AUSTRALASIAN STUDY OF PARLIAMENT GROUP (Queensland Chapter)

AUSTRALASIAN STUDY OF PARLIAMENT GROUP
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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

FRIDAY, 20 JULY 2018

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The conference met at 8.56 am.

Mr FRASER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I just have one administrative announcement. At the end of the first session we are all participating in a conference photograph. That will be done on what is known as the Speaker's Green. The key to that word is 'green' which means it is either painted or it is grass. In this case it is grass. You go down in the lift to the third floor and, instead of going out through the exit where you came in this morning, you turn the other way and walk up a very small number of stairs to the Speaker's Green. We will do it at morning tea time. Your chair for this session is Dr Mary Crawford from the Queensland University of Technology, so I will hand over to her to kick the session off.

Dr CRAWFORD: Good morning, everybody. My name is Mary Crawford. I would like to welcome our panel today: the Hon. Trevor Mallard, who is the Speaker of the New Zealand parliament; Jonathan O'Dea, the member for Davidson in the New South Wales parliament; Professor Ken Coghill, who is the former speaker of the Victorian parliament and is now a professor at Swinburne University; and Gabor Hellyer, who is a parliamentary officer in the Office of the Clerk in the New Zealand parliament.

There have been a couple of comments about us having all male panels. I have to say, as someone who did their PhD on gender and the Australian parliament, I have been very vigorous in looking at these panels. We have done a lot of talking, but I guess what it says is that the people who are in parliament are actually still not representative of us as a community as a whole and the academy as well and people who study parliament. Perhaps the difficulties that Carole Pateman suffered way back in the 1960s—as we know, she is a great gender and political scholar—that forced her to go to America would seem to be still here perhaps 40 years on. Next time you will have to encourage your female colleagues, if there are enough of them, to perhaps present more. The biographies of our speakers are in the conference brochure, so without further ado I would like to welcome the Hon. Trevor Mallard to speak with us on trust and institutions.

Mr MALLARD: Thank you, Dr Crawford. It was a pleasure spending some time at your table last night learning some of the less published parts of Australian political history. I do not know whether to thank the conference organisers. Last week at the Pacific Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference I had the first speech after the Speakers' conference dinner. I regarded that as taking one for the team. Doing it twice in a row seems a little bit unfair. It is a long-time tradition that the worst speaking spot is the one after the dinner.

A recent analysis of the phenomenon of post truth notes that facts and truth are endangered in today's political arena. This is highlighted in, and is most focused on, the United States, but it stresses that the dangers to democracy and political discourse are far from restricted to a single country or specific individuals. As a Speaker currently serving the country with the longest history of unbroken fully representative democracy, I am very conscious that seemingly robust institutions can be compromised, not the least by the elected actors and those paid to dissemble within the institutions. Distrust in politicians and suspicion of their behaviour is not foreign to New Zealand. There is an ever-present risk that parliament can be collateral damage in those political battles.

I emphasise that my speech is about the parliament and not about the politicians or the political parties. How does parliament, which is neutral and independent, resist such fakery and contest unpalatable ideas and misconceptions? In my view, it is done by being outward looking, being receptive to people and being clear and proactive in the way it communicates. We have a duty to communicate how and where our democracy functions well and to vigorously assert what is appropriate and desirable in this so-called post-truth world.

I would like to share some examples of how I think the New Zealand parliament is communicating well as well as explore a couple of the challenges that flow from it. The key source of our public information is our website. The new version was launched in 2016. It is well regarded and has been nominated for awards. It has very good quality content. Previously—and not that long ago—we considered the website to be a repository of information for experts, for people who knew about stuff and where it could be found. We now recognise that it could be much better used to inform, engage and educate.

The carousel on the home page is used to draw people's attention to significant upcoming debates and recently presented reports of bills open for submission. It provides an opportunity to publicise or reflect on events occurring at parliament to convey a sense of a relevant and vibrant institution. It lets us put out information that people are seeking, or even information that they did not know they were seeking. Our challenge is to get the hits on the site up while maintaining its professional, non-sensationalist approach, which is consistent with the parliamentary institution. For example, when our Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, went on parental leave for her first child, that gave rise to the opportunity for the website to feature what happens in parliament when the Prime Minister is not available.

Gayle Smith, the CEO of the worldwide advocacy group One Campaign, wrote, 'Citizens cannot trust what they cannot see.' There are many dimensions to that, but part of it is the transparency of the democratic process, the activities of elected representatives and the openness of the machinery. One significant development in this respect in New Zealand has been the live streaming of select committee hearings. We are fortunate that, as a small country, our committees are already accessible. For those in the know, we send all of our legislation to committees. We expect that live streaming will only make them more accessible and, hopefully, change the perception of parliament from the heightened reality of question time. Public committee hearings are streamed via Facebook and on the pages of the individual committees. It is particularly heartening to see that dialogues are beginning to occur, both in real time and after the event, with what the submitters are saying. Parliament has been facilitating the conversations by offering the streaming service and moderating comments. While the initiative is still in its infancy, it is exciting to see where it will lead. It has the potential to change our MPs' participation and to increase their accountability to electors.

To do that, there has been some tolerance for risk. We must encourage debate but be aware of wider responsibilities within the online community. We have been dealing with some pretty tricky subjects recently—medically assisted dying and the use of medicinal cannabis. We have had people submitting and commenting who are navigating a fine line between advocating change and/or inciting activities that are currently against the law. There have been disclosures of incidents of law-breaking. We have to start making decisions about where it is appropriate to intervene. My view is that we err on the side of freedom of expression and more or less treat it as we would treat the House.

In reflecting on my position as Speaker, I see it as important to communicate parliament. For it to work it has to be authentic. Bad communication can cause real problems. Each sitting day I record a video on what is coming up in the House, for sharing on various channels. I see it as an opportunity to engage with people in an informal, accessible way. The objective is to try to demystify what is going on in the House. We put it out via parliament's Facebook, via the parliament's Twitter page, my Facebook, my Twitter page, my personal profile and through the website that is shown on the parliament's TV immediately before the live broadcast. It gets out there quite a long way.

The final example that I would like to cite is the e-petition system that we have introduced over the past six months as a way of getting people to interact with parliament. Any member of the public can launch a petition, come up with a brief synopsis of what it is about and then see what amount of support it receives. It was informed by a design-thinking process focused on user needs and expectations. There has already been quite an increase in the number of petitions received. That can only be positive for promoting the relevance of parliament as an institution.

With the increased engagement comes an increased expectation of action. We can pretty confidently assume that the House will receive more and more e-petitions, but the rules of how to handle them have not changed. They are referred to a subject select committee for consideration. The committee determines what happens. The committees are always busy. They often consider that legislation relating to financial matters has priority. It has not been unusual in the past for committees to report in a very proforma way. While a committee can, if it wants, make positive or negative recommendations to the government, it is very rare for a committee report on a petition to be debated in the House.

There is a challenge here. How does an institution which, like most parliaments, has a reputation for incremental rather than radical change ensure that its internal rules allow it to keep pace when the external environment is changing faster than the parliament is? In New Zealand we have a regular review of standing orders every term, which is an excellent opportunity to innovate, hear from different people, build consensus for enduring change and ensure that the internal rules are fit for purpose. I think mechanisms like e-petitions

will become increasingly important. If the public makes the effort to submit and promote petitions or give evidence to committees but the results disappear into a parliamentary hole, the disenchantment will follow very swiftly. We can make it easier for people to engage with parliament, but to maintain the trust that gets built out of that we have to ensure that they feel like their voices are heard and that they are influential. If they are not, we will add to rather than take away from the disenchantment. Thank you very much.

Dr CRAWFORD: I now call Jonathan O'Dea. We will have questions and answers but at the end, after each person has spoken. Thank you, Jonathan.

Mr O'DEA: Thank you, Mary, and good morning to you all. Like Colleen yesterday, I have a 40-minute paper that I am not going to read. The only way to deliver a 40-minute paper, which you can all read, in 15 minutes is to speak to the paper rather than read the paper. I encourage you to read it.

Today I wanted to talk about particularly the behaviour of politicians. As a politician I ask you: what do you think is the most important, most valuable asset that anybody has in politics?

DELEGATE: Integrity.

Mr O'DEA: Integrity—dare I say 'trust', which is synonymous with that. That is what we are talking about. In my view, it is the most important asset in politics. Trust can generate community and business confidence. Therefore, it leads to economic growth and improves the political success potential of an incumbent government. The more that government is trusted, the more that business will generally spend and invest to boost the economy. People are more likely to pay their taxes and comply with regulation if they trust the government. Trust promotes an environment of optimism, cohesion and national prosperity. When trust is lost, it is difficult to win it back.

We saw yesterday through a number of presentations how trust has been lost. I do not want to go over that. You can read what I say about it in my paper. There are two particular surveys that suggest that trust has fallen in Australia from 51 per cent to 26 per cent and another survey which quantifies it as having fallen from 45 per cent to 35 per cent over a shorter period—over the last two years. The other statistic was over a longer period.

Suffice it to say, Australia has seen a significant erosion in trust over time. That has not happened everywhere in the world, but it has happened as a general trend across the world. As we have seen, Nordic countries, Germany and India still have reasonably high levels of trust in government. In contrast, Australia, the US—the Trump phenomenon is particularly associated with that—the UK with Brexit and Italy are examples where there has been erosion. Australia is certainly in that latter group, where there has been a substantial erosion of trust.

What are the three main influencers of trust as I see them? The first main influencer of trust is institutional protections. When I am talking about institutional protections I am mainly talking about anti-corruption laws, fundraising and donation laws, the regulation of lobbyists, open government measures as well as accountability by various oversight bodies. There is potential to strengthen those institutional frameworks. I refer you to a paper I delivered to this forum in 2016 which looked at things like federal ICAC's fixed electoral cycles, more consistent and tighter donation laws, particularly at the Commonwealth level, various parliamentary processes and public expenditure transparency.

In addition, it is necessary for parliament as an institution to provide a level of protection where there is residual trust or protection over and above the behaviour of individual politicians. In parliament fulfilling that role, it not only has to have those protections in place but also has to effectively communicate. That is something that I think Trevor highlighted in his presentation very well. One of the things that parliament has done recently is, in addition to webcasting its own proceedings, propose a code of practice for local government where that sort of transparency is likely to become compulsory in the future.

The second factor I wanted to talk about is the public mindset and socialisation influences. A number of these were discussed yesterday. I want to move fairly quickly over those. In the Australian context it seems that urban dwellers, religious people, professionals and managers, highly educated people, males as well as those with a higher perceived socio-economic status all expressed greater trust in MPs and public officials. Individual and group perceptions of public figures and institutions do have a significant influence on political trust.

There are a couple of factors I will highlight in that section of the paper. A lack of parliamentary representation from traditionally under-represented groups does contribute and continues to contribute to an erosion of trust in politicians. There are a number of external economic factors that also affect levels of trust in politicians and governments worldwide. In general, some of those which particularly influence trust in a positive way are stronger property rights, more extensive labour market regulations, lower levels of corruption, higher education levels, higher income levels and lower unemployment.

The third area I want to particularly focus on in my presentation is around political behaviour. There is no doubt that, particularly in this digital age, there is a temptation for politicians to pursue short-term wins over more substantial long-term strategic governance plans. In that sense, there is a dynamic which is further complicated by the age-old attraction of masking a lack of substance with bravado or a lack of direction with spin. Some would say that we could focus on Donald Trump as a case study there. There is no doubt that a lack of serious policy discussion and thoughtful collaborative action does ultimately undermine public trust in politicians to deliver. I emphasise how the influence of social media on political trust cannot be understated. We have had quite a lot of discussion on that so I will gloss over those aspects. The final point that I make and elaborate on is how Australians believe the rise of career politicians has also contributed to the steady decline in citizens' trust in governments since 2017.

What I want to do now is focus on some examples—in particular, four types of behavioural characteristics which relate to that third point, which is around political behaviour. I will do so with reference to some recent examples in Australian political history. The first behavioural characteristic is around acting with integrity and honesty. There is no doubt that personal integrity is vital for the modern public figure. The essence of integrity is staying true to one's promises, values and behaviours, even under mounting pressure to capitulate. An example is the perceived loss of integrity suffered by former prime minister Julia Gillard over the carbon-pricing issue, where the then opposition leader and, indeed, fairly powerfully, Alan Jones, as a significant media commentator, particularly focused on what was a misstatement at best and at worst a lie from Julia Gillard in relation to carbon pricing. I note that Kevin Rudd also suffered enormously in terms of credibility when he reversed his position on climate change.

People do not like to hear politicians say something and then change their mind, particularly when it is seen as a fundamental commitment. I give some further commentary on that in the paper. I try to be a bit even-handed in the paper, even though I very much come from a liberal philosophy and a Liberal government. I have tried to give a balanced perspective through examples. One of those is that Abbott shot himself in the foot in his first budget, the Hockey-Abbott budget, where they made some fairly clear and emphatic promises to not cut budgets in certain areas of government and then went ahead and did so. That resulted in 2014 in the Edelman Trust Barometer dropping from 56 per cent at the time of Abbott's election to 49 per cent after the budget. That was certainly a significant decline in the context of world rankings that year.

There is no doubt that the public also questions when politicians individually do not meet commitments at a local level. I give the example of the last four premiers in New South Wales who when they left office had the choice of either completing a term of government or not completing that term of government. Two of them chose, even though not the premier, to serve out that term and two of them chose not to. I think that is reflective of the sorts of choices that politicians have. In that respect, I think that premiers can set an important example.

There is no doubt that politicians are empowered to make decisions in the best interests of the public. It is crucial that governance is not corrupted by undue influences. In the paper I give the example which has been mentioned already in this conference of Eddie Obeid, who was the New South Wales upper house factional leader. He used his powers quite inappropriately to affect policy, to fundraise, to control preselections and promotions and to ultimately benefit himself. He was shown to have acted corruptly and indeed is now serving time at Her Majesty's pleasure. The fact that he has been jailed has in fact helped to restore some of the trust that people have in the system, which is a good thing beyond a due punishment. There is no doubt that corruption does have dire effects on levels of public trust. Politicians have to always strive to act with integrity, consistent with public expectations.

The second major point is demonstrating openness and transparency. We should be inclusive and sincere as politicians. I give a couple of examples there. Former premier Mike Baird took the divesting, or a partial divesting, of electricity assets in New South Wales to an election. Even though that might not have

been popular, that was seen as a positive measure. We were up-front, and ultimately the electorate trusted us on that. That has transpired as a very good move for our economy, which is now booming. Compare that to perhaps another situation, which he probably did not handle well, around the banning of greyhounds where, in a fairly unexpected way, he tried to make that change and ultimately lost the trust not only of the public but also of certain of his colleagues.

I make the point, then, in terms of openness and transparency about the importance, from my perspective, of mechanisms like citizens juries. I know you are going to hear from Iain Walker a little bit later. I have had the pleasure of working with Iain at the New South Wales level in implementing some citizens juries. I put some commentary in my paper around that. I acknowledge the work that has been done in South Australia which was mentioned yesterday.

In the context of openness and transparency, there is the potential to have more conscience votes of parliamentarians, potentially guided by more popular votes along the lines of the same-sex marriage plebiscite. Those types of votes are becoming easier, particularly with the potential use of blockchain voting. If the public generally had the chance to have a say on some of those issues, perhaps levels of trust in government would increase.

The third point I want to emphasise in terms of behaviour is around delivering competent and fair performance. That is performance that is fair, not fair-ranking performance. I give the example of how federal Labor was generally regarded as having delivered that in the context of the global financial crisis. That largely contributed to Kevin Rudd's popularity at the time. Likewise, the current Berejiklian government in New South Wales is experiencing higher levels of trust, or a rebound in trust, because we are delivering so soundly on economic parameters. On any objective measure, New South Wales is leading the nation in terms of competent economic management. I also give the example of the New South Wales Solar Bonus Scheme, which we handled in a way which reflected the need to respect the importance of trust and commitments that have been made by one government when a new government comes in, despite facing certain challenges.

The final point I want to touch on is collaborating in the public interest. There is no doubt that an effective government is underpinned by collaboration at all levels in the political system. I give two examples there. One is the recently created Board of Treasurers formed across all states and territories—a New South Wales led initiative. That inaugural meeting was held late last year. That helps discuss various productivity reforms around health, education funding and the state's relationship with the Commonwealth. That is a positive measure led by Treasurer Dominic Perrottet. Likewise, I point to the strong partnership between federal and state governments on the National Disability Insurance Scheme—another credible and positive example.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that the attitudes and behaviours of politicians themselves do ultimately underpin the fabric of trust between people and government. The most important factor is the actual attitudes and behaviour of politicians as the public sees them. To regain the trust, confidence and respect of the community we do need demonstrated action and changes in behaviour that resonate with grassroots community members. If Australian politicians and parliaments increasing adopt the sorts of behaviours, particularly the four types of behaviours that I have outlined, then I think a consequent rise in political trust could strengthen the social fabric of our society and promote our progress as a nation. Here's hoping.

Dr CRAWFORD: Thank you very much, Jonathan. I now call on Professor Ken Coghill, who will speak about enhancing conduct to enhance trust.

Prof. COGHILL: Thank you very much for the opportunity to make this presentation, which I do on behalf of myself and my co-authors, one of whom is here today, Dr Julia Thornton. The other is Dr Cristina Neesham of Swinburne University. Just to clear up any confusion about where I work these days, I am working part-time at Monash University and have an adjunct appointment at Swinburne University. I have connections to both of them.

I acknowledge that we meet on the lands of Indigenous peoples and that those Indigenous peoples have never ceded sovereignty over this land. I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging.

The paper that I present today relates very closely to work which has been commissioned by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. It relates to these various points which I will cover during the presentation. The major focus will be on codes of conduct. Those in turn relate to instilling trustworthiness beyond the codes. I will suggest that there are some areas where further research is required.

In presenting this particular paper we are really looking at the intersection between public administration and political science. We are really thinking about the features of public administration that are relevant which we can apply in this political context. What I am particularly grateful for in making the presentation following David Solomon is that he made his presentation yesterday explaining the concept of the public trust exercised by politicians and distinguishing that from trust in politicians.

One of the key points that arises from that is the concept that members of parliament are public officers; in other words, they hold a public office. Again, as David indicated yesterday, a requirement of being a public officer is that you act in accordance with the public interest. Your role is to put the public interest ahead of personal interests, family interests, political parties and particularly political donors. Whenever a politician is carrying out their responsibilities as a parliamentarian they need to put the interests of the public in aggregate ahead of any of those more private interests. An interesting analysis of that has been published by David Lusty. I want to quote from that, because I think it is really important and quite central to what I have to say here. In a paper published in 2014 he said—

The central thesis of the doctrine of representative government is that all powers of government are derived from, ultimately belong to, and may only be exercised for and on behalf of, the people. It follows that persons entrusted with such power owe a fiduciary "duty of loyalty" to the public. Indeed, it is widely accepted that public office is a "public trust" and public officials are "trustees".

I think it is important in this context to think about the functions that are being performed by members of parliament, which in turn relate to the functions of the parliament itself. What we are talking about in this particular case is not campaigning skills and the various activities that politicians get involved in in order to be elected or re-elected. What we are talking about are the functions of the parliament which include, fairly obviously, legislating, budget making—which you can in one sense say is a special form of legislating—representation, oversight or scrutiny of the government and redress of grievances. Representation can be thought of in two particular ways which I think are important to distinguish. One is the very well known activity of taking up matters raised by a member of parliament's electorate, but the other more fundamental role, of course, is making legislative decisions representing the local community, the electorate, the constituents, and the way in which one votes in making legislation or other deliberations of the parliament.

It is also well known that politicians do not require a formal qualification. There is no formal knowledge or skills qualification that is required and very little in the way of education or professional development. Indeed, the work that I am referring to follows on earlier work which Professor Colleen Lewis, I and others have done about the way in which members of parliament acquire and enhance their particular skills in conducting these parliamentary functions. One of the things that Colleen and I have found is that the way in which orientation or induction is conducted is highly variable from parliament to parliament and in many cases is rather weak, particularly in the Australian cases we looked at. There is very little by way of continuing education. There are sometimes in some parliaments a series of seminars and what have you that are orientated to the interests of members of parliament, but that tends to be the exception rather than the norm in our jurisdictions.

The way in which members of parliament learn is very often incidental, informal learning—observing what their peers are doing, observing what is seen to be the norm of behaviour and the ways in which those behaviours can be executed. One of the things that we need to think about is: how do members of parliament learn about and become informed about trust? What are the ways in which trust can be enhanced or which there might be derogation from it? What we argue in our paper is that the way in which members of parliament behave can be conditioned very much by codes of conduct. Those codes of conduct can very much shape, firstly, the way in which the individual members of the parliament behave and, secondly, the way in which the institution of parliament itself is seen and, consequently, the way in which the parliament can be perceived to the extent to which there is trust in the parliament.

The work that we have been doing has led to the publication of some benchmarks for codes of conduct for Commonwealth parliaments. This is work that was commissioned by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. What we have found is that there in fact had been very little available to guide parliaments or parliamentarians as to what ought to be included in codes of conduct or, indeed, the very concept that codes of conduct should be practised by individual parliaments. That is something that is relatively new. In 2006 there was an international conference involving the CPA, the United Nations Development Programme and a couple of other organisations which recommended some benchmarks for legislatures overall. One of the recommendations was that there needed to be a code of conduct for all parliaments. Indeed, in their report in paragraph 10.1.2 they say, 'The legislature shall approve and enforce

a code of conduct, including rules on conflicts of interest and acceptance of gifts.' Prior to that there was no international standard at all, and this now constitutes something of an international standard which is intended to guide all parliaments throughout the world.

At the time of that 2006 report there was no indication as to what should be in the codes of conduct. There are some interesting views about what that should be, and I think it is summed up by a statement of Riccardo Pelizzo, who said that codes—

> ... have generally taken two main forms: Ethics codes and conduct codes. Ethics codes tend to be fairly general documents: They formulate broad principles of behavior but they do not define what is appropriate and what is inappropriate behavior, nor do they establish sanctions for violations of the code. By contrast, codes of conduct tend to contain very specific provisions with clear sanctions for those who violate the dispositions of the code.

It was that view that clearly inspired the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to ask for the development of some guidelines for codes, and that commenced in 2014. The approach that we took in executing this was to review the literature, as one does for any project of this type, and then we turned to the parliaments themselves to get some guidance from them as to what currently exists.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is no small organisation. If you count all of the houses of parliament there are about 200 houses of parliament involved between the national parliaments and the subnational parliaments, the provinces, the territories, the states and what have you. It is quite a significant body of organisations. Of those that responded to us, which was 141, about 104 indicated that they had some form of code of conduct in place. In addition to that 104, another 11, most of which were Indian states, had codes of conduct which were general across the public sector as a whole and not specific to their parliamentary chambers that provided guidance to members of parliament as well as to others. Twenty-six of the 141 that responded said that they had no code of conduct at all. Some of those did have provisions in standing orders which some might interpret as codes of conduct, but they really did not have the same focus on conduct as a code of conduct would normally do.

We used that analysis to come up with some significant features which are in the written paper, and I will not go into that in the time available. I want to make the point that it had to be very flexible. We are dealing with chambers of parliaments which vary in size, from the smallest, which is St Helena—for those whose geography is very good, you will remember that is where Napoleon was exiled in the south Atlantic—to 650 in the British House of Commons. We are dealing with a huge range, and the environments in which those codes of conduct operate are vastly different. In a small chamber like St Helena, or even the Victorian chamber, all of the members know each other and that helps reinforce norms of behaviour. When it comes to something like the House of Commons in Britain, we found that members of the House of Commons could not even recognise whether people in the corridor were staffers wandering around or fellow members of the House of Commons, so we are dealing with really important distinctions there.

Our recommendations then proposed general principles rather than fine detail as to what should apply in every chamber, but we did say it is really important to state the values and principles on which it is founded. One of the things that I will come to very shortly is the importance of sanctions as a mechanism for encouraging members to behave in accordance with the ethics embedded in a code of conduct and to do so in a way which is going to be respected.

We think research still needs to be done with regard to how parliaments adopt codes of conduct, whether they have regard to the recommendations we have adopted or otherwise, and there needs to be further research on how these recommendations are adapted. There is an example right now in our home state of Victoria where there are proposals for a new code presently before the parliament. Happily, that follows our recommendations very closely, although not precisely. However, what is important is that there are sanctions available and that those sanctions are effectively applied. We have found evidence that the more rigorous a set of codes and its enforcement the better the performance of a parliament. It is also important to look at its role within the integrity system. Finally, there needs to be developed an instrument by which members of parliament can self-assess their own ethical competence.

To summarise, as I indicate there, it is important that there be all of these things. The final point is absolutely crucial: there needs to be an ethics adviser who can be approached on a highly confidential basis, in the same way as David Solomon was when he was the Integrity Commissioner here in Queensland.

Dr CRAWFORD: Thank you very much, Ken. I now call on Gabor Hellyer, who is going to talk on 'Trust and parliament: reviewing the evidence'.

Mr HELLYER: Hello, everyone. I am Gabor Hellyer from the New Zealand parliament. Today I am going to be talking about the academic literature on political trust. I have quite a bit to get through in 15 minutes. I am condensing a whole academic field of study, including a 560-page handbook on political trust, into 15 minutes and hopefully also making it relevant to parliaments. I will try not to speak too quickly, but start waving your hands if I am going too fast.

In terms of motivation for the paper, we hear a lot these days about the post-truth era—it is the theme of this conference as well—and the alleged death of expertise. A recent book that I read on post truth said that everybody has an obligation to fight that. I think that applies to us, too. That was the motivation for wanting to look at the evidence and what the academic literature can tell us about this. I have up there a bit of the structure of the presentation.

After I did my research I thought about the motivation for the tone of the presentation, which you might find slightly different to some of the things that we heard yesterday. I am trying to escape a little bit of the focus on Trump and Brexit. A lot of political history happened before our current moment. I think we can get a bit captivated by what is going on at the moment. There is a kind of pervasive doom-and-gloom narrative out there of democratic malaise. I would not suggest that we do not have any problems, but I would also like to try to find a different way to talk about the problems.

I have two quotes up here. The first you will see is from a report called *The crisis of democracy*, from 1975. I think that emphasises that this has been a topic of concern in established democracies for over 50 years. Underneath you have probably the leading figure in the study of political trust and her landmark book from 2011 saying that the crisis myth, while fashionable, exaggerates the extent of political disaffection and too often falls into the dangers of fact-free hyperbole. Obviously that was before Trump and Brexit; however, I think it is worth looking at the evidence from that time.

We do have a lot of challenges in terms of strong-man politics, as Obama recently called it, and authoritarianism, populism and all of that. I am not suggesting that those are not problems, but when we are looking at political trust I think the evidence paints a slightly more complex picture than some of the narratives that we hear. Yesterday Colin James mentioned the pervasive negativity in the media discourse having a negative effect. Sometimes in the way we talk about democracy we can fall into the same trap, so I am trying to find a slightly different way to talk about it.

In terms of an overview of my impressions from the academic literature on political trust, as I mentioned it has been a topic of concern for 50 years. It is really focused on studying attitudes rather than behaviours. Although people often like to point to declining voter turnout as a piece of evidence about what people feel about democracy—and I am not saying that voter turnout is not interesting and possibly a problem in and of itself—in terms of finding out what people think about democracy, in the field of political trust people really focus on actually studying the attitudes themselves. The data on attitudes is improving, but it is hard to escape the past. A lot of the data collection only really started in the 1980s—that really limits the extent of the long-term analysis that we can do—and in some cases it actually only started in the 1990s. However, examining long-term trends is really crucial. As I talk about in the paper, short-term variations in trust are expected, based on the theories that we have. If you want to speak meaningfully about what is going on in democracy, there is widespread agreement that you have to look at long-term trends.

Studies tend to focus mainly on description. It is still a very contested field, talking about what is actually happening in political trust. There is a little bit of an explanation of why it is happening. However, there is very little that looks at the consequences. That is one area that the literature does need to improve on. The final point is that there is a lot of contestation in the literature. I am already sensing that I am going to have to speed up a little, so I will skip through a couple of these slides.

In terms of parliament in the literature, I think it is quite interesting that there are some basic questions that we still do not really know how to answer about parliaments. This is something that Rebecca touched on yesterday. Do people distinguish between parliament and the politicians inside parliament when they are making their assessments? When people talk about distrusting parliament, is that just distrusting politicians? You can see these two quotes from, again, two leading people in the field with slightly contrasting assessments of that question. That is something that we really need to do more work on to understand.

Sorry, I had the slides around the wrong way. That is the politicians' slide. The other one is: do people actually distinguish between parliaments and other institutions of government? Again, these are two leading people in the field. We are not really sure at this point based on the evidence that we have. There is some

evidence that people do not; there is some evidence that people do. However, as people who care about parliaments, if we want to know how to address the problems and we want to characterise the problems accurately, these are questions that we really do need to answer in terms of devising good solutions to them.

This is a broad overview of the conclusions in the literature. There are basically two main narratives. Some people say that there has been a big decline in trust and some people say that what we actually have is called trendless fluctuation. A lot of the difference in those two perspectives is based on your starting point. For people who start in the 1960s, there was a big decline in trust around the 1950s and 1960s, but mainly in the 1960s and going through into the early 1970s, based on the available data. From the 1980s onwards, looking at all established democracies, the literature concludes that there has not actually been what is called a secular or a general trend of a decrease in trust. You find a lot of cross-national variation, which is something that we saw in Casey's presentation yesterday, in terms of differences in levels of trust in different countries. You also see a lot of fluctuation over time, which I think becomes quite important when you are looking at a country's specific trends. We will talk about that with Australia in a second.

There is agreement in the literature that there is a so-called democratic deficit. That is really about people having a very high endorsement of democratic values overall, which has remained fairly stable for a very long time—it is pretty much universal that people support the idea of democracy—but people's assessments of the overall performance of democratic regimes falls short of that. That is where that democratic deficit comes in: people's expectations are not being met. I think that is possibly a slightly more helpful way to characterise the problem than just talking about the low trust.

Going on to trends in New Zealand, New Zealand really suffers from a lack of data, I have to say. I will speak a little about that at the end, if I have time. Satisfaction with democracy has been steady at 65 per cent since 2002. Trust in government has actually gone up since the 1990s, with data going up to 2011. Mixed-member proportional representation, or MMP, does seem to have made a difference in terms of how much people feel that their vote counts. There has been a decrease in the figures on members of parliament being out of touch. MMP does seem to have made a difference in that way. Overall, the Institute for Governance and Policy Studies in New Zealand concluded that we know relatively little about trust in New Zealand. I think there is a little bit of complacency there, perhaps. That is something that we need to do better at.

Looking at Australia, I am very reluctant to speak about Australian politics to an audience full of Australians, because you all know a lot more about it than I do. The data is somewhat better for Australia, but the outlook is worse. Over the past 10 years, in terms of the robust longitudinal measures that we have for Australia, there have been pretty significant decreases in trust. We have satisfaction with democracy, which is a slightly higher level measure than trust in politicians—it is how satisfied are you with the overall system's operation—going down from 86 per cent in 2007 to 60 per cent in 2016. That is quite a significant drop. Trust in government as a whole has gone down similarly. Interestingly, parliaments have measured around 30 per cent of trust since the 1990s. That has not really changed in terms of the available data that we have. I think the big question in Australia is: are those dynamics structural? Do they show a big long-term trend occurring or is it more of a cyclical phenomenon? That is a big question that the literature is very preoccupied with. It does not necessarily have a good answer at this stage.

There is a key Australian study from Bean in 2015 looking at 1983 through to 2010. He found no secular downward trend in trust, although trust was very low in that period. Again, when looking at current trends it is interesting to keep that in mind. I think the next five to 10 years in Australian politics are going to be very interesting, because if the trends continue it will be much more plausible to talk about a secular downward trend. However, if we see what we have seen internationally, you might expect those numbers to rebound a bit and then what you would have is that trendless fluctuation that we see in some of the international literature.

I am not sure if I am going to have time to go through too many of these slides. I have up here a list of some of the main factors that people look at in terms of what determines political trust. One of the things that is quite interesting here is that some of the strongest evidence for the objective quality of government, as measured by experts, is a really strong ability to predict cross-national variation in trust. The winners and losers slide refers to, basically, that people who vote for the winning party do seem to trust politics a lot more, which indicates that maybe people do not distinguish too much between parliaments and the incumbents in them.

The one that I find really interesting is corruption. People said that corruption has a big impact on political trust, but most of our measures of corruption are actually about perceptions of corruption. I am not really sure if, at a single point in time, there is a big difference between viewing politicians as corrupt and viewing them as untrustworthy. I think that definitely needs a bit more study. Certainly that seems like a very strong factor in Australia, even though people do not have very much experience of corruption, but they have very high perceptions of corruption and it does seem to impact trust a lot.

Unfortunately I cannot go through all of these slides, because I do want to get on to talking about the relevance for parliaments. I am going to have to skip ahead a little bit, unfortunately, even though I have some very fascinating graphs. I will keep those for the paper and I do encourage you to take a look at them.

In terms of implications for parliament, my impression from the literature is that we really need to know more about what people think about parliament. I have this on the next slide, but Australasia is very far behind in this regard—both Australia and New Zealand. In Europe they have the European Values Survey, and they are part of the Global Barometer Studies as well. Those are much more frequent than the data that we have for Australasia. I think we really need to be better about that. We also need to know more not only quantitatively, about how much people trust parliaments and what they think about them, but also qualitatively, how they understand parliaments' role and how that affects the assessments that they make.

The quote that I have up there is possibly a controversial one. I put it up there for that reason. One of the leading figures in this study, who wrote the conclusion to the handbook I mentioned earlier, is so convinced by the evidence on the quality of governance that they say that the answer is not more democracy necessarily; it is better quality of governance if you want to improve the legitimacy of democracy in the eyes of the public. For parliaments, I think that says that the core contribution, through core functions of good quality legislative process and meaningful scrutiny, does still have a very important part. I completely support and agree with all of the emphasis on communicating parliament—I think that is crucial—but it is important not to lose sight of the core functions of parliament and improving those as well.

In terms of my two cents, we already heard our Speaker mention the regular review of rules. I think that is absolutely crucial to keeping parliament up-to-date and providing a regular forum for those conversations to happen. The one that I would really like to see a lot more of is independent funding of parliaments—I mean, independent from the executive. The reason I would give for that is that parliaments feel the impact of a lot of these challenges and a lot of these trends that we are discussing, but my impression is that parliaments have actually very little agenda-setting and decision-making capacity in these areas. A robust process for the independent funding of parliament would provide a forum and a space where some of that can happen. It is more of a high-level mechanism. I am not saying that that is intrinsically going to solve these problems, but you need a way for parliaments to be more agents in this space. I think it is absolutely crucial to advocate for that.

In the last minute that I have I will go through some of the key messages I would like you to take away from this. In the literature there is no real evidence for a decline in trust over the last 40 years. There is trendless fluctuation and cross-national variation. If we can get away from the doom and gloom of democracy being completely in trouble—there are definitely significant challenges—and if we change the tone to making democracy work the way that people want it to and address that gap between aspirations and assessments of performance then I think that might be more helpful.

The literature on political trust, even though it has been going for 40 to 50 years, has to do a lot more to understand the causes of changes in trust and particularly the consequences. That is an area that they do need to improve. Australasia needs to do better on data collection. Even though this is going to take me a bit over my time, if you indulge me for one second, one of the best sources of data is the World Values Survey. Through my work on this project I got in touch with the person who runs the World Values Survey in New Zealand.

Currently in New Zealand we are not sure whether we are going to be able to be part of the next round of the World Values Survey, which is the largest data set of relevance for this, because of a lack of funding. He is only looking for $50,000. I think that says a lot about the state of robust data collection in New Zealand. It is something I am trying to work with him on to find sources of funding for that. If anybody has any ideas, I am all ears. We really need to make sure that we are still collecting robust data on these things. Seeing as the buzzer has gone, I will leave it at that, but I am very happy to have any questions or conversation about those points.

Dr CRAWFORD: Thank you very much, Gabor. I am sure this has raised huge numbers of questions. I can see a lot of people with their hands up already. James is moving around with the microphone. Please identify yourself first and also the person to whom you are addressing the question.

Mr CAMPBELL: I am a former member of the Queensland parliament and was the inaugural chairman of the members' ethics and privileges committee. I have found this interesting. I would like to ask a question to Trevor. Firstly, does the New Zealand parliament have a citizen's right of reply? How do you, as Speaker, handle the disrespect that executive government might show the parliament? It might not happen in New Zealand but quite often in Australian parliaments the executive government shows total disrespect for the institution of parliament.

Mr MALLARD: I will answer the first question first. Yes, for about a decade we have had a citizen's right to have a written response put into the record, with the permission of the Speaker, where they have been adversely commented on. Maybe it has occurred five or six times over the years. I know one of them very well because it was a response to a comment that I made. I did not entirely agree with the Speaker putting it in, but we will leave that.

The second question was about reining in executive government or making sure the executive government properly respects parliament. It is something which is very hard. I think we have a set of standing orders in New Zealand which need further development in that direction, but there are occasional powers that the Speaker has when he or she thinks that a minister has behaved badly. An example from a couple of weeks ago in the New Zealand parliament was that one of our ministers was exceptionally disrespectful in his answering of a member's written questions—outrageously disrespectful.

What I did was not only required him to correct them but in New Zealand, unlike other parliaments, a Speaker has total discretion over the number of supplementary questions in the House. We have 12 questions every day. We generally have about 60 supplementary questions. I gave the opposition party a further 20. The message was that if the government are not going to be accountable in written questions they are going to be facing more time answering extra questions in the parliament, in order to reinforce the fact that they need to keep their ministers in line.

Dr CRAWFORD: Ken, did you want to give a quick answer?

Prof. COGHILL: I cannot resist this. There are a couple of answers—one of which is to have a bicameral parliament in which the government does not hold a majority in the upper house. The next best to that is to have an MMP system, where it is very difficult for a government to achieve a majority.

Mr YUSSUF: Evidently there is no substitute for parliamentary democracy, but what can we do to maintain the dignity and the respect and the trust of the public in that institution? The Speaker will say that he does not require formal training or education or something like that. If you do not have minimal education for entry to parliament, parliamentary seats will attract all sorts of characters which will inevitably diminish the standing of parliament in the long term.

Dr CRAWFORD: Who would you like to answer that?

Mr YUSSUF: Anyone can or all of them.

Dr CRAWFORD: Everyone. We will start down this end then.

Mr HELLYER: I think you raise a really good point. The training, as we have talked about, and properly equipping members to do their jobs is a really key part of that. We heard from Colin James yesterday. Giving members enough resources to be able to develop their roles I think is a really important part of addressing that.

Prof. COGHILL: As I mentioned briefly in my talk, I think that the evidence from countries that have a very strong and rigorously enforced code of conduct is a help. I do not say it is a complete answer. Certainly if you talk to the Canadians they say, 'Our code of conduct is very tough and it is rigorously enforced and we have a better parliament because of that.'

Dr CRAWFORD: Jonathan says that he does not have anything to add. Trevor?

Mr MALLARD: I probably do. Part of it is raising the skills of the members. We have to recognise that expectations on members have changed over a period of time. Not long before I became an MP, parliament in New Zealand basically sat while the cows were dry or between the tupping and the lambing and did not start until May—right up until the 1980s. Since the 1980s we have had an increase in the professionalism but not the training of members of parliament. That is something that I am working on as

part of our appropriations review. People are thrown into jobs as spokespeople, as lead opposition people, as chairs of select committees and as ministers without any decent pre-training. That results in a lot of mistakes and I think a lack of credibility in the system.

Prof. SAWER: I have a comment on Jonathan O'Dea's presentation about the failure to keep campaign promises as a source of loss of trust. That is persuasive on the face of it. Political scientists have been doing some experimental research to see what voters' attitudes are to promise keeping. They have found that voters do not necessarily prioritise promise keeping if, for example, the promises are unpopular in terms of public opinion or if they are seen as contrary to the public interest, circumstances may have changed and so on. If the promise is seen as contrary to public interest, that is seen as a reason for not keeping promises and a valid reason. Anyway, I thought you might be interested in this research. It is forthcoming in the *International Political Science Review.*

Mr O'DEA: There is a level of common sense that people have to apply. The reality is that you are not going to see a constant trend in all jurisdictions over time because there are so many factors which influence trust, and I tried to give a sense of that. Some are institutional. Some are more personal, from a perspective of each individual. Some are dictated by the behaviour of the political players themselves, and that is what I focused on and I think that is the most important factor.

I disagree, and I have given statistical evidence—both Julia Gillard on the carbon tax and Tony Abbott in terms of fundamental promises made during an election—where the statistics and the measures clearly demonstrate that trust markedly changed following those two instances, and they were fairly major—likewise with Kevin Rudd when he backflipped. Irrespective of people's views on what the public interest considerations were around whether we should or should not have an environmental cost attached to pollution or carbon, the fact that they changed what was seen as a fundamental commitment in all three examples undeniably affected the level of trust or perceived trust in those people and in the government of the time. I would be very interested in your research, but I think it is contrary to those three examples I have given.

Ms HYLAND-WOOD: This is more of a comment. I want to thank the Australasian Study of Parliament Group for making opportunities for a number of PhD students, of which I am one, to be here and to highlight the fact that it is bittersweet to be sitting here listening to this. It is great to hear it, but I am heartbroken that the media that has created the Trump phenomenon and continues to feed the Trump monster, I would argue, perpetuates. I am really glad there is a place in the world where these thoughtful, candid conversations are happening, that there is representation from multiple countries and that it is bipartisan or multipartisan. This is Australasia's era to really stand up. This is the future superpower—this region. There is no question.

I am very encouraged by hearing Gabor and Casey, because for a lot of young people in the United States the wind has really gone out of their sails and I think that is going to result in a whole generation lost to public service. I have been incredibly impressed. Thank you for the opportunity to include a number of students and future leaders in this. I really look forward to reading all of the papers. They are very, very relevant. Thank you very much for taking the time to prepare them and to be here and to have this discussion because it is not happening, sadly, in the United States.

Prof. LEWIS: I have a question about whether we are actually doing enough to take the parliament to the people. I think that trust in parliament as an institution is much more important than trust in individual MPs, for obvious reasons—MPs come and go through the parliament. I took Mr Speaker's point about what you have done to enliven the website and to have people interact with you that way, but how often do parliaments actually go out to the people? How many sporting clubs do you go to and address so that people understand just how important parliament as an institution is to us?

Where are the other sorts of community groups like the Lions clubs or the forums in regional cities when they have their big fairs or their music festivals or whatever? I know the Ombudsman did it for a while, but they only do it for a little while and then they come back and think, 'That didn't work,' but nothing works quickly. I think it is so important that we take the parliament to the people and that parliament is shown to be making an attempt to go out there and in an interesting—dare I say 'sexy'—way let them know why parliament is so important to their daily lives. I would be interested in people's comments on that. I have one more comment: try crowd funding if you cannot get the $50,000 any other way.

Mr MALLARD: On the first thing, next Tuesday our MPs are going to get a draft parliamentary engagement strategy. Last year one of our research companies did a lot of attitudinal research on parliament and what has flowed out of that is an obvious lack of engagement and a number of suggestions.

One of them includes—we do a number of offshore parliamentary tours—a number of internal parliamentary tours to highlight the role of parliament and the engagement that people can have, including to events, as you said.

On the question of how we get involved, probably in the last couple of months I have done eight or nine speeches on the role of parliament to various service and social groups. They are always really well received, but what we are not sure of yet, because they are pretty new, is what is going to flow from that or whether people are going to pick up the engagement. That will take time.

Mr O'DEA: Colleen, I think parliament does make an effort. Primarily it reaches out to and is open more to people who are school aged. A lot of schools come in. Engaging young people is incredibly important. Parliament can do a lot more. I mentioned before the exercise through the then public accounts committee that I chaired with citizen juries and trying to reach out. I think parliaments can do a lot more of that sort of thing, particularly through the committee system, actually reaching out—rather than in reactive way saying that those who want to come to a parliament open day can come or those who want to make a submission to an inquiry can do so, actually actively going out more so and soliciting interest and getting people interested.

Certainly politicians can go out and speak, and they do at a whole range of groups, clubs included. Sometimes clubs like Lions and Rotary come into the parliament and they are always welcome, but the great enabler that we have in this age is technology. Parliaments well and truly have to grasp that nettle of technology, social media included. I know that in the New South Wales parliament and some of my colleagues here today, who work within more the parliamentary institution, are very conscious of the need for parliament to go out and engage with people. Social media and technology are great enablers in this age and we need to actually get if not ahead of the game then at least in the game because we are a long way behind where we need to be.

Prof. COGHILL: I am really excited by the things that are happening in New Zealand. I think what you have outlined to us is innovative and progressive and I would hope that it has some of the effect that Colleen seeks in the question and comment that she makes. When I was Speaker I did some of the going out and speaking about the parliament that you have done. In Victoria there has also been at least one occasion on which the parliament actually met away from Parliament House. I think it may have in fact been on two occasions—I cannot remember the detail—but I think the Legislative Assembly met in Bendigo and the Legislative Council met in Ballarat. My memory is a little hazy; I am not sure if that is exactly correct. That is the sort of thing that can be done. It is, in fact, very difficult logistically to move the whole box and dice away from Parliament House to another location, but if you can combine that with live streaming of what is going on and what have you then I think you can make significant steps towards what Colleen is advocating.

Mr HELLYER: The New Zealand parliament is, I think, doing more and more of that. At the moment there is a big piece of legislation, the End of Life Choice Bill, before the justice committee and they have been going out to lots of communities to have hearings of evidence. They do receive very positive feedback from submitters in the communities that they are getting out there and being seen. I think there is a very intrinsic reason to do it.

I am slightly more sceptical as to whether it is the solution to our problems. I think parliaments do have an obligation to communicate, to engage and to be accessible. I am not entirely sure if that is going to solve the trust problem, though. I think that is such a big, aggregate problem and you can only reach so many people through direct engagement. I think we absolutely do need to be doing it, but we need to be looking at other things as well.

Dr CRAWFORD: A very quick last question.

Mrs CHERNEY: It is actually on this topic. My name is Lorraine Cherney from the University of Queensland. A couple of weeks ago I was on a school tour of Queensland parliament with my daughter's year 6 class. It was a wonderful experience. It was done really, really well. This morning when I was leaving to come to the conference my daughter asked if she could take the little packet of parliament mints and the conference program to take into the class so that they could discuss it and have a chat today at school about it. It was just a wonderful experience to see the kids sitting in the chamber role-playing a debate, arguing with their teacher across the chamber, shouting, getting an opportunity to shout 'shame, shame, shame', at their teacher across the chamber. It was fascinating and it was wonderful and they asked such

great questions. It was probably an experience that a great many people in this room have never had. If you do get an opportunity to go and volunteer on a school trip to parliament, it is really worth doing, especially if you would like to get an opportunity not to work on your PhD.

Dr CRAWFORD: Thank you very much. That brings this session to an end. I do think perhaps some of the issues we have not covered—looking at people who already feel marginalised and trying to attract those into the democratic process—are some of the really big challenges that we have in terms of trust. Thank you very much, everyone. Do not forget, you go down to level 3 and out to the Speaker's Green for a quick photo. The quicker you are, the more morning tea you will have. Thank you.

Proceedings suspended from 10.21 am to 10.43 am.

Dr MOLS: Thank you all for coming this morning to this fifth panel session entitled 'Communication and Public Engagement'. I do not think I need any introduction. I will hand over immediately to Iain Walker as our first presenter.

Mr WALKER: In the 15 minutes that we have together I really hope to convey to you three words. That is why I have not bothered with a presentation deck. I want you to leave with that sentiment: 'Learn from Ireland'.

I am going to spend a little bit of time giving you a sense of who we are, because most people I have met today have gone, 'What on earth is newDemocracy?' I will then step through what we have learned as a research foundation over the last 10 years and then give you one practical model that will help you learn from Ireland.

Who we are, firstly: newDemocracy is a research foundation underwritten and funded by a former political donor who walked out of a fundraiser in 2007 pretty colourfully. We never name the party or MP concerned but he essentially said, 'I'll write whatever cheque you want if you take money out of politics.' And they said, 'You'll write your cheque anyway if you want to work in this state.' That is the starting point.

He contacted the University of Sydney and said, 'Who do I give money to who takes donations out of politics?' and they said, 'You're an idiot. Money will always flow downhill. You could ban all donations tomorrow. It won't make a difference. Read these five books and come back when you know something.' It is a tremendous way to work with Luca. He read these five books. They are on citizens juries on Athenian democracy and he saw the power of randomly selected people. It is a fantastic idea. How do we trial that? That is mainly what newDemocracy seeks to do. We take great ideas in academia and we try to interface with the real world of mayors, ministers and premiers and run trials to see if this is going to work in practice.

We are fortunate to be supported by former premiers Nick Greiner and Geoff Gallop. The No. 1 criticism you can throw at a democratic reform organisation is, 'If you want to do something, get elected.' What Nick and Geoff really share—and they do not share many policy positions, if any, that I have discovered—is the belief that our existing democracy is fantastic at resolving 70 per cent of issues but it has some problems with the last 30 per cent.

At the core of the problem we seek to solve is that we have built a system that is far too responsive to public opinion. It massively values what people think in the next few seconds much more than a considered view. In fact, a criminal jury analogy is a tremendous one. Let us say that Mike and I get arrested after this session and we are offered a choice to phone-poll a thousand people to decide whether we go to jail or to show a small sample of people an array of evidence—contested evidence, diverse positions. Let them discuss it amongst themselves and see if they find common ground. No-one ever takes the poll, and yet that is really at the core—public opinion testing of how many public decisions are shaped—of what we see as the problem.

Why do I say 'Be like Ireland'? Ireland, you may recall, has taken two votes this year—one on marriage equality and one on abortion law. A right aligned government has an office of deliberation where it can pass a contentious issue to 100 randomly selected citizens. In each of those cases the 100 randomly selected citizens went through a six- to nine-month process and explored the nuances of the issue. We would never take a policy position. I am not here to comment on the merits of that, but the one idea I would ask you to accept is: in a very religious country like Ireland, are they not very politically challenging issues to take on? What empowered that Prime Minister and that parliament to act? What empowered them to get beyond the really predictable polar edges of that argument, picking the worst and most extreme examples from the other and using that as a battleground to the end?

What it was is that there is a complementary voice of everyday citizens who, once they learn enough about an issue, will stand alongside it and make that case to the remainder of the community. There was a nice comment from Trevor in the prior session. He said, 'Citizens cannot trust what they cannot see.' That is great, but there is a wonderful phenomenon called rational ignorance. We have better stuff to do. In Australia, I am 116.3 millionth of a vote. Will I read the Henry tax review? No, because no-one cares—no-one should care—about my view.

What do we do to change that? We need to shrink this to a number where it is a rational choice for me to read and learn, where it is a rational choice for me to listen to other experts, where it is a rational choice for me to think as part of a group and think about what expertise, instead of that which is being pushed at me, I would choose to engage with as well. It is only by moving beyond public opinion to public judgement that we are likely to see a better form of trust in parliament occurring—that element of, 'Well it's boring; I'm not going to watch it.'

Who will we listen to? The Edelman Trust Barometer was also referred to in the prior session. We tend to listen to other people like us. What we really like about random selection is that it delivers blue collar, white collar, no collar, old, young, all walks of life and all types of jobs standing in front of a decision. We think it is a great political asset for anyone in elected office to have a group standing alongside them saying, 'We have read this and it is reasonable.'

In the specific case of the Irish abortion vote—because that was embedded in the constitution, that had to go to a referendum—a group of citizens ended up pulling out 11 scenarios. They said, 'In this scenario over here, 97 per cent of us think this is reasonable,' and that was in the case of sexual assault. 'In this scenario over here, only three per cent of us think it is reasonable,' and that was in the case of people who gender-select for family reasons; they would rather have a girl or a boy. The government was then able to say, 'In the event a referendum passes, our law will broadly follow the shape of these 11 recommendations. These things will be in but these things will not be permitted.' What does that do for public debate? It knocks out some of the ridiculous extremes that get used.

Using that as a baseline, I want to fast-forward and use the minutes that we have together for an idea that we are teasing out in Queensland. Queensland is unique: with no upper house, it is a very different dynamic. There was a Queensland MP about a year ago who said to me, 'I understand what you guys do with citizens juries but there is one part of it to me that is really stupid.' I was of course hurt but I heard him out. He said, 'Why do you let governments commission them? No-one is going to trust a government commissioning a jury. It feels a little bit poacher and gamekeeper. You should let an opposition commission them.' I have been doing this job for eight years and it challenged this really core assumption. Are projects run well because of authority? I can only recruit random pools of citizens if you say, 'And you will get an answer from this minister or this Premier.'

Initially, I must say, for 10 minutes I thought it was the dumbest idea I had ever heard, and yet here I am presenting it to you. Why do we think it works? The MP continued and said, 'What parliaments really need to earn public trust is a put-up-or-shut-up mechanism. We can spend a lot of time through the committee structure, which does work well, coming to a position which is carefully considered and supported by evidence. We can spend a year or 15 months doing that, and then you can get hit by a bus of a really good tag line of someone making a doorstop and a five-second comment and that thing dies in two days because of that responsiveness to public opinion.'

What if there was a countermeasure to be offered? The idea is simply this: an opposition would be empowered such that three times in a term of government they can call a citizens jury. Why is this in a government's interest? Because if they do not call it it tells you something. Really simply, we think this is a low-cost idea that can be trialled. Let us look at how you could elevate the quality of public discourse and how parliaments behave. I will confess that I was a little traumatised by the stirring joy that it brought being able to yell 'shame' across a chamber. I was not sure that was the high point we were looking for from school engagements. But we look at it and say, 'That is shallow oppositionalism.' That is not a partisan statement; it is just the nature of an election system. It makes sense to do some shallow oppositionalism. It works really well.

How do we change the incentives around that? Our simple concept, again, is to say: 'You are the government; you have just introduced a measure.' I am not going to use a live example here. The opposition will predictably say, 'It is the end of the world. Something terrible will happen,' so there are now two courses. If your argument will warrant scrutiny by a pool of 50 citizens looking at it for 30 to 40 hours, then ask for

that audience. Ask for a cross-section of the citizenry to look at this in detail. We will never get millions of people to do it, and if we do it through simpler online mechanisms it will lead to shallow and gamed results. But if we ask for a small sample of people, exactly as we would in a criminal jury setting, we will get people to think.

We set a threshold, and we have been testing a threshold that recommendations come when 80 per cent of the room can agree to something. It sounds like a high number. In practice almost everything ends unanimously because people do not have an incentive to disagree. They start to work out what needs to change about statements to earn their support.

I have run this foundation for the last seven years. We have operated 22 projects. What I hope to convey is that we understand the mechanisms of how people work together. Like anything, a jury mechanism can be done well and it can be done badly. It is about knowing what criteria break them. I have broken one project. It is only by researching and exploring this—and I apologise to the South Australian minister for the environment because he had to live with the consequences—by doing all these microscopic tests that we now know there is a rigorous mechanism which we can use.

We know how to get genuine random recruitment. We have researched in the background why people answer those invitations, and I will give you a little snapshot. It says on the invitation what you will do with it so I knew my decision mattered. It came to me so I figured it went to other normal people, not the people who go to council meetings. While you ask me for a lot of time, it had a beginning and an end so I could make plans around it. Most opportunities to contribute in public life are never ending. Anyone who has coached a child's sports team knows that you are not getting out of that—you are doing it next year and the year after—whereas this says, 'I need five days of your life but when it is done you are done and you have contributed.'

The asset we would seek to deliver is, firstly, a group of citizens who stand alongside a government of whatever persuasion and says, 'We have looked at this and, for all the noise, this is fair enough.' We think it will have a secondary benefit in that that reaction to shallow oppositionalism, that chance to bang the drum and say, 'This is the end of the world,' but maybe with a claim that would not pass scrutiny, will give oppositions pause because if they are not readily to go to the deeper level of letting citizens really pull this apart in detail maybe it will change that behaviour.

My concluding thought is: we cannot simply ask people to behave better in parliament. It is one option. It is about incentives. It is about incentives that will resonate in the press. Please can we learn from Ireland? If you think I would love to but I cannot afford it, as a foundation we have a standing offer for up to $5 million for any parliament that would like to trial something. If you want to do it, we can turn the key, operate it and fund it.

Dr MOLS: Thank you very much, Iain, for a great talk. Our next presenter is Mike Price.

Mr PRICE: I am the chief information officer at the parliament of New South Wales. I would like to credit Scott Fuller, my Hansard editor, who frankly did the lion's share of work on the paper, leaving me to just edit a bit, throw in a few ideas and then pull together the presentation, so thanks very much to Scott.

We have decided to look within the theme of this session of communication and engagement specifically from an information technology perspective. We started out thinking that we will talk about some of the great things you can do with IT. We realised along the way that there are also a lot of problems, so I am going to talk about a few of those and some of the remedies we think we can take to deal with those. Like quite a few of the presenters, I am not going to go through all the points in the paper. I have picked out what I think are the most interesting ones.

It is probably not very controversial to say that information technology has contributed significantly to the current climate of distrust that many of the other speakers have talked about—Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others. Probably enough has been said in this conference about the current President, Twitter and some of those stories. I do not know if you all know that he has now been endorsed by the Pope.

Another aspect of information technology that leads to mistrust is viruses—in this case ransomware, having a PC hijacked. Closely related to that is the worry about information that is on the internet, whether it is going to get hacked or whether it is going to get shared. There is a lot of discussion about that now in the context of the health records database. I think a lot of these stories have led people to be very lacking in trust.

This is all in the context that the internet and technology in general have brought us some great advances and have made things much easier than they used to be. Here is just one example for younger people in the room. You may not realise that back in the 1980s we all used to carry around these things in what you now have in your smart phone. Well, of course we didn't, but if we had wanted something like the smart phone this is what we would have needed.

Information technology has contributed significantly to the current climate of distrust. One more example on that from a New South Wales perspective: when our former premier, Mike Baird, stood down he had been prolific on Twitter, probably pretty well as prolific as President Trump, and he had made a lot of his announcements on Twitter. Everything he did pretty well was on Twitter rather than on conventional platforms and then as soon as he had resigned he deleted his account. That, firstly, I think was a bit damaging to the trust people had previously had in him. It also caused people a problem in our state records in that what were effectively records, important records of the parliament and of his government, had disappeared.

For communication to be effective it must be trusted. I am going to look briefly at how we consider whether we find someone trustworthy. Conventionally we assess trustworthiness in terms of characteristics like honesty, reliability and benevolence. With individuals we do that largely through interaction. We can meet someone, we can shake their hand, we can look them in the eye. We may not know straightaway. They may feel trustworthy, but over a period of time we can see whether they did what they said they were going to do, whether they stuck to the same message. We have had some interesting comments already this morning about people who changed the message that they were putting out. We can assess individuals, even remote individuals like politicians, but when it comes to institutions it is not quite so simple. The relationship between institutions and individuals is asymmetric. The information flows only in one way. Where there is no interaction it is very hard for us as individuals to think over time to assess whether we trust those institutions.

What do we do about it? The conventional response of governments and parliaments and other institutions is to provide more information. Parliaments already release a huge amount of information. We have *Hansard*, annual reports, committee reports and auditors-general reports. All those types of information are out there. They are all afflicted by this problem that it is a one-way flow. It is asymmetric. It does not encourage engagement. Quite often the content is really rather opaque. I am a big fan of *Hansard* but if you really want to find out exactly what happened in the current issue of the day, starting with *Hansard* is not usually the best idea. Another thing parliaments do is put up logs and other forms of social media. That can be better, but it does depend on the content being relevant to the citizen's interest and allowing meaningful interaction.

This brings us to a concept that at least one speaker has already mentioned which is the echo chamber. I just put that quote up from Cass Sunstein which I think is quite interesting—

> Although millions of people are using the Internet to expand their horizons, many people are doing the opposite, creating a Daily Me that is specifically tailored to their own interests and prejudices

Cass Sunstein said that back in 2001. That was before Facebook, Twitter or any of the other social media we are familiar with today. It was really quite a prescient comment maybe, but it has certainly got worse since and that problem has been amplified since. This I think rather neatly illustrates this; this is a graph of the level of activity. In the case of Facebook, over on the left you have the echo chamber—lots and lots of likes, lots of activity. On the other side, on the right, you have the flame wars, where there are lots of comments, negative comments—again, lots of activity. In the middle you have the valley of open-mindedness, very low activity, and if you cannot read the words at the bottom it says 'productive discussions', and that is where productive discussions live on Facebook and probably on some other forms of social media. I rather like that one.

In the digital echo chambers, as we said, people sort themselves into homogeneous groups. It is difficult to know how we can communicate with them and with their digital worlds in a way that preserves the content, actually reaches them and is not immediately blown away by the next competition for their interest. I have to say, if you are hoping that at this point I reveal the magic answer, I do not think we have an answer for this overall, but we have some things we can do to try to improve, but it is a problem that is out there.

What we think is access to information in itself is not the central problem—I have already made some suggestion of that—but rather it is access to accessible information. Here is one example from New South Wales. The Legislative Council can and does order government to produce documents, like a number of

the other upper houses do. Recently some people may have seen the publicity around the Powerhouse Museum and the stadiums where the government was forced to release documents. A lot of it is technically public, but if you want to read it you have to go into the Legislative Council, sit at a designated desk during business hours and read it at that desk. That is not terribly accessible. If we could put it online it would be much better.

I think what is interesting about that is that the same would apply to other types of documents that are tabled. Obviously people are familiar with annual reports and other documents being tabled in parliament. They are, as I understand, literally put on a table and the paper document is there. A lot of them are available online. Annual reports almost universally are. Others are not. What strikes me here is that parliament could be a curator for the public of information that is already there. It could also put other information on. Going back to the case of the order for documents, it could say to executive government, 'You have to provide them to us online,' and that would be instead of getting a stack of papers. There are a few practical problems, I am sure, around that but I think it is an interesting thought.

Parliaments should certainly place greater emphasis on audiovisual services. There is a forecast there from Cisco about video content comprising 82 per cent of internet traffic within three years and most digital worlds are linked via audiovisual content. I am not going to play this video, but it is just an example. We all are grabbed by the audiovisual things that appear on our Twitter or Facebook feeds much more than the words. A lot of parliaments already do broadcast a lot of our proceedings, but if you want to see them you have to see them at a particular time.

The next thing I would want to suggest is that video on demand is superior and even really necessary so that citizens do not need to be available at a particular time. This is just expected in the modern era. My chief executive, Mark Webb, who is in the audience, was telling that me that his daughter Molly, who is 10, was outraged recently that they were going to sit down together and watch a program as a family and it was on at 8.30. She could not understand that there was something that was only on at a certain time. 'Happy to watch it. Why can't we just watch it now?' She has a good point. If that is what she is thinking now, over time that is only going to become more the trend. We think providing video on demand—and some parliaments already have done this—is the way forward. There is also potential, if you can do that, to have parliamentary education sections strengthened through providing video content. You could condense essential elements of bills, enhanced by video clips, and better still if it encourages interaction and responses from citizens.

Another theme on providing accessible information is the question of live captioning of broadcasts. Federal government does it and we are looking at it in New South Wales, as one or two others are. There is obviously cost involved and there is complexity. There are inherent problems of getting those subtitles accurate as you go, but in general where it has been done it has generally been felt to work well. There is obviously an accessibility gain. We think about this usually in terms of benefit for the deaf or people with hearing impairments, but think about it like this: it can benefit any of us who ever want to watch a broadcast in a noisy environment or, indeed, in a quiet one. For instance, have you ever tried watching the TV in a pub or maybe an airport? Subtitles, as we can see there, help a lot and you can actually just watch what is going on with the subtitles. Without the subtitles you are pretty lost. Similarly, in terms of a quiet environment, I think a lot of us would benefit from being able to switch the volume right off and not disturb a sleeping or reading partner.

Another issue around audiovisual information I respectfully say parliaments might want to consider is the imposition of terms and conditions. These obviously are done sincerely—they define the information as being worthy of a particular level of respect—but in the digital worlds of citizens this clashes with people's expectations. With some trepidation I have an example here from Queensland. I am not going to risk further trying to interpret or analyse this or say more about it, but I am sure most people in the room, not just those from Queensland, are familiar with this one. The point is—and I think the ABC have summed it up in the headline—that the parliament has rules against being ridiculed, which you may think is ridiculous. I will not try to say more about that one. We had another one in New South Wales recently where a minister was caught laughing over a picture of Borat in a mankini. Time does not allow me to explain why he was doing that. The minister in front of him, Gabrielle Upton, was obviously oblivious to it and this again caused some concerned questions to be asked of me and my boss by our Speaker about whether it should be allowed to be out there. I think most of us would say, 'Expect that the information is going to be there, don't try to tie rules around it and just be careful what pictures you hold up and which way the camera is pointing.'

The final point I am going to make is on digital democracy initiatives. Iain actually mentioned something about those, as quite a few other speakers have. This is a French initiative called 'parlement et citoyens'—literally parliament and citizens. It involves citizens in the lawmaking process before bills are submitted to parliament. They did a consultation on biodiversity recently. They had over 9,000 participants and over 2,000 contributions. I have a two-minute video and I have only one minute left. It is in French, of course, but it is with subtitles. The subtitles had the option of being in English, which I have chosen, so I have put it up without the sound but with English subtitles. This is the video they put on their website to promote parlement et citoyens and how it works. The MP makes a video of what they want to do. Members of the public can view the video. They can vote 'yes', 'no', 'maybe'. They can put comments on, a bit like Facebook or Twitter all over again, and that information is fed in from multiple people and collated and the MP then—and they are actually making a parallel with Greek democracy here, the original democracy—goes on and has effectively a citizens forum over the internet. As I say, that is one of the things Iain was talking about. I might just leave that running as I walk down, but I think I will stop there with one second to go. Thank you.

Dr MOLS: Thank you very much, Mike. That was a wonderful presentation. Our next presenter is Greg Cotmore.

Mr COTMORE: Good morning. Jingerri, jingerri. Morena. Tena felaba. I am from the Office of the Clerk of the New Zealand parliament. I am responsible for broadcasting parliament's proceedings on radio and Parliament TV, known locally as PTV. I have been at the Office of the Clerk since late 2011. I am quite possibly the only person in New Zealand to have watched PTV almost every sitting day from start to end for nearly seven years. In that time PTV has covered three openings of parliament, seven budgets, 517 question times, 61 maiden statements and 46 valedictories. It is enough to turn you into a parliamentary nerd and I guess I have become one.

Today I will talk to you about research I undertook in 2016 for the Parliamentary Law, Practice and Procedure course at the University of Tasmania. The research looks at the behaviour of MPs in New Zealand's debating chamber over the 10 years before the start of PTV in July 2007 and during the following decade. While I do not claim the study to be based on rock-solid science, my findings, I hope, provide the basis for further informed discussion—not looking at anyone in particular, Dr David.

I will give some background about the development and operation of PTV, but before I start I would like to run a quick straw poll. By a show of hands, how many think cameras in the chamber had no influence? How many think the cameras had a negative influence? And how many think the cameras had a positive influence? We will see how we stack up in a wee while.

The genesis of my research paper was the looming 10th anniversary of PTV in July 2017 and comments from parliamentary old hands that the behaviour of members had improved since the start of PTV. My research started with a quotation from British Labour politician Austin Mitchell. Why Austin Mitchell? The former MP is no stranger to Kiwis. He lived in New Zealand from 1959 to 1967 and he wrote a popular satirical book about life down under called *The Half Gallon Quarter Acre Pavlova Paradise*, which I had the pleasure of reading when I was about 13. Mitchell was a vocal advocate for admitting TV cameras to the UK House of Commons. He got his wish on 21 November 1989. Not long after the start of TV coverage, Mitchell judged it to be mediocre but predicted that—

... coverage will get more interesting and television will become addictive. Fears will prove groundless. MPs will wonder why they wasted so much time resisting it in the first place.

Of course, he was writing well before the start of 16-by-nine, warts-and-all, high-definition TV. Here is a comparison of Margaret Thatcher on an old-fashioned four-by-three and Theresa May on a 16-by-nine. An online article in the *Telegraph* published 25 years later asked: have TV cameras in parliament made political debate coarser? The article claimed behaviour is no worse than before cameras arrived. Rather—

If anything, MPs are more watchful and fewer MPs are thrown out of the chamber today for bad behaviour.

This supports the idea TV cameras have had a positive influence. So much for the UK!

What about the New Zealand experience? Prior to the arrival of PTV, television coverage in the chamber was limited to occasional filming for the prime-time news by Television New Zealand and TV3. They would set up their own ad hoc facilities in the galleries. The problem is that the cameras and microphone booms were bulky, noisy and an intrusive distraction. Furthermore, parliamentary rules restricted filming to only the member with the call or the Speaker and, viewed from above, the resulting footage featured mostly coiffured hairdos and bald heads. Not exactly must-see TV.

In its 2003 review the Standing Orders Committee proposed installing small robotic cameras under the galleries, remotely controlled from a studio on the precinct. Being closer to eye level, the coverage would be a dramatic improvement on the gallery shots. One of the report's other recommendations was to stop broadcasters using their own cameras once PTV was up and running. Predictably, this led to a stoush with the news media. A report of the Standing Orders Committee in June 2007 made the case for loosening the rules for filming. The report also relented and allowed the TV channels to continue filming from the galleries on the proviso they adhered to new and more liberal rules for TV coverage that were incorporated into standing orders.

PTV began broadcasting on 17 July 2007. It is operated by professional TV staff under contract to the Office of the Clerk and is available on three digital platforms—Freeview, Sky and Vodafone. It is also streamed on parliament's website and is available through parliament's mobile device app called Virtual House, and you can download it free from the App Store. PTV broadcasts all House proceedings live and repeats question time twice each sitting day.

For my research, four comparisons were undertaken that compiled data from 10 years before the start of PTV and the following decade. I looked at members ejected from the chamber, withdrawals and apologies, points of order and questions to members. Although cause and effect is inferred, the comparisons offer a measurable glimpse of three potential outcomes—the presence of TV cameras had no influence, had a negative influence or had a positive influence.

In New Zealand the Speaker has the ability under standing order 89 to order any member whose conduct is highly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House. Over 20 years there have been 382 ejections. Some 79 per cent occurred before PTV started and 71 per cent were from the opposition benches. The red jagged line is a splitting down exactly in the middle of 2007, and you can see that halfway through the year there is a drop and the levels remain down. The 47th Parliament, from 2002 to 2005, was particularly noteworthy for having 40 ministers ejected. This contrasts with the post PTV figure of only 10 ministers ejected from the chamber over nine years comprising three parliaments, so if TV cameras have modified the behaviour it appears that they have and for the better.

One quirky result indicates that being ejected from the chamber does not necessarily hinder an MP's parliamentary prospects. With due deference to someone here, six MPs in the last parliament—the 51st—featured in the list of top 10 offenders from 1997 to 2017 and include a former prime minister, the Right Hon. Bill English, and the current Acting Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Winston Peters, and the Right Hon. Trevor Mallard, who on 7 November 2017 was elected Speaker of the 52nd Parliament.

With regard to withdrawals and apologies, longstanding Speakers' rulings allow the presiding officer to require a member to withdraw a statement and, if required, give an apology unreservedly. This is one of the most effective procedural mechanisms to maintain order when the House becomes agitated. Over 20 years 802 members were required to withdraw or withdraw and apologise. Some 65 per cent occurred before PTV started and 24 per cent were made by ministers. From 193 ministers asked to withdraw or withdraw and apologise, 75 per cent of that happened before PTV started. Again, like comparison 1, it appears the TV cameras may have improved behaviour.

Points of order, when properly used, give a member the ability to raise a procedural issue with the Speaker. Nevertheless, in an adversarial debating chamber they are often used to disrupt the flow of an opponent's speech. Due to the large number and frequency of points of order, my study restricted itself to points of order raised during question time in the same week of the annual budget. From a total of 399 points of order over 20 years some 55 per cent occurred post PTV, so any anxiety that members would feel restrained by the TV cameras or be encouraged to showboat is not reflected in the data.

With regard to questions to members, under standing order 379 a member may be asked about any bill, motion or public matter connected with the business of the House of which the member has charge. It is asked immediately after oral questions to ministers. In television parlance, this is prime-time viewing. Presumably an MP wishing to maximise TV coverage would take advantage of the standing order. Did they? Over 20 years there have been 400 questions to members. Some 62 per cent were post PTV, so it seems TV cameras have enticed members to make the most of this media opportunity. This is the only result that shows an increase and it is arguably a positive outcome as the viewing public learn more about parliamentary business. A more cynical interpretation would be that members have figured out how to maximise the TV opportunity of question time. From these four comparisons it can be reasonably deduced

that the presence of TV cameras in the chamber has overall improved the behaviour of MPs, particularly ministers, and, likewise, the ability of members to function in the chamber has not been impeded. Arguably, they are now more positively engaged.

The Office of the Clerk commissions biannual surveys to rate the media used by the public to access parliament. As helpful as these are to evaluating public engagement, they do not offer any data specific to how MPs value PTV. It has filled a gap around a SurveyMonkey. Eight questions were emailed to party whips and chiefs of staff to distribute to members and to support staff. While the response rate was low, it was representative of all major parties. Nearly 97 per cent claim to watch PTV and 70 per cent use footage on their social media. To a question about how they rate the value of PTV personally or to the institution of parliament or to the nature of democratic representation, there was a strong positive response of 98 per cent. When asked if they were aware of the TV cameras in the chamber, 82 per cent said yes and when asked if the cameras made them feel uncomfortable or self-conscious just one said yes. The combination of usage and perceived value suggests that PTV is greatly valued by MPs and their staff, PTV is a popular communications component in today's social media mix, and TV coverage in the chamber does not adversely affect MPs' behaviour in the House.

Alas, the public's perception of parliament, at least through the lens of the media, remains less than positive. This was on the first sitting day of 2016—that is, a cartoon in one of the major national papers. So where to from here? After a decade PTV has proven to be a professional and balanced provider of official TV coverage. However, to encourage greater viewer engagement, a wider variety of camera shots, including discretionary close-ups, would better convey the atmosphere. This is not to say that the rules should be liberalised to accommodate the media's interests. The dignity of parliament is paramount and its proceedings should not be reduced to a snappy headline or clickbait. It is to be hoped that one day the standing orders review committee will concur that MPs can trust the PTV operators to maintain their dignity while also making coverage more engaging for the public and maybe even, as Austin Mitchell once envisaged, addictive. Thank you.

Dr MOLS: Thank you very much, Greg. I am suddenly wondering whether our good behaviour is perhaps because we are staring down the barrel of a camera! Our next speaker is Dr Sarah Palmer.

Dr PALMER: Good morning, everyone. I am going to talk to you about building trust relationships in the context of parliamentary committee work with reference to social theories of trust, psychological aspects of trust and the personal experiences of committee staff. I was going to give you a bit of background on where my interest in trust in government came from, but I do not really have time. Suffice it to say, it was a PhD project and it involved farmers. If you want to talk to me about it later, do feel free.

There seems to be a reasonable amount of trust in committees, but they are comprised of politicians, so how does that work? I contend that the committee staff play a key role in building the trust that citizens and stakeholders have in the committee process. This is by managing these critical relationships. These relationships work together to produce a level of confidence in the committee that will determine whether messages from the committee—that is, committee reports—are trusted. Sociologists have been endeavouring to define and understand trust as a social mechanism for some decades. UK academic Barbara Misztal concedes the definitions are imprecise, confusing and the understanding of trust is underdeveloped, but she did land on this definition and, importantly, to trust is to believe despite uncertainty.

In an increasingly uncertain world, trust becomes an even more significant player. Most individuals do not have the capacity or opportunity to attain a level of knowledge that would enable them to assess the value or the risk of something like a scientific development or medical procedure, for example, or maybe superannuation or taxation law, so people often take short cuts in gathering knowledge by using trusted messengers. They do not have time to unpick the complexities, so when it comes to medicine, for example, they might choose someone like Michael Mosley to trust. For politics they might trust seasoned journalists like Leigh Sales and Paul Kelly and in the past Maxine McKew, or it might be a commenter like Waleed Aly. In some cases former politicians have become commentators and are respected more than when they were in office. John Hewson is an example and Mark Latham is probably not an example.

They may not remain trusted sources forever, however. Poortinga and Pidgeon suggest that people constantly re-evaluate and change their trust judgements. Because doing this continuously means it cannot be done comprehensively, they tend to do so intuitively on the basis of perceived similarity, so people with similar social identities. This explains why politicians are not likely to be trusted messengers, since they are often perceived to be out of touch with the public or motivated by different goals. This is where committees, as at least notionally nonpartisan entities, have an advantage over individual politicians and political parties.

If, as Luhmann and Putnam and others contend, building trust at the micro level contributes to trust at the macro level, the interpersonal relationships within committees will help build the trust in parliamentary committees as a political institution and maybe even in politicians. Think of how positive experiences with your local doctor, for example, may eventually increase your confidence in the medical system as a whole.

One of the bases of trust identified in psychological models that is particularly relevant to committee work and to many business relationships is knowledge-based trust. According to Lewicki et al, this type of trust is grounded in the ability to know and understand the other well enough to predict his or her behaviour, even if the other is predictably unpredictable at times. I think committee secretariats can relate to this.

The pathway to knowledge-based trust includes these four aspects. How does that operate in practice? How do people successfully build trust and/or eliminate mistrust? Abrams et al identified 10 actions and behaviours they regard as trust builders. These are the first five and they are particularly applicable to committee management and relationships. Anyone looking for management tips might have come across some of these or things similar to them. These are the second five. Note that these trust builders were developed in the context of manager, employee and co-worker relationships in business organisations. Therefore, six and seven are a little less applicable to committee relationships, but I think eight and 10 are particularly relevant.

These 10 trust builders promote either one or both of two dimensions of trust: competence based trust, which is having the relevant expertise and being depended upon to know what you are talking about, and benevolence based trust, which is that you have the person's best interests at heart and will act in good faith. In looking at the first of those relationships, the trust between the chair and the PRO—and I should say that I am using the term 'PRO'—principal research officer. That is what we use in the WA LA committee office. It is equivalent in other jurisdictions to perhaps the committee clerk, committee secretary, inquiry secretary or advisory officer—basically, whoever is in charge of the secretariat.

At the start of the journey, when committees have just been formed and staff appointed, the chair and PRO will most likely neither trust nor distrust each other. They simply do not have enough information about each other to know how the other will behave. Each party may have a little information that may shape their attitude at the outset. If the chair has been on a committee previously, the staff of that committee will pass on their experiences. It would be naive to think that chairs do not also compare notes on staff. Your current chair may quiz another member who has worked with you about your strengths and weaknesses. As one of my colleagues noted, it pays to treat all MPs well whenever you have the opportunity because you never know who your next chair may be.

Trust is built gradually. You need to establish how the chair likes to communicate, what level of advice to provide and how to provide it. Letters and briefing papers that are well crafted will help build competence based trust, but the inquiry report is probably the ultimate test. How accurately the PRO has interpreted the stance that the committee, and in particular the chair, wishes to take will be determined by the chair's feedback. What the PRO does with this feedback is critical. The chair, who I think of as the client, must be able to interrupt the PRO to make the changes. If the chair suggests something inaccurate with a potential to reflect badly on the committee, the PRO must provide the evidence that demonstrates this in a tactful manner.

The construction of an inquiry report is often a delicate balancing act. It must convey the voice and position of the committee and whatever political agenda may be in play as well as be accepted as an accurate reflection of the issues. This will help ensure that it is a document that the committee is happy to own but also has credibility within parliament and with the inquiry stakeholders. I think it is a bit like being a dressmaker. As anyone has seen that recent wonderful Australian film *The Dressmaker* would know, the client does not always know how to describe exactly what they want, but the dressmaker has to work this out and then create a garment that suits them and that they will want to wear.

So far, most of what I have discussed is more or less within the PRO's power to shape or control, but certain things are beyond a PRO's control. A chair will almost certainly be carrying political and/or personal baggage. PROs need to identify knowledge and understand what this is. The chair may have been overlooked for a cabinet post, or may be going through a divorce, or be unwell, or be having a hard time in the media. The personality of a chair is also outside the secretariat's control, but there are ways to manage it. Engagement with a chair who appears distant or maybe even a bit prickly can be enhanced by getting to know who they are as a person by reading their inaugural speech or noting issues that fire them up. Creating personal connections, which is trust builder No. 8, might mean getting to know their favourite TV shows so that you can have a conversation about them, or laugh at their jokes—except in hearings or if they are

denigrating another member. That is not a good idea. You might be wondering what that image of that chap knitting is about. I was reminded of a scene from the stage musical *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* in which Finch, the young man trying to get ahead, finds out that the boss has a very unusual hobby: knitting. He manufactures a situation whereby the boss will discover him knitting and be thrilled that someone else will finally understand his hobby—instant rapport and promotion.

I feel that issues of gender could form an interesting paper in their own right if thoroughly explored but, briefly, what works best? Does a male chair refer a male PRO? There is no blanket rule. I think it depends on the views of the individual chair. For some chairs, the gender of the PRO may be neither here nor there, but some preferences have been noted in the past. It was felt that one female chair was much more receptive to a female rather than male staff members and problems experienced by a male chair with a female PRO team seemed to improve when a male took over the PRO role. Suffice it to say, it will be difficult to build trust between a chair and the PRO if one or the other feels that they are being judged unfairly because of their gender.

The fact that the PRO has to have a close working relationship with the chair can lead to feelings of mistrust from other committee members. PROs need to make it clear from the outset that they are there to serve all members but that they will often, for administrative and procedural reasons, need to liaise more closely with the chair. Greeting members in the same fashion and having casual conversations with all members is important. In fact, many of the aspects of developing a trusting relationship with the chair also apply here—reading inaugural speeches, finding out what inspires or annoys them. Knowing what football team they support and congratulating them on a win can help—and supporting the same team is even better! As my colleagues have said, travel is often a good opportunity to get to know the other members. You get to spend more time with them, and not just the chair. You might bond over breakfast with the discovery that you enjoy the same brand of yoghurt or the same type of coffee.

Trust builder No. 1 is acting with discretion. This is particularly important for members to feel confident to raise issues with the secretariat that might reveal their own ignorance, for example, in relation to procedural matters that they are not familiar with, or maybe they want to raise complaints about the chair or other committee members. I think being on the secretariat is a bit like being the butler.

A chair that adopts a consensus approach to chairing is more likely to earn the respect and trust of the committee. Trust builder No. 5 is that decisions are seen to be fair and transparent. An example of this is the chair allowing all members to ask questions in a hearing, even if he or she does not agree with them, and allowing input into the report's findings and recommendations without immediately shutting down other members.

Deliberative meetings where long and wideranging discussions occur is an example of trust builder No. 4—collaborative communication. This assists with buy-in to an inquiry by all members and can result in a smoother report adoption meeting. Although this is controlled by the chair, the secretariat can assist by ensuring that adequate time is scheduled for these discussions.

The final relationship that I am looking at is the trust between the secretariat and the stakeholders. Although the committee members are the public face of the committee, if the staff do not maintain relationships behind the scene, trust in the committee and in the committee process can deteriorate. Inquiry stakeholders, which is the agencies, organisations and individuals who make submissions and/or appear at hearings, need to be taken seriously and to be kept informed. Sometimes they also need to be persuaded. A trust relationship is developed based mainly on discretion and consistency between word and deed and good manners. Even though at times we might feel like doing this, we, in fact, do this. The secretariat may have to explain to a disappointed stakeholder why their letter or submission has not received the treatment they were anticipating. Their ability to do this without divulging the deliberations of the committee, without further upsetting the stakeholder, also contributes to how committees as a whole are perceived.

Do we know when trust has been achieved? Some PROs can point to a specific moment when the trust relationship changes for the better. For many, it is a more subtle process. Signs that the chair trusts the PRO's expertise, which is competence based trust, and that they have their best interests at heart, which is benevolence based trust, might be that they ask for their advice and, even more significantly, their opinion, or that they want the PRO to write the chair's foreword to a report, or that they will speak about sensitive issues in the presence of the secretariat and confide in the PRO. However, it would be unwise for a PRO to ever think that they are there in terms of their relationship with the chair. Maintaining a certain amount of distance in any professional relationship is probably a good thing.

I think the chair-PRO relationship is probably better summed up by this. If you cannot read it, it says, 'I have discovered a way to stay friends forever. There is really nothing to it. I simply tell you what to do and you do it.' To conclude, hopefully by now it is clear how trust at the micro level within the various committee relationships impacts on trust at the macro level. A mistrusting and disunited committee undermines public confidence in any messages emanating from the committee and in the process itself. Thank you.

Dr MOLS: Thank you very much, Sarah, for a wonderful paper, and to all of the presenters for their immaculate time keeping. That means that we have quite a bit of time left for questions and answers.

Dr PHILLIPS: I am Harry Phillips. I am a Western Australian parliamentary fellow. I have been in an exercise of writing a history of the committee system in the Western Australian parliament. We did a survey of all the parliamentarians. I might say that, while the international literature says that the parliamentary chairs—the politicians—are the key, the parliamentarians themselves believe that it is the senior research officer who is the key. That gets priority from every respondent. I think it is fair to say that Sarah, who is an outstanding senior PRO, today has sensitively given a much greater understanding of the role of committees than I have seen in any of the literature. I ask her one question: what sort of in-service training would you prescribe for the senior PRO in particular?

Dr PALMER: Thanks, Harry. It is interesting, because this came up recently. We have been going through our committee process in the LA committee office and looking at how we do inquiries and how we interact with our committees to understand what it is that we do and how to avoid some of the pitfalls. One of the things that seems to always be put in the too-hard basket is, 'But I've got a difficult chair.' We will come up with all of these solutions to things—ways of working, putting things in place—and then more often than not one of the PROs or ROs will say, 'Yes, but my chair didn't like this or didn't like that,' or 'I can't get them to agree.' Sometimes there is a personality clash. At one of our most recent sessions I did suggest, because I had been doing this paper, that we have some training in how to build trust, in just understanding what the trust builders are. I think it actually would be valuable for staff to do that, so I will continue to push for that.

Prof. McKEW: Iain, I want to be a believer in citizen juries. For the benefit of all us, can you go through a little bit of the South Australian experience on the issue of whether the state government should enter into contracts for the burial of nuclear waste? As I understand it, what happened was that there was capture by special interests of the whole process. What has been learned from that?

Mr WALKER: I am trying to think how to distil 10 months into two minutes. Really simply, most of my job is in speaking with people in elected office and saying, 'Tell me what is hard.' We get contacted by the South Australian Premier's office, which says, 'We are considering building a high-level nuclear waste facility to take the entire world's nuclear waste. It will probably be on Indigenous land. There's your brief.' At the high level, there were two design flaws. We said, 'Great, you've done $9 million on a royal commission; nobody will read it. Secondly, you'll probably trot around the state doing feedback as usual, get 20,000 or 30,000 negative comments and then say, "Isn't it great we've heard negative comments? Now we know what we need to do."' You will just get destroyed in terms of public interest trust.

We ran two juries in that project. One was a 50-person jury, essentially to let citizens write the government's collateral. No-one will trust the government's collateral to say everything is fine. We had seen some of the government's early collateral. It looked like Monty Burns from *The Simpsons* wrote it. It was completely out there and it had zero neutrality. It resulted in citizens saying, 'I think you're trying to sell me something,' and you cannot sell a nuclear waste storage facility. In our assessment, we ran two juries, the first of 50 people. What is the part of the royal commission report every citizen in South Australia should read? Frankly, 9½ out of 10 operationally. Fifty people, all walks of life—blue collar, white collar, no collar.

There was a particular high point. Yes, there were people saying that you can never get citizens to read the 318-page Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission report. On the first day, there was someone standing next to the royal commissioner who said, 'Look, I'm a concreter. I actually did some of the rebar under this building that we are standing in.' I do not think the royal commissioner was particularly happy to be in this conversation. The bloke had his royal commission report rolled up into a tube and he was smacking it into his hand. He was asked, 'How did you go with the document?' He unfurled it. This thing was torn up. It had been in his ute for a month and had coffee stains on it. He opened it up and said, 'Now, I couldn't understand appendix H for the life of me.' He opened it up and it was marked in red throughout. At the core of it—the piece of the project that worked—50 citizens read the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission report. That works. They go out around the state.

We ran a 350-person jury. The key thing here is that 350 people is a mob; 30 people is a jury. The methodology really calls for—I do not want to a say a fudge, but you break people down into groups of 30 and 35 and then subsets within that to fives and sixes. Far too much occurred in plenary.

The second thing is that we produced an eight-page research note on what worked and what went wrong. In a 35-person jury, you always get one or two people out on the edges. They get diluted by other people, probably like when you are at a dinner party and someone is really way off the deep end; they are an absolute crank. You go 'oh' and go the other way. However, with 350 people, 15 or 30 people get together and it is like a wildfire. It is very hard to stop. The key learning for a large-format process is that we run four days entirely separate. Do not mix them at all. Have groups of 30 to 40, because then the social norms are established. You can still bring them together for the larger format, but you need to have done that grounding.

The other point that we have really accelerated since that project is that we now produce a three-minute critical-thinking video and assistance cards for citizens. There is a bias to trusting certain people and, frankly, it is people who have been on TV too much. We were disappointed that a leading think tank representative walked off the stage and said, 'Wasn't that easy? I pretended to have a tantrum. I completely bullshitted them. Ha, ha!' I just said, 'That's probably a reflection on your own ethics.' Most speakers cannot get away with that, but certain major think tanks have enough of a reputation that people do instinctively trust them.

The point in this is that it is not perfect but it is good. For people who want to learn about that, we love it as a stress test of the model. Yes, we produced a warts-and-all, fairly punishing bit of reading for me to go through and say that this is what was learned. The core of it, though, is to keep groups small for them to be productive.

Dr MOLS: Thank you. Yes?

Mr YUSSUF: My question regards access to information for people with disabilities. Already they feel marginalised by nature. What should be done to mainstream them into the public?

Mr WALKER: There are a couple of points in answer to your question, firstly, on random selection. Our process, as you probably worked out, relies pretty heavily on literacy. We have run projects in lower socio-economic areas. Do you know how we can tell people who do not have English skills? They give it to their kids. The self-identified ethnic background skew you get is that you see that all the younger people tend to come from different backgrounds and the older whiter people occupy that demographic. It is a good, better, best.

At the core of it, we see small groups as a chance for people to really learn. You never get thousands of people to do that. Where social media can be brilliant—and we only discovered it accidentally—is that that 50 or 100 people then take the message out to their community. They take subsets and nuggets out. It is what is resonant to a particular group.

We have one audience hole, frankly, that we cannot fill. People ask, 'Who doesn't respond to random selection?' It is newly arrived Chinese male students aged under 24. They have zero culture of challenging government and are nearly impossible to recruit. Aside from that it is income groups, self-identified ethnic background. Disability groups end up overrepresented, because it is a fabulous format. If you have a physical disability and it is hard to get around, I have just given you five meetings and plenty of warning and lots of written materials that can be compatible with being consumed by audio or other mechanisms. So when I look at how you scale information into a community, a deliberative component, scaled by the people themselves, helps to scale that message.

Mr CAMPBELL: This is a question that I would like Sarah and Iain to comment on. Iain, I know you talked about the possibility of having opposition raise the issues for citizen juries. How would it be if you use some of your money from your foundation to allow parliamentary committees to use a modified citizen jury concept to allow them to do extra and more comprehensive work? I have found most committees are really limited by the money they have.

Dr MOLS: I might ask Iain to respond, first, and then come to you, Sarah.

Mr WALKER: I love being put on the spot with a financial offer. Broadly, yes. This is being recorded! There will always be a 'what's in it for me?' component. The 'what's in it for me?' component will be that we will walk you through a trial, we will show you a couple, but we are looking to a point where it becomes the structural way that you do it. One of the best people to speak to on this is actually Jonathan O'Dea, who

was in the former session. It actually goes to some of the culture of parliamentary reporting staff. It was Jonathan who, as chair of the public accounts committee, was given an inquiry into the economics of renewable energy generation. I am just looking to see that I have that right. That was in 2012. He said, 'Look, the main problem that we have is that we hear from all the usual suspects. You do a call for submissions and you hear from Greenpeace and Santos. You can kind of guess what they are going to say. You hear from very agitated groups. How do I get beyond that?'

Yes, we underwrote a project for the public accounts committee. We ran it in two locations. It was about a $280,000 exercise. We were looking at whether people can engage with complex materials. Can they actually identify sources that go beyond what is the traditional inquiry? Tick, tick, tick. The part we were particularly happy with when we got the final report, no doubt written by the parliamentary staff—there was a little bit of heart in mouth: 'Dear God, did they listen to the jury at all?' We did a quick find and replace. About 140 times they said 'we heard from the energy industry'; 'we heard from the community sector'. However, the PAC was influenced by the fact that citizens could find common ground around this point. That was where we saw this complementary nature come through. Because we have done committees before, we are not going to pay for it open-ended, but if there is an intent from the parliament to say that we can make committees work better and we want to explore something through a trial period of a year or two with a view to making it permanent, I am happy to have an underwriting conversation.

Dr PALMER: We often have discussions in our committee office about better ways to engage the public and, again, not go to the usual suspects. Always, you call for submissions and you tend to get the same. We advertise in other places, not just in the newspaper, which no-one really looks at. We try social media et cetera to get a response from the community that is at the heart of the issue. As someone with a background in social research, I would really welcome that. I think it would be wonderful, because I always would love to bring in the voice of the community much more. What the committee does with it is another matter.

Prof. LEWIS: I have made many submissions to parliamentary committees over the years. I have appeared before them as an expert witness et cetera. I think the great unsung heroes are the committee staff. I have trusted them on every occasion. They have always been so professional in all dealings. I wanted to make that comment and to thank all those committee staff who have been so helpful to me over so many years.

Dr MOLS: Thank you. I will do a Tony Jones: I take that as a comment.

Mr FRASER: My question is to Mike and Greg. In terms of making parliament more relevant and more engaging, what is the next step in, say, the televising of parliament or whatever the next technological step is? Where do we go to make parliament more relevant?

Mr COTMORE: Parliament TV. We have recently introduced full-time New Zealand sign language interpretation for question time. We used to do that during Deaf Awareness Week for question time, but it has been a move recently to go beyond that. Of course there are cost implications, but we are working our way through that. Two years ago we introduced live closed captioning, which is provided very ably by Ericsson out of Sydney. It has been a slow but gradual move of making the proceedings more accessible to a wider audience.

Back in the day when PTV started, its original mandate was to basically point, shoot and show the proceedings live. There was nothing else planned. I was not around at the time, but, from talking to the people who were there, there was not even any intention to have any on-screen graphics. Someone realised that they were showing the proceedings, but the viewer did not know what was going on, so suddenly we introduced a bit of technology, some new kit and operators to provide those functions. Down through the years there has been more and more added on. Video on demand was introduced in 2009, I think it was. The simultaneous interpretation of te reo Maori was introduced in 2010. There were all of these bolt-ons. PTV did not start up magically with everything there; it has been an organic experience.

After 10 years we are now at a point where the equipment is reaching end of life. We are redeveloping our processes and technology. From 2019 onwards we are going to be able to provide a far more engaging experience for the viewer. What we do need though, as I alluded to, is the standing orders review committee to at some stage have a bit more faith in the professionalism of TV operators and that would make the coverage far more engaging for the viewer. At the moment it is still a bit restrictive. The professionals try, with as much flair as they can, to make it more engaging.

I am essentially the onsite producer. I am always reminding them, 'No, you cannot do that.' I am always reminding them when there is a bit of argy-bargy in the chamber that the default shot is the Speaker. I say to them, 'No, we are not going to be showing the member walking out in a huff,' because that is not going to be used by them for their social media.

We impose our own restrictions, which is unlike the TV commercial channels. They would love to have all the juicy bits. We are not there to provide it for them. We would like to make the coverage more realistic—as if you were up in the galleries, could look down and see all the bits and pieces, but not necessarily the nasty bits.

Dr MOLS: So we are not yet at the stage where there is a cable across the parliament with cameras flying through the air?

Mr COTMORE: Not quite drones yet.

Mr PRICE: I think the big two I referred to in my presentation are live captioning and video on demand. Greg has just spoken very eloquently about live captioning. I am very aware that New Zealand are way ahead of us and most others. That is great. I will not say anything more about that.

In terms of video on demand, in New South Wales at the moment members of parliament can ask some of my staff in the library for a clip of the proceedings that are videoed and we do that. We are currently improving the technology so we can do that more easily. We are at the point where we probably could technically introduce video on demand with a bit of software over it. Given the way it has evolved, people think that they were part of a debate and they made a particularly magnificent speech or possibly that their political opponent held up a picture of Borat in a mankini or said something ridiculous and they want to get a video of that for maybe less noble uses. They already know what it is and they want to get a copy of it.

In terms of video on demand, the general public is generally not going to know about that. I think we have to go way beyond, 'I know what I want. Can I please get a copy of it,' to us selecting and curating clips of video. I use the ABC Radio app on my phone and iPad—I am sure a lot of people do; it is a great way to listen to radio in the morning while wandering around the house in different rooms. Increasingly, the ABC has embellished that app with podcasts and lots of little clips—lots of very enticing bits and snippets and things I did not know I wanted to hear about but the clip is there. I think that is what we might start doing.

From the image that the New Zealand Speaker showed earlier of their website, I think they have the beginnings of that. There is a lot of potential for putting up interesting clips. If you go to the parliament website you would think, 'What is that?' There could be a clip on the Powerhouse controversy or a clip on something else of interest.

Dr THORNTON: I am an occasional researcher with Ken. Listening to the tenor of the discussion so far, there seems to me to be a reasonably strong emphasis on parliaments as producers of information and something of a consumer model of where citizens are. I am interested in the obverse of that and how permeable parliaments—not just members of parliament but parliaments themselves—are to bottom-up information. I am thinking that recently there has been something of an explosion of digital platforms for voting in decision-making—things like MyVote and Flicks. There is a group of them that have come up which have relatively complex underpinning decision theories, polling theories and consultation theories sitting underneath them. That is all very well, and some of them work better than others, but they will not work at all if parliament is not at some level permeable to accepting that kind of input. My question is directed mainly at Mike but somewhat to Iain.

Mr PRICE: That is interesting. I am inclined to just say yes. I would like to think about that more and look into it. I think the video I showed at the end from France was an example somewhat in that space. I would encourage people to go and look at the Parlement et Citoyens and follow that one through and see how that works. Certainly what the rest of the video was showing was the idea that by feeding into the debate people are not just saying 'yes' or 'no' to what the member put forward but actually feeding new ideas in. The later part of the clip showed the MP, having heard the consultation and having had the video citizens jury, pulling together some of these ideas and making a new video of their revised proposal that has been influenced by those points. That is the only thing I can think of off the cuff. I will not try to add anything more. What you are talking about is certainly very interesting.

Dr MOLS: I was also thinking about the term 'citoyens'. We would translate that into citizen, but it does not have the same connotation. The French word 'citoyens' has much more participatory overtones. That is a side comment.

Mr WALKER: I absolutely agree with the thrust of your question, with a massive caveat which is that format matters. We found that one of the critical things to our citizens is not the result they want but the questions they would ask and the values. You get massively different results in terms of citizen input.

We are currently engaged by the City of Madrid, because they have one of these digital utopian tools they have called the Side Madrid. I think 54,000 people use it in any month and 6,000 proposals go up. We said, 'That is great. What is the problem?' The basic thrust in Madrid is that if you get one per cent of the population—so 23,000 out of your 2.3 million city residents—to tick off your proposal then it goes to a referendum.

Two things got up and hit that threshold last year. One is that people who do not pick up their dog's poo should get a fine. The second is that there should be one continuous 90-minute ticket for public transport. There are two problems. There already is a fine if you do not pick up after your dog. The problem is that the city government does not run public transport. That is the responsibility of the regional government.

The flaw that I am trying to illustrate is that a lot of opportunities for engagement do not require people to think. I would love to look at mechanisms which feed into committee structures which feed into parliaments. I would love citizens to be able to pose questions in question time, but I would always want that safety brake of another pool of randomly selected citizens being able to look at the question and say, 'Is this actually the question we want to ask?' That is a safety brake we are putting on in Madrid and it can yield something of really high quality.

There is one threshold test we always apply, that is: am I hearing from a representative sample of people? Almost all self-selected mechanisms are not. The state government in New South Wales is I think racking 30,000 negative comments on WestConnex. What did you think would happen? 'I am building a road.' 'That is fine. I will get on with my life. Actually, it is right next to me. I will go bananas.' Most government engagement formats are geared to only hear from the negative. That is my caveat. My clearly excessive concern is that I would love to be able to do it but the simplistic digital tool mechanisms like MyVote are poor.

Dr THORNTON: MyVote does have a consultative mechanism in it. I am not necessarily a fully blown fan of it, but it is relatively complex and does have a consulting mechanism in it.

Mr WALKER: For self-selected people, though.

Mrs YOUNG: I am Natalie Young and I am responsible for community education and community engagement at the parliament of South Australia. I am particularly interested in video on demand as an access point for citizens. Like you were saying, Mike, people expect to get things at a time that suits them and they do not necessarily want to wait to watch something live. Some of the concerns I have had around video on demand access are when there might be privilege issues involved or if statements need to be withdrawn or if members want to cherrypick selections from video on demand and use them out of context or for political gain. I was wondering if you were aware of any restrictions or usage requirements in place for video on demand to protect parliaments and their integrity or the integrity of their footage in those sorts of situations?

Mr PRICE: There are a couple of elements to that. I think in terms of the question around, 'What if somebody says something that later has to be withdrawn?,' off the cuff that would fall into the general regime we operate under with regard to *Hansard*. If a member comes after the debate to the editor of Hansard and says, 'When I said I really want to thank Mr Smith in my electorate, it was actually someone else,' of course we correct it. There is that sort of editorial acceptance.

I cannot think of the example off the cuff, but there was a great Barnaby Joyce one a few years ago. I do not think I am slandering him on the record. He went to Hansard to change what he had said—which was a political statement—to the opposite. They said, 'No, we cannot. You did say that and so that remains the record.' If it was not Barnaby Joyce, my apologies.

I think video would fall into that category. If someone genuinely said it, I do not see any great problem. After all, this is the people's parliament and we publish what is said. We show what is said. That is obviously with the exception of in camera proceedings, which would not be videoed and shown anyway.

In terms of the other part of your question, you have put your finger on the issue I and my colleagues have when we are making the points I have been making to date in New South Wales. In the case of one of our houses of parliament there is quite significant concern about that. One of the clerks has an electronic scrapbook of a number of incidents where MPs took footage, got a clip of it and then adapted it for satirical purposes, put full subtitles under it and so on.

I think this comes back to putting restrictions around it. Obviously you can have a disclaimer which says that you cannot use the clip for satirical or ridicule purposes or whatever. We are revising our terms. We are looking to do something like that. I think we do have to be mindful of what I was suggesting with the Borat mankini shot or whatever else it is. That is a case where something that actually happened could be ridiculed.

It is hard to legislate against those things happening. An alternative point of view—and this is by no means resolved in our parliament—would be, to some extent, to let that happen and accept that it is a by-product. We assume that the audience of the recycled clip with satirical or inappropriate subtitles will treat that with what it deserves. They will say that it has been doctored. It may be very clever, but it is not really very funny. I am saying that a little off the cuff as well. It is going to happen so I think it is probably better to try to think how you handle it rather than shut up shop and say you are not going to allow it.

Mr COTMORE: Proceedings in the House are covered by parliamentary privilege. What is said in the House is televised and everything that is televised is sliced and diced and put up on the YouTube platform which is then fed back to the parliamentary website. It is out there. Standing orders do prescribe the use of footage. It has been liberalised. We did have the restriction on satirical use. That has been removed. The only restrictions now are for political advertising or election campaigning, except with the permission of all members, and commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising.

Mary Harris, the clerk previous to the current Clerk, David Wilson, was quite vocal about the fact that we need to grow up and be a bit more mature about how the world will respond to us. She was quite keen to have the satirical element removed, and that I think was generally agreed to by most of the members. I think the Speaker could confirm that from the last standing orders review committee. In terms of how it is monitored, nothing has come to my attention of any malicious use of parliamentary coverage, but, then again, I am not watching dodgy websites.

Dr MOLS: We have time for one more question.

Dr SOLOMON: I want to exercise a right of reply about behaviour. I started covering the House of Representatives from the press gallery in Canberra in 1966 for about another 10 years. In those days, it was a rare event for a member to be kicked out of question time. The Speaker had to name the person and the Leader of the House had to move a motion for the person to be kicked out. Standing orders have been changed, the Speaker can now throw people out and the numbers being thrown out are infinitely greater. I am not saying there is a causal effect yet.

Dr MOLS: Thank you. We will take that as a comment. For the very last question, could you keep it short so we can perhaps get a short answer and wrap up?

Mr SON: I am from the New Zealand parliament. My question is to Mike. I want to go back to your point about how we assess trustworthiness through action. That is easy if it is between individuals but not so much between individuals and institutions. Does the New South Wales parliament have any initiatives or programs for members to connect with their constituents in an individual capacity to build trust in the institution of parliament?

Mr PRICE: It is not my specialist area. I do not know whether we have any programs to encourage that particular learning. I am probably the wrong person to be answering this because there are MPs from New South Wales in the room, but I think it is routinely accepted that as part of what a member of parliament does they meet with their constituents—preferably lots and lots of them, particularly given that we have an election coming up next year. They do seek to interact with them and seek to build trust relationships. I am not sure that many of them need training for that. I do not know that we offer specific training, but I could be wrong.

Mr WALKER: David, when I was watching Greg's presentation I was amazed at the numbers. They were conclusive. The transformation was amazing. Then it struck me: we all go out and trust a restaurant to serve nice food. How would you feel if there were cameras in that restaurant? It is not how many cockroaches are in the kitchen; it is how many cockroaches you see. I think there is an element of: while

the numbers are great, so too is the public perception. There may have been more cockroaches in the kitchen in the past, but now we are just seeing that one and it is popping up on the TV news for many of us. It is the perception and the reality. You can measure the reality but it is the measuring of perception at the same time. I think you are pulling an interesting thread there and I would be interested to look at other measures of the impact of televising.

Dr MOLS: Please join me in thanking all the presenters for their great presentations.

Prof. LEWIS: I have two quick comments that I intended to make this afternoon in the closing remarks, but I believe some people are leaving early. One of the things I wanted to acknowledge is that Dr Harry Phillips from Western Australia has been attending ASPG meetings for 20 years. During that time he has made very wise contributions to the debate and supported the ASPG. We appreciate both very much, Harry, and we wanted to acknowledge it so thank you.

We have had some excellent presentations and I want people to be encouraged to please submit them to the APR. Rodney Smith, our editor, is over here. If you would like to have a word with him before the conference ends, please do. If not, you can send it through to him. If you want it peer reviewed or non-peer reviewed, just let him know. We have had some fabulous papers and it is great to see them in print.

We have had a lot of trouble at times with the video equipment, and Ciara Furlong has been there the whole time running up and fixing it up for people. I can imagine how stressful it is for Ciara, who is sitting there thinking, 'Oh no, not again.' She has been terrific. I wanted to acknowledge that as well while we are all here.

Proceedings suspended from 12.21 pm to 1.05 pm.

Mr FRASER: Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. My only task at present is to introduce the chair of this session, Sandy Bolton, the member for Noosa.

Ms BOLTON: Good afternoon, everyone. I am also the only Independent member in Queensland. For those who have been here talking about trust, I have found it absolutely fascinating. I am very much looking forward to this session, which is on social media, innovation and the future. I am sure we are all going to be very interested in it. We have Professor Stephen Bell from the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland. He is tackling fair share, competing claims and Australia's economic future. Please give him a welcome.

Prof. BELL: Thanks for coming, everybody. This is a quick tour of the last chapter of a book that was just mentioned, *Fair Share: Competing Claims and Australia's Economic Future*. It was co-authored with Michael Keating, who used to be the head of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and worked as a central player in the economic policy reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. We wrote this book and make a lot of policy recommendations. Some of them are very challenging. Our central argument is that the neoliberal supply-side reforms of the 1980s and 1990s more recently have worked very well in many ways but have run their course and that we now need to address more pressing issues of inequality and wage stagnation and have a new focus on the demand side of the economy.

As part of the policy package that we are proposing we talk about increased public expenditure—a small increase in federal taxation levels—to pay for the necessary reforms that we propose in the book. When you get to that point you think, 'What capacity has the Australian federal government got in relation to these sorts of policy issues?' The question is, 'Can we do it even if we think it is a good idea?' The last chapter of the book is the governance challenge, and I want to run through some of the arguments that we make in that chapter.

In theoretical terms in political science, there are useful theories coming out of various East Asian development stories and comparative politics. If you look at successful governments, or successful states, the analysis can turn on two broad issues. One is issues to do with the institutional arrangements of governance and states. The second arena of interest is the relations that states can forge with key social groups and players. It is an institutional story and set of issues and it is a relational set of issues and stories. We structured the analysis in our book around those topics and questions.

In many ways the book is quite optimistic. We focus on economic performance and governance. Historically, Australia's economic performance been extremely good. If you look at a whole lot of key metrics—in terms of the macro-economic numbers of interest, even issues of inequality and, until very recently, issues of wages growth—Australia has performed extraordinarily well. That suggests that our governance capacity has been quite strong.

Most people who can remember back to the 1980s and 1990s would probably agree that the 1980s and 1990s—and Michael Keating was central to all of this—was a particularly strong era of successful economic governance. If you look at aspects of government itself and the institutions of the state, in the 1980s and 1990s we had coherent leadership in terms of expressing a strong view of what the issues were and what the problems were. We had an extraordinary bunch of competent ministers. We had a lot of bipartisan support for a policy agenda. We had a sense of economic crisis epitomised by the 'banana republic' statement in 1986 from Paul Keating. There was a palpable sense of big issues confronting the country. The government was able to develop a very clear vision and leadership strategy of what to do.

Part of the policy agenda was neoliberalism—that is, more markets—but, unlike a lot of characterisations of neoliberalism, there were certainly more markets but there was not necessarily less government. In fact, government was ramped up in various ways. Australia developed an interesting combination and in some ways—not unique necessarily—a very interesting combination of neoliberal supply-side, market based reforms combined with a social democratic package that was very aware of the issues of inequality, distribution and a fair go. This is not often commented upon, but Australia was the developer of what was later described in the UK as the 'third way'—a synthesis between states and markets—which was innovative.

There are other issues that we talk about in the book in terms of electoral systems, the capacity to build certain sorts of Centre Left coalitions, the inclusion of disaffected elements in society in the electoral process and a whole range of other things that I do not have the time to go into. We also had arguably a pretty effective federal bureaucracy. The government was very interested in debating policy with senior policymakers and technical experts. In some ways, at the top level the government was a debating society. The government was very interested in building the capacity of institutions and developing effective institutions. I wrote a book a while ago on the Reserve Bank. The Reserve Bank is an interesting story of institutional development, particularly through the 1980s and 1990s, to a point where it is today in many ways.

In terms of relations between government and society, building coalitions and support, and policy change, as I mentioned, we had a lot of bipartisanship within the parliament and there were strong connections between the government and the business community and the government and the trade union movement, which was very good at developing political consensus around key policy issues. This was also the period—in the 1980s in particular—when the business community developed much more sophisticated policy analysis capacity. I have written a fair bit about this in the past. I call it research based advocacy. It was pioneered by the Business Council and Geoff Allen, who ran the secretariat in particular, but it was also insisted upon by the government—'Don't come to Canberra with old-style lobbying and thumping the table. It just won't work. We need extremely well researched policy proposals.' The 1980s in particular was an era where all the interest groups led by the unions and business were able to work with the government at a sophisticated policy level in developing innovative policies.

We talk about that era in the book as a period when Australia had—and it was not the only era—substantial policy capacity. We then go on to talk about the decline of that capacity and analyse the current governance capacities to implement sophisticated policy reforms, which arguably the country needs.

Using our framework, if we go to the institutions of parliament and the broader state—and we all know this kind of analysis and story—we have much more political fragmentation, much more party contestation, much less bipartisan support for major policy reform and, probably the last common denominator, public debate. One or two years ago Ken Henry famously said in public—and a number of people have said this recently—that the level of public debate around policy in this country has almost reached all-time lows. We seem to have trouble developing policy vision et cetera.

The interest group arena has also shifted. The public sector has lost substantial capacity, with downsizing and outsourcing in a far more politicised arena where senior public servants are much more beholden to the hierarchy of ministerial authority than used to be the case. There is much less debate going on—serious debate—between key policymaking experts and parliamentarians on the whole at the federal level. The old party system—the bipartisan party system—is fragmenting. We now have a lot of Australians who do not support either major party. In the analysis we run we trace that back to pretty substantial societal changes which are leading to a more argumentative and fragmented society based on those groups that support market based reforms and those groups that are highly sceptical of neoliberalism market based reforms and globalisation and feel quite threatened, in many cases justifiably so, by changes in the economy that are rendering them as the new losers in a sense. There is a reaction against market based reforms and all that goes with it, including globalisation.

There is also a cultural divide that is becoming more pronounced between the educated city middle class who are cosmopolitan and willing to embrace a whole bunch of 'isms', from gay rights to any other kind of politically correct 'ism', compared to a whole bunch of people in the electorate who are sceptical of those sorts of changes perhaps based on religious views or other sorts of views that react negatively to a progressive left agenda. That is opening up all sorts of political divides which populist politicians in particular are quite willing to exploit, so the parliamentary system is more divided. It is harder to get a coalition around certain key policy agendas.

The other issue we do not face, even though Mike and I think we have serious economic problems, is that I think we are verging now finally on following the American route of wage stagnation and growing inequality. We argue at great length in the book that that has serious consequences for economic growth, aggregate demand et cetera. Even on the supply side, it has big productivity negatives as well. We think we have serious economic problems, but there is not a palpable sense out there of economic crisis or big problems that we need to confront. The problems are more, in a sense, not subterranean but not well recognised. This is why we wrote the book.

There are a couple of other issues. In terms of the relational capacities, governments do not have as strong interlocutors as they used to have in the sense that the union movement now is much weaker and the business community at the national level has in some ways retreated from the front lines of policy debate. I have stated the Business Council extensively. The Business Council, for instance, used to be the frontrunner of innovative, blue-sky policy thinking—in fact, getting ahead of the policy debate in this country—and not being reactive and certainly not being self-serving. It was always the motto of the BCA that, 'We do not lobby on individual or common business interests in the here and now. It is all about future policymaking and blue-sky stuff.' The Business Council is now arguing for tax cuts, which is a broader pattern in western business politics. We argue very strongly in the book that business tax cuts right now are not a particularly great idea at all, but that is another issue.

The business community increasingly is less organised, less coherent, more fragmented and more willing to pursue narrow firm based or sectoral policy concerns and not be a player in the big national debates as was the case particularly in the eighties and nineties, when the business input was particularly valuable and could support the national policy agenda effectively. We argue that has changed. There are a range of difficult governance issues that we are now confronting in this country which do not make policy reform any easier. It is difficult to get a coherent vision and message across which can in either sense embrace a consensus around policy change.

Nevertheless, I will conclude on a somewhat optimistic note. One of our great strengths in this country—it has served us really well and hopefully will continue to—is that Australia is quite special in many ways with having a very strong egalitarian culture. That is why we called the book as it is. It is about fairness, equality and recognising problems and addressing them. Australia's egalitarian culture is particularly effective at dealing with these sorts of issues, so we are hoping it will kick in at some point soon. We have also managed in the past to be one of the more successful economic governance systems in the western world. I think we have had—and Mike does too—a lapse in the last decade or more and we think we need to rebuild that capacity as fast as we can. Thank you.

Ms BOLTON: Thank you, Professor Bell. Fancy giving me a microphone; now I am really dangerous! I also have a Maroon and a Blue on either side, so I realise I am in a precarious situation. On that note, I welcome to the podium fellow MP Mr Peter Russo, the member for Toohey. He will be speaking about the role of the media in politics and the effect of social media on political reporting.

Mr RUSSO: This is my second term of serving the people of my electorate, the electorate of Toohey. As has been discussed by social commentators for some time now, the role of mainstream media in our lives is ever diminishing and the role of social media in our lives is ever increasing. If I ask how many people have Netflix or how many people now watch programs on Netflix rather than commercial channels, you would be surprised how many people have changed their television viewing habits. My argument is that it is the same for where people get their news from. They are not going to the traditional sources to get their news. Whether it be fact or fake news, social media is having a tremendous effect on political reporting, political trends and political campaigning. I will attempt to explore some of these issues in this presentation. There is no doubt in my mind that today a majority of people source, in part or in whole, their information through social media.

I have an example of a flyer, which I will come to later, that I believe brings all aspects of media together. Here we have the tabloid media, the *Australian* newspaper, an agenda-setting journal, the *Quarterly Essay*, and social media in the form of WeChat coming together. Whilst the *Australian* newspaper, the flyer and WeChat all went about creating the falsehood of the debate, the *Quarterly Essay* journal went about correcting the untruths spread in WeChat, the *Australian* newspaper and the flyer. I believe this shows that, whilst it is easy to spread false statements through social media such as WeChat, the tabloid media is equally capable of spreading misinformation and falsehoods and, as we see here, indeed does. The difference I guess is that journalists put their names to articles; however, you are able to hide your true identity with social media.

The sheer quantity and accessibility of social media means that, now more than ever, people have ready and immediate access to information, whether that be information in the true sense or information in the sense of whatever the person producing the social media output chooses to post. The term 'fake news' is attributed to the 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump. He is a prodigious user of social media. He is a habitual user of Twitter and he has been riding the wave of social media to his own ends—to maintain very individual control. It is interesting to note that news bulletins will often refer to what the President has said on his Twitter account rather than what has been said by a spokesman on his behalf at a traditional style press conference. In this regard he seems to be the first President who has truly engineered social media to his own ends, and this seems so even though many of his tweets are entirely cringe-worthy. No doubt there would be members of the Republican Congress who would prefer that he did not tweet at all, or at least not as often as he does, or that he at least had someone vet the tweets before he sends them into the worldwide electronic stratosphere.

A news article written by Andrew Buncombe writing for the *Independent* stated—

Mr Trump has weaponised Twitter, using it not just to reach the masses but to control the news agenda through bluster and distraction.

Professor George Lakoff, an emeritus university professor from the University of California in Berkley and author of *Don't Think of an Elephant!*, is an expert on cognitive science and linguistics. Professor Lakoff has analysed Mr Trump's tweets and concluded Trump uses social media as a weapon to control the news cycle. It works like a charm. His tweets are tactical rather than substantive. Professor Lakoff has created a template in which he places the President's tweets into one of four categories—pre-emptive framing, diversion, deflection and the trial balloon. Professor Lakoff says that he is as good as it gets.

Even mainstream media acknowledge the influence of social media, demonstrated by the fact that media outlets have Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter accounts where news articles will often appear that do not appear in the tabloid version of the relevant news outlet. As you know, there are many platforms in which political and governing issues are discussed. However, Professor Lakoff has stated that he believes it is up to the media to point out the misinformation and untruths that are being spread. Some of those I observed as having significance in campaigning in the 2017 state election. We have our usual suspects such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn and the not-so-usual suspects such as WeChat and LINE.

The people from mainland China appear to favour WeChat. For want of a better description, it is the Chinese version of Facebook. Some in the Chinese community have told me that WeChat is the first thing they check while having their coffee in the morning and it is the last thing they do after cleaning their teeth before tucking themselves in. Janet, who worked in my office previously, often complained to me that people would keep many a conversation going about a single issue well into the early hours of the morning.

People from Taiwan appear to prefer the social media platform LINE. In my work and in my campaigning I have attempted to use both, but it has to be said that you are at a very big disadvantage in using either of these platforms if you cannot speak or write Mandarin. Unless you have someone monitoring what is happening on WeChat, you are likely to miss a conversation or an invitation to a community event. WeChat, like all forms of social media, can be used to send out incorrect information in order to improperly influence the voting community.

This is a flyer that was distributed throughout much of the electorate in the 2017 campaign. It was not possible for me to ascertain whether or not it made its way into my electorate, but the sentiments being portrayed in WeChat conversations reflected what was outlined in these flyers that had been distributed. The flyer went on to say, as you can see—

The LNP have promised to axe these radical programs and fund a proper anti-bullying program to protect all students.

Unfortunately, there were no radical programs to axe. There were already antibullying programs in place, with the state government having a program to equip teachers to assist their students should there be bullying. It was about creating a safe and inclusive environment for LGBTI students. In Benjamin Law's article 'Moral Panic 101: Equality, Acceptance and the Safe Schools Scandal', published in the *Quarterly Essay*, he explores this subject in a far deeper and analytical way than I have time to do now. I encourage anyone who is interested in this debate in a social reform context to read his article. His article speaks about the sustained attack by News Corp journalists on Safe Schools, and he states that they 'would have you believe Safe Schools involved queer activists accessing classrooms and students, without parental consent or knowledge'. Benjamin Law further spoke about George Christensen's contribution in our federal parliament.

The creator of the flyer adopted themes similar to News Corp. Social media was then used to spread the misinformation like wildfire. Social media is a very powerful tool for such behaviour. From personal experience, I can say that WeChat was a vehicle used by others to attack me in the Chinese community way before the election campaign even started. There were conversations on WeChat saying that I would not be selected by the Labor Party. At the time that this was happening, it was very difficult for me to enter into the debate.

As with many social media platforms, those who spread misinformation are able to do so in comparative secrecy. It is very difficult to identify who starts the false information and then who promulgates it. Conventional redress like defamation actions become an impractical means of remedying such behaviour.

Normally what happens in the electorate around January-February is that we have many, many functions in relation to Chinese New Year. My social media showed me at all of these functions in the southern part of my electorate. Then I received criticism from two social media groups on the eastern side of my electorate: the Salisbury Community Grapevine and the Moorooka Community Grapevine. They were monitoring my Facebook page and, seeing that I was at all of these Chinese New Year events, they were saying that they had not seen me.

I just want to point out that I did some very basic campaigning. I stood on the side of the road with this sign thanking my electorate for voting for me. If I had been a little wiser and got someone to take a photo of me out on the street and put it on my social media, my reach would have been far greater than it was from just standing on the side of the road with that sign.

As we all know, campaigning does not stop on election day. It is a continuing process throughout your entire term and into the next. Social media is a tool that we can all use to assist us to spread our message—the real information. At the same time, it is a means that those who wish our defeat can misuse by spreading false information. The challenge is for the real information to triumph over the misinformation. The learning curve for this challenge will continue to be steep. I hope you have enjoyed this conference and your stay in our great city of Brisbane. I would like to thank the organisers for putting on such a great event.

Ms BOLTON: Thank you, Peter. Just to add to that, because I share many commonalities as in what we go through as MPs, the interesting thing with all the misinformation and disinformation is that, if you take a negative and capitalise on it and respond, you are actually getting a lot of information out there and you can, bit by bit, work not only on what is being put out there but also on changing the culture of your community, for them to start recognising it for what it is. They actually do see it for what it is. There are two ways of looking at it. What I can say is that it is very resource intensive to be aware of everything that is going on and that is hard work.

Our next panellist is Sean O'Connor, who is the Clerk Assistant Chamber and Sergeant at Arms in the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly. He is talking about the rise of the keyboard commando member. That sounds like you and me.

Mr O'CONNOR: Good afternoon, colleagues. My name is Sean O'Connor. I am the Clerk Assistant Chamber and Sergeant at Arms for the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory. I am presenting this session today with Mr Gareth Ward MP, member for Kiama in New South Wales and Parliamentary Secretary for Education and the Illawarra and South Coast.

Session 6, after lunch on day 2: our panel definitely drew the short straw! I will say up-front that we do not have any Winston Churchill quotes. However, I do want to note that one of the books that I have used for this paper is Tim Highfield's *Social Media and Everyday Politics*, which I found to be a really refreshing and interesting read. I will be quoting from his work throughout my presentation. Highfield prefaced his book with—

> More pertinently, though, this book was written by a straight, white, agnostic, middle-class, male academic, at the time of writing approaching thirty, and based in Australia.

I may not fit all of these categories. However, I am sure I tick a few of the boxes. I will preface our presentation by saying that this is the view of a parliamentary officer and a parliamentarian on a matter that interests us both: who do you trust—keyboard warrior versus traditional activist? We changed the title slightly.

The idea for this session rose from an elective university course that I presented at Charles Darwin University over summer with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, Mr Andrew Jones, called LWA210—Parliamentary Practice and Procedure. As part of this week-long incentive course, Mr Ward came to Darwin and presented three lectures for us. One of them was on empowering citizens through the parliamentary process. It was after this session, or more likely after a bottle of red, that Mr Ward and I had a discussion where we landed on the question: does a keyboard commando have more power than a concerned constituent of old who had to work hard to get access to their local member? We then had a follow-up question, or more likely several more bottles of wine: does this new-found potential two-way dialogue create a level of trust between constituents and the member or does it erode trust?

In the past there was a gatekeeper who had the ability to filter what went through to the member. This filter included phone calls, letters and visitors. Nowadays, if a local member is tech savvy and engaged, a constituent has the ability to contact that local member 24/7 on multiple platforms—the obvious being email, Facebook, Instagram and even Snapchat. Like Colleen Lewis prefaced in her presentation yesterday, we are not making definitive statements in our presentation, rather posing questions. This is an area that I would like to and will do more research on in the future.

Some of the questions that we have posed to each other as we have debated this topic are: do people feel like heroes because they are talking directly to members and does this create a greater level of political engagement? Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Is this unfiltered engagement influencing government policy? Is it changing debate in society or is it just creating a keyboard warrior whose main achievement is keeping their members awake at night, messaging on their iPhones when they should be sleeping? Was it better in the past when there was a gatekeeper screening communication before it went to a member and if constituents wanted to access their member they had to abide by societal norms and standing orders in order to push a grievance through parliament—for example, petitions?

In his book *Social Media and Everyday Politics*, Tim Highfield discusses the intersection of politics and our everyday lives. An example he gives of where this has merged dates back to May 2014, when the British Electoral Commission issued advice to polling booth staff ahead of their upcoming local and European elections that voters could not take selfies in polling booths. These selfies, they said, if sent to Instagram or Facebook or other social media, were deemed to be a threat to the validity and security of the vote, especially if that selfie featured the highly private and confidential polling papers. These selfies were deemed irresponsible at best and at worst as committing a crime. Highfield notes that the fact that this activity warranted an official statement from the British Electoral Commission demonstrates the intersection of politics in everyday lives. He makes what I think is a powerful conclusion: if we update our social media profiles with details of other aspects of our everyday lives, why should we be prohibited from posting updates of ourselves at the polls?

For the purpose of this presentation, the term 'politics' includes a wide range of political actions and functions, from an individual at a polling booth on election day to a member of parliament, a government and even a parliament tweeting about historical parliamentary records. My interest in this topic builds on the paper that I delivered at ASPG in 2017: 'Can modern media make parliament more attractive to a hi-tech generation?' My interest is from the perspective of a parliamentary officer and is twofold: one, can social media influence the political trajectory of an issue or is it just white noise and are traditional forms of lobbying, specifically petitions, more effective in influencing change; and, two, regardless of the effect of social media, what role, if any, do parliamentary institutions have with this medium in community engagement?

In the next section Mr Ward will be homing in on his personal experiences as a member of parliament and his observations on whether or not social media is a trusted source of information and the effectiveness of MPs engaging online. Before I hand over to Mr Ward, a question which should be asked is: do people want to be involved in political debate? The Hansard Society has undertaken investigation into how politically engaged and interested our community is through the society's audit of political engagement. This body of work suggests that most people are not very interested in participating in political decision-making. They want their representatives to do this for them. While they want a voice in the process, they do not expect or desire a greater level of involvement. If they do get involved, they prefer options that demand little by the way of sustained time and commitment. Whitney Phillips states—

… so-called real life necessarily bleeds into online life, and vice versa. Our raced, classed, and gendered bodies are encoded into our online behaviours, even when we're pretending to be something above or beyond or below what we 'really' are IRL (in real life).

My take from what Whitney Phillips is trying to say here, as noted in Highfield's work, is that what is happening is that the political climate of the real world is not divorced or separate from what people are talking about on social media. Not all of us—well, when you look around, maybe people not in this room—are engaged in political discussion and debate. Many people may use social media to take their selfies with their glass of wine, cupcakes or animals and never engage in political discussion. Quite often, when I am wasting my time looking at Instagram, Facebook or, if I really like punishing myself, Twitter, I think to myself: do you really think we care about your cupcake, animals or what you are having for dinner? This can often be as I am positioning candles or lights to take a photo of the most amazing cocktail or bottle of wine in front of me.

When a hashtag-able moment occurs, the general public may get in on the bandwagon. An example of this may be the hashtag #illridewithyou or the marriage equality debate. A question to pose here is: would the national debate have been different following the Port Arthur massacre and the subsequent changes to Australian gun laws? Because the everyday person now has a megaphone that they can use to engage in political debate and an avenue to talk directly to their elected officials, has this engagement come at the expense of the traditional activist because they are not using the same megaphone and are taking their cause up with their member using pen and paper, the courtesy of making an appointment or standing in the cold out the front of their local supermarket gathering signatures for a petition?

One of the methods that these keyboard warriors seem to follow and are often labelled as doing is communicating at rather than communicating with their audience. The interactive potential of social media seems particularly appealing in light of the unidirectional nature of traditional political communication. As Coleman argues, the framing of 20th century politics by broadcast media led to a sense that democracy amounted to the public watching and listening to the political elite, thinking aloud on its behalf, but Coleman suggests that with the rise of interactive media the equation between communication and transmission is no longer defensible as the best or only way of serving the public interest. While the paternalistic model of top-down political communication may not be defensible in the digital age, the question remains: does that model continue to prevail? Are politicians and members of the public making use of social media to engage one another in a reciprocal dialogue or do politicians simply use social media as an additional avenue for transmitting information, for communicating at rather than with the public themselves?

In this method of communicating at, the reciprocity norm comes to light. Ostrom discusses the reciprocity norm, which Kobayashi in his research states has been found to impact social relations and cultures across the globe, including in online environments, as a human action that we return like for like. When people treat us well, we return the kindness. When people treat us poorly, we respond with hostility and punishment. Trumbull suggests that, because politicians cannot afford to engender further public rancour, they are likely to respond to barrages of negativity on social media not with negativity of their own but with silence. In short, they will simply avoid the type of two-way communication that social media should ideally promote. I will now hand over to Mr Ward, who will discuss his experiences as a member of parliament with social media.

Mr WARD: Thank you, Sean. I will pick you up on one point. You promised no Winston Churchill quotes. I do distinctly remember a conversation that you and I once had where you quite rightly said that if I were one of your members of parliament you would poison me, to which I said, 'If you were my clerk assistant, I would drink it.' That aside, as we have heard over the last two days, the focus of this year's conference is trust. Given my profession and, indeed, the history of New South Wales, I feel honoured that someone thought it appropriate to invite me. I thought for a moment that perhaps this was an invitation to be more the target of a case study than deliver a presentation, but the topic of today's discussion involves

the fickle, often feckless forum which solicits the views, tirades, wit and wisdom and occasionally the scintillating dictum of the keyboard warrior, but combine politicians, constituents and social media and you will find a forum like no other place where prejudice is more mistaken for truth, passion for reason and conjecture for documentation and fact.

Traditionally every three or four years the industry that has become Australian politics fills the airwaves with the most virulent, scurrilous, wall-to-wall character assassination of every political practitioner in the country. Then after the dust has settled the commentariat declares itself puzzled that Australia has lost faith and trust with politicians. But now the campaign to win the hearts and votes of Australians happens every day, every hour and every minute—tweets, posts and social media tiles. The public used to have to put up with the rigidity of election campaigns only once in a while, but now the constant churn of the media cycle is only outpaced by the saturation of social media through your computer, your iPad or even your smart phone.

Do people really trust social media either? According to this year's findings by the Edelman Trust Barometer, the answer is an emphatic no. The annual study surveyed more than 33,000 people across the globe about how much they trust institutions including government, media, businesses and NGOs. This year there was a sharp increase in trust in journalism—I do not understand that, but anyway—as the source of news information and a decline in trust in social media and search engines for this purpose. Globally, trust in journalism rose five points to 59 per cent whilst trust in social media and search engines fell two points to 51 per cent, a gap of eight points.

In Australia the level of trust in both was below the global average, but the 17-point gap between them was greater—52 per cent for journalism and just 35 per cent for social media and search engines. Social media certainly helps traditional journalists latch on to stories much faster than they otherwise would, with most people having a very high quality camera and mic embedded in their mobile phone. Social media and smart phones mean that public figures are never truly off the record and can no longer be in total control of the flow of information about themselves and their roles. 'Off the record' is now well and truly off the table.

If this technology were around years ago, one wonders whether certain members of parliament would have made it quite as far as they did. Social media's particular strength is its capacity to show up people in real time as being dishonest, ridiculous or even hypocritical. Tony Abbott once remarked that if Facebook were available in his day he would never have become prime minister. What a shame Malcolm was not forward thinking enough to have invented the internet much earlier than he did.

Social media can have the same perverse impact of making people even more popular. Indeed, President Trump's famous tweets have arguably given him an air of authenticity that many amongst his base consider refreshing. One would hope that the competent would adopt social media platforms to their advantage while the incompetent would be shown up for exactly what they are. Levels of competency involve the degree to which members use social media not just to promote their activities and initiatives but also to engage in a conversation online. This may be staff ghostwriting, but the best members use digital platforms to engage and respond, although this does mean that their support staff may require heavier levels of prescription medication than the average Australian.

Of course we all have our critics, and keyboard warriors, or trolls, are always there to check your ego if you need to be brought down to earth. As a local MP I believe that I work hard and do the best I can, but, fair dinkum, there are people waiting for you online like a snake would wait for its prey in the tall, tall grass. I could get up one morning and literally walk on the water body that is known as the beautiful Shoalhaven River and the first post on the Shoalhaven News Facebook page would be a skull-and-crossbones emoji with the associated words 'Ward can't swim'.

Keyboard warriors, or trolls, often without profiles, are simply now part of the game. Understandably, most of these people would never speak this way to your face in public. Indeed, such has been my interaction with trolls that I have broken them up into three categories. There is the adjunct troll, who can be characterised as falling into the conversation, occasionally stumbling over the truth but hastily picking himself up and hurrying on as if nothing had happened in the first place. Then there is the French Revolutionary troll. This troll can be characterised as working out where the discussion is going first and then promptly declaring himself to be leading the winning argument and critical to the outcome of the virtual battle. Then there is the Anakin Skywalker troll. Just do not engage. They are on the dark side and no amount of elective surgery will save them.

My strong recommendation to my colleagues is to resist the temptation to engage. Those of you who do follow me on Facebook will know that I am being a tad hypocritical in proffering this advice. Once upon a time, people got their news and discussion by attending robust meetings of their local community. Whilst this still happens, more and more social media is the vehicle through which people retrieve their news and views, and also express those views unedited in real time. The social media ecosystem is similar to what happens at candidates forums. My experience over the 14 years of elected office tells me that candidates forums tend to be the domain of the politically active and rarely do genuinely interested people attend. This hypothesis is backed up by recent evidence from the US when it comes to social media that indicates my echo-chamber theory may have some merit.

Last year the Pew Research Centre released new data analysing the Facebook posts of members of Congress. Pew found that the sites whose stories were shared by members of Congress tend to correlate to their members' own politics. More conservative members of Congress shared articles from more conservative news sites and more liberal members shared from more liberal ones. What is more, stories from sites more popular with partisan members of Congress were also shared more regularly. In other words, Democrats sharing links from ThinkProgress saw more people reshare them than posts from the Associated Press. Republicans sharing stories from Fox News saw the same.

This matches data from the social media universe on the whole reported by Harvard's Berkman Klein Centre last August. Both Twitter and Facebook were more partisan during the 2016 presidential election campaign than the news media universe at large. Facebook was more partisan than Twitter. The Berkman study also found that during the 2016 election popularity on Facebook was a strong indicator of a highly partisan and unreliable media. That is presumably less the case when the person doing the sharing is a member of parliament or Congress, but it reinforces the idea that Facebook is a place where people tend to share highly partisan information.

Indeed, keyboard warriors who stalk the web are helping politicians understand their audience if they did but know it. Many of you have heard the term of boosting a post. This is not Cambridge Analytica; this is a very simple thing that you can do to target a particular demographic using a relatively small amount of money. For those serious about their campaigns, there are more elaborate ways to microtarget and engage disenfranchised voters. Facebook Pixel is a small piece of code that can be placed on a web page to help track site visitors. This information is used to remarket Facebook ads to those individuals. Once sites are advertised to past visitors, the code can be used to track them and learn from audience behaviour when people were back on that website. You can create funnels that collect people who have visited your site in the last seven, 10, 20, 30 or 40 days—however you like.

Not only do politicians know exactly whom they are advertising to; they understand how their ads are performing and how they have the opportunity to remarket them to be most effective. What is clear is that the public are awake up to this. From the research of the Hansard Society through to the Australian National University's School of Politics and International Relations, trust and confidence in politicians is sadly lacking but recent evidence suggests so too are the instruments of social media—#theend.

Ms BOLTON: Thank you, Gareth. That was very interesting. Before anyone says you cannot trust me because I allowed him to go over time, it is okay because David said I could do that if I wanted to. Next up we have Dr Paul Williams from the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science from Griffith University. His topic is the regional vote at the 2017 Queensland state election and what it means for minor parties.

Dr P WILLIAMS: Thanks to the ASPG for the invitation to speak and to the chapter chair and secretary for organising this wonderful event. You might be thinking, 'What has the Queensland election in 2017 got to do with fake news or trust in a post-truth world?' Hopefully that will become evident. It might sound like a tangential issue, but hopefully that will become evident too.

A lot of this is pitched to our interstate visitors, who might find what happened last year in Queensland interesting. We really did have a very unusual election result. I did not find too many people outside the Labor Party who thought that Annastacia Palaszczuk would be returned as Premier. I did not find too many people inside the Labor Party who thought she would be returned with a majority, but let us kick off with a quick overview and context.

Labor was returned with a majority. Very few people thought it would. Labor got a two-party preferred swing to it. It was a minority government in a hung parliament. With all due respect to the Labor presence in the room, the consensus was that it was a pretty average government beset with some ministerial problems, resignations of MPs et cetera but it did get a swing to it and a very small primary swing away from it.

Annastacia Palaszczuk is the only state woman Premier to have won successive elections. We saw our first Greens MP elected, we saw our first Torres Strait MP elected, and we saw our first South Sea islander MP elected. He is also the first One Nation member to be returned to the parliament since 2009. So there are a number of firsts. It is the first election since 1989 that Queensland returned to compulsory preferential voting. We had optional preferential voting for 25 years and, somewhat controversially, the state returned to CPV. I will return to that point in a moment.

It is the first election for our expanded parliament. Our parliament for over 30 years was 89 seats and we are now 93. It is the first since real-time electoral declaration laws for donations. It is the first since we repealed voter ID laws. This is the history of this election and the unexpectedness of this election. It is the first time in 110 years that a minority government was returned in Queensland—the first since the Kidston government back in 1907. It was a remarkable election any way that you slice it, and it has a very regional flavour. I will get to that in a moment.

Some more points: the LNP vote plummeted. It did not just drop; it plummeted. The LNP lost Brisbane seats including some of its jewel-in-the-crown seats. Pauline Hanson's One Nation vote fell well below expectations. They secured a single seat, despite Hanson saying it would supersede 1998, when the party won 11 seats and 23 per cent of the vote. The Greens won Maiwar in western Brisbane but they did not win their target seat of South Brisbane, and that surprised a lot of people.

This is where I am going to kick off with my hypotheses. The regional variations were especially pronounced. This is where we are going to kick into the meat of the sandwich. This election was an especially regionalised election. My first argument is this: the 2017 Queensland election was the most regionally focused in terms of campaign, campaign rhetoric, leaders visits et cetera since the 1998 election, which is when Pauline Hanson burst on to the scene. Why did Pauline Hanson, populism and perhaps the beginning of the slide of respect and trust in public institutions in Queensland begin? Wik had something to do with it, gun laws had something to do with it, National Competition Policy had something to do with it, and all of this fuelled Pauline Hanson mark I.

I would say that we saw this revisited somewhat in 2017. Regional anger did boil over in Queensland over the last couple of years. There was a downturn after the mining boom. Queensland has an intractable unemployment problem, particularly in regional Queensland and particularly with young unemployment. Rural Queenslanders are very worried and still are angry about tree-clearing legislation.

Here is a big one that might have slipped under the radar of a lot of Brisbane people. There is a perception in Queensland's regions that Brisbane and the south-east are ripping off the regions. I have done my own calculations and the perception does not stack up. Let me show you. In February 2017 there was a Galaxy poll that found 54 per cent of all Queenslanders, including the south-east, thought the south-east was ripping off Queensland from budget allocations. That was higher than 70 per cent among regional Queenslanders, so that is fuelling the mistrust that the Palaszczuk government is not looking after the rest of Queensland.

This is a successive problem for Queensland premiers. Wayne Goss encountered regional backlashes. Rob Borbidge encountered regional backlashes. Campbell Newman encountered enormous regional backlashes. Anna Bligh did and Annastacia Palaszczuk has. The only one who could really mitigate regional backlashes was Peter Beattie, but even then he came to grief over the council amalgamations in 2007. Clearly there is a sentiment in Queensland, even to this day, that somehow the elites in Brisbane are ripping off the good people in regional Queensland.

The reality of the Queensland budget, however, was very different. Yes, there was more spent in overall terms in the south-east than outside the south-east in the 2016-17 budget allocations on infrastructure. A total of $5.69 billion was spent on South-East Queensland projects versus $4.94 billion on regional infrastructure projects. When you break it down on a per capita basis you can see that regional Queenslanders were doing twice as well as South-East Queenslanders, yet the perception remains—one that Pauline Hanson exploited—that the south-east is ripping off the rest of Queensland. That was fuelling mistrust.

For more evidence that we had a strongly regional election, you can see that there are differences between these issues of salience. Some did not have much difference—for example, health—but jobs were much more important in the rest of the state than in the south-east. Leadership was roughly the same. This is a very important point: Queenslanders wanted majority, stable government. That was a major reason Palaszczuk was returned. Have a look down here. This would surprise a lot of people. Adani enjoyed quite low salience. Adani was not the great driver of vote choice in 2017 that the news media might have suggested it was.

There is no doubt that for 20 years there has been enormous regional pessimism in Queensland driving the One Nation populist, angry, anti-elite vote. We saw this in the Queensland's Fortunes questions that were asked for a couple of years through Galaxy. Queenslanders were asked on the eve of the election, 'Do you think Queensland is headed in the right direction?' Forty-nine per cent in Brisbane said 'yes' and 37 per cent said 'no'. The figures were exactly reversed in the regions. Forty-nine per cent of Queenslanders said, 'No, Queensland is not heading in the right direction.' There was more regional anger, more suspicion.

I have done my own quick content analysis where I surveyed the *Brisbane Times*, the *Courier-Mail*, the *Australian Financial Review* and the *Australian* for the words 'Queensland', 'region' or 'regional', and 'protest'. In 2012, in the month before the campaign there were only seven mentions in all of those papers and 65 of 'Queensland', 'region' and 'vote'. Jumping to 2017, there are 31 in terms of 'region' or protest' and 191 references to 'Queensland', 'region' or vote'. It had high salience among newspapers, among journalists. Therefore, we can conclude that the regions would have had a high salience among voters. This was clearly a very regional election.

Let us park hypothesis 1 and look at my second argument. This is the big one. It has long been said—and this is a truism—that Queensland is more regional than any other state. There are more people who live outside of Brisbane than who live in it. That is historically true. It is further from Brisbane to Cairns than it is from Brisbane to Melbourne. You cannot be the Premier, or the government of Queensland, if you do not pay homage to the regions. You will not be in politics for long. Campbell Newman found that out. You really need to pay homage to the regions.

Even so, the view has been that there are two Queenslands: Brisbane versus the bush. An alternative reading is that it is the provinces: the coast versus the inland. This has long been the theoretical norm to assessing Queensland political culture. I argue that that is fine, but it is still too blunt a distinction, particularly in the post One Nation age. I argue that, really, the theory should move to assessing Queensland electoral behaviour according to a six Queenslands thesis. Here are the six Queenslands. There is Brisbane within 20 kilometres of the CBD and the Brisbane fringe, more than 20 kilometres of the CBD. These are the struggle street suburbs: Ipswich to the west, Logan to the south, Redlands to the east and Moreton shire to the north. There is the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. Some people might think it would be more expedient to lump those two in together. I am sure Sandy would be the first to jump in to say, 'No thanks.' They behave very differently, do they not?

Ms BOLTON: Very differently.

Dr P WILLIAMS: They are very different political cultures. There is eastern provincial—the coastal strip running from Nambour right up to Cape York—and everything west of the Great Dividing Range, the western rural seats. That is pretty fundamental. I am not delving down too deeply. I am arguing that there are at least six Queenslands. There are probably more, but a man has only so much time to go into it.

My method is this: populism and regionalism co-exist. If we want to understand the regional vote, we have to understand the performance of populist parties in Queensland. If we want to understand populist party fortunes and, therefore, ideas of mistrust in a post-fact age, we need to disaggregate the regional vote.

To determine the primary vote strength relative among the regions within each party—among the Labor, LNP, PHON and Greens parties—I have categorised that support into strong, moderate and weak. That is probably sounding very confusing, but it will become clear in a moment. I have thrown up all the two-party preferred vote since 1989. The only thing really to note about that is how the total major party share has collapsed. Thirty years ago—immediately after Fitzgerald—Labor and the Liberal and National parties were collecting 95 per cent. Pauline Hanson comes along and it drops to 70. It picks up. Pauline Hanson starts doing *Dancing with the Stars* and she drops off the radar. She comes back on the radar and,

boom, it has dropped below 70 for the first time since 1910. One Nation might have fizzled, but regional anger is still there. Just because Pauline Hanson went away does not mean that these people are not still angry at the major parties. Of course they are.

Here is some public opinion. You can see One Nation is spiking and then here is the campaign start and there is the campaign finish. Pauline Hanson is her own worst enemy. She performs much better when she does not speak. As soon as she opens her mouth, her vote collapses. They had the campaign from hell. I should also say that LNP and Labor are bubbling along. The Greens are bubbling along. This is the really interesting story. PHON was polling extremely well and collapsed.

I will not bore you with too many details except to say that Labor got a very small primary swing against it. The LNP got a massive primary swing—much bigger than anyone thought—including in the regions. In the space of two electoral cycles the LNP has dropped 15 per cent. That is so big that some people are talking about dissolving the LNP back into two parties. PHON was 13.73 per cent, which was respectable in anyone's language, but they were tipping 28 per cent.

Why did Labor get back so strongly? Majority government stability was a major driving force. Palaszczuk was popular. The LNP appeared unready. The Palaszczuk government did not do much, but the consensus was that it was an inoffensive government. Palaszczuk was popular in de-Newmanisation. Nicholls failed to distance himself from Campbell Newman. Nobody believed Tim Nicholls when he said that he was not going to accept One Nation support for minority government after the election. The fact that the LNP preferenced Pauline Hanson's One Nation in 49 of the 61 seats that Pauline Hanson contested really damaged the LNP's progressive credentials in Brisbane. It was a major contributing factor to the LNP's defeats in the seats of Mount Ommaney, Mansfield and Aspley.

PHON had a terrible campaign. It was not helped by Fraser Anning, who resigned 30 seconds after walking into the Senate. The Adani loan veto was popular, but the issue was not highly salient. PHON preferences leaked to Labor at enormous rates—50 per cent in some seats. The LNP preferences saved Labor in South Brisbane but Labor preferences defeated the LNP in Maiwar.

What conclusions can we draw from the Labor vote? There were three major groupings of support. Labor's vote is still strong in Brisbane and Brisbane's fringe. It is of moderate strength in eastern provincial. It is still weak on the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and western rural. The only region in which Labor got a swing to it in the 2017 election was the Gold Coast. Labor is well placed to improve itself there.

What conclusions can we draw from the LNP vote? There are three major groupings of support. They are still strong on the Gold Coast, but since there are only 11 seats on the Gold Coast that is bad news. They have moderate strength on the Sunshine Coast and western rural. They are weak in Brisbane, the Brisbane fringe and the eastern provincial. This is not auguring well for the LNP. They need to do better in eastern provincial if they are going to cancel that populist vote.

For PHON, they are strong in eastern provincial and western rural. Obviously, we already knew that. They are moderate in the Brisbane fringe and the Sunshine Coast. Satellite cities, the struggle streets of the outer capital cities, are still reasonably strong for One Nation. They are weak in Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The Greens are strong in Brisbane, moderate on the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and the Brisbane fringe, and weak in the eastern provinces and western rural.

Here is a summary—and this is really the point of the whole presentation. I have 12 cells. Only two of those cells are identical. Greens and PHON support are almost mirror images of each other. Where PHON does well, the Greens will not. Where PHON does poorly, the Greens will do well, except for the Gold Coast. Out of 12 cells, only two are identical, which means that we need a large number of categories to adequately assess the regional vote and populism.

If the minor parties are going to make a rational choice and get the biggest bang for their campaign buck—because the PHON, the Greens and other minor parties are obviously cash strapped—I would advise PHON to contest only eastern provincial and western rural and I would advise the Greens to contest only Brisbane seats. Overall, my final conclusions are that compulsory preferential voting saved the Palaszczuk government. It punished the LNP.

For Colin Mackerras, one of the original psychologists in this country—as much as I love Malcolm—his uniform swing thesis has yet again been proved to be incorrect. There is no such thing as uniform swing—at least in Queensland. Queensland remains deeply divided in political culture and in electoral behaviour. Only two of the 12 cells were identical. Therefore, we need at least six regions to adequately anatomise the Queensland vote and, therefore, Queensland political culture. That was the view of Queensland going into the election. Thank you.

Ms BOLTON: Excellent. Thank you, Paul. We will open up for questions.

Dr THORNTON: I can usually think of something on social media—and I did. In your presentation on the use of social media, certainly, I think you have it broadly right in terms of its divisiveness. I suspect you underestimated the role of the algorithms themselves as opposed to the people using social media for some of the divisiveness.

Facebook is designed to create echo chambers. It is not a bug; it is a feature. It is unsurprising that you have found that it did, because that is the way the algorithm works. Recently Twitter—and I have not looked at this closely—has taken to cleaning out bots and fake users. I think in the case of at least one American politician it led to a collapse in his Twitter following, down to eight per cent of its previous size, because that was all the real followers that he had. There are a lot of rogue algorithms out there as well that are polluting the process of divisiveness. My query is around what part of shooting home divisions goes to the people using social media as opposed to the effects of the way the technology of algorithms is built?

Dr P WILLIAMS: That is an excellent question. I suppose it comes back, as you say, to who is using it and how they are using it. There are people who are using social media for their own political ends. That is what members of parliament are going to do. I certainly have said in my notes that there are plenty of great examples where you have community Facebook pages that share information.

One of the great powers of social media has also been able to harvest and target from a political point of view so that if there is a particular issue, for instance, you can galvanise around a particular Facebook page or hashtag in order to start that conversation. There are a lot of people out there who use it for the wrong reasons. You mentioned Twitter in particular, which is a declining medium. It is trying to clean out some of the bots and trolls. I wish they would start with my account.

There is certainly a very positive side to social media. Like any candidates forum, like any political medium, people will have a healthy degree of scepticism and cynicism around what is said. I do not think that everyone believes every post that is put up there, but it is a great opportunity for members of parliament to supplement their community engagement. It should not replace face-to-face doorknocking, street stalls and the usual forms of community engagement. It should be about putting yourself into that online community so that you can have that conversation with your constituents.

Dr KELLY: Thinking about social media and trying to build a policy consensus, in terms of echo chambers does social media make it harder to build the kind of policy consensus that might deliver fundamental economic change, for example, when people are talking only to themselves?

Dr P WILLIAMS: Yes. The advantage of the traditional media is that it was much easier to manipulate by power holders who could structure stories and leadership visions et cetera and promulgate them through the community. It was more hierarchical but in a sense I think more strategic in terms of capacities to put ideas out there and try and cement coalitions together. The new media, as you say, facilitates like-minded people talking to each other—and this is now well understood—reinforcing their own views in a manner in which suspect information or facts are not challenged much. I think the old system was at least some sort of gatekeeper for veracity. The new media is more divisive. I think it is not helpful in terms of forming visions and coalitions. If anyone else has an alternative or supplementary view about how progressive politics can build broad visions using social media without being hamstrung by these negatives I am talking about, that would be interesting too.

Mr WARD: If you look at the period when Obama was in office, he originally used the internet for 'net financing'. He would throw a net and ask for small contributions to back the causes that he believed in. There were $5 donations coming into Democratic headquarters because he was casting the net wide. In the second Obama campaign they retargeted using social media and targeted their base—not necessarily with a view to try and convince people—to harvest funds to promote the causes they were seeking to promote in the context of an election campaign. I think social media can be used to have a debate to an extent around the issues that are important, but for political parties more and more it is also becoming an avenue to fundraise to finance their causes, particularly in light of changes to donation laws in states like New South Wales where there are now caps on contributions and caps on spending. Being able to find avenues where you can promote your cause for free is so much more important and so much more important to be able to target.

Mr O'CONNOR: This does not directly answer your question, but you can think about social media as a voice for people who may not have had one before. My mother is one of nine, and I would have hated to be at that kitchen table at dinnertime because you would not get a word in over at least seven of them

because they all talk over each other. The two quiet ones who sat meekly at the table would never have engaged in any form of debate, especially a political debate. Now one of those two quiet, meek ones has an iPad and she has an opinion on everything. That person would not have done that if it were not for social media.

Think about the older generation, who are now getting active on social media—Twitter and Facebook. Again, if I use my family as an example, five years ago my parents would never have had an iPad: 'What are you wasting your money on that crap for?' Now they both have iPads, and when I see some of the stuff that my father reposts on social media I think, 'My God! Was I really from that household?' I think it creates an echo chamber of its own of new groups of people that might not have existed before.

Dr P WILLIAMS: In my presentation yesterday I talked about in some sense the direct opposite of social media, which speeds everything up and lowers transaction costs, and citizen juries, which slow things down. I think it is fairly clear now that one of the things social media has done is that all of those things that have been very good economically in lowering transaction costs and making feedback immediate have had large costs in politics. Then the question becomes: how might we be able to use social media to improve democracy?

One example I have seen is a website which is run out of Melbourne called YourView. It is not very encouraging that it is now in mothballs, but that at least draws attention to some of the problems. YourView was a social media site where people debated policy, but in the background there were algorithms which tried to decide who had high credibility on the site and who did not, which is clearly the essence of a lot of problems that we are running into with social media, particularly with bots and so on.

They built a number of algorithms which were transparent; you knew what they were. To give you an idea of one of the most central ones, people got a high credibility score if they were rated highly by people who disagreed with them. It seems to me that is the essence of democracy: jaw-jaw rather than war-war. We can use the internet for these kinds of projects but they are not at the forefront of commercial viability. They are not the way you make as much money as you possibly can as quickly as you possibly can, which should not surprise any of us when we think about democracy because politics is a public good; it is not a private good. We are so swamped with private good. Our policymakers' heads are so full of the magic of the market, and I am one of them. The market is a miraculous device for certain things, and its miraculousness becomes pretty toxic in this kind of environment, but there are ways in which we can think of technologies and build things that might really help out of those technologies because of the extent to which they scale.

Mr CAMPBELL: Paul, thank you very much for your insight into the 2017 election. Steve, I would like to follow up with you later. I would like to ask for a comment from our three practising members of parliament. In your roles as parliamentarians in parliament, on parliamentary committees, serving your constituents and meeting your public media requirements with social media—and from what I can see, it can be very hurtful—has that impacted on your other roles as members of parliament by having to spend all your time with trolls and everything else on social media?

Ms BOLTON: What I have found difficult is that you have to allocate your time very well. Sadly, because of the resource intensiveness of social media, if I finish out in the community at nine o'clock at night I can then be doing online social media until midnight. I have been doing a pilot with a similar program but it is called Engagement Hub. I use Facebook to drive discussions onto Engagement Hub because with Facebook you cannot control who is in a discussion. I want to have discussions with my constituents so I drive the discussion to the Engagement Hub, which they have to register for, so that you can have a discussion on major issues. If you say to the trolls or those who jump in on discussions, 'Join us in the discussion,' when it is a real discussion and they are not just having a crack, we find that often you will not see those trolls come back. The trolls start to diminish because you are sending them to a verified discussion by saying, 'If you would like to be part of the solution or if you really want to get this sorted, this is the methodology.' Yes, it is hard. I do not know how the others do it, but I do it in the 9 pm to midnight slot.

Mr RUSSO: One of the ways that I manage my social media is not to engage. For example, if I know that misinformation is being put out there I stay out of the arena. What I have found is that by engaging you are feeding it, and feeding it can sometimes be self-defeating. The other thing that has been encouraging for me is that often a supporter in the community will enter the debate and leave me right out of it, and that is always helpful.

Mr WARD: Clem, thank you for your question. I block them. You would not let them graffiti your office; why would you let them graffiti your Facebook page? If these people are just out there to cause trouble—they are not genuine community participants, they are not people from your electorate—then why would you let them? I think some people say, 'Wow, is that what you do?' Of course you should. I do not have a problem with people disagreeing with me, but if they are outside of my electorate and their profile picture is of a cat, a dog, a water fountain or something like that, clearly they are not people who are genuine. They are trolls; they are there to do something deliberate. I love seeing genuine online discussion and debate.

As my colleagues have said, you can facilitate good discussion, but in terms of time management, as I said in my address, it is like a public forum. People who generally participate to a higher extent are like the people you would get coming to a candidates forum. They are generally of one view or the other. Rarely are these people automatonistic, genuine bystanders who have an independent outlook on the world. They are generally people who have a view already, and that is why they are engaging. I like using my Facebook page to upload things like videos from parliament so that people can see my speeches because, let's face it, people are not sitting up until 11 o'clock at night reading *Hansard* anymore but people will watch a clip. They will also engage with video content or clever posts. In the United States the Democrat whip issued a challenge to members to increase their following, and Congressman Lieu boosted it up to 220,000 by being creative about the way he engaged. It is a good way to spend some time but, as I said earlier, it should never, ever replace the authentic engagement that you have with your community through your role as a member of parliament.

Mr ROSIN: I am Zephyr Rosin, a student at UQ. When you use social media solely as a self-promotion and advertising platform and do not engage with a certain subset of people who disagree with what you are saying, how does modern media and social media become any different from traditional media in the sense that you are completely manipulating which discussions happen and how they go?

Ms BOLTON: Is that a question for anyone specific or for the MPs?

Mr ROSIN: I suppose for Gareth and Peter in particular.

Mr WARD: I do engage and I will have that conversation. It is different in that you have the option to choose when you engage. As I say, there are people who will want to have a genuine conversation with you. At the moment in my electorate a plan is proposed to redevelop a tourist icon, Blowhole Point. It came out of the blue from a particular councillor who chairs the tourism committee, who just happened to be the person I defeated for my seat eight years ago. I am enjoying the debate, let me assure you, and I will continue to have that debate with him and with people online. Boy, hasn't he read this one wrong! If you want an example of how not to get involved in social media, follow his account.

Mr RUSSO: I agree with your sentiment that you can sanitise what is happening on your Facebook page by keeping it pedestrian, as I call it. I have been guilty of doing that, mainly because I am fearful that I do not have the skills to perhaps do what Gareth can do and engage in a debate meaningfully without making myself look stupid. I have often elected to not engage for that reason, because I think it is important that if you do engage you are able to contribute something meaningful to a debate.

Ms BOLTON: I have actually not blocked anyone. I have engaged with every single person, even if that person might be viewed as being there to give some grief. Interestingly, a couple of those people have actually become volunteers in my office now. I think the message is that there is a conversion that can happen. You can take a negative and turn it into a positive.

I think it is part of the broader discussion that you would have heard over the last couple of days. It is not only about engaging but also about the responsibility of communities to actually be better informed. As they become better informed they become more engaged and involved and you see less misinformation and disinformation.

You have to put a lot of work in now. It is not a quick process. I believe that I have already seen misinformation and disinformation diminishing. I never make somebody feel bad about what they are saying online, but I will ask them to respect all those online and to be mindful of how they construct their opinion. We are seeing a vast difference from what we saw this time last year.

Mr WEBB: I think all the presentations were great and they all reflected a change in context that has been happening over the last little while. I am interested to hear, especially from the three MPs on the panel, how you would like to see parliamentary administration evolve to support you in this new world?

Mr WARD: Can I start by saying that you are doing an excellent job, Mr Webb. That is a great question from New South Wales. I think it comes back to staff support. I actually do not let my staff do my social media account. If you are to be authentic, it needs to come from you. Obviously for ministers, premiers and prime ministers that is harder, although I do note that the Prime Minister and our Premier do spend a lot of time doing their own social media in the car or at events. That is a good thing.

I suppose it is about having some cognisance amongst parliamentary staff about how to support their member—to make sure that you engender a good conversation or that you make sure that the right content goes up—and perhaps some dos and don'ts about how to assist members who may not be as experienced with social media. As there should be, there is an array of people in parliament with an array of experiences and different backgrounds. Some people will be digital natives and others will not have that experience. In order that everyone can have the same level of outcome or use of the medium, it is important to have the training in place for members of parliament.

Mr RUSSO: I think training is important. As Gareth has said, we all come from different backgrounds and we are all different ages. People of my vintage struggle with the concept. I agree with Gareth that really the only way to run it is to run it yourself—time permitting and given the other commitments you have.

We are very lucky in Queensland in that we receive a lot of support from the parliament in that sphere. I would like to see the Queensland parliament, especially its committees, adopt the social media forum a little more in terms of sending information out into the community. For example, when we are doing a hearing into a particular area that may be of interest to those in the regions, it may be easier for people in the regions to engage with us in Brisbane through social media.

On my current committee and my previous committee we use videoconferencing to try to cover our vast state. For one inquiry where it would have taken us two weeks to go around the state and would have cost an enormous amount of money we were able to be in six different towns and speak to people in other places—on some occasions one person and on another occasion three people. They wanted to engage with the committee and were given that opportunity.

Ms BOLTON: I totally agree with Gareth and Peter. I am very much about resource management. I think for all MPs it would be better not to send information out like a shotgun but to tag us in it. We could have a system that autogenerates. It could be around initiatives or specific things. We are in an era of technology. You can have crawlers and all types of gremlins out there searching for the information you want. It would create much more trust and a lot fewer questions or concerns from constituents if things came straight from the government and we were tagged in them so that it went out through our system. At the moment I have to trawl through, find the information and then go and put it up. It is hard. From the parliamentary services angle that would be an enormous boon—that is, that it automatically comes out to us all and then we are able to share it.

There is also the issue of training. You can now have customised courses for your staff. One of the most important things is communication—keep it short and keep it sweet but also be objective, do not be slanted and do not be offensive. This is a hard one, but you cannot have your staff engaging personally on social media in a negative way or in a way that would come back and reflect badly upon you as an MP.

We have run out of time. We will have a short break to set up for the debate.

Proceedings suspended from 2.37 pm to 2.44 pm.