

XENOPHOBIA AND XENOPHILIA: PAULINE HANSON AND THE COUNTERBALANCING OF ELECTORAL INCENTIVES IN AUSTRALIA

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Mainstream parties focus on the economic dimension of politics, conventionally understood as left versus right. But there is another possible dimension, one which taps concerns about social and cultural issues. The author labels this the cosmopolitan/libertarian versus authoritarian/xenophobic dimension. She argues that extremist parties make appeals to voters with issues drawn from this dimension rather than the economic one.

When appeals by extremist parties invoke xenophobia they are a threat to immigrants. Mainstream parties may be tempted to echo these appeals but, in countries like Australia where large numbers of immigrants have the right to vote, this temptation will be muted.

The author tests her theory by examining the fortunes of Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party in the 1998 Federal Election.

INTRODUCTION

Extremist parties—variously labeled as ‘radical right-wing populism’¹ or the ‘new radical right’²—entered the political stage in European countries in the 1970s and moved from bit players to the permanent cast in many of these nations in the 1980s and 1990s. Although many of the conditions that account for their success in the European context are present in Australia, the ‘lucky country’ was able to avoid the rise of an electorally successful xenophobic party until Pauline Hanson established the One Nation Party (ONP) in April 1997 and went on to win 23 per cent of the primary vote in the Queensland state elections in June 1998. Is Australia merely lagging behind the European pattern or has it followed a different trajectory that can account for the late rise and predicted demise of Pauline Hanson’s ONP?

In this article, I argue that Australia has electoral forces that counterbalance ethnocentric movements and parties, forces that are often smaller or absent in Europe. In fact, Pauline Hanson is hardly the first to exploit the electoral appeal of ethnocentrism. Australian politicians periodically test the political waters to evaluate the electoral gains accruing to an

ethnocentric platform. But political counterweights remind politicians that electoral losses from this platform outweigh electoral gains. Thus, the ONP is unlikely to sustain its electoral appeal.

The variable missing from previous analyses of extreme right parties in Europe is voter opposition to the xenophobic and racist programs propounded by these parties. An important component of this opposition may come from the groups most directly affected by the xenophobic program, minority groups and immigrants. What differentiates Australia from most European countries is the size of the immigrant population and the ease with which the immigrants are able to naturalize and participate in the political system. I argue that immigrants’ electoral participation, under specific conditions, enhances the political incentives for mainstream parties to restrain xenophobic and racist rhetoric and to delegitimize specific dimensions of political debate. And the restriction of the policy debate reduces the ability of extremist parties to attract adherents, in part because their positions on other issues are often indistinguishable from those of the mainstream parties.

I begin with a review and critique of the literature on 'extreme right' parties and associated definitions. I then propose two linked hypotheses about the types of immigrant electoral participation that tend to dampen xenophobic and racist rhetoric and to modify the scope of political debate, both of which contribute to the electoral failure of extremist parties. The hypotheses presented here are evaluated with a qualitative analysis of Pauline Hanson's electoral path in Australia, by an analysis of ONP support by electoral division in the 1998 federal election, and by an individual-level analysis of immigrant voting behavior drawn from the 1998 election survey.

STATE OF THE KNOWLEDGE ON CONTEMPORARY 'EXTREME RIGHT' PARTIES

The rise of right wing extremism in Europe has generated a large and growing literature.³ Analyses are usually divided into two competing explanations. The first emphasizes the changing socio-economic environment that generates insecurity among specific segments of the population. From this perspective, '[l]abor market dualization and the individualization of risks and opportunities have resulted in increased insecurity'.⁴ Those who experience this insecurity tend to support electorally the extreme right parties. Alternatively, analysts point to structural changes in the party system and the decline of parties in Europe as the trigger for the growing electoral support for right wing extremists. Thus, 'the disintegration of majority parties offered a political vacuum into which right-wing parties have swiftly moved since the early 1980s'.⁵

The most fully elaborated examination of right wing parties incorporates both socio-economic and institutional changes

into the analysis.⁶ Kitschelt points to underlying structural change in market economies to explain the shift in voter preferences. According to this analysis, in the first two decades following World War II, voter preferences reflected a primary conflict over the organization of the economy and the distribution of wealth. Kitschelt argues that a second political dimension subsequently emerged, a dimension that incorporates authoritarianism and ethnocentrism. As a result, the new dominant dimension of political choice in advanced, market economy countries is anchored at one end of the political spectrum by a program that combines economic redistribution with libertarianism — the left — while the other end represents free market liberalism combined with a nationalistic authoritarianism — the right.

This underlying shift in voter preferences triggers an opportunity for the entry of extreme right (and extreme left) parties. But the electoral success of these parties depends not only on an underlying change in societal preferences; party strategies are important as well. If the moderate, mainstream parties of the right (and left) converge toward the median voter, a political space is opened for a right (and left) wing electoral appeal. However, the extreme parties themselves may fail to offer an appropriately appealing platform and therefore miss the electoral mark, even when the moderate parties do not incorporate the voters' new preferences. According to Kitschelt, the 'ideal' extreme right program that will successfully attract ongoing electoral support combines a nationalistic, xenophobic, authoritarianism with free market liberalism.⁷

Kitschelt's analysis is the most ambitious theoretically and offers a comprehensive overview of how voter prefer-

ences and party strategies interact to provide an electoral opportunity for extreme right parties. However, there is nothing particularly unique about economic insecurity and party strategies in Europe. This suggests that the analysis might be extended fruitfully to non-European advanced market economy countries, such as Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. In so doing, for at least some of these cases, the model appears to fit less well. Moreover, Kitschelt specifically discounts one explanation that has been shown systematically to contribute to the electoral success of right wing parties in Europe, variation in electoral systems that translate votes into legislative seats.⁸

Even if we accept a great deal of Kitschelt's argument, his theory contains a lacuna: why is it that some mainstream parties of the right (and left) converge toward the median voter, opening a political space for a xenophobic appeal, whereas others diverge from the median voter in an effort to capture voters on the fringes? My analysis focuses on this lacuna and provides a theory of electoral incentives to account for party strategies in responding to changing voter preferences. In so doing, I argue that politicians are able to shape the political debate. However, even if political discourse is molded by politicians, that form is determined by electoral incentives rather than by politicians' individual or collective preferences.⁹

A final concern with Kitschelt's analysis reflects an ongoing debate on extreme right parties: definitional issues. Kitschelt usefully provides a typology of the party platforms of extreme right parties in Europe, noting variation in the appeals on both the economic and authoritarian dimensions, and labels these parties the 'new radical right'. However,

these parties are not radical in their economic positions. Whether they appeal to market globalism or inward looking autarky, their economic policy prescriptions rarely, if ever, fall outside the mainstream political debate. What characterizes these parties as 'radical' or extreme, and generates concern about their success, is the ethnocentric, xenophobic authoritarianism, accompanied by attacks, both verbal and physical, on immigrants and other minorities, be they Jews, aboriginal people, or others. Most of the parties analyzed by Kitschelt do include an authoritarian, ethnocentric, racist dimension. These are the parties I define as 'extremist', specifically excluding any placement on the left/right dimension. This labeling more accurately captures the idea that these parties expand the political debate to a second dimension, rather than overlaying their issues onto the existing left-right dimension.

CONSTRAINTS ON EXTREMIST ELECTORAL SUPPORT

The expansion of the data set to include countries noted for their absence of sustained electoral success for extremist parties, such as the United States and Australia, suggests that additional factors may play a role in the level of extremist electoral support.¹⁰ In particular, I argue that growing xenophobia and racism can elicit a reaction in the form of xenophilia and cosmopolitanism. Immigrants and other minorities who bear the brunt of the xenophobia or racism can be an important component of political opposition, a counterweight to the extremist movement.¹¹ When their electoral weight is sufficient to punish mainstream politicians for catering to xenophobic voters, immigrants and other minorities create an electoral incentive for politicians to

reshape the political debate, thereby undermining electoral support for xenophobic and racist parties.

The theoretical framework I propose has two distinct but related dimensions. The first deals with the electoral incentives for mainstream parties to craft the legitimate parameters of political debate by excluding xenophobic and/or racist rhetoric. If the mainstream parties can be punished electorally by voters for using derogatory language and for pursuing discriminatory policies towards immigrants and minorities, then these electoral incentives create constraints on the ability of mainstream parties to respond to the underlying shift in voter preferences. There are four conditions that affect the ability of voters to play this role: the size of the group undertaking this role; their ability to participate in the political system; their degree of politicization; and their ability to act as swing voters.

In Australia, immigrants form an important group that has a large stake in the rise of xenophobia or racism.¹² And in Australia, unlike many European countries, immigrants are able to naturalize with relative ease,¹³ while their offspring are incorporated into the polity through a policy of modified *jus soli*. Once immigrants naturalize, they are obliged to participate in the political system via compulsory voting, as are all Australian citizens. Finally, immigrants, based on both the size of the immigrant population and its concentration in specific electoral constituencies, are well placed to act as swing voters, rewarding and punishing both Labor and Liberal politicians based on their position on the ethnocentric/racist dimension of political debate.¹⁴

However, although opposition in the political system, provided by immigrants in Australia, may provide political incen-

tives for mainstream parties to diminish their xenophobic or racist rhetoric, no such constraints would seem plausible for the right-wing parties themselves. After all, these parties are not trying to attract minority and immigrant voters. There are two plausible explanations for the connection between the mainstream parties' electoral incentive structures and the electoral support for right-wing parties. The first suggests that, in the absence of adequate information, the mainstream political parties frame the voters' understanding of the issue. The second suggests that these same parties, by strategically selecting the political dimension that avoids immigrant voter punishment, prevent extremist parties from appealing to the voters' xenophobia and racism for electoral support.

The first explanation begins with the assumption that most voters have inadequate information to evaluate policy alternatives. In the absence of information, rational voters take short cuts to help them decide what position to support politically. One possible short cut is to take cues or signals from political insiders, that is, from members of parliament who do have the appropriate insider information and expertise.¹⁵ The advice need not be uniform across the political spectrum. Voters look to those parliamentarians who are sympathetic to their broader political beliefs as signalers of appropriate policy positions. Where mainstream parties of both the left and the right are constrained by immigrant voters, they tend to define issues in terms of economic policy, poverty, and equality of opportunity and to avoid racist, xenophobic overtones. Under these circumstances, the extremist party's analysis does not provide an appropriate solution and voters do not support this party electorally. But when even one main-

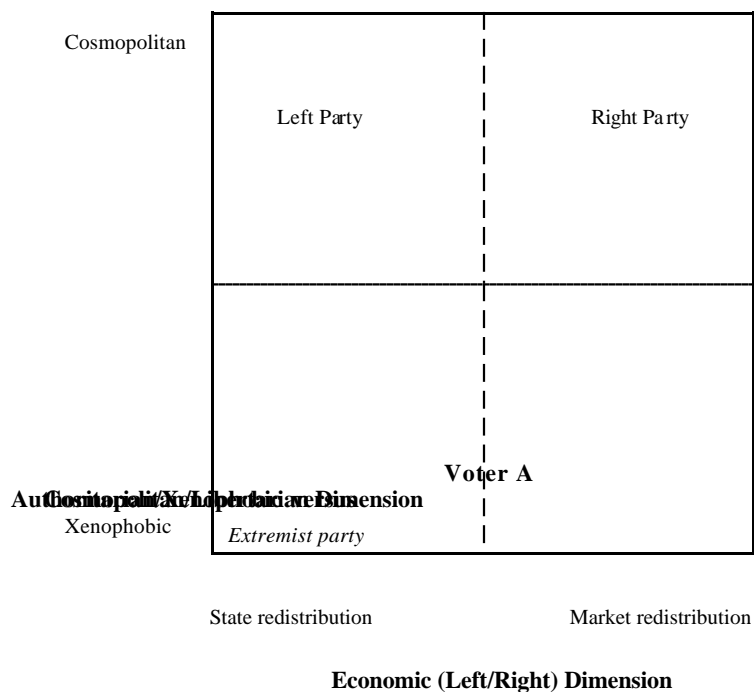
stream party is unconstrained by immigrant voters, when it stands to gain by playing the xenophobic, racist card, then these cues by mainstream party(ies) legitimate the extremist rhetoric, thus making sense of that party's xenophobic platform and enhancing its electoral appeal.¹⁶

An alternative explanation of the connection between the mainstream parties' electoral incentives and extreme-right electoral support focuses on the distribution of voters on two separate issue dimensions. According to the electoral incentive system for mainstream parties set out above, both the parties of the left and the right choose to define the political debate on the economic dimension as opposed to the xenophobic

dimension, in order to avoid punishment by the immigrant voters. Defining the issue along a single dimension prevents the extremist party's platform from providing an appropriate response.

This selection of issue dimensions and its effect on voter choice is illustrated in Figure 1. Voter A is closest on the vertical (Cosmopolitanism-Xenophobia) dimension to the extremist party; if the election is defined in these terms, the voter will choose the extremist party. If, however, the mainstream parties are able to redefine the terms of the electoral debate to the horizontal (Economic) dimension, then the mainstream parties (labelled 'Left Party' and 'Right Party' in Figure 1) both provide positions that are closer to those of the voter. In William

Figure 1: Fixing dimensionality for electoral gain



Riker's words, the mainstream parties 'fix dimensionality' along the dimension that assures them the most electoral support.¹⁷ Defining the issue on the horizontal axis allows the mainstream parties to capture the majority of voters while denying votes to the extremist party.

These two alternative explanations produce the same hypothesis regarding extremist support and may work together. The first suggests the malleability of voter preferences; because mainstream parties define the political debate in non-xenophobic terms, voters do not form preferences to which extremist parties can appeal. The second assumes that voter preferences are fixed; the mainstream parties fix the electoral debate on a dimension that prevents a second xenophobic, racist dimension from becoming part of the debate. In more formal terms, extremist electoral support is hypothesized to be a function of both support for and opposition to a xenophobic platform. In Australia, immigrant voters are the core opposition to a xenophobic platform. When immigrant voters are politically important in the political system, these electoral incentives create a political climate that undermines electoral support for extremist, xenophobic, and racist parties.

THE RISE AND ULTIMATE DEMISE OF PAULINE HANSON AND HER ONE NATION PARTY

Australia provides an interesting example of the changing dialogue on racism, xenophobia and multiculturalism. Australia has a long racist history towards immigrants, informally known as the White Australia policy, a policy that permitted immigrants primarily from the British Isles; few Europeans or Asians ever migrated to Australia and they faced discrimination when they did.¹⁸ Yet Australia dismantled its White Australia

policy, encouraged vast amounts of immigration (including a growing number of Asians, more than 40 per cent in contemporary immigrant intakes), and promulgated a policy of multiculturalism, all on a bipartisan basis that unites the Australian Labor Party (ALP) on the left with the Coalition (Liberal Party and National Party) on the right.¹⁹ This has been achieved with a remarkably small political backlash. Why? I argue that immigrant voters have been able to punish politicians who attempt to incorporate a xenophobic, racist dimension into the political debate. This issue does rise on the political agenda periodically but eventually declines as mainstream parties respond to the electoral incentives provided by immigrant voters. Earlier examples are the so-called 'Blainey debate' in 1984 and John Howard's anti-multicultural comments in 1988. The most recent episode of an anti-immigrant, xenophobic, racist backlash comes from Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party.

Pauline Hanson's story is, by now, well known and I will dispense with the details of her initial election to Parliament in March 1996, her maiden speech in Parliament in which she called for policies restricting immigration, disavowing multiculturalism, and dissolving ATSIC (Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islanders Commission), and the formation of the One Nation Party (ONP) in April 1997.²⁰ Hanson's party ultimately garnered 23 per cent of the primary vote in the Queensland state election in June 1998. How was this possible in a country that has roundly discouraged the type of dialogue and policies she promoted?

In terms of the framework sketched above, Hanson is important because her 1996 victory signaled the potential for electoral gain from raising the ethnocentric dimension in political debate. I

focus here on the Coalition's strategy rather than that of the ALP, because the former responded to the potential for extremist electoral support while the latter resolutely avoided that strategy.²¹

Many political observers in Australia have noted John Howard's delay in condemning Hanson's program but the Coalition's response to this electoral opportunity was not entirely rhetorical. The Coalition passed native title legislation that capped the claims of the Aboriginal population; they reduced immigration intakes and shifted the emphasis from family reunion migration to skilled immigrant intake; they reduced the availability of state resources to migrants; and, in the words of one observer, 'multiculturalism was almost abandoned'.²² The Coalition closed down the BIMPR (Bureau of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Population Research) and they added an English-language component to the skilled Australian-linked immigration category which allows brothers and sisters and some more distant relatives to be sponsored for immigration. All of these policies played against the immigrant and Aboriginal communities and to the nativist Australian. And in the Queensland state election, the Coalition directed their voters to place the ALP last in voters' preference, thus giving preferences to ONP before the ALP. All these policies, combined with the absence of a strong position against Hanson's rhetoric, suggest that the Coalition was bringing the ethnocentric political dimension into the electoral arena.

The Queensland elections were Hanson's and the ONP's high water mark as these elections revealed the costs to the Liberals of opening this second dimension of political debate. In short, the Coalition lost its majority in the state parliament to the ALP. According to

Tony Abbott, 'if the Queensland result were even approximately reproduced elsewhere — the future offers an unstable Coalition government vulnerable to a One Nation stab-in-the-back or a straight out loss to a Labor Party which has abandoned economic responsibility but kept political correctness'.²³ This electoral scenario would be enacted by immigrants and others who traditionally voted Liberal but who, in response to the Coalition's xenophobic policies, would abandon the Liberal Party for Labor.²⁴ As Greg Sheridan observed, 'Even from the narrowest viewpoint of political self-interest, therefore, conservatives, who get into bed with racists end up losing, because the principled people on their own side will not wear [racism] at any cost'.²⁵

Anecdotal evidence provides support for the electoral calculations of the Liberal Party. The *Sydney Morning Herald* on 9 September 1998 reported Liberal defections such as those of Mr. Allen Ortlepp, a 38 year old computer analyst who 'figured that he would be better off under the Coalition tax package but is voting Labor because of its tough stance against ONP'. But the most important block of voters to respond were the immigrants themselves and, in particular, immigrants whose previous affiliation was with the Liberal Party. Immigrants began to organize politically to ensure a wider punishment in the next federal election. A widely noted example was Helen Sham-Ho, a Hong Kong-born senator in the state of New South Wales who resigned from the Liberal Party in protest over its stance on the ONP. Moreover, she rallied members of her constituency to defect as well.²⁶

If Hanson was receiving media coverage, so were immigrant groups. The Ethnic Communities Councils publicized the parties' positions on immigration and

multicultural issues.²⁷ *The Australian* reported in July 1998 that long-resident immigrants were going in to bat for the new. 'Academics and Chinese community leaders believe the Chinese community — traditionally split roughly 60 per cent Labor and 40 per cent Coalition — will now vote almost solidly pro-Labor because John Howard has not unequivocally opposed One Nation...' And finally, the immigrants created a new political party, the Unity Party, to oppose racism and to punish the Liberal Party for promoting an extremist position.²⁸ It is worth noting that the Unity leader is a former Liberal, Peter Wong.²⁹

To avoid an electoral debacle, John Howard, as prime minister and Coalition leader, quickly changed strategies. Howard announced that he would direct Liberal voters in his federal constituency to place ONP last in preferences. The state Liberal parties followed suit.³⁰ The Coalition finally implemented, in August 1998, a \$5 million anti-racism campaign, promised in the 1996 election campaign but postponed for a full two years. Five former prime ministers, from both the ALP and the Coalition, spoke out to attack the 'evil of racism'.

How did the new Coalition strategy work? It worked in two ways. For voters with clear preferences on the immigration dimension, the party attempted to change the electoral debate to alternate issues, strategically selecting issues that would rally this group of voters. The Coalition argued that the election was not about immigration — in fact, immigration and multiculturalism were barely mentioned in the campaign. As James Jupp notes, 'despite the controversies and media coverage of the preceding year, the election was not about immigration but about taxation'.³¹ Second, for those voters without clear preferences on the

immigration dimension, the Coalition provided cues as to what voter preferences should be. Racist vocabulary was to be avoided; the ONP and Pauline Hanson was delegitimized. In so doing, the Coalition hoped to regain voters it lost on the left who were offended by the Coalition dialogue and policy, and to regain voters on the right who had defected to Pauline Hanson. And they were successful in maintaining a reduced majority in the election.

The result was that Hanson's ONP was virtually shut out of the federal parliament in the October 1998 election. Although the ONP gained eight per cent of the primary vote, it won no seats in the lower house. Pauline Hanson lost her seat; and the party won only one seat in the Senate, a victory that was successfully contested because the candidate, Heather Hill, failed to renounce her British citizenship before she ran for office. Other factors surely contribute to the likelihood of continuing ONP success: the party's internal organization on the negative side; federal election monies on the positive side. Nonetheless, the electoral incentives for politicians to relocate the political debate to wards the economic dimension and away from the cosmopolitan-xenophobia dimension played an important part in predicting the ONP's ultimate demise.

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

This brief qualitative analysis can be supplemented by a quantitative, ecological analysis of the ONP vote in the 1998 federal election. The hypotheses presented above suggest that the ONP vote is smallest in federal constituencies where immigrants are politically significant. The political significance of immigrant voters is operationalised by dividing the per cent of the population in each federal

constituency which is of migrant origins by the electoral margin, that is the percentage of the vote that must shift in order to change the electoral outcome between parties.³² The variable thus discounts large immigrant populations in safe seats and highlights small immigrant populations in marginal seats. The larger the immigrants' political significance, the smaller the predicted ONP vote.

A number of other variables are included in the ordinary least squares (OLS) multiple regression, drawn from the hypotheses presented here and from the literature analyzing Hanson's support. The ALP was consistent in signaling to its voters that Hanson's xenophobic program was illegitimate and campaigned on other issues. Therefore a negative relationship is anticipated between the ONP vote and an ALP incumbent. The literature on extreme-right parties suggests that economic insecurity is a factor contributing to extreme right support along with an authoritarian, racist, xenophobic dimension.³³ I have created a variable capturing both dimensions by multiplying the level of unemployment in each constituency by the percentage of the population that is Aboriginal. This is labeled 'anti-Abori-

ginal sentiment'.³⁴

Hanson's support has been drawn from individuals with low levels of education. Therefore, we should see a larger ONP vote in constituencies with high proportions of early school leavers. Queensland is Pauline Hanson's home state and original political base. It is the state in which she has received media attention over the longest period of time. Therefore I anticipate a positive relationship between Queensland constituencies and the ONP vote. In nine electoral constituencies, the ONP failed to nominate a candidate. Of necessity, we would anticipate a zero vote in constituencies that lacked an ONP candidate. Finally, Hanson herself, as leader of the ONP party and the center of media attention, is expected to receive more votes than the average ONP candidate.

The summary statistics for the quantitative analysis are presented in Table 1. The average ONP vote by electoral division is 8.5 per cent, ranging from zero in constituencies with no ONP candidate to 35.9 per cent for Pauline Hanson herself. The immigrant presence refers to the percentage of individuals who speak a language other than English (LOTE) in the home.³⁵ The average immigrant pres-

Table 1: Summary statistics for regression model (percentages)

Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
ONP vote	8.5	7.6	5.6	0.0	35.9
Per cent immigrant	13.5	9.9	12.7	1.3	54.9
Modifies swing	10.0	8.6	6.8	1.1	27.4
% immigrant/swing	1.9	1.2	2.2	0.1	13.1
Unemployment	9.3	9.1	2.9	3.5	17.9
Per cent aboriginal	1.8	1.1	2.8	0.1	23.4
% Aboriginal * unemployment	16.9	10.3	22.9	0.3	173.7
Low education	26.2	26.5	5.7	12.1	39.7

Source: A. Kopras, 'Comparisons of 1996 Census Characteristics: Commonwealth Electoral Divisions', Parliamentary Research Service Background Paper, Canberra, 1997

ence is 13.5 per cent; the range is from 1 per cent to almost 55 per cent. The range of the immigrant electoral bloc variable is somewhat smaller, from 0.1 to 13.1. This reflects the fact that even large immigrant communities may have little power if they are not in swing constituencies. Several of the variables have a skewed distribution, posing the problem of heteroscedasticity in the OLS analysis. Therefore, I employed Huber's jackknife procedure to correct the standard errors in the regression.

The model results are presented in Table 2. Most importantly, for purposes of the argument presented here, the electorally important immigrant variable is statistically significant and relatively large. For each unit change in that variable, the ONP vote is reduced by more than 0.46 per cent, almost a half a percentage point. Holding all other factors constant, the average ONP vote is reduced by a full six per cent in the division with the largest score (13.1 times 0.462). This is a significant reduction, given the average ONP vote of 8.5 per cent.³⁶ Anti-Aboriginal sentiment increases the ONP vote by 0.05 per cent, and low education increases the ONP vote by almost 0.5 per cent.³⁷ The presence of an ALP incumbent reduces the ONP vote by twice that amount, 1 per cent. *The absence of an ONP candidate reduces the vote, holding all else equal, by 3.7 per cent.* The Queensland vote is, on average, 2.7 per cent higher than the national average and the Tasmanian vote is, on average, 6.7 per cent less than the national average, for reasons yet to be discovered. Hanson's publicity as head of the party contributed 19.6 per cent of her overall vote. The model accounts well for the variation in ONP votes across federal electoral divisions; the R², or explained variation, is .818 or 82 per

Table 2: Determinants of One Nation Party vote, Australian Federal Elections, 1998³⁹

Dependent variable: per cent ONP vote in Federal Divisions coefficient (standard error)	
Pro-immigrant bloc	-.462*** (.083)
Anti-Aboriginal sentiment	.056*** (.010)
Low education	.450*** (.033)
ALP incumbent	-1.024** (.412)
No ONP candidate	-3.747*** (.746)
Queensland	2.683*** (.618)
Tasmania	-6.712*** (1.125)
Hanson	19.631*** (.680)
Constant	-3.157*** (.852)
Adjusted R ²	.818

Note: *** = Probability of t > .001
 ** = Probability of t > .010

cent.

The ecological analysis of ONP electoral support is confirmed at the level of the individual voter. I analyzed the voting behavior of respondents in the 1998 Australian Election Study.³⁸ In this analysis I divided the voters in two ways. The first compares the voting patterns of native-born Australians with foreign-born Australians; the second compares the voting patterns of Australians with an English-speaking background (ESB) with those of a non-English-speaking background (NESB). In both cases, foreign-born Australians and NESBs who voted for the Liberal party in 1996 had more volatile voting patterns in 1998 than their counterparts. Moreover, they demonstrated much larger swings away from the

Liberal Party to the ALP between 1996 and 1998 than their counterparts. For Australia-born voters, 72 per cent of Liberal voters in 1996 voted Liberal in 1998, and only 8.4 per cent of those who swung away from the Liberal party in 1998 voted for the ALP. In contrast, for foreign-born voters, only 66 per cent of Liberal voters in 1996 voted Liberal in 1998, and 20.5 per cent of those who swung away from the Liberal party in 1998 voted for the ALP. The corresponding percentages for the ESB and NESB are as follows: 71 per cent of ESB Liberal voters in 1996 voted Liberal in 1998; only 8.8 per cent swung to Labor; 62 per cent of NESB Liberal voters in 1996 voted Liberal in 1998; a full 28 per cent swung to Labor. Moreover, consistent with the hypotheses presented above, the ALP retained a larger degree of loyalty from both foreign- and Australia-born voters, and from ESB and NESB voters: between 73 and 78 per cent of 1996 ALP voters in all categories continued to vote for the ALP in 1998.

The Australian election study complements the findings of the regression analysis. Immigrant voters played a role in constraining the Liberal party; they punished Liberal candidates in the federal election by swinging to Labor. In total, the quantitative results presented above substantiate my hypothesis that politically significant immigrants were an important determinant of the size of the ONP vote, because they were able to successfully threaten defection from the Liberal Party when it adopted elements of the Hanson program.

CONCLUSIONS

The results suggest that politicians may be principled or unprincipled, racist or multicultural, but ultimately they must respond to the electorate. If playing the

racist card works, then principled politicians can be defeated; if playing the egalitarian card works, then it is the racist politicians who are defeated. The critical calculation politicians face is the balancing of electoral gains from bringing the xenophobic, racist dimension into the electoral debate with the electoral losses associated with opposition to such a program. In Australia, immigrants played an important role in shaping the political incentives that politicians face. It is important to note that the counterweight to racist politics must be important to parties of the right as well as parties of the left. What changed in Australia was not the ALP's position but that of the Coalition. Unless immigrants or other groups can seriously threaten the electoral support of conservative parties, they cannot serve as an effective political force in shifting the debate on xenophobia and racism.

Acknowledgment

I wish to thank Jim Jupp for his hospitality and the resources he made available at the Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies, at the Australian National University, as well as his helpful feedback on this article. I also wish to thank Jo Andrews, Bob Birrell, Robert Jackman and Scott Gartner, and an anonymous reviewer, for their comments on this article. I, of course, remain responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation.

References

- ¹ H.-G. Betz, *Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1994
- ² H. Kitschelt, *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1995
- ³ The vast majority of this literature focuses solely on western Europe. The only study I know that systematically incorporates a broader data set of 'established democracies' is H.-G. Betz and S. Immerfall (Eds), *The New Politics of the Right. Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1998. It includes chapters on Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and India.

- ⁴ T. Faist, 'Immigration, integration and the ethnicization of politics', *European Journal of Political Research*, vol. 25, 1996, p. 440
- ⁵ *ibid.*, p. 441
- ⁶ Kitschelt, *op. cit.*
- ⁷ One might criticize Kitschelt's analysis as well for its emphasis on a liberal, free market program as the 'ideal' extreme right position on the economic dimension. This article recognizes the variation in economic policy positions – such as the ONP's protectionist economic platform – and posits an alternative explanation for extremist party failure.
- ⁸ R.W. Jackman and K. Volpert, 'Conditions Favouring Parties of the Extreme Right in Western Europe', *British Journal of Political Science*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 501-21. In this analysis, I, too, ignore the role of electoral institutions but only because of the singular focus on Australia and the absence of any institutional variation.
- ⁹ Thus, although Betts also points to elite influence over the form of political discourse, we differ in the motives driving elite behavior. See K. Betts, 'Public discourse, immigration and the new class', in James Jupp and Marie Kabala (Eds), *The Politics of Australian Immigration*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1993.
- ¹⁰ For a history of right-wing politics in Australia, see A. Moore, *The Right Road? A History of Right-Wing Politics in Australia*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995.
- ¹¹ It is not clear whether Jupp would claim paternity for this hypothesis, but my intellectual inquiries in this area were triggered by one of many fruitful conversations with him on issues of Australian immigration.
- ¹² Aborigines are also affected by racist rhetoric and policies but, in Australia, are not ordinarily a large enough group to change the electoral incentive structure for politicians. Thus, I do not address their role in this paper.
- ¹³ See SOPEMI, *Trends in International Migration. Annual Report 1994*, OECD, Paris, 1995, for an overview of naturalization policies of OECD countries; only New Zealand provides greater ease of political participation, requiring only one year's residence and no naturalization.
- ¹⁴ Both Mackerras and Jupp have argued that large immigrant populations are concentrated in safe seats; see J. Jupp, 'The ethnic dimension', in C. Bean et al. (Eds), *The 1996 Australian Federal Elections*, Allen & Unwin, St. Leonards, NSW, 1997. This does not prevent smaller numbers of immigrants from acting as swing voters in marginal seats. See below for empirical evidence, where the weight of immigrant voters is based on size of group relative to the electoral margin.
- ¹⁵ See A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, Harper, New York, 1957 and E. G. Carmines and J. H. Kuklinski, 'Incentives, Opportunities, and the Logic of Public Opinion in American Political Representation', in J. A. Ferejohn and J. H. Kuklinski (Eds), *Information and Democratic Processes*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1990.
- ¹⁶ The explanation is certainly congruent with the findings of French sociologist, Michel Wieviorka, who argues that, in most individuals, racist, xenophobic attitudes are malleable. In his experiments, individuals took cues from the social definition of the issue by the group discussion leader. New leaders elicited different attitudes from the same group of individuals; attitudes shifted from racist to sympathetic depending on the definition of the issue by the group leader. See M. Wieviorka, *La France raciste*, Seuil, Paris, 1992.
- ¹⁷ W.H. Riker, *The Art of Political Manipulation*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1986.
- ¹⁸ Racism, clearly extended to the Aboriginal population as well but is not developed in detail here for the reason given in note 12.
- ¹⁹ About 24 per cent of the current Australia population is foreign born; however, per capita rates of settler immigration have declined dramatically from the 1960s to the 1990s. For an analysis of immigration control policies in Australia and other advanced market economy countries in the post World War II period, see J. Money, *Fences and Neighbors. The Political Geography of Immigration Control*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1999 and 'No Vacancy. The Political Geography of Immigration Control in Advanced Industrial Countries', *International Organization*, vol. 51, no. 4, 1997, 685-720.
- ²⁰ See the rapidly growing literature on Pauline Hanson and the One Nation Party, including T. Abbott, et al. (Eds), *Two Nations. The Causes and Effects of the Rise of the One Nation Party in Australia*, Bookman, Melbourne, 1998, J. Pasquarelli, *The Pauline Hanson Story... by the Man Who Knows*, New Holland Publishers, Sydney, 1998, articles in *People and Place*, including R. Davis and R. Stimson, 'Disillusionment and disenchantment at the fringe: explaining the geography of the One Nation party vote at the Queensland election', *People and Place*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1998, pp. 45-51.
- ²¹ I have neither the time nor space to provide qualitative evidence to support the contention that the ALP also weighed the potential of electoral gain from a xenophobic platform and found the rewards lacking. See the quantitative analysis below that suggests its strategy was effective in reducing defections from immigrant voters.
- ²² J. Jupp, 'Immigration and the next election', *Political and Economic Newsletter*, vol. 40, September 1998
- ²³ T. Abbott, et al., *op. cit.*, p. 12
- ²⁴ The major defections of immigrant voters would be from the Liberal Party rather than the National Party because few immigrants vote National.
- ²⁵ G. Sheridan, 'Pauline Hanson and the Destruction of the Australian Dream', in Abbott, et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 174-5.

- ²⁶ *Australian Financial Review*, 2 October 1998
- ²⁷ *Ethnic Spotlight*, 1998
- ²⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 and 14 September, 10 October 1998
- ²⁹ Per Jupp (personal correspondence), Unity was able to mobilize the Chinese fairly effectively, with Chinese votes and campaign contributions diverted from the Liberals to Unity and Labor. Unity's lack of electoral success can be accounted for in terms of the proposed model: not only were Hanson voters diverted by the success of major parties in shaping the agenda, so were Unity's potential voters. The ALP represented both an effective response to the Liberal Party's strategy and allowed immigrants to voice preferences on other political issues as well.
- ³⁰ Exceptions were the West Australia National state party and a small number of National Party dissidents.
- ³¹ J. Jupp in *Howard's Mandate: The Politics of the 1998 Federal Election*, forthcoming
- ³² The size of the swing was augmented by one point, to avoid inflating the role of constituencies with electoral margins of less than one per cent.
- ³³ For Australia, see M. Goot, 'Hanson's heartland: who's for One Nation and why', in Abbott, et al., op.cit.; and Davis and Stimson,

op.cit.

- ³⁴ A similar variable was created to capture 'anti-immigrant sentiment' but was not statistically significant when entered into the analysis.
- ³⁵ Two other indicators of immigrant presence, per cent foreign born and per cent first and second generation immigrants, were tested as well. All three indicators of immigrant presence provided almost identical statistical results. This is undoubtedly due to the high correlation among the three indicators.
- ³⁶ Moreover, once the electorally significant immigrant population is taken into account, the actual immigrant population is statistically insignificant.
- ³⁷ When entered into the model the direct effects of unemployment and Aboriginal presence are statistically significant but add less than one per cent in increased explanation.
- ³⁸ C. Bean et al., *Australian Election Study*, 1998 (computer file), Social Science Data Archives, The Australian National University, Canberra, 1998
- ³⁹ The number of federal constituencies is 148; the analysis includes 147, with a single constituency dropped from the analysis because a swing could not be determined.

THE END

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