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**Is One Nation really a postmaterialist party? Exploring the relationship between
postmodernization and party support in Australia**

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Abstract

In this paper we explore the relationship between postmodern values and voting in Australia. The best-known and most widely used measure in the literature is Inglehart's materialism-postmaterialism scale and we begin by examining what the four-item version of this scale can offer in understanding voting support for Australian political parties. We continue by examining other aspects of postmodern attitudes and investigate whether or not the incorporation of a postmodern politics dimension as well as a more traditional left-right dimension adds to our understanding of current voting patterns in Australia, including for minor parties.

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Introduction

Historically, it has been quite common for Australian political discourse and voting behaviour to be described in terms of a single dimension. Sometimes this used to be put in the context of a belief that a dichotomous social class division (and its consequences) was the key underlying aspect, but as such a simple description has become untenable more pragmatic considerations have been mentioned. For example, McAllister (1992) argues that it is in the interest of the two major parties to keep debate focused on economic issues to avoid the divisiveness of social issues (both amongst their own supporters and society at large). Moreover, if party competition can largely be restricted to a single dimension, this has the additional advantage for the major parties of making it difficult for other parties to establish a niche for themselves among the voting public.

Of course, particularly since the mid-1970s, there has been an increase in the rate of formation of new parties¹, of which the most significant are probably the Australian Democrats, the Greens and, most recently, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party (ONP). Concomitantly, there have been changes in the extent of voting for major parties (with 96% voting for the ALP and Liberal-National coalition in the House of Representatives in 1975, but down to just below 80 % in 1998). This situation is not, of course, unique to Australia: indeed, in the early part of the 1990s it was argued (Charnock 1996; McAllister 1994) that the extent of major party dealignment in Australia had been relatively small by international standards and some people would argue that this still remains true.

In attempting to understand these changes in the broader international context, one of the most influential accounts has been provided by Ronald Inglehart (1977; 1990; 1997). He argues that value orientations are based on childhood conditions; that those brought up in materially secure conditions are more likely to hold postmaterialist values relating to the

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quality of life (such as freedom, democracy, beauty and the importance of ideas); that increasing proportions of today's voters, raised during post-World War II prosperity, have such values; and more recently (Inglehart 1997) generalizes beyond postmaterialism to argue that western industrial democracies have in some sense moved beyond the "modernization" project into a process of "postmodernization". Postmodernization is thus conceived as dependent upon a degree of success in the modernization project and he uses the World Values Survey data to argue that the aggregate values of the 43 nations surveyed can be placed along a sequence of modernization and postmodernization.

Applied to the political realm, Inglehart argues that a new "postmodern" political dimension is required in order to supplement the traditional Left versus Right dimension. Typically, the most extreme postmodern position within each political arena is taken by a party of the libertarian or New Left, while the opposing pole is occupied by a party of the New Right. The terminology used in this description suggests this dimension is not wholly independent of the traditional Left-Right dimension and both Kitschelt (1995) and Knutsen (1995) provide empirical support for the existence of what one might call a new axis of party competition, in which competition is seen as taking place within a two-dimensional space but on or close to a particular diagonal line within that space (also see Hellevik 1993).

In Inglehart's own most recent work, although he recognizes that the postmodern dimension is broader than the materialist-postmaterialist distinction on which his earlier work was based, much of his discussion of the relationship between politics and social and cultural change is constructed in the language of postmaterialism. For example, with reference to Germany, he says (Inglehart 1997: 245-6):

"the Republikaner do not call themselves the Anti-Environment Party; nor do the Greens call themselves the Pro-Immigrant Party. But, in fact, their constituencies are disproportionately Materialist and Postmaterialist, respectively; and these parties adopt opposite policies on the relevant issues. The older parties are

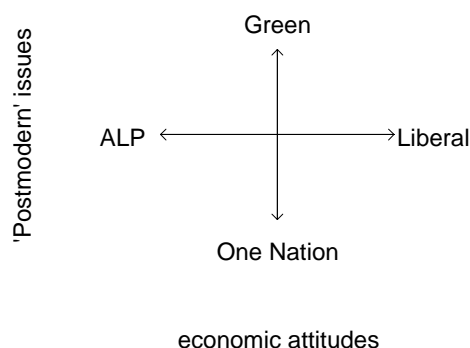
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arrayed on the traditional Left-Right axis, established in an era when political cleavages were dominated by social class conflict... As Kitschelt (1995) has demonstrated, the new politics dimension is not perpendicular to the long-established Left-Right dimension. Instead, the Greens are closer to the old Left on key issues, while the Republikaner are closer to the Right ...(but) the Postmaterialist Left appeals primarily to a middle-class constituency and is only faintly interested in the classic program of the left. For example, Postmaterialists are not necessarily more favourable to state ownership than are Materialists.”

How does this theory apply to Australia? The results in Charnock (1999), showing the importance of attitudes to immigration in determining the vote for ONP at the 1998 federal election, suggest the possibility of an Inglehart-style dimension with ONP at one end and the Australian Democrats or Greens at the other. McAllister and Bean (2000) find that support for ONP was associated with discontent with immigration more than with economic concerns. Denmark and Bowler (1999: 181) suggest the concerns with race and immigration of voters for ONP and New Zealand First, while different to the non-material concerns central to Inglehart’s ideas, “must be seen as representing a qualitatively different attitudinal dimension from the sorts of pocketbook issues over which the centrist parties primarily compete”. Similarly, the analysis in Charnock (2001) demonstrating the impact of national identity on voting at the 1999 Republic referendum has some bearing on this question.

It therefore seems clear that we are justified in proposing a schema of the nature of Figure 1, based upon similar diagrams for France and Germany in Inglehart (1997):

Figure 1
Idealized Inglehart-style diagram possibly representing Australian electorate



In the Australian context, empirical research on the relationship between postmodernization and voting has been largely confined to discussion of the role of postmaterialism (an important, but not necessarily the only, component of postmodernization) in voting behaviour. Nevertheless, some advance in understanding of the dimensionality of Australian political choices is beginning to develop.

Weakliem and Western (1999) examine the relationship between occupational class and House of Representatives vote as reported in Gallup polls pooled over the period 1943-96 and suggest a traditional ALP-DLP-Liberal (manual-business) dimension can be contrasted with a new dimension with the Greens and Democrats at one extension, associated with non manual workers and professionals. However, this approach can only pick up dimensionality based on occupation, not the attitudes and values at the heart of the postmodernization thesis; further, it is hampered by not having a logical candidate for the other end of the postmodern scale from the Greens.

Jackman (1998) examines dimensionality of attitudes based on the 1996 Australian Election Study and considers a two-dimensional attitude space, with attitudes to unions representing a traditional left-right dimension and attitudes to race representing a cross cutting dimension. He finds attitudes on these dimensions are correlated: anti-union

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attitudes are associated with racially conservative attitudes, although this is more so with candidates than the electorate, who see no contradiction in “describing themselves as left-of-centre but still offering relatively conservative opinions on government assistance for Aborigines or levels of immigration.” (Jackman 1998: 182)

However, since he was mainly concerned with attitudes to race, in particular the relationship between elite and electorate opinion and the temptation to ‘play the race card’, he does not directly address the question of whether the emergence of the race dimension indicates a realignment of political discourse along the lines suggested by Figure 1.

Several authors have looked directly at the question of the emergence of postmaterialism in Australian politics. Using data from the 1990 Australian Election Study (McAllister et al 1990), Gow (1990: 60) argues that “by and large, there is no regular pattern of differences between the two polar groups [materialists and postmaterialists]”, although some of the data analysis he presents does show that postmaterialists were much more likely to vote for the Australian Democrats than were materialists.

Blount (1998) criticises aspects of the analytical approach adopted by Gow and argues that there is actually a postmaterialist effect, which manifests itself in the Senate vote for minor parties. However, Blount himself uses questionable statistical techniques, relying upon an arbitrary continuous scale for vote as response, with minor parties (0.0) scored to the left of Labor (0.5) and Coalition (1.0). While this allows some differentiation between Liberal and minor party voters, the scale is unjustified and not validated: and in fact implicitly assumes a one dimensional continuum in Australian politics, one of the key developments to be tested in any consideration of the rise of postmaterialism and postmodern politics. A better method is multinomial logistic regression, as used by Charnock (1999) and Denmark and Bowler (1999), and later in this paper.

Western and Tranter (2000) also use multinomial logistic regression to examine the link between postmaterialism, economic perceptions and voting behaviour. They confirm that

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“Australian political parties cannot easily be arrayed on one single unidimensional continuum” and find that postmaterialists vote disproportionately for both the Australian Democrats and Greens in both the House and Senate, and (perhaps more surprisingly) also (in 1998) for One Nation, at the expense of the Liberal, Labor and National parties: “Value orientations distinguish minor party voters from major party voters, but they do not distinguish Coalition voters from Labor Party voters ... economic evaluations seem particularly important for distinguishing between voters for the coalition and Labor voters” (Western and Tranter 2000: 8).

In what follows, we will relate our work to some of the previous Australian research mentioned above by beginning with an examination of the relationships between voting and measures of postmaterialism, but will later extend our analysis to include a broader consideration of postmodern politics. To do so, it will be necessary to examine a range of attitudes held by voters, and consider voting patterns for minor as well as major parties. Rather than focusing on ‘economic voting’ and economic evaluations (as do Blount, Gow, and Western and Tranter), we will follow the Inglehart and Kitschelt approach which draws on Left-Right economic ideology as the basis for the traditional political dimension. We will also be looking at a broader conception of the new “postmodern” dimension of politics than that measured just by postmaterialism. This will help us to get a more nuanced assessment of differences between the minor parties in particular.

Data and measures

Since the 1998 Federal election was the first in which ONP ran candidates, analyzing data from that election provides an excellent opportunity to test the idealised schema outlined in Figure 1. Consequently, our primary source of data is the 1998 Australian Election Study (Gow et al. 1999)².

A question of potential importance is whether to study vote in the House of Representatives or in the Senate, or even possibly party identification. We follow Blount

(1998) in looking to the Senate to exhibit evidence of the postmodernization of politics. In part, this is because the voting system in the Senate is more ‘minor party-friendly’ because of its more proportional outcomes, but a further reason for examining Senate vote is the greater consistency in choice offered to voters. In the House, voters in each of the electoral divisions (of which there are usually just under 150) face differing choices, with (apart from the possible importance of electorate-specific issues and personalities) not all parties offering candidates in every contest. In particular, it becomes impossible to separately analyse voters for the National and Liberal parties: in view of the way in which One Nation apparently obtained much of its support in National areas, this is an important deficiency for 1998 in particular³.

Economic (Left-Right) ideology

Inglehart’s argument (and, of course, many other authors’) suggests the creation of a traditional left-right cleavage around issues such as state ownership. With the questions available in the AES98, and in view of the degree of attitude instability shown by Johnston and Pattie (2000), we decided to form an index based both on individual self-placement on a left-right scale and also on responses to some relevant individual questions, specifically:

D13SOCEC	Australia better off with a socialist economy
D13EQUAL	Income and wealth should be redistributed
D13TUPOW	Trade unions have too much power
D13STRCT	Stricter laws to regulate trade unions
E1	Choice between taxes and social services
B10OWN	Own left-right position

The index was scaled to have a range of values from 0 to 1, with 0 indicating extreme left-wing and 1 indicating extreme right-wing.

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Postmaterialism

Arguments over the validity, reliability, theoretical content and probable causality of postmaterialism abound (see, for example, Bean and Papadakis 1994), and measuring and interpreting postmaterialism are topics of some controversy in the political science literature (for example, see the recent debate in the *American Political Science Review* (Clarke et al 1999; Davis and Davenport 1999; Inglehart and Abramson 1999)). There are two standard measures (see the appendix for details). The first (which was the earliest one used) is based on a single ranking exercise, with four national aims (two materialist and two postmaterialist) from which to select. The second is based on three such questions, making a total battery of twelve items. The four-item battery results in classifications of survey respondents as “materialist”, “postmaterialist”, or “mixed”. The standard way of aggregating this figure by group (party, country, etc) is to cite the difference between the percentage of postmaterialists and the percentage of materialists (e.g. Inglehart 1997: 136). As outlined in the appendix, the twelve-item battery results in a score ranging from zero (completely materialist) to five (completely postmaterialist) (Inglehart 1997: 130).

Much of the postmaterialism measurement controversy stems from the choice of rival aims that are offered in the four-item battery. These are:

- maintaining order in the nation;
- giving people more say in important government decisions;
- fighting rising prices;
- protecting freedom of speech.

Warwick (1998) argues that the four-item measure is actually revealing a ‘pro-democracy’ orientation. Several critics have also argued that ‘postmaterialism’ on this measure reflects the economic circumstances that obtain at the time of the interview, rather than economic stability at the time of upbringing (as Inglehart proposes). Clarke et al (1999) show how, within the measure based on the four items, “substituting an

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unemployment statement for the standard inflation statement in the battery has major consequences for the classification of respondents as materialist or postmaterialist” (page 637) and that the four-item measure is strongly dependent on economic conditions. They make the cogent criticism that “When inflation is not a salient economic problem, respondents eschew the rising prices item but are forced by the format to choose one of the remaining three, none of which deals with other economic concerns they may have. Respondents who do not select the prices item have a zero probability of being classified as materialist.” (page 638)

In view of these difficulties with the four-item scale, it is unfortunate that only the four-item battery was asked in the 1998 AES, the only available data (currently) that include votes for ONP. As we show later, this leads to some surprising results about ONP voters.

Postmodernism

In attempting to explain an apparently anomalous high probability of being post-materialist for ONP supporters at the 1998 House of Representatives election, Denmark and Bowler (1999) suggest that national identity is still a non-materialist concern, although it is not among Inglehart’s materialist-postmaterialist items. As noted above, while Inglehart argues that the postmodern dimension of politics is strongly associated with the postmaterialism-materialism divide, he does also recognise that a broader consideration of postmodern politics will sometimes be necessary. The problematic nature of the four-item postmaterialism measure available in AES98 (see above) makes it even more important that we operationalise postmodernism on a more sophisticated basis than mere postmaterialism.

One way to do this is directly in terms of the issues Inglehart suggests the new, non-class based dimension is defined by: cultural conservatism, xenophobia, rights for minority or oppressed groups and the environment. Drawing on the data available in AES98 and giving specific attention to the importance of Aboriginal issues in the Australian context, we created 5 indices (see below) to measure individuals’ positions on the different areas

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identified by Inglehart. As with the left-right economic ideology index, each index was scaled to range from 0 to 1, with 1 indicating the most postmodern stance.

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PERMIS

- E2NUDSEX Nudity & sex in films and magazines
- E3 Allow euthanasia – patient has incurable disease
- E4 Allow euthanasia – patient tired of living
- E6MARIJ Decriminalise smoking of marijuana
- E17P5 Importance of traditional ideas of right and wrong

IMMIG

- F6 Number of immigrants increased
- F7P1 Immigrants increase crime
- F7P3 Immigrants take jobs from Australian born
- F5P11 Foreigners shouldn't buy land

ENV

- E14PRESN Nature one of the most precious things in life
- E14SPEND Increase spending to protect environment
- E14POLLT Stronger measures against pollution
- E15ENVIR Approve of environmental groups

AB

- E2ABLAND Aboriginal land rights
- E2ABOR Government help for Aborigines
- G14P7 Special cultural protection for Aborigines
- G14P8 Recognise aspirations of Aborigines
- G14P9 Aborigines' right to self-government

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EEO

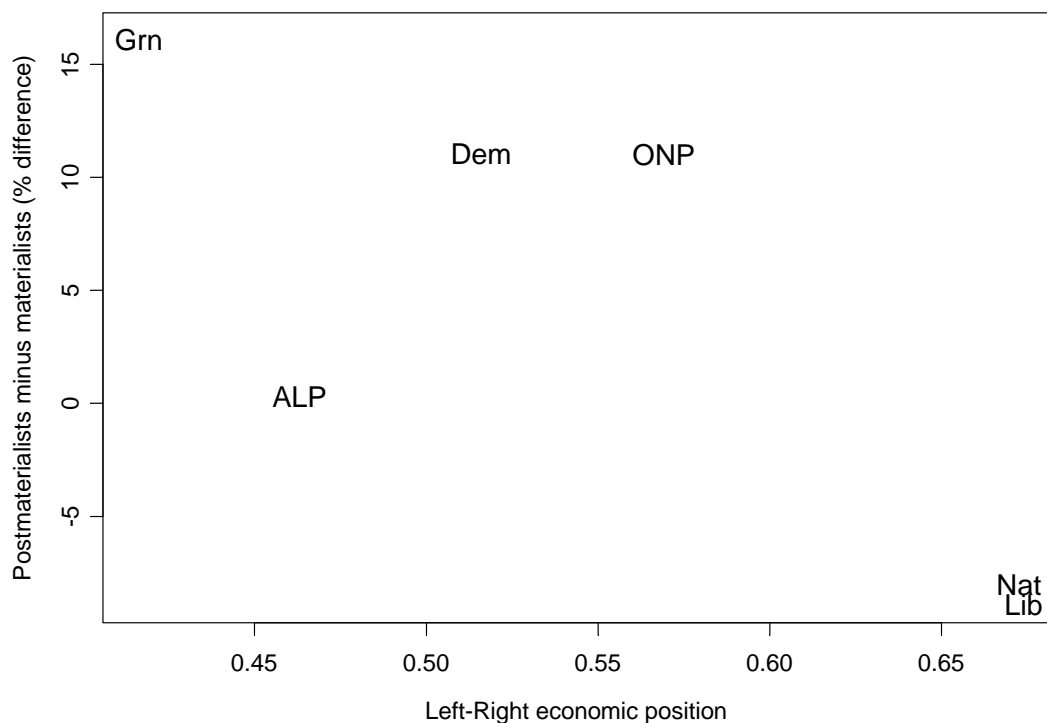
E2EQUOP	Equal opportunities for women
E6OPP	Increase business opportunities for women
E17P2	Importance of EEO in employment opportunity in hiring and promotion
E17P3	Importance of special effort to protect minorities
E17P4	Importance of equality between men and women

If Inglehart's thesis is correct, these attitudes must (at least to a reasonable degree) be able to be summarised in a single dimension. Accordingly, in addition to looking at the five indices separately, we can also calculate a single "postmodern values" index, based on all 23 questions. It then becomes an empirical question as to whether using the five separate indices adds anything of significance to our understanding of voting behaviour, when compared to using the single combined postmodern values index⁴.

Results and Discussion

We begin with an examination of the relationship in 1998 between postmaterialism (using the four-item battery included in the AES) and left-right attitudes (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
Postmaterialism and Left-Right economic positions of Senate voters 1998



This apparently shows Inglehart's thesis to fail, when he argues (Inglehart 1997: 245, 248) that the top of the postmodernist politics dimension is a postmaterialist pole, with the other end disproportionately made up of materialists. In fact, Figure 2 shows not only the Greens well to the left on traditional left-wing attitudes (in contrast to Inglehart's (1997: 246) claim that "the Postmaterialist Left appeals primarily to a middle-class constituency and is only faintly interested in the classic program of the Left") but also shows ONP voters sharing with the other minor parties a high proportion of postmaterialists minus materialists, at least compared to the major parties. On this measure, ONP is as postmaterialist as the Australian Democrats, a very counterintuitive finding.

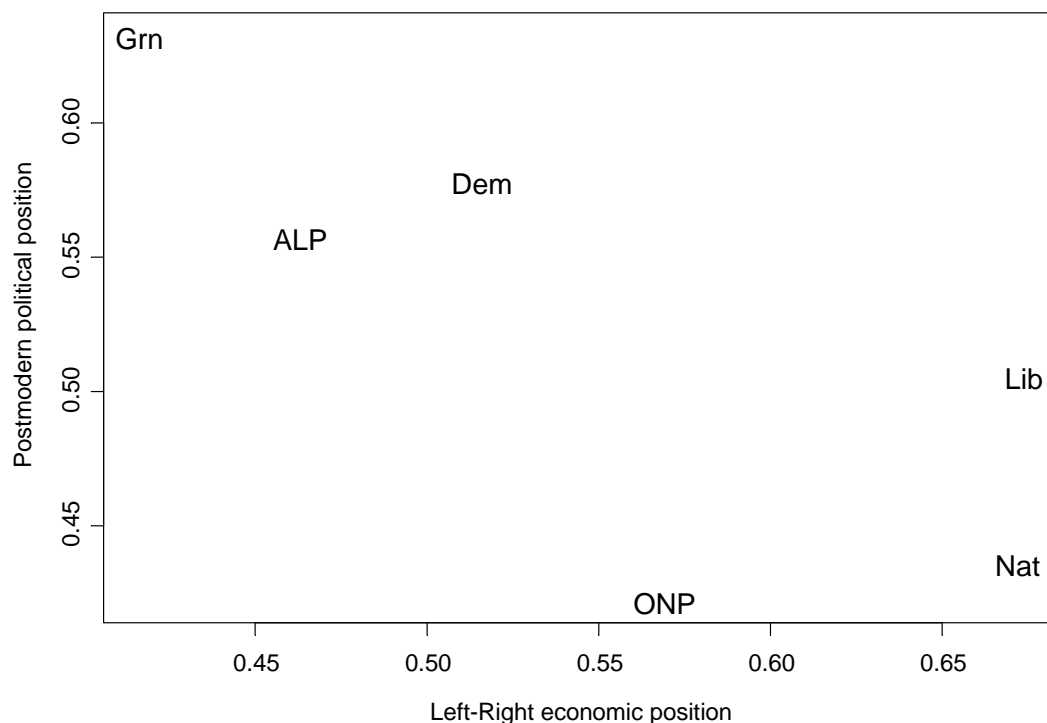
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Of course, an obvious criticism of Figure 2 as a test of the postmodernization of Australian politics lies in the flaws of the four-item measure of postmaterialism discussed above, particularly the demonstration in Warwick (1998) that this measure taps into “pro-democracy” values rather than postmaterialism. In the Australian context, it is not a surprise that ONP voters, often characterised as anti-elite, feeling left out of the Australian political and economic landscape, and opponents of “political correctness” as a form of implicit censorship of “ordinary Australians”, are inclined to believe that “giving people more say in important government decisions” and “protecting freedom of speech” are important aims for Australia. Whether this is an indicator of postmaterialism must await more data based on the twelve-item postmaterialism battery, if and when available.

In the meantime, a better test of the postmodernization thesis is one based on the postmodern values index described above, constructed from the responses to all 23 questions on issues such as the environment, immigration, aboriginals and EEO. Figure 3 relates the postmodern values of Senate voters (as measured on this scale) to their Left-Right economic values.

Figure 3

Postmodern political and Left-Right economic positions of Senate voters 1998



The position of ONP here is much more in accordance with perceptions of the party and its supporters than that indicated in Figure 2, thus suggesting that this index is considerably more appropriate than ones derived from the four-item materialism-postmaterialism battery. Comparing Figure 3 with the idealised two-dimensional space we started with in Figure 1, we can see a general congruence. The main discrepancy is the strong traditional left-wing position of Greens voters in the Senate.

In other respects, ONP can be seen to occupy a pole of a postmodern politics dimension with the Greens at the opposing extreme and the other parties at predictable positions in between. The distinction between Liberal and National voters is on postmodern, not

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Left-Right issues. Democrats supporters occupy a middle ground on economic issues but are very slightly more postmodern than the ALP. Greens voters are both the most postmodern and also the most left-wing party, and the Greens fit rather better into the mould of a left-libertarian party than Inglehart's picture of postmaterialists who have little interest in classic left redistributive agendas.

At least visually, then, it does appear from Figure 3 that picturing parties' positions in a two-dimensional space, incorporating a postmodern values dimension in addition to a more traditional left-right economic ideology dimension, helps in understanding recent Australian electoral politics. The relative positions of the parties on the two dimensions are not the same, with ONP being the least postmodern but fairly close to the centre on economic issues. However, the division between ALP and Liberal voters is very largely defined in terms of left-right economic positions.

Individual voting models

We now proceed to estimate some statistical models relating individual voting to the various indices we have mentioned, both in order to give a more precise account to match the visual impression already discussed, and also to investigate the extent to which using the five separate indices in place of the single postmodern values index gives a finer-grained picture of what differentiates voters for the various parties.

In addition to a null model (to obtain a baseline for assessing the other models), we estimated four models, one with only the left-right economic ideology index (model A1), one with the single postmodern attitudes index (model A2), one with both of these two (model B), and one with the left-right economic index and our five separate indices for the different components of postmodern politics (permissiveness, immigration, environment, aboriginal and EEO attitudes) (model C). These allow us to assess the relative importance of the economic and postmodern indices, as well as whether the five separate indices add much over the single postmodern index.

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We use multinomial logistic modeling (see, for example, Long 1997). In this form of modelling, one category of the dependent variable is set as a reference category. As above, we study Senate vote, and we make Liberal vote the reference category. Unlike in Charnock (1999) and Denmark and Bowler (1999), both of which analyse House of Representatives vote, studying Senate vote allows us to meaningfully separate Liberal from National voters, allowing us to examine differences between the two coalition partners.

Tables 1 to 5 show the results of our multinomial models. Unbracketed numbers are the estimates of the size of the effect compared to Liberal voters; bracketed numbers are the corresponding standard errors (indicating the uncertainty of our estimate). On standard interpretation and presentation of results, an estimate of an effect that is roughly twice the size of its standard error can be described as statistically significantly different from zero (i.e. significant evidence of a difference from the Liberals on this issue).

A negative effect for the “economic” variable indicates Left-wing voters are more likely to vote for that party than for the Liberals; a negative effect for the various postmodern indices indicates postmodern voters are less likely to vote for that party than for the Liberals. Effects should be interpreted as occurring once the other variables in that particular model have been controlled for. Thus, looking at the second row of Table 4 (Model B), we see that, having controlled for left-right economic ideology (on which differences between the coalition partners are statistically nonsignificant), “postmodernists” are less likely to vote for the Nationals than for the Liberals.

Table 1: Null Model for 1998 Senate vote

	Intercept
ALP	0.07 (0.06)
Nat	-2.16 (0.13)
Dem	-0.81 (0.08)
Grn	-2.59 (0.16)
ONP	-1.51 (0.10)

Residual Deviance: 4828.00 AIC: 4838.00 n: 1679

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Table 2: Model A1

	Intercept	Left-Right Economic
ALP	5.52 (0.31)	-9.54 (0.53)
Nat	-2.16 (0.63)	0.00 (0.92)
Dem	3.57 (0.34)	-7.34 (0.58)
Grn	3.63 (0.51)	-11.29 (1.05)
ONP	1.56 (0.43)	-4.93 (0.70)

Residual Deviance: 4256.00 AIC: 4276.00 n: 1679

Table 3: Model A2

	Intercept	Postmodernism
ALP	-2.28 (0.30)	4.42 (0.56)
Nat	0.89 (0.59)	-6.47 (1.29)
Dem	-4.05 (0.40)	5.99 (0.71)
Grn	-8.10 (0.85)	9.74 (1.35)
ONP	2.10 (0.46)	-7.78 (1.01)

Residual Deviance: 4524.00 AIC: 4544.00 n: 1679

Table 4: Model B

	Intercept	L-R Economic	Postmodernism
ALP	4.90 (0.53)	-9.54 (0.55)	1.18 (0.69)
Nat	1.98 (0.99)	-1.19 (0.96)	-7.09 (1.34)
Dem	0.82 (0.63)	-6.54 (0.60)	4.24 (0.81)
Grn	-0.55 (1.27)	-9.70 (1.16)	6.01 (1.53)
ONP	7.14 (0.74)	-6.43 (0.75)	-9.98 (1.09)

Residual Deviance: 4047.00 AIC: 4077.00 n: 1679

Table 5: Model C

	Intercept	Economic	PERMIS	IMMIG	ENV	AB	EEO
ALP	5.00 (0.58)	-9.49 (0.55)	0.72 (0.39)	-0.76 (0.37)	-0.33 (0.47)	0.59 (0.40)	0.86 (0.41)
Nat	2.18 (1.04)	-1.30 (0.98)	-1.92 (0.76)	-1.17 (0.72)	-1.65 (0.81)	-1.84 (0.82)	-0.87 (0.74)
Dem	0.30 (0.70)	-6.33 (0.60)	0.55 (0.46)	-0.07 (0.44)	1.70 (0.59)	1.68 (0.82)	0.60 (0.50)
Grn	-3.23 (1.61)	-8.96 (1.14)	3.62 (0.93)	-0.01 (0.91)	4.53 (1.44)	2.03 (0.99)	-0.96 (1.03)
ONP	5.41 (0.83)	-5.66 (0.77)	-1.19 (0.60)	-4.43 (0.63)	0.02 (0.66)	-2.96 (0.64)	-0.83 (0.58)

Residual Deviance: 3964.00 AIC: 4034.00 n: 1679

The initial models (A1 and A2) essentially confirm the picture of party support differentiation previously obtained from Figure 3, but they also demonstrate (by comparison of the measures of model fit with those from the null model) that the association between voting and the left-right economic ideology index is overall of considerably more significance than is that with the postmodern index (though this, also, is certainly of importance). Clearly, this left-right economic dimension continues to be primary for differentiating the ALP and Liberal parties.

Separating the postmodern index into its five sub-indices does enhance the model, although the extra improvement in model fit is overall relatively small: the addition of the single, combined postmodern index captures most of the improvement by itself. Nevertheless, there are other detailed differences between parties that are apparent when the five sub-indices are included and some of these are of considerable interest because they enable a finer-grained picture to be obtained. For example,

- Although there was a general tendency for ALP voters to be more postmodern than Liberals, they were actually significantly more anti-migrant and xenophobic than Liberal voters when the other attitudes are controlled for. As observed elsewhere (Charnock 1997), this creates something of a strategic dilemma for the ALP, because migrants (Asian, in particular) give them disproportionate support. The resulting balancing act that is required might well prove impossible to sustain without losing some voters to ONP.
- National voters can be distinguished in a detailed manner from their Liberal coalition partners, with statistically significant evidence of more conservative views with regard to permissiveness, environmental and aboriginal issues, but not on economic, migrant or EEO issues.

- Although Australian Democrats voters are overall more postmodern than Liberal voters, at the level of the separate sub-indices there are significant differences only on environmental and aboriginal issues. They are to the Right of the ALP economically and more supportive of environmental issues.
- Greens voters are distinguished from Australian Democrats voters in that they have stronger differences from the Liberals on all the issues where the Democrats differ from the Liberals, and are also significantly more permissive than all other voters. Contrary to expectations from the visual impression in Figure 3, there is no statistically significant difference between Greens and ALP voters on Left-Right economic issues once postmodern issues are controlled for.
- One Nation Party voters are more economically left-wing than Liberal and National voters (and similar to the Australian Democrats, but not as left-wing as the Greens and the ALP). They are statistically significantly different (in a negative direction) from the Liberals on immigration, aboriginal and permissiveness issues (in descending order of importance). They are differentiated from National voters by their much more strongly negative position on migrants, more left-wing economic views and (with less statistical certainty) slightly stronger conservative position on aboriginals and their quite neutral environmental stance.

Whether focusing on the separate sub-indices or on the combined index, a major conclusion from these models is that a postmodern political dimension is of importance in predicting Senate vote. Unlike Western and Tranter (2000), who found that postmaterialism can distinguish between major and minor parties but not within the two clusters, our more sophisticated measure of postmodern (not postmaterialist) politics reveals strong and obvious differences between the minor parties (Table 4, Model B). Decomposing the postmodern political dimension into five sub-components allows an

Charnock, David (2001) Is One Nation really a postmaterialist party? Exploring the relationship between postmodernization and party support in Australia, in *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association (APSA)*, Brisbane, 24-26 September, 2001.

even finer characterisation of the voters for each party, with a picture emerging that distinguishes between even closely aligned parties such as the Liberals and Nationals.

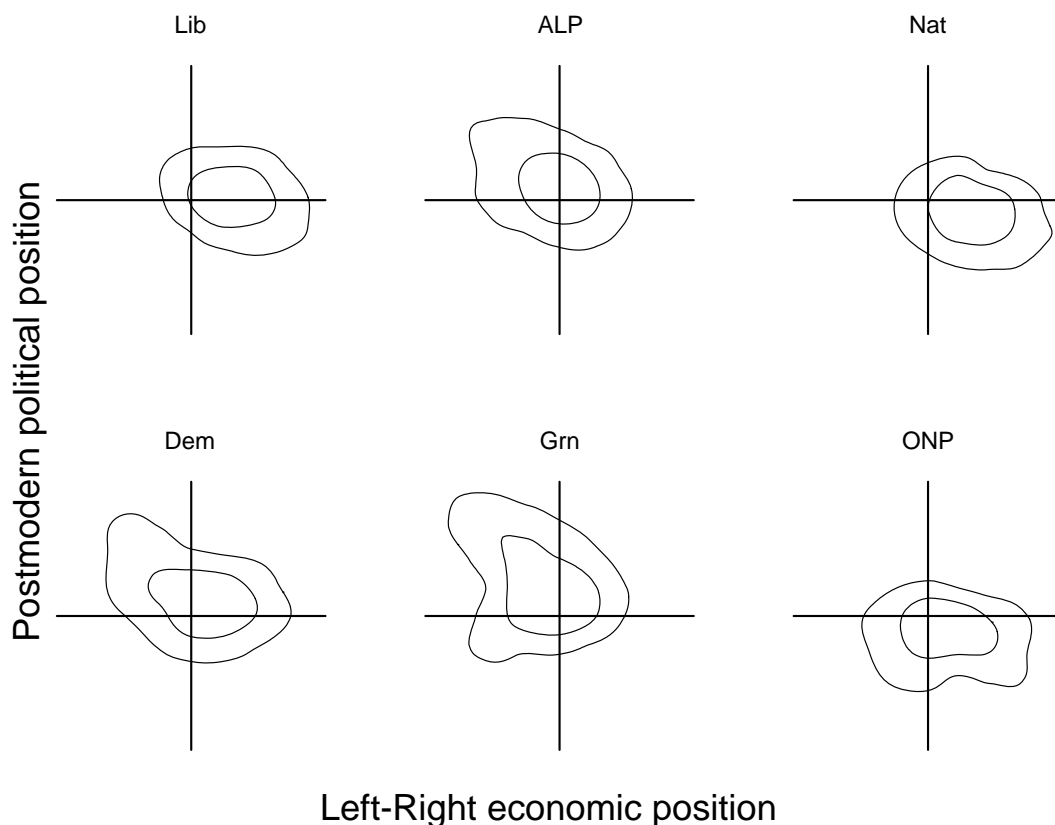
Attitudinal consistency and Distances between parties

The picture we have been able to draw up to this point is certainly very useful for differentiating between the parties, but is essentially based on average attitudinal positions. Another interesting and practically important issue is to examine how much attitudinal variation is present among the voters of each party, and how large are the average distances between the parties. To the extent that the attitudes being studied here are ones that have an impact on voting behaviour, we can use this information as a guide to how much scope there is for parties to attract voters from (or lose voters to) other parties. It will also give us a rather more precise indication of what we might describe as parties with the most “closely ideologically aligned” supporters.

Since we wish to make visual comparisons, we restrict ourselves to examining the two-dimensional space formed by left-right economic attitudes and the combined postmodern attitudes index. The inner and outer contour lines in Figure 4 below enclose 50% and 90% respectively of the estimated population voting for each party. We have inserted the axes around a central point (0.5, 0.5) in order to more readily make visual distinctions between left- and right-wing voters, and between more or less postmodern voters.

It is immediately obvious that there is a considerable degree of crossover between the supporters of the various parties, despite the degree of separation between the centres of density for each party previously indicated in Figure 3. This is, of course, important because it gives rise to potential vote switching between parties.

Figure 4
Intra-party Variations in Postmodern political and Left-Right economic
Position of Senate voters 1998



Note: inner lines enclose 50% and outer lines 90% of the estimated voting population for each party

The general pattern is for the central 50% of voters for all parties to have quite coherent attitudes, but for this to be less so for remaining voters (much less so for Democrats and Greens voters especially). The most internal consistency in attitudinal location actually occurs among the central 50% of National voters and Table 6 shows how much larger than this are the remaining areas (e.g. the area required to incorporate 50% of Greens voters is 1.77 times as large as needed to incorporate 50% of National voters, and to

incorporate 90% of ALP voters requires 4.12 times as large an area as needed for 50% of National voters):

Table 6
Areas taken up by 50% and 90% contours (relative to Nationals central 50%)

	Liberal	ALP	National	Democrats	Greens	One Nation
Area 50%	1.04	1.11	1.00	1.40	1.77	1.11
Area 90%	3.34	4.12	3.09	4.64	5.30	3.74

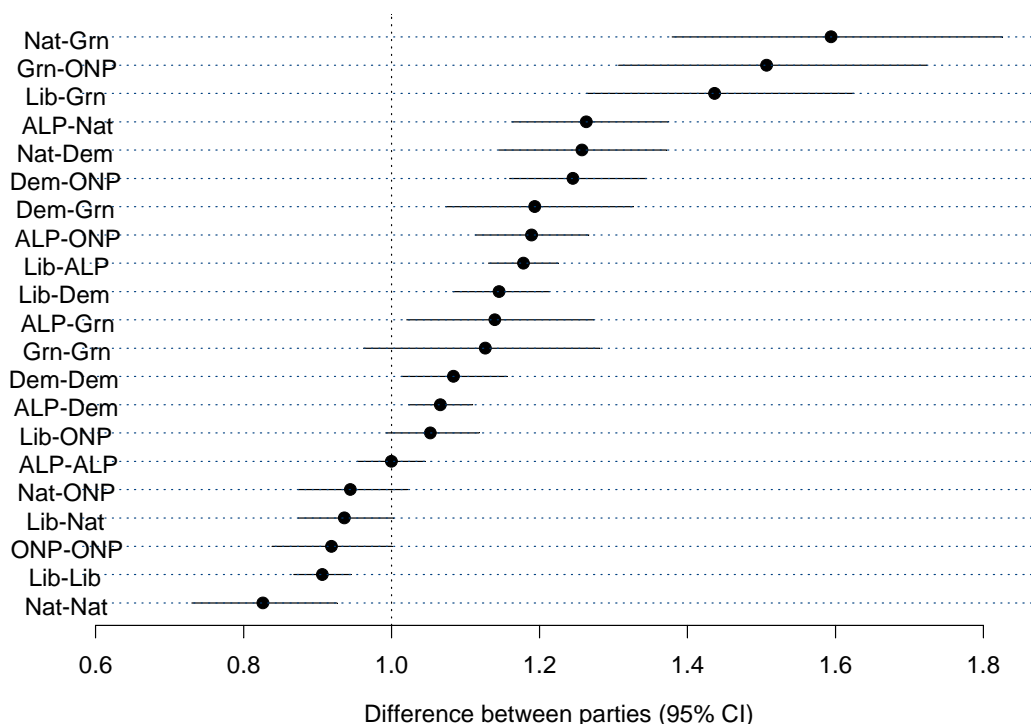
The most internally consistent attitudes were held by voters for the two coalition parties, while voters for the Greens and Democrats clearly did not have attitudes that were as consistent as those of other parties. One especially interesting finding here is that the attitudes of ONP voters seem much more consistent than the Greens and Democrats and were, in fact, more consistent than those of ALP voters. Again, to the extent that these attitudes are significant in determining voting behaviour, the position of the ALP seems weaker than the Liberals, though the extent of the intra-party variations for most of the parties is perhaps surprisingly large.

For any two individuals in the AES98 sample, it is possible to calculate the distance between them in this two-dimensional (left-right economic and postmodernism) space, and we can use this as the basis for giving another measure of attitudinal consistency within parties and also of distances between parties.

Figure 5 shows the mean distances between individuals voting for one party and individuals voting for another party. To make interpretation simpler, these mean distances are standardised to make the ALP-ALP within-group mean distance equal to one. The horizontal lines in Figure 5 show 95% confidence intervals that give some idea of the statistical uncertainty of any interpretation.

Figure 5

Mean distance between individuals in different Senate vote groupings 1998



Note: the central dots are the estimated mean distances between groupings and the horizontal lines show 95% confidence intervals for the mean distances (based on 2000 bootstrap repetitions)

Comparison of the intra-party average distances shown in Figure 5 confirms the visual impression obtained earlier from Figure 4 that voters for the more right-wing parties (Liberals, Nationals and ONP) are more ideologically coherent than those voting for the other parties (ALP, Democrats, Greens). Considering its very recent establishment, this is probably most surprising in the case of ONP voters, and might well provide a secure core of voters for the party.

A number of other interesting features can also be found in Figure 5. The values of Liberal and National voters are the closest of any inter-party pair (a good foundation for a Coalition!), but the difference is not significantly different from that between ONP and National voters. The ALP-Democrats difference is the smallest of all the more left-wing

Charnock, David (2001) Is One Nation really a postmaterialist party? Exploring the relationship between postmodernization and party support in Australia, in *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association (APSA)*, Brisbane, 24-26 September, 2001.

party comparisons, but it is not significantly different from the ALP-Green difference. The biggest distances all involve economically right-wing parties and the Greens (Greens-ONP, Greens-Nationals and Greens-Liberal): an interesting indicator that in this ideological space, it is the Green Party and not the ONP that is the real outsider in Australian politics. Green voters are both the most left-wing and the most postmodern; on the other hand, while ONP voters are the least postmodern, they are relatively central on left-right economic issues.

Naturally, one important practical question is that of which party may find its support base eroded by ONP. Charnock (1999) found that on socio-demographic variables, the ONP support base had many similarities to that of the ALP. However, on the basis of values, what we can see from the position of ONP is that it is placed to potentially attract voters from both the ALP and the coalition: from the Nationals and Liberals, some less postmodern voters who are more centrally located on economic issues, and also some of the less postmodern and more right-wing ALP voters (of which Figure 4 shows there are quite a lot).

Conclusion

The analyses presented here clearly show that a single left-right economic dimension is insufficient to adequately describe voter differences between Australian parties, although it remains the principal aspect dividing ALP from Liberal party voters. An additional dimension is required in order to properly understand the location of other parties. Since they have had most exposure and the longest history of empirical investigation internationally, we began by considering whether the ideas about social and political change suggested in Inglehart's notions based on postmaterialism would be enough to understand the nature of this extra dimension. It immediately became clear that the four-item postmaterialism measure available in the AES98 was inadequate because of its quite counterintuitive placement of ONP as one of the most postmaterialist of parties, when all other evidence suggests differently.

Charnock, David (2001) Is One Nation really a postmaterialist party? Exploring the relationship between postmodernization and party support in Australia, in *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association (APSA)*, Brisbane, 24-26 September, 2001.

We therefore developed a much broader index of postmodern values (formed from 23 survey items) and investigated its usefulness. We discovered that a two-dimensional space with traditional left-right economic views on one axis and postmodern political issues on the other (somewhat in the style of Inglehart's more recent writing) was adequate as a broad brush measure to describe differences between Australian political parties at the 1998 federal election. The positioning of political parties in this space, as judged by the attitudes of their voters in the Senate, is reasonably close to that predicted by Inglehart's recent theories, except for the more extreme left-wing position of the Greens on the traditional left-right economic axis.

Although adding the single combined postmodern index was, by itself, enough to capture most of the gain in model fit, we did also find that breaking it down into its subcomponents offered something of value. At the individual level, differing attitudes to immigration, aboriginals, social conservatism and the environment are all statistically significant predictors of Senate vote. Their main use is in giving a more detailed picture of differentiation, particularly between the minor parties. Multinomial logistic models show that these separate components are useful predictors in some cases (such as immigration for One Nation and the environment for the Greens and Democrats) but that, in contradiction to what we might have concluded from the simpler two-dimensional depiction of attitudinal space, low xenophobia is not a good predictor of Greens voting nor low environmental concern a good predictor of ONP voting, when compared to a Liberal party baseline. Thus even a two-dimensional picture of Australian politics, while a very useful broad brush and a big improvement on a narrower single-dimensional focus on left-right economic ideology, can be improved on. For a fuller picture of the divergent values of the voters for parties in Australian electoral politics, we seem to require up to six dimensions.

Another important practical aspect of our research was to explore the internal coherence of the attitudes held by the voters for the various parties, and to investigate the extent of overlaps between parties, because such overlaps provide ready scope for switching of

Charnock, David (2001) Is One Nation really a postmaterialist party? Exploring the relationship between postmodernization and party support in Australia, in *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association (APSA)*, Brisbane, 24-26 September, 2001.

voters between parties. We found that the greatest degree of internal coherence was among the three more right-wing parties, including ONP, thus giving them a potentially firmer base of support. In studying the distances between supporters of different parties we were able to make some interesting observations, including an intuitive clustering of voters into two camps: one more left-wing and postmodern (ALP, Democrats and Greens), and the other more right-wing and less postmodern (Liberal, National and ONP).

Despite this, however, there is a good deal of intra-party variation in attitudes and, because of this spread of attitudes and the degree of overlap we found, ONP are apparently well positioned in this two-dimensional space to gain votes both from the coalition parties and from the ALP. The Greens, in contrast, are located as the most extreme party on both dimensions, seemingly offering them less scope.

Ending on a note of slight caution, the entry of ONP for the first time at the 1998 election injected a new component into the party system, one which we showed the simple postmaterialism measure available in AES98 does not deal with at all adequately. It is possible that the more complex measure of postmaterialism based on the twelve-item battery would offer more plausible interpretations, but that can only be known if such data become available in future. Our findings using the broader postmodernism index are necessarily based on an examination of a single election only and, although they seem reasonable, our conclusions would obviously be more securely established if they are found to be stable by being replicated at future elections.

Appendix

One of Inglehart's two materialism-postmaterialism indices (used in the earliest research) is based on a four-item battery; the other index is based on a twelve-item battery, which consists of 3 separate ranking exercises, the second of which is effectively the four-item battery (Inglehart 1997: 355). Each of the ranking exercises is prefaced with the question "There is a lot of talk these days about what the aims of this country should be for the next ten years. On this card are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority. Would you please say which one of these you, yourself, consider the most important? And which would be the next most important?"

The options for the first question are: "maintaining a high level of economic growth; making sure that this country has strong defence forces; seeing that people have more to say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities; trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful".

The options for the second question (which is effectively the four-item battery) are: "maintaining order in the nation; giving people more say in important government decisions; fighting rising prices; protecting freedom of speech".

The options in the third question are: "having a stable economy; progress towards a less impersonal and more humane society; the fight against crime; progress towards a society in which ideas count more than money".

From the twelve-item battery, a postmaterialism index is created from the number of the six options chosen which are postmaterialist rather than materialist – the distinction should be fairly obvious to the reader, except in the case of "trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful", which Inglehart does not include on the side of postmaterialism because of (for him, disappointing, since it was designed to measure an element of postmaterialism) low correlation with the other postmaterialist options, apparently tapping instead into fears about urban crime. Consequently, Inglehart does not include this item in his postmaterialist index, which thus ranges from zero (completely materialist) to five (chose all the available postmaterialist options).

Charnock, David (2001) Is One Nation really a postmaterialist party? Exploring the relationship between postmodernization and party support in Australia, in *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association (APSA)*, Brisbane, 24-26 September, 2001.

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Notes

1. For example, more than 40 parties (not counting state branches of the ALP, Liberals and Nationals separately) were officially registered at the 1998 federal election.
2. Computing was done with S-Plus and SPSS. Details are available on request.
3. Although the Liberals and Nationals ran joint tickets in some states, AES respondents in those states were able to (and did) identify themselves as having voted for the separate parties.
We did replicate some analyses using House of Representatives vote and found that many of the main features were similar to those found using Senate vote, though there are differences of detail and, as mentioned, Liberals and Nationals cannot reliably be separately identified.
4. Reliability coefficients for the various indices were as follows: Left-Right Economic (0.70); Combined Postmodern (0.80); PERMIS (0.52); IMMIG (0.76); ENV (0.80); AB (0.82); EEO (0.71). From the items available in the AES we were unable to find a more satisfactory scale to measure cultural conservatism than PERMIS.