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AUSTRALIAN ELECTION 2022

Cover 41/4, Design: Debra Livingston

For this ‘Australian Election 2022’ issue of Social Alternatives, the editor Tim Battin requested that the outgoing Prime Minister of Australia, Scott Morrison, and the elected incoming Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, be a part of the front cover design. As the designer, this request created some challenges for me particularly as for copyright reasons I could not just source images from the web.

To overcome this problem, I subscribed to Midjourney AI which uses artificial intelligence to produce text prompt artworks. There is a lot of controversy from artists over copyright abuse by many AI image enerators. However, this mode of image generation does assist in situations such as mine for the creation of an original image. What the bot does is search billions of photographs and puts together what you have described in your text prompt. For instance, using the text promt ‘HD-Ultra realistic’ can create a light cartoon style. I applied this, and accordingly, the images of Morrison and Albanese on the front cover are not realistic representations but rather a characterisation of their personalities.

I started Midjourney with a 3-hour free subscription, but ended up subscribing for a year which allows the basic subscriber to use 3.3 hours per month. This is not a lot of time especially considering the time it takes for the many iterations to get the nearest possible image that is acceptable.

Understanding AI bot’s idiosyncrasies is a whole new experience in itself. For instance, the request to provide a plain teal (HEX #008080) background proved problematic as the AI kept producing a different background colour for each iteration.

Also, there was a plethora of other small errors in the iterations. For instance, in one iteration Albanese was presented as having two rings on his fingers and having five fingers: Albanese does not wear any rings and his hand has the more usual four fingers and a thumb.

I finally put the front cover design together by firstly creating the past and present prime ministers as separate iterations upon a ‘white’ background – hallelujah the bot understood white! I then downloaded those AI generated images, using Photoshop AI software to do the final selections and corrections for placement in the design. For the background I have used a subtle colour change from teal to green across the cover, to signify the rise of the Green Party and the independent Teal candidates.

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Social Alternatives
Social Alternatives is an independent, quarterly refereed journal which aims to promote public debate, commentary and dialogue about contemporary social, political, economic and environmental issues.

Social Alternatives analyses, critiques and reviews contemporary social issues and problems. The journal seeks to generate insight, knowledge and understanding of our contemporary circumstances in order to determine local, national and global implications. We are committed to the principles of social justice and to creating spaces of dialogue intended to stimulate social alternatives to current conditions. *Social Alternatives* values the capacity of intellectual and artistic endeavour to prompt imaginative solutions and alternatives and publishes refereed articles, review essays, commentaries and book reviews as well as short stories, poems, images and cartoons.

The journal has grappled with matters of contemporary concern for four decades, publishing articles and themed issues on topics such as peace and conflict, racism, Indigenous rights, social justice, human rights, inequality and the environment. Please show your support by subscribing to the journal. For other enquiries please contact a member of the Editorial Collective.

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- copyright release form
- title page listing contributing authors, contact details, affiliation and short bio of approximately 80 words
- abstract should be a maximum of 150 words
- three - five keywords.

Please use Australian/English spelling and follow Harvard referencing. Submit tables, graphs, pictures and diagrams on separate pages. Remove in-text references identifying authors and replace with [name removed for the review process].

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THEME FOR THIS ISSUE: *Australian Election 2022*

EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

The Electorate Steps Left, the ALP Steps Right: An overview of the Australian 2022 federal election

TIM BATTIN

Uniqueness of the 2022 election

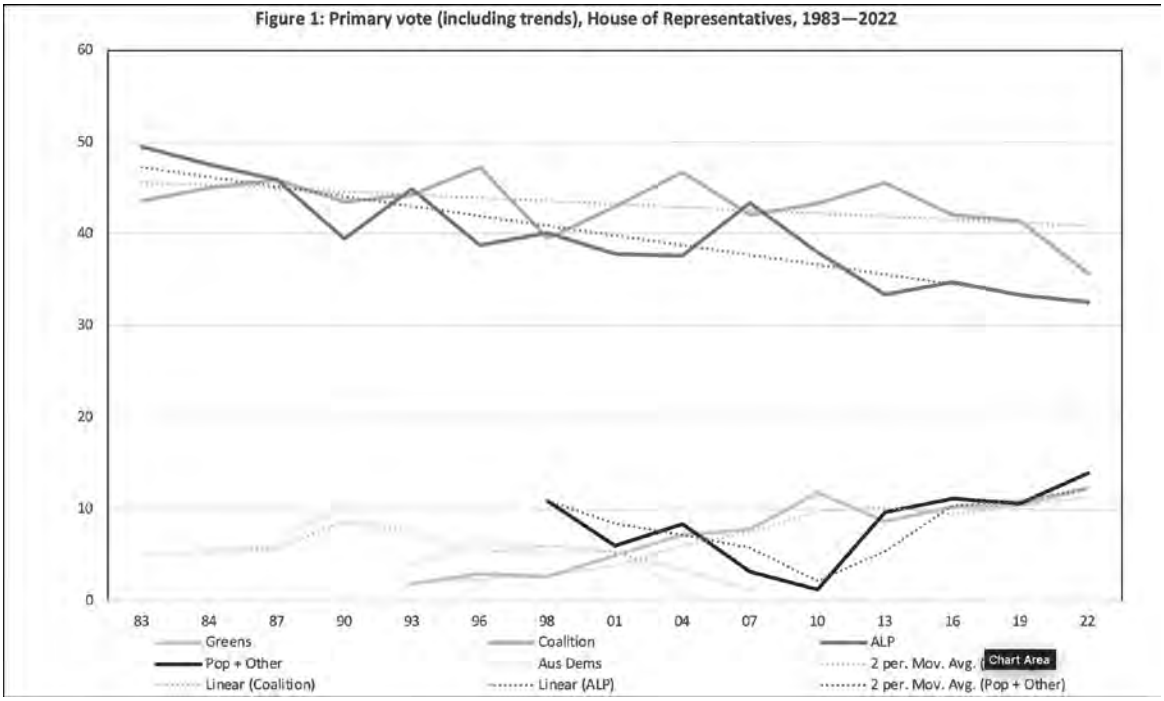
The 2022 Australian federal election was marked by the public's insistence on change. At the most obvious level, this entailed a demand that there be a change of government. But in several ways the election marks a clear difference from other change-of-government elections. For instance, 2022 saw a challenge to the conventional wisdom that when the Australian public changes the government, it does so on a large scale. In an electoral system that favours major parties in a two-party alignment, the remarkable feature of 2022 is that the 5.74 per cent swing of the primary vote away from the Liberal and National Party Coalition — a swing normally enough for an emphatic victory in terms of seats — saw the Australian Labor Party (ALP) clamber to a bare majority. It garnered just short of a third of the primary vote, lower than the combined ALP-and-'Lang-Labor' vote of either the 1931 or 1934 election, and the lowest vote of any party forming a government in the history of the Federation. Notwithstanding the degree of strategic voting by Labor supporters in key seats directing their first preferences elsewhere, the ALP's low primary vote has been endemic to six of the last seven elections and underpins a trend that was set in train from the 1980s.

Meanwhile the rise of the greenish-blue 'teal' independents in former blue-ribbon Liberal seats filled a vacuum created by the Coalition's long-term rejection of climate science, the persistent refusal to establish a federal public integrity (or anti-corruption) body, and its hostility to gender equality and matters concerning the treatment of minorities more generally. In capturing six formerly safe Liberal seats in the House of Representatives — all of them by women — the teals gained financial help to sustain their already healthy grassroots campaign. Amy Nethery's analysis in this special issue points to how the teals obtained funding from Climate 200, an organisation of fledgling status in 2019, which by 2022 was able to ensure that the branch supporters of incumbent Liberals were outrun by teal foot soldiers.

In that context, the success of the Greens, seen in the party's snatching of three metropolitan Brisbane seats — one formerly marginal Labor seat (Griffith), one marginal Liberal seat (Brisbane), and one fairly safe Liberal seat (Ryan) — together with the close-run contests the party mounted elsewhere, was also remarkable given the lack of access the Greens had to Climate 200 funds and ready-made constituencies. Narelle Miragliotta and Alasdair McCallum's analysis shows how two-party-preferred (2PP) majorities were built by the Greens in three seats and the conditions in which twelve Greens were elected to the Senate, one short of holding the balance of power. There seems no exaggeration in claiming the progressive move of the 2022 election reverberated across the electorate: no incumbent lost to someone from his or her right flank. It built on a swing away from the Liberal Party to the ALP and the Greens in affluent seats in 2019. Tellingly, in 2022 the swing *already discernible in 2019* bypassed the ALP to draw further away to the Greens and the teals. And as the electorate shifted left in 2022, the Coalition ranks have reconfigured to leave the Liberal Party, for the first time since its formation, with a minority of the Coalition's seats in the House of Representatives — 27 of 58, and the Coalition 19 short of a majority. The 2022 election is not so much a story of an ALP victory as it is the vanquishing of the Liberal Party. In Graham Maddox's contribution to this special issue, we see the extraordinary nature of Scott Morrison's religion and politics — and we might well wonder how deep the malaise of Australian politics is that delivered such a set of conditions.

That one third of Australian voters turned away from the major parties in casting their primary vote, and yet two thirds voted for a change of government, makes the 2022 election like no other since the establishment of the two-party alignment in 1910. In 2019 a gender gap was already significant — a 10-percentage-point gap in male-to-female support for the Liberal Party and a 6-percentage-point variance in female-to-male support for the Greens (Cameron and McAllister 2019) — and although 2022 saw the gap close to 38:32 in the case of male-to-female support for the Coalition, the gap opened further in female support for the ALP and the Greens, and male support for 'other' (Cameron et al. 2022: 21). All these outcomes accompanied the fact that the parliament elected in 2022 comprises much cultural diversity, including, crucially, 11 Indigenous Australians, a number finally proportional to the population of First Nations peoples, 234 years after dispossession.

In this special issue of *Social Alternatives*, we explore the theme of the electoral and political circumstances



'Pop + Other' = Populist parties (Hanson/One Nation, Palmer/UAP, & Katter) combined with Other (excluding independents). **Source: Australian Electoral Commission**

of the 2022 election and what these circumstances may suggest about the foreseeable future. The proper context of such analysis, of course, requires consideration of the degree of continuity as well. Elections are not everything, and the shift of power that the election suggests may be illusory, to a greater or lesser extent, depending on wider and deeper political conditions and the preparedness of political actors to shape those conditions.

What is the likely stance of the ALP government?

To take the most obvious determinant of what the election might mean in terms of change, a nominal social-democratic party has been elected to government at a time when many social-democratic parties, including the ALP, have largely discarded social democracy. Normally such a statement in an academic journal would be accompanied by substantial argument. Yet several scholars have attested, first, to a retreat of social democracy (Glyn 2001) and, more recently, to the existence of a post social-democratic era (Judt 2010; Mair 2013; Blyth 2015; Manwaring and Kennedy 2018; Manwaring 2021; Sassoon 2021; Moschonas 2022), while others have written specifically about the ALP in such terms (see for example Scott 2000; Quiggin 2001; Johnson 2011, 2018, 2019; Battin 2017). What a post-social-democratic landscape means for Australian politics is an important question both in terms of understanding the 2022 election results and in determining reasonable suppositions about the foreseeable future of the Australian polity.

First, the term 'post social democracy' is defined, and associated concepts are outlined. Post social democracy is the condition in which (one-time) major political parties whose shared history has been concerned with advancing social democracy have come to accept the main tenets of neoliberalism, and, consciously or not, adopted a stance substantially inconsistent with (and in some instances hostile to) the aims of social democracy. Broadly, social democracy is an emancipatory project aiming to extend democracy from the political sphere to the social and economic realm by achieving greater equality, increasingly subjecting markets to socially determined outcomes, building distributive and redistributive institutions, and generally intervening in the economy to decommodify production and exchange as much as possible. Conversely, for the purposes of this discussion, neoliberalism may be defined as a political project to halt or reverse the historical accomplishments made by citizens and workers (Harvey 2005) occurring under the broad rubric of social democracy.

To the extent that (declared) proponents of neoliberalism achieve success in halting or reversing social democratic initiatives, they rely on, at least in part, the timidity of nominally social democratic political agents. The hegemony of neoliberal dictates is obviously a fundamental reason for the persistence of neoliberal policies. Less obvious, but more important, is the extent to which a party such as the ALP propagates ideas that are inimical to social democracy.

One reliable basis for predicting how the Albanese ALP government will approach its term in office may well be how the parliamentary ALP approached the 2022

election, especially in the context of its reaction to the shock result of 2019; another reasonable predictive basis is the ALP's record when last in government (2007 to 2013), but, for reasons of space, the latter will only be touched on here (for a discussion, see Battin 2017). Worth analysing at some length is how the ALP frames its stance towards power in the context of neoliberalism, or how it allows its stance to be framed.

The ALP's preference for minimal policy differentiation in 2022

The ALP's justification for its low differentiation of policy, or so-called 'small-target' stance, in 2022 was based generally on claims about past elections and, specifically, its reading of voters' preferences at the 2019 election. With regard to using past elections as justification, proponents of the small-target approach associated high policy exposure and differentiation with electoral loss, but in fact were reduced to citing 2019 as the sole example of such association. While in opposition, strategies of significant differentiation and detailed policy that met with a marked *increase* in the ALP vote (1969, 1972, 1980, 1983, and 1998) were ignored, along with small-target *failures* of the past (2001 and 2004), leaving 2007, insofar as the ALP almost matched expensive tax cuts, as needlessly small-target. 1983 saw a reasonably ambitious social democratic platform scaled back *after* the election. And, contrary to re-written history, 2004 was an election of low policy differentiation — apart from the ALP's redistributive policy on schools funding (which, again contrary to re-written history, and as polls demonstrated, was supported by the public (Ashbolt 2006; Browne 2012).

Following 2019, in terms of the electorate's opinion of the unpopular ALP leader (scoring him 4 out of 10, the second lowest up to that point), and how its significance might be gauged once Bill Shorten was no longer leader, consideration of the implications was shut down by the sheer force of party officials' scapegoating the ALP's policies. In other words, what weight should have been given to Shorten's unpopularity as opposed to the ALP's 2019 policy suite was squashed as a question by conflating the two. And whether another Coalition campaign of lies could be effective in 2022 was never considered. In 2022 Scott Morrison's score of 3.6, the lowest on record, was a critical factor in the 2022 result. Martin Drum's commentary piece, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, draws our attention to the vital role of voters' perceptions of a leader's competence.

Coming back to the ALP, in the rare media critiques of Labor's small-target approach to the election (Carney 2022), criticism fell into categories of (i) mistaken history, where it was pointed out that clear policy differentiation brought electoral success for the ALP in the past; (ii) risk of self-defeat, where voters might decline to support a party not offering sufficient clarity about change; and/or (iii) a Pyrrhic victory, winning the election but without a mandate to govern beyond a restrictive sphere. Such criticisms were usually accompanied by the related observation that the ALP misinterpreted the result of 2019 as outright rejection of progressive policies (Gittins 2019) and that, erroneously, it was looking to extend its electoral prospects by making its policies more conservative. There is considerable merit in each of these criticisms, but an additional, more fundamental reason for the ALP's stance in the lead-up to the election of 2022 may not have been primarily *electoral* but *ideological*: the parliamentary party is presently so deeply imbued with neoliberal ideas that the claimed electoral constraints were not its principal reason for adopting the approach of minimising policy contest. In other words, although the ALP attempted to justify its stance towards the 2022 election largely in electoral terms — what was considered possible in Australia's set of electoral conditions, and from the vantage point of opposition — the 'small-target' tactic may be more accurately considered a cover for producing an ideological shift further away from social democratic possibility. (Put bluntly, the ALP's position bears some similarity to former British prime minister Tony Blair's comment in the 2015 British Labour Party leadership ballot that even if Labour could achieve electoral victory by undertaking to reverse the effects of neoliberalism, he 'wouldn't want it'.)

Depoliticisation as an interpretive device

Precisely knowing a political organisation's priority of motives is a difficult task, but we do have the official statements of the party organisation as a guide. After the 2019 loss, the ALP's review of the election campaign was remarkable for its politically insipid language:

> Labor should adopt the language of inclusion, recognising the contribution of small and large businesses to economic prosperity, and abandon derogatory references to "the big end of town". Labor's policy formulation should be guided by the national interest, avoiding any perception of capture by special interest groups (Emerson and Weatherill n.d.: 8).

To interpret this language and the approach the ALP took to the 2022 election, it is useful to utilise the concept of depoliticisation. Peter Burnham, credited with initiating debate about depoliticisation in the context of Blair's Labour in Britain, defines depoliticisation 'as a process whereby state managers may seek to place at one remove the politically contested character of governing and in so doing paradoxically enhance political control'

(Burnham 2001: 128). A broader definition, but one which is consistent with Burnham, is the attempt or the act of erasing or obscuring the political character of a decision or activity, when, for normatively stated reasons, it is desirable that its political character is retained and made explicit.

Depoliticisation — of discourse as much as in policymaking — was always a necessary tool of the neoliberal project, insofar as its proponents saw the task as presenting their propositions as incontestable. In terms of discourse, the concept of depoliticisation offers an understanding at the level of everyday, nonsensical language such as 'class warfare' or 'the politics of envy', directed at individuals and groups seeking to revive debate about distribution and redistribution, the terms of traditional politics. It can help to explain Albanese's coining of the term 'conflict fatigue', a signal that the government he leads will not seek to contest existing provisions if doing so will endanger electoral survival. Returning to the words of the ALP review cited above, we see that the implications of depoliticisation involve paradox, insofar as withdrawing from contestation over matters that are inherently political is itself a political act. To be fair to Emerson and Weatherill, their report contains more nuance than the above quote would indicate, pointing for instance to the belatedly announced and frenzied-spending aspects of the 2019 campaign. But the deeper political effect of their report was that the ALP would not redress the existing imbalance of power held by various groups; rather, depoliticisation results in an acquiescence to those groups advantaged by current arrangements.

Depoliticisation — again paradoxically — can also explain how the terms of historicopolitical debate are shaped. When Australia and comparable countries were debating the effect of neoliberal austerity policies in the wake of the global economic crisis, former Treasurer Wayne Swan attempted to repudiate the notion that the ALP under Hawke and Keating commenced the neoliberal project or that stances adopted by Hawke and Keating were mistaken:

> Paul Keating himself has wisely observed that '[neo]liberal economics has run into a dead end and has no answer to the contemporary malaise.' This is not, repeat not, a repudiation of the reforms he implemented as Treasurer and continued as Prime Minister. Rather, it is simply an acknowledgement that different challenges require different solutions (Swan 2017).

To make sense of Swan's position we require context and background. Keating's remark was not the only point of appraisal with which Swan was concerned. At the time of Swan's defence of the broad framework of economic policy from the 1980s to the mid-1990s and from 2007 to 2013 — what he calls 'laborism' — debate was heightened and some of that debate contained implicit or explicit criticism of the programmatic direction undertaken by Hawke and Keating, later not reversed by Rudd and Gillard. Rather than conceding the point that Labor's later stance in government (2007-2013) saw a variation of the neoliberalism that would otherwise have been administered under the Coalition — arguably, a significant variation (such as that seen in Australia's initial management of the global economic crisis) containing some progressive features (Battin 2017) — Swan changes the terms of debate by taking the focus away from social democratic criteria to create another category. In this context 'laborism' is not neoliberalism and cannot even be compared to neoliberalism; rather, laborism responds to the 'challenges' of the times. This subjectivist technique is needed to avoid reference to constants or objective measurement, such as acknowledging and addressing inequality (ironically, a matter he has addressed (Swan 2005)), the level of public provision versus privatisation, the significance of achieving and maintaining secure and appropriately remunerated employment through strong trade unions, or any of the other criteria that distinguish social democracy from neoliberalism. An examination based on these criteria would scarcely lead to an endorsement of policies followed from the days of Hawke and Keating.

One question is why so much effort is expended on developing arguments like Swan's. After all, Swan was addressing a *progressive* audience, which substantially accepts his adept handling of the crisis that unfolded in 2008, not to a right-wing audience. It cannot be, therefore, that he is seeking credit hitherto denied or that he is settling a score with the ALP's opponents to its right. The answer is that Swan (correctly) sees that there is a lot at stake in terms of the future, and the role of ideas in that future. The fight is intensely ideological because, at moments of fierce public debate about the direction of economic policy (e.g. Denniss 2018), such as the period of austerity in which Swan published his view, space opens up to change direction, and for the ALP to assume a role in being part of that change — or to close it down by attempting to recruit more progressives to the neoliberal framework. (Hawke and Keating's insistence that the ALP was somehow economically incompetent until they arrived was at the heart of its acquiescence to economic orthodoxy and the broader neoliberalism to follow (see Hawke's claims and admissions in Hawke 1994: 153, 174, 235).)

Other ALP figures play their role in this ideological design. Former ALP minister in the Rudd and Gillard

era, Craig Emerson, co-author of the ALP's review of the 2019 election and now writing for the *Australian Financial Review*, and who in the 1980s advised ALP ministers supporting the changes made by the Hawke government, has made a case for the 'consensus' style of government espoused by Albanese so that the ALP might come to be entrenched as 'the natural party of government' (Emerson 2022). The remarkable aspect of this appeal is that it all has been implored before (for a critique of which see Maddox 1989). It was claimed in the 1980s that Hawke's electoral success would set up the ALP for a long period of healthy majorities which would see Labor's policies accepted by the electorate and, over time, embedded. The consequence for the Coalition, it was asserted, was that it would be pushed so far to the right it would be unelectable. Instead, Labor's period in office, with the exception of the 1993 election, was associated with a decline both in its primary vote and 2PP support. Despite the re-introduction of universal health care, electoral reform, sex discrimination legislation, selected environmental protection, and some other worthy policies, the period was marked by a systemic departure from social democracy and the inauguration of neoliberalism (Stretton 1993; Langmore and Quiggin 1994; Battin 1997; Mathews and Grewal 1997). In terms of the political effect that Hawke and Keating's directional turn had on the Coalition, far from making it unelectable, it ushered in the Coalition's second-longest period of government (1996-2007) since the formation of the Liberal Party.

This background is relevant to contemporary circumstances because the official ALP view on the path to electoral victory in 2022, and what a victory would offer in the foreseeable future, bears resemblance to those views of the early-1980s ALP camarilla about the 'natural party of government'. But there is one fundamental difference between the settings faced by two ALP governments elected nearly 40 years apart. As much as Hawke's 'consensus' style can be and was criticised for the same reason many would now question Albanese's approach — that it signified retreat from political contest (against Coalition and business interests) over matters economic and industrial — Hawke and Keating at least had the benefit of extensive institutional strength.

By 1983, even though the ALP had governed federally for only one quarter of the previous 40 years, the achievements of the labour movement and social democracy were considerable. Although the 30-year period of full employment frayed at the edges in the mid-'70s recession and came under greater strain in the wake of the deeper recession of the early 1980s, the residual effects of secure, permanent employment with union-sanctioned conditions were still dominant. Fully half the working population belonged to a union. The personal income tax system was decidedly progressive, the public sector robust (although smaller than the OECD average), and public enterprises could lay claim to keeping the private sector honest through extra-market criteria. Manufacturing was still providing one in five jobs. Wages were growing and the working week was shrinking. The balance of capital–labour forces was such that the inflation of the period was hurting capital at least as much as it was workers. The share of income going to the richest one per cent was limited to 4.5 per cent. Whitlam had made the welfare system more universalist and relatively generous for an Anglosphere system, which, apart from the dismantling of Medibank, Fraser did not change in any significant way. The universities, funded by government to provide free tuition, were the envy of the English-speaking world.

Forty years later, except for Medicare, which in any case is much diminished, all these achievements lie in ruins. Albanese cannot operate from a position of social democratic strength. Where Hawke posed as the great conciliator, purporting to seek common ground, but in fact increasingly traded away the accomplishments of the past, Albanese is in no such place. It begs the question as to what benefit he thinks the business sector would discern in a truce with the ALP when organised labour has been defeated and citizens worn down. The answer may be, as Guy Rundle has suggested, that Albanese is functioning on a belief that business, or part of business, may prefer a more stable and consistently administered capitalism, delivered by the ALP, to the crony capitalism which is now the hallmark of the Coalition (Rundle 2022a, 2022b). (In this respect, the loop back to Mark Latham's position in 2003 and 2004 is complete (Latham 2003).) Individual business spokespeople acknowledge capitalism's problems, most importantly its labour and skills shortages (to be addressed by migration), low productivity growth, specific infrastructure needs and overall investment, and some appear to have made a judgement that Albanese's ALP is a better prospect in managing these problems. When the greater certainty the ALP promises to bring to climate policy is added to the mix, business' choice becomes even clearer.

One problem that will be faced by the ALP government, which will become increasingly apparent, is the extent to which it will be able to satisfy progressivist expectations at the same time as it does little or nothing to undo the neoliberal framework, or indeed as it strengthens that framework. The term 'progressivist' denotes a disposition to address specific instances of inequity as they arise within a neoliberal structure, rather than to challenge the logic of that structure, since that logic has been accepted. At the September 2022 'Jobs and Skills Summit' held by the Albanese government, for example, the government reiterated its existing election

pledge to increase substantially the wages in the female-dominated aged-care sector (on the proviso that the industrial tribunal hands down a decision to increase wages in the sector). The systemic causes of low wages in various sectors are not identified, let alone addressed. Within progressivism, specific instances of inequity will sometimes be attended to (aged-care and (perhaps) child-care wages), but the systemic drivers of inequality, and therefore the demands to which inequity gives rise, will remain in place. Satisfying electoral expectations within the ALP's progressivist constituency, then, seems enough of a problem without considering the stultifying effects of an eradicated political economy.

At the expense of losing supporters to its left, the ALP's approach to the 2022 election clearly was based on attracting support from those who had voted for the Coalition in 2019. But here is another critical point: it did so *not* by explaining more effectively the reasons for change — by shaping opinion rather than being shaped by it — or even by reordering the policy priorities of 2019, but by narrowing the possibility of change. In Albanese's own words:

> My job isn't to get people who are already going to vote for me, and who voted Labor in 2019, to get their pen and mark the one with more intensity. My job is to get [enough] people who didn't vote Labor, … an additional … million people, to do that (Albanese quoted in Bryant 2022).

That Albanese failed on his own terms — achieving a negative swing (0.76%) in the primary vote — is not so much the point. And an appeal to swinging voters is not itself necessarily to blame for excessively narrowing the potential for change, for such an appeal must be made in any election. The important point is that the minimisation of policy differentiation comes from the ALP's assumptions about swinging voters' preferences, which are assumptions about *some* swinging voters. Swinging voters do not make their choice through a coherent discernment of their interests or a consistent philosophical outlook. This suggests the group is neither an untapped reservoir of ready-made left votes nor a grasping and unmovable group to which a nominally left party must bow. Sorting out which views could be accommodated to a social democratic program can be done, and potential supporters engaged, although such a task would absorb an enormous amount of time of activists in a social movement. However, an engaged membership is exactly what the ALP has abandoned increasingly since the 1980s. (Even though democratic participation has been spurned by the ALP machine, members still deliver a more-than-deserved activism on rare occasions, as shown in the elections of 1993 and 2007, which featured community engagement and resulted in an increase of electoral reach.) Leaving aside the challenges facing a party that does not have the high level of member activism needed to identify and then engage voters outside a party's constituency, the overall rebuffing of those ALP members who do not support the Party's move to the right carries general problems of reduced motivation for day-to-day activism, even alienation and membership exit.

It is not as though empirical support does not exist for the sorts of contentions made here. Geoffrey Evans and James Tilley demonstrate how the decline of class voting in Britain is not the result of (an imagined) post-industrialised society and fluid class boundaries but rather the rightward shift of notionally left parties (Evans and Tilley 2011; 2012). Johannes Karreth and his colleagues have found empirical support for the idea that the rightward move of social democratic parties in the 1990s to cast the electoral net wider can meet with success, but only for a time (Karreth et al. 2012). After such a process, such parties are confronted with the problem they thought they faced before the policy shift, except the terms of policy debate have moved further from the grounds of social democratic potential.

Coming back to the immediacy of 2022, self-described 'progressive' media commentators (and other elites) encouraged the ALP, if it needed any encouragement at all, in adopting its so-called small-target approach, and, specifically, its accession to the Coalition's plan to eradicate the progressivity of the personal income tax scales. This, they said, was necessary for the ALP to win the election. The damage this would do to the revenue base and to social democratic possibility was either not considered or seen as unavoidable. Even though the strategy seems to be based on a belief that an insufficient number of voters can recognise that tax reduction for high-income groups has no economic logic, or that low- and middle-income voters are incapable of realising their own economic interests, or even recognising the obscenity of flat tax, one such progressivist now urges the Albanese government to consider seeking renewed electoral endorsement for (i) a tax system that at least restores any progressivity of the tax scales which will be lost after July 2024; and (ii) making the tax system generally more equitable, including adopting some of the ALP tax policies abandoned after 2019 (Lewis 2022). Such political dissonance characterises the neoliberal era.

The foreseeable future

The argument of this overview of the 2022 election is that the fundamental problem confronting the ALP is that it has no distinctive political economy to convey to its

own constituency or to the electorate at large. Several years of depoliticisation have reduced it to practising 'politics without a project', to borrow a phrase. In an important respect, when the ALP was last in government, this situation was disguised by the global economic crisis, which, although unanticipated, partly reshaped a diminished politics by presenting the Rudd government with something to do in political economy terms. That the ALP could not achieve ongoing electoral success is attributable — apart from leadership frivolity, which itself stemmed from self-doubt and having no agenda — to its lack of preparedness to depart from neoliberal strictures and more specifically the rush to tighten fiscal policy from 2010 onwards. It reverted to arguing on the terms of its opponents.

In the present parliament the ALP will take up matters that affect workers if they affect business as well, such as skills shortages and selected infrastructure projects. It will position itself in between the Greens and the Coalition on emission reduction targets. And it will select certain progressivist causes to pursue, that is, causes that are primarily socio-cultural, rather than those that pertain to economic inequality. Tod Moore's discussion of populism in this volume underscores the importance of this point. (Whether the ALP has given sufficient thought to how parties of the right tend to benefit when the focus is primarily on cultural concerns (Spies 2013) seems as remote as ever.) Where economic or industrial inequity is recognised, it will be addressed on occasion but confined to an issue-by-issue basis, on gender equity for example. Decisions about policy differentiation will increasingly be based on (perceived) electoral expedience rather than principled representation. This is not to suggest that, on occasion, there will not be ground-breaking initiatives sponsored by the ALP government. As Thomas Mayor outlines in the interview about the Indigenous Voice to Parliament (this volume), there are times when a socio-cultural matter is of such consequence that its social justice implications are profound.

What the ALP's fundamental direction — progressivist but at the same time neoliberal — means for its prospects at the next election, therefore, depends even more than usual on how other political actors respond to it. To spell this out, the ALP seems unlikely to alter its course, and so if the Greens, for example, capitalise on Labor's weakness and win seats such as Richmond in NSW and Wills in Victoria, the ALP would already be looking at losing its majority. If the Coalition remains on its present path, as seems likely, but adopts a more nuanced stance on China, it may win back seats such as Tangney and Bennelong. Xiang Gao's contribution to this special issue highlights the importance, and the unusual circumstances, of the Chinese-Australian vote in 2022. Two or three seats with high numbers of Chinese Australians coming back to the Coalition at the next election is a long way short of a Coalition majority, but, other things being equal, it would pull the ALP into minority government.

It has been well beyond the scope of this overview to examine comprehensively the problems of social democracy, a task performed by others (Johnson 2019; Manwaring 2021). Our task has been focused on the features of the 2022 election — many of them sanguine — in the gloomy context of social democracy's crisis and the ALP's apparent refusal to develop a political economic approach to governing. That neoliberalism is disintegrating at the level of policy, but is maintained at the level of ideology, is at the crux of the malaise of the Australian polity.

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Portraiture

Three portraits in a hallway. *Cat on a Windy Day*,
a small rusty cat attacking whatever
the dry leaves hold. How quickly things go:
Cat on a Slab at the Vet's, the years our kids
spent mewling and purring till we bought them
a kitten. After they'd grown and gone out into the night

of separate lives, they'd come back to us
when cash and kindness dwindled, talk absently,
searching about for the cat. She remembered them,
it seemed, as one thinks of a favourite film
or the morning after love. Now she's a cross
made from twigs. Our son's in London, daughter Melbourne.

Going to their rooms, I linger among the scents
that remain there, the television yowling
down the hall. I wander to the kitchen, look out
into the yard, where the neighbours' cats hiss and snarl
over empty ground. Wind scratches at the clouds,
scrambles through leaves. *Man Alone at a Window, Rain Gathering.*

JOHN FOULCHER

Poetry Authors

John Foulcher has published twelve volumes of poetry, the most recent being *Dancing with Stephen Hawking* (Pitt Street Poetry 2021).

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Juan Garrido-Salgado migrated to Australia from Chile in 1990, fleeing the regime that burned his poetry and imprisoned and tortured him for his political activism. He has published eight books of poetry and his work has been widely translated. He has also translated into Spanish works by several leading Australian and Aboriginal poets, including five Aboriginal poets for the anthology *Espejo de Tierra/ Earth Mirror* (2008). With Steve Brock and Sergio Holas, Garrido-Salgado also translated into English *The Trilingual Mapuche Poetry Anthology*.

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miraculously keeping Z alive

i saw Scott Morrison in a Footscray pool hall
miraculously teeing off
the white ball hurtling into a whole head of cabbage
big and green like a skull on the green table

it was his game to win
he was squashing the competition
a friend of ours we only knew as Z
he was smashing the white ball
deftly into the headlike vegetable
forming divots and creating a great thwack

Maria Tumarkin was driving a minivan and honked
Morrison and Z were none the wiser
we yarned and watched from a cafeteria across the road
X and i biting cautiously into our Olympic donuts
and you your punjabi sweets

i could easily not care but i'm transfixed
sipping my diet coke
while you send a sweet message to Z
you wish him good luck
we pray he makes it out alive

Gareth Morgan

‘If not now, when? If not us, who?’ The teals’ no-nonsense blow to the two-party system

AMY NETHERY

Surpassing expectations, the success of the teal independents at the 2022 federal election marked a turning point in Australian democracy, long dominated by the two major parties. The ‘teal independents’ is the name given to community independents who had received support from the Climate 200 group and ran on a platform of climate action, gender equity, and democratic integrity. Most were professional, ‘no-nonsense’ women with successful careers, and their risky switch to politics spoke to their narrative of the urgency on these issues. This article considers the political and social context that led to the teals’ success and their likely impact on Australian politics. The Coalition’s conservative policies left many moderate voters unrepresented, creating a political space for the teal candidates. Now, six historically Liberal electorates are represented by teal independents, and the movement is emboldened. Although the teals do not hold the balance of power in the 47th parliament, they might nevertheless influence policy and the culture of parliament. They pose an ongoing electoral threat to both major parties.

KEY WORDS: teal independents; community-backed independents; Climate 200; two-party system; moderate liberals; professional women.

Surpassing expectations, the success of the teal independents at the 2022 federal election marked a turning point in Australian elections, long dominated by the two major parties. The Coalition, led by Prime Minister Scott Morrison, experienced its largest post-war defeat. The Labor Party, despite being able to form a majority government, also saw a decline in its primary vote. While the Labor Party gained a small majority, the new teal MPs sit alongside other independents and minor parties to produce the largest crossbench in the House of Representatives since 1910. Six teal independents were elected to the House of Representatives; four independents returned to the House with ‘teal’ support; and one teal independent was elected to the Senate. A further three formerly safe Liberal seats challenged by teal candidates are now marginal. It was a dramatic outcome after nine years of conservative government, and the community campaigns in teal seats have re-energised the relationship between citizens and their elected representative.

The election of the six teal MPs in metropolitan seats in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth proved particularly catastrophic for the Liberal Party. Several of these seats were regarded the ‘jewels in the crown’ for the Liberals, and had been held by the Party since they were established. The MPs holding these seats might have been entitled to believe that their political careers would be long, and that they were future leaders of the Party, if not the country. The implications of the 2022 election and the success of the teal candidates for the Liberal Party, Australian politics and the two-party system are potentially far-reaching, well beyond the parameters of the 47th Parliament.

The label ‘teal independent’ refers to community independents whose campaign for election received the support of the group Climate 200, a donor network. To receive this support, the candidates had to demonstrate that they had genuine community support and a commitment to three values: action on climate, integrity in politics, and gender equity. These three issues were key weaknesses for the Coalition government, which had shifted sharply to the right of politics over the last decade, and was seen to have been captured by vested business interests and the Christian right (Wilkinson 2020; King and Burns 2022). This shift to the right likely alienated voters who had historically supported Liberal ‘moderates’ (Kean 2022). The teal candidates, mostly high-achieving, professional women, presented a viable alternative at what is sometimes termed the ‘sensible centre’ of the political spectrum. While they targeted solely Liberal seats at the 2022 election, their success puts Labor on notice for elections to come, especially if current MPs are regarded as not sufficiently representing their communities (Read 2022).

The Game Has Changed: Independents in Australian Politics

‘The “game” has changed’, wrote Brian Costar and Jennifer Curtin (2004) when they lauded the election of three independents to the Australian parliament in 2001, ‘the largest number to succeed at a federal poll in decades’ (2004: 7). Costar and Curtin point out that independents have

often held positions of significant power in state and federal governments, including bringing down a government in 1941, although the story of guaranteeing supply is more common. They note the disproportionate number of independents that come from rural and regional seats (2004: 8); the fact, therefore, that the Coalition is twice as likely to lose a seat to an independent; and the notable frequency with which these seats were previously considered safe.

Since 2010, independents have had notable influence in the federal parliament. In 2010, independents Tony Windsor, Rob Oakeshott, Andrew Wilkie, and, to a lesser extent, Bob Katter played an instrumental role by supporting Julia Gillard's minority Labor government (2010-2013). With the exception of Wilkie, whose seat of Denison (now Clark) was a formerly Labor-voting seat in metropolitan Hobart, these independents were from conservative rural and regional seats. Oakeshott was a former National candidate before turning independent, and Windsor had supported a minority Coalition government as an independent in the NSW parliament before pursuing federal politics.

In 2013, independent and political neophyte Cathy McGowan surprised the Liberal Party by winning the seat of Indi, a regional electorate in Victoria's north. Indi was considered a safe Liberal seat, but the incumbent was regarded by many constituents as failing to represent the interests of the Indi community. Supported by the grassroots group 'Voices for Indi', McGowan held 'kitchen table conversations' with small groups of people to listen to and connect with the community. This model of community engagement and embeddedness reconnected Indi constituents with their elected representative, and 'reinvigorated how the electorate views, and engages in, politics more broadly' (Hendricks 2017: 483). After two terms, the Indi community voted for McGowan's successor Helen Haines in 2019, making Indi the only seat that has been transferred from one independent to another.

It can be argued that McGowan laid the ground for the many independents' election successes in 2022 in three key ways. First, she devised a clear template for a grassroots election campaign that promoted independents as uniquely positioned to represent the needs of the community. Unencumbered by commitment to party machines, independents like McGowan were answerable only to their constituents. McGowan has also shared her campaign knowledge widely, and her 'Voices for Indi' model formed the blueprint for many of the teals' campaigns (Cohen 2022). Second, on rare occasions McGowan was able to demonstrate to her constituents that she could play a decisive role in policymaking. For example, in 2019 she worked with other independents, Greens and Labor to seize the opportunity created by a rare parliamentary crisis to introduce a bill to provide medical treatment to people detained in Australia's offshore processing system (Belot 2019). In so doing, McGowan and her colleagues intervened on an issue that, because of bipartisan politics, had long been considered intractable. McGowan's third major legacy relates to her political style. McGowan adopted a steady, collaborative, centrist and pragmatic approach in parliament, which has set the tone for other independents later on (Cohen 2022).

Enter Simon Holmes à Court and his fundraising group, Climate 200. Holmes à Court, an investor in the renewables sector, son of Australia's first billionaire, and former Liberal Party fundraiser, had broken with the Party over their lack of action on climate. Holmes à Court established Climate 200 as a fundraising vehicle to elect people committed to action on climate to parliament. In the Victorian seat of Kooyong, held by the then Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, Climate 200 ran a full-page advertisement in the *Age* newspaper calling for candidates. Answering that advertisement, Monique Ryan was subject to a rigorous process of interviews and character checks before she was selected to run for office. Elsewhere the group evaluated candidates who had arisen from 'Voices for' or similar community groups. Climate 200 backed 22 candidates for the House of Representatives (including four sitting MPs: Wilkie, Sharkie, Steggall and Haines), and two candidates for the Senate (Wahlquist et al. 2022). The level of funding (amounting to around $12 million in total), organisation, campaign support and media attention created by Climate 200 was the crucial element for success of so many independents in 2022.

Independent candidates had to qualify on two grounds to receive Climate 200 funding. First, they had to show that they had sufficient community backing for their campaign, and, therefore, a likely chance of success. Second, they had to commit to three core values: action on climate change, political integrity, and gender equality. Once selected for Climate 200 support, candidates also had to commit to a Politician's Pledge developed by the St James Ethics Centre (SMH 2015) for respectful and ethical behaviour during and after their campaign. For their part, Climate 200 leveraged significant financial and campaign support to raise the candidate's profile and visibility. According to the organisation's website 11,200 donors raised over $12 million; 18,953 volunteers were mobilised, 166,086 doors were knocked on, and 62,959 phone calls were made (Climate 200 2022; Millar 2022). In Kooyong alone, 3000 people donated $1.1 million to Monique Ryan's campaign (Milligan 2022), and volunteers knocked on all 55,000 doors in the electorate (McCubbing 2022). The Liberal Party was forced to spend equally large sums to 'sandbag' previously safe electorates: money that it would have preferred to spend shoring up marginal seats (Millar 2022).

If Not Now, When? If Not Us, Who?': The Candidates

The phrase 'doctor's wives' emerged into the political lexicon in the 1990s. It was a descriptor used by politicians and political journalists to describe a demographic of women 'from comfortable families created by high-income husbands' (Farr, cited in Grattan 2004) who, angry with the Liberal Party over the commitment to the Iraq war and other policies, threatened to vote Labor or Greens in protest. 'Doctor's wives' were identified as a particular problem for the Liberal Party in safe, metropolitan Liberal seats. A 2004 news article identified Wentworth in Sydney, and the suburbs of Kew and Camberwell in Melbourne's east, as areas of particular concern for Liberal Party strategists (Grattan 2004). Nearly two decades later, Liberal strategists' concerns about the geography, gender, and motivations of the voters proved prescient, but missed the mark with the possessive 'wives'.

The 22 teal candidates were professionals with well-established careers and strong reputations in their field. All except three were women. Of the six elected teals, two were medical professionals. Monique Ryan, in Kooyong, was a professor of neurology at Melbourne's Royal Children's Hospital. Sophie Scamps, in the NSW seat of McKellar, worked in an emergency department before becoming a general medical practitioner. Others had successful careers in the business and not-for-profit sectors. Allegra Spender, in the NSW seat of Wentworth, had worked for consultancy McKinsey and in the UK treasury before returning to Australia to lead her mother's fashion business Carla Zampatti. Kylea Tink, in North Sydney, was a PR consultant and former CEO of cancer charities McGrath Foundation and Camp Quality. Kate Chaney, in the Western Australian seat of Curtin, had held multiple roles in the corporate and consultancy sector and board positions on community organisations. Zoe Daniel, in Goldstein, was an ABC journalist (Turner 2022).

Demographically, the 2022 class of teal independents are middle-class, highly educated, white, heterosexual women. Most are in their 50s with teenage children, with the exception of Spender, the youngest, who was in her mid-40s with primary-school aged children at the time of the election (Turner 2022). Most were educated in the private school system, and send their kids to private schools. They also own their own homes in wealthy suburbs (Turner 2022). Their websites speak of a commitment to community representation and the three values of climate action, gender equality and political integrity, but beyond this, some of the platforms and the policy details are quite thin. Daniel's website is a notable exception, with a large number of well-researched essays on social, economic, political and climate issues. Overall, the teals presented themselves as economically conservative and socially progressive, and therefore consistent with the electorates they represent.

Yet while they may not be ideologically radical, these six teals and their less electorally successful colleagues took an enormous personal risk running for office. They resigned from high-paying roles, and stepped off their so-far successful career trajectory, despite the improbability of their success. They did so because, they said, the times demanded urgent and drastic action, an idea captured in Daniel's campaign slogan 'If not now, when? If not us, who?' This narrative — and the brave leap of faith itself — was a compelling part of their appeal. Only David Pocock, the sole male teal candidate newly elected for the Senate, was an exception to this narrative. Known as a well-respected former captain of the Australian rugby union team, Pocock's pitch for parliament is better understood as an extension of his work as an environmental activist.

Another part of the teals' appeal to voters was the fact they were not career politicians rising through the ranks of unions, think tanks or the party machine. Instead, they argued, they would transfer to parliament the competencies they had developed in other careers. The political outsider is often associated with populist movements, but with their commitment to introduce evidence and science into the policy and political debate, the teals are not populists. Rather, they are professional, middle-class, highly educated, centrist women who appeal to voters of the same demographic.

Some commentators have suggested that the teals in fact offer a new archetype of politician in Australia (Blaine 2022: 23). Until now, it is argued, Australian politics has been dominated by the 'top bloke' archetype: a man with a larrikin heart, non-consultative, and antagonistic to alternative opinions. Scott Morrison energetically and conspicuously cultivated his 'top bloke' persona with his 'daggy dad' routine, an invented devotion to a football club, and policies to appeal to tradies in hard hats. Yet this inauthentic identity matched his incompetence as a policymaker, and ultimately became transparent to voters (Kelly 2021).

The teals introduced a different persona to the Australian political landscape: the 'no-nonsense' woman. Following the style of Cathy McGowan, Helen Haines and Zali Steggall, the no-nonsense woman doesn't end her parliamentary session 'at the pub cavorting with staffers' (Blaine 2022: 33). They bring to the job competency, sharp focus and discipline, academic and emotional intelligence, and well-honed bullshit detectors. It is quite possible that this new archetype has electoral currency. Australia has two million female professionals, roughly half a million more than there are tradies (Blaine 2022: 24). More women than men have graduated from university each year since 1987. Yet at the same time, the gender pay gap remains stubbornly high, taxation policies have

discriminatory effects, and women are still picking up the majority of housework and family caring. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the caring burden increased, while women bore the brunt of the COVID-19 recession. Concurrently, several high-profile sexual assault cases drew the public's attention to the appalling lack of women's safety in the home, workplace, on the streets, and even in Parliament House. The no-nonsense woman tapped into a sense of anger and frustration about this continued inequity, promising to apply her skills and expertise to these problems and others (Wallace 2022).

Holmes à Court (2022) has taken pains to explain that Climate 200 has not created a political party. So where exactly do the teals sit in the political landscape? Some have observed that these candidates should have been candidates for the Liberal Party. Perhaps this might be accurate if the Liberal Party looked like a feminist, moderate version of Menzies' party. It is true that two of the successful teals come from Liberal Party dynasties: Spender's late father was the federal Member for North Sydney; Chaney's uncle, a Liberal Party minister and deputy leader, wrote in support of his niece's candidature. On the other side of politics, Daniel's father was a Labor Party member, and Ryan herself was a Labor member for a short time. Others have suggested that the teal independents fill a gap in the political landscape once filled by the Australian Democrats, and that ultimately they may come together to form a political party. For now, the fact that they are independent is perhaps the most important part of their relationship with their electorates. One of the challenges for the teals will be to show that they each, independently of the others, bring unique value to the parliament. As Ryan has said, 'We all have to have a presence in Canberra and we all have to demonstrate to our community that we are delivering on the things that we've been elected to do…in many respects our priorities overlap so we will each be struggling to demonstrate impact individually' (cited in Milligan 2022).

The geography of the teals' support

From an overall electorate of 17.2 million registered voters (AEC 2022), 5,178,120 Australians did not give their primary vote to Labor or the Coalition (Raue 2022). At 68 per cent of the overall vote, consistent with the trend of declining support (Biddle and McAllister 2022), the major parties received their lowest share of votes since the entrenchment of the two-party alignment in 1910. Of those five million plus voters who voted for an alternative to the two major parties, approximately 50 per cent voted left and centre (including the Greens and teals), 35 per cent for minor parties or independents on the right, and 15 per cent for other parties. Across the country, 3.97 per cent of the primary votes were for one of the teals (Raue 2022).

The incumbent independents and crossbench MPs were returned, including comfortable re-elections for the four incumbent independents (Steggall, Haines, Sharkie and Wilkie) with new Climate 200 support. Sixteen independents made it to a two-party preferred run-off in their seat, and all but one of these were teal candidates. Of the six teals elected to the lower house, their vote-winning margins are small, ranging from Chaney's 1.04 per cent in Curtin (WA) to Spender's 4.1 per cent in Wentworth (NSW) (Raue 2022). Several minor parties also did well. The Greens gained three new MPs and six new senators, Tammy Tyrell was elected to the Senate for the Jackie Lambie Network, and Ralph Babet to the Senate for the Palmer United Party. Dai Le, the only new independent MP elected without Climate 200 support, claimed the safe Labor seat of Fowler (NSW) as voters protested the party's decision to parachute in a candidate not connected with the community (Milligan 2022).

As in all elections, demographic factors such as gender, education status, and age mattered in how people cast their vote. The issue of gender equality was front and centre of the teals' campaigns to unseat the 'sons of the Liberal Party' (Maley 2022). A 2022 exit survey showed the Coalition were vulnerable. The Coalition received the lowest level of support from women on record: only 30 per cent of women gave their primary vote to the Coalition, compared with 37 per cent of men (Australia Institute 2022). As a result, centrist and progressive female candidates generally fared very well in this election: 15 of the 17 seats that changed hands were won by women (Wallace 2022). In addition to the six teal independents, Dai Le in Fowler (NSW), and Elizabeth Watson-Brown for the Greens in Ryan (QLD), seven Labor women won seats held by the Coalition. On the other side, the number of female Coalition MPs fell from 13 to seven MPs.

Although gender received a lot of attention in the campaigns, the ANU Poll/Comparative Election Survey indicated education levels and age provided the starkest predictors of voting behaviour in 2022 (Biddle and McAllister 2022). For example, only 29.3 per cent of people who had completed Year 12 voted for the Coalition, compared with 47.1 per cent of people who had not completed Year 12 (Biddle and McAllister 2022: 16). Similarly, 49 per cent of those aged 65 and over voted for the Coalition compared with 26.7 per cent of those aged under 65, and only 18.1 per cent of those under 35 (Biddle and McAllister 2022: 16). Several long-term demographic trends also impacted the 2022 election. For example, this was Australia's first election in which baby boomers (aged 65+) were outnumbered by millennial (25-39) and generation Z (18-24-year-old) voters (Kolovos 2022). Young women are more likely to have degrees (31 per cent of young women aged 15-24 compared with 26 per cent of young men, and 79 per cent of women aged 25-

44 compared with 75 per cent of men in this age group) (ABS 2022). The ANU Poll tells us that young, educated women are more likely to vote progressive.

Young people are also less likely to own assets, and are more likely to rent, and this also had a significant impact on voting behaviour (Ratcliff 2022). The Australian Comparative Election Survey found a correlation between the number of asset types owned by voters and their likelihood of voting Coalition. These data explain why the typical age of Coalition voters remains stubbornly over 65 years: increasingly, older voters are more likely to own their own home and other assets than younger age categories. In contrast, people aged 18-29 are least likely to own any assets and were more likely to vote Labor, Green or teal. Far from the poverty line, these voters are 'human capital rich, asset poor young professionals' (Ratcliff 2022), renting where they want to live rather than buying a long way from the city centre.

The End of Two-Party Dominance in Australian Politics?

Citizen engagement with formal politics has been in decline for over half a century, and waning support for the two major parties is a part of that trend. As many scholars have noted, however, it would be incorrect to diagnose this lack of formal engagement with a general lack of interest in politics. Rather, citizens are innovating new ways to engage in a more participatory, issues-based, and non-partisan form of politics (Hendriks 2017: 481). The campaigning and electoral success of the teals is co-constitutive, in that it at once reconnects citizens with their representatives, and reinvigorates the way that the electorate engages with politics more broadly (Hendriks 2017: 483).

The teals do not hold the balance of power in the 47th parliament, so they do not have the unusual power enjoyed by Windsor, Oakeshott, and Wilkie in 2010-2013. They are not 'kingmakers', and neither can they hold the government to ransom. Yet they might still have some policy influence. This will depend on the extent to which the Albanese government is willing to grant the teals this leverage, and the government's decisions are likely to be informed by an assessment of the teals' ongoing political threat.

The teals' larger impact might be the longer-term disruption to the political landscape, so long dominated by the two major parties. The damage to the Liberal Party was immediate: with only 58 seats, the Liberal Party had their 'lowest haul' in an election since 1946 (Blaine 2022: 35). The Liberal Party loss in inner Melbourne was particularly stark: the safest Liberal seat in greater Melbourne, the electorate of La Trobe, is now 50 km from the CBD. In the ACT, the election of the teals' Senator David Pocock, taking the seat of the Liberals' Zed Seselja, means the territory has no representative from the right of politics (Beaumont 2022a).

The loss of the former treasurer, Josh Frydenberg, in Kooyong and others from the 'moderate' faction of the Liberal Party means the Party has lost the next generation of leaders. As such, the Liberal Party in 2022 looks less like Howard's 'broad church' than it did two decades ago, which was less moderate than Fraser's party two decades before that. While some conservatives have welcomed the shift to the right (Grattan 2022), this does not make for a realistic election strategy at a time when voters have indicated they want more progressive and inclusive politics. The problems for the Liberal Party are also demographic: their base of older, home-owning, lower-educated voters is diminishing. Although support for the Coalition in rural and regional Australia remained steady, there are not enough rural and regional electorates to swing an election (Beaumont 2022b). Even these seats are not safe from future challenges: strong teal contests in four regional seats in 2022 will embolden independents in regional areas (Raue 2022).

The Labor Party did not have a good election either. Overall, its primary vote was 3.1 percentage points lower than the Coalition, but it made up ground on preferences to finish with a two-party-preferred (2PP) swing of 3.7 per cent. Of its 77 seats, several have margins of only a few hundred votes (Beaumont 2022b). The Party's shock loss of Fowler was a clear message that community representation is more important than the party. The possibility of an even larger crossbench in 2025, with both Labor and Coalition seats going to independents, is quite realistic if the major party primary vote continues to decline.

A reinvigorated Australian democracy

Buoyed by success, Climate 200 is supporting teals candidates in the Victorian and NSW state elections in in 2022 and 2023 respectively, targeting both Liberal and Labor seats. Yet hard caps on campaign funding, and less appetite for changing state governments, means it will be difficult to mobilise the same number of community volunteers, energy, or donations. Federally, Holmes à Court has indicated an ambitious goal to double the number of teals elected to parliament in the next election. In the meantime, work is needed on the important task of creating favourable conditions for the election of independent candidates from diverse ethnic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Given the factors that have led to the teals' success in 2022, predictions of a consolidation of their power and

further expansion of the crossbench in the next federal election have merit. Much depends on the ability of the teals to represent their communities in parliament. The teals will be watched more closely than backbenchers in either major party, and there is pressure on them to demonstrate their effectiveness. The increased scrutiny on our representatives is surely a good thing for our democracy.

We can make several other reasonable predictions about the teals' impact on our political system. The first is a return to real community representation. The election of so many teals in 2022 requires the major parties to think much more seriously about community representation, and this includes ensuring that representatives are genuinely local residents and have strong backing from their community. We are likely to see an end, at least in the short term, to party candidates being parachuted into safe seats from elsewhere under a party deal. Related to this point, the mobilisation of huge numbers of volunteers for the teals indicates that voters will be politically engaged if given meaningful opportunities. Increased interest, engagement, and investment in politics will be rewarded with transparent and accountable MPs and a rejuvenated political system (Hendriks 2017).

The second benefit will be the insertion of different perspectives into the policy debate. Specifically, the teals are well-positioned to provide opposition in several policy areas that enjoy bipartisan support and therefore do not receive the parliamentary scrutiny they deserve. Their ability to influence policy will depend on the extent to which Prime Minister Albanese considers them a threat to the Labor Party at the next election. If he takes the threat seriously, which he should, Albanese's policymakers will feel the tug from both the progressive and conservative side of politics. The pressure from the left of centre — Greens and teals in particular — will distinguish this term of parliament from the previous Labor government (2007-2013), which was characterised by the overwhelming domination of the Coalition opposition over policy debates. If Labor gives the teals some prominence and influence over policy formation during the present parliament, it will increase the chance that they will hold their seats in the face of Liberal challenges at the next election.

Finally, the 'no-nonsense' demeanour that the teal independents bring to parliament and political debate has the potential to be genuinely, if quietly, transformative. Voters will welcome the reinsertion of expertise to policy debates, respectful behaviour, especially towards women, and sincere and good-faith collaboration within parliamentary processes. This will increase trust in Australian politics, and have other flow-on effects such as encouraging high-calibre people from all backgrounds to engage formally in the political system. Perhaps we can hope that an expanded crossbench in future parliaments will encourage amendments to remove the two-party dominance in question time and other parliamentary processes. Until then, some sensible politics would be a nice reprieve.

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on the rocks

do you remember that night
drinking tawny port on ice
with the Brazilians we'd met at the beach
that place you go for photography's sake
and we stayed longer than was usual for us
the sun turned yellow
and one of us grew especially tired

you waded softly into the ocean
sporting a bright new haircut
some of us were honestly happy
the photographs lifted us all skyward
despite our simple bogan frames
this was just what we were hoping for

and tho some of us were morose
meandering the shallows, sheathed iPhones
dangling from our bikinis
the sun was now orange
and cyclones of pink chocolate
sang in all directions up above us

and despite all our minor jealousies
and no matter how much we protested that fact
we made an effort to weld ourselves
to the one cheeky emoticon we had left

Gareth Morgan

rococo party scene

they should have the purplish
stupid one in the middle

praying that this might be this
and not the other thing, mindless celebration

I save as much as I can but I can
relate to a lot of what you're saying

goes a hundred miles an hour that's
the only way he knows

an extra bedroom is a fifty k jump
better engage

nothin like rocksteady, he says,
LAME! He says, send my daughter to Spain!

song like a business trip, contigo por siempre
baby— one day you'll love me again

Gareth Morgan

‘A Greenslide or Winning in Increments? The Greens in the 2022 federal election’

NARELLE MIRAGLIOTTA AND ALASDAIR MCCALLUM

The Greens’ performance at the 2022 Australian federal election outcome was hailed by the party and the commentariat as a Greenslide. In this article, we examine whether this characterisation of the outcome is entirely accurate. We argue that both the Greens’ campaign strategy and representational gains were strong, even if their overall electoral performance, as reflected in vote share, was not especially spectacular. We conclude that Greens gains are the culmination of an incremental but steady consolidation of the party’s primary vote in mostly inner metropolitan seats. To this extent, the 2022 election outcome was less a Greens surge as it was a victory for the party's ability to forge ongoing inroads within the electorate. The outcome suggests that the Greens are still growing.

KEY WORDS: Australian Greens, federal election, political parties, environment.

On election night, Greens party leader, Adam Bandt, declared the outcome a ‘greenslide’ (Cassidy and Hinchcliffe 2022). Bandt’s description of the party’s performance is understandable even if somewhat overwrought. This was, indeed, the party’s strongest federal election outcome in terms of representational gains. In the House, the party retained the lower house seat of Melbourne, and claimed the seats of Griffith, Ryan, and Brisbane. In the Senate, the Greens secured six vacancies, increasing their presence in the upper house to 12 senators in the 76-member chamber. Nonetheless, the increase in the party’s first-preference nationwide vote compared to 2019 was modest: from 10.4 per cent to 12.25 per cent in the House and from 10.19 per cent to 12.66 per cent in the Senate.

This article examines the Greens’ electoral performance at the 2022 election. Section one surveys the party’s campaign. We contend that the party’s policy and messaging appeals on climate especially managed to strike an effective balance between principle and electoral pragmatism. Section two analyses the electoral data. We show that the Greens’ representational gains were achieved on the strength of modest growth in their overall share of their primary vote. In section three, we consider what this outcome portends for the Greens. Fundamentally, we argue that the Greens’ performance is the culmination of a gradual but steady consolidation of the party’s primary vote in largely inner metropolitan seats rather than heralding a dramatic electoral breakthrough for the party.

The Greens campaign

Some within the commentariat (see, for example Harris 2021) suggested that the Greens might struggle for electoral relevance in 2022 because of the presence of the teal independents (teals). ‘The teals’ is the label applied to a group of well-resourced and loosely aligned grassroots independents that formed prior to the 2022 election based on an agenda of climate action, political integrity and gender equality (Millar 2022), issues that are sympathetic with the Greens’ policy and political priorities. The Greens, however, rejected claims that the teals constituted a direct electoral threat, arguing instead that the party’s electoral prospects would be enhanced by the elevation of the ‘climate issue at the election’ (Bandt quoted in Seccombe 2022).

The Greens’ assessment of the ‘teal effect’ was not mere puffery but an observation informed by certain empirical realities. The Greens had candidates contesting every lower seat compared to the teals’ approximately 22 community-backed candidates (Hawley and Smiley 2022), most of whom were contesting House seats. Secondly, the more prominent teal candidates were confined to safe Liberal, inner-metropolitan seats, electorates that have, with few exceptions, exhibited a comparatively modest appetite for Greens candidates. Third, much of the electoral momentum surrounding the teals was concentrated in the House and not the Senate contest, where the state-wide constituency basis of the upper house is often less hospitable to independents. The Senate, if nothing else, remained competitive for the Greens.

The teals’ presence did, however, signify the increased salience of the issue of climate, a policy domain over which the Greens lay claim to issue ownership. While climate is not a new policy concern (Cameron and McAllister 2020: 242-3), and voters have long ranked it as a policy domain of importance, the issue lacked *immediacy* among voters until recently. Several climate change induced emergencies, in addition to the more

insistent consensus among the scientific community about the state of the climate, may have elevated the salience of climate change. Renewed voter emphasis on climate was reflected in several surveys, most notably the Lowy Institute's Climate Poll 2021, which showed increased voter support for parliament taking more dramatic action on this issue (see also, ACF 2022). The Lowy survey reported that six in 10 electors regarded global warming to be a 'serious and pressing problem', up from five in 10 in 2015. Moreover, eight in 10 respondents reported supporting a net-zero emissions target for 2050. Heightened voter anxiety about the climate was recalled in the experiences of one Greens campaigner who observed that 'this time around I encountered more people than ever bringing [climate change] up at the door as the main issue on their minds…' (Horton 2022).

While the defining issue of the campaign — climate — was a Greens-owned policy issue, the party was much more strategic in positioning itself to optimise its natural advantage. In 2019, the highly charged nature of climate policy was argued by some to partially account for the Coalition's 'unexpected' election victory (Horn 2019). In fundamental respects, the Greens' 2022 climate policy message was very much business as usual. The party called for the rapid phase-out of coal and gas, a 75 per cent emissions reduction target by the end of the decade and net-zero emissions by 2035. At the same time, the party's policy rhetoric on climate was less abrasive, taking greater pains to acknowledge the financial impost of jettisoning old technologies, and granting the important historical role of the mining sector in elevating the living conditions of many Australians.

Bandt's concession that 'we owe coal workers a debt of thanks for powering our country' and that 'we don't need to choose between taking urgent climate action and supporting coal communities' reflected the party's more circumspect rhetorical turn (see Australian Greens 2022: 22). Bandt also delivered these messages personally in those areas of Australia that have been more heavily dependent on coal mining and other fossil fuel technologies, such as the NSW Hunter Region and Queensland. This gentler rhetoric was accompanied by substantive policy commitments, such as a '$19bn plan to diversify fossil fuel-reliant towns and subsidise the wages of coal workers who transition into new jobs, saying employees can stay in mining but should seek employment in critical minerals or green metals' (Butler 2022a). In 2022, the Greens appeared to take more care to present climate action, employment, and the economy as complementary and interdependent and not a zero-sum trade-off.

The more nuanced messaging on climate policy was an extension of the party's disciplined campaign in general, certainly compared to 2019 when internecine conflict in the Victorian and NSW divisions marred the campaign in the more populous states (Jackson 2020). A less fractious party, led by the second most popular federal party leader at this election (Cameron et al. 2022:13), was able to pre-empt issues that had been electoral quicksand for the party in previous elections. One such example was the Greens' management of the perennial question about their relationship to Labor. In an editorial appearing in the *Australian*, Bandt addressed the matter early (February) and explicitly, declaring that:

> The Greens want to change the government but not to be in a Liberal-National style coalition with Labor. Being forced to vote with Labor for more coal and gas mines or to give tax cuts to billionaires doesn't interest us in the least. We'll maintain our independence as we push the next government to act on the climate and inequality crises (Bandt 2022: 11).

It was, however, the party's ground campaign that exemplified its disciplined approach. This was particularly apparent in Queensland, where the party's self-described 'social work' style of campaign was deployed 12 months prior to the start of the official election (Ludlow 2022). The strategy did not explicitly ask electors for their vote but rather made the party's presence known in the electorate by offering more tangible forms of support to voters. The party's theory of its campaign approach was that to reconnect with a disillusioned body politic the Greens must 'reach them [voters] in their homes' (Gillespie 2022) in what one commentator described as a 'blend of politics and activism' (Manning 2022). This entailed embedding party workers within the community well in advance of the official campaign and having volunteers distribute 'care packages to vulnerable residents… building community gardens, organising forums and sending out newsletters as if the Greens were the incumbent' (Smee 2022). As one party campaigner observed, the campaign was not structured around 'mailouts, robo-calls, or text messages', but rather:

> …tens of thousands of individual conversations… We never assumed the role of experts there to convince voters of our policies. Rather, we took the position that we had a lot to learn from the people we spoke to. In this way, the ground campaigning effort was valuable in not only bringing voters over to the Greens, but also in better aligning the party's policies and messaging with what voters cared about (Horton 2022).

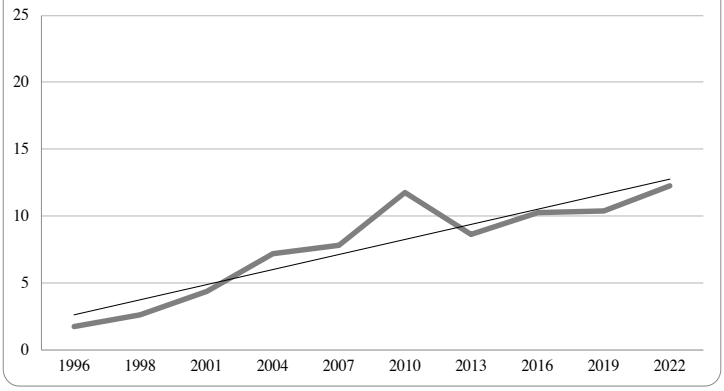
The Green vote

House of Representatives outcomes

In 2022, the Greens' share of the primary nationwide vote share reached 12.25 per cent, up 1.85 percentage

points from 2019. This is the highest nationwide vote achieved by the Australian Greens on record, although it is not the largest swing that the party has enjoyed at a federal election. The strongest swing recorded by the party at a federal election occurred in 2010 where they registered a 3.95 per cent swing. As Figure 1 shows, the Greens' share of the nationwide vote has been on an upward trajectory since 1996, despite several plateaus (2007 and 2019) and one trough (2013).

Figure 1: Greens national vote, 1996-2022

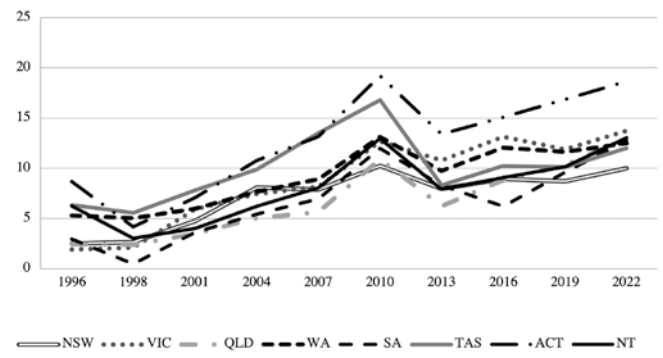


Source: AEC

The party's primary vote in the states and territories is consistent with the national pattern, marked by incremental growth, as shown in Figure 2. There is, however, some variation by jurisdiction, even if the trendline is broadly similar. Here we can see that the ACT, Victoria, and Western Australia have long been reasonably reliable jurisdictions, particularly the ACT (18.67 per cent) and Victoria (13.74 per cent). Other states, such as Tasmania, polled strongly for the Greens in the early 2000s but have consistently fallen short of the 16.83 per cent vote that it achieved in 2010. Since this time, Greens House support in Tasmania has been middling compared to other states, polling 12 per cent in 2022. A second collection of states and territories — Queensland, South Australia, and the NT — have been historically slower to warm to the Greens. However, the Greens' performance in all three caught up with the party's stronger performing state divisions in 2022. Only in NSW did the Greens' primary vote remain comparatively low. While the party's state-wide vote in NSW registered an increase, at 10.2 per cent it was the lowest state-wide vote achieved by the party for the second time at two consecutive elections. The party's comparatively poor long-term performance in the nation's most populous state points to an underlying weakness for the Greens.

There is, however, greater variation in Greens support at the divisional level. Table 1 presents the party's vote in the three most recent federal elections by vote range. The first category consists of seats where Greens candidates won more than 20 per cent of the primary,

Figure 2: Greens House vote share by state, 1996-2022



those divisions which, under the right conditions, place the party's candidate in vote-winning contention. The second category of seats are those where the Greens' candidate polled between 10 per cent and 19 per cent of the vote. These are what we term 'tipping point' seats — divisions in which the Greens are building momentum but are not yet winnable prospects. The third category of seats are those which we have labelled 'low performing' seats, defined for our purposes as any electorate where the party achieves less than 10 per cent of the vote.

Table 1: Greens vote by range, 2016-2022

	2022		2019		2016	
	n	%	*N*	%	*n*	%
Competitive seats 20+	17	11	14	9	8	5
Tipping point seats 19 - 10	67	44	60	40	54	36
Low performing seats <10	67	44	77	51	88	59
	151		151		150	

Source: AEC 2022

Table 1 shows that the proportion of lower house seats where the Greens' primary vote exceeds 20 per cent has increased from 5 per cent in 2016 to 11 per cent in 2022. This points to a modest but growing number of seats emerging as viable electoral prospects for the party. Growth in the number of competitive seats is paired by a decline in the number of divisions where the Greens vote is less than 10 per cent. In 2016, 59 per cent of all seats that the Greens contested attracted less than 10 per cent of the vote but this fell to 44 per cent in 2022. Growth has been less robust, however, in the 'tipping point' seats, with the proportion rising from 36 to 44 per cent over the three most recent elections. The picture overall suggests that the Greens are making steady and incremental inroads within the electorate.

We can gain additional insights into the bases of Greens support by comparing key traits of seats against the party's electoral performance. Table 2 groups our three seat categories by demographic rating (i.e., inner-metro,

outer-metro, provincial and rural) and pre-election party incumbency status (Labor or non-Labor), characteristics which are generally positively correlated with the Greens' vote. It reveals that the Greens' strongest electoral performances in 2022 (20+) were, indeed, clustered in inner-metropolitan seats held by Labor. In contrast, the Greens' weakest electoral performances were concentrated in provincial and rural seats, occupied by non-Labor candidates. This is consistent with prevailing evidence that the Greens' competitive prospects are strongest in Labor-held, inner-metropolitan electorates.

Table 2: Greens vote range by seat and party type 2022

	Seat type %				Party type %	
	Inner Metro	*Outer Metro*	*Provincial*	*Rural*	*Labor*	*Non-Labor*
20+	76	6	12	6	76	24
10-19	30	39	21	10	51	49
<10	18	24	34	24	37	63

Source: AEC 2022

House victories

The highpoint of this election for the Greens was the capture of three lower house seats — Brisbane, Griffith and Ryan. The retention of the inner metropolitan seat of Melbourne, held by party leader Adam Bandt, was expected. Since winning Melbourne in 2010, the Greens have increased and consolidated their primary vote from 36.17 per cent to 49.62 per cent in 2022. This seat is designated by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) as one of the safest federal electorates.

The Greens' victories in the divisions of Griffith, Ryan and Brisbane are particularly noteworthy, especially given that they are concentrated in Queensland, a state with a substantial resources sector that has delivered strong electoral results for the Coalition (Williams 2021) and comparatively poor representational outcomes for the Greens at recent elections. The Greens' path to victory was assisted by the swing recorded against the Liberal National Party (LNP).

Beginning with Griffith, this seat possesses traits which otherwise made it competitive for the Greens. Griffith is an inner-metropolitan seat that spans the inner-southern suburbs of Brisbane. While it has oscillated between Labor and the Coalition since its creation in 1934, it has been held by Labor since 1998 when future Prime Minister Kevin Rudd won the seat. Following Rudd's resignation from the House in 2013, he was succeeded by Terri Butler, who would later be appointed Labor's shadow environment minister. Over the last three recent elections particularly, the Greens' primary vote has been increasing at Labor's expense. In 2022, the Greens secured the highest primary vote, winning 34.59 per cent of the primary vote, ahead of the LNP (30.74 per cent) and Labor (28.94 per cent). As the main beneficiaries of the 10.23 per cent swing against the LNP, the Greens stayed ahead of Labor throughout the count, assisted by favourable preference flows from excluded United Australia Party (UAP) and One Nation (ON) candidates. The Greens eventually claimed the seat following the exclusion of Labor at the fourth count.

The electorate of Brisbane shares similar characteristics to Griffith. Brisbane is an inner-metropolitan electorate that has historically leaned left, interspersed by short Liberal/LNP incumbencies. In 2010, redistricting added the affluent 'blue-ribbon' Brisbane suburbs of Ascot, Hamilton, and Hendra, helping the LNP to win the seat. Nevertheless, the prospect of a Greens victory had been increasing, with the party consistently finishing in third position and, crucially, closing the vote gap with Labor since 2010. Although the Greens finished in third position in 2022 (27.24 per cent), only 0.1 per cent separated their vote from Labor (27.25 per cent). The wafer-thin margin separating Labor and the Greens (0.1 per cent) meant that by the exclusion of the second-lowest scoring candidate, the Greens candidate went ahead of the Labor candidate in the count. The Greens' lead over Labor was extended with the exclusion of the UAP and ON, with a greater share of these preferences being allocated to the Greens over the ALP. With Labor's eventual exclusion, 83.15 per cent of these preferences were reallocated to the Greens candidate, thereby enabling the Greens to overtake the LNP, and claim the seat.

The victory in Ryan defies the received wisdom that the Greens have lower prospects in right tending, outer-metropolitan seats. Ryan is an outer-metropolitan seat, and it has been dominated by the Liberals/LNP since its creation in 1949. Yet in 2022, the Greens won the seat. Part of the explanation lies in the fact that the electorate does include some of the (inner-metropolitan) western suburbs that fall within the city of Brisbane. The electorate covers suburbs such as St Lucia and much of the city's affluent western suburbs. Parts of this electorate also overlap with the state seat of Maiwar, which the Greens also claimed from the LNP in Queensland's 2017 state election and successfully defended in 2020. There were also warning signs for the LNP in the federal seat in 2019. While the LNP's share of the state-wide vote in Queensland increased by 0.5 per cent in 2019, it fell in the seat of Ryan by 3.5 per cent. Assisting the Greens in 2022 was the historical hostility that some LNP supporters typically hold towards Labor. Much of the 10.1 per cent swing registered against the LNP was reflected in the gains made by the Greens, thereby enabling the Greens to finish in second place (30.21 per cent) behind the LNP (38.5 per cent) and well ahead of Labor (22.30 per cent). Preference flows from lower-order candidates enabled the Greens to maintain their lead over Labor throughout the count, and, following Labor's eventual exclusion, to win the seat.

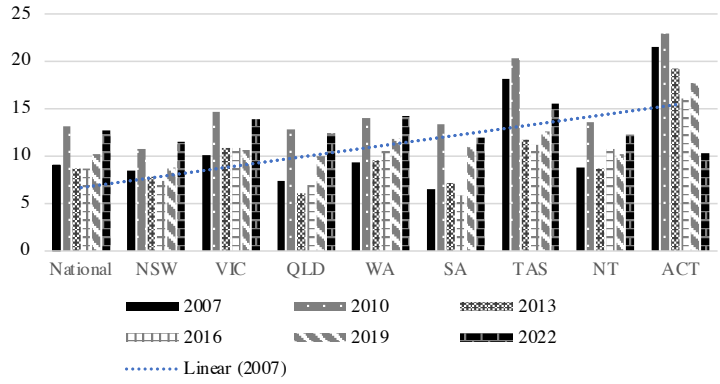
Senate outcome

The Greens had a healthy representational buffer in the Senate going into the 2022 election, with only three of the party's nine senators facing re-election. By the election's end, the Greens had retained its three incumbent senators (Dorinda Cox, Lydia Thorpe and Peter Whish-Wilson), while also gaining three additional senators (Penny Allman-Payne, Barbara Pocock and David Shoebridge).

Consistent with their performance in the House, the Greens' Senate primary vote increased in virtually every state and territory. As Figure 3 shows, the trendline for the Greens' Senate vote is similar to the House, marked by an upward sloping trajectory. Also, in line with their historical election performances, the Greens' Senate state-wide primary vote was generally stronger than the House vote in the corresponding jurisdiction, suggesting that some electors may regard the Greens primarily as a check on government, rather than a party of government. This appears to be the case particularly in Tasmania, where the Greens' Senate vote (15.48 per cent) was 3.48 percentage points higher than its state-wide House vote. Tasmania was also the only jurisdiction where the Greens attained a full quota on primary votes.

There were three jurisdictions where the party's Senate vote diverged from their counterparts. In Queensland, the ACT and South Australia, the party's state-wide House vote was greater than the Senate vote. In the case of Queensland (0.55 per cent) and South Australia (0.75 per cent) the discrepancy was slight but in the ACT the margin of difference was more pronounced (6.41 per cent). Here, the Greens, along with major parties, haemorrhaged vote share to David Pocock (21.3 per cent), the only electorally successful Senate teal independent. Pocock's victory, much like that of his counterparts in other contests, came at the Coalition's expense, and not Labor's.

Figure 3: Greens senate vote by jurisdiction, 2007-2022



Green voters: A portrait of stability

The distinctiveness and stability of the Greens' constituency held in 2022. In line with the findings from previous studies (Miragliotta 2013; Cameron and McAllister 2019), 2022 AES survey data compiled by Nicholas Biddle and Ian McAllister confirmed that Greens voters were slightly better educated, much more likely to have completed year 12 and to hold a tertiary degree. Other characteristics likely to predict the Greens vote were gender, with the party drawing stronger support from among female voters, and age, with Greens electors having a younger age profile. Green voters were also more likely to be born in Australia or another English-speaking country (Biddle and McAllister 2022: 6-7).

Biddle and McAllister's post-election study affirmed the underlying stability of Greens voters, as indicated by respondents reporting that they voted for the same party in 2022 as they did in 2019. Repeat voting among Labor and Coalition electors was 72.5 per cent, and 72.3 per cent respectively. In the case of Greens voters, 74.7 per cent of those surveyed 'repeat' voted in 2022, making Greens voters slightly more stable than Labor and Coalition voters (2022: 9).

Another approach that can help identify the orientations of Greens supporters is to track the preference flows from excluded Greens candidates. While voter preference allocations are a crude metric of support (Miragliotta 2004), they do provide some indication of which major party grouping Greens supporters prefer most. As Table 3 shows, preference flows from excluded Greens candidates heavily favour Labor candidates over Coalition candidates by a significant margin, with more than eight in 10 votes from excluded Greens candidates being redistributed to Labor candidates. The data reveals some interesting state-based variation, with the preferences of excluded Greens candidates in the ACT (88.72 per

Table 3: Two party preference flow from excluded Greens candidates

	Coalition %	*Labor %*
National	14.34	85.66
NSW	15.21	84.79
VIC	12.17	87.83
QLD	16.67	83.33
WA	14.82	85.18
SA	15.18	84.82
TAS	11.28	88.72
ACT	8.54	91.46
NT	18.14	81.86%

Source: AEC 2022a

cent) and Tasmania (91.46 per cent) strongly directed to Labor candidates, whereas in Queensland (83.33 per cent) and NT (81.86 per cent) there was greater leakage to Coalition candidates, potentially suggesting that disaffected Coalition electors in these jurisdictions parked their vote with the Greens. Notwithstanding this, the preferences from excluded Greens candidates were much more likely to be channelled to Labor candidates over Coalition candidates, suggesting strong support for Labor at best, and forbearance at worst.

While Green preferences mostly benefited Labor over Coalition candidates, the same is broadly true for the preferences of excluded Labor candidates, which favoured Greens candidates when the penultimate choice was between a Green and a Liberal candidate. As Table 4 shows, there were only two seats where the Labor candidate was excluded before either the Greens or Coalition candidate. Notwithstanding the small number of cases, the data indicates that Labor preferences are significantly more likely to favour Greens candidates over Liberal contestants. The same, however, is less true for Coalition preferences which overwhelmingly favoured Labor over Greens candidates. This suggests that a certain core of Liberal voters continue to perceive the Greens as more unpalatable than the party's traditional enemy, Labor.

Table 4: Two party preference flows in non-classic seats

	Labor to Green %	*Labor to Liberals* %
Brisbane	84.50	15.50
Griffith	82.14	17.86
	Liberals to Greens %	*Liberals to Labor* %
Cooper	31.71	68.29
Melbourne	29.75	70.25
Ryan	31.71	68.29
Wills	26.67	73.33

Source: AEC 2022a

Implications

In this section, we contemplate some of the likely implications that the 2022 outcome will have on the Greens' party organisation, party room and position within the Australian party system more generally.

At the level of the party organisation(s), the outcome is a boost to the party's confidence, especially in the state of Queensland. That the party has increased its representation to 12 federal senators and four House members energises the membership and it also enhances the finances of the state divisions. A larger parliamentary contingent also provides greater opportunities for suitably qualified party members to gain employment within the offices of Greens elected members, thereby creating career pathways for the next generation of aspiring green politicians and apparatchiks. While such opportunities enable the party to build and retain expertise within their ranks, it also generates some challenges. Specifically, the expansion of the Greens' parliamentary and professional personnel may hasten the party's *professionalisation*, an organisational outcome associated with an increased emphasis on electoral politics over grassroots activities and a growing reliance on paid professionals over the party membership (Jackson 2016: 29). Professionalisation risks the Greens acquiring some of the tendencies of the established parties that they emerged to defeat.

In the parliamentary context, an enlarged party room enables the sharing of shadow portfolio responsibilities across a greater number of elected members. This will enable the parliamentary party to more effectively shadow government ministers and scrutinise proposed legislation before parliament. However, increased parliamentary capacity may increase the complexity of balancing responsiveness (to the party, policies, and supporters) and responsibility (governing prudently, recognising the governing party's mandate). With Labor having only 26 senators, the 12 Greens' senators are a necessary but not a sufficient voting bloc in the event the Coalition refuses to support a bill. Already, the Greens have made decisions likely to disappoint some supporters, namely agreeing to support the Albanese's Government's Climate Change bill that provides for a 43 per cent emissions reduction target by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050, significantly lower than the Greens' target. At the same time, rejecting government bills brings its own political risks, especially those on which the government campaigned and for which it may claim a mandate. The Albanese's Government's proposed referendum on the Voice to parliament provided an early such test for the Greens. Prior to the election, the Greens had declared that Treaty and the creation of a truth and recognition commission was a priority over Voice, with one Greens senator labelling the referendum a 'waste' (Collard 2022) and indicating that 'explicit' support for Voice is conditional on the Albanese government making 'concrete progress on all three aspects of the Uluru statement, not just one' (Butler 2022b). More voices in the party room may make it difficult for the party to agree on parliamentary tactics.

What of the Greens' longer-term place in the party system? More specifically, to what extent is the Greens' electoral fate tied to the policy manoeuvrings of one or both major parties in relation to climate and the environment? Certainly, Labor has made greater substantive commitments in this policy domain that might conceivably blunt the Greens' appeal. However, there is research to suggest that even if Labor adopts a more

accommodating position on climate/environment this might not be sufficient to neutralise the Greens, particularly if the Coalition remains combative on these issues (Barber and Klassen 2021: 66), as the Coalition was in 2022 and seems likely to continue (SBS, 2/8/2022). This follows another recent study which shows that natural disasters generally drive support for the Greens, especially among Labor voters (McAllister and bin Oslan 2021: 2). Given that frequent natural disasters are anticipated, the Greens' ownership of this issue domain seems secure and thereby their place within the party system.

Conclusion

The 2022 election outcome was unprecedented for the Greens in that they increased their parliamentary representation by six and they won three additional seats in the House. However, the party's representational gains did not reflect a surge in electoral support but rather built on a pattern of incremental growth in their primary vote. The House seat gains were noteworthy, but the party's nation-wide and state-wide vote share increased by a modest percentage. While this might seem like bad news, it may, in fact, be a good news story for the party. Incremental growth in the Greens' primary vote indicates that they may be benefiting from a realignment of the party system, building a lasting voting bloc that will not abandon them even if the major parties change their issue position on issues, such as climate and the environment, to align more closely with the Greens.

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from *Venetian Mirrors**

The Riva here is empty. You begin
(near coloured lights above a cafe door
that leads both in—onto the sawdust floor—
and *out* the circus dome beneath the skin)

anew the ramifying narrative:
stray conversations in the dialects
of ruined textures, books of plaster sects;
seeing light trace a shadowed pendentive;

avoiding pigeons, grey as refugees,
who mill, hunch-shouldered, in internment camps
beneath stone towers with their flashing lamps;
the midnight bells of tourists fumbling keys;

a water rat whose wake unstitched a seam
of satin lining, deep within the folds
of sober black. The ancient truce still holds
among the frontline trenches of a dream.

a ruined light towers flashing anew among ramifying conversations tourists dialects stray leads deep folds of lining unstitched the dream shouldered beneath a shadowed narrative the satin internment dome of the ancient of greys above who holds the keys to a stone circus whose hunched black lamps wake and trace the camp within mill sober refugees frontline sects in their plaster fumbling the sawdust in both still textures you avoiding the empty midnight without door here near the seam of seeing coloured trenches of light's truce at the skin as thin bells of water pendent begin a Riva cafe pigeons books beneath on the floor a rat

Jakob Ziguras

* Note: *Venetian Mirrors* contains pairs of poems: a formal poem on the left, and a free-verse reflection, composed by re-arranging the words of the corresponding formal poem.

***

It has been sinking since before before:
a stranded Argo—slowly ossifie
in aeons past, when all the heroes died,
never regaining their paternal shore—

become a reef held hostage by the swish,
the lace ennui of sentimental tides
beneath whose babble ghostly Byron rides
through congregations of myopic fish.

In sun-bleached cells, in every coral niche,
eroded saints, whom floating gulls attend,
sink down into reflections without end,
blending into a bottomless pastiche.

Flapping in flocks, and bright as tropic birds,
street-sellers hope to satisfy the Fates.
In pregnant puddles semblance propagates,
and hands wear down the currency of words

eroded Argo hostage in a reef of babble without sentimental fates sink through the street beneath paternal words never regaining hope whose bright cells held all stranded heroes when the has-been Byron rides a sun sinking slowly down into bottomless puddles attend down in ghostly congregations of ennui the swish lace sellers (to whom since it died the end hands tropic semblance and propagates as before in myopic tides) before blending into their coral niche become the saints of pastiche and wear down every ossified past and bleached currency birds in reflections and floating fish satisfy the flocks of pregnant aeons flapping down

Jakob Ziguras

COMMENTARY

Prime Minister Versus the Premiers: COVID and the Premiers' popularity

MARTIN DRUM

Australia's status as a federal system of government is casually noted by many, but often taken for granted. Intuitively we understand that many services and infrastructure are delivered by state and territory governments, yet we look to the Commonwealth government for leadership. Many Australians who may be a little less engaged with day-to-day politics may assume that the prime minister is directly responsible for most of the policy and implementation which occurs across the nation.

COVID-19 provided a shock correction to these perceptions. In many cases, a national crisis, particularly one which is not of the Government's making, presents a clear opportunity for prime ministers to look statesman-like and demonstrate leadership. In such circumstances, the general public is more willing to accept flaws in policy responses, and get behind decisions, even if they are 'top-down' and less consultative. Prime Minister Scott Morrison, after a brief period of inertia, oversaw the enactment of strict social distancing policies, listened to relevant health advice, including the advice of the Chief Health Officer, and created a new political institution called the National Cabinet. The National Cabinet, designed as a much more agile, flexible and dynamic alternative to the former Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) approach, initially brought a sense of policy cohesion and unanimity of purpose to the national conversation around COVID-19, reassuring the public that all was in hand.

After the initial inertia, there were two policy areas where the Morrison government received broad accolades at the time, and which demonstrated considerable leadership. The first of these was JobKeeper, which entitled many businesses who faced laying off staff to a minimum salary for their workers, paid for by government. Announced in March 2020, the JobKeeper package was a massive financial commitment at the time, the largest single new initiative in post-war Australia. The policy did make a material difference to the economic conditions of the time, enabling businesses to keep staff they would otherwise have lost, and to continue to operate and deliver the products and services the economy relied on.

A related policy, which was not discussed as frequently, but likewise made a profound impact, was the doubling of the JobSeeker payment to the unemployed. This sudden and dramatic policy U-turn demonstrated that the government could afford to be more generous in looking after society's most disadvantaged if they actually wanted to. The massive queues outside Centrelink at the outset of the pandemic clearly convinced the government that a broader demographic was now being affected, including many swinging voters. The doubling of the JobSeeker payment made a material difference to those living on the margins, and it realised (for the time being at least) a long-held policy goal of many social justice advocates and their organisations, such as the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). There was a clear impact on the number of people who needed assistance from government and non-government organisations, and, by guaranteeing a degree of social security for many people not in the workforce, we may never know how many significant social challenges — even catastrophes — were averted at the time.

The second major policy initiative was the closing of the national borders. In mid-March 2020 the Morrison Government initiated a mandatory two-week quarantine period for all incoming travellers, regardless of their visa type, mode of entry, and duration of stay. This initiative had a shattering impact on the tourism industry but was broadly popular in a population which had seen the devastating early impact of COVID-19 in China, the US, the UK, Italy, Iran and Spain. The policy made many Australians feel more safe and secure.

It is worth pointing out, however, that neither of these policy settings were beyond reproach, with hindsight providing considerable scope for reflection on their impact. The JobKeeper program

was the most expensive single policy initiative in Australia's history, and while it clearly kept people in jobs and small businesses afloat, there were significant flaws in its design. The most egregious of these was the breadth of businesses who could apply, enabling numerous already-profitable companies to announce substantial profits whilst at the same time extracting money from the government. There were also arbitrary and, on the face of it, ideological decisions about who was eligible, with universities amongst the hardest hit and experiencing massive job losses yet ineligible for assistance. For its part, the JobSeeker benefit was wound back from the end of 2020, and, eventually, the new rate comprised only a small rise over the pre-pandemic level. In many respects, this represented an opportunity missed, given its clear ability to reduce demand on services, provide greater financial security for low-income people, and relieve abject poverty.

Likewise, the implementation of mandatory quarantine for incoming travellers had a traumatic impact for families who were separated for long periods of time. While the national borders were never completely closed, there were often very few (and very expensive) flights available in and out of Australia. Many Australians remained isolated from their loved ones for up to two years. The quarantine itself was mostly undertaken in hotels which were often not fit for purpose, and expensive. The prospect of spending two weeks in isolation was challenging for some people who exhibited mental health symptoms. The Commonwealth, despite stated intentions, never managed to build purpose-built facilities while the mandatory quarantine was in place, though several facilities opened in 2022 when the strictest measures had already passed. At its height, the Commonwealth completely barred all travel from India, causing distress amongst the ex-patriate community in Australia, and raising accusations of discrimination given that travel from other high-infection places had never completely ceased (apart from the initial ban on China in early 2020).

Nevertheless, many of these flaws did not receive full discussion in the public square until later, and Scott Morrison trumpeted them as major policy successes. But the tide was turning, and the first significant challenge to the Morrison Government came in the form of the vaccine rollout. As one of the wealthier countries, it was expected in 2021 that Australia would have early access to the vaccine once it was developed. In fact, Australia did have its own program in Queensland, but it was abandoned due to complications in the early trials which related to false positives. But as the vaccine duly rolled out in many comparable countries, such as the US and UK, there were very few doses available in Australia. It emerged that the orders made by the Commonwealth were not sufficient, especially when it came to Pfizer, a vaccine which was shown to be more effective amongst certain age groups. The Government ended up on the back foot, facing accusations that it had tried to save money by ordering fewer doses, and/or had relied too heavily on the AstraZeneca vaccine, and/or had not been swift enough in making its order. This was problematic for the Government since it had based its political narrative on an effective response to COVID-19. The slow vaccine rollout was compounded by a lack of other notable policy initiatives; the Morrison Government had not expected to be re-elected in 2019 and its policy agenda was minimal during 2020 and 2021.

In the meantime, a separate kind of problem was emerging for the prime minister – the premiers. The introduction of the National Cabinet had initially created a sense of political unity, but as the positions of the premiers started to differ, it became more evident that the prime minister was powerless, and the lack of authority he exhibited became more and more painfully obvious. It was the state and territory governments and their leaders in particular, who came to the fore. They implemented strong, decisive and often very popular measures, frequently defying public statements of the prime minister in the process. Australia's constitution, little known and even less understood, retains state governments' operational control over public health, law and order, education, and most emergency services. These were the weapons deployed to combat COVID-19, with declarations of state emergencies combined with a visible police presence and the hurried deployment of emergency health services to face the new threat.

Now the premiers were in charge, the public tuned in to their press conferences, hanging on every word, given that their announcements had a profound impact on people's daily lives. Morrison and his ministers, led by Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, took particular exception to the policy decisions of Victorian Labor Premier Daniel Andrews, criticising the harshness of his lockdowns. Calling for an easing of restrictions, the federal Coalition got little discernible traction amongst the broad population, with the opinion polling of the premiers, including Andrews, remaining relatively high, even whilst their people were experiencing the actual lockdowns. There was a vocal minority, extremely alienated by the public health measures, who took to the streets to protest. Such protests received thousands of participants at different times, but their leadership was diffuse, and their appeal was not to prove lasting. The propensity of various protestors

to make unpalatable remarks about politicians and public servants made it difficult for federal government ministers and backbench MPs to openly side with them (although some of them did).

Electoral Effect of Policy Decisions

This conflict between the prime minister and the premiers had a clear impact on subsequent federal, state and territory elections. The first two elections during the pandemic were held in the Northern Territory (August 2020) and Australian Capital Territory (ACT) (October 2020), both of which saw the incumbent Labor Governments returned. While the Opposition Country Liberal Party (CLP) in the Northern Territory picked up several seats, their share of the vote did not improve significantly; in the ACT the makeup of the legislative assembly remained unchanged.

By the time of the Queensland election in October 2020, the pandemic politics started to play out more clearly in the electorate. Queensland Premier Anastasia Palaszczuk drew regular criticism from the prime minister and his ministers for the border closures implemented by the state Labor Government. The border areas around the Tweed River, which is home to a sizable local population, experienced significant day-to-day disruption on account of this, and Liberal National Party (LNP) politicians on both sides of the border took the opportunity to give their concerns as much airing as possible. But there is little evidence that these critiques ever gained traction in Queensland. Queenslanders appeared happy with their state government's efforts to keep the virus out, and the Palaszczuk Government was re-elected comfortably in October 2020. Labor attracted a swing of 4% towards it and won an additional four seats, strengthening its parliamentary position significantly.

While Anastasia Palaszczuk locked horns at times with the federal government, probably the biggest and most consequential tussle which had an effect on the fortunes of the Morrison Government, was that between Scott Morrison and Mark McGowan, Premier of Western Australia. These two leaders appeared to enjoy jousting with one another publicly, with Morrison berating McGowan for the WA border closures, which were the most comprehensive and which remained in place for the vast majority of the period between March 2020 and March 2022, around two years. The WA border policy was not only remarkably effective in preventing transmission of the virus into that state, but it enjoyed extraordinary public support, delivering McGowan approval levels of around 90%, unheard of for any political leader in the Australian context. To Morrison, though, the border closures represented runaway parochialism, which restricted economic and social connectivity with the rest of the country, and paralysed a national approach to combatting the virus and getting the country going again economically.

Morrison took the opportunity to intervene when mining billionaire and sometime political candidate Clive Palmer launched a High Court challenge to the borders. Morrison, in concert with Attorney-General Christian Porter (who hailed from WA), joined the challenge, and presented material in support of it. In doing so, Morrison drastically underestimated Western Australians' approval of the closed borders. WA local media was inundated with negative feedback and even local Liberal state and federal MP constituent offices endured an avalanche of complaints. Morrison recognised how unfavourable the reaction was and made a quick U-turn but the damage was done. Further related barbs about WA being like the "croods" (fictional movie characters who refused to come out of caves) hardly helped endear him to voters in the west. In March 2021 the McGowan Labor Government was re-elected with the largest landslide Australia has ever experienced; Labor received 60% of the primary vote and won 53 seats in a 59-seat chamber; the Liberals were reduced to just two representatives.

The one Australian jurisdiction where the Liberals fared well was Tasmania. Tasmanian Liberal premier Peter Gutwein kept the borders largely closed for much of the pandemic and the state experienced low COVID-19 numbers. His personal approval ratings were high and he was aided by a state Labor party in disarray, which went through a number of leaders. He was very comfortably re-elected in May 2021, attracting 48% of the primary vote; although the Labor party lost 4.4% of its vote, it succeeded in maintaining the same number of seats. While this victory might have appeared to provide respite for the Liberals, it was won off the back of the Liberal state government in Tasmania adopting similar policies to Labor premiers such as Palaszczuk and McGowan.

No further general elections took place until March 2022, when South Australia went to the polls. South Australia's (Liberal) Premier Steven Marshall had adopted similar policies to other premiers, but had not attracted the ire of his federal colleagues, due to tribal politics. In turn, Marshall did not develop a "war of words" with the federal government, so did not draw on the parochialism which McGowan and other Labor premiers deployed. His state avoided high COVID-19 numbers, but he nevertheless lost the 2022 election, a result which was largely attributed to the poor state of the health system. He was the first Australian political leader to lose government during the pandemic and his loss occurred on the eve of the federal election, which was due just two months later. This meant that the Labor-Coalition record since the onset of the pandemic was 5-1, which did not bode well for the federal government.

The Federal Election in 2022

The federal election of May 2022 was to prove disastrous for the Morrison Government; whilst on the surface the two-party preferred swing to Labor was only 3.7%, this masked the full extent of the wipe-out of Coalition MPs which took place in much of the Liberal Party's heartland. The Liberal-National Coalition lost 18 seats in total— to a combination of Labor, the Greens, and perhaps most significantly, to a series of "teal" independents in what were previously their safest seats. While it is evident that a range of issues played a role in this result, such as climate change policy and gender, there is considerable evidence that state-by-state the Morrison Government lost traction after taking on popular state premiers.

The most dramatic impact of the pandemic was felt in WA. This was the state which saw the most sustained conflict between prime minister and premier. The Liberal vote in WA collapsed at the federal election in a similar fashion to the state vote in 2021, with a swing of more than 10% away from its primary vote. This proved most decisive to the overall election outcome, delivering the seats of Pearce, Swan, Hasluck and most notably the very safe seat of Tangney, to Labor. Only when the results in WA became clear was it evident that Labor would form government. Even the blue-ribbon seat of Curtin, former home to Julie Bishop, fell to teal independent Kate Chaney. The especially poor Liberal result in WA was largely attributed to the popularity of Premier McGowan and the unpopularity of Scott Morrison in that state.

The Morrison Government fared poorly in Victoria, where they had taken on Premier Andrews, losing the seats of Chisholm and Higgins to Labor, while the seat of Goldstein, and most stunningly, Kooyong, the seat of the Treasurer and potential leader Josh Frydenberg, were lost to teal independents. The Coalition Government was gutted in central Melbourne, and as a result mostly confined to Victoria's outer metropolitan and regional areas.

In Queensland, which had been the bulwark of the Coalition at federal elections for decades, its attack on the Palaszczuk Labor Government also proved ineffective; the Coalition lost 4% of its vote, and the seats of Brisbane and Ryan were lost to the Greens. In South Australia the Liberals lost 5% of their vote but this did not have a big impact, with just the one seat, Boothby, changing hands. Similarly, a poor performance in the Northern Territory did not cost them seats. In the ACT, their performance was so poor as to cost them their sole Senate seat, leaving them with no representation at all.

Once again the Coalition fared best in Tasmania but still suffered a swing against them of 1.7% (Labor did poorly there with a swing against them of over 6%), with independents and minor parties improving their vote. In the key marginal seats of Bass and Braddon they achieved swings towards them and they almost won the seat of Lyons from Labor. Even so, their state-wide primary vote of 32.9% was well below the Liberal primary vote of 48.7% at the state election in 2021. This demonstrated the gulf in popularity between the state and federal wings of the Liberal party, even in a state in which they did relatively well.

The remaining state was Australia's most populous state of NSW, where the Coalition had hoped to pick up seats, especially in outer-metropolitan areas, to potentially offset seats lost elsewhere. For much of this period, NSW was home to the most popular Liberal leader in the country in Premier Gladys Berejiklian. She had succeeded in keeping NSW out of lockdown for much of

the pandemic, arguing that NSW could manage COVID-19 at low levels. It is worth noting that the Berejiklian government did not attract criticism from the Federal Government when closing the NSW-Victorian border, despite the fact that the single most populous border community in Australia which experienced border disruption was Albury-Wodonga, (albeit for a shorter period). This community is highly integrated, with many shared services, especially in health. If anything, this demonstrated how partisan considerations still came first.

The strategy of the Berejiklian government worked for a while, until the arrival of the Delta variant, which was both more transmissible and more potent. COVID-19 quickly got out of control, with hospitalisations increasing rapidly. Against her natural instincts, Berejiklian locked down parts of Sydney, implementing different rules by local government boundaries. This approach itself drew criticism when low-SES suburbs were treated more harshly than the wealthier areas of Sydney. Despite the failure of her 'business-as-usual' strategy, Berejiklian still remained popular. Then the spectre of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) struck, in the form of an ongoing investigation into her former lover Darryl Maguire, who had been the Member for Wagga Wagga. The disclosure of their previously secret relationship, pursued whilst he was lobbying for various projects, shone a light on her decisions as treasurer and later as premier, and eventually forced her resignation. In her place the NSW Liberal party elected Dominic Perrottet, who was her treasurer. Berejiklian's departure and the circumstances of the lockdown and corruption inquiry, undermined any momentum that the Liberal party had enjoyed in that state, and ensured that the Coalition would find that state challenging also.

At the federal election, the Coalition was unable to make significant gains in NSW and in fact went backwards, losing 6% of their primary vote. Their efforts were hampered by messy factional politics which resulted in late (and at times poor) candidate selection, and this was as much a factor as their handling of the pandemic. Most worryingly for the Liberal Party, a wave of teal independents were elected in their heartland, especially across Sydney's northern and eastern suburbs. Winning back the seats of MacKellar, North Sydney, Warringah and Wentworth will prove a significant challenge in coming elections.

In conclusion, the net effect of how the COVID-19 pandemic was handled turned out to be fortuitous for Labor premiers and disastrous for the prime minister who took them on. The prime minister's authority was severely weakened, with the premiers taking control of their respective state response to the virus. This was demonstrated most clearly in WA, but was clearly evident in Victoria, Queensland and even in states held by the Coalition. Moreover, state leaders dominated the national narrative during the pandemic and used their operational control of key areas of government to ensure their relevance, and to position themselves as protectors of the public. Australian voters are used to seeing the federal government in control, and being accountable for major public policy decisions. The failure of Scott Morrison to assume control and take responsibility for major decisions (despite taking on multiple ministerial portfolios) was a key factor in his demise in 2022.

As a final footnote, the Andrews Government (the first state government targeted by Morrison and his ministers), went to the polls in Victoria in November 2022. Andrews was seeking a third term, and had been a particular target for anti-lockdown protestors. This election again produced a very strong result for an incumbent Labor premier, with Labor retaining 56 seats in the 87-seat Legislative Assembly. This suggests a continuation of the trend where those premiers who had taken on the Morrison government fare well at the polls, even as public concern over the pandemic has receded.

Author
Martin Drum is Professor of Politics and International Relations at the University of Notre Dame Australia in Fremantle. He is passionate about Australian Politics, especially elections and voting. He has worked to reform aspects of the Western Australian electoral system, culminating in changes to its Upper House. He contributes to local and national media, and has made submissions to a range of parliamentary inquiries.

2022 Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize

This is the fourth year of the BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize, run in memory of member Louise Griffith. The 2022 Prize opened during Refugee Week, and closed on Sunday 21st August 2022. Entrants were invited to submit as many as three poems of up to 50 lines. They were informed that the BR4R Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize celebrates the positive contributions that refugees make to our communities, and acknowledges the circumstances that forced them to flee their homelands and request refuge in Australia.

Entry was free and was open to anyone living in Australia. BR4R especially welcomed poems from refugees and those seeking asylum in Australia. In the event, many more entries — 26 — were received from asylum seekers and refugees than previously. BR4R also received a cluster of poems from young people, after a talk to a local school. This inspired BR4R to create an Under-18 category, which attracted 27 entries. Overall, the 129 entries from 88 individual poets significantly exceeded last year's 104 entries.

The theme for this year's competition is *A Turning Point*. The Prize celebrates refugees and asylum seekers reaching significant turning points in their lives. The Seeking Asylum Poetry Prize acknowledges that refugees and asylum seekers have encountered important turning points throughout their journeys to safety, from the moment they decided to flee their home, through the many turning points they navigate during their journey across a dangerous world, until the time they become established in their new country, community and home. The Prize especially celebrates the point at which refugees and asylum seekers can settle in a new community and renew their lives after years of uncertainty.

Cash prizes were awarded to the first, second, and third overall winners, for a poem from a refugee or asylum seeker, and for two poems from someone under 18 years old. Certificates of Participation were issued to all under-18 year old entrants. Eight other entries were commended in the overall category, and six in each of the refuge and asylum seeker and the under-18 categories.

BR4R extends warm thanks to all those who have assisted in the smooth running of this Prize. Our thanks to our partner, *Social Alternatives*, for advertising the Prize, and for overseeing publication of the winning and commended poems. Thank you, Aidan, for recommending our marvelous judge, Juan Garrido-Salgado.

Juan is a poet, translator and human rights activist. He immigrated to Australia from Chile in 1990, fleeing the regime that burned his poetry and imprisoned and tortured him for his political activism. He has published eight books of poetry, and his poems have been widely translated.

Juan did a great job of reading and reviewing every entry, and recommending the winners and commended entries. His comments are as follows:

> Thanks so much for the most amazing and blessed opportunity to judge the BR4R2022.
>
> It was an honour for me to be part of this great poetry competition for Refugees in Australia. I extend my gratitude and friendship to all the organisers and the poets, to Aidan Coleman for suggesting my name, and to the Ballina Region for Refugees (BR4R) for encouraging Australian poets, young people and refugees to be part of this annual event, where poetry is the framework that inspires the thoughts and passion to express how hard and unfair it is for refugees to make the perilous odyssey to seek asylum, having lost everything through war, persecution and adversity.
>
> I found it a struggle to decide which poems should be chosen as the winning entries in each category. The process involved an intense reading of each individual poem. I feel that there is so much quality, intimacy and feeling in all of them, with each poet sharing their own personal thoughts, family, communities, through a kind of journal within the framework of poetry, where I can hear their voices, their cry and their pain as they remember the past and present.
>
> Refugees as a theme of writing is still a very personal way of opening up wounds in this country. I feel a responsibility as a poet and citizen to give an opportunity for Australian people and the community of Australian poets in general to listen, understand and value these poems as a great contribution to our literature in Australia.

This year the Poetry Prize BR4R2022 has three categories: General; Refugees and Asylum Seekers; and Youth.

The winning poem is ‘Oranges and Bell Tower’ by Paul Hetherington. It is very powerful, poetic and moving to read from start to finish. It embraces creativity and reality within the voice of human suffering and hope. ‘Our language tastes/ of black ink and wire/ and I turn in my hands a mouldy orange/ as if it’s tainted/ by congestive words'.

This is followed by another amazing poem in the General category: ‘nuda vita (bare life)’ by Michiyo Miyake. It is a cry for humans to stop causing pain in people’s lives: ‘Without names, without freedom/ Or any form of agency over their own lives/ How long can the human spirit endure that?’

And the third poem in the General category: ‘When Will I Know’ by Bill Boyd. This poem is full of uncertainty about arriving in a land, with questions that ask the readers to engage with the poem itself: ‘Please tell me, this: when will the Australian sky stop being too large?/ And when will these harsh Aussie birds sound sweet to me?’

In the Refugees and Asylum Seekers category, ‘My name is Nadya’ by Afeif Ismail, is a moving and beautiful canto. I have chosen it as the winner, as I believe this poem is a gift to all of us who still believe in humanity, because the inner meaning of the poem becomes a powerful voice rising up from so much pain in loss: ‘I ran all night from the Janjaweed swords/ Ringing in my ears were grandmother’s words./ I cried and screamed for the family I’d lost/ The response was an echo like a winter night’s frost'.

In the Youth category, the first prize is awarded to ‘A Sea of Pain’ by Rose Mealing. It is a short poem creating intense and deep waves of the rhythm of pain and uncertainty, where the voice of the poet is within the sound of water and cry of people. ‘Now no land in sight/just an endless watery grave/ Losing hope quickly/ Only trying not to drown/ People all around you/ Crying for their loss/ There once beautiful country/ Now covered in fiery blaze’.

The second prize in the Youth category is ‘At the Blank Wall: A Turning Point’ by Zara Pereira. It is a poem that questions where the border of reality lies within a powerful experience: 'She stared at the blank wall/for hours. Shadows danced/ around her room’, ‘Staring, watching, waiting'. I congratulate Zara for her powerful poem about what reality is from the blank wall. As poets we create a poem within a blank page.

I was deeply moved by all the entries from young people who write very powerful poems.

I congratulate all the winners and the authors of the commended poems. They are very moving, strong, painful and beautiful expressions of personal stories. I strongly believe these are the new voices of our poetry and writing in Australia today.

As a former political refugee from my motherland (Chile,1990), I feel a responsibility to listen, value and share these voices as the poets in Chile did for us when we sent our poems from prison during Pinochet’s dictatorship, enabling us to participate in a Poetry Prize in Chile for the Political Prisoners. And the final recommendation from Raul Zurita was that all the poems selected should share the prize as a winner for sharing their own time in prison.

Prize Winners & Commended

Overall category

1st place: Oranges and Bell Tower, Paul Hetherington

2nd place: nuda vita (bare life), Michiyo Miyake

3rd place: When Will I Know?, Bill Boyd

Commended entries:

Provinces, Paul Hetherington

Asylum Seeker, Tammy Lee Coad

A change in Heart, Megan Liem

Soliloquy, Saba Vasefi

A gift from Siev X, Afeif Ismail

Untitled entry, Grace Anderson

Nostos, Tina Huang

The Writing on the Wall, Margaret Johnston

Refugee and Seeking Asylum Category

Prize winner: My Name is Nadya, Afeif Ismail

Commended entries:

Treasures, Ivan Rehorek
Do I Belong Here? Sandeep Kumar Mishra
Turning Point, Nives Noel Nabiyik
Lost Lambs (Refugee Children), Ndina Fromm
Escape, Nivash Neil
Untitled entry, Hesam Daryabari

Under 18-year-old category

1st place: A Sea of Pain, Rose Mealing

2nd place: At the Blank Wall: A Turning Point, Zara Pereira

Commended entries for under 18:

Trouble, Indigo Lee
Rivers, Luke McDowall
Nothing and Everything, Monet (Minnie) Porter
No Follow, Maya Khun
Journey to Safety, Tara Verma
Believe, Banjo Keane

Overall Category – First Place

Oranges and Bell Tower

The orchard was littered
with fallen oranges;
fear and anger
fumed in hot air.
Now we're told
not to speak of such things,
as if goblins have risen
to stand before us
with flattening accents.
Our language tastes
of black ink and wire
and I turn in my hands
a mouldy orange—
as if it's tainted
by congestive words.
In my homeland
a gunship circles
the green, laden trees.
*
Procedures march on.
I clear my throat
but no-one wants
to hear of a bell tower
shattered by bombing
or the coruscations
of broken vowels.
In this tribunal
the allotted minutes
quickly pass.
I'm escorted within
a closed corridor;
remove my belt,
take off clothes.
Addressed by a name
that isn't my own,
I'm told to step forwards;
told to stand back.
The vistas close
like a storyteller
arriving too soon
at the end of a poem,
swinging at silence
like a tongueless bell.
*
At last I take memory
into an orchard
surrounded by farmland.
A five-year wait
to stand among oranges
in clearing air;
to plant and tether
some dignity.

Paul Hetherington

Second Place

nuda vita (bare life)

without names, without freedom
or any form of agency over their own lives.
a state of being deprived of
the right to have rights,
identified and controlled by
number and barcode.
lives without legal protection,
identity suspended.
a state of being nobody;
how long can the human spirit endure that?
prolonged detention with no end in sight,
even prayer abandoned.
those who once paddled out into the night sea
risking their lives have forgotten how to dream.

the passport control system born
as a product of the first world war
based on the premise: each individual
is encompassed by the state.
in the era of world wars, globalisation and population mobility,

the spread of the system is confronted
by the problem of statelessness.
those rendered stateless by
persecution and discrimination
find themselves on the margins of the sovereign order.
those who cross the border by sea or land
for a variety of reasons are to be called
stowaways, refugees or asylum seekers.
their existence causing 'excess' within nation-states,
the violence of sovereign power
inflicted upon border-crossers.

outsourced management system of
the detention industrial complex,
prison-machine, capitalism-machine;
call it what you will.
exclusion of journalists, blacked-out documents;
the veil of secrecy brings about a strange obliviousness
to the simple fact that detained people are human.
security staff hired by the private sector
on short-term contracts play a part in the machine.
violence under the guise of 'control,'
brutality even surveillance cameras can't bear to watch.
my responsibility as a taxpayer of the state
continues to allow this reality to exist.

Michiyo Miyake

Third Place

When Will I Know?

When will I know that I have turned the corner?
And when will I know I need never look back?
Yes, when will I know more of the future than of the past?
Yes, more of the future than of the past?

When will I know? When will I know? When will I know?

When will I dream in your language? And when will I swear with your native ease?
And when will I laugh at your jokes? And when will I talk in your easy easy way?
Yes, when will the jingle jangle of your language be my own?
When will I struggle with my own words?

When will I know? When will I know? When will I know?
That I have turned the corner.

Please tell me, this: when will the Australian sky stop being too large?
And when will these harsh Aussie birds sound sweet to me?
And when will the beach be my friend? And when will the ocean be my friend?
And when will the past fade away, fade away, fade away?
When will I know? When will I know? When will I know?
That I have turned the corner.
And I can call you 'mate'?

Bill Boyd

Refugee and asylum seeker category
First Place

My Name is Nadya

My name is Nadya, listen to my song
What didn't kill me has made me strong

One night I awoke to laments and screams
At first, I thought I was still in my dreams
But then I saw terror on the face of my father
'Run like the wind!' cried my terrified grandmother

As she ran her fear blew the dust from her years
Above, Antonov planes roared in our ears
Our huts were burning as they dropped their Hell
'Hide behind this tree', I heard my grandmother yell

The Janjaweed laughed, those devil horsemen,
Killing and raping, again and again
Newborn babes weren't spared this nightmare
Pierced on swords, they were tossed in the air

My grandmother's feet were scratched and bled
'You must leave me, run into the desert,' she said
She hugged and kissed me, then pushed me away
As bombs erupted higher than their horses' neigh

I ran all night from the Janjaweed swords
Ringing in my ears were grandmother's words
I cried and screamed for the family I'd lost
The response was an echo like a winter night's frost

Like a ghost in the desert I walked under the sun
I could still hear the distant shout of a gun
Hurt with hunger and thirst, I could barely walk
At noon I sheltered under the shade of a rock

My name is Nadya, listen to my song
What didn't kill me has made me strong

I lived in a refugee camp but I was free
Grandmother died under a buckthorn tree
For three long years now we've been apart
Every day I still miss her, but she's here in my heart.

Afeif Ismail

Under-18-year-old category

First Place

A Sea of Pain

Guns firing
People screaming
Babies crying
Then darkness

Awaking to the sound of water
As a boat takes you away
From that fear, pain and heartache
A small ship with 70 people onboard

Now no land in sight
Just an endless watery grave
Losing hope quickly
Only trying not to drown

People all around you
Crying for their loss
There once beautiful country
Now covered in a fiery blaze

Rose Mealing

Second Place

At the Blank Wall: A Turning Point

She stared at the blank wall
for hours.

Staring, watching, waiting.
Noone disturbed her,
for all she knew.

And, for once in her life -
she didn't care.

The birds were tweeting, the cars were rumbling,
and the rain fell hard on the roof above her.
Pitter, patter, pitter, patter.

And there she sat
- alone, anew -
on her fluffy rainbow rug,
staring at the blank wall.

Staring, watching, waiting.

Nothing else mattered to her
anymore.
Her new reason for life
was hidden
beneath the brushes
of paint
that covered the walls

There she sat, breathing
in…and out.
Staring at the blank
walls.

Staring, watching, waiting.

Shadows danced
around her room,
not bothering her
the slightest.

Her broken coo-coo
clock bounced
out and in
on its spring.
The spring that kept the clock
sane,
the string that the girl
may have lost.

All the while staring,
watching,
and waiting.

Zara Pereira

The best poem of the day

It is sitting there like the worn leaf of a eucalyptus
It is falling towards the back of the ground and drinking its silence.
It asks you to talk with other leaves that are still on top of the tree.

Ask them if they can give you some of that majestic look
Maybe a little cloud kiss caught between branches and sky
Embrace your roots with pain
And feel blessed by the deepest sound on earth.

Sit there like an orphan leaf
close your eyes and write a verse
on that sheet that is thrown on a street,
in that rainy day gutter
leaf that transforms into a boat sailing no the uncertainty of the day.

Juan Garrido-Salgado

About the Chilean Uprising

The return never comes

we are passengers in transit

between a star

defined by yesterday.

Although the heart

always beating

ahead

of this paper shadow

stuck to the walls. We are.

Juan Garrido-Salgado

The ring and the moon

I wear this ring

Made memory before I open

The heavy gate of death

Ring of the last sigh

Close to farewell

Eternity of what we are

Ring of this full moon

Against the bitter winds

From where I kiss the beloved.

Juan Garrido-Salgado

SIX NOTES FROM THE KITCHEN

Approaching rain:
a cup of rice
poured into
a saucepan
*
Fingers through
the fruit bag's static:
the ocean breathes
in, and out
*
Washing up:
the lid of the cast iron pot
strikes the metal tap –
the mindfulness bell
*
The kettle boils:
a shopping trolley
on bitumen, rolls
to a standstill
*
Instant coffee grains
fall to the cup;
she returns to its box
her delicate chain
*
Cupping a bowl
of rice, I am
released.
Steam rising

Stephen McInerney

Surrender

(Blue Mountains- April 2022)

Tree in tongues of autumn flame
dawn or dusk
the fog smothers the distinction
like lead shavings smudged across paper

The dissolution of ruled street lines
vertical poles
horizontal signs
car parallelograms
into only an outline
A symbol without a point

The sundials of trees & buildings are lost
the fog is a tide coming in
& I will take this drowning

Because I'm waiting
for the grace of the slip
This state a stage
like the nexus of a cobweb
where words uncork
thoughts unfurl
to the kindness of surrender

Juliet A. Paine

Press Play

Will't please you sit and look at her?
Browning

That's her! Admit it, this shot sure is sweet,
you've but to ask we'll switch into Repeat
or simply *Pause* until *Play* is pressed.
It's beyond mere business given you're my guest
and here's the evidence, *Playtime* on my screen,
of who she was, who she might have been:
I'm what you want and I'm supplying plenty…
For what girl looked more tempting circa Twenty?
They term it 'adult'? 'Innocence' sounds better,
ripe to be rescued, the moment that I met her,
from all that sweaty tackiness which went
with long-lunching middle-management,
bugs in suits not doing overmuch
but perving, panting, too afraid to touch.
(Shall we press *Pause* then *Play* then *Pause* again?)
She's waxed, enhanced with all these men men men
it's almost near an abattoir as pub.
'So where on the food-chain do I notch you, grub?'
the DJ's asked. He'd mates, they somehow laughed
their near-appreciation of my craft,
to understand that whilst I play the loner
and she's a free agent, they would never own her.
Then, taking time to fine-tune my mission
I sensed correct, plugged into her ambition:
'If you've a goal so let's achieve that goal,
isn't life more than sliding round some pole?'
For that's how this man beckons *You're the one*…
though please there is no secret why it's done,
as thugs demand or some deadshit begs
I just suggest, a reflex moves those legs.
Next try to guess this target of my scorn,
those kinds of outbursts where the line gets drawn:
'Look at that scrubber, wadda ya reckon, Chief?'
And I'll recoil, for it isn't in our brief
to sneer at any hare-lip, any limp,
to play the preacher nor much less the pimp.
We chose 'companions', 'escorts' sounding trite.
To see you through most days and any night
Select Companions for the rich enough,
with her our grandest asset, no excess puff
required: Miss Natural, top-of-the-range, prime.
Until we hired her out to *Partytime*
and lacking caution, even more the smarts
is where a one thing stops, another starts.
For doubled then redoubled suppliers grew,
dealing on cue her now chaotic brew
of pharmaceuticals. Most have barely heard
their toxic vocab, word-upon-conjured-word;
as each new substance rules how a heartbeat chugs
let's baptise generations by their drugs.
Whatever hers though somethings have to stop
and see me set to turn the workplace cop.
though not for Madam's backhanded tat-taa hiss:
'It's you,' she sneers, 'got me into this.'
That life you loved or its entire botch?
Sweetheart accept this happened on your watch,
whilst there I viewed you near-verging as some wife…
but after those months of all that substance life,
of *Play/Pause/Play/Pause*…finally I *Fast-forward*
informing whoever matters. She's deported,
that's what I'm told. Now to view what's missed
pick up the remote and aren't I back-to-blissed,
as *Play* is pressed all she was remains.
There have been losses, but outweighed by the gains,
as best intentions keep me out of hock,
most days are spent attending to my flock,
the giggling demur or the upfront teaser,
send one out shopping, get one her student visa.
Unlike that Taiwan crowd before the last
we're an outfit where the past stays in the past
to never make the headlines. Trust us. Any loss
much less embarrassment we'll bear. Inform your boss
I'll set a day to get us three acquainted.
(It's friendship first and then the deal, well ain't it?)
No qualms meanwhile in picking up her tab.
Let's buzz the front desk, have them book a cab.

Alan Wearne

George

The world dazzles at the edge of a street.
People in a café juggle the morning take-aways.
George places a branch under a wobbly table
then, warms his hands around a mug,
as if warming a quiet thought.
A wave of sunlight splashes over those
who hurry to be someplace else.
George is not in a hurry.
He has already been here and there,
often in a company of a friend.
This morning, a ladybird lands on his sleeve.
Her tender wings gift wrapped in sunrays.
George turns to an empty chair and smiles,
holding close small miracles, like coffee and friends,
the evenness in his world, the thought that those
who can't be seen are not really missing.

Jelena Dinić

Scale

In the office, they ask questions of the ocean.
They wish only they could see the sea with clear eyes,
the meniscus of clarity onto which they project
their pasts now. They wish only to return
broken fish and dead discs to the ocean.
You might say it shrinks human scale or explodes it
to mean there is no human scale in the ocean
of overheads, of commerce: cruise ship industry crash.
Experts might refer to retail shrinkage exploding
like Bikini Atoll, seen by satellite. No human scale in the ocean
of empire. Experts might refer to lay-offs over lunches,
might eat unemployment. The predators' happiness trickles down
its maw. A greater store of happiness returns a greater store of pain
or the other way around. Consider the eaten animal eating.
The women returned to their homes and found rubble;
The women returned their rubble to the store
of dreams. Of night. No human scale in the empire
of death, which is the only empire
on which the sun never sets, shining on a sea
of irradiated fish, shiny and worthless as compact discs.
In hard water and unpaid work, the women washed
their homes: their rubble shiny under limescale hands.
Some women's rubble washes away. In the office
they download the ocean, see it only from orbit of their open plan.
They ask of it the questions a child asks, when it shatters
plastic and polycarbonate to hear an answer. A word.
Don't worry, there's always another copy
at the bottom of any ocean.
The world keeps turning like a compact disc,
long after no one's listening.

Alex Sutcliffe

Counterpoints

2.1

All the poets on hold / for the requisite quietness. Australia council grants / support the heavenly muzak of the spheres, for the reserve armies of the unemployed / live by a show / don't tell policy. When there's money going around, / there's work / you can hear: the heavenly muzak of the spheres. Of economics / I know only spending. You're speaking / to Centrelink. All the poets pleading for the requisite quietness.

2.2

Is this my voice? / it asks. Questions that can't be answered / like cold light. Watering houseplants, / I don't know where I am, I / say. There's rain falling. / It asks, How will I get used / to my voice speaking through a speaker. In the 1st person sing., / I speak to the only public left / for poetry. In the 1st person sing., / I speak of rain falling on / no roof. For me. / Is that my voice? I ask. It / can't answer.

Alex Sutcliffe

REFEREED ARTICLE

Pentecostal Morrison and Australian Democracy

GRAHAM MADDOX

When criticism is made of the connection between Scott Morrison's faith and political approach, it is rarely conveyed that Morrison's form of religion is not strictly tied to biblical theology, because it is largely a teaching of experience. To that extent, Morrison's religious allegiance can explain his apparent freedom from New Testament injunction. In this article, the Pentecostalist underpinning of Morrison's religious allegiance is examined in the context of the crushing defeat of the Liberal-dominated Coalition. Morrison's determination that his religion be regarded as a private matter is analysed through the lens of the democratic insistence on open public debate. In this context, Morrison's refusal to answer questions, establish a federal integrity body, or generally demonstrate respect for accountability was a serious setback to Australian democracy.

KEY WORDS: Scott Morrison; Pentecostalism; open debate; democracy; accountability.

Scott Morrison's comprehensive loss at the 2022 federal elections invites various explorations of the event, not least that conducted by his own Liberal Party. Here we are concerned with any connection there may have been between his religion and the electoral defeat.

Without doubt, Scott Morrison believed his rise through the ranks to the prime ministership of Australia was a calling from God. Even before entering parliament he told his friend, the Pentecostal pastor Joel A'Bell, that God wanted him to become prime minister (Hardaker 2021a). An implicit belief that God controls everything that happens makes Pentecostalism 'the perfect faith for a conviction politician without convictions' (Boyce 2019). The implication was that all measures he might take to achieve his ambitions would be acceptable to God's plan for him. Before the beginning of his parliamentary career, Morrison participated in some questionable manoeuvres. The brutal disposal of rival candidate Michael Towke from candidacy in the federal seat of Cook, who had heavily beaten Morrison in the first round of the ballot, could scarcely be seen as an act worthy of a righteous man. Towke had been subject to a sustained campaign of racist innuendo and lies about his personal character (Sheehan 2009).

Just before Morrison strode into the party room which was about to elect a replacement leader for the deposed Malcolm Turnbull, he paused in his office for a moment of silence. The incident is related in Niki Savva's book with the tantalising oxymoron of a title: *Plots and Prayers*. Morrison was joined in his office by Stuart Robert, a fellow Pentecostal Christian and his closest ally. Together they prayed 'that righteousness would exalt the nation'. Roberts explained to Savva that 'Righteousness would mean the right person had won' (Savva 2019: 146-147).

This incident was alarming at many levels. First, it implied that God takes sides in party politics, regardless of the many Christians outside of or opposed to the Liberal Party. It is as silly as asking God to let your football team win. Second, Morrison seemed to have believed that he had become God's chosen vessel for running the country. It recollects the old doctrine of the divine right of kings. Morrison as prime minister may have thought that he was answerable to God, more than to the party or the people. Did it empower him with a self-belief and a certainty that he could do no wrong? The people were an inconvenience who voted sometimes and answered opinion polls. The more the prime minister refused to answer questions of journalists, the more he refused to justify his decisions (or non-decisions) to the public, the bigger the doom-laden cloud of suspicion hovered over his seeming assumption of 'divine right'. That Roberts would claim that *righteousness* won the day is astounding. For all the shadows in his rise to power, Morrison was righteous?

Morrison, religion, and democratic politics

With Morrison's eventual defeat, it is apposite to ask whether his religious allegiance is relevant to the outcome. There is a long history associated with religion and the emergence of modern democracy. According to such influential commentators as A. D. Lindsay, the promise of democratic association began with a call for participation in discussion of God's will for the country. The parliamentary side in the English Civil War was rife with calls for open discussion, as manifest over and again in the Putney Debates among Cromwell's army.

Cromwell himself averred that he entered meetings not knowing what the outcome would be, because discussion could evoke understandings not previously arrived at (Woodhouse 1974: 31-32).

Puritan congregations of the seventeenth century provided the model for modern forms of political association. According to Lindsay, the formation of voluntary associations under liberty was the foundation of modern democracy. Their diversity was emblematic of the right of people to hold diverse philosophies and beliefs, whereby the state may not be associated with any one of them. Their presence marked the foreshadowing of the doctrine of the separation of church and state – a point emphasised by the fact that the puritan and Independent Churches were refugees from the established Church of England (Lindsay 1943: 119-121).

In America, at the Massachusetts Bay Colony, John Winthrop followed Luther's 'two-kingdoms' doctrine: '…God operated through popular agencies, not only in designating persons to govern, but in establishing government itself.' But the very polity is founded on the 'consent of a certaine companie of people, to cohabite together, under one government for their mutual safety and welfare' (in Morgan 1988: 126). The migrating puritan communities left as a church but transformed themselves into a polity. Morrison may have considered himself 'designated', but 'welfare' was hardly high on his agenda. The puritan communities were at odds with the 'fallen world' and embodied a never-ending search for the sources of cruelty and oppression against any of God's creatures (Perry 1944: 245-7). Winthrop, the founder and governor of Massachusetts Bay colonies, was no democrat, but he set out the lines of a Christian understanding of a community of love. Addressing his migrating community in 1630, he adjured his followers to love one another completely:

> …we must be knit together as one man (sic). We must entertain each other in brotherly affection. We must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of others' necessities. We must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience and liberality. We must delight in each other; make others' conditions our own; rejoice together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us, as his own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways (Winthrop 1891 [1630]: 306-7).

In human terms, it was an impossible ideal. With time, protestant churches became settled and comfortable institutions, more or less at peace with the world. They had to confront the reality of relativism — humans are capable of great good, but they are also capable of great evil (Niebuhr 1972: 10-15). The churches had to accommodate the necessity that the secular state was entrusted with controlling criminal behaviour, while at the same time holding the state accountable for fostering the good that people can do (Wogaman 1988: 137-8). What the liberal state had fostered was the growth of powerful worldly institutions that accumulated enormous wealth and wielded huge political power, often against the common interest. At the centre of all Christian teaching, however, was the love of fellow beings. Christian love, *agape*, set apart from all other forms of love as based on the nature of God, involves deep respect and concern for the welfare of the other (Tinder 1989: 19). This aspect of teaching put the Christian doctrine at odds with the dominant liberalism of the established democratic orders. As American theologian Stanley Hauerwas argued:

> The genius of liberalism was to make what had always been considered a vice, namely unlimited desire, a virtue… Liberalism is a political philosophy committed to the proposition that a social order and corresponding mode of government can be formed on self-interest and consent … Liberalism thus becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy; a social order that is designed to work on the presumption that people are self-interested tends to produce that kind of people (in Thiemann 1996: 99).

In so much of Scott Morrison's career as minister and as prime minister, his policy stance was on the side of the powerful interests. At this point, however, we are concerned with his refusal to foster open public debate on the issues before the government. In a 'polity of discussion', as a democracy is well characterised, it is expected that the participants share a certain openness and candour in their exchanges. Excepting matters of vital national security, democrats have a right to openness on the part of their chosen leaders. As prime minister, Scott Morrison accumulated a catalogue of disingenuities. 'What he minds is answering the questions' (Murphy 2020: 61). When asked questions by journalists he adopted strategies of evasion. He would dismiss uncomfortable questions with phrases like 'that's just gossip', or 'that's not even debatable', or 'that's just Canberra bubble talk'. Morrison gladly inherited a ruse from John Howard to avoid answering: 'I don't accept the premise of your question'. What he was doing was not accepting the part of the question about which the public had a right, and a citizen's duty, to know and reflect on. He also developed a gift for running down the clock with rambling chatter that circumvented an answer completely (Moore 2020).

As Don Watson reflected: 'Forget what he's said at other times, what stunts he's pulled, ignore the fudges, ask not where consistency, truth and substance lie: he will drown out his doubters in a storm of platitudes and shameless demotic saws. What he says may be off the point, beside the point or have no point at all, but sooner or later it *becomes* the point' (Watson 2020).

During the bushfire crisis, Morrison claimed to have had a conversation with a pregnant woman in Cobargo, yet the video evidence revealed that there had been no communication at all. In a speech to the national press club in January 2020, 'Morrison devoted a substantial part of his speech to the lies that Australia's emissions abatement targets are sufficient…' provoking Bernard Keane to call him 'the most hollow prime minister in living memory'. When dealing with the political opposition, Morrison persistently deployed half-truths and not-truths. Keane was blunt: 'It takes real effort to stand out as a liar in Australian politics, but Scott Morrison yesterday lied so egregiously and offensively it was a triumph of political bullshittery' (Keane 2020).

In another address to the national press club, Morrison denounced alleged fiscal failings of the opposition leader, Bill Shorten: '…this guy doesn't get it. He doesn't understand how to legislate financial services reform. Now, there's a good reason — he's never done it! They didn't do it when they were in government last time. They had Storm Financial, they had all of those — nothing, zip, zero.' Morrison was pulled up by *The Conversation's* Michelle Grattan, who pointed out that Shorten had steered through parliament — against fierce opposition from Morrison himself — a serious financial services reform package, the 'future of financial advice'. Morrison's disingenuous reply was to say that he must have found Shorten's work 'underwhelming'. There could be no hint of correction, retraction, or apology. 'I'll let others, you know, correct the record as they see fit.' But he had thrown the mud and hoped it would stick (Hutchens 2019). At his first outing early in April in the 2019 election campaign, Morrison claimed that federal Treasury had costed several of Labor's policies, declaring that Labor would be the highest taxing Australian government on record. The Treasury immediately made a public statement that this was not true. It was Morrison's fiction, but more mud might stick.

Michael Pascoe of the *New Daily* was as exasperated with Morrison's prevarication as Keane, being moved to repeat in May what he had written in February: 'With what may be another crisis unfolding, it would be helpful to have faith in the nation's leadership, reassuring to have confidence that a capable, open and honest government is doing the right and best thing. Instead… [people have to ask if what they heard is true]. That is what it has come to under a steadily mounting case load of fibs and lies, spin and evasion' (Pascoe 2020). It took a certain amount of hubris to fit the boot to the leader of the opposition's foot. On 25 April 2019 the *ABC news* reported: 'Bill Shorten lies,' the PM said. 'He lies, he lies, all the time'.

If Morrison's passionate religion had directed him more to the gospel teachings in the New Testament, he would have found ample direction about truth-telling. One example of many is 1 John 3. 18 (NIV): 'Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth'. Surely all Christians were taught that 'the truth will set you free' (John 8. 32).

Pentecost and Pentecostalism

The question remains whether Morrison's approach to religion had a significant connection with his politics. Without doubt, many other Christians, who are rooted in the teachings of the New Testament, would be deeply shocked at Morrison's mendacity, but there is no necessary affinity between his faith and his political approach on that score. On the other hand, Pentecostalism may explain his apparent freedom from New Testament injunction. Morrison's form of religion is not so strictly tied to biblical theology, because it is largely a teaching of experience. Pentecostalism arose from emotional Wesleyanism but departed radically from the 'connexion' of the church.[1] Modern Pentecostalism emerged when an American Methodist pastor, Charles Parham, began to preach that Wesley's two phases of 'sanctification' were incomplete without the manifestation in Acts 2: *glossolalia*, speaking in tongues. This teaching was taken up by his student, William Seymour, who in about 1906 preached the 'blessing' of tongues.

Pentecostals typically glean from the Bible a sense of Jesus' sacrifice for human salvation, and of the experience of the disciples at Pentecost. In the account given in the second chapter of Acts, after the resurrection of Jesus, the disciples were visited by the holy spirit in the form of a rushing wind, tongues of flame alighting upon them each, and a breakout of all speaking in tongues — in foreign languages (Acts 2). The people visiting Jerusalem from afar for the festival of Pentecost, the 'Feast of Fifty Days' (after Passover), heard the disciples speaking *in their own languages*. The symbolism of this event is that the disciples were being guided to go and teach all nations in their own languages; but with modern Pentecostals it often results in a lapse into undecipherable blather. No one can describe or evaluate the inner experience of ecstasy that a devout person might feel, but to Pentecostals *glossolalia* is taken as a sign that the spirit has wrought their sanctification. Speaking in tongues becomes a necessary mark of salvation (Kay 2011: 23).

That the Pentecostal event related by Luke was historical is open to serious doubt. The followers of Jesus were scattered and humiliated after the crucifixion, but small, isolated churches began to emerge and to record their own recollections of events decades afterwards. Much of the recorded scripture surrounding the resurrection of Jesus is based on ancient Jewish prophecy, poetry, or folklore. Many stories in the gospels are '*prophecy historicized* and not *history memorized*' (Crossan 1994: 152, emphasis in original).

The gathering of the faithful at Pentecost may indeed be a projection of prophecies in Isaiah, Joel and Jude. There are also echoes of the heavenly sound at the giving of the law at Mt Sinai in Exodus 19. 16-19 (R. Maddox 1982: 138-139). In any case, the scriptural account of Pentecost explicitly states that when the apostles spoke in tongues, foreigners from many parts of the world heard their own languages being spoken. The whole account is symbolic of the commission to bring good news to all peoples (Acts 2. 6-12). It in no sense instructs people to signify their faith by talking gibberish which only a select 'interpreter' can understand.

Experience of the spirit loosens the Pentecostal's connection to scriptural theology, raising 'experience as a norm, sometimes even above the Bible...' (Witherington, 2004: 3). It offers a 'unique perspective on the Christian experience in which God is so intimately present to the saved and sanctified that he can be felt, talked to and heard at any time' (Boyce 2019). This was evident in the 'fruits' by which Morrison was known. He regularly affirmed that his faith was in a category different from his politics, and that his faith was a private matter.

As Guy Rundle cheekily but tellingly puts it, 'The various forms of Hillsongism spreading throughout the Libs offer a personal religiosity geared not to a cosmic order but to a more individualised one, in which Jesus acts as a sort of career booster, life coach and spiritual Prozac' (Rundle 2019). Salvation is 'more of a self-help program rather than a radical rescue mission' (Boyce 2019). In the 'mainstream' Christian tradition salvation leads to an outward concern for others, as expressed in the Catholic Church by the nun's vow of poverty and the foundation of mendicant orders, and in Protestantism by injunctions such as John Wesley's to give away all you can to the poor (Wesley 1998: 123).

Prosperity

There is nevertheless a sense in which Morrison's attachment to policies that favour the wealthy and punish the poor — as in the legislation of lavish tax-cuts for the rich and punitive schemes against the poor such as 'Robodebt' — is affected by a particular branch of Pentecostalism arising from America.[2] The so-called 'prosperity gospel' is a direct attack on the teaching of Jesus, who never asked his followers to be rich. He famously said one cannot serve two masters: 'You cannot serve God and mammon' (Matthew 6. 24). Mammon means both money and wealth. The parable of Lazarus and Dives (Luke 16.19-31) promises a stinging rebuke (and eternal torment) to a rich man in his mansion who spurns the beggar lying at his gate. Yet Pentecostal and some 'evangelical' preachers regularly promote the prosperity gospel. If you serve God faithfully, then riches will be your reward, and will be a sign of God's favour. Preachers adopting 'mammon' as the guide of their own lives could well be shy of announcing God's good news to the poor.

Many of the famous televangelists in the United States have accumulated great wealth to themselves. Jimmy Swaggart, Franklin Graham and Joyce Myers are multi-millionaires, happily flaunting, in some cases, their private jets and luxury homes. Franklin's father, the legendary Billy Graham, died at age 99 with a reported net worth of 25 million dollars. Benny Hinn reportedly has 60 million, while Joel Osteen, the pastor of Lakewood Church in Houston, the largest protestant church in America with an auditorium seating 16,800 people, has an estimated worth of 100 million. Pat Robertson founded the Christian Broadcasting Network which airs in 180 countries. He is highly political and ran for US president in 1988. His Christian Coalition supports right-wing candidates for political office, and he is a champion of Israel over Islamic Arab states. Robertson's worth is also estimated at 100 million dollars. Kenneth Copeland tops the poll at 300 million (Bennet 2021).[3] The other side of the coin is a contempt for people on welfare, with the sinister suggestion that their poverty is a sign of God's disapproval of them.

Pentecostal evangelists preach an American way that is fiercely individualist and conservative. The message is exactly in line with the individualist political ideology of the American entrenched right-wing. There are overtones of anti-Semitism, anti-Islam and white supremacy in the ideology. The attitude permeates wider circles than their own. Exemplifying a deep-seated aversion to anything smacking of 'socialism' was a mainstream or 'conventional' preacher expounding on the justice of Jesus Christ. He found it necessary to interpolate — 'this is personal justice, not social justice'. Televangelist John Hagee was once preaching on the love of God. He announced that it extended to everybody 'except the man on *welfare who is not worth the price of the gunpowder it would take to shoot him*' [verbatim].[4] There is no room here for reflecting on the legitimate reasons for welfare, let alone a flicker of concern for Jesus's good news for the poor. And the cult of violence penetrates the pulpit.

There is no suggestion here that all Australian Pentecostal Churches fall in line with American televangelism, but undoubtedly there are some, and there is good reason to believe that Morrison's personal convictions were indeed aligned to them. In his inaugural address to Parliament in 2008, Morrison acknowledged the founder of the mammoth Hillsong Church, Brian Houston, as one of his mentors. He remained close to Houston till he seemed to cool after Houston's fall from grace in his own church. Pastor Houston was well integrated into the American brand of the 'prosperity gospel' (Hardy 2020). He once wrote a book, in which he denounces a Christian 'poverty mentality', proclaiming *You Need More Money* (1999); the Amazon blurb promises that God's blessing will turn you into 'a money magnet'. The Hillsong empire grew to be a world-wide organisation. In Sydney he told his shining congregation, 'God did not create us to live mediocre, settle-for-less lives'. He tells his enthusiastic followers 'You are awesome!' (Snow 2015). There is an unmistakable resemblance between the Hillsong approach and that of the American televangelist millionaires mentioned above.

At least three things are wrong with the expectation of temporal reward through faith, obedience, or being 'saved': first, 'mainstream' Christianity always puts loving God as the first part of being Christian, regardless of any prospect of reward. Second, feel-good preaching directly traverses Christ's teaching of good news for the poor, and his injunction to serve the poor. Third, it negates Christ's teaching on self-denial: 'Anyone who wants to be a follower of mine must renounce self; he must take up his cross and follow me' (Mark 8.34). Whether the prosperity gospel had a direct influence on Morrison's *policies* remains a moot point. Certainly, the atmosphere in which he breathed and moved was saturated with the sweet smell of prosperity. Yet there were problems when the respected economist of the *Sydney Morning Herald* Ross Gittins exclaimed: 'how can an out-and-proud Pentecostalist such as Scott Morrison be leading the most un-Christian government I can remember? (Gittins 2020).' Gittins clearly found the policies of the government repugnant, and in no measure following the Gospel. Yet neither could a democratic government be called 'Christian', since a democracy must be secular to be an impartial ruler to citizens of all creeds, racial backgrounds and life-situations. What is more at stake here are the personal convictions of the prime minister himself.

Good news to the poor

God's preference for the poor is a central teaching of the Bible, both in its ancient Jewish volumes and in the New Testament focus on the prophetic mission of Jesus Christ. Ross Gittins laid this on the line: '…one message that you get is rarely emphasised by his modern-day generally better-off followers. Jesus was always on about the plight of the poor, and was surprisingly tough on the rich' (Gittins 2020).

Gittins relates the central announcement Jesus made at the beginning of his ministry: 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor' (Luke 4.18). Quoting from the prophet Isaiah, Jesus deliberately aligned himself with ancient Jewish teaching against poverty (Isaiah 61.1). Both the law and the prophets of the Old Testament made care of the poor a paramount service. The 'poor law' commands: 'You shall open your hand to your brother, to the needy and the poor of the land' (Deuteronomy 15. 7-11). The legislated Sabbatical Year, decreeing the cancellation of debts and the manumission of slaves, was an all-out official onslaught on poverty, 'so that there will be no poor among you' (Deuteronomy 15.4). The great prophets, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah thundered against the exploitation of the poor. The Christian New Testament sits squarely in that tradition (Cf. Pilgrim 1981: 19-28). Gittins refers to the famous Sermon on the Plain:

> Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry, for you will be satisfied...
>
> But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort (Luke 6. 20-49)

Taking Dominion

In the wash-up of the 2022 May election, it becomes increasingly evident that the Morrison government left a myriad of pressing matters unattended. Even where it claimed strong achievements as in the roll-out of mass vaccination against COVID-19, its initiatives were substantially delayed. For a prime minister who seemingly believed that the whole world was in God's hands, to be managed by him on a day-to day basis, there was little to be achieved by human government. Resistance to action against global heating was a frightful case in point. If God was truly in charge of all that happens on the earth and beyond, to complain about the effects of global heating would be to challenge God's management. Surely to criticise God's manifestation of himself in the realm of nature would be a blasphemy.

Speaking at Margaret Court's Pentecostal church in Perth on Sunday 17 July 2022, Morrison told his listeners not to trust in governments as earthly institutions, or in The United Nations Organization. At first blush, this may have sounded like sour grapes on the part of one who had recently suffered a severe election loss. Yet there is a strong Augustinian teaching behind such a statement that feeds directly into our conception of democracy. Our institutions provide for regular elections precisely because

human government cannot be accorded unlimited trust. Our own recent politics themselves provide sufficient evidence that power corrupts. That is why the Albanese federal government is pressed to establish an anti-corruption commission. Besides requiring governments to face the electorate periodically, a healthy democracy also requires a strong opposition party to keep a government under daily scrutiny.

Evidently, none of these sound provisions caused Morrison much reflection; he cared little for democracy. He repeatedly refused to deal honestly with the public, he blatantly favoured powerful interests with financial bounties, and acted unconstitutionally by secretly 'swearing himself in' to numerous portfolios — an act of contempt for the Parliament and for the Australian public. Morrison gladly supported Pentecostal churches with huge amounts of public moneys under various disbursement schemes, such as the Safer Communities fund (Pini 2022).

Given the preference to leave things in God's hands, it is somewhat surprising that some Pentecostal Churches are determined to exercise rule in the secular world. It goes beyond merely seeing that their own sect is protected or favoured. They call this 'taking dominion'. The injunction at the beginning of the Bible (Genesis 1. 26-28) for human beings to 'have dominion' over living things is hardly a political pronouncement, and certainly not a mandate to Christians or Jews. Yet branches of Pentecostalism seek to traverse the boundary between church and state to control secular politics. In Texas the 'Taking Dominion Ministries Training Center' glories in its 'vision': 'Training for Reigning'. In their case, dominion means complete mastery over life. Their coat of arms contains many symbols of power, including the *Fleur de lis*, 'which is legend in itself — a lasting emblem of royalty, power, grandeur, faith and unity' (Taking Dominion Ministries 2020).

Separation of Church and State

Ross Gittins denounced the Morrison government as 'unchristian', but this was not to imply that a government should be 'Christian'. A democracy embraces all within it, of whatever faith they may hold, or no faith. At the same time, religious people may expect that the ethos of love and concern for 'neighbour', unremittingly taught by biblical theology, should be a measure of public justice.

It would be absurd to suggest that secular government means that no one should express religious ideals in the public square. Independent researcher Stephen Chavura has helpfully explicated the problem. Does the separation of church and religion mean that politicians and judges are never informed by their religious views in office? Are citizens never informed by religious or philosophical views when casting their votes? Chavura suggests that these propositions are impossible, 'unless we were to (unrealistically) grant public offices and citizenship only to people with no religious views and incapable of being swayed by arguments which, although non-religious, spring from religious motives'. In any case, the political and social milieu is in part formed by 'what we know about the history of ideas such as democracy, rights, toleration, sovereignty, consent, and equality' (Chavura 2010). In a democracy, religious ideals may be aired and debated in the public arena, and promoted strongly by their adherents, but they may not become law until and unless they pass through the secular grinder of parliamentary procedures, where it is intended that the welfare and aspirations of all citizens and residents, regardless of their affiliations, are given full consideration.

Democracy is open to all views that are not subversive of the system itself. The wheels of representative politics are designed to produce outcomes that are broadly acceptable to the great majority of the population, and policies based solely on religious or any other dogma — without considering their impact on the wider community — are unacceptable. These views may be proposed, but they must also be sifted through the mill of democratic procedures.

Morrison and democracy

Morrison himself did not overly parade his election to party leader as an answer to prayer, but he did announce his victory in the 2019 federal elections as a 'miracle' — an in-group signal to his religious followers and admirers that he ascribed his victory to God's intervention. This appeals to the many 'evangelical' Christians, who hold an obsolete Calvinistic view that God micromanages the world. Some such adopt the abhorrent view that God would choose those who would die of COVID-19 and who would be saved; or with Franklin Graham that God sends natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina to destroy 'evil' cities. If management of the affairs of the world are in God's hands, then what place does human government have? Again, there is perhaps here an explanation of the Coalition's denial of global heating, and indeed of its deep reluctance to take remedies to address the climate question.

Any claim to rule in 'righteousness' in the name of Pentecostal religion, or any other creed, is no help to democracy. In a series of articles for *Crikey*, David Hardaker signalled Morrison's term as prime minister as a 'paradigm shift' in Australian politics: 'After eight years in government — three in the top job — Morrison's record shows *that he is the most anti-democratic prime minister we have known*' (emphasis added). His refusal to engage

in open discussion, which we have taken here to be the hallmark of democracy, and his addiction to secrecy, as in his 'on-water matters' used to conceal the nature of official treatment of asylum seekers, show a contempt for the democratic ideal.

I have here also proposed that the regular electoral and legislative processes of parliamentarism are a filter for making policies generally acceptable, but as Hardaker declares, 'Morrison detests independent processes … from stacking independent authorities with political friends, to a disdain for the Australian National Audit Office, to placing his trusted department head Phil Gaetjens in charge of ministerial inquiries' (Hardaker 2021b).

Morrison never went quite to the extent of Donald Trump in denouncing anything uncongenial to himself as 'fake news', but his constant refusal to treat journalists seriously engendered a similar atmosphere of distrust with much of the Australian public. A democracy — government of the people, for the people, *by the people* — must engage the people as serious participants in the dialogue. Like his predecessor bar one, Tony Abbott, who incurred the wrath of much of the community for his blatant misogyny, Morrison's term undermined the standing of government in the eyes of many constituents, not least in his failure to attend to the concerns of women, both in the parliament and in the community. It is true that democracy is constituted to hold concentrated power under suspicion, but the populace is inclined to do so when it holds the *idea* of democratic government in respect. Morrison's theocratic comments at Margaret Court's Pentecostal Church in July 2022 declared his own mistrust in government. The episode of Morrison's term in office was a serious — and to be hoped temporary — setback to Australian democracy.

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End Notes

1. 'Connexion' was a term used by the Methodist Church to denote that members were united in a body run by central conferences, which supported, but could override, local bodies.
2. This suggestion is followed up in detail in G. Maddox, 2016.
3. These estimates of net worth appear in Karen Bennett, 'The Shocking Net Worth of the Ten Richest US Pastors will Blow Your Mind', *People*, 13 January 2021. In 2021 Copeland's worth is now estimated at $900 million. See David Hardaker, *Crikey*, 27 April 2021.
4. Heard by the author in a television broadcast.

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Graham Maddox is professor emeritus of politics at the University of New England. He is the author of several books and articles including *Religion and the Rise of Democracy, 1996* and *Stepping Up to the Plate. America, and Australian Democracy*, 2016.

Cafeteria Lunch

“Are you seeing anyone?
What are you watching?
by the door,
smiling.
you're gay,
Some narratives force change,
No—
The geologic of space and time;
I have a party.
For what? A table.

yes, one more flat mate—

The hour broadens
White light spills,
We used to wait for it.
I must go, by the way—
the flat mate I always wanted.
Oh yes, you better go,
too loud to make anything
Netflix.
Her, the one to the left,
red camisole,
No—
you wouldn’t know.
is it stratigraphy?
the statue worth its history?
the weekend,
Are you still looking?
Or is it empathy,

a chair leg screeches.

it used to be louder here.
she missed her stage cue, entirely.
Completely forgot her lines,
the curtain remained open—
Standing there until the final blunder,
it's too loud in here to make anything,
of a cafeteria lunch.”

Georgia Phillips

Illusions of Largactil

(Sunnyside Down)*

Nurses ached for the light her glance could fetch.
Stars and tides would fluctuate under her gaze.
Each sunup left her alone, her complexion in lilac.
This colour paid the tariff to a heart's ghost.
The doctors studied her case as a juggler's dream.
Her mind seemed to be a conductor of thoughts
enmeshed in viscera merely for them to dissect.
Thinned by psychotropics, of course
her intellect hosted fits, lunging to the pulse
of irregular iambs that made up seizures.
Other lives vanished at her shadow's exit,
skimming debris such as, oh, any personality.
‘Try.’ The verb shaped a war cry.
Her manifesto rode this syllable, late to a muse
that surged through convulsive jolts.
For vertigo, yes, she sought the cure of heights.
Experiments at rehab led to crawling.
Numb, she fancied energy
as love in its pure form,
a death by lightning.

Gregory Daily

* *Sunnyside Hospital was an institution in Christchurch, New Zealand.*

ADHD Episode

Delirium has clawed the neurons ragged.
Through the mind's event horizon you jink,
shining in a lurex kit that's known as talent

The headband can work as your flip-switch.
Leaning any moment into an artful trip,
you sidestep all about the point guards' flailing.

Sweat drools, your face in a rain of saliva.
This juice has primed each movement until
the flex of a shot equates to a sure two points.
Slam dunks rip from your leap-and-fly
as if that KFC has fuelled
an array of lightning jumps.

Three pointers? Those are a given too.
The mobsters of skill have a numbers racket
rigged on any opponent.

Another game is up. Time to skedaddle.
Like all truants, you have to keep running.
The distraction quells the pain of standing still.

Gregory Daily

REFEREED ARTICLE

Populism and the 2022 Australian Election

TOD MOORE

The campaigns and the final outcome of the Australian federal election, which took place on 21 May 2022, furnish a unique insight into the essentially right-wing nature of populism. The political phenomenon of populism can be defined as a construction of 'elites' based on identity, these being middle class and educated, as 'the enemy', while actual elites of wealth become the main policy beneficiaries. This has been termed a 'bait and switch' strategy. Before the election campaign, the Coalition had absorbed many aspects of populism, and populism was also being exploited to a very large degree by the One Nation Party, and by the United Australia Party. In addition, a noisy fringe of 'anti-vaxxers' were adopting the populist stance. Populism emerged frequently in the campaign, for instance in the transphobic rhetoric of candidate for Warringah Katherine Deves, the media output of Sky News, the publicity stunts of Prime Minister Morrison, and perhaps most persistently, in the propaganda of Clive Palmer and Craig Kelly from the UAP. However, despite all of this, the result of the election was a poor showing for the ONP and UAP, a victory of 'teal' independents in Liberal seats, and the Coalition's loss of 19 seats — a disaster for the Morrison approach. In speculating about the future of populism in Australia, this paper seeks to explore the implications of these results. Such speculation includes the possible replacement of traditional media by social media, and the retreat of the middle-class populist core to a more far-right ideological positioning.

KEY WORDS: Populism; bait-and-switch strategy; class; culture wars

Introduction

There is a vast recent literature on the subject of political populism, and it is not necessary to review it comprehensively for our purposes here. Most writers refer to the original 'zeitgeist' article by Cas Mudde, published in *Government and Opposition* in 2004. While on the whole a perceptive and timely discussion of populism, this article tended to steer away from an ideological understanding of the phenomenon, partly dismissing it as a futile reaction to the inevitable rise of free-market policies (Mudde 2004: 555). The definition of populism by Mudde is useful, as it avoids reductionist arguments equating populism with 'common sense' and 'gut feeling' rhetoric, and also with vote buying via pork barrelling, and correctly zooms in on the central role of the symbolism of elites versus masses (Mudde 2004: 543). Another important contemporary writer who has noticed this is the brilliant U.S. political and cultural commentator Thomas Frank. In his 2006 book, *What's the Matter With America*?, Frank charts the rise of populism in the Republican Party from the 1994 mid-term elections to the 2004 Presidential election. By the 2004 campaign, the nature of the phenomenon had become crystal clear, and it was founded on fear and hatred of 'tyrannical liberal snobs' on the part of the working class, and others of the middle class who like to identify with the working class (Frank 2006: 242, 254). This central trope of anti-elite emotion superficially resembles the more colourful segments of class politics, and the resemblance is not missed by Frank. He frequently makes wry observations about this parallel, such as this one:

> The angry workers, mighty in their numbers, are marching irresistibly against the arrogant. They are shaking their fists at the sons of privilege. … They are massing at the gates … hoisting the black flag, and while the millionaires tremble in their mansions they are bellowing out their terrifying demands. "We are here" they scream "to cut your taxes" (Frank 2006: 109).

The second fundamental characteristic of populism is that in addition to using a highly emotive binary of elites and downtrodden ordinary folk, it adopts policies which benefit the rich.

This so-called 'bait and switch' strategy, which entices resentful voters with lurid images of haughty educated upper-middle-class professionals and celebrities, and their refined social ideals, then swipes out the policy prescriptions implied by a working-class agenda, in order to substitute upwardly redistributive economic

agendas, has worked well in some elections. As Frank attests, populism transformed the Kansas Republican Party in the 1990s, with a radical agenda of anti-abortion, pro-gun, and pro-Bible rhetoric, linked to extreme cuts in government services, and correspondingly reduced taxation of economic elites. In the 2004 national elections in the U.S., a similar surge of populism gave 'W.' {Bush} a coveted second term and elected numerous hard right congresspersons (Frank 2006: 253). Another of Frank's books, *Pity the Billionaire*, charts the rise of the Tea Party movement in 2010. Following the greatest financial collapse since the 1930s Depression, this movement blamed the imagined 'elites' for all that was wrong in America, and promoted the austerity cause. A protest that was started by Chicago futures traders, the Tea Party pretended to be both ultra-patriotic and working class, while promoting more or less libertarian economic positions (Frank 2012: 41). In reality, there is no such thing as left populism. Those writers who see populism as divided into left and right variants arguably overlook the possibility that appeals to the masses against elites, when combined with leftist policies of redistribution and social justice, are not populist; they are socialist (Moore 2017). The real key to appreciating populist politics, is not merely the appeal to the masses against confected 'elites', but the use of such outrage to advance elite economic agendas. It is not the 'bait' as much as the 'switch', which determines the essentially right-wing nature of populism, in this account. The 'left' populist, in this view, is either somebody unwilling to act upon their stated 'left' platform, or is in reality a 'right' figure posing as the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing.

Right-wing background to populism

Before the 2022 federal election campaign, populism had enjoyed a long and colourful history in Australian political life (Moore 2019: 209-211). The election of Pauline Hanson for the lower house seat of Oxley in 1996, was the outcome of a burst of intense populism. As has been pointed out by Lynch and Reavell (1997: 35), there had been some trenchant criticism of so-called 'political correctness' before the 1996 elections, and the bungled attempts to de-select Hanson just before the vote helped to make her a lightning rod for the disaffected. Her maiden speech in the House of Representatives in 1996 was front-page news across the country, and it sparked a furious debate which polarised opinion on a number of issues, especially race relations (Marr 2017: 11). The gentrification of the political left had followed a similar trajectory in both the U.S. and Australia, and in both countries populists took maximum advantage of this. The Hansonism of the late 1990s, which especially reacted against non-European immigration and the land claims of First Nations people, revolved around a binary of virtuous rural and outer suburban conservatives, versus inner-city leftist 'elites' (Coghlan 2019: 185). These centre-left 'activists' were previously tolerated by the capitalist establishment, because their brand of political change involved little or no cost for the financial and business leviathans, which had been growing rapidly since the 1970s and 1980s. Noisy support for mild environment protections, limited First Nations rights, liberal feminism, LGBTI+ rights, and similar modest reforms, were very easy for the establishment to live with, as they did not much affect profits (Moore 2019: 207). They also had the advantage of drawing attention away from the defects of wage restraint, deregulation, privatisation, and the so-called free market. But rapid changes in the same areas of reform upset social conservatives, and made it easy for canny politicians and commentators to fan the flames of populism (Walter 2010: 306-307).

With the sole exception of her opposition to privatisation of Telstra, the populism espoused by Pauline Hanson in the late 1990s had involved no actual policies that might favour the 'virtuous' masses, to which the ideology brazenly appealed. The only tax reform which Hanson campaigned for was a 2% 'Easytax', which would have been extremely regressive, and would have resulted in huge retrenchments of government-funded services and programs (Kingston 1999: 12-14). Like Hanson, the wealthy business owner Clive Palmer was a former member of the Liberal-National Party (LNP) in Queensland. Palmer had resigned from the LNP in late 2012 (Stephens 2014), in order to form his own populist party, named the Palmer United Party (PUP), but later reformed as the United Australia Party (UAP). In the 2013 elections, Palmer won a Queensland lower house seat by the narrowest of margins, and three of his PUP Senate candidates, Glenn Lazarus, Jacqui Lambie, and Dio Wang, were successful (Holmes 2014). Like so many populist leaders, Palmer did not play well with others, and one by one all three of his senators left the PUP. Populism had been in retreat in Australia since the early 2000s, but it made a comeback in the years immediately following the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, in much the same manner as populism in the U.S., which had re-emerged under the banner of the Tea Party (Moore 2019: 203). In the 2016 elections, Pauline Hanson won a Senate seat in Queensland, returning to the federal parliament with a similar populist agenda to the one which had worked so well for her in the late 1990s, except that Islam had replaced Asia as the 'enemy' (Crosby 2019: 119-121). A few months later, Donald Trump unexpectedly won the U.S. presidential election, and this raised the profile of populism globally. Then, in the 2019 Australian general elections, Palmer and his re-branded UAP used a $60 million populist advertising extravaganza to help secure a narrow victory for the LNP Coalition (Muller 2020). Even though Palmer won no seats in either chamber, his money was wisely invested, as the Coalition, still in

government, was highly motivated to enhance his fossil-fuel mining returns.

In view of the foregoing history of recent populist politics in Australia, it is not difficult to understand that many of the players in the 2022 general election campaign would find populism highly tempting. As Thomas Frank (2006: 10) says, it has been 'culture war that gets the goods' in many of these contemporary electoral contests. Our question here is, whether it actually worked in May of 2022. There were at least two forms of culture war present within the populism of the campaign, first the regular type, and secondly, a new 'COVID-19 pandemic' type of populism. While the LNP Coalition politicians did explore populist themes of the first familiar type to a certain extent, it was Palmer's UAP which was at the forefront in using both variants of populist rhetoric during the six-week campaign. Aside from the political protagonists themselves, there were also some outspoken celebrities and media personalities who aired these themes, and it could never be said that populism had been stifled, or muted, in the discourses of the 2022 elections.

When Scott Morrison had taken over the leadership of the Coalition, and simultaneously of the country, in August 2018, he embraced populism tightly, possibly being encouraged to do so by the apparent success of Donald Trump in the U.S., and of Boris Johnson in the U.K. Like John Howard before him, Morrison pursued a neoliberal set of economic and fiscal policies, and deep cuts to government services, behind his populist façade. He combined these neoliberal policies with a public image, which was tightly engineered around presenting the manufactured persona of a suburban male stereotype. When scandals involving the treatment of women engulfed the Coalition in the year before the poll, this male stereotype proved to be a considerable liability (Withers 2022). Nowhere was Morrison's desire to craft a relatable public image more in evidence than in his numerous staged appearances enacting 'regular' workforce roles. Both before and during the election campaign, the prime minister paraded himself before the TV cameras, pretending to be a chef, a hairdresser, a pilot, a welder, a truck driver, and anything involving the use of high visibility vests and safety helmets. This culminated in a cringe-worthy domestic dinner table set-up, where Morrison serenaded the cameras with a ukulele, playing the role of the Australian everyman a little too obviously with his 'faux larrikinism' (Bongiorno 2021). His type of folksy appeal was not much more than this, however, as he was tied to government responsibilities in COVID-19 pandemic management, and had also been obliged to make certain concessions on climate policy, both of which barred him from going 'full populist'. No such impediments to full and unabashed populism existed for the minor parties and independents in the campaign, however.

The minor parties and independents

The independents, and minor party personalities, who resorted to populism, often in its more extreme forms, included George Christensen, Pauline Hanson, Bob Katter, and especially Craig Kelly as the nominal leader of the Palmer-backed UAP. In the case of Kelly, his populist campaign owed a great deal to the COVID-19 response, and to Donald Trump's outbursts, and we shall return to this aspect shortly, but first there is the other type of populism to consider. In the 2016 elections, Hanson had secured a Senate seat for Queensland by repudiating First Nations recognition, by attacking Australian Muslims, and by rejecting the 'elitism' of the U.N. and international law. However, as Crosby (2019: 131-133) has pointed out, Hanson paid less attention to policies, and more to her symbolic presence as the known champion of the allegedly dispossessed and ignored common person. Six years later, Hanson was using similar strategies, but also leveraging her record as a power broker in the Senate, and her trenchant opposition to the COVID-19 response. She was especially critical of the Greens, and was adamant that only she stood in the way of their gaining the balance of power in the federal upper house (Hanson 2022). The One Nation position on climate change has been markedly denialist, and they have also sought to restrict access to voting by using updated types of ID card, both of which are policy positions associated with U.S. populism. The party had also recruited George Christensen, who had previously been the member for the lower house seat of Dawson, before he unexpectedly quit the National Party because he thought it was not strong enough in its denial of climate change, and also for allowing COVID-19 restrictions (Tamer 2022).

In the lower house seat of Kennedy, Bob Katter was running again, as he had done successfully since 1993. Always colourful and outspoken, Katter had been in the public spotlight for briefly associating himself, and his Katter's Australian Party, with Fraser Anning, a white supremacist. For a few months in 2018, Anning had been a member of the KAP, after quitting Pauline Hanson's One Nation as a Senator, before his extremist views resulted in expulsion. Representing an outback Queensland seat, Bob Katter has cultivated a 'maverick' image, and favoured certain causes, notably the relaxation of gun ownership laws. He has frequently made inflammatory statements opposing the environment movement, and the activities of foreign-owned multinational corporations, and he advocated for the Australian automobile industry when it was being allowed to wither and die. In the 2022 federal campaign, Katter stuck to this formula, and won the seat comfortably again, with virtually no change from the 2019 result. His image and his politics both appear to have very strong appeal in the many rural and isolated areas which make up this vast electorate of Kennedy, where it is not to be expected that there would be any sympathy

for positions which can be portrayed as urban and elitist (Moffitt 2022). The strident nationalist flavour of Katter's rhetoric also makes him an ideal populist candidate for this particular electorate, where insecurities about the Near North no doubt run deep.

There were numerous fringe independents and micro-parties which took part in the election campaign, and which specialised in populist messaging, but for our purposes we can focus on Palmer's unique United Australia Party (UAP). The UAP was conspicuous for the large amount of money spent on advertising, including television prime-time spot ads, and large yellow billboards, replicating the UAP high spending strategy from the 2019 elections. In fact, the Party exceeded its 2019 level of expenditure, with somewhere between $70 million and $100 million being poured into the advertising blitz (Elias 2022). The UAP advertising tended to attack the major parties as being intrinsically out of touch with an imagined mainstream, but it also introduced several policies, including a federal tax on iron ore exports, a ban on superannuation investments in offshore shares, and a poorly defined policy to cap home interest rates at 3%. When he gave a speech at the National Press Club in early April 2022, Palmer accused the government of economic recklessness for the deficit, and aired the UAP superannuation policy, but spent most of his time on COVID-19 related matters. This tied in with the UAP one-word slogan for the 2022 campaign, FREEDOM, which was branded on all their advertising images. In the speech Palmer concentrated on the pandemic response measures, notably the lockdowns and the vaccine mandates, as being both ineffective and repressive (Thomas et al. 2022). He was especially critical of the lockdowns which had been imposed in the State of Victoria. Palmer also spent time praising the drug hydroxychloroquine, which he claimed was a treatment for the virus, and which was being suppressed by elites, in league with shadowy representatives of Big Pharma. This was a position borrowed directly from Donald Trump in the U.S.

The supposed leader of the UAP in the 2022 elections was Craig Kelly, the member for the lower house seat of Hughes. Like other examples of populist politicians in Australia, Kelly had previously been a Liberal Party right winger, whose pungent brand of politics saw him nearly toppled from preselection in late 2018, when he only retained his Liberal endorsement thanks to an intervention by his long-term friend, Prime Minister Morrison. He was particularly outspoken in 2018 on the subject of climate change denialism, and support for Australian coal mining. During the pandemic, Kelly augmented his pro-coal rhetoric, with severe criticism of lockdowns, vaccines, and vaccine mandates. In early 2021 Kelly had even advocated the use of the veterinary product ivermectin as a cure for the COVID-19 virus, on the basis of no medical evidence whatever (Shepherd 2021). This ended in his decision to resign from the Liberal Party in early 2021 and sit as an independent. Palmer recruited Kelly to the UAP in August 2021, making him the parliamentary leader of the UAP while still guaranteeing supply to the government, as Kelly had previously promised. During the 2022 campaign, Kelly became especially unpopular due to his use of a technique involving unsolicited random SMS text messaging to mobile phones (Orr 2022). Much of this messaging was aimed at vaccines and vaccine mandates. Before the campaign, Kelly had been positioning himself as leader of the anti-lockdown and anti-mandate fringe movement, and he attempted to capitalise on this in the campaign itself. At the end of 2021, when anti-lockdown protesting was at its height, Kelly spoke at a number of gatherings, assuming a leadership role (Gorrey 2021), and there is no doubt that he was attempting to leverage this type of populism in his 2022 campaign strategy.

The eruption of a populist movement opposed to COVID-19 lockdowns, vaccines, mask wearing, and vaccine mandates, was a trans-national phenomenon. Libertarian, far right, and populist figures in many places around the world, railed against governments which were using their legitimate sovereign competencies, to control the public health emergency. In September 2021 the delta variant of COVID-19 took off in some parts of Australia, notably Victoria, and one Victorian State government response was to mandate at least one vaccination for workers employed on large building sites, as these had been identified as places of likely disease transmission. On 20 September 2021, there was an anti-vaccine protest at the Melbourne offices of the CFMEU, the construction industry trade union, where union organisers were violently attacked, and the building also was damaged (Feik 2021). After this highly publicised event, the Australian anti-lockdown and anti-vaccine fringe became more active and organised. This in turn prompted a reaction against such people, as seriously risking public health due to their selfish personal beliefs, and they became known as 'cookers'. This term of political ridicule appropriates an Australian slang term for a chronic drug user, which seems to relate to the trend for some of the protesters to affect an unkempt working-class appearance, but in going too far, to seem more like unhoused 'ice' addicts (Anon. 2022). Assuming this to be the case, it would fit the populist method of trying to attract those who identify as disenfranchised workers, to join in an essentially right wing or libertarian movement of the middle class as supporters. It would be the 'bait' in the 'bait and switch'.

Concluding remarks

Subsequent media attention on the 'cookers' added to the existing pressure on State and Commonwealth

governments, to back away from measures to prevent COVID-19 from entering communities. Australia has an unusually concentrated media ownership and control, compared with other industrialised countries, and this encouraged criticism of certain governments, especially the Andrews ALP government of Victoria. The Sky News network, in particular, which has been closely modelled on Fox News in the U.S., featured programming which constantly lambasted the so-called 'woke' liberal left, and especially its 'elite' character, and supported anti-mandate protests (Loewenstein 2022). By the time of the 2022 elections, the bias of the mainstream media itself had become part of the political debate, especially following the woes of the Liberal Party opposition in both Western Australia and Victoria, which called into question the continuing relevance of media groups such as Sky News. On social media platforms, especially Twitter, influencers such as 'PRGuy17' were tearing the mainstream media to shreds, while video blog sites such as 'Friendlyjordies' provided a superior source of investigative journalism (Hall 2022). Mainstream media attention was intense in February 2022, when a few thousand 'anti-mandate' protesters were in Canberra. Despite the relative lack of interest in the cause of the protesters among the Australian population as a whole, Prime Minister Morrison made a point of supporting their right to protest, and took pains to point out that the mandates had only been enacted by State governments. The mainstream media played up the protest and Morrison's statements, while most people seemed to regard the whole affair as a bit of a joke (Wallace 2022). The social media response to the antics of the cookers in Canberra was scathing.

By the time of the 2022 election campaign, during which many voters had already recorded their verdict well before polling day, COVID-19 issues were no longer as central as they had once been. Life had moved on for many Australians. The prospect of conflict with China, Australia's number one trading partner, and the Special Military Operation by Russia in the disputed parts of Ukraine, were both matters of great concern. Even more pressing was the aftermath of unprecedented weather events and catastrophic floods, clearly signs of the rapidly worsening climate emergency (Biddle and Jackman 2022: 7). During the campaign, memories of the so-called 'Black Summer' 2019-2020 bushfires, and Prime Minister Morrison's poor response to this earlier climate disaster, featured prominently on social media. The populist theme of climate denialism, which was previously such a feature of the rhetoric of Pauline Hanson's One Nation and the UAP, had now become an albatross around the neck of these politicians in the eyes of many potential supporters. Images of rural working class 'battlers' wiped out by floods, or earlier images of such people refusing to shake hands with Prime Minister Morrison after the bushfires, undercut the trope of urban climate change activists being the enemy of the virtuous rural workers. This had been in play during the 2019 election campaign, when Greens Party supporters staged an ill-considered 'tour' of rural Queensland, but there was no repetition in 2022. Last-minute stunts, such as the attempt by Morrison to wedge his opponents on gender politics, via support of LNP candidate Katherine Deves, and even an announced refugee boat arrival on polling day itself, were of no avail.

The final outcome of the 2022 elections provides observers of Australian politics with much food for thought, especially regarding the trends within populism (Beaumont 2022). The Australian Labor Party won the election, and Anthony Albanese became the new prime minister. The defeated LNP did not dispute the election count, and their downcast supporters did not storm Parliament House in anger. In Queensland, Pauline Hanson, the original 1996 populist, was re-elected to the Senate, but only by the narrowest of margins, and none of the other populist politicians did well. In the seat of Hughes, Craig Kelly won barely seven per cent of the votes, and after preferences were distributed, it was an easy win for the preselected Liberal Party candidate. George Christensen also bowed out of politics, although Bob Katter retained his unique seat. The UAP did just manage to secure a single Senate seat, in Western Australia, although the Party has subsequently become deregistered. While Labor won an absolute majority of Lower House seats, with eight seats taken from the government, the LNP Coalition lost another ten seats, mostly to the Greens Party and so-called 'teal' independent candidates (Beaumont 2022). Strategic and tactical voting in specific lower house seats meant that the primary ALP vote in total was unusually low, and this may have misled some observers into thinking that there was a large swing against both of the major parties. The reduced ALP primary vote may still be a problem, because it remains unclear how much of it was due to strategic and tactical voting. The Greens and teal candidates who won, and others such as the successful Senate candidate for the Capital Territory, David Pocock, were popular because of their strong commitment on climate change, and on greenhouse gas reduction strategies (Biddle and Jackman 2022: 7-8). While Labor was not as strong on climate, they did promise to 'end the climate wars' and to actively encourage renewables, at a time of extreme events such as floods, and the earlier fires.

The key strategy of all populists, which involves pitting the virtuous 'ordinary folks' against the educated urban 'elites', clearly ran out of steam in the Australian 2022 elections. The results for the flagship populists, PHON and the UAP, were disappointing. The 'populist-lite' stance of Morrison, and Coalition candidates in general, did nothing to save them from a devastating defeat at the polls. After nine years and three prime ministers, the Coalition appeared to be past its 'use by' date, and the ALP seemed to be united

and confident under Albanese. Media support for Morrison was of little assistance, including the powerful Murdoch media, which has always been happy to assist populist causes, in the name of increased audience and revenue (Loewenstein 2022). Populists may have confused and alienated many voters, by lurching from the older type of populism, which attacked 'elites' on the territory of social progressivism, to the COVID-19-related populism of the cookers, as represented by Craig Kelly. Libertarians and some others might have been offended by the public health measures, but most citizens probably found these predictable and comforting in a time of pandemic. Looking to the future, it is by no means certain that populism has had its day. The ALP remains the Party of Hawke and Keating, which embraced economic rationalism, later termed neoliberalism, and reduced the institutional strength of unions, and this does not augur well for those who have been hoping for socio-economic improvements. Working class disillusion and disappointment, if it does follow, is the very thing upon which middle-class populism feeds and thrives, and populism itself is a mere hair's breadth away from fascism.

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Simple

A strelitzia bud & I are working it out.
Its sister was stolen, perhaps
some teenager sawed it off,
bound to the parameters of new love.

Loss of colour leaves holes in the eye,
the adamance of that crest
does not belong in ordinary lives.

I feed manure & hose regularly
whilst still not understanding the chemistries of beauty.
A new stalk arches up & out…
crane-like this construction will take weeks.

Woke up aflame, does the spring breed wild dreams as
heat wraps the soil in the urgencies of rebirth.
There's pain too, I carry it like the compost bags.
An insect adopts a new god.
The shade kneels in prayer.

Les Wicks

The Ceasefire

All those great loves *moved on*.
No conflict there now.
Thus asserted.

Four apartments, four single men
15 square metres, a bed &
bathrooms the size of an Amazon package.

Rice & beans bubble with indignity
as one man peels the skin
from his guilt. The deeper he gouges
the closer he comes to peace.
Kids alternate weekends.

Next door another enjoys himself.
It's free but messy.
He mistakes his own echoes
for affirmation. Certainty stains the light.

The 3rd one is too old to worry. All that cancer rime
scribbled across the stucco is just another story that
accretes about the building.
He goes to work. Then comes home.

Unit 4 has a meaty jive…
anger that passes for some as sexy,
a delusion that isn't power.
He alone still believes this "scene" is temporary,
needs to bleed some more.

Les Wicks

REFEREED ARTICLE

Dancing with the Panda: Chinese Australians and the 2022 Australian election

XIANG GAO

The Chinese and broader Asian electorate in Australia has been historically fragmented. However, in the 2022 election Chinese Australian voters played a significant role in the defeat of Scott Morrison's Coalition as they swung toward Labor and independents in several constituencies. This occurred in the greater Sydney area, such as in Reid and Bennelong, as well as in Melbourne's Chisholm and Perth's Tangney. This article investigates Chinese Australians' voting patterns in the 2022 election. It argues that Chinese Australian voters, like many Australians, were concerned about Morrison's personal style and attitudes toward climate change. In this election Chinese Australians shared additional displeasure over the Morrison government's approach towards the Australia–China relationship and the changing Pacific strategic environment. Nevertheless, these attitudes do not suggest that Chinese Australian voters represent a monolithic voting bloc in the Australian electorate. There are diverse dynamics that have been manifested in Chinese Australian communities' attitudes towards key election issues, from local government to foreign policy. While Chinese Australians favoured Labor's overall multicultural and more inclusive approach, it may be too simplistic to generalise that the Chinese Australian electorate can be characterised as a traditional 'ethnic vote' in which ethnic communities are heavily influenced by issues related to their countries of origin and culture rather than their duties as Australian citizens.

KEY WORDS: Australia–China relationship; ethnic based politics; Chinese ancestry; Chinese Australians' voting patterns

Introduction

From racially motivated anti-Chinese riots in the Victorian goldfields, the Commonwealth's Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, Cold War containment and Whitlam's diplomatic détente to the recently deteriorating Australia–China relationship, successive Australian governments have been anxious about China and the Chinese presence in Australia. The concern underscores the significance of the historic relationship that China and Chinese migrants have had with the continent. Trade links with Canton (and then Hong Kong) were important across the western Pacific since the foundation of the colonies. With the arrival of significant immigrant populations in the gold rushes and the establishment of Chinatowns in major cities, Chinese migration served as a justification for the exclusionary and racist White Australia Policy. This policy was initially premised on racism and pseudo-science that underpinned a notion of 'Anglo-Saxon race patriotism' but which was later justified on ideology and the fear of communism emanating from Mao's revolutionary People's Republic of China (PRC) (Lowe, 1999: 154). This concern faded from the 1960s, which saw the replacement of the White Australia policy, the end of the Vietnam War and the start of Chinese integration into the world community. Since the 1980s, successive Labor and Coalition Governments welcomed Chinese business and immigration, and China has become Australia's leading trading partner and a major source of overseas investment. Today approximately 1.39 million individuals or 5.5 per cent of the Australian population are ethnic Chinese (Australian Bureau of Statistics ABS 2021i).

Many of these Chinese migrants have become Australian citizens and have had an increasing importance in the electoral calculations of political parties and candidates. While Chinese Australian voters initially leaned in a pro-Labor direction in the 1980s-90s, since the early 2000s voting patterns and attitudes of the community were similar to English-speaking Australians such that these voters were not considered to be a traditional ethnic voting bloc (Jiang 2016). Instead, individual voter preferences and attitudes were manifested in Chinese Australian communities' experiences and attitudes towards key election and public policy issues, from local government to foreign policy. For example, in 2016 the top ten electorates by Chinese language split their representation between the Liberals (five seats) and Labor (four seats) and the Greens (one seat) (Bowe 2019). Yet at the same time, Chinese voters' political attitudes and participation also reflect their backgrounds and interests as a non-English speaking minority. In some instances, these interests and shared attitudes

have caused them to become a significant voting bloc or key constituency in some electorates (Bowe 2019). The increased sense of political efficacy and the fact that these Chinese Australian voters often are found in a number of key marginal seats have brought issues that are more specifically valued by the Chinese Australians community to a higher salience.

In the 2022 election, voters of Chinese ancestry played a significant role in the defeat of Scott Morrison's Coalition as they swung their vote towards Labor and independents in several constituencies. This occurred in the greater Sydney area where the Coalition could ill afford to lose, such as in Reid and Bennelong, and in Melbourne's Chisholm. Additionally, the Perth electorate of Tangney swung to the ALP. This article investigates the role that Chinese Australian voters played in the 2022 Australian election. It argues that Chinese Australian voters, like many Australians, were concerned about Morrison's personal style and attitudes toward climate change. In this election, some Chinese Australians shared additional displeasure over the rocky state of the Australia–China relationship and the changing Pacific strategic environment. Yet these attitudes should not suggest that Chinese voters necessarily represent a coherent ethnic voting bloc within the Australian electorate. While Chinese Australians overall supported Labor's multicultural and inclusive approach, it may be too simplistic to generalise that the Chinese Australian section of the electorate can be characterised as an 'ethnic vote' in which the ethnic communities are heavily influenced by issues related to their country of origin and culture rather than their identity as Australian citizens.

The plural nature of Chinese Australian voters

Politicians and political parties across a range of democratic countries have long appreciated that immigrant groups can be a ready source of votes. Ethnic-based politics, particularly at the local level, have historically been a place where immigrant groups were provided the space to politically organise and mobilise according to their needs and interests. Unlike the United States and Canada, however, in Australia, which experienced its first large wave of non-English speaking immigrants after WWII, immigrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds have generally tended not to engage in ethnic-based politics or vote as a bloc (Wisconsin 1973: 132-5). This is also the case with Chinese voters, though less than other immigrant communities (Gao 2020). In contrast to some other immigrants, Chinese Australians initially tended to be pro-Labor in the latter part of the last century. Many of these voters benefited from the Hawke/Keating Governments' support of multiculturalism, increased emphasis on Australia's Asian ties and efforts to facilitate the settlement of Chinese students after Tiananmen Square, and as such were sympathetic to Labor. Later, despite the rise in anti-Asian sentiment exemplified by Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party and the Coalition's initial hesitance to disavow explicitly some of One Nation's anti-immigrant or anti-Asian positions, they have tended to vote less as a bloc and more in line with their underlying structural position in the economy, class structure and/or their individual predilections.

With the rapid increase of Chinese migration since the turn of the century it is unsurprising that political parties and politicians would see these ethnic voters as a source of potential votes. This trend is magnified by the concentration of Chinese Australian voters in several urban seats that have been considered crucial by both parties to secure a parliamentary majority. Yet this task has been made more difficult by the diversity within the community. Pan-Chinese ethnic appeals that centre on China and the PRC-Australian relationship tend to be moderated by the fact that many Chinese Australians are not from the PRC. As of 2018, of the Australians who report Chinese ancestry, 59 per cent were born outside mainland China (ABS 2018). Other ethnic Chinese settling in Australia come from Hong Kong, Taiwan and the 'Nanyang' countries of Southeast Asia (e.g. Singapore and Malaysia) (Sigler et al. 2018). Approximately 677, 960 of the 1.39 million ethnic Chinese were born in Mainland China (ABS 2021j). More importantly, political attitudes of Chinese Australians have increasingly resembled the general Australian population such that ethnic-based appeals can have little traction (Gao 2020: 156-163). This is not to say that specific discrimination against Sino-centric issues will not be of concern to the Chinese Australian community in a particular election or when public policy more generally is deemed important.

Like other Australians, Chinese Australians are sensitive to discrimination. In the Lowy Institute's 2022 study, one in five Chinese Australians (18 per cent) reported they had been physically threatened or attacked because of their Chinese heritage (Lowy Institute 2022: 10) or had experienced the dominant Anglo majority's complaints directed against the Asian migrant community or China generally (Lowy Institute 2022: 7). For example, in the 2019 New South Wales election Labor leader Michael Daley complained about 'our kids' fleeing Sydney stating that 'they're being replaced by young people, from typically Asia, with PhDs' (ABC News 2019). He later issued an unequivocal apology in the face of a significant loss of support in electorates with large Chinese populations (Davies 2019). This statement was seen as contributing to NSW Labor's defeat in the 2019 election. Chinese Australians' sensitivity is also evident in their higher level of trust in the Chinese government to 'act responsibly

in the world' and their higher level of 'confidence in Chinese President Xi Jinping', compared to the rest of the Australian population (Lowy Institute 2022: 25-6).

As noted by Jia Gao, there are three elements that need to be considered when examining Chinese Australians' voting patterns (Gao 2020: 162-3). First, while Chinese migrants initially voted predominantly for Labor, this is no longer the case, and voting patterns have moved towards a more interest-based and ideological model of voting preference. Second, changes in the socio-economic status of Chinese migrants have led to a change in the political inclinations and shifting political allegiances across the Chinese Australian population as a whole, as well as in contested marginal districts:

> These changes have, unfortunately, been disregarded by those who view Chinese migrants as 'others', and those who have no real knowledge about the community. The misunderstanding resulting from this unfamiliarity has, for years, been haunting the mainstream elites with notions that Chinese Australians are natural supporters of left-leaning ideas, including the Chinese ruling party (Gao 2020: 162).

Finally, there has been a misconception that the earlier pro-Labor bent of Chinese migrants was the result of a high level of Labor Party activity in the community and the conscious cultivation by Labor to mobilise this ethnic vote. Instead, Gao argues that the higher level of political activity and recruitment by Labor masks the underlying plurality of party preferences in the Chinese Australian population (2020).

Chinese Australian voters in 2022 election

Scott Morrison led the Coalition to a defeat in the 2022 Australian federal election, winning 58 seats (42 Liberal and/or LNP and 16 National) in a 151-seat chamber, and the lowest proportion of seats in the House of Representatives since the Liberal Party first contested the 1946 election (Curtis 2022). The stewardship of the national economy and public health featured alongside a low unemployment rate, economic recovery and low COVID-19 mortality as the Coalition's major planks in its re-election bid. Nevertheless, Morrison's tenure and policy suite had been controversial. The AUKUS defence pact resulted in a diplomatic rift with France over an earlier submarine deal. The increasing tensions with China, the government's slow responses to fire and flood and the climate target discussion associated with them, and the treatment of female MPs and government employees combined with a general ambivalence to or distaste for Morrison's personal character to make a Coalition victory difficult (BBC News 2022). Given the circumstances, a Labor victory was anticipated. Though the Labor Party won with an outright majority of seats in the House of Representatives (77 of 151), the election has witnessed the rise of independents and the Greens at the cost of the two major parties. In the Senate, the crossbench, especially the Greens, can potentially shape the policy agenda and outcomes, as neither the Coalition nor the Labor Party commands a majority. As such, the 2022 election reflects a growing diversity of views and interests in the parliament.

According to the 2021 census, 1.39 million Australian residents identify themselves as having Chinese ancestry, about 5.5 per cent of the population (ABS 2021i). Given this population size and the location of Chinese Australian voters who were eligible to vote in the 2022 federal election, Chinese Australian voters are not numerous enough to determine the election's outcome, except for those electorates where 10-20 per cent of voters have Chinese ancestry, namely Chisholm, Reid, Banks, Parramatta, Kooyong, Tangney, Deakin and Bennelong (Fang et al. 2022). For example, both Reid and Chisholm had swings of over 8 per cent toward the Labor Party, a swing much higher than the national average of 3.66 per cent (Fang et al. 2022). Chinese Australian communities, like the rest of the country, were concerned about issues such as health, climate change, education, COVID-19 policy and the economy (Nicholas et al. 2022). What appeared more salient about this voting group was the great amount of attention it paid to the Morrison government's China policy and Australia China relations. Though there has been no substantive policy difference towards China since Labor took power, the Coalition government's rhetoric, as a part of the Australian response to the increasingly assertive Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been poorly received by many Chinese Australian voters, especially when such rhetoric had the potential to encourage expression of racism (McGuirk 2022).

National public opinion polls of Chinese Australian voters

There is little data on the political views or opinions of Chinese Australian voters. Some polling indicative of the views of Australian Chinese voters has been done by Media Today Group, a major Chinese media outlet in the Australian market which polled Chinese Australians prior to the elections in 2019 and 2022. In 2022 Media Today Group introduced the survey as the largest national poll targeting solely Chinese Australians. The group solicited participants widely through various platforms, such as WeChat, a Chinese instant messaging and social media app, and participants self-selected to participate; participation was encouraged using $35 discount vouchers. These polls suggest a significant shift of support between the two major parties but a relatively stable trend as to the issues of concern — save for China–Australia relations.

The 2019 poll indicated participants would vote for the Coalition (63 per cent) by a wide margin over Labor (27 per cent). In 2022 this margin essentially reversed, with 74 per cent of voters favouring Labor to 18 per cent for Coalition. The top priority election issues in 2019 were the economy and taxation, followed by Australia–China relations, health, income and social welfare; in 2022, Australia–China relations became the primary concern, overtaking the other five items that still remained high on the list (Sohu News 2019). In 2022, 62 per cent of the 7,322 survey participants wanted to see that Australia and China 'agree to disagree' and 'improve the bilateral relations' and 25 per cent supported the option to 'fully restore the bilateral relationship and resume Australia's honeymoon period with China', while only 11 per cent of participants believed that the Australian government should 'uphold the current government [Morrison's] stance and protect Australian national interest' (Media Today Group 2022). Defence, infrastructure and the environment have consistently been the least concerning matters for Chinese Australian voters in both 2019 and 2022 according to the survey (Media Today Group 2022).

This survey appears to confirm that the Coalition's fierce rhetoric towards China is a vote-losing stance in the Chinese Australian community. Indeed, the results even concur with some negative assessments concerning the Chinese communities' commitment to Australian values as only 11 per cent of participants supported a statement to protect and promote Australian national interests in Australia–China relations. However, the reliability of this data is open to question. First, the self-selected polling method undermines the validity of the overall survey results. Second, the surveys do not provide the full account of diverse groups and communities with Chinese heritage. Though 68 per cent of the survey participants have lived in Australia for more than 10 years, only 0.53 per cent of participants were born in Australia. Additionally, the survey was conducted in simplified Chinese characters, which means that it is likely that the majority of participants were the first generation of immigrants to Australia from mainland China. As such, second and subsequent generations of immigrants and immigrants with Chinese ancestry from outside the Chinese mainland, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, may be insufficiently represented in the results. Lastly, the questionnaire also solely emphasised attitudes on 'ethnic-related' issues (e.g. the likelihood of supporting candidates who were 'friendly to Chinese community' and candidates 'with Chinese or Asian background') and Australian government's China policy, which does not bring other salient domestic issues or attitudes into the focus.

A better measure of Chinese Australian effects on the 2022 election involves an investigation of some marginal divisions where the Chinese Australian voters have affected the election results. Interpreting the data pertaining to these particular divisions has limitations given the lack of local exit surveys, but there can be little doubt that the Chinese Australian voters' attitudes impacted the election outcome.

Reid, inner-west Sydney, NSW

The inner-western Sydney seat of Reid was a Labor stronghold until it was lost to Liberal candidate Craig Laundy in 2013. This Coalition strength continued when the Liberal Party maintained a margin of 3.2 per cent at the 2019 election. The 2022 election, however, witnessed a two-party preferred (2PP) swing to Labor of 8.4 per cent to produce a Labor margin of 5.2 per cent (Green 2022a). In the 2021 census, 23.2 per cent of Reid residents identified themselves as having Chinese ancestry, much higher than New South Wales generally (7.2 per cent) and nationally (5.5 per cent) (ABS 2021b). When comparing the results from the Australian Electoral Commission's 52 polling places for Reid against the demographic data, it is evident that many voting districts that witnessed a large swing to the Labor Party included a high proportion of voters of Chinese heritage (Australian Electoral Commission 2022a). For example, in Burwood, there are 32.8 per cent of residents with Chinese ancestry (ABS 2021c). Across the three polling places in Burwood, the highest swing to Labor was 11.74 per cent (Australian Electoral Commission 2022a). The polling booth in Wentworth Point North, which has 31.6 per cent Chinese ancestry, recorded a 13.4 per cent swing to Labor (ABS 2021d). Chinese Australians make up 43.2 per cent of the population in Rhodes where the polling booth documented an 11.67 per cent swing towards the Labor Party (ABS 2021e).

Chisholm, eastern Melbourne, Victoria

Liberal candidate Gladys Liu won Chisholm in 2019 with a slim 0.5 per cent margin. In the 2022 election, Australian Labor Party candidate Carina Garland took the electorate with a 6.9 per cent swing, leaving her with a 6.4 per cent margin (Green 2022b). Chisholm residents with Chinese heritage make up 28.9 per cent of the population of the electorate, considerably higher than Victoria generally (6.6 per cent) (ABS 2021f). Cross referencing the election results from 51 polling places in Chisholm and the electorate's demographic composition, we see that the greater swing towards Labor (Australian Electoral Commission 2022b) occurred in those polling booths where the Chinese Australian population was relatively higher. For example, in Box Hill the Chinese Australian population constitutes 39 per cent (ABS 2021g). Among the four polling places in Box Hill the swing to Labor varied from 5.91 per cent to 10.98 per cent (Australian Electoral Commission 2022b). The largest Labor swing occurring

in one of the seven polling places in Glen Waverley was 11.83 per cent, and similar to Box Hill, 38 per cent of the population in Glen Waverley area identified themselves as having Chinese ancestry (ABS 2021h).

The analysis of the Australian Electoral Commission's results and the census data in Reid (NSW) and Chisholm (VIC) reveal a positive correlation between the swing to the Labor Party and the population size of Chinese Australians in those electorates. This positive correlation is further supported by the national election results and census data (Table 1). However, the statistics available do not provide a firm answer to whether Chinese Australian voters have formed a voting bloc that can sufficiently influence the election outcomes in the marginal areas or to what extent the Coalition's policy rhetoric towards China has been a 'turn off' for voters of Chinese heritage. Chinese Australian voters have diverse political views. The Chinese mainland immigrants who gained asylum under Hawke after Tiananmen Square tend to hold negative opinions of the PRC while maintaining the lingering gratitude and appreciation towards the Labor Party (Sohu News 2019). In contrast, the more recent mainland immigrants tend to be more sympathetic or even supportive to the PRC leadership. At the same time these newer migrants have class and other significant differences that make them less likely to favour Labor; many migrated with considerable funding, investment or skills, and have been attracted to the Coalition's promotion of small business and middle-class notions of owning property (Sohu News 2019). People migrating from Hong Kong and Taiwan (together approximately 11 per cent of ethnic Chinese) have been concerned about the recent Chinese government's crackdown of the democratic movement in Hong Kong, its assertive behaviour in the cross-strait relations and the implications of Taiwan's future (ABS 2021j). Ethnic Chinese people from Southeast Asia, such as Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, have more mixed feelings towards China, also shared by many other Australian businesspeople: many enjoy the business opportunities brought by China's economic rise, while being wary of China's increasingly repressive political environment and the pressure on businesses (Sakkal 2022).

Despite these caveats it is nevertheless evident from the brief review of the data above that the matter of Australia–China relations was an important election issue for Chinese Australian voters, a circumstance that was widely covered by the media before the election and in its immediate aftermath. Many voters expressed their concern over the 'anti-Asian hate' fuelled by the Coalition's language that did not sufficiently distinguish the Chinese Communist Party and Chinese government from Chinese Australians (Rachwani 2022). Major media outlets have attributed many Chinese communities' rejection of Liberal Party candidates to the Morrison government's China policy. Nevertheless, as a diverse ethnic group with different countries of origin and generations of immigrants, Chinese Australian voters have grown increasingly sophisticated in their voting choices and patterns. A simple dichotomous single-issue explanation is insufficient and does not account for some switch to independents and Greens in the 2022 election. Put another way, the Chinese–Australian relationship was one factor in voting decisions, and an important one, it seems, but was unlikely to be the only issue that swung large numbers of Chinese Australian voters towards Labor, independents or smaller parties. ABC News conducted a series of interviews among various Chinese communities from February to May 2022. Chinese voters voiced their interest in aged care, climate change, education, economic recovery, a diverse and inclusive Australian government and society (Zhao et al. 2022). Across the primary election issues (such as cost of living, aged care and climate change) there is significant congruence between the second and subsequent generations of Chinese Australians, on the one hand, and the rest of the country (Zhao et al. 2022). Some of the interviewees in these ABC interviews stated that the matter of Chinese–Australian relations was an 'underlying issue' but not a 'make-or-break reason' for them to change votes towards the Greens and independents (Fang et al. 2022).

Discussion: Chinese Australians as a voting bloc?

Immigrant populations and voters often exhibit some reluctance to socialise with democratic politics in their new countries (White et al. 2008). Local citizens sometimes interpret immigrants' cultural and social organisations and political activity as a threat to local power structures and democratic politics. Given the historic anxiety that China and Chinese migrants have had in Australia, the increased presence of Chinese voters and political influence has led to perceptions that ethnic Chinese are seeking to influence Australian politics in a manner contrary to Australian national interests or values. This perception is underscored by widely publicised media reports that Chinese donors gave just over $12.6 million to the Australian political candidates/parties between 2000 and 2016, representing 79.3 per cent of all foreign donations, despite the fact that overall foreign donations are a small portion of total donations. In 2015-16, foreign donations were 2.6 per cent of total donations to political parties, and in the seven election periods from 1998-99 to 2016, foreign donations have only amounted to between 0.03 per cent and 6.13 per cent of all donations (Gomes 2017). A more extreme version of this thesis is that some Chinese community members facilitate corruption (debasing Australian political processes) or are CCP 'agents' wanting to exert influence in Australian politics. For example, Clive Hamilton writes that a systematic Chinese government campaign of espionage and influence peddling is leading to 'the erosion of Australian sovereignty' (Welch 2018). These concerns

Table 1: Election results and swings in seats where residents recorded higher proportions of Chinese ancestry than the national average (5.5 per cent)

Commonwealth Electoral Division	Residents with Chinese ancestry (%)	Liberal Party swing (%) Nat. av. -5.74	Previous Party 2019	Successful Party/candidate 2022
Banks NSW	20.0	-5.7	Liberal	Liberal
Barton NSW	19.0	-7.3	ALP	ALP
Bennelong NSW	28.8	-7.9	Liberal	ALP
Bradfield NSW	24.5	-15.3	Liberal	Liberal
Fowler NSW	12.9	-12.9	ALP	Independent
Parramatta NSW	14.8	-6.3	ALP	ALP
Reid NSW	23.2	-10.4	Liberal	ALP
Chisholm VIC	28.9	-7.7	Liberal	ALP
Deakin VIC	13.0	-6.2	Liberal	Liberal
Kooyong VIC	19.0	-6.5	Liberal	Independent
Higgins VIC	10.1	-5.8	Liberal	ALP
Hotham VIC	14.8	-8.1	ALP	ALP
Menzies VIC	26.7	-8.8	Liberal	Liberal
Swan WA	8.3	-12.7	Liberal	ALP
Tangney WA	16.5	-11.3	Liberal	ALP

Source: 2021 Census Data, Australian Bureau of Statistics; 2022 Seat Summary of House of Representatives, Australian Electoral Commission.

seemingly increased with several high-profile scandals (such as Sam Dastyari and Huang Xiangmo) (Lo 2017), the larger influence China now exerts over the Australian economy, the recent deterioration of China–Australia relations, and the PRC's foreign policy moves in the Pacific Island region. There is also a perception that Chinese businesspersons would use corrupt methods to secure requisite governmental development or business permits. For example, in July 2022, the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption held a public hearing on whether former Hurstville and Georges River councillors accepted kickbacks and other illicit favours to support various developments between 2014 and 2021 (Shams 2022). It is unlikely that these perceptions and incidents, which can segue into racialist discourse and discrimination, will significantly tamp down Chinese Australians' political participation in the long term. However, in certain instances, they may be used as a wedge or as a means of political parties' undermining the support for a candidate who benefits from significant Chinese Australian support in their particular electorate.

One impact of such perceptions is that political parties have been cautious about making explicit appeals to Chinese voters for fear of being labelled 'pro-Beijing' (Tobin and Power 2019). At the same time, this very insecurity and potential discrimination arising from such perceptions and the concomitant perceived need for ensuring political support have made the Chinese community a major source of campaign funding (Tobin and Power 2019). And where Chinese Australian candidates have been nominated, they are often placed by parties in unwinnable divisions. This avoidance of 'pro-Beijing' attitudes can also spill over into 'tokenist' campaigns and tropes in an attempt to sway the Chinese Australian electorates in their favour. For example, the tokenist campaign strategy is evidenced in the 2019 federal election when Labor sought to highlight its commitment to multiculturalism and its opposition to the repeal of Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act in those electorates with significant Chinese Australian voters (Hutcheon and Hui 2019). From this perspective, the attempts to attract Chinese Australian voters using such issues as multiculturalism and migration assume that these are the only issues that Chinese Australians, as 'ethnics' and 'migrants', care about. Accordingly, the view is not attuned to the nature of the Chinese Australian community as a whole (Lo 2019), and, to that extent, it can degrade political discourse.

Perhaps the more salient question about the influence of the Chinese Australian vote in the 2022 election is whether Chinese Australians constitute a cohesive ethnic voting 'bloc' where individuals vote overwhelmingly in favour of a particular party, or according to a set of 'ethnic' issues (or in response to commonly felt discrimination) or vote for ethnic Chinese candidates without concern for political party in a consistent manner. Ethnic voting has essentially two characteristics. First, it is evident where '[m]embers of an ethnic group show an affinity for one party or the other which cannot be explained solely as a result of other demographic characteristics' (Wolfinger 1965: 896). Second, where members of an 'ethnic group will cross party lines to vote for or against a candidate

belonging to a particular ethnic group' (Wolfinger 1965: 869). Ethnic bloc voting exists when a large proportion of the ethnic electorate votes for a particular party, issue or ethnic candidate (Hass 1987: 665). Ethnic voting has long been associated with politics in many democratic states and has been studied both for its persistence (Parenti 1967) and for the lessening of the behaviour across generations (Glazer and Moynihan 1963). In many cases the existence of bloc voting is difficult to discern (Jaffrelot and Verniers 2011).

It is beyond the scope of this article to examine fully the individual-level and important structural conditions that can impact (either advantageously or disadvantageously) Chinese Australian individuals from political participation. Moreover, there is a paucity of data for Asian Australians and Chinese Australians on voting behaviour. Nevertheless, data relating to the 2022 election and previous federal elections provides for some tentative conclusions. First, it is unlikely that the Chinese Australian community is an ethnic voting bloc despite it having some significance in marginal seats. The Chinese Australian community is too diverse and fragmented for ethnically based appeals to have traction across electoral cycles. Indeed, recognising these ethnic differences among Asians is an important aspect of effective outreach, as Scott Morrison learned to his detriment when he experienced backlash after he greeted a Korean voter with a Chinese salutation while campaigning in 2019 (Folley 2019). This is particularly true given the early Australian embrace of multiculturalism as a governmental policy compared with other democratic countries. Nevertheless, this cross-community agreement may not be reflected in primary votes for a particular party, and instead, it tends to be diminished by socio-economic and individual factors. As such, an ethnic Chinese candidate is not an assured winner in a district with a large Asian or Chinese population, as is evident from the fortunes of the Hong Kong-born Liberal candidate Gladys Liu in the Chisholm electorate in Victoria.

The diverse nature of the community is exemplified by Foreign Minister Penny Wong. Wong is a long-time labour rights attorney who immigrated to Australia from Malaysia. As a senator she has not hesitated to embrace and emphasise her Chinese heritage when discussing certain policies, but she has emphasised her Malaysian heritage as well. At the same time, she has used her immigrant experience to emphasise the diversity of the Australian experience and culture within a common system of Australian norms and experiences. She told journalists on her recent visit to her hometown of Kota Kinabalu as Foreign Minister:

> This story [overcoming adverse conditions and immigration] can be told by so many Australians. We have so many Australians who were born overseas or whose parents were born overseas, who have connections with South-East Asia and other countries around the world... (Dziedzic and Barker 2022).

This diversity among the Chinese Australian community (and Asian Australian community more generally) suggests that parties would be better to eschew various electoral strategies that may essentialise and reduce Chinese Australians to a set of assumed stereotypical attitudes and policy preferences. Arguably Mr Morrison and the Coalition did not fully appreciate this diversity in the 2022 election.

Second, it appears that the historical preference Chinese Australian voters had had for Labor from the 1960s to the 1990s has dissipated. This is most evident in the marginal seats mentioned above. In these seats, Chinese Australian votes moved to Labor under Kevin Rudd and Gillard to the Coalition under Turnbull and Morrison back to Labor under Albanese in the 2022 election. These swings suggest that various structural factors that may have influenced these voters have changed, and that local issues and individual preferences have a greater impact on voting decisions. In addition, the strong showing of teal independents in some electorates with large Chinese Australian populations also suggests a growing willingness to vote for those candidates and positions that reflect alternative views to the major parties. For example, in Fowler, NSW, where the residents are 12.9 per cent ethnic Chinese and 18.9 per cent Vietnamese, independent candidate Dai Le, a community-based former ABC journalist, defeated former NSW Labor Premier Kristina Keneally. Teal independent Dr Monique Ryan claimed victory against Liberal candidate Josh Frydenberg, the sitting Treasurer, in Kooyong, Victoria, where 19 per cent of the population identify themselves as having Chinese ancestry (see Table 1). This signals that political parties must commit resources and tailor their messages more closely to the concerns and issues of particular electorates, which may include large numbers of Chinese Australian voters as well as other Asian voters, as these voters can and have recently oscillated among the parties and candidates.

Third, there are issues of particular interest to Chinese Australian voters that involve the Australia–China relations. These issues appear to be most salient in first generation voters who likely migrated recently from the PRC. The large majorities who disagreed with the Morrison government's approach to China, evidenced in the Media Today Group's polls, suggest the continued durability of these attitudes among first generation immigrants from the PRC. However, it is not clear whether the political behaviour is based on ideology (pro-PRC to the point of derogation of Australian interest), business, personal factors or fears of increased discrimination and potential violence due to the use of incendiary anti-Chinese rhetoric. Moreover, it is important to note that

criticisms of the Morrison Government's foreign policy and rhetoric towards PRC were not limited to the Chinese Australian communities. Former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, for example, stated in 2020 that he was 'puzzled' by the Coalition government's insistence on pushing China's 'buttons' as relations continued to deteriorate. Rudd noted that while many states had issues with the PRC, Morrison government's approach seemed counterproductive (Flanagan 2020; ABC News 2021). Nevertheless, it is likely that many of these attitudes exhibited by first-generation immigrants will not transfer to their Australian-born children.

Conclusion

Chinese Australian voters do not generally vote as an ethnic voting bloc nor do they appear to be solely mobilised by ethnically politically based ethnic appeals. However, it is evident that the Chinese Australian community's vote contributed to the historic defeat of the Liberal-National Coalition under Scott Morrison in 2022. Although Chinese Australian voters are not numerous enough to determine the election's direction and results, in many electorates where 10-20 percent of people have Chinese ancestry it appears that Chinese voters, more than Australian voters generally, did turn against the Liberal Party. In Chisholm and Reid, where one in four to five residents self-identified as ethnically Chinese, the swings toward the Labor Party were much higher than the national average. It is not clear if these voters felt more strongly about the state of the economy, COVID-19, climate change and Morrison's personal governance style than other Australians, yet it does seem, in the absence of any other explanation, that some Chinese Australian voters were disinclined to support Morrison because of his rhetoric towards China and Chinese Australians. Nevertheless, the extent to which these voters were crucial to Labor's 2022 majority and whether foreign policy rhetoric and Chinese–Australian relations has become a salient issue within the Chinese Australian community in coming elections warrants further research. The diversity of the Chinese community and the larger Asian community mandates that political parties should commit resources and tailor their messages more closely to the concerns and interests of particular electorates in their future campaigns.

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An Interview with Thomas Mayor

Of Torres Strait Islander heritage, Thomas Mayor was born and raised on Larrakia land (the region we call Darwin and its surrounds). Through a mixture of influences, he was drawn to working on the wharves, where he spent 16 years as a labourer. He is currently the Deputy Secretary of the Northern Territory Branch of the Maritime Union of Australia and the Union's National Indigenous Officer.

In November 2022, on Anaiwan land (in the region of New England) I interviewed Thomas Mayor by telephone when he was on Wurundjeri Country (Melbourne). We spoke about the second edition of his book, *Finding the Heart of the Nation: The Journey of the Uluru Statement from the Heart Continues*.

The following is an edited transcript of the interview.

Tim Battin: Thomas, my first question goes to a general matter about the second edition of your book, *Finding the Heart of the Nation*. The book comes about at the same time as a change of federal government. Was there already a plan to publish a second edition or did a second edition come from the fact that there was a change of government?

Thomas Mayor: No, there wasn't a plan — well, actually, I started working on it just in case. So, the book had done so well, you know it's a bestseller, and obviously there's a lot of interest about it, so in the event that the Labor Party would win the election, or even in the off chance that the Coalition changed its position, we wanted to make sure that there was an updated resource for people to learn from and to answer simple questions. There is a new section in it with a simple-as-possible Q & A section that addresses some of the concerns — and misinformation. And so, we got that ready, and I did not write the conclusion, or complete the conclusion, until after the election, until we knew what the result was.

TB: I'm glad you brought up the topic of that section because I thought it was done particularly well. Was that something that you thought needed to be added in the second edition, given the reaction to the first edition?

TM: Yes, I thought what I have learned over the years is that it's really important to keep things as simple as possible. I think I could have written that section better, actually, but I'm working on another book at the moment with Kerry O'Brien, the former journalist, and it aims to be fewer than 100 pages — 96 pages — and it will aim to make things even simpler. And part of the way we will do that is to include cartoons and infographics and anything visual that can help people to see very clearly why the referendum must succeed.

TB: Yes. Let me ask you another question about that practical information section. You say this is to ensure that the reader "is both inspired and informed", which I rather liked. What do you see as the most important areas about which activists and fellow travellers should be informed?

TM: Well, I don't think it matters who we're talking about — whether it's activists or just the general public. We know we are beginning from a place where there is great goodwill in the Australian public and what people need is the confidence that this is the right thing. So, it's not so much the debate about whether there needs to be improvement to our country and how our relations are with Indigenous peoples or whether we should be recognised. It is down to whether this does really help Indigenous people, and I think that's what we try to cover in that section.

TB: My next question is more personal, if you like. Among First Nations people with whom you are most familiar, what was the reaction to Anthony Albanese's election-night pledge to commit to the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full?

TM: It was one of great excitement. It was something we have not only been fighting for, for five years; but beyond that for over a century we have struggled for recognition and for a statement or a petition to be responded to in such a way. The Uluru Statement is one of many statements and petitions, and pretty much all of them have been dismissed and ignored. The only one that I would say is a bit different is the Barunga Statement and Hawke was the Prime Minister then, and although that is still a sad story because the promise of treaty failed and the establishment of a Voice was eventually repealed by Howard in a very tactical way — softened up the Australian public, amplified its problems, before making that move.

TB: In your book you make the point that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not homogeneous and that we shouldn't expect them to be any more than we would expect non-Indigenous people to be homogeneous, politically or otherwise. I think you are right to make that point about there being risk of internal disagreements, and consequently white fellas pointing the finger about the disagreement, and what I am really asking you is how is that risk best handled?

TM: Well, we need to overwhelm the opposition to it, and that's across the political spectrum, we need to overwhelm that opposition and, as you mentioned, Indigenous people are no more homogenous than any other group. We are as political as any other human beings. We have Indigenous people who are members of the local Liberal Party, through to the Greens, and even on the extremes of both of those, so we must overwhelm them with the truth, and the truth is on our side in this — the logic — and logic and common sense are with us as well. And also by reaching people's emotions I think as well, what motivates people to want to do this great thing, which begins with a Voice. You know all of that is important because — I'll be straight — the people that oppose it are either misinformed or they have a political agenda that is contrary to the advancement of Indigenous people and in their own self-interest, and I'd say that's on the far left and the far right. I mean how can anyone in a democracy, firstly, deny that a greater Voice in decision making and representation is not a practical thing? How can anyone deny that Indigenous people do have a rightful place in this country and should be in the constitution, and have some power in the constitution and recognition? But there we are. And how can anybody believe that Indigenous people are going to disappear off the face of the earth if we have constitutional recognition? I mean I'm talking about the argument that Indigenous people are going to lose our sovereignty somehow from this. I think it's the most ridiculous thing that could possibly be said. This is like saying that the constitution in 1901 said there's no such thing as Indigenous people then we would've just given up. I get fired up about that.

TB: As I was thinking about my questions for this interview, I thought about non-Indigenous institutions in the Australian system which are — in one sense — a Voice to parliament. For example, the office of Auditor-General is accountable to the parliament but at the same time speaks with authority. It is a channel through which opinions can be conveyed to the parliament about what is proper. We don't think of such institutions as a third chamber. We don't think of them as detracting from democracy — indeed, we see them as enhancing democracy.

TM: There's the other argument about us wanting to insert 'race' into our constitution — that this is a racist thing. We're not a different race, we're humans and we are just seeking our rightful place and the ability to speak to our special interests in this country. Because there is inequality right now. The statistics prove there is not equality and if you believe there was equality then you have to believe that Indigenous people are a different race and that somehow are innately criminal or have some flaw in our DNA that causes us to die almost 10 years younger.

TB: In some ways you have already touched on this next question, but here's a chance to pull a few things together. What do the main disagreements about how to proceed boil down to among those groups wanting more than a Voice? What are the arguments and what are the counterarguments?

TM: You mean people who say that it's too weak?

TB: Yes. People who say that it's not enough.

TM: I would agree with that sentiment that we deserve more, but it comes down to — firstly — a collective decision that was taken at Uluru. And people who wanted more, and people who thought that we should aim lower, had to reach a compromise, and that's the way collectivism works. That was hard work. And nay-sayers claiming that we should have asked for more, especially those who were in the convention — and there's few of those — are not acting in a collective way, which weakens our position. Secondly, there's the reason why the decision was made: it is strategic. What people are saying — what I think what you are alluding to — is that people say that anything that is advisory to the parliament is weak. Well, anything that is more than advisory to the parliament is weaker but that is actually impossible. And there's a very good reason why the scare-mongering from the right has been that we're calling for a third Chamber to parliament, or a right to veto, because that is more than advisory, full-stop. That's what more than advisory is. It is just not possible, not going to happen, Australians are just not going to vote for that.

TB: A particularly persuasive point you make in the book is that constitutional recognition of Voice will prevent a future government from removing or defunding its formal channels as was done in the case of ATSIC by the Howard Government. Yet you are at pains to stress that Voice is a constitutional first step to be followed by other steps.

TM: Yes, absolutely, and the Voice will decide what those steps are. Our people, through a proper collective process, through representatives who we choose and can hold to account if they are not speaking genuinely on behalf of what the grassroots say, will decide our next priorities. I mean some of the next priorities are pretty obvious: addressing the issues of the justice system; addressing housing in our communities; how various programs are running our communities, where money is spent — all of these things are common issues across all of our communities, across the continent. And, you know, it's pretty easy to work out what we're going be speaking about.

TB: Yes, indeed. Your approach can be characterised as one step at a time, in the best sense of the phrase. If we do succeed in establishing a Voice to parliament, how do you see further processes, such as treaty and truth, unfolding?

TM: I think much more effectively, by which I mean we will be able to reach outcomes sooner once the Voice is established. You see, truth telling alone does not change things. We do. It's our Voice, it's our political influence. It's our ability to affect laws and policies and to leverage our position where needed: that's what makes change. The truth is part of change. But the truth alone doesn't change anything. It is like how you think about a workplace. The truth of a workplace is that the workers provide the labour that produces the goods and the services, and, without workers, the employers have nothing. As powerful as that truth is, on its own it doesn't change things. It is our ability to organise the structure, the representation, and to use our Voice — our workers' Voice — to get the outcomes.

TB: The truth is a vehicle, in a way?

TM: Yes. It's a tool; it's leverage.

The last thing I would just like to add is a comment about the cost of failure. We must motivate people to put their shoulder to the wheel and work bloody hard to get a successful outcome in the referendum which will be held as soon as late 2023. Because the cost of failure of this new truth of this nation is that the Australian people have refused to acknowledge — officially refused by referendum — to acknowledge that Indigenous people were here and that we continue to be here and that we have a special place in this country. It's a denial of recognition, it's a denial of our sovereignty. Secondly, the new truth becomes that the Australian people again officially through referendum have decided that Indigenous people — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people — should not be heard, should not be consulted, shouldn't have the decency of a Voice before decisions are made about us.

Dwellings

cathedral
please enter
via another door

courtyard
feet echo
feet

doors closed
a squirrel
on duty

the priest
skips up the flagged steps
two at a time

catechism
I believe . . .
in as little as possible

looking up
at the vast ceiling – hammocks
for refugees?

lilies
a dangerous
scent

*

cool breeze
robes on the Buddha's statue
ruffle

a pair of socks
draped
on the bonsai

beware
pick-
pockets

the orange-robed monk
teaches
through a loud-hailer

Owen Bullock

Bagru: A story of block-printed cloth

I am a soft cotton cloth that carries patterns
on my textured skin like language inside sand-filled mouths.
That sits in meditation with colour in waist-deep water baths.
That dries and shrinks in the Indian summer, on rooftops,
lets air permeate through my pores and billow under me gently.

My floral motifs, veining, imperfect, are endearingly human.
– this curled petal, this folded line, this bleeding colour. This repeated
sense of failing, over and over. This fragility. In this ancient art of binding realities,
I change hands, become canvas. Become the instrument and the medium.
Become the voice of the storyteller. Become rapt in my own unfurling.

The printer thump-thumps his brand on my skin with hand-carved blocks
of teak dipped in natural dye. With intricate designs like rising mandalas,
of runny clay made smooth by repeated sifting through muslin, the artisan
builds his design. Then I am dusted with sawdust. Then I soak inside vats of indigo.
Then I become an outpouring of what has been carried inside the heart.

I become a reflection, a nurturing, a systematic kneading and prodding
of that which has been carefully handed down from generation to generation
for countless years. I am washed and worked, washed and printed, washed
till my supple skin speaks. Yields to the calling and blooms in colour and expression -
a rich vocabulary of patterns and designs that sing.

Here, drying on the rooftop of the brightly painted two-storey concrete building
in a small village in Jaipur, dense with crowded homes, and brimming with life
that occludes the distant landscape, city life one length of a desert away,
I am the fading heart and voice. A fluttering block-printed cloth that catches
on the breeze, and someday there won't be pegs to hold back.

Lakshmi Kanchi

Is this

what happens to unmake the certain
bodied in breath? Language assumes
meaning. 'Human', a word, adheres to
type, dissembling when a voice speaks

multiplicity. Does an occupying tongue
shake off the unsettlement of the real? What
awakens? A little fuel burns
the nose and throats a name. Who

brays like a siren, picking up another
breathless patient? The hoon, out of bed, is
revving the joy of curfewed resistance.

Anne Elvey

REFEREED GENERAL ARTICLE

Women and Nonviolent Resistance to Nazism in WWII: Media, sabotage, smuggling and hiding

MARTY BRANAGAN

This article aims to add to the small body of literature on non-violent resistance to Nazism and help reverse historiographic gender imbalance by highlighting the contribution of women active in the resistance to Nazism. It focuses on the use of underground media, the smuggling and hiding of people and sabotage. It considers whether sabotage can be construed as non-violent in some contexts and concludes by evaluating the contribution of women's non-violent resistance to Nazism.

KEY WORDS: Non-violent action, women, Resistance, Nazism, Sabotage, Smuggling and Hiding

Introduction

There is a widespread misconception that WWII Nazism was only overcome through violence, mostly performed by men. Both nonviolent action and the activities of women are often dismissed or overlooked. In a previous article (Branagan 2022) I provided an overview of nonviolence by women in resistance to WWII Nazism and examined the connections between nonviolent and violent actions. Symbolic actions, overt non-cooperation, covert tactics, and the gathering and communicating of intelligence were examined. This article will focus on other covert means of nonviolent resistance through use of underground media, the smuggling and hiding of people, and of sabotage. It will then examine the impacts of these actions. The aims of the article are two-fold: to help reverse the historiographic gender imbalance by highlighting stories of pivotal women activists, and to add to the small body of literature about nonviolence in resistance to Nazism.

Underground media

Closely related to intelligence gathering was the underground media, a form of protest and persuasion, which gathered and disseminated information to a range of audiences for a variety of purposes. These included resisting and countering Nazi propaganda, correcting misinformation, recruiting people into the Resistance, and encouraging resistance activities. Resistance to German propaganda started in a basic way which nevertheless had an impact. Art historian and Resistance leader Agnès Humbert heard in July 1940 that 'as fast as German posters are put up in Paris they are slashed and torn down again. The people of Paris are rebelling already' (2008 [1946]: 8). Although this resistance seems minor, the news of it was enough to motivate her to return to Paris, rather than emigrating or hiding in a Provençal village, and once in Paris she began one of the first organised resistance groups. One of her early actions involved creating home-made stickers reading 'Vive le général de Gaulle' and 'Nous sommes pour le général de Gaulle', plastering them on walls in her neighbourhood and distributing them to friends to display in public urinals, telephone boxes, Métro tunnels and even German trucks (Humbert 2008 [1946]: 19). She also typed messages on banknotes – which no-one would destroy as banknotes were scarce.

Such actions were also undertaken in Berlin by women associated with the Red Orchestra, a resistance group that operated in Germany during WWII. Liane Berkowitz was the nineteen-year-old daughter of a Russian–Jewish symphony conductor. She participated in resistance activities inside Nazi Germany. She joined with art students in plastering hundreds of stickers on walls darkened by the blackout. The same night, Berkowitz and a young soldier were given a hundred handbills and told to act like young lovers, wandering from lane to lane in the Kurfürstendamm, leaving a trail of handbills in their wake (Nelson 2009: 255-6). Berkowitz was executed in August 1943. The Red Orchestra was a resistance group that operated inside Germany. Members Mildred Fish and Greta Lorke translated the banned speeches of Roosevelt and Churchill into German, and their husbands helped distribute them to various discussion circles (Nelson 2009: 106). Sophie Scholl and others from the White Rose student group also distributed fliers before their betrayal, trial and execution (Hanser 2012; Ginder 2001).

In Holland, Truus and Freddie Oversteegens began their resistance by writing pro-resistance slogans on walls, and with their mother printed illegal magazines at home on a stencil machine (Poldermans 2019: 30), while their comrade Hannie Schaft delivered *Waarheid* (Truth) and *Vrij Nederland* newspapers, and a doctor, Ada van Rossem, ran an illegal radio station from her house (Poldermans 2019: 92-4). In Belgium, 50,000 copies of a fake Le Soir, filled with anti-Nazi sentiments, were distributed on 9 November 1943 by the Front for Belgian Independence (Assouline 2009: 95).

In France, a Dernière Colonne group began with minor sabotage but turned to propaganda, beginning with graffiti in chalk before moving to leaflets, type-written tracts circulated hand-to-hand, and finally to 10,000 handbills in four different versions in six cities of the southern zone (Wieviorka 2016: 61). Charlotte Nadel was a co-founder of the resistance group Défence de la France, whose eponymous newspaper had evolved, in only two years, from '5000 copies of a primitive flier to a serious newspaper with a circulation of 150,000, as well as numerous subsidiary publications and forgery operations' (Nelson 2017: 178).

Such resistance was widespread, with 'illegal printing presses running off anti-German pamphlets in basements in the dead of night, distributed away from the gaze of the dreaded Gestapo' (Veitch 2017: 130). In 1940, there were only a few newspapers in France, but by 1944 there were 100 national and 500 regional and local papers with a distribution of over two million copies (Opar 2012). The Germans realised the importance of such activity, and instituted severe punishments including transportation to a concentration camp, or execution.

The activity was perilous in other ways, with Marie Servillat (alias 'Lucienne') having her arm crushed in 1943 in a printing press for the underground newspaper *Combat*, and on 17 June 1944 being shot in the chest and legs before being taken by the Gestapo to Grange Blanche hospital, whence she later escaped (Rossiter 1986: 150-1). Bertie Albrecht, chief of staff of *Combat*, decided to establish a social service to aid those captured and imprisoned, which became a model for other such organisations. Having escaped once from imprisonment, she was captured again on 26 May 1943 in a trap meant for her boss, Henri Frenay. Imprisoned in Fresnes, she died two days later (Rossiter 1986: 157-8).

Functions of the underground media

The underground press firstly concerned itself with the gathering of accurate military and political information to counter that being disseminated by the Germans. It offered news 'more accurate and truthful than the Germans' (Nelson 2017: 125), such as revealing that food and other shortages were due to Nazi looting rather than, as claimed, British blockades (Humbert 2008 [1946]:24-5, 38). One publication gave detailed figures about the large shipments of French food and other resources to Germany (Rossiter 1986: 146). The underground press showed the occupation and Pétainist regime as mendacious, unnatural, irrational and, importantly, reversible, positioning the resistance forces as reasonable, sensible, normal, rational and practical (Kedward in Wieviorka 2016: 63-4).

The second role of the underground media was propaganda. In addition to denouncing the Nazis, the newspapers recanted specific stories or provided different versions of events from that presented in the Nazi-controlled media. Much of it was at first tactful and occupied the middle ground regarding Pétain and the Vichy government, aiming for a gradual education of the public (Blanc 2008: 288). Newspapers initially debated whether or not to publish news about the mass exterminations of Jewish and other people or not, partly out of concern for the victims' families, but *J'Accuse* broke the story on 20 October 1942, and on 30 September 1943 Défence de la France eventually released the first photographs of a concentration camp and mass murders (Nelson 2017: 124, 178), some from a Sorbonne professor who was a prisoner of war. This was in striking contrast with the propaganda of the pro-Nazi newspaper *Le Petit Parisien*, which reported that same week that 'English, Americans and Russians Want to Dominate Europe and Make Its Inhabitants Slaves, says Monsieur von Ribbentrop' (ibid). Although the Nazis discredited Jewish people through many cultural means, such as a propaganda exhibit entitled 'Le Juif et La France', they were keen to avoid the spread of unease about inhumane treatment of Jews, aiming to eliminate them without upsetting the political equilibrium (Nelson 2017: 26). As such, they hid the truth about deportations (Nelson 2017: 62), and were desperate to prevent resistance media from exposing these atrocities.

Underground newspapers also served as recruitment tools for resistance organisations, and aimed to give the impression of a much larger movement, a self-fulfilling strategy (Hanser 2012: 212) which the Otpor movement would later use against Milosevic in Serbia. They aimed to encourage hope and optimism, and champion the notion that France was not defeated as long as there were daily acts of resistance, refusal, noncooperation and defiance – preferably organised and displaying discipline and vigilance. These instructions were given, in the case of *Resistance*, in the name of a National Committee of Public Safety which, by presenting itself as a responsible, authoritative, energetic, courageous organisation, situated itself as an 'expression of a clandestine structure that was already established' (Blanc 2008: 287).

A related function was the encouragement of demonstrations and other resistance activities, ideally thoughtful, strategic and effective ones. Wives and mothers were encouraged to demonstrate for additional food rations, such as by the women's publication *Femmes Françaises*, issued by the Union des Femmes Françaises. On July 14th (Bastille Day) 1944, women were urged to place red, white and blue flowers on war monuments and then to march to the prefectures demanding bread (Rossiter 1986: 146). Such overt resistance was a concern to the Nazis and their desires to appear legitimate (Summy 1995).

Impact of media

Underground media were 'the first means of action and for many militants the only likelihood of practical action for many months' (Bourdet, cited in Wieviorka 2016: 64), thereby combatting despair, apathy, and feelings of powerlessness. Even when they started small, and their impacts were not obvious, the very fact of clandestine newspapers had a large psychological impact, giving tangible proof of active dissenting groups, setting examples and offering encouragement and ideas for strategic action (Blanc 2008: 289). They 'talked up' a vast anti-racist movement which would save many lives covertly (Nelson 2017: 107).

Humbert described an early tract, '33 conseils à l'occupé ('33 Hints to the Occupied')' as:

> a glimmer of light in the darkness. … Now we know for certain that we are not alone. There are other people who think like us, who are suffering and organising the struggle: soon a network will cover the whole of France, and our little group will be just one link in a mighty chain. We are absolutely overjoyed (Humbert 2008 [1946]: 14).

Soon afterwards, radio was her 'sole pleasure', with a De Gaulle speech inspiring her: 'I feel I have come back to life. A feeling I thought had died forever stirs within me again: hope. … I decided not to put an end to everything after all. He has given me hope, and nothing in the world can extinguish that hope now' (Humbert 2008 [1946]: 7). This belief in the future that was encouraged by media was 'an absolutely essential weapon in their arsenal, without which nothing was possible' (Blanc 2008: 297).

Underground newspapers impressed potential recruits as evidence of brave people taking risks distributing banned or unauthorised publications. Those perils conferred a prestige and credibility beyond ordinary demonstrations: 'the freedom to speak under threat precedes and authenticates, by that very means, what it authorises itself to say' (Aglan, cited in Wieviorka 2016: 64). They also aided the movement's strategising and directions:

> The press became the matrix of movements that were destined to prosper. In fact, the print media obliged promoters to clarify their thinking, define their strategy, and speak clearly to the general public, who had to be persuaded before they could be mobilized. … [T]he underground press restored a lost political complexity and allowed them to make choices and no longer simply submit (Wieviorka 2016: 63).

Overcoming the logistical difficulties of creating media – setting up organisations, building trust and distribution networks, obtaining scarce paper and outlawed printing presses, finding warehouses and office guards — often led to other resistance activities such as sabotage. They reinforced cohesion, solidarity, identity and complicity in risky endeavours. Eyewitness accounts of deportations published by *Solidarité* were uncensored and 'the closest thing to contemporary news coverage that the event would receive', making 'a major impact' (Nelson 2017: 92-3). Media often had strong moral authority, such as Christian reviews *Temps nouveau and Esprit, Cahier du Témoignage Chrétien*: 'Thanks to that opinion column, for four years the Christian world would be able to counter Nazism and Pétainism with the force of its word' (Wieviorka 2016: 63).

Hiding and smuggling

Hiding, escaping and using false identities are not usually classified as tools of nonviolence, but when 'a regime seeks the arrest, internment or perhaps extermination of a particular group' they do constitute nonviolent action (Sharp 1980: 313), within the category of noncooperation. Women played a prominent part in smuggling and hiding Jewish people and other evaders from the Holocaust. This ranged from individuals such as Hannie Schaft hiding Jews at her parents' house and elsewhere (Poldermans 2019: 18, 29), to movements such as the National Movement Against Racism led by Suzanne Spaak, which engaged in organised, exemplary and courageous work in and around Paris (Nelson 2017: 105).

As with other women resisters, Spaak demonstrated exceptional social intelligence, networking and recruiting skills, bringing together women from all classes, including the Jewish communist immigrant Miriam Sokol, with their friendship and humanitarian common ground transcending their political and ideological differences – in contrast to their husbands' mutual animosity (Nelson 2017: 9-10). Spaak also recruited Jewish immigrant Sophie Schwartz, as well as social workers, clergy, scouts, officials and guards, in dangerous operations to save Jewish children (Nelson 2017). Some were smuggled to remote villages

such as Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, where more people were saved per capita than anywhere else in France, assisted by enterprising women such as Madeleine Barot and Madeleine Dreyfus, and organisations such as the Organisation de Secours aux Enfants and Cimade, (Moorehead 2015).

Women also helped keep downed airmen and escaped prisoners from incarceration, and facilitated their return to active service:

> The German victory created an immediate need for organized operations that would help Allied soldiers and sympathizers escape to Britain. The earliest efforts by patriots wanting to do something for the Allies were feeding, sheltering and transporting the fugitives they met more or less accidentally … Such impromptu aid by ordinary people gradually developed into a complex structure of escape lines involving about 10,000 resisters, many of whom were women (Rossiter 1986: 23).

Women were in charge of some of the major escape lines, such as Marie-Louise (codenamed 'Françoise') Dissard, who at the age of sixty took over the O'Leary escape network until the war's end after Nancy Wake was forced to flee to England (Braddon 2019 [1956]: 278). Dissard first resisted the Germans by distributing anti-Nazi propaganda in Toulouse, before she was asked to rent a place for the Ullmans, a Jewish tailor and his wife. She later enlisted guides and keepers of safe houses, procured food, civilian clothing and medical supplies, and opened her small flat as a headquarters for the O'Leary line, later known as the Françoise line. There she sheltered airmen, agents and fugitives, and travelled to Switzerland to obtain finances for her work, a journey which entailed climbing barbed wire fences and dodging border guards (Rossiter 1986: 31-4).

The 'Comet' line was 70% staffed by women and led by a young Belgian woman Andrée ('Dedee') de Jongh. In twenty perilous journeys, many of them at night, she conducted 118 evaders across the Pyrenees to safety in Spain, until she was arrested by the Gestapo on January 15, 1943. Subjected to seventeen interrogations by the police of the Luftwaffe, transferred to numerous prisons, and then the infamous Ravensbrück and Mauthausen concentration camps, she was finally rescued by the International Red Cross in early May, 1945 (Opar 2012).

The former wife of Surrealist painter Francis Picabia, Dadaist art critic Gabrièle Buffet-Picabia was second-in-command for her region and the Paris link for the Belgian-French escape line, and had to cross the Pyrenees herself to escape, while Genevieve Soulié was head of lodging in Paris for the Burgundy line, responsible for the security, wellbeing and morale of Allied soldiers awaiting departure. Soulié helped the escape of 136 Allied airmen, carrying out, according to the assistant chief of the line, 'dangerous and tiring work with complete disregard for her own comfort and safety' (Rossiter 1986: 68). Another notable was Yvonne Beauvais, the mother superior of a convent of Augustinian sisters in Malesroit, Brittany, who hid escapers, evaders and resisters in the convent clinic. Skilled at throwing the Germans off the scent, she once disguised a group of Allied airmen as nuns (Opar 2012).

Effectiveness of hiding and smuggling people

Through the efforts of Dissard alone, 230 aviators were returned to Britain, with 110 of them in the period when the Gestapo was intensely searching for her (Rossiter 1986: 35). The escape line which Nancy Wake helped create enabled 1037 men to escape from France (Braddon 2019 [1956]: 105). Many airmen on the run in France later acknowledged that without the perseverance and courageous assistance of women they would not have escaped from France. For example, Flight Officer Kenneth Woodhouse was helped by ten different women on his week-long journey to Brittany and England, while Second Lieutenant Robert V. Lau was assisted by nineteen women, including nine safehouse keepers in his 41-day escape. Lau believes that '[n]either I nor any of us could have evaded or escaped without the women helpers' (cited in Rossiter 1986: 97). Women, Rossiter notes, 'took a keen interest in helping them return to their bases, while many Frenchmen were involved in sabotage and guerrilla operations' (1986: 97). This illustrates the gender differences regarding categories of resistance work, with women tending to work on the more nonviolent end of the spectrum of resistance activities.

Although countries such as Denmark saved a much higher percentage of its Jewish population (93%) than France, the efforts of women such as Suzanne Spaak preserved the lives of 80 to 150 children in one operation alone (from a camp in Vénissieux), and approximately 1000 over the course of the war (Nelson 2017: 104, 244). The communes and isolated farmhouses in the vicinity of Le Chambon hid around 800, with perhaps 3000 passing through (Moorehead 2015: 336). Truus Wijsmuller was a prescient Dutch woman who realised, after *Kristallnacht* (the 'Night of Broken Glass'), that Jewish children were no longer safe in many European countries. Prior to the war, and aided by British activists such as Helen Bentwich, she devoted her life to negotiating with Nazis such as Adolf Eichmann to allow the migration of some 10,000 Jewish children to England and away from the Holocaust (Astaire 2019; Auntie Truus, The Forgotten Rescuer n.d.).

Sabotage and its effects

While Gandhians such as Burrowes (1996) consider sabotage as outside the boundaries of nonviolence, others such as Hastings (2020) consider that it can be considered nonviolent within some contexts (such as against ruthless opponents), albeit located at the more extreme end of the nonviolence continuum, in the category of nonviolent intervention, and provided that only property and not people are targeted. Sabotage as a form of resistance began as opportunistic acts by individuals on a small scale. Teenager Simone Segouin, later known by her codename, Nicole Minet, commenced by stealing a bicycle from a German military administration, slicing the tires of the other bikes and motorcycles so she could not be pursued. Joining the organised resistance, she used the stolen bike to deliver messages between Resistance groups. She quickly became adept at tactics, explosives use, and the sabotage of German equipment. Her deeds escalated to derailing German trains, blocking roads, and destroying bridges, helping to retake France from the inside and clear Germans from the path of the advancing Allied forces. (She also led teams of Resistance fighters to capture German troops and set traps, although this could not be considered nonviolent.) Never captured, she was one of the few women recognised, being awarded a number of medals, including the Croix de Guerre (Belden 1944: 20-3; 'Girl with a Gun - Simone Segouin' n.d.).

Agnès Humbert, even as a slave labourer in a German prison, managed to sabotage rayon production and crate manufacture (Humbert 2008 [1946]: 181-2, 210). Christine Granville sabotaged German communications and helped blow up barges transporting oil from Rumania to Germany (Mulley 2012: 88). Nancy Wake had arrived in France with a handbag full of money and a pistol, and a month later was the leader of the Maquis d'Auvergne, who carried out numerous sabotage actions after D-Day on German installations, rail junctions, bridges and telephone communications. She organised supply and money drops of up to 15 million francs per month (Braddon 2019 [1956]: 158-9). 'No sector in the whole of France caused the Germans more trouble. Nancy led from the front and took part in ambushes, sabotage and raiding parties' (Stanton and Cox n.d.).

In addition to the obvious impacts of sabotage on infrastructure and production were the effects on morale, with Humbert recording that 'I feel much happier now that I know that not a single one of my spools is any good, not a single one will be of the slightest use to the Third Reich!' (2008 [1946]:132). Her attempts at sabotage were her 'one consolation' in prison:

> After every successful act of sabotage my heart feels lighter. It's a sort of rite of atonement for me, between me and my conscience (2008 [1946]: 181-2).

Conclusion

It is difficult to pinpoint any one reason – violent or otherwise – for the overthrow of Nazism. Each of the activities described taken singly, helped to undermine the Germans in small ways; when considered together they had a considerable impact, providing intelligence for use by the Allied forces; encouraging internal dissent, resistance and non-cooperation; saving numerous lives; repatriating many highly trained servicemen; and destroying Nazi resources.

Whereas Hofer's *fundamentalist* approach argues that resistance had little effect, Broszat's *societal* approach suggests that resistance in many spheres of activity and through numerous forms of civil courage made a difference to the ability of the Nazi regime to manipulate society at will (Kershaw 2000: 197-9). Although there were many weaknesses and failures of resistance at national and international levels, and some effective nonviolent strategies were under-utilised, such as economic noncooperation through boycotts, divestment and sanctions against the international corporations which propped up Nazism (Branagan 2014), nonviolent actions by women preserved many lives through the smuggling and hiding of people. Resistance through media eroded support for Nazism and built internal resistance which aided the military objectives of the Allies, as did the gathering and communicating of intelligence.

The smuggling and hiding of people are most easily quantifiable, such as in numbers of people who survived the war but would likely not have if not aided to flee or hide from Nazism. The effects of resistance through media and intelligence were more subtle and less easily measured, but certainly contributed to the growth of groups such as the Maquis, whom the Germans regarded as a major threat, and who greatly facilitated the Allied advance after D-Day. At the very least, it should be acknowledged that Nazism was not defeated solely through Allied military violence (which itself was slow and extremely costly in numerous senses), but that it was supported and complemented by many nonviolent activities.

Although it is problematic to compare different campaigns, the successes of Christine Granville can be compared to the relative inaction of the male Vosges Maquis over the course of the war, most of their time being spent on the run or in hiding (Veitch 2017). Granville made the first contact between the French resistance and the Italian partisans on opposite sides of the Alps in preparation for D-Day; boldly facilitated the defection, with no loss of lives, of an entire German garrison on a strategic pass in the mountains; and audaciously liberated captured Resistance leaders. Granville's 'inestimable value' (Mulley 2012: 253), and the ability of women such as Agnès Humbert and Suzanne

Spaak to swiftly build broad networks of resistance, or the others who published newspapers and smuggled people and information, question traditional narratives that armed men are more effective against ruthless opponents than unarmed women.

Humbert, for example, although too humbly viewing herself as no more than a typist and go-between, was 'essential' and 'indispensable', an 'enthusiastic liaison agent and recruiting sergeant' (Blanc 2008: 285). At the very beginning of the resistance, Humbert introduced key contacts, expanded the numbers greatly (Humbert 2008 [1946]: 29-30) and helped the organisation to grow and diversify, being a vital element of the development of French resistance from 'small autonomous entities' to a crystallized, cohesive, effective organisation (Blanc 2008: 284-6).

This resistance sometimes morphed into reconstruction and justice work after the war, which can be categorised under the 'constructive programme' of the nonviolent intervention category. Humbert, for example, took charge of a town's administration in Germany where she had been imprisoned; she organised camps, food, first aid, and denazification, and refused payment for it (Blanc 2008: 306). Malou sat on judges' panels, worked on committees, and headed the rebuilding and recovery group the Union des Femmes Françaises (Huppert 2021: 77). This and the resistance work of women was a likely contributing factor to some long-term gender-related changes, such as French women securing the right to vote in 1944.

These stories also demonstrate how 'women can step out of the construct of conventional femininity to defy all the stereotypes, if only they are given the chance' (Purnell 2020: 6). Despite their lack of recognition (and women downplaying their own contributions):

> [W]omen were an outstanding presence throughout the movement. Fulfilling a wealth of different roles, responsible at the highest levels, setting up and often running their own groups, these women played an active part at every level and in every field' (Blanc 2008: 293).

As Poldermans notes, 'women are often depicted as the main victims [of war], while it is often precisely women who resist under such circumstances and show genuine leadership' (2019: xxiii).

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Regeneration #3

Blade becomes hand pierces the distance of the social.

Body's arms are breadth when touch is cry

push off. Who leaves the quiet ground?

Comfort is not shivering rue. Each sharp sweep

toward passage lulls till tilt & fill &

frantic shake me awake in that craft

taken once with wind-song wave & lightning

slice. A rocking lunge. A deity. A trough. This

ancient whose eyes close now on need pending

collaboration. Weight of you on palms outstretched.

Anne Elvey

Influencer

Molecules are scattered lavishly across the screen;
blinking and breathing performance art.
Garments shout other people's names

and yet I'm instantly recognisable
instantly recognising myself
as whoever I think I am or want to be:

Aaliyah or Amy Winehouse?
Kurt Cobain or Kevin Samuels?
But I'm none of them; the dead are just the dead.

As are the vapid trolls that hashtag every misstep.
And you in your flannelette haute couture.
Time moves quicker than thought.

I sidestep wars, politics, pandemics
and deep discussion
to be current, in the now, a thing;

a moth floating on the stock exchange
chasing a light that always shines brighter elsewhere:
to live and die in neon.

Christopher Palmer

Today is my enemy

I thought it was an urgent morning tea
but arrived, not quite early

at the Knowledge Festival
where masters of process gather

to discuss programmes versus programs
and thrash out three-word slogans.

A quick scan of who's who in the room:
the usual nodders and shakers.

It's not what's said that's important
but who says it and how loud.

Time to go round the room.
Feign some interest

speak with the freshness of Scandinavia.
The name's Grey I say. Yes, someone says.

Christopher Palmer

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