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**Australian Votes in the Making:
A Critical Review of Voter Behaviour Research in Australia**

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This thesis is dedicated to my father, John Crosby, who has achieved more for this country than I can ever dream of. Thank you for instilling in me the values which drive me to dream big in order to help others and fix the world.

Tikkun Olam.

Statement of Contribution of Others

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Abstract

The 2019 Australian federal election confounded the polls, pundits and politicians, resulting in many hypotheses on what exactly happened. The only way to discover what happened is to research the behaviour of voters, that is, ask them what they did or what they thought. However, voter behaviour is a neglected field in Australia. Hence, this thesis seeks to explore and apply the theory and method of researching voter behaviour to what we know happened in the 2019 election. It asks whether the research on voter behaviour has been effective, whether it is worthwhile to research this topic and what can be done to improve such research.

Researchers study elections and voter behaviour because these phenomena form our governments and thus shape most of our world. Most of the research in Australia is psephology—the study of votes counted and other aggregate data—and not surveys or qualitative inquiries into the decisions of individual voters. As a result, what we know about Australian voter behaviour is thin, dominated by one study and mostly overshadowed by psephological beliefs and data, with assumptions of the importance of partisanship. The lack of questioning of the hegemony in Australian voter research leads to a widespread belief in the stability of the electorate and the issues that matter.

Every election is different, with a unique set of issues and candidates, and thus, the apparent or asserted stability is highly doubtful. Additionally, if every election is a unique event, the extent to which research findings can be generalised from one election to another is also doubtful. This raises the question: why do we study voter behaviour at all? It cannot be for the business of prediction, which is the focus of most reportage and research, since it is not possible to predict how a unique event will unfold. However, it can help with understanding what happened.

This thesis undertakes a thorough literature review on voter behaviour theory and method, with a focus on Australian research. Finding both the theory and method of research lacking in ability to explain what happened in the 2019 Australian federal election and, in particular, to properly account for the volatility of the election, a new theory of voter behaviour, albeit in embryonic form, is also posited as a possible explanation for the otherwise inexplicable and volatile behaviour in the electorate, based on Jung's theories of

individuation. A new theoretical method for researching voter behaviour is also proposed. This method is unlikely to be used on a national level because of the prohibitive cost, but may be feasible in a smaller study, such as on a single electorate.

Using a fused (Lazarsfeldian) approach of combining qualitative and quantitative analysis of the same data, observation of the 2019 election is combined with the published research conducted on the election and a new model of media content analysis of the most-shared news stories from the dumping of Turnbull to election day. Two case studies are also explored to delve deeper into vote behaviour: the Queensland electorates affected by the Adani mine issue, and the two inner Sydney electorates of Wentworth and Warringah.

Using grounded theory to reanalyse this fused data, five themes of the election are identified enabling an alternative analysis of the election and voter decisions. The discussion then applies the theory of voter behaviour to the events of the election, focusing on how social media challenges the dominant theories.

This thesis finds that the current voter behaviour theories and research methods are not by themselves adequate for effectively capturing the behaviour of voters in the modern election. However, a combination of theories and methods may be able to capture the volatility and explain the different behaviour of different voters and electorates.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| 2PP | Two Party Preferred |
| AAP | Australian Associated Press |
| ABC | Australian Broadcasting Corporation |
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ACT | Australian Capital Territory |
| AEC | Australian Electoral Commission |
| AES | Australian Election Study |
| AFR | <i>Australian Financial Review</i> |
| ALP | Australian Labor Party |
| ANES | American National Election Study |
| ANU | Australian National University |
| CAES | Comparative Australian Election Survey |
| DLP | Democratic Labor Party |
| KAP | Katter's Australia Party |
| LNP | Liberal National Party |
| MCA | Media content analysis |
| NAES | National Annenberg Election Study |
| NSSS | National Social Science Study |
| NAT | National Party |
| NSW | New South Wales |

| | |
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| PHON | Pauline Hanson's One Nation |
| RCS | Rolling cross-section |
| SaaS | Software as a Service |
| SBS | Special Broadcasting Service |
| SMH | <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| VAA | Voter advice applications |

Chapter 1: Introduction—Why Study Voter Behaviour?

None can dispute defeated Labor leader Bill Shorten’s explanation: ‘We didn’t get enough votes.’ But that’s pretty much where consensus stops. Other than Queensland, no one is quite sure who to blame, but boy are there a lot of candidates—perhaps more than were in the race itself. As one anonymous Labor figure told *The Guardian* Australia, ‘at the moment we haven’t got a fucking clue’. (Withers 2019).

The 2019 Australian federal election result confounded everyone. Polls, pundits, politicians and even Burt, the psychic crocodile in Darwin who predicted the election result by snapping at meat dangling from a photo of the leaders of the major parties, had predicted the Australian Labor Party (ALP or ‘Labor’) would win (Sorenson 2019). The pollsters conducted reviews and the journalists reflected on their coverage, while the pundits and politicians delved into their haphazard spin on what had just happened with greater than usual gusto, declaring class, greed, fake news, entire states and even the Chinese as the ones to blame for the shock result. Research on the election was quickly churned out, replete with ecological fallacies and ideological assumptions, with still no consensus position on what exactly happened. However, the quagmire of voter behaviour is a field few wade in to deeper than the length of a headline.

Voter behaviour is complex, with no agreed or unified theory. In part, this is because of the complexity involved in voter decision-making and in part because no two elections are alike. Certainly, every election has common elements: candidates stand; policies are proposed; claims are made; voters make their decisions; and someone is declared the winner. But in no two elections are they the same candidates, the same policies, the same claims or the same voters. Every election campaign is a unique event. Similarly, while every voter will be subjected to similar messaging and cast their ballots on the same ballot paper, every voter is unique: with life experience, influences and a decision matrix that is different from those of everyone else.

So why study voter behaviour? Most would argue to try to figure out why people voted the way they did or how they are likely to vote in the future, or possibly as a barometer of public support for certain policy positions. However, if every election is unique and every voter is unique, then are any of those goals actually possible? Two voters, of the same gender, age, location, and countless other common demographic factors, may vote the same

way—but for entirely different reasons. Almost any assertion about the ‘why’ behind an electorate level vote can be argued as invalid, and only the individual vote decision can be demonstrated as having a specific cause—or, more likely, multiple causes influencing voter decisions simultaneously.

Alternatively, it can be argued we should study voter behaviour as the ultimate case study in complex decision-making for intangible outcomes. There is no ‘thing’ acquired at the end of the voting process compared with (say) a complex purchase decision, such as buying a house. There are other decision processes, for instance, choosing to have surgery or choosing a course of education, that putatively deliver a demonstrable benefit to the individual’s life without being a physical thing. What do voters get for their choice, if anything? A promise? A vision? The lack of deliverables in the transaction makes the decision process at once extremely complex and somewhat pure: as the Columbia scholars described it, being comparable to cultural tastes, the choice is reflective of the individual voter’s opinion and values and delivers no return other than the personal knowledge of their choice (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, p. 311).

We study elections and voter behaviour because these phenomena form our governments and thus shape most of our world. Although the return for an individual vote is quite intangible, the flow-on results from our collective votes are very tangible. Those elected take a physical office and the job they were elected to, and they make decisions that have very real effects on our lives. Understanding why voters chose one candidate or party over another is what gives a ‘mandate’ its legitimacy and feeds into informing everything from policy priorities to media coverage.

The question of why we should study voter behaviour becomes even more pressing when considered in relation to the stunning failure rate of most polls to accurately grasp the mood and motivation of voters, particularly in the past decade. Headlines screamed when the Coalition was re-elected in the 2019 Australian federal election that it was a ‘massive failure’ of opinion polling (Livingston 2019; Prosser Scully 2019; Truu 2019). This declaration followed a cascade of electoral results that political professionals, commentators and election polls failed to predict, from the ‘Brexit’ vote in 2016 for Britain to leave the European Union (Curtice 2016; Hobolt 2016; Hübner 2016) and Trump’s victory in the 2016 US presidential election (Azari 2016; Loukissas & Pollock 2017; Lusinchi 2017); to the 2015 British general election (Curtice 2015; Sturgis et al. 2016;

Wring & Ward 2015); the 2015 Israeli election (Navot, Rubin & Ghanem 2017; Peters & Pinfold 2015; Rahat, Hazan & Ben-Nun Bloom 2016); and even the Greek bailout referendum (Silver 2015; Tsatsanis & Teperoglou 2016). However, the business of studying voter behaviour is not about prediction—it is about understanding.

The issues at play in the failure of research, polling and pundits to accurately predict or understand what happened in the 2019 Australian federal election are complex. If the 2019 election result demonstrated anything conclusively, it was how poor the predictive capacity of electoral studies in Australia is. It is not true that, *ex ante*, nobody thought that the Coalition could win the 2019 election (Bedo 2019; Patrick 2019a). Arguably, any race consistently polling within the margin of error of a dead heat could have gone either way, and it should have been reported as such, rather than hyperbolic headlines predicting a Labor landslide (Silver 2019). However, it *is* true that the overwhelming majority of people who derive an income from the activity of electoral studies in Australia *ex ante* thought that the ALP would win (Bennister & Obendorf 2019; Cameron & McAllister 2020b; Gauja, Sawyer & Simms 2020). Is it theory, method, a combination or just the volatile reality of a social media-driven public sphere that is causing this failure? What do we need to do to get the proverbial clue?

1.1 The State of Voter Behaviour Study

There are three major schools of thought in the existing literature on voting behaviour: the Columbia School's sociological model, which focuses on the influence of social context on the individual voter; the Michigan School's psychosocial model, which considers party identification as the main factor behind the behaviour of voters; and Anthony Downs's rational choice theory, which applies economic theories akin to entrepreneurial profit seeking. All three have useful concepts, some limitations and many descendent theories and variants. All three were developed before television was ubiquitous and many decades before social media, and since social media has been so significantly transformative of the public sphere, all three warrant review.

The dominant paradigm for interpreting and discussing Australian elections is not voter behaviour, but psephology. Specifically, the two-party preferred (2PP) measure and the use of 'swing', the percentage difference for or against a particular party in the previous election, to predict the result on a pendulum. The electoral pendulum orders seats from the

most marginal to the safest based on the results of the previous election. Put simply, the belief is that you can predict how many seats will change hands by moving the centre point of the pendulum left or right a number of percentage points, according to the 2PP polling results (Mackerras 2009). This is a distorting and inaccurate way of discussing elections, completely concealing the true variability of election results, and prejudices the understanding of voter behaviour (Goot 2016). Any impartial assessment of the 2019 election would deem the national 2PP polling figures, and the obsession of the nation's press and pundits with the measure, to be at best a distraction, and their increasing inaccuracy warrants a review of the approach.

While considerable research has been conducted in recent decades on voting behaviour, very little of it has been performed in Australia, and much of it has neglected individual-level voter behaviour. Empirical research has focused instead on 'analyses of trends in the aggregate distribution of vote intention over time, leaving the evidence of the effect of campaigns on the vote necessarily indirect and inconclusive' (Finkel 1993, p.2). Most recent Australian research is replete with an assumption of partisanship and ubiquitous references to the 'swing'.

Historically, there was a small flurry of research on voter behaviour in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s, culminating in two seminal studies by Don Aitkin and David Kemp in the 1970s. Then, the field largely stalled until quite recently, with the Australian National University (ANU) and Sydney University scholars leading the revival in interest. The contribution of early scholars is commendable and often overlooked; however, Australia simply does not have the solid bedrock of theory and data available for other countries, and the assumption of electoral stability stemming from Aitkin's (1982) seminal *Stability and Change in Australian Politics* is pervasive in the current Australian work.

Following the earlier substantial research on Australian elections, the field narrowed to the National Social Science Studies (NSSS), which contributed to the understanding of political attitudes through the 1980s, with a two-wave election panel in 1990 being its last publication (Bean & Kelley 1995). The Australian Election Study (AES), a post-election cross-section survey series, began in 1986; since then, the majority of work has been AES-centric, with very rare original studies or use of alternative datasets. The Collaborative Australian Election Survey, conducted by the team at the United States Study Centre at the University of Sydney in collaboration with other universities, is a sorely needed new,

substantial academic study, which entered the field with the 2019 election. Voter advice applications (VAAs), the short surveys that then advise the participant how they should vote, began in Australia in 2013 with the launch of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) and VoxPops collaboration, Vote Compass. This ongoing project provides large datasets of shallow information and some unique insights, but with significant limitations from sample bias and incomplete responses.

1.2 Research Questions

The aim of this thesis is to critically review the research element of the Australian electoral landscape that has been demonstrably underperforming, ask whether it is a worthwhile exercise at all and identify areas for improvement. This thesis involves, first, an observation and media content analysis (MCA) of the campaign for the 2019 election combined with a review of the academic research and polling of that election to examine the correlations and contradictions. Then, a thematic analysis of all the data collected using a grounded theory approach delivers an understanding of the election through five different battlegrounds. This thematic analysis is then used to test the findings of the dominant AES.

The guiding question for this research is: *Are the current approaches to studying voter behaviour in Australian elections effective?*

Within this research question, there are three sub-questions:

1. Did the available research accurately capture the mind and mood of voters in the 2019 election?
2. Did the media coverage (both journalist reporting and opinion or pundit commentary) accurately capture the mind and mood of voters in the 2019 election?
3. Do the theories of voter behaviour explain the events of the 2019 election?

Armed with the knowledge of the effectiveness of current studies, an exploratory discussion of the value of such studies will consider a second research question: *Can we effectively study voter behaviour in Australia, and if so, how?*

1.3 Methods and Sources

The approach to this research has been a fused methodology, heavily anchored in the research approach of Paul Lazarsfeld, seeking, wherever possible, data points that could be

analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Lazarsfeldian approach is superior in that it is self-validating and reduces error through the use of both more data, and different analysis of the same data. Grounded theory, an approach also developed on the basis of Lazarsfeld's work, was used throughout to identify themes and concepts that are not readily apparent and to free findings from the predisposition of existing theories. However, in departure from a normal grounded theory approach, a very extensive literature review of both theory and method of researching voter behaviour was conducted prior to the 2019 election.

Observational research on the election was conducted from June 2018 until the federal election in June 2019, involving intensive observation of election-related discussions on the social media platforms Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, LinkedIn and Instagram, as well as letters to the editor and any live-streamed voter forums that could be accessed. The goal was to hear the authentic voter voice with minimal mediation. Notably, more than 70 politically related Facebook groups and almost 200 local community Facebook groups were observed throughout the lead-up to election day (see Appendix 2). However, due to the privacy and content concerns related to Facebook, courtesy the Cambridge Analytica scandal¹, social media data were not captured: only personal observations were recorded.

A detailed MCA, reviewing the 20 most-shared stories on Twitter each day from the removal of Malcolm Turnbull to election day, offers the most substantive new data contributing to this thesis. The news stories were analysed for content, sentiment, outlet and number of tweets. The headline and lead paragraph of each story were also collected for word cloud analysis using NVivo. The MCA points to some very different indications of what mattered to voter than does the published academic research.

The Voter Choice Project was a year-long panel study conducted by this author, which began under the oversight of the University of Technology Sydney as part of this PhD, but switched to an independent study in August 2018. It was clear following the 'Super Saturday' by-elections that the very high level of volatility in the electoral cycle, and the need for the study to respond immediately to that volatility to be effective, was not

¹ In March 2018, a research company named Cambridge Analytica was revealed to have used personal information it harvested without permission from more than 50 million Facebook profiles to build a system that could target US voters with personalised political advertisements based on their psychological profile. (Cadwalladr & Graham-Harrison 2018; Greenfield 2018).

compatible with the speed of university processes. This difficult decision was validated only weeks later, when Malcolm Turnbull was dumped as prime minister and the study was able to capture the immediate effect of that event on voter behaviour by conducting a snap poll that day. To maintain integrity and comparative balance, only published results of the Voter Choice Project will be used in the analysis for this thesis.

Other comparative data were drawn from the AES, a longitudinal post-election survey whose dataset and results are publicly released on its website, and the Comparative Australian Election Survey (CAES), a new study for this election, which conducted a before-and-after panel but has published few results to date. Results from the ABC's Vote Compass, which is a VAA, and other quasi-academic polls and reports, were also reviewed as appropriate. The commercial polls used in the analysis include Newspoll and other polls by YouGov Galaxy, Essential, Ipsos and Roy Morgan national polling, and ReachTel polling, excluding polls conducted for an issue organisation testing its agenda.

This complex fused method and multiple data source approach has been chosen in part because it has not been done before, and in part because of the overwhelming dominance of the Michigan theory-based AES, 2PP polling and psephological analysis in the discussion of Australian elections. The fixation on voting results, swing, and the assumption of partisanship overwhelms any nuanced discussion on the reasons behind voting decisions, replete with many ecological fallacies and reinforcement of stereotypes and myths. In order to critically review these approaches, a very different and methodologically robust approach to find an alternative to test against these dominant methods was required. Very little sociological analysis has ever been done on Australian elections at all, and almost none in recent times. The fused Lazarsfeldian approach has never been used in any published study of Australian voter behaviour. The Columbia theory and method, detailed in Chapters 2 and 3, has also not been used in any study of Australian voter behaviour other than this author's own Voter Choice Project. Thus, the Lazarsfeldian/Columbia approach is a novel approach in this country, the approach taken in this thesis through Chapters 4 and 5 is most likely to yield new insights.

1.4 Thesis Structure

Chapter 2 begins with an exploration of voter behaviour theories. It starts with a discussion of the three dominant theories and some of the more notable theories that have descended

from those dominant theories. Next, a detailed review of the impressive early research on Australian voter behaviour and the ideas and concepts those studies generated is presented. Then, contemporary voter behaviour literature from both overseas and Australia for the past 30 years is reviewed thematically: participation; engagement; and the major cleavages, such as class, gender, age and religion. The literature on political communication is similarly reviewed thematically: agenda setting, framing, priming, theories of selective exposure and the impact of social media on the public sphere. Then political psychology, a relatively new entrant to assert its place in voter behaviour analysis, with cognitive voting theories and personality measures filling out an area that was largely focused on decision-making and socialisation until recently. Finally, a review of literature on psephological considerations, and how structural issues, such as compulsory voting and the designation of ‘protest voter’, can shape our understanding of voter behaviour. The chapter concludes with a critical assessment of the weaknesses in the theoretical landscape and an initial proposal for a new theory.

Chapter 3 approaches research methodology at the same level of detail. Beginning with a note on the Paradigm Wars and the Lazarsfeldian approach, first, the review considers survey methodology, including panel, longitudinal and cross-section surveys. Further detail is provided on researching online and its impact in terms of altering the way we research. I review questionnaire design issues, and the literature on bias, response effects and the challenge of demonstrating causality. Sample selection and recruitment, an increasingly challenging part of voter behaviour research is also reviewed. The second part of the chapter examines non-survey methodologies including experiments, content analysis, focus groups and observational research. Similarly, the chapter concludes with a critical discussion of the methods used in voter behaviour research and an initial proposal of a new method.

Chapter 4 tells the story of the 2019 Australian federal election and gathers the available data to be used for the grounded theory analysis. The 2019 election was particularly chaotic, following a parliament that was highly unstable and beleaguered in scandal. There was no narrative of the election to help voters to make their decision or the media to cover it. This chapter includes the results of the MCA, with the analysis and selection of other published research. It is from here the most challenging aspect of understanding the 2019 election, namely, the complete lack of correlation or agreement between available research and

reportage on what happened, begins to materialise. I examine two case studies in more detail: the Central Queensland electorates directly affected by the issue of Adani's Carmichael mine and blamed for costing the ALP the election, and the two similar wealthy harbourside electorates of Wentworth and Warringah, which behaved in different ways.

Chapter 5 is the results of the grounded theory analysis, identifying five themes of Coal versus Climate, Rights versus Religion, Refugees versus Racism, Cash versus Certainty and Scandal versus Standards. Through these themes the landscape of the complex, tortured election campaign becomes more manageable, and the divergent behaviours and concerns of voters becomes clearer.

The conflict and the lack of clarity regarding the 2019 election and the understanding of voter behaviour continues into Chapter 6, a discussion chapter that applies the theory in Chapter 2 to the events laid out in Chapters 4 and themes identified in Chapter 5. It is not possible to review all the theories or the entire election through multiple theoretical frames, given the constraints of this thesis, and thus, I focus on applying the three dominant theories to the national overview. Three fundamental problems at the intersection of voter behaviour theory, research method and voter experience reality are identified and discussed: a lack of electoral literacy, including the domination of the 2PP; the theoretical bias in research design and analyses with specific reference to the AES; and polling error and the challenge of sampling. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of what does work and suggest an initial effort towards developing both a new theory and a new method for researching voter behaviour.

A final conclusion chapter, Chapter 7, reviews the material from a critical perspective, makes some final remarks on the vexing question of how we research voter behaviour and whether we should do it at all and makes a number of recommendations for further research.

1.5 Discussion of Contribution

The thesis seeks to critically review the theory and method of voter behaviour in an attempt to answer the following question: *are any of the current approaches to studying voter behaviour and vote intention in Australian elections effective?* To do this, it has reflected on the existing literature on both the theory and method of voter behaviour research; gathered quantitative and qualitative data as part of a fused, Lazarsfeldian methodology;

and analysed this data comparatively and through theoretical frames, with specific challenges to the dominant AES and 2PP polling. Consequently, this thesis has made contributions to four areas. The first area it contributes to is that of knowledge and historical records, by providing new insights and data that fill gaps in understanding the events of the 2019 election specifically and the field of voter behaviour study in Australia more generally through a thematic frame, which may help others to understand an otherwise confusing and chaotic election. The second is advancing theory, by proposing a new theory of voter behaviour, which draws on the elements of many existing theories and Jung's concepts of individuation, and a hypothesis that may explain some unexpected behaviour. The third is advancing method, with a fused methodology used for the analysis, a new type of MCA in Chapter 4 and a new proposed method for researching behaviour outlined in Chapter 3. The fourth is the challenges to existing knowledge and theory, with a particular challenge to the applicability of the existing theory in the volatile and social media-powered context of modern elections.

1.5.1 Contributions to Knowledge and Historical Records

Most analyses of the 2019 Australian federal election solely examine the results of the election, with minimal analysis of events leading up to the election. In this thesis, I examine the events over the entire 45th Parliament, and in more detail from the removal of Malcolm Turnbull to election day in more detail, both chronologically and thematically, providing new insights to the otherwise chaotic election. I identify five different themes or battlegrounds for the election and bring forth other events from throughout the parliament that contributed to shaping those thematic battlegrounds. While some of the highlights, such as the change of prime minister, the Section 44 controversy or the pitched campaign around the Adani mine proposal, will be written about for some time, many of these events may be forgotten over time without being placed in this context. Chapter 4 tells the story of the election with a unique MCA, and Chapter 5 reveals and discusses otherwise unidentified themes of the election. Unusual, unpredicted voter behaviour, including notable geographic differences and voting in defiance of negatively valenced information, is noted. This thematic analysis may fill gaps in understanding the events of the 2019 election, contributing to the knowledge and the historical record of what happened.

1.5.2 Advancing Theory

Two new theories are hypothesised in this thesis. A new theory of *individuated voter behaviour* is proposed in section 2.6, which draws on the elements of a number of existing theories, and in particular, on the microsociological theory of voter behaviour and Jung's concepts of individuation. This theory posits that in a social media-fuelled world, the concept of identity has become more complex, with voters identifying with many potentially conflicting groups. Through the synergising of the many facets of their group identities, voters define themselves and inform their vote decisions. The second hypothesis that may explain some unexpected behaviour is *motivated inverse valence* (see section 4.4), combining the political psychology theory of motivated reasoning and the political science theory of valence to explain voters' increasing support for a candidate despite being regularly confronted with negatively valenced information.

1.5.3 Advancing Method

The methods through which studies examine voter behaviour and vote intent need a great deal of research to overcome current limitations, and the apparent failure of polling and prediction methods. A fused methodology is used for the analysis in this thesis, revitalising a neglected approach largely forgotten about in the Paradigm Wars, which yields a higher quality of data than qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods combined, given the inherent internal validity. A new type of MCA in Chapter 4 utilises Twitter data to analyse the most-shared news items, as opposed to the traditional approach of analysing the front pages of newspapers or lead stories. A new method for researching voter behaviour proposed in section 3.5, which is very challenging from a feasibility perspective, details the type of combined and deep study that would be necessary to capture the volatility and regional differences observed in the 2019 Australian federal election.

1.5.4 Challenges to Existing Knowledge and Theory

The main goal of this thesis is to review what we are doing when it comes to studying Australian elections and ask whether this is a worthwhile exercise. Inherent within this is a substantial challenge to existing knowledge and theory. In particular, I challenge the applicability of existing theory in the volatile and social media-powered context of modern elections, and lay out a direct challenge to the dominant AES and 2PP polling. Common knowledge of what happened, put forward by media commentary, is countered as being

without basis; I join other scholars in warning against the ecological fallacy of inferring individual behaviour from aggregate data. While concluding that none of the existing theory is up to the task of effectively explaining behaviour in the modern election, all theories work some of the time for some voters: thus, it is likely in the combination of theories that answers will be found.

Chapter 2: Voter Behaviour Theory

Any survey of the literature on voting behaviour is difficult... the great theorists have not given us a voting theory. (Eldersveld 1951)

Scholarship examining voter behaviour is complex, with no agreed or unified theory. This chapter will review the voter behaviour literature and the previous studies of voters in Australia relevant to this study. Beginning with the three core theories of voter behaviour, this chapter will touch on the critical theory of voter behaviour and then review early Australian research. Then, contemporary literature on voter behaviour will be examined thematically, namely, on voter behaviour (including the major cleavages, participation, partisanship, protest and swinging voters); political communication; electoral psychology; and psephological considerations. The chapter finishes with a critical review of the current voter behaviour theoretical landscape and an initial proposal for a new theory. The methods employed in researching voter behaviour will be dealt with in Chapter 3.

2.1 Classic Voting Behaviour Theory

There are three major schools of thought in voting behaviour scholarship. The first, the Columbia School's sociological model, focuses on the influence of social context upon individual voters. This approach was principally argued in *The People's Choice. How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign* (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968) and in *Voting: A study in opinion formation in a presidential campaign* (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954). The second, the Michigan School's psychosocial model, considers party identification the main factor influencing the behaviour of voters. This approach was developed in *The Voter Decides* (Campbell, Gurin & Miller 1954) and, more significantly, in *The American Voter* (Campbell et al. 1960). The third, Anthony Downs's rational choice theory, applies economic theories akin to entrepreneurial profit seeking to voter behaviour, as initially developed in *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (Downs 1957).

2.1.1 Columbia School (Sociological Theory)

The Columbia School's series of studies on influence and voter behaviour are at once seminal and highly controversial and have been passed over for large periods of academic

history. Led by noted sociologist and methodologist Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia's Bureau of Applied Social Research, the studies conceived voters as primarily social actors, subject to social forces, influenced by others in their social groups, with political preferences determined by social characteristics (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968).

The team had expected to confirm the beliefs of the political operatives and academics of the day that voting was an individual, rational act (Eulau 1980; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, pp. xxix–xxx). Instead the results challenged and eroded many myths about voter behaviour (Antunes 2010; Eulau 1980; Lazarsfeld 1944b). They found the influence of campaign propaganda and media to be relatively minor, only able to reinforce existing voting intent or to bring forth underlying existing vote intent—a process described as 'activation'—and rarely able to change party allegiances (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, pp. 73–86).

The 'minimal effects' (sometimes 'limited effects') theory of media influence contained within the Columbia theory is both advanced and criticised in current literature (Finkel 1993; Mendelsohn, M. 1994; Salmore 1985; Wyatt 1998). It is important to note that the 'minimal effects' thesis did not mean 'no effects'. The study found 'the campaign activated the indifferent, reinforced the partisan, and converted the doubtful', and that conditions needed to be met for campaign advertising and media coverage to influence voter behaviour (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, pp. 73–100). Thus, the sociological and structural forces that media needed to penetrate a voter's decision process minimised the media's capacity for influence (Jeřábek 2011; Katz 2001).

The Erie County study (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968) was the first significant study on voter decision-making. It was conducted primarily in the urban centre of Sandusky in Erie County, Ohio, on the 1940 presidential election campaign, involving a total of 3000 respondents. This study found party changers (or swinging voter, as it is now generally termed) were not intelligent, informed voters carefully weighing up the choices, as was widely believed at the time, but were instead indifferent to the campaign, switching their vote on a whim. It also observed the previously unrealised power of social structures as the predominant influence on voting decisions, particularly the influence of one's family. Those who have conflicting social forces, defined as 'cross-pressures', were identified as those who decided their vote later and were more open to changing their vote. In the

concluding chapter, the authors hypothesised about, more than summarised, the important concepts of two-step communication, and the role of opinion leaders. In brief, the concept is that information is disseminated by power/information sources (campaigns) via the media, and this is then received by opinion leaders, who then pass it on to average voters (Eulau 1980; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, pp.151–152).

The learnings from the Erie County and other related studies of influence, as well as a 1944 national election study that was hampered by the constraints of war (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, p. xxvii), informed the design of the 1948 election panel study in Elmira, published in *Voting* (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954). Considerable refinements were made to the method and focus from the Erie County study; the Elmira study concentrated on political actors themselves and less on media, likely due to the earlier findings that media were not that significant in the vote decision and that interpersonal relationships were the key influence (Bartels 2010; Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, p. ix). The results further highlighted how uninterested the vast majority of voters were in politics: ‘it is a curious quality of voting behaviour that for large numbers of people motivation is weak if not almost absent’ (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, p. 308).

The findings from the Elmira study were so numerous that the authors summarised them throughout the text as a list of 149 (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954). The Elmira study confirmed the Erie County findings of social differentiation as a precondition for political dissent and subsequent electoral cleavage, and the transmissibility of voting intent and partisan allegiance within families and social groups that are politically homogenous. The study deepened the understanding of the important role of opinion leaders: ‘The political genius of the citizenry may reside less in how well they can judge public policy than in how well they can judge the people who advise them on how to judge policy’ (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, pp.109–14). Although not generally credited as a founding study of social network analysis, it introduced the concept of a ‘network’ as being more appropriate than a ‘group’ for understanding the social forces of influence (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, p. 94; Eulau 1980). Confirming the effects of cross-pressures, a model of voter turnover (i.e. shifts in voting intention from one party to the other, whether during the election campaign, between elections or between generations) was developed (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, pp. 118–49). The anomaly of those who consider switching vote, often returning to their ‘natural’ party of choice, was investigated and

described as ‘reactivation’ (pp. 291–92). Of the completely new research on issues, the most important finding was that voters’ perceptions of the campaign are often vastly different: ‘people pick the people and ideas to suit their own personal equilibrium’ (p. 232).

A final study was conducted by McPhee & Glaser (1962), which included panels on congressional elections in 1950 and a three-process model for voting decision. This ‘campaign simulator’ (see Figure 2.1) was the first computer simulation of a voter’s learning cycle, with the three steps of the process being *stimulation* (by outside input) causing an initial impression, *discussion* leading to an impression and then a *learning process* leading to a modified disposition (McPhee 1961; McPhee 1963, pp. 75–9; McPhee & Glaser 1962, pp. 127–30). The final text of the period summed up the Columbia findings, concluding that the primary determinants of choice are external stimuli and internal disposition, and further refined the campaign simulation model (McPhee 1963).

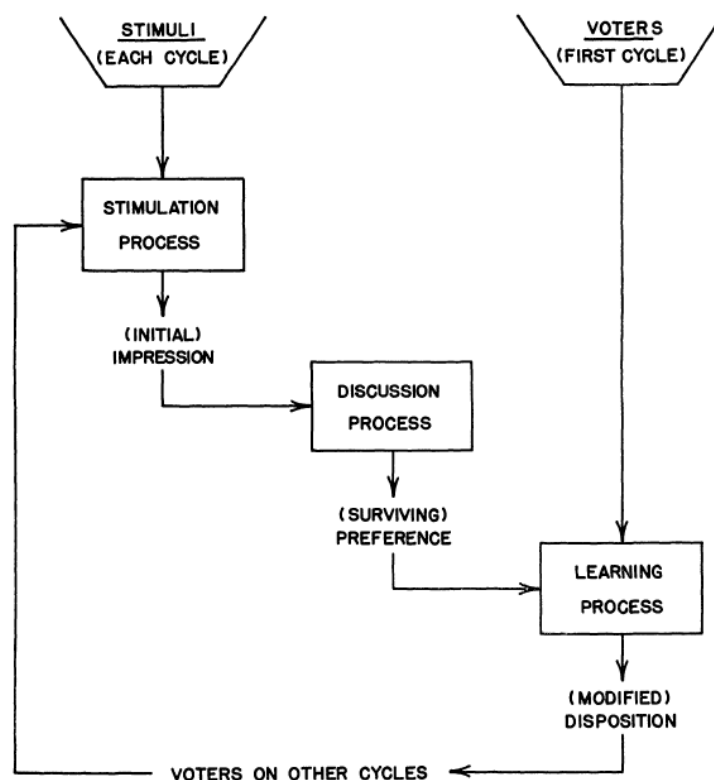


Figure 2.1: The Campaign Simulator (McPhee 1961)

The Columbia approach to the study of voter behaviour was largely ignored by later studies (Christensen 2015). The most significant development in sociological approaches to voter behaviour is the research of Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995), who argued for a microsociological theory of voter behaviour, also referred to as contextual voting, wherein

all voters are interdependent, subject to a complex range of inter-related influences. Microsociological theory considers choice and control over information as problematic and incomplete, because a great deal of information is obtained inadvertently through being exposed to signs or other paraphernalia, and thus, no one exercises complete control over incoming information (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995, pp. 16–18). Building on McPhee’s voter simulation model and combining the Columbia findings with the seminal sociopolitical works of Durkheim, Tingsten and Key (see Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995, pp. 6-13), the authors emphasised the uniqueness of each electorate, referring to the national electorate as a useful concept but an intellectual construct (p. 282). They stated that just as each electorate is distinctive, so is each citizen, with a unique matrix of social and other influences weighing on individual decisions (p. 283). Arguably, it is this combination of understanding of the individuality of each voter responding to the own unique context that advances the sociological theory to one particularly useful in the current media environment where voters can tailor their own context in a way that could not have been conceived in the 1940s.

2.1.2 Michigan School (Psychosociological Theory)

Spurred on by the criticism that the sociological approach did not properly examine the role of the campaign or party allegiance, the Michigan School’s Survey Research Centre developed a psychosocial theory of voting. This theory put partisanship, defined as a psychological affinity, as the primary influencing factor of voter behaviour, viewing the voter as an autonomous actor and dismissing social context as secondary (Campbell et al. 1960; Campbell, Gurin & Miller 1954). According to this theory, changes in party identification are rare and occur as reactions to events of significant impact. Leaning heavily on the reference group theory, the Michigan theorists notably allow for partisanship to be separate from vote choice in their model. A voter can identify as Republican and choose to vote Democrat in a given election without damaging their identity as a Republican. This work also confirmed the Columbia finding of cross-pressures, which they referred to as attitude conflicts, as the main cause for voting against partisan leanings and for late decision-making (Campbell et al. 1960, pp. 77–88).

An important conceptualisation within psychosocial theory is the ‘*funnel of causality*’ (Campbell et al. 1960, pp. 24–32; Lewis-Beck 2009, pp. 22–8). The concept is that every interaction and decision leading up to a vote decision feed into that decision. Ordering

dimensions are categorised into exogenous factors versus relevant conditions, personal versus external conditions and political versus non-political conditions. A cross-section at any point in the funnel is able to contain all the elements that can successfully predict the next chain of events and the eventual vote choice (Campbell et al. 1960, pp. 24–32). Although the model encompasses all these factors, it focuses its attention more on the relationship of partisanship, candidates and issues and less on social factors and communication systems (Niemi, Weisberg & Kimball 2001, p. 15).

The Michigan model has come under widespread and constant criticism (see Pomper 1978, for a review of the 25 main disputed points). The turbulence of the 1960s and 1970s and the rise of issue politics seemed to disprove the partisanship dominance thesis (Nie, Verba & Petrocik 1979), but this was later found to be an aberration (Miller, W.E. & Shanks 1996). Significant bodies of literature have been produced arguing that the Michigan model overstates the role of long-term partisan loyalties and that voters are not autonomous actors (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995; Meier 1975). The study was transformed into the American National Election Study (ANES) and still runs today with remarkably few changes in methodology. In addition, as documented in *The American Voter Revisited* (Lewis-Beck 2009), the underlying findings of voter behaviour using the Michigan methodology have not changed.

Philip Converse (2006b) developed an independent theory from the Michigan School springboard, arguing that voters have neither a full set of beliefs to produce a coherent personal ideology nor a clear idea of what constitutes an ideology. Converse argued that except for a small number of voters with a high level of political sophistication, the vast majority do not understand the ideology of political parties, cannot comprehend their own opinions within a larger ideological framework or even grasp the left-to-right ideological spectrum. He classified five voter types according to their understanding and engagement with ideology. Zaller (1992) updated and refined Converse's theories of mass opinion, arguing that voters do not hold structured belief systems and more politically aware voters are likely to be influenced by elite messages while rejecting views that conflict with their own.

2.1.3 Anthony Downs (Rational Choice)

Anthony Downs (1957), in *An Economic Theory of Voting*, applied economic theories of entrepreneurship and rational choice to the practice of voting. This theory posits voters are self-interested and rational beings who will make rational choices of the representatives most likely to achieve the best results for them (Downs 1957, pp. 38–9). Spatial theories of voting also stem from this theory, which conceptualise parties or candidates as being on a spectrum, trying to place themselves as closely as possible to the ideal voter, with voters choosing parties by which they place themselves on that spectrum (Downs 1957, pp. 114–41).

The underlying requirement that voters have accurate and detailed information about their interests and parties' proposals is the main weakness of this model. The proponents of this approach try to overcome this weakness using the concept of heuristics to explain how voters would be able to make decisions based on little information (Lupia, McCubbins & Popkin 2000; Popkin 1994; Simon 1955). This theory is also criticised as not being applicable outside the United States. To quote Colin Hughes (1969):

But when we turn to the real world in which electoral decision-making is as much, or more, influenced by images which have been as greatly affected by irrational factors as it is by rational calculation of the sort outlined by Downs, a new dimension is introduced. No longer does the rational voter seek the maximum information and weigh utility incomes without prejudice. Rather he [sic] seeks the minimum of information necessary to appraise a pre-existing image and determine whether it is still valid for his purpose – which is to discharge a civic obligation under penalty of a fine. (pp. 186–7)

A notable development of rational voter theory is the 'referendum model', which suggests that elections are ultimately decided on the state of the national economy and the perceived ability of the incumbent government to manage it (Finkel 1993). Fiorina (1981) is largely credited with developing the Downs's rational voter theory along this line as a response to the dominant Michigan theorists, focusing on temporal changes in party identification as retrospective voter evaluations of how well the party in power had performed.

Valence voting, as first described by Stokes (1963), is a significant development of the spatial voting theory, which posits that voters make their choices based not on differing issues or policies, but on perceptions of which party is more competent to deliver on a

single, stable issue domain, as can often be the case in modern democracies where most things are agreed upon. V.O. Key's (1966) *The Responsible Electorate*, in which he famously asserted 'the perverse and unorthodox assertion of this little book is that voters are not fools' (p. 7), confirmed the importance of *The American Voter* model built on party identification; however, it also concluded that a large number of voters are moved by policy and performance, and that, contrary to the Michigan findings, those who switch party allegiance do so for valid valence- or issue-based reasons. However, voters do not always respond reliably in response to negatively valenced information, with some reinforcing their vote intention through motivated reasoning (Lodge & Taber 2013; Redlawsk, Civettini & Emmerson 2010).

The clarity and simplicity of rational and spatial theories of voting ensure they are still used in somewhat pure forms to explain voter behaviour, including in an Australian context (e.g. see Charnock 2010; McAllister, Sheppard & Bean 2015; Singh 2009).

2.2 Early Studies of the Australian Voter

A flurry of research was conducted on voter behaviour in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s, culminating in two seminal studies in the 1970s: Don Aitkin's (1977, 1982) *Stability and Change in Australian Politics* and David Kemp's (1978) *Society and Electoral Behaviour in Australia*. After this point, the field largely stalled, with only the AES examining long-term trends. The reasons for the lack of more varied study seem a matter of vast geography, logistics and available resources. To quote Rawson (1961):

There seems no possibility of undertaking it in Australia. The difficulties in the way of obtaining a representative sample of people throughout the country for the purpose of any but the most simple inquiry, and the difficulties of arranging for long and repeated interviews, are serious enough separately and, for the present, quite insuperable together.
(p. 164)

2.2.1 Stability and Change

Don Aitkin (1982) is often credited with delivering the most seminal study on Australian voting behaviour, *Stability and Change in Australian Politics*. After studying with the UK Nuffield scholars and the US Michigan School, Aitkin returned to Australia and conducted his own study (Goot 2013). Significant variations were necessary to adapt the Michigan

model to Australia. The result involved two panel waves, one in 1967 in a non-election year, and a follow up in 1969, which was an election year. A first edition was published after these two waves, and following the considerable political upheaval of the 1970s, a third survey was conducted in 1979 with different respondents (i.e. it was not a third wave of the panel). This was published as the second edition in 1982, but Aitkin's conclusions were largely unchanged: the Australian electorate's political attitudes and allegiances were largely stable, a pattern he attributed to habit rather than understanding (Aitkin 1982, p. 270). Aitkin (1973, 1982) identified only three important cleavages: socioeconomic class (defined as a combination of inequality, self-identified class consciousness and competition for resources [pp.120–1]) being the most important, followed by religion and the place of residence, whether urban or rural. He found class, while an important cleavage, was of little importance to Australians, who 'wore class labels lightly' (Aitkin 1972; Aitkin 1982, p. 127; Mackerras 1979). His interest in the 'peculiarities' of the rural voter, combined with earlier studies in northern New South Wales (NSW), went on to form his important theory of 'countrymindedness', defined as the tendency of rural voters to put farming and the interests of rural communities ahead of the interests of their city cousins and the nation (Aitkin 1965, 1973; Aitkin 1982, pp. 180–97; Aitkin 1985, 2005).

Aitkin's focus on stability was contrasted with David Kemp's (1978) focus on change. Kemp, who closely rivalled Aitkin in importance, also focused on the longer-term trends of voter behaviour, completing a secondary study on 30 years of opinion polls to analyse the changing nature of voter attitudes and party allegiance. Kemp argued that class (which he measured solely in terms of occupation) had ceased to be an important motivator for voter behaviour, and it was instead a matter of culture that determined vote. His arguments centred on the lack of apparent difference between Labor and Liberal voters, and the gradual decline in the cleavages of religion and class to the point where they were just two of many factors rather than determining factors. In a review essay, Mackerras (1979) was critical of Kemp's failure to properly explain why some areas still appear to vote along class lines, while noting Aitkin and Kemp both agreed that the explanatory power of class was overrated and declining.

2.2.2 The Ringwood Series

Creighton Burns's (1961) study on the 1960 La Trobe by-election, *Parties and People*, is arguably the most important text on Australian voting behaviour, providing more insight

into the Australian voter psyche than the Aitkin (1982) and Kemp (1978) texts combined. The results of the research in the suburb of Ringwood largely aligned with the Columbia School findings: the media have little impact on voter decisions, political propaganda less so, and speeches of politicians least of all. The parallels between Burns and Columbia are most evident through the declaration by C. Burns (1961) that 'Voting is an inescapably social act, a decision about social preferences taken under the impact of pressures, incentives and inducements' (p. 72, p. 120).

Class (measured through occupation, but also discussed as self-identified class) was a factor in the Ringwood study; however, social identity was not necessarily class, but other clearly defined groups such as 'young marrieds' or 'retired' (Burns, C. 1961, pp. 79–80). While C. Burns emphasised that no one factor can explain voting behaviour, class consciousness dominates in a complex mix of vote determinants. People vote as they do 'because of their social situation; not only, that is, because of their income and occupation, but also because of their educational background, their age, their sex, their religion, and their own assessment of their place in society' (Burns, C. 1961, pp. 73–4).

C. Burns (1961) found most voters to be singularly uninterested in the business of the campaign, but deemed apathy to be too strong a word: 'it is more social insouciance which results in many voters being completely untouched by the electoral campaign' (p. 8, p. 31). Diverging from US and UK findings, political interest was found to be spread evenly across all occupations and education levels (Burns, C. 1961, p. 77; Davies, A.F. 1967). Of note, C. Burns (1961) argued that those voters more involved in the community through participation in organisations were more likely to be interested in the election; 'apathy is a function of social isolation' (pp. 9, 60–1).

C. Burns (1961) conceptualised the role of issues in the campaign as having three faces: first, the face of the issues as the parties present them in their propaganda; second as the news media present them; and, third as the voters see them, with no necessary correspondence between the three (p. 27). Very few voters vote on issues or view the election in terms of competing policies (pp. 40–1). Condemning politics in La Trobe as being mainly for the politicians, he concluded: 'The campaign itself was largely a private ritual, conducted in half-empty halls and the unread columns of the press' (p. 65).

Two layers of typologies were categorised by Burns: a voter typology and a decision typology. Voter types were:

- *the Solid Voter*, committed to a particular party, comprising two-thirds of voters studied
- *the Swinging Voter*—which was, in turn, split in to two sub-types, namely, *true Swinging Voters* (comprising less than 4% of the sample) and *Wavering Voters* who were largely more aligned to one party but sometimes consider voting elsewhere, 33%)
- *the Projected Voter* who was propelled to vote for another party due to some kind of social change or significant event
- *the Fringe Voter* who was on the edge of the public sphere, for whom politics barely existed. (Burns, C. 1961, p. 119)

Voters made their decisions in one of the following four ways:

- *Responsive* decision makers are swayed by the record or promise of their party, have a traditional view of the contest and consider voting a rational act
- *Situational* decision makers vote largely because of habit or tradition, engage in reflex voting and are strongly conditioned by family and class awareness
- *Personality* decision makers are influenced by the politician or significant person in their life (e.g. a spouse); for them, politics barely exists in their daily lives and voting is similar to punting on a sports team
- *Ideological* decision makers commonly define their ideology by saying what they are not; for them, voting is a matter of high principle, an election is ‘an almost life and death affair, a choice between good and evil, right and wrong’. (Burns, C. 1961, pp. 121–5)

Only responsive decision-makers respond to traditional election campaigns (Burns, C. 1961, p. 126). Unique aberrations created by compulsory voting were noted by C. Burns (1961) in his typologies: the *apologetic* and *aggrieved* voters who felt the need to give some apology or alibi for their lack of interest in the election or for whom the election itself was too stressful to contend with (pp.140–1); and the *condescenders*, whom Burns portrayed as ‘bright children making light of the adult game’, for whom voting was an ‘over-rated pastime’ (p. 143). *Victims* of the election were a smaller group, with extensive complaints

about politicians, expressing resentment and aggression in some cases but, most commonly, just disappointment (pp.145–7).

Alan Davies, who assisted Creighton Burns on the 1960 La Trobe by-election study, reinterviewed individuals in the Ringwood sample, finding the work environment a significant factor. He also noted the importance of the *political friend*: a designated friend or family member with whom the respondent specifically has regular and often enjoyable political discussions (Davies, A.F. 1962). His (1967) third study involved reinterviewing of the Ringwood sample and other groups to illuminate different ways in which people thought about and applied class structures to their understanding of opportunity, social position and political opinion.

2.2.3 The Nuffield-style Studies

The Nuffield Election Studies, named for the Oxford college that conducted them, were largely a historical recording of British elections, until David Butler and Donald Stokes began working with the Michigan scholars to transform them to a Michigan study (Butler, D. 2014). Don Rawson, in collaboration with Colin Hughes, conducted the first Australia-wide national election study using the Nuffield approach (a mixed-methods study focused on a narrative recording of the election), including a panel study in the electorate of Parkes (a metropolitan seat in southern Sydney), during the 1956 federal election (Rawson 1961). It confirmed what was ‘generally known’ about the distribution of partisan support and the receptiveness to campaigning: voters are uninterested and have little political knowledge; women are less interested than men; neither party’s following has the simplest idea about policy and follow their party because they believe it consists of people like them rather than for its policy; and propaganda is largely ineffective, mostly because it focuses on policy and overrates voter interest in the election (Rawson, 1961, p. 165). Further, voting was not discussed by most respondents in or outside their homes, and half had not discussed their vote with anyone at all (p. 168). Most voters were unable to recall any campaign communication, and two-thirds of respondents could see no difference between the two major parties on issues (pp. 169–73).

A similar study limited to the Eden Monaro electorate, including a survey of 200 people in Queanbeyan interviewed a week before the sequential 1955 federal and 1956 NSW elections, found a difference in voter motivation between the two polls. The number of

voters who ‘always voted’ for their party was considerably higher in the state election, indicative of a much lower level of interest in the issues and leaders. The study noted that split ticket voters—whether they voted differently between House and Senate in 1955, or between state and federal elections—were not ‘swinging’ voters but simply ambivalent. Personal and local loyalties were also noted as an influence on voting behaviour, which affected the electorate regions differently (Rawson & Holtzinger 1958).

Colin Hughes (1969) conducted a Nuffield-style study of two Queensland elections in 1963 and 1966, including a panel study of voter attitudes, published as *Images and Issues*. This study found the electorate to be remarkably stable and gave few insights into individual voting behaviour beyond voters’ low knowledge and disinterest in state elections. Joan Rydon and Henry Mayer (1954) authored the first book-length study of any Australian election in a similar mixed-methods study and narrative report: *The Gwydir by-election, 1953: A study in political conflict*. Studies were also conducted on the 1959 South Australian (Hetherington 1962) and Western Australian (Crowley 1959) elections, with little theorising on the ‘why’ behind voters’ actions in these reports.

2.2.4 Swings and Personalities

The influential Australian psephologist Malcolm Mackerras has not often ventured into voter behaviour with one exception: his (twice rejected) PhD thesis (Mackerras 1974, 1976). Mackerras analysed swing deviations, building on David Butler’s theories in combination with data from Don Aitkin’s (1982) study, to identify the value of the personal vote for longstanding, popular or well-known candidates. Conceding that the importance of the candidate or the party cannot be generalised and that it is not an easy task to divide the two factors, Mackerras (1976, pp. 2–3) argued that regularities in swing indicate party vote and irregularities indicate personal vote (p. 446). He found country seats and ministers more likely to benefit from personal vote (p. 447), the benefit being the highest in Tasmania, higher than average in Queensland and the lowest in Victoria (p. 217, p. 345, p. 415, p. 447). The level of benefit was more pronounced in state elections than in federal (p.387, p. 447). He also demonstrated that the personal vote is not always positive, with a vote against a poorly performing candidate able to ‘buck the swing’ (p. 453). Other scholars have since confirmed the benefit of the personal vote (Bean 1990; Chaples 1997).

Mackerras's research was strongly criticised throughout this period. Joan Rydon (1966) had worked with a binary Labor versus non-Labor 'adjusted two party vote' in her PhD thesis on electoral system bias, some years before Mackerras (Goot 2016). Rydon (1973) argued, 'Mackerras' measures may often obscure the extent of changes in voting since they ignore shifts of voters to or from minor parties' (p. 260). She considered the excessive focus on swing a misrepresentation of the Australian electoral process, distorting what is actually going on in favour of simplification (Rydon 1973). Henry Mayer (1980) had similar thoughts: 'Mackerras' approach... has a grossly misleading and crudely positivistic facticity which hides its ideological assumptions' (p. 353). Murray Goot (1973) was also critical, arguing that it was only a measurement of net change, and substantially more voters may have switched allegiance during the campaign or between elections, pointing to variations in opinion poll numbers to indicate the more significant levels of volatility than the 'swing' would indicate. He later repeated these arguments in a comprehensive history and countering of the Mackerras Pendulum and the fixation on the national 2PP vote (Goot 2016).

Joan Rydon and Henry Mayer (1954) authored the first book-length study of any Australian election: *The Gwydir By-Election in 1954*. This impressive multi-method exercise was unable to identify the causality of vote. However, the reaction to Mrs Thelma Kirkby, the Country Party candidate who had stood twice before and the only woman candidate in the state at the time, who seemed to garner additional personal support, which the authors attributed to her being a woman (Mayer & Rydon 1954, p. 29), is an interesting anchor point to track through to others making the 'woman vote' argument for Julia Gillard in 2010 (Denemark, Ward & Bean 2012).

2.2.5 The Prime Minister's Policy Speech

The only known three-wave panel study of an Australian election of this early period examined the impact of a single prime ministerial speech on voter information and attitudes (Hughes & Western 1966). The focus was, as in most of Hughes's writing, on the party and politician images: how voters perceived and recalled those images. The study found that extensive change in attitudes at the individual level happened rarely (p. 42). However, when people were affected by the policy speech, they were most likely conservative Liberals with an initially unfavourable view becoming more favourable, or alternatively, radical ALP voters with a favourable view becoming less favourable (p. 124). Hughes and Western

(1966) also found that voters have ideal concepts of what the candidate should be and will identify those attributes in their candidate, but that they view those attributes through a perceiver predisposition that biases them to identify attributes that fit the idealised image of their chosen party. Using Osgood and Tannenbaum's (1955) 'principle of congruity', which states that changes in evaluation are always in the direction of increased congruity with the existing frame of reference, they argued that to avoid stress, partisan people will bring about perceptual congruence between their preferred and ideal candidate images (Hughes & Western 1966, pp. 155–6). The study was criticised for its methodological issues, which resulted from the hasty way it was put together (Thompson 1968).

2.3 Critical Theory of Voter Behaviour

Critical Theory is defined by Horkheimer (2002) in his seminal essay 'Traditional and Critical Theory' as theory which does not merely express the historical situation, but constitutes a force within that situation to stimulate change, and bring forth a better reality. *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno 1950) is a definitive Critical Theory text that has greatly influenced the field of political psychology. This research used a fused quantitative and qualitative approach similar to the Lazarsfeldian method, and it pushed into psychosocial attempts to explain the inexplicable, irrational behaviour of voters in supporting authoritarian figures against their own interests. Similarly, the public sphere theory of the second-generation critical theorist Habermas (1989) is a dominant paradigm for understanding the functional way debate and discourse enable the state to be held accountable via publicity (Breese 2011; Downey, Mihelj & König 2012). Most scholars of the public sphere theory find there are multiple overlapping and unequal publics, including issue, ad hoc and counter publics, the definitions of which are problematic (Breese 2011; Bruns 2019a; Downey, Mihelj & König 2012; Squires 2002). Habermas understands ideology as communication that is distorted by systems of money and power (Bohman 2019; Elias 2013). Thus, it is not surprising that most critical theory research that touches on elections is focused on the influence of money and media power, rather than on voter behaviour.

Although not a member of the Frankfurt School, Paul Lazarsfeld was a contemporary of Horkheimer and many argue was a significant influence on both Adorno and Habermas (Jeřábek 2017, pp. 60–2; Jones, P. & Holmes 2011, p. 35). His own approach was grounded in Marxist theory (Balazova & Marsalek 2012; Cole, J.R. 2004; Jahoda 1979). A debate

about the ‘administrative’ approach of the Vienna School advanced by Lazarsfeld, and the ‘critical’ approach of the Frankfurt School advanced by his former assistant Adorno, continued for some time, but in the end the two influenced each other, with Lazarsfeld endorsing the critical approach (Jeřábek 2005; Katz & Katz 2016; Lazarsfeld 1941a; Morrison, D.E. 1978).

There is definitely an orthodoxy in voter behaviour study ripe for critique. Several seminal texts, including those noted above, would appear to be at odds with one another, but on closer inspection, they are remarkably similar and grounded in similar ideas. Catt (1996) argued that there is much debate and controversy within voter behaviour study, but it happens within the tight confines of accepted working practices, namely, the assumption of the partisanship and rationality of voters; the downplaying or discarding of political context; and the similar method and even questions asked by voter behaviour scholars. Those who have sought out new methods, such as in the Annenberg studies (Romer et al. 2006), did not challenge the assumption of partisanship, the role of issues or media influence, and largely reinforced the orthodoxy.

2.4 Contemporary Research

Considerable research has been conducted in recent decades on voting behaviour, particularly in the United States, yet far less so in Australia. However, much of the research has neglected individual-level voter behaviour. Empirical research has focused on analyses of trends over time, leaving the evidence of the effect of campaigns on the vote indirect and inconclusive (Finkel 1993).

In Australia, following the earlier research described thus far, the NSSS contributed some understanding of political attitudes through the 1980s, with a single election panel in 1990 being its last publication. The AES, a post-election cross-section survey series, began in 1986, continuing in the style of Aitkin. Since its inception the majority of Australian research has been AES-centric, with very rare original studies or use of alternative datasets prior to the 2019 election. The findings of the AES have been summarised by Ian McAllister (2011) and in the regularly updated *Trends* publication (Cameron & McAllister 2016). Goot (2013) catalogued a number of issues and limitations with the AES; Throsby (2013) also drew attention to the disconnect between the AES political knowledge question

set and the contemporary political environment, and the potential for the survey to be exclusionary to various voter groups.

The remainder of this chapter will consider the advancements in the field predominantly since 1990, with an emphasis on Australian studies.

2.4.1 Voter Behaviour

2.4.1.1 Major cleavages

Class has historically been considered the most important cleavage in Australian politics, with religion included by some scholars as equally significant (Bean 1999), and gender, age, ethnicity, the urban/rural divide and issues listed as other significant cleavages (Jaensch 1995, pp. 127–34; McAllister 2011, pp. 111–42; McAllister 2015a).

2.4.1.1.1 Class

Debate has ensued on how to measure class in a voter behaviour context, whether it is in decline or there is any realignment, and what class means to different people (Goot 1994; McAllister 2011, pp. 144–71; Weakliem & Western 1999). However, there is general agreement, as demonstrated by Kemp and Aitkin (discussed above) and confirmed by others (Bean & McAllister 2015; Charnock 1997; Marks 1991; McAllister 2011, pp. 144–5; Weakliem & Western 1999), that it is a relatively weak and declining predictor of individual behaviour in the electorate.

In 2016, the ANU Social Research Centre, in collaboration with Fairfax and polling firm Kieskompas, utilised YourVote data from the 2016 election and additional surveys to develop seven personas of Australian voters as an alternative construct of class. The Political Persona Project identified ‘tribes’ within the Australian electorate: the socially conscious Activist Egalitarian; politically engaged Progressive Cosmopolitan; organised and future-focused Ambitious Saver; conservative Prudent Traditionalist; big spending Lavish Mod-Con; sceptical Anti-Establishment Firebrand; and cautious Disillusioned Pessimist codify demographic, age, gender, issue and voting tendencies (Hanna, Ting & Wade 2017). This work followed on from earlier studies using a random digit dialled survey, which identified six class types (Sheppard & Biddle 2017).

2.4.1.1.2 Religion

Religion is predominantly discussed in terms of traditional voter allegiances (i.e. Catholics voting ALP and Protestants voting conservative), which are no longer found to be particularly determinative, while the increasing number of secular voters tend to vote Green or ALP (Bean 1999; Bean & McAllister 2015; Donovan 2014; Manning, H. & Rootes 2005). Additionally, the analysis of the religious beliefs of elected representatives and leaders, and how that may or may not appeal to voters, has had greater emphasis since John Howard's tenure as prime minister (1996–2004), lifting religion in the national discourse to a similar level as that of the ALP/ Democratic Labor Party (DLP) split² during the 1950s (Crabb 2009; Donovan 2014; Fozdar 2011; Gleeson, K. 2011; Warhurst 2006, 2007, 2012)

Similar to class, when analysed statistically, it is generally agreed that religion as a cleavage remains an influence on voting behaviour in Australia, but one in long-term decline and nearing minimal influence (Jones, F.L. & McAllister 1989; McAllister 2011, pp. 125–6). A criticism of much of the study in this field is the almost exclusive focus on Christian denominations. While non-Christian religions account for a small proportion of the electorate, some religious communities, notably Jews, have played a role in public life well beyond their numbers (Maddox 2001, pp. 4–6).

2.4.1.1.3 Gender

Aggregate data research examining the 1990s confirmed the gender gap finding of earlier studies: female voters favoured conservative parties, but it was largely a consequence of gender segregation in the workforce (Leithner 1997). By the 2000s, the gender gap had disappeared, although when segregated by age and sex there were still differences, with younger women voting ALP and older women voting Liberal (Bean & McAllister 2009). By 2010, the gender gap had reversed with women more likely to vote for the ALP. This shift was theorised as a gender-affinity effect in 2010 enjoyed by then prime minister Julia

² The ALP split, a series of events beginning in 1954, involved conservative Catholic leaders within the ALP concerned about the increasing influence of communism, notably BA Santamaria, breaking away and forming the conservative Australian Labor Party (Anti-Communist), which was renamed the Democratic Labor Party in 1957. The split is often credited with keeping the ALP out of power federally until 1972. The DLP dissolved in 1978, before reforming as a small group shortly after, and changing its name to the non-American spelling of 'Labour' in 2013, with some minor electoral success in Victoria and one Senator elected in 2010, John Madigan (who resigned as a member of the DLP in 2014 and was not re-elected under his own party banner in 2016). For more on the ALP/DLP split or the DLP, see Ghazarian (2013); Love, Costar and Strangio (2005); and R. Murray (1972).

Gillard (Bean & McAllister 2012; Denmark, Ward & Bean 2012; McAllister, Bean & Pietsch 2012; Tranter 2011). However, subsequent elections have returned to no discernible gender gap in the Labor vote (Bean & McAllister 2015; Cameron & McAllister 2016). The AES study of the 2019 election found the gender difference in the Labor vote to be within the margin of error (37% of women, 34% of men), while a gender split was more noticeable for the Liberal Party (35% women, 45% of men) and The Greens (15% of women, 9% of men). The National Party and other minor parties and independents had no reported gender difference (Cameron & McAllister 2019, p.17). More generally, Banducci and Karp (2000) found that while women can view women candidates more favourably, it is not consistent, and leadership evaluations are an equally strong determinant of vote choice.

2.4.1.1.4 Age

Age has predominantly been studied in the frame of younger voters' behaviour, or generational analysis; more often, age is used as a secondary factor to break down another cleavage. Young voters have been found to be far less knowledgeable voters, excluded by the democratic process and turned off by formal politics (although this should not be construed as disinterest in political issues) (Edwards, Saha & Print 2005). The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has found younger voters have become less likely to enrol over time, and around half would not vote were it not compulsory (Edwards, Saha & Print 2005; Martin, A. 2012). The use of the Internet in election campaigns has been found to significantly improve younger voters' political knowledge and their likelihood of voting (McAllister 2016). Dalton's (2016) Good Citizen thesis posits that the concept of citizenship is changing to include other forms of non-voting participation and young people in particular are embracing new and different forms of political participation. A. Martin (2012) and Vromen (2003, 2011) have both tested the Good Citizen thesis among younger Australians and found similar behaviours, both in terms of youth participation in non-traditional forms of participation and the perception by older generations of those behaviours as being less worthy forms of citizenship.

Generation X have a particularly problematic connection to politics: Putnam (2000) argued they never made the connection to politics and thus emphasise the personal and private over the public and collective. Vromen (2003) analysed behaviours of voters identified as Generation X in the Australian context and found them to be highly individualistic in their approach to politics.

2.4.1.1.5 Ethnicity

Voters' ethnicity and immigration background have been studied at length. There are relatively low rates of political participation among the overseas born, believed to be a consequence of the interaction between ethnicity and socioeconomic background, and the information costs related to political participation, which are higher for those of non-English speaking backgrounds (Bilodeau 2009; Bilodeau, McAllister & Kanji 2010; Peucker, Roose & Akbarzadeh 2014; Zingher & Thomas 2012). Conversely, others find no such disadvantage, and indeed find they participate more in certain activities (Bean 2012; Zappala 1998). The discrepancies appear to be largely the result of differing definitions of participation (McAllister 2015a).

2.4.1.1.6 Urban/Rural divide

The differences between urban and rural voters are most clearly borne out in the continuing existence of the National Party (Jaensch 1995, p. 130; McAllister 2011, p. 139). More recently, similar rural affiliations have been noted with One Nation's supporter base (Forrest et al. 2001; Halpin 2004), while urban support bases have been noted for the Australian Greens and the Australian Democrats before them (Charnock 2009; Marks & Bean 1992; Miragliotta 2013). In an analysis of spatial variations of voting behaviour, David Charnock (2009) found the contextual effect of living in a rural area and 'country-mindedness' as strong an influence on voting behaviour as living in an area with a high unemployment rate. The influence of the rural-urban divide on voter behaviour has been demonstrated to be either steady or increasing (Bean & McAllister 2012, 2015; Wilson, S. 2001).

2.4.1.1.7 Issues

Issues occupy a special place in the election campaign, often determining the narrative of what the election is 'about'. Issues become a cleavage in, and of, themselves when they are so divisive that a community forms around the dissenting view, which in public sphere theory terms is called a 'counterpublic' (Breese 2011; Fraser 1990; Squires 2002).

'New politics', or the influence of value issues, such as the environment, women's issues and social justice, attracted some attention in the 1990s, particularly with reference to support for the Australian Democrats and Greens (Bean & Kelley 1995; Charnock 2009;

McAllister & Studlar 1995; McAllister & Vowles 1994). A two-wave election panel in 1990 as part of the NSSS demonstrated a significant influence of environmental issues in the 1990 election, particularly with Democrats and Greens voters, but only on voters who decided during the campaign. The saliency of the issue did not flow through to the 1993 campaign in which the major parties did not focus much attention on the issue (Bean & Kelley 1995).

2.4.1.2 Participation and the democratic disconnect

Political participation is defined as citizens' activities that are aimed at influencing the selection of the members of government and the actions they take (Verba & Nie 1972, p. 2). Participation affects voter behaviour through electoral turnout, increasing the civic skills that empower voters to contribute to discourse and debate, which may both clarify their own views and influence other voters (Sheppard 2014; Verba, Schlozman & Brady 1995). The civic voluntarism model argues that civic skills enable citizens to participate by making them more able to express their views, but the intentions of participatory behaviours, such as voting, signing a petition, attending an event or making a political donation, can be very different for different citizens (Milbrath 1977). Sheppard (2014) drew on Verba et al.'s (1995) civic voluntarism model of political participation to argue 'Internet use' is a resource that increases the likelihood that Internet users will participate in political activity, but the Internet has largely reinforced the participation gap in favour of people with a higher socioeconomic profile.

Globally there is an increasing concern about a 'democratic disconnect': an increasing gulf between the governing and governed. Gibson, Lusoli and Ward (2008) argued that the disconnection thesis, which is not new but has gained increasing prominence, has been less pronounced in Australian debate, and found that the disconnection thesis is often based on the evidence of a number of inter-related symptoms:

- declining citizen knowledge and interest in representative politics
- declining levels of trust in politicians and representative institutions
- declining levels of efficacy amongst citizens—the public's belief that they can influence government is falling

- declining levels of public identification and engagement with representative institutions notably through electoral engagement or political activity through mainstream organisations, such as political parties, which, in turn, erodes the overall legitimacy of representative organisations
- increasing participation divides—the problems of connection are exacerbated in areas of social deprivation and inequality; hence, trust, knowledge and engagement are falling most among the poorest. Additionally, many of these problems are more acute amongst younger people, raising fears of a generational switch-off from mainstream politics.

Others have argued there is little evidence of a democratic disconnect in Australia and strong evidence of a robust democracy (Goot 2002; Norris 2000). The level of concern about voter engagement in Australia is counterbalanced by compulsory voting, which some have argued masks underlying problems (Edwards, Saha & Print 2005; Gibson, Lusoli & Ward 2008). Goot (2002) rejected the ‘masking’ argument and said that compulsory voting is a misnomer because only attendance at a polling booth is required. Coupled with frequent elections, compulsory voting ensures that electoral participation is higher in Australia than anywhere else in the world (McAllister 2015b), but others have argued voter turnout is not a relevant measure of political participation in Australia since there is no choice (Bean 2012; Passey & Lyons 2005, p. 71).

2.4.1.3 Partisanship

Substantial volumes exist on the topics of party loyalties, party discipline and why we choose our ‘team’ in the political sphere. Party identification is the predominant means by which an average voter can reduce the information required to understand the political vote and cast the required vote (McAllister 2011, p. 35). Political party identification is the most persistent and potent political attitude (Campbell 1960; Campbell, Gurin & Miller 1954; Converse 1962; Converse & Markus 1979; but see Krosnick 1991). There is little doubt that patterns of partisan attachment have changed and weakened over time, particularly in relation to socio-demographic groupings (Bean & McAllister 2015, p. 414; McAllister 2011). Partisan de-alignment is believed to be the cause of the increase in late decider voting (McAllister 2002); however, many studies report a widespread tendency of seemingly undecided voters to return to their partisan camp as the campaign progresses consistent with the Columbia ‘reactivation’ finding (Finkel 1993).

Australians do not hold political parties in high regard: two-thirds of voters lack confidence in their parties and do not believe that Australian political parties generally care for what ordinary Australians think (Werner 2016). There is a significant difference between the positions parties take in their program and the party positions that voters perceive, with most Australian voters systematically perceiving their preferred party to be closer to their own positions than their policy platform would suggest (Werner 2016). Compulsory voting has been found to increase the level of partisanship, particularly among the least knowledgeable voters (Dalton & Weldon 2007; Singh & Thornton 2013). The AES consistently finds that at least 80% of Australian voters are partisan (Cameron & McAllister 2016, p. 28; McAllister 2011, pp. 38–43).

2.4.1.4 Protest voters

A protest voter is one who deliberately votes validly for another party than their preferred party, usually directing their preferences back to their party of choice. The other kind of protest is of course to not vote. The three types of abstainers among Australian citizens are non-voters (enrolled but did not attend a polling booth, which is punishable by a small fine), non-enrollers (never enrolled, or have fallen off the roll at some point) and deliberate informal voters (Sheppard 2014, pp. 61–2). Chaples (1997) identified alienated swinging voters and party wavered as those who would protest vote at the House level, and Senate protest voters, who remain loyal in their House vote but communicate dissatisfaction via their upper house vote.

Increasing electoral volatility offers a challenge to traditional voter behaviour theories, particularly to the Columbia and Michigan schools that both emphasise stability (Willocoq 2016). German scholar Carsten Zelle (1995) advanced the floating voter theory, finding considerable evidence for the frustrated floating voter or protest voter, and attributed the volatility predominantly to general political dissatisfaction. Dassonneville, Blais and Dejaeghere (2015), tested Zelle's findings across 26 countries using the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems dataset, utilising Hirshman's (1970) 'exit', 'voice' and 'loyalty' model of voter decision options. Although limited by the post-election cross-section, which is inferior to the panel methodology of the PartiRep Panel used by Zelle, the results contradicted Zelle's findings. They argued that switchers and abstainers are not frustrated about politics but are dissatisfied with a particular party; a general sense of dissatisfaction with the democratic system will lead to abstaining only (Dassonneville, Blais & Dejaeghere

2015). Others have found evidence that supports the referendum model (Boyd 1986; Söderlund 2008), that those who vote strategically are more likely to switch (McGregor 2012) and that changes to electoral systems can contribute to uncertainty (Drummond 2006).

2.4.1.5 Swinging voters

From engaged to apathetic, intelligent to moronic, the swinging voter has been called everything one can imagine. Poorly defined, and the subject of more commentary than solid research, swinging voters are the group of most interest to politicians (Throsby 2013). It has long been believed that ‘elections results turn on the behaviour of a small number of floating voters’ (Benewick et al. 1969). As the number of ‘rusted-on’ partisans declines, the number of swinging voters must increase, both among the deserters (those who state a party identification and vote for another) and floating voters (those who state no party identification), but the rates are not generally increasing as a percentage of vote (Manning, H. 2009).

Edwina Throsby (2018) used focus groups to study Australian swinging voters in the 2013 election and identified four distinct types:

- ‘switchers’ who had already decided to change their vote, and were unlikely to be influenced by the campaign;
- ‘assessors’ wanted to see what they learned through the campaign;
- ‘disaffected’ who had not decided their vote because they did not like any of the options; and,
- ‘uninterested’ who did not know who they were going to vote for because they were not interested in politics. (p. 8)

Ernie Chaples (1997) also defined four typologies of true swinging voters in Australia: major party swingers voting on rational reasons; Anti-major ‘third party’ voters; protest voters; and the ‘airheads and drongos...apoliticals of our society’ who, if not for compulsory voting, would not enrol, let alone vote (p. 363).

2.4.2 Political Communication

The intersection of media effects with political influence, and in particular the three effects of agenda setting, framing and priming, form the core of the political communication study. To describe these three effects most simply: agenda setting is the media's power to tell voters what to think about; framing is the media's power to tell voters how to think about it; and, priming is the media's power to get voters to think about it often (Scheufele 2000). Separately and combined, these effects can have a significant subtle effect on a voter's decision-making process, but it has been 'maddeningly difficult to prove substantial media effects exist' (Zaller 1992). Media effects are constrained by a voter's existing political loyalties, beliefs and information; those with stronger political affinities will have existing ties reinforced by media cues, while those with weak or no affinities tend to avoid political news entirely (Converse 2006b; Denmark, Ward & Bean 2007; Nimmo 1978, pp. 361–2; Zaller 1992).

2.4.2.1 Agenda setting

As early as the 1920s, Walter Lippmann (1922; 1925; 1931) wrote extensively on the news media's ability to affect public opinion by focusing attention on some issues while ignoring others. This concept went on to become agenda setting, codified by McCombs and Shaw (1972), drawing on the maxim that media 'may not be successful in telling people what to think, but they are stunningly successful in telling people what to think about' (Cohen 1963, p. 13). McCombs and Shaw found that voters without firm convictions paid equal attention to all media, not favouring stories of their party, which was better explained by agenda setting than the dominant selective exposure theories. They argued that media imperfectly reproduced an image of the political world, and voters tended to share the media's composite definition of what was important, thus suggesting a media agenda-setting function. Importantly, they noted a psychological function in the individual receptivity to the agenda-setting power of mass media, advising future studies must consider both psychological and social variables. Salience comes from within and without, the 'product of both personal and social forces' (McCombs 2005). Much of the development of agenda-setting study has been related to the significant concepts that agenda setting is something that happens over time—the temporal aspect cannot be ignored, and during that time there are many non-media elements that may influence agenda setting (Blood 1982). With the

dramatic changes to the media landscape, the future of agenda-setting studies is in the Internet (McCombs 2005).

Limited research has been performed on agenda setting in the Australian context. Gadir (1982) considered the activation and deactivation of issues in the larger issue agenda; N. Brown and Deegan (1998) focused on the environmental agenda issue and found that it affected corporate elites; and Dixon et al. (2014) found news coverage served an important agenda-setting role in explaining the public's attitudes and beliefs about tanning and skin cancer. David Denmark has conducted the only election-specific study that could be identified (Denmark 2002, 2005; Denmark, Ward & Bean 2007). His Type I method (combining AES data and MCA) studies examined the agenda-setting effects of television news on voters, finding that Australian television had poor agenda-setting power, with the issues cited by Australian voters being remarkably consistent regardless of campaign or television coverage. Denmark and others repeatedly cite this claim, arguing 'a critical proportion of the electorate' make their vote choice during the election campaign and thus may be influenced by said campaign 'despite the fact that many pay only passing attention to news bulletins' (Denmark, Ward & Bean 2007; see also Young 2011, pp. 3–4).

2.4.2.2 Framing

Framing, according to Entman (1993), is an interpretive process by which some aspects of a candidate's character or governing ability are emphasised over others in such a way as to promote an understanding or evaluation (Grabe & Bucy 2011, p. 211). Sometimes described as second-level agenda setting, the definition of framing is less clear than that of agenda setting or priming, because it incorporates a wider range of factors and is more tied in with culture (Weaver 2007). The major premise of framing theory is that an issue can be viewed from multiple perspectives and evaluated on different bases, not all of which will yield the same attitude toward the issue; thus frames in communication, which focus citizens' attention on one factor over another, will affect the attitudes and behaviours of the audience (Chong & Druckman 2011, pp. 238–41). According to Druckman and Nelson (2003), voters who regularly consume large amounts of news are at the greatest risk of influence from framing; if they already have a high level of information, they will have frames embedded in their memory and thus will most likely accept messages in similar frames and reject messages in new frames.

2.4.2.3 Priming

Priming is the specific seeding of issues into the discourse, so they become salient to the voter, with the intent they are salient in the context of the candidate or party in a positive way. The notion of priming is based on psychological research that shows people rarely consider all evidence when making decisions (Miller, J.M. & Krosnick 1996, p. 80). Since the burden of a complete and comprehensive information search to make a fully informed decision is too high, people 'satisfice', that is, assess only a small number of factors to make a satisfactory decision without expending great effort (Couper et al. 2013; Miller, J.M. & Krosnick 1996, pp. 80–1). Priming can be viewed as an extension of agenda setting and occurs when extensive media coverage leads voters to attach more importance to a given consideration in deciding their vote (Gidengil et al. 2002, p. 76; Miller, J.M. & Krosnick 1996, p. 81).

For issue priming to occur, the campaign has to revolve around an issue that is dramatically new. Issue priming is unlikely when classic valence or multi-issue agendas prevail. Leadership priming is routine; M. Mendelsohn (1994, 1996) argued that by failing to situate political issues in a broader context, media organisations encourage voters to attribute undue responsibility to individual political actors. Along with Wattenberg (1991), M. Mendelsohn also argued the media downplayed political parties and encourage the rise of candidate-centred politics (see also Gidengil et al. 2002, pp. 77–8).

2.4.2.4 Selective exposure

The new media environment has led to an increasing focus on whether people chose to only expose themselves to media sources with which they agree. The dominant theory of selective exposure is that people will generally seek out and/or only consume media content that is in line with their partisan leanings (Kim 2009; Sears & Freedman 1967). This behaviour was identified in the Erie County study and considered indispensable to explaining why campaigns mainly activate and reinforce existing predispositions (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, pp. 80–1; Sears & Freedman 1967). However, studies trying to prove the theory have had far from conclusive results (Katz 1989; Sears & Freedman 1967). People are usually only exposed to messages consistent with their existing attitudes, and when they are exposed to inconsistent messages, their pre-existing

attitudes guide their interpretation to utilise those messages in a reinforcing way (Miller, J.M. & Krosnick 1996, p. 79).

As exposure to news and civic information is increasingly mediated through online social media and personalisation, enabling individual curation by voters, it has led to speculation about ‘echo chambers’ in which there are only like-minded individuals participating in debate (Bakshy, Messing & Adamic 2015; Barberá et al. 2015; Choi & Shin 2017; Del Vicario et al. 2016; Meraz 2014) and ‘filter bubbles’ in which there is only content selected by algorithms according to previous behaviours (Bakshy, Messing & Adamic 2015; Pariser 2011), both of which are devoid of attitude challenging content. However, other studies have found that as opposing opinions are largely being fed in to users’ social media feeds by friends or others with whom they have a personal relationship, they are less likely to ignore, block or delete the content since they value the personal relationship with the individual more than they dislike seeing the content (Bruns 2017b, 2019b, 2019c; Masip, Suau-Martínez & Ruiz-Caballero 2017; Messing & Westwood 2014). Experimental studies have found that, given time, voters will view challenging content (Iyengar et al. 2008), and that anxious voters will intentionally seek information that they disagree with to defend their own opinions (Valentino et al. 2009).

2.4.2.5 Campaigns and media effects

A campaign—whether an election, referendum, issue or image campaign—consists of an organised communication effort, involving one or more agencies seeking to influence the outcome of processes of political decision-making by shaping opinion (Schmitt-Beck & Farrell 2002, pp. 2–3). Campaigns provide voters with political information, although not necessarily factual information (Dow 2011, p. 385). The intentional and unintentional effects of political campaigns have consequences at both the macro and micro level, from activating supporters to electorate-wide demobilisation and significant social change (Schmitt-Beck & Farrell 2002, p. 13)

Campaign effects on voter decisions are, to the dismay of political operatives, very small at best. Research has continued to find that potential does exist for campaigns to move individuals away from their vote dispositions, but serve largely to strengthen existing political predispositions, in line with the Columbia theory (Bowler, Farrell & McAllister 1996; Dilliplane 2014; Dow 2011; Finkel 1993; Hollander 2006).

Holbrook (1996) contended there are substantial media effects during campaigns, but the competing media arguments neutralise each other and thus are simply not observable through methods such as surveys (see also Box-Steffensmeier, Darmofal & Farrell 2009; Zaller 1992, 1996, 2002). Strong campaign effects may be experienced among voters without party affiliation who make their choice during the campaign (Lachat & Sciarini 2002, p. 55), or whose initial predisposition was incongruent with their underlying predispositions or other cross-pressures (Finkel 1993). Party identification has a sheltering effect, protecting voters from the influence of the campaign (Gidengil et al. 2002, p. 43). Activities that increase name recognition and brand presence as well as direct interaction to make the voter confront and engage with their vote decision (e.g. canvassing, doorknocking and other ‘on the street’ activities—what is generally referred to as ‘ground game’) are generally regarded as the best use of resources with some demonstrated pronounced effects (Arceneaux 2007; Barton, Castillo & Petrie 2014; Black 1984; Hillygus 2005; Lam & Peyton 2013). The use of emotion, particularly fear to increase vigilance and promote information seeking, and enthusiasm to activate loyalty and participation, can increase campaign effectiveness (Brader 2005). Voters will respond to economic motivation such as tax cuts, ‘pork-barrelling’ and other spending promises separate from the current state of the economy (Alizadeh & Farid 2017; Bojar 2017). However, promises that voter consider unrealistic or unlikely to be delivered can hurt the campaign (Bonilla 2017).

Campaigns can also affect vote intent by affecting consideration saliency (Gidengil et al. 2002, p. 87). Saliency is most affected through the intensity of the campaign, intensity being determined by either the divisiveness of the issues or intensiveness of advertising. Campaigns can be more intense in rural areas where the greater diversity of outlets and content leads to more coverage of the election, and cheaper advertising rates usually result in more advertisements (Beaudoin & Thorson 2004; Bowd 2012; Ewart 2000; Richards, Chia & Bowd 2011). Intense campaigns lead voters to consider their votes more important and thus lead to more sophisticated electoral decisions (Lachat & Sciarini 2002, p. 43). Low campaign intensity denies non-partisan late deciders the opportunity or incentive to make sophisticated voting choices (Lachat & Sciarini 2002, p. 55).

2.4.2.6 The Internet and social media

The way citizens' access information has undergone significant change because of new communication technologies (Pariser 2011). The Internet has empowered average news consumers to become active news seekers (Bruns 2005, p. 2). Although higher educated people are more likely to participate in politics, the less educated are likely to feel empowered to affect the political process to a greater degree than the educated as a result of using social media (Sasaki 2016). Social media has been increasingly used for political purposes, which makes encountering political information and perspectives on the platform more likely (Rainie et al. 2012). Bean (2011) argued the Internet will become the major medium of electoral communication due to the degree of discretion it gives users to choose the political information to which they will pay attention.

Sheppard (2014) found Australian Internet users do not generally view social networking as a forum for political discussion or proselytising; however, the #auspol Twitter community—the people discussing Australian politics denoting their subject with the use of the #auspol hashtag—is among the most active and emotive political discussion communities worldwide, supplemented in elections by the #ausvotes hashtag (Bruns 2017c; Bruns & Burgess 2011; Bruns, Highfield & Lind 2012; Bruns, Highfield & Sauter 2013; Burgess & Bruns 2012; Highfield 2013; Sauter & Bruns 2015). Twitter users have somewhat unfettered access to both the political and media elite, which has changed the social structure and challenges the two-step model of communication and traditional opinion leader theory. The estimated 8% of Australians that use Twitter for news (Watkins et al. 2017, p. 12) are likely to be the most politically engaged Australians and opinion leaders in their social circles. However, it is equally possible to be on Twitter or any other social media platform and avoid political discussion entirely (Bruns 2017a). Those that use both Facebook and Twitter for news are the most politically engaged users (Watkins et al. 2017, p. 39). Whether a social media user's experience contains any cross-cutting content (i.e. content that is of an opposing political argument to the voter's personal political leaning), or any political content at all, will depend largely on the individual, who their friends are and what they share, and what else they choose to expose themselves to online (Bakshy, Messing & Adamic 2015). 56% of Australian social media users deliberately avoid news (Watkins et al. 2017).

2.4.2.7 Informal communication and discourse

Personal communication has been recognised as a significant influence factor since the Columbia studies, albeit a far harder subject matter to investigate than media effects. Discussion is the vehicle through which dominant preferences of the larger community are transmitted to the individual voter (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1991; Putnam 1966). The people that voters choose to discuss politics with can affect their voting disposition in two ways: short-term impact on vote intention, and long-term effect on party loyalty (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1991; Segal & Meyer 1974). The workplace has been found to be the most likely place to have discussions with those of opposing political views (Mutz 2002). Social media discussions have been found to silence engagement in offline political discussions if people believe they hold minority views (Hampton, Shin & Lu 2017). Society and media are changing dramatically, but personal conversation remains a more consequential carrier of partisan messages than the media (Beck, P.A. et al. 2002).

2.4.3 Electoral Psychology

Electoral psychology is defined as that part of political psychology that assesses the act of voting to try to understand the long-term development of a voter's psychology and identity, and the way it acquires its consistency and logic throughout a citizen's life (Harrison, S. 2020). Scholarship examining the psychology of voters has been the biggest area of advance overseas, with political psychology now a recognised, distinct subfield in the United States (Austen-Smith & Lupia 2007). The most powerful dynamic linking psychology and politics is that of trust (Brown, B.S. 1977). A common tool used in psychology to understand voter behaviour is heuristics—the shortcuts we use to make decisions easier and faster (Lau & Redlawsk 2006; Popkin 1994).

Dalton's (1984) cognitive mobilisation theory posits that the functional value of partisanship was declining, and instead of party mobilisation, voters were being increasingly cognitively mobilised via the information explosion in mass media, and the dramatic increase in education producing a qualitative change in political sophistication of voters. The increase in political literacy and the decreasing cost of political information meant voters were now able to deal with the complexities of voter decisions without partisan cues, causing partisan dealignment and yielding greater electoral volatility.

Motivated reasoning theory is a similar psychological explanation of voter behaviour, which contends that voter reasoning is goal orientated (Taber & Lodge 2006). This natural bias leads voters to either seek out and rationalise new information in search of accuracy, or to confirm existing beliefs or partisan leanings (Kunda 1990; Lodge & Taber 2005; Taber & Lodge 2006). Motivated reasoning can result in behaviour that confounds rational theories of voting, where the voter's interpretation of negative information about their preferred candidate results in confirming or strengthening their support for the candidate (Redlawsk, Civettini & Emmerson 2010). Drew Westen (2007) used MRI scans of voters' brains to examine motivated reasoning based on the hypothesis that when reason and emotion collide, emotion wins. This study found that faced with confronting information, the brain registers distress. Then, the brain rationalises rather than reasons with the conflict between desire and the information being presented, shutting down the distress through this faulty, motivated reasoning. Next, the partisan brain, having turned off the circuits for negative emotions, turns on the circuits for positive emotions, thus reframing and revalidating their political allegiance until they feel good.

2.4.3.1 The Big 5 and the influence of personality

The way that people perceive and understand their social environment is shaped by their personality (Winter, D.G. 2003). Personality predates political and social influences (Gerber et al. 2010), is rooted in our biological structure and can predict a range of political behaviours (Dawkins 2017; Mondak & Halperin 2008). Core personality traits, known as the 'Big Five' dimensions of personality (i.e. extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness to experience) (Costa & MacCrae 1992; Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann 2003), have received considerable attention regarding their influence on shaping political attitudes (e.g. Bakker et al. 2016; Gallego & Oberski 2012; Gerber et al. 2011; Gerber et al. 2013; Mondak 2010; Mondak et al. 2011; Mondak & Halperin 2008; Paul 2016; Vecchione & Caprara 2009).

Extraversion and openness to new experience have consistently been found to have a direct effect on political participation (Bakker et al. 2016; Dawkins 2017; Mondak 2010). Extraverted people are more likely to be partisan and engaged, exploring all options before resigning themselves to switching from a party that has disappointed them. Open to experience voters are more likely to consider new and unknown alternatives, or if partisan, engage in constant rational updating of information to confirm their vote intent (Bakker et

al. 2016). Agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability are inconsistent personality traits for predicting voter behaviour. Voters with high levels of conscientiousness like order and are resistant to change, are motivated by feelings of civic duty, but are paradoxically the most likely not to vote if they feel another obligation such as family responsibilities or work is the higher duty, and thus civic engagement is a luxury. Voters with high levels of agreeableness tend to be trusting and most susceptible to campaign messaging or active in campaigns, and may be loyal partisans because they like being ‘part of the team’, but also have a high desire to avoid conflict, which translates to no indicative correlation on voting behaviour. Emotional stability is a spectrum from stable to neurotic: neurotic people are most responsive to emotional campaign cues in intense campaigns, are most likely to become angry with a party that has disappointed them, but simultaneously are most risk-averse, and the most likely to eschew social norms and not turn out to vote. Emotionally stable people react neither to campaigns nor social forces (Bakker et al. 2016; Dawkins 2017).

2.4.3.2 Decision-making

Significant research has been undertaken, particularly in the experimental space, to better understand decision-making processes. Evidence indicates that factors such as social location, broad attitudinal predispositions, ongoing party political loyalties and responses to the dominant political personalities feature as the major determinants of electoral choice, and the salient policy issues of the day have little weight (Bean 1994). However, others have found that personal issues can play a significant role in vote decisions (Goot & Watson 2001).

Heuristics are the short cuts or mental cues we all use to make complex decisions more quickly and easily. Petersen (2015) defined heuristics as ‘rapidly executed rules for decision-making that specify a narrow relationship and the preferred decision (“If information x, then decision y”)’ (p. 45). Citizens use heuristics to form political positions and make voting choice decisions despite a deep lack of political knowledge or information (Lau & Redlawsk 2006; Lupia & McCubbins 1998; Petersen 2015; Popkin 1994; Sniderman, Brody & Tetlock 1993).

Many specific heuristics have been identified. Party identity is one of the most common heuristics in voting studies, briefly explained as ‘my party supports x, therefore I will

support x'. Valence voting, wherein non-policy factor assessments are made about competence and performance (e.g. 'are they doing a good job?'), is also a widespread underlying heuristic cue. The 'deservingness' heuristic is an important factor on all welfare issues, with five core dimensions of welfare recipients' control of their situation, their need for support, identity, gratefulness for the support received, and whether they have earned the support (reciprocity), identified in the psychological process of how voters determine whether people deserve certain welfare benefits (Oorschot 2000; Petersen 2015).

2.4.3.3 Socialisation

The distinguishing characteristic of social communication research is that citizens are influenced by the environment in which they reside (McClurg 2010). Socialisation refers to those pressures exerted on the subject, in this case the voter, by their social environment. Studies since the Columbia series have consistently found that the family is the single most influential factor in determining a person's lifelong voting preference, and political socialisation within the home at a young age is somewhat inescapable. Such is its influence that the family frequently becomes the standard by which other sources of social influences are measured (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1991). Symbolic attitudes are thought to be acquired early in life through parental socialisation and to remain fairly fixed through the rest of life (Krosnick 1991). Political choices are affected to a significant degree by the flow of information in and around the decision-maker's immediate social environment (Beck, P.A. et al. 2002; Huckfeldt et al. 1998).

2.4.4 Psephology and System Considerations

2.4.4.1 Compulsory voting

Combined with the single transferable vote (or preferencing), nowhere is Australian exceptionalism more apparent than in our comprehensive compulsory voting system (McAllister 2015a; Norris 2000). Debate continues regularly about the pros and cons, and on the issue of what proportion of Australian voters would not vote if we switched to voluntary voting: the AES asks this each cycle and it has not budged much over the years, with 80% of respondents in 2016 indicating they would have voted, and 70% supporting compulsory voting (Cameron & McAllister 2016). Lisa Hill (2002, 2010, 2015) has examined a number of the arguments for and against the system. Compulsory voting has been found to increase partisanship (Singh & Thornton 2013). There is some evidence

compulsory voting can lead to increased political knowledge (Sheppard 2015), but there is no correlation between compulsory voting and levels of political discussion or other non-voting forms of political participation (Singh & Thornton 2013).

2.4.4.2 Timing of vote decision, pre-poll and postal voting

The expansion of convenience (pre-poll and postal) voting options in recent years significantly alters the time-of-voting-decision discussion. In the 2019 election, 648,488 votes or 4.11% of the total 2019 ballots were cast pre-poll (up from 3.57% in 2016), and a further 1,538,139 or 8.27% were cast as postal votes (down from 8.58%) (AEC 2016, 2019). For some time, the proportion of voters in comparable democracies leaving their decision until late in the campaign has been increasing (McAllister 2002). In Australia, this trend developed considerably in the 1990s (Bean & McAllister 2000), and then reversed in the early part of this century to the point where in 2007 it was back to the low levels of the 1980s (Bean & McAllister 2009). However, the uncertainty of the 2010 election following the abrupt dumping of Kevin Rudd as prime minister sent the number of late-deciding voters back up to the high levels of the late 1990s, with 47% making their decision during the campaign (Bean & McAllister 2012). This dropped again in 2013 to 41% (Bean & McAllister 2015) and was at a similar level in 2016 (Cameron & McAllister 2016).

McAllister (2002) argued that the increasing number of late-deciding voters is due to a social shift of increasing education and access to political information, and that the increase is in the number of ‘calculating’ voters rather than ‘capricious’ voters. Seemingly applying cognitive mobilisation theory, McAllister suggested that the ‘most obvious explanation’ with the rise of the late decider is partisan dealignment; social mobilisation has educated voters to a higher level of political knowledge, thus empowering them to be more calculating in their vote decisions; and that this large and growing group of late deciders is more likely to be volatile in their vote intent, indicative of protest voting that is not usually sustained past one or two elections.

2.5 Review of theory

All theories and methods have some value in explaining some voter behaviour some of the time, but no theory or method can explain all voter behaviour in one election, let alone in multiple elections. The advent of social media has fundamentally changed the way that

voters interact with the public sphere, enabling a completely individualised news stream, and cultural changes across the world are pushing all of us to a more individuated sense of identity and redefining belonging to a multi-layered series of groups.

Sociological theory has many strengths and appealing features as it captures the complexity and murkiness of human interaction that makes voter behaviour so confounding complex. However, to understand Sociological voter behaviour theory necessitates embracing the nature influence and working with it, which is an anathema to most political scientists, given the field's obsession with influence as a distorting thing endangering our democracies. It is also somewhat dismissive of more simple and logical explanations and undermines the very structure of partisanship. Microsociological theory is a little more permissive of the influence of media and partisan affiliation but reduces the assessment of the vote almost entirely to the individual, and thus prevents any generalisations that would enable analysis of the community as a whole.

The extent to which Sociological theory makes political scientists uncomfortable is the single greatest explanation for the dominance of Psychosocial theory. Political scientists are much more comfortable talking about partisanship and policy. However, the dominance of this theory fuels a cycle of arrogance and disconnect, with the same issues being presented in the same ideological frame election after election, by both media and press, and indeed reinforced by researchers asking about those issues. The voters themselves with their messy and unpredictable behaviours and influences are homogenised into something that can be quantified by polls and correlated with other aggregate data. Despite the apparent inclusion of psychology implied by the name, individuality is erased.

Rational theories are also appealing because of their logic and clarity, but again make too many assumptions to explain voter behaviour, and largely dismisses or excludes the groups an individual belongs to. Rational voter behaviour theories are arguably a 'cheap' explanation, requiring little analysis or even qualitative data in order to be posited. They are also the most vulnerable to ecological fallacy, with aggregate data being used to assume behaviour of individuals.

2.6 A New Theory: Individuated Voter Behaviour

The gap in the theoretical landscape appears to be appreciating the individual within, or in reference to, the collectives that the individual belongs to. Each theory wants to give precedence to one attribute or group than another – whether it is partisanship, social context, or cleavages, they each require an assumption that one is more influential than another. The reality may be more that it is the combination of multiple forces, identities and influences that results in vote choice. The following is an attempt to rectify this, beginning the exploration into a new theory that fully appreciates both the individual and collective in voter decision.

Individualism is long recognised as a significant idea in liberal democracies, since the theories of Locke (1947), which sanctify the value of the individual. U. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002, pp. 22–3) argued: ‘The choosing, deciding, shaping human being who aspires to be the author of his or her own life, the creator of an individual identity, is the central character of our time.’ However, theories of individualism posit the individual’s actions without reference to others, or give the individual choice prominence over the collective, and thus diminish the influence of social forces readily acknowledged in voter behaviour literature. Jung’s theory of individuation, by contrast to individualism, ‘does not shut one out from the world, but gathers the world to oneself’ (Jung 2014, p. 226). The individuated voter exercises their own agency while conforming to external social influences (Reedy, King & Coupland 2016).

With its roots in Marx (2002) and the cornerstone of Jung’s psychology (Schmidt 2005), this theory is starting from the understanding of individuation as a process where someone defines their own identity in reference to the groups they identify with (how the ‘I’ relates to the ‘we’). Just as people curate their social media feed, the individuated voter curates their identity in reference to the groups with which they identify: worker, patient, veteran, minority, parent and so on. Individuation is not at odds with collective ideology, nor class theory, but rather reimagines the definition of collective as a series of distinct and overlapping groupings. For some, these competing collectives will cause cross-pressures; for others, it will reinforce and strengthen ideological leanings, leading to a more polarised polity (Houtman, Aupers & De Koster 2011).

Individuation is not a new idea but does not yet appear to have made its way into recognised theories of voter behaviour. The vast literature of voter behaviour largely seeks to classify voters in typologies, or to assess voter's action in reference to one group, such as class. Recent research on political personas or 'tribes' identified identity groupings that do not fit traditional class labels but have significant impact on voter identity and behaviour (Hanna, Ting & Wade 2017). Some researchers have acknowledged the self-identification of groups: for example, C. Burns (1961) noted how people identified themselves in reference to social groups; class identities were common but so were occupational groupings, self-identified class groups that did not correlate with observable measures, such as occupation, and other clearly defined social identity groupings that were not related to class, such as religion, age, 'young marrieds', 'housewife' or 'retired'. A third of voters asked which group in the community they belonged to failed to offer common class labels (Burns, C. 1961, pp. 77–81). This study is limited by a theoretical desire to classify people, rather than accepting the simultaneous complexes of group identities that combine to form the individual psyche. The only theory that, to date, readily accepts and embraces the influence of multiple groups on an individual voter is microsociological theory. The proposed theory may be perceived as an advancement on microsociological theory while attempting to bring a deeper psychological understanding of group affinity and individual identity to volatility in vote decision.

This proposed theory seeks to harness the idea of individuation as a process of identifying with multiple groups, while drawing on the parts of existing theory that this study has found are still applicable: the importance of social influence, opinion leaders and cross-pressures from sociological theory, context and the influence of multiple societal groups from microsociological theory, the funnel of causality and the influence of attitudinal conflicts from psychosociological theory, spatial voting from rational theory, valence voting, cognitive mobilisation and motivated reasoning. Given that the concept of self within the theory of individuation is not a fixed concept, but rather one in a process of continual redefining fed by identifying with multiple groups, which are also not fixed concepts, understanding voting behaviour in this way is to accept that collective voter decision is never stable.

Each voter is a unique individual, making a decision in an equally unique electoral event. Each voter brings with them to that decision all of the events and interactions that have

happened in their past: the attitudes of friends and family, the life events and experiences that shape their view of the world and the messages they have been exposed to over time. The level of education and political literacy of each voter will determine their level of information seeking and the type of information sources they will seek out, with the exact combination of information and influence sources being unique to each voter. The volume of available information is now larger than ever before, and the need for heuristics (mental shortcuts) in processing that information greater. The proliferation and easy access to groups with which one can identify with, get information from and take cues from, leads to more frequent redefining of self, and potentially increased polarisation and volatility in the electorate.

Voters are always social beings and heavily influenced by the attitudes of those closest to them. However, world powered by social media, those influences stretch well beyond the traditional concepts of friends and family. Voters can now directly engage with politicians, journalists and other experts to obtain higher quality information inexpensively. This greater pool of opinion leaders influencing any given voter causes later voting decisions, due to the time necessary to process the larger number of opinions available to the voter, and greater volatility in vote decisions since the voter is exposed to more differing views. There are many publics in the public sphere facilitated by social media, creating networked clusters of grouped debate, while simultaneously the mass-mediated public sphere continues to decline as an accurate representation of public opinion (Bruns 2008; Bruns 2019a).

Voters can curate the opinion leaders to whom they are exposed and the facts to which they are exposed. However, most do not filter out opposing views (Masip, Suau-Martínez & Ruiz-Caballero 2017); instead, they are reinforced in their beliefs and identity by facing confronting information and rejecting it. This leads to unexpected, unprecedented, irrational voting behaviour, since they choose which facts they wish to believe and reject others (or believe the information from groups they identify with, and reject information they perceive as originating from other groups they do not identify with). Through a psychological process of *motivated inverse valence*, an emotional reaction to negatively valenced information that causes the voter to defend those they identify with, rather than reassess their own attitudes, the influence of media is further weakened from its already limited effect. This rejection of alternative information and the hardening of their position

is leading to increasing polarisation in the electorate and makes political debate fraught. Disconnected from facts and reacting to the reactions of others, individuated voters may actively rank their group identity above acting in their own self-interest.

Negative campaigning, once considered the most reliable and effective tool for election campaigns, is more likely to be rejected or ignored by the individuated voter. This does not mean the electoral environment has become more positive, but rather that the general discourse is so divisive and negative that negative campaign material does not stand out from the noise. Additionally, voters now feel empowered to simply reject negative information at first sight. The individuated voters now control the narrative, each responding (or not) in a unique way to events and information, interpreting them in a way fuelled by their individual identity and schema and voicing their own opinion into the public sphere which, in turn, causes other voters to react. The ripple effect of many voters influencing many other voters can magnify the influencing power of a single event or news story, but the framing of that event or original news story no longer defines the reaction. It is more unpredictable than ever before which events or news stories will create the greatest reaction. Trivia and nonsense, such as the editing of a photo to change Scott Morrison's shoes in a family photo (Keoghan 2019; Martin, L. 2019a), may generate a greater reaction than a significant policy announcement that will affect many thousands of lives. The electoral strategy of microtargeting, which involves monitoring people's online behaviour, and using the data to design and deliver political advertisements targeted at specific types of people (Reedy, King & Coupland 2016; Zuiderveen Borgesius et al. 2018), both acknowledges the individuation of the vote and minimises the risk of a large-scale undesirable reaction.

How an individuated voter responds to information and opinion, and whether that information and opinion will influence their vote decision, will depend almost entirely on context and timing. The how and where the voter receives the information is more important than what the information is. For example: a voter having a conversation in church with an elder of their community may accept the elder's opinion on a matter because the voter identifies with the church, respects the individual and is actively thinking about other non-political things, such as the sermon just given or the lunch about to be served. The same voter may then reject the same opinion given by a well-known figure they oppose on social media later that afternoon, when they are actively thinking about the issue and

not distracted by other things, but do so entirely because they do not like the messenger, or the perceived group affiliations of that messenger. There is no logic to how the individuated voter responds to information, increasing the volatility and unpredictability of the electoral environment.

The individuated voter does not necessarily equate partisan membership with the groups they identify with, nor empower the political party they prefer to tell them which individual opinion leaders they should be listening to. While the individuated voter may identify with a party, they are unlikely to have it rated highly in the hierarchy of groups they identify with due to the declining trust in political parties. When defining which 'team' they are on, and who they should be attacking or supporting, they are likely to identify with individuals in the party organisation rather than blanket approval on all party figures. This is a rejection of partisanship as a defining heuristic: whether it be the Trump supporter who does not identify as Republican or vice versa, or an Australian Greens supporter who likes their policies but does not like their candidates, the importance of party identification has decreased with the increase of other group identities with which the voter may choose to define themselves. For those who do reference their party affiliation as an important a defining part of their identity, they will continue to appear as a committed partisan voter and take their cues from the party. However, note that this is not due to the strength of the party influence, but rather the strength with which that voter identifies themselves by the party.

As the election date nears, individuated voter behaviour becomes more personal. As the cacophony of opinions and information becomes deafening, the voter focuses on the task and rejects most debate. The personal influence of those they trust is likely to be the only new information they will consider. They will make valence assessments of candidates they actually get to vote for, rather than parties or national issues, and those assessments will be on their personal set of concerns that have shifted to the top of factors they choose to consider. They may make a decision early if there is only one clear option for them on the ballot; they may make a decision late if there are a number of viable options that they need to assess further. Alternatively, if there are no options on the ballot that interest them, they are likely to leave the decision until the very last moment, seeking out more and more information and potentially making the decision on a whim. They may rationalise their wants and opinions for the option closest to what they want, if no candidate quite matches

their desires, particularly if there is an abhorrent candidate they wish to vote against. They may only vote at all because of Australia's system of compulsory voting and may vote informal if they believe that to be an option.

Older voters will find this societal shift to multi-group identification more confronting than younger voters, many of whom have never experienced the social pressures to conform to dominant group norms that older voters grew up with. Thus, older voters will feel conflicted, with some choosing to disengage and stick to what they consider to be 'right' or 'valid' considerations, and others reaching out for more opinion leaders to assist their decision. This too is part of the ongoing process of individuation and may result in greater polarisation. Disillusioned by the highly visible division within the supporters of parties they used to rely on as the principal consideration for their voting decisions, older voters are likely to rationalise their voting decisions by increasingly identifying with their geographic community, or others in a similar stage in life. They will assess what is best for their neighbours or others in the same social grouping, rather than what is best for them personally or for their normal party of choice. The length of time they have spent living in a geographic community will determine whether it is their geographical community, or 'people like me' community that they prioritise in their vote decision.

Individuated voter behaviour does not preclude patterns being found in aggregate voter behaviour. This theory acknowledges the ongoing role of social groupings, and what may appear to be issue positions or partisan allegiances. Class is still a group with which a voter may identify with, as is age, education, gender, sexual orientation, wealth, geography or any other cleavage. The difference is that acknowledging the individuation of voter's identity and decisions enables and even predicts the instability and unpredictability of the modern election.

This theory has limitations, and potentially a limited lifespan, as the political communication environment is rapidly changing, and the individuated behaviour seen in the 2019 Australian federal election may not be generalisable. However, if the culture of the world further deepens and entrenches the idea of identity, and the format of media continues to trend towards a curated individual experience linked to multiple groups, then the study of voter behaviour must also begin from a premise of individuation.

2.7 Summary

Voter behaviour is an increasingly well-established field of study globally but remains centred in the traditional three theories of voter behaviour: Sociological (Columbia), Psychosocial (Michigan) and rational (Downs). Australian research in this area has largely been homogenised around the AES, with the influence of the Michigan voter behaviour theory clearly evident in the persistent assumption of partisanship and stability.

Theoretically, we understand that the media can influence vote intent, but that power is limited by the voter's predispositions and social context. Social influences may be more powerful than media influences. Psychological factors, such as the voter's personality, may be more important than social context, by determining whether the voter was ever open to being influenced by any message at all. We also know that voters are rarely fully informed at the point of decision on either issues or candidates, but rather use cues and heuristics to make equally sophisticated voting choices. Issues and partisanship are important cues and heuristics. However, the medium for transmission of those cues will be social contact or media, and the reception of those cues will be filtered by the voter's pre-existing schema of attitudes, whether the message or cue is in accord with their partisan leaning, and their level of political interest. In short: voter behaviour is complex—intersecting multiple individual, social, media and political forces—and elections and voters are somewhat annoyingly unique.

What we know about Australian voters from the research amassed so far is that most voters are loyal partisans who decide their vote well before the election and are not moved by campaign material or issues. There are an increasing number of undecided and late-deciding voters; the 'why' is not clear from available data. The traditional cleavages, such as class and religion, may still have some declining relationship to vote intent, but it will be political psychology that fills out other aspects, such as attitude towards the state, and personality influences are more instructive and relevant. There is no gender gap, overall. Younger voters and those from non-English speaking backgrounds may be less engaged, but not necessarily. Where they live affects their decision. We know that a minority cross-class vote, a minority change their vote and a minority choose not to vote at all. Most voters are media savvy and happy to find their information on the Internet, but only personal contact and conversation seem to have real influence. There appear to be correlations

between media consumption, media endorsement and vote outcome but no clear causal influence link.

The main gap in theory is an inability of most theories to cope with simultaneous influence sources. The proposed individuated voter behaviour theory seeks to address this, but will require extensive study to support the concept.

Chapter 3: Voter Research Methods

There are certainly other ways of studying elections, but the most direct and often most valid way of understanding why people vote the way they do is to ask them. (Niemi, Weisberg & Kimball 2001, p. 4)

Chapter 2 reviewed theories of voter behaviour; this chapter will review the methods to obtain the data that inform those theories. Beginning with a discussion of quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods and Paul Lazarsfeld's approach of fusing or integrating quantitative and qualitative analysis, it will briefly touch on the 'Paradigm Wars'. A review of survey methods focused on panels, polling and other types of surveys, including the issues involved in online surveying and survey design, will be detailed, and non-survey methods commonly deployed in voter behaviour and election study will be discussed. Finally, the strengths and weaknesses of these methods will be reviewed and a possible new method proposed.

3.1 How Elections are Studied

Election studies primarily take place at two levels: the macro level of 'why did x win the election'; and the micro level of 'why did some people vote for x while others voted for y ?' (Erikson 2002, p.269). Election studies are by their nature complex with a vast array of descriptive questions (which describe the characteristics of the population), and associative questions (which determine the relationships between variables) (Kenski 2004). The variables that are important at the micro level are not necessarily important for macro-level analysis and vice versa; and there is certainly no agreement on the important variables for electoral behaviour studies (Erikson 2002; Knight & Marsh 2002). In theory, all macro-level explanations must derive from micro-level behaviour, but contemporary macro-level studies have become largely divorced from the analysis of micro-level data (Converse 2006a; Erikson 2002).

In his review of voting behaviour theory and method, Eldersveld (1951) identified six classifications of voter behaviour studies:

- the *hypothesis-testing exploratory* study, in which the investigator guesses the significance of a factor, and collects and orders voting data in a manner designed to demonstrate the truth or falsity of the proposition
- the *mass-tabulation case* study, which has no hypotheses or has only vague or very vague ones, studying many aspects of a single electoral unit (city or electorate for example), in either one or a short series of elections, collating as much data from available records as possible
- the *comparative statistical survey*, an attempt to identify differences in voting behaviour trends in a particular electorate or geographic construct, often without hypotheses and based largely on available voting data
- the *single-hypothesis trend* study, exploring the validity of a single proposition or phenomenon over a number of elections and in many different electoral units
- the *hypothesis-testing factorial analysis*, systemically testing a defined hypothesis to elections in a single community
- the *community dynamics* study, mass-tabulation and recording studies, with a set of hypotheses, exploring and quantifying the dynamic interaction of many factors, cleavages and variables, using the most advanced measurement and survey techniques.

The three most prominent criteria for the evaluation of research methods are reliability, replication and validity. Reliability, especially a concern for quantitative research, refers to whether the results are repeatable and whether the measures used are stable and consistent. Replication refers to whether another researcher can reproduce the study and find the same results (Bryman 2016, pp. 41–3). Validity is arguably the most important criterion because it refers to the integrity of the conclusions. Many types of validity may be measured, depending on whether the study is quantitative, qualitative or a mixed-methods approach. Cook and Campbell (1979) identified four types of validity: construct, external, statistical conclusion and internal. Construct validity assesses how the measure conforms to theoretical explanations, or whether a measure does measure the concept it claims to be measuring. External validity refers to whether the findings can be generalised beyond the specific research context. Statistical conclusion validity relates to the covariation between the dependent and independent variables and ensuring that covariation conclusions are based on statistical evidence. Internal validity relates primarily to the issue of causality and is concerned with whether a conclusion that incorporates a causal relationship between two

variables is truthful. Other validity measures include criterion (or predictive) validity, which is used to demonstrate the accuracy of a measure or methodology by comparing it with a known procedure (Carmines & Zeller 1979), and ecological validity, which is concerned with whether the research findings are reflective of events in people's everyday lives (Bryman 2016, pp. 41–3).

3.1.1 Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed-Methods research

Approaches to research are generally divided into quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods. The quantitative paradigm is typically associated with a positivist and objectivist stance. Quantitative research is characterised by the acceptance of objective measures and scepticism about subjective information, except when interpreted as attitudes and beliefs; by emphasis on a description of what happened in the context of initial expectations and observed events; and by a subtractive approach to explanations, which are considered adequate when rival hypotheses can be ruled out through control or comparison observations, statistical adjustments or accounting for the observed variation (Bryman 2008; Datta 1994; Mahoney & Goertz 2006).

Broadly, the qualitative paradigm is typically associated with an interpretive and constructionist stance. Qualitative research is characterised by the acceptance of subjective information and scepticism about objective measures; by emphasis on in-depth understanding of what has happened as the meaning of events to those involved; and by emphasis on an additive approach to explanations, in which understanding is considered complete when all the available information can be incorporated into a satisfying pattern (Bryman 2008; Datta 1994; Mahoney & Goertz 2006).

The mixed-methods approach involves the utilisation of at least two methods, one of which is quantitative and the other, qualitative. This approach has attracted a variety of views on what it can and cannot achieve, some of which have been extremely resistant to the idea that quantitative and qualitative research can be combined at all. The 'Paradigm Wars' is a term given to the debate in academia regarding the relative merits of quantitative versus qualitative research approaches, which peaked during the 1980s. The differences between the sides were not technical; they were philosophical, and thus, the dispute over the relative merits of quantitative versus qualitative was somewhat intractable (Bryman 2008). The different traditions have been likened to different religions or the worship of alternative

gods (Beck, N. 2017; Mahoney & Goertz 2006). The ‘development’ of mixed-methods was supposed to have brought about an ‘end’ to the ‘war’, or at least a respite in hostilities (Bryman 2008).

Of course, it can be argued that all the advent of mixed-methods did was add a third side to the war, because mixed-methods researchers can be as strident in advocating for their approach as those advocating for the qualitative or quantitative analyses. The terminology and culture differences between quantitative and qualitative researchers is such that even when attempts are made to bridge the divide, they usually favour one side, are misinterpreted or fail (Mahoney & Goertz 2006). Further, neither the qualitative nor quantitative paradigms are monolithic, and researchers in both are often uncomfortable with their colleagues’ approaches, with disputes within the paradigms as well as between them (Bryman 2008; Datta 1994).

3.1.2 The Lazarsfeldian Approach

The notion that ‘mixed-method’ research is a relatively new approach is a revisionist view of history for anyone who has spent time with the work of Paul Lazarsfeld. His friend and colleague of many decades Robert Merton (1979) said Lazarsfeld ‘considered it his moral duty to demonstrate the value, and in the social sciences, the frequent necessity of combining quantitative inquiry with qualitative insight’ (p. 20). Paul Lazarsfeld is regarded as the father of the survey research of the modern era: his advances in methodology both in data collection and analysis, particularly multivariate analysis, significantly contributed to making survey research the dominant method of inquiry in social and political sciences, as well as a commonly used tool in many disciplines (Glock 1979).

In an unpublished 1933 manuscript ‘Principles of Sociography’ (cited in Glock 1979; Lazarsfeld 1969) Lazarsfeld summarised his Austrian research experiences and noted the need for integrating different methods in a formulation of the Lazarsfeldian approach. It included four rules that characterised his philosophy:

1. For any phenomenon one should have objective observations as well as introspective reports.
2. Case studies should be properly combined with statistical information.

3. Contemporary information should be supplemented by information on earlier phases of whatever is being studied.
4. One should combine ‘natural’ and experimental data. (Glock 1979, p. 29)

Lazarsfeld (1969) explained that by natural he meant unobtrusive measures and by experimental he meant mainly questionnaires. This philosophy guided his research in both Austria and the United States, as well as the research of the various research centres he led that came to be referred to as the ‘Columbia tradition’. His academic preference for questions of ‘why’ rather than ‘what’, underpinned by his personal intellectual interest in decision-making processes, contributed to the intellectual excitement and advancement under his leadership at the Bureau of Applied Social Research (Glock 1979).

Lazarsfeld wrote numerous papers on method, methodology and his thoughts on the research approach, many of which are contained in *The Language of Social Research* (1955), which serves as a text on the Columbia tradition. Lazarsfeld, displaying his characteristic modesty, also downplayed the number of papers in the text he had written by publishing some of them under his alias Elias Smith (Fleck 2015). An early summary of his research approach, and in particular the learning from the *Marienthal* study, was published in the seminal paper ‘The Art of Asking Why’ (Lazarsfeld 1935). In this paper, which has been republished many times, he focused largely on open-ended questions and sought to outline the requirements for designing survey questions in such a way that the different determinants of a decision really come to light. Lazarsfeld specified that three principles must be observed:

- specification: considering what a question really means
- division: enabling the interviewee to answer
- tacit assumption: considering what the answer means.

In an equally seminal paper published slightly later, ‘The Controversy over the Detailed Interview – An Offer for Negotiation’ (Lazarsfeld 1944a), he made a strong case that both open and closed questions can, and should, be used together for different purposes. Through all the many volumes and papers written by and about Lazarsfeld, the consistent theme is that multiple research methods should be combined, fused where possible, and that the methodology should be custom designed for the specific nature of the study (Cole, J.R. 2004).

3.1.2.1 Lazarsfeld's influence on Grounded Theory

Paul Lazarsfeld significantly influenced Barney Glaser in the development of Grounded Theory (GT). GT is an inductive methodology (neither qualitative nor quantitative) which involves the systematic generation of theory from systematic research. Lazarsfeld's influence is most clearly detailed in Glaser's (2008) *Doing Quantitative Grounded Theory* in which Glaser explains it was Lazarsfeld who came up with the idea of getting data based on a sound objective methodology and deriving the theory from that data, rather than correcting speculative theories or hypotheses. Glaser (2008) took this approach a few steps further than Lazarsfeld did 'by just generating conceptual theory abstract of unit, time, place and people, and with not preframing by extant theory before the research began' (p. 2). Thus, where Lazarsfeld worked with a combination of speculative theory at the beginning of research (albeit not conforming to what the scientific method would require in a hypothesis) and generating new theory from data (e.g. as discussed in Chapter 2, beginning with the concepts of voter behaviour, such as the swinging voter being the most engaged or voting being like consumer decisions—both disproven; and, from the data, developed the minimal effects model of media influence and the opinion leader theory), grounded theory starts from a blank slate, with minimal literature review and no predetermined research 'problem', to discover new theory. This new theory is then related back to the literature (both descriptive and theoretical), to advance it with modification and constant comparative transcending concepts.

3.1.2.2 Open-ended interviewing

All of the Columbia studies (and the Ringwood study of C. Burns [1961]) involved face-to-face interviews in which trained interviewers used a technique known as open-ended interviewing. These interviews do not set fixed answers in terms of which a respondent must reply. The interviewer is given questions in a fixed order and is instructed to probe for more information if the initial answer is brief (Campbell 1946; Lazarsfeld 1944a).

The six main functions of the open-ended interview technique are:

- clarifying the meaning of a respondent's answer
- singling out the decisive aspects of an opinion
- discovering and dividing what decisive factors, predispositions and influences are brought to bear on opinion to form a judgement on causality if possible

- determining complex attitude patterns and, through the notation of off-hand references, discovering any cues or frameworks the respondent may be using
- identifying the motivational interpretation of respondents
- clarifying, interpreting and refining statistical inter-relationships of characteristics (or analysing the deviant cases). (Lazarsfeld 1944a)

Campbell (1946) argued that the open-ended interviewing technique made ignorance very difficult to disguise, and in contrast to polling, the respondent's interpretation of the question and intensity of opinion could not be hidden.

Lazarsfeld proposed a compromise method of surveying that would be more objective and manageable on a mass basis, while still achieving the benefits of open-ended interviewing. For clarifying the meaning of a respondent's answer, a series of interlocking poll questions can be used. Checklists can single out the decisive aspects of an opinion. Complex attitude patterns can be determined through using scales and typologies. He theorised a respondent's motivation could be derived through predictive tests, but at the time he was writing none existed for testing public opinion. No alternatives could be identified for discerning influences or clarifying statistical relationships—only open-ended interviews could derive these results (Lazarsfeld 1944a).

Open-ended interviewing made it possible for Lazarsfeld to achieve what he considered methodologically the ultimate in design: quantitative and qualitative data gathered through a single survey tool (Cole, J.R. 2004). The initial response to the structured question provided statistical data that could be analysed quantitatively; the longer, detailed answers garnered by the interviewers' probing could both verify the right answer had been given and provide the qualitative data for in-depth analysis.

3.2 Survey Methods

Surveying is a predominantly quantitative method for collecting and analysing social, economic, psychological and other types of data in a highly structured way. Surveys can also be used to collect qualitative data when carefully designed (Boeren 2015). Surveying is based on studying representative samples of a population, asking them for information through questionnaires (a specific set of questions that the respondents answer). Surveys can be descriptive—describing the population through demographic and behavioural

factors, or analytical—determining why people behave the way they do (Berger 2016, pp. 290–2; Boeren 2015). Political communication scholars use surveys as a data collection and analysis method for assessing attitudes, cognitions and behaviours relevant to both politics and communication (Hoffman et al. 2011). Structured interviews (individual or group, in person or on telephone) and self-administered questionnaires (supervised or unsupervised; online or printed with mail or other delivery) can both be employed for effective survey delivery with manageable advantages and disadvantages (Berger 2016, pp. 294–5). Political communication researchers must work towards theoretical and methodological advances to keep pace with the speed of real-world changes in their research fields (Kosicki, McLeod & McLeod 2011).

3.2.1 Panel Studies

Panel studies are a variety of survey studies known as a longitudinal study (discussed further in section 3.2.2) in which data are gathered from the same individuals at multiple points in time. Panel studies have a greater ability to address issues of causality and change and thus are considered superior for voter behaviour study (Andreß 2017; Bean 1990; Eveland & Morey 2011; Ruspini 2002, pp. 3–6). The benefits of panel studies are best articulated by Paul Lazarsfeld (1948b):

A considerable amount of additional information is obtained by reinterviewing the same people. The most important difference is the ability to single out in a panel study exactly who are the people who change. Once singled out, the changers can be subjected to more intensive study to determine the psychological and social-psychological elements which operated to produce the change in question. A trend study may show us the net impact of events on opinion. A panel can allow us to single out the individuals who changed their opinion in the course of the repeated interviewing, to probe for the psychological meaning of the event, and the role played by the various mass media of communication in the change. (p. 406)

Thus, the major purpose and the major advantage of panel designs is the analysis of causality and change at the individual level, because they permit tracking of that individual change (Eveland & Morey 2011; Ruspini 2002, pp. 40–2). Panels with three or more questionnaire waves can distinguish between measurement error and true change over time (Bartels 1993); they can also assess causality (Cole, D.A. & Maxwell 2003) as well determine whether change is reinforcing, linear or non-linear over time (Eveland & Morey

2011; Singer, J.D. & Willett 2003). Panels can also counter a number of types of errors and biases that can be inherent from other types of data collections, such as recall error, measurement error and selection effects (Andreß 2017).

The length of time necessary to produce an effect is a central concern in designing a panel study. Cumulative exposure to multiple influences may be required to produce any effect or change of vote intent. There may be a delay or the effect of exposure may decay, or it may change with subsequent events. External stimuli, such as significant events in the campaign cycle (e.g. leaders' debates), can be used as quasi-experiments in the panel design, by timing waves before and after those events to effectively measure the causal effects (Bryman 2016, p. 50; Eveland & Morey 2011). Smaller intervals between waves are more sensitive to change and better able to capture campaign dynamics (Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011).

Measuring the same variable at multiple times throughout a panel can result in 'panel conditioning' (Bartels 2000; Bryman 2016, p. 58; Clinton 2001; Trivellato 1999). Interviewing the same interviewees repeatedly may sensitise them to the concepts and methods of the study, even allowing respondents to provide stock answers (Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011; Miller, D.C. & Salkind 2002, p. 320). Producing equivalent forms of a measure, and asking the different forms in different waves, can help to reduce panel conditioning (Eveland et al. 2005). Nevertheless, multiple studies have found little evidence of significant bias from panel conditioning (Bartels 2000; Clinton 2001; Struminskaya 2015), and in the absence of repeated measurements, such studies would fail to take advantage of the analytic strength of the panel methodology (Eveland & Morey 2011; Lazarsfeld 1940; Lazarsfeld 1941b; Lazarsfeld 1948b). In particular, causal analyses require prior measures of dependent variables to test the intermediate variables (Cole, D.A. & Maxwell 2003; Eveland & Morey 2011). Traits are stable variables that do not vary over time and can be measured in any wave. There is no need to repeatedly measure traits, unless a significant event has occurred that may disrupt an otherwise stable variable (Eveland & Morey 2011).

Panel studies have inherent limitations: it takes considerable time to gather multiple waves of data; the cost of gathering such data is necessarily more than that for other methods; and since the complexity of the data acquired makes it vulnerable to error, the data require careful management and analysis. Attrition—the loss of panel members as a result of the

difficulty in reaching the same person for two or more contacts or because of the respondent's refusal to continuously cooperate—is a considerable challenge (Andreß 2017; Bartels 2000; Eveland & Morey 2011; Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011; Lazarsfeld 1941b, 1948b; Miller, D.C. & Salkind 2002, p. 320; Ruspini 2002, pp. 72–3). A non-probability web-based panel is generally less expensive than surveys involving actual interviewers and a faster mode of data collection and it reduces panel attrition across the waves (Eveland & Morey 2011).

3.2.1.1 Case study: The Columbia Erie County study 1940

The main purpose of the Erie County study was to examine the formation of opinion at the precise moment of its formation (Lazarsfeld 1941b; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1940). This study is cited as a classic example of a community dynamics study in Elderveld's (1951) typologies. Paul Lazarsfeld (1941b) had been interested in using the panel technique for some time, and this was his first opportunity to use it on a large scale. Special efforts were made to follow the changes in voting intentions and to gather data on the possible intervening factors in the attitudinal change process. Questions included those on the perceptions of the differences between the parties, participation in the campaign, political information gathering and networks, media consumption, issue opinions, voting intentions, the role of personal relationships and social groups and the influence of family and friends (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1940).

CHART I
OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

| Time Table | May | June | July | August | September | October | November |
|------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | REPUBLICAN CONVENTION | DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION | | | ELECTION | |
| Interview Number | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Group | Total | Main Panel 600 | Main Panel 600 | Main Panel 600 | Main Panel 600 | Main Panel 600 | Main Panel 600 |
| Interviewed | (3000) | | Control A 600 | Control B 600 | | Control C 600 | |

Figure 3.1: Timetable of Erie County questionnaires (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, p. 4)

At the outset of the study, 3000 people were sampled and interviewed. From these, four groups of 600 people each were derived by sub-sampling. The four groups were very closely matched by punching the age, sex, income, residence, political opinion and expressed interest in the campaign of all respondents on Hollerith cards and then breaking down the sample into small groups based on attributes, which were then distributed evenly into four sub-samples. The main panel members were reinterviewed six more times at monthly intervals, but each control group was reinterviewed only once more, at different times (see Figure 3.1), for the purpose of determining whether the repeated interviewing was affecting the decision-making process (Lazarsfeld 1941b).

From a technical point of view, the most difficult aspect was noted as keeping people from dropping out of the panel (attrition); however, after the second interview the numbers dropping out were small. The average attrition was 13%, with 520 completed panels from the main sample (Lazarsfeld 1941b). A notation in the preface to the third edition of *The People's Choice* discusses panel bias, including a brief summary of the PhD of Charles Y. Glock (1952) that focused on the control panels. Glock found the panel methodology did expedite the time of decision of those in the study because they developed their voting intentions more quickly than did the control groups, but participation did not substantially alter their voting decision or their interest in the subject (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet

1968, pp. xii–xv). Some of the questionnaires are available with the scanned codebook and data files in the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research database (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1940).

3.2.2 Longitudinal and Time Series Designs

A *longitudinal study* commonly refers to a series of cross-section studies collected at two or more periods of time (Bryman 2016, p. 56; Ruspini 2002, p. 3). The term longitudinal can be applied to any kind of study that gathers data on subjects over time and is often a combination of approaches (Ruspini 2002, p. 6). Longitudinal data make it possible to analyse the duration of social phenomena, to study change both over time and in relation to other variables and to identify ‘ sleeper effects ’ (connections between events that are widely separated in time) and help to identify the causality of social phenomena (Ruspini 2002, p. 25).

One type of longitudinal studies is trend studies, which involve repeated cross-section studies (discussed in section 3.2.3) to follow a series of attributes through time (Lazarsfeld & Rosenberg 1955, p. 203; Ruspini 2002, p. 3). Trend studies can often indicate that an event has not brought any net change in opinion, but there may be a great amount of shifting of positions that can only be discovered via a panel study method (Lazarsfeld 1948a). When the periods of time in between questionnaires are evenly spaced, the study is called a *time series* study (Jerit & Simon 2011; Ruspini 2002, pp. 107–8). A time series study has two main aims: to identify the nature of the phenomenon by the sequence of the observations and to predict outcomes (Ruspini 2002, p. 109). Panel studies (discussed in section 3.2.1) are distinguished from other longitudinal and time series designs by the fact that they track individual behaviours rather than select attributes, and thus generally measure individual (micro) level change rather than aggregate community (macro) level change (Ruane 2015, p. 80).

3.2.2.1 Case study: The American National Election Study (ANES)

The American National Election Study (ANES) is the modern descendant of the Michigan studies (Burns, N. 2006). The time series study has been conducted for every election cycle since the Michigan scholars began their research in 1948. The study involves a before-and-after panel in presidential elections, and in non-presidential election cycles, only the post-election interview. The study includes the current module from the Comparative Study of

Electoral Systems (CSES), a global consortium that asks common questions across systems to enable comparative analyses. Data are collected through both face-to-face interviews (1,181 respondents in 2016) and online self-completion questionnaires (3,090 respondents in 2016). In addition to questions on electoral participation, voting behaviour and public opinion, the study asks questions on media exposure, values and predispositions (ANES 2016). Since 2012, the ANES (2016) has included the Ten Item Personality Inventory for the ‘Big Five’ personality traits discussed in Chapter 2.

Datasets and technical documents are available from the ANES website (ANES 2017).

3.2.3 Cross-Section Surveys

A cross-section survey is a snapshot at a single point in time (Kenski 2004). A cross-section research design is defined as the collection of data on a sample of cases, at a single point in time, to collect a body of quantitative (or quantifiable) data in connection with two or more variables, which are then analysed to detect patterns of association (Bryman 2016, p. 53; Ruspini 2002, p. 5). Studies of this kind have been a mainstay of scholarly literature in political communication, but they are unable to capture change or campaign effects or to provide insight into causality (Bryman 2016, pp. 52–3; Kenski 2006; Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011). Most commercial polling is cross-section surveying.

Volatility of opinion has been a concern of survey researchers from the early days of the profession. George Gallup (1947), Paul Lazarsfeld (1944a) and Angus Campbell (1946) are among those who proposed multiple interlocking questions to help clarify complicated issue opinions. Gallup’s (1947) Quintamimensional Plan asked five questions (or categories of questions) in order: a filtering question to determine whether they had thought about the issue at all; an open question to reveal the direction of their thinking; a yes/no question to a specific proposal; ‘why’ question(s) to determine the reasons behind the position held; and, a final question(s) to determine the intensity of opinion. Yankelovich, Skelly and White (1981) developed their ‘Mushiness Index’ model continuing in this tradition, tested it thoroughly and found it to be highly effective at both determining how ‘mushy’ (soft) a political opinion was and why.

3.2.4 Rolling Cross-Section Surveys

The rolling cross-section (RCS) design facilitates detailed study of campaign dynamics and influence (Johnston & Brady 2002; Kenski 2006). First used in a side project to the 1984 ANES, the methodology came into its own for the 1988 Canadian Election Study and was then adopted by the New Zealand Election Study from 1996; its most notable use is in the National Annenberg Election Study (NAES) beginning in 2000 (Johnston & Brady 2002; Kenski 2006).

RCS is the same as a normal telephone cross-section poll, but interviewers are asked to follow a careful mix of calling at different times and days to eventually contact the potential respondent in a process called ‘clearing the sample’ (Brady & Johnston 2006; Johnston & Brady 2002; Kenski 2006). The total target number of telephone numbers is divided randomly into ‘replicates’, each large enough to generate a given number of completions for a sub-period (Brady & Johnston 2006; Kenski 2006). Each replicate contains fresh respondents; individuals are never interviewed twice (Brady & Johnston 2006; Kenski 2006).

The RCS design allows precise analyses that can shed light on the media effects such as agenda setting, framing and priming that are present (Kenski 2006; Wagner 2011). Only a panel study can fully appreciate causality and campaign impact at the individual level; however, an RCS design is strongly suited for detecting campaign dynamics in real time at the macro level and is not subject to the issues of panel attrition or panel conditioning (Johnston & Brady 2002; Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011). Because RCS data do not reflect individual-level processes, it is inappropriate to make the ecological fallacy of generalisations about individuals from the group aggregated data (Kenski 2004; Schutt 2006, p. 170).

3.2.4.1 Case study: *The National Annenberg Election Study (NAES)*

The National Annenberg Election Study (NAES) was a national RCS study created to study the 2000 presidential election campaign, conducted again in 2004 and 2008 (Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011; Winneg, Jamieson & Hardy 2014). The NAES was created to prove that campaigns matter; thus, the methodology was one specifically of political communication and was designed to test campaign effects (Hall Jamieson & Kenski 2006; Wagner 2011). Questions covered the presidential campaign and politics generally, current

policy issues, media use, political participation and voting behaviour (Annenberg Public Policy Center 2013; Hall Jamieson & Kenski 2006). The NAES design consisted of the largest academic telephone surveys ever conducted in the United States with close to 100,000 respondents each election cycle (Wagner 2011). In 2008, an online panel was also conducted with a representative random sample of 28,985 (Annenberg Public Policy Center 2013). Because the cumulative sample of the NAES was very large, researchers can use the data to make generalisations about both small and large populations, allowing unique study of subgroups (Hall Jamieson & Kenski 2006; Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011). However, the dropping and adding of questions throughout the survey limited the ability of researchers to make inferences regarding long-term effects (Kenski, Gottfried & Jamieson 2011; Wagner 2011). The datasets and technical documentation are available to academic scholars from the Annenberg Public Policy Center (2017) website after acquisition of a password.

3.2.5 Conducting Survey Research Online

As use of the Internet has grown, online research has emerged as commonplace, and completing online surveys has become a frequent activity of online users (Baker, J. 2013). There is debate about whether collecting data entirely online changes the results or samples, with some researchers finding a very similar result to traditional modes, and others finding significant deviation when examining certain factors (Bytzek & Bieber 2016). One argument made for these discrepancies in political studies is that voters are more comfortable expressing honest views in privacy than they are talking directly to an interviewer (Homola, Jackson & Gill 2016). Although the AES found no significant differences in responses between online and offline modes with regard to political preferences, it found that vote choice differed depending on Internet access (Gibson & McAllister 2009). The general agreement is that online is an appropriate mode in most cases if the survey is properly designed, and thus online panels have become a prominent way to collect survey data and are used in many fields (Bytzek & Bieber 2016; Callegaro et al. 2014, p. 1; DiSogra & Callegaro 2015).

3.2.5.1 Benefits

Although not error free, online surveys can be designed using the knowledge about other modes to minimise measurement error. The capacity to randomise and vary how many

questions are shown on a page can prevent context effects, progress indicators can assist in preventing drop out and logic ensures more effective completion with less confusion than mail surveys (Hoffman et al. 2011; Peytchev & Hill 2009). Issues of space and time are largely overcome by online surveys, but this does not mean that researchers can ask every question imaginable (Bryman 2016, pp. 230–1; Hoffman et al. 2011). Metadata can be collected (e.g. log on and off times and IP addresses), giving invaluable insights to both respondents and research design issues (Lauer, McLeod & Blythe 2013).

Behind online surveys are websites running various software programs that make it possible to administer online instruments, electronic measurements, surveys and polls with essentially zero publishing and distribution costs. This is a dramatic change from previous administration methods, which had significantly higher costs associated with surveys (Baker, J. 2013). Online survey software is an example of ‘software as a service’ (SaaS) or cloud computing. There are many services available, such as the well-known SurveyMonkey, the more business-orientated Qualtrics and the open-source Lime Survey. The advantage of hosting surveys online (in the cloud) rather than running surveys locally are numerous; the most obvious is that the surveys are accessible to anyone with Internet access at negligible cost. The key benefit of employing SaaS online survey software is that the researcher is not responsible for maintaining the software itself (Baker, J. 2013).

In addition to lower costs, Internet-based surveying allows the use of much larger samples and has much greater speed. Huge amounts of data can be generated from large samples, sometimes in as little as hours. Data need not be manually entered as with traditional methodologies, which further cuts down the demand on resources (Clarke, H.D. et al. 2008; Gibson & McAllister 2009; Homola, Jackson & Gill 2016). VAAs are online tools that aim to assist citizens in determining which candidate or party they should vote for on the basis of the degree of agreement with a series of issue statements. They also yield enormous datasets unprecedented in traditional models, some with respondents in the millions (Garzia & Marschall 2012; Rosema, Anderson & Walgrave 2014). VAAs are typically run with media partners who shoulder the cost, which enable the massive samples relative to commercial and academic surveys; however, considerable bias is generated from self-selection, which needs to be managed effectively (Jackman, Ratcliff & Mansillo 2019).

Conducting research online also helps access younger voters and other groups who traditionally are difficult to access (de Bruijne & Wijnant 2013; Gibson & McAllister

2009). Optimising the survey to be accessible on a mobile device will enhance this advantage; given the option, a majority of respondents will complete the survey on their mobile device, and an even higher proportion of younger respondents will do so (de Bruijne & Wijnant 2013; Toepoel & Lugtig 2014). Designs need to take into account the smaller screen, minimise scrolling and avoid large tables to enable easier mobile device completion and not cause frustration (Barber, S. 2016; Lugtig & Toepoel 2015; Peytchev & Hill 2009; Revilla et al. 2016).

3.2.5.2 Risks with data security and privacy

While having the ease and convenience of an easily collected survey hosted in the cloud is a benefit, having data available in the cloud is also a security risk. Heerwegh and Loosveldt (2002) found that participants in online surveys are concerned about their privacy, with measures such as having them log in with a password increasing (rather than decreasing) response rate due to the perception their data are more secure. Information collected online is almost impossible to verify—a respondent can make up any age, gender, location and income and there is no way researchers will know better. While this is equally possible in a postal survey, the online culture of anonymity lends itself to this problem (Liu et al. 2014). Similarly, some may complete surveys more than once by using multiple email addresses (Hoffman et al. 2011; Liu et al. 2014).

3.2.5.3 Exclusion, self-selection and attrition

A notable problem with conducting a study entirely online is that those without Internet access are excluded from the potential panel of respondents (Bryman 2016, p. 191; Callegaro et al. 2014, p. 2). People without Internet access are not ‘missing at random’ and are likely to have some socio-demographic or other characteristics that separate them from those who do have Internet access (Callegaro et al. 2014, p. 2). The same argument, of course, can be made about people who do not have a telephone—an increasing problem as more people do not have a landline telephone (Barber, M.J. et al. 2017; Dal Grande & Taylor 2010). Others may find it too hard, or may lack the necessary digital literacy, to complete the survey (Bryman 2016, pp. 191–3; Hoffman et al. 2011). Dual-mode designs that incorporate online and face-to-face and/or telephone interview elements can overcome this concern entirely by including offline households, with the added increase to costs and resources (Blom, Gathmann & Krieger 2015; Clarke, H.D. et al. 2008).

For both access panels and discrete online studies, the most common recruiting method is asking for volunteers. Many companies are secretive about their specific methods, but advertising online and distributing invitations via mailing lists are common, as well as snowballing techniques (recommend a friend) or embedding sign-up requests at the end of short polls in social media or other online content. It is best practice to use a double opt-in process when people join an online panel (Callegaro et al. 2014, pp. 6–8). A concern is self-selection bias: those interested in the subject will likely sign up, and those uninterested will pass it by (Bytzek & Bieber 2016; Leeper 2016).

Attrition (loss of participants) is not more of a significant issue in an online panel than in other modes. Although it is easier to change one's email address than one's physical address, it is generally less common. Initiatives to reduce attrition, such as maintaining contact mid-wave, offering incentives and reaching out to re-recruit lost panel members, can all help reduce attrition rates (Callegaro et al. 2014, pp. 10–1).

3.2.5.4 Case study: Vote Compass

Vote Compass is a VAA developed by a team of data scientists from Vox Pop Labs in collaboration with academic scholars (Temporão et al. 2019). Hosted on the ABC website, the national broadcaster aggressively promotes the application over the course of each election campaign. The VAA includes a set of questions on respondent demographics (age, birthplace, education, household income, religious affiliation and geographic location), vote intention and issue preferences. In 2016, Vote Compass collected data on 1,178,398 Australian voters, with data for nearly 800,000 available after removing duplicates and missing responses (Jackman, Ratcliff & Mansillo 2019). This was almost double the usable responses from 2013 (Carson, Dufresne & Martin 2016). By far the largest dataset on Australian voters, Vote Compass provides a minimum of 1000 responses per electorate, but there is significant demographic and political bias in the sample, which must be managed by scholars who work with the data through significant post-stratification (Jackman, Ratcliff & Mansillo 2019).

3.2.6 Questionnaire Design Issues

Well-designed questionnaires avoid vague or complicated words and jargon and, where possible, reduce the number of syllables and words to aid comprehension (Hoffman et al. 2011). Attention should be given to keeping questionnaires as short as possible with no

unnecessary information sought or given. In particular, longer or more wordy questions may increase misunderstanding and measurement error (Alwin & Beattie 2016).

3.2.6.1 Open-ended versus closed-ended survey questions

Two types of questions can be asked: open-ended questions, where a respondent can construct their own answer, and closed-ended questions, where a respondent is asked to choose from a list of answers provided (Berger 2016, p. 300; Bryman 2016, p. 244; Krosnick 1999). Researchers tend to prefer the latter because open-ended questions can be time-consuming; need to be interpreted and coded, thus causing vulnerability to measurement error; and require much greater effort from respondents, which may increase the dropout and non-completion rate in self-administered questionnaires (Boeren 2015; Bryman 2016, p. 244; Singer, E. & Couper 2017). The two major criteria for generating good closed questions are that the answer choices should be exhaustive (which is typically achieved by adding ‘other’ as a choice) and that the respondent should be able to select one answer only (unless the particular question calls for multiple responses) (Berger 2016, pp. 300–1; Krosnick 1999). However, having respondents answer in their own terms has significant advantages, including allowing unusual responses to be derived, the true salience of issues to be explored and new areas of research or unexpected findings to be exposing and, of particular relevance for panels, open-ended questions can be used to generate options for closed-answer questions in later waves (Bryman 2016, p. 244; Singer, E. & Couper 2017). Other benefits of open-ended questions are noted in section 3.1.2.2 in the discussion on the open-ended interviewing technique.

While the economics of large-scale quantitative studies drove open-ended questions out of fashion, Howard Schuman (1966) proposed a solution in ‘The Random Probe’. Schuman argued that most of the value of open-ended questions, as argued by Lazarsfeld (1935, 1944a), could be fulfilled by probing a randomly selected subset of responses to closed-ended questions with open-ended follow-ups. By only probing a subset of respondents, the cost and demand on recording and coding would be reduced and the responses could be generalised. Schuman and Presser (1979) further attempted to address the conflict between quality from open-ended questions and the economy of closed-ended questions, concluding that pre-testing could ensure the acquisition of spontaneous responses, and the placement of open-ended questions among closed-ended questions would help mitigate issues of bias.

Further, open-ended questions within a survey are important to both clarify and validate closed-ended question responses (see also Singer, E. & Couper 2017).

Scaling, the most common of which is the Likert scale, involves a closed-ended question asking respondents to choose from a range of positions, usually on a 3-, 5- or 7-point scale, to give the magnitude of the opinion as well as the direction (Berger 2016, p. 301; Bryman 2016, p. 154; White & McBurney 2013, p. 222). Each scale point should be labelled with words as well as numbers because this not only significantly improves reliability and validity but also increases respondent satisfaction (Krosnick 1999). Respondents sometimes infer a middle option as the ‘typical’ or ‘average’ person answer. The ‘assimilation effect’ can result from respondents using this middle point as their starting point; similarly, middle points invite satisficing. Satisficing, also called the ‘low road’, is when a respondent answers the question superficially, rather than by engaging in the cognitive work required to make a decision, often by choosing the middle response option (Hoffman et al. 2011; Krosnick 1999; Tourangeau & Rasinski 1988). Middle points should be avoided, if possible, in question design, except where conceptually demanded (Hoffman et al. 2011). Conversely, not providing a middle point may risk some respondents having to select an alternative that they do not in fact hold (i.e. they may not agree nor disagree); providing an ‘other’ option can overcome this limitation, while still gaining the benefits of not having a middle point (Bryman 2016, p. 162).

Closed-ended questions, even if they do have an ‘other’ option, are subject to acquiescence bias: the tendency of a respondent to agree with any statement on the questionnaire regardless of its content. People generally ignore the opportunity to volunteer a response and simply select one among those listed (Krosnick 1999; White & McBurney 2013, p. 222). Acquiescence is believed to be linked to high agreeability from the Big Five personalities (Costa & MacCrae 1992; Soto & John 2017) mentioned in Chapter 2. Those who are inclined to be agreeable in all social interactions are likely to acquiesce and be agreeable when answering questions in a survey. Other theories infer that the behaviour is a result of the perceived power or authority status of the interviewer. Those who have lower cognitive abilities are more likely to be affected by both satisficing and acquiescence (Krosnick 1999).

3.2.6.2 *Response effects*

Following on from acquiescence and satisficing, the order in which alternatives are presented to a question alters the way people select an answer. Called ‘response order effect’, respondents will favour options at the top of the list when presented visually: when the options are read, such as in a face-to-face or telephone interview, the bias is towards the end of the list; that is the last-heard options (Krosnick 1999). A variant is the ‘endorsement effect’ by which a vignette or preamble to a question clearly implies what a candidate, party or leading public figure’s view is on an issue, and then asks the respondent for their view, clearly leading the respondent to both think about the public figure and leveraging the figure’s influence to bias the respondent’s answer (Zaller & Feldman 1992).

To reduce the potential for inadvertent ‘priming’ within a survey, that is, unintentionally increasing the saliency of an issue or concept in the respondents’ mind prior to asking a question on a related issue, researchers often carefully consider decisions about question order, wording and format (Hoffman et al. 2011). Just as media can prime issues and attitudes in the voters’ mind more generally, so can the wording of the questionnaire prime respondents, generally referred to as ‘framing effects’ (Zaller & Feldman 1992). A common strategy to reduce priming is to ask open-ended questions before related closed-ended questions so that the open-ended response is not a mere reflection of the ideas primed by the closed-ended form of the question. Researchers also ensure that the phrasing of their questions does not prime thoughts that will bias responses (Hoffman et al. 2011).

Answers to attitude questions in surveys can vary significantly depending on the preceding items; this is known as ‘context effects’ (also called ‘carryover effects’). The order in which questions are presented can significantly alter results. It is believed that the first question increases the salience of issues or ideas that influence the response to the following questions, and those least interested in the issue will be most affected (Bishop 1990; Lasorsa 2003; Peytchev & Hill 2009; Tourangeau & Rasinski 1988; Tourangeau et al. 1989; Zaller & Feldman 1992). Questions that are presented in blocks are more likely to present this problem (Tourangeau et al. 1989). To reduce (but not eliminate) context effects, surveys can be designed to provide questions in a random (yet comprehensible) order; questions that are likely to influence those around them can be distributed through the survey randomly and answers can be randomised (Alspach & Bishop 1991; Bishop, Oldendick & Tuchfarber 1984; Hoffman et al. 2011; Krosnick 1999). Important questions

that can be affected by the cumulative impact of the questionnaire, such as political knowledge and interest, should be asked at the beginning (Lasorsa 2003).

Of particular concern to panel studies is *response instability*. People can answer the same question differently based on what they were asked immediately before it, but the ‘*same person can answer the same question at different times as if it involved different topics*’ (Zaller & Feldman 1992, p. 594, italics in original). Similar to the other response effects mentioned, its cause is in the saliency of issues and considerations, which of course can vary between waves. Traditionally, these differences have been dismissed as measurement error. It is important to note that even high levels of response instability do not mean the data are ‘incorrect’; conflicting opinions expressed in multiple waves may be based on very real considerations (Zaller & Feldman 1992).

3.2.6.3 *Non-attitudes*

Converse (1974) and other scholars (Garner & Palmer 2016; Moy 2008) questioned the predominant view that respondents recall memories consistently and sometimes answer questions they do not have opinions about, resulting in a construct referred to as a ‘non-attitude’. Debate continues about what leads people to express non-attitude or to ‘float’ between responses (Hoffman et al. 2011; Zaller & Feldman 1992). Questionnaire design can assist in reducing non-attitudes. Respondents with lower education levels or otherwise socially marginalised individuals are more likely to offer ‘don’t know’ responses and are unaffected by the survey mode (Francis & Busch 1975; Hoffman et al. 2011). The ‘don’t know’ option reduces non-attitudes, and thus, its inclusion is encouraged. When phrased as ‘haven’t thought much about this issue’, the wording further reduces the likelihood of obtaining non-attitudes (Hoffman et al. 2011). The Yankelovich, Skelly and White (1981) Mushiness Index is an example of using a multiple-question design to reduce non-attitudes (Asher 2016, p. 60).

3.2.6.4 *Causality*

For any researcher to be able to argue ‘why’ an election result occurred, they must be able to demonstrate causality. Causality is a relationship in which changes in one variable cause change in another variable (Halperin & Heath 2012, p. 146). While most of the issues of causality are challenges for analysis, it is essential to bear in mind the need to capture the required variables at each time point when designing the questionnaires and waves. Causal

theories cannot be supported empirically unless the conditions of causality have been established by good research design (Hayes, Preacher & Myers 2011). To demonstrate causality, the following four tests must be met:

- Covariation: the variables must be statistically related. As each independent variable varies, there must be an observable variation in the dependent variable too.
- Non-spuriousness: the relationship observed between the independent and independent variables must not be due to the effects of another variable.
- Temporal order of events: The hypothesised cause or independent variable must happen prior to the dependent variable in time.
- Causal link: the causal mechanism or process theorised must link the two variables. (Halperin & Heath 2012, pp. 146–7; Kosicki, McLeod & McLeod 2011; Ruspini 2002, pp. 25–6)

The first test, the notion of temporal precedence—that the cause comes before the effect in time—is an important element in causality (Cole, D.A. & Maxwell 2003; Cook & Campbell 1979; Lazarsfeld 1955). Time series studies would seem to have an advantage in this respect; however, just because one event comes before another does not mean that the first event has caused the second event. Hence, while a time series analysis can capture that elite communication came before an opinion change, it is unable to capture whether it was the cause of that opinion change (Jerit & Simon 2011). It is a common mistake to infer causality from correlational data. Multi-observation research designs, such as panels that can account for the impact of variables external to the relationship that might contribute to the appearance of spurious relationships, or reveal suppressor variables, are the superior methodologies for investigating causality (Kosicki, McLeod & McLeod 2011).

The two different notions of causality are deterministic and probabilistic causation. Deterministic causation states ‘if (x), then *always/invariably* (y)’, whereas probabilistic causation states ‘if (x), then *maybe/sometimes/probably* (y)’. Human behaviour is always rarely determined and more accurately constrained, always vulnerable to the exception; thus, in voter behaviour we are almost exclusively working with probabilistic causation (Halperin & Heath 2012, p. 147). Many empirical studies focus on establishing whether one variable affects another and fail to explain how the causal relationship arises; this is

known as a ‘black box’ approach to causality (Imai et al. 2011). Process tracing within detailed case studies can overcome this issue by enabling a precise sequence of events for an individual case (Berg-Schlosser 2016; Imai et al. 2011).

Mahoney and Goertz (2006) argued that quantitative and qualitative researchers approach causality differently and use different language when defining it. Qualitative researchers often think about causation in terms of necessary and/or sufficient causes by using comparative methods. The assessment of causation in individual cases is in terms of a necessary condition counterfactual: ‘if: X, then: Y. X is a cause of Y because without X, Y would not have occurred’. Quantitative researchers have more of a correlational approach to causation, seeking to identify causes that, on average, increase or decrease the values on an outcome across a large population. Lazarsfeld’s groundbreaking research on multivariate analysis and causality was not paradigm loyal; he particularly focused on the deviant case found in quantitative studies to be subjected to qualitative analysis for learning what unobserved variable might be causing behaviours (Kendall & Lazarsfeld 1950; Kendall & Wolf 1955; Lazarsfeld 1961; Lazarsfeld & Rosenberg 1949).

3.2.6.5 Research continuity and using existing questions

Paul Lazarsfeld placed great emphasis on the importance of research continuity. It is only through the repeating of studies that we can truly distinguish what is reactionary behaviour to the specific context of this election and what is genuine, underlying political tendencies and long-term voter behaviours (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, pp. viii–x; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, pp. xxvi–xxxi). Using questions employed by other researchers in comparable studies is common practice and allows comparisons with other datasets (Bryman 2016, pp. 261–2). However, over-emphasis on continuity—common in trend studies such as the AES, ANES and British Election Study—driven by the understandable desire to compare one election with the previous one, can reinforce the orthodox approaches to voter behaviour study and entrench the exclusion of groups, or the use of methods or measures that are misleading or less than best practice (Catt 1996, pp. 65–75).

3.2.7 Sample Selection and Recruitment

The literature offers considerable contradictory advice about selecting and recruiting a sample. Ultimately, it comes down to a series of choices: probability or non-probability;

recruit or access an existing panel; incentivise or not. There are a limited number of existing panels from local providers to international giants such as YouGov. While some studies show incentives such as cash lotteries or text messages appealing to altruism or ego can be of assistance, some show they can be a disincentive and cause the recruitment of fake respondents and others show they have no impact at all (Görizt 2004; Pedersen & Nielsen 2014).

A further consideration is one of geography. In voter behaviour studies, the geographic context in which that decision is being made may be important. Some studies place it high in the consideration hierarchy—certainly, the Columbia School did, and it was a core concept for Huckfeldt and Sprague (1995); meanwhile other (particularly national) studies place little to no value at all on it. Stoker and Bowers (2002) argued that samples of voters in electoral contexts should at least be stratified with regard to their electorate, with more electorates and a smaller sample providing more insight than a larger national sample.

3.2.7.1 Probability v. non-probability

Probability sampling allows inferences to be made from information about a random sample that can be generalised to the population from which the sample was drawn (Bryman 2016, p. 181). There are three basic approaches to selecting a random probability sample: simple random samples, in which each member of the public has an equal chance of being selected; stratified random samples, in which the population is divided into subcategories relevant to the subject under investigation (or strata) and respondents are selected based on those characteristics of interest; and, clustered samples, which involves sampling members of groups or categories within the population (Asher 2016, pp. 110–3; Berger 2016, pp. 309–10; Bryman 2016, pp. 176–80).

In contrast, there are a number of non-probability sampling methodologies that are worth consideration. Convenience sampling is one that is available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility, such as a particular class of students or an email list they can access. Volunteer sampling (also called ‘opt-in’) is a kind of convenience sampling in which individuals self-select to participate in studies they have heard about, usually through media appeals for participants. Snowball sampling is a recruitment process of initial contact with a small group of people relevant to the research topic who are then used to make contact with others that they know, such as by asking them to invite their friends and family to take

part in the study. Quota sampling is considered by some to be of equal reliability as probability sampling; it is similar to stratified random samples with individuals selected to match the required demographic and categories (known as quotas) except that the selection of respondents is not random (Asher 2016, pp. 107–10; Bryman 2016, pp. 187–90; DiSogra & Callegaro 2015; Harrison, L. & Startin 2013). Change Research (2020), a US Democratic polling firm, has pioneered the use of highly targeted social media advertising to randomly recruit quotas.

3.2.7.1.1 Effective probability sampling in online panels

Because of the nature of large online surveys being generally open to the public, most are conducted by non-probability volunteer sampling (Callegaro et al. 2014; Gibson & McAllister 2009). There have been some advances in effective probability sampling from the large datasets generated by open online signups; for example, Knowledge Networks (now the US arm of YouGov) overcame the problem of selection bias in their online surveys by recruiting to their online panel through traditional telephone methods. Polimetrix used a ‘matching’ approach whereby they select a quasi-representative sample from a large panel of volunteers, thus replicating a normal probability sample. Both meet the highest standards of probability (Callegaro et al. 2014; Iyengar 2011). The key concept in designing a probability-based online panel is to use the usual formulas in reverse to produce the sample size required (DiSogra & Callegaro 2015); the sample size required is that from which generalisable results can be made (Boddy 2016).

3.2.7.2 *Weighting methods*

Weighting refers to correcting unequal selection probabilities by statistical means. The most straightforward way to do this is to ascertain the demographic breakdown of the entire population (e.g. using census or electoral roll data), and then adjust the research results so that each demographic is representative of the equivalent cohort in the whole population. Weighting can also be applied to adjust for non-response (where a particular group fails to respond to a study); this is more problematic since it involves assumption and may not correct for bias (Asher 2016, pp. 130–3; Callegaro et al. 2014; Halperin & Heath 2012, pp. 244–5).

3.3 Non-survey Methods

3.3.1 Experiments

Experimental designs are widely thought to be the most effective for testing whether or not two variables are causally related (Halperin & Heath 2012, p. 167). Experimental methodologies can overcome the limitations of survey methodologies and more accurately identify causation effects. Being able to isolate and test the effects of specific elements of political messages for a more solid determination of causal inference is a great strength of experiments. Online experiments have both reduced cost and significantly reduced the sampling bias inherent in earlier experiment studies that involved captive populations, such as class groups of university students. Diverse subjects for experiments can now be sourced rigorously and efficiently via online platforms (Iyengar 2011).

There are two types of experiments: field experiments that happen in real-life settings, and laboratory experiments that happen in contrived settings (Bryman 2016, pp. 44–5). Cluster experiments, such as experiments randomised at the level of voting booth that can use publicly available election reports to study preference effects, are not only an inexpensive technique, but also do not have the degree of measurement error that surveys do (Arceneaux 2005). Quasi-experiments are studies that have some characteristics of experimental designs but do not fulfil all the internal validity requirements, including ‘natural experiments’, which is when the variation being tested is naturally occurring (e.g. a leaders’ debate during an election campaign). Quasi-experiments often offer compelling possibilities because they are not artificial interventions, and thus, their ecological validity is strong; however, the lower level of control reduces the ability to make clear causal inferences (Bryman 2016, p. 50). A lack of realism and generalisability is the major limitation and criticism of experimental studies (Iyengar 2011).

3.3.2 Content Analysis

Content analysis is a well-established methodology and one of the most commonly used tools in media and communication research (Berger 2016, p. 271; Macnamara 2005). It is a method of measuring or quantifying dimensions of the content of messages, making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying and coding characteristics of media content (Benoit 2011; Berelson 1952, p. 18; Bryman 2016, p. 284; Holsti 1969).

There are disputes among scholars about the definition; how objective MCA can be; and whether it is quantitative, qualitative or both (Macnamara 2005). Berelson (1952) very clearly contended it was both and outlined 17 types of uses for content analyses, including applications that were used in the Columbia voting studies (see pp. 41–42). Content analysis has significant advantages as an unobtrusive, transparent, flexible and inexpensive methodology with relatively easily obtainable data on current events; however, it is labour intensive and can present challenges in finding a representative sample, determining measurable units, defining terms and maintaining reliability in coding. Additionally, it is sometimes criticised for emphasising what is measurable rather than what is theoretically significant (Berger 2016, pp. 279–82; Bryman 2016, pp. 302–5). Hybrid models that measure both exposure and attention to media content are ideal, as well as specifying outlets, channels and modes (Hoffman et al. 2011).

Computer use for content analysis is perpetually increasing in complexity and sophistication but has limitations (Benoit 2011; Macnamara 2005). Computers generally cannot infer meaning or identify satire or irony, and humans are better able to deal with vague or awkwardly worded texts (Benoit 2011). Automated content analysis makes mostly arbitrary associations between words and phrases, and the programs have significant difficulty with content analysis conducted across multiple cultures and languages other than English (Macnamara 2005). However, ‘text as data’ analysis, particularly that of large volumes of social media content, can uncover themes and categories that would have otherwise escaped the notice of human analysts (Grimmer, J. & Stewart 2013; Miller, C. 2017).

3.3.3 Focus Groups

Focus groups are a predominantly qualitative methodology involving small discussion groups guided by the researcher to address the question through open discussion. They have a number of distinct characteristics: they are truly group interviews; they are contextual, influenced as social concerns, social status and conversational factors; they are relational; they are tied to meaning—a way of answering how and why; they are heuristic—scholars should anticipate surprises since unanticipated and inconsistent views often emerge; they are revelatory—hidden answers are revealed through discussion; and, they are democratic—giving power and voice to group participants (Jarvis 2011; Kern & Just 1995). Focus group size is usually between seven and 12 individuals of common attributes;

however, there are no set rules, and smaller groups may be preferred for emotionally charged subjects, for example, politics. It is generally agreed that between four and six groups are required for the research to be valid, with two groups as a minimum (Fern 2001, p. 123; Jarvis 2011; Kern & Just 1995).

Focus groups began as ‘group interviews’, and Robert Merton advanced the technique significantly through what he called ‘focused interviews’ to determine the subjective interpretation of an individual’s experience of a particular event (Merton 1987; Merton & Kendall 1946; Tadajewski 2016). While Merton is often cited as the ‘father of the focus group’, it was actually Paul Lazarsfeld’s second wife, Herta Herzog, who worked on the initial group interviews on the *Marienthal* study and refined the methodology as well as promoted their use by other researchers (Bartos 1986; Tadajewski 2016). The story of how Merton became involved in Lazarsfeld’s group interviews of radio listeners is an often-cited tale of a convivial dinner, during which the two researchers abandoned their wives (including Hertog) to head to where the research using a device known as the Lazarsfeld-Stanton Program Analyzer³ was in progress. There, Merton, unimpressed with the interviewer’s technique, began suggesting improvements, at which point Lazarsfeld suggested he interview the next group, and thus, his involvement with the research began (Merton 1987; Sills 1987; Tadajewski 2016). For a concise history of how this initial research of Lazarsfeld, Merton and Herzog on motivation and influence for radio listeners became the modern focus group, see Tadajewski (2016).

Focus groups are increasingly prevalent in political communication research and professional campaign operatives use focus groups in designing their campaign strategies, since the rediscovery of this method in the 1980s (Jarvis 2011; Tadajewski 2016). Focus groups are helpful to identify, refine and provide a basis for interpreting statistically significant events, both before and after using other methodologies (Jarvis 2011; Kern & Just 1995; Merton 1987). The focus group process is not one that is intended to be generalisable (Jarvis 2011; but cf. Stanley 2016).

³ The Lazarsfeld-Stanton Program Analyzer was a small machine developed by Paul Lazarsfeld and Frank Stanton to measure the ‘quality’ of the radio audience listening experience. Listeners would flick a switch when they liked or disliked what they were listening to, as part of an experiment to add qualitative data to the quantitative studies to increase CBS radio’s audience. The advertising agency McCann-Erickson also used the machine to test commercials and programs they produced. See Levy (1982) for a concise history of the Program Analyser.

3.3.4 Ethnographic and Observational Research

Ethnography is iterative–inductive research that involves direct and sustained contact with people in their daily lives, drawing on a family of methods, and which acknowledges the role of theory as well as of the researcher in observing the phenomenon being studied (O'Reilly 2012, p. 3). It is a term very much open to interpretation, but essentially involves empirical research, especially observation, with the aim of producing a full picture of a complex subject (O'Reilly 2012; Taylor, S. 2002, p. 2). Very little political research is qualitative, and even less is ethnographic (Harrison, L. & Startin 2013, p. 83). While ordinarily, there are two types of observational research available, participant and non-participant observations, which can be in natural or controlled environments (Kumar 2005, pp. 119–21), generally, elections are so complex and consuming that they can only be studied as a participant in the natural environment. Observer bias, a common problem of observation and ethnography, is somewhat unavoidable in political research. Prolonged participant observation has proved to be the only effective way to research organisations or movements that are secretive in nature, as most political parties and movements tend to be. Reflexivity and triangulation of the research are essential for effectively using this approach in political research to control for bias and perspective concerns (Harrison, L. & Startin 2013, pp. 80–3).

3.4 Review of methods

The methods of researching voter behaviour have not substantially changed in recent decades. Some innovation in the Rolling Cross Section is notable, enabling more appreciation of the volatility of campaigns, but still not able to deliver indications of causality. As most interpretation and debate about elections related to causality, panel studies remain the gold standard for voter behaviour research.

It is notable that, other than the somewhat over used focus group, non-survey methods have rarely been deployed for the study of voter behaviour. As voter behaviour is very complex, with potentially years of conditioning and multiple contradicting influences weighing on vote decisions according to almost all accepted theories, one would think that quantitative methods would lack the necessary depth. Conversely, it may be that qualitative and mixed method studies are too resource hungry and will generally yield less than clear results on

such a complex subject, given the inability to replicate such a study with very large participant numbers.

Experiments have proven to be one of the more essential methods in unpacking elements of voter behaviour, and the method most respected by psychologists. However, replicating the intense and multifaceted environment of the election campaign is very difficult. Thus, use of experiments has been limited and experiment-based studies note many limitations.

Social media content analysis, like media content analysis, is useful but often overstated as to its predictive value or power. Social media analysis is often sentiment or key word analysis, losing the appreciation for context and struggling to differentiate memes and satire from serious content. Most content is inaccessible for research, hidden in groups or private conversations. Media content analysis is typically done from the front pages of printed newspapers, despite the fact that the majority of people now read their news online and without the context of an editor's layout. While content analysis is important and can give unique insights into the influence on voters, it should be restricted to a secondary data source or part of a mixed method study, as there is substantial opportunity for bias.

Ethnography is a particularly neglected method in academic research of elections generally. Indeed, there is so little work done the reasons for the avoidance of the method are not clear. Digital ethnography may become a crucial element of voter behaviour research with so much of our elections not being waged online.

3.5 A New Method: Integrated Multi-Panel Study

Panel studies have long been considered the gold standard in investigating elections but need enhancement to capture the volatility of modern elections. The concept I feel will work best is an integrated multi-panel study: multiple panels running simultaneously to capture campaign dynamics and volatility, triangulated by social media analysis and ethnographic observation. This method is cost prohibitive, and hence, will likely never progress beyond the theoretical, but it is briefly detailed here in the hope it will inspire others to develop feasible and effective models.

A demographically balanced and representative sample of approximately 2353 voters from each electorate needs to be recruited to provide a 2% margin of error and 95% confidence for each electorate. The number of electorates for the next election will return to 150 after

a planned redistribution, and hence, this equals a sample of 352,950 voters. Those voters should then be equally distributed into seven demographically and geographically balanced panels of approximately 50,421 voters each. Each panel will be assigned a day of the week on which they will receive their next survey (see Figure 6.2). Participants are given a substantial first survey to gather baseline and demographic data, which needs to be undertaken before assigning them to a panel to ensure that each panel is also demographically and electorally balanced.

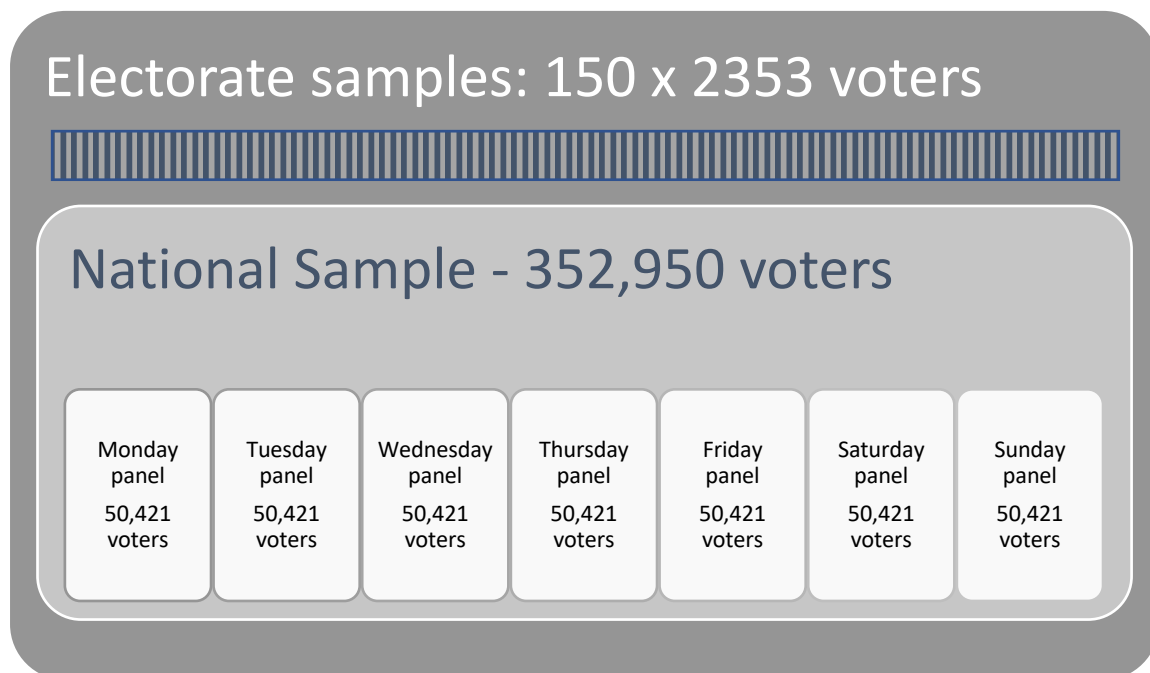


Figure 3.2: Graphic of sample structure for integrated multi-panel study (source: Author)

The substantive study should commence no less than three months out from an election. This is challenging in Australia where there is such a long window for elections to be called but is essential to capture voter attitudes before the polarising process of the campaign begins to shape their opinions. The concept is to deliver short surveys one day each week to each panel through a mobile phone application (with a backup web-based version).

A very limited number of questions will be delivered: possibly just five questions to make it a very quick process and thus minimise panel attrition. Of these, one question will need to be on voting intention, followed by a question to assess the volatility of that intention, one issue question, one about job performance (valence) and one about their recent political communication. It may be possible to ask more than five questions per survey: the model

needs to be tested to determine the most effective format. While quick answers are desirable and ideally each weekly respondent should take no longer than, say, two minutes to complete, there should always be an allowance for 'other' and one open question per survey. This will reduce satisficing, ensure that more complex behaviours are not being missed and enable verification of responses given to closed questions. Open questions also enable frustrated voters to feel that they are being heard and it is not 'just another poll'. Both specific regional questions for each electorate and national questions should be asked over the study. Randomly selected participants should be contacted to participate in more in-depth telephone interviews to tease out their deeper thoughts, impressions of the campaign and vote decision.

The intent is that over the period of the study a detailed picture of each voter will be amassed, including their attitudes to issues, what conversations they recall and how their vote intention fluctuates over time. By issuing daily surveys to part of the sample, the effect of the 'story of the day' causing outrage can be identified. By averaging the responses across the seven panels each week, the distorting effect of that instant outrage can be ameliorated, reducing error in vote intention figures. Daily samples also enable momentum shifts to be identified as soon as possible, and sudden late changes in the vote to be tracked and measured. Daily data also enable better forecasting to be performed because there are more data points to put into analysis. Each panel can also be tracked over the weeks, as well as the overall trend. In addition, because there is a full sample from each electorate, each electorate can be analysed for local issues and trends. A polling result and forecasts can be made on a likely result on House composition (i.e. a forecasted result of the likely share of the 150 seats), rather than the problematic national 2PP number.

Combined with this multi-panel survey tool, ethnographic analysis and social media analysis should be undertaken to inform and flesh out the survey findings. Ideally, a researcher based in each electorate would perform the ethnographic observation in a regionally appropriate context. They will be able to identify and understand local issues and inform what region-specific questions should be asked. Social media usernames of study participants should be collected in the initial survey to enable analysis of what content they are sharing and liking, as well as posting themselves. This is currently possible on Twitter; however, Facebook, Instagram and other sites generally prevent researchers from being able to analyse data. Social network analysis can also be used with social media data

to identify the pathway of influence, which may be very useful in improving the way we deal with ‘fake news’ and verifying the role of opinion leaders in a social media era.

As noted, this is theoretical and highly cost prohibitive. A test in a by-election, a single electorate study or a smaller election (e.g. the ACT Legislative Council) would be essential to figure out the details of such a comprehensive model before rolling out a nationwide study.

3.6 Summary

When selecting a method, one needs to take care that it can actually deliver the data desired. Any method can theoretically be used to study voter behaviour, but surveys and polling are by far the dominant method used, and the least appropriate tool to explain the ‘why’ of voter behaviour. More detailed panel studies, or mixed-methods and qualitative research, are far better situated to explain what happened in an election but are not often used because they are more expensive and time-consuming. The influence of early scholars, and the repetition of survey questions to enable comparison from election to election, contribute to reinforce perceptions of surveying as the appropriate method.

There is much about voter behaviour research that appears to be done because that is the way it has always been done, rather than any basis in fact or reason. In choosing the method for this study, I began with the identification of what was problematic or weak in the current methods. Thus I opted for a media content analysis of what people were reading online, as opposed to newspaper front pages, combined with digital ethnography of the experience of the election online, and utilising all published survey data on the election to triangulate the research approach. This combination of methods has not been chosen to prove the dominant methods wrong, but rather to see if there is a unique insight to be derived from alternative method, and in the process test the dominant methods.

Chapter 4: The 2019 Australian Federal Election

As Prime Minister Scott Morrison called the federal election on Thursday, Australians farewelled the 45th parliament and one of the most chaotic, and at times, strangest chapters in political history (Yosufzai 2019).

Chapters 2 and 3 focused on voter behaviour theories and the methods used to study voter behaviour, respectively. However, voter behaviour does not happen in a vacuum; it happens in a specific and unique context. An election campaign is a wholly unique event: there are many elections, but each election has a combination of candidates, issues, messages and events that will never be repeated. In this chapter, the events of the 2019 election will be detailed, supported by published research and a media content analysis.

4.1 Background

While the Australian federal political system is one generally noted for its stability (Aitkin 1982; Bean & Kelley 1988; Goot 1972), the 45th Parliament is one notable for its stunning instability. Beginning with a double dissolution 2016 election, the Government began with the smallest of margins of one seat (Green, A. 2017a). A total of nine House seat by-elections were required during the term, and a full third of the Senate members were replaced, most due to the Section 44 constitutional crisis (Stubbs & Webster 2019). While eight of the nine by-elections were retained by the incumbent party, the ousting of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull caused the Liberals to lose the subsequent by-election in the seat of Wentworth, and the resignation of another member, Julia Banks, from the Liberal Party, caused the Coalition to enter the 2019 election in minority government (Smith 2018). Table 4.1 shows the composition of the federal parliament leading in to the 2019 election.

Table 4.1: Composition of the House and Senate leading in to the 2019 election

| Party | Status ⁴ | Ideology | House members | Senate members | Notes |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---|---------------|----------------|---|
| Australian Labor Party | Major Party | Centre Left, democratic socialist | 69 | 26 | |
| Liberal/National Coalition | Major Party | Centre Right, nominally conservative liberalism; National Party is nominally agrarian socialist | 74 | 31 | The Coalition includes the Liberal Party of Australia, Country Liberal Party, Liberal National Party (Qld) and National Party. They caucus separately as The Liberal Party and National Party, as well as together in a joint party room. |
| Australian Greens | Minor Party | Nominally Green politics, secular humanist | 1 | 9 | |
| Pauline Hanson's One Nation | Micro Party | Populist Nationalism | 0 | 2 | |
| Centre Alliance | Micro Party | Alliance of independents, no 'party' ideology | 1 | 2 | Formerly the Nick Xenophon Team |
| Liberal Democratic Party | Micro Party | Libertarian | 0 | 1 | |
| Australian Conservatives | Micro Party | Religious Right, Conservative | 0 | 1 | Merged with Family First |
| Derryn Hinch's Justice Party | Micro Party | Single issue: justice, particularly Anti-paedophile | 0 | 1 | |
| United Australia Party | Micro Party | Populist Nationalist | 0 | 1 | Formerly Palmer United Party |
| Katter Australia Party | Micro Party | Agrarian Socialist | 1 | 0 | |
| Independents | N/A | | 4 | 2 | Fraser Anning's Conservative National Party was registered the same month the election was called. |
| TOTAL | | | 151 | 76 | |

Source: Compiled by author (see Gobbett 2016; Parliament of Australia 2019)

⁴ I have defined a major party as one able to form government, a minor party as one with consistent presence but unable to form government and a micro party as one having less than five members and thus not achieving 'party status' under parliamentary procedure. For a detailed discussion of the definition of micro party, see N. Kelly (2016).

4.1.1 The Australian Federal Political System

The Australian federal parliament is a bicameral system consisting of a lower house, called the House of Representatives, and an upper house, called the Senate. The government is formed by the parties/party that win/s a majority of seats in the House of Representatives. There are two major parties, commonly defined as those capable of forming government, the ALP and the Liberal Party of Australia (in a formal Coalition with the National Party). Table 4.1 lists the parliamentary parties of the 45th Parliament, their basic ideology and their representation leading into the 2019 election. If neither major party wins enough seats to form government, the incumbent government has the first right to form a minority government with the support of crossbench Independent and minor party House members (House of Representatives 2018, p. 37). The prime minister is the person elected as the leader of the party that forms government (House of Representatives 2018, p. 68).

Members of the House of Representatives serve terms of approximately two and a half to three years, re-elected each election (Pickering 2016). They represent constituencies of roughly 110,000 voters (or more technically 164,788 people as at the 2017 redistribution), with borders of electorates, also called seats, redistributed regularly by the AEC to ensure equal representation. The exception is Tasmania: the Australian Constitution requires that no state shall have less seats than at the time of Federation; thus, Tasmania maintains a minimum of five seats and an average 69,000 electors per seat. A significant redistribution following the 2016 election saw the removal of a seat in South Australia, and a seat each added in Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, bring the total number of seats in the House of Representatives to 151 (AEC 2020; Barber, S. 2016). In the event of a House member vacating their seat, a by-election is held in the electorate to replace them (House of Representatives 2018, pp. 94–5).

There are 76 members of the Senate: 12 representing each of the six states, and two each from the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. Half of each state's senators and all of the territory senators are elected every three years. In the event of a senator vacating their seat, they are replaced by appointment from the relevant state or territory parliament, with the party that won the seat in the election nominating the replacement senator to ensure the preservation of the voters' wishes (Senate 2020).

Federal elections in Australia are ‘called’, that is, set on a date determined by the prime minister of the day within a window of when the election must be held. The prime minister calls the election by advising the Governor General of Australia of the date, who then dissolves the parliament and issues the writs for the election. The formal election campaign period is a minimum 33 days from the time the election is called to election day, which must be a Saturday. By law, the half Senate election and the full House election do not have to happen at the same time, but in practice, they are held concurrently, since voters dislike going to the polls on multiple occasions, and it is difficult to get attention for a half Senate election on its own (Green, A. 2017b). The last half Senate election conducted separately from a House election was in 1970 (Barber, S. 2017).

4.1.2 The 2016 Double Dissolution Election and the Unstable Parliament

The 2016 double dissolution election established the beginnings of the most unstable parliament in Australia’s history. Section 57 of the Australian Constitution provides a mechanism to break a deadlock when the Senate will not pass a Government bill that has passed the House twice and been rejected by the Senate twice: the double dissolution election. This involves the entire Senate being spilled and facing re-election immediately, rather than half the Senate, and the term changeover occurring on July 1. This high-stakes move has not often been used, and combined with changes to the Senate voting system, set the stage for a dramatic election campaign (Green, A. 2017a).

The election campaign that unfolded was anything but dramatic. It was instead a formulaic, unexciting campaign, that generally failed to engage voters (Westmore 2016). The ‘trigger’ legislation used to bring on the double dissolution, the re-establishment of the Australian Building and Construction Commission—an administrative tribunal to investigate and oversee the building and construction industry that was largely seen as an attack on powerful construction unions—was barely mentioned in the campaign, or afterwards (Smith 2018). The alternative or some argue ‘real’ motivation for the double dissolution, to clear out the Senate crossbench, spectacularly failed, with the highest minor party vote since the post-war reconstruction (Elder 2016; Kefford 2018), the largest crossbench since the expansion of the Senate in 1950 (Gobbett 2016) and the return of populist right-wing agitator Pauline Hanson to the parliament as a senator for Queensland (Crosby 2019a; Economou & Ghazarian 2018).

The result of the election was not clear-cut. There was no result on election night with many seats too close to call; Malcolm Turnbull declared victory with a razor-thin margin of one seat one week after election day (Gauja et al. 2018). A result in the Queensland seat of Herbert (which encompasses most of the city of Townsville) was the last seat to be declared, after a month-long recount and a final margin of 37 votes (Green, A. 2020).

Immediately after the election, long-serving ALP Senator Stephen Conroy resigned to spend more time with his family, just two and half months into his six-year term (Murphy, K. 2016b). He was the first in a long list who were unable to make it through the short 45th Parliament. Table 4.2 lists the members of parliament who resigned or were disqualified during the term and the reasons for their resignation or disqualification. Table 4.3 lists the members who did not recontest their seats at the 2019 election.

Table 4.2: Turnover in the 45th Federal Parliament

| Date | Name | Party | Seat | Reason | Replaced by |
|------------|----------------------|-------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 30/9/2016 | Stephen Conroy | ALP | Senate – Victoria | Resigned – family | Kimberley Kitching |
| 1/11/2016 | Bob Day | FF | Senate – South Australia | Resigned – Bankrupt. Later disqualified – s44 pecuniary interest | Lucy Gichuhi (Independent) |
| 11/1/2017 | Rod Culleton | PHON | Senate – Western Australia | Disqualified – s44 convicted (and bankrupt) | Peter Georgiou |
| 14/7/2017 | Scott Ludlum | GRN | Senate – Western Australia | Resigned, later disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Jordon Steele John |
| 18/7/2017 | Larissa Waters | GRN | Senate – Queensland | Resigned, later disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Andrew Bartlett |
| 31/7/2017 | Chris Back | LIB | Senate – Western Australia | Resigned – change in personal circumstances | Slade Brockman |
| 27/10/2017 | Malcolm Roberts | PHON | Senate – Queensland | Disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Fraser Anning (Independent/Fraser Anning Conservative National Party) |
| 27/10/2017 | Barnaby Joyce | NAT | New England | Disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Barnaby Joyce (re-elected at a by-election 2/12/2017) |
| 27/10/2017 | Fiona Nash | NAT | Senate – New South Wales (NSW) | Disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Hollie Hughes (Liberal) also disqualified – Jim Molan (Liberal) |
| 31/10/2017 | Nick Xenophon | CA | Senate – South Australia | Resigned to contest SA State election | Rex Patrick |
| 27/10/2017 | Steven Parry | LIB | Senate – Tasmania | Resigned, later disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Richard Colbeck |
| 11/11/2017 | John Alexander | LIB | Bennelong | Resigned – dual citizen | John Alexander (re-elected at a by-election 16/12/2017) |
| 14/11/2017 | Jacqui Lambie | JLN | Senate – Tasmania | Resigned, later disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Steve Martin (Independent) |
| 22/11/2017 | Skye Kakoschke-Moore | CA | Senate – South Australia | Resigned, later disqualified – s44 dual citizen | Tim Storer (Independent) |
| 25/1/2018 | Sam Dastyari | ALP | Senate – NSW | Resigned – personal scandal | Kristina Keneally |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-----|---------------------|--|---|
| 1/2/2018 | David Feeney | ALP | Batman | Resigned, dual citizen | Ged Kearney (won by-election 17/3/2018) |
| 8/2/2018 | George Brandis | LNP | Senate – Queensland | Resigned, Appointed High Commissioner to London | Amanda Stoker |
| 9/5/2018 | Katy Gallagher | ALP | Senate – ACT | Disqualified – s44 dual citizen | David Smith |
| 10/5/2018 | Tim Hammond | ALP | Perth | Resigned, family reasons | Patrick Gorman (elected in a by-election 28/7/2018) |
| 10/5/2018 | Justine Keay | ALP | Braddon | Resigned, dual citizen | Justine Keay (re-elected in a by-election 28/7/2018) |
| 10/5/2018 | Josh Wilson | ALP | Fremantle | Resigned, dual citizen | Josh Wilson (re-elected in a by-election 28/7/2018) |
| 10/5/2018 | Susan Lamb | ALP | Longman | Resigned, dual citizen | Susan Lamb (re-elected in a by-election 28/7/2018) |
| 11/5/2018 | Rebekha Sharkie | CA | Mayo | Resigned, dual citizen | Rebekha Sharkie (re-elected in a by-election 28/7/2018) |
| 15/8/2018 | Lee Rhiannon | GRN | Senate – NSW | Resigned, internal party disputes/lost pre-selection | Mehreen Faruqi |
| 27/8/2018 | Andrew Bartlett | GRN | Senate – Queensland | Resigned to contest lower house seat of Brisbane | Larissa Waters |
| 31/8/2018 | Malcolm Turnbull | LIB | Wentworth | Resigned, lost leadership of party | Kerryn Phelps (Independent, won by-election 20/10/2018) |
| 21/1/2019 | David Bushby | LIB | Senate – Tasmania | Resigned, Appointed Consul-General in Chicago | Wendy Askew |
| 15/2/2019 | Jacinta Collins | ALP | Senate – Victoria | Resigned, retired from politics, family reasons | Raff Ciccone |
| 1/3/2019 | David Leyonhjelm | LDP | Senate – NSW | Resigned to contest NSW Election | Duncan Spender |

Note: ALP: Australian Labor Party; CA: Centre Alliance; FF: Family First; GRN: Australian Greens; KAP: Katter's Australian Party; LDP: Liberal Democratic Party; LIB: Liberal Party of Australia; LNP: Liberal National Party; NAT: The National Party; PHON: Pauline Hanson's One Nation.

Source: compiled by author.

Table 4.3: Parliamentarians who did not contest the 2019 election

| Date announced | Name | Party | Seat | Reason (if known) |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 31/5/2016 | John Williams | NAT | Senator – NSW | Retired |
| 24/7/2016 | Doug Cameron | ALP | Senator – NSW | Retired |
| 9/3/2017 | Kate Ellis | ALP | Adelaide | Family |
| 12/5/2018 | Jane Prentice | LIB | Ryan | Lost pre-selection |
| 5/7/2018 | Michael Danby | ALP | Melbourne Ports (renamed Macnamara) | Retired |
| 6/7/2018 | Jenny Macklin | ALP | Jagajaga | Retired |
| 6/7/2018 | Barry O’Sullivan | LNP | Senator – Queensland | Lost pre-selection |
| 31/7/2018 | Claire Moore | ALP | Senator – Queensland | Retired |
| 8/8/2018 | Luke Hartsuyker | NAT | Cowper | Retired |
| 13/8/2018 | Gai Brodtmann | ALP | Canberra | Family |
| 17/9/2018 | Ann Sudmalis | LIB | Gilmore | Internal party dispute |
| 18/12/2018 | Andrew Broad | NAT | Mallee | Personal scandal |
| 14/1/2019 | Cathy McGowan | Ind | Indi | Retired |
| 19/1/2019 | Kelly O’Dwyer | LIB | Higgins | Family |
| 25/1/2019 | Michael Keenan | LIB | Stirling | Family |
| 26/1/2019 | Nigel Scullion | CLP | Senator – Northern Territory | Retired |
| 10/2/2019 | Wayne Swan | ALP | Lilley | Retired |
| 21/2/2019 | Julie Bishop | LIB | Curtin | Retired (lost leadership ballot) |
| 1/3/2019 | Steve Ciobo | LIB | Moncrieff | Moved into business |
| 2/3/2019 | Christopher Pyne | LIB | Sturt | Moved into law |
| 15/3/2019 | Craig Laundry | LIB | Reid | Family |
| 11/4/2019 | Emma Husar | ALP | Lindsay | Lost pre-selection/scandal |
| 17/4/2019 | Tim Storer | Ind | Senator – South Australia | Family |

Note: ALP: Australian Labor Party; CLP: Country Liberal Party; LIB: Liberal Party of Australia; LNP: Liberal National Party; NAT: The National Party; Ind: independent.

Source: compiled by author.

4.2 Timeline of the 2019 Election

Technically, the election campaign begins when the election is ‘called’, about five weeks before election day. In reality, there is a tipping point where voters begin to focus more on their decision (Redlawsk, Civettini & Emmerson 2010), and the frame of how government performance is assessed shifts from whether they are delivering what they promised in the previous election, to their performance or their promises for the future, with late-deciding voters more likely to vote prospectively than retrospectively (Elinder, Jordahl & Poutvaara 2015; Lockerbie 1992). For the 2019 cycle, that tipping point was a rapid flip, when Malcolm Turnbull was removed as prime minister and replaced by Scott Morrison, and the subsequent by-election in Turnbull’s electorate of Wentworth. At that point, the nation had turned its attention to what was going on in federal politics, and their gaze did not shift until the election was over. Table 4.4 is a timeline of the significant events from the dumping of Malcolm Turnbull as prime minister to election day. This same period is analysed in the MCA, with a number of events detailed in the thematic analysis in chapter 5.

Table 4.4: Timeline of significant events during the 45th Parliament from the removal Malcolm Turnbull as Prime Minister to Election Day

| Date | Event |
|-------------------|---|
| 24 August 2018 | Malcolm Turnbull deposed; Scott Morrison becomes Prime Minister |
| 30 August 2018 | Au pair scandal story breaks |
| 12 September 2018 | Needles are found in strawberries leading to a nationwide alert and recall |
| 24 September 2018 | Michelle Guthrie is sacked as managing director of the ABC; board chair Justin Milne resigns three days later under allegations he sought for journalist Emma Alberici to be sacked to appease the Government |
| 9 October 2018 | Religious Freedom Review released |
| 20 October 2018 | Kerryn Phelps wins the Wentworth by-election; Government loses majority (75 seats), Parliament is hung |
| 31 October 2018 | A group of white supremacists quit the National Party amid investigation into their extremist connections |
| 9 November 2018 | Bourke Street knife attack in Melbourne |
| 30 November 2018 | School strike for climate |
| 3 December 2018 | Medevac bill introduced into Parliament |
| 24 November 2018 | Labor wins the Victorian election |
| 27 November 2018 | Julia Banks quits the Liberal Party; Government is in minority (74 seats) |
| 12 December 2018 | Cardinal George Pell found guilty of sexually abusing two choirboys (later overturned); story is suppressed domestically but widely available online |
| 7 January 2019 | News of the first major fish kill at Menindee breaks |
| 4 February 2019 | Banking Royal Commission Report released |
| 8 February 2019 | Franking credits inquiry scandal story breaks |
| 9 February 2018 | Paladin Affair story breaks |
| 11 February 2019 | Royal Commission into Aged Care begins |
| 12 February 2019 | Medevac bill passed in the House against Government's wishes |
| 18 February 2019 | 'Helloworld' travel scandal story breaks |
| 13 March 2019 | Cardinal George Pell sentenced to six years in prison for the sexual abuse of two choirboys |
| 15 March 2019 | Christchurch Massacre |
| 17 March 2019 | William 'Egg Boy' Connolly hits Senator Fraser Anning with an egg for his bigoted statements about the Christchurch Massacre |
| 23 March 2019 | Liberal Party wins the NSW election |
| 2 April 2019 | Treasurer Josh Frydenberg announces the budget is back in surplus (next year) |
| 11 April 2019 | General election called |
| 24 April 2019 | Declaration of nominations |
| 16 May 2019 | Bob Hawke, former prime minister, dies |
| 18 May 2019 | Election Day |

Source: compiled by author.

4.3 Data on the election

Viewing the whole picture before we drill down into the themes, the overwhelming impression is one of stable inconsistency. There were very few significant changes in polling or other research through the analysis period. Yet the discourse of the media, overwhelmingly predicting a solid win for the ALP, and in some cases taking a strong opposition to the incumbent Coalition Government, is not supported by the polling trend or the electoral result.

The data collated on the events of the 2019 Australian federal election was a combination of observation and digital ethnography (embedded observation in Facebook groups, Twitter, LinkedIn, Reddit and Instagram discussions of the election), media content analysis (MCA), and desktop analysis of the results of commercial pollsters and other researchers.

4.3.1 Media Content Analysis

4.3.1.1 Method

Media content analysis (MCA) was conducted with a grounded theory framework (Glaser 2008), and using a template devised by this author for earlier research on the 2013 election (Crosby 2014) and a sentiment measure, adopted from Carson, Martin and Ratcliff (2019). Additional measures of scandal and the themes detailed in this chapter were derived from a grounded theory coding process of emerging themes during the MCA process.

Normally, MCAs are conducted using the front pages of newspapers; however, for this analysis I decided to analyse the most-shared news items on Twitter, judging this approach as more consistent with this thesis being about voter behaviour, rather than the institutional behaviour of politicians or the press. For practicality, the analysis was limited to the top 20 digital news items shared on Twitter for each week, from the week commencing 19 August 2018, when Malcolm Turnbull was removed as Prime Minister, to when the election was held on 18 May 2019. ATNIX (Australian Twitter News Index) is a long-term project tracking Australian news sharing on Twitter since 2012 (Bruns 2020). The top 20 results for any period since the collection began are accessible from their public dashboard. Some items linked to news outlet homepages or to articles that had been removed; in that situation, Google news search was used to try and identify the article, but it was not always

possible to ascertain exactly which article the link originally referred to. These are noted in the MCA notes in Appendix 1. In all, 704 substantive articles were identifiable and analysed, accounting for 1,317,683 tweets that included a link to an Australian news outlet. For comparison, Carson and Zion (2020) conducted a traditional front-page MCA of the 377 major newspaper front pages over the 37 days of the formal election campaign. The headline and lead paragraph of each story were collected for the purpose of word cloud analysis using NVivo. Word cloud analysis reveals the dominance of topics or individuals that may not be otherwise evident from story counts.

The headline and lead paragraph of each story were collected for the purpose of word cloud analysis using NVivo. Word cloud analysis reveals the dominance of topics or individuals that may not be otherwise evident from story counts. Additionally, observational notes were also taken as each individual news item was analysed to reveal any media narratives that may have been influential, consistent with the grounded theory approach (see Glaser 2008; Glaser & Holton 2004; Glaser & Strauss 1967). This process resulted in the five themes or battlegrounds discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The number of times a story was tweeted was also recorded as a measure of engagement, as well as the date of publication to inform the assessment of campaign dynamics, and the outlet who published the story to measure potential influence and possible bias in coverage.

The MCA tracked:

- the subject of the content: whether it was about the issues (including policy), candidates or individual politicians, party leaders, the party or government/opposition, the contest or ‘horse race’, or not election related
- the sentiment or tone of the content, whether it was for or against either major party or neutral, adopting the method used by Carson, Martin and Ratcliff (2019)
- whether the story related to a scandal (regardless of substantive subject or theme)
- the theme of the election (identified through grounded theory, see chapter 5) that the story most related to:
 - Coal versus Climate, including all stories on climate change, renewable energy, the proposed Adani Coal mine, water management, drought and the environment more generally
 - Religion versus Rights, including all stories on the Royal Commission into Institutional responses to child abuse and the conviction of George Pell,

- LGBTIQ rights and persecution, Safe Schools and related stories of religious or identity persecution
- Racism versus Refugees, including all stories on racism and bigotry, white supremacist and Anti-Islamic actions, the Christchurch Massacre and all stories on refugees
- Cash versus Certainty, including all stories on the Banking Royal Commission, the budget, grants, funding, robodebt, workplace rights and wages and instability in the economy, media or parliament
- Scandal versus Standards, including all stories on the personal activity of parliamentarians; anything described as a controversy, scandal, saga or similar; any discussions of standards or values, #MeToo and the place of women; and the dumping of Malcolm Turnbull.

Theme and sentiment categorisation were challenging at times, with numerous stories that could have fitted more than one theme, and some stories being both pro one party and anti the other. In each case, a determination was made about what the main subject of the story was—for example, whether the story was about the ALP’s franking credits policy or was really about Tim Wilson (who was investigating the policy)—and then coding was performed on that principal subject. So, to complete the example, if the story was about the ALP’s franking credits policy it would be coded as Cash versus Certainty, and the sentiment assessed on whether it was pro- or Anti-ALP; if the story was about Tim Wilson’s inquiry it was coded as Cash versus Certainty and the sentiment assessed on whether it was pro- or Anti-Coalition.

The use of ATNIX and Twitter data has both limitations and benefits. The most significant limitations are that it means the MCA is not comprehensive of all news items published during the period, but only those shared on Twitter with a link to an Australian news site. The Twitter audience is generally more politically engaged than people who are not on Twitter, comprising more educated people and most politicians and journalists (Davis, Holtz-Bacha & Just 2016, p. 4).

What was shared on Twitter is not necessarily reflective of what was shared on other platforms or reported on television news (print and radio are far more likely to create digital versions of their stories than television), nor of public opinion at large (Hamby 2016). Further, it is measurably a more negative discourse (Burgess & Bruns 2012). However,

Twitter users are an audience of opinion leaders, and their activity is likely to influence others (Dubois & Gaffney 2014; Hamby 2016; Park 2013). Despite the perception of a left wing bias, repeated studies have found Twitter to be politically balanced, albeit polarised (Bruns 2017a, 2019c).

Video news tweets are generally missed by ATNIX because the video is embedded in the platform rather than linked to a separate news site. Additionally, ATNIX is unable to distinguish between the Australian version of *The Conversation* and its overseas counterparts, leading to an oversampling. *Sky News* stories are generally not given unique URLs, leading to both an oversampling and an inability to identify the appropriate news story. However, using ATNIX does reveal what people were talking about, including which stories are still being shared long after publication, or old news stories resurfacing as part of current debates. It is also a quantitative and objective data source of what was important and influential, rather than the study being biased by researcher perspective of what to analyse. The Internet has become the first place people look for information (Kümpel 2019), and as print circulation continues to rapidly decline (McNair 2016; O’Sullivan et al. 2017; Young 2010), the previously accepted method of analysing front pages may no longer be effective (Carson 2015; Riffe et al. 2019).

Detailed analysis by outlet was restricted to the top 10 outlets (see Table 4.5), because these had consistently high figures for every week of the analysis period.

Table 4.5: Top 10 news outlets by Twitter Shares

| Rank | Code | Outlet | Total shares |
|------|------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | ABC | <i>ABC News</i> | 2107122 |
| 2 | SMH | <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> | 2091135 |
| 3 | CON | <i>The Conversation</i> | 1047968 |
| 4 | NCA | <i>News.com.au</i> | 604720 |
| 5 | AUS | <i>The Australian</i> | 593634 |
| 6 | SBS | <i>SBS News</i> | 534928 |
| 7 | AGE | <i>The Age</i> | 515455 |
| 8 | AFR | <i>Australian Financial Review</i> | 379921 |
| 9 | SKY | <i>Sky News</i> | 359504 |
| 10 | NIN | <i>Nine News</i> | 322904 |

Source: ATNIX, compiled by author

Sky News and *Nine News*, as predominantly television news outlets, are not well represented since embedded videos without a link would not be captured by ATNIX, in addition to most cases of *Sky News* tweets linking only to the home page. Additionally, *The Conversation* stories were often not ‘news’ as such and include stories from their overseas counterparts that are not relevant for this analysis. For this reason, these three outlets (highlighted in red in Table 4.5) have been excluded from detailed ‘by outlet’ analysis but retained in the analysis of all stories.

4.3.1.2 Findings

The tweeting of news was relatively consistent with most weeks registering above 220,000 news link shares, outside of the expected slump in the Christmas/New Year period. The largest spikes in news sharing related to the dumping of Malcolm Turnbull as prime minister, the franking credits inquiry scandal, the Paladin Affair, the first extinction linked to climate change—that of the Bramble Cay melomys—and the Christchurch Massacre (see Figure 4.1). Further detail on the specific highlighted stories is covered in the previous chapter.

The formal election campaign stayed entirely within the range of 240,000–260,000 news links shared each week, indicating a very stable news sharing habit, and lower than in the six weeks before the election was called, which all totalled above 260,000. This initially surprising indication can be explained by the high levels of live tweeting of events and the use of live blogs, decreasing individual news items. Additionally, both researchers and journalists argued evidence of ‘election fatigue’: people had had enough, had already made a decision and may have voted early, and thus were not looking for news (e.g. Sinnerbrink 2019; Tingle & Elton 2019). The Voter Choice Project found in its panel surveys that as election day neared, engaged voters turned away from news and to personal conversations to make their final decision (Crosby 2019c), which is also supported by this MCA.

News links shared on Twitter by week and outlet

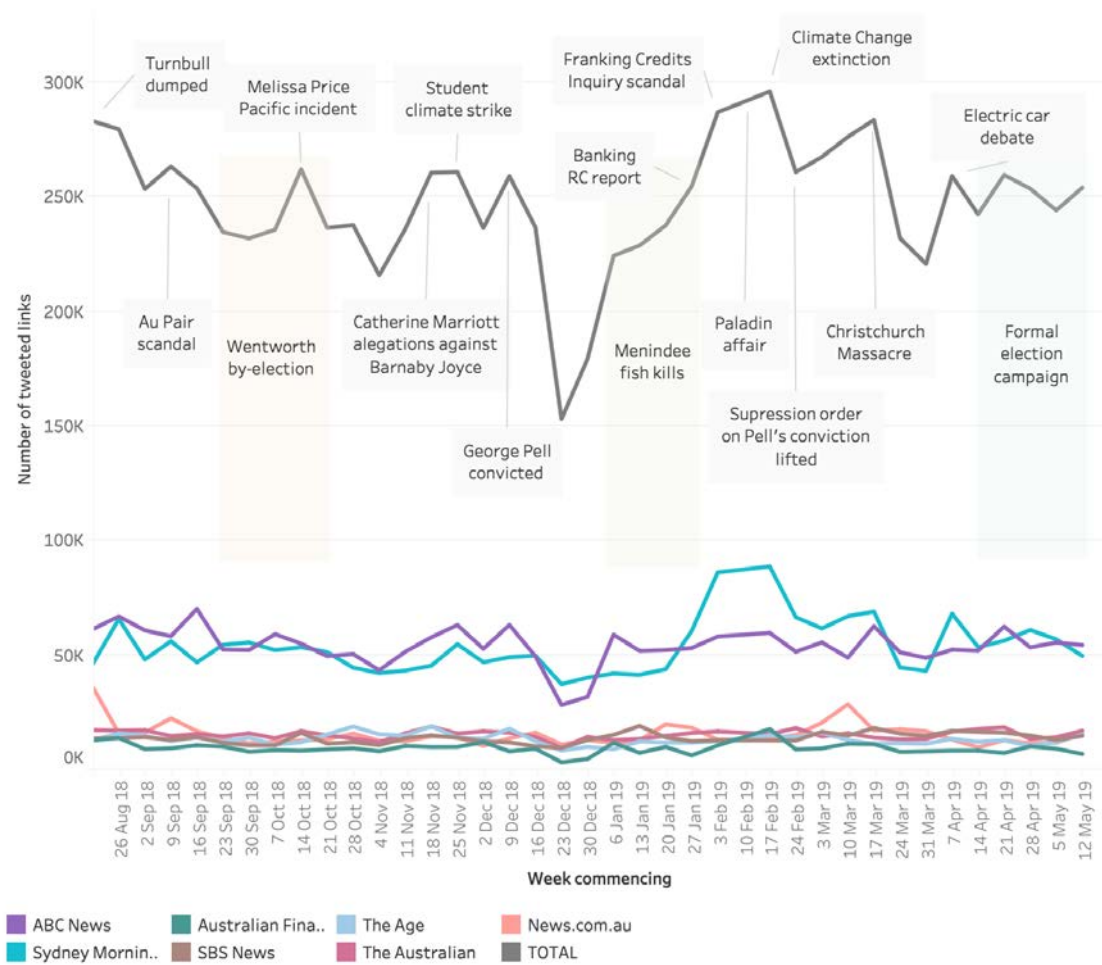


Figure 4.1: News links shared on Twitter by week and outlet. Top outlets and total news link tweets shown (source: ATNIX, compiled by author)

The *ABC* and *SMH* are clearly the dominant news platforms throughout this period, with their content shared considerably more than that of their competitors. This is an important consideration, given the widely believed (yet factually incorrect) adage that Rupert Murdoch controls the majority of Australia’s newspapers (Flew 2013; Gauja, Sawer & Simms 2020; Manne 2011; McDougall 2019; Rudd 2019; Turnbull 2020, p. 618). Further research would be required to determine whether their website design is a contributing factor, since in break-out weeks (where one outlet was clearly favoured) it was observable that there would be multiple stories from the one outlet all being shared at higher than normal rates. The outlet trends indicate the strength of different platforms, with *news.com.au* spiking during ongoing live events, such as the change of prime minister and the Christchurch Massacre; the *SMH* peaking during investigations of corruption and wrongdoing; and the *ABC* spiking during serious matters and anything rural, such as the

Menindee fish kills (which is to be expected given their more extensive rural capacity). *The Australian Financial Review (AFR)* would rarely make it into the top 20 stories in any given week, although the outlet was in the top 10 overall shares every week. Its stories that did make it into the analysis were often about very substantive matters, which is arguably consistent with the more intellectual framing of the outlet.

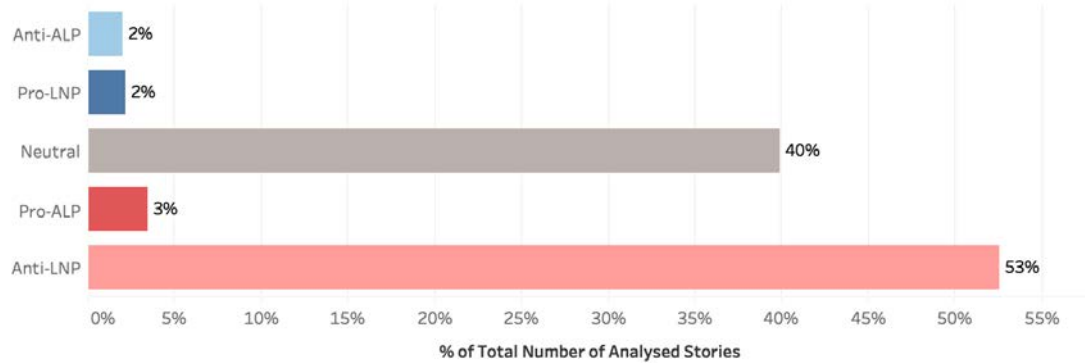
The state elections did not significantly contribute to any spikes in tweet sharing. The Victorian election was held on 24 November 2018, and the NSW election was held on 23 March 2019, both returning their incumbent governments. While some stories about the Victorian election made it to the top 20 for those weeks, lifting the figures for Melbourne based *The Age*, it was not a significant deviation from normal traffic; while the *SMH* traffic dropped significantly in the NSW election in March 2019, from the scandal-related highs concerning Tim Wilson's franking credits inquiry and the Paladin Affair throughout February, and the election week figures were below average for the masthead.

An interesting pattern noted was a story trending well in the week of initial release, then coming back and being shared again, approximately three weeks later. Initial research indicates this may be due to a trending story on Twitter permeating its way through Facebook and potentially other social media platforms, and then coming back and being shared on Twitter by people who had not seen it on the platform the first time. More detailed research is required to confirm this indication of a sharing cycle or pattern.

The sentiment of the news stories analysed was strongly against the Coalition, but not necessarily pro-ALP (see Figure 4.2). Arguably, some of this can be accounted for in the normal activity of the fourth estate in holding the government to account, but a significant volume of the stories and shares was due to the stunning number of scandals that involved predominantly Coalition politicians documented in Chapter 4. *SMH* was the only outlet where the level of Anti-LNP content might give cause for concern: all the Fairfax papers editorialised in favour of an ALP victory (see, e.g. Davies, L. 2019), but analysis of sentiment indicates that 64% of *SMH* content was Anti-LNP. The analysed *AFR* content was strongly Anti-LNP, but this is a small number of stories and the majority relate to the Paladin scandal (the *AFR* broke the story); these figures may not be an accurate reflection of the sentiment of all *AFR* content. Because of the *SMH* dominance in tweeted links, this skews the overall result. (Removing the *SMH* reverses the result to 52% Neutral, 43% Anti-

LNP.) The most pro-LNP outlet was, perhaps unsurprisingly, *The Australian*, that overall had reasonably balanced coverage.

Content sentiment



Content sentiment by outlet

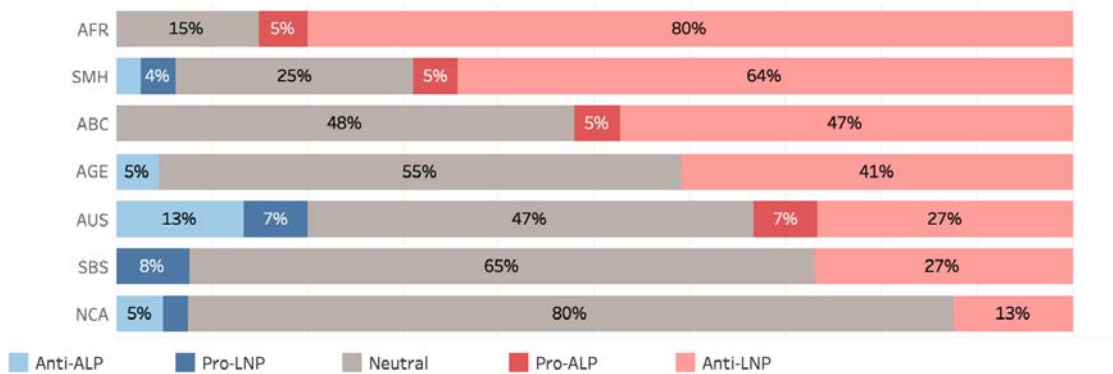


Figure 4.2: Sentiment of analysed news stories (source: compiled by author)

When analysed by Twitter shares as a trend over the period from Turnbull’s dumping to election day, the rotating back and forth between neutrality and holding the government to account can be seen more clearly (see Figure 4.3). The trend line indicates the media’s Anti-LNP drumbeat slowly increasing, with pro-ALP stories only starting in the formal election campaign. This supports the observed evidence and the results of the ALP review of the campaign (Emerson & Weatherill 2019) that there was no reason to vote ‘for’ the ALP that was clearly articulated early enough in the cycle to be included in the complex decision-making process of voters.

Content sentiment trend

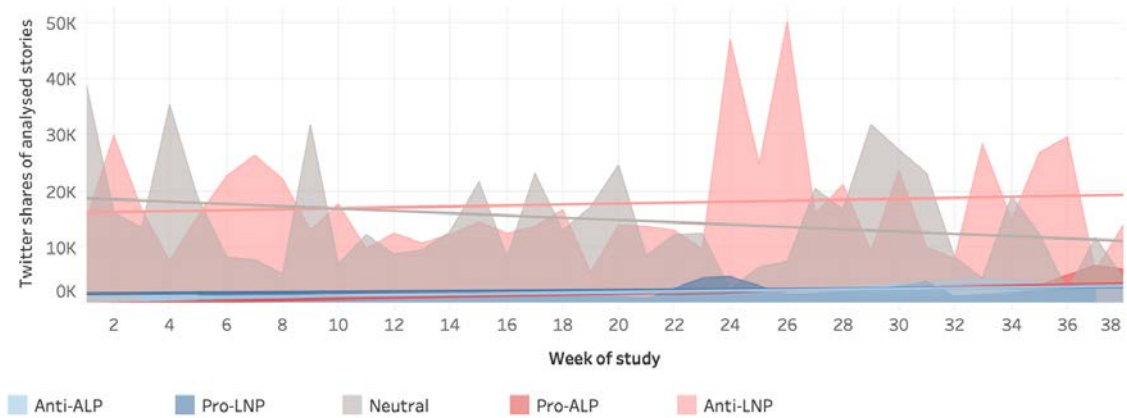
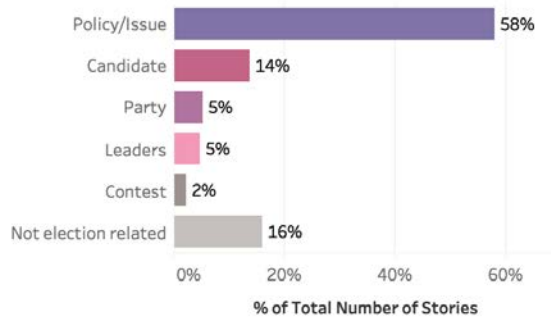
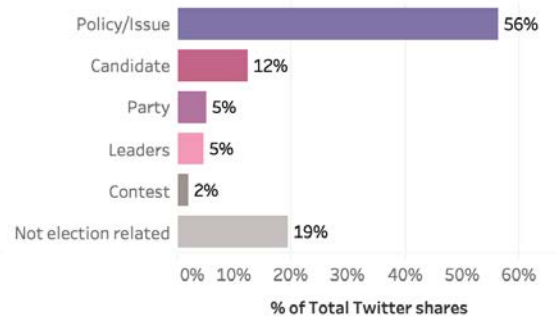


Figure 4.3: Trend of sentiment of analysed stories by Twitter shares (source: compiled by author)

Content type - stories



Content type - shares



Content type by outlet

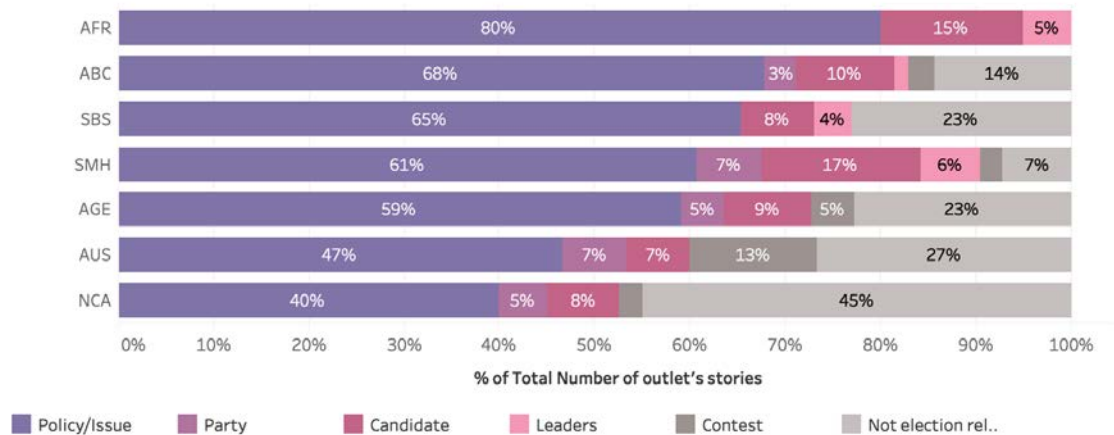


Figure 4.4: News items shared categorised by content, analysed by number of stories and number of shares (source: compiled by author)

Measured by both number of stories and number of shares, more than 50% of the analysed coverage was about policy or issues. Accordingly, most outlets exceeded that benchmark

as well (see Figure 4.4). The exceptions were the more conservative-leaning and News Limited owned outlets of *The Australian* and news.com.au.

A third of all stories analysed were about a scandal of some kind, with three notable peaks where the stories about scandal were shared more than non-scandalous stories were (see Figure 4.5). These peaks correlate with Peter Dutton’s *Au Pair* affair story breaking in week 4 of the study (commencing 9 September 2018), Stuart Robert’s exorbitant internet bill in week 7 (commencing 30 September 2018) and Tim Wilson’s misuse of parliamentary entitlements with the franking credits inquiry in week 26 (commencing 17 February 2019).

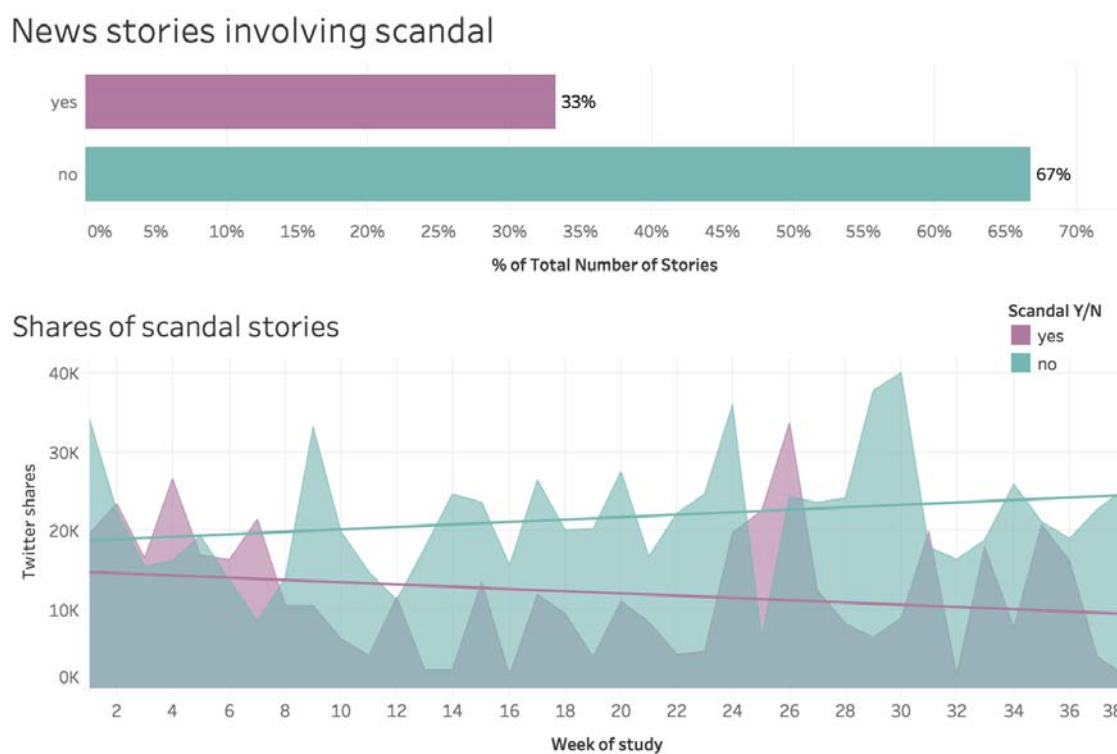


Figure 4.5: News stories shared involving some element of scandal, by total number of stories, and number of shares by week (source: compiled by author)

Of the top 10 tweeted stories from the entire period (see Table 4.6), half were related to subjects that were found not to be construed as having any bearing on the election at all. Only two of the top 10 were political scandals, and only one of those was a fresh story: Tim Wilson’s misuse of a parliamentary inquiry to prosecute a case against the ALP’s franking credits policy. This was the one scandal story that did not have much impact and certainly did not result in any ramifications for the individual MP or the party (Murphy, K. & Karp 2019).

Table 4.6: Top 10 news stories shared on Twitter from 19 August 2018 to 18 May 2019

| Outlet | Date | Headline | Subject/Lead | Type | Category | Sentiment | Scandal | Shares |
|------------|---------|---|--|---------|----------------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| SMH | 19/2/19 | 'Our little brown rat': first climate change-caused mammal extinction | The Morrison Government has formally recognised the extinction of a tiny island rodent, the Bramble Cay melomys—the first known demise of a mammal because of human-induced climate change. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 19314 |
| NCA | 21/8/18 | South Africa begins seizing white-owned farms | South Africa has targeted the first two farms for unilateral seizure after the owners refused an offer of one-tenth of the land's value. | news | issue | neutral | no | 17753 |
| SMH | 27/8/18 | Cancer eating the heart of Australian democracy | Kevin Rudd says since the coup of June 2010, Australian politics has become vicious, toxic and unstable. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 17003 |
| SMH | 9/9/18 | It is Serena Williams who owes an apology to umpire Carlos Ramos | Carlos Ramos, in the umpire's chair for the US Open women's singles final between Serena Williams and Naomi Osaka, will be going through a rollercoaster of emotions as he copes with global headlines that umpires of professional tennis would rather avoid. | opinion | not election related | neutral | yes | 13288 |
| ABC | 8/1/19 | Polyana Viana, UFC fighter, beats up would-be thief in Rio after he tried to rob her using fake gun | A woman standing on her own waiting for an Uber in Rio de Janeiro may have appeared an easy target to a would-be thief. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 13204 |
| ABC | 19/9/18 | Leave no dark corner | China is building a digital dictatorship to exert control over its 1.4 billion citizens. For some, 'social credit' will bring privileges—for others, punishment. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 12721 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------|----------|--|---|------|----------------------|----------|-----|-------|
| SMH | 5/2/19 | Wilson and Wilson: The MP, the fund manager, and the franking credits inquiry | A high-profile fund manager leads assault against Labor's changes to franking credits boasted about using a taxpayer-funded inquiry to maximise the chances of defeating the policy. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 12392 |
| SMH | 17/2/11 | Morrison sees votes in Anti-Muslim strategy | The opposition immigration spokesman, Scott Morrison, urged the shadow cabinet to capitalise on the electorate's growing concerns about 'Muslim immigration', 'Muslims in Australia' and the 'inability' of Muslim migrants to integrate. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 11142 |
| YAH | 15/10/18 | U.S. Embassy apologises after cat picture mistakenly sent out | US Embassy in Canberra, Australia, has apologised on behalf of the Department of State who accidentally sent a test email featuring a photo of a cat dressed in a Cookie Monster costume. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 10247 |
| ABC | 25/8/18 | Pink answers grieving girl's wish for a hug at Brisbane concert | A 14-year-old girl grieving the recent loss of her mother has been sent 'a hug from heaven' after pop star Pink pulled her out of the crowd for a hug, selfie and motivational chat at one of her concerts this week. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 9622 |

Source: compiled by author.

Conversely, the intense attacks by the ALP against Tim Wilson (Bagshaw 2019a; Belot 2019b; Kelly, J. 2019; Knaus 2019b) may have only served to draw attention to their problematic policy, leading to the drop in their primary vote figures as shown in Figure 4.8. The other political scandal story worked its way into the top 10 the hard way: an 8 year old story regarding Scott Morrison believing the party would gain votes from an Anti-Muslim stance (Taylor, L. 2011) resurfaced once, after Morrison became prime minister, and then again as part of response to Christchurch Massacre.

One other data point for consideration is the actual election result. If we consider the individual MPs whose scandals were widely reported and shared on Twitter: Peter Dutton

4.3.2 Polling and research

4.3.2.1 Method

A record of all the published commercial polls from September until election day was compiled, using the MCA and compilations published by polling commentators, and by searching for polling results from the major pollsters on their websites. The following pollsters and researchers were included:

- You Gov/Galaxy including Newspoll
- Roy Morgan
- Ipsos
- Essential Research
- ReachTel/uComms
- Voter Choice Project
- Vote Compass
- Australian Election Study.

The Voter Choice Project and Vote Compass include both academic research and commercial polling. The Voter Choice Project is this author's research: a panel study that began as purely academic research for this thesis but was transformed to a commercial study owing to the volatility of the electoral environment and other demands. Vote Compass is a VAA run by Vox Pops Labs in partnership with an academic panel and the national broadcaster the *ABC* (ABC News 2019f; Hanrahan 2019d). An alternative VAA, Smartvote, was a project of the ANU in partnership with Fairfax/Nine newspapers the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) and *The Age* (ANU 2019); however, no known results have been published from this study.

Vote Compass and ReachTel did not produce national polling figures; their results on specific issues are noted in the appropriate theme. The long-running academic post-election research, the AES, publishes its results and data on their website (ANU 2020), and are also included under the appropriate themes. The Collaborative Australian Election Study, likely to be a highly significant data source, has only resulted in one publication to date (Ratcliff, Sheppard & Pietsch 2020). Unfortunately, at the time of writing there was very little other

academic studies available. Occasional academic and quasi-academic issue research from think tanks are also included where appropriate.

4.3.2.2 Findings

The polling was fairly consistent, as it usually is during Australian elections, with the usual fixation on the 2PP numbers meaning that is often the only number reported or analysed. The assumed validity of the 2PP is a myth (discussed further in the next chapter) because there is no national electorate, but it has become a dominant part of Australian electoral culture. Figure 4.7 shows the 2PP results during the period of August 19 to election day. The variation throughout the period was never more than five points, with a consistent—and normal—curve to a narrowing at election day.

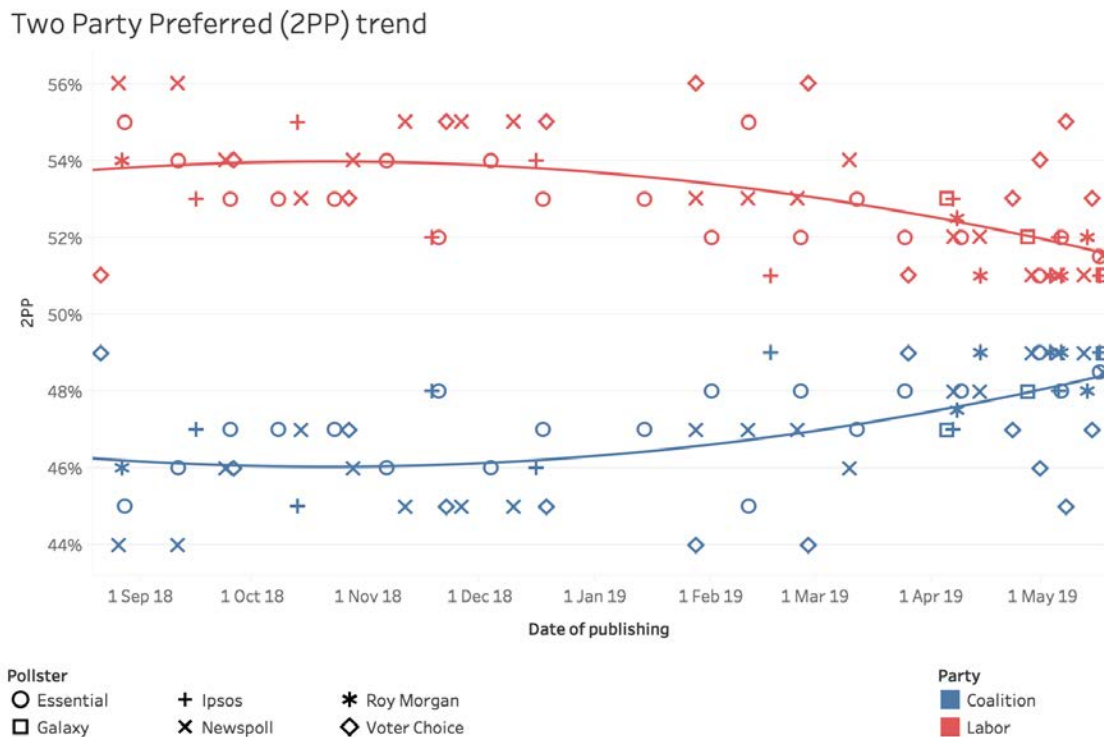
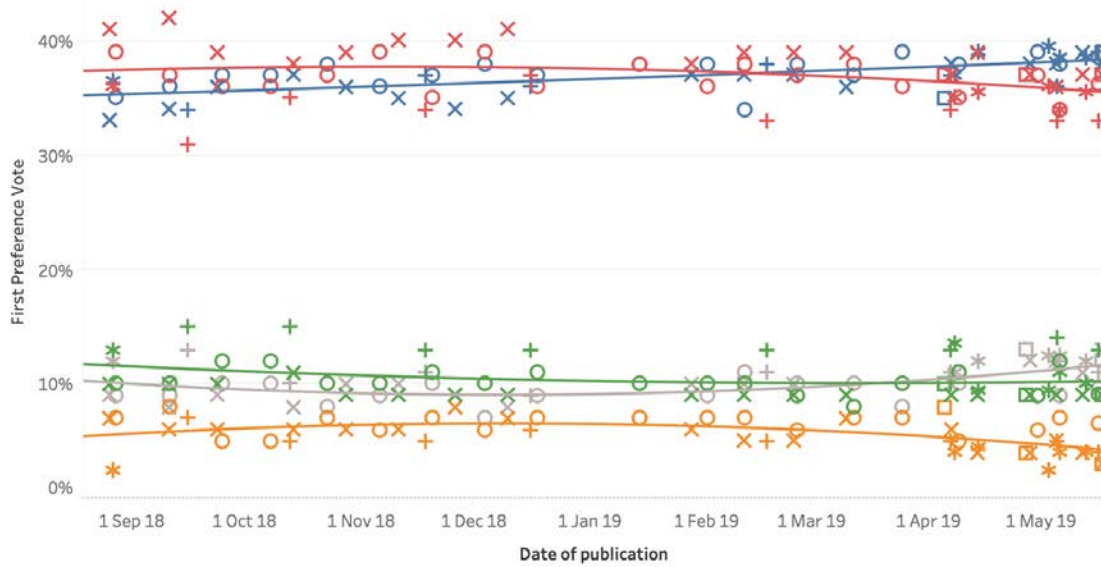


Figure 4.7: Two-party preferred figures from 19 August 2018 to election day, 18 May 2019, with trend (source: compiled by author)

First preference figures were the canary in this electoral coal mine, with the major party first preference votes staying stubbornly low. Then, the trend indicates the Coalition started to gain momentum from around December 2018, while the ALP had flatlined or were slowly declining. The Voter Choice Project’s questions were substantially different, enabling participants to stay in the undecided column, and providing more minor party

options in the pick list, resulting in a much higher (and somewhat oversampled) ‘other’ vote (Crosby 2018a, 2019c). Standard practice for most other polls is to prompt an undecided voter to nominate who they are most likely to vote for (Goot 2020; Lavrakas 2008). For these reasons, Voter Choice Project figures are separated in Figure 4.8. The trend for both the major commercial polls and the Voter Choice Project had the election over before it was officially called, with both ALP, Green and other voters on the decline, and the trend line for the Coalition crossing over the ALP to take the lead by April.

First Preference trend



First Preference trend (Voter Choice)

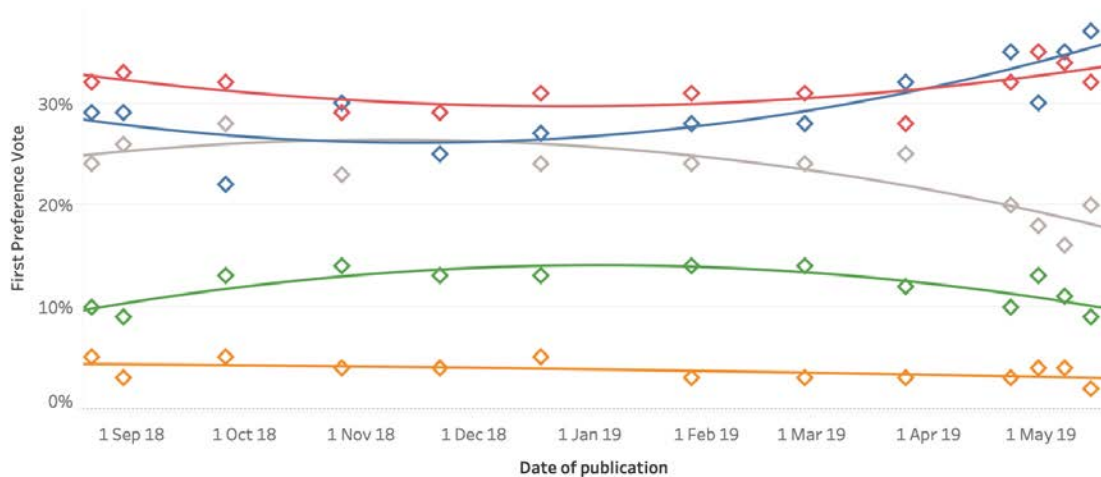


Figure 4.8: First preference polling 19 August 2018 to 18 May 2019, with trend (source: compiled by author)

The Voter Choice Project was designed specifically to find what was driving vote decision, and thus goes into some detail on the subject. Describing a hierarchy of vote decision (see Figure 4.9), late-deciding voters were found to have been largely unimpressed by the substantive campaign and made their final vote decisions on the balance of multiple factors, or on the personal qualities of local candidates. Using an open ended question verified by a series of interlocking closed questions, and tested at multiple points of time, this study

found that only 7% of those who changed their vote, and 11% of participants overall, decided their vote primarily on policy issues. Additionally, geography and length of time in an area significantly affected vote decision, but not class factors, such as occupation and income (Crosby 2019c).



Figure 4.9: Hierarchy of vote decision identified by The Voter Choice Project

(Source: Summary of key findings of the Voter Choice Project (Crosby 2019c))

The Voter Choice Project’s finding that only 11% of voters had policy as their highest consideration contrasts starkly with the AES’s finding that 66% of voters had policy as their most important consideration. Cameron and McAllister (2020a) found that policy issues, and most notably the environment, played a bigger role than in previous elections; trust and satisfaction were at record low levels, non-partisan voters and those who supported minor parties continued to rise and there was a growing generational divide, with the lowest Liberal vote recorded for voters aged under 35. The study also emphasised its longstanding finding of the influence of self-identified class and rejected the claims of commentators that it was ‘battlers’ switching from the ALP to the Coalition that decided the election.

Shaun Ratcliff (2019), coordinator of the Cooperative Australian Election Survey (CAES) run by the United States Study Centre at the University of Sydney, also pushed back on the ‘battlers’ explanation of the result. Examining business or trust ownership, disability pension and household income, he asserted that high-income business owners are still more likely to vote for the Coalition, while workers and others on low incomes are still more likely to vote for the ALP. This initial finding was later expanded on by Ratcliff, Sheppard and Pietsch (2020) with a deeper exploration into voters’ relationship with capital as a more nuanced form of class explanation of voter behaviour. They also rejected another narrative that the Coalition won the ‘ethnic’ or Chinese vote, finding that there is literally no difference in the attitudes of Chinese voters towards conservative policy issues such as same-sex marriage. The narratives about particular ethnic groups or class or other group attributes as a driver of vote decision almost always stemmed from the ecological fallacy of analysing aggregate movements in a particular electorate and generalising to individual vote behaviour, most commonly by considering census data in those electorates.

Most commercial polls did not attempt to find the primary drivers behind vote decisions, as is appropriate given the limitations of the format. Vote Compass data concurred with the AES and Voter Choice Project findings that the economy and environment were the most important policy issues (Hanrahan 2019d). However, the Ipsos Issues Monitor found health care and cost of living topped the list, although it noted a significant increase in concern about the environment (Wade 2019). The Essential Report’s (2019b) recurring question on ‘most important issues’ also put health and cost of living pressures at the top just before the election began, along with unemployment.

4.4 Regional Variation Case Studies

The 2019 Australian federal election was particularly chaotic with no narrative or national trend to explore, complicated by starkly different experiences in different parts of the country. To enable a deeper examination of this regional variance, two case studies are outlined: the six Central Queensland seats affected by the Adani issue, and the two similar Sydney seats of Warringah and Wentworth that voted in opposite ways in 2019. Voting is an event that happens within a specific construct; thus analyses at the electorate level enable a much clearer picture as the construct for all the behaviours being examined is similar and many variables are eliminated (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995, pp.6-7).

4.4.1 Case Study 1: Central Queensland

While the national campaign did not have a narrative or clear question to be answered, Central Queensland did: the discourse centred almost entirely around support or opposition for ‘Adani’ as a yardstick of supporting local communities and people (see section 5.2.1 for further discussion). The next two most significant issues were responses to the flooding disaster of a few months prior, and the long-running controversy around Clive Palmer and the closed Queensland Nickel mine at Townsville. However, even these issues were woven into the Adani narrative: to support Adani was to support local people and be doing something to create jobs and get North Queensland back on its feet; to oppose Adani was to abandon locals for the benefit of ‘latte drinking greens’ in the cities of the south (Koslowski & Latimer 2019).

Immediately after the election, Queensland was ‘blamed’ for the result owing to the state-wide swing of 4.2% against the ALP, with some going so far as to call for a ‘Quexit’ to separate the state from the rest of Australia, a play on Britain’s ‘Brexit’ separation from Europe (McCauley 2019b). This does not make any rational sense, given the state-wide swing to the LNP was only 0.5% (Green, A. 2019a). Large swings did occur in LNP safe seats that simply became safer LNP seats (see Table 4.8).

The only ALP-held seats that became LNP-held seats were the very marginal Townsville city seat of Herbert, won from the LNP in the 2016 election by a mere 37 votes; and Longman, which had also been historically a LNP seat, won by the ALP in 2016 by 0.8% or 1,390 votes. Additionally, a further two seats were won by the Coalition from the ALP in Tasmania (Bass and Braddon) and in NSW (Lindsay and Longman) with no such ‘blame’ being cast on those voters.

The Galilee Basin, where Adani intended to develop the Carmichael mine, is in the electorates of Maranoa and Kennedy, and a very small part of Capricornia and Flynn. The Carmichael mine is in the far northwest corner of Capricornia. The main fly-in-fly-out centre of Townsville includes the electorates of Herbert, as well as the edge of Dawson and Kennedy, and the secondary centre of Rockhampton is in Capricornia (Browne, B. 2017). Figure 4.10 shows the coal basins and federal electorates of Central Queensland, including the location of the proposed Adani Carmichael mine.

Table 4.8: 2019 Federal election results—Queensland electorates

| Seat | Won by | Margin | LNP 2CP 2016 (%) | LNP 2CP 2019 (%) | Swing to LNP |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Ryan | LNP | 11,620 | 58.98 | 56.03 | −2.95 |
| Kennedy | KAP | 24,514 | 61 | 63.33 | −2.33 |
| Griffith | ALP | 5,701 | 48.57 | 47.14 | −1.43 |
| Brisbane | LNP | 10,033 | 56 | 54.92 | −1.08 |
| Leichhardt | LNP | 7,491 | 53.95 | 54.17 | 0.22 |
| McPherson | LNP | 22,569 | 62.2 | 61.64 | 0.56 |
| Moncrieff | LNP | 28,239 | 64.61 | 65.36 | 0.75 |
| Moreton | ALP | 3,448 | 45.98 | 48.1 | 2.12 |
| Fairfax | LNP | 26,248 | 60.87 | 63.44 | 2.57 |
| Oxley | ALP | 11,577 | 40.99 | 43.61 | 2.62 |
| Fadden | LNP | 27,562 | 61.24 | 54.18 | 2.94 |
| Dickson | LNP | 8,988 | 51.69 | 54.64 | 2.95 |
| Bowman | LNP | 20,135 | 57.07 | 60.24 | 3.17 |
| Fisher | LNP | 25,152 | 59.15 | 62.7 | 3.55 |
| Bonner | LNP | 13,957 | 63.39 | 57.41 | 4.02 |
| Longman | LNP | 6,525 | 49.21 | 53.28 | 4.07 |
| Rankin | ALP | 10,922 | 38.7 | 43.56 | 4.86 |
| Wide Bay | LNP | 24,686 | 58.19 | 63.15 | 4.96 |
| Wright | LNP | 28,249 | 59.62 | 64.58 | 4.96 |
| Lilley | ALP | 1,229 | 44.32 | 49.36 | 5.04 |
| Groom | LNP | 39,100 | 65.31 | 70.48 | 5.17 |
| Hinkler | LNP | 26,701 | 58.38 | 64.5 | 6.12 |
| Maranoa | LNP | 41,718 | 65.86 | 72.49 | 6.63 |
| Petrie | LNP | 17,065 | 51.65 | 58.4 | 6.75 |
| Blair | ALP | 2,321 | 41.86 | 48.79 | 6.93 |
| Flynn | LNP | 15,487 | 51.04 | 58.66 | 7.62 |
| Forde | LNP | 15,736 | 50.63 | 58.6 | 7.97 |
| Herbert | LNP | 15,365 | 49.98 | 58.36 | 8.38 |
| Dawson | LNP | 25,959 | 53.37 | 64.61 | 11.24 |
| Capricornia | LNP | 21,983 | 50.63 | 62.35 | 11.72 |

Note: LNP: Liberal National Party; KAP: Katter's Australian Party; ALP: Australian Labor Party.

Source: Compiled by author.

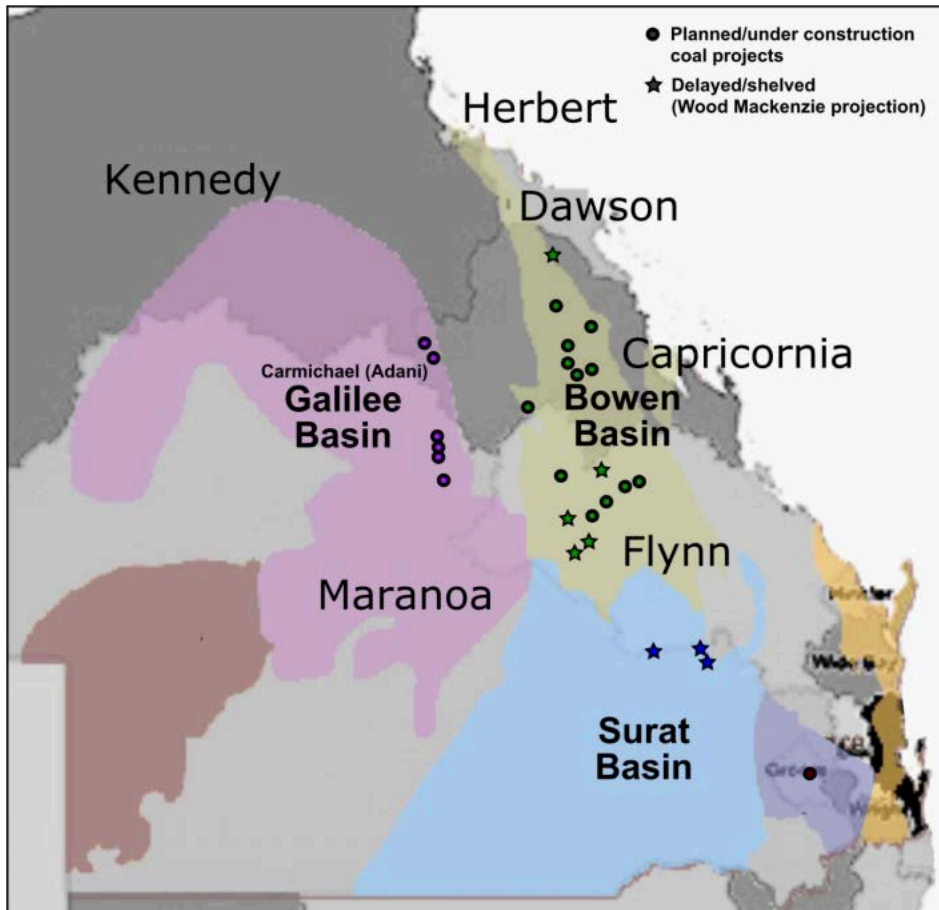


Figure 4.10: Map of Queensland showing coal basins, proposed mine sites and Central Queensland federal electorates affected by Adani (source: The Australia Institute [Browne, B. 2017])

On considering only these electorates, an average swing of 7.3% to the LNP is observed. However, this is too simplistic, as revealed in Table 4.9. If we accept the indications from the analysis in 4.3.2 that it was first preference votes that are the most reliable indicator of voters' intention, there is no pattern in these six seats that would indicate any one factor — whether it be Adani or anything else—was responsible for these large but inconsistent 2PP swings. Dawson and Capricornia registered the highest swings to the LNP on a 2PP basis, but in both seats the LNP candidates did not substantially improve their vote: George Christensen (Dawson, LNP) registering only 0.32% more votes than the previous election, and Michelle Landry (Capricornia, LNP) only 0.59%. In both seats, the ALP lost a considerable share of the vote that is almost mirrored by the rise in the Pauline Hanson One Nation vote. The swings against the ALP in Flynn and Herbert were similar, but that vote did not go to similar places, and the Pauline Hanson's One Nation (PHON) and Katter's Australia Party (KAP) movements are diametrically opposed.

Table 4.9: 2019 Federal election results—Central Queensland electorates affected by Adani

| | 2016 | | | 2019 | | | 16->19 Swing | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|--------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Candidate | FP | 2PP | 2CP | Candidate | FP | 2PP | 2CP | FP | 2PP | 2CP |
| Capricornia | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LNP | <u>LANDRY, Michelle</u> | 40.05 | 50.63 | 50.63 | <u>LANDRY, Michelle</u> | 40.65 | 62.35 | 62.35 | +0.59 | +11.72 | +11.72 |
| ALP | NEATON, Leisa | 38.09 | 49.23 | 49.23 | ROBERTSON, Russell | 23.74 | 37.65 | 37.65 | -14.33 | -11.72 | -11.72 |
| PHON | - | - | - | - | ROTHERY, Wade | 16.98 | - | - | +16.98 | - | - |
| KAP | CARTER, Laurel | 7.08 | - | - | BIRKBECK, George | 3.67 | - | - | -3.4 | - | - |
| Oth | | 14.78 | | | | 14.96 | | | +0.18 | | |
| Dawson | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LNP | <u>CHRISTENSEN, George</u> | 42.61 | 53.34 | 53.35 | <u>CHRISTENSEN, George</u> | 42.95 | 64.61 | 64.61 | 0.32 | +11.24 | +11.24 |
| ALP | GILBERT, Frank | 32.79 | 46.66 | 46.66 | HASSAN, Belinda | 20.28 | 46.63 | 46.63 | -12.48 | -11.24 | -11.24 |
| PHON | - | - | - | - | LAWSON, Debra | 13.09 | - | - | 13.09 | - | - |
| KAP | DODD, Ash | 6.54 | - | - | BUNYAN, Brendan | 6.32 | - | - | -0.22 | - | - |
| Oth | | 18.06 | | | | 17.36 | | | -0.7 | | |
| Flynn | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LNP | <u>O'DOWD, Ken</u> | 37.06 | 51.04 | 51.04 | <u>O'DOWD, Ken</u> | 37.89 | 58.66 | 58.66 | +0.83 | +7.62 | +7.62 |
| ALP | BEERS, Zac | 33.39 | 49.96 | 49.96 | BEERS, Zac | 28.65 | 41.34 | 41.34 | -4.74 | -7.62 | -7.62 |
| PHON | BAKER, Phil | 17.15 | - | - | LOHSE, Sharon | 19.60 | - | - | +2.45 | | |
| KAP | LOVE, Richard | 3.38 | - | - | - | - | - | - | -3.88 | - | - |
| Oth | | 9.02 | | | | 13.86 | | | +4.84 | | |
| Herbert | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| LNP | JONES, Ewen | 35.5 | 49.98 | 49.98 | <u>THOMPSON, Phillip</u> | 37.11 | 58.36 | 58.36 | +1.61 | +8.38 | +8.38 |
| ALP | <u>O'TOOLE, Cathy</u> | 30.45 | 50.02 | 50.02 | O'TOOLE, Cathy | 25.45 | 41.64 | 41.64 | -5 | -8.38 | -8.38 |
| PHON | VIRGO, Geoff | 13.53 | - | - | LOHSE, Amy | 11.09 | - | - | -2.44 | - | - |
| KAP | DWYER, Colin | 6.87 | - | - | RADECK, Nanette | 9.8 | - | - | +2.93 | - | - |
| Oth | | 13.65 | | | | 16.55 | | | +2.9 | | |
| Kennedy | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LNP | PAVETTO, Jonathan | 32.33 | 56.86 | 38.88 | BEVERIDGE, Frank | 27.48 | 64.51 | 36.67 | -5.11 | +7.77 | -2.33 |
| ALP | JACOBSEN, Norm | 19.16 | 43.14 | - | McGUIRE, Brett | 16.98 | 35.49 | - | -2.57 | -7.77 | - |
| KAP | <u>KATTER, Bob</u> | 39.85 | - | 61.12 | <u>KATTER, Bob</u> | 40.96 | - | 63.33 | +2.59 | - | +2.33 |
| Oth | | 8.66 | | | | 14.58 | | | +5.92 | | |
| Maranoa | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LNP | <u>LITTLEPROUD, David</u> | 49.19 | 67.54 | 65.86 | <u>LITTLEPROUD, David</u> | 56 | 75.42 | 72.49 | +6.81 | +7.88 | +6.63 |
| ALP | KERRIGAN, Dave | 18.27 | 32.46 | - | LITTLE, Linda | 15.55 | 24.58 | - | -2.72 | -7.88 | - |
| PHON | KEEHN, Lynette | 17.82 | - | 34.14 | MOULDEN, Rosemary | 14.62 | - | 34.14 | -3.2 | - | -6.63 |
| KAP | GURNETT, Rick | 4.78 | - | - | WALLIS, Anthony | 4.58 | - | - | -0.2 | - | - |
| Oth | | 9.94 | | | | 9.25 | | | -0.69 | | |

Note: Election results detailing LNP, ALP, PHON and KAP candidates in the six electorates affected by the Adani mine. PHON did not contest Kennedy in either 2016 or 2019. Winning candidate underlined; incumbent is bold.

Source: compiled by author from AEC data.

Kennedy is always a personality rather than partisan seat, dominated by KAP leader Bob Katter, but it is noteworthy the LNP dropped more in primary vote than the ALP did in that electorate. In only one of the six seats was there a substantial swing to the LNP on first preferences, Maranoa; this gain of 6.81% for David Littleproud can easily be explained as a correction from the 2016 result (swing against the LNP of -8.23% on first preferences), assisted by Littleproud becoming the deputy leader of the National Party⁵ in 2018.

This case study is a good example of how the 2PP measure conceals and misleads on the true intent of voters and the real rate of vote change. The first preference votes clearly support the contention that the ALP lost the election—the Coalition did not win it.

A potential alternative explanation for the result in these seats is an emotional response to the perception of being under attack. While no detailed research of these seats is available, The Voter Choice Project and Roy Morgan polling in New England to test the intent of voters while Barnaby Joyce (National Party) was under attack, detailed in Chapter 5, indicates a polarisation of the vote, and a solidification of support for the politician under siege. George Christensen was under intense scrutiny, including a police investigation, for his overseas trips as discussed in the previous chapter (Harris, R. & Galloway 2019; Maiden 2019b; Viellaris 2018). Michelle Landry was under attack for her strong support of Adani, particularly in light of the company's substantial contributions to her campaign (Murphy, K. 2019b), pushing for a new coal-fired power station in her electorate (Peel 2019), and in trouble with her own party for criticising their treatment of women (Remeikis 2018c) and the party's leadership (AAP 2019). Ken O'Dowd (Flynn, LNP) was also in trouble with the party for suggesting he might challenge the leader, and under some pressure for failing to advocate for the family of Tamil refugees that had been forcibly removed from their home in Biloela (Bray 2019). LNP candidate for Herbert, Phillip Thompson, also came under intense scrutiny for Anti-Muslim social media posts (Palin 2019); this happened soon after his nomination and before the Townsville flood event, and may have contributed to his small increase in first preference votes. Moreover, the entire area was under attack from Adani protesters for failing to oppose the mine.

⁵ While the Liberal and National Parties are a merged entity in Queensland (the LNP), elected members of the LNP choose to caucus with either the Liberal Party or National Party at a federal level. All of the Adani affected LNP members caucus with the National Party.

It is reasonable to expect that in similarly parochial and protective rural seats, the same polarisation of vote and desire to ‘protect one’s own’ identified in New England fed into a solidifying of support for those candidates demonstrated by both maintaining their personal first preference vote and an increased two-candidate preferred vote, despite the negatively valenced information being presented to voters. This dynamic is not exactly valence voting, nor motivated reasoning, but might be described as a *motivated inverse valence* vote, that is, voting for a candidate in spite of negatively valenced information because the voter feels emotionally motivated to defend the performance of their fellow community member.

This case study is also clear evidence that voters cannot be bought. Mining magnate Clive Palmer announced he would seek a senate seat in Queensland. Earlier plans to contest the seat of Herbert (in the city of Townsville) were seemingly abandoned (Killoran 2019a), which may have been linked to the ongoing controversy around his Queensland Nickel mine, and the fact that he still had not paid his workers years after closing the plant (Walker, J. 2019). Over \$80m was spent by the United Australia Party on their campaign. Mostly in the Adani related electorates, with a high focus on 15-second television commercials, billboards and text messages (McIlroy & Tadros 2020; Stensholt 2019). So many ads were generated so quickly that they were notoriously of poor quality and more annoying than effective (Fernando 2019b; Ikonomou 2019). Despite the handwringing that Palmer was ‘buying’ the election, polls pointing to a rise in the Palmer vote and the related frantic and breathless coverage of the Palmer campaign, declaring he could be the ‘kingmaker’ in key contests, it all came to naught. His party won little support and no seats (McIlroy & Tadros 2020; Stensholt 2019).

4.4.2 Case Study 2: Wentworth and Warringah

The individuation of the vote (as theorised in section 2.6) and the strength of socialisation are most clearly borne out in the stories of Wentworth and Warringah, two of Sydney’s wealthiest electorates, both predominantly white and educated, with famous beaches and enviable lifestyles. Nevertheless, their choices in the 2019 election were very different.

The electorate of Wentworth is one of Australia’s wealthiest, with a median weekly income of \$2,380 (ABS 2018b).⁶ It incorporates the entirety of Waverley and Woollahra local

⁶ The national mean income as at the 2016 Census was \$1,438 (ABS 2018a).

councils, and a very small part of Sydney Council in Moore Park, Elizabeth Bay, Darlinghurst, Kings Cross and Centennial Park, and the north side of Randwick and Clovelly from the Randwick Council Area (AEC 2018; Green, A. 2018a). Aside from the exceptional wealth, the area is remarkable for high education levels, with 46.8% of residents having a bachelor degree or higher (compared with 22% nationally), and a very high Jewish population (12.5% religiously Jewish v. 0.4% nationally) (ABS 2018b). It should be noted that the Jewish population is usually under-reported in census figures by approximately 20–30% for historical reasons related to misuse of census data in Nazi Germany and fear of Anti-Semitism, and because many cultural or ethnic Jews who identify as Jewish are not religiously Jewish (Eckstein 1999; Graham & Waterman 2005). Additionally, the electorate is home to a sizable LGBTIQ+ community, although (again) a reliable population estimate is not available (Dodd 2019, pers. comm., 18 January). State MP Alex Greenwich estimates the gay community is 15–20% of Wentworth voters (Clark 2018). Polling analyst William Bowe argues the diversity or number of ‘subcultures’ within the Wentworth electorate makes the seat difficult to poll (Walker, T. 2018).

The Wentworth by-election campaign was intensified by the involvement of numerous activist organisations. GetUp! invested heavily in the contest, directly supporting Phelps, campaigning on climate change, the Adani mine proposal in Queensland as a proxy for climate change and the dumping of Malcolm Turnbull (GetUp! 2018; Patrick 2018; Patrick 2019b, pp. 49–50). The organisation conducted polling and extensive door-knock and telephone canvassing (Clark 2018) and produced multiple versions of their own how-to-vote cards that diverted preferences from all major candidates to Phelps (GetUp! 2018; Murphy, K. & Davies 2018; Patrick 2018; Patrick 2019b, pp. 53–5). Greenpeace (2018) also released climate change campaign materials and media content, in what they claimed was their ‘first time ever... campaigning in a by-election contest’, and releasing a poll that was substantially questioned (Bowe 2018; Morgan, Levine & McCrann 2018). Animals Australia (2018a, 2018b) conducted polling and campaigning activities on opposition to live export. The Refugee Coalition also commissioned a poll of the electorate (Refugee Council of Australia 2018), and multiple refugee advocacy organisations campaigned in the by-election (Murphy, K. 2018d).

Informally organised activism was also a notable influence in the by-election campaign. Malcolm Turnbull’s son, Alex Turnbull, was regularly reported in mainstream media for

his Anti-Liberal commentary on the by-election on social media (Clennell 2018; Mayers 2018; Patrick 2018; Potter 2018). Long-serving political journalist Margo Kingston was clear in her support for Kerryn Phelps, calling her a ‘gift to the nation’ (Kingston 2018), and was one of the most frequent posters on social media on the Wentworth by-election hashtags (Patrick 2018). Environmentalist Simon Holmes à Court and high-profile Wentworth voter Mike Cannon-Brookes (co-founder of the Australian-based ICT company Atlassian) also drew media attention for their similarly Anti-Liberal tweets about the by-election (McIlroy 2018; Patrick 2018; Seccombe 2018).

Eight polls conducted during the by-election for candidates or interest groups were reported in the media, all of which were criticised for their significant variability (Morgan, Levine & McCrann 2018), consistent with ongoing discussion about seat polling in Australia being highly inaccurate (Jackman & Mansillo 2018). However, while this particular seat is notoriously difficult to poll, and seat polling generally in Australia is highly variable, only the late Greenpeace (2018) poll is a significant outlier with the low Liberal vote of 33%.

Kerryn Phelps won the by-election, predominantly on the strength of strategic voting (Patrick 2018), but, by the time of the general election in 2019, most of this intense campaign activity had evaporated. GetUp! (2019) shifted its primary focus to unseating Tony Abbott in Warringah, and most of the issues got lost in the national campaign. There was no public polling of the seat, and only a report of Liberal internal polling that showed the economy, and not climate change, was the most important issue and that former ambassador to Israel, Dave Sharma, was likely to win (Sas 2019). The voters of Wentworth who had strived so hard to deliver ‘punishment’ to the Liberal Party for ousting Turnbull, returned to type and ousted the Independent for the Liberal (Grattan & Seaborn 2019).

Warringah is directly north of Wentworth on the other side of Sydney Harbour, including Sydney’s North Shore and lower northern beaches, covering suburbs on both sides of Middle Harbour around the Spit Bridge (Green, A. 2019b). It is equally as wealthy with a median weekly income of \$2,384 (ABS 2017). It is also a ‘blue-ribbon’ Liberal seat that had been held by another former prime minister, Tony Abbott, for many years. However, the seat is more homogenous than the subculture-rich Wentworth, with demographics largely reflective of the European, English-speaking, Christian-dominating Australia-wide figures, except for education, with near double the average level of university educated

people (42.3% v. the national rate of 22%), and occupation, with a much higher level of professionals (34.7% v. 22.2%) (ABS 2017).

A vigorous campaign mounted by the non-partisan Voices for Warringah, and a number of other local action groups, backed former Olympian and barrister Zali Steggall as the preferred independent candidate (FitzSimons & Shields 2019; O'Malley 2018). The campaign focused on needing to take action on climate change and Tony Abbott's personal failings. Steggall pitched herself as representing the 'sensible centre' in contrast with the 'out of touch' Abbott who had 'gone off to fight right wing culture wars' (McCauley 2019a). Voice of Warringah mobilised ground forces, using the model of 'kitchen table conversations' developed by the similar Voices for Indi campaign in Victoria which had successfully returned a similar independent candidate for three cycles (Ridge 2018).

Action group GetUp! invested heavily in the race, mobilising substantial resources, including sending 600 volunteers into the electorate with the specific aim of ousting the former prime minister (Kelly, C. 2019b). A new right-wing activist group, Advance Australia, also got involved in the race, going head-to-head with GetUp! in terms of organisation and advertising and claiming they were only campaigning in Warringah because GetUp! was there (Gregory 2019). The campaign turned nasty, described as 'toxic' with claims that the local action groups were motivated purely to 'get rid of Tony', allegations of 'dirty tricks' and a lot of posters were defaced (Gregory 2019; McKinnon 2019).

Steggall thumped Tony Abbott on election night, gaining 43.5% of the first preference vote, and delivering an 18.3% swing against the former prime minister in two-candidate preferred terms to win 57.2% to Abbott's 42.8%. This was a much more substantial victory than Phelps' by-election results of just 29.2% of the primary vote and scraping in with 51.2% of the two-candidate preferred vote.

These two seats are so similar in many ways yet delivered the opposite result in the 2019 election. Wentworth went from rebellious and independent at the by-election, to solidly returning the Liberal candidate. Warringah went from solidly Liberal to confidently Independent, returning Zali Steggall with a far greater margin than Kerryn Phelps had at the by-election.

A focus group study conducted on the two seats in the lead-up to the election provides some insight to the similarities and differences: Warringah was in the mood for change, and despite Steggall having little name recognition in February, by the week before the election her name recognition was high, although voters knew little about her other than she was the best bet to beat Abbott. This is a similar mood to Wentworth at the by-election, strategically backing the candidate they wanted to ‘send a message’, but by the general election eight months later the anger had faded. Some voters considered an independent vote a ‘wasted vote’ despite not indicating any disappointment with Phelps’ performance. Climate change was a significant issue for voters in both seats, but where it was seen as the defining point of difference in Warringah, in Wentworth there was no difference in the candidate’s position on the issue, and voters returned to the overarching partisan position of believing the Liberal Party the safer option for the economy (Grattan & Seaborn 2019).

Valence theory and the individuated vote can also explain these divergent results. Tony Abbott was assessed as doing a bad job, and thus was voted against, but it was a valence assessment of the individual candidate, not the party. Similarly, there is some indication that some who had voted strategically for Kerry Phelp made an assessment that she had little power as an Independent, again, a valence assessment of the individual candidate (Grattan & Seaborn 2019).

4.5 Comparing the Data

The most striking aspect of compiling the data available on the 2019 Australian federal election is how the different sources do not correlate with each other. The polling trend clearly indicated that the Coalition had the momentum, but the media coverage was strongly predicting an ALP win, while the Liberals floundered in their scandal and squalor. The AES points to policy being the most important factor, while the Voter Choice Project points to it being one of the least important. The Collaborative Australian Election Study findings released so far points to class being a major factor, supported by some AES figures, but not supported by other research or the actual election results, which were so geographically different that an element such as class cannot fully explain the disparity. The dominance of scandal clearly illuminated through the MCA does not correlate with election results that largely rewarded scandal-affected politicians, nor polling that indicated a significant proportion of people wanted the scandal-ridden Barnaby Joyce gone. Minor factors, such as the level of interest right-wing voters have in climate change as an issue,

can only be found from some research sources. The lack of narrative discussed as the malaise affecting the campaign in the previous chapter is found in this data as well, indicating that these five major themes—and many minor ones—operated as distinct public spheres. Whatever sphere a voter predominantly engaged in would dramatically alter their election experience and decision process.

The second most striking thing is the absence of the ALP from the conversation. Only in the Cash versus Certainty theme (see section 5.5) did Bill Shorten's name surface in any of the word cloud analysis. This did not correlate with what was observed about the election, which was so very ALP focused. This may have been a manifestation of the desire of Shorten to promote the Labor Team, as opposed to just himself. However, Chris Bowen, the shadow treasurer and point person for the reforms, also did not come up in the word cloud analysis. One assessment that is more certain is that if Cash versus Certainty was the only topic in which Bill Shorten was cutting through, then the 'Bill you can't afford' slogan used by the Liberals would have been devastatingly effective, defining the one area where he was salient as a negative. It is also clear that despite the media coverage overwhelmingly favouring the ALP, voters were coming to their own conclusions.

The partisan leaning of the analysed news coverage may give some insight as to why media coverage was not cutting through: the left-leaning outlets were also the most policy-heavy outlets, while the right-leaning News Limited outlets were far more focused on process and other news. The scandalous stories were frequently broken by those same ALP-favouring outlets and presented in a more news-heavy format than the tabloid spread of the Coalition-favouring outlets. For example, the Paladin Affair story was broken in the *AFR* (Grigg, Shapiro & Murray 2019a) and, despite high sharing, did not appear to penetrate the voter's consideration matrix. The story about Peter Dutton accusing his opponent of using her disability as an excuse, most-shared from *The Australian* (McKenna, M. 2019), did cut through, but appears to have assisted rather than hindered Dutton's re-election. The multiple scandal stories on Barnaby Joyce were broken by varying news outlets, including the *Daily Telegraph* that led the story on the affair and the baby with a staffer (Markson & Loussikian 2018), and it appears the regular scrutiny and criticism may have assisted his re-election efforts as well. Further research is required to understand this relationship between negative reporting, partisan leaning of outlets (and presumably the readers of those outlets) and vote effect.

The hidden variable in all the above data is how voters reacted to events and new information. The adage ‘media doesn’t tell people what to think, it tells people what to think about’ may well explain a great deal of campaign effects and voter behaviour in the 2019 election. Through scandal and controversy, certain issues and people remained salient, but the negative tone of the coverage did not influence voter’s decisions. By remaining in the news and under criticism, policies such as the ALP’s franking credits were considered and broadly rejected, and politicians embroiled in scandal increased their name recognition and vote share. While further research is required to understand this contrarian dynamic, it should be noted this may be an Australian phenomenon, and then may be limited to just this particularly chaotic and negative election. However, voters becoming more supportive of a preferred candidate or party in the face of negatively valenced information has been noted in overseas studies and is explained by the motivated reasoning theory (Lebo & Cassino 2007; Leeper & Slothuus 2014; Redlawsk, Civettini & Emmerson 2010; Slothuus & de Vreese 2010).

Method and question design issues, as well as a bias to theory, may explain why almost none of the research effectively grasped what was going on in the election. The 2PP numbers are effectively meaningless, far more stable than social media sentiment, MCA or almost any other indicator, and not an accurate predictor of result either separately or when analysed by trend. Much of the issue-based research and academic study uses closed questions, with the options defined by researchers well before the events of the election played out, arguably pre-determining a result that is not supported by other data. The fused quantitative/qualitative approach of the Voter Choice Project overcame this limitation by asking open-ended questions and allowing voters to say in their own words what was affecting their vote decision; thus, it resulted in very different responses, accurately picked up the regional disparities and got a better handle of voter psychology and thinking. However, it too did not grasp the volatility in the electorate nor accurately predict the result.

It is evident from this top line analysis that the research is disconnected from the media, and both are disconnected from the historical record. This is somewhat supported by the findings of an inquiry into polling on the 2019 Australian federal election conducted by the Association of Market and Social Research Organisations, who point to a lack of transparency and appropriate standards for pollsters and reporters as a possible cause for this disconnect, and found that guidelines for reporting of polls are inadequate (Pennay et

al. 2020). While individual points are aligned, there is no clear picture on what happened or why on which all outlets agree. As we dive deeper into the themes of the election in the next chapter, this pattern continues.

4.6 Summary

The 2019 election campaign was chaos built on a foundation of instability and scandal. The ALP put forward too many policies without a compelling story to connect them all into one big idea. The Coalition behaved like an opposition, with few substantial policies and no coherent story. The media too could not shape a story around the election and thus latched on to fringe elements, such as Clive Palmer's advertising. Third-party organisations and ad hoc movements like the Adani Convoy took over the role of defining the terms of the election, with the result of a nationally fragmented campaign and no clear narrative for voters to latch on to as they decided their vote.

The Christchurch Massacre in March 2019, perpetrated by an Australian man, caused a sharp shift in what was considered tolerable in Australian political discourse and a re-evaluation of Australia's issues with racism and bigotry, inside and outside of the parliament. Australia's treatment of refugees continued to be the most wicked of issues, causing hopeless outrage among voters and merging the themes of racism and bigotry; bullying; and accountability and trust. Combined with the Section 44 constitutional crisis, salient courtesy of candidates being dumped after nomination because they would not meet the required test, this re-evaluation of values appears to have caused voters to re-evaluate the moral character and values of each politician at the personal level rather than the values of their party, and dramatically increased individuation of Australian politics.

This chapter has reviewed the available data on the election in a fused quantitative and qualitative way, using observation, MCA, polling, election results, and two case studies, to seek an understanding of what happened in the 2019 election. Despite this analysis incorporating every source of publicly available data on the election it is not at all clear what happened or why. The next chapter is the results of a grounded theory analysis of this data to see in a theory blind approach can illuminate the story of the election.

Chapter 5: Thematic Analysis of the 2019 Australian Federal Election

As the election results started to roll in on Saturday night, a lot of Australians would have been asking the question ‘How could all of the polling companies call the Federal Election result incorrectly?’ Craig Young, President of Association of Market and Social Research Organisations (Wallbank 2019).

While the rhetoric and common discourse are that polling got the election fairly wrong, and ‘battlers’ abandoned the ALP to deliver the win to the Coalition, this analysis will look past the 2PP indicator and quick assumptions of voter motivation to include issue questions, and other indications of sentiment, in the search of the true story of the 2019 election. Alas, little correlation can be found in the published research, MCA or observed events of the election, providing some evidence of a significant disconnect between voters, politicians and the media.

One of the most striking aspects of the 2019 election was the lack of narrative. Political narrative can be defined as the story of the election, framing an emotionally compelling message through language and images that tap into voters’ unconscious beliefs (Sheets 2008). Narrative gives us context to make sense of complex things, and the lack of narrative in the 2019 election made the task of deciding who to vote for cognitively much harder. Narrative defines the question to be answered by the election, and because there was no narrative, there is much disagreement on what this election was about. The ALP acknowledged they failed to give voters a clear vote choice and lacked a coherent message in their review of the campaign (Emerson & Weatherill 2019).

However, using a grounded theory approach, five themes or battlegrounds emerged. This thematic analysis enables a different perspective of the election as a fractured contest with no dominant national narrative, but nonetheless valid voting decisions made within five sub-narratives or battlegrounds.

5.1 Method

The data collated on the events of the 2019 Australian federal election was a combination of observation and digital ethnography (embedded observation in Facebook groups,

Twitter, LinkedIn, Reddit and Instagram discussions of the election) , media content analysis (MCA), and desktop analysis of the results of commercial pollsters and other researchers.

Using a fused (quantitative and qualitative) grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss 1990; Glaser 2008; Glaser & Holton 2004) of making diary notes throughout the period of matters that appeared to be attracting voter attention on social media confirmed by MCA, identifying key words and phrases that were confirmed by word cloud analysis and using both open and theoretical coding and the constant comparative method, patterns for similar voters discussing similar matters in five different themes of the election emerged. These themes are:

- Coal versus Climate: the perpetual battle around advocating for or against dealing with climate change, which the right has reframed into a battle about energy, electricity prices and coal as a good energy source because it is reliable and cheap
- Religion versus Rights: a last kick from the religious right to enshrine the ‘right to be bigoted’ in the name of religion, spurred on by their loss of the marriage equality debate and increasing rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTIQ+) Australians
- Racism versus Refugees: another entrenched Australian battle for identity and decency in the face of fear of the unknown and rising white supremacy, with refugees the ones getting the short straw
- Cash versus Certainty: the enormous expenditures, questionable grants, pork-barrelling and waste in pursuit of voters who just want certainty from an unstable system
- Scandal versus Standards: the shocking parade of personal failings, juxtaposed with repeated calls for standards to be upheld and tectonic shifts in society around the way that we treat our fellow humans.

Like five knots in the stomach of Australian democracy, these five battlegrounds are uncomfortable and seemingly unresolvable pain centres, demanding attention and sucking energy away from any healthy debate about the future of the nation. Invoking the public sphere theory of Habermas (1989), each of these battlegrounds can be envisaged as their own sphere, with little evidence of overlap and little common discussion. Trying to untangle the chaos of this period is no small undertaking, and given the lack of narrative,

is particularly challenging. However, by analysing the election through these five thematic windows we can start to understand why the election was playing out so differently for different voters and why the election result was far from predictable.

From this detailed observation and analysis of the events and public engagement with the election, the story of the election is reported in the next sections in a thematic narrative.

5.2 Coal versus Climate

As noted in the previous chapter, the CAES, AES, Voter Choice Project and Vote Compass all pointed to climate change (or global warming, language only used by the AES) as a significant issue, albeit beaten by the economy overall. The Ipsos Issues Monitor found more Australians than ever before believed climate change to be caused by human activity, that it is already affecting the country and that increased renewable power capacity should be a high priority (Brook, J. & Clark 2019). The Essential Poll also found a majority believed climate change is happening, is caused by human activity and that Australia was not doing enough to address the issue (Essential Report 2019a; Lewis, P. 2019). The Lowy Institute Poll also found climate change had surged to a majority of Australians believing it was a serious and urgent issue, and a bigger threat than terrorism (Baker, N. 2019a; Lowy Institute 2020).

Stories were classified as meeting the Coal versus Climate theme if they were about energy (renewable or otherwise), coal mining—including the Adani Carmichael mine proposal—power prices, water management, the drought that was sharply affecting most of Eastern Australia and South Australia, natural disasters such as flood and fire, the Great Barrier Reef and more general stories about the environment, climate change and environmental policy. A total of 95 stories were categorised in this theme, accounting for 12% of the shared links (see figure 5.1).

Number of stories and Twitter shares by week | Coal v Climate

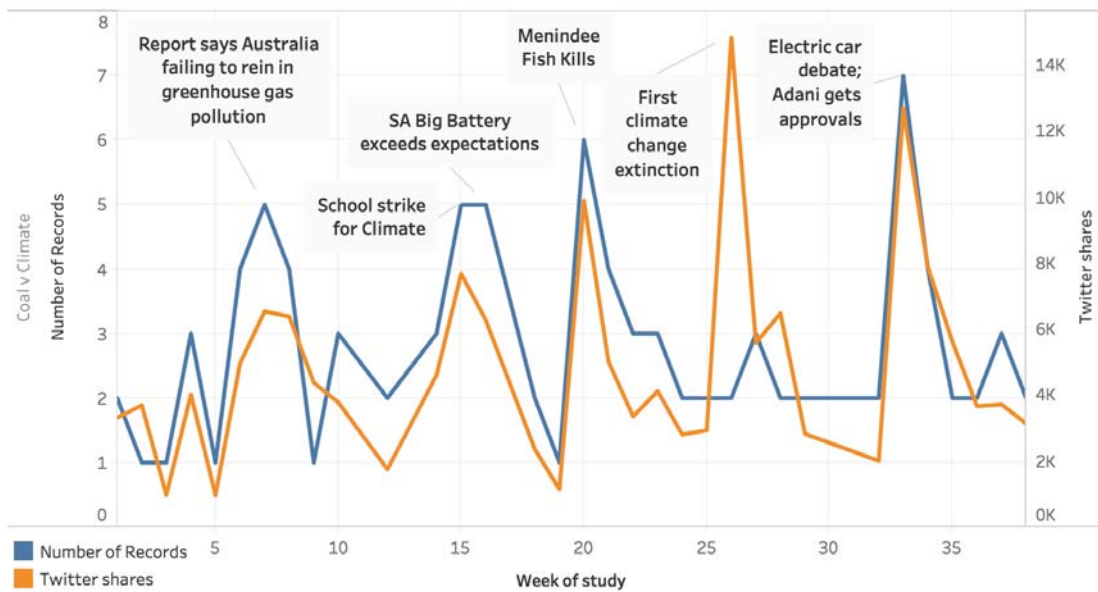


Figure 5.1: News links shared on Twitter by week and number of stories, Coal v. Climate theme (source: compiled by author)

The leading Coal versus Climate story—the extinction of the Bramble Cay melomy—was the most-shared story throughout the period by a substantial margin. It is not clear to what extent this story, on the heels of the Menindee fish kills (which was a much bigger story on television, given the powerful visual of millions of dead fish), as real-world examples of the consequences of failing to act on climate change, fed into the noted increase in the importance of climate change in post-election studies. The top five stories within the Coal versus Climate theme are detailed in Table 5.1. The word cloud analysis (Figure 5.2) concurs with the other data that the conversation was firmly centred around climate change policy and government actions.

Table 5.1: Top five stories, Coal v. Climate theme

| Outlet | Date | Headline | Subject/Lead | Type | Sentiment | Scandal | Shares |
|--------|----------|---|---|------|-----------|---------|--------|
| SMH | 19/2/19 | 'Our little brown rat': first climate change-caused mammal extinction | The Morrison Government has formally recognised the extinction of a tiny island rodent, the Bramble Cay melomys – the first known demise of a mammal because of human-induced climate change. | news | Anti-LNP | no | 19314 |
| SMH | 17/10/18 | 'For the Pacific it's always about cash': Environment Minister in diplomatic incident over climate change | Environment Minister Melissa Price has been accused of offending a key Pacific leader by declaring the region was 'always' seeking cash from Australia, in a disputed remark that has triggered a new storm over government policy on climate change. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 4374 |
| ABC | 26/4/19 | Government approved controversial uranium mine one day before calling the election | The Morrison Government signed off on a controversial uranium mine one day before calling the federal election and did not publicly announce the move until the environment department uploaded the approval document the day before Anzac Day. | news | Anti-LNP | no | 4232 |
| ABC | 18/4/19 | Adani did not 'accept in full' changes sought by scientists during approval stages, meeting notes show | Handwritten documents obtained by the ABC appear to directly contradict the Environment Minister Melissa Price that Adani 'accepted in full' changes sought by scientists to limit the impact of its controversial Queensland coal mine. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 3958 |
| AFR | 27/7/17 | Pub speech sparks calls to strip Barnaby Joyce of water ministry | A recording of federal Water Minister Barnaby Joyce skiting about the alleged theft of water by irrigators from the Murray–Darling Basin has increased calls for him to be stripped of the water portfolio. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 3728 |

Source: compiled by author.



Figure 5.3: Scott Morrison holding a lump of coal during Parliamentary Question Time, 9 February 2017 (photo: Lukas Coch)

5.2.1 Protests and Hyperbole—Adani and the School Strike for Climate

The key story of this reductionist, ideological war was the proposed Carmichael mine in Queensland’s Galilee Basin to be built by the Indian company Adani. The environmental movement’s opposition was intense and entrenched: they had blocked funding for the project by intimidating banks, mounted huge public opposition with frequent rallies and protests against the project (see Figure 5.4), lobbied Government, and had taken legal action on behalf of flora, fauna and the Great Barrier Reef (Colvin 2020; Gunningham 2017; Horn 2017; Slezak 2017). The enormous mine was estimated to cost \$22b and create 10,000 much-needed jobs in rural Queensland, but opponents said the environmental cost was too high, particularly the threat to the Great Barrier Reef and climate change (Horn 2017). The ANU’s Climate Institute estimated 705 million tonnes of carbon dioxide would be generated by the mine each year (Hannam 2019).



Figure 5.4: Protesters create a human ‘Stop Adani’ sign at a protest on Nobby’s beach in Newcastle, NSW, 7 October 2017 (photo: Ryan Jago)

The Adani issue was in many ways a proxy for a range of subjects related to energy and climate change and continues to be a heuristic for values of voters and candidates alike. Many who cared about environmental issues or climate change had reduced their considerations solely to Adani; which side of the battle they fell on was largely linked to social identity (Colvin 2020). Interestingly, actual knowledge of the proposal was alarmingly low: a special survey on the Adani issue by the Voter Choice Project found that less than 3% of the 1117 respondents who answered the question ‘What does the term “Adani” mean to you?’ gave any response that indicated they understood Adani was a company – most thought it was the name of the mine, or a form of environmental damage that needed to be stopped (Crosby 2018b).

During the election, former Greens leader Bob Brown led a ‘Stop Adani’ convoy of protesters from the south of the country all the way up to the mine site (Colvin 2020), an action which ensured a sharp swing to the Coalition who were supporting the project in regional Queensland seats (Emerson & Weatherill 2019; Slezak 2019). There were many indications that this swing was not about the mine *per se*, but a solid rebuke to ‘latte sipping city folk’ telling rural Queenslanders what they should do (Colvin 2020; Lester 2019). The convoy was met by locals telling them they were not welcome and shopkeepers and innkeepers refusing them service, whereas all the while they were cheered on by their like-

minded southerners (Burt & McGhee 2019; Murray, D. & Australian Associated Press [AAP] 2019).

The Stop Adani protests merged to some extent with the global school strike for climate change, with many ‘Stop Adani’ signs and t-shirts at the school strike events (see Figure 5.5). The prospect of children protesting generated farcical behaviour from Government members and right-wing commentators. The hyperbolic statements from the Prime Minister down, telling the children to stay in school and that they would wind up on the dole if they participated in the event, only encouraged more people to participate. Thousands marched for the climate in all major cities, including many parents of the striking students (AAP 2018a; ABC News 2019a; Dye 2018; Sahlberg 2019).



Figure 5.5: Photo of the School Strike 4 Climate in Brisbane (photo: Lucy Murray, ABC News)

Both Vote Compass and the Voter Choice Project undertook specific surveys about the proposed Adani Carmichael coal mine. Vote Compass found a majority of voters wanted the mine stopped; however, that number softened the closer you got to the mine site (Wordsworth 2019). The Voter Choice Project similarly found a majority strongly opposed the proposal, but also found that many conservative voters were simply not interested in the issue and the left-leaning voters responded emotionally rather than having a clear

understanding of the facts. Additionally, the fusion of the Adani issue with the climate change agenda by environmental campaigners backfired in creating support for the mine in people that would otherwise be predisposed to distrust a foreign company (Crosby 2018b). This finding aligns with the finding of researchers from the University of South Australia's Institute of Choice, who found that while voters were generally in agreement on the substantive issues of climate change, right-leaning voters did not think them very important and were generally neutral on what should be done (Baddley & Cong 2019). The Australian Youth Climate Coalition (2019) research conducted by uComms/ReachTEL found significant geographic differences, but majority support for action on climate change and the Adani mine proposal being stopped.

Arguably, the intensity of feelings around the issues of coal and climate change is not well accounted for in these objective measures. The imagery and events, such as the many Anti-Adani rallies, and that there was a substantial Stop Adani Convoy that travelled north during the election, are a better indication of the passion that drove debate on these issues. The rejection of these activities (or lack of concern) by the right, and the reaction by the Central Queenslanders whose towns were invaded by the Stop Adani Convoy, was more muted, but like a quiet temper that would flare quickly when directly provoked. This is captured in some of the post-election analysis (Horn 2019; McCauley 2019b; Slezak 2019), but the MCA, and indeed the media content during the election, largely diminished the Anti-Adani campaign to more of a curiosity than an intense movement.

5.2.2 Energy Wars

On the other side of this battle ground was a debate about the cost of energy. The retail cost of electricity had been a particularly potent issue in the 2016 election campaign, and much was said about lowering people's electricity bills. After successfully disposing of Malcolm Turnbull, a core of conservative politicians who called themselves the Monash Forum refocused themselves on the tasks of strongly advocating for coal and of opposing action on climate change. Officially, they declared themselves to be 'agnostic on energy technology' and appointed themselves to review all energy options, including nuclear (Karp 2018c). The move divided the Coalition parties even further (Crowe 2018f).

There was an observable increase in ideological hatred of renewable energy sources. A significant state-wide blackout in South Australia in 2016 provided endless fodder for the

renewables haters, despite it being caused by a very significant storm that destroyed a number of transmission towers and caused numerous system failures (Slezak 2016). Opposers to renewable energy were able to blame the state's significant move to wind power as the reason for such a significant blackout, alleging the grid was unstable and the power mix was to blame for the cost of electricity in South Australia being so much higher than in other states. Josh Frydenberg, then federal Energy Minister, blamed the ALP, claiming their 'incompetence has subjected the people of South Australia to Third World conditions', while the previously pro-renewable Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull described the move towards 100% renewables as 'fanciful' and the blackout a 'disgrace' (SBS News 2017). The event has, in the words of clean energy commentator Ketan Joshi (2019):

taken on a mystical significance among opponents of decarbonisation, deniers of climate change and proponents of fossil fuels. Presenting this event as irrefutable proof of the immediate and apocalyptic harm of decarbonisation.

Joshi, known and respected for his deep understanding of renewable energy and ability to communicate complex science and data, was at the forefront of dispelling misinformation about the South Australian blackout on Twitter and through multiple news outlets. He and others were particularly critical of then ABC political editor Chris Uhlmann blaming South Australia's 40% wind power for the blackout within hours without any evidence (Joshi 2016; Parkinson 2016). Meanwhile, Mark Di Stefano (2016) of BuzzFeed uncovered an army of fake Twitter accounts linked to a mining lobby group that was assertively trying to alter the conversation to an anti-renewable agenda following a flurry of activity linked to the South Australian blackout.

The 2016 state-wide blackout obtained this mythical status in part because the state continued to have a series of blackouts over the next year, while repairs and other system issues were being fixed (Warren 2017). This prompted Lyndon Rive, the head of Tesla's battery division, to claim they could solve the problem in 100 days (Potter 2017). Mike Cannon-Brooks, a founder of Australia IT company Atlassian, tweeted to Elon Musk asking how serious it was, and Musk tweeted back, 'Tesla will get the system installed and working 100 days from contract signature or it is free. That serious enough for you?' (Musk 2017). The very next day, Musk had spoken to South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill, and the Tesla Powerpack was delivered in 60 days, adding 100 MW of storage capacity to the

state's power system (AAP 2017; Roberts 2017). Despite the fact that the battery is highly effective and works better than forecast, it too has got tied up in the energy wars, labelled a 'Hollywood solution' and likened to gimmicky tourist attractions such as the 'Big Banana'⁷ by then Treasurer Scott Morrison (Coorey 2017c; Harmsen 2019; Long 2018).

The Australia Institute (2019) polled on the issue of renewable energy, using the smaller research firm Dynata, finding widespread support for the big battery in South Australia and for the State's move to 100% renewable power. Vote Compass also found an extraordinary 90% of respondents wanted more renewable energy, and 72% wanted the government to do more to support the transition to electric cars (Hanrahan 2019a).

5.2.3 Leadership Spills and Diplomatic Incidents

The energy policy fight had been slowly creeping up to centre stage over many years and through many governments (Baker, N. 2020). It is also almost entirely responsible for the significant instability in prime ministerships in Australia, given Kevin Rudd and Malcolm Turnbull were both rolled by their parties over climate and energy policy (Baker, N. 2020; Hudson 2019). Kevin Rudd (2007) described climate change as 'the greatest moral, economic, and social challenge of our time' and pushed hard for the Paris Agreement on climate change action. Nevertheless, when he sought to impose a specific tax on Australia's highly profitable miners, Rudd incurred the wrath of the ALP power brokers (Rudd 2018, pp. 404–12). He was quickly dumped for Julia Gillard, who promptly back-pedalled on the climate agenda (Butler, M. 2017; Curran 2011; Hudson 2019).

Fast forward a decade, and Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull was dumped as leader of the Liberal Party days after the party room overwhelmingly agreed to a new energy policy, the National Energy Guarantee, a policy which was strongly opposed by leadership challenger Peter Dutton (Crowe 2018e; Hudson 2019). This time though, instead of being an international leader on climate change action, Australia was out of touch—particularly with our Pacific neighbours. At successive Pacific Forums, climate change was declared the 'single greatest threat' to Pacific peoples and allegations were made that Australia was the only nation to object to climate change action (Downie 2018; Dziedzic, Walshe & Kilbride 2018). The representative of Palau described Australia's relationship with the Pacific

⁷ The Big Banana is a well-known tourist attraction at Coffs Harbour in New South Wales, including a 13-metre-long banana statue and banana-themed fun park.

region on the issue of climate change as ‘abusive’ and ‘dysfunctional’ (Lyons & Doherty 2018). Environment minister Melissa Price caused a diplomatic incident when she told former Kiribati president Anote Tong that it was ‘always about the cash’ for climate change action when Pacific leaders came to Australia (Crowe 2018c). That week of the election, the UN secretary-general met with Pacific leaders to discuss climate change, with frustrations expressed that Australia has failed to curb emissions, and the meeting’s call for radical action aimed squarely at Australia (Dziedzic 2019).

5.2.4 Disaster Strikes

The year 2019 began with a record-breaking monsoon in North Queensland. In late January, a monsoon trough, caused by a slow-moving tropical low northeast of Mount Isa, stalled, creating a ‘convergence zone’ that delivered consistently heavy rainfall across all of Northern Queensland for a week (Brook, B. 2019). Major, historic flooding occurred in the city of Townsville, displacing thousands and damaging some 3300 homes, causing an estimated \$1.2b in damage, and taking three lives. A further two lives were taken in areas west of Townsville, as the flooding took over large areas of Northern Queensland. The army was called in to assist with rescues and the disposal of thousands of drowned livestock. A total of 39 different Local Government Areas were affected by the monsoon and related flooding (Inspector-General Emergency Management 2019).

Widespread bushfires affected Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia, while the flooding continued in the North. Queensland and NSW had already endured hundreds of ferocious bushfires in late 2018 (Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience 2019). Tasmania was hardest hit with relentless fires from December 2018 to March 2019, burning more than 210,000 hectares of land—much of it heritage protected ancient forests—and destroying six homes (Cronstedt, Thomas & Considine 2019). The fire most destructive to homes was in Victoria, where the Bunyip State Park fire destroyed 29 houses and 67 outbuildings and sheds in two days (ABC News 2019e).

The combination of drought, lack of water flow and sudden temperature changes had caused a massive fish kill near the NSW town of Menindee. On 15 December 2018, tens of thousands of dead fish were reported along a 30 km stretch of the Darling River (Tomevska & McKinnell 2018). Large numbers of dead fish were seen in the vicinity of the Old Menindee Weir and Menindee Pump Station (Australian Academy of Science

2019). A second, larger fish kill event involving hundreds of thousands of fish on the same part of the river was reported on 6 January 2019 (Davies, A. 2019a), which is when the story broke in wide circulation. Further events followed on 28 January and 4 February, killing millions of fish (Australian Academy of Science 2019; Davies, A. 2019b). The shocking visual images of huge, old fish floating dead in the river raised debate about water policy, both irrigation and environmental flow policies, and the Murray–Darling Basin Plan (Koziol 2019c). The issue was also framed as a consequence of not dealing with climate change (Kilvert 2019). Since the alarm about the health of the river and the fish kills was raised largely by farmers, the ‘farmers for climate change action’ movement became more prominent (Sullivan 2019).

While these disasters pale in comparison to the bushfires and pandemic the next year was to bring, at the time they were significant and notably affected the schema and voting decisions of Australian voters. In particular, for those motivated by the issue of climate change, the events appear to have provided another example of real-world impact. For voters who were not motivated by climate change issues, the events only served to fuel a general feeling of uncertainty.

The Voter Choice Project conducted specific polling to understand how the natural disasters had affected people’s voting decisions, finding the Queensland floods directly affected the largest proportion of voters and that 40% of voters had some connection to those affected. Because of how the disasters were managed, 16% became more certain of their vote choice, and 4% reconsidered their vote choice. The study also found that the reaction as well as the perception of political performance was most intense if the voter perceived the disasters as evidence of climate change (Crosby 2019b).

5.3 Religion versus Rights

Dominated by the response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse, and the conviction of George Pell, this theme included all stories about religion, religious freedom, values, the religious activities of leaders, the Safe Schools program, LGBTIQI+ rights and persecution. While this was a particularly intense debate from the perspective of Christian leaders who felt their way of life was under threat (or that it was a convenient line that might get them a few votes), it was the least dominant theme

of the five in both numbers of stories analysed (42) and Twitter shares (5% of total items shared) as shown in Figure 5.6.

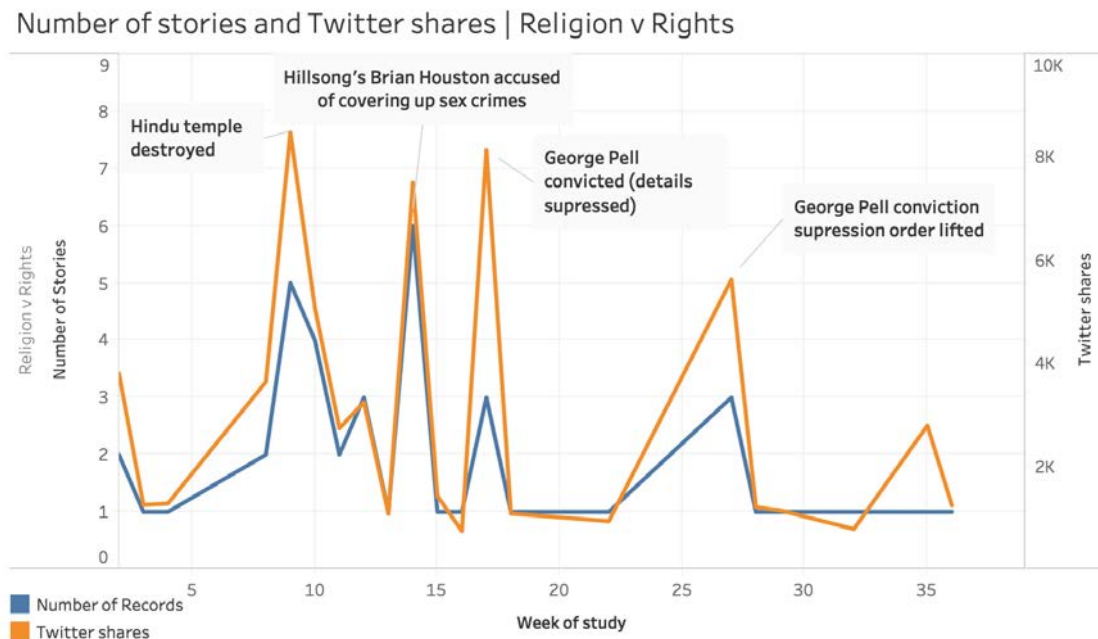


Figure 5.6: News links shared on Twitter by week and number of stories, Religion v. Rights theme (source: compiled by author)

Arguably, of all five themes this was the least partisan, but the most vexatious. Politicians from both sides both supported and opposed the various figures accused of not protecting children. Commentators from both sides revealed being horrified by the evidence given to the Royal Commission. Nevertheless, the calculations, the strategy and the coalition building to try to protect individuals like Cardinal George Pell and the founder of Hillsong (Australia’s largest Pentecostal Church) Brian Houston from allegation are evident in the cascade of stories and the high share rate.

Table 5.2: Top five stories, Religion v. Rights theme

| Outlet | Date | Headline | Subject/Lead | Type | Sentiment | Scandal | Shares |
|--------|----------|--|--|---------|-----------|---------|--------|
| AGE | 12/12/18 | Why the media is unable to report on a case that has generated huge interest online | A very high-profile figure was convicted on Tuesday of a serious crime, but we are unable to report their identity due to a suppression order. | news | neutral | yes | 4431 |
| SBS | 18/10/18 | 'We never expected this to happen in Australia': Vandals torch Hindu temple | Vandals have torched a Sydney Hindu Temple, leaving its holy statues in ruins and a close-knit community shattered. | news | neutral | no | 2927 |
| AGE | 26/2/19 | Cardinal George Pell found guilty of child sex abuse | Cardinal George Pell has been found guilty and is set to be jailed for child sexual abuse in the most sensational verdict since the Catholic Church became engulfed in worldwide abuse scandals. | news | neutral | yes | 2854 |
| HUN | 23/4/19 | Rita Panahi: Christians face a grim reality and we can't dismiss attacks | Christians in just about all of the Middle East, large swathes of Africa and increasingly in parts of Asia and even in Western countries face a grim reality. | opinion | neutral | no | 2788 |
| SMH | 9/10/18 | Religious freedom review enshrines right of schools to turn away gay children and teachers | Religious schools would be guaranteed the right to turn away gay students and teachers under changes to federal Anti-discrimination laws recommended by the Government's long-awaited review into religious freedom. | news | Anti-LNP | no | 2671 |

Source: compiled by author.

The vandalism of a Hindu temple in Sydney is the one story that stands out in all the analysed stories of this theme (see Table 5.2): it had nothing to do with the intense debate about religious rights *per se* yet was strongly shared as a matter of public concern. This story again demonstrates how vexing yet non-partisan this space was: widely reported as a hate crime, but neither leader commented and only local press and SBS NEWS

appropriately covered the story. Those debating the need for religious freedoms to be protected did not use it as an example, staying with the (arguably preposterous) argument that Christianity was under threat (Karp 2018g; Panahi 2019).

The word cloud analysis (Figure 5.7) indicates there was a bit more involvement of politicians than the top stories reveals, but the conversation was strongly centred on abuse.



Figure 5.7: Word cloud of the top 50 terms in the headlines and leads of stories classified as Religion v. Rights (source: compiled by author)

5.3.1 Marriage Equality and Religious Freedom

The friction between the people and the parliament on marriage equality for same-sex Australians was dominant in the 2016 election and morphed into a full-scale battle between rights and religion throughout the parliamentary term. During the 2016 election, the Coalition had committed to holding a plebiscite on the issue of same-sex marriage to resolve the dilemma that had plagued the parliament for many years (Hunter 2016). The issue had been prominent since the *Marriage Act* 1961 (Cth) was changed in 2004 to expressly prohibit same-sex unions (Donovan 2014). While public opinion polls had consistently indicated support for same-sex marriage since 2007, successive governments

had shown neither the will nor ability to get legislation passed (Carson, Ratcliff & Dufresne 2018; Gravelle & Carson 2018). Even when it came to passing the bill necessary to enable the plebiscite, it was blocked by a conservative group within the Liberal Party, resulting in the measure needing to be put to the people as a voluntary mail survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), rather than a compulsory plebiscite conducted by the AEC (Gravelle & Carson 2018; Vaughan 2019). In all, 79.5% of enrolled voters participated in the survey held from 12 September to 7 November 2017, with 61.6% approving changing the law to enable same-sex couples to marry (Gravelle & Carson 2018; McAllister & Snagovsky 2018). The law was passed in the parliament in December 2017 in an emotional and historic scene, with both the gallery and members of parliament giving the near-unanimous vote⁸ a standing ovation (see Figure 5.8) before erupting into an impromptu singing of the classic Seeker's song, *I am Australian* (Karp 2017).



Figure 5.8: Scenes of jubilation in the House of Representatives chamber on the passing of the *Marriage Amendment Act 2017 (Cth)* (photo: Mick Tsikas)

⁸ Four members voted against the *Marriage Amendment Act 2017 (Cth)*: Russell Broadbent (Lib, Monash), Keith Pitt (LNP, Hinkler), David Littleproud (LNP, Maranoa) and Bob Katter (KAP, Kennedy). Ten members abstained from the vote: Barnaby Joyce (Nat, New England), Tony Abbott (Lib, Warringah), Andrew Hastie (Lib, Canning), Michael Sukkar (Lib, Deakin), Kevin Andrews (Lib, Menzies), Scott Morrison (Lib, Cook), George Christensen (LNP, Dawson), Rick Wilson (Lib, O'Connor), Stuart Robert (Lib, Fadden) and Bert van Manen (Lib, Forde) (Henderson 2017).

The same-sex marriage campaign was divisive and intense, with a notable feature of both the Yes and No campaigns of identifying the position of every member of parliament on the issue (Copland 2018). While public records of voting histories of individual MPs have always been available for those who knew how to navigate parliamentary records, and since 2006 *They Vote For You*, an online database of voting records modelled on the UK Public Whip site (Degan et al. 2015), this was the first major campaign that weaponised the voting records of individual politicians. This was largely only possible because votes on the issue of same-sex marriage were not along party lines, and individual politicians on both sides were prepared to threaten to quit the party and/or speak out on the issue (Carson, Ratcliff & Dufresne 2018; Vaughan 2019). Even after the survey vote, the targeting of individual politicians intensified with articles on which MPs would not be voting in line with their electorates (Elton-Pym 2017), or naming those who did not vote for marriage equality (Henderson 2017). The personalisation of responsibility for parliamentary votes has been increasingly adopted by campaigners for other issues since the success of the marriage equality campaign.

A related issue was the Safe Schools program. The program was designed to make schools a safer space for LGBTIQ+ students and their families. Starting in 2010 in Victoria after substantial research that same sex attracted Australians did not feel safe in school, the program went national in 2014, but due to intense opposition has progressively been withdrawn from other states. Like so many issues, Safe Schools was the victim of a great deal of hyperbole, fake news and false outrage: it was bipartisan and a ‘political no-brainer’ when launched in 2014 but descended into farce after *The Australian* ran a sustained campaign against it beginning in 2016 (Law 2017). The opposition centred around the concept that the program imposed an ‘ideology’, particularly on gender and trans issues, that was contrary to the beliefs and values of some people (Devine 2018; Law 2017). In May 2017, the Australian Christian Lobby held seminars discussing whether the program was safe and implied harm was being done to children (Hore 2017). The mere mention of ‘Safe Schools’ became a heuristic for anything to do with the LGBTIQ+ community, and opposing the mainstreaming and acceptance of LGBTIQ+ people in broader society (Koziol 2016; Law 2017). For this reason, the discussions of Safe Schools and Marriage Equality were often blurred.

Immediately following the loss of the same-sex marriage debate, the then Turnbull Government asked former Attorney General Philip Ruddock to lead a review into religious freedom in November 2017 (Karp 2018e). The review was reported in May of 2018, but the Government buried it and their response until after Turnbull was deposed. Scott Morrison got to launch the Government Response and proposed legislation in December 2018. The resultant bill was largely condemned as asserting the ‘right to be a bigot’, a term used often in the same-sex marriage debate, largely because it proposed to enable religious institutions, including schools and hospitals that received significant public funding, to legally fire someone for identifying as LGBTIQ+ (Beck, L. 2019; Topsfield 2018). Discussion of the bill was deferred to after the election in an attempt to get the issue off the table (Karvelas 2018).

A Fairfax/Ipsos poll found a stunning 74% of voters opposed the proposed religious freedom laws; even amongst Coalition supporters, only 30% supported the right of a religious school to discriminate against gay students and teachers (Crowe 2018b). An Essential Poll found no consensus on the proposal, with 37% supporting new laws, 26% opposing and 37% responding that they did not know (Essential Report 2018). Vote Compass found religious voters were slightly more likely to support the Coalition (Tong 2019).

5.3.2 Religious Failings

The contrast to this move to ‘protect’ the freedoms of people of faith was the ongoing response to the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse. This Royal Commission was significantly triggered by, and focused on, the sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests (Doyle 2017). A key recommendation of the Royal Commission was the establishment of a National Redress Scheme, a program to force institutions to provide appropriate compensation to those affected by abuse (Daly 2018). Initiated by the Turnbull Government, who committed to follow all of the Royal Commission’s recommendations, the National Redress Scheme was assessed by some as a bureaucratic and re-traumatising nightmare that failed to provide timely and appropriate support to victims (Bowden 2019; Hoysted 2019). When Scott Morrison gave the National Apology to Australian Survivors and Victims of Child Abuse in October 2018, he claimed the Government was actively working on 104 of the Royal Commission’s 122 recommendations, and said ‘an apology without action is just a piece of paper’ (Morrison,

S. 2018). In February 2019, with just 51 survivors paid any compensation, and growing calls of outrage threatening to disrupt the election, the Morrison Government moved to shift the blame away from mismanagement; they released a ‘name and shame’ list of more than 100 organisations that had not yet signed up to the Scheme (Cunningham 2019; Eddie 2019).

A star witness for the Catholic Church in the Royal Commission’s hearings, and the person who had led the ‘Melbourne Response’ process to deal with the issue, was Australia’s most senior Catholic figure, Cardinal George Pell. Pell himself was charged with multiple offences related to incidents involving two 13 year old boys, was convicted in December 2018 and was sentenced to jail in March 2019, right on the eve of the formal election campaign (Sweeney 2020). Several Coalition figures and conservative commentators, including former prime ministers John Howard and Tony Abbott, had written character references for Pell, and/or publicly criticised the verdict while vowing continued support for the cardinal. This public support ensured that the criminal matter could not be separated from the election on foot (ABC News 2019c; Koziol 2019a). Following the conviction, there were calls to tear the Melbourne Response down. The Victorian Government moved to both find ways for victims to sue for more compensation than the Melbourne Response allowed, and to force priests to break the seal of the confessional (Anderson 2019). (Note: Pell’s conviction was quashed by the High Court in 2020; McKenna, K. & Farnsworth [2020].)

Throughout the same period, allegations of wrongdoing intensified against Brian Houston, founder of the Hillsong megachurch and mentor to Scott Morrison (Kelly, C. 2019a). Houston’s father Frank was accused of abusing as many as nine young boys, and the Royal Commission found Brian and other executives of the Assemblies of God covered it up (Browne, R. 2015). In November 2018, a victim, Brian Sengstock, went public with his story, and NSW police confirmed they were investigating Brian Houston (Zhou 2018).

The Assemblies of God and their beliefs was always going to be a topic of discussion with the transition to Scott Morrison as Prime Minister. The constant references to faith reached an unprecedented level when Morrison invited cameras into church to photograph him in worship at an Easter Sunday service. The resulting photo (Figure 5.9) became an iconic image of the 2019 election, and possibly the most-shared image during the election.



Figure 5.9: Scott and Jenny Morrison singing at an Easter Sunday service during the 2019 election (photo: AAP, Mick Tsikas)

When prominent Rugby League player Israel Folau posted on Instagram that a range of sinners were going to hell (see Figure 5.10), for the second time in a year and mere weeks before the election, the Assemblies of God came under much closer scrutiny, and the debate intensified. Most of this debate happened on social media and sports programs, with the controversy centred on whether Rugby Australia had the right to sack Folau for his well-known religious views (Johnson, P. 2019). Morrison praised Folau for his ‘strong character’ and praised him for standing up for his faith when he did it the first time (AAP 2018d); this close to the election he was more muted, describing the comments as ‘insensitive’ (Gredley 2019a). Bill Shorten was sympathetic, but equivocal, saying Folau should not be sacked, while acknowledging the comments were hurtful (Noyes 2019). Morrison was directly asked by a journalist whether he thought gay people should go to hell, and Shorten criticised him for Folau was sacked by Rugby Australia, the day before the election (Giles 2019; Robinson 2019). It was the Folau case that put the heat into an already fraught issue of religious freedom, widening the debate beyond religious institutions and schools (Grattan 2019). Then, in the final week of the election campaign,

the issues of Folau and the way religious leaders treat the vulnerable, religious freedom and Scott Morrison's faith fused to become one and the same (Sandeman 2019).



Figure 5.10: Instagram post from Israel Folau that resulted in his sacking the day before the election (Folau 2019)

5.4 Racism versus Refugees

This theme had a great deal of heavy, emotional content, such as the abuse of refugees and the Christchurch Massacre, as well a number of curious stories, such as Egg Boy (Reuters 2019), former ALP leader Mark Latham calling for Aboriginal people to be forced to provide DNA evidence to prove their ancestry (Han 2019) and Scott Morrison spending \$2000 a minute for a press conference on Christmas Island (Crowe 2019a). Any stories to do with the immigration program, refugees and their conditions, racism, white supremacy, Anti-Islamic and other bigotry, and Indigenous issues, were categorised under this theme (see Figure 5.11). A number of stories that were critical of activity in China were coded as 'other' since they mostly did not advocate an Anti-Chinese narrative, but rather were detailing the oppression of the Chinese people by the Chinese Government. A total of 118

stories were analysed in this theme, accounting for 19% of news links shared on Twitter in the period.

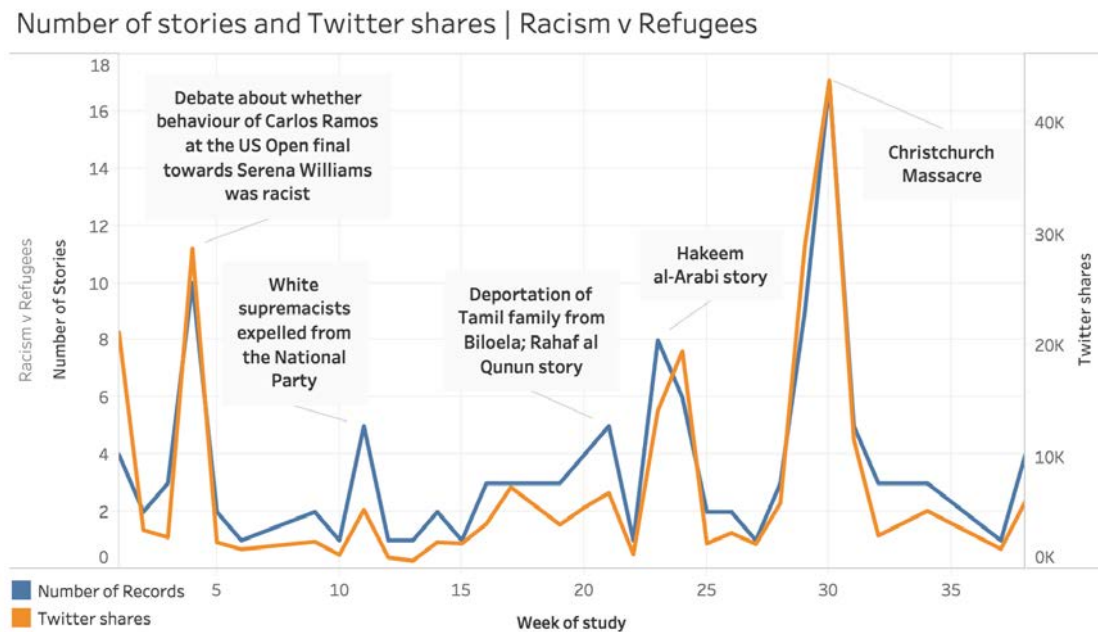


Figure 5.11: News links shared on Twitter by week and number of stories, Racism v. Refugees theme (source: compiled by author)

The story about Serena Williams triggered a number of debates and discussion about ‘what is racist’, and the contribution of *Herald Sun* cartoonist Mark Knight (see Figure 5.12) spun the story off on a uniquely Australian tangent. Knight defended his work, and the Press Council found he had not breached standards (ABC News 2019b). Similarly, while the Christchurch Massacre was widely reported and discussed, the contribution of Fraser Anning and his subsequent egging (see section 5.4.3) gave the discussion a uniquely Australian tangent, although it was also widely reported around the world (e.g. Noori Farzan 2019; Reuters 2019).

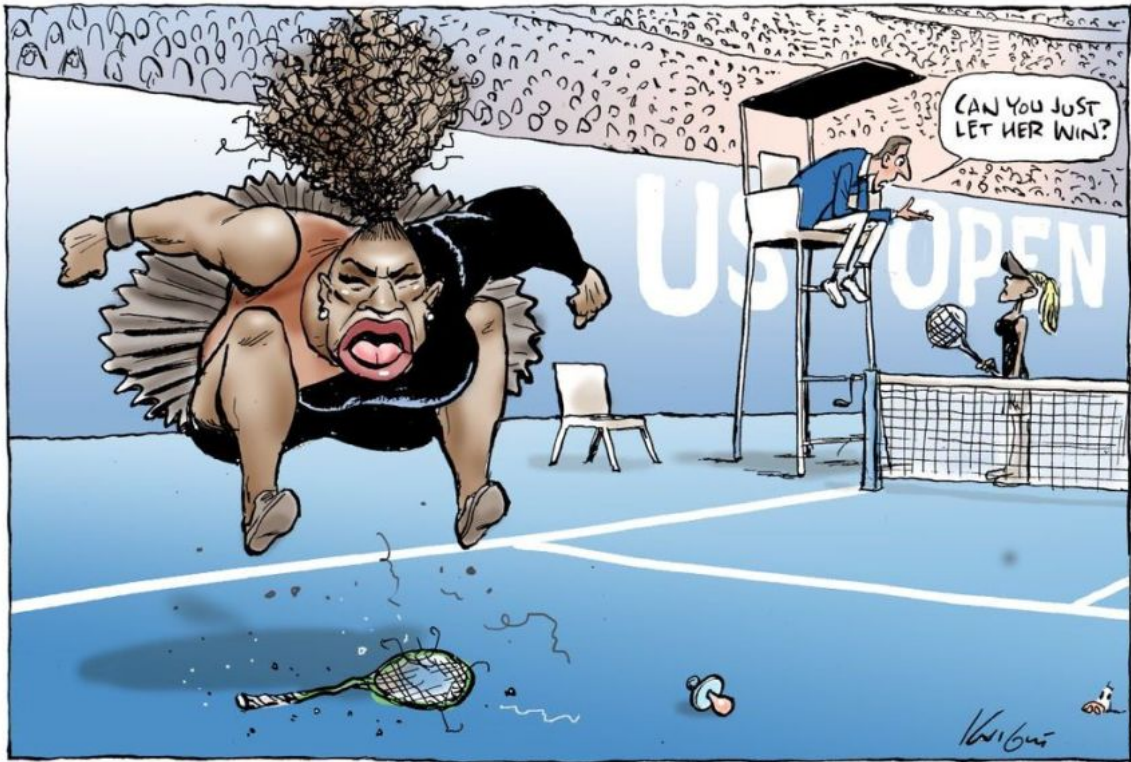


Figure 5.12: Mark Knight cartoon published during the debate over the events of the US Open women's final (*Herald Sun*: Mark Knight)

The top stories (see Table 5.3) are remarkable in that none of the subjects was an event that happened in Australia. The South African farmers' story became relevant to Australian audiences because of Dutton's assertion they may be given preferential treatment as refugees. The Williams story spiked largely because of the Mark Knight cartoon. The attack on Christchurch mosques was perpetrated by an Australian, and Hakeem al Arabi had a refugee visa and lived in Australia.

Table 5.3: Top five stories, Racism v. Refugees theme

| Outlet | Date | Headline | Subject/Lead | Type | Sentiment | Scandal | Shares |
|--------|----------|--|--|---------|-----------|---------|--------|
| NCA | 21/8/18 | South Africa begins seizing white-owned farms | South Africa has targeted the first two farms for unilateral seizure after the owners refused an offer of one-tenth of the land's value. | news | neutral | no | 17441 |
| SMH | 9/9/18 | It is Serena Williams who owes an apology to umpire Carlos Ramos | Carlos Ramos, in the umpire's chair for the US Open women's singles final between Serena Williams and Naomi Osaka, will be going through a rollercoaster of emotions as he copes with global headlines that umpires of professional tennis would rather avoid. | opinion | neutral | yes | 13241 |
| NCA | 16/3/19 | Dozens dead after gunman opens fire on Christchurch mosques in 'unprecedented' terror attack | New Zealand is reeling after an 'unprecedented' terrorist attack in Christchurch, carried out by an Australian who killed at least 49 people. | news | neutral | no | 8276 |
| CRI | 13/12/18 | The question no one will answer about Hakeem Al-Araibi | This arrest could have huge ramifications for other refugees who have been granted asylum by Australia. | news | Anti-LNP | no | 6750 |
| ABC | 19/3/19 | As the Christchurch shootings unfolded, I knew I had to quit my job at Sky News | In the aftermath of the Christchurch terror attack, my social media feeds have filled with people expressing their shock and disbelief that something like this could happen in our part of the world. | opinion | neutral | no | 6727 |

Source: compiled by author.

The word cloud analysis is less revealing for this theme (see Figure 5.13), with the high reference to Muslims unsurprising in the context of where this debate has generally defaulted: an unedifying discussion of whether people of that faith can be refugees, when so many of 'them' are terrorists.

45th Parliament, the refugee issue maintained its prominence but did not manage to seize the narrative and become the dominant and deciding issue for the 2019 campaign.

5.4.1 Operation Sovereign Borders

The most dominant issues were centred on the indefinite detention of refugees in Papua New Guinea and Nauru. Both detention facilities were highly controversial, with different problems, and were created because of the inhumane policy that no refugee who arrives to Australia by boat will ever be allowed into Australia (van Berlo 2015). The Manus Island facility was forcibly closed in 2017 after the Papua New Guinea Supreme Court declared the facility unconstitutional, and the people detained there were moved to Port Moresby (Tlozek & Anderson 2016). Behrouz Boochani, a Kurdish Iranian refugee detained indefinitely on Manus Island since 2013, became the face of their plight in many ways. He recorded and wrote about conditions inside detention and made direct pleas to the Australian people (Doherty 2019).

Meanwhile in Nauru, the gates of the Refugee Processing Centre were opened on 5 October 2015 and refugees there declared to be ‘free’, living in the Nauruan community (Gleeson, M. 2016, p. 298; Sonali 2015). Reports of violence towards the refugees were common, and, as in Papua New Guinea, health services so poor that people were dying: during the 45th Parliament, seven refugees in Australian offshore detention centres died, most from either suicide or alleged accident (Doherty, Evershed & Ball 2020). Legislation known as the medevac bill, begun by Independent Tim Storer in the Senate, and pushed through the House with the assistance of newly elected member and high-profile doctor Kerryn Phelps, provided for refugees to be brought to Australia for medical care (RMIT ABC Fact Check 2019). It was passed just before the election, over the strong objection of the Government who had lost control of the chamber, and some refugee advocates who considered it a compromise and not the end to offshore detention that Phelps had promised during her campaign (Davidson 2019c; Worthington 2019).

5.4.2 Inconsistent Treatment

The diverse ways that different refugees are treated has always been the most troubling and difficult to reconcile part of the refugee issue, probably because of the inherent and obvious prejudice. Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton caused an uproar in March 2018 when he asked his department to consider a special refugee intake of white South African farmers,

and made multiple comments of their deservingness for a life in ‘a civilised country like ours’ (Lewis, R. 2018; Theodosiou & Sinclair 2018). The clearly racial overtones, that the ‘white’ South Africans were deserving but not the darker-skinned, UNHCR-certified refugees languished in offshore detention, was not missed by the public, particularly on social media (see example Figure 5.14) and was condemned as hypocritical by Human Rights Watch and average voters alike (James 2018; Theodosiou & Sinclair 2018).



Figure 5.14: Tweet from @Vic_Rollison in response to Peter Dutton comments on white South African farmers (Rollison 2018)

Rahaf Mohammed al-Qunun, a young Saudi woman and daughter of a powerful figure, was detained in Thailand on her way to Australia to seek asylum in January 2019. She posted her story on Twitter, asking for asylum anywhere that would take her and saying she would be killed if she were forcibly returned to Saudi Arabia. Barricaded in her hotel room to stop her deportation, she live-streamed the multiple attempts by authorities and hotel staff to get her out (British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC] 2020; Maiden & Eddie 2019). The UNHCR granted her refugee status, and her passport was eventually returned to her, including a tourist visa to Australia, but because of radio statements by Peter Dutton that she seemed safe in Thailand and doubts about the process of her asylum claim, she went to Canada instead where she was personally welcomed by Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland (BBC 2020; SBS News 2019). Following her story, it was revealed Border Force were targeting fleeing Saudi women, blocking their attempts to seek asylum in Australia (McNeill 2019).

The story of Hakeem al Arabi, a Bahraini refugee living in Australia since 2014, provided another insight to the inconsistent treatment of refugees in Australia. Hakeem had been arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison for an attack on a police station that happened while he was playing in a televised soccer match. While on bail and playing soccer for the national team in Qatar, he fled and was granted asylum in Australia in 2014 (Clench & Johnson 2019). He was travelling with his wife on their honeymoon when he was arrested in November 2018 in Thailand due to an Interpol 'Red Notice' issue by Bahrain. He was imprisoned in Thailand for months while his case was argued, with former captain of the Australian national soccer team Craig Foster advocating on his behalf. After Foreign Minister Marise Payne flew to Thailand to advocate on the issue, Hakeem was released from prison, flew home to Australia the next day and was granted citizenship a month later in March 2019, just before the election was called (Massola 2019; McDermott 2019; Shields & Massola 2019).

Meanwhile, a much-loved family of Tamil refugees living in the rural Queensland community of Biloela, including their two Australian-born daughters, were detained in a pre-dawn raid. They were unduly pressured to sign 'voluntary deportation' agreements, and told that if they did not sign, they would be deported anyway and imprisoned in a detention centre in Melbourne. Peter Dutton accused the couple of having their children as 'anchor babies' to strengthen their claim to stay in Australia (Dabbagh 2019). A massive campaign to bring the family 'home to Bilo' garnered significant support (Bochenski 2019). However, where the online movement had yielded positive results for Hakeem and Rahaf, Priya and Nades remained detained with the Government determined to deport them (Davidson 2019b).

5.4.3 Bigotry Gets Bold

Australia's entrenched cultural bigotry, albeit dressed up as nationalism, benefits the Coalition, and conservative politicians have been emboldened by the return of One Nation to tread closer to xenophobic themes (Aly 2019). This has transformed into quite significant white supremacist movements in some parts of the country (Chamas 2019). The National Party was forced to expel a number of members after reports that a far-right group was deliberately trying to infiltrate the party (McGowan 2018). The lead-up to the 2019 election was noted for a resurgence of racist and bigoted incidents, with candidates of Aboriginal,

Asian, Jewish and Muslim backgrounds and people of colour targeted with vandalism of their campaign materials and other attacks (Nathan 2019; 'Lib candidate targeted' 2019).

Antisemitic comment had notably increased during the Wentworth by-election as much was said about one of the largest Jewish communities in the country, and policies changed to pander for their votes, notably, a last-week announcement about moving the Australian Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem (Chen & Gartry 2018; Moreton 2018). By the general election, Jewish MPs and candidates had contended with antisemitic graffiti, which included swastikas, Hitler moustaches, dollar signs and devil's horns; email campaigns alleging they spread diseases; and a large white supremacy rally in Melbourne that resulted in swastikas being painted on the entrances to a retirement home filled with holocaust survivors (Johnson, M. 2019; Martin, L. 2019b).

Arguably, the Anti-Muslim material was more intense, with Muslim candidates called terrorists, physically threatened and targeted by fake propaganda. There were calls for Muslims to be banned or deported, and for feminists supporting Sharia Law to have their genitals mutilated (Conifer 2019; Laschon 2019a; Osborne 2019). Some chose to blame the result on the outburst of racism and bigotry, using the preference flow from far-right parties as their evidence (Mani 2019).

One Nation leader and Queensland Senator Pauline Hanson did her best to be as racist as possible during the 45th Parliament. She got underway early in the term, calling for a complete ban on immigration and saying we are 'in danger of being swamped by Muslims' in her first speech (Grigg, Shapiro & Murray 2019b; Refugee Council of Australia 2019). In August of 2017, she entered the parliament wearing a burqa in a stunt to draw attention to her call for the Muslim religious garment to be banned (Murphy, K. 2017a). In October 2018, she moved a motion in the Senate that 'it is ok to be white', arguing the need to acknowledge what she perceived as an increase in Anti-white racism and attacks on Western civilisation, a motion that was 'accidentally' supported by the Coalition due to an 'administrative error' (Bourke 2018a; Norman 2018b). Her Queensland colleague Malcolm Roberts focused his attention on opposing the UN, on climate change denial and on a love of conspiracy theory in the brief time he was there (Davies, A. 2018b; Murphy, K., McGowan & Davies 2018), but Roberts' replacement tried to outshine everyone as the most bigoted politicians to take a seat in the parliament. In his widely condemned first speech, Fraser Anning proposed a plebiscite as a 'final solution' to the problem of

immigration, and it went downhill from there, with Muslim blaming and attendance at white supremacist rallies becoming regular features of his contribution to Australian society (Murphy, K. 2016a).

Australia's bigotry was given a face and a name when 28-year-old Australian Brenton Tarrant massacred 51 people and injured 40 more in a terrorist shooting of two mosques at prayer in Christchurch. The Christchurch Massacre, and notably New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's response to the event, was confronting for many Australians who like to blame the world's problems on 'others' (Clark 2019). There was a notable shift in the collective Australian value set, and in particular the community's attitude toward Muslims (Aly 2019). Senator Anning blaming the Christchurch terrorist attack on New Zealand's immigration program that 'allowed Muslim fanatics to migrate' attracted furious and universal condemnation, sparking a petition with over a million signatures for him to be removed from parliament, and a formal censure motion in the Senate (Remeikis 2019; Worthington & Doran 2019). It also prompted William Connolly, a 17 year old boy in Melbourne, to hit Anning on the head with an egg, an act of protest to which Anning responded by punching him twice in the face followed by his supporters tackling him to the ground until police arrived (Karp 2019b). 'Egg Boy', as he was quickly dubbed in online praise for his actions, was given a warning (Reuters 2019).

Meanwhile, Indigenous Australians, heartbroken at the continued rejection of the Uluru Statement from the Heart (Chrysanthos 2019), continued to be subjected to racism and baseless hatred. Debates raged about Australia Day, and whether it was appropriate to celebrate on a day our Indigenous peoples mourn as the invasion day, and whether the words 'young and free' are appropriate in the National Anthem (Chan 2017b; Daley 2016; Mao 2018). Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott said the arrival of the First Fleet was 'a good thing' for Indigenous Australians because it brought Western civilisation to the country (AAP 2018b). A respected Aboriginal Elder standing as a Greens candidate for the Senate in the South Australian had his posters defaced with racist graffiti (ABC News 2019d). In addition, campaigning for a seat in the NSW Parliament with his new party One Nation, former federal ALP leader Mark Latham called for a DNA test to prove people are Indigenous before they can access welfare (Han 2019).

5.5 Cash versus Certainty

Australians were very nervous about a looming recession throughout the period, and this is reflected in the high interest in stories about jobs and business, working conditions, the economy and system instability. A frequent polling question that fed into this nervousness is that of preferred prime minister. Another proxy for the likely result, similar to the 2PP, preferred prime minister is anchored to certainty and leadership. Bill Shorten consistently trailed in this measure according to the major pollsters (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Published polling on preferred prime minister

| Date | Firm | Morrison (%) | Shorten (%) |
|----------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| 16/5/19 | Newspoll | 45 | 38 |
| 15/5/19 | Ipsos | 47 | 40 |
| 4/5/19 | Ipsos | 45 | 40 |
| 4/4/19 | Ipsos | 46 | 35 |
| 6/4/19 | Ipsos | 46 | 35 |
| 17/2/19 | Ipsos | 48 | 38 |
| 10/2/19 | Newspoll | 44 | 35 |
| 15/12/18 | Ipsos | 46 | 37 |
| 11/11/18 | Newspoll | 42 | 36 |
| 28/10/18 | Newspoll | 43 | 35 |
| 21/10/18 | Essential | 42 | 27 |
| 24/9/18 | Essential | 39 | 27 |
| 23/9/18 | Newspoll | 45 | 32 |
| 10/9/18 | Essential | 39 | 27 |
| 9/9/18 | Newspoll | 42 | 36 |
| 25/8/18 | Newspoll | 33 | 39 |

Source: compiled by author.

Nevertheless, the explosion in sharing of stories within this theme was generally related to scandals about the misuse of government funds and grant irregularities, the ALP's tax policies and the Banking Royal Commission. In all, 131 stories were classified under this theme, accounting for 17% of analysed Twitter shares (see Figure 5.15).

Number of stories and Twitter shares by week | Cash v Certainty

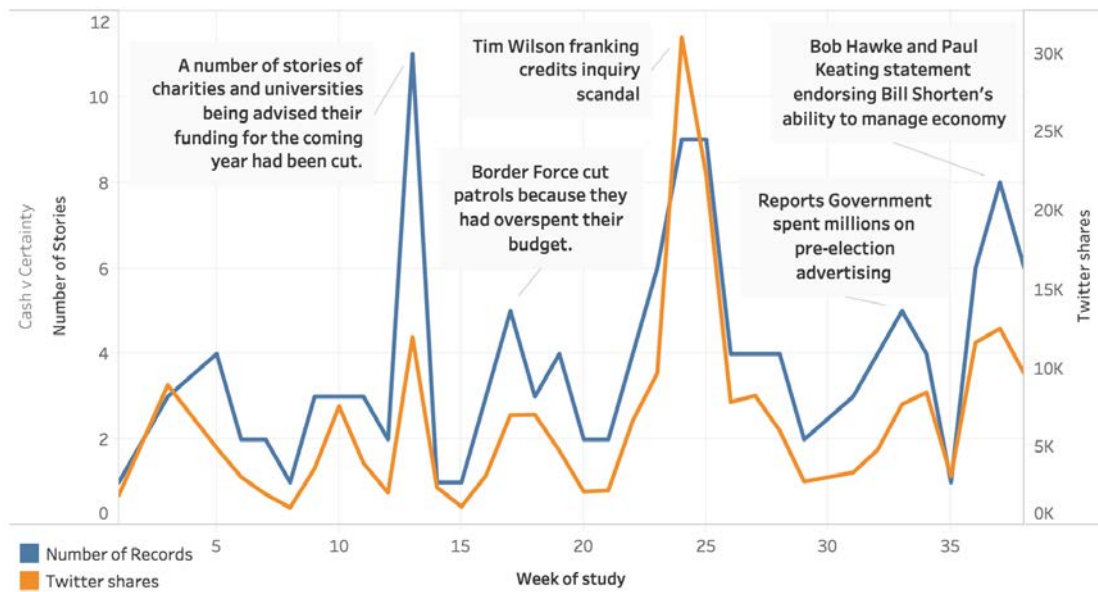


Figure 5.15: News links shared on Twitter by week and number of stories, Cash v. Certainty theme (source: compiled by author)

The peak of the Tim Wilson franking credits inquiry scandal is clearly unparalleled in terms of shares within this theme (see Table 5.5). The scandal encapsulated all sides of this theme: the tax debate, and the misuse of government resources and funds, corruption and the need for certainty from the political system. The issue provided two of this theme’s top five stories. This did not correlate with the observed prevalence of this scandal, in which there was little voter outrage or concern noted, and some praised Wilson for doing his job effectively.

Table 5.5: Top five stories, Cash v. Certainty theme

| Outlet | Date | Headline | Subject/Lead | Type | Sentiment | Scandal | Shares |
|--------|---------|---|--|------|-----------|---------|--------|
| SMH | 5/2/19 | Wilson and Wilson: The MP, the fund manager, and the franking credits inquiry | A high-profile fund manager leading an assault against Labor's changes to franking credits once boasted about using a taxpayer-funded inquiry to maximise the chances of defeating the policy. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 12278 |
| SMH | 19/8/18 | Nestle says slavery reporting requirements could cost customers | One of the world's largest food and drink companies has warned proposed legislation requiring big business to report on their efforts to combat modern slavery could hit consumers' hip pockets. | news | neutral | no | 7128 |
| AFR | 10/2/19 | Cashing in on refugees, duo make \$20 million a month at Manus Island | On the second working day of the year as most Australians eased into summer holidays, the federal Government quietly extended one of its most controversial contracts, an extra \$109 million to provide security for refugees on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 6404 |
| SMH | 8/2/19 | Taxpayer funded inquiry used to raise money for Liberals | The Coalition is using a taxpayer-funded inquiry into Labor's franking credits policy to raise funds for the Liberal Party, as the committee prepares to meet with dozens of angry retirees for the final time before Parliament returns. | news | Anti-LNP | no | 6317 |
| AFR | 14/2/19 | Home Affairs sought to delete FOI clause from Manus contract | The Department of Home Affairs sought to exclude Manus Island security contractor Paladin from Freedom of Information laws, while allowing it to sit outside the usual government procurement guidelines, raising further questions about the awarding of \$423 million in Commonwealth contracts. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 5902 |

Source: compiled by author.

The word cloud analysis (see Figure 5.16) surprisingly did not register the word ‘Wilson’, but the word ‘Shorten’ did make the top 50. This is the only theme in which the opposition leader’s name does appear, which is illuminating: if the only debate in which Bill Shorten was substantially in the discussion was Cash versus Certainty, the uncertainty the ALP policy platform provides ensures the ALP could not win the election. The opposition is unlikely to ever win a battle fought primarily on money matters; they must change the conversation to their stronger suit.



Figure 5.16: Word cloud of the top 50 terms in the headlines and leads of stories classified as Cash v. Certainty (source: compiled by author)

Significant polling was undertaken on the specific policy measures proposed by the ALP. Ipsos found that the capital gains tax and negative gearing were neither supported nor opposed (Crowe 2018d). Similarly, Vote Compass found that the ALP’s proposed franking credits policy split voters, with 35% opposing and 40% supporting it (Hanrahan 2019c). Essential compared tax policies and values as they pertain to taxation arrangements, finding limited support for the idea that the ALP is the higher taxing party, and over a quarter admitted they do not understand tax policy (Essential Report 2019c). The Voter Choice Project conducted short surveys specifically on the franking credits issue and the Paladin Affair: 94% knew what the franking credits issue was about and 60% were concerned about it, mostly along partisan lines, while only 46% knew about the Paladin issue and only 36% were concerned about it (Crosby 2019d, 2019e).

The economy is an enduring election issue, whether framed in terms of the national budget or the household budget. However, this theme was the one where the disconnect between what the parties were offering and what the voters wanted was most stark. Voters seemed to be yearning for certainty, after far too many years of rapid government change, revolving prime ministers, promises not being delivered and an unstable policy environment. However, the parties were fixated on cash, with the Coalition's only real election commitment being tax cuts and a lot of pork-barrelling, the ALP tax changes headlining a complicated policy agenda and neither side willing to talk about the looming recession.

5.5.1 Funding Irregularities

Throughout the 45th Parliament, and increasingly so towards the end of the term, there were very large grants given with seemingly no basis and other grant irregularities, which caused voters to question the accountability and trustworthiness of the Government. The Great Barrier Reef Foundation, a small charity that seeks to partner with private firms and philanthropists to protect the reef, had what they themselves described as a 'lottery win' when the Government announced a grant of \$444 million that the organisation had not applied for (Molloy 2018). Similarly, Paladin, a small company in Papua New Guinea, was revealed to have been awarded contracts of \$423 million to provide refugee services on Manus Island, equating to a cost of \$1,600 a day per refugee for woefully inadequate services (Karp 2018d). The controversy that had been dubbed Watergate, revelations that a company with a senior Government member, Angus Taylor, on the board of the company that had been paid \$80m for water licences (Slattery 2019), reached its peak at the beginning of the formal campaign.

While the discussion swirled around these eye-watering amounts of money being spent, the funding cuts from late 2018 had largely been forgotten. Significant charities such as Foodbank and Father Chris Riley's Youth Off The Streets had their funding slashed (and then returned after community backlash) (AAP 2018c; Clench 2018a; Markson 2018; Remeikis 2018a). University research funding was cut by \$318.5m, only a year after a \$2.1b cut to the sector and capping of student places (Gardner 2018; Koziol 2018c). Moreover, \$1.5b was cut from across the public service to fund their election promises (Karp 2019a; Whyte 2019).

5.5.2 ‘Government Can’t Computer’

Building like a slow drumbeat over many years, the increasing concern about the Government’s ability to deliver technology-based solutions and services has decayed to a fundamental inability to trust the Government to do its job. Colloquially referred to as ‘Government can’t computer’ (see Figure 5.17), the turning point was the failed 2016 census, where the online census was compromised by a distributed denial of service (DDOS) attack and had to be taken offline, prompting the hashtag #censusfail. The decision to turn off the website over security concerns amplified the community’s concern about the census being moved online, originally triggered by a decision to keep names and addresses for four years (MacGibbon 2016).



Figure 5.17: Example of a social media post linking multiple issues of technical failure with the phrase ‘Government can’t computer’ (source: Newton 2016 [on Twitter])

Two long-running issues dominated the concern about the Government’s ineptitude in technical things. The first was My Health Record, Australia’s electronic health record system. Introduced in 2012, by 2017 it only had 21% of Australians signed up (Walsh et al. 2017). The decision was made to make the system opt-out instead of opt-in, at which point very significant privacy concerns were raised (Chang 2019). The law was changed to explicitly prohibit employers and insurance companies from accessing the records, require law enforcement to get a court order to get them, provide greater privacy for teenagers, protect people at risk of family violence and make it very clear that the system cannot be privatised or used for commercial purposes (Australian Digital Health Agency 2018; Bogle 2018). Fears were generally not allayed, and a substantial campaign got underway to

encourage people to opt out before 31 January 2019, so that an account was not created for them (Chang 2018b).

The second was ‘robodebt’, a complex issue of people having debts raised against them for Centrelink welfare overpayments. The automated debt recovery program used data matching with other agencies and a complex algorithm to identify debts, and then sent debt notices or requests for more information to hundreds of thousands of people on welfare without any human oversight or quality control. Once they had received the debt notice, Centrelink would move aggressively to collect the debt, taking a portion of benefits for those on welfare or seizing tax returns, and in some cases referring the matter to debt collection agencies (Pett & Cosier 2017). The process to demonstrate that a welfare recipient did not owe money was complex and difficult, including providing documentation such as payslips from seven years prior. If they made it through the process, many were found to not owe anything (McIlroy 2017). Further, 2000 people lost their lives after receiving debt notices, although it is unknown how many of those were suicides (Medhora 2019).

Privacy and technology advocates were working hard fighting on those two fronts when they got hit with a third: new laws that would force technology companies to help law enforcement access encrypted messages. The encryption protocols used for messaging, the target of the legislation, also underpinned the security of the entire Internet, including that for health information storage such as My Health Record, welfare information such as through the access portal MyGov and the data matching systems Centrelink was relying on to raise its robodebts. The bill was passed in December 2018, giving police the power to issue a notice without a court order, which would require technology companies to break the encryption that is their key selling point or even hand over their source code (Bogle & Gothe-Snape 2018; Karp 2018a; Stilgherrian 2018).

5.5.3 Tax Plans and Franking Credits

One of the clearest points of difference in the campaign was the starkly different tax plans on offer. While both parties desperately wanted the conversation about the election to be about their reforming tax plans, the debate became largely about the ALP’s franking credits policy. The policy was to stop paying cash refunds for dividend imputation or ‘franking’ credits, that is, tax withheld by companies on dividends and intended to then be offset

against an individual shareholder's income tax, which are refunded if the individual has more in franking credits than they owe in tax (Baker, N. 2019b). The policy created much division and was opposed by most voters, although there is some evidence it was not well understood (Crosby 2019d; Hanrahan 2019b, 2019c). The policy was too complex and too problematic, and the potential impact was unclear (Baker, N. 2019b). The ALP changed the policy to exclude pensioners after the initial backlash during the Batman by-election (Coorey 2018a; Emerson & Weatherill 2019). However, that caveat may not have cut through, and the debate created more problems since it drew greater attention to the risk and uncertainty of the ALP's proposed reforms (Emerson & Weatherill 2019). Despite the belief it was only retirees who opposed the proposed franking credits changes, reinforced by the Coalition dubbing it the 'retiree tax' (Bagshaw & Dunckley 2019), older women still in the workforce with small shareholdings were the most concerned (Crosby 2019d) and self-funded retirees most affected by the policy swung to the ALP (Emerson & Weatherill 2019).

Upcoming Coalition MP Tim Wilson latched onto the issue with gusto, turning the attention of the Standing Committee on Economics that he chairs to run a hasty inquiry into the implication of the ALP's plan to abolish refundable franking credits (Bagshaw 2019b; Bagshaw & Dunckley 2019). He launched a website, stoptheretirementtax.com, which generated pre-written form submissions to the inquiry he chaired (Evershed & Knaus 2019; Oboler 2019). He also coordinated the hearings for the inquiry to coincide with a roadshow against the policy being run by investment fund manager Geoff Wilson, whom Tim Wilson had invested with, and the ALP referred Wilson to the police for sharing data with the investment firm (Bagshaw 2019b). The inquiry was strongly criticised (Bagshaw 2019b; Belot 2019b; Koziol 2019b; Manning, P. 2019), and there were calls for Wilson to resign or Scott Morrison to sack him (Belot 2019b; Kelly, J. 2019). Wilson did not budge, Morrison refused to sack him and some praised him for his efforts (Bagshaw & Dunckley 2019; Murphy, K. & Karp 2019).

5.5.4 When All Else Fails, Splash the Cash

Starting with the Wentworth by-election, both major parties engaged in wanton pork-barrelling in the lead-up to the 2019 election, with the Government clearly using the benefits of incumbency (Wright & Irvine 2019). The Wentworth by-election earned the wealthy seat \$2.5m for surf lifesaving clubs, \$2.2m for security for the many Jewish schools

and institutions in the community, \$500,000 for lighting in a local park and a commitment to help fund a new high school, among other promises (Davies, A. 2018b; Macdonald, E. 2018a, 2018b). In the 2019 budget announcement, brought forward one month because of the election (Coorey 2018b), the Government declared the budget ‘back in black’ (Benson 2019; Coorey 2019) and offered cash to low- and middle-income earners, tax cuts, a \$100b in infrastructure investment and a return to surplus, but only if they won the election (Coorey 2019; Crowe 2019c; Murphy, K. 2019a). It has since been revealed that a sports grants program was used by the Coalition to deliberately target competitive electorates (Snape & Probyn 2020). Similar allegations have been made about an infrastructure grants program (Kearsley 2020).

The Parliamentary Budget Office (2020) publishes a list of all the election commitments made and the economic impact of the proposals, which in 2019 included 67 commitments by the Liberal and National Coalition, 273 commitments by the ALP and 86 commitments by the Greens. Most of the Coalition’s spending announcements were made in the budget before the election was called, the total election-orientated spending commitments reaching \$302b. The ALP’s commitments totalled \$31.7b in new spending, and the Greens, \$143.8b.

5.6 Scandal versus Standards

Scandal was the dominant undercurrent of the entire parliament; hence, unsurprisingly, the shares on this theme are higher with more peaks. Scandals that were more accurately reflected in other themes (e.g. Tim Wilson’s franking credits scandal) were coded in those themes, leaving these stories as the less substantive bizarre happenings and personal failings. The removal of Malcolm Turnbull as prime minister could have quite accurately gone in any of the themes, but as the event played out in quite a spectacle, classification in this theme seemed most appropriate. The peaks shown in Figure 5.18 are quite steep, which gives a good feel for the short-lived outrage as each new scandal came along.

Number of stories and Twitter shares | Scandal v Standards

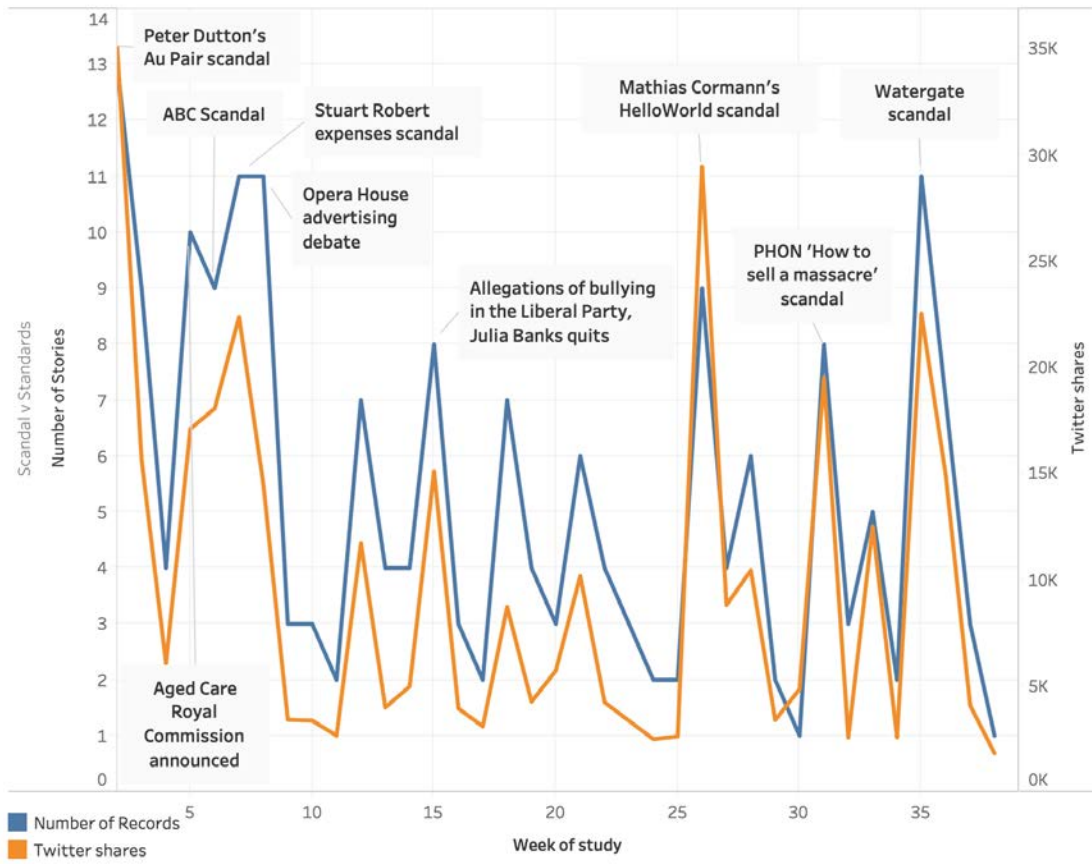


Figure 5.18: News links shared on Twitter by week and number of stories, Scandal v. Standards theme. (source: compiled by author)

The five top stories (Table 5.6) are vastly different: opposition to ongoing scandals and the decay of standards in Australian politics, privilege gone mad, political pressure compromising independence, outright fraud that has nothing to do with politics and media power compromising the integrity of political processes.

Table 5.6: Top five stories, Scandal v. Standards theme

| Outlet | Date | Headline | Subject/Lead | Type | Sentiment | Scandal | Shares |
|------------|----------|--|--|---------|-----------|---------|--------|
| SMH | 27/8/18 | Cancer eating the heart of Australian democracy | Kevin Rudd says since the coup of June 2010, Australian politics has become vicious, toxic and unstable. | opinion | neutral | no | 13434 |
| SMH | 18/2/19 | Cormann had 'no idea' a travel company had given him a free trip | Finance Minister Mathias Cormann's flights for a family holiday to Singapore were paid for by a travel company controlled by Liberal Party Treasurer Andrew Burnes within weeks of that company winning a \$1 billion contract from Cormann's department. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 8216 |
| SMH | 25/9/18 | 'They hate her': emails show ABC chairman told Michelle Guthrie to fire Emma Alberici | ABC chairman Justin Milne told former managing director Michelle Guthrie to sack high-profile presenter Emma Alberici following a complaint from then-prime minister Malcolm Turnbull. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 7696 |
| ABC | 27/11/18 | Belle Gibson faces jail time if \$410k fine for cancer fraud goes unpaid | A Federal Court judge has warned fake wellness blogger Belle Gibson she could go to jail if she does not pay \$410,000 for duping customers. | news | neutral | yes | 6397 |
| ABC | 19/9/18 | What did Rupert Murdoch and Kerry Stokes have to do with the Liberal leadership spill? | Malcolm Turnbull's demise as Australia's 29th prime minister was unusual for many reasons, and truly unique for one: his was the first known prime ministership to be the subject of a billionaires' tug of war between the nation's most powerful media moguls. | news | Anti-LNP | yes | 5606 |

Source: compiled by author.

The word cloud analysis (Figure 5.19) brings to the fore just how central Peter Dutton was to many of the scandals, including the leadership spill: almost as big as Morrison, and bigger than Barnaby Joyce.

5.6.1 Section 44 Constitutional Crisis

The Section 44 constitutional crisis was a bizarre turn of events, which caused many members of parliament to be found ineligible to sit in the parliament. Section 44⁹ of the Australian Constitution sets out restrictions on eligibility to be a candidate for the federal parliament, based on the NSW eligibility rules at the time of federation. It began with two bankruptcies that were not the problem; while both South Australian Family First Senator Bob Day and West Australian One Nation Senator Rod Culleton were bankrupted, which is part iii of the disqualification categories of section 44, they were not disqualified as election candidates by the High Court on the grounds of their bankruptcies. The High Court ruled under part v, which disqualifies an individual if they have a pecuniary interest in any agreement with the Commonwealth, that Bob Day was never eligible to stand as a candidate since he leased his electorate offices with public funds from his own company; and Rod Culleton was in violation of part ii, because he had been convicted of theft at the time of nominating (Gauja et al. 2018). Rod Culleton nominated again in 2019, despite being an undischarged bankrupt, and for his efforts was referred to the Federal Police by the AEC to determine whether he had made a false declaration under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Crowe 2019b; Hutchens 2019).

A Greens Senator for Western Australia, Scott Ludlum, revealed he was ineligible under part i to be a candidate because he was a dual citizen, having been born in New Zealand and never having renounced that citizenship (Karp 2016). This was soon followed by his

⁹ Section 44 of the Constitution sets out restrictions on who can be a candidate for Federal parliament. In full it reads:

44. Any person who –
- (i.) Is under any acknowledgement of allegiance, obedience, or adherence to a foreign power, or is a subject or a citizen or entitled to the rights or privileges of a subject or citizen of a foreign power: or
 - (ii.) Is attainted of treason, or has been convicted and is under sentence, or subject to be sentenced, for any offence punishable under the law of the Commonwealth or of a State by imprisonment for one year or longer: or
 - (iii.) Is an undischarged bankrupt or insolvent: or
 - (iv.) Holds any office of profit under the Crown, or any pension payable during the pleasure of the Crown out of any of the revenues of the Commonwealth: or
 - (v.) Has any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in any agreement with the Public Service of the Commonwealth otherwise than as a member and in common with the other members of an incorporated company consisting of more than twenty-five persons:
- shall be incapable of being chosen or of sitting as a senator or a member of the House of Representatives. But sub-section iv. does not apply to the office of any of the Queen's Ministers of State for the Commonwealth, or of any of the Queen's Ministers for a State, or to the receipt of pay, half pay, or a pension, by any person as an officer or member of the Queen's navy or army, or to the receipt of pay as an officer or member of the naval or military forces of the Commonwealth by any person whose services are not wholly employed by the Commonwealth.

Queensland colleague Larissa Waters who was born in Canada (Remeikis 2017). This began a domino effect through the parliament, as it quickly became apparent that many parliamentarians had not taken this restriction on eligibility seriously, and/or never investigated whether they held other citizenships. A total of 15 sitting politicians were either disqualified or resigned pre-emptively on the basis of dual citizenship, including the Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce and President of the Senate Steven Parry (Byrne & Doran 2017; Castello & Shepherd 2017; Harris, B. 2017).

Hollie Hughes, a senate candidate for the Liberal Party who had been declared elected to replace National Party Deputy Leader Fiona Nash, was disqualified before she was sworn in for holding an office of profit under the Crown in violation of part iv. This was perceived as a particularly perplexing interpretation by the High Court, because the disqualifying role was one she had accepted after being unsuccessful in the election; at the time she nominated and on election day, she was eligible to be a candidate (Strutt & Kagi 2017). Many other replacement senators also had to demonstrate their eligibility but were more successful. Kenyan-born Lucy Gichuhi, declared elected to replace Family First's Bob Day, was referred to the High Court to test her citizenship and was found to be eligible (Doran, Belot & Crothers 2017). Fraser Anning, who replaced One Nation's second senator from Queensland Malcolm Roberts after he was disqualified on citizenship grounds, had to prove he was not bankrupt before taking his seat (Doran 2017). Steve Martin, declared elected from the Jacqui Lambie Network to replace Jacqui Lambie in Tasmania, was also referred to the High Court to determine his eligibility since he was the current Mayor of Devonport, but was found eligible (Byrne 2017).

In a twist typical of the instability, all of the challenged Senate replacements ended up being sworn in as Independents rather than for the parties they were affiliated with at the time of the 2016 election. Family First merged with the Australian Conservatives—a right-wing 'family values' party founded by Liberal Party defector Cory Bernardi—but Gichuhi opted not to join them and became an independent instead. She later joined the Liberal Party (Belot 2018). Fraser Anning either quit (Hanson's version of events) or was kicked out of (Anning's version of events) Pauline Hanson's One Nation the day he was sworn into the Senate, resulting in him being sworn in as an Independent (Gartrell 2017b). He later joined the Katter Australia Party, was then kicked out of that party for his racist views and formed his own Conservative National party (Byrne 2018). Steve Martin had an argument with

Jacqui Lambie, who had wanted him to resign his seat so she could return to the Senate immediately, and she dumped him from the party (Pigram & Dunlevie 2018). He was sworn in as an Independent and later joined the National Party (Barbour 2018). Additionally, Tim Storer, who replaced the Nick Xenophon Team’s Skye Kakoshke-Moore after she was disqualified on citizenship grounds, had also parted ways with the party after a disagreement and was sworn in as an independent, then briefly flirted with establishing his own party before announcing he would leave politics at the 2019 election (Briggs 2019).

Table 5.7: Candidates who were disendorsed or withdrew from the 2019 election after nomination

| Candidate | Party | Electorate | Cause |
|------------------------------|----------|------------|---|
| Gurpal Singh* | Liberal | Scullin | Sexist comments about rape victim |
| Luke Creasey* | ALP | Melbourne | Sexist and other inappropriate comments |
| Jessica Whelan* | Liberal | Lyons | Made Anti-Muslim and Anti-immigration comments |
| Jeremy Hearn* | Liberal | Isaacs | Made Anti-Muslim comments |
| Peter Killin* | Liberal | Wills | Homophobic comments |
| Steve Dickson* | PHON | QLD | Sexist comments and groping in strip club |
| Wayne Kurnoth* | ALP | NT | Shared a post containing an antisemitic conspiracy theory |
| Jay Dessi* | Green | Lalor | Inappropriate posts on social media of a sexual and racist nature |
| Tony Pecora* | UAP | Melbourne | Promoting 9/11 conspiracy theories |
| David Paull* | Green | Parkes | Denial of Port Arthur Massacre (continued as an independent) |
| Vaishali Ghosh | Liberal | Wills | Dual citizenship issues |
| Kate Oski | Liberal | Lalor | Dual citizenship issues |
| Helen Jackson | Liberal | Cooper | Australia Post employee |
| Murray Angus | Liberal | Corio | Referred to opponent as being a good bloke, made pro-union comments |
| Courtney Nguyen | Liberal | Fowler | Dual citizenship issues |
| Sam Kayal | Liberal | Werriwa | Dual citizenship issues |
| Mary Ross | ALP | NSW | Possible dual citizenship issues or income from Commonwealth |
| James Harker-Mortlock | National | Whitlam | Dual citizenship issues |
| Melissa Parke | ALP | Curtin | Comments about Israel’s treatment of Palestinians |

* Candidate disendorsed or withdrew after nominations closed and remained on the ballot paper.

Source: compiled by author.

An unprecedented 19 candidates were disendorsed or withdrew in the early days of the formal election campaign. Seven of these were because the candidate would fall foul of Section 44 of the Constitution, and the remainder because of scandal or inappropriate comments, mostly on social media. Table 5.7 lists the candidates who were disendorsed or withdrew. In those seats where the candidate was disendorsed or withdrew after nominations had closed, their name remained on the ballot paper, and the party they were endorsed by went into election day with no official candidate in that seat.

5.6.2 Sex scandals and other personal controversies

Controversy and scandals were the constant bubble of the 45th Parliament. In a stark difference to previous parliaments where scandals had predominantly been about travel allowances, the predominant controversy and scandals in this term were about sex or other personal failings.

ALP Senator from NSW Sam Dastyari was one of the first to resign in 2016 after it was revealed he asked Chinese donors to pay personal legal and travel bills, and that he had made statements about the South China Sea supporting China's position and at odds with party policy (Gartrell 2017a). The National Party member for Mallee (an electorate in regional Victoria), Andrew Broad, resigned from the ministry in December 2018 and announced he would not seek re-election, after being caught out seeking the company of a younger woman via a 'sugar baby' dating site while on official parliamentary business in Hong Kong (Brown, G. 2019). In the case of both Dastyari and Broad, they owned their mistakes at the point when they resigned. They were the only ones to do so in a scandal-laden parliament.



Figure 5.20: Cover of the *Good Weekend*, 2 December 2016 (source: *Sydney Morning Herald*; photo: Andrew Mears)

Member for Dawson, the National Party's George Christensen, drew significant attention to himself when photographed wearing a singlet and a whip (see Figure 5.20) for the cover of *Good Weekend* magazine (Zwartz 2016). He was the subject of a police inquiry when it was revealed he had spent more time in the Philippines than in Parliament, earning himself the moniker 'Member for Manilla'. He explained he had weight loss surgery there in 2017, did work with a children's charity and was visiting his now wife; but the allegation referred to police indicated that he was frequenting and sending money to 'seedy' neighbourhoods in Southeast Asia and possibly engaged in illegal activity involving sex workers (Maiden 2019a, 2019b). The Australian Federal Police cleared Christensen of any wrongdoing in a highly unusual press conference, but it did not stop the controversy and questions (Viellaris 2018). The Liberal Party's Senate Leader and Minister for Finance, Matthias Cormann, was also accused of irregular travel after he was caught getting holidays for free or at a significant discount, which he did by telephoning the CEO of travel company Helloworld

directly (Murphy, K. 2019c), and booking a defence jet to fly from Canberra to Adelaide to advocate for the party's tax policy in a meeting with Centre Alliance (Gothe-Snape 2019a).

Pauline Hanson's One Nation offered up a juicy tale of how Pauline Hanson's Chief of Staff James Ashby and the lead Senate candidate in Queensland Steve Dickson had a great trip to the United States and did a lot of drinking and groping women while they were there. The purpose of the trip was actually to learn from gun lobbyists like the National Rifle Association how to manipulate voters, and potentially get American money for the party (Clarke, M. 2019). The events that unfolded were revealed in an Al Jazeera documentary, *How to Sell a Massacre* (Al Jazeera 2019), a three-year investigation into the methods and tactics of the National Rifle Association's gun movement in the United States, which used extensive undercover footage to expose the behaviour (Charley 2019). The pair attacked a shopping list of characters for putting them in this situation, while leader Pauline Hanson staunchly defended her colleagues, declared it 'spin', 'propaganda', a 'hit piece' and a 'stitch up' and even went so far as accusing 'the Islamist Al Jazeera', and the ABC who broadcast the documentary, of 'a political attack' (Knaus 2019a; Tovey 2019). Pauline Hanson did not apologise for her on-film comments to the effect that the Port Arthur Massacre¹⁰ was a government conspiracy, saying her comments had been 'heavily edited' (Fernando 2019a).

In a twist, and at about the same time as the *How to Sell a Massacre* story was playing out, Hanson and former One Nation turned Independent turned United Australia Party Senator Brian Burston both accused each other of sexual harassment: Hanson accused Burston of offering to have sex with a distressed staff member to 'make things better'; Burston accused Hanson of multiple unwanted advances and touching over some years (Koslowski & Shields 2019). Burston sued Hanson for defamation, seeking aggravated damages of one million dollars (Killoran 2019b). This event led to James Ashby punching Burston at a formal event, and as a result losing access to parliament house (Chan 2019b). This was not the first time Mr Ashby had been a key player in controversy that threatened his boss' career: he and Senator Hanson had previously been accused of failing to declare a light plane, gifted to the campaign by a property developer and emblazoned with Pauline

¹⁰ The Port Arthur Massacre was a mass shooting in which Martin Bryant shot and killed 35 people and wounded 19 others. The event led to a significant overhaul of gun laws in Australia.

Hanson's face and name, as a campaign contribution (Bickers 2017; McGhee 2017). During the term, Ashby was also accused of throwing a mobile phone at another staffer and conspiring to defraud the Commonwealth by sending candidates inflated bills for election material printing (Hook 2019).

While Ashby is definitely a contender for a podium spot, Barnaby Joyce, the now former National Party leader and Deputy Prime Minister, was the gold medallist in scandal for the 45th Parliament by a very long way, and most of it was about sex. After being declared ineligible under section 44 (Coorey 2017a), the freshly re-elected member for New England had to resign his leadership and ministerial roles after being accused of serious sexual harassment by respected rural leader Catherine Marriott (Chan 2018). This was quickly overshadowed by revelations he had been having an affair with a staffer, who was pregnant, and he had separated from his wife (Jones, R. 2017; Markson & Loussikian 2018; Ozturk 2017; Wilson, J. 2017). Further issues emerged, including inappropriate use of travel allowance, and that he had inappropriately influenced other ministers in the Government to take his new partner on their staff as the relationship became public (Massola & Gartrell 2018). In response to this scandal, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull banned sex with staffers, a rule that was dubbed the 'bonk ban' (Langford 2018; Yaxley 2018).

Other claims and rumours of impropriety swirled, including that Joyce may have been involved in the arson attack on the Armidale Club, a small live music venue and bar on the town's main street, to make way for a government department he was forcibly relocating to his electorate (Chan 2019a; Green, S. 2019). He denied any wrongdoing when purchasing a poor-quality block of land that would profit from the construction of an inland railway he strongly advocated for (Karp 2018b). A water licence purchase scandal (dubbed #watergate) in which he approved an \$80m purchase of water licences from two farms in Queensland owned by a company named Eastern Australia Agriculture, of which Angus Taylor, the Liberal Member for Hume and Energy Minister, is a director, created much debate (Slattery 2019). This was in addition to earlier calls for him to be stripped of the water portfolio for his clear favouring of irrigators, including praising irrigators for stealing water from the Murray–Darling River system at a public event (Chan 2017a; Coorey 2017b; Davies, A. 2018a). There were many other questions about his suitability to be a leadership figure, which remained unanswered, including that he decommissioned animal welfare programs related to live export as Agriculture Minister, resulting in thousands of animals

suffering (Bourke 2018b; Chan 2019c). He created an uproar when he called for transgender children to be expelled from school and not permitted to use the bathroom (Maiden 2018). Further, he, with other National Party colleagues, arguably asked for permission to be corrupt when the Liberal Party was considering establishing an Integrity Commission, seeking an exemption that would ensure ministers could ignore Departmental advice and approve grants and projects for their electorates in rural areas (Koziol 2018a).

Prime ministerial aspirant and Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton also had a collection of scandals, but, in a welcome relief, none were sexual in nature. Early in the term, it was revealed he had used his ministerial discretion to release an Italian *au pair* (foreigner working as a babysitter) from immigration detention for ‘a mate’ he had worked with in the Queensland Police, and separately, a French *au pair* for the CEO of the Australian Football League, Gil McLauchlan (Probyn, Greene & Borrello 2018). In retaliation for the pressure on the *au pair* issue, Dutton threatened to name every ALP MP who had asked for assistance on behalf of a constituent. He also tried to pressure Border Force, an agency under his jurisdiction, to give two of his other police ‘mates’ jobs (McKenzie & Baker 2018). Another ‘mate’ in the Liberal Party had been paid thousands of dollars by a Chinese billionaire to get a meeting with Dutton in an attempt to secure Australian citizenship over the objections of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (McKenzie 2019). He also had questions raised about his eligibility under Section 44, owing to his ownership of childcare centres that received millions in government funding, but managed to avoid a referral to the High Court (Loussikian & McCauley 2018). Further, on the first days of the formal election campaign, he created outrage when he suggested his opponent, Ali France, used her disability¹¹ as an ‘excuse’ not to live in the electorate (Belot 2019a).

And, because it really would not be an Australian Parliament without an entitlement scandal, in 2017 Health Minister Sussan Ley resigned her ministerial role and returned to the back bench after it was revealed she had bought a luxury Gold Coast apartment while on official business (Gartrell & Remeikis 2017). (She was later cleared of any wrongdoing but did not return to the frontbench until after the 2019 election [Allison 2019].) Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert did keep his frontbench position after it was revealed he was billing taxpayers \$2000 a month for his home internet bill and \$17,000 on personalised stationary,

¹¹ Ali France had a leg amputated following a car accident and lived in a modified home.

considerably more than his colleagues (Gothe-Snape 2018; Karp 2018f). Robert was also challenged over his disclosures and possible conflicts of interest following revelations he had transferred a company with significant government contracts into his parents' names without their knowledge (Bourke 2017).

The scandals did not end with the parliament. Social media comments tripped up many candidates during the campaign (see Table 4.5). The Liberal candidate for Wills quit over Anti-gay comments (Osborne 2019). Racist and Anti-Muslim posts were plentiful, but Liberal candidate for Lyons, Jessica Wheelan, tried to deny her responsibility and referred the 'fake' posts to police; more posts were promptly found leading to her resignation (Conifer 2019). The ALP candidate for Melbourne, Luke Creasey, apologised after sharing a 'rape joke' on Facebook, and again, after more inappropriate posts were found, he resigned a few days later. Liberal candidate for Scullin, Gurpal Singh, resigned after claiming a man accused of raping his wife was the 'real victim' (Osborne 2019).

5.6.3 #MeToo and the Status of Women

Instability is symptomatic of change, and throughout the 45th Parliament there were some tectonic shifts in the community around values and standards. The most significant shift was around the role of women and what women are prepared to tolerate (or, more correctly, not tolerate any longer). The #MeToo movement globally inspired a range of reforms to stop sexual harassment (Mendes, Ringrose & Keller 2018). The Australian government implemented an inquiry into the issue (Murphy, K. 2018b), and prominent journalist Tracy Spicer latched on to the issue, quickly becoming the movement's de facto leader in Australia, launching *Now Australia* to raise funds and provide counselling and legal support for victims (Harmon 2018). Very high-profile actors—for instance, Craig McLaughlan and Geoffrey Rush—were accused of sexual harassment; Rush won a defamation case about it in the week of the election, which caused alarm that the #MeToo movement would falter (O'Connell 2019; Ziwick 2019).

In parliament itself, the issue of the treatment of women was at boiling point. The removal of Malcolm Turnbull also brought to a head simmering issues of sexism and bullying, manifested in the resignation of Julia Banks and the crushing defeat of Julie Bishop in the leadership ballot, and much written about the 'battle for the soul of the Liberal Party' (Knott 201; Murphy, K. 2018c). A number of Liberal Party women quietly confirmed the

intimidation and bullying they had endured (Doran 2018; Szego 2018), with Banks saying in her blistering resignation speech that the parliament is decades behind the corporate world in the way they treat women (Chang 2018a; Crowe 2018g). Jane Prentice, a member of the outer ministry widely respected throughout Canberra, was defeated in pre-selection by Brisbane City Councillor Julian Simmonds, a move condemned by colleagues and commentators alike (Remeikis 2018b). She also delivered a fierce farewell speech, critical of those who get into politics for personal ambition rather than helping people (Gredley 2019b).

The bullying of women in the parliament was not limited to the Liberal Party. In July 2018, BuzzFeed journalist Alice Workman claimed ALP member for the marginal Western Sydney seat of Lindsay, Emma Husar, was being investigated over workplace bullying and misconduct following complaints from staffers (Workman 2018b). In a second article on August 1, Workman claimed Husar had sexually harassed staff, bragged about who she was having sex with and had intentionally exposed herself to another ALP MP, Jason Clare, in a manner referred to as a ‘Sharon Stone’ move with reference to the film *Basic Instinct* (Workman 2018a). Husar denied the accusations and sued Workman and BuzzFeed for defamation, labelling the report as ‘slut-shaming’, resulting in a settlement and apology from Buzzfeed and Ms Workman (O’Malley, Hunter & Smith 2018). The ALP investigation cleared Husar of most of the allegations (O’Malley & Snow 2018).

Queensland One Nation turned Katter Party turned Independent Senator Fraser Anning, former Liberal turned Australian Conservatives Senator for South Australia Cory Bernardi, Liberal Democrats Senator for NSW David Leyonhjelm, and Liberal National Party (LNP) Senator for Queensland Barry O’Sullivan, were also accused of slut-shaming, this time by Greens Senator for South Australia Sarah Hanson-Young. All denied the allegation, despite months of slurs and inappropriate comments (Clench 2018b; ; Whitbourn 2019). Ms Hanson-Young sued Senator Leyonhjelm, an action that she won, being awarded \$120,000 (McGowan & Karp 2019). Not all the slut-shaming was done by men: Workplace Relations Minister Michaelia Cash allegedly tipped off the media to ensure they were there to film an Australian Federal Police Raid of the Australian Workers Union, and when repeatedly questioned about it, chose to smear the young female staff in ALP leader Bill Shorten’s office with allegations of inappropriate behaviour (Dziedzic 2017; Norman 2018a).

5.7 Summary

The five themes are a useful device for making sense of the otherwise chaotic events of the 2019 election. These themes are unlikely to have manifested in any method other than grounded theory, and further underscore the limitations of deciding closed question answer options for a survey well before the election. However, it is not possible to identify the election battlegrounds before the battle has begun. The media coverage, in determining what is salient, also may create a social desirability bias in how people answer questions, which, in turn, leads to a false flag of what issues and factors are genuinely influencing voter decision, or indeed incorrect poll predictions. This thematic analysis also reveals that research on the election, by any method, is failing to grasp the whole picture, which indicates we researchers are as out of touch with voters as politicians.

While discussed here as five distinct themes, and while there was some indication that the election could be viewed by some through any of those five themes as a single battleground, the themes do overlap and intersect. The one permeating idea is disconnect: what voters wanted was not what either major party was offering. Voters wanted certainty; a government they can rely on to do its job and to act on key areas, such as climate change, individual rights and privacy; and for people to behave better and be treated better. Neither major party was interested in having that conversation. So, without any effective narrative, voters made up their own minds on the one thing they felt confident in assessing: their local candidate.

The next chapter will apply the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 2 to the events of the election and discuss whether any of the methods of Chapter 3, or the research detailed in this chapter, could effectively explain the 2019 Australian federal election.

Chapter 6: Discussion—How Should we be Studying Voter Behaviour?

Some of the headlines in the Australian media are idiotic and embarrassing. When polls show a race within a couple of percentage points, nobody — least of all journalists, who are paid to be informed about this stuff — should be shocked when the trailing side wins. (Silver 2019)

The primary goal of this thesis is to seek an answer to the question of how we should be studying voter behaviour: what works, what does not and areas in which we can do better. The 2019 Australian federal election, and the contradictions of findings discussed in Chapter 4, demonstrated that current research is not performing well.

This chapter will apply the main theories of voter behaviour presented in Chapter 2 to the events of the 2019 Australian federal election discussed in Chapter 4 and thematic analysis in Chapter 5 to assess the validity of the dominant theories. I will begin by recapping the three dominant theories and discuss whether there is support for these theories in what was seen in the 2019 election. The focus of this discussion will be on how the advent of social media affects these theories, given that the shift in communication dynamics created by social media challenges each of these theories that were developed before even television was widespread. I will then briefly discuss secondary theories that may be useful in explaining voter behaviour in this election.

Then, I will move on to three core problems I have identified in the interplay of voter behaviour theory, voter behaviour research methods and the actual reality of how voters decide who to vote for. The first problem is electoral literacy: the over-dependence on the flawed instrument that is the 2PP measure, the misinterpretation of election events through that frame and the lack of understanding of the electoral system. The second problem is one of theoretical bias: how theory affects questionnaire design, which, in turn, prevents accurate analysis and the true voice of voters being heard. The third problem is sampling: whether samples are too small or not stratified enough to be genuinely reflective, and how theory influences sample selection. Finding the theory and research lacking, and in light of these three substantial problems, the chapter concludes with a proposed method for detailed

election research, which may be more effective in capturing voter behaviour in a volatile election, and a theory of individuated voter behaviour.

6.1 Applying Dominant Voter Behaviour Theory to the 2019 Australian Federal Election

6.1.1 Sociological Theory (Columbia)

As we saw in Chapter 2, the Columbia or Sociological theory's main premise is, unsurprisingly, *profoundly* sociological: the voter is first and foremost a social actor, subject to social forces, influenced by others in their social groups and with political preferences determined by social characteristics (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968). The homogeneity of social groups and social stratification is given as the main reason people vote in groups: for example, farmers are more likely to talk to other farmers, and city people, to other city people. Interaction between groups may change that group, but it is just as likely to reinforce the key characteristics of that group. The result is that the people within defined social groups have similar concerns and motivations.

Importantly for our purposes, the Columbia voter behaviour research, and resultant Sociological voter behaviour theory, was completed before mass television and pervasive media, let alone before social media; thus, there are serious questions about the relevance of that sociological theory to the current social milieu. Are groups still stratified in this way? Is social media a leveller, breaking down the silos of geography? Some would argue yes, with studies finding that social media exposes people to a greater diversity of views (Barberá et al. 2015; Bruns 2017a, 2017b, 2019b; Masip, Suau-Martínez & Ruiz-Caballero 2017). Others argue no, pointing to concepts such as filter bubbles and echo chambers as reinforcing social stratification (Hampton, Shin & Lu 2017; Marquart, Matthes & Rapp 2016; Mascaro, Agosto & Goggins 2016; Messing & Westwood 2014; Yang, Barnidge & Rojas 2017). However, Bruns (2019c) argues, with some merit, that echo chambers and filter bubbles are ill-defined metaphors that:

principally constitute an unfounded moral panic that presents a convenient technological scapegoat (search and social platforms and their affordances and algorithms) for a much more critical problem: growing social and political polarisation. (p. 2)

Regardless of this debate, the pervasive uptake of social media causes the primary method of communication to be reverted from mass broadcast to people talking directly to other people (Mascaro & Goggins 2012), as it was when the Erie County study was done. Thus, an argument can be made that the theory is now more relevant and revealing than ever.

Personal influence is a difficult thing to measure. The Voter Choice Project, which was heavily anchored in Columbia methodology, found significant evidence that voters withdrew from seeking information from media sources and were more heavily influenced by personal contact as the election neared, confirming the Columbia findings of personal influence 80 years after Erie County. Similarly, there was clear evidence of social stratification, albeit more nuanced and flexible, with personal identification with peoples' residential communities and the length of time living in a community highly indicative of vote choice and vote stability. The more stable and positive the voter is with their situation in life, the more likely they were comfortable considering negatively valenced or challenging information, and through motivated reasoning, confirming and reinforcing their vote choice rather than changing it (Crosby 2019c).

Sociological theory, for all its strengths and weaknesses, does explain some of the geographic disparity in vote behaviour seen in the 2019 election. Local context and social structure are important in influencing proximity and exposure, and thus how much someone is likely to care about an issue and what kinds of information and homogenising forces they are exposed to (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1990; Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995, pp. 34–5; McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook 2001). National trend and partisan theories are likely to miss these effects:

By studying the trend of opinion during a propaganda campaign within a relatively homogeneous local area, the researchers were able to calculate the measure of effectiveness of the various stimuli (formal and informal media) and to calculate their effectiveness among different social and psychological groups... the complex of forces operating on a national level, and operating in different ways in different areas, would make it extremely difficult to *isolate* sufficiently the various stimuli and their effects. (Lazarsfeld & Rosenberg 1949, p.578, italics in original).

From the results of the 2019 election and associated media coverage, there were clearly regions and individual electorates behaving as an integrated community with influence exerted by fellow citizens, such as Dawson, Capricornia and Warringah detailed in section

4.4, or New England where the community came together to defend the sitting member Barnaby Joyce from outside attack (Caughlan 2019; Murphy, J. 2019). However, this was far from universal: in the vast majority of seats no clear pattern or dominating issue can be identified. Thus, it could be that social stratification led to the behaviour of those electorates that behaved in a manner contrary to what was indicated by polling or press, or it could be something else entirely, and it leaves the bulk of electorates unexplained.

There is significant evidence supporting the two-step model of communication and the role of opinion leaders, as theorised in the Columbia work. In particular, the finding in the MCA detailed in Chapter 5 of media articles coming back for a second round of sharing indicates that there are at least two tiers of communication: the media consumers who shared it the day it was published, and those sharing what they have seen someone else share. The exact chain of events can theoretically be mapped, especially on Twitter where public data are collectable, and would be an interesting area of further research. Social media influencers are opinion leaders by another name, and their influence on ensuring the saliency of an issue or in determining a dominant way to interpret an event is also acknowledged by a number of researchers (e.g. see MacDonald, T. 2017; Sotiropoulos, Bilanakos & Giaglis 2016; Winter, S. & Neubaum 2016).

Social media's influence is also well explained by the concept of cross-pressures. This part of the Columbia theory posits that those voters who are exposed to multiple viewpoints in their personal conversations will be more likely to change their vote and will often not commit to a vote choice later in the election. If social media is degrading the homogeneity of geographic social groups, or creating virtual social groupings that compete with geographic groups in a voter's psyche and identification (Himmelboim, McCreery & Smith 2013; Mascaro & Goggins 2012), it stands to reason that more voters will be exposed to cross-pressures as a direct result of social media exposure, and thus more voters will be late deciders and subject to changing their vote intention. The finding of the Voter Choice Project that 13% of voters changed their vote decision in the last week, generating a net 2% shift to the Coalition, underscores the volatility of the electorate (Crosby 2019f).

6.1.2 Psychosocial Theory (Michigan)

Psychosocial theory puts partisanship, defined as a psychological affinity, as the primary influencing factor on voter behaviour, seeing the voter as an autonomous actor and

dismissing social context as secondary (Campbell et al. 1960; Campbell, Gurin & Miller 1954). There will always be a proportion of the voting public who are partisan, voting consistently along party lines. However, with an increasingly volatile electorate, and the proportion of voters who identify with any political party consistently declining (Cross & Gauja 2014; Grimmer, M. & Grube 2017), the Michigan theory is found wanting.

While the Michigan theorists do argue that partisanship is separate from vote choice (i.e. you can be a Labor supporter but vote Liberal), they do not provide a substantial explanation for the increasing number of non-partisan voters. Attitudinal conflicts, which are fundamentally the same as Columbia's cross-pressures, are nominated as the main cause for an individual voting against partisan leanings and late decision-making (Campbell et al. 1960, pp. 77–88). These forces are, as discussed above, exacerbated by social media exposing people to a much broader array of attitudes and opinions. However, the presumption of partisan leaning to vote against it is largely without basis for an increasing number of voters. As the disconnect between elected and electors grows ever wider, it stands to reason that there are now generations of voters who have never had a particular leaning towards one party or another. Class, religion and other group attributes are no longer reliable indicators of partisan preference on their own.

The AES, a nominally Michigan study, stretches the imposition of partisanship to some lengths to explain the election result. The summary findings of the AES indicate:

Voters swung to the Coalition based on the economy, tax and leadership. Voters swung to Labor on the environment and health. On balance, there were a greater number of voters that switched from Labor to the Coalition based on economic issues, than from the Coalition to Labor based on environmental issues. (Cameron & McAllister 2020a)

There is little in the data to support this conclusion. The phrasing of the question (D1) asks participants to choose from a closed pick list, with no 'other' option, which of those options was the most important when they were deciding who to vote for. Similarly, question B5 is limited to the party leaders, policy issues, candidates in your electorate and the parties taken as a whole, as the only four options, and respondents are asked to choose the most important to them. While this is useful for tracking long-term election sentiments, it actually tells us very little about what influenced a voter's decision. It does not mean that policy was an influential factor, nor even a significant deciding factor such as would warrant this interpretation. The issues listed (taxation, immigration, education,

environment, government debt, health and Medicare, refugees and asylum seekers, global warming, superannuation and management of the economy) are listed as simple terms without any explanation, nor any opportunity for the respondent to indicate what they think those broad terms are referring to. The lack of an ‘other’ option means that it may have been a relatively minor option in that voter’s decision, but the most important in that list—or indeed if none of those given choices were important to them, it could just be satisficing. Further, reducing the analysis to only those voters who recalled they switched from the ALP to Liberal, or vice versa, cannot explain a multi-party, multi-seat result. In short, there is nothing in the AES data, nor could there be with the way the questions are framed, that supports this explanation of the election results.

There is no allowance for the regional variations seen in the 2019 election, nor candidate or social factors. As discussed in the case studies in section 4.3 in more detail, partisanship is simply not a viable explanation for the election result. There was no consistent national swing, no unifying issue that was salient in all areas of the country and no real ideological conviction identifiable in voter behaviour.

However, the funnel of causality concept does hold up to scrutiny and is potentially more insightful now than before the widespread adoption of social media. The notion that every interaction feeds into vote decision is supportive of the strong influence of social media, as there are, for many voters, thousands more interactions within a campaign cycle, and with a broader number of potential influence sources, than ever before. Voters can now directly interact with candidates and parties more than ever before, and debate issues with others interested in the same issues in a way that would have been inconceivable before the Internet. Recalling the criticism that the funnel of causality was not linked to the findings of *The American Voter* (Eulau 1960), it is not inconsistent to say that the funnel of causality is still valid whereas Psychosocial Theory is lacking relevance.

6.1.3 Rational Theory (Downs)

Rational theory is preferred by many pundits and scholars because of its simplicity: voters act in their own self-interest and choose the party closest to their views (Downs 1957). It was the one theory quickly espoused in explaining the huge swings in Central Queensland, or the resistance to the ALP’s franking credits policy. However, it is a theory that is too simple to explain every seat result, or indeed the overall result.

Downs's rational theory is an easy option to explain what happened in the six Central Queensland electorates. All of them have very high levels of unemployment, and thus voters, were rational in voting for jobs and economic prosperity in their community. Indeed, the shifts against the ALP in Dawson and Capricornia can be in some part explained by Adani, given Townsville (part of which is the very top of the Dawson electorate) and Rockhampton (in Capricornia) are the designated fly-in-fly-out centres for the Carmichael mine. Herbert, which is most of the city of Townsville, did pull away from the ALP, but by a significantly smaller 5%: less than half of the swing seen in Dawson and Capricornia. If having Adani jobs was the decisive factor for most Central Queensland voters, then the swing should have been largest in Townsville where the Adani headquarters is and most of Adani's employees were likely to be based. That said, Townsville was still recovering from the significant flood just a few months prior, and it is likely many voters there did not significantly engage with the election campaign.

Rational theory would support the result in both Warringah and Wentworth. Wentworth, having delivered the punishment they felt necessary in the by-election, returned to the party that is closest to their position and a candidate who is very much on the moderate end of the Liberal Party spectrum. Presented with a new option that was not available before, Warringah voters acted rationally in choosing the new option closer to their own positions rather than continuing to support the conservative Abbott who they deemed out of touch with their electorate. In both seats, they were voting to protect their financial interests, since only the ALP was a genuine threat on that front.

When restricted by geography and the variabilities of the national electorate are removed, rational voting theory has some strengths. However, on a national level, it is easily dismissed. As noted by many other critics of rational theory, the principal downfall is the underlying requirement that voters have accurate and detailed information about their interests and the proposal under consideration (Bartels 1996; Fiorina 1990). There is clear evidence this was not the case, whether it was the alarmingly poor level of understanding of what Adani was (Crosby 2018b) or the complete misinformation of fake news events such as the Death Tax scare campaign (Murphy, K., Knaus & Evershed 2019). Additionally, given the Coalition was far from forthcoming about their plans and policies (Crabb 2019), it is simply impossible to argue that Coalition voters were well informed.

They may have been informed enough to cast a ballot, but accurate and detailed information about Coalition policies was simply not available.

6.2 Other Theories of Note

A vast array of other theories can be used to explain voter behaviour, only a sampling of which were discussed in Chapter 2. The following theories have some relevance to the 2019 Australian federal election.

Microsociological theory (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995) has significant merit and can easily explain the very divergent behaviours both within and between electorates. This development of sociological theory gives more weight to social context and the unique experiences of each voter and acknowledges that each voter is exposed to many different sources of influence and may be a part of several groups in society. In the era of social media, the realisation that an individual voter may identify with multiple groups, that not all of those groups are geographically based and that communication amongst publics not defined by geography is now commonplace via social media (Bruns et al. 2016; Rambukkana 2015; Sauter & Bruns 2015), becomes critical to understanding the voter decision process. Voters value information and prefer to obtain it inexpensively, but choice and control over information is incomplete and probabilistic (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995, pp. 16–8). This is particularly the case when a social media feed exposes the voter to much more information from all their various groups and extends their lack of control over what they are exposed to far beyond the posters in their local area. Thus, the value and application of microsociological theory continue to be enhanced. However, a main argument of this theory is that when presented with new information that is at odds with the voter's current understanding, they may rationally re-evaluate their position (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995, p. 20). There is no accounting for an emotional or irrational response to disagreeable information that solidifies their current position, as is identified in the 2019 Australian federal election.

Motivated reasoning (Lodge & Taber 2013), as mentioned in the previous chapter, can provide an explanation for the unexpected result and apparent stubbornness of some parts of the electorate. Undoubtedly, there are voters who continued to rationalise away negatively valenced information and strengthen their vote intention as the election approached. More research is required to understand this dynamic. Countrymindedness,

Don Aitken's (2005) theory to explain the voter behaviour of rural people and specifically National Party voters in rejecting the attitudes of city cousins, has clear support in the behaviour of some areas in the 2019 election. Specifically, the rejection of interference from city people opposing the Adani mine in regional areas in Queensland, as shall be discussed further in the case studies.

Referendum (Fiorina 1981) and valence (Stokes 1963) voting are an unlikely fit for this election because the Morrison Government was too new to assess, and too divergent from the moderate Turnbull Government, but may explain individual seat results. Similarly, Mackerras's (1976) study on the power of the personal vote may explain a number of local aberrations, but, as was noted when the concept of the pendulum and the 2PP vote was first released (e.g. see Goot 1973; Rydon 1973; Sharman 1978), it is huge misrepresentation of what is going on and a far too simplistic explanation, obscuring the reality of a volatile electorate. However, with the individuation of the vote identified in this election, it is plain that the personal vote did contribute significantly to voter decisions.

Arguably, a combination of microsociological theory, motivated reasoning and the individuated or personal vote starts to get closer to a complete picture of voter behaviour in the 2019 election. Perhaps it is that social media has changed the meaning of context that microsociological theory is heavily based on, to a more individual context, complicating matters. However, the individuation of the vote and the rejection of partisanship leans to local and personal context and identification with candidates being more important. The observations made here also prompt the question: how is local context both more and less important at the same time? It may be that the 2019 election, lacking the national narrative, is an odd election resulting in divergent voting behaviour and widespread evidence of disconnect, or a structural may be shift taking place.

6.2.1 Revisiting the Disconnection Thesis

Evidence of a disconnect between politicians, voters, media and researchers has been noted throughout this thesis. However, as argued by others (Gibson, Lusoli & Ward 2008; Goot 2002; Norris 2000), this disconnect does not conform to the defined concept of disconnect, identified by evidence of declining citizen knowledge, trust, efficacy, engagement and participation. In the Australian experience, the opposite is true: there are very high levels of participation and engagement, evidenced by the same-sex marriage debate, exploding

youth participation and voter registration (Gravelle & Carson 2018; McAllister & Snagovsky 2018; Vaughan 2019) and the consistently high levels of activity on the well-established #auspol (Australian politics) hashtag on Twitter (Bruns 2017c; Sauter & Bruns 2015). The trust in, and respect of, politicians and political parties have been low for a very long time and continue to be so (Gothe-Snape 2019b; Grimmer, M. & Grube 2017; Martin, A. 2010).

This disconnect in the Australian system is a more pure or simple concept of the different stakeholders not having the same conversation. What voters wanted to talk about was not what politicians were talking about; not what media was reporting on; and not what researchers were asking about. This disconnect continues to drive further interest and engagement, rather than disengagement, as the cultural lack of respect for political office enables the Australian voter to yell louder, rather than give up in the face of out-of-touch leaders and institutions. Dalton's (2008) cognitive mobilisation theory does support this alternative view of the disconnect, with increasing education and the information explosion in mass and social media enabling voters to get more engaged and have their own conversations.

6.3 Problems at the Intersection of Theory, Method and Reality

6.3.1 Electoral Literacy

Undoubtedly, Australia suffers from very poor electoral literacy (McAllister 2010)—both in terms of election polling and its flawed interpretation and reportage, as well as in understanding our own electoral system. This is most clearly evident in the flawed 2PP model, swing and the concept of the election pendulum. The 2PP has always been a flawed instrument, given that Australia has never accurately been a two-party democracy and we have never had a national electorate. Even when the influence of minor parties was considerably smaller than it is now, the 2PP concealed the true intent of voters, confused National and Liberal party support as one and erased geographic differences in pursuit of an easy-to-understand measure (Rydon 1973).

To be fair, it is unlikely Mackerras or other scholars promoting a binary measure and the use of swing would have, or could have, foreseen the level of the media's fixation with the 2PP. Far too many headlines predict the result of an election based on a 2PP number months

out from an election, and a single point move in the 2PP will be spun into some significant indication of a rise or fall in support for either major party, rather than a movement within the margin of error. The advent of social media has demonstrably encouraged this obsession, with Twitter in particular exploding into a day's worth of armchair psephology with each Newspan release.

From that dominant 2PP frame, almost everything about our electoral system is misinterpreted. Correlations with census data are churned out by academics and journalists making the ecological fallacy of inferring nationwide party support from the aggregate data of dominant demographic groups in seats with significant swings (Catt 1996; Ratcliff, Sheppard & Pietsch 2020). Voters do not understand election results or the preferential voting system because they are so indoctrinated to understand the business of elections as a national contest with only two contestants. The myth of a national electorate leads to screams of outrage from minor party supporters that it is 'unfair' they did not get as many seats as their national vote share would indicate they should have (Brent 2019). This false understanding of the election system and how it works, in turn, compromises other electoral research, since the way voters interpret questions—even basic questions such as 'who do you intend to vote for'—is significantly dependent on how the respondents understand the electoral system. They may interpret that question as who they are giving their first preference to, which party they want to win or which major party they will preference.

The lack of nuance and expertise in analysis and reporting elections is not limited to polling numbers. A notable example is the reporting of 'preference deals': agreements between parties on the order in which they will preference each other on their how-to-vote cards. The how-to-vote card is a uniquely Australian creation of habit to assist voters in numbering their ballots correctly to support the candidate of their choice (Sharman, Sayers & Miragliotta 2002). The past practice of senate preference deals—where group ballots were submitted by parties enabling the voter to just put '1' in their party's box, and the flow from there to be determined by the party themselves—was abandoned before the 2016 election (Green, A. 2018b), but the discussion of preference deals continues as though what a party puts on a marketing flyer will determine the result (Elton 2019). Media outlets made some notable attempts to inform voters otherwise during the formal campaign (e.g. see McMahon 2019; Street 2019). Voters are free to number ballots how they like, but many

continue to believe that the 1 on their ballot will determine what happens, rather than their own numbering.

The question of how to resolve this problem is a vexed one. As noted by Goot (2020), pollsters and press could do more to emphasise that polls are not precise measures but are estimates with a margin of error. Moreover, the demand for pollsters to predict outcome, rather than report the numbers reflecting the day's opinion, must end. Journalists need to shift to reporting polling numbers soberly without spinning the numbers into actual electoral consequences, but as sober reporting does not get the desired click rate, it is unlikely this behaviour will change soon.

6.3.2 Theoretical Bias

Theoretical bias refers to how theory affects questionnaire design. Each of the dominant voter behaviour theories predict or anticipate the importance of certain factors and make assumptions about underlying behaviour. This leads to question design that seeks to prove or find evidence supporting the theory, which, in turn, prevents accurate analysis and the true voice of voters being heard, because their answers have been predetermined for them. The interpretation of those results through a theoretical frame also ensures a reinforcement of the theory, rather than an unfiltered, authentic representation of what voters actually did.

This is a contestable suggestion, since of course all researchers working within a particular frame will deny any such bias and assert that they have reported their findings honestly. This critique is not to suggest they have behaved unethically or dishonestly, but rather, that the theoretical input into the questionnaire design colours the responses. This bias will be greatest in those surveys that only have closed questions for important considerations, such as which policy area they considered most important, because the responses are written by someone thinking in a theoretical frame of what is important for vote decision. Even when a researcher deliberately designs a study to test multiple theories, the results are predetermined to support one of those theories. There is no allowance for the unexpected behaviour, or a consideration that was not forecasted.

Post-election research is particularly vulnerable to theoretical and respondent bias, even without the ecological fallacy of drawing inferences of individual behaviour from the aggregate election results and census data. The design of a questionnaire after the election, or analysing media content after the election, will be significantly influenced by the

perception of the events during the election and the immediate post-election commentary. Similarly, voter responses to questions asked after the election will be subject to significant bias, and since time would have distorted their memory of what they thought at the time, they may report a different vote decision than their actual vote out of a social desirability bias or guilt about their choice, and they too may have taken on board the immediate post-election discourse and engaged in post-event rationalisation of what happened. Importantly, post-election research is very susceptible to fitting the events of the election to the preferred theory, and then asking questions to confirm that re-fit, rather than attempting to understand those events and then generating the theory from the results.

Academic research in particular does not lend itself well to voter behaviour research. The volatility and the dynamic nature of election campaigns that may necessitate rapid changes to questionnaires or even to study design are simply incompatible with the slow, deliberate work of academia and the necessary ethics process of university research. To study elections effectively, you must gather multiple data sources in real time, and you must have the flexibility to respond to rapidly changing events without waiting for the next meeting of the ethics committee for approval to proceed. It may be necessary to launch a new survey in hours to capture responses to an event as soon as it occurs or begin an entirely new study immediately if a snap election or by-election is called. The cultural demand for a research question that is to be answered by any study also fuels the theoretical bias, demanding a narrow focus that prohibits exploration of the unexpected and hidden variable. While grounded theory and a-theoretical approaches are technically accepted as valid, the cultural pressure to define how and what you are looking for before you begin can be intense and suffocating, particularly for newer researchers. The kind of research necessary to genuinely understand voter behaviour without theoretical bias is simply incompatible with the current university environment and culture.

6.3.3 Sampling

The challenges of voter behaviour research, both academic and commercial polling, are often anchored in sampling. Including more people involves more cost, and there has been a dismaying trend towards smaller samples that only balance on age and gender, and possibly electorate. As noted by Goot (2020) and Ratcliff, Sheppard and Pietsch (2020), other factors, such as geography or residency, asset ownership, occupation, education or media consumption, may need to be reincorporated into sampling design to ensure an

accurate reflection of the variability in voter attitudes. Reincorporated rather than added, since the early studies of voter behaviour did take more factors into account. For example, the original 1940 Erie County study balanced their samples on age, sex, income, residence, political opinion and expressed interest in the campaign (Lazarsfeld 1941b). The 1972 Summit County study sample was balanced on age, sex, race (with black voters deliberately oversampled), education, income, occupation, party identification, political interest and voting disposition (Mendelsohn, H.A. & O’Keefe 1976, pp. 219–27).

The size of the sample needs to be increased to account for the increasing variability and volatility of the electorate. It is no longer adequate to have a sample of less than 1200 people nationwide and assert it is reflective of the entire country for something as complex as voter behaviour. In a single electorate or community, it may still be valid, but in a challenging electorate—for example, Wentworth with its many subcultures as mentioned in section 6.5.2—a larger sample that accurately reflects the subcultures and identity groupings may be needed. The exact number needed to accurately reflect the entire country is a matter for further research.

Identifying the sample size and composition is a problem that again will be biased by theory. The groupings or demographics that are used to balance the sample will almost entirely be determined by the dominant theory being used: a Columbia-descendent study is more likely to value media consumption or regionality, a Michigan-descendent study more likely to value partisanship or issue opinions and a Downs-descendent study more likely to value occupation or asset ownership. Post stratification of a significantly large study, or perhaps the data gathered by a VAA, may enable the identification of important factors and a re-weighting of the sample to appropriately reflect voter behaviour, but again is open to theoretical bias and the re-fitting of the events to the theory, rather than accurately interpreting the data and then explaining that data theoretically.

6.4 What Works?

By this point, the reader may be feeling confused that there is no apparent argument in favour or against the theory or the method of understanding voter behaviour being laid out in this thesis. The feeling is correct: there is little evidence to support any one method as being ‘right’. All are useful tools, but it is in the combination of tools that some understanding of this most complex behaviour may be found. Similarly, no one theory can

effectively explain the events of the 2019 election. However, a combination of theories, especially microsociological theory, valence and motivated reasoning, starts to build a more accurate picture and reduces the number of false flags generated by using one theory alone. These theories are not naturally complementary and lack a common anchoring work.

The new theory of *Individuated Voter Behaviour* proposed in an embryonic form in Section 2.6 does address some of the weaknesses of existing theories by being more encapsulating of conflicting influences and motivations that exist within a single voters decision. Whether this theory works or not, and indeed if it works for other elections, can only be determined through further study. However, even at a conceptual level it cannot account for all voter behaviour and will likely be limited to a useful theory in combination with other theories.

The methods used to measure the dominant theories are also different and not overly complementary. Sociological theory is best measured by a multi-wave panel study enabling the capture of campaign dynamics and media and social pressure over time. Valence factors are most commonly measured in post-election surveys asking questions about issues and assessment of performance. Valence factors can be measured in a panel study, but the assessment of performance or competence will vary with the ebb and flow of the campaign and, in turn, complicate results. Motivated reasoning, as a psychological theory, is best tested in an experimental setting. The new theory of *motivated inverse valence* hypothesised in section 4.4 is similarly most effectively explored and confirmed in an experimental study, although a panel study—particularly a panel study with natural experiments embedded in its design—may be able to identify some of the behaviour.

Panel studies are generally considered superior to other methodologies for a number of reasons, as outlined in Chapter 3. Isolated cross-section surveys or polls cannot be used to determine vote causality, are more prone to sample and other research bias that needs to be mitigated and managed, and are unable to develop a relationship with respondents that enables more honest and insightful results. Panel studies are more rare because of the cost, not because of the quality of data.

That said, the volatility of the 2019 election tripped up polling and panel studies alike. There is particular concern around electorate or regional polling, and the decreasing accuracy and reliability of smaller polls (Goot 2020; Jackman, Ratcliff & Mansillo 2019). It is possible that pollsters are treating such polls as a miniature version of national polls,

without appropriate deference to regional variability, which is not the purpose of a local poll (Lazarsfeld & Rosenberg 1949). Alternatively, it could be a lack of poll literacy creating unrealistic expectations of polls (Goot 2020).

How to capture the observed fast shifts in momentum and voter movements that are against the flow of electoral discourse, while accounting for regional variation, is a puzzle that must be dealt with if we are to understand what is happening in modern elections. Notably, the assessment of social media must be integrated into survey methods to effectively capture the dynamics of the public sphere. The new method proposed in section 3.5 is a theoretical attempt to find a way to solve that puzzle.

6.5 Summary

All theories and methods have some value in explaining some voter behaviour some of the time, but no theory or method can explain all voter behaviour in one election, let alone in multiple elections. Rigid applications of, or even loyalty to, any one theory is not serving the voters or researchers or Australian elections well, leading to false conclusions and baseless narratives, which, in turn, influence the coverage of elections and election campaign strategies away from the thoughts and desires of voters. The events of the 2019 Australian federal election were particularly volatile and subject to extreme geographic differences, making the election extremely difficult to poll, research and understand, and none of the theory or research was up to the task of understanding or explaining exactly what happened. We must find new ways to research voter behaviour and new ways to poll vote intent that are more effective at exploring the reality of voters' lives, that account for geographic variation and are flexible enough to adapt to the unique events of any election. A fusion of theories and methods will likely be the optimal approach; however, caution is necessary to ensure older theories do not bias research design, and there is capacity to capture new trends and unexpected results.

The new theories of individuated voter behaviour and motivated inverse valence put forward here similarly will not explain all voter behaviour in an election, but seek to explain the increasing volatility, polarisation and what may be objectively observed as irrational voter decisions. The integrated multi-panel method proposed is similarly designed to capture and measure that volatility and seek out its cause and other destabilising influences, but it cannot explain all election phenomena.

Chapter 7: Conclusion—Should We Research Voter Behaviour?

The answer to the question of ‘why study elections?’ is self-evident: as they are necessary for democracy, then it is equally necessary to analyse the nature of elections and to assess whether they are achieving their purposes. The study of elections, then, has a focus much broader than the simple issue of who wins (Jaensch 1995, p. 2).

Voter behaviour research is a complex topic, and one that has been somewhat ignored in Australia. Similar to many doctoral theses, this thesis ends with creating more questions than it answers. Before we turn to listing all the areas where more research is required, I will first recap the findings of this thesis in a critical frame and address the more philosophical question posed in the introduction: is it a worthwhile exercise to research voter behaviour at all? I also sum up the two major findings of this thesis: none of the existing theories and methods are up to the challenge of effectively researching voter behaviour in the modern election; and it is still a worthwhile exercise to research voter behaviour.

As discussed in Chapter 2, there is no agreed or unified theory of voter behaviour; however, there is a clear orthodoxy in voter behaviour theory and research. The vast array of voter behaviour theories is all anchored back to the three dominant theories of Columbia, Michigan and Downs, and through them to democratic ideals, and norms and concepts of group behaviour. Political science scholars have proven themselves resistant to alternate theories, preferring partisanship and issues as worthy of more weight than social and psychological considerations, and preferring not to work with the other social sciences (Eldersveld 1951). Even those daring to go into the social and psychological and challenge the existing theory, such as motivated reasoning and cognitive mobilisation theorists, are still attempting to explain the decision in reference to partisan norms.

Early scholars were far more flexible and creative in their approach, seeking out the unknown rather than testing for the predetermined. It is likely, at least in part, this is because they were pioneers, lacking the collective pressure of a hegemony to tell them what they ‘should’ be doing. However, the dearth of attempts to really examine the phenomenon of how voters decide who to vote for are obvious and indicate a largely stagnant field. When

one reflects on the subject and literature, it is quite profound how little we know about the actual process of deciding who to vote for, given the detailed and exploratory nature of early work. Take for example, C. Burns's (1961) *Parties & People*, whose many findings match this author's findings nearly 60 years later: issues are unimportant (pp. 40–1, 72), the media and campaign had little influence (p. 62), of greatest influence was personal conversation (p. 63) and no vote is decided on one factor alone (p. 131). Had Burns's research been embraced and built upon over the intervening years, alongside the Michigan theory-based AES, we would probably have a much greater understanding of Australian voter behaviour today.

The adherence to dominant theory over time has arguably resulted in perpetually weaker analysis and results, easier to fault and deconstruct. The self-reinforcing nature of research anchored in theory as the foremost consideration in research design is the most obvious cause of the observed disconnect between research findings and reality. The orthodoxy possibly explains the failure of researchers to use all of the resources available to truly understand the subject.

For example, while some scholars do attempt to grapple with the rapidly shifting sands of the electoral landscape, there is little in the way of academic research that engages with the professionals who run campaigns, with notable exceptions such as Edwina Throsby's (2018) interviews with campaign professionals and the involvement of Elmo Roper in the original Columbia research (Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee 1954, p. xvi; Eulau 1980; Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, p. xlii). That is not to say that the partnership of professional and academic minds on this vexing subject will necessarily result in greater accuracy; the beliefs of Roper and colleagues were systematically disproven by the Columbia studies, for example:

Political experts have frequently asserted that, during a campaign, the more intelligent and concerned voter will shift allegiance from one candidate to another as he learns more about their platforms and he is better able to appraise their qualifications... because the relationship between party changer and indifference was unanticipated the plan for the 1940 study did not make adequate provisions for examination. This was corrected in the 1944 study. (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet 1968, pp. xxix–xxx)

However, the lack of such partnerships points to an obvious failure of the field to identify and determine what it was campaigners were trying to achieve in their assessments of

campaign effects, as well as learn from those on the ground how voters are reacting. There may be a perception that these campaigners are not interested in democratic ideals, they just want to win, which is likely to be true but does not mean that professionals are unable to provide valuable insight.

Similarly, digital professionals and scholars may be able to assist political science with a better understanding of communication dynamics. There is a rich tapestry of thought and creative theory development to understand this most rapid and unstable thing that is the Internet and the way it is reforming our societies. Just as campaigns are slow to embrace it, so is political science. The Cambridge Analytica scandal will not help matters, making it exceptionally difficult for researchers to study anything in the social media space, and nearly impossible for election-related research.

The methods discussed in Chapter 3 again adhere to conceptualisations of the ‘right’ way to research voter behaviour, with very little grounded theory or ethnographic analysis evidenced in the literature, and a heavy loyalty to survey research. Again, attempts to introduce new methods have generally faltered, with experiments and observation only at the edges of the field, rarely utilised to their full capacity. Even interlocking questions as to a method to unveil the true meaning and intent of answers to surveys, as advocated for by George Gallup (1947), Paul Lazarsfeld (1944a) and Angus Campbell (1946), are not commonly observed in recent studies. Digital ethnographers who immerse themselves in our new public sphere are likely to be the best partners for voter behaviour scholarship going forward, and their role should not be limited to understanding ‘fake news’ and analysing conversation sentiment.

The events of the election as detailed in Chapter 4 and 5 are very complex and volatile. The thematic analysis of these events is an attempt to make sense of chaos, but by definition also means that some of the events of the cycle are excluded or diminished in importance. The unpredictability of such events makes research challenging, particularly research within universities which, due to university structure and ethics considerations, simply cannot adapt to such volatility. Yet, despite that volatility, the polls and research and commentary could have been easily transferred from any other election. Creighton Burns (1961) said in his report on the 1960 La Trobe By-election that politics in La Trobe was mainly for the politicians, with the tactics and campaign methods inherited from earlier generations: ‘The campaign itself was largely a private ritual, conducted in half-empty halls

and the unread columns of the press' (p. 65). Perhaps it is that electoral research is also something inherited from past scholars, and for the benefit only of researchers.

We particularly need to reflect and reconsider our method of research given the failure of almost everyone to report on the events of the election accurately and completely. This includes media, pundits and researchers alike—including myself. We all got it wrong. If anyone did get it right, we have no way of testing that. We all reached for the easy explanation, the self-validating theory and the quick defence of wrong predictions. We all persist in discussing the swing and 2PP and in framing discussions of the election in partisan terms that award more presence and power to major parties than is necessarily the case. The pressure of the hegemony of voter behaviour research and theory is suffocating to the fresh approach. The myth of the national electorate is so pervasive as to silence nuanced discussion of regional variations, and the samples too small to explore any region in detail.

The concept of individuated voter behaviour proposed in Section 2.6 is equally submissive to the hegemony. It draws on all three dominant theories in some fashion, the integrated multi-panel method proposed still bows to the well-established panel method as being the best way to research voter behaviour, and to the concept of mixed-methods as being superior to a single method alone. The shift to a perspective that considers the voter first, and the system second, will be too challenging for many in the field, even though that is all it is: the discussion of 'me' (the voter) in reference to 'we' (the electorate), rather than discussion of the electorate of which voters happen to be part of.

Nevertheless, it does not necessarily follow that this somewhat pessimistic appraisal of voter behaviour research negates the value of researching voter behaviour at all. Conversely, it amplifies why we need to do more substantial research, and more research of voter behaviour generally. Understanding voter behaviour has implications for myriad other fields and research subjects: understanding influence feeds into marketing and media; understanding values and the hierarchy of voter needs and wants informs government and advocacy organisations; understanding this most difficult decision process informs the study and understanding of all kinds of decisions, from which car to buy, to which university degree to pursue, to why some oppose vaccinations or wearing a mask to protect their health.

Being able to combat the extemporaneous explanations and spin of pundits and politicians is crucial to have a healthy democracy. The ‘blaming’ of Queensland for the election result as discussed in Chapter 4 is a vivid example of what happens when we do not research elections and voter behaviour well. The divisions in society get deeper, and indeed very substantial government decisions are made (e.g. the Queensland Government’s move to approve aspects of the Adani mine) because of completely baseless interpretations of electoral results. The quick and ideological interpretations, some based on limited data, others making ecological fallacies and others based on no data at all, do not serve our democracy well.

In his famous ‘Postscript’ written in 1937, Max Horkheimer (2002) defined Critical Theory and in doing so illuminated the challenge of voter behaviour research identified by this thesis:

The critical theory of society, on the other hand, has for its object men as producers of their own historical way of life in its totality. The real situations which are the starting point of science are not regarded simply as data to be verified and to be predicted according to the laws of probability. Every datum depends not on nature alone but also on the power man has over it. Objects, the kind of perception, the questions asked, and the meaning of the answers all bear witness to human activity and the degree of man’s power. (p. 244)

Too much of both theory and method diminish or dismiss the power that voters have over their own decisions and the electoral result, as part of the dedication of social science to the principles of empiricism, and in doing so, largely sidestep the complex mystery and magic of voter behaviour. Misunderstandings of voter behaviour derived from a lack of robust research, whether that lack of robustness is the result of loyalty to the orthodoxy or limited resources, enslaves our democracy to shallow, poll driven, guesswork. Voter behaviour researchers need to adapt, confront the complex and confounding, be ready for the unexpected result, willing to draw on theory outside of the accepted hegemony and be more honest brokers of electoral phenomena.

7.1 Main Findings

The guiding question for this research was: *Are the current approaches to studying voter behaviour in Australian elections effective?* Within this there were sub-questions relating

to whether research or media coverage effectively captured the mind and mood of voters, and whether the available theories of voter behaviour explained the events of the 2019 election.

The findings of this thesis demonstrate that there are some significant issues and limitations in current approaches, notably the dominance of theory pre-suggesting findings and significantly influencing study design. A demonstrable orthodoxy in voter behaviour research at both the academic and commercial research levels hampers the ability of researchers to effectively identify the mind and mood of voters. Poor poll literacy and fundamental misunderstanding of our democracy contribute to poor coverage of elections generally and research data more specifically. The hyperbole in election reporting and overstating of predictions based on poll results are particularly concerning and are rightly a cause for review of both how research is communication to media, and how journalists write their stories. This is not to say that all reporting or polls are flawed, but the intense pressure to be ‘right’ in predictions and ‘first’ in publication is clearly having a distorting effect. Meanwhile, voters are having their own conversations, largely empowered by social media rather than mainstream press, and are disconnected from the conversations happening between politicians and press. The existing theories of voter behaviour are able to explain the behaviour of some voters in some areas but are unable to explain all behaviour and the overall result of the election. In short, no, the current approaches to researching Australian voter behaviour are not very effective.

A second research question explored the fundamental issue more deeply: *Can we effectively study voter behaviour in Australia, and if so, how?* It may be possible to improve methodology, in particular, by jettisoning the flawed measure of the 2PP and embracing more psychosocial approaches to understanding voter behaviour. Regional differences must be accounted for, and the methods deployed must be designed to capture the volatility of the electorate. Every election is unique, so a new study should be designed for each election that is tailored to the unique issue and social events of that election. New theories and combining theories, as well as developing atheoretical approaches, will be essential to effectively understand what happened in any given election. Attempting to compare one election to a previous one is theoretically possible, and an understandable desire, but the drive for research continuity will come at the cost of researchers continuing to be disconnected from the behaviour of the unique election on foot.

There are two significant findings from this research. The first is that none of the existing theories and methods is up to the challenge of effectively grasping all the complexities of voter behaviour in the modern election. Clearly, if none of the existing theories and methods are up to the challenge, we need to go back to the drawing board. That is not to say that studies using the longstanding and accepted theories are wrong, but we need to adjust our language and posture to attempting to explain an election, to attempting to explain some voters' behaviour in the context of a particular language. A fusion of theories and methods is likely to produce better results, but experimentation is also essential. The media reporting of research and poll findings also needs to interweave an element of doubt, not bury margins of error in the fine print and declare the election result before votes are cast.

The second is that it is, despite the challenges, still a worthwhile exercise to research voter behaviour. As stated above, it is actually more necessary than ever to seek a better explanation, and research more deeply and creatively. We need to understand elections to understand how a government came to power, and that means we simply must study voter behaviour. We just need to find flexible and responsive ways of doing so that can more authentically capture the mind and mood of voters.

7.2 Areas for Further Research

There are many areas for further research to improve both the theory and method of voter behaviour research that have presented themselves during this study. The following are all substantial areas of research worthy of scholarly consideration.

Individuation of voters, as discussed in Chapter 2, is not a new concept, but as a new theory does require extensive research and testing to determine the validity of the theory. Is personal identity a dominant factor in voter decision? Does the way voters relate to their communities, the way they define themselves in reference to others, shape the way they make voting decisions?

Motivated inverse valence, the term I applied to the emotionally motivated decision to act the opposite way to what would be a rational reaction to negatively valenced information (see Section 4.4.1), needs to be explored in some detail. This is evidently one of the most frustrating and confounding dynamics of the modern election. It is likely this psychological

process is what enables the likes of US President Donald Trump to get increased support for doing things that are widely condemned. Understanding this one behaviour pattern, understanding it and being able to identify it and measure it in real time during a campaign, may unlock the mystery of why the polling is getting things so wrong, and lead to better methods.

A return to the basics of influence, the nature of it and how we influence each other in a social media-enabled world, is essential for any effective analysis of voter behaviour. The finding from the MCA in Chapter 4 of a second wave of sharing of news items needs to be fully explored and tested. Are people sharing other people's content, is it a yoyo traversing the various social media platforms with their different speeds or is it an influencer sharing something that gives a story its second wind? What is causing old news stories to be revived and shared again? To what extent is other kinds of content both being shared and how is that influencing voters, their discussions and decisions?

There are always patterns in the chaos, and further study is necessary to identify those patterns over time and what is driving those patterns. This is likely to be through hidden variables and other factors not yet identified or even considered, and each election will present new patterns, for which we must search. Grasping the volatility of campaign dynamics will be a perpetual challenge, even when studying elections not preceded by such a volatile term. The integrated multi-panel method I proposed in Section 3.5 may assist with this challenge, but it too needs to be tested to determine the validity and feasibility of the approach.

Generalisability is a challenge for electoral research of any kind. Ask any political observer at the time of the 2016 election, and not one would have predicted the Section 44 constitutional crisis, the number of by-elections or the overwhelming wave of scandal that consumed the parliament. Similarly, at the time of the 2019 election it is unlikely any would have considered it possible for the world to be consumed in a pandemic the following year. The 46th Parliament is drowning in challenges as much as the 45th was drowning in scandal. The next election will be nothing like the last one, indeed it is difficult to even guess how voters may behave in our new reality. Researching to what extent the findings of one election are generalisable to another, whether it be another election of the same jurisdiction at another time or an election in a different jurisdiction, is important to understanding how each study fits into the overall understanding of voter behaviour and elections generally.

7.3 Final Thought

Studying voter behaviour in a specific election context is, in my humble view, one of the most complex and difficult of subjects to attempt to study within the social sciences. I have on occasion likened it to an Olympic sport: it requires a team effort of highly skilled people, and you only get one shot at it every few years. Try to break it down into its parts and the important interplay of the complex electoral environment is lost. Try to generalise it from a previous election, or an election in a different context, and you will generally fail because each election is unique. Continuing to fail in understanding and interpreting the thought processes and decisions of voters is not an academic misstep, it is a fundamental failure to understand the subject matter.

For these and many other reasons, a substantial argument can be made for a dedicated research centre, with substantial secure funding for a number of cycles, to really delve into the mystery of Australian voter behaviour. This brings with it an inherent risk of further entrenching dominant thought, because gathering most of the country's psephologists and voter behaviour scholars (and there are not that many) in one place may further homogenise an already narrow field. However, this is not research that can be done in between lectures or as one of many research projects: complete focus is required. Nor is it a single project to be done once; we must research every election to understand what voters are trying to say. However, as the current hegemony reinforces the power of the major parties and classic understandings of politics, it is unlikely this will change.

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Appendix 1: Media Content Analysis Data

Key

- Week: Analysis period
- Outlet: ABC: ABC News; AFR: Australian Financial Review; AGE: The Age; AUS: The Australian; BRT: Brisbane Times; CAT: Canberra Times; CON: The Conversation; CRI: Crikey; GUA: The Guardian Australia; HUF: Huffington Post; HUN: Herald Sun; IND: Independent Australia; NCA: News.com.au; NED: New Daily; NEM: New Matilda; NIN: Nine News; NTN: Northern Territory News; PER: Perth Now; SAT: Saturday Paper; SBS: SBS News; SKY: Sky News; SMH: Sydney Morning Herald; TCM: The Courier Mail; TED: 10Daily; TEL: Daily Telegraph; WES: The West Australian; YAH: Yahoo News
- Date: Date of publication as listed on the article
- Link: Link provided by ATNIX. Note, some stories have multiple links
- Headline: Headline of story as published online
- Lead: The first paragraph of the story, or if a buried lead, a brief summary of the story.
- Type: News: a journalistic news item published as news; Opinion: commentary piece published as editorial
- Coverage: Candidate: about personal attributes of a candidate; Contest: about the horse race, predictions, and polling; Issue: about a substantive issue in the debate (most commonly policy issues); Leaders: stories specifically about Bill Shorten or Scott Morrison; Party: about the political party; Not election related: does not relate to nor reflect on the election contest.
- Pro/Anti: Anti-ALP: substantively critical of the ALP or their candidates; Anti-LNP: substantively critical of any of the Coalition parties, candidates or the Government; neutral: either balanced or not critical or supportive of any political side; Pro-ALP: substantively supportive or positive about of the ALP or their candidates; Pro-LNP: substantively supportive or positive about the Coalition Parties, candidates or the Government.
- Scandal: Yes: story is about, or significantly references, a scandalous matter; No: Story does not relate to scandal.
- Twitter shares: The number of tweets of that link during the week of analysis, as reported by ATNIX. Note, it is not total shares of the item and some stories appear in multiple weeks.
- Theme: Coal versus Climate: stories for or against dealing with climate change, including discussions of energy; Religion versus Rights: discussions of religious values or individual rights; Racism versus Refugees: any stories about racism or refugees; Cash versus Certainty: expenditures, grants, pork-barrelling and stories on trust or economic certainty; Scandal versus Standards: discussions of scandal and debates about societal values.
- Yellowed: Story not able to be analysed

| Week | Outlet | Date | Link | Headline | Lead | Type | Coverage | Pro/Anti | Scandal Y/N | Twitter shares | Theme |
|------|--------|---------|---|---|--|------|----------------------|----------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1 | NCA | 21/8/18 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/economy/world-economy/south-africa-begins-seizing-whiteowned-farms/news-story/8937f899bd3f131bfc4ffb648ea5c53b | South Africa begins seizing white-owned farms | SOUTH Africa has targeted the first two farms for unilateral seizure after the owners refused an offer of one-tenth of the land's value. | news | issue | neutral | no | 17441 | Racism v Refugees |
| 1 | ABC | 25/8/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-22/pink-answers-grieving-girls-wish-hug-at-brisbane-concert/10153014 | Pink answers grieving girl's wish for a hug at Brisbane concert | A 14-year-old girl grieving the recent loss of her mother has been sent "a hug from heaven" after pop star Pink pulled her out of the crowd for a hug, selfie, and motivational chat at one of her concerts this week. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 9123 | other |
| 1 | SKY | 24/8/18 | https://www.skynews.com.au/page/libspill | | Collection page for stories about the Liberal party leadership spill | news | Party | neutral | yes | 3247 | Scandal v Standards |
| 1 | SMH | 22/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/government-refers-duttons-eligibility-to-solicitor-general-20180822-p4zyy6.html | Government refers Dutton's eligibility to Solicitor-General | Attorney-General Christian Porter has referred the issue of Peter Dutton's eligibility to sit in Parliament to the the federal government's top legal officer for advice ahead of a looming leadership spill between the former home affairs minister and Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2553 | Scandal v Standards |
| 1 | NCA | 24/8/18 | https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/wtf/a-peter-dutton-from-texas-is-getting-confused-for-australias-peter-dutton/news-story/22b6d79b27757629515fa098b5271908 | Peter Dutton from Texas is getting confused with Australia's wannabe PM | A 30-YEAR-OLD popcorn entrepreneur from America called Peter Dutton, who was confused online for the Australian prime ministerial hopeful of the same name, has embraced the unexpected fame with his "new found Aussie family". | news | candidate | neutral | yes | 2245 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 1 | SBS | 23/2/17 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/australian-imam-volunteering-to-defend-jakarta-s-ahok-at-blasphemy-trial | Australian imam volunteering to defend Jakarta's Ahok at blasphemy trial | The president of the Islamic Association of South Australia is heading to Indonesia's capital hoping to defend its governor at a blasphemy trial. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2135 | other |
| 1 | NIN | 23/8/18 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/alex-mcewan-guilty-murder-eunji-ban/056521d7-19d3-4e68-b5dd-5bfc47625358 | Alex McEwan sentenced to life for murder of Korean student Eunji Ban | Alex Reuben McEwan has been sentenced to life in prison after being found guilty of murdering Korean student Eunji Ban as she walked to work in Brisbane in November, 2013. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2079 | other |
| 1 | SMH | 20/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/malcolm-turnbull-removes-all-climate-change-targets-from-energy-policy-in-fresh-bid-to-save-leadership-20180820-p4zyht.html | Malcolm Turnbull removes all climate change targets from energy policy in fresh bid to save leadership | Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has staged another dramatic retreat on energy policy in the face of a dire threat to his leadership, removing climate change targets from the National Energy Guarantee in his second policy reset in four days. | news | Party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1960 | Coal v Climate |
| 1 | NED | 23/8/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/08/23/hello-rupert-bye-bye-malcolm/ | Hello Rupert, bye-bye Malcolm | Murdoch's annual visits to Australia invariably trigger seismic events both in and outside News Corp, the company he's presided over for decades. So is it any surprise that Malcolm Turnbull has lost his job less than a fortnight after Murdoch arrived here? Of course it isn't. | opinion | leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 1900 | Cash v Certainty |
| 1 | CAT | 22/8/18 | http://canberratimes.com.au/politics/federal/dutton-childcare-company-received-5-6-million-in-public-money-20180822-p4zyy6.html | Dutton childcare company received \$5.6 million in public money | The childcare company operated for Peter Dutton's family trust received more than \$5.6 million in public Commonwealth funding, placing the Liberal leadership contender in | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1662 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | | | danger of being ineligible to remain in Parliament. | | | | | | |
| 1 | ABC | 25/8/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-24/malcolm-turnbull-liberal-party-fear-comes-to-pass/10160764 | With Malcolm Turnbull's demise, the Liberal Party's true fear is coming to pass | It's taken 14 years for the Liberal Party to work Malcolm Turnbull, like a splinter, out of its flesh. | opinion | Party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1613 | Scandal v Standards |
| 1 | SMH | 19/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/if-anyone-would-want-to-ban-muslims-it-should-be-me-but-i-don-t-20180817-p4zy5w.html | If anyone should want to ban Muslims it would be me but I don't | Son of murdered police staffer Curtis Cheng opines in opposition to Fraser Anning's call to ban Muslim immigration | opinion | Party | neutral | yes | 1604 | Racism v Refugees |
| 1 | TCM | 22/8/18 | https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/hug-from-superstar-pink-a-dream-come-true-for-townsville-teen-leah-murphy/news-story/42ba60794cbc3643e76e67ea4d42eb5c | Hug from superstar Pink a dream come true for Townsville teen Leah Murphy | A QUEENSLAND teen has been given a touching moment with P!NK after a sign she was holding was passed to the US singer during one of her concerts this week. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1424 | other |
| 1 | SMH | 26/10/09 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/nasty-saga-you-nearly-missed-20091025-hem5.html | Nasty saga you nearly missed | Story of how Michael Towke was rolled by the Liberal Party for the seat of Cook in favour of Scott Morrison. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1362 | Scandal v Standards |
| 1 | SMH | 19/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/fairfax-ipsos-poll-voter-support-collapses-as-peter-dutton-leans-towards-challenging-malcolm-turnbull-20180819-p4zye9.html | Fairfax-Ipsos poll: Voter support collapses as Peter Dutton leans towards challenging Malcolm Turnbull | Supporters of Peter Dutton say the Home Affairs Minister is leaning towards challenging Malcolm Turnbull for the prime ministership and has the numbers to win, amid a crisis over energy policy and a horror new poll showing support for the Coalition has slumped. | news | Leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 1350 | Coal v Climate |
| 1 | CAN | | http://www.canberratimes.com.au/photogallery/federal- | David Pope cartoon gallery | cartoon | | | | 1339 | | |

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|---|-----|---------|---|--|---|---------|-------|----------|-----|-------|---------------------|--|
| | | | politics/cartoons/david-pope-20120214-1t3j0.html | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | | 1318 | |
| 1 | AUS | 21/8/18 | theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/concerns-for-children-of-asylum-seekers-on-nauru/news-story/279834a87ef5236d08802a18dfdb5f2b | Concerns for children of asylum seekers on Nauru | New Zealand has bypassed Australia to directly petition Nauru to relocate refugees from Australian detention centres amid calls for children of asylum-seekers to be taken off the island. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1125 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 1 | AFR | | https://www.afr.com/policy/david-rowe-cartoons-20180430-h0zgej | David Rowe Cartoon Gallery | cartoon | | | | | 1041 | | |
| 1 | ABC | 20/8/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/religion/nazism-socialism-and-the-falsification-of-history/10214302 | Nazism, socialism and the falsification of history | At a time when conservative governments, the Murdoch press and their corporately funded think-tank supporters run down university departments of history in this country, the need for careful interpretations of the past has never been more evident. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1028 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 2 | SMH | 27/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/cancer-eating-the-heart-of-australian-democracy-20180826-p4zzum.html | Cancer eating the heart of Australian democracy | Kevin Rudd says since the coup of June 2010, Australian politics has become vicious, toxic and unstable | opinion | Issue | neutral | no | 13434 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 2 | SMH | 27/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/can-t-vote-liberal-in-good-conscience-alex-turnbull-blasts-climate-stance-20180827-p50018.html | Can't vote Liberal 'in good conscience': Alex Turnbull blasts climate stance | Alex Turnbull blamed "rent-seekers" backing the coal industry for felling his father Malcolm Turnbull as prime minister, saying it's "impossible" to vote for the Liberal-National coalition "in good conscience" | News | Issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 3688 | Coal v Climate | |

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| | | | | | because of its climate stance. | | | | | | |
| 2 | SKY | 27/8/18 | https://www.skynews.com.au/details/6077544012001 | Court throws out John Setka's case against the ALP | The Victorian Supreme Court has dismissed union boss John Setka's case, saying his membership with the Labor Party is a matter for the ALP. | News | Party | neutral | yes | 2762 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | ABC | 2/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-28/dutton-released-au-pair-after-lobbying-from-afl-boss-mclachlan/10172788 | Peter Dutton released au pair from immigration detention after lobbying from AFL boss Gillon McLachlan | Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton personally intervened to stop a French au pair being deported after his office was lobbied by AFL boss Gillon McLachlan. | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2730 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | ABC | 30/8/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-29/chelsea-manning-australian-government-may-ban-entry/10180236 | Chelsea Manning: Federal Government preparing to ban US whistleblower from Australia | The Federal Government is preparing to ban US whistleblower Chelsea Manning, the former soldier-turned-whistleblower who spent seven years behind bars for sending nearly 750,000 classified military and diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks, from coming to Australia for a speaking tour. | News | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2373 | religion v Rights |
| 2 | ABC | 27/8/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-27/refugee-children-on-瑙鲁-googling-how-to-kill-themselves/10153568 | Refugee children on Nauru are Googling how to kill themselves, whistleblower warns | Refugee children on Nauru are facing an unprecedented health crisis and are at a real risk of death, three whistleblowers have warned. | News | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2337 | Racism v Refugees |
| 2 | ABC | 2/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-30/dutton-ignored-border-force-advice-to-grant-au-pairs-visa/10182374 | Peter Dutton overruled Border Force advice when granting au pair's visa after AFL boss emailed his office | Peter Dutton overruled advice from a senior Australian Border Force (ABF) official when he allowed a French nanny to escape deportation after | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 2274 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | | | being lobbied by AFL boss Gillon McLachlan. | | | | | | |
| 2 | AFR | 3/8/18 | https://www.afr.com/politics/michaelia-cash-declined-to-give-afp-statement-on-union-raids-fresh-claims-20180830-h14pks | Michaelia Cash declined to give AFP statement on union raids: fresh claims | Cabinet minister Michaelia Cash has become the latest target of the payback culture inside the Liberal Party, after allegations emerged that she declined to provide a witness statement to the Australian Federal Police investigating the leaking of a union raid from within her office. | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1893 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | AUS | 27/8/18 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/newspoll/newspoll-popular-support-for-coalition-at-lowest-level-in-a-decade/news-story/cf52dcfd80c5f0e28c27a9e9557b0 | Newspoll: Voters savage Coalition chaos | Popular support for the Coalition has crashed to its lowest levels in a decade, with newly elected Prime Minister Scott Morrison faced with leading a shattered government out of the wreckage of last week's leadership coup and rebuilding a Liberal Party in crisis. | News | Contest | Anti-LNP | no | 1788 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | SMH | 30/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/dutton-s-au-pair-drama-shows-hypocrisy-of-immigration-policy-20180830-p500np.html | Dutton's au pair drama shows hypocrisy of immigration policy | Waleed Aly argues the position of Dutton on the au pairs is absurd. | opinion | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1730 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | SMH | 26/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/julie-bishop-quits-as-foreign-minister-and-will-likely-quit-parliament-20180826-p4zztq.html | Julie Bishop quits as Foreign Minister and will likely retire from Parliament | Julie Bishop will not serve in Prime Minister Scott Morrison's revamped cabinet and will likely quit Parliament at the next election in a bombshell decision that leaves the coveted foreign affairs ministry up for grabs. | News | Leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 1570 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 2 | SMH | 30/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/peter-dutton-au-pair-decision-helped-former-queensland-police-colleague-20180830-p500t3.html | Peter Dutton au pair decision helped former Queensland Police colleague | Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton acted on a request from a former Queensland Police Service colleague to overturn a border control decision on a foreign au pair, releasing the woman from detention and allowing her to enter the country. | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1453 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | ABC | 2/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-29/dutton-defends-au-pair-intervention-after-political-donations/10175466 | Peter Dutton defends au pair intervention after political donations as Labor calls for inquiry | Federal Labor says Peter Dutton must explain whether generous political donations had any influence on his decision to help a French au pair into the country. | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1432 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | SMH | 29/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/business-leaders-detail-list-of-industrial-relations-demands-for-minister-kelly-o-dwyer-20180829-p500j0.html | Business leaders detail list of industrial relations demands for minister Kelly O'Dwyer | Business leaders have put Prime Minister Scott Morrison on notice, calling for swift action on industrial relations to curtail union power just as an ACTU campaign seeking a radical expansion of workers' bargaining rights gathers steam. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1431 | Religion v Rights |
| 2 | SMH | 27/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/rudd-savages-abbott-and-murdoch-for-wrecking-australian-democracy-20180826-p4zzw8.html | Rudd savages Abbott and Murdoch for wrecking Australian democracy | Former prime minister Kevin Rudd has launched an incendiary attack on Tony Abbott and News Corp executive chairman Rupert Murdoch, who he claims have undermined Australian democracy and contributed to the "orgy of political violence" that led to Malcolm Turnbull's ousting. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 1376 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 2 | NCA | 30/8/18 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/work/a-war-veteran-ignored-by-peter-dutton-for-years-has-slammed-his-au-pair-visa-decisions/news-story/3f6e62091c080c61668a4dfcf39a03cd | A war veteran ignored by Peter Dutton for years has slammed his au pair visa decisions | Army veteran Captain Jason Scanes has made repeated requests to meet with Mr Dutton to discuss a visa for the Afghan interpreter who worked with him in the war zone, and whose life is in danger, but he was ignored, and is now criticising Dutton over the au pair scandal. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1322 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | CON | 29/8/18 | https://theconversation.com/could-section-44-exclude-tony-abbott-and-barnaby-joyce-from-parliament-102346 | Could Section 44 exclude Tony Abbott and Barnaby Joyce from parliament? | Tony Abbott and Barnaby Joyce have each accepted job offers from new Prime Minister Scott Morrison to serve as his special envoys, but these jobs may have inadvertently rendered both Abbott and Joyce disqualified from parliament under section 44 of the Constitution. | opinion | Issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1282 | Scandal v Standards |
| 2 | SMH | | https://www.smh.com.au/x/x-20000000-chels | | | | | | | 1185 | |
| 2 | BRT | 28/8/18 | https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/tamil-asylum-seeker-dies-in-south-east-queensland-hospital-20180828-p500a1.html | Tamil asylum seeker dies in south-east Queensland hospital | A Tamil asylum seeker from Sri Lanka who had tried to take his own life has died at Logan Hospital, south of Brisbane, after his life support was switched off. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1160 | Racism v Refugees |
| 3 | SMH | 19/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/nestle-says-slavery-reporting-requirements-could-cost-customers-20180816-p4zy51.html | Nestle says slavery reporting requirements could cost customers | One of the world's largest food and drink companies has warned proposed legislation requiring big business to report on their efforts to combat modern slavery could hit consumers' hip pockets. | News | issue | neutral | no | 7128 | Cash v Certainty |
| 3 | SMH | 3/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/i-ve-kept-a-very-good-list- | 'I've kept a very good list': Peter Dutton threatens to | Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton has threatened to turn the tables on the | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 3313 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | peter-dutton-threatens-to-dish-dirt-on-labor-amid-au-pair-scandal-20180903-p501f5.html | dish dirt on Labor amid au pair scandal | Labor opposition if it keeps pursuing him over the au pair scandal, saying he "kept a list" of MPs who asked him for help on immigration cases and he is "gathering information" to expose Labor's hypocrisy. | | | | | | | |
| 3 | SAT | 1/9/18 | https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2018/09/01/how-morrison-played-everyone/1535724006796 | How Morrison played everyone | While Scott Morrison presented himself as a reticent candidate, in reality he used unpopular tax cuts to damage Turnbull and fooled Dutton over numbers. | News | Leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 3111 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 3 | AGE | 3/9/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/matt-hew-guy-paid-out-millions-to-keep-his-job-documents-20180903-p501ir.html | Matthew Guy paid out millions to keep his job: documents | Victorian opposition Leader Matthew Guy settled a lawsuit over a botched planning decision because he feared losing his job if it went to court. | News | Not election related | Anti-LNP | Yes | 2031 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 3 | ABC | 3/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/elections/wagga-wagga-by-election-2018/results/ | 2018 Wagga Wagga by-election | Progressive count results of a by-election in the State seat of Wagga Wagga | News | Contest | Neutral | No | 1577 | Other | |
| 3 | AUS | 3/9/18 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/coalition-ignored-official-advice-on-reef-fund/news-story/3b7d344c0900bc6e1d25cd0bdc1bd075 | Coalition 'ignored official advice' on reef fund | A grant of almost half a billion dollars to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation was more than double the recommended amount and handed over as a single payment against the advice of the Department of Finance. | News | Party | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1480 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 3 | SMH | 6/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/help-for-a-friend-roman-quaedvlieg-reveals-explosive-evidence-in-peter-dutton-au-pair-scandal | Help for a 'mate': Roman Quaedvlieg reveals explosive evidence in Peter Dutton au pair scandal | Former Border Force commissioner Roman Quaedvlieg wrote to the Senate inquiry to reveal the phone call he received from Mr Dutton's chief of staff in June 2015, seeking help for | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1468 | Scandal v Standards | |

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| | | | scandal-20180906-p5021f.html | | a "mate" of the minister who had an au pair in detention at Brisbane Airport. | | | | | | |
| 3 | SMH | 7/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-vows-to-change-laws-on-religious-freedom-but-won-t-be-a-culture-warrior-pm-20180907-p502da.html | Scott Morrison vows to change laws on religious freedom but won't be a 'culture warrior' PM | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has vowed to change laws to protect religious freedom while assuring voters he will not be a "culture warrior" on divisive social issues | News | Issue | Neutral | No | 1248 | Religion v Rights |
| 3 | NCA | 13/10/12 | https://www.news.com.au/national/deputy-opposition-leader-julie-bishop-demands-pm-julia-gillard-apologise-for-labelling-tony-abbott-a-misogynist/news-story/2a92e6754def5e62fd1965f13850335b | Deputy Opposition leader Julie Bishop demands PM Julia Gillard apologise for labelling Tony Abbott a misogynist | FEDERAL Deputy Opposition Leader Julie Bishop has called on PM Julia Gillard to withdraw her fiery comments made in parliament this week, in which she labelled Tony Abbott a misogynist. | News | Party | Anti-ALP | Yes | 1175 | Scandal v Standards |
| 3 | SBS | 4/9/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/nauru-asylum-seekers-beyond-broken-as-calls-for-medical-help-surge | Nauru asylum seekers beyond 'broken' as calls for medical help surge | A new report lifts the lid on the government imposed secrecy surrounding Nauru's detention centre, detailing escalating levels of abuse, trauma and desperation. | News | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 1114 | Racism v Refugees |
| 3 | SMH | 6/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/lawyer-who-spoke-out-about-au-pair-saga-loses-government-contract-the-day-after-tv-interview-went-to-air-20180906-p5024p.html | Lawyer who spoke out about au pair saga loses government contract the day after TV interview airs | A lawyer who spoke to the media about the Peter Dutton au pair affair, Greg Phillipson, believes he has paid a heavy price after the Department of Veterans Affairs suddenly refused to renew his contract. | News | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1038 | Scandal v Standards |
| 3 | ABC | 7/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-07/nasty-tactics-dutton-backers-liberal-spill-revealed/10212110 | Peter Dutton's backers refused to leave Liberal Party members' offices, demanded they | Fresh details have emerged about the "nasty" standover tactics employed by some of the Liberal "insurgents" as they tried to build | News | Party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1021 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | | reveal votes during spill | support for Peter Dutton during their failed leadership coup last month. | | | | | | |
| 3 | ABC | 5/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-05/great-barrier-reef-foundation-funds-returned-under-labor/10201390 | Great Barrier Reef Foundation funding would be clawed back under a Labor government | Labor has written to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation warning there could be a change of Federal Government soon, so it should not spend too much of its controversial \$444m grant money before then. | News | Issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 998 | Scandal v Standards |
| 3 | ABC | 3/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-03/angus-taylor-energy-minister-power-price-solution-curious/10188496 | The reality is new coal power is not the answer for cheaper electricity bills | The tipping point's been reached: renewable energy is now a cheaper source of power for Australia's future electricity needs than coal. | opinion | Issue | Anti-LNP | no | 973 | Coal v Climate |
| 3 | SMH | 7/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace/in-amazon-s-hellscape-workers-face-insecurity-and-crushing-targets-20180907-p502ao.html | In Amazon's 'hellscape', workers face insecurity and crushing targets | Workers at Amazon's first Australian warehouse say they're too stressed to function and too scared to go to the toilet. | News | Issue | Neutral | yes | 942 | Cash v Certainty |
| 3 | NCA | 3/9/18 | https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/aussie-model-dies-while-holidaying-in-greece/news-story/c9c0efafcc40b8843ec75c47f988ebae | Aussie model's cryptic post before mysterious death on billionaire's superyacht in Greece | Greek port authorities are today expected to reveal the preliminary findings of a post mortem examination into the death of an Australian model, Sinead McNamara, 20, was found unconscious on a luxury yacht off the island of Kefalonia four days ago. | News | Not election related | Neutral | no | 905 | other |
| 3 | HUN | 4/9/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/law-order/car-runs-down-pedestrian-in-brawl-involving-200-people-in-smith-st- | Car runs down pedestrian during brawl in Smith St, Collingwood | THE father of a victim who was hit by a car during the wild Collingwood brawl says it was "madness" and Melbourne's violence must stop. | News | issue | neutral | no | 870 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | collingwood/news-story/5bc19f9bea4e22b6a4edbd12bcb681ba | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | ABC | 5/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-05/nauru-blocks-transfer-of-mentally-ill-refugee-to-australia/10205040 | Nauru blocks transfer of mentally ill refugee to Australia despite Federal Court order | The Government of Nauru has blocked the medical evacuation of a refugee needing urgent treatment for depression and trauma-related conditions, despite court orders stipulating she must be brought to Australia for treatment. | News | Issue | neutral | no | 852 | Racism v Refugees |
| 3 | SMH | 7/8/16 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-slams-banking-royal-commission-proposal-as-nothing-more-than-a-populist-whinge-20160807-gqms5y.html | Scott Morrison slams banking royal commission proposal as nothing more than a 'populist whinge' | Bill Shorten's push for a banking royal commission is a "populist whinge" that threatens to undermine a key pillar of the Australian economy, Treasurer Scott Morrison says. | News | issue | Anti-ALP | no | 825 | Cash v Certainty |
| 4 | SMH | 9/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/sport/tennis/it-is-serena-williams-who-owes-an-apology-to-umpire-carlos-ramos-20180909-p502q2.html | It is Serena Williams who owes an apology to umpire Carlos Ramos | Carlos Ramos, in the umpire's chair for the US Open women's singles final between Serena Williams and Naomi Osaka, will be going through a rollercoaster of emotions as he copes with global headlines that umpires of professional tennis would rather avoid. | opinion | not election related | neutral | yes | 13241 | Racism v Refugees |
| 4 | TCM | 23/5/16 | https://www.couriermail.com.au/sport/tennis/french-open-2016-nick-kyrgios-blows-up-at-umpire-calling-his-officiating-fking-bullst/news-story/1ea62e76de3bd4b23fb4abe5601f64f7 | French Open 2016: Nick Kyrgios blows up at umpire | NICK Kyrgios had been on court for mere minutes at the French Open when he blew up at a ball boy and launched a foul-mouthed tirade at the umpire. | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 3369 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 4 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 3030 | |
| 4 | NCA | 12/9/18 | https://www.news.com.au/travel/travel-updates/incidents/heartbreaking-final-words-of-september-11-victims-and-their-desperate-families/news-story/bc41f01b828672a92a06bb18e12080cd | Heartbreaking final words of September 11 victims and their desperate families | THE phone calls of plane passengers, crew and office workers killed on September 11 have been collected. They're devastating. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2859 | other |
| 4 | SMH | 10/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/dutton-asked-quaedvlieg-to-help-his-mate-get-a-border-force-job-20180910-p502vm.html | Dutton asked Quaedvlieg to help his mate get a Border Force job | Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton pressed then Customs chief Roman Quaedvlieg to help two Queensland policemen get jobs in the new Border Force agency Mr Dutton was setting up – a revelation set to escalate the political furore surrounding Mr Dutton's decisions as immigration minister. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2768 | Scandal v Standards |
| 4 | HUN | 12/9/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/herald-sun-backs-mark-knights-cartoon-on-serena-williams/news-story/30c877e3937a510d64609d89ac521d9f | Herald Sun backs Mark Knight's cartoon on Serena Williams | HERALD Sun cartoonist Mark Knight says he suspended his Twitter account overnight because of abuse towards his family over his cartoon of Serena Williams' US Open tantrum. | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 2662 | Racism v Refugees |
| 4 | NCA | 5/6/17 | https://www.news.com.au/sport/tennis/rafael-nadal-criticises-chair-umpire-at-french-open/news-story/e80a249590dcd9d1e7d53a333ba5c498 | Rafael Nadal criticises chair umpire at French Open | RAFAEL Nadal blasted French Open umpire Carlos Ramos for treating him like a "machine" and suggested he was being unfairly targeted in an effort to speed up play. | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 2148 | Racism v Refugees |
| 4 | NCA | 12/9/18 | https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/parenting/school-life/queensland-schoolgirl-threatened-with | Queensland schoolgirl threatened with | Harper Nielsen, a student at Kenmore South State School in Brisbane, decided | news | issue | neutral | no | 1729 | Racism v Refugees |

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|---|-----|---------|--|---|--|---------|-----------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|
| | | | schoolgirl-threatened-with-suspension-after-refusing-to-stand-for-national-anthem/news-story/33a07500c2cbf17d765af7da742c5dfc | suspension after refusing to stand for national anthem | to protest against Advance Australia Fair, saying it was not inclusive of indigenous Australians. | | | | | | |
| 4 | ABC | 12/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-12/adani-groundwater-bores-investigated-by-queensland-department/10231752 | Adani groundwater bores investigated amid claims they were sunk without approval | The Queensland environment department has launched an investigation into a series of groundwater bores drilled by Indian miner Adani, which conservationists say were sunk without approval. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1666 | Coal v Climate |
| 4 | ABC | 12/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-12/national-anthem-protest-school-brisbane/10235792 | National anthem protest: 9yo refuses to stand because anthem is for 'white people of Australia' | Teachers at a Brisbane primary school have disciplined a nine-year-old girl for refusing to stand for the national anthem during assembly. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1645 | Racism v Refugees |
| 4 | ABC | 23/8/17 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-23/same-sex-marriage-what-bible-has-to-say-robyn-whitaker/8831826 | Same-sex marriage: What does the Bible really have to say? | Many on the No side are prone to citing the Bible or appealing to "biblical values". But what does the Bible actually say about human sexuality and homosexuality in particular? | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1273 | religion v Rights |
| 4 | SMH | 15/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-party-meeting-erupts-after-tony-abbott-hit-by-rare-and-substantial-protest-vote-20180915-p503v6.html | Liberal Party meeting erupts after Tony Abbott hit by rare and substantial protest vote | A meeting to endorse Tony Abbott's re-election to Parliament descended into an angry shouting match after the former prime minister was hit by a rare and substantial protest vote. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1269 | Scandal v Standards |
| 4 | SMH | 12/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/more-australians-fear-climate-change-as-morrison-government-dumps-legislation | More Australians fear climate change as Morrison government dumps emissions legislation | Voter concern about climate change has surged and about half of Australians want new coal mines banned, according to new research that suggests the | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1199 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | emissions-legislation-20180911-p5031o.html | | Morrison government's relegation of emissions reduction is at odds with public sentiment. | | | | | | |
| 4 | SMH | 10/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-mps-sussan-ley-and-sarah-henderson-vote-against-live-export-ban-bill-20180910-p502wu.html | Liberal MPs Sussan Ley and Sarah Henderson vote against live export ban bill | They threatened to cross the floor to stop the trade they felt was so heinous. But when it came to a vote on Monday, Liberal MPs Sussan Ley and Sarah Henderson staged a change of heart and used their deciding votes to prevent a debate on a ban on the live animal export trade. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1152 | Scandal v Standards |
| 4 | ABC | 13/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-13/new-zealand-climate-change-zero-emissions-jacinda-ardern/10207334 | New Zealand's politicians just came up with a good plan — together | As Australia adjusts to another prime minister undone by climate change, New Zealand has just released its comprehensive roadmap for transition to a low emissions economy. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1146 | Coal v Climate |
| 4 | NCA | 10/9/18 | https://www.news.com.au/world/europe/paris-stabbing-several-injured-in-knife-spree-suspect-arrested/news-story/14b085042cab5e0e30d756ad5f629fd5 | Paris stabbing: Several injured in knife spree, suspect arrested | A MAN has been arrested over a brutal stabbing attack in and around a cinema in Paris, with reports that up to eight people have been injured. | News | Issue | Neutral | NO | 1123 | Racism v Refugees |
| 4 | SBS | 10/9/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/nz-government-pushes-for-maori-language-in-all-schools-by-2025 | NZ government pushes for Maori language in all schools by 2025 | New Zealand's government wants Maori language classes to be available in all primary schools by 2025, but admits there are hurdles. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1111 | Racism v Refugees |
| 4 | ABC | 15/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-15/virginia-trioli-speech-at-women-in-media-conference/10247488 | Virginia Trioli on being a difficult woman in a difficult world | This is a transcript of the speech Virginia Trioli gave at the Women In Media Conference at the Gold Coast on Friday. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 852 | Scandal v Standards |

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|---|-----|---------|---|--|--|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|
| 4 | SBS | 11/9/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2018/09/11/aboriginal-teens-drown-inner-city-police-chase | Two Aboriginal teens drown in inner city police chase | The bodies of two Aboriginal teenage boys have been recovered from Perth's Swan River. They were part of a group being chased by police on Monday afternoon, and the incident will be treated as deaths in custody. | News | Issue | Neutral | No | 848 | Racism v Refugees |
| 4 | HUN | 12/9/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/rita-panahi/raceobsessed-commentators-see-issue-with-mark-knight-serena-williams-cartoon-writes-rita-panahi/news-story/9473b3e179cf1bb aad8e80b89d46a1f9 | Race-obsessed commentators see issue with Mark Knight's Serena Williams' cartoon, writes Rita Panahi | SHOW a race-obsessed agitator a cartoon lampooning a petulant tennis star and all they'll see is 'racism'. That's all they ever see whether it exists or not, writes Rita Panahi. | opinion | Issue | Neutral | Yes | 801 | Racism v Refugees |
| 5 | ABC | 19/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-18/china-social-credit-a-model-citizen-in-a-digital-dictatorship/10200278 | Leave no dark corner | China is building a digital dictatorship to exert control over its 1.4 billion citizens. For some, "social credit" will bring privileges — for others, punishment. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 8850 | other |
| 5 | ABC | 19/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-18/liberal-leadership-spill-rupert-murdoch-kerry-stokes-influence/10262552 | What did Rupert Murdoch and Kerry Stokes have to do with the Liberal leadership spill? | Malcolm Turnbull's demise as Australia's 29th prime minister was unusual for many reasons, and truly unique for one: his was the first known prime ministership to be the subject of a billionaires' tug of war between the nation's most powerful media moguls. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 5606 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 3050 | |
| 5 | NCA | 19/9/18 | https://www.news.com.au/technology/online/big-brother-chinas-dictatorship-moves | Big Brother: China's chilling dictatorship moves | CHINA'S dictatorship will introduce personal scorecards where citizens | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2150 | other |

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| | | | chilling-dictatorship-moves-to-introduce-scorecards-to-control-everyone/news-story/6c821cbf15378ab0d3eeb3ec3dc98abf | to introduce scorecards to control everyone | will be monitored 24/7 and ranked on behaviour. | | | | | | |
| 5 | SMH | 20/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/prime-minister-scott-morrison-announces-4-4-billion-school-funding-fix-20180920-p504y6.html | Prime Minister Scott Morrison announces \$4.6 billion school funding fix | The Morrison government will inject another \$4.6 billion into private schools over the next 10 years in a bid to finally end the funding wars and resolve a political stoush with the aggrieved Catholic and independent school sectors. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 2090 | Cash v Certainty |
| 5 | AFR | 17/9/18 | https://www.afr.com/rear-window/rupert-murdoch-to-kerry-stokes-malcolm-has-to-go-20180917-h15gv0 | Rupert Murdoch to Kerry Stokes: 'Malcolm has to go.' | But we return here to the matter of News Corp v the government of Malcolm Turnbull, an issue taken distantly mainstream by Nine's political editor Chris Uhlmann during the "form of madness" that overran Canberra three weeks ago. | opinion | leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 1780 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | NED | 16/9/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/09/16/morrison-aged-care-royal-commission/ | Aged care royal commission: PM angrily denies funding cut | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has angrily denied cutting \$1.2 billion in aged care funding as he announced a royal commission into the sector. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1642 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | SMH | 21/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/kerryn-phelps-backflips-announces-she-will-preference-liberals-over-labor-20180921-p50574.html | Kerryn Phelps backflips, announces she will preference Liberals over Labor | The independent candidate for Wentworth Kerryn Phelps has announced she will now preference the Liberals ahead of Labor in a major backflip on her earlier claims. | news | candidate | neutral | yes | 1601 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | ABC | 19/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-19/aboriginal-man-facing-deportation-to- | Aboriginal man Daniel Love facing deportation to PNG, lawyers say | Lawyers have accused the Federal Government of locking up an Aboriginal man in immigration | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1511 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | png-takes-case-high-court/10262952 | | detention and preparing to deport him to Papua New Guinea. | | | | | | |
| 5 | AGE | 20/9/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/shocking-video-surfaces-of-man-running-down-emus-with-vehicle-20180920-p504zp.html | Shocking video surfaces of man running down emus with vehicle | The RSPCA is appealing for public assistance to identify the source of a shocking video that shows a man gleefully running down a mob of emus with his vehicle. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1457 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | ABC | 16/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-16/scott-morrison-announces-royal-commission-into-aged-care-sector/10252850 | Scott Morrison announces royal commission into aged care; advocates expect 'appalling' cases of mistreatment to surface | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has announced a royal commission into Australia's aged care system. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1138 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | SMH | 21/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/john-howard-wants-more-female-liberals-calls-quotas-patronising-20180921-p5059x.html | John Howard wants more female Liberals, calls quotas 'patronising' | Former prime minister John Howard has called for more women to join the Liberal Party's parliamentary ranks, while speaking at an exclusive club that doesn't allow female members. | news | party | Anti-LNP | no | 1011 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | ABC | 19/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-19/google-scott-morrison-children-dads-parliament-josh-frydenberg/10254550 | Google 'Scott Morrison' and 'children' and 'juggle'. The result may surprise you | Scott Morrison and Josh Frydenberg have been asked a lot of questions in the three weeks since they pronounced themselves the "New Generation" of Liberal leadership. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 991 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | SMH | 16/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/this-will-be-abbott-s-last-term-how-the-tide-turned-against-former-pm-in-warringah-20180916-p5042j.html | This will be Abbott's last term': Liberals call time on former PM as tide turns in Warringah | The Liberal Party is under pressure to reveal the results of a damaging secret ballot that nearly cost Tony Abbott his seat, as fears mount that local voters will abandon the former prime minister at the next election. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 967 | Coal v Climate |

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| 5 | SMH | 19/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/turnbull-lodged-complaint-with-murdoch-over-coverage-in-last-days-of-his-prime-ministership-20180919-p504rd.html | Turnbull lodged complaint with Murdoch over coverage in last days of his prime ministership | Prime minister Malcolm Turnbull spoke to News Corp executive chairman Rupert Murdoch two days before last month's Liberal Party leadership spill, urging the media mogul to stop a campaign against him. | news | leaders | neutral | yes | 966 | Scandal v Standards |
| 5 | SMH | 20/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-s-1-2-billion-bonus-for-private-schools-slammed-as-a-slush-fund-20180920-p5050o.html | Scott Morrison's \$1.2 billion bonus for private schools slammed as a 'slush fund' | The Morrison government will create a special \$1.2 billion fund for private schools and pay it directly to Catholic and independent school authorities to distribute as they see fit. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 965 | Cash v Certainty |
| 5 | SMH | 18/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/how-foxtel-is-spending-its-30-million-government-handout-20180907-p502fy.html | How Foxtel is spending its \$30 million government handout | The majority of sporting codes to benefit from the first portion of Foxtel's \$30 million government handout have previously aired on the subscription broadcaster according to documents released under freedom of information laws. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 963 | Cash v Certainty |
| 5 | ABC | 21/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-21/nsw-government-says-federal-school-funding-is-unfair/10289100 | Prime Minister Scott Morrison's \$4.5bn independent school funding boost rejected by NSW Government | The New South Wales Government says it will not sign up to any school funding model that offers "special deals" for Catholic and independent schools. | news | issue | neutral | no | 892 | Cash v Certainty |
| 5 | SMH | 15/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/pm-calls-royal-commission-into-aged-care-after-inexcusable-failures-20180915-p5040n.html | PM calls royal commission into aged care after inexcusable 'failures' | The Morrison government will establish a royal commission into Australia's aged-care sector following a string of horrific revelations of elderly abuse and neglect that have shattered public faith in the system. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 890 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 5 | IND | 18/9/18 | https://independentaustria.net/politics/politics-display/morrison-dutton-coleman-cold-heartless-sadistic,11906 | Morrison, Dutton, Coleman: Cold, heartless, sadistic | Children continue to suffer untold cruelty under Australia's indiscriminate asylum seeker stance. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 881 | Racism v Refugees |
| 6 | SMH | 25/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/they-hate-her-emails-show-abc-chairman-told-michelle-guthrie-to-fire-emma-alberici-20180925-p505z4.html | 'They hate her': emails show ABC chairman told Michelle Guthrie to fire Emma Alberici | ABC chairman Justin Milne told former managing director Michelle Guthrie to sack high-profile presenter Emma Alberici following a complaint from then-prime minister Malcolm Turnbull. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 7696 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2676 | |
| 6 | SMH | 26/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/abc-chairman-justin-milne-under-pressure-to-resign-over-emma-alberici-email-revelations-20180926-p5060s.html | ABC chairman Justin Milne under pressure to resign over Emma Alberici email revelations | ABC chairman Justin Milne is under pressure to resign after Fairfax Media revealed he told former managing director Michelle Guthrie to "get rid of" high-profile presenter Emma Alberici. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2450 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | ABC | 23/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-23/catholic-school-funding-scott-morrison-jane-caro/10291370 | The Catholic school funding deal is hunger relief for the well fed | According to the OECD, Australia now spends a higher proportion of public money on private schools than any other advanced economy and that was before Prime Minister Scott Morrison's extraordinary announcement yesterday that a further \$4.5 billion of taxpayers' money is to be thrown at fee-charging schools. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2168 | Cash v Certainty |
| 6 | ABC | 19/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-18/china-social-credit-a-model-citizen-in-a-digital-dictatorship/10200278 | Leave no dark corner | China is building a digital dictatorship to exert control over its 1.4 billion citizens. For some, "social credit" will bring privileges — for others, punishment. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1857 | other |

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| 6 | NTN | 27/9/18 | https://www.ntnews.com.au/news/northern-territory/hell-be-having-nightmares-tonight-tony-abbott-booted-from-borroloola/news-story/b66116f4e10203a5719a0abd612b2b0e | 'He'll be having nightmares tonight': Tony Abbott booted from Borroloola | TONY Abbott was sensationally booted out of a remote NT community after furious locals told the indigenous affairs envoy he was not welcome | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1774 | Racism v Refugees |
| 6 | SAT | 29/9/18 | https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2018/09/29/exclusive-morrison-set-reef-grant-terms/15381432006927 | Exclusive: Morrison set reef grant terms | The terms of Malcolm Turnbull's \$444 million Barrier Reef grant were set by Scott Morrison, who as treasurer insisted the money not go to a Commonwealth agency. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1459 | Coal v Climate |
| 6 | SMH | 24/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/opera-house-goes-carbon-neutral-five-years-ahead-of-schedule-20180921-p505av.html | Opera House goes carbon neutral five years ahead of schedule | The Sydney Opera House was notoriously behind schedule on most things during the 14 years it took to build but on Monday it will be five years ahead of schedule when it meets its target to reduce emissions and become carbon neutral. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1396 | Coal v Climate |
| 6 | SMH | 25/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/spyware-on-phone-fears-as-dutton-pushes-new-security-laws-20180924-p505oc.html | Spyware on phone fears as Dutton pushes new security laws | A push to compel Australia's telecommunications companies to install spyware on customers' phones under broad new security plans could be "severely damaging" to the country's cybersecurity, the industry has warned. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1393 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | ABC | 26/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-24/michelle-guthrie-leaves-as-md-of-the-abc/10297608 | Michelle Guthrie sacked from ABC managing director role halfway through term | ABC managing director Michelle Guthrie says she is "devastated" and considering her legal options after being sacked just two-and-a-half years into her five-year term. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1350 | Scandal v Standards |

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|---|-----|---------|---|---|--|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|
| 6 | ABC | 25/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-25/adani-plans-to-take-12.5b-litres-of-water-as-farmer-denied-access-in-'double-standard'/10298354 | Adani plans to take 12.5b litres of water as farmer denied access in 'double standard' | A farmer has been denied access to a river system Adani plans on drawing 12.5 billion litres of water from in what activists are calling a "double standard", documents obtained under freedom of information laws show. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1347 | Coal v Climate |
| 6 | SMH | 7/4/16 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace/top-director-spurned-corruption-whistleblower-as-corporate-scandal-grows-20160406-gnzwud.html | Top director spurned corruption whistleblower as corporate scandal grows | Top Australian businesswoman and ABC board member Dr Kirstin Ferguson failed to protect a whistleblower who personally alerted her to a corruption scandal inside the nation's biggest mining services company. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1206 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | NCA | 28/9/18 | https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/home/pets/hero-dog-saves-lost-koala/news-story/c62ce26ca56b748ba6ee916a10355277 | This could be the cutest story in Australia this week | A GOLDEN retriever has saved a koala joey from death in a miraculous rescue that stunned the pet's owners. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1112 | other |
| 6 | SMH | 27/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/they-fricken-hate-her-full-emma-alberici-shows-justin-milne-was-not-taken-out-of-context-20180927-p506hs.html | 'They fricken hate her': Full Emma Alberici email shows Justin Milne was not taken out of context | The full text of an email sent by former ABC chairman Justin Milne about journalist Emma Alberici reveals he wanted the high-profile presenter sacked because she was "sticking it" to the government with a "clear bias". | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1093 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | SMH | 27/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/this-is-about-more-than-the-abc-20180927-p50691.html | This is about more than the ABC | Waleed Aly says the kind of government pressure on media outlets is unprecedented | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1072 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | SMH | 28/9/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/oceania/kindness-not-fear-or-hate-Jacinda's | Kindness, not fear or hate - Jacinda's | New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has used her debut speech to the | news | issue | neutral | no | 1030 | other |

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|---|-----|---------|---|--|--|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|
| | | | jacinda-s-message-to-trump-and-the-world-20180928-p506ju.html | message to Trump and the world | United Nations General Assembly to directly challenge the view of the world outlined by US President Donald Trump in his speech there earlier this week. | | | | | | |
| 6 | AUS | 23/9/18 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/labor-to-force-companies-with-over-1000-employees-to-publicly-reveal-gender-pay-of-workers/news-story/e140adb126bdd28b7284a681363a9b0 | Labor to force companies with over 1000 employees to publicly reveal gender pay of workers | Scott Morrison has left the door open to supporting a Labor proposal to force companies with more than 1000 employees to publish how much they pay women compared to men. | news | issue | Anti-ALP | no | 945 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | SAT | 29/9/18 | https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2018/09/29/enemies-public-schooling/15381432006921 | Enemies of public schooling | An award-winning public school principal I know responded wistfully to the extra \$4.6 billion in education funding Prime Minister Scott Morrison is giving exclusively to fee-charging schools. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 892 | Cash v Certainty |
| 6 | AGE | 27/9/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/sport/afl/one-of-our-biggest-nights-police-brace-for-spike-in-family-violence-20180927-p506ax.html | One of our biggest nights': Police brace for spike in family violence | Police are bracing for a 20 per cent spike in family violence incidents after Saturday's AFL grand final. | news | issue | neutral | no | 844 | Scandal v Standards |
| 6 | CON | 21/9/18 | https://theconversation.com/solar-panels-replaced-tarmac-on-a-road-here-are-the-results-103568 | Solar panels replaced tarmac on a road – here are the results | Four years ago a viral campaign wooed the world with a promise of fighting climate change and jump-starting the economy by replacing tarmac on the world's roads with solar panels. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 759 | Coal v Climate |
| 7 | SMH | 5/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/gladys-berejiklian-hands- | Gladys Berejiklian hands Racing NSW, Alan Jones victory | Gladys Berejiklian has handed broadcaster Alan Jones and Racing NSW a | news | not election related | Anti-LNP | yes | 3603 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-22/more-to-jobs-and-growth-than-a-corporate-tax-cut/9471856 | in Opera House battle | massive public relations and promotional victory, with her government instructing the Sydney Opera House to allow its sails to be lit up with colours, numbers and a trophy to promote next Saturday's Everest horse race. | | | | | | |
| 7 | SKY | 22/2/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-22/more-to-jobs-and-growth-than-a-corporate-tax-cut/9471856 | There's more to jobs and growth than a corporate tax cut | The Prime Minister has invited a who's who of Australian business to accompany him this week on his trip to meet President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence in Washington. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2996 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | HUN | 28/9/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/lifestyle/home-garden/hero-dog-saves-lost-koala/news-story/c62ce26ca56b748ba6ee916a10355277 | This could be the cutest story in Australia this week | A GOLDEN retriever has saved a koala joey from death in a miraculous rescue that stunned the pet's owners. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2941 | other |
| 7 | SMH | 5/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/assistant-treasurer-bills-taxpayers-2000-a-month-for-data-at-home-20181003-p507jx.html | Assistant treasurer bills taxpayers \$2000 a month for data at home | Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert has been charging taxpayers more than \$2000 per month to use the internet at his Gold Coast home. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2239 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | SMH | 5/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/alan-jones-calls-on-berejiklian-to-sack-opera-house-boss-over-racing-dispute-20181005-p507x8.html | Alan Jones calls on Berejiklian to sack Opera House boss over racing dispute | The chief executive of the Sydney Opera House, Louise Herron, says she has agreed to light up the sails of the structure with jockeys' colours to promote the Everest horse race, but is resisting projecting words or branding onto the sails. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2159 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 7 | AGE | 2/10/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/the-australian-fined-155-000-for-contempt-in-setka-case-20181002-p507a1.html | The Australian fined \$155,000 for contempt in Setka case | The Australian newspaper has been fined \$155,000 for contempt of court after publishing the criminal history of construction union boss John Setka. | News | Not election related | Neutral | Yes | 2059 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | SMH | 3/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/fossil-fuels-craig-kelly-liberals-climate-20181003-p507ia.html | Fossil fuels protect us': Liberal backbencher tells party not to worry about climate | Craig Kelly, a prominent Liberal Party backbencher, has told party members in Sydney they should not worry about climate change and that fossil fuels were among the reasons "we are so safe". | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 2054 | Coal v Climate |
| 7 | ABC | 22/2/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-02-22/more-to-jobs-and-growth-than-a-corporate-tax-cut/9471856 | There's more to jobs and growth than a corporate tax cut | The Prime Minister has invited a who's who of Australian business to accompany him this week on his trip to meet President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence in Washington. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1826 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | SMH | 2/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/culture-of-fear-murdoch-the-abc-and-how-to-fix-a-media-in-crisis-20181001-p5073f.html | Culture of fear': Murdoch, the ABC and how to fix a media in crisis | So what should be done about the rolling crises washing over what remains of the Australian media? | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1674 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | SMH | 1/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/more-honoured-in-the-abuse-than-application-abc-panel-member-hits-out-at-board-appointments-20180930-p506zy.html | More honoured in the abuse than application': ABC panel member hits out at board appointments | A former member of the independent panel tasked with deciding who should run the ABC and SBS has lashed the Coalition for "abusing" the system and stacking the public broadcasters with unqualified board members. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1628 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | TEL | 30/9/18 | https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/rendezview/kavanaugh-case-the-ultimate-weaponisation- | Kavanaugh case the ultimate weaponisation of MeToo | THE smearing of Brett Kavanaugh is the logical result of the unhinged | opinion | Not election related | Neutral | Yes | 1567 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | of-metoo/news-story/fd9f0bff4d1cba6eada22816f1186890 | | MeToo movement, writes Miranda Devine. | | | | | | |
| 7 | ABC | 5/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-05/mps-expense-claims-stuart-robert-spent-most-on-stationery/10328066 | Stuart Robert spent more than any other MP on personalised stationery | Liberal politician Stuart Robert spent almost \$17,000 of taxpayers' money on "personalised letterhead stationery" during the final weeks of the financial year, more than five times the typical spend for an MP. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1529 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | ABC | 2/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-02/tesla-battery-proves-a-leading-source-of-dispatchable-power/10326420 | Tesla battery proves a leading source of dispatchable power, AEMO says | AEMO's data shows that the Tesla big battery can dispatch power far more rapidly and precisely than conventional thermal power stations and more swiftly and accurately than the market operator thought possible — while also pushing down prices. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1488 | Coal v Climate |
| 7 | ABC | 4/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-04/government-delayed-release-of-climate-data-again:-foi-shows/10333056 | Climate data release again delayed by Government, FOI documents show | A report showing Australia is failing to rein in its greenhouse gas pollution was sat on for nearly two months by the Federal Government, before being released late on a Friday afternoon of a long weekend when footy finals fever and banking royal commission findings were dominating headlines, the ABC has learned. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1142 | Coal v Climate |
| 7 | SMH | 3/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/malcolm-turnbull-given-a-formal-overseas-travel-entitlement-not-granted-to-other-ex-pms | Malcolm Turnbull given a formal overseas travel entitlement not granted to other ex-PMs | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has formally granted Malcolm Turnbull and wife Lucy a taxpayer-funded overseas travel entitlement - something no | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1086 | Cash v Certainty |

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|---|-----|---------|---|--|--|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|
| | | | to-other-ex-prms-20181002-p507c7.html | | other former prime minister has listed in their allowances. | | | | | | |
| 7 | SMH | 6/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/have-your-race-leave-the-opera-house-alone-20181006-p50859.html | Have your race: leave the Opera House alone | On Friday 2GB shock jock Alan Jones reached a new low – even for him – by publicly bullying a respected public official, the chief executive of the Opera House, Louise Herron in an effort to get her to ignore the Opera House charter by displaying an ad for a horse race on the famous white sails. | opinion | not election related | Anti-LNP | yes | 1085 | Scandal v Standards |
| 7 | ABC | 30/9/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-29/earthquake-hero-dies-after-getting-flight-off-the-ground/10321204 | Indonesian earthquake: Air traffic controller dies ensuring flight gets off the ground | An Indonesian air traffic controller has sacrificed his life to ensure a plane carrying hundreds of people safely made it off the ground after Friday's earthquake. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1047 | other |
| 7 | NED | 3/10/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/10/03/scott-morrison-untruths-donald-trump/ | Morrison's willingness to tell brazen untruths proves he is just like Donald Trump | Australia's new prime minister Scott Morrison showed this week he has mastered one of US President Donald Trump's most amazing tricks: the ability to make claims he and every one else knows are complete nonsense – and to make them with total impunity. | opinion | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 928 | Coal v Climate |
| 7 | NED | 2/10/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2018/10/02/scott-morrison-carbon-emissions-claim-not-true/ | Scott Morrison is either lying about carbon emissions, or just plain ignorant | Prime Minister Scott Morrison says Australia is on track to meet its 2030 emissions reduction target "in a canter". | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 920 | Coal v Climate |

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| 7 | NED | 2/10/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/10/02/bill-shorten-banks/ | Shorten asks why bank executives have avoided jail | Bankers who steal from Australians should go to jail, Opposition Leader Bill Shorten says. | news | issue | pro-ALP | yes | 882 | Cash v Certainty |
| 8 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 3590 | |
| 8 | SMH | 6/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/have-your-race-leave-the-opera-house-alone-20181006-p50859.html | Have your race: leave the Opera House alone | On Friday 2GB shock jock Alan Jones reached a new low – even for him – by publicly bullying a respected public official, the chief executive of the Opera House, Louise Herron in an effort to get her to ignore the Opera House charter by displaying an ad for a horse race on the famous white sails. | opinion | not election related | Anti-LNP | yes | 2684 | Scandal v Standards |
| 8 | SMH | 9/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/religious-freedom-review-enshrines-right-of-schools-to-turn-away-gay-children-and-teachers-20181009-p508o7.html | Religious freedom review enshrines right of schools to turn away gay children and teachers | Religious schools would be guaranteed the right to turn away gay students and teachers under changes to federal Anti-discrimination laws recommended by the government's long-awaited review into religious freedom. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2671 | Religion v Rights |
| 8 | ABC | 9/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-09/environment-minister-says-calls-to-end-coal-drawing-long-bow/10354604 | Climate change: Environment Minister rejects top scientists' advice on phasing out coal, after UN's warning | Federal Environment Minister Melissa Price has argued some of the world's leading climate scientists are "drawing a long bow" in calling for an end to coal power in a bid to limit global warming. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2486 | Coal v Climate |
| 8 | WES | 6/10/18 | https://thewest.com.au/politics/federal-politics/federal-minister-stuart-robert-removed-from-company-that-charged- | Federal Minister Stuart Robert removed from company after he charged taxpayers for internet | A company run by a Federal minister who charged taxpayers \$2000 a month for internet access lodged documents removing him as its director only after | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1909 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | taxpayers-for-internet-ng-b88982344z | | the matter was queried by <i>The Weekend West</i> . | | | | | | | |
| 8 | CON | 6/6/18 | https://theconversation.com/how-south-korean-boy-band-bts-became-a-k-pop-hit-by-fighting-for-social-rights-97562 | How South Korean boy band BTS became a K-pop hit by fighting for social rights | Since bursting onto the music scene five years ago, South Korean boy band BTS (“Bangtan Sonyeondan”, “Bulletproof Boys Scouts”) has become an incredible force for good. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 1761 | other | |
| 8 | ABC | 9/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/am/melissa-price-paris-commitment-ipcc-and-the-opera-house/10354540 | Melissa Price; Paris commitment, IPCC and the Opera House | The Federal Environment Minister, Melissa Price joined us on AM to chat about the IPCC, Paris commitment, climate change | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1491 | Coal v Climate | |
| 8 | SMH | 9/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/sydney-news/opera-house-illumination-time-changed-to-avoid-protesters-20181009-p508ob.html | Protesters turn out in droves to boo horse race advertising on Opera House | More than 1000 protesters chanting "save our sails" and "it's our house" gathered in front of the Sydney Opera House on Tuesday night in protest at the Racing NSW projections on the World Heritage listed building. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1362 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 8 | SMH | 7/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/the-everest-horses-alan-jones-will-have-his-eye-on-20181006-p5086j.html | The Everest horses Alan Jones will have his eye on | Alan Jones may have no horse himself in the world's richest turf race – one he demanded to be advertised on the sails of the Sydney Opera House. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1259 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 8 | SMH | 9/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/life-and-relationships/six-women-killed-in-five-days-you-need-to-engage-with-this-crisis-20181008-p508c2.html | Six women killed in five days, you need to engage with this crisis | As I write this, six women have been killed in the last five days. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1252 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 8 | ABC | 8/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2018-10- | IPCC issues dire climate warning, says coal must go to | Australia and the rest of the world must virtually eliminate the use of coal for | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1230 | Coal v Climate | |

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| | | | 08/ipcc-climate-change-report/10348720 | save Great Barrier Reef | electricity within 22 years if there is to be a chance to save even some of the Great Barrier Reef, the world's most authoritative climate science body has warned. | | | | | | |
| 8 | AUS | 8/10/18 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/climate/whatever-it-takes-scomo-prepared-to-go-nuclear-if-it-cuts-power-prices/news-story/1193fd298fb3ff1d57b4e48acce3ee1 | Whatever it takes: ScoMo prepared to go nuclear if it cuts power prices | Scott Morrison says he would overturn the ban on building nuclear reactors in Australia if he believed it would put downward pressure on power prices. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1171 | Coal v Climate |
| 8 | NED | 6/10/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/state/nsw/2018/10/06/apologies-alan-jones/ | My apologies, Alan Jones – you really do run NSW | I'm sorry, Alan, I was wrong, you do run New South Wales. Such is the weak-kneed nature of our miserable excuses for local politicians, your bullying, hectoring, bombastic, crude, condescending, uncivilised, screeching, occasionally racist, more than occasionally sexist, sometimes defamatory and somewhat demented ranting and grandstanding before a relatively small and ageing radio audience delivers you power beyond all comprehension. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1157 | Scandal v Standards |
| 8 | SMH | 11/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/very-very-weird-peter-costello-lashes-liberal-leaders-over-economic-policy-20181011-p5092e.html | 'Very, very weird': Peter Costello lashes Liberal leaders over economic policy | Former treasurer Peter Costello has launched an excoriating attack on the Liberal Party leadership, warning the government is "operating in a parallel universe" by promising | news | party | Anti-LNP | No | 1113 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | | voters it would deliver reforms in 10 years' time. | | | | | | |
| 8 | SMH | 7/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/the-right-thing-for-sydney-berejiklian-defends-allowing-ads-on-opera-house-sails-20181007-p5087m.html | Why not put it on the biggest billboard Sydney has?: Scott Morrison backs decision to promote The Everest on Opera House | Prime Minister Scott Morrison says the Sydney Harbour Bridge should also be used to advertise sporting events and described opponents of the move to display racing ads on the Opera House sails as “precious”. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1066 | Scandal v Standards |
| 8 | SMH | 8/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/alan-jones-defends-controversial-interview-with-opera-house-boss-louise-herron-20181008-p508bj.html | Alan Jones defends controversial interview with Opera House boss Louise Herron | Broadcaster Alan Jones has defended his interview with Opera House chief executive Louise Herron, after she said she would not project horse names and branding on the Opera House sails. | news | Issue | Neutral | Yes | 1042 | Scandal v Standards |
| 8 | ABC | 10/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-10/religious-freedom-ruddock-schools-scott-morrison-christianity/10359612 | Scott Morrison 'has a blind spot': Bitter Liberal MPs won't stay silent for long on religious freedom split | A temporary, tenuous and deeply superficial silence has overcome the federal Liberal Party as it battles to retain the seat of Wentworth. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 968 | Religion v Rights |
| 8 | ABC | 12/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-12/stuart-robert-pays-back-\$38,000-to-cover-internet-bills/10370978 | Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert pays back \$38,000 to cover internet bills charged to taxpayers | Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert has paid back nearly \$38,000 to cover his unusually high internet bills. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 929 | Scandal v Standards |
| 8 | SMH | 9/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/eight-out-of-10-in-nsw-opposed-to-berejiklian-s-opera-house-sails-deal-survey-20181009-p508oc.html | Eight out of 10 in NSW opposed to Berejiklian's Opera House sails deal: survey | More than 80 per cent of NSW residents are opposed to Premier Gladys Berejiklian's decision to overrule Opera House management and ensure promotional materials for the Everest horse race be projected onto its sails, while a majority of survey | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 904 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | | | participants were also concerned that politicians' values on the issue do not reflect the community. | | | | | | |
| 8 | ABC | 9/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-09/alan-jones-apologises-opera-house-advertising-spray/10354304 | Alan Jones apologises for Opera House interview, as petition with 235,000 signatures delivered | Radio broadcaster Alan Jones has apologised for comments he made to the head of the Sydney Opera House, after calling for her to be sacked during a debate on the promotion of a horse race on the iconic sails. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 886 | Scandal v Standards |
| 9 | YAH | 15/10/18 | https://news.yahoo.com/u-embassy-australia-apologises-mistakenly-042802194.html | U.S. Embassy apologises after cat picture mistakenly sent out | U.S. Embassy in Canberra, Australia has apologised on behalf of the Department of State who did just that, accidentally sending a test email featuring a photo of a cat dressed in a Cookie Monster costume. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 10105 | other |
| 9 | NIN | 15/10/18 | https://www.9news.com.au/world/us-embassy-in-canberra-apologises-for-cat-in-pyjamas-email/577007dc-be1f-45e6-a609-578f6c4c73e6 | US embassy in Canberra sorry for cat pyjama email | The United States' embassy in Canberra has apologised for a "training error" after distributing a fake meeting invitation, complete with a photo of a pyjama-wearing cat. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 7432 | other |
| 9 | SMH | 17/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/for-the-pacific-it-s-always-about-cash-environment-minister-in-diplomatic-incident-over-climate-change-20181017-p50a6b.html | 'For the Pacific it's always about cash': Environment Minister in diplomatic incident over climate change | Environment Minister Melissa Price has been accused of offending a key Pacific leader by declaring the region was "always" seeking cash from Australia, in a disputed remark that has triggered a new storm over government policy on climate change. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 4374 | Coal v Climate |
| 9 | SBS | 18/10/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/we-never-expected-this-to-happen-in-australia- | We never expected this to happen in Australia: Vandals torch Hindu temple | Vandals have torched a Sydney Hindu Temple, leaving its holy statues in | news | issue | neutral | no | 2927 | Religion v Rights |

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|---|-----|----------|---|---|--|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|------|-------------------|--|
| | | | vandals-torch-hindu-temple | | ruins and a close-knit community shattered. | | | | | | | |
| 9 | CON | 6/6/18 | https://theconversation.com/how-south-korean-boy-band-bts-became-a-k-pop-hit-by-fighting-for-social-rights-97562 | How South Korean boy band BTS became a K-pop hit by fighting for social rights | Since bursting onto the music scene five years ago, South Korean boy band BTS (“Bangtan Sonyeondan”, “Bulletproof Boys Scouts”) has become an incredible force for good. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 2224 | other | |
| 9 | ABC | 20/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/elections/wentworth-by-election-2018/results/ | 2018 Wentworth by-election | election results page | news | Contest | neutral | no | 2190 | other | |
| 9 | AUS | 19/10/18 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/wall-street-journal/will-pakistan-execute-woman-for-being-christian/news-story/1cf3d6e2377cc3741a69c240bd715bb3 | Will Pakistan execute woman for being Christian? | Does Pakistan’s Supreme Court have the courage to free Asia Bibi, an illiterate 53-year-old Christian woman on death row since 2010 for “blasphemy,” while thousands of Islamic extremists across the country bay for her blood? | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1775 | Religion v Rights | |
| 9 | SMH | 16/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/unprincipled-and-craven-morrison-s-israel-pitch-plumbs-new-depths-of-stupid-20181016-p509wr.html | Unprincipled and craven: Morrison's Israel pitch plumbs new depths of stupid | To betray the national interest to chase a few votes is irresponsible. To betray it for no votes at all is stupid as well as irresponsible. | opinion | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1753 | Religion v Rights | |
| 9 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1715 | | |
| 9 | SMH | 17/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/they-have-lost-their-minds-government-fuming-over-growing-push-to-topple-deputy-prime-minister-20181017-p50aax.html | 'They have lost their minds': Government fuming over growing push to topple Deputy Prime Minister | The Coalition government is bracing for its second leadership challenge in less than two months, with Nationals MPs counting numbers to potentially topple Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack within days. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 1666 | Cash v Certainty | |

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| 9 | ABC | 16/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-16/ecuador-asks-julian-assange-to-curb-speech-look-after-cat/10382992 | Julian Assange ordered by Ecuador to curb speech, clean bathroom, look after cat if he wants internet | Ecuador has ordered Julian Assange to stick to a new set of house rules, including avoiding contentious political issues, cleaning his bathroom and looking after his cat if he wants the internet reconnected. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1510 | other |
| 9 | CON | 24/10/18 | https://theconversation.com/enough-pasta-already-why-asylum-seekers-in-italy-are-fed-up-with-their-food-rations-84147 | Enough pasta already: why asylum seekers in Italy are fed up with their food rations | Elias, who arrived in Italy from West Africa after a long journey, eats pasta every day for lunch and dinner. And, he claims, for breakfast too. He's been doing so for nine months, since he first set foot in the small town in central Italy where he now lives. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1404 | Racism v Refugees |
| 9 | SMH | 15/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/alan-jones-the-pyjamas-and-the-ponies-20181012-p509e7.html | Alan Jones, the pyjamas and the ponies | Alan Jones' long-term racing partner John Leaver was in his pyjamas when the Australian Federal Police raided his Point Piper mansion late one evening in October 2013. | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 1236 | Scandal v Standards |
| 9 | IND | 16/10/18 | https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/stuart-roberts-litany-of-transgressions,12001 | Stuart Robert's litany of transgressions | Stuart Robert still owes money to Australian taxpayers as well as an apology and an explanation as to why he should still hold office. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1126 | Scandal v Standards |
| 9 | SMH | 16/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-considering-controversial-recognition-of-jerusalem-as-israel-s-capital-20181015-p509tl.html | Scott Morrison considering controversial recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital | Prime Minister Scott Morrison is considering recognising Jerusalem as Israel's capital in a historic change of policy that would align Australia with Donald Trump's controversial shift but jar with much of the Western world and risk | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1076 | Religion v Rights |

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| | | | | | angering Arab and Muslim nations. | | | | | | |
| 9 | AGE | 15/10/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/stop-our-crimes-against-humanity-20181015-p509s7.html | Stop our crimes against humanity | Despite insidious attempts by successive Australian governments to suppress truth, abundant evidence, buttressed in recent days by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and international humanitarian powerhouse Medecins Sans Frontieres, demonstrates mandatory offshore incarceration of refugees and people seeking asylum fails every measure of acceptable policy and politics. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1054 | Racism v Refugees |
| 9 | NED | 15/10/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/10/14/stuart-robert-neighbours-internet/ | Stuart Robert's neighbours 'stunned' by his huge internet bill | Current and former neighbours of federal MP Stuart Robert have confirmed his street has internet troubles, but are still shocked he racked up \$38,000 in data charges. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1028 | Scandal v Standards |
| 9 | SMH | 14/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/unions-defiant-in-the-face-of-illegal-strike-warning-20181012-p509bm.html | Unions defiant in the face of illegal strike warning | ACTU Secretary Sally McManus has accused Fair Work Ombudsman Sandra Parker of "intimidating working people" ahead of a series of union rallies, after the regulator warned workers they could face hefty fines if they took illegal strike action to participate. | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 998 | Cash v Certainty |
| 9 | SMH | 14/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/fairfax-ipsos-poll-huge-majority-of-australians-oppose-laws-banning-gay | Fairfax-Ipsos poll: Huge majority of Australians oppose laws banning gay | Australian voters have strongly rejected laws to allow religious schools to discriminate against gay students and teachers, in a | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 948 | Religion v Rights |

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| | | | gay-students-and-teachers-20181014-p509kv.html | students and teachers | widening political storm over special exemptions to be challenged in Parliament this week. | | | | | | |
| 9 | ABC | 19/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-19/reef-company-altered-scientist-report-crown-of-thorns-program/10391730 | Reef company altered scientist's report on crown-of-thorns program — even though he told them not to | A company given millions of taxpayer dollars to cull the devastating crown-of-thorns starfish on the Great Barrier Reef altered a scientific report about the "poor management" of its own program, an ABC investigation can reveal. | news | issue | neutral | no | 938 | Cash v Certainty |
| 10 | SMH | 26/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ndis-funds-to-be-repurposed-for-drought-relief-under-morrison-plan-20181026-p50c5k.html | NDIS funds to be 'repurposed' for drought relief under Morrison plan | Disability advocates have slammed Prime Minister Scott Morrison's decision to "repurpose" \$3.9 billion originally set aside for the NDIS to pay for drought relief, but the plan has been cautiously welcomed by farmers. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 3862 | Cash v Certainty |
| 10 | SMH | 26/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/silenced-leading-reef-research-centre-faces-axe-after-funding-miss-20181026-p50c41.html | 'Silenced': Leading reef research centre faces axe after funding miss | One of the world's premier coral reef research centres has failed to secure Australian Research Council funding, placing in doubt the science hub even as the Great Barrier Reef faces another bout of bleaching. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | Yes | 2580 | Cash v Certainty |
| 10 | AGE | 26/10/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/no-work-done-after-nationals-treasurer-got-850k-water-saving-grant-20181025-p50bve.html | No work done after Nationals' treasurer got \$850k water-saving grant | The Nationals' federal treasurer and candidate for the Victorian seat of Shepparton, Peter Schwarz, is accused of gouging much of the \$850,000 he was paid by Australia's largest drought-proofing project. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | Yes | 2090 | Coal v Climate |

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| 10 | SMH | 22/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/of-all-the-politicians-julia-gillard-was-the-only-one-survivors-really-wanted-20181022-p50b8z.html | Of all the politicians, Julia Gillard was the only one survivors really wanted | Gillard's last act as prime minister was to order a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse, and its political culmination was on Monday. | news | Issue | pro-ALP | No | 1830 | Religion v Rights |
| 10 | SMH | 23/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/no-record-julie-bishop-facing-questions-over-jimmy-choo-shoes-disclosure-20181016-p50a25.html | No record': Julie Bishop facing questions over Jimmy Choo shoes disclosure | Julie Bishop could be in breach of strict rules that stipulate ministers must pay for extravagant gifts, after receiving a pair of shoes designed by high-end fashion designer Jimmy Choo. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1729 | Scandal v Standards |
| 10 | SAT | 27/10/18 | https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2018/10/27/running-against-tony-abbott-warringah/15405588007058 | Running against Tony Abbott in Warringah | I keep asking myself what I have done by putting up a tentative hand as a possible independent candidate for the seat currently held by former prime minister Tony Abbott. | opinion | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1525 | Other |
| 10 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1464 | |
| 10 | SMH | 22/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/dreadful-abuse-of-childrens-trust-must-never-happen-again-20181019-p50avp.html | Dreadful abuse of children's trust must never happen again | For those who have suffered so much, whether they gather in Parliament House or watch and listen from elsewhere, the apology being delivered today to survivors of institutional child sexual abuse is an overdue acknowledgement. Finally, the nation is saying we see you, hear you, believe you, value you and we are sorry. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1462 | Religion v Rights |
| 10 | AGE | 24/10/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/politics/federal/urgent-hearings-over-sick-refugee-children- | Urgent hearings over sick refugee children thrown into doubt | Urgent court hearings that decide if dangerously ill refugee children should be flown to Australia have | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1270 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | thrown-into-doubt-20181023-p50bh4.html | | been thrown into doubt after the government challenged the Federal Court's ability to order humanitarian evacuations. | | | | | | |
| 10 | TEL | 23/10/18 | https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/father-chris-riley-forced-to-pay-back-funds-youth-off-the-streets-has-already-received/news-story/34086882cfc6da8561db5d9b946d95ee | Father Chris Riley furious as government cuts his funding without explanation | CHARITY legend Father Chris Riley has had his funding slashed by the federal government and has been ordered to repay \$630,000, putting the education of homeless and disadvantaged children at risk | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1113 | Cash v Certainty |
| 10 | ABC | 20/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/elections/wentworth-by-election-2018/results/ | 2018 Wentworth by-election | election results page | news | Contest | neutral | no | 1037 | other |
| 10 | CON | 1/11/16 | https://theconversation.com/how-us-policy-in-honduras-set-the-stage-for-todays-migration-65935 | How US policy in Honduras set the stage for today's migration | Hondurans fleeing poverty and violence – who make up most of the participants of a “caravan” estimated at between 7,000 and 8,000 people – are slowly moving through Mexico in the hope of reaching the United States and receiving refuge. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 933 | other |
| 10 | HUN | 21/10/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/rita-panahi/female-athletes-are-right-to-be-concerned-about-trans-competitors-writes-rita-panahi/news-story/174f730ff2d436072eb3eb70eab716d8 | Female athletes are right to be concerned about trans competitors, writes Rita Panahi | LAUREL Hubbard used to be Gavin and competed as a male weightlifter before transitioning and competing as a female. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 917 | Religion v Rights |
| 10 | ABC | 23/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-23/chinas-flaunt-your-wealth-challenge-goes-viral/10404202 | China's 'flaunt your wealth' challenge goes viral with people falling out of | Photos of people lying face down on the ground — surrounded by luxury bags, shoes, and sometimes wads | news | not election related | neutral | no | 904 | other |

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| | | | | cars with luxury goods | of cash — have gone viral on Chinese social media. | | | | | | |
| 10 | SMH | 22/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/coal-s-days-are-numbered-top-government-adviser-says-20181022-p50b50.html | Coal's days are numbered, top government adviser says | The federal government's top energy adviser Kerry Schott says the plunging cost of renewables will force Australia's remaining coal plants to close even earlier than planned, as mining giant BHP renewed calls for a price on carbon to urgently slash national emissions. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 877 | Coal v Climate |
| 10 | ABC | 19/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-19/authority-creep-has-more-agencies-accessing-your-metadata/10398348 | Metadata laws under fire as 'authority creep' has more agencies accessing your information | More government agencies are accessing people's phone and internet records than originally envisaged, in what critics are describing as "authority creep". | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 866 | Religion v Rights |
| 10 | SMH | 21/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-mp-condemns-conservative-media-hosts-and-issues-warning-to-colleagues-who-listen-to-them-20181021-p50b11.html | Liberal MP condemns conservative media hosts and issues warning to colleagues who listen to them | Liberal MP Craig Laundy says too many of his own colleagues are listening to right-wing commentators, warning they risk ending up out of step with mainstream Australia. | news | party | Anti-LNP | no | 813 | Scandal v Standards |
| 10 | SBS | 19/10/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/rwanda-s-leader-names-50-per-cent-female-cabinet | Rwanda's leader names 50 per cent female cabinet | Rwanda has announced that women now make up half of the East African nation's 26-seat cabinet, just two days after a similar move by Ethiopia. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 810 | other |
| 10 | NCA | 24/10/18 | https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/health-problems/what-the-future-of-healthcare-will-look-like-with-artificial-intelligence/news- | What the future of healthcare will look like with artificial intelligence | THE rise of artificial intelligence means we're only going to see more robots in healthcare. | news | issue | neutral | no | 808 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | story/6927dd8a81c77dc b03a94f352ebe91cc | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | NED | 24/10/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/consumer/2018/10/24/morrison-not-cutting-power-bills/ | No, Scott Morrison is not cutting our power bills: PM's latest stunt debunked | The inanity of some political stunts, the need "to be seen to be doing something", is on full display with Scott Morrison's claim to be protecting consumers from rising power costs. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 808 | Coal v Climate |
| 11 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2755 | |
| 11 | AGE | 29/10/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/coalition-vows-to-reinstate-religious-instruction-in-state-schools-20181029-p50cpr.html | Coalition vows to reinstate religious instruction in state schools | Religious instruction classes will be reintroduced into the Victorian state school curriculum if the Coalition wins next month's election. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1976 | Religion v Rights |
| 11 | SMH | 31/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/forget-barnaby-joyce-s-affair-this-is-why-he-should-not-return-to-the-leadership-20181031-p50d0o.html | Forget Barnaby Joyce's affair - this is why he should not return to the leadership | Although Barnaby Joyce's name is not mentioned, it is his legacy that informs Philip Moss' damning report into the Department of Agriculture's performance as the regulator of the live exports industry. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1862 | Scandal v Standards |
| 11 | ABC | 1/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-10-31/saudi-arabia-executes-migrant-worker-without-informing-indonesia/10450624 | Tuti Tursilawati: Anger in Indonesia after Saudi Arabia goes ahead with execution of maid who killed employer 'in self-defence' | Saudi Arabia has executed an Indonesian female migrant worker without first informing the Indonesian Government, according to Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1795 | other |
| 11 | AGE | 29/10/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/world/asia/all-dead-lion-air-flight-crashes-in-indonesia-20181029-p50cmu.html | 'All dead': Lion Air flight crashes in Indonesia | Indonesian authorities have predicted there will be no survivors after a passenger plane carrying 189 people, operated by Indonesian budget carrier Lion Air, | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1638 | other |

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| | | | | | crashed into the ocean on Monday morning. | | | | | | |
| 11 | ABC | 1/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-01/satellite-images-expose-chinas-network-of-re-education-camps/10432924 | China's frontier of fear | Satellite imagery captured over a remote and highly volatile region of western China lifts the lid on the size and spread of internment camps used to indoctrinate vast numbers of the region's Muslim population. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1477 | other |
| 11 | SMH | 26/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ndis-funds-to-be-repurposed-for-drought-relief-under-morrison-plan-20181026-p50c5k.html | NDIS funds to be 'repurposed' for drought relief under Morrison plan | Disability advocates have slammed Prime Minister Scott Morrison's decision to "repurpose" \$3.9 billion originally set aside for the NDIS to pay for drought relief, but the plan has been cautiously welcomed by farmers. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 1399 | Cash v Certainty |
| 11 | SMH | 26/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/silenced-leading-reef-research-centre-faces-axe-after-funding-miss-20181026-p50c41.html | 'Silenced': Leading reef research centre faces axe after funding miss | One of the world's premier coral reef research centres has failed to secure Australian Research Council funding, placing in doubt the science hub even as the Great Barrier Reef faces another bout of bleaching. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1294 | Cash v Certainty |
| 11 | SMH | 25/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/fears-of-a-dangerous-precedent-as-labour-hire-extends-to-medicare-20181024-p50bq7.html | Fears of a 'dangerous precedent' as labour hire extends to Medicare | The use of labour hire staff in the Department of Human Services has extended to Medicare, adding to contractors already employed in Centrelink call centres and even front of house roles. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1246 | Cash v Certainty |
| 11 | HUN | 28/10/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/rita-panahi/grim-toll-of-pc-bias-has-the-uk-learned- | Grim toll of PC bias: Has the UK learned its lesson? | AUTHORITIES were too frightened to act when hundreds of young girls in the UK were groomed, | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1213 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | its-lesson/news-story/58f15ddcc17f1e9f17eedad1ef4f560a | | raped and trafficked — because the predators were from immigrant communities. | | | | | | |
| 11 | SMH | 2/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/tv-and-radio/sky-news-host-ross-cameron-sacked-for-racist-comments-20181102-p50d3m.html | Sky News host Ross Cameron sacked for racist comments | Television host Ross Cameron has been sacked by Sky News for comments he made about Chinese visitors to Disneyland on his <i>Outsiders</i> program this week. | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 1187 | Racism v Refugees |
| 11 | SMH | 31/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/nationals-members-resign-en-masse-amid-investigation-into-neo-nazi-ties-20181031-p50d3m.html | Nationals members resign en masse amid investigation into neo-Nazi ties | A group of about 15 Nationals members have resigned amid an investigation into their alleged ties to neo-Nazi and fascist groups. | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1153 | Racism v Refugees |
| 11 | ABC | 28/10/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/classic/features/richard-gill-dead-at-76-obituary/10183180 | Conductor and Music Educator Richard Gill dies at 76 | Richard Gill's final public appearance was at the City Recital Hall in Sydney on 10th July. Up on stage in front of a thousand singers, he led Sydney's Flash Mob through the Beatles' 'When I'm Sixty-Four'. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1135 | other |
| 11 | SBS | 2/11/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2018/11/02/tony-abbott-says-thank-you-putting-invasion | Tony Abbott says: 'Thank you for putting up with the invasion' | The special envoy for Indigenous affairs makes a faux pas on the final day of his tour to remote communities in South Australia. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1013 | Racism v Refugees |
| 11 | NCA | 2/11/18 | https://www.news.com.au/entertainment/celebrity-style/heidi-klum-just-revealed-her-2018-halloween-costume/news-story/009a27b80715e15c83799ac0eaf191b5 | Heidi Klum just revealed her 2018 Halloween costume | SHE manages to outdo herself every year — the undisputed Queen of Halloween Heidi Klum just unveiled this year's OTT costume. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 947 | other |

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| 11 | SAT | 27/10/18 | https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2018/10/27/running-against-tony-abbott-warringah/15405588007058 | Running against Tony Abbott in Warringah | I keep asking myself what I have done by putting up a tentative hand as a possible independent candidate for the seat currently held by former prime minister Tony Abbott. | opinion | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 856 | other |
| 11 | SMH | 31/10/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/agriculture-minister-orders-urgent-overhaul-of-own-department-s-handling-of-live-export-trade-20181031-p50d0d.html | Agriculture Minister orders urgent overhaul of own department's handling of live export trade | Agriculture Minister David Littleproud will order a complete overhaul of his department - including creating an external watchdog - after a damning report of its handling of the live export industry found the bureaucracy was unwilling to use its powers to protect animals from abuse and prevent their deaths. | news | issue | neutral | no | 775 | Scandal v Standards |
| 11 | AFR | | https://www.afr.com/policy/david-rowes-cartoons-20180928-h160a5 | David Rowe Cartoon Gallery | cartoon | | | | 767 | | |
| 11 | TEL | 30/10/18 | https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/rendezview/the-sinister-identity-politics-agenda-of-new-labor/news-story/de9e962a57ce4d185483ff63cf333d65 | The sinister identity politics agenda of 'new' Labor | POLLS point to a change in government, but a policy document reveals what Labor has in mind for us. It's riddled with diversity nonsense, while wage growth barely gets a mention, writes Miranda Devine. | opinion | party | Anti-ALP | no | 759 | Religion v Rights |
| 11 | NCA | 30/10/18 | https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/offshore-detention-horrors-being-deliberately-hidden-from-us/news-story/cea3de557eac18ff5df62e9291b51f9 | Offshore detention: Horrors being deliberately hidden from us | IF AUSSIES could see the suffering being inflicted in our name, we'd be appalled. And that's exactly why it's being hidden from us. | opinion | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 747 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 12 | SMH | 5/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ghost-bus-the-scomomo-express-hits-the-runway-rather-than-the-road-20181105-p50e2g.html | Ghost bus: the 'ScoMo Express' hits the runway rather than the road | The self-styled "ScoMo Express" might be tearing up the Bruce Highway this week, but for the most part, Prime Minister Scott Morrison is touring Queensland by jet. | news | Leaders | Anti-LNP | Yes | 3918 | Scandal v Standards |
| 12 | SAT | 10/11/18 | https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2018/11/10/exclusive-auditor-general-found-morrison-breaches/15417684007120 | Exclusive: Auditor-general found Morrison breaches | While mystery surrounds Scott Morrison's sacking from Tourism Australia, a buried audit report shows numerous anomalies and concerns over contracts worth \$184 million. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2261 | Scandal v Standards |
| 12 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1865 | |
| 12 | SMH | 9/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/women-are-burning-with-a-kind-of-cold-fury-20181109-p50ezj.html | Women are burning with a kind of cold fury | It is a sick and ancient truth that the unwanted sexual attention of powerful men can be extremely dangerous for women. | opinion | issue | Anti-ALP | yes | 1742 | Scandal v Standards |
| 12 | HUN | 10/11/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/law-order/serious-incident-in-bourke-st-melbourne/news-story/ece8cfbdc7ac84eb32204d10fe88ece7 | Bourke St horror: Incredible footage shows moments before man shot following terror attack | A SURVIVOR of the Bourke St terror attack has told how he was stabbed in the head as he tried to help during yesterday's horror. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1484 | Religion v Rights |
| 12 | AGE | 8/11/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/gun-lobby-spends-big-in-victorian-election-20181108-p50ev7.html | Gun lobby spends big in Victorian election | Australia's gun lobby is pouring money into a US-style state election campaign aimed at weakening Victoria's firearms laws, according to Anti-violence campaigners. | news | Contest | neutral | no | 1304 | Cash v Certainty |
| 12 | SMH | 9/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/technology/my-health-record-s-privacy-chief-quits-amid-claims-agency-not-listening | My Health Record's privacy chief quits amid claims agency 'not listening' | The director of privacy at the agency behind My Health Record has quit amid claims the organisation and Health Minister Greg Hunt's office | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1073 | Scandal v Standards |

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|----|-----|---------|---|--|---|----------------------|---------|----------|-----|-------|--|---------------------|
| | | | listening-20181107-p50elu.html | | have not been taking the concerns of internal privacy experts seriously enough. | | | | | | | |
| 12 | ABC | 5/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-05/media-coverage-of-african-offenders-skewed-warns-chief-judge/10452172 | Media coverage of African offenders 'skewed', warns Melbourne chief judge | One of the most senior judges in Victoria has labelled the reporting and political rhetoric on African crime in Melbourne as "dangerous" and "skewed". | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1033 | | Racism v Refugees |
| 12 | ABC | 9/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-09/annabel-crabb-ashleigh-raper-luke-foley-geoffrey-rush-barnaby/10480876 | Luke Foley vs Ashleigh Raper shows that even if you're a good girl, you're still going to cop it | What have we learned this year from Australia's three most famous sexual harassment cases? It's simple: Even if you're a good girl, you're still going to cop it. | opinion | issue | neutral | yes | 1020 | | Scandal v Standards |
| 12 | AGE | 12/2/11 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/assange-helped-our-police-catch-child-pornographers-20110211-1aql.html | Assange helped our police catch child pornographers | news | not election related | neutral | no | 970 | other | | other |
| 12 | SMH | 7/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/former-official-criticises-angus-taylor-over-extraordinary-coal-protection-measure-20181106-p50ebw.html | Former official criticises Angus Taylor over 'extraordinary' coal protection measure | A potential Morrison government move to shield new coal-fired power projects from the future costs of their carbon emissions amounts to a taxpayer-funded subsidy and would be an "extraordinary" and "irresponsible" move, the former chief of the federal government's green bank says. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 967 | | Coal v Climate |
| 12 | AGE | 9/11/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/melbourne-news/bourke-street-car-explosion-live-man-shot-after-car-bursts-into-flames-on-bourke | As it happened: terror suspect known to ASIO dies after stabbing rampage | Live blog of Bourke Street attack | news | issue | neutral | no | 924 | | religion v Rights |

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|----|-----|----------|---|--|---|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------------|
| | | | street-20181109-p50f5b.html | | | | | | | | |
| 12 | SMH | 4/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/a-real-leader-would-not-keep-hanging-out-in-jonestown-20181102-p50dod.html | A real leader would not keep hanging out in Jonestown | Amid all the outrage over who said what to whom between Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his predecessor Malcolm Turnbull over just what Turnbull's brief was in Bali – with the two giving entirely divergent accounts, on twitter and the Alan Jones 2GB Breakfast show – may I ask the most cogent question of all? | opinion | Leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 920 | Scandal v Standards |
| 12 | NCA | 10/11/18 | https://www.news.com.au/national/victoria/carbon-fire-in-melbournes-bourke-st-mall/news-story/47635c260e97cf932516036aea0f336a | Melbourne stabbing attack was 'terrorism incident', police say, as Islamic State claims it | The stabbing rampage that left one dead in Melbourne is being treated as a 'terrorism incident', as police confirm the knifeman is also dead. Islamic State later claimed the attack. | news | issue | neutral | no | 835 | Religion v Rights |
| 12 | CON | 25/10/18 | https://theconversation.com/republican-women-are-just-fine-thank-you-with-being-republican-104762 | Republican women are just fine, thank you, with being Republican | Republican women have faced a conundrum repeatedly in the last two years. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 791 | other |
| 12 | ABC | 7/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-07/adani-water-project-bypassed-full-assessment-against-advice/10457670 | Adani water project bypasses full environmental impact assessment against advice | The Federal Environment Department ruled against the advice of the Government's own water experts when deciding Adani's North Galilee Water Scheme, in Central Queensland, did not require a full environmental assessment. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 779 | Coal v Climate |
| 12 | NED | 5/11/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/11/05/patriotism-last-refuge-scoundrel/ | Patriotism, the last refuge of the scoundrel, waves its flag | If the News Corp/Scott Morrison/Virgin Australia stunt using returned servicemen and women was | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 768 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | | | merely a marketing ploy for the airline coming second, it wouldn't matter. | | | | | | |
| 12 | NED | 8/11/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/property/2018/11/08/negative-gearing-claims-slammed/ | 'Misleading and disingenuous': Treasurer's negative gearing claims slammed | Experts have rubbished Treasurer Josh Frydenberg's claims that a proposed rollback of negative gearing will decimate the property market and send rents soaring. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 758 | Cash v Certainty |
| 12 | SBS | 31/5/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2018/05/31/william-cooper-koories-protest-against-nazis | William Cooper: a Koorie's protest against the Nazis | A Yorta Yorta man lead a march to Melbourne's German Consulate to make a stand against the persecution of the Jewish people by the Nazi government. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 749 | other |
| 12 | SMH | 6/11/17 | https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/melbourne-cup-one-of-the-cruellest-days-in-citys-calendar-20171106-gzjf9m.html | Why the Melbourne Cup is actually one of the cruellest days on Australia's calendar | But there's no dressing up the fact that the Melbourne Cup is one of the cruellest days on Melbourne's calendar. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 733 | other |
| 13 | ABC | 16/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-16/fact-check-negative-gearing-under-80000/10387552 | Fact check: Do two-thirds of negative gearers have a taxable income under \$80,000? | Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, in keeping with his predecessor Scott Morrison, has attacked Labor for its policy to restrict tax concessions for negatively geared investment property. | analysis | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1701 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | SMH | 11/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/beijing-s-secret-plot-to-infiltrate-un-used-australian-insider-20181031-p50d2e.html | Beijing's secret plot to infiltrate UN used Australian insider | Earlier this year, a petite 62-year-old woman dubbed the "queen of the Australian-China social scene" walked out of a US federal prison. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1603 | other |
| 13 | AFR | 15/11/18 | https://www.afr.com/companies/telecommunications/kiwis-to-get-20times-nbn-speeds- | Kiwis to get 20-times NBN speeds for similar price | New Zealanders will soon be getting internet speeds 20 times faster than those enjoyed by most | news | issue | neutral | no | 1509 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | for-the-same-price-20181114-h17wgg | | Australians for just a few dollars more a month, further widening an already-huge gap between the two countries' broadband networks. | | | | | | |
| 13 | SAT | 10/11/18 | https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2018/11/10/exclusive-auditor-general-found-morrison-breaches/15417684007120 | Exclusive: Auditor-general found Morrison breaches | While mystery surrounds Scott Morrison's sacking from Tourism Australia, a buried audit report shows numerous anomalies and concerns over contracts worth \$184 million. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1494 | Scandal v Standards |
| 13 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1457 | |
| 13 | SMH | 15/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/healthcare/hidden-conflict-my-health-record-boss-privately-giving-advice-to-health-firms-20181107-p50eh9.html | Hidden conflict: My Health Record boss privately giving advice to health firms | The chairman of the agency responsible for the bungled My Health Record rollout has been privately advising a global healthcare outsourcing company. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1305 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | SMH | 14/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/australia-becoming-more-corrupt-warns-former-judge-20181113-p50fsp.html | Australia becoming more corrupt, warns former judge | Australia is becoming more corrupt because successive federal governments have failed to create an effective national Anti-corruption body similar to the NSW Independent Commission against Corruption, a leading jurist has argued. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1097 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | SMH | 12/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/foodbank-that-feeds-710-000-australians-a-month-has-funding-halved-20181112-p50ffo.html | Foodbank that feeds 710,000 Australians a month has funding halved | A charity that feeds 710,000 Australians every month says the federal government has cut its budget almost in half just weeks before Christmas. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1094 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | NIN | 12/11/18 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/bourke-street-terror-attack-family-say-hassan- | Bourke Street attacker's family say he was 'crying for help' | The family of the man responsible for Friday's attack on Bourke Street insist he was not a terrorist | news | issue | neutral | no | 1076 | Religion v Rights |

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| | | | khalif-shire-ali-was-mentally-ill/5c3eb35e-e665-402e-873a-50a4f2ad1050 | | but a mentally ill man "crying for help". | | | | | | |
| 13 | AGE | 4/9/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/how-matthew-guy-s-2-5m-settlement-was-hidden-from-investigators-20180904-p501ql.html | How Matthew Guy's \$2.5m settlement was hidden from investigators | Senior state bureaucrats withheld documents from integrity agencies about Matthew Guy's financial settlement of a botched planning decision because they feared the multimillion-dollar payout had no legal basis. | news | not election related | Anti-LNP | no | 1074 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | SMH | 12/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/we-are-under-assault-major-universities-go-to-war-with-morrison-government-over-research-cuts-20181112-p50fih.html | 'We are under assault': Major universities go to war with Morrison government over research cuts | The country's biggest universities say they are "under assault" and have launched an extraordinary attack on the Morrison government over a fresh round of cuts to academic research. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 883 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | CON | 16/11/18 | https://theconversation.com/how-australias-nra-inspired-gun-lobby-is-trying-to-chip-away-at-gun-control-laws-state-by-state-105667 | How Australia's NRA-inspired gun lobby is trying to chip away at gun control laws, state by state | One of the more noticeable ad campaigns in the upcoming Victoria state election comes from a seemingly unlikely source. | news | issue | neutral | no | 858 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | ABC | 13/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-13/nra-stay-in-their-lane-doctors-respond/10491624 | Doctors post blood-soaked photos after NRA tells them to pipe down over gun restrictions | US doctors are sharing haunting pictures of the aftermath of gun violence on social media after the National Rifle Association of America (NRA) told medical experts to "stay in their lane" when it comes to firearms restrictions. | news | issue | neutral | no | 850 | Other |
| 13 | SMH | 17/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/if-peter-was-the-answer-what-was-the-question-what-was-the-question-turnbull-s-spray-at-dutton | 'If Peter was the answer, what was the question?': Turnbull's spray at Dutton | Late on Friday evening, in the cavernous space that is the Cutaway at Barangaroo, Malcolm Turnbull was | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 844 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | dutton-20181116-p50gm5.html | | hitting sixes to a home crowd. | | | | | | |
| 13 | SMH | 14/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/indonesians-privately-told-five-per-cent-chance-australia-will-go-ahead-with-israel-embassy-move-20181114-p50g11.html | Indonesians privately told 'five per cent chance' Australia will go ahead with Israel embassy move | The Morrison government has told Indonesian ministers there is "less than 5 per cent" chance it will go ahead with a divisive new policy on Israel, in a comment that could clear the way for a diplomatic retreat to seal a \$16.5 billion free trade agreement. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 829 | Scandal v Standards |
| 13 | ABC | 14/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-14/ai-group-apprentice-dillon-wu-dies-in-unsafe-worksite/10429356 | Family distraught after apprentice dies in worksite employer Ai Group knew was unsafe | Just a few weeks have passed since their 20-year-old son, Dillon Wu, died while working at a Melbourne factory. | news | issue | neutral | no | 822 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | ABC | 14/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-14/federal-Anti-corruption-commission-might-become-reality/10498042 | Federal Anti-corruption commission a step closer, with growing support in Lower House ahead of debate | A federal Anti-corruption commission now appears to be a live option, thanks to the growing power of the crossbench in the House of Representatives, with legislation to establish a body that would investigate corruption likely to be introduced into Parliament before Christmas. | news | issue | neutral | no | 812 | Cash v Certainty |
| 13 | SMH | 15/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/backlash-to-embassy-review-worsens-as-malaysian-pm-warns-on-causes-for-terrorism-20181115-p50gb8.html | Backlash to embassy review worsens as Malaysian PM warns on 'causes for terrorism' | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has encountered more objections to his policy shift on Israel, as a prominent Asian leader raises concerns about the decision and warns that questions over Palestine are contributing to terrorism. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 802 | Scandal v Standards |
| 13 | ABC | 13/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-13/keating-says-raising-superannuation-to | Paul Keating says raising superannuation to | Former prime minister Paul Keating has rejected a Grattan Institute | news | issue | neutral | no | 793 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | super-to-12-per-cent-will-barely-cut-it/10494226 | 12 per cent will 'barely cut it' | report that suggested scrapping plans to raise compulsory super payments from 9.5 per cent to 12 per cent, and raising the retirement age to 70. | | | | | | |
| 13 | SMH | 17/2/11 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/morrison-sees-votes-in-Anti-muslim-strategy-20110216-1awmo.html | Morrison sees votes in Anti-Muslim strategy | THE opposition immigration spokesman, Scott Morrison, urged the shadow cabinet to capitalise on the electorate's growing concerns about "Muslim immigration", "Muslims in Australia" and the "inability" of Muslim migrants to integrate. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 756 | Racism v Refugees |
| 14 | SBS | 21/11/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/cultural-revolution-as-humpback-whales-change-their-songs | 'Cultural revolution' as humpback whales change their songs | Research has shown that male humpback whale populations undergo a "cultural revolution" every few years when they change their song anthem. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2604 | other |
| 14 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2439 | |
| 14 | ABC | 22/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-22/counting-the-cost-of-the-education-revolution/10495756 | Counting the cost of the education revolution | Thousands of public schools receive less public funding than similar private schools, an ABC News investigation has found. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2399 | Cash v Certainty |
| 14 | ABC | 21/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-21/victorian-forests-appear-to-have-been-logged-illegally/10496424 | Australia's endangered forests are being 'stolen' and sold in hardware and office stores | Thousands of hectares of state forest appear to have been logged or earmarked for logging illegally, an ABC investigation has found, amounting to what some say is the mass "theft" by a government-owned for-profit logging company. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 2388 | Coal v Climate |
| 14 | NIN | 19/11/18 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/sexual-abuse-survivor- | Victim of Hillsong Church founder's pedophile father | Brian Houston is the founder and leader of the global religious | news | issue | neutral | no | 1815 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | describes-his-ordeal-at-hands-of-pedophile-pastor/6bf49f92-b731-403e-803a-99b6908a20b3 | says childhood was destroyed by sexual abuse | phenomenon Hillsong Church. His father was Frank Houston, a serial paedophile. | | | | | | |
| 14 | HUN | 19/11/18 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/blogs/andrew-bolt/a-present-for-your-marxist-lecturer/news-story/1e406019196218520808c84b4da0adae | A PRESENT FOR YOUR MARXIST LECTURER | Got a lecturer who still praises Marxism? Send them Jordan Peterson's preface to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's The Gulag Archipelago | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 1557 | other |
| 14 | SMH | 20/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/education/how-political-correctness-is-changing-education-according-to-abbott-jones-and-donnelly-20181120-p50h5y.html | How political correctness is changing education, according to Abbott, Jones and Donnelly | There is something sinister going on in Australian classrooms. That was the consensus of a former prime minister, a former curriculum reviewer and a radio broadcaster. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | No | 1478 | Religion v Rights |
| 14 | AGE | 21/11/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/politics/victoria/victorian-liberals-to-shut-down-injecting-room-in-a-week-if-elected-20181121-p50hcj.html | Victorian Liberals to shut down injecting room in a week if elected | The opposition will shut down the state's only medically supervised drug injecting room within a week if voted into government in this Saturday's state election. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1400 | Religion v Rights |
| 14 | NCA | 20/11/18 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/work/leaders/why-the-former-prime-minister-wants-more-prayer-time/news-story/85050d5d5c6692b4c2ed231ed8fb2e69 | Why the former prime minister wants more prayer time | Former prime minister Tony Abbott believes we don't pray enough and go over the top when acknowledging indigenous culture. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1271 | Religion v Rights |
| 14 | ABC | 20/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-20/federal-government-scott-morrison-migration-cuts/10513256 | Scott Morrison warns permanent migration needs to be cut to ease city congestion | The Federal Government is likely to cut Australia's permanent migration cap, in a move it says will ease congestion in the major cities. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1225 | Racism v Refugees |
| 14 | SMH | 19/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/enough-enough-scott-morrison-says-he | 'Enough, enough, enough': Scott Morrison says he | Prime Minister Scott Morrison will cut the number of migrants coming | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1184 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | morrison-says-he-will-cut-australia-s-migration-intake-20181119-p50hle.html | will cut Australia's migration intake | to Australia, declaring the "roads are clogged" and buses, trains and schools in Sydney and Melbourne "are full". | | | | | | |
| 14 | ABC | 19/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-18/liberals-preference-gay-conversion-promoter-on-buninyong-ticket/10508978 | Gay conversion supporter preferred on Liberal ticket in Victoria's west | The Victorian Liberal Party has preferred a conservative Christian who promotes gay conversion therapy and refers to homosexuality as "sexual brokenness", on a how-to-vote card in the state's west. | news | Party | Anti-LNP | no | 1141 | Religion v Rights |
| 14 | ABC | 21/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-21/gatwick-st-kilda-alarming-number-women-in-prison/10513530 | 'Alarming' number of women forced to move out of the Gatwick for The Block are now in jail | The lights, cameras and crowds have finally cleared out of St Kilda following the auctions last month at the Gatwick Private Hotel, a run-down three-storey rooming house that was transformed into six multi-million-dollar apartments for this year's season of the popular home renovation show, The Block. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1136 | Scandal v Standards |
| 14 | NIN | 18/11/18 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/60-minutes-brian-houston-hillsong-church-founder-under-police-investigation/a6ee85b6-39a9-4810-8530-9dd1f2f377bf | Hillsong Church founder under police investigation over handling of father's sex crimes | Brian Houston, the founder of the Hillsong Church, is under investigation by New South Wales police over his handling of the sex crimes committed by his father Frank Houston. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1127 | Religion v Rights |
| 14 | SMH | 22/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/bill-shorten-sets-new-course-on-climate-boosting-renewables-and-subsidising-batteries-for-100-000- | Bill Shorten sets new course on climate, boosting renewables and subsidising batteries for 100,000 homes | Labor is vowing to underwrite a series of mammoth new energy projects that ramp up the supply of renewable power, in a long-awaited plan that sidelines a bipartisan agreement in Parliament out | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 1115 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | homes-20181121-p50hgz.html | | of concern the Coalition cannot agree on a united policy. | | | | | | |
| 14 | SMH | 21/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/scandal-nsw-coal-power-plants-will-kill-thousands-before-they-close-20181120-p50h66.html | 'Scandal': NSW coal power plants will kill thousands before they close | Air pollution from NSW's five coal-fired power stations carry a "substantial health burden", including leading to an estimated 279 deaths a year with thousands more to come before they close, a new study has found. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1101 | Coal v Climate |
| 14 | IND | 21/11/18 | https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/why-is-scott-morrison-protecting-hillsong-pastor-brian-houston.12123 | Why is Scott Morrison protecting Hillsong Pastor Brian Houston? | The PM remains mute as his mentor, Pentecostal Pastor Brian Houston, is investigated for covering up child sexual abuse but demands Muslim leaders take responsibility for their communities' criminal behaviour, writes Dr Jennifer Wilson. | opinion | Leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1090 | religion v Rights |
| 14 | SMH | 19/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/life-changing-new-measures-to-help-women-leaving-abusive-relationships-20181119-p50gwy.html | Life-changing': New measures to help women leaving abusive relationships | Women leaving abusive relationships will be able to access their superannuation early as part of a suite of Coalition government measures aimed at helping women improve their financial security. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 1064 | Scandal v Standards |
| 14 | SMH | 16/8/13 | https://www.smh.com.au/technology/sigurdur-thordarson-wikileaks-babyfaced-traitor-20130815-2ryiu.html | Sigurdur Thordarson: WikiLeaks's baby-faced traitor | When he met Julian Assange for the first time, Sigurdur Thordarson admired the WikiLeaks founder's attitude and quickly signed up to the cause. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1019 | other |
| 14 | ABC | 22/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-18/pamela-anderson-lashes-out-at-scott- | Pamela Anderson blasts Scott Morrison for | Actor Pamela Anderson has lashed out at Prime Minister Scott Morrison via an open letter, saying he | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 943 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | morrison-via-open-letter/10508472 | 'smutty' comments after Assange plea | "trivialised" the suffering of Australian WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, and made "lewd" comments about her. | | | | | | |
| 15 | PER | 26/11/18 | https://www.perthnow.com.au/business/agriculture/big-knickers-a-standout-on-myalup-farm-ng-b881032899z | Big Knickers a standout on Myalup farm | Knickers the steer is a bit on the shy side, but the bovine behemoth tends to stick out from the herd. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 7182 | other |
| 15 | ABC | 27/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-27/belle-gibson-faces-jail-term-for-unpaid-cancer-fraud-fine/10558150 | Belle Gibson faces jail time if \$410k fine for cancer fraud goes unpaid | A Federal Court judge has warned fake wellness blogger Belle Gibson she could go to jail if she does not pay \$410,000 for duping customers and breaching Australian consumer law. | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 6397 | Scandal v Standards |
| 15 | SMH | 30/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/climate-change-protest-will-lead-to-dole-queue-minister-tells-students-20181130-p50jbt.html | Climate change protest will lead to dole queue, minister tells students | Thousands of Australian schoolchildren have walked out of class to demand federal government action on climate change are only going to learn how to join the dole queue, a senior federal government minister says. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2849 | Coal v Climate |
| 15 | ABC | 30/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-30/proud-boys-founder-gavin-mcinnnes-denied-visa-to-australia/10573134 | Proud Boys founder Gavin McInnes denied visa to tour Australia with 'The Deplorables' | Right-wing provocateur and founder of the Proud Boys group Gavin McInnes has had his visa application blocked by the Home Affairs Department, failing the character test to enter Australia. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2288 | Racism v Refugees |
| 15 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2251 | |
| 15 | TEL | 25/11/18 | https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/rendezview/this-is-how-you-lose-an-election/news- | This is how you lose an election | When a Liberal politician backs away from telling the truth about Safe Schools' radical gender ideology, | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1422 | Religion v Rights |

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| | | | story/78a7911432a18414840be9e11305f7d3 | | conservative voters will respond in no uncertain terms, writes Miranda Devine. | | | | | | |
| 15 | NED | 28/11/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/11/27/morrison-government-threatens-mass-referrals-high-court-dutton/ | Government threatens mass referrals to High Court if Parliament moves on Dutton | The Morrison government's threat to refer crossbench MP Kerryn Phelps to the High Court if the Parliament moves on Peter Dutton has sparked fresh claims of intimidation. | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1414 | Scandal v Standards |
| 15 | SMH | 1/5/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/teachers-need-fewer-holidays-more-hours-Coalition-MP-Andrew-Laming-20180501-p4zcog.html | Teachers need fewer holidays, more hours: Coalition MP Andrew Laming | A Coalition backbencher has criticised the "soothing" approach to school reforms being adopted by the government, arguing teachers should spend eight hours at work each day, get just four weeks' annual leave, and should not be marking or doing class preparation at home. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1403 | Scandal v Standards |
| 15 | SMH | 29/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/education/school-students-on-mass-strike-to-protest-climate-change-inaction-20181129-p50j4c.html | School students on mass strike to protest climate change inaction | Thousands of striking Sydney students are expected to converge on Martin Place on Friday, joining their peers around the country in demanding the government take action on climate change | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1351 | Coal v Climate |
| 15 | SMH | 28/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/craig-kelly-planning-to-quit-the-liberal-party-as-government-braces-for-more-defections-20181128-p50iyk.html | Craig Kelly planning to quit the Liberal Party as government braces for more defections | Liberal MP Craig Kelly plans to run as an independent at the next election and is being urged to quit the party immediately, in the latest blow to unity inside the Morrison government. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1349 | Scandal v Standards |
| 15 | SMH | 25/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/the-walls-are-closing-in-2gb- | 'The walls are closing in': 2GB | To cut to the chase, Alan Jones's contract is up in the middle of next year, and | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 1261 | other |

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|----|-----|----------|---|---|--|---------|-----------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|
| | | | management-wants-alan-jones-out-20181123-p50hwz.html | management wants Alan Jones out | current 2GB management does not want to renew it. | | | | | | |
| 15 | SMH | 27/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-government-shock-julia-banks-quits-the-liberal-party-to-sit-on-the-crossbench-20181127-p50il8.html | Morrison government shock: Julia Banks quits the Liberal Party to sit on the crossbench | The Morrison government has suffered a body blow to its control of Parliament with outspoken MP Julia Banks quitting the Liberals to sit on the crossbench in a blistering verdict on the party's direction. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1235 | Scandal v Standards |
| 15 | SMH | 29/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/yes-prime-minister-i-m-striking-from-school-consider-it-a-climate-lesson-20181127-p50iqd.html | Yes, Prime Minister, I'm striking from school: consider it a climate lesson | I am Veronica, 15 years old, from Scott Morrison's electorate. Despite our Prime Minister's calls for students not to strike from school on Friday, we're choosing to no longer be powerless. We will be striking with thousands of other students, to show we will not stand for our government's inaction on climate change. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1215 | Coal v Climate |
| 15 | ABC | 30/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-30/australian-students-climate-change-protest-scott-morrison/10571168 | Students strike for climate change protests, defying calls to stay in school | Thousands of Australian students have defied calls by the Prime Minister to stay in school and instead marched on the nation's capital cities, and some regional centres, demanding an end to political inertia on climate change. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1196 | Coal v Climate |
| 15 | SMH | 26/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/you-won-t-get-a-single-cent-labor-stands-firm-on-stadium-cash-20181126-p50ien.html | You won't get a single cent': Labor stands firm on stadium cash | The NSW Labor party will not rebuild either the Sydney Football Stadium at Moore Park or proceed with an \$800 million upgrade to ANZ Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park if it wins | news | issue | pro-ALP | yes | 1180 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | | government at the March election. | | | | | | |
| 15 | SMH | 29/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/nationals-mps-rebel-over-government-s-integrity-commission-plans-20181129-p50j51.html | Nationals MPs rebel over government's integrity commission plans | The Morrison government is facing an internal rebellion by Nationals MPs over plans for a new Anti-corruption regime unless it protects ministers from being targeted over infrastructure grants made against bureaucrats' advice. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1155 | Scandal v Standards |
| 15 | SMH | 1/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/how-about-he-rings-pm-s-woman-problem-hits-peak-farce-20181129-p50j8b.html | How about he rings?: PM's woman problem hits peak farce | After hearing her public complaints of being bullied and intimidated, Scott Morrison invited the Liberal senator Lucy Gichuhi to his office in Parliament House. | opinion | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1140 | Scandal v Standards |
| 15 | SBS | 26/11/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/teenager-comes-out-as-gay-in-sydney-catholic-school-assembly | Teenager comes out as gay in Sydney Catholic school assembly | Exclusive: Finn Stannard tells SBS News why he chose to share his journey to accepting his sexuality with 1,500 people, as footage of his powerful speech is released. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1088 | other |
| 15 | SMH | 29/11/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/adani-announces-coal-mine-construction-will-begin-20181129-p50j69.html | Adani announces coal mine construction will begin | Federal Labor says Adani's Carmichael mine has failed to live up to its economic promises after the Indian mining giant announced it will self-finance a dramatically smaller project than originally planned. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1060 | Coal v Climate |
| 15 | ABC | 27/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-25/poor-english-no-jobs-little-support-international-students/10513590 | Poor English, few jobs: Are Australian universities using international students as 'cash cows'? | Recently at an elite Australian university, a senior humanities lecturer opened her office door to a young international student who was accompanied by another woman and seemed nervous. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1005 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 16 | AFR | 5/12/18 | https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/south-australias-big-battery-slashes-40m-from-grid-control-costs-in-first-year-20181205-h18q11 | South Australia's big battery slashes \$40m from grid control costs in first year | South Australia's big battery has outperformed expectations in its first year of operation, saving almost \$40 million in grid stabilisation costs, helping prevent blackouts, and generally restoring confidence in energy supply in the state, according to French project backer Neoen, which is working on expanding its battery project line-up in Australia. | news | Issue | Neutral | No | 2593 | Coal v Climate |
| 16 | ABC | 30/11/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-11-30/proud-boys-founder-gavin-mcinnis-denied-visa-to-australia/10573134 | Proud Boys founder Gavin McInnes denied visa to tour Australia with 'The Deplorables' | Right-wing provocateur and founder of the Proud Boys group Gavin McInnes has had his visa application blocked by the Home Affairs Department, failing the character test to enter Australia. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2400 | Racism v Refugees |
| 16 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2108 | |
| 16 | SMH | 2/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/craig-kelly-s-expletive-laden-rant-exposes-depth-of-liberal-party-tensions-20181202-p50jra.html | Craig Kelly's expletive-laden rant exposes depth of Liberal Party tensions | Craig Kelly walked into the Engadine Gymnastics Club on Sunday night a man under pressure. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1815 | Scandal v Standards |
| 16 | SMH | 4/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/assistant-treasurer-stuart-robert-to-headline-fundraiser-about-the-banking-royal-commission-20181204-p50k1i.html | Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert to headline fundraiser about the banking royal commission | Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert will headline a Liberal Party fundraiser that promises political donors an insight into the government's potential response to the banking royal commission. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1714 | Cash v Certainty |
| 16 | SMH | 2/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-party-in-turmoil-over-plan-to-save-craig-kelly | Liberal Party in turmoil over plan to save Craig Kelly | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has moved to save embattled backbencher | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1441 | Scandal v Standards |

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|----|-----|---------|---|---|--|---------|----------------------|----------|----|------|----------------|
| | | | plan-to-save-craig-kelly-through-emergency-powers-20181202-p50jp2.html | through emergency powers | Craig Kelly from being thrown out of Parliament in a risky intervention that will ignite a fresh war between the Liberal Party's conservative and moderate forces. | | | | | | |
| 16 | CON | 5/12/18 | https://theconversation.com/bizarre-dark-fluid-with-negative-mass-could-dominate-the-universe-what-my-research-suggests-107922 | Bizarre 'dark fluid' with negative mass could dominate the universe | It's embarrassing, but astrophysicists are the first to admit it. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 1411 | other |
| 16 | ABC | 6/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-06/developer-issues-legal-threat-to-minister-over-protected-wetland/10581734 | Liberal Party donor issues legal threat to minister over development on sensitive bird habitat | The former federal environment minister rejected advice from his own department that a \$1.4 billion development on protected wetlands being proposed by a major Liberal Party donor was "clearly unacceptable", documents obtained under Freedom of Information (FOI) show. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1224 | Coal v Climate |
| 16 | AUS | 5/12/18 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/cris-dawson-arrested-to-be-charged-with-lyn-dawsons-murder/news-story/8f949934d7022cc2a1fbcaf47803b933 | Chris Dawson arrest: babysitter revealed as new witness who may give evidence | The former babysitter for Chris and Lyn Dawson is one of the new witnesses that may be called to give evidence in the murder charge against the former footballer. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1033 | other |
| 16 | SMH | 1/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/rioting-is-not-one-of-the-three-rs-liberals-say-protesting-students-should-give-up-ice-creams-20181201-p50jmf.html | Rioting is not one of the three Rs': Liberals say protesting students should give up ice-creams | Liberal MPs have attacked the "rioting" students who took a day off school to protest the government's climate change policies, with one challenging them to swear off ice-cream to lower emissions. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 946 | Coal v Climate |

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| 16 | SMH | 6/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/whatever-it-takes-scott-morrison-vows-to-avoid-losing-historic-parliamentary-vote-20181206-p50kjk.html | Whatever it takes': Scott Morrison vows to avoid losing historic parliamentary vote | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has promised to do "everything in my power" to prevent a vote in Parliament that would likely see the government lose to a Labor, Greens and crossbench bid to hasten medical treatment for refugees on Manus Island and Nauru. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 858 | Racism v Refugees |
| 16 | CON | 1/12/18 | https://theconversation.com/rewilding-is-essential-to-the-uks-commitment-to-zero-carbon-emissions-107541 | Rewilding is essential to the UK's commitment to zero carbon emissions | Humans have cut down half the trees on Earth since the dawn of agriculture – over 3 trillion of them. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 828 | Coal v Climate |
| 16 | SMH | 5/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-government-exposed-to-a-humiliating-defeat-in-parliament-on-final-sitting-day-20181205-p50kjb.html | Morrison government exposed to a humiliating defeat in Parliament on final sitting day | The Morrison government is exposed to a humiliating defeat in Parliament from a multi-party push to legislate faster medical treatment for refugees on Manus Island and Nauru, highlighting the Coalition's vulnerability on the last sitting day for the year. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 789 | Racism v Refugees |
| 16 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 781 | |
| 16 | SMH | 2/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/top-qc-slams-centrelink-s-robo-debt-program-as-elaborate-sham-20181202-p50jos.html | Top QC slams Centrelink's robo-debt program as 'elaborate sham' | Centrelink's controversial robo-debt recovery scheme is an "elaborate sham", according to a prominent Victorian barrister who wants to challenge it in the Federal Court. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 739 | Cash v Certainty |
| 16 | NED | 6/12/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/12/06/barnaby-joyce-trans-comments/ | Calls for Barnaby Joyce to resign over transgender kids comments | Former deputy prime minister Barnaby Joyce has called for private schools to retain the right to ban or expel transgender children | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 738 | Religion v Rights |

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| | | | | | to stop them from going into single-sex change rooms and bathrooms. | | | | | | |
| 16 | SMH | 7/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/home-affairs-budget-slashed-to-avoid-300-million-overspend-20181206-p50kpp.html | Home Affairs budget slashed to avoid \$300 million overspend | The Australian Border Force is slashing staff numbers at airports over the busy Christmas period as part of desperate measures to stem a predicted \$300 million overspend at the Department of Home Affairs. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 702 | Cash v Certainty |
| 16 | SMH | 3/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/consumer-affairs/six-panels-a-minute-two-million-australian-homes-now-have-solar-20181203-p50jtn.html | Six panels a minute': Two million Australian homes now have solar | Surging power bills and the falling price of solar panels have pushed the number of households with photovoltaics on their roofs past the 2 million mark, according to analysis of Clean Energy Regulator data. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 682 | Coal v Climate |
| 16 | CON | | | | | | | | | 678 | |
| 16 | SMH | 1/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/how-about-he-rings-pm-s-woman-problem-hits-peak-farce-20181129-p50j8b.html | How about he rings?': PM's woman problem hits peak farce | After hearing her public complaints of being bullied and intimidated, Scott Morrison invited the Liberal senator Lucy Gichuhi to his office in Parliament House. | opinion | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 665 | Scandal v Standards |
| 17 | ABC | 13/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2018-12-09/christmas-comet-46pwirtanen-and-geminids-meteor-shower/10583932 | Christmas comet' 46P/Wirtanen and the Geminids meteor shower herald a cracker weekend | Grab your cameras, get away from city lights if you live somewhere where there's clear skies this weekend and you'll have a front-row seat for a beautiful show. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 5904 | other |
| 17 | AGE | 12/12/18 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/why-the-media-is-unable-to-report-on-a-case-that-has-generated- | Why the media is unable to report on a case that has generated huge interest online | A very high-profile figure was convicted on Tuesday of a serious crime, but we are unable to report their | news | issue | neutral | yes | 4431 | Religion v Rights |

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| | | | huge-interest-online-20181212-p50lta.html | | identity due to a suppression order. | | | | | | |
| 17 | NED | 9/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-09/record-number-asylum-seekers-peter-dutton/ | Irony: Record number of asylum seekers arrive on Dutton's watch | For all the government's tough-on-asylum-seekers rhetoric, protection visa applications have blown out to record numbers on Peter Dutton's watch. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 4157 | Racism v Refugees |
| 17 | PER | 12/12/18 | https://www.perthnow.com.au/an-awful-crime-the-person-is-guilty-but-we-cant-publish-the-story-ng-4be7ee27075d4fb302aae9989c40ad34 | news | issue | neutral | yes | 2617 | Religion v Rights | | |
| 17 | NIN | 12/12/18 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/daniel-hadley-cocaine-charges-dropped-on-mental-illness-grounds/bb8b00f7-f189-4351-b379-75761c670db2 | Ray Hadley's son Daniel has cocaine charges dropped on mental illness grounds | Daniel Hadley, a former police officer and the son of broadcaster Ray Hadley, has had a charge of cocaine possession against him dropped in a Sydney court. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2504 | other |
| 17 | ABC | 9/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-09/california-fires-dog-guards-home-for-a-month-waiting-for-owner/10598026 | Dog guards ruins of California home for a month after owner fled Camp Fire in Paradise | A dog that survived the catastrophic wildfire in Northern California apparently protected the ruins of his home for almost a month until his owner returned. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2337 | other |
| 17 | SMH | 13/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/you-welcome-them-with-hatred-malala-yousafzai-s-disappointment-at-australia-20181213-p50m13.html | 'Your job as a human is to welcome them': Malala's disappointment at Australia | When asylum seekers looked to an affluent Australia for hope, it was disappointing to see some were treated with "hatred" and weren't even allowed to set foot on its shores, said activist Malala Yousafzai. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2092 | Racism v Refugees |
| 17 | ABC | 8/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-09/labor-government-would- | Plan to outsource Australia's visa processing would be | Plans to offload Australia's visa processing system to the private sector, | news | Party | pro-ALP | no | 1992 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | dump-plan-to- outsource-visa- processing/10597606 | dumped under Shorten Labor government | potentially worth more than \$3 billion to the winning company, would be dumped under a Shorten Labor government. | | | | | | | |
| 17 | SMH | 14/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/so-many-holes-former-icac-boss-slams-morrison-s-plan-20181214-p50m91.html | Ex-ICAC boss says Obeid would be a free man under Morrison's plan | The men who helped put one of Australia's most corrupt politicians behind bars say Scott Morrison's Anti-corruption commission would not have the powers to expose a future Eddie Obeid | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1803 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 17 | CON | | | | | | | | | 1585 | | |
| 17 | SMH | 9/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace/heston-blumenthal-the-tax-havens-and-the-ripped-off-workers-20181207-p50ksz.html | Heston Blumenthal, the tax havens and the ripped-off workers | The international restaurant empire fronted by world-renowned chef Heston Blumenthal is run through a series of notorious offshore tax havens while also substantially underpaying staff at its high-end Australian eatery. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1550 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 17 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1276 | | |
| 17 | ABC | 12/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-12/woman-pleaded-for-help-giving-birth-alone-in-bandyup-prison-cell/10608464 | Woman gave birth in Bandyup Prison alone in jail cell, prison watchdog finds in damning report | In a maximum security prison cell on a 33-degree day, a woman was forced to have her baby alone while pleading for help for over an hour to the guards watching through a gap in the locked cell door. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1270 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 17 | SMH | 12/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/review-clears-abc-and-sbs-over-claims-they-compete-unfairly-with- | ABC and SBS cleared by review into claims they compete unfairly with commercial rivals | An independent review commissioned by the government has spectacularly rejected claims that the ABC and SBS enjoy an unfair | news | issue | neutral | no | 1211 | Cash v Certainty | |

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| | | | commercial-rivals-20181212-p50lpj.html | | competitive advantage over their commercial rivals. | | | | | | |
| 17 | NCA | 11/12/18 | https://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/military/chinese-military-official-we-should-be-ready-to-take-over-taiwan/news-story/58b8ff6e0d9f335354a71c1edbce63ee | Chinese military official: 'We should be ready to take over Taiwan' | A Chinese military official says rising tensions in the South China Sea could prompt the country to make a move that could plunge us into war. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1190 | other |
| 17 | SMH | 11/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/stop-the-boats-email-exposes-border-force-plans-to-save-money-by-halting-ocean-patrols-20181211-p50lis.html | Stop the boats: Email exposes Border Force plans to save money by halting ocean patrols | The Australian Border Force plans to save money on fuel by pulling ships from ocean patrols, amid a high-stakes political fight between the Morrison government and Labor over border security policy. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1151 | Cash v Certainty |
| 17 | SBS | 11/12/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/cabinet-set-to-formally-ratify-jerusalem-as-israel-s-capital | Cabinet set to formally ratify Jerusalem as Israel's capital | The cabinet is expected to ratify Jerusalem as the capital of Israel but the embassy will not be moved from Tel Aviv just yet, The Australian reports. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1091 | Religion v Rights |
| 17 | PER | 11/12/18 | https://www.perthnow.com.au/politics/federal-politics/scott-morrison-approves-paying-more-than-1-million-to-government-staffers-ng-b881047192z | Scott Morrison approves paying more than \$1 million to government staffers | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has personally approved 30 pay rises for senior staff. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1090 | Cash v Certainty |
| 17 | CRI | 10/12/18 | https://www.crikey.com.au/2018/12/10/class-actions-manus-nauru/ | Australia faces class actions for 'crimes against humanity' on Manus and Nauru | One day after the government filibustered proposed changes to medical transfers from Nauru, human rights lawyers have filed two class action suits alleging "torture", "persecution" and "other inhumane acts". | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1082 | Racism v Refugees |

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|----|-----|----------|---|---|---|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|------|------------------|
| 17 | AUS | 10/12/18 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/newspoll-coalition-ends-year-with-poll-slump/news-story/b7ea62ddbdf298bbfeb05ea8daa8c308 | Newspoll: Coalition ends year with poll slump | Scott Morrison will head to the Christmas break with the titanic task of turning around a damaged government before the May election, with the Coalition ending 2018 in the grip of a poll slump. | news | Contest | Anti-LNP | no | 1078 | other |
| 18 | SMH | 20/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-s-fixer-offered-craig-kelly-s-challenger-a-350-000-party-job-to-drop-out-20181219-p50n7j.html | Scott Morrison's fixer offered Craig Kelly's challenger a \$350,000 party job to drop out | A key confidant of Prime Minister Scott Morrison offered Sutherland Shire councillor Kent Johns a \$350,000 party job in an attempt to head off a preselection showdown with sitting Liberal MP Craig Kelly. | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 3428 | Cash v Certainty |
| 18 | SMH | 13/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/please-keep-your-promise-it-s-been-months-now-lombok-locals-plead-20181211-p50ljb.html | Please keep your promise, it's been months now: Lombok locals plead | Like thousands of people here, Akila and her family are still waiting for the 50 million rupiah (\$4600) per household in aid that was promised by Indonesian President Joko Widodo four months ago to help rebuild their home. | news | Not election related | neutral | no | 3369 | other |
| 18 | CON | 18/12/18 | https://theconversation.com/myefo-rips-a-130-million-per-year-from-research-funding-despite-budget-surplus-108919 | MYEFO rips A\$130 million per year from research funding despite budget surplus | Yesterday morning, the mid-year budget update unveiled research funding cuts of A\$328.5 million over the next four years. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2512 | Cash v Certainty |
| 18 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2362 | |
| 18 | SAT | 22/12/18 | http://thesaturdaypaper.com.au/2018/12/22/exclusive-chemical-weapons-dropped-papua/15453972007326 | Exclusive: Chemical weapons dropped on Papua | The Indonesian military has employed airstrikes in West Papua – suspected to include the banned chemical weapon white phosphorus – as a retaliation for murders | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2142 | other |

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| | | | | | following a flag-raising protest. | | | | | | |
| 18 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 1976 | |
| 18 | ABC | 16/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-16/scott-morrison-names-david-hurley-as-new-governor-general/10624514 | David Hurley named as Australia's next governor-general | Australia's next governor-general will be retired General David Hurley. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1941 | other |
| 18 | NCA | 17/12/18 | https://www.news.com.au/world/europe/hero-civilian-fifth-victim-of-strasbourg-christmas-market-attack/news-story/c400f927380a66fb188e1e4346ced27a | Hero civilian fifth victim of Strasbourg Christmas market attack | A man that tried to stop a suspected terrorist armed with a knife and gun from attacking shoppers at a Christmas market has died. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1622 | other |
| 18 | SMH | 17/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/andrew-broad-resigns-from-morrison-ministry-over-bombshell-sex-scandal-allegations-20181217-p50mon.html | Andrew Broad resigns from Morrison ministry over bombshell sex scandal allegations | Assistant minister Andrew Broad has quit the frontbench in the wake of a sex scandal that could rock the Morrison government, amid claims he met a "sugar baby" in an overseas hotel. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1553 | Scandal v Standards |
| 18 | ABC | 18/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-20/womens-prisons-full-of-domestic-violence-victims/10599232 | Why are our prisons full of domestic violence victims? | The number of women in prison is continuing to soar, new data shows. But advocates warn we can't arrest the increase until we start properly addressing domestic abuse, which affects an overwhelming majority of women behind bars. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1381 | Scandal v Standards |
| 18 | AFR | 15/12/18 | https://www.afr.com/politics/gladys-berejiklian-splits-from-out-of-touch-scott-morrison-on-energy-targets-net-emissions | Gladys Berejiklian splits from 'out of touch' Scott Morrison on energy, targets net zero emissions | The NSW Coalition government of Gladys Berejiklian said the Morrison government was "out of touch" on energy and climate policy and | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1366 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | zero-emissions-20181218-h19984 | | needed to change course to target net zero carbon emissions by 2050. | | | | | | |
| 18 | NED | 21/12/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/12/21/conservative-mp-scandal/ | Morrison government reportedly warned of fresh MP scandal | The Morrison Government is facing a fresh scandal after revelations that police were asked to investigate a conservative MP's trips to seedy Asian tourist spots known for prostitution and street drugs. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1311 | Scandal v Standards |
| 18 | NCA | 21/12/18 | https://www.news.com.au/travel/travel-updates/incidents/backpackers-killed-in-morocco-by-isis-terrorists-and-film-one-being-beheaded/news-story/8f1f4f5b011ba185c275aa9c5d969cf0 | Backpackers killed in Morocco by 'ISIS terrorists' with one filmed being beheaded | Three suspects have been arrested over the horrific killing of two Scandinavian backpackers, who were hacked to death on camera. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1310 | other |
| 18 | SMH | 16/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/government-staffer-put-on-indefinite-leave-after-sending-vile-text-message-to-female-journalist-20181216-p50mkm.html | Government staffer put on 'indefinite leave' after sending vile text message to female journalist | A government staffer has been put on "indefinite leave" after texting an expletive-laden tirade to a female journalist who recently criticised a federal MP. | news | Not election related | Anti-LNP | no | 1295 | Scandal v Standards |
| 18 | SMH | 17/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/andrew-broad-used-taxpayer-funds-for-part-of-his-bombshell-hong-kong-sugar-baby-trip-20181217-p50mtn.html | Andrew Broad used taxpayer funds for part of his bombshell Hong Kong 'sugar baby' trip | The Morrison government is facing a growing scandal over former assistant minister Andrew Broad, amid revelations he used taxpayer funds for part of his travel to Hong Kong to meet a "sugar baby" he then asked the police to investigate. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1187 | Scandal v Standards |
| 18 | CON | 21/12/18 | https://theconversation.com/yes-there-is-a-war- | Yes, there is a war between science and religion | As the West becomes more and more secular, and the discoveries of evolutionary | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1081 | Religion v Rights |

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| | | | between-science-and-religion-108002 | | biology and cosmology shrink the boundaries of faith, the claims that science and religion are compatible grow louder. | | | | | | |
| 18 | NED | 17/12/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/news-federal-budget/2018/12/17/budget-pork-barrel-pascoe/ | Scott Morrison's \$10 billion pork barrel budget distraction | It's early days yet in our five-month election campaign, but Scott Morrison has already earmarked a \$10 billion pork barrel for "secret" tax cuts and spending promises. | news | Leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1075 | Cash v Certainty |
| 18 | SMH | 17/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/andrew-broad-built-himself-a-pedestal-then-fell-off-it-20181217-p50mr4.html | Andrew Broad built himself a pedestal, then fell off it | The last time the Nationals were in crisis over a sex scandal, Andrew Broad reached for the words of American evangelist Billy Graham, who had died in North Carolina just hours earlier. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1048 | Scandal v Standards |
| 18 | ABC | 17/12/18 | http://abc.net.au/news/10625228 | Adani's key water management plan is flawed and used some unverified data, CSIRO says | The CSIRO has found serious flaws in Adani's key water management plan to protect an ancient springs complex near its proposed Carmichael coal mine, threatening to further delay the controversial project. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 988 | Coal v Climate |
| 18 | SMH | 20/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/stuart-robert-contacted-multiple-times-since-2016-over-massive-home-internet-bill-20181219-p50n7d.html | Stuart Robert contacted 'multiple' times since 2016 over massive home internet bill | Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert was asked "multiple" times by the finance department about his exorbitant home internet bills of up to \$2800 per month, but continued on the same plan because there was "no alternative". | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 926 | Scandal v Standards |
| 19 | SKY | 11/12/18 | https://www.skynews.com.au/details/5977808928001 | British PM delays vote on Brexit, admits she faced 'significant' defeat | British Prime Minister Theresa May has dramatically decided to pull a House of Commons vote | news | not election related | neutral | no | 3510 | other |

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| | | | | | on her Brexit deal after admitting she would suffer a 'significant' defeat. | | | | | | |
| 19 | NCA | 4/1/19 | https://www.news.com.au/national/the-new-extremist-threat-in-australia-rightwing-groups-who-have-asios-attention/news-story/44ae06be0aaa765c862fd6d20426fe9a | The new extremist threat in Australia: Right-wing groups who have ASIO's attention | Right-wing extremists are planning a Cronulla-style race riot this weekend to protest immigration, and national intelligence agencies are watching. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2154 | Racism v Refugees |
| 19 | SBS | 29/12/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/us-farmers-helpless-as-tpp-boosts-aust | US farmers 'helpless' as TPP boosts Aust | US farmers are upset that Australia and Canada will soon get a leg up on them under the TPP trade pact, with reduced tariffs selling wheat to Japan. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2134 | other |
| 19 | SBS | 1/1/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/if-you-have-a-go-you-get-a-go-pm-vows-to-make-2019-a-winner-for-all | If you have a go, you get a go': PM vows to make 2019 a winner for all | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has told Australians 2019 will be a year of choices with the upcoming federal election in his New Year's Day message. | news | leaders | pro-LNP | no | 1760 | Cash v Certainty |
| 19 | NCA | 2/1/19 | https://www.news.com.au/technology/innovation/military/sink-two-aircraft-carriers-chinese-admirals-chilling-recipe-to-dominate-the-south-china-sea/news-story/aaa8c33d57da62e7d5e28e791aa26e0f | 'Sink two aircraft carriers': Chinese Admiral's chilling recipe to dominate the South China Sea | Beijing has a devastating plan to force the world out of the East and South China Seas — and it could cost the US 10,000 lives. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1700 | other |
| 19 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1674 | |
| 19 | SMH | 3/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-party-on-track-to-run-lowest-number-of-female-candidates-this-century | Liberal Party on track to run lowest number of female candidates this century | The Liberal Party is on track to take the smallest number of female candidates to a general election this century as it | news | party | Anti-LNP | no | 1289 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | century-20190103-p50pdq.html | | struggles to preselect women in seats it holds and ones it needs to win to stay in power. | | | | | | |
| 19 | ABC | 30/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-30/adani-provided-evidence-of-illegal-water-bores-lawyers-say/10673422 | Adani provided 'persuasive' evidence of 'illegal' water bores, environmental lawyers say | Mining firm Adani has unwittingly provided "persuasive" evidence for a Queensland Government investigation into allegedly illegal works on its Carmichael mine site, environmental lawyers say. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1139 | Coal v Climate |
| 19 | SMH | 30/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/he-doesn-t-have-a-political-bone-in-his-body-dutton-s-spray-at-turnbull-20181230-p50osg.html | He doesn't have a political bone in his body': Dutton's spray at Turnbull | Four months after losing the leadership spill he instigated, Peter Dutton has broken his silence in an extraordinary spray at Malcolm Turnbull. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | yes | 1120 | Scandal v Standards |
| 19 | SMH | 31/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/surf-lifesaving-club-pays-1200-to-attend-nsw-liberal-party-function-20181219-p50n5d.html | Surf lifesaving club pays \$1200 to attend NSW Liberal Party function | A surf lifesaving club that counts Tony Abbott and former NSW Premier Mike Baird as members spent more than \$1200 to attend a Liberal Party event last year but the club denies it was a political donation. | news | party | Anti-LNP | no | 1118 | Cash v Certainty |
| 19 | SMH | 5/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/citizen-murdoch-s-critical-grip-on-democracy-20190104-p50pkw.html | Citizen Murdoch's critical grip on democracy | This year will be an important year for three of the world's oldest, continuing democracies - the United States, the UK and Australia. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1081 | Cash v Certainty |
| 19 | AUS | 3/1/19 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/billy-connolly-says-hes-near-the-end-of-life/news-story/435ffa51c7cda753796d6b48909bedb1 | Billy Connolly says he's near the end of life | Legendary Scottish comedian Sir Billy Connolly has admitted he is "near the end" and his life is "slipping away", as he spoke about his fight with Parkinson's disease. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1021 | other |

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| 19 | SMH | 4/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/andre-w-broad-rues-dumb-mistake-says-public-life-took-a-toll-20190104-p50pjf.html | Andrew Broad rues 'dumb mistake', says public life took a toll | Still bruised from a very public downfall, Andrew Broad says he is leaving politics to "come out the other side stronger and better". | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 992 | Scandal v Standards |
| 19 | SMH | 1/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/what-the-economy-really-needs-more-of-trees-20181231-p50p06.html | What the economy really needs more of: trees | Planting trees in parks, gardens or streets has many benefits, helping to cool cities, slowing stormwater run-off, filtering air pollution, providing habitat for some animals, making people happier and encouraging walking. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 975 | other |
| 19 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 971 | |
| 19 | ABC | 29/12/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-29/st-kilda-clash-far-right-activists-target-young-men/10673088 | Far-right activist refuses police requests to stop filming group playing soccer at St Kilda Beach | Victoria's Police Minister has warned the community against inciting violence after far-right activists filmed a group of men playing soccer at St Kilda Beach, refusing multiple police requests to stop recording. | news | issue | neutral | no | 913 | Racism v Refugees |
| 19 | AGE | 5/1/19 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/police-out-in-force-for-angry-clashes-in-far-right-rally-in-st-kilda-20190105-p50pr1.html | Police out in force for angry clashes in far-right rally in St Kilda | Hundreds of police occupied the St Kilda foreshore to maintain the peace as close to 100 far-right activists clashed with 200 Anti-racism protesters throughout the afternoon on Saturday. | news | issue | neutral | no | 909 | Racism v Refugees |
| 19 | SMH | 1/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/oh-no-it-s-2018-again-typo-projected-onto-sydney-harbour-bridge-pylon-20190101-p50p12.html | Oh no, it's 2018 again': Typo projected onto Sydney Harbour Bridge pylon | New Year's Eve revellers were taken back in time for a moment during Monday's fireworks after a typo was projected onto the Sydney Harbour Bridge. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 856 | other |

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| 19 | SMH | 2/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/anti-nationals-group-is-rising-and-wants-barnaby-joyce-gone-20181231-p50owg.html | An Anti-Nationals group is rising and wants Barnaby Joyce gone | Emerging Anti-Nationals organisation Anyone But Nats will start the new year with \$60,000 in the bank and a mission to take on the perennial rural party at the NSW and federal elections, with Barnaby Joyce as its prime target. | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 836 | Scandal v Standards |
| 19 | SMH | 31/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/governor-general-pleads-for-more-cash-to-do-his-job-after-budget-blowout-20181230-p50ot0.html | Governor-General pleads for more cash to do his job after budget blowout | The office of Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove is pleading for more cash after its eighth year of failing to make ends meet, warning the integrity of official honours could be put at risk without a funding injection. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 770 | Cash v Certainty |
| 20 | ABC | 8/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-08/polyana-viana-ufc-fighter-beats-up-would-be-robber-in-brazil/10697010 | Polyana Viana, UFC fighter, beats up would-be thief in Rio after he tried to rob her using fake gun | A woman standing on her own waiting for an Uber in Rio de Janeiro may have appeared an easy target to a would-be thief. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 13026 | other |
| 20 | AFR | 27/7/17 | https://www.afr.com/politics/secret-recording-sparks-calls-to-strip-barnaby-joyce-of-water-ministry-20170727-gxk4nh | Pub speech sparks calls to strip Barnaby Joyce of water ministry | A recording of federal Water Minister Barnaby Joyce skiting about the alleged theft of water by irrigators from the Murray-Darling Basin has increased calls for him to be stripped of the water portfolio. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 3728 | Coal v Climate |
| 20 | ABC | 11/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-11/mathias-cormann-spent-37k-on-flights-to-spruik-tax-plan/10697652 | Finance Minister Mathias Cormann booked solo \$37,000 flights home so he could spruik tax plan | Finance Minister Mathias Cormann booked flights costing \$37,000 so he could spruik the Government's personal tax cuts and lobby crossbenchers for its corporate tax plan. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2575 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 20 | NED | 8/1/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/01/08/rahaf-alqunun-visa-saudi/ | Australia will offer Saudi teen asylum if she's found to be a genuine refugee | The Saudi teenager who barricaded herself in a Bangkok airport hotel and begged for asylum from Australia could have her wish granted. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2346 | Racism v Refugees |
| 20 | ABC | 7/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-06/saudi-woman-seeking-australia-detained-in-bangkok/10688208 | Saudi woman seeking asylum in Australia 'detained in Bangkok airport' | An 18-year-old Saudi woman on her way to seek asylum in Australia is being held in an airport hotel in Bangkok, and says her family will kill her if she is forced back to Saudi Arabia. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2257 | Scandal v Standards |
| 20 | SMH | 9/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/shocking-video-shows-dead-century-old-fish-in-australian-environmental-disaster-20190109-p50qc9.html | Shocking video shows dead 'century-old fish' in Australian environmental 'disaster' | A NSW government minister has been accused of snubbing farmers and residents gathered in the state's far-west to confront him over an environmental "disaster" that is believed to have killed up to a million fish. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1645 | Coal v Climate |
| 20 | NIN | 9/1/19 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/news-melbourne-tullamarine-dashcam-footage-shows-shocking-moments-a-freeway-sign-crushes-a-car/fe23a75a-d59c-4dd2-b392-4d122b753dd2 | Government will foot the bill for damages caused by falling Melbourne freeway sign | Acting Victorian Premier Tim Pallas says the state, through the Transport Accident Commission, will pick up the bill for damages after a horrific incident saw a woman lucky to escape. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1577 | other |
| 20 | SMH | 10/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/the-stunning-chart-revealing-australia-s-record-breaking-run-of-rising-temperatures-20190110-p50qk1.html | The stunning chart revealing Australia's record-breaking run of rising temperatures | If there was any question Australians are enduring a more extreme, topsy-turvy climate, look only to the month just gone. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1327 | Coal v Climate |

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| 20 | SMH | 11/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/fraser-anning-s-new-party-name-to-face-challenge-from-the-nationals-20190111-p50qsg.html | Fraser Anning's new party name to face challenge from the Nationals | The senator who was rebuked for attending a far-right rally in Melbourne last weekend has exposed himself to a likely legal challenge from the Nationals over his new party's name: the Conservative Nationals. | news | party | neutral | yes | 1299 | Racism v Refugees |
| 20 | ABC | 9/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-08-28/cotton-executives-20-million-fraud-allegation-norman-farming/10172736 | Cotton farm execs accused of \$20m fraud over Murray-Darling water funding | Two senior figures in Queensland cotton conglomerate Norman Farming have been arrested over an alleged \$20 million fraud involving federal funds earmarked for Murray-Darling water savings. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1289 | Coal v Climate |
| 20 | AFR | 9/1/19 | https://www.afr.com/operty/labor-negative-gearing-cgt-policies-sound-kpmg-economics-says-20190109-h19vr2 | Labor negative gearing, CGT policies 'sound', KPMG Economics says | Labor's negative gearing and capital gains tax policies would need to be introduced carefully but are "sound", KPMG Economics says in a new report on the Sydney and Melbourne housing markets. | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 1169 | Cash v Certainty |
| 20 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 1080 | |
| 20 | SMH | 5/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/citizen-murdoch-s-critical-grip-on-democracy-20190104-p50pkw.html | Citizen Murdoch's critical grip on democracy | This year will be an important year for three of the world's oldest, continuing democracies - the United States, the UK and Australia. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1013 | other |
| 20 | SMH | 8/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/dutton-s-citizenship-case-against-terrorist-prakash-shredded-20190107-p50q2e.html | Dutton's citizenship case against terrorist Prakash shredded | Fiji's top immigration official has confirmed categorically that Islamic State fighter Neil Prakash is not a Fijian national, meaning the Morrison government's stripping of | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1009 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | | | Prakash's Australian citizenship is not lawful. | | | | | | | |
| 20 | SMH | 9/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/water-ministers-reject-claims-of-mismanagement-over-massive-murray-darling-fish-kill-20190109-p50qen.html | Water ministers reject claims of mismanagement over massive Murray-Darling fish kill | Federal and state ministers have rejected claims of mismanagement in the Murray-Darling Basin following the death of an estimated one million fish, described as one of the largest fish kills ever recorded. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 964 | Coal v Climate | |
| 20 | NED | 10/1/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/01/10/rupert-murdoch-nbn-kevin-rudd/ | Kevin Rudd blasts Murdoch and claims 'key evidence' in NBN downfall | Former prime minister Kevin Rudd has claimed to have "key evidence" media mogul Rupert Murdoch killed off Labor's National Broadband Network. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 956 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 20 | ABC | 9/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-09/menindee-mass-fish-deaths-spark-blame-game/10699734 | Mass fish deaths at Menindee sparks viral video as Minister receives threats | Knee-deep in green water and cradling dead cod, two outback blokes' emotional pleas on Australia's water policy have gone viral. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 925 | Coal v Climate | |
| 20 | SMH | 12/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/how-peta-credlin-has-become-the-liberal-party-s-great-right-hope-20190110-p50qp4.html | How Peta Credlin has become the Liberal Party's 'great right hope' | On December 18, the member for the federal seat of Mallee, Andrew Broad, announced his retirement. Immediately, the name Peta Credlin appeared towards the end of reports on who will replace him. | opinion | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 877 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 20 | ABC | 7/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/worldtoday/saudi-woman-in-bangkok-pleads-australian-govt-to-grant-asylum/10693086 | Young Saudi woman in Bangkok says she's being returned home against her will | Human Rights Watch is calling on the Australian Government to intervene in the case of an 18-year-old woman from Saudi Arabia who says she is facing forced return to the Middle East from Thailand later today. | news | issue | neutral | no | 859 | Racism v Refugees | |

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| 20 | AUS | 7/1/19 | https://www.theaustralia.com.au/national-affairs/david-leyonhjelm-to-quit-federal-politics-contest-nsw-state-election/news-story/4cc8d4dda18fc9af8a191ea0b106e202 | David Leyonhjelm to quit federal politics, contest NSW state election | Liberal Democrat senator David Leyonhjelm will quit federal politics at the end of next month to contest the NSW state election, when he'll compete against his former party member Mark Latham to clinch one of 21 seats. | news | candidate | neutral | no | 812 | other |
| 21 | ABC | 15/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-15/no-criminal-charges-in-awu-raids-case/10714942 | No criminal charges for anyone implicated in leaking information in AWU raids case | Commonwealth prosecutors will not pursue criminal charges against anyone implicated in leaks to the media about raids on the Australian Workers Union (AWU). | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2879 | Scandal v Standards |
| 21 | SMH | 17/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/life-and-relationships/men-of-australia-it-s-time-to-pick-your-side-20190117-p50rz7.html | Men of Australia, it's time to pick your side | The body of the woman found in bushes at Bundoora, in Melbourne's north, has been identified, and the worst seems confirmed: another young woman's life has been ended by a man who chose to inflict sexual and physical violence on her. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 2676 | Scandal v Standards |
| 21 | SBS | 14/1/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/they-re-not-refugees-dutton-says-queensland-tamil-family-will-be-deported | They're not refugees': Dutton says Queensland Tamil family will be deported | The Home Affairs Minister has refused to reverse the decision to deport a couple and their two young daughters, who are currently in detention, despite efforts from their community. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2115 | Racism v Refugees |
| 21 | CON | 16/1/19 | https://theconversation.com/the-darling-river-is-simply-not-supposed-to-dry-out-even-in-drought-109880 | The Darling River is simply not supposed to dry out, even in drought | The deaths of a million or more fish in the lower Darling River system over the past few weeks should come as no surprise. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1859 | Coal v Climate |

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| 21 | ABC | 16/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-15/rahaf-alqunun-speaks-first-time-from-canada-asylum/10716182 | Rahaf al Qunun pledges to use her freedom to campaign for others after being granted asylum in Canada | In a week, Rahaf al Qunun has gone from being barricaded inside a Bangkok airport hotel room to being the most recognised refugee on the planet. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1666 | Racism v Refugees |
| 21 | SMH | 18/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-senator-announces-resignation-gets-plum-overseas-post-60-minutes-later-20190118-p50s87.html | Liberal senator announces resignation, gets plum overseas post 60 minutes later | Liberal senator David Bushby's resignation from federal politics came out of the blue at 1.10pm on Friday, with the Tasmanian saying he looked forward to "a new chapter in my professional career". | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1585 | Scandal v Standards |
| 21 | SBS | 17/1/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/australian-coal-is-killing-the-pacific-fiji-pm-tells-scott-morrison | Australian coal is killing the Pacific, Fiji PM tells Scott Morrison | Fiji has firmly told Australia to shift away from coal and fossil fuels because climate change is hurting Pacific island nations. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1277 | Coal v Climate |
| 21 | SMH | 15/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/key-labor-policies-will-hit-richest-liberal-seats-hardest-20190115-p50rg4.html | Key Labor policies will hit richest Liberal seats hardest | Labor's plans to increase capital gains tax and limit negative gearing will hit the nation's wealthiest and largely Liberal-held electorates, sparing those in low income rural areas or comfortably held by the ALP. | news | issue | Anti-ALP | no | 1276 | Cash v Certainty |
| 21 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 1209 | |
| 21 | ABC | 21/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-19/teenage-daughter-of-russian-whistleblower-speaks-out/10720640 | Russian whistleblower's teenage daughter comes forward after 9-year outback exile | Like most teenagers, Anya Stride just wants a normal life, far from the past nine years hiding across some of the most remote regions of Western Australia. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1165 | Racism v Refugees |
| 21 | NIN | 18/1/19 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/home-affairs-department-peter-dutton-450000- | Peter Dutton's department defends \$450,000 'wine and dine' bill | The Department of Home Affairs has justified spending more than \$450,000 on wining and | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1061 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | wining-and-dining/2b82e2db-510f-449f-915b-23c29ea89300 | | dining, while splashing a further \$100,000 on office upgrades last year. | | | | | | |
| 21 | SMH | 15/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/australians-do-not-want-any-more-migrants-anu-poll-20190114-p50r8e.html | Australians do not want any more migrants: ANU poll | Support among Australians for a growing population is crumbling amid fears of overcrowded cities and homes priced out of the reach of ordinary people, a new survey by the Australian National University has revealed. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1045 | Racism v Refugees |
| 21 | ABC | 18/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-17/bundoora-body-tributes-laid-melbourne-tram-stop/10721878 | Bundoora murder victim Aiiia Maasarwe was talking to sister on phone when she was attacked | A 21-year-old exchange student whose body was found near a tram stop in Melbourne was on the phone to her sister when she was attacked, police say. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1022 | Scandal v Standards |
| 21 | IND | 17/1/19 | https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/editorial-something-stinks-in-the-coalition-and-its-not-just-dead-fish,12286 | EDITORIAL: Something stinks in the Coalition and it's not just dead fish | The sight of close to a million dead fish in one of Australia's most important waterways may herald the end for the Morrison Government. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1010 | Coal v Climate |
| 21 | SMH | 13/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-echoes-howard-in-push-for-conversation-on-australian-values-20190113-p50r4q.html | Morrison echoes Howard in push for conversation on Australian values | Prime Minister Scott Morrison will embark on a major push on traditional national values in the run-up to Australia Day to connect with what the government regards as voters' concerns as the election year kicks off. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 937 | Scandal v Standards |
| 21 | ABC | 18/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-18/trust-explosion-raises-ato-concerns-on-tax-minimisation/10725422 | Trusts being used to avoid paying billions in tax, report warns ATO | A report commissioned by the Australian Tax Office has found that wealthy people are funnelling money into private trusts and avoiding paying tax to | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 934 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | | the tune of possibly several billion dollars every year. | | | | | | |
| 21 | SMH | 19/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-party-shock-as-kelly-o-dwyer-quits-politics-ahead-of-election-20190119-p50sdx.html | Liberal Party shock as Kelly O'Dwyer quits politics ahead of election | The Liberal Party will lose one of its most senior women and moderate figures with Jobs and Industrial Relations Minister Kelly O'Dwyer to quit politics. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 925 | other |
| 21 | SMH | 16/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/weather/the-world-s-15-hottest-sites-were-all-in-australia-amid-significant-heatwave-20190116-p50rnr.html | The world's 15 hottest sites on Tuesday were all in Australia | Australia was home to all 15 of the world's hottest temperatures on Tuesday, a feat it may well repeat on Wednesday and beyond as a huge swath of the nation bakes in 45-degree-plus heat. | news | issue | neutral | no | 861 | Coal v Climate |
| 21 | SBS | 15/1/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2019/01/15/indigenous-youth-suicide-crisis-point | Indigenous youth suicide at crisis point | Communities and families are mourning the loss of five young Aboriginal girls who took their own lives in separate incidents in Western Australia, Townsville and Adelaide this year. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 827 | Racism v Refugees |
| 21 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 823 | |
| 22 | NCA | 20/1/19 | https://www.news.com.au/world/south-america/inside-mexicos-drug-gangs-who-force-members-to-eat-the-hearts-of-their-victims/news-story/flb2e210bb179c8456907534a2991d30 | Inside Mexico's drug gangs who force members to eat the hearts of their victims | Inside the history of cannibalism in Mexican drug cartels, where teen enforcers are fed crack before feasting on the organs of their victims. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 3856 | other |
| 22 | ABC | 25/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-25/matthew-flinders- | Remains of explorer Matthew Flinders found under London train station during | The remains of explorer Matthew Flinders have been found at a burial site beneath Euston station in | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2498 | other |

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| | | | remains-discovered-london/10748938 | HS2 dig, ending 200-year mystery | London, 216 years after he circumnavigated Australia. | | | | | | |
| 22 | SMH | 22/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/watchdogs-wined-dined-and-given-corporate-gifts-without-scrutiny-20190122-p50sy8.html | Watchdogs wined, dined and given corporate gifts without scrutiny | Australia's corporate and consumer watchdogs are allowing commissioners and staff to accept gifts and hospitality from the industries they regulate but refuse to publicly disclose the largesse or potential conflicts of interest. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2219 | Cash v Certainty |
| 22 | NED | 22/1/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/01/22/scott-morrison-banking-royal-commission/ | Scott Morrison was the last frontier before the banking royal commission, sources reveal | Scott Morrison was the "last holdout" against calling a royal commission into the big banks, according to insiders in the inner sanctum of Malcolm Turnbull's economic team. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 2208 | Cash v Certainty |
| 22 | NCA | 22/1/19 | https://www.news.com.au/travel/travel-updates/incidents/bikini-climber-freezes-to-death-after-20m-fall-from-mountain/news-story/5248010cf59fe8983422969ca3498e77 | 'Bikini Climber' freezes to death after 20m fall from mountain | A mountaineer famous for climbing in bikinis has frozen to death in tragic circumstances after misfortune struck during a solo hike. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1900 | other |
| 22 | AGE | 20/1/19 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/arrested-for-someone-else-s-crime-a-teen-was-left-badly-injured-20190120-p50sh6.html | Arrested for someone else's crime, a teen was left badly injured | Even before the skinny Indigenous teenager was handcuffed and hurled into a fence, at least six police officers were worried an innocent man had been arrested. | news | issue | Anti-ALP | no | 1321 | Racism v Refugees |
| 22 | NED | 22/1/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/01/22/coalition-election-advertising-pascoe/ | You're being robbed to fund the Coalition's election advertising | How do you feel about paying for particularly misleading advertising aimed at winning votes for the Coalition? | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1286 | Cash v Certainty |
| 22 | SMH | 20/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/top-scientists- | Top scientists agree to Labor request to | Leading Australian scientists will conduct a study into causes of the | news | issue | pro-ALP | yes | 1255 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | agree-to-labor-request-to-study-darling-river-fish-kill-20190120-p50sii.html | study Darling River fish kill | huge fish kill on the Darling River and the wider issue of water mismanagement after accepting a request from Labor leader Bill Shorten. | | | | | | |
| 22 | SMH | 21/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/public-servant-accuses-afp-of-political-bias-after-dutton-au-pair-raids-20190121-p50sod.html | Public servant accuses AFP of political bias after Dutton au pair raids | A public servant suspected of leaking embarrassing documents about Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton's intervention in a foreign au pair visa case says a police raid over the incident was politically biased and designed to deter future whistleblowers. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1216 | Scandal v Standards |
| 22 | ABC | 25/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-25/adani-mine-should-be-suspended-un-traditional-owners/10686132 | Adani coal mine should be suspended, UN says, until all traditional owners support the project | The United Nations has asked the Australian Government to consider suspending the Adani project in central Queensland until it gains the support of a group of traditional owners who are fighting the miner in court. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1157 | Coal v Climate |
| 22 | ABC | 10/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-21/to-learn-your-country-start-by-learning-its-aboriginal-names/10719890 | To learn your country, start by learning its Aboriginal names | Learning the Aboriginal meaning of place names will deepen our connection to the land we all live on, say Indigenous historians, at the launch of the ABC's This Place project. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1090 | other |
| 22 | SMH | 26/10/09 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/nasty-saga-you-nearly-missed-20091025-hem5.html | Nasty saga you nearly missed | Story of how Michael Towke was rolled by the Liberal Party for the seat of Cook in favour of Scott Morrison. | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1074 | Scandal v Standards |
| 22 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 995 | |
| 22 | SMH | 22/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-to-parachute-labor-boss-warren | Scott Morrison to parachute former Labor boss Warren | Prime Minister Scott Morrison will today install former Labor Party | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 995 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | former-labor-boss-warren-mundine-into-marginal-seat-20190122-p50sts.html | Mundine into marginal seat | president Warren Mundine as the Liberal candidate in the knife-edge seat of Gilmore, ousting the man who had already been preselected by local members. | | | | | | |
| 22 | ABC | 25/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-25/bungaree-australian-circumnavigate-country-matthew-flinders/10749476 | Bungaree was the first Australian to circumnavigate the continent, but he's less well known than Matthew Flinders | British explorer Matthew Flinders — whose body has been found under London's Euston station — is famous for being the first person to circumnavigate Australia. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 958 | other |
| 22 | SMH | 24/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/postcard-from-the-edge-of-the-murray-darling-s-ecological-disaster-20190123-p50t1z.html | Postcard from the edge of the Murray Darling's ecological disaster | I'm writing from Goondiwindi, a town that sits along the Macintyre River, at the top of the Murray-Darling Basin, right on the border of NSW and Queensland. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 937 | Coal v Climate |
| 22 | SMH | 24/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/fashion/intolerance-has-no-place-in-tennis-wintour-criticises-margaret-court-20190124-p50tcs.html | Intolerance has no place in tennis': Wintour criticises Margaret Court | Anna Wintour has thrown her support behind the push to rename Margaret Court Arena over the tennis champion's opposition to same-sex marriage. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 931 | Religion v Rights |
| 22 | AFR | 21/1/19 | https://www.afr.com/opinion/the-tide-has-turned-in-the-tax-debate-20190121-h1aahl | The tide has turned in the tax debate | Some political parties are coping better with the social and technological transitions that are reshaping Australia than others. Save Share Some political parties are coping better with the social and technological | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 928 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | | transitions that are reshaping Australia than others. | | | | | | |
| 22 | SMH | 21/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/it-s-got-to-stop-minister-s-final-message-for-the-men-of-nsw-20190120-p50sgz.html | It's got to stop': Minister's final message for the men of NSW | When a middle-class, high employment area such as Camden recorded an almost 50 per cent spike in domestic violence in the two years to 2018, Pru Goward had to ask the question. | news | issue | neutral | no | 924 | Scandal v Standards |
| 22 | SMH | 21/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/north-america/pelosi-is-winning-battle-with-trump-because-she-s-better-at-her-job-20190121-p50skx.html | Pelosi is winning battle with Trump because she's better at her job | Nancy Pelosi is winning her showdown with President Donald Trump for one simple reason: She knows how to do her job better than he knows how to do his. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 887 | other |
| 23 | SMH | 29/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-intervenes-in-hakeem-al-araibi-case-20190129-p50ubd.html | Scott Morrison intervenes in Hakeem al-Araibi case | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has intervened in the plight of Hakeem al-Araibi, urging his Thai counterpart to stop the Melbourne-based refugee footballer's extradition to Bahrain and release him from detention. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 2804 | Racism v Refugees |
| 23 | SMH | 31/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/judge-calls-on-muslims-to-publicly-disavow-violence-in-koran-20190131-p50uvy.html | Judge calls on Muslims to publicly disavow violence in Koran | A NSW Supreme Court judge has called on Muslims to publicly disavow violent verses of the Koran that he says have been used by Islamic extremists to support terrorism in Australia. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2603 | Racism v Refugees |
| 23 | ABC | 28/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-28/bill-shorten-turns-down-meeting-with-rupert-murdoch/10755892 | Opposition Leader Bill Shorten rebuffs Rupert Murdoch on US meeting | Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has signalled he will not meet with Rupert Murdoch, breaking a long tradition of Australian political leaders who felt | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 2559 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | | compelled to pay court to the media proprietor who has used his company's influence in Australian, British and US politics for decades. | | | | | | |
| 23 | SMH | 29/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/i-pay-taxes-i-play-football-i-love-australia-hakeem-al-araibi-speaks-20190128-p50u6l.html | I pay taxes, I play football, I love Australia': Hakeem al-Araibi speaks | Refugee footballer Hakeem al-Araibi has begged the Australian government to "keep fighting for me" and stop his extradition to Bahrain on what supporters say are politically-motivated charges. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 1711 | Racism v Refugees |
| 23 | SMH | 1/9/12 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/reith-rewrites-history-to-hide-the-shame-of-children-overboard-lie-20120831-255u3.html | Reith rewrites history to hide the shame of children overboard lie | ENOUGH, Peter Reith. It has been infuriating hearing the former defence minister repeat all this week that the Children Overboard scandal was just "a minor incident, long finished", just "a small thing", a "bit of a stuff-up" and that he has nothing to answer for. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1639 | Racism v Refugees |
| 23 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1615 | |
| 23 | ABC | 31/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-31/murray-darling-basin-plan-ignored-potentially-catastrophic-risks/10766106 | Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission slams authority for 'maladministration' | The Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission has found Commonwealth officials committed gross maladministration, negligence and unlawful actions in drawing up the multi-billion-dollar deal to save Australia's largest river system. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1607 | Coal v Climate |
| 23 | NCA | 30/1/19 | https://www.news.com.au/entertainment/tv/morning-shows/joe-hildebrands-take-on-the-australia-day-date- | Joe Hildebrand's take on the Australia Day date debate | As Kerri-Anne Kennerley and Yumi Stynes traded blows live on air, Joe Hildebrand remained quiet. Here is what he thinks. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1587 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | debate/news-story/1bd2fce2810645eadb263e2c1f37314c | | | | | | | | |
| 23 | SMH | 1/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/comm-20190201-p50v75.html | Commissioner Hayne turns Treasurer's moment in the spotlight ice-cold | Justice Kenneth Hayne, with Treasurer Josh Frydenberg on Friday, after presenting the government with his final report from the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1563 | Cash v Certainty |
| 23 | SMH | 31/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-warns-against-rash-response-to-banking-royal-commission-20190130-p50uo1.html | Scott Morrison warns against rash response to banking royal commission | Prime Minister Scott Morrison says the Australian economy faces "significant consequences" if the banking royal commission triggers a credit crunch, while warning an election contest over which party is tougher on the beleaguered financial services industry risks undermining the system. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1467 | Cash v Certainty |
| 23 | ABC | 30/1/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-30/fact-check-labors-dividend-imputation-policy/10626204 | Will Labor's dividend imputation policy overwhelmingly affect the low paid? | For months the Morrison Government has argued Labor's controversial plan to raise more than \$5 billion a year by scrapping refundable franking credits on dividends from shares is "not fair". | analysis | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1464 | Cash v Certainty |
| 23 | SMH | 31/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/taxpayers-foot-bill-for-roadshow-attacking-labor-s-franking-credit-policy-20190130-p50uja.html | Taxpayers foot bill for roadshow attacking Labor's franking credit policy | Retirees unhappy with Labor's plan to remove cash payments for excess franking credits are free to vote for another party, shadow treasurer Chris Bowen has declared, as the opposition doubles down on the policy in the face of | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1428 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | | criticism from the government. | | | | | | |
| 23 | CON | 31/1/19 | https://theconversation.com/eu-japan-trade-deal-comes-into-force-to-create-worlds-biggest-trade-zone-110729 | EU-Japan trade deal comes into force to create world's biggest trade zone | Two new landmark agreements between the EU and Japan come into effect on February 1, 2019: the Economic Partnership Agreement and the Strategic Partnership Agreement. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1377 | other |
| 23 | SMH | 30/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/sport/soccer/savehakeem-if-you-re-reading-this-let-s-help-bring-him-home-20190130-p50un7.html | #SaveHakeem: If you're reading this, we can help bring him home | Sport? It is about so much more than goals, tries, runs, medals and all the rest. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1321 | Racism v Refugees |
| 23 | SMH | 26/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/gum-trees-and-the-fight-against-global-warming-20190122-p50suu.html | Gum trees and the fight against global warming | Just as the world grapples with the effects of climate change – fiercer and more frequent bushfires, droughts, floods and freak storms – Australia is doing its damndest to cut down more trees. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1288 | Coal v Climate |
| 23 | SMH | 1/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/abbott-liberal-figures-at-event-with-chinese-communist-party-links-20190201-p50v6x.html | Abbott, Liberal figures at event with Chinese Communist Party links | Former prime minister Tony Abbott, his fundraising chief and several NSW Liberal MPs have been hosted by the Chinese Communist Party's top Australian lobbyists and propagandist, including several facing pressure to declare their Beijing connections on the nation's new foreign influence register. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1266 | Racism v Refugees |
| 23 | NCA | 21/1/19 | https://www.news.com.au/national/politics/how-early-australians-treated-aboriginal- | How early Australians treated Aboriginal people | As white farmers took over Australia, Aboriginal women were considered fair game to anyone who | news | issue | neutral | no | 1258 | Racism v Refugees |

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|----|-----|----------|---|--|--|------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|-------------------|--|
| | | | people/news-story/e984d3a453382c59a1d5d81f99a9ad8c | | wanted a piece of “black velvet”. | | | | | | | |
| 23 | SMH | 26/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/four-time-olympian-zali-steggall-launches-bid-to-topple-tony-abbott-in-warringah-20190125-p50tqs.html | Four-time Olympian Zali Steggall launches bid to topple Tony Abbott in Warringah | World champion athlete-turned-barrister Zali Steggall has called time on Tony Abbott's "destructive and divisive" 25-year career in federal politics, launching a major bid to seize the former prime minister's blue-ribbon Sydney seat of Warringah. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1222 | Coal v Climate | |
| 23 | NIN | 30/1/19 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/more-than-200-million-taxpayers-dollars-spent-on-government-ads/12842630-df53-43e7-8703-bdf348452a83 | Exclusive: Taxpayers foot bill for \$200m government ad spree | More than \$200 million taxpayer dollars have been spent on government advertising since the beginning of last year, 9News can reveal. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1168 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 23 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 1046 | | |
| 24 | SMH | 5/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/wilson-and-wilson-the-mp-the-fund-manager-and-the-franking-credits-inquiry-20190205-p50vqk.html | Wilson and Wilson: The MP, the fund manager, and the franking credits inquiry | A high-profile fund manager leading an assault against Labor's changes to franking credits once boasted about using a taxpayer-funded inquiry to maximise the chances of defeating the policy. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 12278 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 24 | CRI | 13/12/18 | https://www.crikey.com.au/2018/12/13/hakeem-al-araibi-thailand/ | The question no one will answer about Hakeem Al-Araibi | This arrest could have huge ramifications for other refugees who have been granted asylum by Australia. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 6750 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 24 | SMH | 8/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/taxpayer-funded-inquiry-used-to-raise-money-for- | Taxpayer funded inquiry used to raise money for Liberals | The Coalition is using a taxpayer-funded inquiry into Labor's franking credits policy to raise funds for the Liberal Party, as the | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 6317 | Cash v Certainty | |

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|----|-----|---------|---|---|---|------|-------|----------|----|------|-------------------|
| | | | liberals-20190207-p50w93.html | | committee prepares to meet with dozens of angry retirees for the final time before Parliament returns. | | | | | | |
| 24 | ABC | 5/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-04/border-force-accused-of-targeting-saudi-women-traveling-alone/10768036 | Australian Border Force accused of targeting women suspected of fleeing Saudi Arabia | Witnesses and activists have accused Australian Border Force officers of targeting Saudi Arabian women whom they suspect will apply for asylum and blocking them from entering the country when they arrive at Australian airports. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 4258 | Racism v Refugees |
| 24 | SMH | 29/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-intervenes-in-hakeem-al-araibi-case-20190129-p50ubd.html | Scott Morrison intervenes in Hakeem al-Araibi case | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has intervened in the plight of Hakeem al-Araibi, urging his Thai counterpart to stop the Melbourne-based refugee footballer's extradition to Bahrain and release him from detention. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 3226 | Racism v Refugees |
| 24 | SMH | 7/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/retiree-group-lobbying-against-labor-unmasked-as-liberal-party-and-trucking-industry-operation-20190205-p50vvo.html | Retiree group' lobbying against Labor unmasked as Liberal Party and trucking industry operation | A lobby group masquerading as a grassroots organisation of disgruntled retirees is actually a network of professional lobbyists involved in the trucking industry and the Liberal Party, with a history of campaigning against Labor government policies. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 3100 | Cash v Certainty |
| 24 | SMH | 7/1/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/peter-dutton-claims-bill-shorten-ignored-top-level-security-briefings-on-kerryn-phelps- | Peter Dutton accused of 'lying' by Labor over security briefing accusations | Labor has accused Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton of "lying" about high-level security briefings on a crucial asylum seeker bill, prompting experts to call for more transparency | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2144 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | refugee-bill-20190207-p50w7t.html | | in how government deals with classified information. | | | | | | |
| 24 | SMH | 9/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/labor-refers-tim-wilson-to-police-over-claims-he-shared-voter-details-with-fund-manager-20190208-p50wk6.html | Labor refers Tim Wilson to police over claims he shared voter details with fund manager | The chair of a taxpayer funded government inquiry has been referred by Labor to the Australian Federal Police after being accused of sharing the details of voters with a high-profile fund manager as part of a co-ordinated campaign against Labor's franking credit policy. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1926 | Cash v Certainty |
| 24 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1675 | |
| 24 | ABC | 5/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-05/big-banks-ask-government-to-call-short-royal-commission-letter/10778928 | This letter from the big banks helped shape the royal commission | It is a revelation that underscores the close relationship between the major banks and the Government. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1670 | Cash v Certainty |
| 24 | SMH | 1/12/15 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/banking-and-finance/treasurer-scott-morrison-says-to-forget-about-relying-on-the-age-pension-20151127-gl9q2i.html | Treasurer Scott Morrison says to forget about relying on the age pensio | Treasurer Scott Morrison has put ordinary Australian workers on notice that they should no longer expect to receive an age pension from the government when they retire. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1636 | Cash v Certainty |
| 24 | SMH | 2/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-government-just-days-away-from-removing-all-refugee-children-from-auru-20190202-p50v8x.html | Morrison government just days away from removing all refugee children from Nauru | The Morrison government is just days away from removing all refugee children from Nauru, ending one of Australia's darkest chapters but shifting attention to the future of hundreds of men still languishing offshore. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 1576 | Racism v Refugees |
| 24 | SMH | 4/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/astounded-former-fire-chief- | Astounded': former fire chief unloads on politicians over | Decorated Australian firefighter Greg Mullins says climate change is | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1571 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | unloads-on-politicians-over-climate-change-inaction-20190204-p50v10.html | climate change inaction | contributing to bushfires so horrendous that homes and lives cannot be protected, and the federal government will not acknowledge the link because it has failed on emissions reduction policy. | | | | | | |
| 24 | SMH | 6/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/thailand-blames-australia-for-hakeem-al-araibi-s-detention-20190206-p50w3m.html | Thailand blames Australia for Hakeem al-Araibi's detention | Thailand has blamed Australia for the detention of Hakeem al-Araibi, arguing it only detained the Melbourne-based refugee footballer after an Interpol Red Notice alert was issued by Canberra. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1550 | Racism v Refugees |
| 24 | SMH | 5/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/labor-will-live-to-regret-its-unfair-retirement-tax-policy-20190117-p50rvn.html | Labor will live to regret its unfair retirement tax policy | I think it is fair to say that in Australia we believe tax policy should be equitable, progressive and reliable. | opinion | issue | Anti-ALP | no | 1368 | Cash v Certainty |
| 24 | NED | 5/2/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2019/02/05/royal-commission-insider-trading/ | A quick \$22 million profit for royal commission insider trading? | Last week Josh Frydenberg "guaranteed" the royal commission's final report would not leak while the government sat on it for three days. | opinion | issue | neutral | yes | 1363 | Cash v Certainty |
| 24 | SMH | 6/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-must-sack-tim-wilson-over-collusion-labor-20190206-p50vyp.html | Scott Morrison must sack Tim Wilson over 'collusion': Labor | Prime Minister Scott Morrison is standing behind embattled Liberal MP Tim Wilson, accusing Labor of "mud throwing" after it was revealed the prominent backbencher had discussed co-ordinating protests at the taxpayer-funded inquiry with a high-profile fund manager. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1306 | Cash v Certainty |
| 24 | AFR | 7/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/rear-window/what-tony-abbott-said-to-simon-benson | What Tony Abbott said to The Australian's Simon Benson | It's not every day a diner finds themselves seated metres from former prime minister Tony Abbott. | opinion | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1243 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | benson-20190207-h1azpo | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | SMH | 8/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/we-won-landmark-climate-ruling-as-nsw-court-rejects-coal-mine-20190207-p50wer.html | 'We won': Landmark climate ruling as NSW court rejects coal mine | Environmental groups are cheering a decision in NSW's Land and Environment Court that found the emissions of greenhouse gases and resulting climate change from a proposed coal mine were among the reasons to reject the project. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1229 | Coal v Climate |
| 24 | ABC | 7/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-07/liberal-frontbencher-admits-inappropriate-behaviour-defence-raaf/10785572 | Federal assistant minister apologises for inappropriate behaviour towards female RAAF member | A Federal Government minister has apologised for "inappropriate" actions towards a female Defence officer, admitting he "behaved like an idiot" while on a military exchange program in Darwin. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1228 | Scandal v Standards |
| 25 | AFR | 10/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/policy/foreign-affairs/cashing-in-on-refugees-duo-make-20-million-a-month-at-manus-island-20190210-h1b2e5 | Cashing in on refugees, duo make \$20 million a month at Manus Island | On the second working day of the year as most Australians eased into summer holidays, the federal government quietly extended one of its most controversial contracts, an extra \$109 million to provide security for refugees on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 6404 | Cash v Certainty |
| 25 | AFR | 14/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/policy/foreign-affairs/home-affairs-sought-to-delete-foi-clause-from-manus-contract-20190214-h1b8yb | Home Affairs sought to delete FOI clause from Manus contract | The Department of Home Affairs sought to exclude Manus Island security contractor Paladin from Freedom of Information laws, while allowing it to sit outside the usual government procurement guidelines, raising further | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 5902 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | <p>questions about the awarding of \$423 million in Commonwealth contracts.</p> <p>A draft of Paladin's "PNG Services Contract", provided to the Senate by Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton, shows department lawyers crossed out obligations for Paladin to comply with FOI legislation.</p> <p>You have reached an article available exclusively to subscribers</p> <p>Save 50% for your first 3 months. Take control in the current climate with coverage and context from Australia's best business newsroom.</p> <p>SAVE 50% NOW Already a subscriber? Log in</p> <p>The Department of Home Affairs sought to exclude Manus Island security contractor Paladin from Freedom of Information laws, while allowing it to sit outside the usual government procurement guidelines, raising further questions about the awarding of \$423 million in Commonwealth contracts.</p> | | | | | | |
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| 25 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | | 5633 | |
| 25 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | | 2635 | |
| 25 | AFR | 13/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/peter-dutton-had-no-sight-of-manus-contractor-paladin-20190213-h1b7jk | Peter Dutton had 'no sight' of Manus contractor Paladin | Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton has moved to distance himself from a controversial government contractor that is providing security on Manus Island, arguing he had "no sight" of the tender process and it was a matter for department officials. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1996 | | Cash v Certainty |
| 25 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | | 1925 | |
| 25 | CON | 15/2/19 | https://theconversation.com/school-climate-strikes-why-adults-no-longer-have-the-right-to-object-to-their-children-taking-radical-action-111851 | School climate strikes: why adults no longer have the right to object to their children taking radical action | A worldwide wave of school climate strikes, begun by the remarkable Greta Thunberg, has reached the UK. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1674 | | Coal v Climate |
| 25 | AFR | 12/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/policy/foreign-affairs/home-affairs-ran-closed-tenders-for-paladins-lucrative-manus-security-contracts-20190212-h1b5ym | Home Affairs ran closed tenders for Paladin's lucrative Manus security contracts | The federal government chose not to run an open tender process for contracts worth \$423 million to provide security for refugees on Manus Island, raising more questions about how the thinly capitalised and inexperienced Paladin group was chosen. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1641 | | Cash v Certainty |
| 25 | SMH | 11/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-mp-tim-wilson-faces-breach-of-privacy-claims-20190210-p50wtk.html | Liberal MP Tim Wilson faces 'breach of privacy' claims | Experts believe Liberal MP Tim Wilson may have breached privacy laws by failing to tell hundreds of people who signed up to a petition that their names, | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1554 | | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | | | addresses, phone numbers and emails would be transferred to a multibillion-dollar fund manager. | | | | | | |
| 25 | AGE | 10/2/19 | https://www.theage.com.au/politics/federal/mp-tim-wilson-s-position-is-untenable-20190210-p50wvf.html | MP Tim Wilson's position is untenable | Conflicts of interest and a lack of transparency and accountability have corroded community confidence in bedrock institutions including banks, churches, law enforcement, unions and professional sport. | opinion | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1424 | Cash v Certainty |
| 25 | CRI | 14/2/19 | https://www.crikey.com.au/2019/02/14/home-affairs-scandals/ | Home Affairs is in crisis and only a royal commission can fix it | Behind the Department of Home Affairs' shadowy facade is a shambolic bureaucracy which refuses to learn from its past scandals. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1406 | Scandal v Standards |
| 25 | YAH | 12/2/19 | https://au.news.yahoo.com/unborn-baby-removed-mums-womb-surgery-put-back-043551944.html | Unborn baby removed from mum's womb for surgery and then put back | An unborn baby has been removed from its mother's womb for treatment then put back, in a groundbreaking operation. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1342 | other |
| 25 | SMH | 9/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/in-the-fight-of-my-life-abbott-takes-aim-at-negative-cashed-up-independents-20190207-p50wak.html | In the fight of my life': Abbott takes aim at 'negative, cashed-up' independents | There's a new Tony Abbott in town, although he doesn't see it that way. | news | candidate | neutral | no | 1255 | Coal v Climate |
| 25 | NIN | | | | | | | | | 1223 | |
| 25 | NED | 9/12/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/12/09/record-number-asylum-seekers-peter-dutton/ | Irony: Record number of asylum seekers arrive on Dutton's watch | For all the government's tough-on-asylum-seekers rhetoric, protection visa applications have blown out to record numbers on Peter Dutton's watch. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1199 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 25 | NCA | 10/2/19 | https://www.news.com.au/entertainment/celebrity-life/celebrities-gone-bad/celebrities-and-politicians-who-ruined-their-careers-in-seconds/news-story/8b3a773f7e5fd671cc68ad24db0b6b36 | Celebrities and politicians who ruined their careers in seconds | Under the endless scrutiny of the public, celebrities and politicians sometimes make ill-informed decisions and ruin their careers in the process. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1195 | Scandal v Standards |
| 25 | SMH | 11/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/stop-the-boats-email-exposes-border-force-plans-to-save-money-by-halting-ocean-patrols-20181211-p50lis.html | Stop the boats: Email exposes Border Force plans to save money by halting ocean patrols | The Australian Border Force plans to save money on fuel by pulling ships from ocean patrols, amid a high-stakes political fight between the Morrison government and Labor over border security policy. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1122 | Cash v Certainty |
| 25 | AFR | 15/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/policy/foreign-affairs/how-a-soldier-of-fortune-landed-a-423-million-manus-island-contract-20190214-h1b9s0 | How a soldier of fortune landed a \$423 million Manus Island contract | As diplomats and aid workers fled East Timor in 2006, a former Australian soldier landed in the capital, Dili, looking to profit from the chaos. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1113 | Cash v Certainty |
| 25 | SBS | 14/2/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/refugee-flown-from-manus-island-to-switzerland-to-accept-major-human-rights-award | Refugee flown from Manus Island to Switzerland to accept major human rights award | Abdul Aziz Muhamat was allowed to travel to Geneva where he was named the 2019 Martin Ennals Award Laureate. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1091 | Racism v Refugees |
| 25 | ABC | 11/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-11/scott-morrison-friend-hired-by-french-during-submarine-talks/10797920 | Scott Morrison ally helps French lock in submarine 'contract of the century' with Australia | A long-awaited contract for the \$50 billion Future Submarine program will be signed in Canberra today by France and Australia, following months of tough negotiations and the recruitment of a high-powered lobbyist. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1071 | Cash v Certainty |

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| 26 | SMH | 19/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/our-little-brown-rat-first-climate-change-caused-mammal-extinction-20190219-p50yry.html | Our little brown rat': first climate change-caused mammal extinction | The Morrison government has formally recognised the extinction of a tiny island rodent, the Bramble Cay melomys - the first known demise of a mammal because of human-induced climate change. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 13351 | Coal v Climate |
| 26 | SMH | 18/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/cormann-had-no-idea-a-travel-company-had-given-him-a-free-trip-20190218-p50ym5.html | Cormann had 'no idea' a travel company had given him a free trip | Finance Minister Mathias Cormann's flights for a family holiday to Singapore were paid for by a travel company controlled by Liberal Party Treasurer Andrew Burnes within weeks of that company winning a \$1 billion contract from Cormann's department. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 8216 | Scandal v Standards |
| 26 | SMH | 19/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ambassador-joe-hockey-helps-out-travel-firm-20190219-p50yux.html | Ambassador Joe Hockey helps out travel firm | Australia's US ambassador, Joe Hockey, asked embassy staff to meet with a corporate travel company before it lobbied for government work, even though the former treasurer is close friends with the company's chief executive and now a big shareholder. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 4693 | Scandal v Standards |
| 26 | SMH | 20/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ministerial-responsibility-in-canberra-appears-to-have-all-but-decayed-to-no-responsibility-20190219-p50yul.html | Ministerial responsibility in Canberra appears to have all but decayed to no responsibility | As the federal election rapidly approaches, there is no hint of a minister willing to step aside for transgressions real, alleged or imagined that would, in virtually any other time, have consumed a government. | opinion | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 4400 | Scandal v Standards |
| 26 | SMH | 22/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/dear-scott-and-bill-we-ve-strayed- | Dear Scott and Bill, we've strayed from | Football commentator Craig Foster, who helped save refugee Hakeem al-Araibi, | opinion | issue | neutral | yes | 3662 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | from-our-values-a-socceroo-s-plea-20190221-p50z96.html | our values: a Socceroo's plea | has written a challenge to PM Scott Morrison and Labor leader Bill Shorten: now save Australia's humanity. | | | | | | | |
| 26 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2734 | | |
| 26 | SMH | 16/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/africa/more-than-900-dead-in-madagascar-measles-epidemic-20190216-p50y96.html | More than 900 dead in Madagascar measles epidemic | At least 922 people have died in a measles outbreak in Madagascar, the majority of them children, the World Health Organisation said on Friday. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2396 | other | |
| 26 | ABC | 18/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/2030-people-have-died-after-receiving-centrelink-robodebt-notice/10821272 | Over 2000 people died after receiving Centrelink robo-debt notice, figures reveal | More than 2030 people died after receiving a Centrelink debt notice, also known as robo-debt, according to new data released by the Department of Human Services. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2240 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 26 | SMH | 21/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/christian-porter-appoints-slew-of-former-liberal-mps-to-lucrative-jobs-on-public-tribunal-20190221-p50zez.html | Christian Porter appoints slew of former Liberal MPs to lucrative jobs on public tribunal | The Coalition government has appointed several former Liberal MPs to lucrative jobs at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal on the final parliamentary sitting day before the budget. | news | party | Anti-LNP | no | 2199 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 26 | CRI | 20/2/19 | https://www.crikey.com.au/2019/02/20/morrison-government-scandals-disgust-voters/ | People aren't just angry at this government. They are disgusted by it. | The sheer volume of waste, shonk and grift has left Australian voters with a sense of utter repulsion toward the Morrison government. | opinion | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 2108 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 26 | AFR | 19/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/policy/foreign-affairs/paladin-affair-factchecking-what-home-affairs-said-in-senate-estimates-20190219-h1bfbg | Paladin affair: Fact-checking what Home Affairs said in Senate Estimates | analysis | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2027 | Cash v Certainty | Cash v Certainty | |

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| 26 | SMH | 18/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/seriously-damaging-asio-says-advice-on-border-security-was-misrepresented-20190218-p50ykq.html | 'Seriously damaging': ASIO says advice on border security was misrepresented | The head of Australia's chief intelligence organisation has intervened in the high stakes political stoush over border security and says his agency's classified advice on the medical evacuations bill has been misrepresented. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2024 | Racism v Refugees |
| 26 | AFR | 17/2/19 | https://www.afr.com/world/paladin-cut-deal-with-family-of-png-powerbroker-20190217-h1bd8m | Paladin cut deal with family of PNG powerbroker | The family of one of PNG's most powerful politicians is directly benefiting from Paladin's \$423 million worth of security contracts on Manus Island, awarded by the federal government in a closed tender. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2000 | Cash v Certainty |
| 26 | SMH | 21/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/julian-assange-gets-a-new-australian-passport-20190221-p50zek.html | Julian Assange gets a new Australian passport | Fugitive Wikileaks founder Julian Assange has been issued with a new Australian passport after lengthy negotiations over whether he was subject to an arrest warrant for a "serious foreign offence". | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 1584 | other |
| 26 | ABC | 20/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-20/australian-firm-eos-weapons-systems-bound-for-saudi-arabia/10825660 | Australian Government under fire over export of weapons system to Saudi Arabia | The Federal Government is under fire for granting a licence to a Canberra company exporting a weapons system destined for Saudi Arabia, a country plagued by allegations of human rights atrocities committed as part of the controversial conflict in neighbouring Yemen. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1554 | Cash v Certainty |
| 26 | ABC | 19/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-19/mathias-cormann-singapore-family | Mathias Cormann repays Helloworld flights, says he calls travel company boss direct when he | The Federal Finance Minister has revealed he calls the CEO of one of the nation's largest travel | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1498 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | flights-payment/10824200 | wants to go on holiday | companies to book his family holidays. | | | | | | |
| 26 | ABC | 19/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-19/adani-law-firm-put-forward-trained-attack-dog-strategy/10821470 | Adani's new law firm put forward 'trained attack dog' strategy for waging legal 'war' | Lawyers for mining firm Adani proposed waging "war" on opponents of its controversial Queensland mine by using the legal system to pressure government, silence critics and financially cripple activists, according to documents obtained by the ABC. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1471 | Coal v Climate |
| 26 | SMH | 18/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/michaelia-cash-refused-to-give-afp-statement-20190218-p50yho.html | Michaelia Cash 'refused to give AFP statement' | The Australian Federal Police believes some evidence relevant to its inquiry into media leaks about its raids on the Australian Workers Union may have been destroyed, Deputy Commissioner Leanne Close has told a Senate estimates hearing. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1377 | Scandal v Standards |
| 26 | AGE | 18/2/19 | https://www.theage.com.au/politics/federal/cormann-had-no-idea-a-travel-company-had-given-him-a-free-trip-20190218-p50ym5.html | Cormann had 'no idea' a travel company had given him a free trip | Finance Minister Mathias Cormann's flights for a family holiday to Singapore were paid for by a travel company controlled by Liberal Party Treasurer Andrew Burnes within weeks of that company winning a \$1 billion contract from Cormann's department. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1280 | Scandal v Standards |
| 26 | SMH | 19/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/hundreds-of-foreign-criminals-are-being-handed-back-their-cancelled-visas-20190215-p50xzu.html | Hundreds of foreign criminals are being handed back their cancelled visas | Hundreds of foreigners who had their visas cancelled after committing serious crimes are being spared deportation by national security officials, with the government facing | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1203 | Racism v Refugees |

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|----|-----|---------|---|---|--|---------|----------------------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|
| | | | | | questions over how a drug trafficker was allowed to remain in Australia despite spending nearly a decade in prison and offshore detention. | | | | | | |
| 27 | SMH | 27/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/small-business/ato-whistleblower-faces-six-life-sentences-roughly-the-same-as-ivan-milat-20190226-p510d2.html | ATO whistleblower faces six life sentences, roughly the same as Ivan Milat | There's something radically wrong with a society that allows mass murderer James Gargasoulas to be eligible for parole in 46 years, locks up serial killer Ivan Milat for 181 years and then has an Australian Taxation Office employee facing 161 years in prison for blowing the whistle on a poor culture inside one of our most powerful agencies. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 4021 | Scandal v Standards |
| 27 | SMH | 24/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ex-liberal-spin-doctor-stars-as-jim-72-retiree-in-anti-alp-campaign-video-20190223-p50zs7.html | Ex-Liberal spin doctor stars as 'Jim, 72, retiree' in Anti-ALP campaign video | “Bill Shorten's retirement tax is hopeless for us people living in South Australia and a lot of people, my friends included, we rely on our stocks and shares and the dividends we get from them,” the man says, identified only as Jim, a 72-year-old South Coast retiree. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 4008 | Cash v Certainty |
| 27 | NCA | 26/2/19 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/business/other-industries/actress-found-dead-months-after-hinting-at-alleged-paedophile-ring/news-story/e2cd0f086103b09201d7c27a80921201 | Actress found dead months after hinting at alleged paedophile ring | Natacha Jaitt claimed to have proof of a VIP paedophile ring. Months later, she was found dead — after warning her life was at risk. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 3049 | other |
| 27 | SMH | 27/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/scott-morrison-pea-and-thimble-trick | Scott Morrison's pea-and-thimble trick | Did you notice that the Morrison government has slashed Australia's Paris | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2891 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | s-pea-and-thimble-trick-20190226-p51090.html | | climate target in half, a detail that somehow escaped scrutiny in the flurry of climate policies announced this week? | | | | | | |
| 27 | AGE | 26/2/19 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/cardinal-george-pell-found-guilty-of-child-sex-abuse-20181214-p50m86.html | Cardinal George Pell found guilty of child sex abuse | Cardinal George Pell has been found guilty and is set to be jailed for child sexual abuse in the most sensational verdict since the Catholic Church became engulfed in worldwide abuse scandals. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 2854 | religion v Rights |
| 27 | SBS | 4/3/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/language/korean/yutyu-beu-miseongnyeonia-deungjang-dongyeongsange-daesgeul-cadan | | | | | 2621 | | | |
| 27 | SMH | 28/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/peter-dutton-claims-australians-will-be-kicked-off-hospital-waiting-lists-in-favour-of-refugees-20190228-p510w6.html | Peter Dutton claims Australians will be 'kicked off' hospital waiting lists in favour of refugees | Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton has used the departure of the last refugee children off Nauru to increase the pressure on Labor over the medical transfers legislation and claim Australians will be "kicked off" waiting lists for healthcare and public housing. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2239 | Racism v Refugees |
| 27 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2207 | |
| 27 | SMH | 1/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/foreign-minister-marise-payne-appoints-friend-and-ally-to-plum-diplomatic-post-20190301-p5116f.html | Foreign Minister Marise Payne appoints friend and ally to plum diplomatic post | Foreign Minister Marise Payne has appointed a friend and political ally to the plum diplomatic post of High Commissioner to New Zealand in the latest episode likely to earn claims of cronyism. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1649 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 27 | SMH | 25/12/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/christian-porter-gave-ex-adviser-250-000-job-on-public-tribunal-20190225-p5102t.html | Christian Porter gave ex-adviser \$250,000 job on public tribunal | Attorney-General Christian Porter has appointed one of his own ex-staffers to a plum job on the Administrative Appeals Tribunal just two months after the former adviser left his office. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1639 | Scandal v Standards |
| 27 | SMH | 26/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/australian-border-force-confirms-ocean-patrols-were-cut-to-save-money-on-fuel-20190226-p510ez.html | Australian Border Force confirms ocean patrols were cut to save money on fuel | The Australian Border Force has admitted it curtailed ocean patrols to save money on fuel, contradicting Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton's claims that the agency did not reduce its marine presence. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1547 | Cash v Certainty |
| 27 | SMH | 27/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/mps-allowed-to-spend-millions-of-taxpayers-dollars-on-radio-and-tv-ads-under-new-rules-20190227-p510mb.html | MPs allowed to spend millions of taxpayers' dollars on radio and TV ads under new rules | The Morrison government will allow MPs to use millions of taxpayer dollars on television and radio advertising for the first time, in a move it says will enable regional and rural MPs to communicate with voters more fairly. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1503 | Cash v Certainty |
| 27 | SMH | 27/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/they-want-to-cook-him-slowly-ato-whistleblower-faces-six-life-sentences-unprotected-by-new-laws-20190227-p510ll.html | They want to 'cook him slowly': ATO whistleblower facing six life sentences unprotected by new laws | An Australian Tax Office whistleblower facing 161 years in prison for exposing misconduct by the ATO will not be protected by new laws passed by Parliament designed to shield those who lift the lid on abuses by Australia's most powerful bodies. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1483 | Scandal v Standards |
| 27 | SMH | 26/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/victoria/cardinal-george-pell-found-guilty-of-child-sex-abuse-20190226-p510ez.html | Cardinal George Pell found guilty of child sex abuse | Cardinal George Pell has been found guilty and is set to be jailed for child sexual abuse in the most sensational verdict since the | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1399 | religion v Rights |

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|----|-----|---------|---|--|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------|------|-------|-------------------|
| | | | abuse-20181214-p50m86.html | | Catholic Church became engulfed in worldwide abuse scandals. | | | | | | |
| 27 | SMH | 24/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/cabinet-poised-to-appoint-ita-buttrose-as-next-abc-chair-20190224-p50zy1.html | Cabinet poised to appoint Ita Buttrose as next ABC chair | Ita Buttrose is poised to become the next chair of the ABC, ending a tumultuous search for the public broadcaster's next leader following the acrimonious departure of Justin Milne and managing director Michelle Guthrie nearly six months ago. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1387 | Coal v Climate |
| 27 | TEL | | https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/entertainment/image-gallery/9399d609a6ffd35d0cbf5eca9456ba1c?fbclid=IwAR0jVySgdPy5eL5dFirYNkCFosj7rj5yhK78QdRCne7YxNwSZdY9N8o77XE&page=9 | Jennifer Hawkins photo gallery | | not election related | neutral | no | 1372 | other | other |
| 27 | ABC | 26/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-26/george-pell-guilty-child-sexual-abuse-court-trial/10837564 | George Pell guilty of sexually abusing choirboys | Australia's most senior Catholic cleric, Cardinal George Pell, has been convicted of sexually abusing two choirboys while he was archbishop of Melbourne. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1370 | religion v Rights |
| 27 | SMH | 27/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/weather/it-s-been-extreme-australia-s-summer-smashes-seasonal-heat-records-20190227-p510od.html | It's been extreme': Australia's summer smashes seasonal heat records | Australia has posted its hottest summer and the first season in which temperatures exceeded two degrees above the long-term averages, according to the Bureau of Meteorology. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1304 | Coal v Climate |
| 27 | NCA | 27/2/19 | https://www.news.com.au/world/india-just-bombed-a-target-within-pakistan-and- | India bombed a target within Pakistan — and | Pakistan has said it will respond “at the time and place of its choosing” after its nuclear-arms neighbour | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1286 | other |

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| | | | both-nations-are-nuclear-powers/news-story/75c2b876e4088cc0be9c1ade83847010 | both nations are nuclear powers | India launched a pre-dawn air strike, which they say was targeting militants. | | | | | | |
| 27 | ABC | 26/2/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-26/fact-check-does-labors-capital-gains-tax-policy-frydenberg/10845696 | Labor's capital gains changes will hurt those on less than \$80,000, Josh Frydenberg says. Is that right? | The Coalition has long warned that Labor's proposed 50 per cent capital gains tax increase will not only hit the economy but also taxpayers on low-to-middle incomes, including teachers, nurses and emergency services workers. | analysis | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1165 | Cash v Certainty |
| 28 | SMH | 19/2/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/our-little-brown-rat-first-climate-change-caused-mammal-extinction-20190219-p50vry.html | Our little brown rat: first climate change-caused mammal extinction | The Morrison government has formally recognised the extinction of a tiny island rodent, the Bramble Cay melomys - the first known demise of a mammal because of human-induced climate change. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 5135 | Coal v Climate |
| 28 | NCA | 3/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/business/retail/everyone-has-some-form-of-ptsd-former-uniqlo-employees-describe-toxic-bullying-culture/news-story/3e355f0f9c64234aa30e95b378735df8 | 'Everyone has some form of PTSD': Former Uniqlo employees describe toxic bullying culture | Seven shirts folded per minute, "shouting rooms" and 18-hour days. Former Australian Uniqlo employees have spoken out about the retailer. | news | issue | neutral | no | 3483 | Scandal v Standards |
| 28 | SMH | 6/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/christmas-island-tropical-tour-a-waste-of-taxpayer-cash-20190306-p5127q.html | Christmas Island tropical tour a waste of taxpayer cash | Australians just paid up to \$2000 a minute for a press conference on Christmas Island that told them nothing new. | analysis | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 3263 | Racism v Refugees |
| 28 | SMH | 5/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/queensland/major-study-shows-no-link-between-measles- | Major study shows no link between measles vaccine and autism | A major decade-long study has found there is no link between the Measles-Mumps-Rubella vaccine | news | not election related | neutral | no | 3225 | other |

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| | | | vaccine-and-autism-20190304-p511px.html | | and autism, even among children with other risk factors for the disorder. | | | | | | |
| 28 | NCA | 5/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/chinas-latest-island-grab-fishing-militia-makes-move-on-sandbars-around-philippines-thitu-island/news-story/7805269e5fe270f59e7657328f0c6382 | China's latest island grab: Fishing 'militia' makes move on sandbars around Philippines' Thitu Island | Beijing has snatched another patch of the South China Sea, with its "militia" seizing control of a string of sandbars and denying fishermen access. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2470 | other |
| 28 | SBS | 8/3/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/scott-morrison-says-the-rise-of-women-should-not-come-at-the-expense-of-men | Scott Morrison says the rise of women should not come at the expense of men | Prime Minister Scott Morrison says women's success shouldn't come at the expense of others. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2456 | Scandal v Standards |
| 28 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2314 | |
| 28 | ABC | 1/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-01/is-mass-grave-yazidi-sex-slave-islamic-state-syria-baghouz/10862994 | Headless bodies found in mass graves in IS Syrian stronghold thought to be those of sex slaves | A mass grave containing the bodies of dozens of people thought to have been Yazidis enslaved by the Islamic State (IS) group has been found in territory recently seized by the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1946 | other |
| 28 | ABC | 6/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-06/federal-treasury-scolds-coalition-labor-negative-gearing-changes/10873514 | Federal Treasury scolds Coalition for exaggerating impact of Labor's proposed negative gearing overhaul | Federal Treasury has scolded the Coalition for overstating the impact of Labor's negative gearing changes. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1946 | Cash v Certainty |
| 28 | SMH | 6/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/australia-falls-into-per-capita-recession-as-growth-tumbles | Australia falls into per-capita recession as growth tumbles | Australia's economy has slumped into a per-capita recession for the first time since 2006, leaving the country relying on population growth to propel | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1478 | Cash v Certainty |

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| | | | tumbles-20190306-p5122r.html | | its economy and raising questions about the Coalition's economic management months out from the federal election. | | | | | | |
| 28 | ABC | 8/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-08/alice-springs-segregated-hotel-rooms-aboriginal-communities-ibis/10879896 | Undercover recordings capture hotel staff racially segregating guests | Management at a popular hotel run by Australia's largest hotel group has been directing staff to segregate Aboriginal people into inferior rooms while charging them the same price as other guests, an investigation by ABC's Background Briefing has revealed. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1467 | Racism v Refugees |
| 28 | ABC | 4/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-04/analysis-claims-labor-big-tax-policies-misleading/10861688 | Why using taxable income to attack Labor's negative gearing, capital gains and dividend imputation policies is misleading | Depending on which side of politics you listen to, Labor's plans for negative gearing, franking credit refunds and capital gains tax concessions will either hurt those who can least afford it, or claw back tens of billions of dollars of extra revenue from the relatively well-off by shutting down overly-generous tax loopholes. | analysis | issue | neutral | no | 1464 | Cash v Certainty |
| 28 | NCA | 9/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/national/politics/pm-scott-morrison-women-comments-heard-around-the-world/news-story/c5b1816dd87bdc4fe11aedf17778b803 | PM Scott Morrison reacts to criticism after his women comments went global | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has responded to criticism about comments he made about female empowerment on International Women's Day. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1353 | Scandal v Standards |
| 28 | ABC | 6/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-06/billions-of-litres-of-water-missing-from- | Murray-Darling Basin could be missing billions of | Hundreds of billions of litres of water is missing from the Murray-Darling | news | issue | neutral | no | 1338 | Coal v Climate |

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|----|-----|--------|---|--|--|------|-------|----------|-----|------|---------------------|--|
| | | | murray-darling-basin/10873782 | litres of water, study claims | Basin, according to a new report. | | | | | | | |
| 28 | SMH | 3/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/sydney-archbishop-says-don-t-be-quick-to-judge-george-pell-20190303-p511fq.html | Sydney Archbishop says don't be 'quick to judge' George Pell verdict | Archbishop of Sydney Anthony Fisher has told Catholic worshippers not to be "too quick to judge" in relation to Cardinal George Pell's conviction over child sexual abuse. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1203 | religion v Rights | |
| 28 | SMH | 9/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-government-backs-down-on-banning-milo-yiannopoulos-in-face-of-backlash-20190309-p512xc.html | Morrison government backs down on banning Milo Yiannopoulos in face of backlash | The Morrison government has backed down on banning right-wing speaker Milo Yiannopoulos from entering Australia, amid a backlash from MPs and conservative media commentators. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1179 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 28 | SMH | 5/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/leaked-briefing-reveals-defence-warning-on-state-of-australian-border-force-20190305-p511vl.html | Leaked briefing reveals Defence warning on state of Australian Border Force | The Australian Border Force has been falling short of its sea patrol target by 20 per cent, which has "posed an increased risk" to maritime security, leaked documents reveal. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1122 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 28 | SMH | 3/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/six-former-liberal-politicians-turned-ambassadors-could-be-recalled-under-labor-hit-list-20190303-p511fj.html | Six former Liberal politicians-turned-ambassadors could be recalled under Labor hit list | Politicians given plum overseas postings or lucrative positions on tribunals under the Coalition could have their jobs terminated by Bill Shorten should he become prime minister. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1074 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 28 | SMH | 9/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ag-christian-porter-appoints-junior-barrister-he-knew-at-uni-as-judge-20190308-p512r6.html | AG Christian Porter appoints junior barrister he knew at uni as judge | Eyebrows have been raised in legal circles over Attorney-General Christian Porter's decision to appoint a junior barrister he knew at law school to the Federal Court. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1037 | Scandal v Standards | |

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| 28 | WES | 2/3/19 | https://thewest.com.au/politics/federal-politics/julie-bishop-i-was-liberals-best-bet-to-beat-bill-shorten-in-federal-election-ng-b881123326z | Julie Bishop: I was Liberals' best bet to beat Bill Shorten in Federal election | Julie Bishop says she could have beaten Bill Shorten in the May Federal election — had her colleagues made her prime minister in last year's brutal leadership fight. | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 1022 | Scandal v Standards |
| 29 | NCA | 16/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/world/pacific/police-respond-to-shooting-inside-christchurch-mosque/news-story/db75a7aa031b8db068ca7c7e44c4728e | Dozens dead after gunman opens fire on Christchurch mosques in 'unprecedented' terror attack | New Zealand is reeling after an "unprecedented" terrorist attack in Christchurch, carried out by an Australian who killed at least 49 people. | news | Issue | Neutral | No | 8276 | Racism v Refugees |
| 29 | SMH | 17/2/11 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/morrison-sees-votes-in-Anti-muslim-strategy-20110216-1awmo.html | Morrison sees votes in Anti-Muslim strategy | THE opposition immigration spokesman, Scott Morrison, urged the shadow cabinet to capitalise on the electorate's growing concerns about "Muslim immigration", "Muslims in Australia" and the "inability" of Muslim migrants to integrate. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 5686 | Racism v Refugees |
| 29 | SMH | 15/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/white-broken-men-the-20190315-p514ml.html | Broken white men and the racist media that fuels their terrorism | At 1.40pm local time, a man who identified himself as Brenton Tarrant burst into a mosque in Christchurch, New Zealand, and possibly another, shooting and killing upwards of dozens of panicked and huddled Muslim worshippers at point-blank range shortly before Friday prayers began, laughing insanely as he carried out what can only be described as IS-level violence. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 5254 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 29 | SKY | 15/3/19 | https://www.skynews.com.au/details/6014187227001 | Four people in custody after NZ mosque shootings | Police in New Zealand have confirmed three men and one woman are in custody following shootings at two mosques in the New Zealand city of Christchurch. | news | issue | neutral | no | 3528 | Racism v Refugees |
| 29 | NCA | 13/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/world/north-america/ivanka-trumps-husband-jared-kushner-got-into-harvard-after-his-father-made-a-hefty-donation-to-the-elite-school/news-story/c17907b694e3f86cfc1a2201616a4720 | Ivanka Trump's husband Jared Kushner got into Harvard after his father made a hefty donation to the elite school | In the wake of America's latest "college scam" scandal, one name in the White House is being thrown around a lot right now. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2638 | other |
| 29 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1963 | |
| 29 | SMH | 11/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/i-m-the-elected-deputy-prime-minister-of-australia-barnaby-feels-no-guilt-over-challenge-to-nationals-leader-20190311-p5137j.html | 'I'm the elected deputy prime minister of Australia': Barnaby feels no guilt over challenge to Nationals leader | Former Nationals leader Barnaby Joyce has laid claim to being the "elected deputy prime minister of Australia" and declared he would have no guilt in seeking a return to the leadership if a spill was called. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1720 | Scandal v Standards |
| 29 | NIN | 11/3/19 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/a-current-affair-centrelink-debt-cancer-patient-anna-grubb-single-mum-pension-struggle-latest-news-australia/dd9341d4-2ccb-434a-9cef-300edad46789 | 'I'm an emotional wreck': Single mum could lose Centrelink pension because of cancer treatments | A cancer patient who copped a "robodebt" notice has broken down in tears while describing her fight with Centrelink which could see her lose her single parent pension. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1719 | Cash v Certainty |
| 29 | SMH | 11/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/everybody-hates-a-welfare- | 'Everybody hates a welfare rorter': Latham spruiks | One Nation NSW's Mark Latham says the party will introduce laws to force | news | issue | neutral | no | 1674 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | rorter-latham-spruiks-dna-testing-plan-for-aboriginal-people-20190311-p513au.html | DNA testing plan for Aboriginal people | anyone claiming Aboriginal ancestry to prove it with a DNA test in a bid to stop "welfare rorters". | | | | | | |
| 29 | NCA | 5/4/18 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/business/other-industries/south-korean-tv-star-jang-jayeons-suicide-note-claimed-she-was-abused-by-highprofile-figures/news-story/ff5d5ce717db823c600fcdbe6fa1b995 | South Korean TV star Jang Ja-yeon's suicide note claimed she was abused by high-profile figures | NINE years ago, this TV star took her own life after making shocking claims of sexual abuse. Now, her case could be reopened. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1653 | Scandal v Standards |
| 29 | YAH | 9/3/19 | https://au.news.yahoo.com/blood-knees-defeated-jihadists-still-defiant-114228772--spt.html | Blood up to your knees': defeated IS jihadists still defiant | Defeated but unrepentant, some jihadists limping out of their besieged final bastion in eastern Syria still praise the Islamic State and promise bloody vengeance against its enemies. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1479 | other |
| 29 | AUS | 13/3/19 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/climate-kids-merely-pawns-in-a-bid-to-undermine-capitalism/news-story/8d256420e390aa04c99594c6b2d96cf8 | Climate kids mere pawns in a bid to undermine capitalism | These are the words of Greta Thunberg, a 15-year-old Swedish student who last year, according to CNN, "shamed" negotiators at the UN climate summit in Katowice, Poland. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1447 | Coal v Climate |
| 29 | SMH | 15/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/let-the-children-strike-as-a-lesson-to-all-who-live-on-this-planet-20190314-p5149j.html | Let the children strike as a lesson to all who live on this planet | Hundreds and thousands of students in more than 100 countries are walking out of their schools on Friday with a shared purpose: Save our planet. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1374 | Coal v Climate |
| 29 | SMH | 16/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-government-bans-milo-yiannopoulos-in-wake-of-christchurch-massacre-20190316-p514ri.html | Morrison government bans Milo Yiannopoulos in wake of Christchurch massacre | The Morrison government has banned Milo Yiannopoulos from entering Australia after the controversial right-wing commentator responded to the New Zealand mosque | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 1289 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | | | massacre by describing Islam as a "barbaric" and "alien" religious culture. | | | | | | |
| 29 | NCA | 16/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/world/pacific/gunman-who-opened-fire-on-christchurch-mosque-addresses-attack-in-manifesto/news-story/70372a39f720697813607a9ec426a734 | Gunman's family in Australia called police after news of Christchurch massacre | It's been revealed that the Australian terrorist's family were watching in horror as he beamed his face and brutal attacks live around the world. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1274 | Racism v Refugees |
| 29 | AGE | 14/3/19 | https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/this-is-why-we-don-t-leave-justice-in-the-hands-of-victims-20190314-p5143p.html | This is why we don't leave justice in the hands of victims | As County Court Chief Judge Peter Kidd methodically went about sentencing George Pell this week, it occurred to me that he took a position very few have taken, at least in public. | opinion | issue | neutral | yes | 1141 | religion v Rights |
| 29 | SMH | 14/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/lifestyle/health-and-wellness/questions-that-need-to-be-asked-pete-evans-endorses-Anti-vaxxer-20190314-p5144h.html | 'Questions that need to be asked': Pete Evans endorses Anti-vaxxer | My Kitchen Rules judge Pete Evans has endorsed a podcast supporting Anti-vaxxer views, which actively encouraged parents to not listen to doctors' calls to vaccinate their children. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1117 | other |
| 29 | SMH | 10/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/education/labor-pledges-2-7-billion-to-fully-fund-nsw-public-schools-20190309-p512xw.html | Labor pledges \$2.7 billion to fully fund NSW public schools | NSW Labor will use its campaign launch today to unveil a signature education commitment, vowing to pour \$2.7 billion into public schools to end the school funding wars within a decade. | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 1052 | Cash v Certainty |
| 29 | SMH | 15/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/disgusting-morrison-slams-senator-s-comments-on-christchurch-massacre-20190315-p514oj.html | 'Disgusting': Morrison slams Senator's comments on Christchurch massacre | Scott Morrison has led a swift and strong repudiation of Queensland Senator Fraser Anning, who linked Muslim immigration to the terror attack carried out at two mosques in New | news | issue | pro-LNP | yes | 982 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | | | Zealand by suspected far-right extremists. | | | | | | |
| 29 | ABC | 16/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-16/fraser-anning-egged-in-melbourne-while-speaking-to-media/10908650 | Fraser Anning punches teen after being egged while speaking to media in Melbourne | Queensland senator Fraser Anning is being investigated by police after being egged while speaking at a political meeting at Moorabbin in Melbourne's south-east. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 977 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | ABC | 19/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-19/sky-news-christchurch-mosque-shooting-live-stream/10912844 | As the Christchurch shootings unfolded, I knew I had to quit my job at Sky News | In the aftermath of the Christchurch terror attack, my social media feeds have filled with people expressing their shock and disbelief that something like this could happen in our part of the world. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 6727 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | NED | 18/3/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/03/18/morrison-waleed-aly-muslim/ | Furious PM's office threatens Ten over Waleed Aly's emotional Christchurch plea | Broadcaster Waleed Aly's emotional editorial on the Christchurch massacre has been shared more than 12 million times, but it so incensed the Prime Minister's office that it sparked threats of defamation. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 4937 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 21/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/stadium-could-have-met-safety-and-compliance-requirements-for-18-million-report-shows-20190320-p515xo.html | Stadium could have met safety and compliance requirements for \$18 million, report shows | Allianz Stadium could have been upgraded to meet all safety standards for as little as \$18 million, a report for the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust reveals. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 4833 | Scandal v Standards |
| 30 | NEM | 3/3/18 | https://newmatilda.com/2018/03/03/2891-murdoch-stories-trashing-islam-single-year-study-reveals/ | 2,891 Murdoch Media Stories Trashing Islam In A Single Year, Study Reveals | And before you Fairfax readers say 'I told you so', they didn't fare all that much better. Michael Brull reviews a stunning study released by the One Path Network. | analysis | issue | neutral | no | 4001 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 30 | SBS | 17/3/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/man-who-scared-away-christchurch-mosque-gunman-hailed-as-a-hero | Man who scared away Christchurch mosque gunman hailed as a hero | A man who charged the Christchurch mosque gunman has been hailed a hero for preventing more bloodshed. | news | issue | neutral | no | 3610 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | NEM | 16/3/19 | https://newmatilda.com/2019/03/16/tears-for-christchurch-australia-has-been-importing-hate-since-1788-now-were-in-the-export-business/ | Tears For Christchurch: Australia First Imported Hate In 1788. Now We're In The Export Business | If you want to know why an Australian man massacred 50 Muslims in a mosque in New Zealand yesterday afternoon, then you need to understand a little bit about our nation's dark past and in particular the quality of our present leadership. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 3499 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 22/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/healthcare/in-complete-shock-sydney-man-contracts-hiv-despite-taking-prep-drug-20190321-p5165z.html | In complete shock': Sydney man contracts HIV despite taking PrEP drug | A Sydney man has been diagnosed with HIV despite taking a "game-changing" pre-exposure prophylaxis medication known as PrEP. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2234 | other |
| 30 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2217 | |
| 30 | SMH | 17/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/don-t-egg-politicians-you-get-tackled-teen-who-egged-fraser-anning-speaks-20190317-p514us.html | Don't egg politicians, you get tackled': Teen who egged Fraser Anning speaks | A GoFundMe page has raised more than \$30,000 for the teen who egged Senator Fraser Anning on Saturday afternoon, but he plans to donate the majority towards victims of the Christchurch terror attack. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 2161 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | ABC | 23/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-23/christchurch-shooting-accused-praised-blair-cottrell/10930632 | Christchurch shooting accused Brenton Tarrant supports Australian far-right figure Blair Cottrell | Three years before the mass shooting in Christchurch, Brenton Tarrant was lavishing praise on prominent Australian far-right nationalist Blair Cottrell, referring to him as "Emperor". | news | issue | neutral | no | 2140 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 30 | SMH | 19/2/11 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/ugly-game-of-race-baiting-20110218-lazkt.html | Ugly game of race baiting | Scott Morrison has form as a cheap populist, but his latest outburst is deeply harmful to the national interest. | opinion | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 2102 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 22/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/fraser-anning-staffer-and-alleged-nazi-enthusiast-employed-by-home-affairs-20190321-p51698.html | Fraser Anning staffer and alleged Nazi enthusiast employed by Home Affairs | The political staffer accused of writing Fraser Anning's infamous "final solution" speech and holding an obsession with Nazi Germany is employed by the federal government agency managing Australia's immigration program, it has emerged. | news | issue | neutral | yes | 1955 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 17/2/11 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/morrison-sees-votes-in-Anti-muslim-strategy-20110216-lawmo.html | Morrison sees votes in Anti-Muslim strategy | THE opposition immigration spokesman, Scott Morrison, urged the shadow cabinet to capitalise on the electorate's growing concerns about "Muslim immigration", "Muslims in Australia" and the "inability" of Muslim migrants to integrate. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1923 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SKY | 22/3/19 | https://www.skynews.com.au/details/6016598378001 | NZ day of mourning declared one week on from Christchurch massacre | Two minutes of silence will be held across New Zealand as a national day of mourning and reflection is declared to mark one week since the Christchurch mosque massacre. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1778 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 18/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/our-pm-is-telling-fairytales-while-ardern-does-something-radical-20190316-p514rg.html | Our PM is telling fairytales while Ardern does something radical | Something the Prime Minister said on Friday has been gnawing at me. For the most part, his statements in the immediate aftermath of the obscenity in New Zealand were admirably clear. | opinion | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1713 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 30 | AFR | 17/3/19 | https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/politicians-should-know-dog-whistling-has-consequences-20190317-h1cgub | Politicians should know that dog whistling has consequences | By the time the final week of the 2007 election campaign rolled around, the Howard government was already finished. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1611 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 17/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/ardern-is-a-leader-for-our-times-and-we-should-follow-her-example-20190315-p514lg.html | Ardern is a leader for our times, and we should follow her example | This nation needs more leadership, across all levels, in all parties, like that provided by New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern in the wake of Christchurch's mosque massacres. | opinion | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1591 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 16/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/oceania/jacinda-ardern-shines-on-new-zealand-s-darkest-day-20190316-p514qh.html | Jacinda Ardern shines on New Zealand's darkest day | It may have been New Zealand's darkest day, but leader Jacinda Ardern shone brightly. | news | leaders | neutral | no | 1391 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | NED | 20/3/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/03/20/scott-morrison-Anti-muslim-sentiment/ | PM cancels interview, slaps down 'lie' on alleged Anti-Muslim chat | Scott Morrison has cancelled a planned appearance on The Project after host Waleed Aly aired "a disgraceful smear" that he once discussed capitalising on Anti-Muslim sentiment in a 2010 shadow cabinet meeting. | news | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1343 | Racism v Refugees |
| 30 | SMH | 21/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/milo-yiannopoulos-tapped-conservative-mates-bolt-jones-in-visa-ban-lobby-20190321-p516cu.html | Milo Yiannopoulos tapped conservative mates Bolt, Jones in visa ban lobby | Milo Yiannopoulos and his touring manager attempted to use their network of powerful conservatives including Andrew Bolt and Alan Jones to lobby the Morrison government to overturn a decision to deny the notorious political commentator a visa. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1257 | Racism v Refugees |
| 31 | ABC | 26/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-26/secret-recordings- | One Nation wanted millions from the NRA while | Secret recordings of senior One Nation figures reveal the party wanted millions of | news | Party | neutral | yes | 5590 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | show-one-nation-staffers-seeking-nra-donations/10936052 | planning to soften Australia's gun laws | dollars in political donations from America's National Rifle Association and discussed softening its policies on gun ownership as it tried to secure the funding. | | | | | | | |
| 31 | SBS | 27/3/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/a-95-year-old-kiwi-wwii-veteran-caught-four-buses-to-protest-against-racism | A 95-year-old Kiwi WWII veteran caught four buses to protest against racism | At Auckland's Aotea Square on Sunday, this 95-year-old veteran joined thousands of others to rally against racism. | news | Not election related | Neutral | No | 3926 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 31 | NCA | 28/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/national/politics/one-nation-leader-pauline-hanson-exposed-by-hidden-camera/news-story/c0da722767bf9dc9798b3119622c5f20 | One Nation leader Pauline Hanson exposed by hidden camera | Pauline Hanson has been filmed appearing to suggest the heinous mass murder of dozens of people in Tasmania isn't what it appears to be. | news | Party | pro-LNP | Yes | 3803 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 31 | SMH | 26/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-s-9-billion-mass-detention-plan-20190325-p517dr.html | Scott Morrison's \$9 billion mass detention plan | Scott Morrison as immigration minister proposed a multibillion-dollar program to build new mass detention facilities in Australia for asylum seekers who were living in the community on bridging visas, according to multiple informed sources. | news | Leaders | Anti-LNP | No | 3151 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 31 | SMH | 26/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/north-america/sting-operation-catches-one-nation-seeking-funds-from-us-pro-gun-groups-20190326-p517iq.html | Sting operation catches One Nation seeking funds from US pro-gun groups | An elaborate sting operation has revealed that senior One Nation figures, including Pauline Hanson's chief-of-staff, sought millions of dollars in donations from the US pro-gun lobby to help them water down Australia's gun control laws. | news | Party | Neutral | Yes | 2393 | Scandal v Standards | |

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| 31 | SMH | 26/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/he-was-in-it-right-up-to-his-neck-how-scott-morrison-deposed-a-prime-minister-20190312-p513jl.html | He was in it right up to his neck': How Scott Morrison deposed a prime minister | When a reporter asked Scott Morrison if he had ambitions for Malcolm Turnbull's job at a joint press conference, he responded by throwing a friendly arm around his prime minister's shoulder. | analysis | Leaders | Anti-LNP | Yes | 2117 | Scandal v Standards |
| 31 | SMH | 26/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/she-doesn-t-speak-for-us-liberals-disown-teena-mcqueen-after-q-and-a-appearance-20190326-p517i3.html | She doesn't speak for us': Liberals disown Teena McQueen after Q&A appearance | Senior Liberals are disowning the party's hard-right vice-president Teena McQueen following her train wreck performance on the ABC's Q&A program. | news | party | Anti-LNP | yes | 2051 | Scandal v Standards |
| 31 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1855 | |
| 31 | HUN | 27/3/19 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/rita-panahi/rita-panahi-hypocrisy-unveiled-when-western-women-don-hijab-for-harmony/news-story/60d38c10da6f9af99a54717371e041a3 | Hypocrisy unveiled when Western women don hijab for harmony | Women are risking their lives to protest forced veiling. We're betraying those brave women when we embrace the hijab as a symbol of diversity and harmony, writes Rita Panahi. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 1743 | Racism v Refugees |
| 31 | NCA | 25/3/19 | https://www.news.com.au/world/africa/mali-violence-men-disguised-as-hunters-kill-at-least-134-muslim-farmers/news-story/acd84ec127c91d270cafd9606afce172 | Mali violence: Men disguised as hunters kill at least 134 Muslim farmers | Pregnant women, children and elderly people have been killed, with some burned alive in a shocking massacre. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1735 | Racism v Refugees |
| 31 | SMH | 28/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/tony-abbott-says-coalition-should-still-give-preferences-to-constructive-pauline- | Tony Abbott says Coalition should still give preferences to 'constructive' One Nation | Former prime minister Tony Abbott says the Coalition should still direct preferences to One Nation ahead of Labor and the Greens, despite Prime Minister Scott Morrison's | news | Contest | neutral | yes | 1434 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | hanson-20190328-p518cg.html | | change of heart following revelations about the party's links to the US gun lobby. | | | | | | |
| 31 | SMH | 23/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/liberal-mp-tim-wilson-sends-6000-unsolicited-franking-credit-letters-raising-questions-over-use-of-expenses-20190322-p516om.html | Liberal MP Tim Wilson sends 6000 unsolicited franking credit letters, raising questions over use of expenses | Liberal MP Tim Wilson sent 6000 unsolicited letters to superannuation trustees, including thousands who live outside his electorate, encouraging them to sign up to a Liberal party campaign against Labor's franking credits policy, potentially putting him in breach of parliamentary spending guidelines. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1353 | Cash v Certainty |
| 31 | CON | 29/3/19 | https://theconversation.com/deadly-frog-fungus-has-wiped-out-90-species-and-threatens-hundreds-more-113846 | Deadly frog fungus has wiped out 90 species and threatens hundreds more | Our research, published today in Science, reveals the global number of amphibian species affected. At least 501 species have declined due to chytrid, and 90 of them are confirmed or believed extinct. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 1302 | other |
| 31 | HUN | 26/3/19 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/nationals-mp-george-christensen-spent-nine-months-in-the-philippines-over-four-year-period/news-story/b3bec4f02c92a3f0b2c9f3a24bbe04e5 | Nationals MP George Christensen spent nine months in the Philippines over four-year period | Nationals MP George Christensen's constant travel to the Philippines has earned him the nickname "Member for Manila", with the full extent of his frequent flights revealed. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1150 | Scandal v Standards |
| 31 | TED | 26/3/19 | https://10daily.com.au/news/sport/a190325ige/w-hen-playing-by-the-rules-is-the-closest-thing-to-cheating-20190326 | Ravi Ashwin Proves That Playing By The Rules Can Feel Like Cheating | Cricket is in uproar after an overnight incident in India. But was it fair play or foul? | news | not election related | neutral | yes | 1076 | other |
| 31 | SKY | 1/2/19 | https://www.skynews.com.au/details/5997258710001 | A woman who celebrates World Hijab Day is like a slave who | Sky News host Rita Panahi says World Hijab Day, celebrated on February 1, is a betrayal of the most | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 1025 | Racism v Refugees |

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| | | | | celebrates their chains: Panahi | oppressed women in the world. | | | | | | |
| 31 | CON | 24/5/18 | https://theconversation.com/the-roman-dead-new-techniques-are-revealing-just-how-diverse-roman-britain-was-95243 | The Roman dead: new techniques are revealing just how diverse Roman Britain was | Our knowledge about the people who lived in Roman Britain has undergone a sea change over the past decade. | opinion | not election related | neutral | no | 1003 | other |
| 31 | ABC | 30/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-30/sixty-nine-millionaires-paid-zero-tax-in-2016-17/10954888 | Sixty-nine millionaires paid zero tax in 2016-17 | Sixty-nine Australians who earned more than \$1 million in the 2016-17 financial year did not pay a cent of income tax. | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 1002 | Cash v Certainty |
| 31 | SMH | 28/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace/stunning-win-for-chemist-warehouse-workers-on-both-wages-and-labour-hire-20190328-p518gc.html | Stunning win for Chemist Warehouse workers on both wages and labour hire | Workers at Chemist Warehouse have won a significant victory with large pay rises and a substantial overhaul of the use of labour hire after a two-week strike at the group's major distribution centres. | news | issue | neutral | no | 986 | Cash v Certainty |
| 31 | CON | 26/3/19 | https://theconversation.com/did-al-jazeeras-undercover-investigation-into-one-nation-overstep-the-mark-114288 | Did Al Jazeera's undercover investigation into One Nation overstep the mark? | The sheer audacity of Al Jazeera's three-year ruse is astounding. | opinion | issue | neutral | yes | 960 | Scandal v Standards |
| 32 | SMH | 4/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/rort-liberals-hand-out-environment-grants-before-applications-open-20190324-p5172q.html | Liberals announce environment grants before applications open | A Liberal MP has announced tens of thousands of dollars worth of grants to community groups in a highly marginal seat before applications for the program have opened, it has emerged in Senate estimates. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1740 | Cash v Certainty |
| 32 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1437 | |

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| 32 | SMH | 2/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/vandals-nsw-environment-staff-fear-for-jobs-as-office-dissolves-20190402-p519wy.html | Vandals': NSW environment staff fear for jobs as office dissolves | The Berejiklian government has sought to reassure staff and the public that the dissolution of the Office of Environment and Heritage won't compromise the independence and services provided by it. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1380 | other |
| 32 | SMH | 27/8/18 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/cancer-eating-the-heart-of-australian-democracy-20180826-p4zzum.html | Cancer eating the heart of Australian democracy | Kevin Rudd says since the coup of June 2010, Australian politics has become vicious, toxic and unstable | opinion | Issue | neutral | no | 1231 | Scandal v Standards |
| 32 | SMH | 4/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/oceania/jacinda-ardern-pays-for-groceries-of-a-mum-who-forgot-her-wallet-20190404-p51aq7.html | Jacinda Ardern pays for groceries of a mum who forgot her wallet | New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has shown her compassionate side again during a recent visit to a supermarket. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1230 | other |
| 32 | CON | 29/3/19 | https://theconversation.com/emissions-inequality-there-is-a-gulf-between-global-rich-and-poor-113804 | Emissions inequality: there is a gulf between global rich and poor | American congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez recently shook up environmental politics by releasing a broad outline of a Green New Deal – a plan to make the US a carbon-neutral economy in the next ten years, while reducing both poverty and inequality. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1217 | Coal v Climate |
| 32 | NCA | 3/4/19 | https://www.news.com.au/finance/economy/federal-budget/scott-morrison-to-close-christmas-island-again-a-month-after-it-was-reopened/news-story/4fd4ab31455a82e895bf26f4677a0f45 | Scott Morrison to close Christmas Island again, a month after it was reopened | Scott Morrison toured Christmas Island and posed for photos just last month. But the Budget shows it may have been a cynical move. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1209 | Racism v Refugees |
| 32 | ABC | 3/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-03/ray-hadley-faces-fresh- | 2GB radio broadcaster Ray | Several former staff at radio station 2GB have come forward with fresh | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1189 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | bullying-allegations/10958154 | Hadley faces fresh bullying allegations | allegations of bullying against high-profile broadcaster Ray Hadley. | | | | | | |
| 32 | AUS | 1/4/19 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/coalition-defuses-debt-bomb-in-budget/news-story/a2bbf2b18695938e17a33380bdc3f15a | Coalition defuses debt bomb | Josh Frydenberg will today declare an end to the debt and deficit disaster the Coalition inherited from Labor six years ago, with the budget revealing that government net debt will be eliminated within a decade. | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 1061 | Cash v Certainty |
| 32 | ABC | 31/3/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-31/newstart-budget-unemployment-benefits-lower-poverty-figures/10956660 | Increasing Newstart benefits would reduce inequality across the country. | Lifting the rate of unemployment benefits would bring down poverty levels and reduce inequality in Australia, according to new modelling by the University of Canberra. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 993 | Cash v Certainty |
| 32 | SMH | 4/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/you-shouldn-t-have-to-sell-the-roof-over-your-head-labor-pledges-to-slash-cost-of-cancer-treatment-20190404-p51ay0.html | 'You shouldn't have to sell the roof over your head': Labor pledges to slash cost of cancer treatment | Labor has pledged \$2.3 billion to slash the cost of cancer treatment by offering millions of free scans and consultations to prevent Australians being "impoverished" by the steep cost of fighting the disease. | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 987 | Cash v Certainty |
| 32 | ABC | 5/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-06/abbott-attended-function-hosted-by-communist-party-linked-mogul/10962224 | Tony Abbott attended re-election fundraiser at fugitive Chinese tycoon's golf club | Tony Abbott's re-election campaign held a fundraising event at a private golf club run by a fugitive Chinese casino tycoon with deep ties to the Communist Party. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 909 | Racism v Refugees |
| 32 | ABC | 1/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-01/deportation-looms-for-wangchuck-family/10957590 | Deportation would spell 'a world of isolation' for family's hearing-impaired son | A family is facing deportation after being told their hearing-impaired son does not meet Australia's migration health requirements and would be a financial burden on the country. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 879 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 32 | SMH | 31/3/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/education/major-distraction-school-dumps-ipads-returns-to-paper-textbooks-20190329-p5191r.html | Major distraction': school dumps iPads, returns to paper textbooks | As classrooms across the country embrace digital textbooks, one Sydney school has declared the e-book era over and returned to the old-fashioned hard copy version because it improves comprehension and reduces distraction. | news | issue | neutral | no | 858 | other |
| 32 | SBS | 3/4/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/two-sydney-babies-too-young-to-be-vaccinated-infected-with-measles | Two Sydney babies too young to be vaccinated infected with measles | Two babies have been diagnosed with measles in Sydney with health authorities saying they probably caught the highly infectious disease locally. | news | issue | neutral | no | 807 | other |
| 32 | SBS | 4/4/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/warming-seas-are-wrecking-great-barrier-reef-s-ability-to-regrow-research-shows | Warming seas are wrecking Great Barrier Reef's ability to regrow, research shows | Researchers say rising sea temperatures have wrecked the Great Barrier Reef's ability to regrow. | news | issue | neutral | no | 784 | Coal v Climate |
| 32 | ABC | 3/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-03/brunei-introduces-sharia-law-lgbt-whipping-stoning-to-death/10959618 | Brunei enacts Islamic laws to punish gay sex with stoning to death — here's what you need to know | The tiny nation of Brunei introduced severe penalties for gay sex and adultery — stoning to death and whipping — despite global condemnation. | news | issue | neutral | no | 779 | religion v Rights |
| 32 | NCA | | http://news.com.au | | | | | | | 768 | |
| 32 | SMH | 5/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/abbott-s-re-election-backed-by-communist-linked-chinese-businessmen-20190404-p51arb.html | Abbott's re-election backed by Communist-linked Chinese businessmen | Tony Abbott's re-election campaign held a fundraising function last year at a private golf club controlled by an allegedly corrupt Beijing-linked casino tycoon and China's biggest media propagandist in Australia. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 752 | other |
| 32 | SMH | 5/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/scott-morrison-chokes-back-tears-announcing-royal | Scott Morrison chokes back tears announcing royal | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has launched a \$527 million royal commission into the abuse | news | issue | pro-LNP | no | 125 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | commission-into-disability-abuse-20190405-p51b2c.html | commission into disability abuse | and neglect of disabled Australians in an emotional announcement of an inquiry to run for at least three years. | | | | | | |
| 33 | SMH | 8/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/special-treatment-and-a-one-on-one-lunch-with-peter-dutton-how-huang-lobbied-for-a-visa-20190408-p51bzl.html | Special treatment and a one-on-one lunch with Peter Dutton: how Huang lobbied for a visa | Chinese Communist Party-aligned billionaire Huang Xiangmo paid tens of thousands of dollars to a former Liberal minister to secure a one-on-one meeting with Peter Dutton as Mr Huang mounted a back-room campaign to win Australian citizenship. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 4513 | Scandal v Standards |
| 33 | SMH | 12/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/both-sides-expect-the-election-to-be-dirty-but-few-thought-peter-dutton-could-go-so-low-so-quickly-20190412-p51dgb.html | Both sides expect the election to be dirty but few thought Peter Dutton would stoop so low so quickly | It was only last Friday that Scott Morrison stood in his private courtyard at Parliament House and declared Australia had to lift its game in its treatment of people with disabilities. | opinion | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 3302 | Scandal v Standards |
| 33 | NIN | 12/4/19 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/man-jailed-for-forty-four-years-after-murdering-girlfriends-daughter/b42e84a6-778e-4022-a66c-bc2017aefdae | Toddler's murderer jailed for maximum 44 years | A Sydney man has been jailed for a maximum 44 years for murdering a two-year-old girl in a series of horrific assaults. | news | issue | neutral | no | 2741 | other |
| 33 | SMH | 9/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/toyota-scuppers-claim-labor-s-electric-vehicle-policy-would-leave-hilux-drivers-stranded-20190409-p51cit.html | Toyota scuppers claim Labor's electric vehicle policy would leave HiLux drivers stranded | Official analysis by the Department of the Environment and Energy has suggested electric vehicle uptake in Australia could be identical under the policies of both Labor and the Coalition. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2539 | Coal v Climate |

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| 33 | ABC | 11/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-11/adani-damning-assessment-turned-into-approval/10990288?nw=0 | Inside Melissa Price's decision to approve Adani's groundwater plan | In terms of the careful language used by scientists and bureaucrats, the assessment was damning. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2435 | Coal v Climate |
| 33 | SMH | 8/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/coalition-spends-millions-on-electric-vehicles-despite-claiming-labor-push-will-end-the-weekend-20190408-p51bz5.html | Coalition spends millions on electric vehicles despite claiming Labor push will 'end the weekend' | The Morrison government's derision of Labor's electric cars policy has been undermined after it emerged that the Coalition has spent millions of dollars encouraging Australians to use the vehicles and its MPs routinely spruik the technology. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1856 | Coal v Climate |
| 33 | SMH | 9/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/environment-minister-melissa-price-signs-off-on-adani-project-20190409-p51cc0.html | Environment Minister Melissa Price signs off on Adani project | Environment Minister Melissa Price has granted federal approval to the controversial Adani coal mine following intense pressure from her Queensland colleagues to sign off on the plan before the federal election. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1815 | Coal v Climate |
| 33 | SMH | 8/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/taxpayers-bill-for-advertising-hits-136-million-as-scott-morrison-prepares-to-call-an-election-20190408-p51by6.html | Taxpayers' bill for advertising hits \$136 million as Scott Morrison prepares to call election | The Morrison government has ramped up its marketing and advertising spending to \$136 million for the first half of this year as it looks to maximise the number of taxpayer-funded ads before calling the federal election. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1733 | Cash v Certainty |
| 33 | NED | 8/4/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/federal-budget-2015/2019/04/08/scott-morrison-cancer-cost/ | Scott Morrison busted over cancer treatment cost myth | When police officer Kylie Walsh was first diagnosed with breast cancer four years ago, her out-of-pocket costs quickly spiralled to \$17,000. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1724 | Cash v Certainty |

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| 33 | ABC | 8/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-08/chinese-billionaire-chasing-passport-paid-liberal-lobbyist/10962234 | Chinese billionaire chasing passport paid Liberal lobbyist who boasted of direct line to Peter Dutton | Chinese Communist Party-aligned billionaire Huang Xiangmo paid tens of thousands of dollars to former Liberal minister Santo Santoro while mounting a back-room campaign to secure Australian citizenship. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1663 | Cash v Certainty |
| 33 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1642 | |
| 33 | SMH | 12/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/melissa-parke-quits-as-labor-s-curtin-star-candidate-over-israel-remarks-20190412-p51dqz.html | Melissa Parke quits as Labor's Curtin 'star candidate' over Israel remarks | Labor's star candidate for Julie Bishop's seat of Curtin quit on Friday night after the party entered into crisis talks over remarks she made about the Israel and Palestine conflict. | news | candidate | Anti-ALP | yes | 1641 | Scandal v Standards |
| 33 | SMH | 9/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/the-fear-campaign-about-electric-cars-has-hit-a-new-level-of-utter-shamelessness-20190409-p51ch8.html | The fear campaign about electric cars has hit a new level of utter shamelessness | The phoney election campaign reached a new peak of phoney political rhetoric on Tuesday when a government minister stood with voters and vowed to defend them when Bill Shorten came to take their cars away. | news | Contest | neutral | no | 1615 | Coal v Climate |
| 33 | SMH | 9/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/chinese-donor-had-help-from-liberal-party-director-met-christopher-pyne-20190409-p51cca.html | Chinese donor had help from Liberal Party director, met Christopher Pyne | Former Liberal Party federal director Brian Loughnane asked Peter Dutton to consider a request from Chinese Communist Party-aligned billionaire Huang Xiangmo for special citizenship treatment just prior to Mr Dutton approving the request. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1586 | Scandal v Standards |
| 33 | AUS | 12/4/19 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/labor-candidate-using-disability-as-an-excuse- | Labor candidate using disability as an excuse: Dutton | Peter Dutton has targeted the Labor candidate in his marginal seat of Dickson, accusing amputee Ali | news | issue | Anti-ALP | yes | 1448 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | dutton/news-story/d2614dfe179afa837e5c9df7ba6e933c | | France of using her disability “as an excuse” for not moving into the outer north Brisbane electorate. | | | | | | |
| 33 | SMH | 7/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/taxpayers-foot-multi-million-dollar-advertising-bill-in-final-days-before-election-is-called-20190407-p51bnd.html | Taxpayers foot multi-million dollar advertising bill in final days before election is called | The Morrison government has gained more time to spend at least \$5 million on advertising over the week ahead, billing taxpayers for the campaigns as it holds off on calling an election. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1373 | Cash v Certainty |
| 33 | NED | 9/4/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/life/tech/2019/04/09/nbn-accs-slow-speeds/ | NBN an ‘obsolete network’: How Australia became a ‘third-world broadband country’ | The botched rollout of the national broadband network has short-changed the public, with some customers forced to pay more for an NBN internet service no better than ADSL. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1292 | other |
| 33 | SMH | 4/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/environment/barbaric-adanis-giant-coal-mine-granted-unlimited-water-licence-for-60-years-20170404-gvd41y.html | Barbaric: Adani's giant coal mine granted unlimited water licence for 60 years | The proposed Adani coal mine, which will be Australia's biggest, has been granted unlimited access to groundwater by the Queensland government in a move farmers fear will drain huge amounts of water from the Great Artesian Basin. | news | issue | Anti-ALP | yes | 1232 | Coal v Climate |
| 33 | NED | 9/4/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/life/auto/2019/04/09/lelectric-car-target-reality/ | Why Bill Shorten’s electric car target will become a reality | Prime Minister Scott Morrison may be determined to paint Bill Shorten as the enemy of ute owners over his ambitious electric vehicle target, but the reality is that the global automotive industry is way ahead of him. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1193 | Coal v Climate |

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| 33 | SMH | 10/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/frydenberg-looks-ridiculous-as-government-gets-into-a-pickle-20190410-p51cpv.html | Frydenberg looks ridiculous as government gets into a pickle | Treasurer Josh Frydenberg joined the ranks of Springfield's Police Chief Wiggum of the Simpsons, and South Park's Officer Barbrady, in his Q&A performance this week, adhering to the mantra: "Move along, nothing to see here." | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1183 | Cash v Certainty |
| 34 | SMH | 16/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/coalition-mps-urged-to-sell-the-abc-and-support-a-flat-tax-in-ipa-call-20190416-p51enu.html | Coalition MPs urged to sell the ABC and support a flat tax in IPA call | Coalition candidates are being urged to endorse a conservative manifesto that includes selling the ABC, slashing the company tax rate and pulling out of the Paris agreement on climate change. | news | party | Anti-LNP | no | 4104 | Cash v Certainty |
| 34 | ABC | 18/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-18/adani-geosciences-approval-meeting-documents/11025724 | Adani did not 'accept in full' changes sought by scientists during approval stages, meeting notes show | Handwritten documents obtained by the ABC appear to directly contradict the Environment Minister Melissa Price that Adani "accepted in full" changes sought by scientists to limit the impact of its controversial Queensland coal mine. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 3958 | Coal v Climate |
| 34 | SKY | 20/4/19 | https://www.skynews.com.au/details/6028050549001 | Police reveal Notre Dame Cathedral fire caused by electrical short-circuit | Police in Paris believe an electrical short-circuit most likely caused a fire which tore through the Notre Dame Cathedral. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 3112 | other |
| 34 | ABC | 12/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-12/australia-stands-by-routine-diplomatic-practice-in-thai-case/10999418 | Australia stands by 'routine diplomatic practice' in Thai politician's sedition case | The Australian Government has defended its decision to send a diplomat to observe a controversial legal case in Bangkok, after the Thai Government summoned the Australian Ambassador in for talks over the incident. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2450 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 34 | YAH | 16/4/19 | https://au.news.yahoo.com/trumps-notre-dame-advice-risible-says-fire-chief-123834246--spt.html | Trump's Notre-Dame advice 'risible', says fire chief | As Notre-Dame in Paris burned, US President Donald Trump tweeted some advice to French firefighters. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2203 | other |
| 34 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2149 | |
| 34 | AUS | 20/4/19 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/world/loser-prabowo-claims-victory-on-indonesia/news-story/aaf26f3b01632117d7f7b3f2f84ed0c5 | Loser Prabowo claims victory on Indonesia | Indonesia's presidential challenger Prabowo Subianto continued to insist he was the rightful winner of Wednesday's bitterly fought elections yesterday, two days after early poll counts showed incumbent Joko "Jokowi" Widodo had been re-elected with a double-digit margin. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1756 | other |
| 34 | SBS | 18/4/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/vaccineswork-unicf-launches-campaign-promoting-immunisation | #VaccinesWork: UNICEF launches campaign promoting immunisation | The campaign will use the hashtag to promote a new global drive about the safety of vaccines, which UNICEF says save 3 million lives annually. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1740 | other |
| 34 | AGE | 16/4/19 | https://www.theage.com.au/federal-election-2019/coalition-mps-urged-to-sell-the-abc-and-support-a-flat-tax-in-ipa-call-20190416-p51enu.html | Coalition MPs urged to sell the ABC and support a flat tax in IPA call | Coalition candidates are being urged to endorse a conservative manifesto that includes selling the ABC, slashing the company tax rate and pulling out of the Paris agreement on climate change. | news | party | Anti-LNP | no | 1715 | Cash v Certainty |
| 34 | ABC | 18/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-18/fraser-annings-alt-right-staff-have-secret-plan-nazis/11025260 | Alt-right to release 'avalanche' of election campaign propaganda to help Fraser Anning | Leaked messages have revealed the Australian alt-right's secret plan to use Queensland senator Fraser Anning to expand its extreme agenda in the Australian Parliament and beyond. | news | candidate | neutral | no | 1709 | Racism v Refugees |

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| 34 | SMH | 13/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/radical-climate-action-critical-to-great-barrier-reef-s-survival-government-body-says-20190413-p51dul.html | Radical climate action 'critical' to Great Barrier Reef's survival, government body says | Australia's top Great Barrier Reef officials warn the natural wonder will virtually collapse if the planet becomes 1.5 degrees hotter – a threshold that scientists say requires shutting down coal within three decades. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1702 | Coal v Climate |
| 34 | SMH | 17/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/europe/julian-assange-wins-eu-journalism-award-20190417-p51euj.html | Julian Assange wins EU journalism award | WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has been given an award established in honour of an assassinated journalist. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1458 | other |
| 34 | SMH | 24/10/16 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/agriculture-department-head-paul-grimes-questioned-barnaby-joyces-integrity-days-before-being-sacked-20161024-gs9b67.html | Agriculture Department head Paul Grimes questioned Barnaby Joyce's 'integrity' days before being sacked | A one-page letter that the federal government has spent a year and a half and tens of thousands of dollars trying to keep from public sight raises explosive questions about Barnaby Joyce's conduct and "integrity". | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1384 | Scandal v Standards |
| 34 | SMH | 18/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/scare-campaigns-and-propaganda-why-a-fed-up-bill-shorten-has-turned-on-news-corp-20190418-p51fe6.html | Scare campaigns' and 'propaganda': Why a fed-up Bill Shorten has turned on News Corp | "Never pick a fight with people who buy ink by the barrel," writer Mark Twain advised. | news | leaders | pro-ALP | no | 1333 | Cash v Certainty |
| 34 | AFR | 16/4/19 | https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/morrison-s-plan-requires-40b-cut-20190415-p51e6l | Morrison tax plan needs \$40b spending cut | The Morrison government would need to cut spending by about \$40 billion a year by 2030 to afford its big personal income tax cuts and deliver on its budget surplus forecasts, new analysis by the Grattan Institute shows. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1276 | Cash v Certainty |

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| 34 | ABC | 19/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-19/nt-police-woman-breath-tested-breathalysed-at-home-dv-consent/11031136 | NT Police did not have power to breath-test woman in her home, judge finds | An Aboriginal woman in Katherine has been breath-tested in her own home by Northern Territory Police — despite officers receiving no complaint about her — and arrested for being in breach of a domestic violence order. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1174 | Scandal v Standards |
| 34 | NIN | 14/4/19 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/60-minutes-plastic-australian-recycling-malaysia-china/e1a06745-9b35-4b15-85cb-32168ef9b440 | 60 Minutes: Australia's recycling lie exposed: Plastics being dumped, buried and burned in Malaysia | A 60 Minutes investigation has revealed that Australia's attempts to ethically recycle are falling short, causing harm offshore for our international "dumping ground." | news | issue | neutral | no | 1156 | Coal v Climate |
| 34 | SBS | 19/6/18 | https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/nitv-news/article/2018/06/18/removal-sacred-djap-wurrung-trees-act-cultural-terrorism | Removal of sacred Djap Wurrung trees an 'act of cultural terrorism' | A protest camp and tent embassy have been set up to stop the bulldozing of sacred trees for the new Western Highway. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1058 | Coal v Climate |
| 34 | SBS | 18/4/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/father-of-reconciliation-pat-dodson-to-be-indigenous-affairs-minister-under-labor | Father of Reconciliation' Pat Dodson to be Indigenous Affairs minister under Labor | Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has tapped the 'Father of Reconciliation' Patrick Dodson to be Indigenous Affairs minister if Labor wins the federal election. | news | issue | neutral | no | 1051 | Racism v Refugees |
| 34 | ABC | 15/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-15/nsw-election-results-david-leyonhjelm-misses-out-on-seat/11002814 | David Leyonhjelm misses out on NSW Upper House seat as final election results confirmed | Former senator David Leyonhjelm's state political career is over before it even began, with the NSW Electoral Commission's final count revealing the Liberal Democrats did not win an Upper House seat. | news | candidate | neutral | no | 1021 | other |
| 35 | ABC | 26/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-26/government-approved-uranium- | Government approved controversial uranium mine one | The Morrison Government signed off on a controversial uranium mine one day before calling the | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 4232 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | mine-day-before-election/11047252 | day before calling the election | federal election, and did not publicly announce the move until the environment department uploaded the approval document the day before Anzac Day. | | | | | | |
| 35 | SMH | 23/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/helloworld-chief-made-200-000-donation-to-liberal-party-during-government-tender-20190422-p51g7c.html | Helloworld chief made \$200,000 donation to Liberal Party during government tender | A private company co-owned by the Liberal Party's federal treasurer donated \$200,000 two weeks into a government tender process for an accommodation contract worth nearly \$1 billion that another of his companies ultimately won. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | Yes | 4140 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | ABC | 25/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-25/pregnant-wife-of-sri-lanka-bomber-detonates-suicide-vest/11045306 | Pregnant wife of Sri Lanka bomber detonates suicide vest, killing children and police | The pregnant wife of a Sri Lanka bomber detonated a suicide vest when police raided the affluent family's home in the wake of the terror attacks, killing her own children. | news | Issue | Neutral | No | 3689 | Other |
| 35 | AUS | 26/4/19 | https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/penalty-rate-cut-failed-to-create-one-new-job/news-story/4946a1915162c197a896063ae4009bb7 | Penalty rate cut 'failed to create one new job' | Cuts to Sunday penalty rates had not created one new job or prompted business to give any extra hours to workers, admits the small business lobby, which has declared the heated political debate over the reduction in workers' pay to be a "waste of time". | news | Issue | pro-ALP | No | 3120 | Cash v Certainty |
| 35 | HUN | 22/4/19 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/eastern-australia-agriculture-donated-55000-to-liberal-party-before-2013-election/news- | Eastern Australia Agriculture donated \$55,000 to Liberal Party before 2013 election | The company at the centre of a controversial multimillion-dollar water buyback deal donated \$55,000 to the Liberal Party before the 2013 election. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 2981 | Scandal v Standards |

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| | | | story/f7e6ad45583c0f060a5c1451a51c03f7 | | | | | | | | |
| 35 | HUN | 23/4/19 | https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/rita-panahi/rita-panahi-christians-face-a-grim-reality-and-we-cant-dismiss-attacks/news-story/e612328fcf48aed13f3bb51717e6ade4 | Rita Panahi: Christians face a grim reality and we can't dismiss attacks | Christians in just about all of the Middle East, large swathes of Africa and increasingly in parts of Asia and even in western countries face a grim reality. | opinion | issue | neutral | no | 2788 | religion v Rights |
| 35 | SMH | 24/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/private-schools-are-far-superior-liberal-candidate-claims-20190423-p51gbm.html | Liberal candidate claims private schools 'far superior' and childless leaders 'lack empathy' | The Liberal Party candidate under fire for referring to Chloe Shorten as a pig has gone to ground, after letters to the editor emerged in which she wrote private schools were far superior, and childless leaders lack empathy. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2620 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2153 | |
| 35 | ABC | 22/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/drive/barnaby-joyce-responds-to-australias-watergate/11036040?nw=0 | Barnaby Joyce questioned over Australia's 'watergate scandal' | Mounting questions over a controversial \$80 million dollar water buyback are threatening to derail the Coalition's election campaign, prompting fresh calls for a Royal Commission into the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1957 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | SMH | 22/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/awu-raids-inquiry-cost-taxpayers-1-2-million-but-liberal-staffers-refused-to-co-operate-20190422-p51g6h.html | AWU raids inquiry cost taxpayers \$1.2 million - but Liberal staffers refused to co-operate | Taxpayers have now forked out at least \$1.2 million to cover the costs of a police inquiry into leaked information pertaining to raids on the headquarters of the Australian Workers' Union. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1905 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 35 | SMH | 24/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/middle-east/saudi-arabia-beheads-37-mostly-shiite-citizens-displays-executed-body-20190424-p51gnz.html | Saudi Arabia beheads 37 mostly Shiite citizens, displays executed body | Saudi Arabia on Tuesday beheaded 37 Saudi citizens, most of them minority Shiites, in a mass execution across the country for alleged terrorism-related crimes. It also publicly pinned the executed body and severed head of a convicted Sunni extremist to a pole as a warning to others. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1738 | other |
| 35 | SMH | 26/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/no-way-in-the-world-former-liberal-mp-slams-preference-deal-with-clive-palmer-20190426-p51hkq.html | No way in the world: Former Liberal MP slams preference deal with Clive Palmer | A former Coalition MP for the seat devastated by Clive Palmer's business record has slammed Prime Minister Scott Morrison's preference deal with the "vacuous" mining magnate, and says he is shocked and disgusted Australians are considering voting for him. | news | Contest | Anti-LNP | no | 1630 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | ABC | 23/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-23/lnp-senate-candidate-gerard-rennick-bom-climate-conspiracy/11036404 | LNP Senate candidate accuses weather bureau of fudging data to suit 'global warming agenda' | The weather bureau has been tampering with temperature data in order to "perpetuate global warming hysteria", according to an under-fire Coalition candidate. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1565 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | SMH | 21/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/taxpayers-dudded-in-water-deal-experts-say-as-calls-grow-for-royal-commission-20190421-p51fzs.html | Taxpayers dudded in water deal, experts say, as calls grow for royal commission | Water experts say the Coalition government paid too high a price for water rights owned by a tax haven-linked Australian company, deepening a row that has ensnared former deputy prime minister Barnaby Joyce and Energy Minister Angus Taylor. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1492 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 35 | SMH | 23/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/not-my-job-barnaby-joyce-angrily-rejects-criticism-over-controversial-water-buyback-20190422-p51g6k.html | Not my job': Barnaby Joyce angrily rejects criticism over controversial water buyback | Former water minister Barnaby Joyce signed off on a controversial water buyback deal without questioning key details, including links to the Cayman Islands, because it was "not my job" to know who would benefit from the decision, he says. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1436 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | ABC | 15/10/15 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2015-10-15/barnaby-joyce-says-water-responsibility-rests-with-him/6856050 | Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce says water responsibility rests with him | Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce is adamant he has ultimate responsibility for water in the Turnbull Government. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1430 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | ABC | 26/4/18 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-26/clive-palmer-seeks-approval-for-monster-mine-near-adani/9698680 | Clive Palmer seeks approval for 'monster mine' next door to Adani | Clive Palmer has sought federal environmental approval for a huge greenfield coal mine in central Queensland, which documents suggest could produce 33 per cent more coal than Adani's controversial and delayed Carmichael mine. | news | candidate | neutral | no | 1381 | Coal v Climate |
| 35 | ABC | 22/4/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-22/gerard-rennick-liberal-party-queensland-senate-conspiracies/11034682 | Coalition candidate Gerard Rennick floats 12 per cent company tax rate, suggests early education a conspiracy | Helping families send three-year-olds to pre-school is a Labor Party conspiracy to strengthen government control over child raising, a Coalition candidate claims. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1343 | Scandal v Standards |
| 35 | ABC | 16/3/16 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-03-16/us-spy-boss-makes-secretive-visit-to-australia/7251590 | US spy boss James Robert Clapper Jr makes secretive visit to Australia | America's top spy, the US Director of National Intelligence, is on a secret visit to Australia, the ABC has learnt. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1304 | other |
| 35 | SKY | 20/4/19 | https://www.skynews.com.au/details/6028050549001 | Police reveal Notre Dame Cathedral fire caused by electrical short-circuit | Police in Paris believe an electrical short-circuit most likely caused a fire which | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1297 | other |

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| | | | | | tore through the Notre Dame Cathedral. | | | | | | |
| 36 | SMH | 1/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/women-lack-the-business-skills-to-get-a-pay-rise-liberal-candidate-20190429-p51i7s.html | Women lack the 'business skills' to get a pay rise: Liberal candidate | The Liberal candidate for a once-safe Coalition seat says women are not getting pay rises because they are not interested in "money matters and other business-related 'stuff'". | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 3450 | Scandal v Standards |
| 36 | NED | 1/5/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2019/05/01/hospitals-sale-healthscope-cayman-islands/ | Tony Abbott under pressure over hospitals sale to Cayman Islands entity | Tony Abbott has come under pressure from Warringah independent candidate Zali Steggall over the government's decision to approve the sale of the new Northern Beaches Hospital, and 42 other Australian hospitals, to an obscure company in the Cayman Islands. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 3437 | Cash v Certainty |
| 36 | SMH | 28/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/all-hell-broke-loose-the-strange-story-behind-joyce-taylor-and-watergate-20190426-p51hjm.html | All hell broke loose': The strange story behind Joyce, Taylor and #Watergate | By now you surely know at least the gist of the so-called #Watergate story. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 3126 | Scandal v Standards |
| 36 | NED | 2/5/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/election-2019/2019/05/02/federal-police-not-probing-doctored-post/ | Liberal candidate dumped over Anti-Muslim online posts | The Liberal party has dumped Tasmanian candidate Jessica Whelan after fresh Anti-Muslim social media posts under her name emerged overnight. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 3090 | Scandal v Standards |
| 36 | SMH | 29/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/australia-drops-to-62nd-in-global-broadband-speed-rankings-20190428-p51hz2.html | Australia slips three spots to 62nd in global broadband speed rankings | Australia has slipped further in global broadband speed rankings, underlining the challenges facing the rollout of fast and reliable internet connections under the National Broadband Network | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 2869 | Cash v Certainty |

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| 36 | SMH | 3/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/move-to-higher-ground-liberal-mp-s-climate-advice-to-fijians-20190503-p51jpo.html | Move to higher ground': Liberal MP's climate advice to Fijians | John Alexander, the sitting Liberal MP for Bennelong, has sought to downplay his comments that Australia's climate policy priority in the Pacific should be helping people "move to higher ground" rather than curbing coal. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 2571 | Coal v Climate |
| 36 | NIN | 1/5/19 | https://www.9news.com.au/national/us-news-jury-reaches-verdict-over-death-of-justine-ruszczyk-damond-shot-by-police-officer-mohamed-noor/b1342c42-8c33-4d45-9f25-cde2291e23a3 | Noor guilty of third-degree murder, manslaughter in killing of Justine Ruszczyk Damond | Former Minneapolis police officer Mohamed Noor has been found guilty of third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter in the fatal shooting of Australian woman Justine Ruszczyk Damond. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 2234 | other |
| 36 | SMH | 1/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/money/super-and-retirement/self-funded-retirees-could-earn-less-than-age-pension-20190429-p51ic1.html | Self-funded retirees could earn less than age pension | Labor's policy to end cash refunds for franking credits is a contentious topic – and for good reason. | analysis | issue | Anti-ALP | no | 2205 | Cash v Certainty |
| 36 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1788 | |
| 36 | SMH | 29/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/national/turnbull-government-minister-for-welfare-has-a-problem-with-welfare-20190429-p51i42.html | Turnbull government minister for welfare has a problem with welfare | We didn't know it at the time – but Dan Tehan, the minister for social services in the Turnbull government, has some reservations about welfare. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1764 | Cash v Certainty |
| 36 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1593 | |
| 36 | SMH | 30/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/it-just-makes-sense-nationals-leader-michael-mccormack- | 'It just makes sense': Nationals leader Michael McCormack spruiks | Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack says a preference "deal" between the Nationals and Pauline Hanson's One Nation "just | news | Contest | Anti-LNP | no | 1549 | other |

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| | | | spruiks-deal-with-one-nation-20190429-p51i7v.html | 'deal' with One Nation | makes sense" because the parties' policies closely align and it will help the Coalition win the election. | | | | | | |
| 36 | SMH | 1/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/that-notorious-homosexual-liberal-candidate-in-attack-on-tim-wilson-20190501-p51j0z.html | Victorian Liberals' horror day on the hustings | Victorian Liberals had a disastrous day in the federal election campaign when two candidates were obliged to resign over homophobic and Islamophobic comments. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1364 | Scandal v Standards |
| 36 | ABC | 23/11/17 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-23/liberal-mp-john-alexander-apologises-for-rape-jokes/9183556 | John Alexander: Liberal candidate for Bennelong by-election apologises for rape joke video | The Liberal candidate for a crucial by-election in Sydney that could threaten the Federal Government's majority has apologised after a video of him telling racist jokes emerged. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | yes | 1353 | Scandal v Standards |
| 36 | NED | 28/4/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/state/vic/2019/04/28/julia-banks-preference-labor-over-libs/ | Julia Banks' bombshell: She'll preference Labor over Libs | Liberal turned independent Julia Banks has enraged former colleagues after confirmation she will exchange preferences with Labor in her fight to win Health Minister Greg Hunt's seat of Flinders. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1292 | Scandal v Standards |
| 36 | WES | 3/4/19 | https://thewest.com.au/politics/federal-politics/liberal-mp-andrew-hastie-clashes-with-anglican-priest-after-bid-to-rally-religious-support-ng-b881141484z | Liberal MP Andrew Hastie clashes with Anglican priest after bid to rally religious support | Liberal Andrew Hastie has clashed with an Anglican priest in his local area of Mandurah after the conservative MP sought to rally support among religious leaders before the election. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | no | 1240 | religion v Rights |
| 36 | AFR | 30/4/19 | https://www.afr.com/rear-window/eastern-australia-agriculture-s-80-million-accounting-triumph-20190429-p51ics | Eastern Australia Agriculture's \$80 million accounting triumph | The mark of the truly creative accountant is the ability to hold up two valuations \$80 million apart, and show that really they are saying the same thing. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1214 | Scandal v Standards |

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| 36 | SMH | 1/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/new-modelling-to-unleash-explosive-row-over-climate-change-costings-20190501-p51j5e.html | New modelling to unleash explosive row over climate change costings | Opposition Leader Bill Shorten is facing an explosive political row over his climate change policy as industry warns of rising costs and a new economic study predicts 167,000 fewer jobs by 2030 under the Labor plan. | news | issue | Anti-ALP | no | 1092 | Coal v Climate |
| 36 | SMH | 27/4/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/government-funds-go-to-construction-projects-at-elite-private-schools-20190427-p51hsp.html | Government funds go to construction projects at 'elite' private schools | Millions of dollars from a federal government program for capital projects at under-resourced schools have been directed to facilities at "elite" private institutions, prompting claims from the public school teachers' union about unfair funding levels in the education system. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1043 | Cash v Certainty |
| 36 | NED | 1/5/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2019/05/01/the-death-of-liberals-bad-for-liberals/ | Why the death of the Liberals' liberals is bad news for Australia | Whoever wins government on May 18, there is one certainty: It will be a decidedly more conservative, more neo-liberal and less liberal Liberal Party than the one elected in 2016. | opinion | party | Anti-LNP | no | 276 | Cash v Certainty |
| 37 | SMH | 7/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/pm-shifts-attack-on-labor-to-green-tape-he-says-costs-australian-jobs-20190507-p51ky0.html | PM shifts attack on Labor to 'green tape' he says costs Australian jobs | Prime Minister Scott Morrison has vowed to stop the spread of union power and stem the growth of environmental rules that he blames for costing Australian jobs, as he sharpens his pitch to voters in the final days of the election campaign. | news | Issue | pro-LNP | No | 2700 | Cash v Certainty |
| 37 | NCA | 8/5/19 | https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/wtf/exorcism-goes- | Exorcism goes mainstream: Combined Churches | Catholic, Lutheran and Protestant priests have put aside hundreds of years of | news | Not election related | Neutral | No | 2048 | Other |

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| | | | mainstream-combined-churches-assemble-in-rome-to-learn-best-practice-eviction-of-demons/news-story/d97c59cfe2d1bac0fc53432d0f3e2776 | assemble in Rome to learn 'best practice' eviction of demons | bitter history and flocked to Rome in a bid to learn 'best practice' techniques to battle Satan head-on. | | | | | | | |
| 37 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 2038 | | |
| 37 | ABC | 9/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-09/federal-election-fact-check-cost-of-coalition-tax-cuts/11092856?nw=0 | Fact Check: Will \$77 billion worth of Coalition tax cuts go to people earning more than \$180,000? | The issue of income tax — and who will pay what and when — has been a prominent feature of the election campaign. | ANalysi s | Issue | Neutral | No | 1925 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 37 | SMH | 8/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/a-political-hit-job-labor-braces-for-war-with-murdoch-media-20190508-p511f6.html | A political hit job': Labor braces for war with Murdoch media | Labor is bracing for an escalating assault from News Corp and fears further attacks in the final days of the election campaign after a furious Bill Shorten savaged Rupert Murdoch's company over its reporting of his mother's life and career. | news | Contest | pro-ALP | Yes | 1879 | Scandal v Standards | |
| 37 | ABC | 5/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-05/refugee-caseworkers-in-png-told-to-falsify-reports-for-australia/11062160 | PNG refugee support workers 'directed to cook the books' to prepare for Australian audit | Refugee support workers who were based in Papua New Guinea say they were "directed to cook the books" by one of their managers for an Australian Government audit. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 1800 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 37 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | 1800 | | |
| 37 | SMH | 6/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/abc-cuts-inevitable-if-coalition-government-returned-managing-director- | ABC cuts 'inevitable' if Coalition returns to power, managing director warns | The ABC is facing "inevitable" job cuts and programming disruption if the Morrison government is returned to power, the national broadcaster's new | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 1525 | Cash v Certainty | |

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| | | | warns-20190506-p51koc.html | | managing director has warned. | | | | | | |
| 37 | AFR | 10/5/19 | https://www.afr.com/rear-window/is-news-corp-still-paying-zero-tax-20190509-p51lqe | Is News Corp still paying zero tax? | News Corp did a little tax engineering just days before the election campaign started. | news | Issue | Neutral | No | 1497 | Cash v Certainty |
| 37 | SMH | 8/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/aviation-qantas-launches-zero-garbage-flight-20190508-p5116f.html | A significant day for aviation': Qantas launches zero garbage flight | Qantas has trialled the world's first flight ever to produce no landfill waste as the airline embarks on a mission to cut out the use of 100 million plastic items from its planes by next year. | news | Issue | Neutral | No | 1422 | Coal v Climate |
| 37 | SMH | 8/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/scott-morrison-is-flying-in-the-face-of-history-with-his-fallacious-claim-20190507-p51kts.html | Scott Morrison is flying in the face of history with his fallacious claim | It is a blatant denial of history for Scott Morrison to allege that the Labor Party cannot manage the economy when he knows the design and structure of the modern Australian economy was put in place exclusively by the Labor Party. | news | Issue | Anti-LNP | No | 1377 | Cash v Certainty |
| 37 | ABC | 11/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-11/federal-election-2019-shorten-finds-feet-morrison-panics/11102786 | Bill Shorten finds his feet in tectonic shift in federal election campaign | You may have heard the sound of something snapping in the federal election campaign this week. | Analysis | Contest | pro-ALP | No | 1363 | Other |
| 37 | NED | 10/5/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/election-2019/2019/05/10/clive-palmer-coolum-resort/ | The resort that Clive forgot | When Clive Palmer bought Queensland's Coolum Resort in 2011, it was one of the country's top luxury resorts. | news | candidate | Neutral | No | 1328 | Cash v Certainty |
| 37 | SMH | 9/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/world/europe/britain-goes-a-week-without-coal-power-saying-this-is-the-new-normal-20190509-p511gv.html | Britain goes a week without coal power saying this is 'the new normal' | Britain has gone an entire week without burning coal for power for the first time since the Industrial Revolution. | news | Not election related | Neutral | No | 1301 | Coal v Climate |

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| 37 | SMH | 7/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/wong-has-something-you-cannot-manufacture-20190506-p51kfl.html | Wong has something you cannot manufacture | When it's pointed out to Penny Wong that she is the fourth most recognised politician on the front bench of either major party according to a new poll, her response is to say that she's the only Asian among them. In other words, no big deal. | opinion | candidate | pro-ALP | No | 1267 | Other |
| 37 | SMH | 8/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/why-this-was-the-most-compelling-moment-of-this-election-campaign-20190508-p5119i.html | Why this was the most compelling moment of this election campaign | Rightly angry at a tawdry personal attack, Bill Shorten has just told Australians exactly what drives him to seek the nation's top job. | Analysis | Leaders | pro-ALP | Yes | 1140 | Scandal v Standards |
| 37 | NED | 10/5/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2019/05/10/frydenberg-budget-rba-rates/ | Frydenberg's budget torpedoed: RBA signals interest-rate cut is coming | To cut to the chase, the Reserve Bank is forecasting it will have to cut its official interest rate by 50 basis points, knocking half a per cent off most mortgages. | Analysis | Issue | Neutral | No | 1081 | Cash v Certainty |
| 37 | SMH | 7/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/bob-hawke-and-paul-keating-reunite-for-the-first-time-in-28-years-to-endorse-labor-s-economic-plan-20190507-p51kv2.html | Bob Hawke and Paul Keating reunite for the first time in 28 years to endorse Labor's economic plan | Bob Hawke and Paul Keating have issued their first joint statement in 28 years to claim Labor's ownership of the economy and endorse Bill Shorten to run it. | news | Party | pro-ALP | No | 1051 | Cash v Certainty |
| 37 | SBS | 9/5/19 | https://www.sbs.com.au/news/calls-to-dump-liberal-candidate-over-facebook-attack-against-alleged-rape-victim | Calls to dump Liberal candidate over Facebook attack against alleged rape victim | A Liberal candidate said the husband was the "real victim" in response to a woman's account of being raped and abused by her husband. | news | candidate | Anti-LNP | Yes | 1047 | Scandal v Standards |
| 37 | ABC | 6/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-06/biggest-global-assessment-of-biodiversity-sounds- | One million species at risk of extinction, UN report warns, and we are mostly to blame | One million of the world's species are now under threat of extinction, according to the biggest-ever review of the state of nature on Earth. | news | Issue | Neutral | No | 993 | Coal v Climate |

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| | | | dire-warnings/11082940 | | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | | 3052 | |
| 38 | NCA | 15/5/19 | https://www.news.com.au/entertainment/tv/morning-shows/federal-election-2019-kerrianne-kennerleys-huge-call-bill-shorten-will-end-life-as-we-know-it/news-story/86508c8610f70bdad6b596b179b76ac7 | Federal election 2019: Kerri-Anne Kennerley’s huge call — Bill Shorten will ‘end life as we know it’ | Television star Kerri-Anne Kennerley has unleashed on Bill Shorten, declaring that “life as we know it will be over” if Labor wins the election. | news | Contest | Anti-ALP | no | 2716 | Cash v Certainty | |
| 38 | SKY | | https://www.skynews.com.au/ | | | | | | | | 2178 | |
| 38 | ABC | 14/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-14/adani-csiro-emails-foi-melissa-price/11107276 | Adani water plan ticked off within hours despite lack of detail, internal CSIRO emails reveal | Internal CSIRO correspondence reveals the science agency was pushed to formally accept the Federal Government’s approval of Adani’s water plans in a single afternoon. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | yes | 1833 | Coal v Climate | |
| 38 | TEL | 13/5/19 | https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/manly-daily/officeworks-in-hornsby-refuse-to-print-fraser-anning-party-warringah-candidates-election-leaflets/news-story/b8e79ec2e2977bf59ac23ea3efa7e4fb | Officeworks Hornsby refuse to print Fraser Anning Party Warringah candidate’s leaflets | An Officeworks shop has refused to print a Fraser Anning Party candidate’s campaign literature which states we are ‘overrun’ by an Islamic element imposing ‘vile sharia law’. | news | candidate | neutral | no | 1829 | Racism v Refugees | |
| 38 | SMH | 17/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/shorten-s-united-team-will-end-years-of-instability-20190516-p51o0r.html | Shorten’s united team will end years of instability | History will not look kindly on the past decade of Australian politics in which four elected prime ministers have been overthrown by their own parties. | opinion | Contest | pro-ALP | no | 1803 | Scandal v Standards | |

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| 38 | ABC | 14/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-13/federal-election-fact-check-underemployment-shorten/11102694?nw=0 | Bill Shorten says a million Australians are doing two jobs and a million are underemployed. Is he correct? | Jobs and wages have emerged as key talking points in the lead up to the election, with Opposition Leader Bill Shorten bemoaning the extent of underemployment in Australia and the prevalence of "second jobs". | analysis | issue | pro-ALP | no | 1684 | Cash v Certainty |
| 38 | ABC | 14/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-14/biloela-family-facing-deportation-loses-final-legal-bid/11110130 | Tamil family from Biloela loses last legal bid to avoid being deported | A Tamil family facing deportation who had been living at Biloela in central Queensland has lost a bid to have their case reviewed by the High Court. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1570 | Racism v Refugees |
| 38 | SMH | 15/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/coalition-implodes-as-nationals-launch-their-own-below-the-line-campaign-against-jim-molan-20190515-p51nhd.html | Coalition tensions as Nationals launch their own 'below the line' campaign against Jim Molan | The Nationals are directing members to ignore how-to-vote cards and vote below the line in the Senate, in a spectacular collapse of Coalition unity following Jim Molan's rogue campaign for his own re-election. | news | Contest | Anti-LNP | no | 1474 | other |
| 38 | ABC | 16/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-16/australia-secret-deal-to-take-in-rwandan-tourists-murder-accused/11118922 | Rwandans accused of 1999 tourist murders in Uganda secretly brought to Australia in deal with United States | Two Rwandan men accused of murdering tourists in 1999 were recently settled in Australia as part of a refugee swap, after spending years in US immigration detention. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1444 | Racism v Refugees |
| 38 | CAT | 16/5/19 | https://www.canberrames.com.au/story/6128531/coalition-to-cut-15b-from-public-service-to-fund-promises/ | Federal election 2019: Coalition to cut \$1.5b from public service to fund promises | The Liberal party has pledged to cut \$1.5 billion in spending on the public service over the next four years, to fund promises made during the election campaign. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1440 | Cash v Certainty |

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|----|-----|---------|---|--|---|---------|----------------------|----------|----|------|------------------|
| 38 | SMH | 14/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/clive-palmer-must-not-buy-his-way-into-parliament-20190513-p51mgt.html | Clive Palmer must not buy his way into Parliament | This Saturday's election will determine the future government but it will also be a sobering test of how much it costs to buy a seat in Parliament. | opinion | candidate | neutral | no | 1422 | other |
| 38 | CON | 13/5/19 | https://theconversation.com/mounting-evidence-the-tide-is-turning-on-news-corp-and-its-owner-116892 | Mounting evidence the tide is turning on News Corp, and its owner | There is mounting evidence that Australia is sick of Rupert Murdoch and the political propaganda machine he runs in the guise of a news organisation. | opinion | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1354 | Cash v Certainty |
| 38 | SMH | 15/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/federal-election-2019/australia-can-be-superpower-of-post-carbon-world-says-ross-garnaut-20190515-p51nsb.html | Australia can be 'superpower of post carbon world', says Ross Garnaut | Australia has the opportunity to surpass other rich countries to become more prosperous than ever before in a post-carbon world, according to the eminent economist Ross Garnaut. | news | issue | pro-ALP | no | 1298 | Coal v Climate |
| 38 | HUF | 13/5/19 | https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-trade-war-15-billion-farm-subsidy_n_5cd89043e4b054da4e8b5593 | Trump Seeks New \$15 Billion Subsidy To Protect Farmers From His Own Trade War | The president falsely claims that tariffs are paid "directly" to the U.S. Treasury by China and indicates these nonexistent Chinese funds will cover the subsidy cost. | news | not election related | neutral | no | 1289 | other |
| 38 | SMH | 15/5/19 | https://www.smh.com.au/education/private-school-funding-growth-outstrips-public-schools-despite-gonski-20190514-p51naa.html | Private school funding growth outstrips public schools' despite Gonski | Government funding boosts to private schools outstripped increases to public schools in the 10 years to 2017, despite the Gonski reforms and a national consensus on the importance of needs-based funding. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1284 | Cash v Certainty |
| 38 | ABC | 16/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-16/bob-hawke-dies-former-australian-prime- | Bob Hawke, Australia's 23rd prime minister, dies aged 89 | Bob Hawke, Australia's 23rd prime minister and Labor Party legend, has died at the age of 89. | news | Leaders | pro-ALP | no | 1216 | other |

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|----|-----|---------|---|---|--|----------|---------|----------|----|------|-------------------|
| | | | minister-and-labor-leader/6562902 | | | | | | | | |
| 38 | ABC | 17/5/19 | https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-17/rwandan-massacre-victim-family-kept-in-dark-on-resettlement/11122952 | Rwandan massacre victim's Australian parents kept in dark on suspects' resettlement from US | The Perth father of a 27-year-old man who was hacked to death by a Rwandan militia has been left devastated after discovering two of his son's alleged killers have been resettled in Australia. | news | issue | Anti-LNP | no | 1209 | Racism v Refugees |
| 38 | NED | 15/9/18 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/election-2019/2019/05/15/barnaby-joyce-senate-jim-molan/ | Senate voting uproar risks 'utter chaos' for Coalition: Barnaby Joyce | Barnaby Joyce has accused the Liberal Party of "firing the first shot" in a civil war with the Nationals that threatens to render the Coalition "completely and utterly chaotic". | news | Contest | Anti-LNP | no | 1148 | other |
| 38 | NED | 12/5/19 | https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2019/05/12/scott-morrison-ignores-rba-downgrades/ | Hey PM, you're either lying or ignorant about the RBA's forecasts | Prime Minister Scott Morrison is either desperately lying or ignorant about the Reserve Bank seriously downgrading Australia's economic outlook – a downgrade that could easily wipe out the government's "back in black" surplus claim. | analysis | leaders | Anti-LNP | no | 1125 | Cash v Certainty |

Appendix 2: Facebook Groups Monitored During the Election Period

The following groups were monitored for discussion of the election. Due to the Cambridge Analytica scandal and ethics concerns, content was not captured; observations were noted consistent with an ethnographic method. Groups targeted were local area groups or overtly political groups.

ADELAIDE HILLS CHAT
1,000,000 Strong Against The Liberal National Party
2750 Penrith and Surrponding Areas Community
4007/ 4010 / 4011 Community Noticeboard
7NEWS Adelaide
7NEWS Australia Breaking News
7NEWS Brisbane Breaking News
7NEWS Sydney Breaking News
ABC Women's Work
Aberdeen Community Notice Board
Adelaide Families on a budget
ADELAIDE HILLS CHAT
ADELAIDE HILLS CHAT No rules 18+
Adelaide Hills Community Group
Adelaide Hills Politics and Current Affairs
Adelaide Mums Group
Affordable Housing for Australians
All new Armidale community noticeboard
AMPS - Astralian Mature Political Space
Anonymous Australia
Armidale
Armidale Rural Australians for Refugees
Armidale Uralla Buy Swap and Sell
Auspol shitposting
Aussie Bar Flys
Aussie friends and chat
Aussie Lefties United
Aussie Lefties United (ALU)
Aussies Against Our Right Wing Government
Aussies against the One Nation Party
Austalians for Australia
Australia Down Under
Australia news
Australian Conservative Politics

Australian Conservatives/Federation Party
Australian Federal Government | A Forum for your say
Australian Green's politics, news and discussion
Australian News
Australian Political Debate 2.0
Australian Political Debate for Thinking Australians
Australian Political Debate- Hall Of Fame
Australian Political Issues (Real Issues Real Debates)
Australian Politics - A Commonsense Perspective
Australian Politics / World current affairs ... Chatter/Debate
Australian Politics and World Events (A.P.A.W.E
Australian Politics from all sides of the world
Australian PoliticsFighters
Australian Poltiics and Social issues
Australian Progressive Coalition Discussion Group
Australian Public Policy Discussion
Australians Against The LNP
Australians over 50 Chat Group - OFFICIAL
Australians vs Neoliberal & Right Wing Politics
AYPS - Australian Youth Political Space
Ballina Notice Board & Information Exchange
Barnaby Joyce pretty poor choice
Barnaby Joyce: Pretty Poor Choice
Bay & Basin Community Notice Board
Beenleigh Community Page
Better Adelaide Hills Community Chat
Better Internet For Rural, Regional And Remote Australia (BIRRR)
Biggera Waters Community Page, Qld
Birkdale / Wellington Point & Beyond
Blue Mountains Political Forum
Bondi Community Noticeboard
BONDI JUNCTION LOCAL LOOP
Bondi Local Loop
Bondi Real Local Loop
Bowen and Surrounds Community Chat & Noticeboard
Bribie Asylum
Bribie Island
Bribie Island And Surrounds Open Community Page
Brisbane Mums Group
Brisbane Northside Community Noticeboard
Brisbane to Byron Jewish Community
Bundaberg community notice board
Camden Narellan Mt Annan Elderslie Picton & Surrounds Community
Noticeboard
Camden-Narellan Community Noticeboard For Grown People
Canberra Notice Board Group

Carrara Community Group - Notice Board
Central Coast Community Notice Board
Central Coast Neighbourhood Watch and Chat
Chat 10 Looks 3
City Local Loop
Community Notice Board - Tamworth and District
Community noticeboard - Macarthur/Wondilly district (NSW)
Community Noticeboard Gunnedah & District
Conservative Politics Australia
Coomera Community Page, Qld
Coonabarabran Community Noticeboard
Cooroy Community Noticeboard
CWA of NSW Members
Double Bay Community
Eagleby Community Noticeboard
Empowering People Australia: Political, Legal, Social
Empowering People Australia:Political, Legal, Social
End Australian Political Pensions Now
Epping (NSW) Community Forum
Fairfield City Community
Fairfield-Liverpool Community Notice Board
Female Problems
Ferry Hills Ferry Grove Arana Hills Everton Park Community Notice Board
Freo Massive
Freo more massive
Gemfields Community Noticeboard
Get it off your chest
glen innes notice board
Gold Coast Community Pages
Gold Coast Community Voice Group
Goulburn Community Notice Board
Gregory Hills Community Noticeboard
Gwandalan and Summerland Point Community Noticeboard
Harrington Grove + Oran Park Community Noticeboard
Harrington Grove Estate/Harrington Park Sydney Notice Board
Hervey Bay buy/sell and community notice board
Hervey Bay Community Notice Board
Hope Island Neighbourhood
I hate Barnaby Joyce
I will Dox all the Nazis
Iluka NSW Community - General Information and Noticeboard
Iluka NSW Notice Board
Indian Community in Melbourne and Victoria
Ipswich (Aust) Community Noticeboard
Issues and thoughts on the Australia Government.
Jewish Sydney Network for Jewish politically jews

JOS - Jews of Sydney
Kangaroo Island - Community and Visitor Information
Kangaroo Island discussion
Kingham and South Burnett Community Notice Board
Kununurra Community Noticeboard
Labor Wreckage Politics and World Affairs
Lake Cathie Noticeboard
Lake Macquarie Locals
Last watch
Lismore NSW Community Board
LNP - Seriously Out Of Touch
LNP -The Great Australian Mistake
Longreach And Surrounding Area's Community Notice Board
Lost Manly & the Northern Beaches
Mackay Community Notice Board
Mareeba Community Noticeboard
Margaret River Notices
Melbourne events
Melbourne Mums Group
Melville Community Chat
Merrimac Community Notice Board
Middle Australia Fightsback!
Middlemount Community FB Notice Board
Moreton Bay Regional Noticeboard. Buy Or Sell And Community Notices
Morisset & Surrounds Community Notice Board
Moron Scott Morrison must go
Murrurundi Community Notices & Events
Murrurundi Life
Muslim Tradingpost Australia
Muswellbrook Community Notice Page
Nambucca Valley Community Notice Board
Naracoorte Notice Board
Nerang Community Group
news.com.au Breaking News
Noosa Community Board
Noosa Community Notice Board
North Lakes Community
North Shore Mums (Sydney)
Northern Beaches Community Board
Northern Beaches Sydney Noticeboard
Nundle Community Notice Board Facebook.
NYT Australia
OnScene Bondi Community News Group
Orange community notice board
Orange NSW Australia
Ormeau Community Page

Paradise Point & Surrounding Suburbs/GC Business/ Buy Swap Sell/ Community
Paradise Point Community Voice Group
Parramatta Region Community Noticeboard
Pauline Hanson's One Nation
Penrith and Blue Mountains Community Noticeboard
Penrith Area - Have a Whinge
Penrith area crime alerts and discussion
Penrith NSW Area Community Group
Perth - Have a Whinge
Perth have a Whinge
Perth Have a Whinge 18+
Pimpama Community Page, Qld
Pimpama Neighbour's Community Group
Planet America
Politeical
Political events in Sydney
Political surviving on Centrelink
Political Thinkers
Politics in Queensland
Politics in the Pub (Sydney)
Polly geeks
Port Macquarie Community Board
Port Macquarie Noticeboard
POTTSVILLE COMMUNITY NEWS (Australia, NSW)
Professional Women's Network- Australia & NZ
Proud to be a second class citizen
Queanbeyan Community Notice Board
Quirindi, Werris Creek and surrounds community noticeboard
Redbank Plains Community Notice Board
Redlands Community Board
Refugees in Australia, PNG, Nauru Need Action Now
Rhodes - Wentworth Point - Sydney Olympic Park Community News Service
Ringers From The Top End (RFTTE)
Rose Bay Community
Saving New South Wales (NSW) group
Scarborough Beach (WA) Community Noticeboard
SCONE COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD
Scone Community Page
Scrutinise the Australian Federal Government
Sell and buy anything on the north west coast,tasmania
Shepparton Community Notice Board
Single Parents Australia Network - SPAN
Sky News Australia After Dark
South Fremantle Massive
South Fremantle Precinct
Southern Highlands CommUnity Notice Board

Southern Highlands Style
Spotlight Crafts for a Cause
Stop Evil Murdoch's Monopoly
Sunbury Community and News Page (Australia)
Sunshine Coast Australia - Official Community Notice Board
Sydney Eastern Suburbs Community
Sydney's Northern Beaches Notice Board
TAREE Community Noticeboard
The all new Hervey Bay Community Notice Board
The Australian Political Informer
The Better Adelaide Hills Community Chat
The clusterfuk that IS the LNP - Australians deserve BETTER!!!
The LNP & One Nation are a CRIME and a JOKE
The LNP Are First Class Dickheads!
THE POINT NEWS AND VIEWS
The Redcliffe Peninsula
The Repugnance Of Barnaby Joyce
The Sarah Hanson Young is a fruitloop appreciation society
Toowoomba Community Notice Board
Townsville Community Noticeboard
Tuncurry Forster Community Noticeboard
Tweed Notice Board
UN Women Australia
Uncensored Australian Political Debate Forum
Under the Bonnet
University discussion group
Uralla Community Info
Uralla Community Noticeboard
UTS discussion group
UTS Social and Political Sciences
Victor Harbor & Surrounding Areas Community Board
Victorian Eastern Suburbs Noticeboard
VOICES OF THE NDIS
Vote Tony Out
Wallabadah Community Notice Board
WAtoday Politics Lab
We Loathe Barnaby & Andrew Broad
We Loathe Dutton & Morrison
Western Sydney Community Noticeboard
Western Sydney University Discussion Group
Wetherill Park, Smithfield & Fairfield Community Group
What's Happening in Armidale
Women empowering Women
Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA) Community
YAMBA NOTICE BOARD
You know you are from Quirindi when...

Zero Waste Sydney
Zero Waste Tasmania