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The top-up budget spills over? | Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny

27-34 minutes



The top-up budget spills over?

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Wednesday, March 26, 2025

Economist Kristen Sobeck joins Democracy Sausage to break down the budget – the goods, the bads and the ‘X factor’ unknowns.

Will the budget do enough to deal with cost-of-living concerns? Is Treasurer Jim Chalmers playing economic chess or political checkers? And how can we engineer a tax system that creates a more equitable 'good life' in Australia?

On this episode of **Democracy Sausage**, economist Kristen Sobeck joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss the budget and the lingering tax reform issues influencing our economy.

Kristen Sobeck is a Research Fellow at the ANU Tax and Transfer Policy Institute.

Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations.

Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age* and *The Canberra Times*.

Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on [Apple Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), [Pocket Casts](#), [Google Podcasts](#) or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au.

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Class is in session

56:08 | Tuesday, May 27, 2025

The hosts of Democracy Sausage are joined by political scientist Jill Sheppard and ANU students to gauge the current state of politics. Will the tensions between the Liberal and National parties be a shot in the foot or an opportunity to reshape the parties? What questions and issues linger for Australia's young people after the

federal election? And what will it take for a Liberal party to connect with young people? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, recorded in a political science classroom, Dr Jill Sheppard and Dr Marija Taflaga take Professor Mark Kenny back to school to discuss the changing face of Australian politics. A special thanks to the student panel for volunteering and contributing to this podcast. Jill Sheppard is a Senior Lecturer in the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. She is an investigator on several major survey studies of Australian public opinion and behaviour, including the Australian Election Study, World Values Survey, and Asian Barometer Survey. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Senior Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Journey of rediscovery

53:01 | Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Correspondent Jason Koutsoukis joins Democracy Sausage to discuss the latest power plays, election missteps and the lost heart of the Liberal party. How did the Liberal party misjudge the election? Now returned to power, can Labor deliver on its election promises? And is Sussan Ley up to the task of reshaping a Liberal party adrift? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, journalist Jason Koutsoukis joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss stories from this new parliament. Jason Koutsoukis is a special correspondent for The Saturday Paper. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Senior Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as

chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Cabinet battles

46:01 | Tuesday, May 13, 2025

Political scientist Dr Jill Sheppard and independent electoral analyst Ben Raue unpack the latest results on seats and preference flows, the cabinet battles in the party room and the two-party system. With some of the election dust settled, what does it tell us about the relevancy of two-party preferred polling? Can Albanese maintain party unity with a landslide victory, a huge backbench and a diversity of voices? And will new Liberal party leader, Sussan Ley, be able to keep her party room onside? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Dr Jill Sheppard and Ben Raue talk to Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga about interesting results, cabinet battles and how to create unity without silencing diverse voices. Ben Raue is an independent electoral analyst and the founder of The Tally Room. Jill Sheppard is a Senior Lecturer in the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. She is an investigator on several major survey studies of Australian public opinion and behaviour, including the Australian Election Study, World Values Survey, and Asian Barometer Survey. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Senior Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to

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Can't divide your way to unity

51:18 | Tuesday, May 6, 2025

Join the hosts of Democracy Sausage for a discussion about Labor’s victory and what it means. What can we expect from Albanese’s leadership approach the second time around? Can we expect Labor to continue to have the same level of unity? And how can the Liberals rebuild after their election defeat? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga discuss the outcome of the 2025 federal election. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Senior Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We’d love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



The pub test

01:04:30| Wednesday, April 30, 2025

In the final week before ballots are counted, Jill Sheppard and Frank Bongiorno join Democracy Sausage for a live discussion where they sink their teeth into the 2025 federal election. Who won the four debates, and do they even change people's minds? In a scenario where we end up with a minority government, what can we expect from the crossbench? And which questions still remain in our live audience's minds? On this live episode of Democracy Sausage, recorded at an ANU pub, Dr Jill Sheppard and Professor Frank Bongiorno join Dr Marija Taflaga and Professor Mark Kenny for a final rundown of the 2025 election. Jill Sheppard is a Senior Lecturer in the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. She is an investigator on several major survey studies of Australian public opinion and behaviour, including the Australian Election Study, World Values Survey, and Asian Barometer Survey. Frank Bongiorno is a Professor at the ANU School of History. He is President of the Australian Historical Association and the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Resurrections and reversals

42:49| Wednesday, April 23, 2025

Data analyst Simon Jackman joins Democracy Sausage to chat about the polls, swing seats and how the global uncertainty is impacting this election. When did Labor's recovery start? How has uncertainty in the US influenced the framing of this

election and left the Coalition vulnerable? And does this election cycle point to any changes in how the major parties operate? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Professor Simon Jackman joins Professor Mark Kenny to talk about polling data and the AUS-US relationship. Join us Monday 28 April at Badger&Co on the ANU campus for a recording of Democracy Sausage in the pub. More information here: <https://www.anu.edu.au/events/democracy-sausage-2025-live-election-special> Simon Jackman is an independent data scientist and strategist. He is an Honorary Professor at the University of Sydney's United States Studies Centre and an elected fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, and the Society for Political Methodology. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Rizzinformation

51:15| Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Political communications expert Andrea Carson joins Democracy Sausage to discuss social media, misinformation and disinformation and what ideas, if any, are actually landing with a disengaged electorate. Which campaign messages are cutting through in both traditional and social media? Are mis- and disinformation seducing the electorate any more than in the past? And are we now seeing social media impact not only how campaigns are run, but also how policy is designed? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Professor Andrea Carson joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss the 'subterranean' election campaign – the crackpot memes, AI videos and Gen Z-courting content that could shape votes and policy. Andrea Carson is a is Associate Dean, Research, Industry and Engagement with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and Professor of Political

Communication in the Department of Politics, Media and Philosophy at La Trobe University. She is also an award-winning former journalist. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Bucking the precedent

52:07 | Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Historian Frank Bongiorno joins Democracy Sausage to tell us what we can learn from precedent, and what's unusual about this federal election. How will Trump's tariffs sway this campaign and Australia's relationship with the US? Has Labor flipped the worldwide incumbency disadvantage trend? And how much campaigning is landing with a disengaged populace? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Professor Frank Bongiorno joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss elections past and present. Frank Bongiorno is a Professor at the ANU School of History. He is President of the Australian Historical Association and the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for

future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Testing the suburban strategy

47:48 | Tuesday, April 1, 2025

In the first sausage sizzle of this federal election campaign, pollster Shaun Ratcliff gives Democracy Sausage an update on the state of the campaign. Is Labor bouncing back in the polls? How likely is it that Will Peter Dutton pull off his appeal to voters in the outer suburbs? And will the question 'are you better off than you were three years ago' sway voters this election? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Dr Shaun Ratcliff joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss the 2025 federal election. Shaun Ratcliff is a political scientist, survey researcher and data scientist. He is the principal at Accent Research. He is also an Honorary Associate at the University of Sydney's US Studies Centre. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Talking tough or scapegoating

49:51 | Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Migration expert Alan Gamlen joins Democracy Sausage to unpack the arguments and misconceptions around immigration. What is it about immigration that makes voters so anxious? What are the misconceptions we have about migration? And with Peter Dutton mulling over a referendum to give ministers the power the ability to strip dual nationals of citizenship will migration be a key issue in the upcoming election? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Professor Alan Gamlen joins Professor Mark Kenny to discuss the politicisation of migration and what it means for this election. Alan Gamlen is the Director of the Migration Hub at the ANU School of Regulation and Global Governance. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



All cloud, no lining

39:57| Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Researcher Nicholas Biddle joins Democracy Sausage to discuss new research on Australia's optimism (or lack thereof), what's driving it, and what it means for the election. What's the current mood in Australia and how is it impacting votes? Can our pessimism drive support for any particular policy, party or candidate? And will we see populist support grow in Australia? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Professor Nicholas Biddle joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss research on the erosion of hope and Australia's mood as we move closer to a federal election. Nicholas Biddle is the Head of the School of Politics and International Relations. His latest research on the Erosion of Hope is available [here](#). Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Monkey see, monkey don't?

54:01| Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Political scientist Shaun Ratcliff joins Democracy Sausage to discuss election polls, influential demographics, and whether foreign politics are at the forefront of voter's minds. How will Donald Trump's hostile meeting with Volodymyr Zelenskyy affect diplomatic ties between Australia and the United States? What are the key issues influencing Australian voters in the upcoming federal election? And what factors are driving Peter Dutton's political gains? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Dr Shaun Ratcliff joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss our

current political landscape on both a domestic and world stage. Shaun Ratcliff is a political scientist, survey researcher and data scientist. He is the principal at Accent Research. He is also an Honorary Associate at the University of Sydney's US Studies Centre. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Keep calm, Keir-y on?

44:15 | Wednesday, February 26, 2025

We Are New Britain's Anna McShane joins Democracy Sausage to talk British politics, the return of President Trump, and the power of visible change in uniting public support. With the Australian federal election on the horizon, what can we learn from the leadership styles of politicians across the world? Should UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer take on a 'Trumpist' approach to wielding executive power? And why are quick wins so important for building long-term support for a political agenda? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Anna McShane joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss the flow-on effect of a Trump presidency on foreign affairs. Anna McShane is the Director of We Are New Britain, an independent progressive think tank focused on bringing in more women and front-line voices into policy making. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is

available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



An unpredictable race?

46:34 | Tuesday, February 11, 2025

The Tally Room's Ben Raue joins Democracy Sausage to talk by-election results, swing seats and what it all means for the federal election. What lessons we take from the most recent by-elections? What do they tell us about long-term shifts in Australian politics? And what are the patterns we should watch for ahead of the federal election? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Ben Raue joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss the long and short-term trends influencing voters. Ben Raue is an independent electoral analyst and the founder of The Tally Room. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Countering effective mislabelling

44:19| Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Senator Larissa Waters joins Democracy Sausage to talk electoral reform, resisting the far right and the Greens' ongoing negotiations. What's stopping donations data from being revealed in real-time? Do proposed donation reforms go far enough to strengthen Australian democracy? And is the left too fractured to rise to the challenge at the next election? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Senator Larissa Waters joins Professor Mark Kenny to discuss political donations, truth in advertising and responding to the far right. Senator Larissa Waters is the Leader of the Australian Greens in the Senate and represents the people of Queensland. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Shrinking leaders and nations

47:46| Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Cultural studies professor Graeme Turner joins Mark and Marija to compare election campaign expectations, media concerns, and ask whether Donald Trump's return could affect Australian democracy. Can we expect Peter Dutton to adopt a Trump-style for the upcoming election? Could such a campaign ever gain traction in Australia? And if it did, would the government hold it off? Or have portfolio governance changes and an incremental approach to progress left Labor with no defining re-election narrative? On this episode of Democracy Sausage, Emeritus Professor Graeme Turner joins Professor Mark Kenny and Dr Marija Taflaga to discuss the federal election. Graeme Turner is Emeritus Professor in the Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland and a founding figure of Australian media and cultural studies. His most recent book is *The Shrinking Nation*. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age* and *The Canberra Times*. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.



Hungry for hope in the new year

54:42| Friday, December 13, 2024

Historian Frank Bongiorno and political scientist Marija Taflaga join Democracy Sausage to look back on 2024 and ahead to upcoming election year. After a turbulent year for democracy, does incumbency offer an advantage anymore? What does this say about the Albanese government's chances next year? And what is Peter Dutton's vision for Australia (and what are his policies to achieve it)? On this

episode of Democracy Sausage, Professor Frank Bongiorno and Dr Marija Taflaga join Professor Mark Kenny to reflect on the year that was and make some forecasts about the political future ahead of us. Frank Bongiorno is a Professor at the ANU School of History. He is President of the Australian Historical Association and the Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, the Australian Academy of the Humanities and a Whitlam Institute Distinguished Fellow at Western Sydney University. Marija Taflaga is the Director of the ANU Australian Politics Studies Centre and a Lecturer at the ANU School of Politics and International Relations. Mark Kenny is the Director of the ANU Australian Studies Institute. He came to the University after a high-profile journalistic career including six years as chief political correspondent and national affairs editor for The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, and The Canberra Times. Democracy Sausage with Mark Kenny is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. We'd love to hear your feedback on this series, so send in your questions, comments or suggestions for future episodes to democracysausage@anu.edu.au. This podcast is produced by The Australian National University.