

Dog Whistles and Death Penalties: The Ideological Structuring of Australian Attitudes to Asylum Seekers

Professor Murray Goot
Department of Politics and International Relations
Macquarie University

Tim Sowerbutts
QSRC

Refereed paper accepted for the
Australasian Political Studies Association Conference
University of Adelaide
29 September - 1 October 2004

**Dog Whistles and Death Penalties:
The Ideological Structuring of Australian Attitudes to Asylum Seekers¹**

Murray Goot and Tim Sowerbutts

What drives opposition to asylum seekers who try to reach Australia by boat? One set of explanations, advanced by those who support asylum seekers, is organised around attitudes to ethnicity, particularly to immigration from the Middle East. Another set, advanced by supporters of the government's hard line, valorises rule following with its opposition to 'queue-jumping', 'illegal' immigration, and 'people smuggling'. Using data from the 2001 Australian Election Study (AES), this paper argues that the popular rejection of asylum seekers is a product of both sets of values: for the most part, opposition to immigration, especially from the Middle East, and opposition to Aboriginal land rights; but also a concern about crime and the need for harsher punishments, including the re-introduction of the death penalty. It shows that on a scale of social values, running from pure liberalism to consistent conservatism, respondents: (a) are not wholly drawn to one pole or the other, as presupposed by a discourse in which the 'elites' betray 'the people'; (b) are not clustered around the middle, as assumed by talk of a 'non-ideological' age; but (c) are divided fairly evenly between liberals, conservatives and those in between. The paper shows how occupation and education predict positions on the scale. It shows how positions on the scale predict party support - with One Nation at one end, and the Greens at the other. And it shows that while few liberals vote Liberal as many conservatives as liberals vote Labor.

The arrival in Australian waters of the Norwegian container boat *M.V. Tampa*, in August 2001, with its unexpected cargo of asylum seekers, mainly from the Middle East, was a turning point in Australian politics. Before the Government's decision to stop the boat landing, the Coalition was behind in

¹ This paper was submitted and accepted for presentation at the Australasian Political Studies Association Conference, Adelaide 2004. However, the paper was not presented as the *registrant* was forced to withdraw at the last moment due to unexpected circumstances.

the polls. But Labor vacillated on the issue, Kim Beazley's leadership was seen to be weak, and suddenly the Coalition's fortunes had turned (Goot 2002, 71). Party strategists (Henderson 2001), and journalists like Paul Kelly (2001a, 2001b), adamant that the *Tampa* crisis would have 'little direct bearing on the election' because of 'a lack of fundamental opposition' between the Government and Labor, proved badly mistaken. However close the parties, the electorate clearly preferred John Howard's handling of the issue to that of Beazley's (Goot 2002, 73). The Coalition may not have won on the strength of this issue – there was the impact of September 11 (Denemark and Devereux 2002, McAllister 2003, 460-61), not to mention the Coalition's advantage on matters of economic and financial management (Goot 2002, 76-7; Crosby 2002, 117) - but that asylum seekers contributed significantly there can be little doubt (Bean and McAllister 2002, 283-84; Solomon 2002, 247, McAllister 2003, 460-61).² Howard's handling of the *Tampa* and his response to the subsequent terror also contributed to the sense that he was a strong leader (Goot 2002, 78; Crosby 2002, 117).

On one view, attitudes to asylum seekers were organised around attitudes to ethnicity, race or immigration. It was commonly argued, for example, that opposition to boat people was generated almost entirely by hostility to people from the Middle East. It was 'anti-Muslim feeling and fear of the unknown' that 'drove the outpourings against the asylum seekers', one columnist remarked during the campaign (Day 2001). 'Decent Muslims who have lived here happily for years', a former diplomat noted, 'suddenly wonder if they are really welcome' (Kevin 2001). Looking back at 'Tampa time', Donald Horne (2002) remembered those 'calls on talkback for the murder of "ragheads" planning to take over Australia' and the 'strong, if ill-defined, race and ethnic hates' that were 'levelled at those desperadoes who were even ready to throw their children overboard'. Some argued that what was involved was really broader than this, but not so broad that it, too, could not be reduced to a single factor – 'dog-whistle' politics (Oakes 2001), an appeal to 'the white vote' (Millett 2001), or a prime minister prepared to play the 'race card' (Solomon 2002, 243; Johnson 2002, 37; Marr and Wilkinson 2003, 175-6, 242, 285). Others, like the *Economist* (2001), thought that what opposition to the asylum seekers signified was nothing short of opposition to immigration itself, immigration being an issue that 'hardens hearts and softens brains like few other issues'.

² However, a fundamental flaw in the analyses of AES data by Denemark and Devereux and also by McAllister is the failure to factor in economic management as an issue. The particular impact of share-owning on the Coalition vote is analysed by Donaghue et al (2003).

Overwhelmingly, those who argued for such positions were sympathetic to asylum seekers, disturbed by public opinion ('hysteria') on the issue, and highly critical of the positions taken by both the government and the Opposition - Howard, in particular, standing accused of 'playing (electoral) politics' rather than sticking to political 'principles'; of pandering to public opinion, especially as expressed on talkback radio, rather than leading it. David Marr and Marion Wilkinson's *Dark Victory*, the best account of the politics of the time, exemplifies this line of argument (2003, 175-6). If ever there was a case of 'liberal intellectuals ... attributing pathological qualities (such as racism or even xenophobia) to those currents in public opinion with which they happen to disagree', said one sceptic, this was it (Burchell 2003, 55).³

A very different set of explanations focused not on whom the asylum seekers were, or where they had come from, but on their mode of arrival. 'Is there an overt anti-Muslim feeling in Australia?' one columnist asked. 'I don't think so. In this country of the fair go, we'll give anyone a chance - just as long as they don't abuse our good nature or our hospitality' (Schofield 2001). 'That's why', said one journalist, 'the immigration debate that has unfolded in Australia ... has been a debate about principle. Principle, not race' (Sheehan, 2002). The principle, said another, had to do with 'queuing up'; adherence to the convention about queuing was 'one of the defining elements of the Australian character'. An 'abhorrence of queue-jumping', he intoned, 'probably explains why the boatpeople are criticised less for who they are and where they come from, rather [sic] their indifference to our national conviction that everyone has to wait their turn' (Penberthy 2001).⁴ After September 11, thoughts that terrorists might have been smuggled onto the boats served to connect concerns about queue jumping with the scare about national security.

³ For an important, if neglected, discussion of 'intolerance' in Australian history and the social sciences, including an observation about the Left's censoriousness of 'the typical Australian, especially his [sic] racist intolerance', see Irving (1985, 35).

⁴ For an analysis of the press releases put out by the Minister of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, which argues that 'asylum seekers are depicted as a consequence of [sic] criminal activity', see van Acker and Hollander (2003). That the language of lawlessness gained some purchase is suggested by a national survey of respondents in paid work or wanting paid work, conducted in September 2003. Told that 'a variety of terms' had 'been used in recent years to describe the people who have attempted to come to Australia as refugees' and asked which terms it was 'all right or not all right' to use, 78 per cent said it was all right to use the term 'asylum-seekers' and 45 per cent said it was all right to use 'boat people'. But 48 per cent also said that it was all right to use 'detainees', 47 per cent said it was all right to use the term 'illegals', and 30 per cent said it was all right to use 'queue-jumpers' (Saulwick 2003). For discussions of 'queue-jumping' in this context, see Mares (2002) and Gelber (2003); for a defence of the government's position, using different terms, see Millbank (2003).

Typically, those for whom opposition to asylum seekers was best explained in these terms supported the government's case. This is not surprising: the condemnation of queue jumping, people smuggling and illegal immigration constituted the centrepiece of the government's case. Though widely accused of 'demonising' asylum seekers - most notably in relation to its spurious claims that asylum seekers had thrown their children overboard (Weller 2002), but also because of its claims that some of those who had sought to come 'illegally' had criminal records (Clennell and Murdoch 2001) - the government went out of its way to avoid any suggestion that asylum seekers were being held at bay because of their religion, nationality or race.

'What', one headline asked, if the boatpeople had been 'white Zimbabweans?' (Hollis 2001). The question, posed by one of Howard's least favourite papers, was rhetorical; no senior politician, whatever their view, would have been caught out by it. Howard had learnt much since 1988, when he had supported calls for 'Asian immigration to be slowed down a little' - support which might have cost the Party victory in Victoria, and that certainly helped cost Howard the Party leadership federally (Rubenstein 1993, 153-5; Kelly 1994, 460ff; Jupp 2002, 128-9). One could 'argue a racist position without necessarily being a racist', he said in the run-up to the 1996 election, but arguing for 'a reversion to a racially discriminatory criteria[sic]' in immigration policy was 'probably arguing against Australia's interests', he advised (Henderson 1998, 17). In the run-up to the 2001 election he would not countenance anything he regarded as racist. When a West Australian Senator, Ross Lightfoot, broke Liberal ranks to describe boatpeople as 'repulsive' Howard condemned it (Saunders and O'Brien 2001). Countering the charge that his policies, nonetheless, pandered to a racist electorate, Howard remarked: 'I don't find any racism in the Australian public' (Marr and Wilkinson 2003, 279). The charge of racism could also be met by highlighting support for the government's policy among asylum seekers themselves. Immediately after the interdiction of the *Tampa*, the *Daily Telegraph*, reputedly the prime minister's favourite paper, led its 'Weekend' supplement with a full-page picture of a Vietnamese refugee from the 'first wave', in the 1970s, who 'now feels we don't need any more refugees' (Keogh 2001).

The care taken by the Government not to talk about the boatpeople in terms of their nationality, ethnicity or religion was one reason why Labor could find so little in what the government was saying with which it might disagree, especially when the government's line seemed to resonate with the electorate. 'The fact is', said Con Sciacca, shadow minister for immigration, 'there is not a great deal of sympathy among the Australian public - and, indeed, the public of the whole western world - to [sic] people who jump queues, who come in here illegally' (Mares 2002, 117). In responding to the *Tampa*, 'the government

was seen to be standing up to the people-smugglers and the “illegals”, the legions of “queue-jumpers” who, in the words of the opposition leader, Kim Beazley, “flout” Australia’s generosity’ (Mares 2002, 133). ‘Ninety per cent of Australian voters’, Beazley (2002) was later to claim, ‘do not believe that illegal people movement should take place from people who have already secured haven – and they are right to think so.’

Could the government appeal to both sorts of attitudes at once – to concerns about Muslims as well as concerns about the integrity of the law? It could. When Howard declared, in the most widely quoted statement from the campaign, that ‘we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come’ (Megalogenis 2003, 178-9, for the origin), he left his listeners entirely free to imagine for themselves the criteria by which ‘we’ would be empowered and the circumstances in which ‘they’ would come.

What, then, does determine attitudes to asylum seekers: attitudes to where asylum seekers come from or how asylum seekers get here? Are differences in attitudes to asylum seekers symptomatic of some wider division in attitudes? And if they are, what are the social correlates and the political significance of this division?

Interpretations of the data

Social researchers wanting to explore public opinion on asylum seekers have turned either to public opinion polls conducted on behalf of the press, or to the 2001 AES, a post-election survey conducted on behalf of a group of academic social scientists (Bean et al. 2002). The polls report widespread support for government policy; prior to the election, upwards of two-thirds of respondents supported the policy of refusing to allow boats carrying asylum seekers to enter Australian waters or thought the Government was doing ‘a good job’ in its handling of ‘the refugee problem’ (Goot 2002, 72). And both the polls and the AES report majorities (a plurality in one case) in favour of the idea that boats carrying asylum seekers should be turned back (Table 1).

TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

Betts and the decline in support for asylum seekers: from the first wave to the third Opposition to asylum seekers, Katherine Betts argues, has been no ‘sudden’ development but ‘a slow and growing trend over the last quarter of a century’ (2001, 44-5). To sustain her argument, she cites polls conducted in 1977 and 1979 (during the ‘first wave’ of boatpeople from Vietnam), 1993 (during the ‘second wave’), and in 2001 (after the arrival of the *Tampa* carrying asylum

seekers mostly from Iraq and Afghanistan). Polls taken between 1977 and 1979 suggest that most respondents thought a 'limited' number of 'refugees from Vietnam' should be 'allowed to live here permanently'; more than half (57-61 per cent) of those interviewed by Morgan wanted numbers 'limited' rather than 'any number' or 'none'. In 1993, the proportion of respondents in favour of sending people who had 'travelled to Australia from Asia in small boats...straight back where they come from, despite what they say might happen to them' (44 per cent) was greater than the proportion in the late 1970s (between 20 per cent and 32 per cent) that wanted to stop Vietnamese refugees from 'staying here'. In 2001, 50 per cent of those interviewed by Newspoll agreed that the government should 'turn back all boats carrying asylum seekers' (Betts 2001, 40-2).

Do these polls chart 'a slow and growing trend'? The types of people seeking asylum have varied, as have their origins and circumstances. Those in the first wave were Vietnamese escaping communism; Australians themselves had fought in the South to prevent a communist takeover; and the government regarded them as 'genuine refugees' (Marr and Wilkinson 2003, 36). By contrast, those in the third wave were from the Middle East, had been brought in by people smugglers, and been condemned by the government as 'illegal immigrants' and 'queue jumpers'. As Betts herself concedes, the most recent wave represents 'a shift from Asian source countries to the Middle East', arguably a less popular source; and the presence of people smugglers 'feeds the suspicion that rather than being genuine refugees many of the boatpeople are manipulating the system.' Besides, it is not clear that rejecting Vietnamese boatpeople in 1979 or 1993 and rejecting asylum seekers in 2001 meant the same thing. As Betts acknowledges: 'In the late 1970s many people could have thought that to turn the boats around would be to condemn innocent and desperate people to death by drowning. Today a person offering this response could think "Let the people smugglers take them back to Indonesia"' (2001, 45).

If opposition to asylum seekers has increased, as Betts maintains, what has driven it? Opposition to immigration is one driver, she suggests, though this 'cannot fully explain current sentiment about boatpeople', she notes, because opposition to immigration has declined sharply since the Howard Government came to office. The 'experience' Australians have had of 'boatpeople arriving' is another. The greater their experience, she maintains, 'the more unhappy about it' Australians have become (2001, 44). However, she advances no evidence connecting this 'experience' with changes in the pattern of polled response. The 'scale of the movement' - 2,000 arrivals from 1976 to 1981; over 10,000, from 1999 to 2001 - is another driver.

Explaining attitudes to asylum seekers: McAllister's model

To test a variety of explanations using data from the AES, Ian McAllister turns to regression analysis. Opposition to immigration is one variable he plugs into his model. The others cover prejudice (two), procedural fairness (two), and national identity (two). The most powerful predictor of attitudes to whether 'all boats carrying asylum seekers' should be sent back, he reports, comes from responses to the question: 'Do you think the number of people allowed into Australia nowadays should be reduced or increased?' Three other variables also proved significant, one from each of the three sets: respondents' sense of themselves as personally prejudiced, respect for authority, and pride in being Australian. Views about the level of prejudice, satisfaction with 'the way democracy works in Australia', and respect for Australian laws and institutions, added nothing (McAllister 2003, 457).

The reasons for McAllister's choice of variables are unclear. Half the items in his model – views about level of racial prejudice compared to five years ago, satisfaction with the way democracy works in Australia, and respect for Australia's institutions and laws – have such low zero-order correlations with attitudes to asylum seekers that they were never likely to explain much.⁵ At least one item - how the level of racial prejudice compares with the level five years ago - conflates a research question with a survey question. And another item - how respondents' rate their own prejudice – is of doubtful validity because of likely social desirability effects (Tourangeau et al. 2000, 269). Yet other variables that correlated highly with attitudes to asylum seekers – most notably, variables to do with crime and punishment - are overlooked.

Struck by the 'predominant influence' of attitudes to immigration, McAllister set out to discover whether opposition to asylum seekers rested 'simply on opposition to more migrants *per se*' or whether it rested on 'more complex beliefs and perceptions'. To do this he built another model. Along with the original item on migrant numbers, he included items on whether migrants 'increase the crime rate', are 'generally good for Australia's economy', 'take jobs away from people who are born in Australia', and 'make Australia more open to new ideas and cultures'. He also included items on whether Australia should accept more migrants who are Asian, British, Southern European, or who come from the Middle East.

⁵ The correlation coefficient for the belief that 'there is more racial prejudice in Australia than there was five years ago' (G13) and views about asylum seekers (E4) was .016. The corresponding figures for satisfaction with the way democracy works in Australia (C7) and views about asylum seekers was .016 and for 'respecting Australia's political institutions and laws' (G6) and views about asylum seekers was .070. None of these was statistically significant.

The variables in this model explained more of the variance than did those in the original model: an adjusted R-square of 0.41 compared with the original 0.33. More importantly, the item that stood out now related to the number of migrants coming from the Middle East; concern about the number of migrants in general, while still important, was no more powerful than the concern that migrants increase crime; and the item on migrants taking Australian jobs mattered as well. Respondents who wanted asylum seekers returned were 'neutral about levels of immigration from Asia, Britain or southern Europe', and - he might have added - neutral about whether migrants were good for the economy or made Australia more open to new ideas (McAllister 2003, 458). What, if anything, the other variables in the original model – respect for authority, and pride in being Australian – would have added to the new model, he does not say.

Betts and the broader significance of attitudes to asylum seekers

Before we turn to our own analysis of the AES, there is another question to consider: is a focus on asylum seekers too narrow? Betts argues that attitudes to asylum seekers need to be understood in the context of a broader range of issues – issues around 'national identity'. Using the AES data, she reports, first, that the majority of respondents who said they had voted Labor in 1998 but not in 2001, and who wanted asylum seekers turned back, voted for the Coalition, whereas those who had voted for the Coalition in 1998 but not in 2001 'were not particularly concerned with border control'; second, that this was part of a wider pattern, with the Coalition doing best – holding its own supporters and attracting voters from Labor - among those who rated 'newer questions' like 'asylum-seekers, immigration, defence, terrorism and the environment' ahead of 'economically oriented political issues such as health, welfare, employment and taxation'; and third, that these 'newer questions which are more about long-term social and political values' and that 'bear on the integrity of the nation, both at the symbolic level and in reality', are ultimately captured by feelings of closeness to Australia and pride in being Australian (Betts 2002a, 44, 51-2).

The occupational correlates of attitudes to asylum seekers, party choice, and feelings about Australia, she argues, support this analysis. The occupational groups that displayed the highest levels of opposition to sending asylum seekers back were middle class groups – 'social professionals' (teachers, journalists, lawyers, ministers of religion, counsellors, social workers, people working in the arts, and so on) but also those labelled 'other professionals' under the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations (ASCO). Of those who responded to the item on asylum seekers, exactly half (50 per cent) of the social professionals opposed sending them back, as did a third (34 per cent) of 'other professionals', compared with just a fifth (21 per cent) for the sample as

a whole. Respondents who said they had switched from Labor were disproportionately 'middle class' – nearly a third (30 per cent) being classified as 'associate professionals, advanced and intermediate clerks' and more than a quarter (27 per cent) as 'managers, administrators and professionals'. And while the proportion of social professionals or 'other professionals' who felt 'very close' - 'emotionally attached' - to Australia was not significantly different from the sample as a whole, the proportions who felt 'very proud' to be Australian (69 per cent and 70 per cent respectively) were marginally lower than in the sample as a whole (75 per cent) (Betts 2002a, 45, 49-51).

While a search for broader values that might underlie attitudes asylum seekers is to be applauded, Betts' search is flawed. Labels like 'new' and 'old', used to distinguish the sorts of issues which Coalition and Labor respondents prioritise, are misleading: 'new' issues, like immigration and defence, are just as old as the 'old' issues; and 'old' issues, like the GST, are just as new as any 'new' issues on Betts' list. If we re-order the lists and re-do the sums the differences between the priorities of Coalition and Labor respondents (30: 28, 'new'; 66: 70, 'old') largely disappear. As for the differences between ex-Coalition respondents and ex-Labor respondents – hopelessly unreliable measures⁶ - they were minimal even before any adjustments were made.

Priorities, moreover, are not necessarily the most important connection between issues and votes; a voter's judgment about the position of the parties, or of their competence, may also play a part. Asked, by ACNielsen, which of a number of issues would have 'the greatest impact' on their vote, more Coalition respondents chose 'the economy' (34 per cent) than chose either 'refugee policy' (16 per cent) or the 'war on terrorism' (13 per cent). And the proportion of Labor respondents who chose 'the economy' (8 per cent) was less than the proportion (11 per cent) who chose 'refugee policy' or the 'war on terrorism' (Goot 2002, 76).

Nor do the occupational correlates necessarily bolster Betts' case. If, as the AES data suggest, managers, administrators or professionals display no less a pride in being Australian than the average respondent, and the propensity to switch votes away from Labor is determined by level of pride in Australia, why do managers, administrators and professionals appear to be so heavily over-represented in ex-Labor ranks? Betts' argument is based on a series of bivariate analyses. Even so, since the distinctiveness of social or other

⁶ While 47.3 per cent of respondents said they had voted for the Coalition in 1998, the Coalition actually received only 39.5 per cent of the vote (Bean et al. 2002, item B16). In both McAllister (2003, Table 2) and Betts (2003, Table 2), the impact of unreliable recall on the turnover matrix is sure to be considerable; this also undermines the work of Denmark and Devereux (2002).

professionals on pride in being Australian pales by comparison with the distinctiveness of their views in relation to asylum seekers, it is unlikely that in any multivariate analysis pride in Australia would turn out to be more important as a vote-switcher than attitudes to asylum seekers. In McAllister's analysis, pride in being Australian contributed nothing to an explanation of why respondents wanted asylum seekers sent back. Without this variable the pseudo R-square was 0.32; with the variable the pseudo R-square was 0.33 (compare McAllister 2002, Table 6 with McAllister 2003, Table 6).

The AES data re-examined

There is much in the AES data that separates those who supported the idea that boats carrying asylum seekers be turned back from those who opposed it. Supporters and opponents even disagreed about who the boatpeople were. Of those who wanted them sent back, only a quarter (28 per cent) agreed that 'most of the people seeking asylum in Australia are political refugees fleeing persecution in their homeland'; of those who did not want them set back, two-thirds (66 per cent) agreed that they were fleeing persecution. Even so, the issue of who the boatpeople was not what distinguished supporters from opponents most sharply.

The items that correlate most strongly with attitudes to asylum seekers (all had correlation coefficients of 0.4 or more) are of three kinds. One cluster, as might be expected, covers attitudes to immigrants and immigration; a second, overlooked by both McAllister and Betts, concerns Aborigines; the third, is about punishment. Most of the items on migrants will already be familiar from McAllister's list: whether the number of migrants coming to Australia has gone too far, whether the number of migrants should be reduced or increased, whether the government should accept more migrants from Asia or from the Middle East, whether migrants increase the rate of crime, whether equal opportunities for migrants have gone too far, whether migrants take jobs away from people who are Australian-born, and whether it is more important for migrants to learn what it is to be Australian than to cling to their old ways. The items on Aborigines include: whether land rights have gone too far, whether government help for Aborigines has gone too far, and whether it is better for the well being of Australian society that the aspirations of Aborigines be recognised. The items on punishment had to do with whether the death penalty should be reintroduced, and whether people who break the law should be given stiffer sentences.

From a theoretical perspective, the clusters make sense. The first group includes items central to the idea that what drives attitudes to asylum seekers are views about migrants in general, and to migrants from Asia or the Middle

East in particular. The second group, on attitudes to Aborigines, is useful for testing claims that attitudes to asylum seekers are a product of a mind-set focused not just on the migrant 'other' but on the indigenous 'other'. The third group invokes the government's position with its rhetorical targeting of queue-jumping and illegal entry.

Of these items, which were the most important? Bi-variate analysis, the approach that Betts' explores, offers no way forward. Rather, we need to follow McAllister and build a multivariate model. Among the thirteen items we have identified, four pairs are made up of items that express similar ideas and, as one might expect, are strongly related ($r > 0.60$); to minimise the problem of co-linearity, we selected the item in each pair that correlated more strongly with attitudes to asylum seekers and discarded the one that correlated less strongly. This left nine items.

Using the forward step-wise method that shows which variable explains the greatest amount of variance, which the next, and so on, we entered each of these into a regression. The item on immigration from the Middle East had the highest zero-order correlation with the dependent variable; hence, it was entered first. Adjusting for the effect of this first item, we assessed the partial correlations of all the other items and the one with the highest value - the item on the reintroduction of the death penalty - was entered next. And so on. Based on the standard test of significance for each item ($p > .05$), all nine variables in Table 2 were entered into the model. However, after step five, each additional variable added little; typically, less than one percentage point. In the interests of parsimony, therefore, we decided to restrict our analysis to the first five variables. At step 5, the standardised regression coefficients (betas) for each predictor all have absolute values of about 0.2 (Appendix, Table A). This indicates that when all are acting together the effect of each is roughly the same.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

The five variables account for 51 per cent of the variance. This represents a substantial improvement on McAllister's models in terms both of power and parsimony. As Table 2 shows, opinions about taking more migrants from the Middle East accounted for 28 per cent of the variance, or rather more than half of the total variance explained. Views about reintroducing the death penalty contributed a net 12 per cent. Opinions about stiffer sentences added another six per cent. Rather less was added by opinions on the number of migrants entering the country (four per cent) or views about Aboriginal land rights (two per cent). That these last items, and more particularly items six through

nine, added so little testifies to the fact that they correlated strongly with items already in the model.

Liberalism versus Conservatism: The Ideological Structuring of Attitudes

While a combination of four or five items goes a long way to predicting support for sending asylum seekers back, how was support for the various permutations and combinations of these attitudes distributed across the sample? We know that the majority of respondents thought the number of migrants coming from the Middle East was too many (53 per cent), that the death penalty should be reintroduced for murder (55 per cent), and that people who break the law should receive stiffer sentences (72 per cent); we know that nearly half (46 per cent) agreed that Aboriginal land rights had gone too far; and we know that about a third (36 per cent) thought the number of migrants coming to the Australia should be reduced. But what proportion affirmed *all* these things? Was it as high as 36 per cent (the theoretical maximum set by the item with least support)? And what proportion endorsed *none* of these things? Was it as high as 28 per cent (the theoretical maximum, given that no fewer than 72 per cent supported the call for stiffer sentences)? Was opinion polarised, with most respondents supporting either liberal or conservative positions across each of these issues; or was opinion quite evenly spread, with most respondents endorsing two or three liberal positions and three or two conservative ones? And what of the occupational and political correlates of these views? Might they help recast the work of Betts and clarify the ideological bases of the parties?

To answer these questions we began by dichotomising each of the five variables, giving the value 1 to conservative responses and the value 0 to liberal ones; with three of the items offering conservative response categories before liberal ones and two offering liberal responses before conservative ones, the items were roughly balanced (see Appendix, Table B). We then created a table that put numbers against each of the 32 (2^5) permutations and combinations that such an array makes possible, assigning the responses to one of six types on a liberal (0) - conservative (5) continuum (Table 3). At the conservative end were those who thought there were too many migrants coming from the Middle East, and who wanted fewer migrants generally; who felt that the death penalty should be reintroduced for murder, and who wanted stiffer sentences generally for people who break the law; and who believed that Aboriginal land rights had gone too far. At the liberal end were those who supported none of these things.

TABLE THREE ABOUT HERE

The distribution of opinion

The polarisation of opinion was remarkable. More than a quarter (28 per cent) of those who expressed a view on all five items (all but 8 per cent of the sample) were either at the liberal end (12 per cent) or the conservative end (16 per cent) of the spectrum. Had the respondents been completely non-ideological, so that their responses to one item bore no relation to their responses to any other, we would have expected a total of no more than about 6 ($100/32 \times 2$) per cent at these two poles. If we count as liberal or conservative those who were not ideologically pure, but almost so (that is, took liberal or conservative positions on at least four of the five items), then the liberal end (scores of 0 or 1), with 26 per cent of respondents, and the conservative end (4 or 5) with 36 per cent of respondents, attracted more than half as much support again as the ideologically non-descript middle (2,3), with 38 per cent of respondents endorsing either two liberal and three conservative positions or three liberal and two conservative positions (Table 4).

That there were more conservatives than liberals should come as no surprise given the frequencies for the individual items. Consistent conservatives outnumbered consistent liberals by more than a third. Conservatives more broadly defined - respondents we might call inconsistent conservatives (0, 1) - also outnumbered liberals more broadly defined - inconsistent liberals (4, 5) - by more than a third.

What occasioned ideological inconsistency? Among liberals who broke ranks (13 per cent of the sample), the issue that mattered most frequently was support for stiffer sentencing; more than half (57 per cent) of those who scored 1 rather than 0 did so for this reason. Among the much larger number of conservatives breaking ranks (21 per cent of the sample), two reasons loomed large for scores of 4 rather than 5: an unwillingness to endorse the view that Australia should accept fewer migrants (45 per cent of the group), and a rejection of the idea that Aboriginal land rights had gone too far (25 per cent).

The relationship between liberal or conservative positions and attitudes towards the boat people was strong. Indeed, as Table 4 shows, it could hardly have been stronger. Of those who adopted consistently liberal views (0 on the scale), only 9 per cent supported the view that 'all the boats carrying asylum seekers should be sent back'; of those who adopted consistently conservative views (5 on the scale), no fewer than 95 per cent wanted the boats sent back. Among inconsistent liberals (1), only 28 per cent favoured sending the boats back, while among inconsistent conservatives (4) no less than 88 per cent did so. If ever there was an emblematic issue, asylum seekers are it.

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

The occupational structuring of opinion

Support for liberal positions has a very clear occupational structuring – one that is similar to the occupational structuring of support for asylum seekers (Betts 2002a, 45). Social professionals (57 per cent of consistent or almost consistent liberals) were the only occupational group to register a liberal majority, broadly defined. Professionals (41 per cent), managers and administrators (31 per cent), and associate professionals (29 per cent) followed – these last two being not far from the mean (26 per cent). And beyond the professional and managerial middle class, support for a broadly liberal set of values was quite atypical; in none of the other groups did the level of support exceed 18 per cent (Table 5).

Expressed in terms of support for conservative positions, the occupational structuring is not quite so clear; nor is it quite the same as the occupational structuring of opposition to asylum seekers. The most conservative groups were tradespersons and related workers, and intermediate production and transport workers – stereotypically, the demographic for talkback hosts like Alan Jones, John Laws and Howard Sattler (Adams and Burton 1997, 242-5; Lyons 1991, 12-13, 47); half (51 per cent) the respondents in these categories were conservatives, broadly defined. Intermediate, clerical sales and service workers (47 per cent), and elementary clerical, sales and service workers (44 per cent) followed. These groups encompass large sections of small business, and a fair slab of the working class.

Nonetheless, occupational groupings with scores close to the sample mean (36 per cent) range across class: labourers and related workers (33 per cent), advanced clerical and service workers (33 per cent), managers and administrators (33 per cent), and associate professionals (32 per cent). Managers and administrators, together with associate professionals, display the widest opinion spread of all, being evenly divided between the two ends and the middle. And whereas the majority of those in every occupation, except the social professionals, wanted asylum seekers sent back (Betts 2002a, 45), in only two occupational categories was there majority support for conservative values, broadly defined.

TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

Education and ideology

Support for liberal positions also has an educational structuring, though (*pace* Betts 1999, 119, 120-4, 126-8) one that cannot be reduced to the presence or absence of what Betts variously calls more education, higher or tertiary

education, or university education. Amongst those with an undergraduate diploma, or better, liberals easily outnumber conservatives; even a higher degree does not change things very much. Among those with associate diplomas downward, conservatives easily outnumber liberals; not even the absence of a post-school qualification matters much (Table 6).

Exposure to a university alone cannot explain support for liberal positions. Most social professionals are liberal and almost all (92 per cent) have university degrees or undergraduate diplomas; but most (70 per cent) of those categorised as other professionals have university degrees or undergraduate diplomas and most are not liberals.

TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

Political correlates of liberalism and conservatism

The political correlates of liberalism and conservatism are clear-cut. The Coalition's dominance of the conservative end of the spectrum is almost matched by Labor's dominance of the liberal end. Among consistent conservatives, half (55 per cent) reported voting for the Coalition; not much more than a quarter (28 per cent) recalled voting for Labor. Among consistent liberals, half (49 per cent) reported voting for Labor; only a fifth (20 per cent) said they had voted for the Coalition. Among inconsistent conservatives (scores of 4) and liberals (scores of 1) the gap narrowed. Inconsistent conservatives voted for the Coalition rather than Labor by a margin of 16 percentage points; inconsistent liberals voted for Labor over the Coalition by a margin of six percentage points (Table 7a).

More remarkable is the story in the middle. Here, amongst the least ideological third of the sample, the Coalition was almost as dominant as it was amongst the most conservative third. About half (48 per cent) the respondents who endorsed three liberal and two conservative positions, and half (50 per cent) who endorsed three conservative and two liberal positions, voted for the Coalition; not much more than a third (37 and 38 per cent respectively) reported voting for Labor.

Of the minor parties, the Greens and the Democrats did best among liberals; One Nation did best among conservatives. The Greens did three times better among consistent liberals than they did across the sample as a whole; the Democrats did a bit better than twice as well. Indeed, more liberal respondents reported voting for the Greens (15 per cent) or Democrats (12 per cent) than for the Liberals or Nationals (20 per cent combined). One Nation, by contrast, did nearly three times better among conservatives than

across the sample as a whole. More conservatives reported voting for One Nation (9 per cent) than for the Greens and Democrats (4 per cent combined).

TABLE 7A ABOUT HERE

Having asked how liberals and conservatives distributed their votes, we can turn the question around and ask: how dependent was each of the parties on liberal and conservative voters? Here, the results are equally striking. Labor, it appears, was hardly more dependent on liberals (32 per cent), broadly defined, than on conservatives (29 per cent). However, the Coalition was much more dependent on conservatives (44 per cent) than on liberals (16 per cent). Labor (39 per cent) and Coalition (41 per cent) were equally dependent on the middle ground (Table 7b).

TABLE 7b ABOUT HERE

The parties most dependent on liberals were the Greens and the Democrats; both opposed the government's policies on *Tampa* (Barns 2003, 131). More than half the vote for both the Greens (61 per cent) and the Democrats (53 per cent) came from liberals, broadly defined, no less than 40 per cent of the Green vote and 28 per cent of the Democrat vote coming from consistent liberals. The party most dependent on conservatives was One Nation, the party from whom some said the government had taken its *Tampa* policy (eg, Marr and Wilkinson 2003, 283). Of those who said they had voted for One Nation, two-thirds (67 per cent) were conservatives, broadly defined; 39 per cent were consistent conservatives. In the run-up to the 1998 Queensland election, two of the items in an ACNielsen poll on which One Nation supporters stood out were 'The law should be tough on law breakers' and 'Racial problems in Australia are getting worse' (Goot 1998, 69).

Overall, the parties most dependent on those of liberal disposition, in descending order, were the Greens, the Democrats and Labor. The parties most dependent on conservatives were One Nation and the Coalition. Labor respondents were more liberal and Coalition respondents more conservative than the sample as a whole.

Conclusion

Our analysis suggests that, in relation to the conflicting interpretations of public opinion advanced by opponents and supporters of the government's position on asylum seekers, each side grasped part of the truth but only part of the truth; that voters opposed asylum seekers for reasons that had to do

with both whom the asylum seekers were and how they had arrived; and that opposition to asylum seekers was also reflected attitudes to Aborigines.

In arguing for these conclusions we need to enter three caveats. First, we have assumed that attitudes to asylum seekers and to immigrants from the Middle East are analytically distinct. It might be objected, however, that because recent asylum seekers have been drawn largely from the Middle East and because the most publicised arrivals from the Middle East have been asylum seekers, to insist that opposition to migrants from the Middle East drives opposition to asylum seekers is not to explain attitudes to asylum seekers but simply to redescribe them.

We have some sympathy for this view. If attitudes to the latest wave of asylum seekers differ only in degree from attitudes to the first and second wave of asylum seekers from Vietnam, the idea that hostility to immigrants from the Middle East is the primary driver of attitudes to the latest wave of asylum seekers loses some of its force. Nonetheless, we are convinced that the Middle Eastern origin of this third wave of asylum seekers is significant. We doubt that public opinion would have been quite so hostile had the asylum seekers been Vietnamese. We are certain it would have been very different had the asylum seekers been 'white'.

The second caveat has to do with our assumption that there is a real difference between hostility to people based on their ethnicity and hostility to people based on what they do. It is sometimes suggested that the language of law and order is really code for getting tough with Aborigines (especially in Western Australia and Queensland), with other ethnic groups (for example, in Sydney's western suburbs), or with strangers on our shores. Nonetheless, we remain convinced that an analysis of the kind we have undertaken does distinguish respondents concerned about race – including those who think they heard a dog whistle – from those concerned about crime.

A third caveat concerns the question of causation – of whether we have got the independent and dependent variables right. We have argued that opposition to immigrants from the Middle East helped generate opposition to asylum seekers. But it is possible that the government's handling of asylum seekers itself generated opposition to immigration from the Middle East. Did opposition to immigration from the Middle East increase as a result of the controversy generated around the asylum seekers? In the 2001 AES, 55 per cent of respondents wanted fewer migrants from the Middle East. In 1988, the only similar survey of recent origin, 43 per cent of those interviewed by AGB:McNair wanted fewer migrants from the Middle East. However, in that survey the order in which the questions were asked may have encouraged a

more sympathetic response (Goot 1991). Even if it did not, we are in no position to pinpoint when opinions shifted. We suspect that the Government's attitude to asylum seekers and its rhetoric did increase the level of opposition to immigration from the Middle East; it surely increased the issue's salience. But we are equally confident that attitudes to Middle Eastern migrants impacted substantially on attitudes to asylum seekers as well.

To say that attitudes to asylum seekers are driven largely by attitudes to immigration, especially from the Middle East, attitudes to Aborigines, and attitudes to punishment, especially to the death penalty, is not necessarily to say that attitudes to asylum seekers are driven by either ethnocentrism or authoritarianism. It is possible to want fewer migrants, whether from Asia or the Middle East, for reasons other than ethnocentrism; this was precisely the position taken in the 1960s by the Immigration Reform Group that wanted the White Australia policy dismantled but not in a way that would offend the sensibilities of Australian voters or at a pace that would generate 'racial' tensions (Rivett 1962, 116-7; 1992, 16). It is also possible to want tougher sentencing without subscribing to the entire authoritarianism package; in the 1960s, Doug McCallum observed that 'Australians often exhibit a number of features of the authoritarian personality', including 'a tendency to be on the lookout for, and to condemn or punish those who violate conventional values', without displaying 'other traits of the authoritarian personality so notably' (1962, 41-42). Nonetheless, we would be surprised if the items we have isolated were not correlated with both ethnocentrism and authoritarianism (Ray 1974, 224 for the connection between social conservatism and authoritarianism; Hughes 1965, 9 for the connection between social conservatism and ethnocentrism).

What our analysis suggests is not just an authoritarian streak, so often denied in the Australian character (eg, Shanahan 2003), but an authoritarian streak with a strongly populist inflection - where authority is valorised but where there is considerable scepticism about the willingness of established institutions to exercise it. When interviewers for the Morgan poll told respondents that the Federal Court had 'ruled that the Government acted unlawfully in detaining the refugees on the *Tampa*', and had 'ordered the boat people on the *Tampa* be returned to the Australian mainland' rather than be 'sent by the Australian Government to Nauru and New Zealand for processing', no fewer than three-quarters (76 per cent) of the respondents rejected the decision; they thought the boatpeople should not 'be returned to Australian mainland now' (Morgan 2001). Even before the poll, the government was attempting to extend the 'populist themes' it had 'cultivated

since it came to office', including the perceived softness of the legal system generally and asylum seekers in particular' (Secombe 2001).

Law and order, like border protection, leverages a concern with security that is both widespread and wide-ranging. This helps explain why, during the election, the Coalition campaigned hard in many electorates against drugs, and why Labor, some months after the election, created a shadow portfolio that covered not only border security', but 'gang violence', 'organised crime', and 'drug abuse' (Goot 2002).

Our findings demonstrate the ideological structuring of attitudes to social issues. For a society routinely described as non-ideological (see Kelley 1988, 68, 75, for an argument based on survey research; Henderson 2003, for a columnist's view), or as sharing the one ideology - usually utilitarianism (see, Connell 1968, for a brilliant account of W.K. Hancock's influence in spreading the notion that 'Australian politics is virtually devoid of ideas', and Collins 1985 for a celebrated restatement of the Benthamite case) – this is surely remarkable.⁷ The proportion of liberals, broadly defined, is only a little shy of the 30 per cent Robert Manne (1998) thinks of as members of an Australian 'ideological-cultural' elite – a group based on 'employment or employment prospects, on status and on wealth' and on their 'world views'. To the right on economic policy (something we do not explore), they remain distinctly liberal, says Manne, in their social views: 'far less keen on harsh punishment for serious crime' than 'ordinary people', they are also 'more sensitive to questions of Aboriginal justice', more likely to 'support current levels of Asian immigration' and are more sympathetic to multiculturalism.⁸

The term 'elite', used by Manne, is one that our analysis has sought to challenge. In social theory, the complement of 'elite' is 'mass'. But in Australia, the distribution of opinion is not of this kind. Contrary to the idea that liberal views are held by a relatively small number of voters, while most of the electorate is committed to views which are the polar opposite (Flint 2003, 13, puts the 'rank and file conservative' or 'anti-elite' vote in 2001 at about 90 per cent), our analysis points to three broad groupings not two:

⁷ Using the 1990 Australian Election Study, McAllister identifies 'a small proportion' that can be classified as ideologues (1992, 94-5). But the test he applies has to do with the match between respondents' self-placement on a left-right - not liberal-conservative – scale and their 'economic view', not their view on social issues.

⁸ John Carroll had earlier described an Australian class structure, based on 'cultural rather than socio-economic level', in which 'the upper middle class' could be identified by its university education and 'chosen milieu of opinion, information and entertainment'. This class, which accounted for about 15 per cent of the population, he thought, was readily identifiable by its 'internationalist, cosmopolitan vision'; its embrace of 'new Labor causes', from economic rationalism to multiculturalism; and its reliance on the ABC and SBS and, in Melbourne, the *Age* (Carroll 1997).

liberals, conservatives, and those whose views consist of a more or less equal mix.

Of course, the exact percentage of liberals or conservatives in our analysis is an artefact of several things. One is whether all respondents are included in the denominator or, as we have done, only those who responded to each of the items. Another, more substantial, consideration has to do with the construction of the items themselves; the inclusion of an explicit 'don't know' option in any of the AES items would have significantly increased the proportion that declined to choose. A third is the number of items in the scale: the greater the number, the smaller the proportion to be found at either extreme. Were we to drop back from a five-item to a four-item scale, by omitting the item on land rights, the proportion at the extremes would rise and the proportion in the middle would fall.

We should also note a certain asymmetry in our scale. To count as conservative, respondents had to want something changed, some measured tightened up. Liberals, on the other hand, wanted change in the opposite direction (more migrants, more migrants from the Middle East, or more land rights for Aborigines), supported the status quo, or (in relation to tougher punishments) neither supported change nor opposed it. If one rejects the notion that liberals could be indifferent on such issues, then our approach produces an overestimate of the liberal presence, since those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the idea of having stiffer sentences represented 17 per cent of the sample as did those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the idea of having the death penalty reintroduced. Rather than thinking of these respondents as liberals, therefore, one may prefer to think of them in more neutral terms as not endorsing conservative positions.

What cannot be gainsaid is that the scale proved powerful and not only in second-guessing which respondents would almost certainly approve and which disapprove sending boatpeople back. First, it revealed a clear occupational structuring to social attitudes. While social professionals are the only occupational category for which a liberal disposition is the rule rather than the exception, substantial minority support for liberal positions can be said to characterise middle class respondents generally. While liberal positions are much less common elsewhere – hence the Coalition's opportunity for 'wedge politics' - among respondents in the largest fraction of the working class the level of support for liberal values appears to be not very different from that reported by managers and administrators.

Second, and related, it reveals a structuring of attitudes by education. The argument about a great cultural divide in Australia, typified by divisions over

immigration and opened up by Betts, is important. But our analysis suggests that the divide is not a simple one between ‘university-educated people usually with professional qualifications’ – Betts ‘new class’ (1999, 3) – and ‘lower-class parochials’ – or ‘the rest of society’, to quote the front cover of her book. Social professionals, typically, are university-educated and liberal; ‘other professionals’ are university educated but not liberal.

Third, it establishes how liberals and conservatives cast their votes and, just as importantly, the extent to which each of the parties depended on liberal and conservative voters. Those categorised as liberals voted disproportionately for the Greens and the Democrats and, to a lesser extent, Labor; conservatives voted disproportionately for One Nation and, to a lesser extent, the Coalition. Labor benefited less from liberals than the Coalition benefited from conservatives. This contrast is more striking when the question is turned around: whereas the Labor vote drew almost equally on liberals, broadly defined, on conservatives, and on those in between, the Coalition’s vote drew mostly on conservatives, broadly defined, and to a lesser extent on those who were neither liberal nor conservative; it drew relatively little on conservatives, whether narrowly or broadly defined.

The existence of a divide within Labor’s social base is not new. Talk of ‘the disappearance of consensual positions on social issues that are now dividing the traditional constituencies of social democracy’ (Wilson 2002, 17), as if it were, is therefore misleading. Simon Jackman’s analysis, based on the 1996 AES, showed that Labor identifiers exhibited more ‘ideological diversity’ in relation to race than Liberal and National identifiers (1998, 180). Forty years ago, Alan Hughes noted that on ‘conscience radicalism’ – including ‘a death penalty for murder’ and keeping the White Australia policy ‘as it is now’ – Labor voters interviewed in Melbourne, and subsequently Sydney, presented a ‘sharp cleavage’: educated supporters tended to be ‘radical’, but its ‘working class supporters, especially those less interested in politics’, were ‘more conservative’ (1964, 16-17; 1969, 95-6; 1975, 102-3, and Appendix D). And in the 1920s, Vere Gordon Childe wrote eloquently about the ‘Heterogeneity of the elements within the Labour Party’ - the liquor trade versus the ‘temperance party’, nationalists against internationalists, the attitudes of the *petit-bourgeoisie* versus those of the industrial proletariat (1923, ch. V).

On the Coalition side, it is not only liberals within the Liberal Party who have been marginalised, as Party members or ex-members like Chris Puplick (1994) were lamenting prior to Howard’s accession to the leadership and those like Greg Barnes (2003) have been lamenting ever since; the Party’s dependence on the votes of social liberals is marginal as well. To what extent the

dominance of conservatives in the government and the paucity of liberals voting for the Party are related we cannot say.

What of the minor parties? The idea that they simply pick up a 'protest' vote can be discounted: ideologically, those who vote for the Greens, at one end of the spectrum, or for the Democrats, are quite different from those who vote One Nation, at the other (see also Goot and Watson 2001). Nor are these parties built around single issues. 'The single issue tag went', says Greens leader Senator Bob Brown, 'when we took our stand over the Tampa' (Wright 2003). Perhaps. But what is clear that support for the minor parties has to be understood, to a greater or lesser extent, in terms of issues of social liberalism or conservatism.

In the hostility expressed towards asylum seekers, some commentators see 'a populist backlash' against migrants in general (Hewett 2001, Devine 2002). This is a misreading. Surveys suggest that opposition to immigration has actually declined since the Coalition came to office (Goot 2000, Betts 2002b, 26). And while opposition to asylum seekers is correlated with opposition to immigration, it does not follow that widespread opposition to asylum seekers means widespread support for cuts to immigration. John Hirst argues that the government's stand on 'illegal immigration' has actually boosted support for legal immigration (2002, 91). He may not be right, but there is no evidence that its stand has done it any harm.

REFERENCES

Adams, Phillip and Burton, Lee (1997) *Talkback: Emperors of the Air*, St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Barns, Greg (2003) *What's Wrong With The Liberals?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bean, Clive, David Gow, and Ian McAllister (2002) 'Australian Election Study, 2001: User's Guide for the Machine-Readable Data File', SDA Study No. 1048, Canberra: Social Science Data Archives, ANU.

Bean, Clive and Ian McAllister (2002) 'From Impossibility to Certainty: Explaining the Coalition's Victory in 2001', in John Warhurst and Marian Simms (eds) *2001: The Centenary Election*. St.Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

Beazley, Kim (2002) 'Refugees: Labor has nothing to apologise for', *Age* 26 September.

Betts, Katherine (1999) *The Great Divide: Immigration Politics in Australia*, Sydney: Duffy & Snellgrove,

Betts, Katherine (2001) 'Boatpeople and Public Opinion in Australia', *People and Place* 9 (4): 34-48.

- Betts, Katherine (2002a) 'Boatpeople and the 2001 Election', *People and Place* 10 (3): 36-54.
- Betts, Katherine (2002b) 'Immigration and Public Opinion: Understanding the Shift', *People and Place* 10 (4): 24-37.
- Burchell, David (2003) *Western Horizon: Sydney's Heartland and the Future of Australian Politics*. Melbourne: Scribe.
- Carroll, John (1997) 'The middle-class quake', *The Australian's Review of Books*, 12 February: 18-19.
- Childe, Vere Gordon (1923/1964) *How Labour Governs*, Second edition, Parkville: Melbourne University Press.
- Clennell, Andrew and Lindsay Murdoch (2001) 'Bad apples could barely make up a cricket team', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 September.
- Collins, Hugh (1985) 'Political Ideology in Australia: The Distinctiveness of a Benthamite Society', in Stephen R. Graubard, ed. *Australia: The Daedalus Symposium*, North Ryde, NSW: Angus & Robertson.
- Connell, R.W. (1968/1974) 'Images of Australia', *Quadrant* 12 (2): 9-19; reprinted in Don Edgar, ed. *Social Change in Australia*, Melbourne: Cheshire.
- Crosby, Lynton (2002) 'The Liberal Party', in John Warhurst and Marian Simms (eds) *2001: The Centenary Election*. St.Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
- Day, Mark (2001) 'Land waiting for population', *Daily Telegraph* 10 October.
- Denemark, David and Joanna Devereux (2002) 'TV Coverage and International Issues in the 2001 Australian Federal Election', *AQ* 74 (6): 8-16.
- Devine, Miranda (2002) 'When allegations go overboard', *Sydney Morning Herald* 27 June.
- Donaghue, Jed, Bruce Tranter and Robert White (2003) 'Homeownership, Shareownership, and Coalition Policy', *Journal of Australian Political Economy*, 52: 58-82.
- Economist* (2001) 'Welcome stranger', *The Economist*, 8-14 September: 11-12.
- Flint, David (2003) *The Twilight of the Elites*. North Melbourne: Freedom Publishing.
- Gelber Katherine (2003) 'A Fair Queue? Australian Public Discourse on Refugees and Immigration', *Journal of Australian Studies*, No. 77: 23-30, 181-4.
- Goot, Murray (1991) 'Public Opinion as Paradox: Australian Attitudes to the Rate of Immigration and the Rate of Asian Immigration, 1984-1990', *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 3 (3): 277-294.

Goot, Murray (1998) 'Hanson's Heartland: Who's for One Nation and Why', in Nadine Davidoff, ed. *Two Nations: The Causes and Effects of the Rise of the One Nation Party in Australia*, Melbourne: Bookman.

Goot, Murray (2000) 'More "Relaxed and Comfortable": Public Opinion on Immigration under Howard', *People and Place* 8 (3): 46-60.

Goot, Murray (2002a) 'Turning Points: For Whom the Polls Told', in John Warhurst and Marian Simms (eds) *2001: The Centenary Election*. St.Lucia: University of Queensland Press.

Goot, Murray (2002b) 'Despite the alarm bells and whistles, tide is turning on immigration', *Sydney Morning Herald* 30 August.

Goot, Murray and Ian Watson (2001) 'One Nation's Electoral Support: Where Does it Come From, What Makes it Different, and How Does it Fit?', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 47 (2): 159-91.

Henderson, Gerard (1998) *Menzies' Child: The Liberal Party of Australia*, revised edition, Sydney: HarperCollins.

Henderson, Gerard (2003) 'Rallying around the flag is no jingoism', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 April

Henderson, Ian (2001) 'Libs relish distraction from GST scam: Labor', *Australian*, 3 September.

Hewett, Jennifer (2001) 'Skipper Howard all at sea without a moral compass', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 August.

Hirst, John (2002) 'Correspondence', *Quarterly Essay*, No. 6: 89-91.

Hollis, Colin (2001) 'What if they were white Zimbabweans?' *Age*, 31 August.

Horne, Donald (2002) 'Best-case scenario', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Spectrum, 9-10 November.

Hughes, Alan (1964) 'Political Attitudes in a Sample of Melbourne Voters: A Survey During the Federal Elections of 1963'. Canberra: APSA Conference (mimeo)

Hughes, Alan (1965) 'Authoritarian Orientation, Alienation and Political Attitudes in a Sample of Melbourne Voters'. Sydney: APSA Conference (mimeo)

Hughes, Alan (1969) 'Political Review', *Australian Quarterly*, 41 (3): 87-98.

Hughes, Alan (1975) *Psychology and the Politics of Experience*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Irving, T.H. (1985) 'Sources of Australian Intolerance: Some Reflections', in George Shaw, ed. *A Pluralist Australia?* Brisbane: Australian Studies Centre, University of Queensland.

Jackman, Simon (1998) 'Pauline Hanson, the Mainstream, and Political Elites: The Place of Race in Australian Political Ideology', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 33 (2): 167-88.

- Johnson, Carol (2002) 'The 2001 Campaign: The Ideological Context', in John Warhurst and Marian Simms (eds) *2001: The Centenary Election*, St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press.
- Jupp, James (2002) *From White Australia To Woomera*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kelley, Jonathan (1988) 'Political Ideology in Australia', in Jonathan Kelley and Clive Bean, eds *Australian Attitudes*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Kelly, Paul (1984) *The End of Certainty*. Revised edition. St Leonard's, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Kelly, Paul (2001a) 'There's no way out for a pale imitation', *Weekend Australian*, 1-2 September
- Kelly, Paul (2001b) 'How PM's ship came in', *Weekend Australian*, 22-23 September
- Keogh, Kylie (2001) 'All in the same boat', *Daily Telegraph*, September 1
- Kevin, Tony (2001) 'Spurn the poison unleashed by hatred', *Australian Financial Review*, 19 September.
- Lyons, John (1991) *Laws: A life of Power*, Sydney: Random House Australia.
- McAllister, Ian (1992) *Political Behaviour*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- McAllister, Ian (2002) 'Border Protection, the 2001 Australian Election and the Coalition Victory', Australasian Political Studies Association Conference, ANU, Canberra, 2-5 October.
- McAllister, Ian (2003) 'Border Protection, the 2001 Australian Election and the Coalition Victory', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 38 (3): 445-63.
- McCallum, Douglas (1962) 'The State of Liberty', in Peter Coleman, ed. *Australian Civilisation*. Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire.
- Manne, Robert (1998/2001) 'The two Australian nations', *Age*, 30 March; reprinted in *The Barren Years: John Howard and Australian Political Culture*, Melbourne: Text
- Mares, Peter (2002) *Borderline: Australia's Response to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the Wake of the Tampa*, Second edition, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Marr, David and Wilkinson, Marion (2003) *Dark Victory*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Megalogenis, George (2003) *Fault Lines: Race, Work and the Politics of Changing Australia*, Melbourne: Scribe
- Millbank, Adrienne (2003) 'Dark Victory or Circuit Breaker: Australia and the International Refugee System Post Tampa', *People and Place* 11 (2): 24-38.
- Millett, Michael (2001) 'White fringe fury feeds Labor's fall', *Sydney Morning Herald* 28-29 December.

Morgan (2001) Morgan Poll Finding No. 3446, 19 September, www.roymorgan.com

Oakes, Laurie (2001) ' ', *The Bulletin*, 13 November.

Puplick, Christopher (1994) *Is The Party Over? The Future of the Liberals*. Melbourne: Text Publishing

Ray, John J. (1974) 'Are the Workers Authoritarian, Conservative or Both?', in John J. Ray, ed. *Conservatism as Heresy: An Australian Reader*, Sydney: Australian and New Zealand Book Company

Penberthy, David (2002) 'Jumping the queue just isn't tolerated', *Daily Telegraph*, 21 September.

Rivett, Kenneth ed. (1962) *Immigration: Control or Colour Bar?* Revised and enlarged, Parkville, Vic: Melbourne University Press.

Rivett, Ken (1992) 'The Immigration Reform Movement', in Nancy Viviani, ed. *The Abolition of the White Australia Policy: The Immigration Reform Movement Revisited*, Centre for the Study of Australia-Asia Relations, Griffith University, Queensland.

Rubenstein, Colin (1993). Immigration and the Liberal Party of Australia'. In *The Politics of Australian Immigration*, eds. J. Jupp and M. Kabala. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Saulwick (2003) 'Jobfutures/Saulwick Employee Sentiment Survey', No. 10, www.jobfutures.com.au

Schofield, Leo (2001) 'War of words', *Sunday Telegraph*, 9 September.

Secombe, Mike (2001) 'Immigration looms as election weapon', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 September.

Shanahan, Dennis (2003) 'Howard has more to gain from crisis', *Australian*, 23 March

Sheehan, Paul (2002) 'Paltry debate places race above principle', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 September.

Solomon, David (2002) 'Election Race or Race Election?' in D. Solomon (ed) *Howard's Race: Winning the Unwinnable Election*, Sydney: HarperCollins.

Tourangau, Roger, Rips, Lance, J. and Rasinski, Kenneth (2000) *The Psychology of Survey Response*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

van Acker, Elizabeth and Robyn Hollander (2003) 'Protecting Our Borders: Ministerial Rhetoric and Asylum Seekers', *Australian Journalism Review* 25 (2): 103-19.

Weller, Patrick (2002) *Don't Tell the Prime Minister*. Melbourne: Scribe.

Wilson, Shaun (2002) 'The Emergence of the Green Electorate in Australia', *AQ*, 74 (6): 17-22.

Wright, Tony (2003) 'The green house effect', *Bulletin*, 4 November.

Table 1 Whether Australia should turn back boats carrying asylum seekers, 2001-2002 (percentages)

Date	Poll	Accept none	Accept some	Accept all	DK	n
Aug. 31 – Sept. 2, 2001	Newspoll	50	38	9	3	(1200)
Sept. 16-18, 2001	Morgan	68	na	20	12	(853)
Oct. 26-28, 2001	Newspoll	56	33	8	3	(1200)
Nov. 2001 – Apr. 2002	AES	61	20		20*	(2010)
Aug. 30 – Sept. 1, 2002	Newspoll	48	38	10	4	(1200)

na: not asked

* Includes neither

Questions:

'Thinking now about asylum seekers or refugees trying to enter Australia illegally. Which one of the following are you personally most in favour of with regards to boats carrying asylum seekers entering Australia? Do you think Australia should: turn back all boats carrying asylum seekers; allow some boats to enter Australia depending on the circumstances; allow all boats carrying asylum-seekers to enter Australia?' [Rotated] (Newspoll)

'Recently there has been a lot of discussion about the refugees arriving in Australia by boat. Do you feel the Australian Government should accept those refugees arriving in Australia by boat or put those boats back to sea?' (Morgan)

'Here are some statements about general social concerns. Please say whether you strongly agree, agree [neither agree nor disagree 18%], disagree or strongly disagree with each of these statements. ...All boats carrying asylum seekers should be sent back. (AES)

Source:

Newspoll.com.au, for the *Australian* 4 September 2001, 31 October 2001, and 5 September 2002; roymorgan.com.au, Finding No. 3446, 19 September 2001; and Bean, Gow and McAllister, 2002, 72-73.

Table 2 Items that predict support for sending all asylum seekers back: a step-wise regression model, Australian Election Study 2001

	Zero order R	Cumulative Adjusted R square	Additional variance explained %	Standardised Beta Coefficients*
F.8 Governments should accept more migrants who are from the Middle East	- 0.53	.283	28.4	-0.195
E.4 The death penalty should be reintroduced for murder	0.50	.396	11.3	0.178
E.4 People who break the law should be given stiffer sentences	0.48	.448	5.2	0.224
F.6 The number of immigrants allowed into Australia nowadays should be increased (a lot/a little)	- 0.52	.484	3.7	-0.208
E.2 Aboriginal land rights have gone too far	0.52	.509	2.4	0.185
F.7 Immigrants increase the crime rate	0.50	.520	1.2	0.140
G.10 It is more important for new migrants to learn what is to be Australian than to cling to their old ways	0.43	.527	0.7	0.099
F.7 Immigrants take jobs away from people who are born in Australia	0.45	.529	0.3	0.073
G.10 It is important for the well-being of Australian society that Aboriginal aspirations be recognised	-0.34	.531	0.2	-0.051

* For the first five variables the standardised Beta coefficients are as at step 5; for each of the other variables, they are as at step 6 (Migrants increase crime), step 7 (important that migrants learn to be Australian), etc.

Source: Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002

Table 3 Patterns of response to combinations of items comprising a liberal-conservative scale, Australian Election Study, 2001

Position on Lib-Cons scale*	Too many Mid-East migrants	Restore death penalty	Stiffer penalties needed	Too many immigrants	Aboriginal land rights gone too far	%
0	No	No	No	No	No	12.2
1	No	No	No	No	Yes	1.7
1	No	No	No	Yes	No	0.7
2	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	0.1
1	No	No	Yes	No	No	7.6
2	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	3.3
2	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	1.0
3	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	0.6
1	No	Yes	No	No	No	1.5
2	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	0.8
2	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	0.1
3	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	0.3
2	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	5.4
3	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5.5
3	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	2.0
4	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.0
1	Yes	No	No	No	No	1.8
2	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	0.9
2	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	0.8

3	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	0.8
2	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	4.0
3	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	3.5
3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	2.3
4	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2.4
2	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	0.7
3	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	1.3
3	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	0.4
4	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	1.8
3	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	4.3
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	9.2
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	5.1
5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	15.9

* Where 0 represents a consistently liberal set of responses and 5 represents a consistently conservative set of responses

Source: Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002

Table 4 Relationship between position on liberal-conservative scale and support for sending back asylum seekers, Australian Election Study, 2001 (percentages)

<i>Liberal-Conservative Scale</i>			<i>Return asylum seekers</i>	
Position	Proportion	n	Favour	Oppose
0 Liberal	12.2	(223)	9.0	91.0
1	13.3	(245)	27.8	72.2
2	17.1	(314)	52.2	47.8
3	21.1	(389)	71.5	28.5
4	20.5	(378)	88.1	11.9
5 Conservative	15.9	(294)	94.6	5.4
Total	100.1	(1843)		

Source: Table 3; and Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002

Table 5 Relationship between position on liberal-conservative scale and occupation, Australian Election Study, 2001 (percentages)

Occupation	Position on Liberal-Conservative scale*						n
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Managers & administrators	16.5	14.2	13.8	22.5	20.2	12.8	(218)
Social professionals	32.5	24.5	18.4	10.4	9.2	4.9	(163)
Other professionals	19.8	20.9	18.6	16.4	15.3	9.0	(177)
Associate professionals	13.2	15.5	18.4	21.3	16.1	15.5	(174)
Tradespersons & related workers	7.2	6.6	15.7	19.3	26.5	24.7	(166)
Advanced clerical & service workers	2.8	6.9	31.9	25.0	23.6	9.7	(72)
Intermediate clerical, sales & service workers	7.5	10.6	16.5	18.1	25.6	21.7	(254)
Intermediate production & transport workers	7.2	7.2	12.0	23.2	25.6	24.8	(125)
Elementary clerical, sales & service workers	6.3	11.0	18.1	20.5	26.0	18.1	(127)
Labourers & related workers	4.0	13.5	16.7	32.5	19.0	14.3	(126)

* Where 0 represents a consistently liberal set of responses and 5 represents a consistently conservative set of responses.

Source: Table 3; and Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002

Table 6 Relationship between position on liberal-conservative scale and educational level, Australian Election Study, 2001 (percentages)

Educational level	Position on Liberal-Conservative scale*						n
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Postgraduate degree or postgraduate diploma	32.3	20.4	16.2	16.2	10.2	4.8	(167)
Bachelor degree (including Honours)	26.0	25.0	19.1	13.7	9.3	6.9	(204)
Undergraduate diploma	21.7	20.0	20.0	11.7	21.7	5.0	(60)
Associate diploma	8.5	12.0	20.5	26.5	20.5	12.0	(117)
Trade qualification	4.9	10.1	17.0	21.0	23.3	23.6	(347)
Non-trade qualification	8.0	11.1	17.7	22.6	23.0	17.7	(226)
No qualification since leaving school	8.7	10.1	15.0	23.0	24.0	19.1	(612)

* Where 0 represents a consistently liberal set of responses and 5 represents a consistently conservative set of responses.

Source: Table 3; and Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002, 189.

Table 7A Relationship between position on liberal-conservative scale and reported vote, Australian Election Study, 2001 (percentages)

Lib-Cons Scale	Greens	AD	ALP	LNP	ONP	Other	n
0 Liberal	14.5	12.2	48.9	19.9	0.9	3.6	(221)
1	8.2	10.8	40.1	34.5	1.7	4.7	(232)
2	5.5	5.5	37.0	48.3	1.0	2.7	(334)
3	2.2	4.3	37.8	49.7	3.0	3.0	(370)
4	2.6	2.0	30.1	56.5	4.8	4.0	(352)
5 Conservative	1.4	2.5	28.1	55.4	8.6	3.6	(264)
Reported vote	5.0	5.6	36.3	46.0	3.5	3.6	(1745)

Source: Table 3; and Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002.

Table 7B Reported vote by position on liberal-conservative scale, Australian Election Study, 2001 (percentages)

Lib-Cons scale	Greens	<i>AD</i>	ALP	<i>Total*</i>	LNP	ONP	Other
0 Liberal	39.8	27.6	17.1	12.7	5.5	3.3	12.7
1	21.6	25.5	14.7	13.3	10.0	6.6	17.5
2	18.2	16.3	17.1	16.7	17.6	4.9	12.7
3	9.1	16.3	22.1	21.2	22.9	18.0	17.5
4	10.2	7.1	16.7	20.2	24.8	27.9	22.2
5 Conservative	4.5	7.1	12.3	15.9	19.2	39.3	17.7
n	(88)	(98)	(633)	(1745)	(802)	(61)	(63)

* Sample mean, against which parties to the left are relatively liberal and parties to the right relatively conservative.

Source: Table 3; and Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002.

Appendix

Table A. Liberalism-conservatism scale

New variable	Original variable	YES Score = 1	NO Score = 0	No data
Too many Mid-East migrants	F.8 Whether govt should accept more or less migrants from Middle East	4 = Accept some less 5 = Accept a lot less	1 = Accept a lot more 2 = Accept some more 3 = Stay about the same	-1 = Missing data
Restore death penalty	E.4 Reintroduce death penalty for murder	1 = Strongly agree 2 = Agree	3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly disagree	-1 = Missing data
Stiffer penalties needed	E.4 Stiffer sentences for people who break the law	1 = Strongly agree 2 = Agree	3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly disagree	-1 = Missing data

Too many immigrants	F.6 Whether the number of migrants should be increased or decreased	4. Reduced a little 5. Reduced a lot	5. Increased a lot 4. Increased a little 3. Remain about the same as it is	-1 = Missing data
Aboriginal land rights gone too far	E.2 Whether Aboriginal land rights have gone too far	1. Gone much too far 2. Gone too far	3. About right enough 4. Not gone far enough 5. Not gone nearly far enough	-1 = Missing data

Table B. Standardised coefficients (betas)

	Step								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
F.8 Accept more migrants from the Middle East	-0.533	-0.379	-0.333	-0.240	-0.195	-0.166	-0.147	-0.147	-0.147
E.4 Reintroduce the death penalty for murder		0.370	0.271	0.225	0.178	0.156	0.149	0.142	0.137
E.4 Have stiffer sentences for law breakers			0.259	0.244	0.224	0.213	0.207	0.207	0.207
F.6 Increase the number of immigrants				-0.231	-0.208	-0.167	-0.167	-0.144	-0.138
E.2 Aboriginal land rights have gone too far					0.185	0.169	0.155	0.155	0.129
F.7 Immigrants increase crime						0.140	0.118	0.094	0.092
G.10 Important that new migrants learn to be Australian							0.099	0.095	0.098
F.7 Immigrants take jobs from Aust								0.073	0.077
G.10 Important that Aborigines be recognised									-0.051
R Square Change	28.4%	11.3%	5.2%	3.7%	2.4%	1.2%	0.7%	0.3%	0.2%
R Square	0.284	0.397	0.449	0.486	0.509	0.521	0.528	0.531	0.533
Adjusted R square	0.283	0.396	0.448	0.484	0.508	0.52	0.527	0.529	0.531