

Chapter 4: Quebecois Nationalism

Social Studies 20-1

Ms.Gill

Consider This...

Is there a range of collective consciousness among people in Canada?

To what extent should nation be the foundation of identity?

Collective Consciousness: a group or nation may share a collective consciousness when its members collectively share similar values, beliefs, and internalized feelings based on their shared experiences. A collective consciousness can develop when the people of a nation focus on their identity as a group rather than on their identities as individuals



Quebecois Nationalism

To what extent do our histories shape our collective consciousness?

Within Canada, there are diverse understandings of the meaning of nation. Among Canadians, there may be one common national identity or a range of understandings of who we are. Historically, the collective consciousness of the Québécois in Canada has developed since the first French settlements in Canada.



Quebecois

Who are the Québécois? Historically, people in Canada who spoke French called themselves *Canadien* or *Canadien-français*. This distinguished the people of New France from those of France.

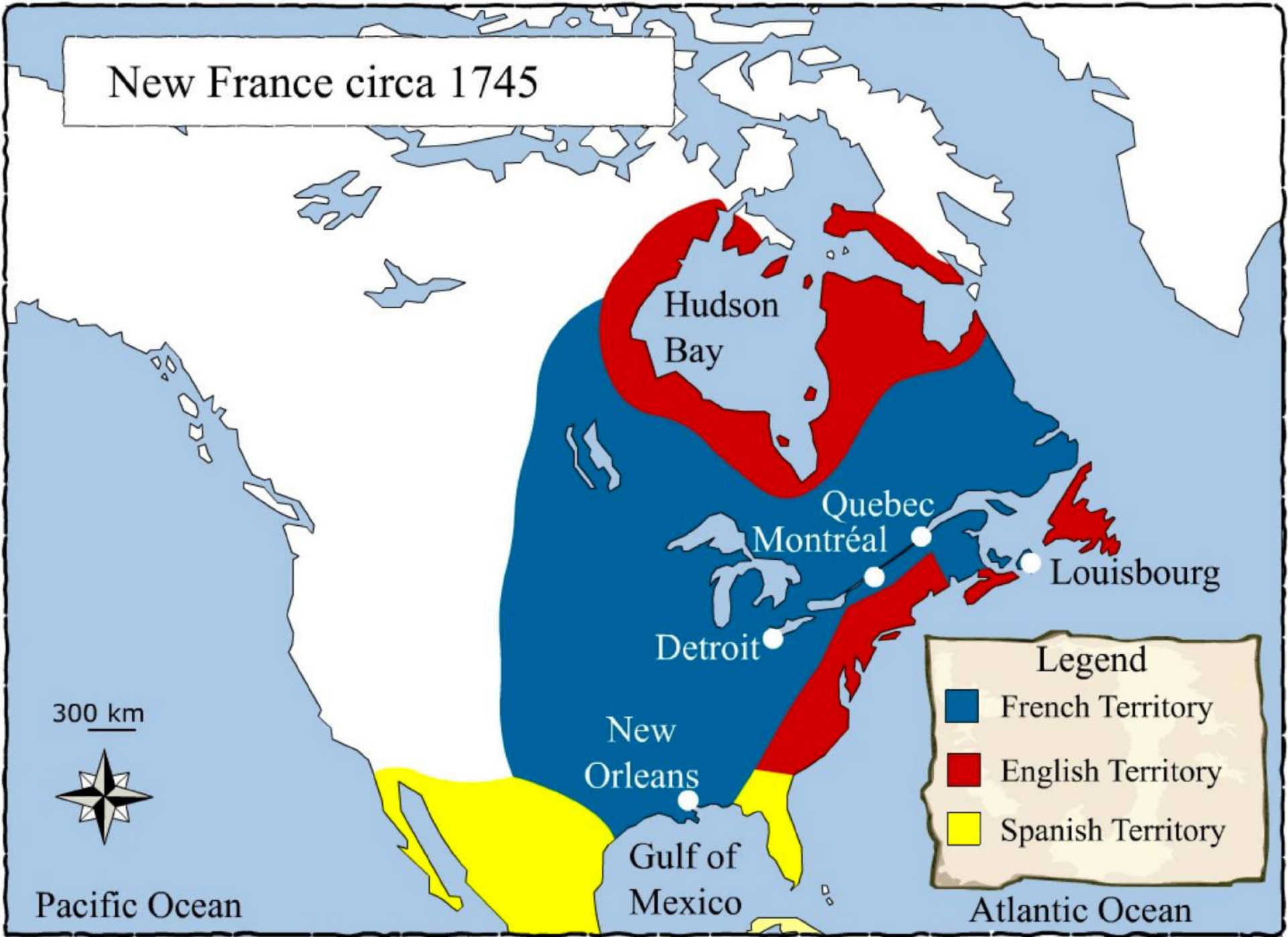
Being *Canadien* developed as a shared experience based on life in New France. Francophone identity as Québécois emerged in the 20th century, as both a political and a linguistic distinction from the Anglophone population in Canada and from Francophones elsewhere in Canada.





**What observations
can you make from
this map?**

New France circa 1745



300 km



Pacific Ocean

New Orleans

Gulf of Mexico

Detroit

Montréal

Hudson Bay

Québec

Louisbourg

Legend

French Territory

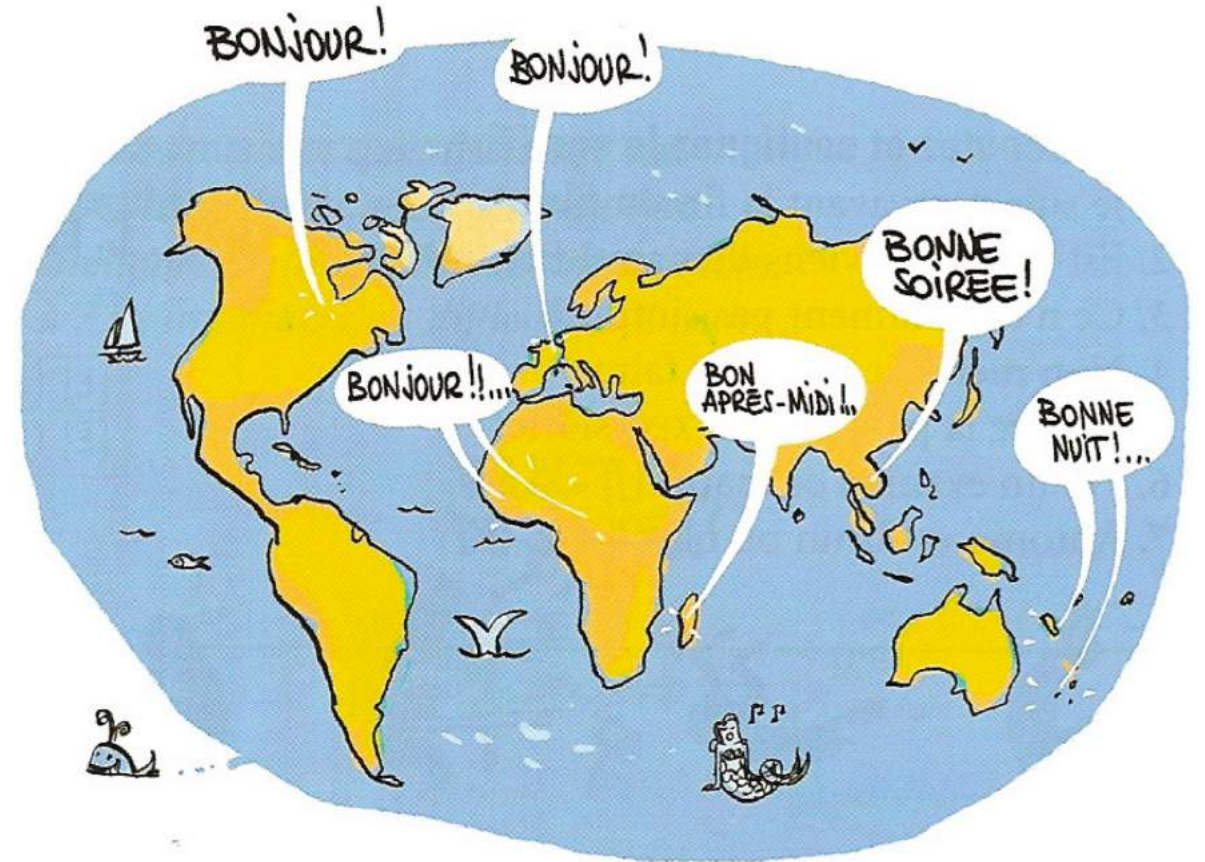
English Territory

Spanish Territory

Atlantic Ocean

Fast Facts

Francophone is a term that refers to people whose first language is French. As Francophones in Québec began to use the term *Québécois* to refer to themselves in the latter half of the 20th century, the terms *Franco-Albertan*, *Fransaskois* (from Saskatchewan), and *Franco-Columbien* (from British Columbia) emerged. They became terms that reflect the identity of some Francophones outside of Québec.



What does this graphic tell you about Francophone identity?



Quebec's History

Until the last several decades of the 20th century, Québec's economy was largely in the hands of the province's English-speaking population. To provide employment for Québec's growing population in the first half of the 20th century, the provincial government had encouraged businesses owned by English-Canadians and Americans to establish themselves in Québec.

This policy provided the opportunity for Anglophones to dominate Québec business, even though they formed a minority of the province's population. By the 1960s, studies showed that the average incomes of Francophone Québécois were lower than the average incomes of Anglophones in the province, and that Francophones' job opportunities and earnings were better if they were able to work in English.

The Quiet Revolution

This situation led to a generation of Francophones in Québec wanting greater economic opportunities and political control in their own province.

Using the campaign slogan *“Maîtres chez nous”* (“Masters in our own house”), the liberal government of Jean Lesage was elected in 1960, and introduced a series of reforms in a period known as la Révolution tranquille (“the Quiet Revolution”).



The Quiet Revolution

The reforms introduced during the Quiet Revolution were instrumental in reversing the economic and political leadership of Québec, and in turning control of the economy over to French speaking citizens of Québec. Among the reforms introduced were

- the modernization of Québec's industries
- the nationalization of the hydroelectric industry
- reforms to the education system
- the establishment of social programs and public institutions to offer services in French

Feelings of nationalism in Québec shifted during the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s. Premier Jean Lesage's reforms not only shaped Québécois collective identity, they also reduced the influence of Anglophone identity in Québec.

Quebecois Identity

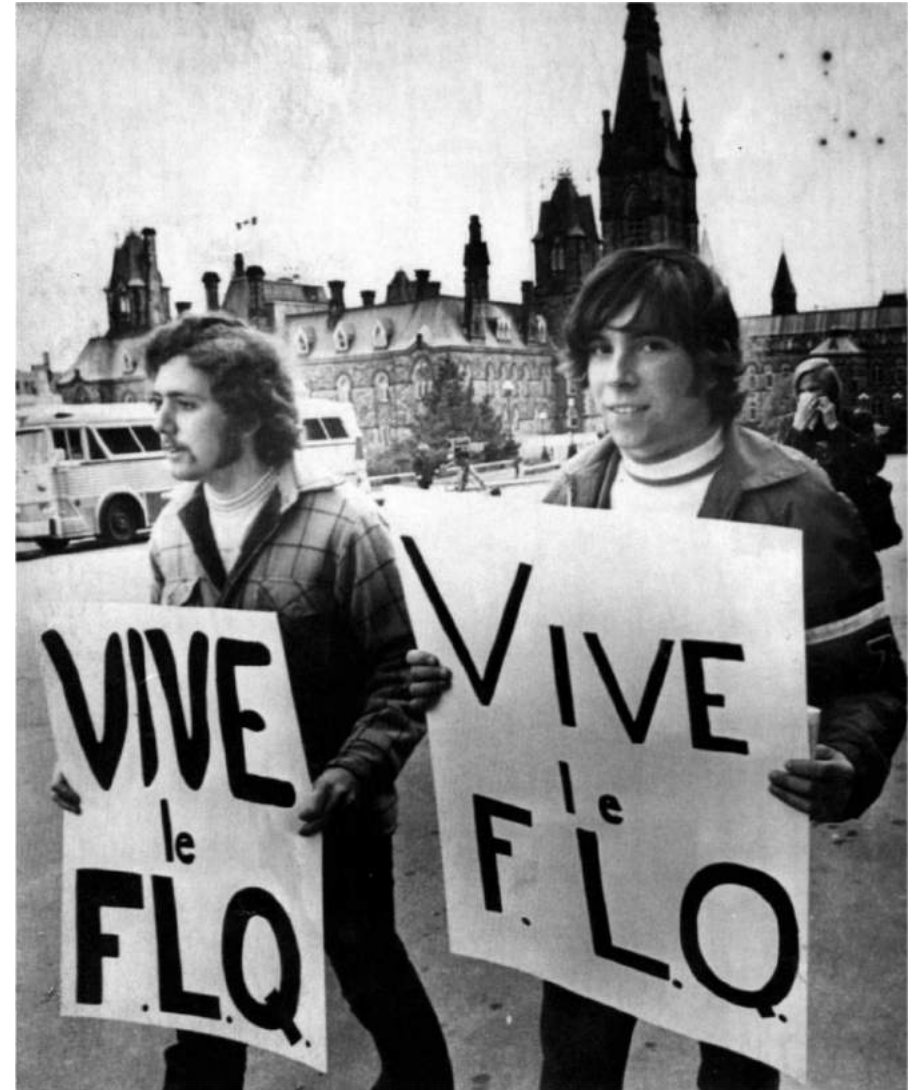
During this time, the term *Québécois* became popular for distinguishing the Francophones of Québec from Francophones elsewhere. Lesage's political, social, and economic reforms helped create a generation of young and educated Francophones who strongly identified themselves as Québécois.

The government's promotion of a Québec for and led by Francophones became widely accepted by the Québécois. **During this time, many ideas regarding the necessity for constitutional change and regarding Québec's status in Canada were discussed. These ideas included co-operative federalism, special status, sovereignty-association, and complete separation.**



The FLQ

The **Front de libération du Québec (FLQ)**, a radical group, was formed to spark change through protest and violence. The October 1970 kidnappings and murder by one radical faction of this group led the government of Canada to invoke the **War Measures Act**, in order to give the government the power to suppress the FLQ.



The War Measures Act

The War Measures Act was a federal statute adopted by Parliament in 1914, after the outbreak of the First World War. It gave broad powers to the Canadian government to maintain security and order during war or insurrection.

The only use of the War Measures Act in a domestic crisis occurred in October and November 1970, when a state of "apprehended insurrection" was declared to exist in Quebec. Emergency regulations were proclaimed in response to two kidnappings by the terrorist group, The FLQ. The FLQ kidnapped British trade commissioner James Cross, and kidnapped and murdered Quebec Labour Minister Pierre Laporte. As authorities grappled with the crisis, more than 450 people were detained under the powers of the Act; most were later released without the laying or hearing of charges.

The suspension of civil liberties in Quebec was politically controversial. Why do you think this is?

The War Measures Act

The War Measures Act resulted in the suspension of citizens' legal rights, and the arrest and detention of over 400 Québécois without any charges being laid against them. This event created a division between some Québécois and the rest of Canada about the future of Québec and the Francophone Québécois in Canada.



Bilingualism and Biculturalism

During Québec's Quiet Revolution, in 1963, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson set up the Royal Commission on **Bilingualism and Biculturalism** to report on ways to respond to the growing separatist movement in Québec.

A major recommendation of the report six years later was that French and English be declared the official languages of the Parliament of Canada, of the federal courts, and of the federal government. The work of this commission led to the development of **the Official Languages Act**.

Creation of the Charter

The next prime minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, responded to the sense of Francophone isolation with the Official Languages Act of 1969 and, later, the repatriation of Canada's Constitution in 1982, enshrining the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. From his point of view, these two actions would guarantee a future for Francophone Québécois in a Canadian federation where their language and culture would be protected by law.

An Independent Quebec?

During this period, a political party supporting an independent Québec emerged, and in 1976 was elected as Québec's provincial government. Led by René Lévesque, the Parti Québécois offered **sovereignty-association (combining political autonomy and economic association)** with Canada as a means to achieve **an independent nation-state for the Québécois**.

As premier of Québec, Lévesque presented a referendum question in 1980 asking the people of Québec whether his government should pursue sovereignty-association. The result—in which roughly 60 per cent of Québec voters voted against this move toward independence—left many Québécois disappointed about the future of a separate nation-state.

Another Referendum

The results of a 1995 Québec referendum reflected strong support for Québec sovereignty. This referendum posed the following question:

Do you agree that Québec should become sovereign, after having made a formal offer to Canada for a new economic and political partnership, within the scope of the bill respecting the future of Québec and of the agreement signed on June 12, 1995?

In this vote, 50.58 per cent of Quebeckers voted against sovereignty, while 49.42 per cent voted in favor, resulting in a narrow rejection sovereignty-association.



This shows the question on the ballot in Québec's 1995 sovereignty referendum. Subsequently, in 2000, Canada's Parliament passed the Clarity Act, which authorizes the House of Commons to determine the clarity of a referendum question on the secession of a province.

Quebecois Nationalism Today

In 2014, came the *Parti Québécois's* proposed "**Charter of Values,**" which was explicit in its attempt to ban religious symbols of all sorts in the public service, except for those associated with "elements of Quebec's heritage."

The message, implicit in these examples and others is clear: non-white, non-Catholic "others" must assimilate into the Québecois identity

Allowed



Not allowed



Quebecois Nationalism Today

In 2019, **Bill 21** was one of the first laws passed by the government of Quebec premier François Legault, the founding leader of the popular, centre-right Coalition Action Démocratique (CAQ) party. It sets out a long list of government-affiliated jobs—certain members of the legislature, police, prosecutors, teachers and others—whose holders are henceforth banned from wearing “religious symbols” on the job.

What does this tell you about values in our Canadian identity? Do you believe this violates Charter Rights?

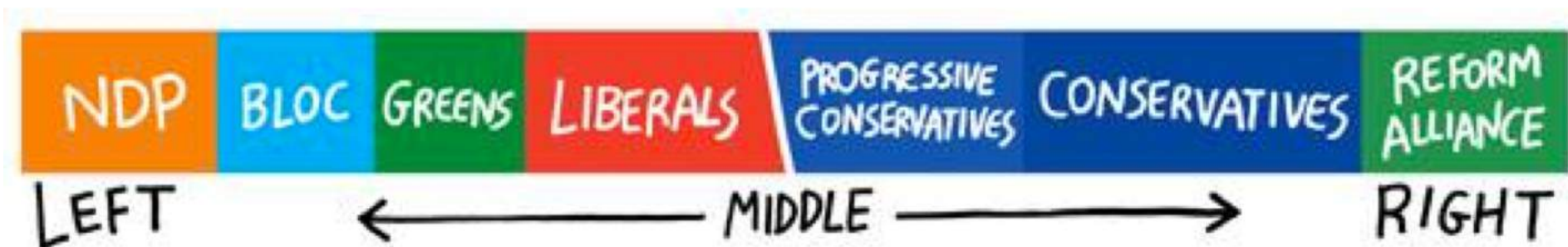


Quebecois Nationalism Today

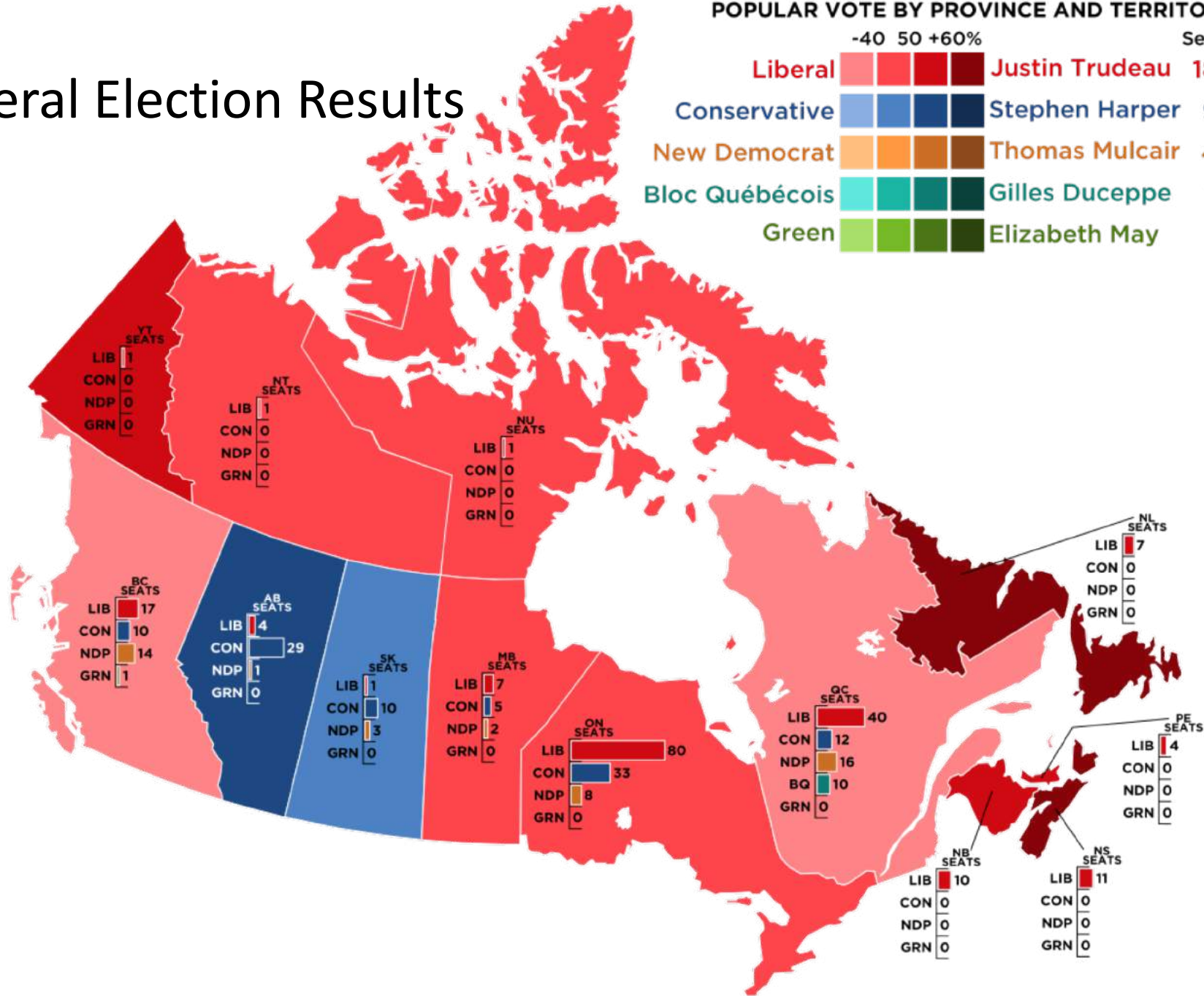
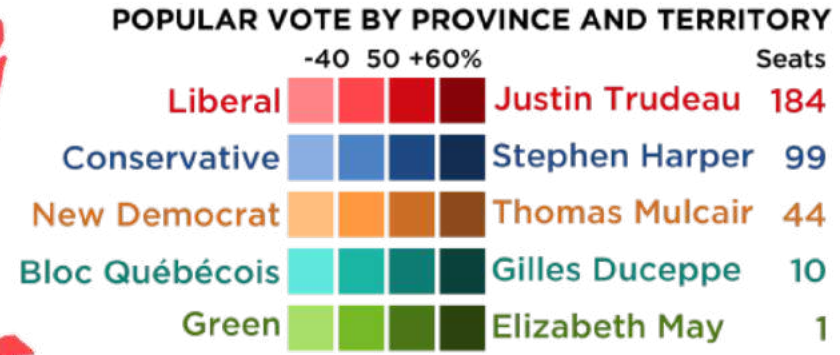
Bloc Québécois: a federal political party in Canada devoted to Quebec nationalism and the promotion of Quebec sovereignty



The Bloc Québécois platform includes: Quebec Nationalism, Quebec Sovereignty and Social Democracy. They are also Pro, Environmentalist, same sex marriage, abortion rights, legalization of assisted suicide and finally the abolition of the Canadian Senate.



2015 Federal Election Results



2019 Federal Election Results

