Canadian Journal of Political Science (2026), 1–14
doi:10.1017/S0008423926101127

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

RESEARCH NOTE/NOTE DE RECHERCHE

Place Consciousness and Voting in Canada

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(Received 04 March 2025; revised 01 October 2025; accepted 23 December 2025)

Abstract
Building on Cramer's (2016) foundational work on rural consciousness, we measure place consciousness in Canada as a unified construct capturing both in-group place identification and out-group place resentment. Using data from a large-scale Canadian survey, we then examine how place consciousness relates to federal voting behaviour across a novel typology of six urban, suburban, and rural place types. We find that place consciousness is strongest on the ends of the urban-rural continuum; in low- and high-income rural places, and in core urban contexts with large shares of knowledge economy workers. Strong place consciousness relates to Conservative voting in the former places, and Liberal voting in the latter. Place consciousness is weaker in suburban and working-class urban places, and less systematically related to voting behaviour. By examining place consciousness across place types, our findings reveal the nuanced ways in which place identity and resentment shape vote choice across Canada's urban–rural cleavage.

Résumé
En nous appuyant sur les travaux fondamentaux de Cramer (2016) sur la conscience rurale, nous mesurons la conscience du lieu au Canada comme un concept unifié qui englobe à la fois l'identification au lieu au sein du groupe et le ressentiment envers le lieu en dehors du groupe. À partir des données d'une enquête canadienne à grande échelle, nous examinons ensuite comment la conscience du lieu est liée au comportement électoral fédéral à travers une nouvelle typologie de six types de lieux urbains, suburbains et ruraux. Nous constatons que la conscience du lieu est la plus forte aux extrémités du continuum urbain-rural, c'est-à-dire dans les zones rurales à faibles et à hauts revenus, ainsi que dans les contextes urbains centraux où la proportion de travailleurs dans l'économie du savoir est importante. Une forte conscience du lieu est liée au vote conservateur dans les premières zones et au vote libéral dans les secondes. La conscience du lieu est plus faible dans les zones suburbaines et les zones urbaines ouvrières, et elle est moins systématiquement liée au comportement électoral. En examinant la conscience du lieu plutôt que le simple lieu de résidence objectif, et en utilisant une typologie des types de

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https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423926101127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

lieux plus fine que les recherches comparatives précédentes, nos résultats révèlent les nuances avec lesquelles l'identité du lieu et le ressentiment influencent le choix électoral à travers le clivage urbain-rural au Canada.

Keywords: place consciousness; urban–rural divide; rural resentment; vote choice; elections

Mots-clés : conscience du lieu; clivage urbain-rural; ressentiment rural; choix électoral; élections

Introduction

Political scientists have long recognized the role of identities such as race, ethnicity and religion in shaping opinion formation and vote choice (Achen and Bartels, 2016; Campbell et al., 1960; Dawson, 1995; Huddy et al., 2015; Lazarsfeld et al., 1966). However, it is only more recently that *place* has emerged in the literature as a key identity through which to understand contemporary political behaviour. In response to destabilizing political events such as Brexit in the United Kingdom, the election of Donald Trump in the United States, and the Gilets Jaunes protests in France, a burgeoning body of literature now seeks to understand how a particular form of politicized place-based identity among urban and especially rural residents, sometimes referred to as "place consciousness," may be reshaping twenty-first-century politics (Arzheimer and Bernemann, 2024; Borwein and Lucas, 2023a; Cramer, 2016; Hochschild, 2016; Huijsmans, 2023; Lunz Trujillo & Crowley, 2023; Munis, 2021).

Almost all of this research builds, to varying degrees, on Katherine Cramer's (2016) pathbreaking ethnographic study of place consciousness in rural Wisconsin. In her work, Cramer (2016) articulates the idea of "rural consciousness," a form of place-based identity among rural residents, encompassing both a sense of identity tied to a person's rural location and a perception of deprivation relative to urban areas. Cramer argues that rural residents form strong in-group attachments to their places, and they perceive their places are disrespected and disregarded economically, culturally and politically by urban political elites, which breeds a politics of resentment toward urban out-groups.

Expanding on Cramer's (2016) foundational work, subsequent literature on place consciousness has developed along two primary lines. The first line of research focuses on rural and urban place-based identity as in-group identities, emphasizing how place attachment shapes political attitudes among people who identify with their place types (Bornschier et al., 2021; Lin and Lunz Trujillo, 2023; Lunz Trujillo, 2022; Lyons and Utych, 2023; Shea and Jacobs, 2023; Zollinger, 2024; Zumbrunn, 2024).[1] This research has primarily turned to public opinion surveys, using a range of measures to capture place identity, including questions that ask people about their perceived closeness or belonging to their place types (Bornschier et al., 2021; Zollinger, 2024) and social identity batteries previously leveraged to measure other identities such as national and partisan identification (Lunz Trujillo, 2022; Zumbrunn, 2024). Research in this tradition shows that urban and rural identities are closely associated with economic disparities stemming from the new knowledge economy (Bornschier et al., 2021; Wuthnow, 2019; Zollinger, 2024) and underpin urban–rural differences in policy attitudes (Diamond, 2023; Shea and Jacobs, 2023),

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political trust (Zumbrunn, 2024), radical right support (Bornschier et al., 2021; Zollinger, 2024) and partisan animosity (Lin and Lunz Trujillo, 2023).

A second line of research building on Cramer (2016) has focused on place-based *resentment*, emphasizing how rural—and sometimes also urban—identities combine with grievances directed at place-based out-groups to shape political behaviour. Although this research has employed a variety of methodological approaches and measures, it has generally followed Cramer in conceptualizing place resentment as comprising three sets of grievances related to feeling one's place is (1) economically under-resourced, (2) cultural disrespected and (3) politically under-represented. Research has now documented high levels of place-based resentment among people in rural places across US (Hochschild, 2016; Lunz Trujillo and Crowley, 2023; Munis, 2022), Canadian (Banack, 2021; Borwein and Lucas, 2023a) and European contexts (Auerbach et al., 2024; Claassen et al., 2025; Hegewald, 2024; Huijsmans, 2023; McKay et al., 2021).

While recognizing that place identity and place resentment are deeply interconnected, in connecting place resentment to political behaviour, this research has empirically generally modelled place resentment as being downstream from place identity and has thus proceeded in analyses by examining how place resentment relates to political behaviour after accounting for place identity (that is, after controlling for place identity in models) (Hegewald, 2024; Huijsmans, 2023; Jacobs and Munis, 2023; Lunz Trujillo and Crowley, 2023). Studies on place resentment in rural places show it is connected to a range of political behaviours and attitudes, including lower satisfaction with democracy and representation, anti-immigrant attitudes and voting for populist and radical right politicians and parties (Borwein and Lucas, 2023a; Huijsmans, 2023; Lunz Trujillo and Crowley, 2023; Munis, 2022). A closely related strand of research has also instead conceptualized the twin dynamics of in-group place identity and out-group resentment in terms of place-based affective polarization—that is, emotional like of place-based rural (urban) in-groups relative to dislike of place-based urban (rural) out-groups—and has produced similar findings (Hegewald and Schraff, 2022). Finally, a third set of studies have tried to disentangle the relative contributions of the economic, cultural and political components of resentment to vote choice and other phenomena such as political trust, with mixed conclusions (Huijsmans, 2023; McKay et al., 2021; Lunz Trujillo and Crowley, 2023).

Thus, building on Cramer's (2016) ethnographic work on rural consciousness, there has been a proliferation of research and measures capturing different aspects of urban and rural identity and resentment, but which has converged on the conclusion that people's connections to their places are a driving force in contemporary political behaviour. In this research note, our contribution to this literature is primarily empirical: We seek to delineate how place consciousness relates to vote choice in Canada across rural, suburban and urban place types. In doing so, however, and for the purposes of our study's focus on vote choice, we also argue for the use of a single, unified measure of place consciousness that, in line with Cramer's (2016) original conceptualization, captures the co-constitutive nature of in-group place attachment and the economic, cultural and political dimensions of out-group resentment.

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In arguing for a unified measure, we do not contend that our approach is superior to the alternative measurement approaches outlined above; on the contrary, each of these approaches has merit, depending on the research question at hand. For example, a focus on in-group place identity is particularly useful for understanding how local attachment and community pride shape support for policies benefiting one's own region—such as environmental protection or gun control—often independent of attitudes toward other places (Diamond, 2023; Shea and Jacobs, 2023). In contrast, a focus on out-group place resentment is crucial for understanding how perceptions of unfair advantage and status competition vis-à-vis other places have driven affective polarization, partisan sorting and opposition to policies that, on the surface, appear to be in the interests of the in-place (Huijsmans, 2023; Jacobs and Munis, 2023). Finally, analyses separating rural resentment into multiple dimensions, variously described as economic, political and cultural (Lunz Trujillo & Crowley, 2023; McKay et al., 2021), or as resources, power and culture (Claassen et al., 2025), suggest that different components may play more or less central roles in different country contexts.

For our purposes, however, we see several reasons why combining place identity with economic, cultural and political resentment into a single measure of place consciousness is most appropriate. First, Cramer's (2016) original conceptualization is derived from earlier psychological research on group consciousness, which specifies three integrated conditions for groups developing a group consciousness: (1) a group must possess subjective group identification, (2) it must hold grievances or resentment pertaining to group-based disparities (3) and it must assign external blame to the system for those disparities (Huddy, 2013; Miller et al., 1981). In our reading, this framework implies an interactive relationship: Strong group identity can generate or amplify resentment, while experiences of grievance or perceived injustice can, in turn, strengthen in-group attachment (Brewer, 1999; Huddy, 2013; Jardina, 2019). Measuring place resentment separately from place identity, while controlling for the latter (or vice versa), is therefore sub-optimal, because neither is clearly pre-treatment to the other. By scaling the intertwined in- and out-group components of place consciousness into a single measure, we aim to mitigate this measurement challenge.

A similar point applies to efforts to estimate the independent effects of the three dimensions of place resentment on voting behaviour. In definitions of rural consciousness, these dimensions are not cleanly separable. Rather, rural consciousness is understood to fuse rural residents' identification with their places, their perceptions that their places are denied their fair share, economically disadvantaged and culturally disregarded and their belief that this disadvantage is the fault of urban decision makers at the centre of power (Cramer, 2016). Such a conceptualization echoes arguments in the populism literature that economic dislocation and cultural change are mutually reinforcing drivers fueling political disaffection and populist support (Gidron and Hall, 2017). Critically, as Agnolin et al. (2025) argue, empirical evidence both that economic shocks shape cultural attitudes and that cultural concerns heighten the political significance of economic shocks makes it futile to try to measure both drivers in horse-race regressions that pit them against each other. In our view, then, the best way to capture the full effect of place consciousness on voting behaviour is to include all

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of these forces in a single measure and remain agnostic about the relative importance of economic, cultural and political components.

Our preference is thus to use a parsimonious unified measure of place consciousness. However, our primary interest in this research note is empirical: We examine how place consciousness relates to vote choice in the Canadian federal electoral context. Canada's urban–rural electoral divide has widened substantially in the last three decades (Armstrong et al., 2022), reflecting a pattern that has also been observed in other anglophone democracies with majoritarian systems, and to a lesser extent across continental Europe (Huijsmans and Rodden, 2025). Despite these common trends, Canada's cleavage has followed its own distinct development trajectory, and its specific manifestation at the party level reflects the country's unusual two-and-a-half party system (Armstrong et al., 2022; Huijsmans and Rodden, 2025; Taylor et al., 2024). As Armstrong et al. (2022) document, the country's urban–rural electoral divide has grown and receded at different points in history, but since the mid-1990s has become particularly germane to electoral outcomes, with the Liberal and Conservative parties dominating in urban and rural areas, respectively, and the New Democratic party (NDP) dominating in neither place type.

While a range of economic, social and political factors no doubt contribute to Canada's potent urban–rural divide, accumulating evidence of the growing strength and intensity of the cleavage suggests it may also have identity-based or affective underpinnings. Yet, we know very little about whether—and if so, how—place-based identity and resentment (that is, place consciousness) contribute to the urban–rural divide in electoral outcomes in Canada. On the one hand, research examining the United States, whose cleavage is arguably most similar in size and scope to that of Canada, shows that rural identity and resentment are significant predictors of voting for the Republican party (Lunz Trujillo & Crowley, 2023; Jacobs and Munis, 2023), raising the possibility that Canada's urban–rural cleavage may also have affective foundations. On the other hand, the translation of place-based grievances into electoral politics in the United States has been driven, at least in part, by enterprising political elites in the Republican party, who have actively inflamed rural identity and grievances (Cramer, 2016; Jacobs and Munis, 2023; Jadhav, 2020; Shea and Jacobs, 2023). In Canada, there is less evidence of elite-driven appeals to place-based grievances of the kind observed in the United States, although recent developments suggest this could be changing.[2] Even so, the Canadian context remains distinct: Federalism and the greater fractionalization of its party system, with actors such as the New Democratic party and regionally concentrated parties such as the Bloc Québécois, complicate the relationship between place consciousness and vote choice by offering disaffected voters multiple partisan outlets across different regions of the country.

In examining how place consciousness shapes vote choice in Canada, our final contribution in this research note is to extend analyses beyond coarse rural–urban (or rural–suburban–urban) dichotomies by examining place consciousness across six distinct urban, suburban and rural place types. These place types, first articulated by Borwein and Lucas (2025), differentiate places on the basis of similarities on multiple dimensions including average sociodemographics, housing, employment, and commutes, and include *low-income rural*, *higher-income rural*, *low-diversity*

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suburban, *high-diversity suburban*, *working-class urban* and *professional-class urban* places. Importantly, while Borwein and Lucas (2025) show that this place typology is related to federal voting patterns at the aggregate level, we do not know how place consciousness varies across these place types, nor how it relates to voting in each place.

In sum, this research note contributes to research on the identity and affective bases of urban–rural electoral divides by examining place consciousness as a unified construct capturing place-based identity and resentment; by doing so in the context of Canadian federal electoral politics, one of contemporary politics' largest urban–rural cleavages; and by using a more nuanced typology of urban, suburban and rural place types than has previously been used.

To examine how place consciousness shapes Canadian voting behaviour, we draw on data from the Cities in Canadian Political Development (CCPD) survey, a large, nationally representative survey of approximately 4,000 Canadians, which was fielded in Spring 2024. We ask respondents first about their identification with their own place types, using four questions designed to capture place identity as a *social identity*, and, second, about their sense of resentment toward place-based out-groups, using four questions that capture the cultural, economic and political dimensions of place-based grievances (Borwein and Lucas, 2023a). In our analysis, we first show that all eight of these questions contribute information to a single latent measure of place consciousness. We then present analysis that disaggregates place types into our six types of rural, suburban and urban places to show which place types have the highest levels of place consciousness. Finally, we examine for which place types place consciousness does—and does not—predict voting behaviour. In short, we find that place consciousness is highest in both types of rural places (low- and higher-income rural areas) and in both places is a significant predictor of voting for the Conservative party, but it only predicts voting for the Liberal party in Canada's most inner-urban places (professional-class urban place types). We conclude with a discussion of the significance of our findings for the study of place consciousness as a single composite of place identity and place resentment, in Canada and elsewhere.

Data and Methods

Our analysis relies on data from the Cities in Canadian Political Development (CCPD) survey, a large, nationally representative survey fielded between March 6 and March 14, 2024. Survey respondents were recruited by Léger Research from an existing online panel, with recruitment quotas for province, age, gender, education and language. We have a total of 3,962 responses available for analysis from the general public. To ensure precise measurement across all place types, we deliberately oversampled rural respondents; as a result, we have more than 1,000 respondents for each place type (urban, suburban and rural) in Canada.

As we noted above, our measure of place consciousness includes both an in-group place identity component and a multifaceted place-based resentment component.[3] Both sets of questions are drawn from previous research in Canada (Borwein and Lucas, 2023a; 2023b) and are grounded in more general measures of place-based resentment (Munis, 2022) and social identity (Huddy and Khatib, 2007).

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Table 1. Overview of Question Wording

Category	Question	Responses
Place identity	How important is being a (rural/suburban/urban) person to you?	Not important at all, Somewhat important, Very important, Extremely important, Don't know
Place identity	How well does the term "(rural/suburban/urban) person" describe you?	Not at all, Not very well, Very well, Extremely well, Don't know
Place identity	When talking about people in (rural/suburban/urban) places, how often do you use "we" instead of "they"?	Never, Rarely, Some of the time, Most of the time, All of the time, Don't know
Place identity	To what extent do you think of yourself as being a (rural/suburban/urban) person?	Not at all, Very little, Somewhat, A great deal, Don't know
Place resentment (economic)	In Canada, (in-place) areas have distinct economic interests that are often ignored by people in (out-place) areas.	Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree, Don't know
Place resentment (cultural)	In Canada, (in-place) areas have a distinct culture that is often misunderstood by people in (out-place) areas.	Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree, Don't know
Place resentment (political)	In Canada, (out-place) areas have too much say in Canadian politics.	Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree, Don't know
Place resentment (political)	Politicians care more about representing people in (out-place) areas than in (in-place) areas.	Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree, Don't know

We provide the full wording of these items in Table 1. Following past research on place identity in Canada, we measure individual-level place consciousness using Bayesian factor analysis, but we show that this measurement modeling decision is not consequential for our results.[4] We determined respondents' in-place and out-place identities from earlier questions on the respondent's place of residence.[5]

To measure respondents' place types, we rely on a new typology developed by Borwein and Lucas (2025), which divides Canada's geography into seven place types at the scale of aggregated dissemination areas. This place typology allows for a finer-grained breakdown than a continuous urban–rural continuum or a categorical urban–suburban–rural typology. Because one of the place types identified by Borwein and Lucas (2025) ("Indigenous rural") has very low population totals, we did not have sufficient sample to include this place type in our analysis. We thus focus our analysis on place consciousness and voting in the six remaining place types: low-income rural, higher-income rural, professional-class urban, working-class urban, low-diversity suburban and high-diversity suburban. For more information on how this typology of place types is constructed, see Appendix A.1.

Results

To validate our approach to measuring place consciousness as a single construct, we begin by presenting results from our Bayesian factor analysis of the in-group place identity scale (place identity 1–4) and the out-group place resentment scale (cultural, economic and political resentment). Figure 1 summarizes the discrimination

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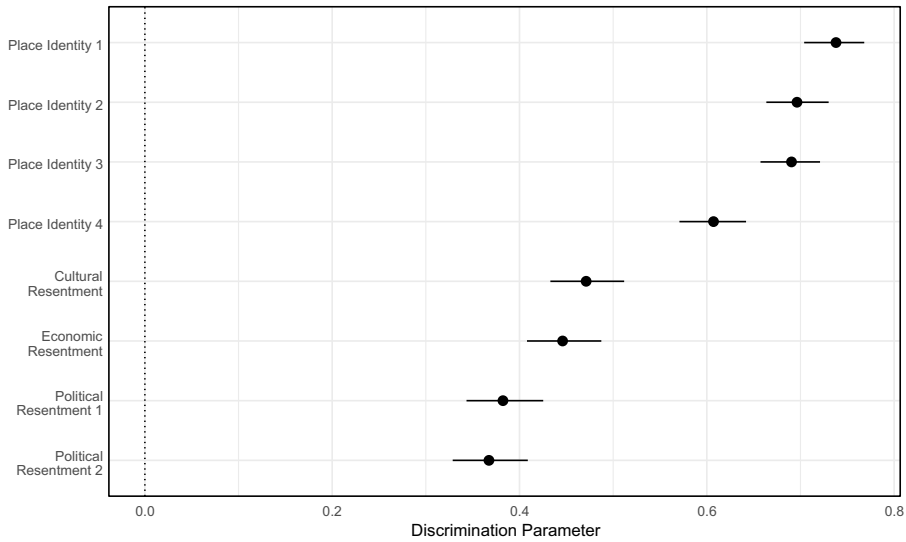


Figure 1. Place Consciousness Measure: Discrimination Parameters. Discrimination Parameters and 95 per cent Credible Intervals for each of the Place Identity and Place Resentment Items in the Place Consciousness Measure.

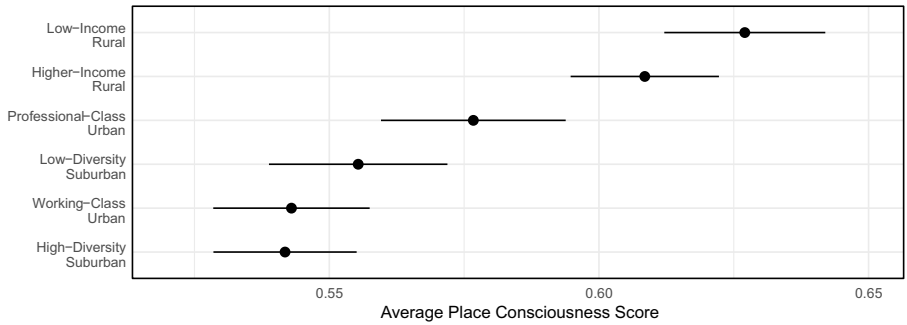


Figure 2. Average Place Consciousness Levels, by Place Type. Mean Estimates with 95 per cent Confidence Intervals of Place Consciousness, by Place Type.

parameters from this measurement model. These discrimination parameters can be interpreted as similar to factor loadings; they represent the relationship between the item and the latent place consciousness measure. We note that $\hat{R}$ values and trace plots indicated good mixing and provide strong evidence of model convergence. Positive discrimination parameters, all distant from zero, indicate that all eight items contribute information to the latent measurement model.

Figure 2 summarizes average place consciousness scores by place type. In keeping with other measures of place identity and place resentment (Borwein and Lucas, 2023a; Munis, 2022), we find that place consciousness is especially strong in rural Canada. While average levels of place consciousness are higher in "low-income

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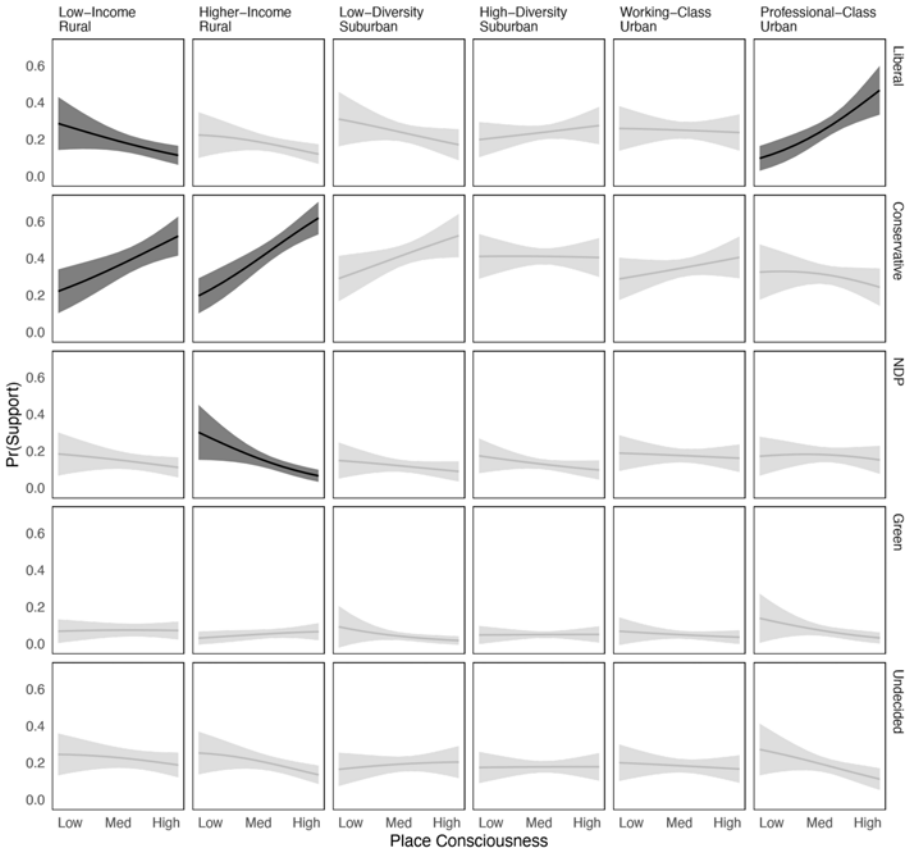


Figure 3. Place Consciousness and Vote Choice, by Place Type. Probability of Vote Intention for each Major Pan-Canadian Federal Party, by Place Consciousness (horizontal axis). Panel Columns are Place Types, and Panel Rows are Political Parties. Statistically Significant Slopes are Shaded in Black. Full table in Supplementary Material (A.3).

rural" than in "higher-income rural" places, these within-rural differences are considerably smaller than the differences between rural places and other places. Interestingly, however, we find more substantial differences in place consciousness within urban places: In professional-class urban places, average place consciousness is quite strong, whereas place consciousness is weaker in more working-class urban place types. Relative to rural places and professional-class urban places, place consciousness is also relatively low in both low-diversity and especially higher-diversity suburbs.

Figure 3 summarizes the predicted probability of supporting each party, conditional on respondents' place consciousness, with controls for age, gender, region and language.[6] The figure is broken down by place type (the columns in the figure) and party (the rows in the figure); in each panel, we provide the predicted probability that a respondent in a specific place type will support a specific party as we move from low levels of place consciousness to high levels of place

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consciousness. We have shaded statistically significant relationships with black lines and darker gray 95 per cent confidence intervals.

The light-gray lines in many of the panels in Figure 3 suggest that place consciousness is not meaningfully related to vote choice in the case of many place types and parties. In several theoretically important cases, however, we find relationships that are statistically significant and substantively large. In the top-left corner of the figure, for instance, we find that rural residents with strong place consciousness are significantly more likely than those with weak place consciousness to support the Conservative party. This relationship is nearly identical regardless of the rural place type under consideration: It is equally the case in lower-income rural places (more common in remote parts of Ontario and Quebec) and in higher-income rural places (more common in southwestern Ontario and the Prairies). Among rural residents with strong levels of place consciousness, support for the Conservative party is extremely high.

Importantly, however, we do not find the same pattern in urban place types. In the case of the Liberal party, we observe a statistically significant and large relationship between place consciousness and vote choice only in "professional-class urban" places, the urban neighbourhoods populated with highly educated knowledge workers often very near the urban core. In working-class urban neighbourhoods, in contrast, we find that the relationship between place consciousness and party support is essentially flat for all parties; indeed, if it is upward-sloping for any party, it is for the Conservatives, not the Liberals.[7]

Finally, we observe one more idiosyncratic relationship in Figure 3. Individuals in higher-income rural areas with strong place consciousness are significantly less likely to vote for the NDP—perhaps, as a consequence of the NDP's attempt to appeal to progressive urban voters, strong rural identifiers feel somewhat more alienated from that party than would have been the case in the party's more agrarian formative years.

Taken together then, our results support the view that patterns of electoral support in Canada are not simply a matter of place of residence but also a matter of the character of an individual's identification with that place—the in-group *and* out-group components that make up what Cramer calls "place consciousness." In some places, individuals with low levels of place consciousness—such as rural residents, or residents of professional-class urban places—are in fact remarkably *unlikely* to support the party that is typically thought to be favoured in those geographic regions.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this article, we measured place consciousness as a single construct encompassing both in-group and out-group place identity and resentment, and we examined its relationship to voting behaviour in Canada. Our findings support the conclusion that there is significant variation in the strength of place consciousness across urban, rural and suburban places in Canada. Place consciousness is particularly potent in both low- and high-income rural areas and, to a lesser extent, in core urban areas comprising a high share of professional-class workers. We further find that geographic patterns of strong place consciousness relate to voting behaviour; high

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place consciousness in both low- and high-income rural places is a strong predictor of voting Conservative, while in professional-class urban areas it is a strong predictor of voting Liberal. Place consciousness is both weaker in suburban and working-class urban places and less systematically related to voting behaviour.

Earlier work on place-based resentment in Canada shows that resentment is often associated with distinct policy positions and preferences; rural residents with high levels of place-based resentment hold more anti-environmental, traditionalist and anti-immigrant attitudes, while urban residents with high levels of resentment tend to be more supportive of strong environmental policy, less traditionalist and more supportive of immigration (Borwein and Lucas, 2023a). Together with our vote results, we take this to suggest that place consciousness likely acts to amplify and translate place-rooted ideological divides into partisan choice—tightening the connection between rural traditionalist, anti-immigrant and anti-environmental orientations and voting Conservative in rural communities and, in professional-class urban cores, pro-environmental and pro-immigration orientations and voting Liberal.

Our findings provide new insights into the role of place consciousness in Canadian electoral politics. First, by moving beyond a simple urban–suburban–rural trichotomy of place types, we show that place consciousness differs significantly not just between urban, rural and suburban place types; it also differs *within* them. Our finding that place consciousness is significantly stronger in urban places with high levels of education and employment in professional (and related) occupations as compared with urban places with lower levels of education and greater employment in service and manufacturing industries in our view lends credence to the argument that contemporary place-based divides can often be understood as conflicts that are "sectoral and educational at their core" (Zollinger, 2024). Put differently, even as Canadians frequently perceive and articulate their politics through the lens of place, these politics are also importantly downstream from where they are located as winners or losers in the knowledge economy.

Our findings also suggest rural consciousness is not just about material disadvantage. While both low-income and high-income rural place types are characterized by relatively low levels of average education, high levels of unemployment characterize low-income rural place types, while unemployment is much lower in high-income rural places. Yet, despite this significant difference in material position, the two place types display similarly high levels of place consciousness, and similar patterns of voting Conservative at high levels of consciousness. To better understand the potential material bases of place consciousness in rural communities, future work should investigate whether place consciousness is heightened among those Canadians who are relatively advantaged within their rural communities—who may contrast their status with urban elites and national economic trends—or if it is primarily the most disadvantaged rural individuals who experience and express this resentment. This distinction has implications for understanding the political mobilization of rural voters for the Conservative party: To what extent are place-conscious Conservative voters responding to personal or local economic insecurity, and to what extent are they reacting against perceptions of disrespect and other status concerns vis-a-vis urban areas? The latter would reflect patterns found by Lunz Trujillo & Crowley, 2023,

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where symbolic rather than material grievances were the primary drivers of rural conservative alignment.

Another avenue for future research is better theorizing and measuring how place consciousness interacts with other social and political identities. While our results suggest that place consciousness is an important factor shaping vote choice in Canada, we do not yet know how it interacts with other sources of identification, particularly relating to ethno-racial and linguistic identity. Our finding that place consciousness is particularly weak in suburban place types with high levels of ethno-racial diversity raises the possibility that the presence of strong non-geographic bases for identity may crowd out geographic ones. To better understand these dynamics, future work should therefore examine whether and when other identities compound or compete with place consciousness. Addressing these and related questions will clarify the broader implications of place consciousness for contemporary political behaviour in Canada and elsewhere.

Supplementary material. The supplementary material for this article can be found at https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423926101127.

Competing interests. Authors declare they have no competing interests.

Notes

1 Another line of research has also focused on the political consequences of place-based identity at local geographies other than urban and rural (for example, Arzheimer et al., 2024; Borwein and Lucas, 2023b; Fitzgerald, 2018; Wong, 2010). However, this article focuses specifically on urban and rural in-group identities, so this work is outside of its scope.

2 Under Pierre Poilievre's leadership, the Conservative party has advanced rhetoric that resonates with place-based grievances. The "axe the tax" campaign to eliminate the federal carbon tax and public support for the Freedom Convoy in 2022 were often articulated in populist or anti-elite terms rather than explicitly geographic ones, but they nevertheless tapped into rural and small-town discontent. Another example includes the Manitoba New Democratic party's use of by-election advertisements claiming other parties ignore rural areas.

3 All eight questions form a reliable scale ($\alpha = 0.78$). Scree plots from a factor analysis indicate that a unidimensional measure is appropriate, with the first factor explaining 42 per cent of the variance in responses.

4 For instance, our latent place consciousness scale correlates extremely strongly ($r = 0.95$) with a simple additive scale. However, the additive scale requires listwise deletion of any respondents who selected "don't know" for even one of the eight items (about one-third of the respondents), whereas our measure allows us to retain all responses. In addition, the factor analysis approach avoids the assumption that each item should carry equal weight in the latent measure (which the parameters in Figure 1 suggest would be inappropriate). In our vote choice analysis, both measures fit the data equally well, with a slight improvement from the Bayesian measure (Akaike information criterion (AIC) = 5,908 for the Bayesian measure; AIC = 5,910 for the additive measure). See Supplementary Material (A.2) for more information.

5 Specifically, place types for place identity batteries were drawn from responses to the question "which of the following words do you think best describes the place where you live" with urban, suburban, and rural as response options. In-places for place resentment questions were also drawn from the aforementioned question, and respondents were then randomized to see one of the two possible out-places. For instance, respondents who selected "urban" were randomly assigned to "suburban" or "rural" out-places.

6 In main models, we select controls that we are confident are pre-treatment to place consciousness. However, in Supplementary Material (Figure A.4) we also show models with additional sets of covariates, including covariates for symbolic ideology, values (nativism; free market beliefs; egalitarianism; traditionalism) and party ID. Findings suggest that different covariates may mediate the relationship between place consciousness and voting in different place types.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423926101127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

7 We show in the Supplementary Material (A1) that these relationships for the Conservatives and Liberals are robust to alternative measures of place identity or place consciousness.

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Cite this article: Borwein, Sophie, Jack Lucas and Bradley Wood-MacLean. 2026. "Place Consciousness and Voting in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423926101127.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423926101127 Published online by Cambridge University Press