

## **Managers' and Workers' Attitudes Toward Unions in the U.S. and Canada**

Ishak Saporta et Bryan Lincoln

Volume 50, numéro 3, 1995

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/051034ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/051034ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Département des relations industrielles de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0034-379X (imprimé)

1703-8138 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Saporta, I. & Lincoln, B. (1995). Managers' and Workers' Attitudes Toward Unions in the U.S. and Canada. *Relations industrielles / Industrial Relations*, 50(3), 550–566. <https://doi.org/10.7202/051034ar>

Résumé de l'article

Les explications les plus courantes sur les causes de taux de densité syndicale différents entre les États-Unis et le Canada vont de l'hypothèse de l'opinion publique de Lipset à l'hostilité croissante des gestionnaires américains en passant par les différences dans le droit du travail. Nous utilisons les données de l'enquête sur les attitudes des travailleurs et des gestionnaires dans ces deux pays tirées de Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness pour faire l'examen des diverses explications. Cette enquête comprend des questions visant à mesurer les opinions eu égard à différents aspects des relations entreprise-syndicat.

Nous retenons quatre questions : qui des travailleurs ou de la direction devrait gagner à l'occasion d'une grève ? devrait-on prohiber l'embauche de briseurs de grève ? les travailleurs devraient-ils empêcher physiquement les briseurs de grève ? et les corporations bénéficient-elles indûment à leurs propriétaires aux dépens du reste de la société ? Cela nous permet de comparer les attitudes des travailleurs et des gestionnaires au Canada et aux États-Unis sur ces questions.

On a souvent conclu que c'est l'hostilité croissante des employeurs envers les syndicats qui expliquerait le taux beaucoup plus bas de syndicalisation aux États-Unis. Si cette hypothèse est correcte, on devrait alors retrouver des opinions anti-syndicales beaucoup plus fortes parmi les gestionnaires américains comparativement à leurs collègues canadiens. Si l'hypothèse de l'opinion publique de Lipset est juste, il devrait y avoir une plus grande hostilité envers les syndicats dans la population américaine que chez les canadiens.

Nous utilisons deux tests statistiques pour comparer les attitudes : l'un est le test de différence simple dans les moyennes et l'autre, une spécification probit ordonnée qui inclut des contrôles des différentes caractéristiques individuelles. Nous effectuons alors les comparaisons suivantes : les gestionnaires des deux pays, les travailleurs des deux pays, gestionnaires-travailleurs aux États-Unis et gestionnaires-travailleurs au Canada. Nous observons que les attitudes des gestionnaires dans les deux pays ne présentent pas de différences. Cela suggère que l'hostilité croissante des employeurs américains n'explique pas les taux de syndicalisation différents dans les deux pays. Les travailleurs américains sont ici les plus militants. Les travailleurs canadiens se retrouvent au centre entre les gestionnaires et les travailleurs américains. Certains suggèrent qu'il peut à ce sujet y avoir d'importantes différences régionales, nous avons répété notre analyse en traitant le sud des États-Unis et le Québec séparément. Nous n'avons trouvé que de minimes différences entre ces deux régions.

# ***Managers' and Workers' Attitudes Toward Unions in the U.S. and Canada***

ISHAK SAPORTA  
BRYAN LINCOLN

*Current arguments about the causes of differing union density rates in the U.S. and Canada range from Lipset's public opinion hypothesis and differences in labour law, to increased U.S. managerial hostility. We use survey data on managers' and workers' attitudes in the two countries to examine the competing arguments. Using questions that probe opinions toward various aspects of union-firm relations, we find that managers' attitudes in the two countries do not differ. This finding suggests that increased U.S. managerial hostility is not the cause of the divergent unionization rates. U.S. workers are the most militant of the four groups, with Canadian workers in the middle, between managers and U.S. workers. Following literature which suggests that there may be important regional differences, we perform a similar analysis treating the South in the U.S. and Quebec in Canada separately. We find only minimal cross-regional differences.*

A recent estimate of the percentage of the labour force in unions is 17 percent for the U.S. and 36 percent for Canada (Blanchflower and Freeman 1990). Current research focuses on several competing explanations for this difference in unionization rates: differences in the legal system (Chaison and Rose 1991), in the structure of the economy (Troy 1990), in public opinions toward labour unions (Lipset 1986), and above all, in the increased amount of hostility of U.S. managers to the ideas surrounding unionization (Freeman 1985; Poole 1986; Jacoby 1987, 1991).

- 
- SAPORTA, I., Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California at Berkeley.  
LINCOLN, B., Department of Economics, University of California at Berkeley.
  - We would like to thank William Dickens, Michael Reich, George Strauss, Anand Swamynathan, two anonymous referees, and especially David Levine, for helpful comments.

The last argument of increased U.S. managerial hostility toward unions was the main impetus for our research. If differences in attitudes are driving observed outcomes, then we should see disparities in a direct examination of attitudes in the two countries. For our study, we used survey data from the Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness dataset, analyzing responses to questions about specific union issues. Our main finding is that managers in the U.S. and Canada agree on all issues, contradicting the increased U.S. managerial hostility hypothesis.

We then examine workers' responses to the same set of questions. Some forms of the theory of business unionism would imply that workers in the U.S. should be in closer agreement with their employers. Though they might argue about marginal changes in how the pie is sliced, the overall structure of how the pie is divided is considered satisfactory. The more politicized unions in Canada might translate into workers' attitudes that are more hostile to the basic societal contract. Our results give some support to this second idea. The concept of business unionism leading to less adversarial relations is strongly rejected in the U.S. with U.S. workers generally the most radical on questions asked among all four groups.

Finally we use the data to examine regional (specifically the South in the U.S. and Quebec in Canada) differences in attitudes among managers and workers towards unions. The U.S. South with its prevalent right to work laws is often considered particularly hostile to unions while Quebec is considered to be particularly favourable. Of course if these beliefs are correct then controlling for region would only diminish any cross-national differences found. The rest of the U.S. without the South would be less anti-union while the rest of Canada without Quebec would be less pro-union. Hence controlling for region should decrease any differential of U.S. hostility and so would go the wrong way in terms of explaining our results. Be that as it may, our measures show few regional differences among managers and workers in either country.

We further elaborate on the theoretical debate in the next section and present related evidence in the literature. We then discuss the data and statistical techniques used. The following section presents overall results, while the subsequent section focuses on the issue of regional differences. Conclusions are presented in the last section.

## ***BACKGROUND AND ARGUMENT***

### ***Management Opposition***

Since the beginning of the 1980s researchers have emphasized management attitudes and behaviour towards union formation as an important determinant of union success. Freeman (1989: 14) states:

on the basis of diverse studies that show management opposition to have been a major factor in the failure of unions to organize in the period, most analysts have come to believe that it is a, if not *the*, major cause of the decline in private sector density.

Poole (1986: 47) similarly argues that:

managerial preferences have fluctuated over time, but against the general trend toward a tacit acceptance of trade unions, a substantial number of U.S. employers publicly espouse a 'union free' policy.

Finally Jacoby (1987: 34) expresses the same idea:

distinctive features of American unionism cannot be understood without taking into account national differences in management characteristics and policies. It is likely (but yet unproven), that American managers had values that predisposed them to be more hostile to collective bargaining than managers in Europe.

Managerial hostility arguments imply that the differing U.S. and Canadian unionization density rates are caused by underlying differences in managerial attitudes. If management hostility is "a, if not *the*, major cause" of differing union density rates, then direct measures of management attitudes will systematically differ across countries with different unionization rates. Some researchers posit that precisely this would be found in comparing U.S. and Canadian managerial attitudes:

Although there is no supporting data, a consensus seems to have developed that employer resistance to unions in Canada is not as extensive or intense as in the United States (Chaison and Rose 1991: 182).

The tentative nature of this quote reflects the lack of research directly examining managerial attitudes in the two countries.

There is, of course, the larger issue of assigning primacy to proposed ultimate causes of differing rates of unionization, but any argument which believes managerial hostility is an important link should hypothesize systematic patterns in managerial attitudes and unionization outcomes. Manager hostility arguments predict that managers and workers will be closer in Canada than in the U.S. (in the direction of Canadian managers being less aggressive towards unions). To support the hypothesis that increased U.S. managerial hostility has been an important factor in the diverging trends in union density, differences in attitudes should be found between managers in the two countries.

### *Public Opinion*

Lipset (1986) popularized the public opinion argument. He argues that the state of public opinion and cultural values directly affect unionization rates. Gallup polls in the U.S. find that 14 to 18 percent of the U.S.

population disapproved of unions in the years 1953–57, while 27 to 35 percent disapprove in 1978–85. Moreover, the correlation between net approval of unions in the Gallup poll with two measures of unionization outcomes, union density and percentage union success in NLRB certification elections, for the postwar years in the U.S. is, respectively, .81 and .70. This leads Lipset to argue that change in public opinion is an important independent explanation for the decline in union density in the U.S.

This national opinion thesis has come under increased attack. Contrary to popular views, not all the evidence in the U.S. points to increased hostility toward unions over time. Lowe and Krahn (1989) note that a 1985 Harris poll found 34 percent would at least probably vote for a union at their work place if an election took place tomorrow, similar percentages to the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey and the 1980 NLS. Canadian Gallup polls have found 12 to 20 percent responding that unions are bad for the country in the years 1950–58, while for 1976–82 it was 30 to 42 percent (Bruce 1989). This increase in negative responses towards unions in both the U.S. and Canadian Gallup polls, along with the increase in the Canadian union density rate, contradicts the public opinion argument. Recent research on Lipset's arguments has recognized the shaky empirical base for his provocative thesis (see the recent exchange in Bowden 1989, 1990 and Lipset 1990). A series of papers have used this same dataset and questions to look at overall population responses between the two countries (Baer, Grabb, and Johnston 1990, 1993). Their findings for total population are in agreement with our own on the lack of a strong one-way dichotomy in national differences (see Table 1, Baer, Grabb, and Johnston 1990, though their 1993 paper does find more significant differences with a breakdown by region).

### ***Workers' Attitudes***

One popular view of the U.S. industrial relations structure is that it follows a "business union" model: a pure and simple trade unionism interested only in "bread and butter" issues and an accompanying apoliticism compared to labour unions in other countries. This can lead to putting the "blame" of the diminishing importance of U.S. labour unions on a strategic decision taken by U.S. unions at the beginning of the twentieth century to concentrate on workplace issues and ignore the larger political arena, the classic Gompers debate. Lipsig-Mummé (1989) asserts the converse of the managerial hostility hypothesis: that the plight of U.S. unions is due to their strategies in collective bargaining rather than specific managerial actions. We see, for instance, the existence of a labour party in Canada and not in the U.S. Other attempts to theorize about current U.S. union decline assign

a "dual" responsibility to managers' and unions' activities and decisions (Ulman 1987; Jacoby 1987, 1991).

The assumption of a smoothly working business unionism would imply that U.S. worker attitudes are more moderate than those of Canadian workers. The more political nature of Canadian unions might lead workers to be less convinced that the basic societal contract is set in stone and is satisfactory. On "general" questions of the proper social structure, Canadian workers may be more radical. In accordance with this version of business unionism we would anticipate that American employees in general will be closer in attitudes to their managers compared to their Canadian counterparts.

### *Institutional Considerations*

On the macro level the main argument for differences between the countries is labour law and the structure of the political system (Bruce 1989; Meltz 1985; Chaison and Rose 1991). In Canada strikes are legally banned during the period of a collective agreement. To receive union certification, only a majority of workers at an establishment have to be dues-paying members of the union rather than have an NLRB-type election. The 1971-1984 annual average number of days lost per 1000 paid workers due to strikes is 800 for Canada (second in the world behind Italy, which suggests the ban may only be on the books), while for the U.S. it is 348 (Adams 1989: 454).

The decline of industrial sectors where unions have traditionally been strong (i.e., manufacturing) and the concurrent rise in the difficult-to-organize service sector are sometimes argued to account for the fall in U.S. unionism (see Troy 1990). Canadian data contradict this view: Canada in 1983 had the highest ratio of service to industrial sector employment in the world (Lipset 1986: Table 1), while 6.6 percent of the services are unionized in the U.S. versus 38.1 percent in Canada (Chaison and Rose 1991: Table 3).

The U.S. had 28,995 unfair labour practice complaints in 1983 which, corrected for population, still dwarfs a comparable Canadian figure of 1,331 for 1984 (Chaison and Rose 1991). Canadian management attitudes are not always so benign, as this quote from a Canadian national union head attests:

I am involved in a number of quality of work life programs. But wherever I have one that works, I have a dozen more that are simply designed to get rid of a union if it is there, or keep it out if it is not there. (Anderson, Gunderson, and Ponak 1989b: 470).

### ***DATA AND METHODS***

---

The data set used is the "Class Consciousness and Class Formation" data base collected under the supervision of Wright (1990)<sup>1</sup> (see Wright et al. (1982) for a discussion of this data set). The data set includes a host of questions for the years 1980 in the U.S. and 1982 in Canada concerning attitudes toward aspects of the economy. Sample sizes in the data set are small but were theoretically designed to be representative of the total labour force population.

We break the sample down by managers and non-managerial employees in each country. We operationalize managers as only those who manage others, not "independent" positions such as engineers or teachers. Similarly, the category non-managerial employees excludes sales and other professional positions. (For more detail on procedures and data restrictions a technical appendix is available from the authors upon request.) The main comparisons we will analyze are first across countries: only managers, and then only workers; and then within each country: comparing managers and workers. In addition we will then further differentiate the sample taking into account the South in the U.S and Quebec in Canada.

The comparisons will be conducted on the following four questions (responses to questions 2 to 4 are on a scale from 1 (strongly agree), to 4 (strongly disagree):

- 1) Imagine that workers in a major industry are out on strike over working conditions and wages. Which of the following outcomes would you like to see occur?
  - 1 - workers win
  - 2 - make some concessions
  - 3 - make major concessions
  - 4 - go back to work without winning
- 2) During a strike, management should be prohibited by law from hiring workers to take the place of strikers.
- 3) Striking workers are generally justified in physically preventing strike-breakers from entering the place of work.
- 4) Corporations benefits owners at the expense of workers and customers.

---

1. The data utilized in this publication were made available by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. The data for *Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness: Core and Country-Specific Files* were originally collected and prepared by Erik Olin Wright, et al. (1990). Neither the collector of the original data nor the consortium bears any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

Note the word "union" does not appear in any of the above questions. Hence low-numbered responses do not necessarily mean approval of unions per se as the best method for achieving these goals. Nevertheless these questions deal with traditional concerns of unions and we will interpret responses as shedding light on attitudes toward unions.

We conduct two types of statistical tests: first, a series of t-tests for differences in means between various groups for the four questions, and, second, an ordered probit specification (Maddala 1983: 46). In our ordered probit specification we use several standard control variables at the individual level including age, education and sex. We use the existence of a union in the firm as a control for unionism in all specifications. This gives much larger samples than using an alternative variable of whether respondent was in a union or not (all results have been checked with this alternative variable and do not differ significantly). We also have controls on the sector in which the individual is working (manufacturing, government, and service) to try to account for sectoral composition of the economy.

We constrain coefficients on these control variables to be the same across whichever two groups we are testing, allowing only the intercepts to differ across the two groups. For example, in Table 2, first row, the coefficient on the manager dummy variable is the intercept difference between U.S. and Canadian managers' attitudes. A formal test at the 5 percent level of equality of control variable coefficients is accepted in 15 out of the 16 cases, hence empirically the data justifies our model specification. Working with this same dataset Baer, Grabb, and Johnston (1990) also accept equality of coefficients across the two countries for a similar set of controls and with a different technique (LISREL).

The first half of Table 1 lists means and standard deviations broken down by country and worker versus manager for all variables used in the study.

## RESULTS

The second half of Table 1 presents the t-tests while Table 2 presents the ordered probit results for the main coefficients. To save space we tabulate coefficients on control variables for the ordered probit only for the question of outcome of strike in Table 3 (results for control variable coefficients for other questions are comparable and are available upon request). Regional results are listed separately in Table 4.



TABLE I  
Means, Standard Deviations and T-Tests

	U.S.		Canada		T-Test Manager	T-Test Employees	T-Test U.S.	T-Test Canada
	Manager	Employees	Manager	Employees				
Win Strike	2.17 (.57)	1.95 (.61)	2.15 (.56)	2.09 (.63)	.44	-5.33*	4.88*	1.11
Replac. Worker	2.93 (1.16)	2.33 (1.24)	2.75 (1.10)	2.18 (1.19)	1.48	2.93*	6.42*	5.90*
Physi. Strike	3.33 (.97)	2.90 (1.12)	3.45 (.87)	3.08 (1.02)	-1.20	3.82*	5.69*	4.87*
Corp. Benefit	2.74 (1.05)	2.31 (.95)	2.71 (.99)	2.18 (.96)	.29	3.32*	5.46*	6.26*
Age	41.38 (12.96)	36.68 (13.84)	42.76 (11.82)	38.38 (13.50)				
Education	14.13 (2.46)	12.45 (2.18)	13.96 (3.50)	11.41 (2.83)				
Union in Firm	.27 (.44)	.32 (.47)	.39 (.49)	.40 (.49)				
Male	.68 (.47)	.46 (.50)	.69 (.47)	.58 (.50)				
Manufacturing	.33 (.47)	.39 (.48)	.29 (.46)	.50 (.50)				
Government	.15 (.36)	.18 (.38)	.21 (.41)	.16 (.37)				
Hours Work	49.85 (13.16)	40.32 (13.30)	46.86 (11.64)	39.40 (13.10)				

T-Test, T-value of differences in means. MANAGER refers to differences in means between managers in U.S. and Canada. EMPLOYEES refers to differences in means between employees in the two countries. U.S. refers to differences in means between managers and employees in the U.S. and CANADA refer to differences in means in Canada.  
\*  $p < .05$

TABLE 2  
Results of Ordered Probit Main Effect Coefficients

	<i>Win Strike</i>	<i>Prohibit Replacement</i>	<i>Physi. Strike</i>	<i>Corp. Benefit</i>
Managers	.189	.203	-.150	-.034
U.S. vs. Canada	(.152)	(.134)	(.143)	(.131)
Employees	-.296*	.052	-.244*	.124*
U.S. vs. Canada	(.057)	(.054)	(.054)	(.052)
Canada	-.0006	.322*	.359*	.522*
Managers vs. Employees	(.111)	(.106)	(.120)	(.108)
U.S.	.334*	.361*	.221*	.358*
Managers vs. Employees	(0.98)	(.107)	(.113)	(.107)

\*  $p < .05$

Controlling for: Age, Gender, Education, Hours of Work, Union in Firm, and Economic Sector (manufacturing, government, and service).

### *Managers' Attitudes*

We find no statistically significant differences between managers of the two countries for any question using either type of test. The sign on the dummy varies across questions and across tests. This is direct evidence that it is not increased U.S. managerial hostility which is driving the lower U.S. unionization rate. Concerning the question of hiring replacement workers during a strike, there are differences in the respective countries' legal system which are potentially important. The legal situation in the U.S. is that since 1938 American employers have been permitted to hire replacement workers. The ruling distinguishes between a temporary and permanent replacement. During an economic strike, the employer can hire permanent replacements, while, if unfair labour practices are involved, employers can only replace their employees temporarily.

In Canada, on the other hand, there are regional variations in the legal possibility of replacing striking workers. For instance, in Quebec at the time of the survey it was forbidden by law. These differences in the law may make the U.S. employer more prone to disagree with legal intervention to forbid a practice that is well entrenched in the labour market and is widely used. In Canada, where there is no clear-cut legal decision about replacement workers, employers would have to be more hostile toward unions in order to disagree with the proposition.

TABLE 3  
Ordered Probit Dependent Variable: Win Strike

	<i>Managers U.S. vs. Canada</i>	<i>Employees U.S. vs. Canada</i>	<i>Canada Managers vs. Employees</i>	<i>U.S. Managers vs. Employees</i>
U.S. Dummy	.189 (.152)	-.296* (.057)		
Managers Dummy			-.0006 (.11)	.334* (.098)
Age	.014* (.007)	.014* (.002)	.009* (.003)	.019* (.003)
Union in Firm	-.095 (.192)	-.443* (.063)	-.626* (.085)	-.200* (.086)
Manufacturing	-.184 (.185)	.013 (.067)	.076 (.078)	-.063 (.092)
Government	-.235 (.266)	-.050 (.080)	.087 (.110)	-.144 (.111)
Male	.643* (.199)	.053 (.059)	.141 (.078)	.092 (.083)
Education	-.012 (.028)	.008 (.012)	-.005 (.013)	.025 (.019)
Hours of Work	.003 (.007)	.003 (.002)	.005 (.003)	.001 (.003)
Constant	.994 (.64)	.322 (.220)	.893* (.252)	.044 (.317)
N	283	1918	1167	1034

\*  $p < .05$

The coefficients on control variables in the ordered probit in Table 3 reveals that existence of a union in the firm affects managers' attitudes in a direction favourable to unions (though the coefficient is not significant). Age, on the other hand, appears to influence managers in the opposite direction and make them more hostile toward unions. This does not fit the proposition that it is a younger breed of managers that has led to an increase in management hostility towards unions<sup>2</sup>. Male managers are much more likely to be anti-union. Based on these results, we conclude that there are no major differences between the managers in the two countries.

2. This comment due to a personal communication from William Dickens.

### ***Workers' Attitudes***

Canadian workers are more conciliatory on the questions of the outcome of strikes and whether workers are justified in physically preventing strikebreakers from entering the workplace. Canadian workers are more likely to believe that corporations benefit owners at the expense of the rest of society. This is consistent with the idea that the more politically-based unionism of Canada filters down into a more aggressive attitude among workers on general class issues. As in the analysis of managers' attitudes, the results of the t-test and the ordered probit are qualitatively the same; however, with respect to the question of legally prohibiting strikebreakers, for the ordered probit, workers' attitudes across the two countries are statistically indistinguishable. The variable "union in firm" is highly significant in all the workers' equations: workers in a firm with a union consistently hold views that are more extreme than workers in non-unionized firms. Neither the dummy variable for manufacturing or government job is significant. Sectoral differences in jobs do not show up in different attitudes on these questions. Older workers are slightly more conciliatory.

### ***Managers' vs. Workers' Attitudes in Canada***

One might not expect to find a great deal of agreement between managers and workers, but in Canada there is one question, concerning the outcome of strikes, where workers and managers agree. This important agreement on who should win in the event of a strike could serve as a basis for labour relations that are less antagonistic. The union variable coefficient in the ordered probit again takes on a large negative value. This point estimate is three times that of the same coefficient for this question in the U.S. This may reflect an insider-outsider effect: that Canadian union members feel more secure in their bargaining position, both as compared to nonunion members in Canada and union workers in the U.S., and so feel less need to be conciliatory.

### ***Managers' vs. Workers' Attitudes in the U.S.***

According to the argument of business unionism, managers and workers will be closer to each other under the American system. One finds no agreement between managers and workers on any question examined. The existence of a union in the firm leads the individual to be more hostile but less so than in Canada. Managers and union members consistently disagree strongly on both the t-test and the ordered probit specifications. Since we showed earlier that Canadian and U.S. managers have similar attitudes, the adversarial relation expressed here seems to reflect U.S. worker hostility.

### *Regional Comparisons*

There is some evidence in the literature that a Canada-U.S. split of the data may hide important regional differences: specifically that attitudes in Quebec in Canada and the South in the U.S. may be very different than in the rest of the respective countries (see Baer, Grabb, and Johnston 1990, 1993). An estimate of union density in the private sector for 1982 in the U.S. is 10.1 percent in the South versus a national ratio of 19 percent (Troy and Sheflin 1985: Table 7.12). Less dramatically, Quebec's 1982 union density was 36.8 percent versus a national average of 32.9 percent (Meltz 1989: Table 3). Conversely, some recent literature attacks a Southern or Quebec "exceptionalism" in labour relations (see for the South, Zeiger 1991, and for Quebec, Boivin 1989). A lack of distinctiveness of Southern industrial relations would go against the provocative thesis of Reich (1981) that racism is institutionally perpetuated as a divide and conquer strategy to forestall unions and a more equitable income distribution.

We examine possible regional differences for our breakdown of managers/workers. As noted in the introduction, with the standard prior beliefs that the South in the U.S. is more hostile to unions than the U.S. average, while Quebec is less hostile to unions than the Canadian average, breaking things out by these regions will only lessen any differences found in managerial and worker hostility (for the comparison of differences in the "rest of" each country). It would be relevant if we had found strong U.S. hostility: then it might be argued that the results were just being driven by the South and Quebec, that they do not truly reflect nation-wide attitudinal differences. Since we find none to begin with, this section is really a separate exercise. Sample size becomes small for certain cells of the ordered probit specification with various missing values for right hand size variables so we only present the means tests in Table 4. We have means tests among managers and then among employees. We show results for the U.S. versus Canada-excluding the South and Quebec, within Canada-Quebec and non-Quebec, and within U.S.-the South and non-South.

Excluding the South and Quebec, managers across the two countries have no statistically significant differences, as in Table 1. For employees we still find U.S. workers are more aggressive on outcome of strike and physically prohibiting strikebreakers while Canadian workers believe that corporations benefit owners. The only difference from Table 1 is on the question of the legal ban where their attitudes now agree.

We find that the agreement in Canada on outcome of strike is more a phenomenon of Canadians outside of Quebec, with the Quebecois conforming to the stereotype of more radical attitudes. Looking at this by manager and employee, we find Quebec managers are *more* (though not

TABLE 4  
Regional Comparisons  
Means, Standard Deviations and T-Tests

Managers	U.S.		Canada		T-Test Non-South Non-Quebec	T-Test Non-Quebec Quebec	T-Test Non-South South
	Non-South	South	Non-Quebec	Quebec			
Win Strike	2.18 (.59)	2.15 (.48)	2.12 (.53)	2.23 (.63)	.91	-1.05	.45
Replac. Worker	2.99 (1.13)	2.66 (1.24)	2.86 (1.06)	2.37 (1.14)	.91	2.2*	1.6
Physi. Strike	3.38 (.96)	3.17 (.77)	3.41 (.89)	3.58 *.76)	-.30	-1.14	1.4
Corp. Benefit	2.79 (1.03)	2.52 (.08)	2.74 (.99)	2.58 (.97)	.35	.91	1.4
N	141	40	112	38			
Employees	U.S.		Canada		T-Test Non-South Non-Quebec	T-Test Non-Quebec Quebec	T-Test Non-South South
Non-South	South	Non-Quebec	Quebec				
Win Strike	1.96 (.58)	1.90 (.71)	2.11 (.65)	2.04 (.58)	-4.93*	1.89	1.11
Replac. Worker	2.29 (1.20)	2.45 (1.27)	2.26 (1.12)	1.97 (1.11)	.688	3.91*	-1.59
Physi. Strike	2.93 (1.11)	2.80 (1.17)	3.03 (1.02)	3.20 (1.01)	-2.01*	-2.42*	1.48
Corp. Benefit	2.34 (.94)	2.20 (.97)	2.20 (.95)	2.15 (.97)	3.13*	1.14*	2.01*
N	781	225	855	319			

T-Test: T-value of differences in means. Non-South refers to people who reside in the U.S. outside the South. Non-Quebec refers to Canadians who reside in Canada outside the province of Quebec.

\* p<.05

statistically so) aggressive than their other Canadian counterparts. Quebec workers are more aggressive than non-Quebec workers. The reality of the law in Quebec of legally prohibiting strikebreakers is perhaps reflected in the attitudes of both Quebec workers and managers being more inclined to favour such a ban.

On the last two questions, managers are not statistically significantly different. Quebec employees are, perhaps surprisingly, less likely to agree to physically obstructing strikebreakers than other Canadian workers. An obvious possible explanation is they prefer the legal ban and see that as the proper institutional structure.

Managers in the U.S. South are not statistically significantly more radical than non-South managers on any question. In fact the tendency in each case is for Southern managers to be more conciliatory, a finding that contradicts the conventional wisdom. Between employees in the two regions we find that the only statistically significant difference is on the question of whether corporations benefit owners at the expense of the rest of society where Southern workers are more inclined to agree. It is here, perhaps, that we are picking up some of the traditional Southern antagonism. Otherwise the patterns between the two regions seem the same.

### CONCLUSIONS

From these results we draw several conclusions. Arrayed on a continuum, we find Canadian and U.S. managers at one extreme, U.S. workers at the other, with Canadian workers marginally more in the middle than their U.S. counterparts. Our finding of agreement among U.S. and Canadian managers is direct evidence against the argument that decreasing U.S. unionization rates are attributable to U.S. managerial hostility.

Regional differences within the U.S. and Canada in this manager/worker breakdown are minimal. By these measures, regional "exceptionalism" views are not strongly supported. The most significant changes from the national comparison occur on the question of legally prohibiting strikebreakers for Canada. This is perhaps indicative of the importance of legal institutional factors in the shaping of attitudes.

Theories of business unionism which claim worker/manager attitudes will coincide are not supported by this analysis. Our finding of strong U.S. worker hostility to current employment practices might reflect a potential breeding ground for unions which does not appear in current density rates.

**■ REFERENCES**

- ANDERSON, John C., Morley GUNDERSON, and Allen PONAK, eds. 1989a. *Union-Management Relations in Canada*. 2nd ed. Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley Publishers.
- ANDERSON, John C., Morley GUNDERSON, and Allen PONAK. 1989b. "Back to the Future." *Union-Management Relations in Canada*. 2nd ed. J. C. Anderson, M. Gunderson, and A. Ponak, eds. Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley Publishers, 465-486.
- ADAMS, Roy J. 1989. "Industrial Relations Systems: Canada in Comparative Perspective." *Union-Management Relations in Canada*. 2nd ed. J. C. Anderson, M. Gunderson, and A. Ponak, eds. Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley Publishers, 437-464.
- BAER, Doug, Edward GRABB, and William A. JOHNSTON. 1990. "The Values of Canadians and Americans: A Critical Analysis and Reassessment." *Social Forces*, Vol. 68, No. 3, 693-713.
- BAER, Doug, Edward GRABB, and William A. JOHNSTON. 1993. "National Character, Regional Culture, and the Values of Canadians and Americans." *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol. 30, No. 1, 13-36.
- BLANCHFLOWER, David, and Richard FREEMAN. 1990. "Going Different Ways: Unionism in the U.S. and other Advanced OECD Countries." NBER Working Paper No. 3342.
- BOIVIN, Jean. 1989. "Union-Management Relations in Quebec." *Union-Management Relations in Canada*. 2nd ed. J. C. Anderson, M. Gunderson, and A. Ponak, eds. Don Mills, Ont.: Addison-Wesley Publishers, 407-436.
- BOWDEN, Gary. 1989. "Labour Unions in the Public Mind: The Canadian Case." *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol. 26, No. 5, 723-742.
- BOWDEN, Gary. 1990. "From Sociology to Theology: A Reply to Lipset." *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol. 27, No. 4, 536-539.
- BRUCE, Peter G. 1989. "Political Parties and Labor Legislation in Canada and the U.S." *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 115-142.
- CHAISSON, Gary, and Joseph B. ROSE. 1991. "Continental Divide: The Direction and Fate of North American Unions." *Advances in Industrial and Labor Relations*. Vol. 5. D. Sockell, D. Lewin, and D.B. Lipsky, eds. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 169-206.
- FREEMAN, Richard. 1985. "Why are Unions Faring Poorly in NLRB Representation Elections?" *Challenges and Choices Facing American Labor*. T. A. Kochan, ed. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 45-64.
- FREEMAN, Richard. 1989. "On the Divergence in Unionism among Developed Countries." NBER Working Paper No. 2817.
- JACOBY, Sanford. 1987. "American Exceptionalism Revisited: The Importance of Management." UCLA Working Papers No. 144.
- JACOBY, Sanford. 1991. "American Exceptionalism Revisited: The Importance of Management." *Master to Managers*. S. Jacoby, ed. New York, N.Y.: Columbia University Press.



- LIPSET, Seymour M. 1986. "North American Labor Movements: A Comparative Perspective." *Unions in Transition*. S. M. Lipset, ed. San Francisco, Calif.: ICS Press, 421-452.
- LIPSET, Seymour M. 1990. "Trade Unionism in Canada and the United States: A Reply to Bowden." *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, Vol. 27, No. 4, 531-535.
- LIPSIG-MUMMÉ, Carla. 1989. "Canadian and American Unions Respond to Economic Crises." *The Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 31, No. 1, 229-256.
- LOWE, Graham S., and Harvey KRAHN. 1989. "Recent Trends in Public Support for Unions in Canada." *Journal of Labor Research*, Vol. X, No. 4, 391-410.
- MADDALA, G. S. 1983. *Limited-Dependent and Qualitative Variables in Econometrics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MELTZ, Noah M. 1985. "Labor Movements in Canada and the U.S." *Challenges and Choices Facing American Labor*. T. A. Kochan, ed. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 315-334.
- MELTZ, Noah M. 1989. "Interstate vs. Interprovincial Differences in Union Density." *Industrial Relations*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 142-158.
- POOLE, Michael. 1986. *Industrial Relations: Origins and Patterns of National Diversity*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- REICH, Michael. 1981. *Racial Inequality: A Political-Economic Analysis*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- TROY, Leo, and Neil SHEFLIN. 1985. *Union Sourcebook*. West Orange, N.J.: IRDIS.
- TROY, Leo. 1990. "Is the United States Unique in The Decline of Private Sector Unionism?" *Journal of Labor Research*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 111-143.
- ULMAN, Lloyd. 1987. "Who Wants Collective Bargaining in the First Place?" Working Paper No. 1, Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Berkeley.
- WRIGHT, Erick Olin, Cynthia COSTELLO, David HACHEN, and Joey SPRAGUE. 1982. "The American Class Structure." *The American Sociological Review*, Vol. 47, No. 6, 709-726.
- WRIGHT, Erick Olin, et al. 1990. *Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness: Core and Country-Specific Files*. Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty, producer, 1989. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, distributor.
- ZIEGER, Robert H., ed. 1991. *Organized Labor in the Twentieth-Century South*. Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press.

---

## RÉSUMÉ

### Attitudes des travailleurs et des gestionnaires envers le syndicalisme aux États-Unis et au Canada

Les explications les plus courantes sur les causes de taux de densité syndicale différents entre les États-Unis et le Canada vont de l'hypothèse de

l'opinion publique de Lipset à l'hostilité croissante des gestionnaires américains en passant par les différences dans le droit du travail. Nous utilisons les données de l'enquête sur les attitudes des travailleurs et des gestionnaires dans ces deux pays tirées de Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness pour faire l'examen des diverses explications. Cette enquête comprend des questions visant à mesurer les opinions eu égard à différents aspects des relations entreprise-syndicat. Nous retenons quatre questions : qui des travailleurs ou de la direction devrait gagner à l'occasion d'une grève ? devrait-on prohiber l'embauche de briseurs de grève ? les travailleurs devraient-ils empêcher physiquement les briseurs de grève ? et les corporations bénéficient-elles indûment à leurs propriétaires aux dépens du reste de la société ? Cela nous permet de comparer les attitudes des travailleurs et des gestionnaires au Canada et aux États-Unis sur ces questions.

On a souvent conclu que c'est l'hostilité croissante des employeurs envers les syndicats qui expliquerait le taux beaucoup plus bas de syndicalisation aux États-Unis. Si cette hypothèse est correcte, on devrait alors retrouver des opinions anti-syndicales beaucoup plus fortes parmi les gestionnaires américains comparativement à leurs collègues canadiens. Si l'hypothèse de l'opinion publique de Lipset est juste, il devrait y avoir une plus grande hostilité envers les syndicats dans la population américaine que chez les canadiens.

Nous utilisons deux tests statistiques pour comparer les attitudes : l'un est le test de différence simple dans les moyennes et l'autre, une spécification probit ordonnée qui inclut des contrôles des différentes caractéristiques individuelles. Nous effectuons alors les comparaisons suivantes : les gestionnaires des deux pays, les travailleurs des deux pays, gestionnaires-travailleurs aux États-Unis et gestionnaires-travailleurs au Canada.

Nous observons que les attitudes des gestionnaires dans les deux pays ne présentent pas de différences. Cela suggère que l'hostilité croissante des employeurs américains n'explique pas les taux de syndicalisation différents dans les deux pays. Les travailleurs américains sont ici les plus militants. Les travailleurs canadiens se retrouvent au centre entre les gestionnaires et les travailleurs américains. Certains suggèrent qu'il peut à ce sujet y avoir d'importantes différences régionales, nous avons répété notre analyse en traitant le sud des États-Unis et le Québec séparément. Nous n'avons trouvé que de minimes différences entre ces deux régions.