

Rebuilding our political system to nurture equality



Communities in Control, 28th May 2018, Nicholas Gruen

@ngruen1



Lateral Economics



Nicholas Gruen @NGruen1

59m

How can we build a democracy that's more supportive of equality

Find out next Monday at
Communities in Control Conference
at Moonee Valley next Monday
Morning

communitiesincontrol.com.au/files/CIC-2018...

Building our political system to nurture equality

Nicholas Gruen, CEO, Lateral Economics

As we're increasingly realising, social connectedness and a shared sense of purpose which focuses the common good are all fundamental to building society and economy. Yet there's a pervasive feeling that things are falling apart in our society. Faith in our major institutions or democracy continues to steadily decline both here and in a number of other countries. This talk will explore the ways in which inequality impacts material phenomena. It will argue that politics as our means to address these concerns and explore the ways in which our political system could be improved - in which people are given power to influence - selected by lot as they were in ancient Athens - will also explore the ways in which such a system might be used to address our social problems.



Ken Parish

@KenParish1

Replying to @NGruen1

Punt the housekeeping on number 7 in the third race at long odds and then do a Fine Cotton conspiracy on behalf of the undeserving poor and broadcast the tip on Facebook?

4:24pm · 22 May 2018 · Twitter Web Client

1 REPLY 1 LIKE



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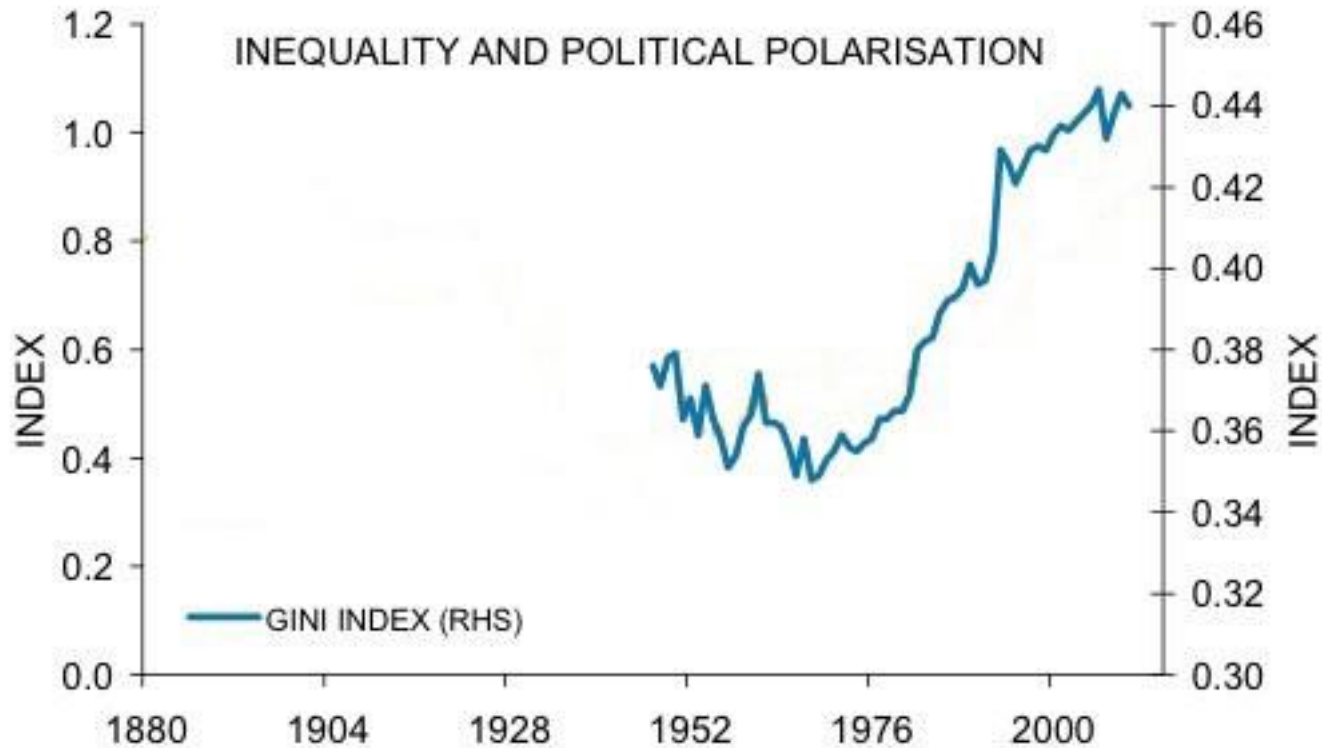
Where are we and how did we get here?

Materialist explanations

- Recession
- Austerity
- Inequality

Exhibit 4

Rising Inequality and Political Polarization

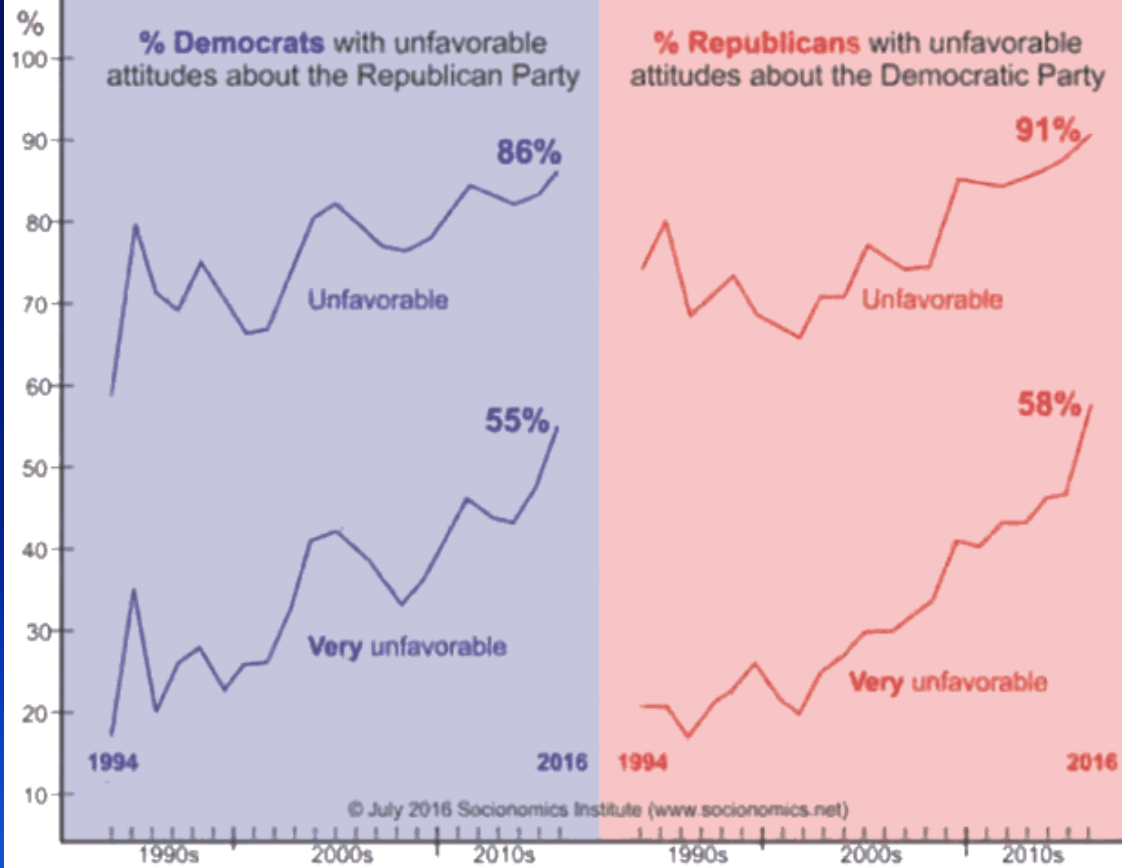


Source: Census Bureau, Voteview.com, Morgan Stanley Research

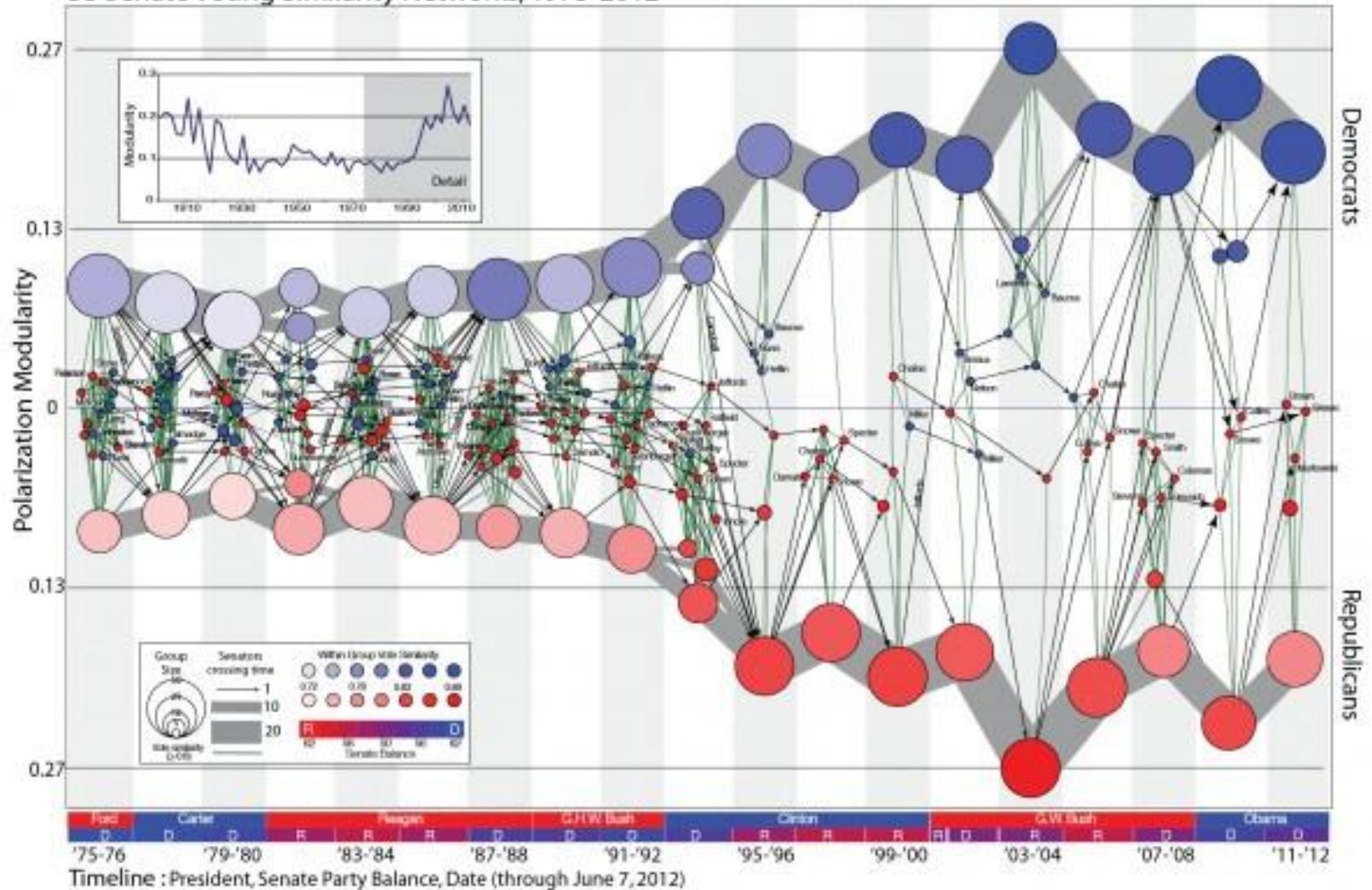
Negative Social Mood Has Polarized America

"Majorities have deeply negative views of other party"

1994-April 2016, data courtesy Pew Research Center



US Senate Voting Similarity Networks, 1975-2012



Polarisation

1990s: 1/5 US partisans regard opponents “very unfavourably”

Today: 2/5 think the other political party’s policies “so misguided that they threaten the nation’s well-being”

2/5 uncomfortable with a politically mixed marriage.

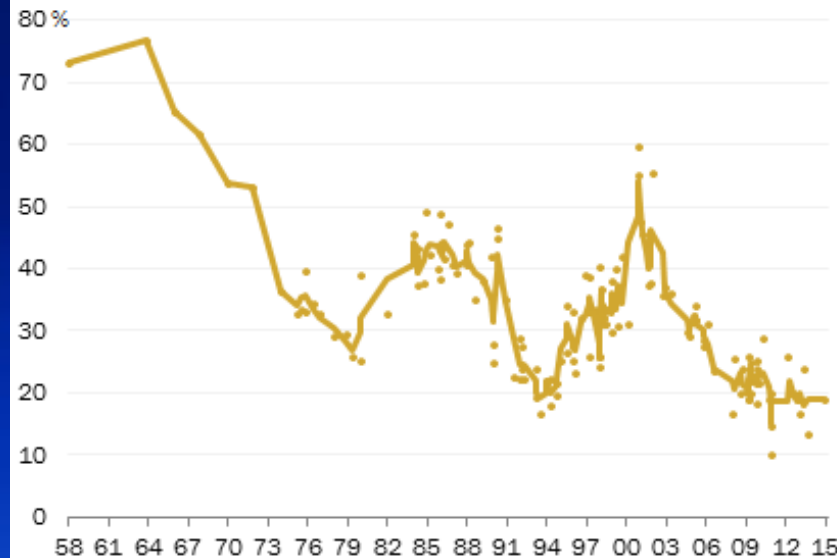
More than interracial marriage or being gay.

Jonathan Haidt and Ravi Iyer, Wall Street Journal, 10 November 2016.

Distrust

Public trust in government: 1958-2015

Trust the federal government to do what is right just about always/most of the time ...



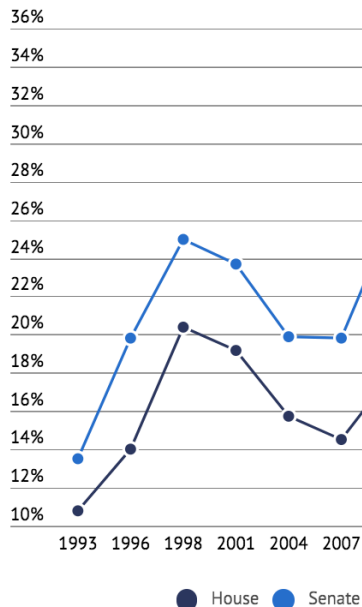
Survey conducted Aug. 27-Oct. 4, 2015. Q15. Trend sources: Pew Research Center, National Election Studies, Gallup, ABC/Washington Post, CBS/New York Times, and CNN Polls. From 1976-2014 the trend line represents a three-survey moving average.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Polarisation amidst policy blandness

Minor parties are attracting more votes and stronger support

Percentage of votes cast for minor parties

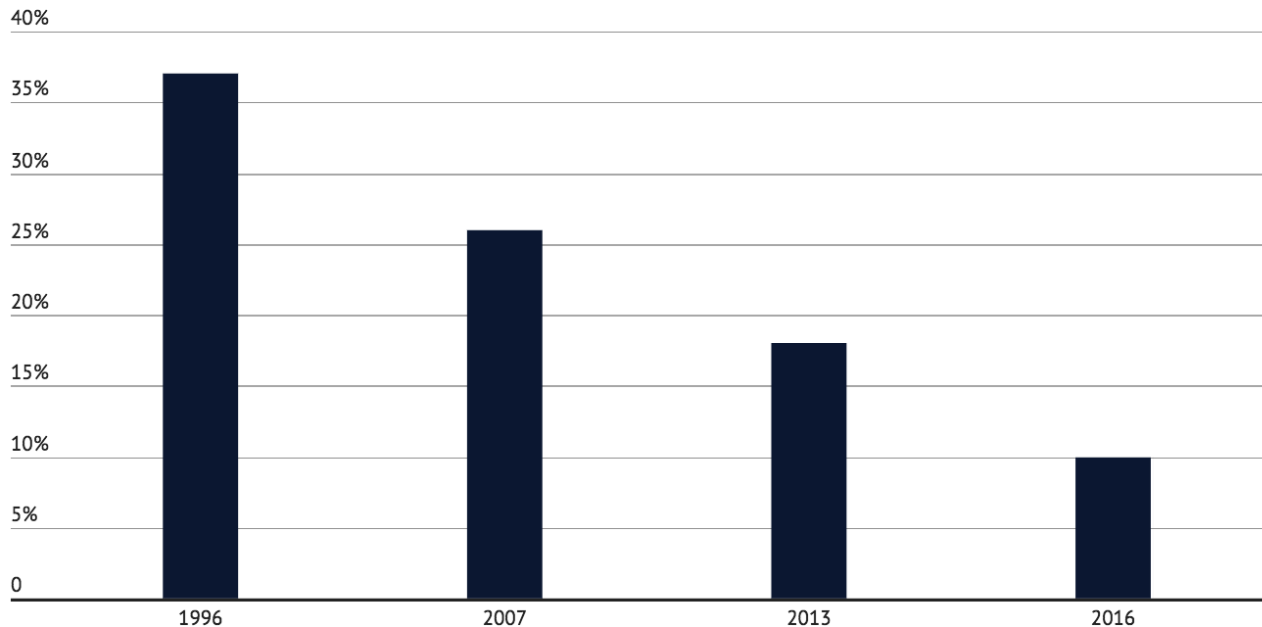


Australian voters are polarising

Percentage of voters describing themselves 'left', 'right' or 'centre'

Australia's disappearing moderate politicians

Proportion of major party candidates who describe themselves as 'moderate'

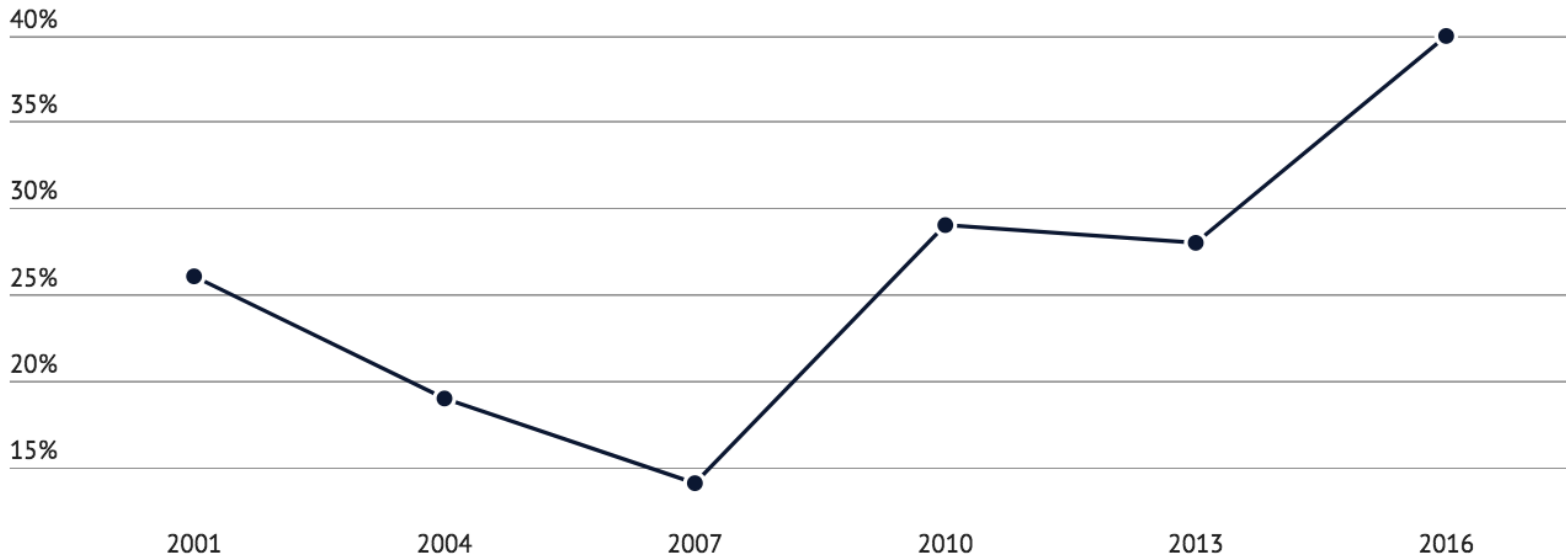


Results from AES survey of Australian political candidates to the question, 'In politics, people sometimes talk about the 'left' and the 'right'. Where would you place yourself on a spectrum from 0 (left) to 10 (right)?' 'Moderates' are ALP members who answer 5 or more and L/NP members who answer 5 or less.

Distrust

Voter dissatisfaction with democracy is at record levels

Percentage of overall voters



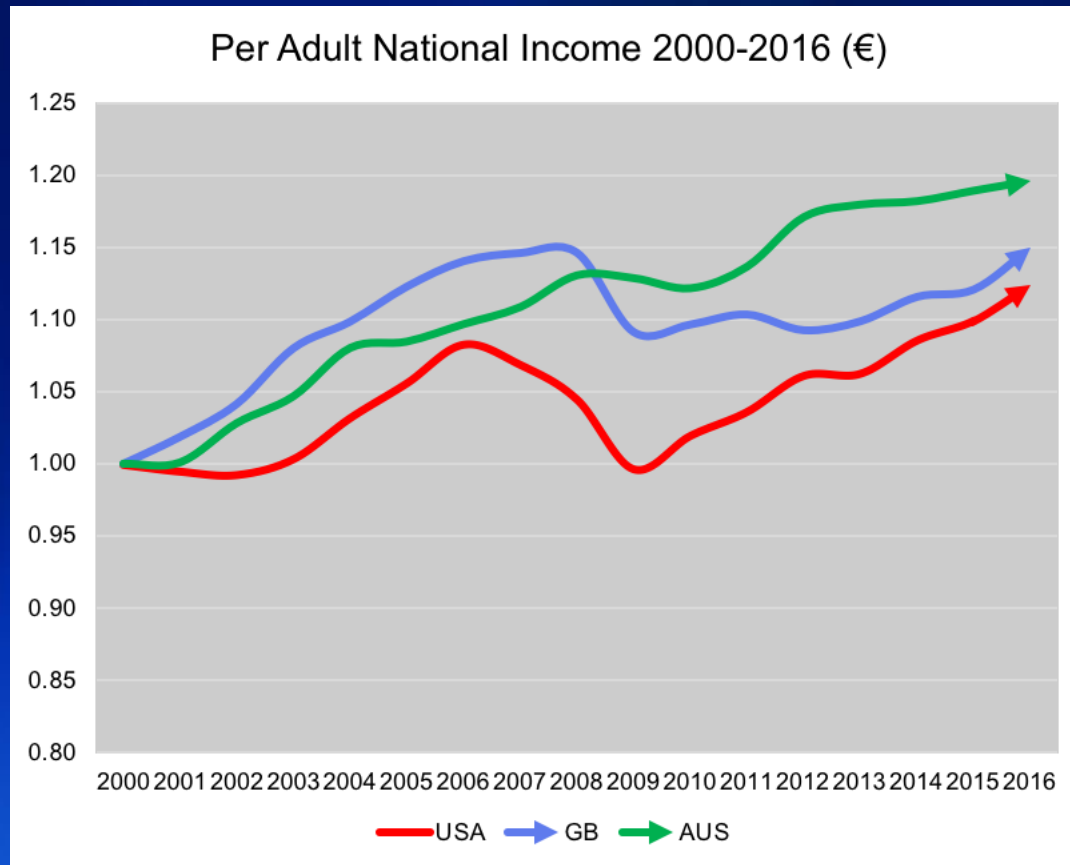
Question from AES: On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in Australia? Chart shows respondents answering not very or not at all satisfied.



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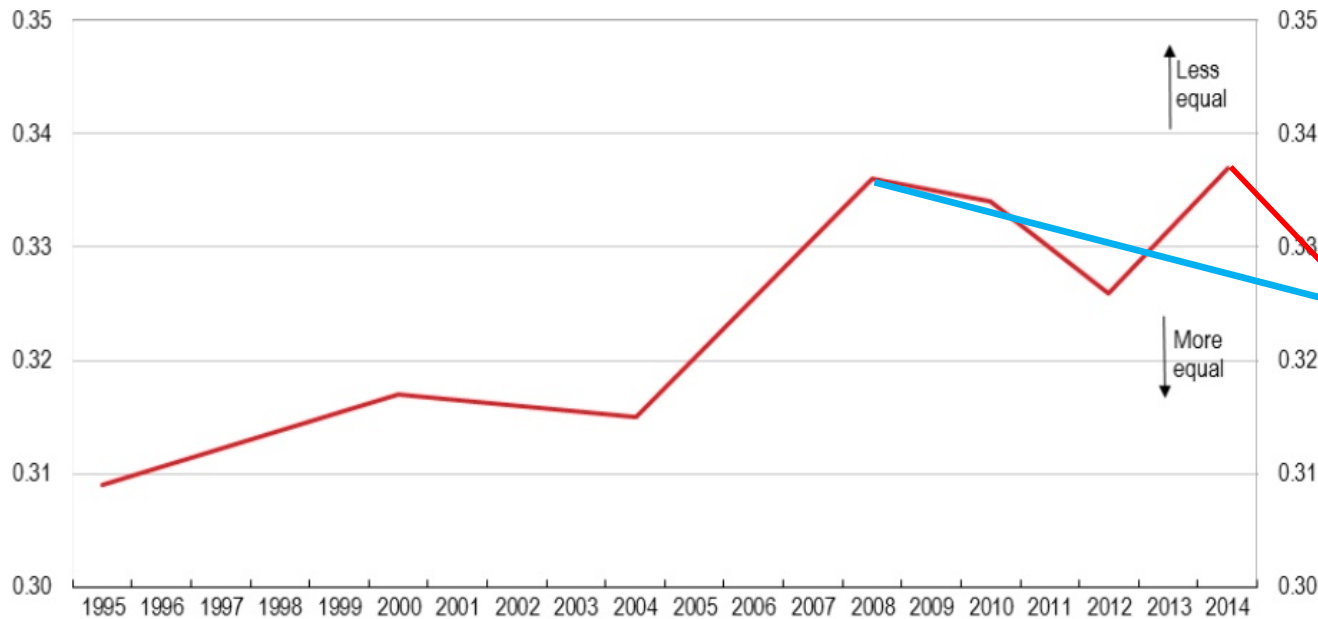


Source: World inequality Database

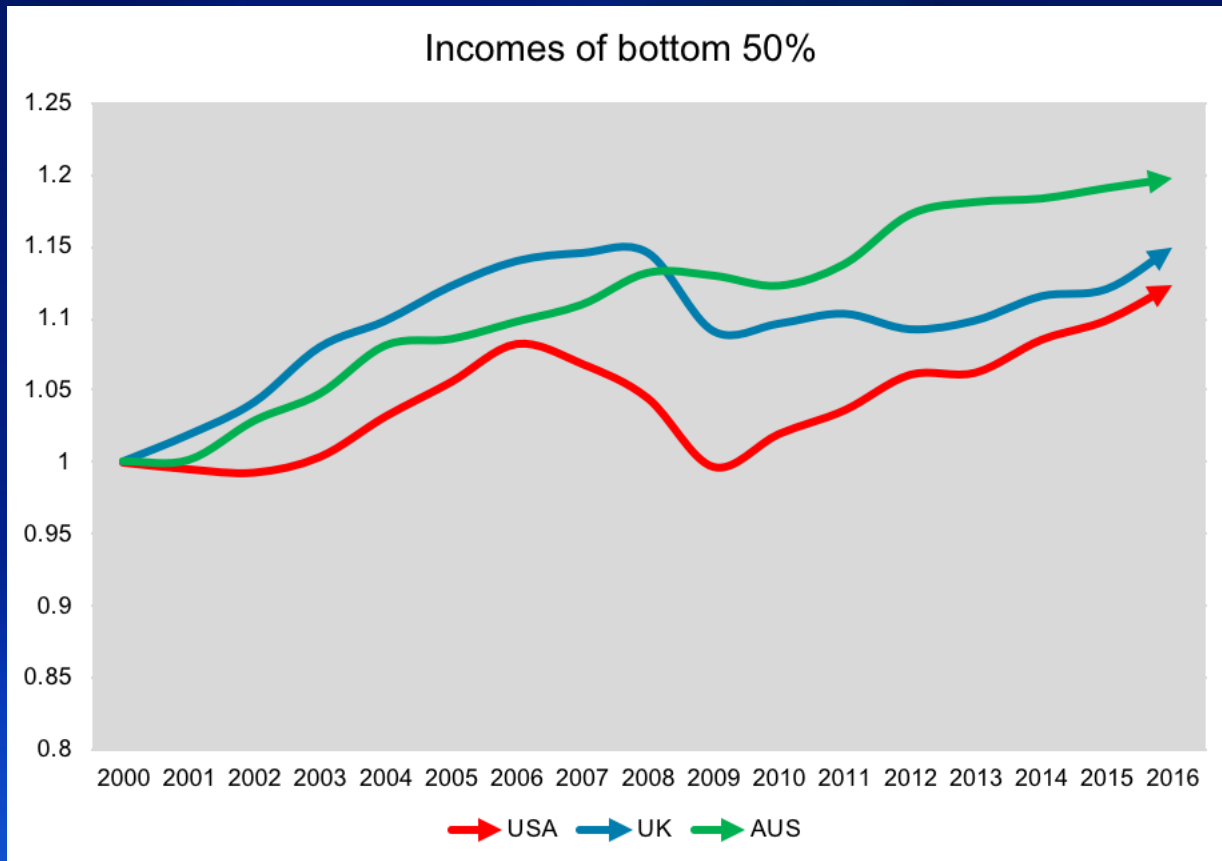


Inequality has risen (but not much and not lately)

GINI coefficient (disposable income, post taxes and transfers)

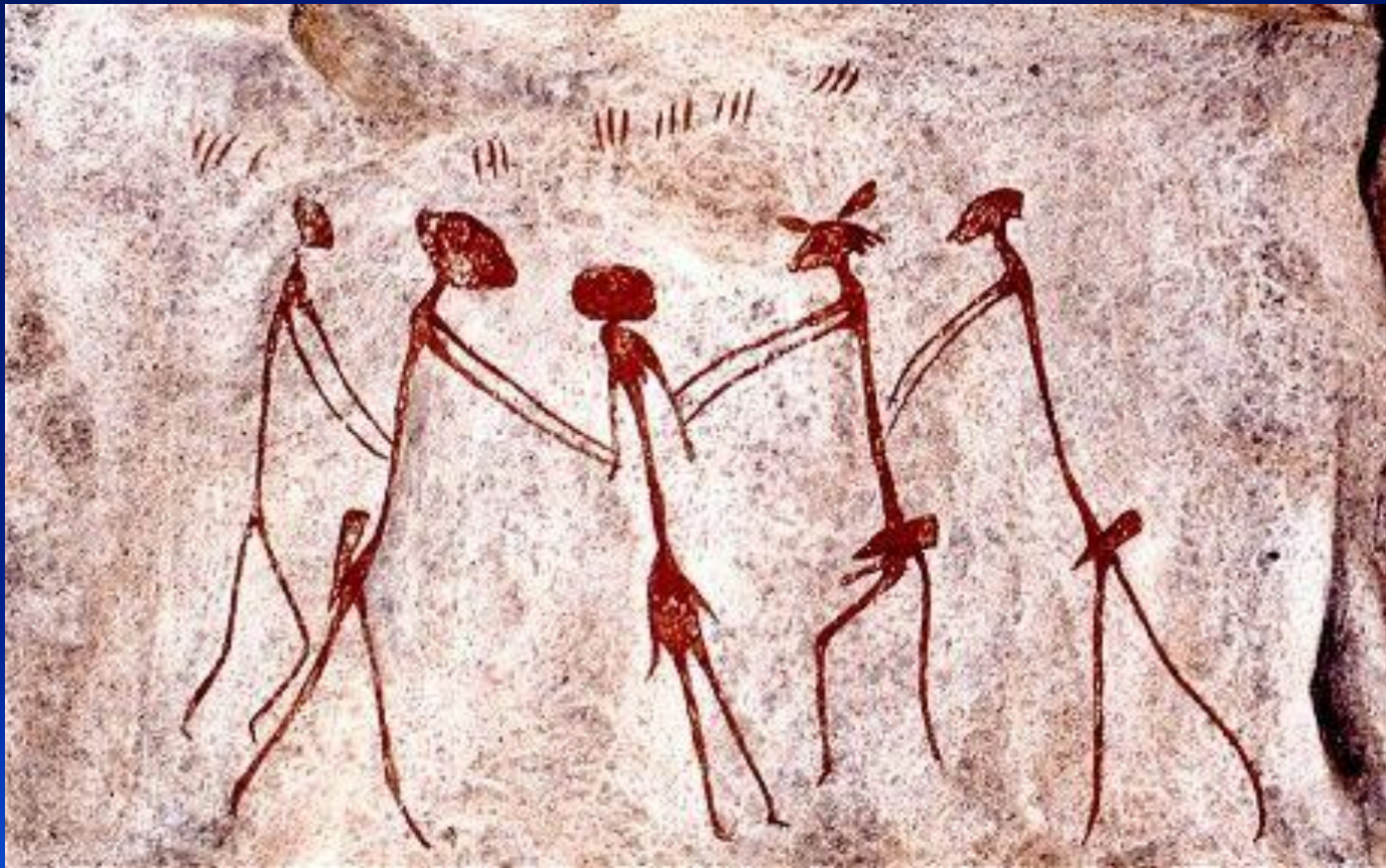


Source: OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard 2015.



Source: World inequality Database

Is this material conditions?





A culture optimised

A culture awash with instant gratification

- Food
- Media
- Advertising
- 24 hour news and punditry
 - content-free political punditry
 - Astro-turfing and online free commentary
- Porn
- Inspirational and TED talks
- Social media
 - Micro-targeted marketing
 - Fake News

Sound bytes fell from 48 – 9 Seconds from 1968 to 1988

The Race to the Bottom of the Brainstem

The tech industry is an “arms race for basically who’s good at getting attention and who’s better in the race to the bottom of the brainstem to hijack the human animal”.

Tristan Harris, former design ethicist for Google and founder of the Centre for Humane Technology

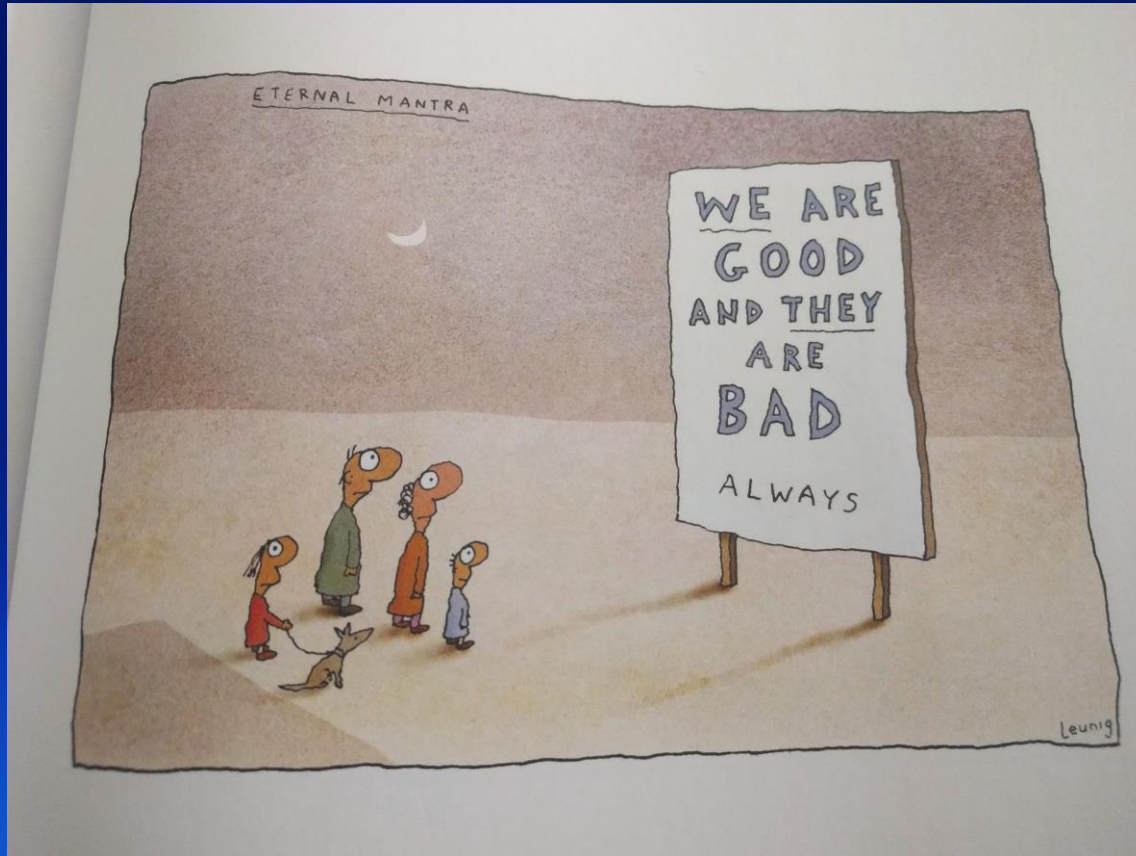


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Politics as culture war



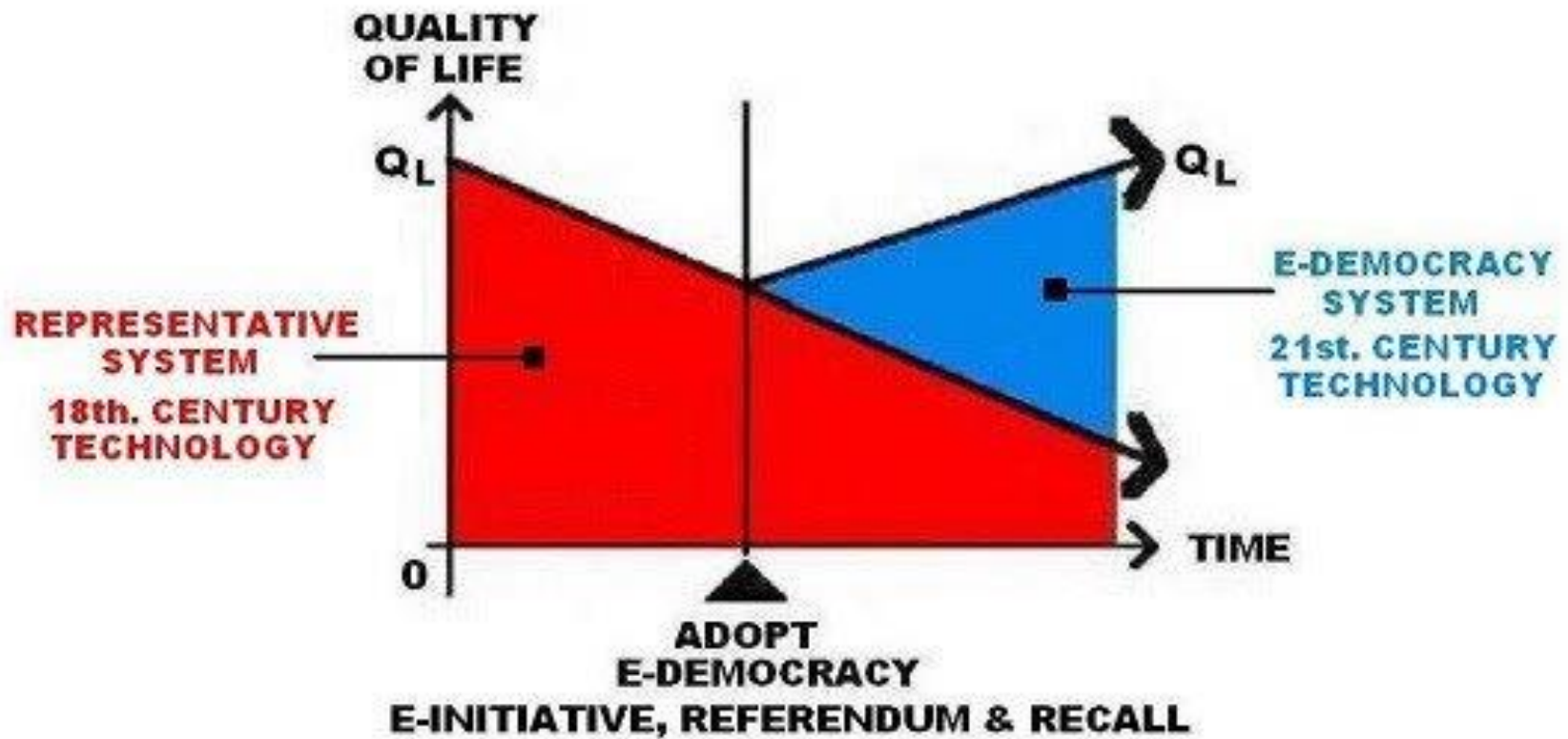
The pull of magic sentimentalism



We the people



25





These hundreds of thousands will be followed by millions.

This revolution will not be satisfied with overthrowing a corrupt and unresponsive political system.

It won't stop at remaking politics. And it won't pay attention to national borders.

Joe Trippi, *The Revolution will not be Televised*, 2008

**Policy
Brainstorming**



1



2



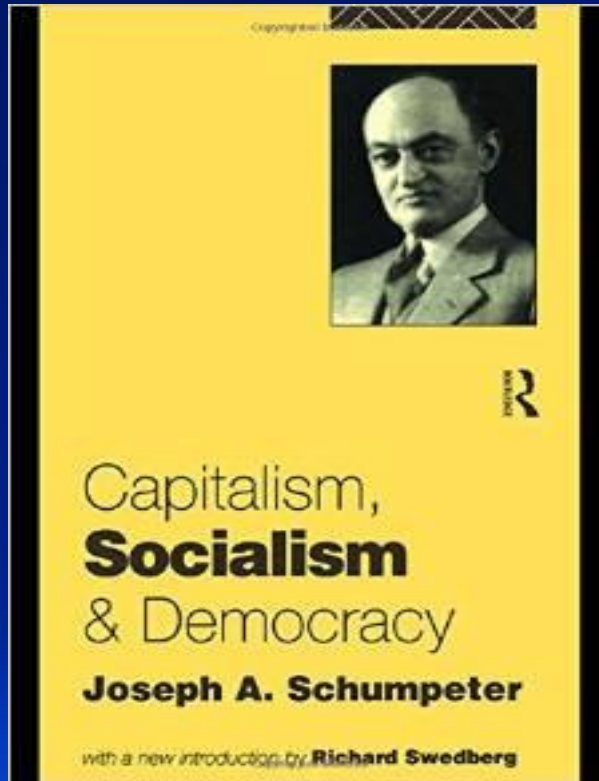
3



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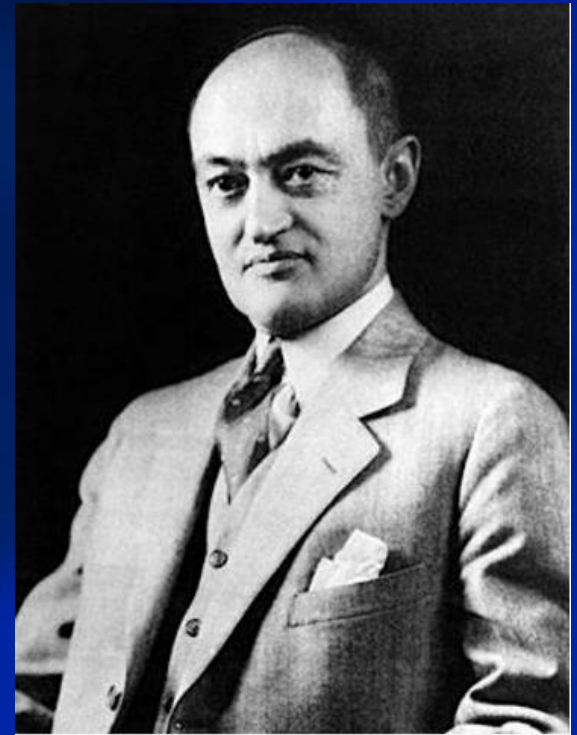
Some simple ideas about democracy

1943

1. Leadership

“Collectives act almost exclusively by accepting leadership — this is the dominant mechanism of practically any collective action which is more than a reflex.”

Joseph Schumpeter, 1943



Power without responsibility

Schumpeter

Democracy is only possible where a strong elite is dedicated to

- public service and
- the rule of law



1. Leadership?

Can we do without responsible class leadership?

- We'll have to find out

We cannot do without a cognitive division of labour

- Experts on everything are experts on nothing

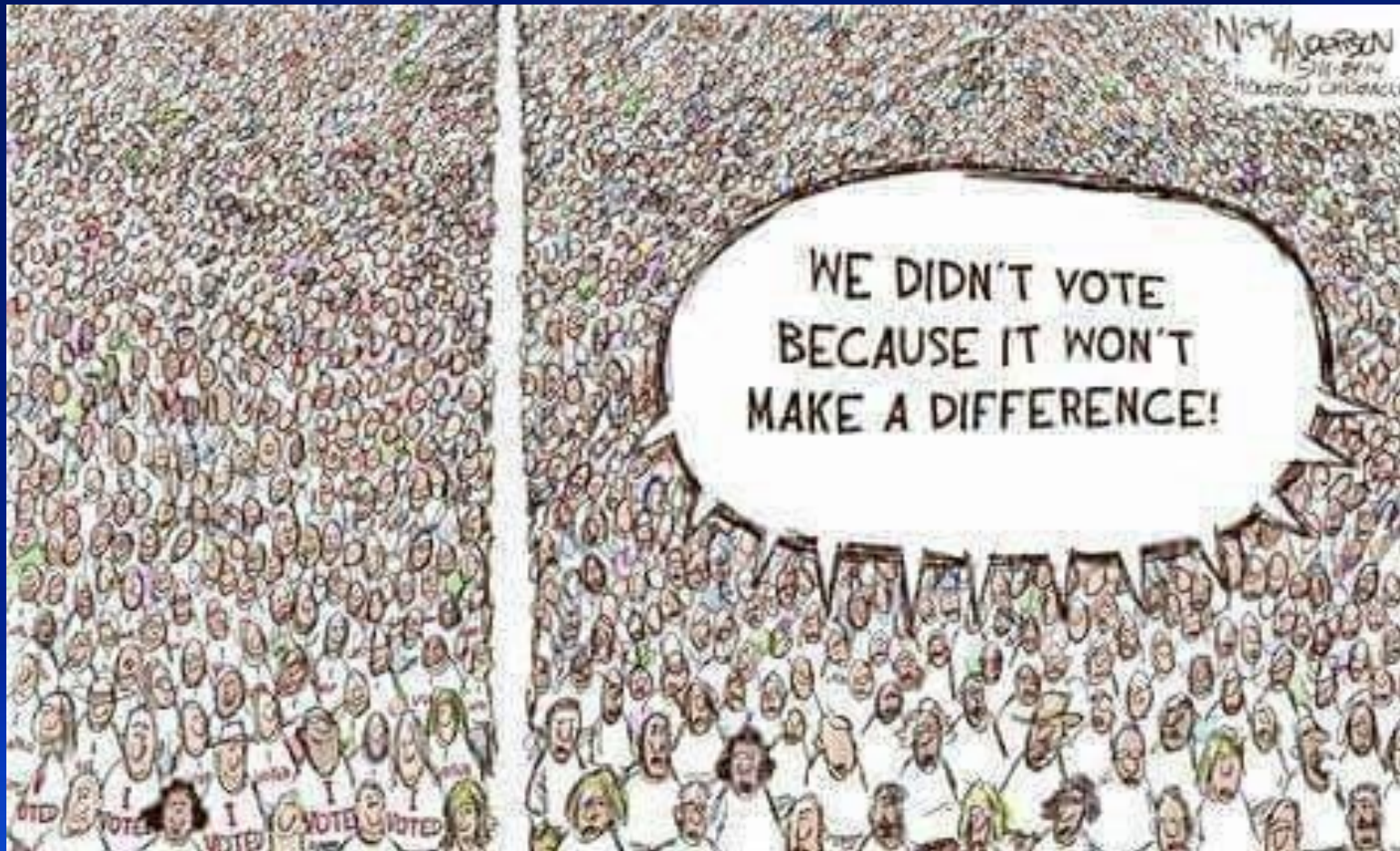
2 Thinking in private and public realms

Private

- Problem solving
- Rational, concrete, goal oriented

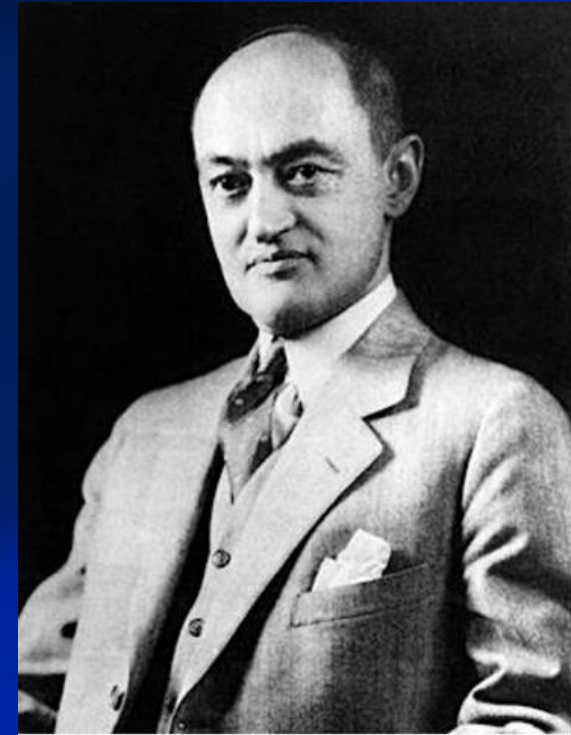
Public

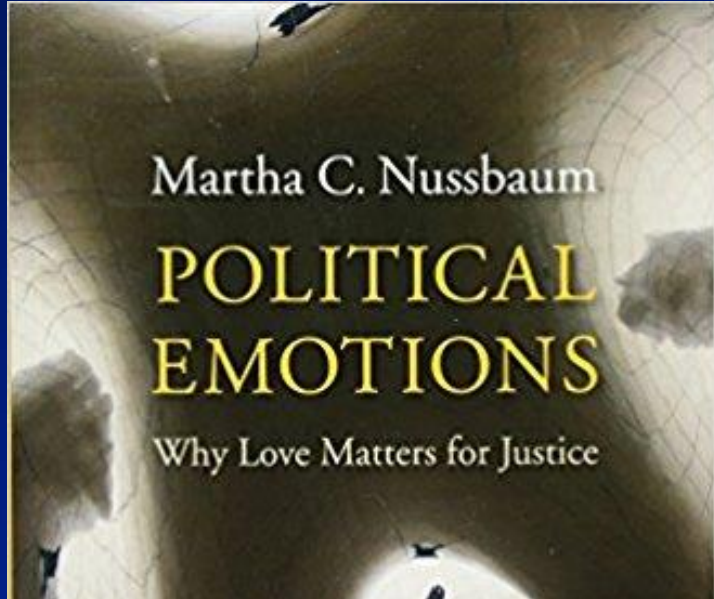
- Abstract and ambiguous
- Affective, expressive



3. The engine of engagement: emotion and affect

We find the same attempts to contact the subconscious ... the same technique of creating favorable and unfavorable associations which are the more effective the less rational they are ... and the same trick of producing opinion by reiterated assertion that is successful precisely to the extent to which it avoids rational argument and the danger of awakening the critical faculties of the people.





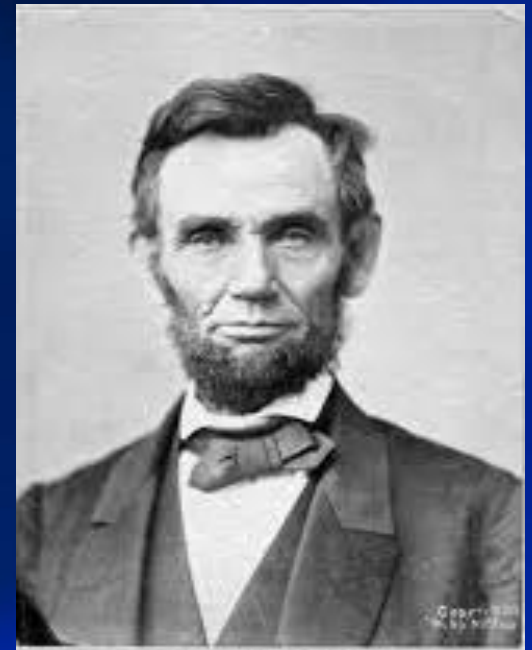
Inspiring worthy collective projects
requiring effort and sacrifice

To protect the fragile self by
denigrating and subordinating others



Emotions bind us for care

Let us strive ... to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations



Emotions bind us to fight others

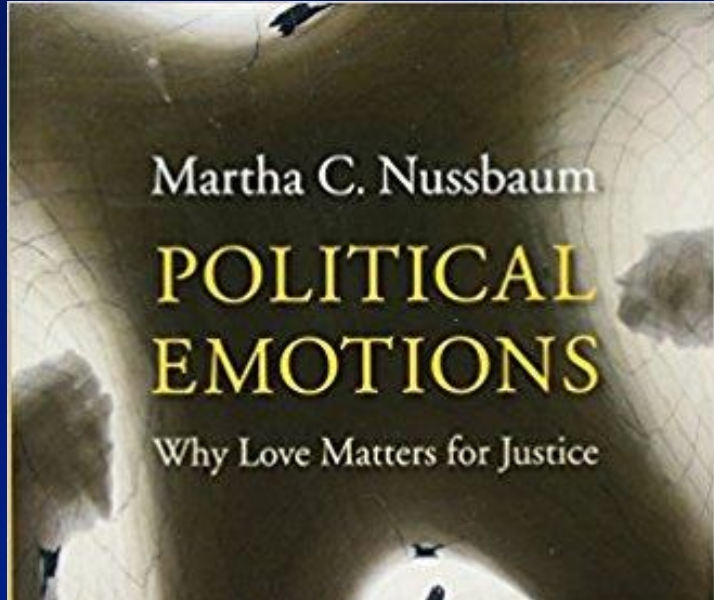
You ask, what is our policy? ... To wage war with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us; to wage war against a monstrous tyranny never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word: It is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be.



Emotion: the engine driving politics

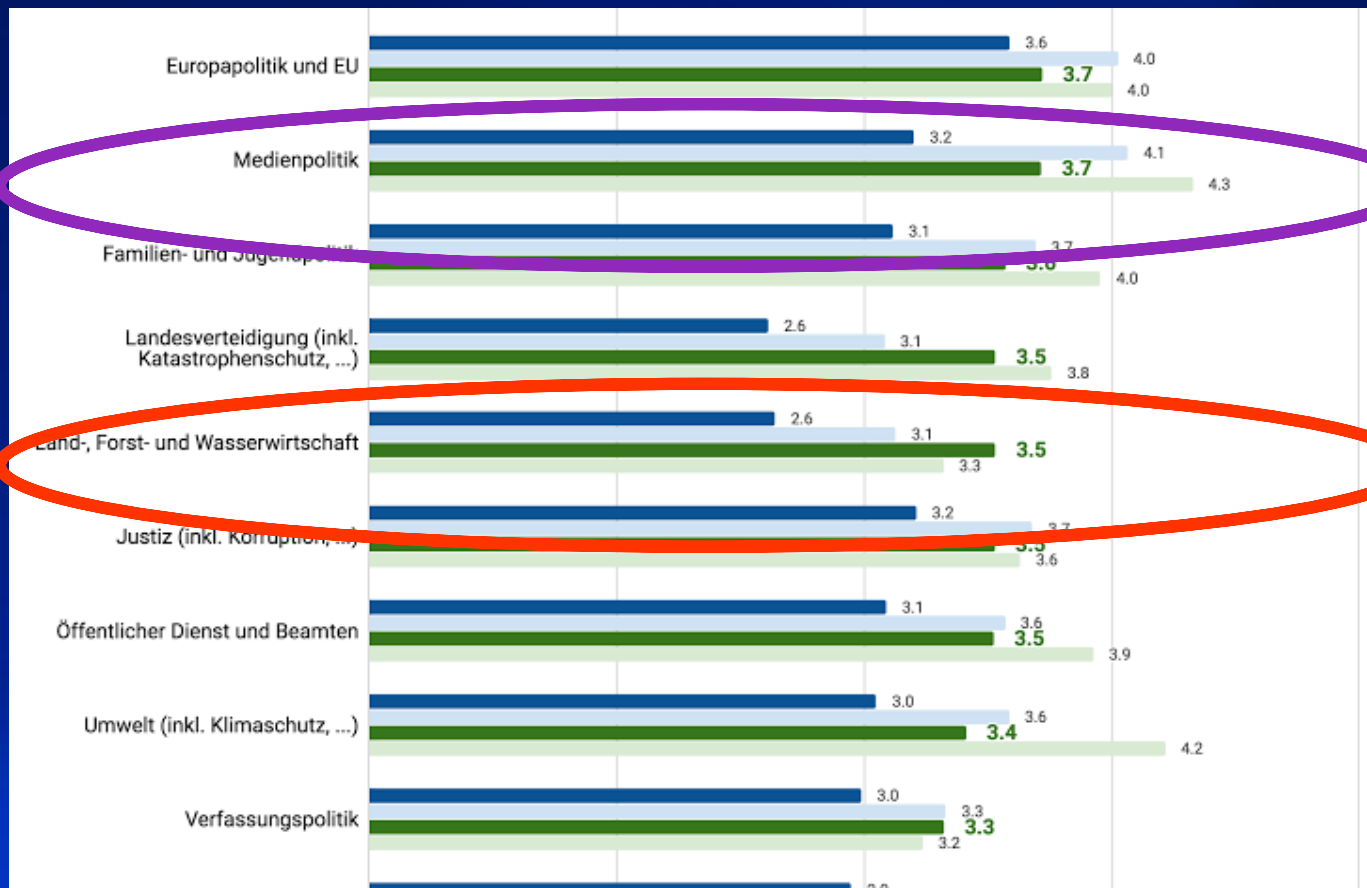
I use emotion for the many and
reserve reason for the few.

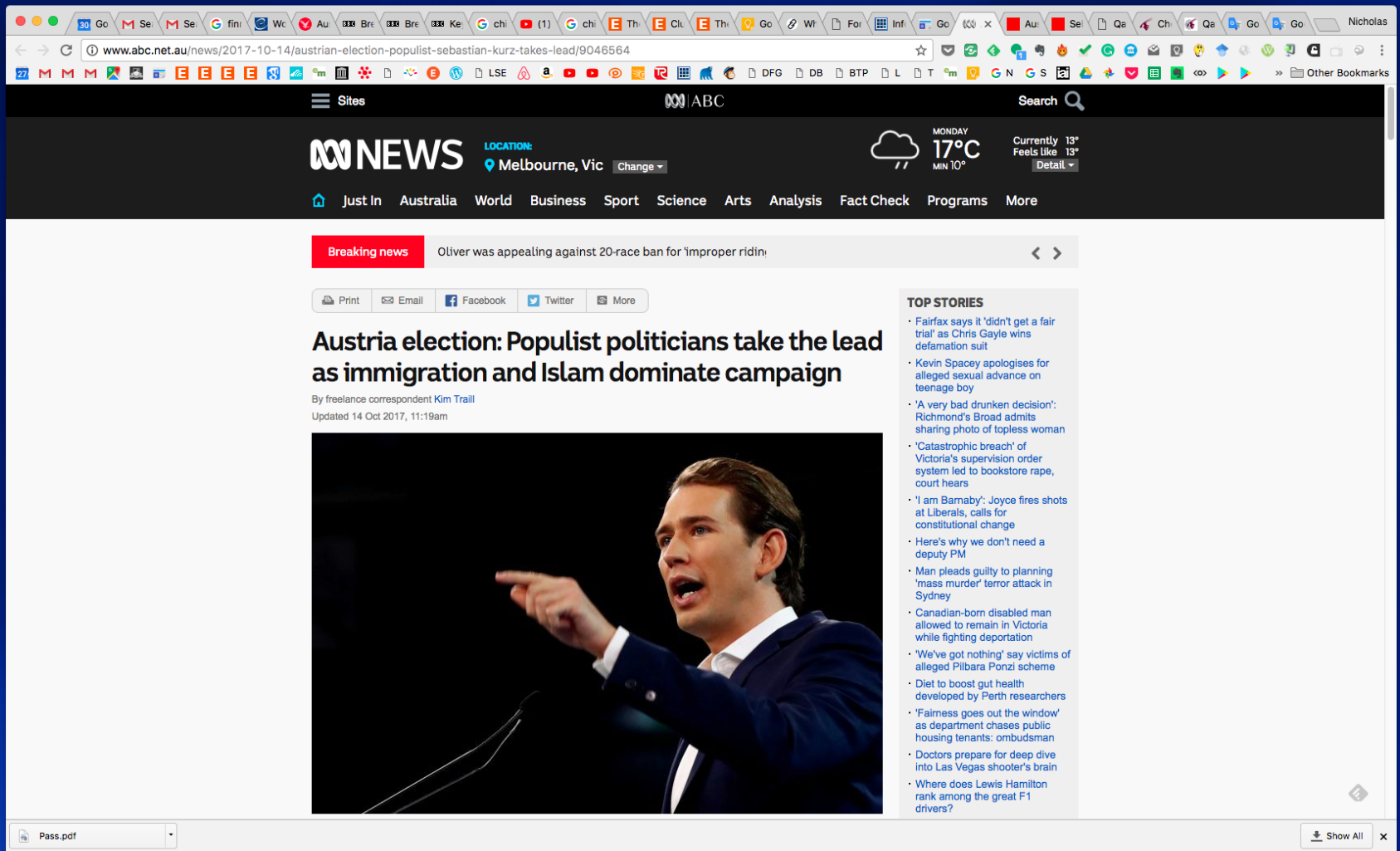




The balance of emotions

Meanwhile
in Austria





The balance of emotions

It was quite a joy to hold the little kids' hands and watch them smile.

Naval Commander Norman Banks

We decide who comes here and the terms on which they come.

John Howard

Most issues require thought – and usually balanced emotions

Carbon pricing

Tax

Welfare

Migration

Trade negotiation (Brexit in UK, the TPP in Australia)

Nuclear power

Austerity

‘Harm minimisation’ v escalating criminalisation of illicit drugs

Professional demarcations (like software supported nurses prescribing some antibiotics).

Media irresponsibility

Representing the people: Another way



Representation

By election

- Fairly recent
- Parties aggregate votes to platforms
- Careers anchor MPs to parties

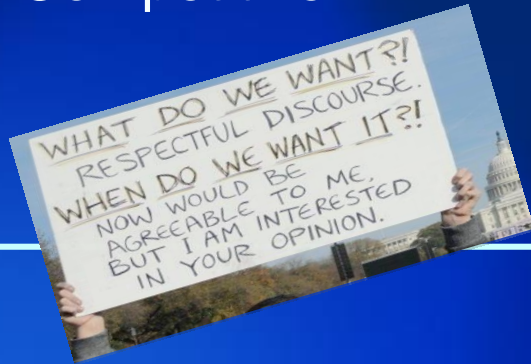
By Lot

- Much older lineage
 - Athenian *boule*
 - European cities
 - Juries in courts

Representation

By election

- Aristocracy reformed
- 'Aristocratic'
- Extractive
- Competitive



By Lot

- Interdicts oligarchy
- 'Democratic'
- Generative
- Unitary

ἰσηγορία – isēgoría



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Citizen's chambers, the balance of emotions and political culture

Assembly Members rated the Assembly an average of 5.5 out of 6 across the two weekends

86% 'strongly agreed' with the statement "Assemblies like this should be used more often to inform government decision-making."

A further 8% 'agreed' taking 'agree' to 94%.



Safer, more vibrant Adelaide night life

Jurors overwhelmingly very positive about it

Most avidly followed the progress of the recommendations.

Jurors reactions

1. composition of jury didn't match expectations.

'Not just the young activists'

"I was expecting the blue rinse set from the Eastern suburbs. I was delighted to find that wasn't the case".

Jurors' reactions

“I’m a man, I’m six foot two, I have no considerations for my safety in Adelaide.

Then being with other people: older, smaller, females, you learn that their experiences are very different”

Changes in Jurors' perceptions: Politicians

“I have a lot more respect for politicians. People give them a lot of flack but it's so hard when you have so many conflicting voices coming at you.

Changes in Jurors' perceptions: Media

“It was eye opening. Because you had your opinions about things, and you would hear something completely opposite and you'd think ‘Why did I ever think that in the first place?’, and then you realise that you never really get the full story through the media”

Many were ‘angry’, ‘annoyed’ and ‘appalled’ when they saw media coverage of their deliberations

Several journalists took one line from the report (on a car parking tax) and reported it out of context

Respect for decision

Table 6.11. The Level of Respect for the Final Result, Even if It Contradicts One's Own Opinion (fourth survey)

(Unit: %)

		Will respect			Won't respect		
		Completely	Moderately		Moderately	At all	
Total		93.2	32.1	61.1	6.8	5.3	1.5
Gender	Male	93.5	39.2	54.3	6.5	4.7	1.7
	Female	92.9	25.2	67.6	7.1	5.9	1.3
Age	19–29	97.1	47.1	50.0	2.9	2.9	–
	30–39	95.0	36.3	58.8	5.0	3.8	1.3
	40–49	95.3	29.9	65.4	4.7	4.7	–
	50–59	91.3	33.7	57.7	8.7	6.7	1.9
	60+	89.2	20.7	68.5	10.8	7.2	3.6
Region	Seoul	94.5	29.4	65.1	5.5	4.6	0.9
	Incheon, Gyeonggi-do	93.5	35.5	58.0	6.5	5.1	1.4
	Daejeon, Chungcheong-do	95.7	34.0	61.7	4.3	2.1	2.1
	Gwangju, Jeolla-do, Jeju	91.2	33.3	57.9	8.8	5.3	3.5
	Daegu, Gangwon-do, Gyeongsangbuk-do	93.0	28.1	64.9	7.0	5.3	1.8
	Busan, Ulsan, Gyeongsangnam-do	90.3	30.6	59.7	9.7	9.7	–

Unitary democracy is *generative*

Turns wariness about politics into enthusiasm

Generates increased participation

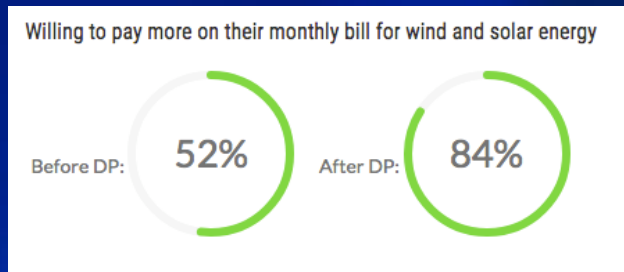
Associated with wider benefits.

How do views change?

Deliberative polling on energy in Texas

Immediate GDP less important

Pricing for poorer citizens more important.



Didn't volunteer much. "Then, again, not that much per person would actually be necessary to finance some notable changes of policy. So our surmise is that many of the participants learned that many of the benefits they desired could be achieved with a very modest price increase".

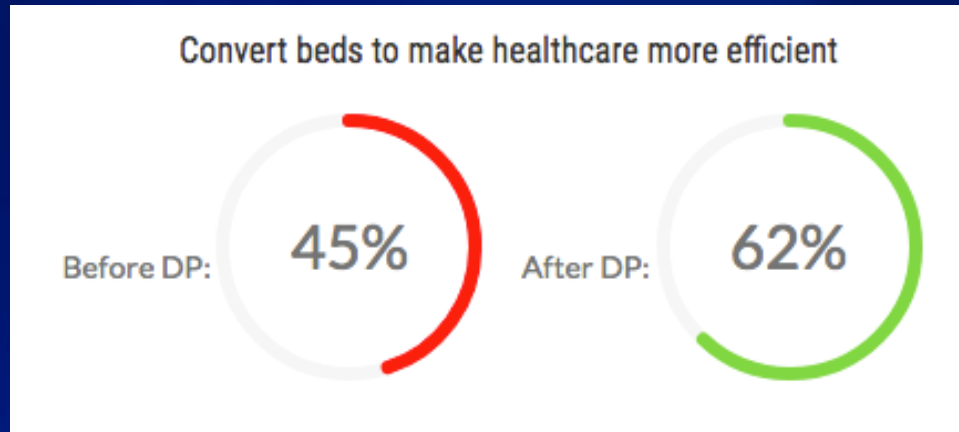
UK National Health 1998 Deliberation

Substantial majorities before and after the deliberation were in favour of increased government spending on the NHS, even if this meant paying higher taxes.

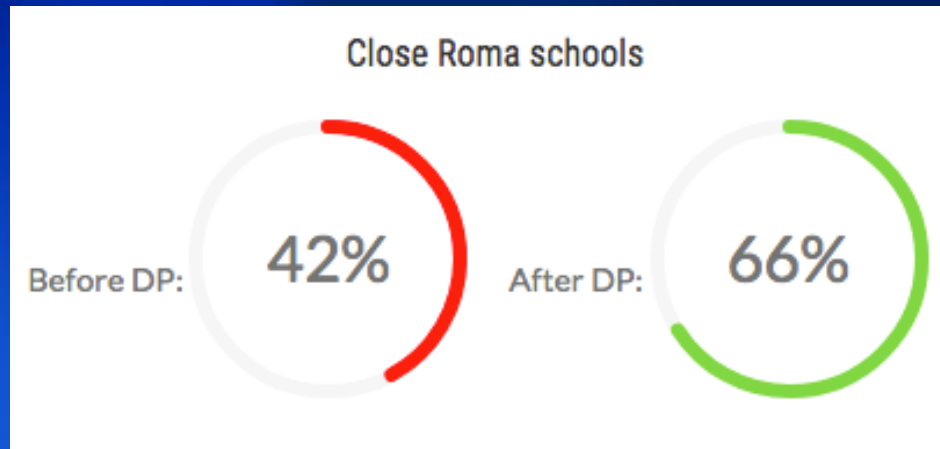
The positive and protective attitudes towards the NHS as an institution increased through the deliberation.

Those who agreed that “Government should pay for everyone’s health care” went from 58 percent to 75 percent

Italy-Regione Lazio



Bulgaria



Oregon's Citizen Review Initiative

Each citizen initiated referendum has citizens'
jury review panel

Measure 73

Mandatory sentencing

Mandatory sentencing in Oregon

Measure 73	In favour	Against
Before	70%	30%

Mandatory sentencing in Oregon

Measure 73	In favour	Against
Before	70%	30%
After	12.5%	87.5%

Mandatory sentencing in Oregon

Measure 73	In favour	Against
Before	70%	30%
After	12.5%	87.5%
Vote	57%	43%

Table 3. Statement Coding Correlations with Change Scores

Values Coding	Correlation with Attitude Change
Liberalism	.02
Cosmopolitanism	.21**
Sustainability	-.13
Egalitarianism	.17*
Collectivism	.11*

Note. One-tailed alphas ($N = 65$), * $p < .10$, ** $p < .05$, *** $p < .01$.



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Citizens' House
Representation by lot

Upper House
Representation of
aristocracy/property

Lower House
Representation by election

Sortition as activism



A new repertoire

Merit selection without self-assertion

A House of Lords by sortition

Ethics committees

Balanced demarchy

- Landlords and tenants
- Employees and employers

Operation Christmas 1914

Greek Crisis
Brexit
War



Citizens juries as activism for equality

Newstart

Tax policy

Health and education funding

Asylum seekers

Obesity

Homelessness

Illicit drugs



Most issues require thought – and usually balanced emotions

Carbon pricing

Tax

Welfare

Migration

Trade negotiation (Brexit in UK, the TPP in Australia)

Nuclear power

Austerity

‘Harm minimisation’ v escalating criminalisation of illicit drugs

Professional demarcations (like software supported nurses prescribing some antibiotics).

Media irresponsibility



Super Trawlers should be banned

Vote

Support

Undecided

Oppose

VOTES (78) [Show Voters](#)

69% support

31% oppose

COLLECTIVE WISDOM

48% support

52% oppose

The collective wisdom is the view of the participants considered as forming a collective mind. It is determined by weighting the "raw" votes by the credibility of the voters. For more see the [YourView FAQ page](#).

Both the raw vote and the collective wisdom are based on the views of those who participated, and may not accurately reflect the views of Australians in general.



The end

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