

## Australasian Political Studies Association Annual Conference 25 -27 September 2006



Hosted by the Politics Discipline  
School of Economics, Politics & Tourism  
University of Newcastle

The APSA Conference will be in the city of Newcastle



The venue will be City Hall



The Co-convenors for the 2006 Conference are:

Dr Jim Jose  
Dr John Tate  
Dr Ben Goldsmith

**Conference Postal Address:**

APSA 2006 Conference  
c/o Discipline of Politics  
School of Economics, Politics & Tourism  
University of Newcastle  
Callaghan  
NSW 2308

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For all conference administration issues contact Kate Tabernacle

For all conference academic issues contact Jim Jose

For all conference paper issues contact the relevant Stream Coordinator or Jim Jose

Conference Details

Conference Program

Abstracts and Papers

Conference Registration

Conference Dinner

Accommodation

Conference Streams and Call for Papers

Submission Guidelines

Travel Information and Maps

Sunday Postgraduate Workshop

APSA Postgraduate Travel Awards – NOW CLOSED

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**CRICOS Code:** 00109J **Last modified:** Monday, 28th August 2006 **Feedback:** Your Comments

APSA Conference  
Newcastle 2006

Call for Papers

Proposals are invited for papers (5000 to 8000 words) for presentation at the APSA Conference to be held at City Hall in Newcastle, NSW.

Eight major streams have been proposed:

- Australian and New Zealand Politics  
Convenor: Jim Jose
- Feminism and Gender Politics  
Convenor: Alison Convery
- Indigenous Politics  
Convenor: John Tate
- International Relations  
Convenor: Ben Goldsmith
- International Political Economy/Comparative Politics  
Convenor: James Juniper
- Media and Popular Culture  
Convenor: Tod Moore
- Political and Social Theory  
Convenor: John Tate
- Public Policy  
Convenor: Michael Howard

Specialist Panels/Sessions

- J.S. Mill in the 21st Century (To be convened by Helen Pringle, UNSW and Paul Corcoran, Uni of Adelaide)
- Looking Back at Levinas (To be convened by Helen Pringle, UNSW)
- Teaching Politics (To be convened by Rebecca Albury, Uni of Wollongong)
- Youth and Politics (To be convened by Ariadne Vromen, Uni of Sydney)
- Federalism and Regionalism (To be convened by A.J. Brown, ANU and Robyn Hollander, Griffith Uni)
- Evaluating Political Science Research (To be convened by Claire Donovan, ANU)
- Elections & the Internet: A Comparative Perspective (To be convened by Richard Davis, Brigham Young Uni, USA)
- Global Governance as Revolution from Above or from Below? (To be convened by Andre Broome, ANU)

Deadlines for Abstracts and Papers

**Abstracts** (no more than 300 words) for all papers are due on or before **2 June 2006**. Please submit your abstract as an attachment via email (preferably as a Word document saved as RTF) to the relevant Stream co-ordinator.

**Papers submitted for refereeing** are due on or before **6 July 2006**. Please submit your paper for refereeing to the relevant Stream Co-ordinator as an attachment via email (preferably as a Word document saved as RTF).

Papers should be from 5000 to 8000 words in length. Formatting details for papers are available at [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/ept/politics/apsa/submission\\_guidelines.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/ept/politics/apsa/submission_guidelines.html).

**Please note that PowerPoint and similar electronic facilities will not normally be available. Each room will be equipped with an overhead projector, screen and whiteboard. If your presentation requirements absolutely necessitate PowerPoint or other audio-visual aids then please discuss this with the relevant Stream Advisor.**

## Submission Guidelines

**Abstracts:** (no more than 300 words) for all papers are due on or before **2 June 2006**. Please include the following information with the Abstract:

- Paper-giver(s)' name(s)
- Institutional affiliation (if any)
- Relevant stream
- E-mail address (if applicable) or postal address

The abstract and other information should be sent as an attachment saved either as Word or RTF document. In the body of the email (or letter) please specify whether you intend to submit the paper for refereeing (but not on the attached abstract), so that prospective referees can be organised.

Paper-givers who do not have access to e-mail should fax their Abstract to 61 2 49216919. Please mark the fax: Attention Ms Kate Tabernacle, APSA 2006 Abstract.

## Paper Submission

**Non-Refereed Papers:** Please bring at least 25 copies of the paper to the Conference.

**Refereed papers:** These will be anonymously, externally, peer refereed in accordance with DEST guidelines and papers that are accepted will be published on the Conference website. Refereed papers must be received on or before **Thursday 6 July 2006**.

Please specify the relevant stream in your email and covering note. Any identification of authors should be confined to a separate title page.

Papers should be between 5,000-8,000 words in length and should conform to the referencing format specified in the Australian Journal of Political Science Style Guide. Footnotes or Endnotes should be kept to a minimum. Endnotes should appear before the Bibliography.

**Please note that PowerPoint and similar electronic facilities will not normally be available. Each room will be equipped with an overhead projector, screen and whiteboard. If your presentation requirements absolutely necessitate PowerPoint or other audio-visual aids then please discuss this with the relevant Stream Advisor.**

### Margins:

- Left hand margin 3 cm
- Right hand margin 3 cm
- Top margin 2 cm
- Bottom margin 2 cm
- All body text fully justified

### Font:

- Times New Roman or Arial, or Helvetica
- 12 point for body of paper
- 10 point for footnotes/endnotes

### Title page:

**Full Paper Title (20 point, bold)**

Author (16 point)

(include first name and title eg Dr, Professor etc)  
School/Department, (14 point)  
Organisation/institution (14 Point)

Refereed paper presented to the  
Australasian Political Studies Association conference  
University of Newcastle  
25-27 September 2006

**Second Page of Paper:** Include title (Centred, 14 point font), Abstract (Centred, fully justified, 10 point font), Text of paper, fully justified, should begin below the Abstract. First line of first paragraphs of each new section should not be indented.

**Do not include your name in any headers or footers.**

**Footnotes/Endnotes:** Same font type as body of paper, 10 point, and numbered consecutively.

**Spelling and Grammar:** Please use the Spell checker of your word processing program.

Consult the Australian Journal of Political Science Style Guide and/or the relevant Stream Coordinator.

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# APSA Conference 2006 Registration

The registration form is available in Word or PDF. You cannot register online as we do not have encrypted facilities. To access the registration form click on [Conference Registration Form \(Word\)](#) or [Conference Registration Form \(PDF\)](#), print off the form, fill it in and fax/mail it to Ms Kate Tabernacle, Conference Administrator.

Fax: 61 2 49216919, marked Att Ms Kate Tabernacle

Mail:

APSA Conference 2006

Ms Kate Tabernacle

School of Economics, Politics & Tourism

University of Newcastle

CALLAGHAN

NSW 2308

All registered delegates will be issued with a name tag when collecting their conference pack. Please ensure that your name tag is visible at all times to enable entrance to all sessions and special events.

## Registration Fees for the Full Conference:

|                           | Earlybird | Full Rate |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| APSA members              | \$190     | \$250     |
| Non-members               | \$295     | \$355     |
| APSA postgraduate members | \$40      | \$70      |
| Postgraduate non-members  | \$85      | \$110     |

- Earlybird rate applies on or before the 14th of July.
- Full rate applies on or after the 15th of July.

## Single Day Registration Fees:

|                           | Full Rate |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| APSA members              | \$105     |
| Non-members               | \$160     |
| APSA postgraduate members | \$50      |
| Postgraduate non-members  | \$65      |

- Fees for both full and day registrations are inclusive of GST. Please retain a copy of your registration form for your own receipting purposes.
- Day registration does not include entry to the Welcome Reception or the Conference Dinner.

## Conference Dinner

The Conference Dinner will be held at the Tamburlaine Members' Lodge at the Tamburlaine Winery in the Hunter Valley on 26 September. All registered delegates are welcome to attend.

Please note that there will be an upper limit to the number of places (approximately 210) for the conference dinner. Register early to avoid disappointment. It may not be possible to register for the Conference Dinner at the last minute at the Conference.

|                        | Price |
|------------------------|-------|
| Conference delegates   | \$80  |
| Postgraduate delegates | \$55  |

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## APSA Conference Newcastle 2006

### Abstracts and Refereed\* Papers

Refereed papers are available as full text – except where indicated. For unrefereed papers only the abstract is available

Australian, New Zealand & Indigenous Politics

Feminism and Gender Politics

International Relations

International Political Economy/Comparative Politics

Media and Popular Culture

Political and Social Theory

Public Policy

### Panels

**\*Please note:** Copyright remains with the authors. All papers were refereed in line with the requirements of the Australian government's Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). Each paper submitted for refereeing was subject to blind review (ie the identity of the author(s) was not made known to the referee). Written comments were requested from each referee for each paper and forwarded to the author for revisions, if required.

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**Australian, New Zealand & Indigenous Politics**

Refereed papers are available as full text. For unrefereed papers only the abstract is available.

Alport, Kate & Hill, Lisa

Alvey, John & Ryan, Neal

Archer, Jeff

Beard, Michael & van Onselen, Peter

Beer, Chris

Brennan, Deborah

Brent, Peter (The Development of Centralised Australian Electoral Institutions)

Brent, Peter (Opinion Pollsters and Preferences)

Broome, Andre

Carroll, Peter

Catt, Helena

De Costa, Ravi

Doran, Christopher (Australian Constitution, Personhood & Democracy)

Eonomou, Nick

Edwards, Kathy

Erdos, David

Evans, Glynn, MacIntyre, Clem & McCarthy, Greg

van Egmond, Marcel, O'Flaherty, Martin & Tranter, Bruce

Ghazarian, Zareh

Gillon, Grant

Goot, Murray

Gunstone, Andrew

Hill, Lisa & Young, Sally

Howlett, Catherine

Johnson, Carol

Kelly, Norm

Larkin, Phil

McCarthy, Greg

Maddison, Sara

Melleuish, Greg

Moore, Tod

Mughan, Anthony

van Onselen, Peter

O'Sullivan, Dominic

O'Sullivan, Siobhan

Payne, Alicia & Payne, Trish

Payne, Trish

Pearse, Hilary

Quirk, Victor

Robinson, Geoff

Ross, Paul

Sawer, Marian

Scott, Andrew

Senior, Philip

Staples, Joan

Strauss, Jonathon

Walter, James

Warhurst, John

Williams, Harry

Williams, Paul

Younane, Stephanie

# Monday 25 September APSA Conference

| REGISTRATION CITY HALL |                                                                               |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0800-0900              | Concert Hall 1                                                                | Waratah                                                                                                       | Mulibinba                                                                                               | Cummings                                                                                                    | Hunter                                                                                                          | Newcastle Room                                                                                          |
| Rooms                  |                                                                               |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                 | Playhouse<br>(Civic Theatre)                                                                            |
| Streams                | International Relations                                                       | Media                                                                                                         | Aust & NZ Politics I                                                                                    | Aust & NZ Politics 2                                                                                        | Public Policy                                                                                                   | Political Theory                                                                                        |
| 0900-1030              | Ben Goldsmith<br>(Chair)<br>T. Davis & M. Moran<br>A. Lockyer<br>J. Manicom   | Tod Moore<br>(Chair)<br>G. Craig<br>T. Payne<br>P. Senior                                                     | Jim Jose<br>(Chair)<br>C. Johnson<br>J. Strauss<br>J. Staples                                           | Robert Mackie<br>(Chair)<br>P. Brent (Pollsters)<br>H. Catt<br>N. Kelly                                     | Michael Howard<br>(Chair)<br>P. Carroll (Policy Transfer Trends)<br>R Eccleston<br>S. Young                     | John Tate<br>(Chair)<br>G. Crowder<br>V. Spencer                                                        |
|                        |                                                                               |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                 | AJ Brown<br>(Chair)<br>A. Fenna<br>R. Hollander;<br>AJ Brown                                            |
| 1030-1100              | MORNING TEA (Banquet Hall)                                                    |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1100-1230              | Peter Searle<br>(Chair)<br>S. Brown<br>B. Goldsmith & Y. Horiuchi             | Tod Moore<br>(Chair)<br>G. Croucher<br>G. McCarthy<br>S. Younane                                              | Alison Convery<br>(Chair)<br>C. Beer<br>J. Craik<br>M. Sawyer                                           | John Gow<br>(Chair)<br>N. Economidou<br>K. Edwards<br>L. Hill & S. Young                                    | (Chair)<br>J. Francis<br>L. Botterill<br>P. Carroll (Copying by Agreement)                                      | John Tate<br>(Chair)<br>M. Beacroft<br>M. Cominos<br>J. Jose                                            |
|                        |                                                                               |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             | Ben Sheehy<br>(Chair)<br>N. Bassil<br>Xu Yi-Chong<br>J. Juniper (Money, Semiotics & Social Analysis)            | J. Bellamy<br>(Chair)<br>B. Benson<br>A. Kay<br>D. Bruckhorst & I. Reeve<br>Session ends at 1.00pm      |
| 1230-1400              | LUNCH                                                                         |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1400-1530              | Jackson Maogoto<br>(Chair)<br>P. Kimunguyi<br>P. Sales<br>T. Takamine         | Fem Pol<br>(Chair)<br>Alison Convery<br>(Chair)<br>D. Brennan<br>L. Chappell & K. Tegtssoonian<br>M. Crawford | Victor Quirk<br>(Chair)<br>A. Mughan<br>P van Onselen<br>H. Pearse                                      | Carol Johnson<br>(Chair)<br>M. Goot<br>G. Robinson<br>A. Scott                                              | Greg McCarthy<br>(Chair)<br>M. Haward & J. Vince<br>N. Hall & R. Taplin<br>J. Jenkins<br>M. McKenzie & M. Howes | Inta Allegritti<br>(Chair)<br>J. Juniper ( <i>Homo Sacer</i> and Biopower)<br>A. Little                 |
|                        |                                                                               |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             | Steven Threadgold<br>(Chair)<br>R. Abdel-Tawaab<br>B. Isakhan<br>T. O'Brien                                     | Ian Gray<br>(Chair)<br>W. Sanders<br>I. Gray<br>D. Giorgas                                              |
| 1530-1600              | AFTERNOON TEA (Banquet Hall)                                                  |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1600-1730              | Kath Gleeson<br>(Chair)<br>J. Eidenfalk<br>K. Fraser<br>J. Louth              | Carol Johnson<br>(Chair)<br>A. Convery<br>B. Lowe<br>M. Tyler                                                 | Elections & Internet Panel<br>(Chair)<br>R. Davis (Chair)<br>D. Hill<br>I. McAllister<br>P. van Onselen | Victor Quirk<br>(Chair)<br>M. Beard & P. van Onselen<br>G. Evans, C. McIntyre & G. McCarthy<br>Z. Ghazarian | John Jenkins<br>(Chair)<br>R. Rhodes<br>A. Boin, A. McConnell, P. Hart<br>A. Hindmoor                           | Robert Mackie<br>(Chair)<br>N. Barry<br>S. Chavura<br>P. Corcoran                                       |
|                        |                                                                               |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             | A. Broome (Chair)<br>D. Biro<br>L. Chan<br>N. Henry                                                             | AJ Brown<br>(Chair)<br>ARC "Towards Sustainable Regional Development Institutions" Project Team Meeting |
| 1735                   | Book Launch: "Berry Berry 1" and "Berry II", Four Jays Press, in Banquet Hall |                                                                                                               |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |

**Tuesday 26 September APSA Conference**

| Rooms & Times | Concert Hall 1                                                                   | Waratah                                                        | Mulibinba                                                                                                                         | Cummings                                                                                                | Hunter                                                                                | Concert Hall 2                                                                                                  | Newcastle Room                                                                                          |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               | International Relations                                                          | Indigenous Pol                                                 | Aust & NZ Politics 1                                                                                                              | Aust & NZ Politics 2                                                                                    | Public Policy                                                                         | Int. Pol. Economy                                                                                               | Political Theory                                                                                        |
| 0900-1030     | Peter Searle (Chair)<br>C. Doran (Military & Neo-Lib)<br>B. Stevens              | John Tate (Chair)<br>R. De Costa<br>A. Gunstone<br>S. Maddison | <b>Youth &amp; Pol Panel</b><br>A. Vromen (Chair)<br>K. Edwards<br>L. Hill & J. Louth,<br>A. Elliot & S. Goodwin<br>S. Threadgold | Harry Williams (Chair)<br>A. Broome<br>M. Van Egmond, M. Flaherty & B. Tranter<br>J. W'anna             | Michael Howard (Chair)<br>S. Reeves<br>S. O'Sullivan<br>I. Ward                       | Kath Gleeson (Chair)<br><br>F. Gale<br>J. McGee<br>P. Ross                                                      | <b>J.S. Mill Panel</b><br>P. Corcoran (Chair)<br>A. Goldstone<br>P. Griffiths<br>H. Pringle<br>K. Smits |
| 1030-1100     | MORNING TEA (Banquet Hall)                                                       |                                                                |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1100-1230     | <b>Looking Back on Levinas</b><br><br>(Chair)<br><br>D. Celermajer<br>H. Pringle | Tod Moore (Chair)<br>J. Archer<br>C. Howlett<br>D. O'sullivan  | <b>Youth &amp; Pol Panel</b><br>S. Goodwin (Chair)<br>P. Collin<br>I. Fyfe<br>A. Vromen                                           | <b>Eval Pol Sci Panel</b><br>C. Donovan (Chair)<br>J. Brett<br>L. Butler & I. McAllister<br>B. Galligan | Victor Quirk (Chair)<br><br>S. Grey<br>A. Hinton<br>J. Jenkins (non-resident fathers) | <b>Aust &amp; NZ Politics 2</b><br><br>Robert Mackie (Chair)<br>A. Payne & T. Payne<br>J. Walter<br>J. Warhurst | Adrian Little (Chair)<br><br>I. Allegritti<br>M. Walsh                                                  |
| 1230-1400     | Lunch                                                                            | 1230-1300: "Keywords" CUP Book Launch Banquet Hall             |                                                                                                                                   | Rod Rhodes Editorial Meeting (Waratah Room)                                                             |                                                                                       | AJPS Board Meeting (Newcastle Room)                                                                             |                                                                                                         |
| 1400          |                                                                                  | Load buses – Travel to Hunter Valley Wineries                  |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1545-1700     |                                                                                  | Winery Tour & Wine Tasting                                     |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1700-1715     |                                                                                  | Travel to Harrigan's Irish Pub                                 |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1715-1830     |                                                                                  | Drinks & Presidential Address at Harrigan's Irish Pub          |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1830-1845     |                                                                                  | Travel to Tamburlaine Winery                                   |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 1845-2230     |                                                                                  | Conference Dinner                                              |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |
| 2230          |                                                                                  | Depart for Newcastle City Hall                                 |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                         |                                                                                       |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                         |

## Wednesday 27 September APSA Conference

|           | Lord Mayor's<br>Reception Area                                           | Waratah<br>Political History                                          | Mulubinba<br>Aust & NZ Politics 1                                                             | Cummings<br>Aust & NZ Politics 2                                                                                                             | Hunter<br>Public Policy                                                           | Newcastle Room<br>Political Theory                         |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0900-1030 | <b>Teaching Politics<br/>Panel</b><br>R. Albury<br>A. Fenna<br>A. Vromen | John Gow<br>(Chair)<br><br>G. Melleuish<br>T. Moore                   | Jim Jose<br>(Chair)<br>P. Carroll<br>D. Coldicott<br>H Williams                               | James Juniper<br>(Chair)<br>J. Alvey & N. Ryan<br>C. Doran (Australian<br>Constitution ,<br>Corporate Personhood<br>& Democracy)<br>D. Erdos | Michael Howard<br>(Chair)<br>L. Hinds & J. Fleming<br>P. Quiddington<br>E. Davies | P. Balint<br>(Chair)<br>M. Bode<br>J. Tate                 |
| 1030-1100 | <b>MORNING TEA (Banquet Hall)</b>                                        |                                                                       |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                                                            |
| 1100-1230 |                                                                          | <b>Fem Pol</b><br>Alison Convery<br>(Chair)<br>M Andrew<br>C. Morriss | Harry Williams<br>(Chair)<br>K. Alport & L. Hill<br>P. Brent (AEIs)<br>G. Gillon<br>P. Larkin |                                                                                                                                              | Peter Carroll<br>(Chair)<br>V. Quirk<br>J. Alvey                                  | <b>Heads of<br/>Discipline<br/>meeting<br/>(inc lunch)</b> |
| 1230-1400 | <b>LUNCH</b>                                                             |                                                                       |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                                                            |
| 1400-1530 | <b>Annual General Meeting</b>                                            |                                                                       |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                                                            |
|           | <b>To be held in the Cummings Room</b>                                   |                                                                       |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                                                            |
| 1530-1600 | <b>AFTERNOON TEA (Banquet Hall)</b>                                      |                                                                       |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                                                            |
|           | <b>CONFERENCE CLOSE</b>                                                  |                                                                       |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                                                            |
|           |                                                                          |                                                                       |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                   |                                                            |

**Refereed paper presented to the  
Australasian Political Studies Association conference  
University of Newcastle  
25-27 September 2006**

**The Howard Government's Electoral Reforms – a Blight on Democratic Principles**

**Norm Kelly  
The Australian National University**

**Abstract**

The Howard Coalition government has recently enacted the most significant reforms to the Commonwealth Electoral Act to have occurred for more than 20 years. The reforms include removing the limited prisoner franchise, earlier closure of the electoral roll, and higher disclosure thresholds and increased tax deductibility for political donations. Parliamentary debate on these issues has been limited, while public debate on electoral issues also tends to receive minimal exposure. This paper provides an overview and analysis of the major changes to the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 passed by the Australian Parliament in June 2006. It examines the democratic implications of these changes, particularly in relation to the democratic principles of political equality and popular control of government. The paper also compares the Australian Commonwealth reforms with electoral legislation at the Australian sub-national level, and with recent electoral reforms in the United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand.

When the Howard Liberal/National Coalition government was first elected in March 1996, it moved quickly to place its imprint on election administration. As an example, one of its first acts in government was to abolish the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Election Education and Information Service (ATSIEEIS), an arm of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) that had been instrumental in improving the rates of Indigenous enrolment and voting, especially in remote areas. This was the first time that the AEC, an independent statutory authority, had been given explicit instruction as to what it may or may not spend its budget on. However, for nine years the Howard government was thwarted in making substantial changes to electoral legislation due to not having a majority in the Senate. Until this year the government had only been successful in making minor modifications, such as reducing the prisoner franchise, and changing a redistribution formula to ensure the retention of the two Northern Territory House of Representatives seats. Both these changes occurred in 2004 and both required the support of the Labor Party (in fact Labor initiated the amendment that reduced the prisoner franchise).

At the 2004 election, the Coalition was able to win control of the Senate, taking effect from 1 July 2005. Since then, the Coalition has been busy implementing its long-standing electoral policy agenda. The Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Electoral Integrity and Other Measures) Bill 2006 contains many measures that the Coalition first raised in 1996, and has consistently pursued since, both through

had announced it would agree to the federal change (Osborne, 2006:NP). New South Wales (section 21, *Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912*) and Western Australia (section 18, *Electoral Act 1907*) continue to enfranchise prisoners serving sentences of less than one year; Tasmania enfranchises prisoners serving sentences of less than five years (section 31(2) *Electoral Act 2004*); while South Australia enfranchises all prisoners, irrespective of their length of sentence (Orr, 2004:10; also see section 29 (4)-(5) of South Australia's *Electoral Act 1985*). This confusing mix of voting entitlements can only add to the difficulty in encouraging prisoners (where eligible) to engage in the democratic process as part of their rehabilitation into broader society.

The arbitrary nature of imposing an additional penalty (that is, of denying the right to vote) on top of a custodial sentence, is also questioned. Senator Andrew Murray has pointed out that an offence, such as traffic fine defaulting, may be punished by imprisonment in one jurisdiction while in another jurisdiction, the same offence only warrants a loss of licence (JSCM, 2005:405). This inconsistency, both between jurisdictions, and offences, can be expected when electoral governance imposes on judicial decisions. As Senator Murray points out, the arbitrary removal of citizens' rights should be a decision of the courts, not the legislative process. However, it is exactly the intent of the Howard government's reforms to remove courts' discretion. While Labor does not support the total disenfranchisement of prisoners, it does support discretionary prisoner enfranchisement, through the imposition of a threshold length of imprisonment that coincides with the length of the parliamentary term.

### **Early Closure of the Electoral Roll**

Australia does not have fixed-date elections at the Federal level. The Prime Minister is able to call an election, within a specified time frame, without any notice or warning. The writs for the election are then issued shortly afterwards. This uncertainty makes the closing date of the electoral roll a critical issue. Because of the uncertainty of the election date, since the 1980s seven days have been allowed following the issuing of the writs before the electoral rolls are closed. During this time, citizens have been able to newly enrol, or update their existing enrolment if they have moved address or changed their name. However, as a result of the 2006 legislation, the electoral rolls will now close for new enrolments at 8pm on the day that writs are issued, and three business days after the issuing of the writs for enrolment changes. There are exceptions for 17-year-olds who will turn 18 before the election day, and for people who are to be granted citizenship before election day. People in these categories will have three business days from the issuing of the writs to enrol. The government's reasoning for this change is that it will enhance the integrity of the roll by preventing people from making fraudulent enrolments following the calling of an election. The government argues that by closing the roll earlier, the AEC will have additional time to verify new and updated enrolments.

Following concern raised by a Liberal Party MP after the 2001 election, the AEC conducted an audit of the South Australian roll. Two cases were identified (in a roll of over one million) where people had moved address following the calling of the election, only to move back to their old address after the election. However, these cases were not found to be for fraudulent reasons (Sawer, 2006:5). In 2002, the Australian National Audit Office found that the electoral roll is reliable and of high integrity (Costar and Browne, 2006:NP). In the lead-up to the 2004 election, during

Victoria – three days after writs are issued; South Australia – seven to ten days after writs are issued; and the Australian Capital Territory – 29 days before election day (Sawer, 2006:7).

As noted above, the closing of the roll is a more serious issue when the government of the day can suddenly call an election with little or no warning. In the jurisdictions without fixed-date elections, there is a similar mix of closing dates: Tasmania closes its roll on the day writs are issued, however, Tasmania's *Electoral Act 2004* (section 63) requires that writs are not to be issued until at least five days (and up to ten days) following the dissolution of parliament, ensuring reasonable notice before the roll is closed. The Northern Territory closes its roll only two days after writs are issued. This is an understandably short period considering that the Territory's *Electoral Act 2004* (section 28) requires that polling day must be 18 days after the issuing of the writ, and also taking into account the need for extensive mobile polling in the widespread population areas of the Territory. The remaining jurisdictions without fixed-date elections provide reasonable notice of an election before closing their rolls – Queensland (five to seven days after the issuing of writs) and Western Australia (eight days after the issuing of writs) (Sawer, 2006:7). The lack of uniformity between Australian jurisdictions unnecessarily adds confusion and cost to the election process. It is understandable that the differing requirements between Commonwealth and sub-national elections lead to potential electors inadvertently being omitted from the roll. It also adds to the cost for electoral authorities to advertise the roll closure deadlines at a time when electors are already being bombarded with political advertising during an election campaign.

At the March 2006 Senate committee inquiry, the AEC Commissioner stated that at least 150,000 Australians enrolled or updated their enrolments in the period between the seven-day cut-off for the close of roll, and the election day (Campbell, 2006:5). This meant that these people either missed out on having their democratic voice at the election, or for those people who had moved outside their old electorate, fraudulently voted by using their old address. It can be seen that, rather than changing the system to capture this significant group of people, this government reform can only be expected to increase the number of otherwise eligible citizens who will be unable to vote at future elections, or who will fraudulently vote due to an out-of-date enrolment. It can also be expected to disproportionately impact on people living in remote areas, or who travel for extended periods as part of their work, who will find it particularly difficult to meet the new deadline.

#### **New proof-of-identity requirements**

The government has also introduced new proof-of-identity requirements, both for enrolling and provisional voting. In both cases, citizens will be required to provide their driver's licence or other documentation to be prescribed in regulations. For enrolments where the person does not have any documentation, the application will need to be witnessed by two electors who know the person.

These provisions will make it more difficult for citizens, particularly those in rural and remote areas, to enroll and vote. Combined with the early roll closure, it can be expected that many will not bother to go to the trouble of complying, and will therefore choose not to vote, or will vote using an old address (if already enrolled). These changes also reflect the Howard government's emphasis in shifting the



The United Kingdom's £5,000 disclosure threshold is comparable to Australia's new limit; while Canada, which has far more stringent caps on donations, is also stricter on disclosure, with a \$200 threshold (Ewing and Ghaleigh, 2006:6; Geddis, 2006:6). However, when comparing political funding structures, there are many aspects to consider. For example, the United Kingdom and Canada prohibit foreign donations, while Australia has no restrictions in this area. In fact, the largest single donation during the 2004 election campaign was \$1m to the Liberal Party, received from a British peer, Lord Michael Ashcroft. Similarly, Australia has no restriction on corporate donations, even in cases where companies have significant government contracts. By comparison, Canada prohibits donations from corporations that receive more than half their revenue from government, and otherwise limits corporate donations to \$1,000 for an individual campaign. In April 2006 the Canadian government introduced Bill C-2, which bans all donations to parties or candidates by corporations, trade unions and associations, replacing the previous limit of \$1,000 (Parliament of Canada, 2006:NP). In addition, corporations are not allowed to donate to national party organisations or for leadership contests (Geddis, 2006:5). Although the United Kingdom does not have limits on corporate donations, campaign expenditure caps were introduced in 2000 to limit the potential for corporate influence in elections. The requirement for shareholder approval for company donations was introduced at the same time (Sawer, 2004:NP).

For a disclosure regime to be effective, it is important that information is made public in a timely manner. Once again, Australia falls well short of best practice, with financial returns for the October 2004 election not being released until February 2006. These disclosures therefore become more of a historical document rather than information that electors can consider in determining their vote. The United Kingdom leads the way in this area, with a requirement for quarterly disclosure reports and weekly reports during election campaigns. Canada also requires quarterly reports but does not have any special requirements during election campaigns (Young and Tham, 2006:140). It is acknowledged though that a disclosure regime that requires reporting during an election campaign could easily be subverted by donors agreeing to support parties, but not making actual donations until after the election.

Australia's reporting regime also has serious issues of non-compliance and inaccurate reporting, a problem raised by the JSCEM (2000; 2005), Miskin and Baker (2006), and Young and Tham (2006). For example, the inflated cost of tickets to a party dinner with Ministers in attendance may be classified as 'other receipts' rather than donations. The original source and size of donations can also be hidden through the use of third parties, such as public relations companies that organise fundraising events for political parties. While New Zealand has similar failings in its disclosure regime, it, like Canada, places a cap on election spending (Geddis, 2006:7) with the intention that the ability to generate private donations does not unduly influence an election result. Another area of concern is in the use of loans to political parties, which can give the lender a stronger, ongoing influence over a party than a donation of the same amount would. Although Australia has not had any major scandals like Britain's recent 'loans-for-lordships' affair (e.g. Woodward, Hencke and Branigan, 2006:NP), the ability for the use of loans to have a corrupting influence on Australian politics remains. The AEC has raised this issue numerous times with the JSCEM, including the lack of source disclosure for overseas loans (AEC, 2004b:27-8). The Australian government does not appear to be concerned to address any of these issues.

reduces in percentage terms as the size of donation increases, with there being three tiers of subsidies for donations up to the maximum allowable of \$C1,000 (2006:142). This system appears cumbersome for such amounts and unlikely to cause significant changes in donating behaviour. An additional aspect of inequity that has been raised by Senator Andrew Murray and others is the differential tax treatment given to political donations compared to donations to other comparable community organisations that do public good in a civil society (JSCCM, 2005:386), and that tax deductibility should be applied to not-for-profit organisations on a basis of principle, rather than special interest (Murray, 2006:9).

### **Conclusion**

It can be seen that these changes will have significant impacts on the franchise and the political finance environment. Rather than extending the franchise and attempting to maximise the turnout of eligible citizens at elections, as has been the experience in most modern democracies, Australia is moving towards a selective franchise where governments decide who is fit to exercise this civic duty. Instead of voting being a 'responsibility', as it traditionally has been, especially under the compulsory regime, it is becoming more of a 'right' that can only be exercised by those selected by the government. Similarly, the ability to participate on an equal basis is being undermined, with wealth playing an increasingly significant role in the style and content of Australian political discourse. The democratic principle of popular control of government is also threatened when the financial supporters of political parties remain unknown to the citizenry.

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