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ISLAMIC SCIENCES &
RESEARCH ACADEMY
AUSTRALIA

RESILIENT DEMOCRACY FOR RESILIENT COMMUNITIES



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 Q&A

 Polls

Which best describes the perspective you bring to today's conference?

0 

Government perspective

Community perspective

Academic and expert perspective

Other diverse perspective

Send



The slide features two decorative wavy lines in a light olive green color. One line starts at the top-left corner and curves towards the center. The other line starts at the bottom-right corner and curves towards the center. The text is centered on a white background.

Welcome

Scott Lappan-Newton
Facilitator, Gauge Consulting

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Welcome

Dr Derya Iner
Charles Sturt University

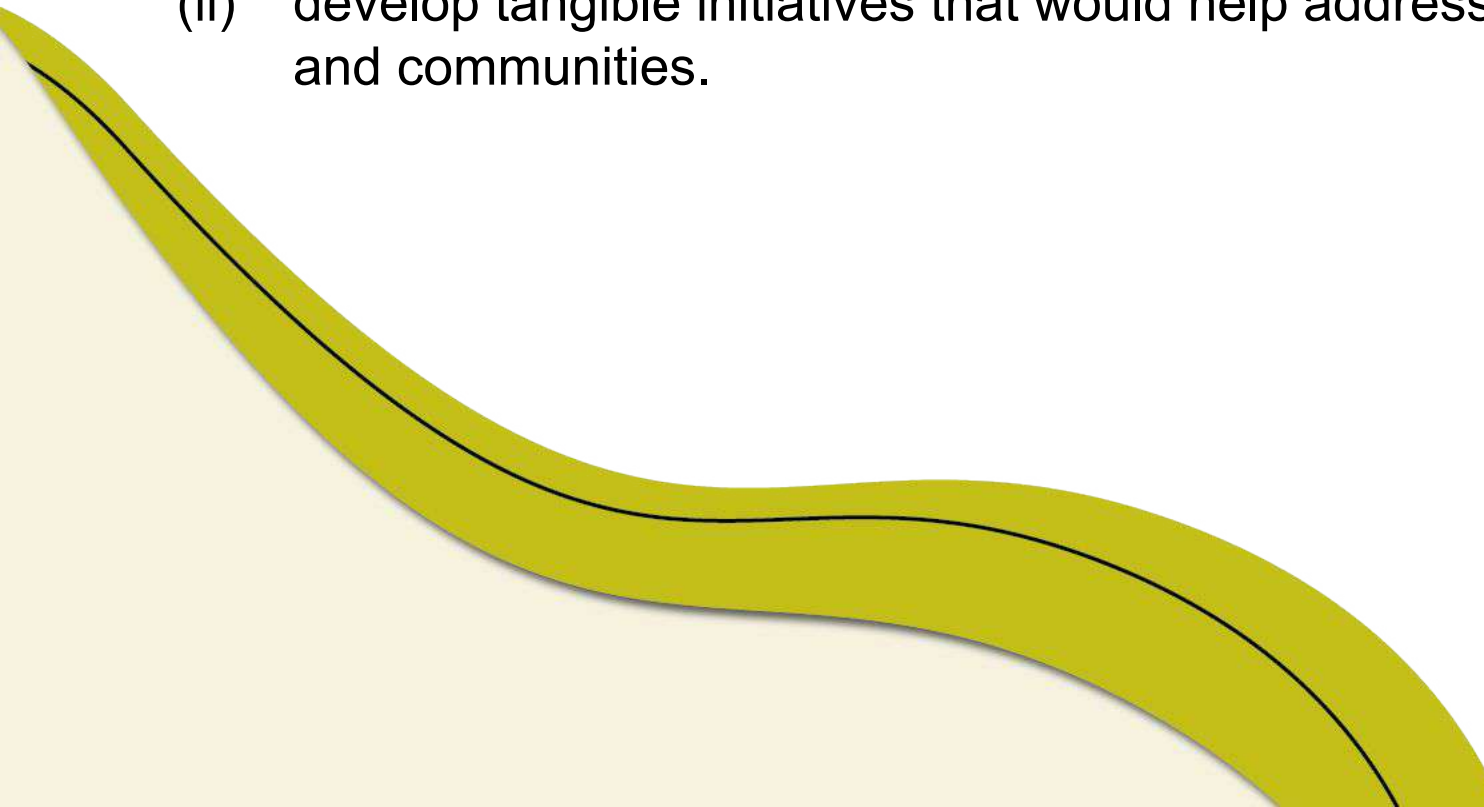
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Welcome

Pia van de Zandt
Department of Premier & Cabinet

Conference Objective

Today's objective is to work together to

- (i) reach a deeper understanding of the challenges our communities and our democracy are facing, and
 - (ii) develop tangible initiatives that would help address these and strengthen our democracy and communities.
- 

Conference Journey

Community Stories panel

to understand our communities' struggles and strengths



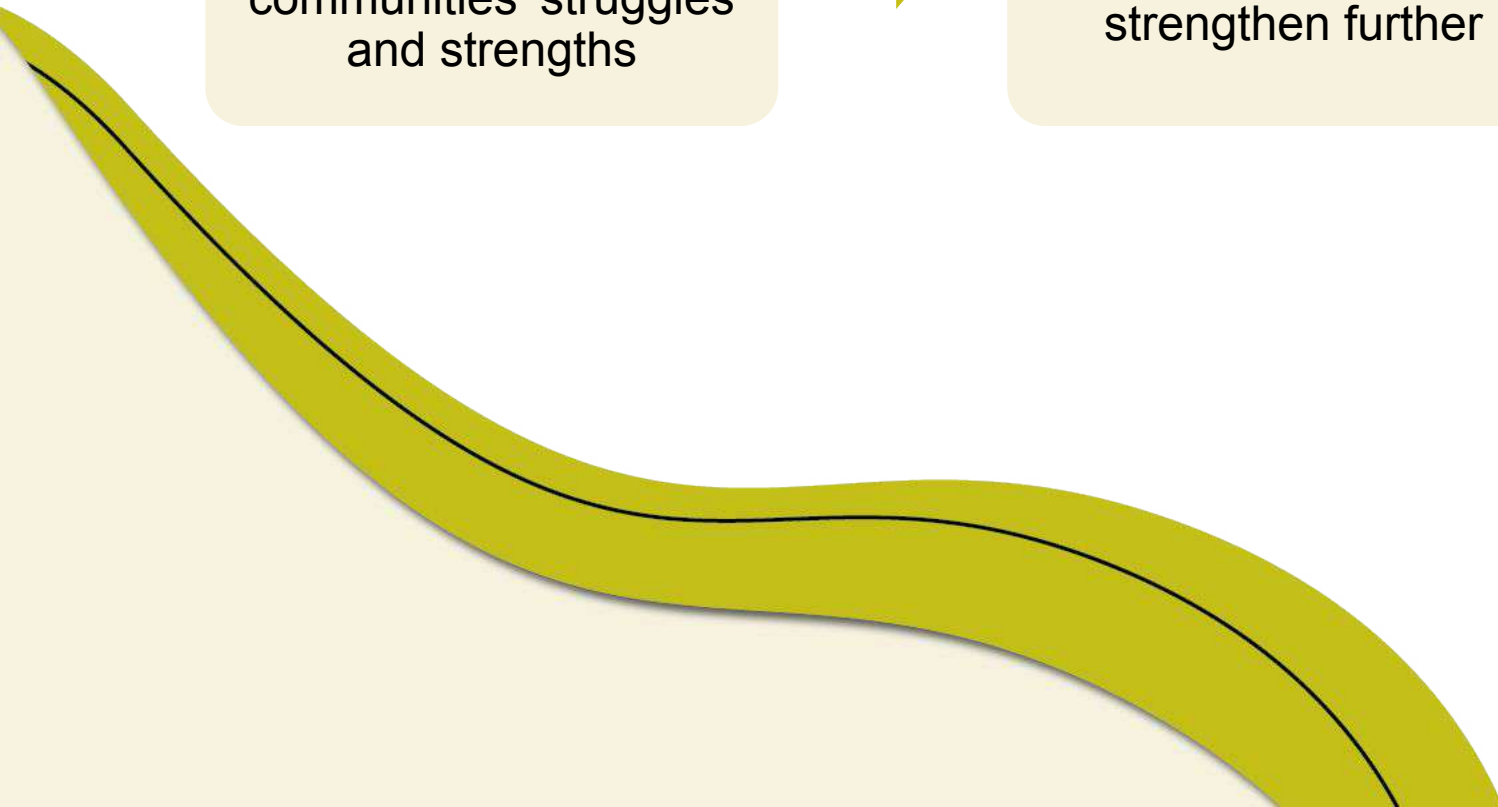
Academic panel

to understand how democracy might be strengthened further



Collaborative work

to apply these learnings to ideas for strengthening our democracy and communities



Community stories



Prof Sue Green
Charles Sturt
University



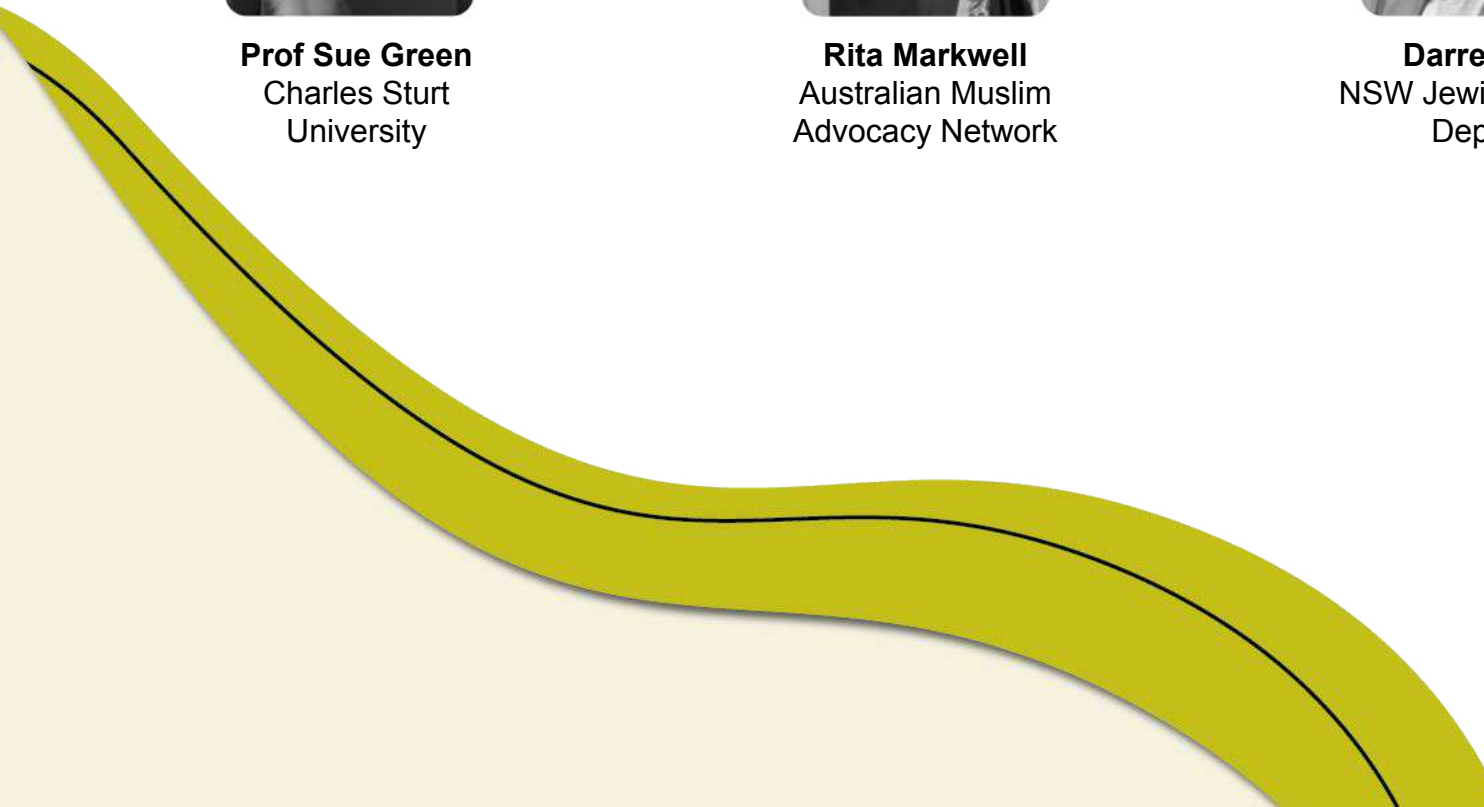
Rita Markwell
Australian Muslim
Advocacy Network



Darren Bark
NSW Jewish Board of
Deputies



Benjamin Ho
Asian Australian
Alliance



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Academic panel *presentations*



Prof Mark Evans
Charles Sturt
University



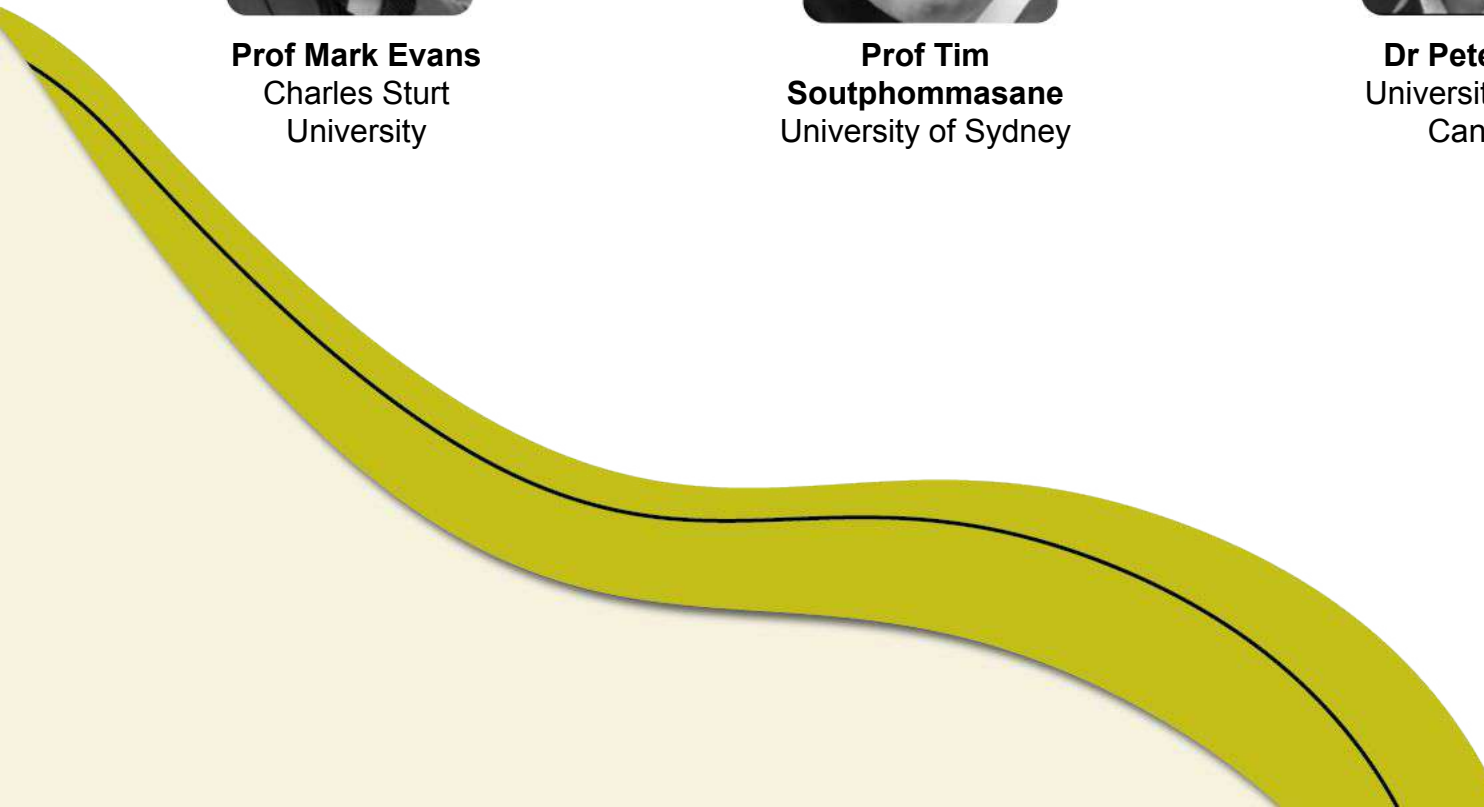
**Prof Tim
Soutphommasane**
University of Sydney



Dr Peter Balint
University of NSW
Canberra



Dr Derya Iner
Charles Sturt
University



The State of Australian Democracy: 'Culture of contentment' or the 'end of complacency'?

Mark Evans (PhD, FIPPA)

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research

Charles Sturt University

August 2022



Democracy 2025 reports, articles, podcasts and blogs can be found at: www.democracy2025.gov.au



FROM TURNBULL TO MORRISON The Trust Divide



Edited by Mark Evans, Michelle Grattan and Brendan McCaffrie



The Isolated Political Class

ARTICLE BY: MARK EVANS AND MICHELLE GRATTA

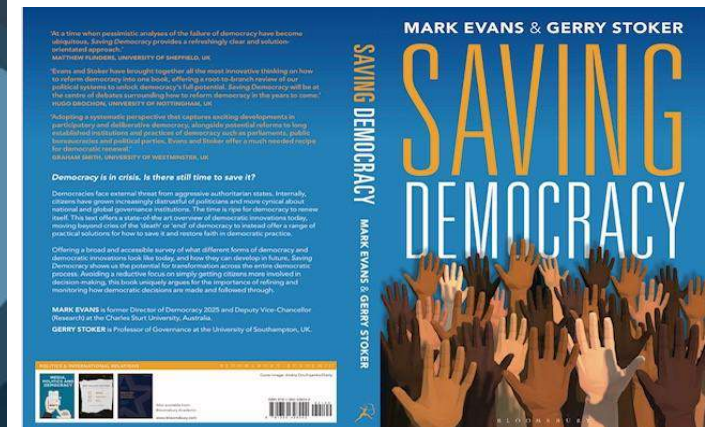
Amongst Australians, trust in people in government (25 per cent), federal government (31 per cent), government ministers (24 per cent), members of parliament (21 per cent), and political parties (20 per cent) is at an all-time low.

Honesty and integrity are qualities that Australian citizens highly prize in politics but we can also report that 89 per cent of citizens have a negative view of the standards of honesty and integrity held by politicians. Despite 28 years of economic growth, Australia is characterised as a 'distrusted country' and sits below the median satisfaction rating when compared with other advanced industrial democracies.

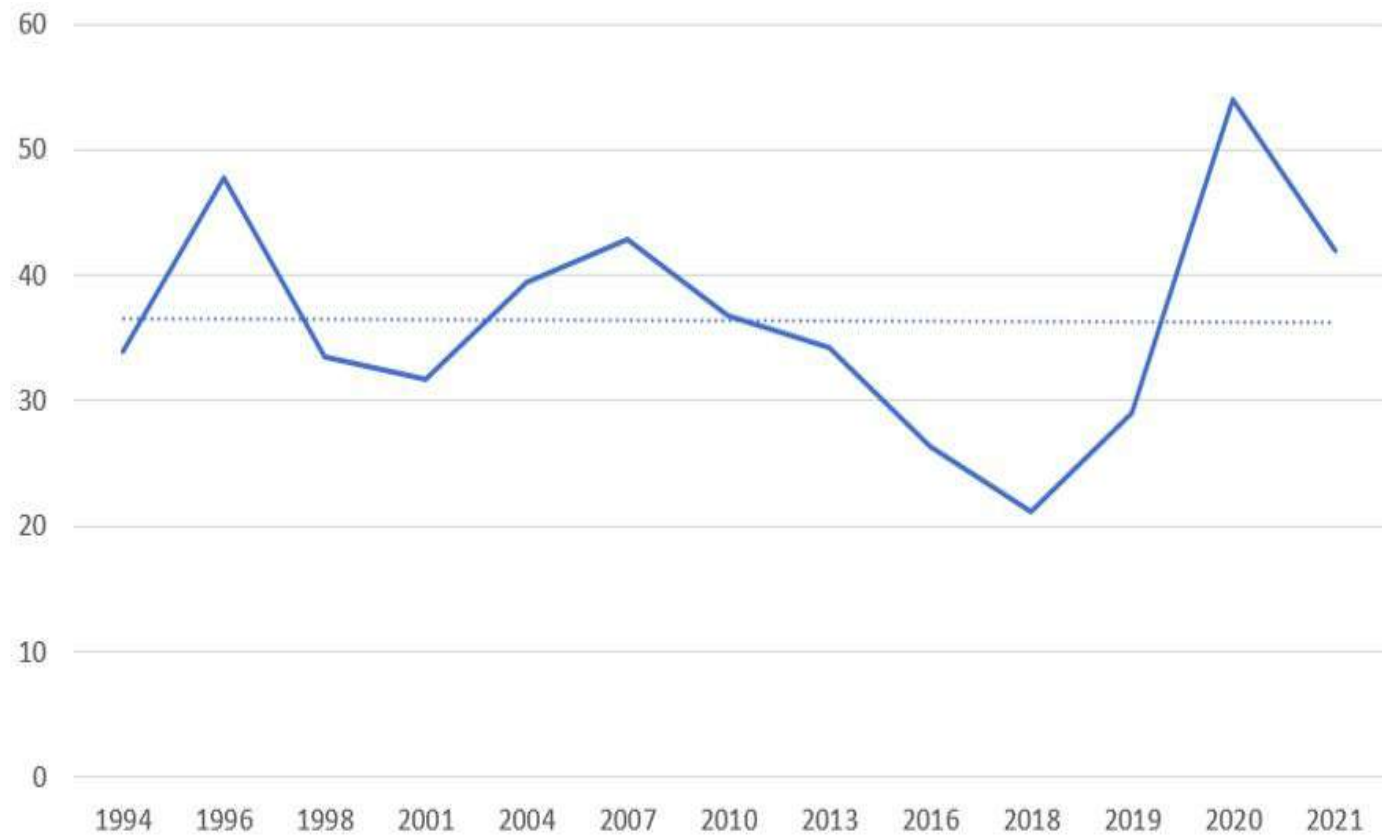
The demoralisation of young Australians for engaging in climate protest, the absence of the Prime Minister at the early stages of the bushfire crisis, wrangling over the leadership of the National party and the emergence of the 'Sports turf' scandal – all at a time of national emergency – have served to further erode public trust and heighten the need for a moral

If you ever thought that politicians are out of touch, then you're not alone. There is mounting evidence that Australia's political class is increasingly isolated from the citizens it serves.

The gap between how Australians perceive their politicians and political institutions, and how they would like their democracy to be, has widened to such a degree that there is an urgent need to pause, and reflect on what our political system needs to do to adapt to the realities of 21st-century governance

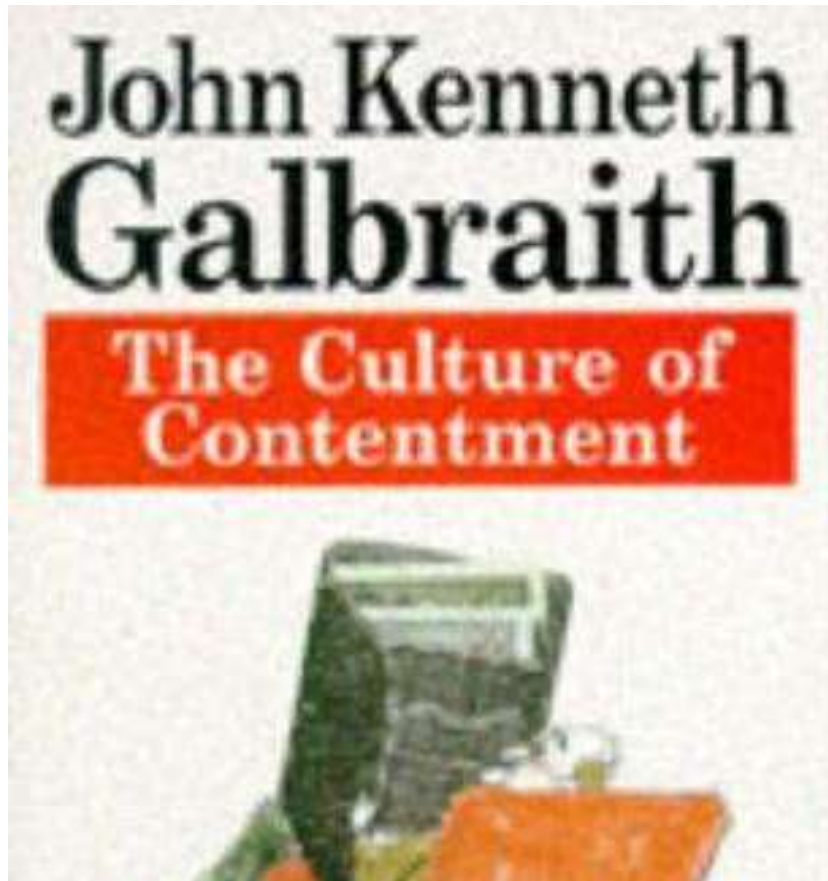


“Trust in people in government”



Sources: Australian Election Study (1994-2019) and Democracy 2025 (2016, 2018, 2020 and 2021)

Frame: what do we mean by a culture of contentment?



- Australia's ability to evade the worst excesses of the global financial crisis (GFC) and seize comparative advantage in a period of affluence has stifled innovation in democratic governance.
- The absence of a burning platform for change has given rise to what renowned American economist John Kenneth Galbraith termed a 'culture of contentment'.
- Galbraith shows how a contented class—"not the privileged few but the socially and economically advantaged majority—defend their comfortable status at all costs. Middle-class voting against regulation and increased taxation that would remedy pressing social and environmental problems has created a culture of immediate gratification, leading to complacency and hindering long-term progress".
- For Galbraith, "only economic or military disaster, or the eruption of an angry underclass who have been left behind by globalisation, seem capable of changing the status quo." **Could COVID-19 be the catalyst to a period of democratic renewal?**

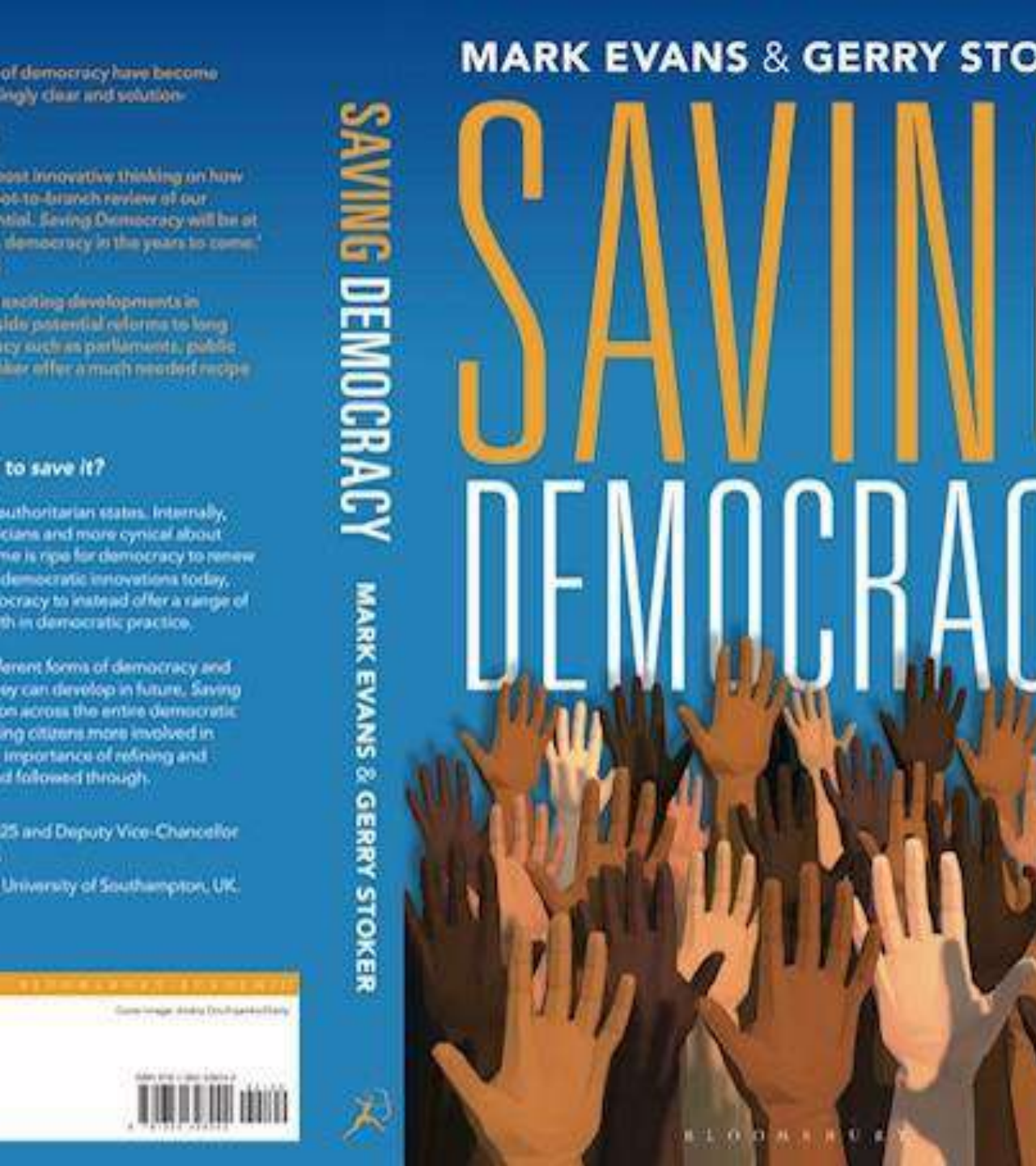
Argument – culture of contentment or the end of complacency ?

The “Corona-coma” has had both positive and negative impacts on democratic governance in Australia. But its’ ultimate impact will depend on the degree of social and economic dislocation caused by the pandemic and its ability to affect shock therapy to the isolated political class and prevailing culture of contentment.

The evidence also suggests that Australian citizens think that participatory reforms can be used to bolster the legitimacy of representative democracy and enhance trust between government and citizen.

However, there is only limited evidence so far to suggest that the pandemic and associated economic peril is compelling Government or Opposition to end the age of complacency and challenge the established culture of contentment.





How can we save democracy?

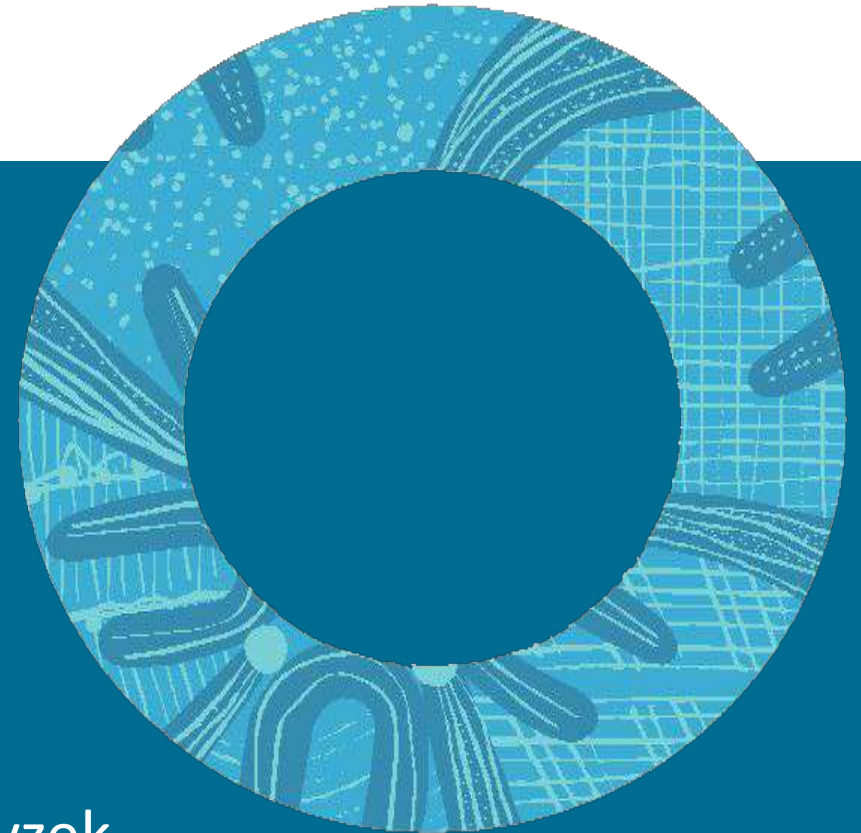
- We offer a simplistic but hopefully helpful system framing for our analysis: dividing reforms between those focused on inputs, those dealing with throughputs and those attentive to the outputs of a democratic regime. Hidden behind this device was a contribution to one of the biggest divides in the democratic renewal literature between those who argue that the solution to democratic malaise is to give citizens more to do and more opportunities for participation (we have standard participation, citizen control, direct democracy and deliberative versions of this basic premise) and an alternative position that citizens want good government/politics and effective administration, without doing all the work themselves.

- Our survey and focus group work in both UK and Australia on favoured democratic reforms found that changes to the processes of throughputs and outputs were supported at least as much if not more than opportunities for more citizen engagement.

Learning Democratic Resilience

Jordan McSwiney, Selen A. Ercan, Peter Balint, John Dryzek

Funding for this research was provided by the NSW Government, Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Program 2022.




Learning Democratic Resilience

- Background
- Same threat, different responses (eg US vs NZ). Why?
- Our contribution: a democratically resilient public sphere
- A healthy public sphere is vital for democracy
- Violent extremists seek to undermine the public sphere
- Shift the resilience focus from 'community' to the 'public sphere'
- Applying theory

Building Democratic Resilience: Key Findings and Ways Forward

	Findings: What matters for building democratic resilience?	Enablers	Barriers	Ways Forward
1	How political leaders talk about violent extremism	Unifying language	Divisive language	a. Continue to develop speech guidelines for public facing political leaders
2	How CVE is understood and implemented in policy and programming	Clear, consistent, and transparent communication around CVE	Vague and inconsistent communication around CVE	b. Clarify between CVE and CT activities to help counteract stigmatisation in the public sphere c. Promote a strong evidentiary basis for deliberation on violent extremism in NSW
3	How minorities are included in the public sphere of a multicultural society	Participation of diverse communities in the public sphere	Marginalisation in the public sphere	d. Promote ethnic and multicultural media in the public sphere e. Emphasise intracultural diversity that exist within communities
4	How an inclusive collective identity is constructed in the public sphere	Performances and symbols of inclusive collective identity	Failure to recognise the unifying role of symbols and performances	f. Invest in commemoration and memorialisation practices and that signal unity and resilience in the public sphere
5	How media reports on violent extremism	Responsible media reporting	Sensationalist media reporting	g. Explore ways to promote responsible media reporting on violent extremism
6	How government engages with the civil society organisations and the wider public	Authentic and consequential public engagement	Tokenistic and inconsequential public engagement	h. Foster consequential deliberation between government and civil society and the wider public i. Create spaces and opportunities for listening and reflection
7	How information pollution is tackled online	Media literacy and platform regulation	Poor media literacy and unregulated platforms	j. Enhance media literacy education for the public k. Develop strategies to address information pollution

**Work in progress. Please do not distribute without permission.*



Saving Democracy from Elitism & Nativism

Dr Derya Iner, CSU

Fragile Democracy

Elitism { Growing Alienation among People/People in Power (GAP) } Nativism

GAP

Indigenous people

GAP

Dominant national majority

GAP

Ethnically/religiously diverse communities

Populism

*Loss of trust ▽

Not believing in the system,
people and a positive change

*Loss of hope ▽

Not wanting/attempting to speak
up, act and solve the problem in
licit ways

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓
Alienation
Despotism
Radicalism
Extremism



Lacking Multiple Voices in Democracy

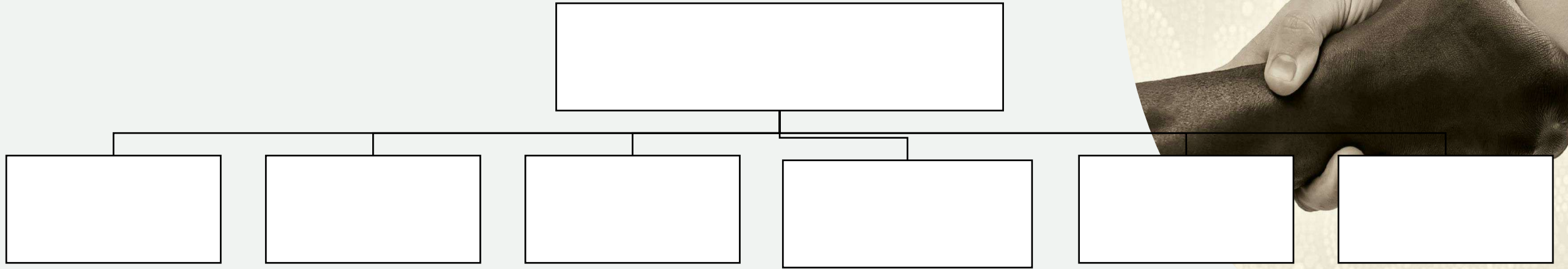
- **Elitism:** Multiculturalism in Malaysia (Minority)
- **Nativism:** Multiculturalism in Norway (Majority)
 - *Breivik attacked the Labor Party's youth camp & killed 77 people)*
- Sense of displacement, loss of hope and trust in people & democracy by minority & majority

Capacity building in democracy

Capacity building in communities



Capacity Building



Community
Capacity Building

Trust/Hope

Safe/Open

Communication

Collaboration

Solidarity

Independence
& Evidence

What are your TOP TWO questions?

Take 5min now...

What are your table's top two questions for the panel?

Please **write one question on each of the cards** on your table





1. Select your **top 3** questions

2. Hit 'send'



Academic panel Q&A



Prof Mark Evans
Charles Sturt
University



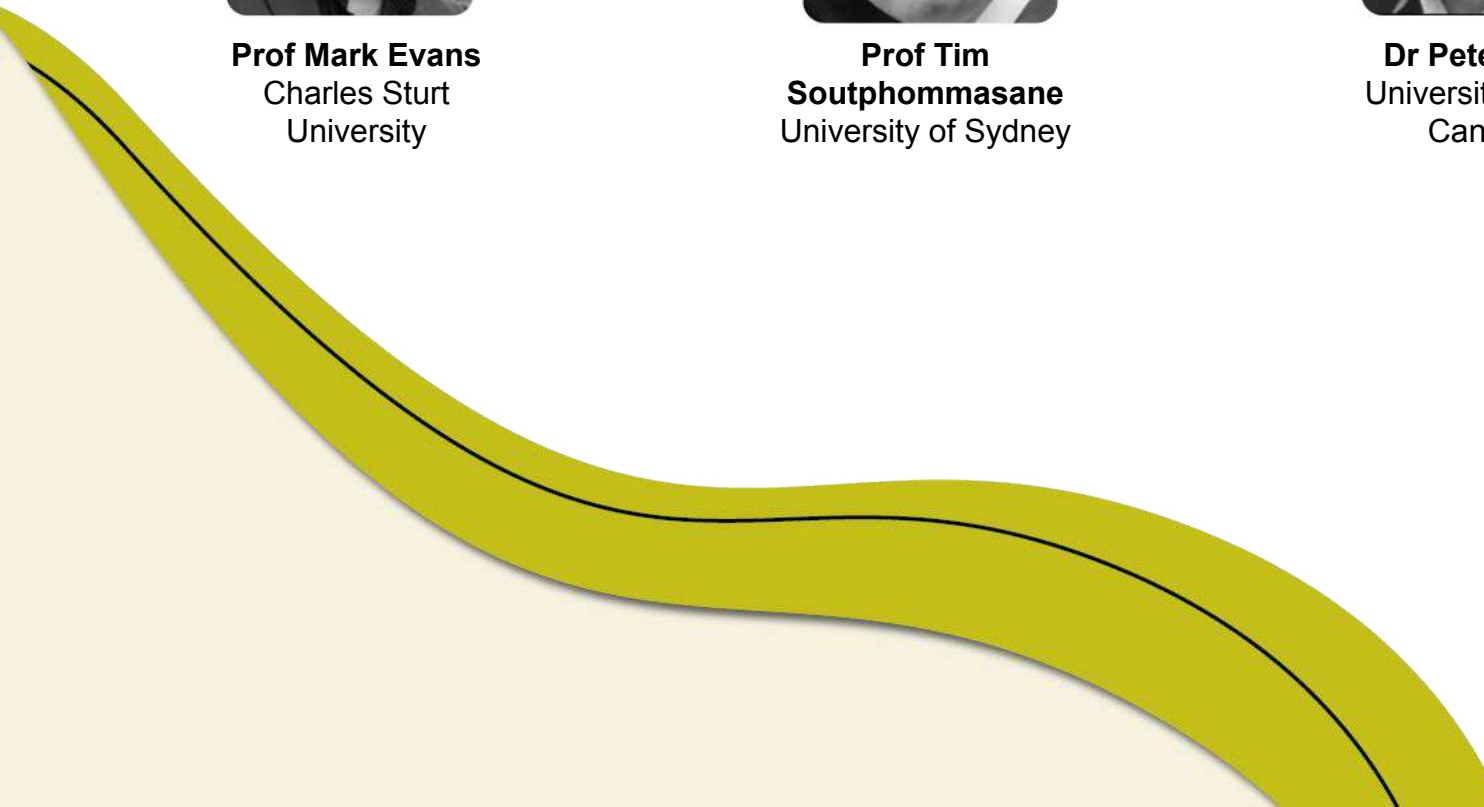
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Dr Peter Balint
University of NSW
Canberra



Dr Derya Iner
Charles Sturt
University



Where is this already working well?

What examples can your table identify of democracy successfully building community resilience and serving community needs?

Please **write one example on each of the cards** at your table

We will stick these up for you to peruse over lunch







Democracy in action

Iain Walker
NewDemocracy



Your one idea

Work at your table to prepare your one idea for **strengthening our democracy and our communities**

Sketch your ideas on the *Working Out* template

Add your best idea to the *Draft Idea* template

You will have one minute to **pitch** it to the room

DRAFT IDEA

Big heading (5-7 words)
Brief description
Add your table no.

1. As each group presents,
scroll to their table number

2. Type in any **specific
suggestions to help them
improve their idea**

3. When all presentations are
complete, hit 'send'





Improve your idea in new groups

1. **Decide who will stay** at your table as 'host'
2. Everyone else, **find another table** of mixed colours
3. Use the submitted suggestions to **improve that table's idea**

FINAL IDEA

<small>Big heading (5-7 words)</small>
<small>Brief description</small>
<small>Add your table no.</small>

1. After all the presentations,
select the **best idea**

2. Hit 'send'



How could YOU help realise these ideas?

Find post-it notes matching your nametag colour

Walk along today's ideas

Stick up your **name and how you could help** make them a reality

Try to be as specific as possible



1. Answer the quick **evaluation** questions

2. Hit 'send'







Concluding Remarks & Vote of Thanks

Prof Mark Evans
Charles Sturt University





Observations & Thanks

Pia Van De Zandt
Department of Premier & Cabinet