A. Henderson, “‘Small Worlds’ as Predictors of General Political Attitudes,” *Regional and Federal Studies* 20:4-5 (October-December 2010)

**Overview:**

Individuals hold varying levels of trust and efficacy for provincial and federal governments – using a novel question from the 1984 CES, paper “makes clear that state and sub-state trust and efficacy exert an independent impact on general political attitudes.” Investigates the ability of regions to provide “small world” political cultures

**Political culture:** a property of the aggregate – so political attitudes and behaviours are merely indicators of a culture. Within a single state – might find attitudes/behaviours of neighbouring sub-states appear very different, though demographic and economic characteristics appear similar.

* State-centered political culture research presents itself in 2 ways
  + Attitudes to the state are used as proxy for general political attitudes
  + Attitudes to the state are used to predict general political attitudes
* Henderson interested in demonstrating that sub-state unites have the capacity to generate distinct political cultures that serve as rival predictors for general attitudes
* Results show that socio-economic variables by themselves account for very little variation in the dependent variable (trust and efficacy) – though gender, university education, and income sig. predictors.
* 2 key findings:
  + Indicators of provincial and federal political culture exert an independent impact on generalized political attitudes (as measured by support for gov’t or state intervention)
  + Variables probing provincial political culture do a far better job of explaining general attitudes than do variables probing federal political culture

**Problems with the analysis:**

* Not sure that the dependent variables are really good indicators of political culture – trust and efficacy?? Really?
* Issues with model – though “statistically significant” the range of difference in these measures is like 0.1-0.15. VERY SMALL