

The Populist Elements of Australian Political Satire and the Debt to the Americans and the Augustans

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In a tribute to the popular American TV show *The Colbert Report*, Australian comedian Charlie Pickering wrote, “All modern satirists ... are creative descendants of Mark Twain. He spoke truth to power without fear or favour”.¹ This notion of “speaking truth to power” is common to many scholarly analyses of the work of Stephen Colbert and of his counterpart Jon Stewart, often accompanied by a Foucauldian appropriation of the rhetorical term *parrhesia*.² For instance, one scholar argues that “Jon Stewart embodies a contemporary form of what Michel Foucault called *parrhesia*, Greek for ‘truth-telling’”.³ Another casts Stewart as a risk-taker who tells the truth and takes on the powerful who are “corrupted by untruth”, “daring to say what the [mainstream media] would not”.⁴ Such arguments suggest that this is a radical and new conception of satire.

To the contrary, Stewart and Colbert are in fact part of a line of anti-politics rhetoric that has dominated Anglosphere countries for

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approximately 300 years. Along with many other satirists, cartoonists and comedians, they sit firmly within the mainstream of political life in which a ready-made audience is prepared to believe the worst of politicians and politics. Political satire has in fact been a central not a marginal component of Anglosphere democracies for the last 200 years precisely because it is a highly moralistic discourse that has portrayed a gap between the actualities and the ideals of democracy as a way of criticising politicians. Such attacks have relied on inherent tensions within representative democracy, yet have always implied that such permanent features can be resolved by better occupants of political office.

Such arguments point both to an aggressive form of the incongruity theory of humour in which humourists stake the moral high ground against politicians and also to a romantic strain in representative democracy that is associated with populist anti-politics. In this respect, political satirists, cartoonists and comedians are comrades of those critics in the Fourth Estate who style themselves watchdogs of government and the political classes. Practitioners and critics share a common anti-politics discourse—to such an extent that satire has consistently been mixed with news in democratic countries since the nineteenth century. It is in this tradition of blending that we should place Stewart's *Daily Show*, for example.

This study takes a rhetorical and historical view of political humour that is inspired by three scholarly understandings. The first places political ideas in their historical and linguistic context, and is therefore sensitive to the prevailing shared vocabularies, concepts and assumptions employed to discuss problems and frame legitimate actions or a society's moral identity. In this view, such authors are attempting to enlist a normative language in their cause during conversations with others, and are thus agents participating in politics.⁵ Consequently, we should also see the satirists, cartoonists and comedians discussed here as rhetors successfully persuading us about the dismal qualities of politicians. Secondly, these utterances connect to the idea of thematic recurrence,⁶ that is, the recurrence of certain rhetorical themes occurs because of representative democracy's characteristic and chronic need to persuade ordinary people, particularly shown in the USA which has the longest history of that form of political society.

Of necessity, this leads to the last theoretical resource. Populism is a dirty word in the everyday and political science lexicons. It is often associated with right-wing xenophobic parties and/or with demagogic

leaders pandering to irrational masses, such as the National Fronts in Britain or France or the Tea Party movement in the USA. Such pejorative views of fallible ordinary folk have been an enduring strain in democratic discourse since the early nineteenth century, when Platonic critiques of Athenian *demokratia* persisted even while representative democracy flourished. They were present in the minds of many political elites in both England and the USA who worried about the participation of the so-called “ignorant masses”. Whether reflecting the scepticism of American Founding Father James Madison, who feared the tyranny of the majority, or the more measured views of English philosopher John Stuart Mill, the common answer was the need to provide the right leadership to guide fallible inferiors.

Populism especially acquired its bad reputation when political victors wrote the history of the defeated People’s Party that flourished in late nineteenth-century America. It was portrayed as a reactionary movement against modernity that sought refuge in primitive tradition. Historiography was further distorted in the 1950s, says Charles Postel, when Richard Hofstadter and other US writers drew fear-laden connections to this earlier time and filtered their pessimism about irrational masses through both revulsion at McCarthyite paranoia and their memories of fascist totalitarianism.⁷ But one need only recall other periods in US history (such as Roosevelt’s New Deal, the 1960s or indeed any period at all since the 1830s⁸) or in other countries’ experiences (such as Chavez’ Venezuela and Morales’ Bolivia) to understand that populism has arisen on the left as well as on the right, that it has not always been a force of reaction, and that certain intellectuals of the early to mid-twentieth century held exaggerated fears about ordinary citizens.

In fact, as many scholars have pointed out,⁹ populism has no ideological home on a political spectrum that it traverses from the left to the right. It is not some dangerous aberration from democracy but one of its intrinsic elements, using many of the same linguistic features: democracy, justice, the people, the little guy, the ordinary person, the underdog, elites, the powerful and so on. Principally, populism has an anti-establishment position that emanates from a love–hate relationship lying at the very core of representative democracy. On the one hand, the general population is the source of legitimacy, expressed most clearly at elections when one side is sanctified as the winner of the citizenry’s ballots. On the other, the general population has no wish to take up the reins of power. There is no widespread desire to revive Athenian direct

democracy with popular participation in executive decision making and legislation, and therefore the citizens need a political class to act on their behalf. Yet always there is a popular antagonism to institutions like parties and to the political class that is willing to take up the reins of power.

Nevertheless, based on this paradox, political aspirants in Anglosphere countries constantly seek at election time to reassure voters that things will be better next time, that this time they will live up to the high ideals held by citizens, and that new people will make all the difference for the public good. Therefore, the focus of such contests is on personalities rather than on those complexities of representative democracy designed to constrain overly ambitious individuals. Despite this, during campaigns, politicians will gleefully traduce each other for letting down the people, hoping to gain some advantage from the widespread disrepute in which their whole kind is held, while at the same time promoting their political idealism to voters.

In other words, as Margaret Canovan notes,¹⁰ there is tension between romantic hopes for a perfect relationship between government and the people, and popular disgust at the often necessary pragmatism of government, with its innate difficulties of power, compromise, institutions and interests. This tension manifests most easily as dismal views of politicians, seeing them as letting down democracy, justice and the people as a whole, and in the process bolstering elites, corruption and the evil manipulations of mass media and language cast as spin. Ironically, the comic commentators under discussion make their names through exactly these despised mass media. Furthermore, rhetoric is the lifeblood of democracy since it is not only a means by which ordinary people participate in discussion but also, in today's representative form of this political society, the means for leaders to gain followers and to get things done. It is also of course a means of the mass media. Moreover, rhetoric is the purveyor of a "political anti-politics" that has been central to Western political culture for more than 300 years.¹¹

Explicating this particular discourse is Jon Stewart, who declared on the programme of his Egyptian emulator Bassem Youssef (b. 1974): "I don't like assholes and so I try to speak out against assholes. And isn't that all government is? We all get together and decide as a majority who the assholes are".¹² Australian cartoonists with similar sentiments are easy to find. Patrick Cook (b. 1949) argued that "authority has to be earned, but power can be stolen",¹³ therefore the job of cartoonists was to hamper the arbitrary powers of politicians. This was also the stance taken by

Geoff Pryor (b. 1944), who early in his career formed the view that there was no fairness in politics and that “all power resides in the incumbent government, and if not used ruthlessly to its fullest advantage it is not worth having”.¹⁴ He went on to say that since spin and hypocrisy are the staples of any government, it is naturally the job of the fourth estate to attack them for those sins. In 2013 his fellow cartoonist Bill Leake (1956–2017) was heard to put the same sentiment more colourfully during the Sydney launch of *Dirt Files*,¹⁵ a book on politics and cartooning: “Who are we going to shitpot but those in power?”

The beginnings of such anti-politics rhetoric are found in England in the early eighteenth century, a period mythologised by sociologist Jürgen Habermas who set his concept of the “rational public sphere” as the standard for twentieth-century public debate, despite basing it on his assessment of the political debates in the coffee shops and newspapers of London at this earlier time.¹⁶ As well as committing anachronism, Habermas managed completely to ignore the role of satire and to overlook the political engagement of the most famous satirists of the time. Satire is never synonymous with the rational and the respectful. Robert Walpole, for example, is commonly regarded as Britain’s first prime minister, certainly its longest-serving one, from 1721 to 1742. He attracted fierce opposition, which came especially from Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, John Gay and other Augustan writers who excelled in derision, insults and celebrating the humiliation of his Government. Since they were Tories and he was a Whig, they were bound to ridicule him and he could be and was depicted publically in cartoons like the one in Fig. 2.1 below, entitled “Idol-Worship or The Way to Preferment” (1740). This shows an enormous Walpole bending over with his backside fully exposed for an ambitious young man to kiss, while another man rolls through the enormous arch of his legs a hoop inscribed with the words Wealth, Pride, Vanity, Folly, Luxury, Want, Dependance [sic], Servility, Venality, Corruption and Prostitution. Beyond are arches engraved with names of government locations: Saint J[ames’s] P[alace], The Treasury, The Exchequer and The Admiralty.

Contemporary readers of Jonathan Swift’s novel *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726) and viewers of John Gay’s *The Beggar’s Opera* (1728) were aware that Tory criticism of Walpole’s Whig Government formed part of the background to these works. Such mocking and indirect methods were hardly the stuff of idealised and gentlemanly political debate, since satire is an aggressive discourse aimed at destroying an opponent’s credibility

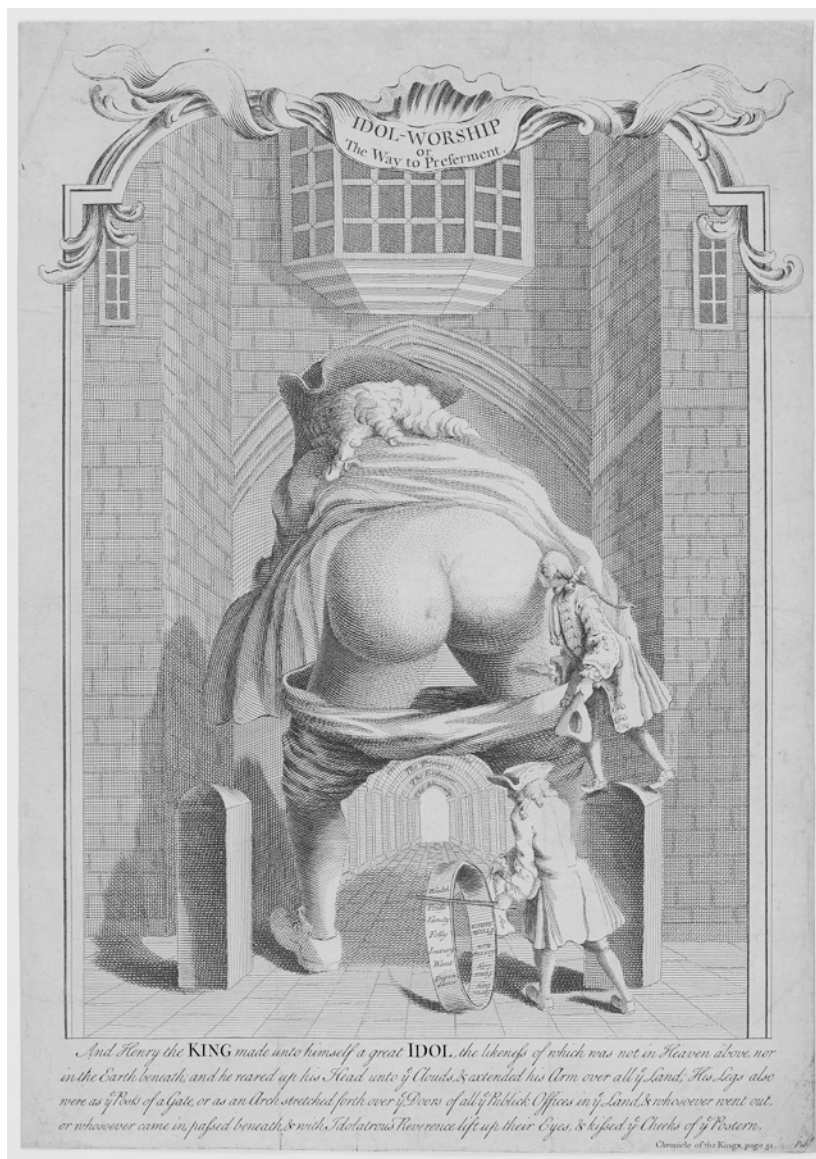


Fig. 2.1 “IDOL-Worship, or, The Way to Preferment”, 1740, anonymous etching on paper; © The Trustees of the British Museum, reproduced with kind permission.

through making an audience laugh at the victim's expense. Aristotle had pointed out that laughter was a rhetorical weapon allowing a rhetor to make an audience laugh at, rather than with, another person.¹⁷ The Augustan satirists deemed, as have generations of successors, that there was a moral gap or failing between the declarations and the actions of their targets which justified such ridicule. Ad hominem attacks were combined with claims to the satirists' own moral high ground, portraying themselves as concerned truth-tellers and moralists pointing out the need for reform in a society being brought to its knees by political sinners. When reading these satirists today, we should not accept such claims to virtue at face value but see them as blatant attempts to persuade their contemporaries of political points. Moreover, while Tory wits complained bitterly about the prejudice, deceit and irrational debate of their rivals, they were themselves only too eager to rain insults on these Whigs. Clearly, stones in glass houses were being thrown in both directions—typical of the hypocrisies of the time.¹⁸

Importantly, accusations of corruption, lies and irrationality are not—perhaps cannot be—advanced innocently within a party system of politics. With the growth of the Westminster two-party model, there developed a rhetoric indulged in by major parties that continues to this day. Each party accuses the other of lies, corruptions and conspiracies—basically, because they profit from them.¹⁹ Generally speaking, then as now, since people are prepared to believe the worst of politicians and politics, politicians and their respective cheer-squads eagerly cater to this belief in order to gain partisan advantage and thus anti-politics rhetoric lives on. Barack Obama is a perfect contemporary example of this method. During his bid for the US presidency he identified with voter anger by declaring his political innocence (“I know I haven’t spent a lot of time learning the ways of Washington”), before scorning that capital city as “more corrupt and more wasteful than it was before”.²⁰ His campaign book, *Audacity of Hope*, opened with an anecdote of his first run for public office which served to distance him from the game. He wrote that everyone he met countered his earnestness with a negative: “You seem like a nice enough guy. Why do you want to go into something dirty and nasty like politics?”²¹ Similarly, for the Augustans, a crafty, scheming or manipulating person might well be compared to a politician, as Henry Fielding did in his 1749 novel *Tom Jones*, writing that “The Squire ... was, however, in many Points, a perfect Politician”. In 1776, in *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith referred to “That insidious

and crafty animal, vulgarly called a statesman or politician, whose councils are directed by the momentary fluctuations of affairs".²²

Such views leapt across the Atlantic to colonial America. The works of Swift, Defoe, Pope, Addison and Bolingbroke were "regularly on the lists and catalogs of American booksellers and libraries"²³ and served as primary texts in almost all American colleges throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Accordingly, they were primers for George Washington and the five presidents who followed him. That is, all were aware of the dichotomy between patriotism and partisanship and aspired to be the kind of patriot king so powerfully outlined by Tory aristocrat Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke (1678–1751). This was a highly partisan construction of an ideal leadership advanced against the Whigs that would supposedly act against the corrupt cabals of parties, thieves and money thought to be plaguing government at the time. In this scheme, the patriot king acted only for the public good, never for political gain, and would thus return the nation to the people from the grip of the Whigs. Naturally, the lord identified the public good in his own Tory fashion.

Bolingbroke's work was almost compulsory reading until the 1830s, so that his idea became a "commonplace in colonial American rhetoric".²⁴ It served as the basis for the "presidential fiction" of a ruler who is concerned only with the public good of the people and is above selfish parties and factions. It was and is an impossible formula for any leader to satisfy in a representative system built around political parties that serve as vehicles for a presidential candidate who, upon winning office, must then appear to be above party. A structural gap between expectations and reality was thus built into the system and was therefore bound to cultivate moral critiques of, and popular dissatisfaction with, any current Government. Yet the concept of the patriot king who is above party became an essential element in what Jeffrey Smith calls the imaginative construction of US presidents.²⁵

A fiction bolstered by satirists thus became an easy way to perceive a gap between the actions and ideals of leadership. It has been an essential feature of the populism that, as Paul Taggart points out,²⁶ has dominated US politics since the 1830s:

It is hard to understand politics in the United States without having some sense of populism. It is impossible to understand populism without having a sense of populism in the USA. The construction of the political system,

as embodied in the constitution and of the very national identity of the USA has been around principles of representative democracy. Populism therefore, as a reaction to representative politics, runs through US politics like a motif.

Therefore, it is not surprising that populist anti-politics formed the basis of Barack Obama's political campaigns from his first run for the Illinois Senate in 1995 to his landmark 2008 presidential campaign. His pitch to voters was to present the untainted virtue of his political inexperience against the endemic iniquities of the political game, whether it was played in the capital of the state or the nation. Similarly, one can see this persuasive combination reinvented for the perspective of comedy films, from the early *Mr Smith Goes to Washington* of 1939 and *The Distinguished Gentleman* (1992) to the more recent *Dave* (1993). This last movie starred Kevin Klein playing two characters who are identical in looks but not in character. One is a completely unethical and dislikable president who suffers a stroke that leaves him in a coma. The other is the innocent Dave who is inveigled by shady presidential staff into standing in for his lookalike. His innocence and good intentions, however, prove to be refreshing and he is an attractive comic character.

Mr Smith Goes to Washington starred Jimmy Stewart playing Thomas Jefferson Smith whose name combined references to a founding father with a nod to the democratic everyman. Director Frank Capra pitted this newly elected innocent against a corrupt political machine run by a man called Taylor, a character based on a real-life equivalent called Thomas Pendergast.²⁷ The *Distinguished Gentleman* was directed by Jonathan Lynn, one of the writers of the British series *Yes Minister*,²⁸ who also referenced Thomas Jefferson in naming his central character. But in the movie, this man turns out to be more of a sinner than an innocent, as the movie-trailer makes clear:²⁹

Voiceover: Thomas Jefferson Johnson was no ordinary conman ...
There is only one place for people like him

Johnson: I wanna tell y'all about a town where the streets are paved with gold

Man: You mean Las Vegas?

Johnson: No, not Las Vegas

Woman: He's talkin' about Washington DC

Johnson: I am running for Congress!

Voiceover: Thomas Johnson conman is Thomas Johnson Congressman ... He's going to do to Congress what Congress has been doing to you

According to the movie, this character's transition from crime to Congress was a seamless process.

Overall, these three movies of the twentieth century appeal to the same disdain for politics as did two US humorists and journalists who made their names in the nineteenth century: Kin Hubbard (1868–1930) and Mark Twain (1835–1910). The first wrote, “We’d all like to vote for the best man, but he’s never a candidate”.³⁰ Mark Twain’s extensive collection of ironical remarks on politics includes such gems as, “Suppose you were an idiot, and suppose you were a member of Congress; but I repeat myself”; and “There is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress”.³¹ Laughing at politicians is a game that almost everyone in America has played since the early days of the republic.

Following on from England and America, anti-politics rhetoric settled easily in Australia in the nineteenth century. Historian John Hirst has testified that “the view that parliamentarians are the lowest form of life dates from the early years of democracy”,³² a time when the country was still a colonial offshoot. As proof, he instances an 1866 cartoon in the *Sydney Punch* magazine, appearing several years after responsible Westminster government with adult white male suffrage had been established in the colonies, and when new buildings to accommodate parliaments were being planned. The cartoon (shown in Fig. 2.2) depicted architectural “Designs for New Houses of Parliament” as a range of plans, for a doghouse, a gaol and a pig-trough. Its images of disdain are compelling, even today.

Such disdain attached even to Australia’s first (limited) representative legislature. In 1843, some decades earlier, the first Australian libel case was brought by a politician against the editor of *The Satirist & Sporting Chronicle* who had associated the politician’s pockmarked face with “the commission of sin in early life and the effects of mercury”,³³ a reference to venereal disease and its treatment. Taking his cue from his paper’s motto, a snippet of a Byron poem (“Fools are my theme, let satire be my song”), the editor was using such ad hominem attacks as a means to pursue what his journal regarded as political “humbug” (meaning deception, fraud or sham).³⁴

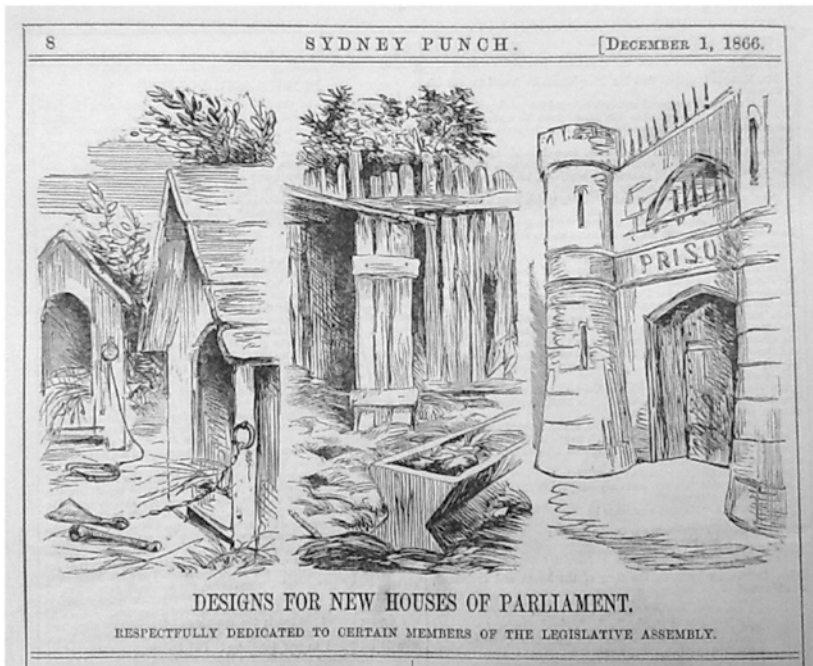


Fig. 2.2 “Designs for New Houses of Parliament”, anonymous drawing, *Sydney Punch*, Vol. 2 (28), 1 December 1866, p. 8. P-D Art from the collections of the State Library of NSW.

Anti-politics attitudes were inherited, it seems, as a component part of the intellectual baggage that arrived in Australia in 1788 with the British themselves; but they subsequently flowered after nurturing with crucial inputs from America. In the 1830s, the populist fulminations of US President Andrew Jackson against elites and banks who worked purely for their own interests found many admirers in Australia and particularly in Australian newspapers of a radical bent.³⁵ Such people looked to the USA as an exemplar of the representative institutions they sought for their society, especially in regard to what was called “the land question” that dominated politics for most of that century. As in the USA, Australian democrats were contesting elite control of land after it had been taken from dispossessed indigenes. Liberal writers such as Daniel

Deniehy (1828–1865) and Henry Kendall (1839–1882) produced satires in 1864 on behalf of The Poor Man, “a rhetorical figure for the unemployed and propertiless, [who] was denied access to the land”.³⁶ Siding with the political underdogs, they attacked those deemed powerful and immoral. Deniehy was a politician who, in the parliamentary debate of 1854, effectively ridiculed into stillbirth a proposal by landed elites to create a local hereditary aristocracy.³⁷

Despite the work of such tribunes of the people, however, a seemingly widespread populist sentiment might still arise. The editor of one conservative newspaper complained in 1872 that:³⁸

There is a general impression among a section of the working classes that the present state of society is corrupt, and that the whole fabric must be overthrown if justice is to be secured to all. The cry is taken up by a portion of the Press, and we are assured that there must sooner or later be a revolution.

Neither the workers referred to nor the population in general conceived this turmoil in any Antipodean isolation. From early days, the Australian presses were able to keep abreast of international events since newspapers included excerpts from British and US publications. Thus, in the 1870s, Australians were well acquainted with the infamous Tammany Hall of New York and an article from the *Brisbane Courier* of 1888 shows that it was understood as the archetype of the corrupt political machine and “political debauchery”.³⁹ They also became acquainted with William Tweed (“Boss Tweed”), who was not only the head of this effective but despised patronage system but also the frequent butt of devastating cartoons by Thomas Nast (1840–1902), who dominated cartooning as well as politics in the USA during the nineteenth century. Nast invented the potent image of the “Fat Man”, evident in his depictions of Tweed such as that in Fig. 2.3. Numerous Australian newspapers reproduced his cartoons and gleefully reported Tweed’s hurt observation, “I don’t care a straw for your newspaper articles, my constituents don’t know how to read, but they can’t help seeing them damned pictures”.⁴⁰

The local impact of this image and its US populist influence can readily be seen in cartoons such as Fig. 2.4, featuring the archetypal Australian capitalist, whose political tentacles supposedly controlled right-wing politicians at the time (in the view of the left). Drawn by Cecil L. Hartt (1884–1930) in 1914 for *The Australian Worker*,⁴¹ this image shows a greedy capitalist strutting beneath the flag of patriotism that covers his profit-making while

Fig. 2.3 “The Brains”, drawn by Thomas Nast, *Harper’s Weekly*, 21 October 1871, p. 992. P-D Art from the collections of the Library of Congress, at: <http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a00744/> (accessed 21 October 2016).



Fig. 2.4 “This sort of ‘Patriotism’ does not appeal to us”, drawn by Cecil Lawrence Hartt, *The Australian Worker*, 24 September 1914, p. 3. P-D Art from the Trove collection of the National Library of Australia, at: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/145944483> (accessed 21 October 2016).



unemployed workers starve in the background. The artist’s opinion is made plain by the inclusion of a pseudo-news quotation beneath the image, “Many employers are contributing to the Patriotic Funds and at the same time discharging employees.—Daily fact” and is generalised to the reader by the main caption, “This Sort of ‘patriotism’ Does Not Appeal to Us”.

Figures 2.5 and 2.6, from 1901 and 1910 respectively, convey the familiar popular complaints of politicians being liars, that both sides of politics are as bad as each other and that the level of political discourse is one merely concerned with mud slinging, abuse and misrepresentation. Both cartoons reflect election campaigns in New South Wales. The first cartoon, drawn by Fred Brown (active c.1890–1930) for the influential *Bulletin* magazine and entitled “The N. S. W. General Elections—What It Amounts To”, portrays the arch-politician as a modish and plausible young Satan who is disillusioning two would-be saintly reformers; while the second, drawn by Hugh MacLean (1875–1951) for a country journal, shows an older politician wilting in the heat as he canvasses for votes and the muck around him begins to stink. Satan’s advice aptly sums up the situation: “Now you two, keep your eye on the vote, and don’t forget that the biggest liar gets it”.

Fig. 2.5 “The NSW General Elections—What It Amounts To”, drawn by Frederick A. Brown, *The Bulletin* (Sydney), 29 June 1901, p. 20. P-D Art from the library collection of the University of New South Wales, Sydney.



Fig. 2.6 “Phew! This Heat Brings the Mud Out”, drawn by Hugh Maclean, *The Worker* (Wagga Wagga, NSW), 15 September 1910, p. 11. P-D Art from the the Trove collection of the National Library of Australia, at: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/145735084> (accessed October 21, 2016).



When these cartoons were published, the term “typical politician”, with its pejorative associations of self-interest and shiftiness, had been settled in political discourse since at least the 1870s, sometimes used in conjunction with Australian discussions of Tammany Hall.⁴² Marcus Clarke (1846–1881), a minor literary figure as well as journalist, used the term in a satire portraying a fictitious minister in the state of Victoria as a dull “beast of burden”. In an article written for the *Australasian* in May 1868, Clarke adopted the persona of a waiter whose experiences serving in the minister’s house purportedly furnish answers to those “closet naturalists” who want to introduce this species of beast into the Australian continent. Although “cleanly in his habits” and “domesticated”, the minister/beast might only “be made a useful animal” that is “in any way politically serviceable” with “great patience and a continued course of instruction”. The animal is “not quick to receive instruction” and “any attempt to coerce him into concerted action with others of his species is followed by instant outbreaks of his savage nature”. The advice concludes that it would take vast resources to handle the import of “a cageful of these interesting and peculiar creatures” from Europe—or indeed America, where “they swarm”.⁴³

Clarke can be seen as a precursor to the many political commentators and journalists around the world who now weave satire into their critiques of politics. He was not, however, the first such, as the practice was already firmly established in Australia as well as in the USA and Britain. In a Victorian newspaper of 1855 that had employed satire to ridicule “the absurdity of the latest undertaking of our local municipality” (the town of Geelong), one can find approving editorial comment justifying such a practice⁴⁴:

[S]atire is a weapon which may be used indiscriminately, and often with equal effect against the silly or the wise. One of the wisest and wittiest of England’s writers, the immortal Sidney Smith, has however asserted with equal truth, that there are men against whom no other mode of attack is so efficacious, and as the attainment of a public good must be the sole object of an honest journalist, he must at times accomplish results by means which he would not avail of, were his choice unfettered. When public bodies are impervious to reason, there is no course left but to ridicule their follies.

Australians had enjoyed more than 40 years of parliamentary democracy by 1901, when amalgamation of their separate six colonies into a federation took place, giving grounds for optimism about the new century. But before the year was out, one prominent journalist was mourning a lost and better time of politics. This was David Maling (1854–1931), who regularly injected satire into his columns for the Melbourne *Argus*, written under the pseudonym of Ithuriel—an angel in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* who with a touch of his spear exposed Satan’s real appearance to Eve. Like many journalists of his time and later, Maling evidently believed he was exposing the real nature of politics. He damned Australia’s second prime minister with faint praise as a “master of euphemism”.⁴⁵ The criticism applies to many a politician, since euphemism is a common means of persuasion, although often dismissed these days as spin. Even before the first federal parliament had reached the end of its term, Maling wrote to its politicians⁴⁶:

Experience has proved that you are what an auctioneer would describe as a “mixed lot”. You comprise some of the strongest, subtlest men in Australia, and others of whom the irreverent Byron would say:

Like the fly in amber, we but stare
And wonder how the Devil you got there.

There is a direct line of descent from such views and practices in nineteenth-century Australia to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) programme *That Was the Week That Was*, popular in both Britain and America in the early 1960s, which mixed news with humour. The lineage belies the alleged novelty of the practice implicit in the label “Satire Boom” affixed by some writers to this decade.⁴⁷ Australia had its own examples such as *This Day Tonight* on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Antipodean equivalent of the BBC. Although primarily focused on current affairs rather than humour, the show blended various types of satire (including animation by cartoonists) to make its point. Equally notorious for its satirical daring was a more humour-focused commercial programme called *The Mavis Bramston Show*.⁴⁸ With hindsight, all these examples represent new ways of exploring old issues—further evidence for the argument of thematic recurrence.

Across the Anglosphere, journalists today commonly weave satire into their reporting. Recent Australian predecessors include journalists Matt Price (1961–2007) and Paul Lyneham (1945–2000). The latter especially was known as an even-handed excoriator of politicians on both sides of the political divide, publishing a popular book *Political Speak: The Bemused Voters’ Guide to Insults, Promises, Leadership Coups, Media Grabs, Pork-Barrelling and Old Fashioned Double-Speak*. A satirical parody of a manual, it instructed political aspirants that, having chosen their party, “it’s time to practise saying one thing while you mean another”; that they should “Tell ... the Mugs What They Want to Hear” and “be all things to all voters”.⁴⁹ Lyneham hoists politicians on their own petards by quoting back what they actually said, illustrating the premise that fiction is not as funny nor as ludicrous as what politicians actually say.

In 1990, the BBC and Harry Thompson (1960–2005), a comedy writer and producer, launched *Have I Got News For You* (*HIGNFY*), a television quiz that mixed satire and news. It was an immediate hit and continues to screen today. Thompson’s impressive résumé included a biography of Peter Cook (1937–1995), one of the stars of the 1960s purported Satire Boom and a founder of the British satirical magazine *Private Eye*, one of the legacies of that era. Cook’s chosen successor as editor of the *Eye* was Ian Hislop, and this job put Hislop on the path to a permanent place on *HIGNFY*. While the line of satirical descent is clear, the original hard-hitting approach was not always sustained. By 2007,

Will Self, an ex-panellist of the show, wrote to mourn the flabby fall of this show from its heyday when it was:

[I]n the very cockpit of British satire: a prototype kind of reality TV in which unwitting politicians were parachuted into a jungle full of backbiting repartee. The combination of a witty dissection of the week's current events and an opportunity for viewers to see their rulers – or wannabe rulers – excoriated in front of a live studio audience was a must-see.⁵⁰

That time had passed for Self, who saw the team leaders as middle-aged and comfortable rather than as angry young men, making it “hard to credit them as effectively wielding what is traditionally the weapon of the powerless against the powerful, when they’re so clearly part of an elite”.⁵¹ Self’s views reinforce the notion of the persistence of populist expectations about satire. And in terms of format, the formula of satire mixed with news continues to dominate in panel shows led by comedians such as *Good News Week* on Australian TV (1996–2000, 2008–2012), *The News Quiz* and *The Now Show* on BBC Radio 4. In 2014, Al Jazeera US hired Australian comedian Dan Ilic—fresh from his success with comedic injections into the *Guardian* newspaper of a video show called *A Rational Fear*—to attract a younger audience with his popular formula.⁵²

With the historical provenance established for this intimate nexus between politics and satire, some topics of satiric thematic recurrence that contribute to anti-politics rhetoric may now be fleshed out, beginning with lying politicians. Conservative US journalist/satirist P.J. O’Rourke started his career with *National Lampoon*, when the renowned humour magazine began in the 1970s and before it grew into the comedic institution depicted in Hollywood films. O’Rourke wrote a parody of a citizen’s manual, *Parliament of Whores* (1991), that reached number one on the *New York Times* bestseller list. In it, he baldly declared, “Of course politicians don’t tell the truth ... But neither do politicians tell huge entertaining whoppers”, and later, “When you looked at the Republicans, you saw the scum off the top of business. When you looked at the Democrats, you saw the scum off the top of politics. Personally, I prefer business.”⁵³ Twenty years later, this comfortable line of critique led to another bestseller by O’Rourke, entitled *Don’t Vote! It Just Encourages the Bastards*.

The accusation of lying is closely related to the damning of political rhetoric as spin. This theme features heavily in recent comedic representations of politics in TV series such as Britain's celebrated *Yes Minister* and Australia's *The Hollowmen* and *Utopia*, where politicians and their aides continually substitute words for action. Sharing a title with T.S. Eliot's evocative poem of 1925, *The Hollowmen* aired on the ABC in July 2008 and its first episode set the tone for the series.⁵⁴ It portrayed prime ministerial staffers addressing the complaint that their boss is all talk and no action. In response, they create a plan to deal with the social problem of obesity. Most of them are initially excited by a series of slogans that in fact signify nothing and, after a series of political obstacles, they adopt a bunch of meaningless words as their solution. Pursuing a similar theme of political vacuity, the editors of the *Yes Minister* "diaries" (the TV scripts presented in all their glory as putative historical artefacts) take a dig at the tendency of politicians to avoid responsibility through language:⁵⁵

Years of political training and experience had taught Hacker to use 20 words where one would do, to dictate millions of words where mere thousands would suffice, and to use language to blur and fudge issues and events so that they became incomprehensible to others. Incomprehensibility can be a haven for some politicians, for therein lies temporary safety.

Another theme of anti-politics rhetoric and satire is to exploit anti-theoretical ideas of ideal leadership in a representative democracy: the strong leader or Great Man thesis versus the weathervane thesis. By switching between these two arguments, it is possible to catch out politicians who are unable to adapt to circumstances skilfully enough without being denounced as shape-shifters. In the first conception, the leader is seen as ahead of the people, showing the way forward and sticking to principles. Frequently, caricatures of the careers of great men such as Lincoln, Churchill or F.D. Roosevelt are brought into play. By contrast, the weathervane leader hangs back with the pack of the people, promising to do what they want and reflect their interests and values. In fact, there can be no single formula for leadership success in the huge complexity known as representative democracy. These two conflicting views must be balanced by a leader who changes speed or course while

maintaining credibility amid a variety of different and conflicting political relationships and responding to unforeseen events and urgent demands. Successful examples beyond those named include more recent instances like Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton in the USA, and Bob Hawke and John Howard in Australia.

Despite popular celebration of sticking to principle regardless of consequences, arrogance is a pejorative frequently levelled against prime ministers in Australia. Although a measure of arrogance might be thought necessary for anyone capable of leading a country, the accusation conveys the notion of some sort of distance between the prime minister and the people—a gap that can be leveraged by an opposition leader. But, representative democracy by definition involves separation and distance between the political class and the voters, between the wielders of power and the people who legitimate their rulers. The complexities and difficulties of actually leading public opinion in these circumstances are revealed by the fact that the two judgments (of strength or arrogance) are two sides of the same coin, only separated by the approval or withdrawal of popular favour at any point in time. Popularity is never to be depended on.

Playing upon such widespread conceptions, satirical cartoonists can easily convey arrogance through famous historical analogies of imperial power diverting a leader from concentrating on the national interest. This perspective is powerfully conveyed by the pen of David Low (1891–1953), who ridiculed the tremendous ego of Prime Minister Billy Hughes, popular during the First World War. Hughes is shown literally hogging the limelight in one cartoon (Fig. 2.7a below), and in another (Fig. 2.7b below), measuring up his place in the section of Westminster Abbey reserved for great figures of history. The background for these depictions is behaviour such as Hughes's outrageous treatment of his opponents during the fierce sectarian debates about conscription that divided Australia in 1916 and 1917, and a push by sections of the right-wing press to acclaim him as another Abraham Lincoln saving democracy.⁵⁶ Despite Hughes's popularity, this was over-reaching and treated as such by cartoonists and commentators.

More recent uses of the same trope by cartoonists include Patrick Cook (b. 1949) depicting former Australian Labor prime minister Bob Hawke as Little Caesar, and Ward O'Neill (b. 1951), evaluating the



Fig. 2.7 Two plates featuring Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes, drawn by David Low, *The Billy Book: Hughes Abroad/Cartoons by Low* (Sydney: NSW Bookstall Co. Ltd, 1918), pp. 27 and 35. P-D Art from a copy owned by the author.

2003 entry into parliament of Malcolm Turnbull (current prime minister) as yet another Napoleon arriving with a leadership baton in his knapsack.⁵⁷ Ron Tandberg (b. 1943) used it to sum up the short tenure of Kevin Rudd (prime minister 2007–2010 and again in 2013 for 11 weeks), whose imperious quality and claimed expertise in all things Chinese is captured in Fig. 2.8 by caricaturing him as an impotent feudal potentate in a litter awaiting ascension to Parliament House (shown in the background). The absence of attendants symbolises desertion by the ordinary people who are of course the means for ascent to power in a democracy. Such links with imperial history offer any country a ready-made way to cut politicians down to size, as do depictions of politics

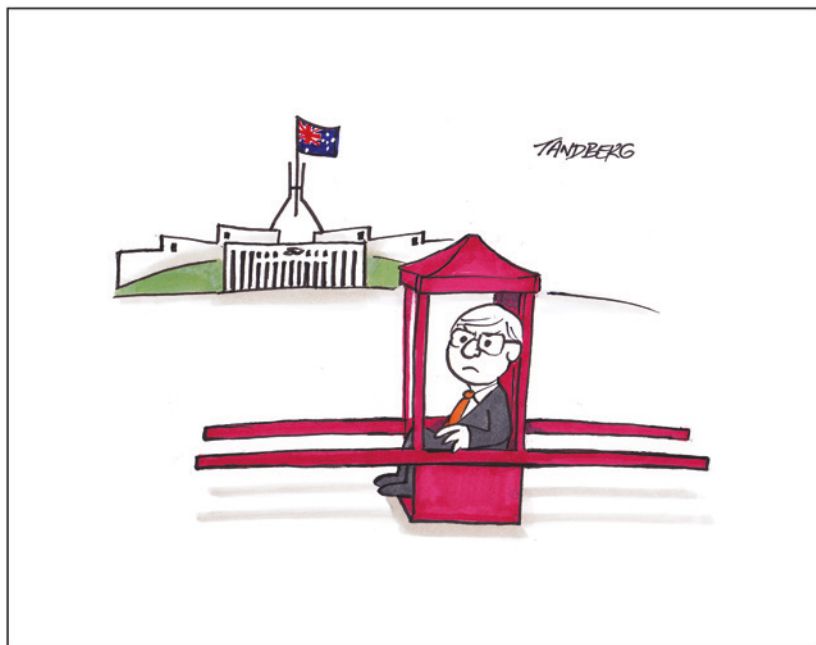


Fig. 2.8 Untitled, drawn by Ron Tandberg, originally published in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 July 2013. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist.

itself as a Roman arena of cruel and bloody entertainment. The latter is exemplified in Fig. 2.9, a powerful cartoon also by Tandberg, set in Canberra, where Parliament House is commonly described as a three-ring circus in real life. Playing on her declared atheism, it shows Julia Gillard (who in 2010 became as the nation's first woman prime minister by deposing her Labor colleague, Kevin Rudd) being literally thrown to the lions and replaced by Rudd again (seated smugly smiling on the left), with then Opposition leader Tony Abbott on the right watching, with satisfaction. Three months later, Rudd lost the election to Abbott.

Exploiting the two sides of the coin described above, satirists and cartoonists can easily damn politicians as mere weathervanes to public opinion, saying and doing whatever is necessary to be elected rather than being willing to take a brave stand on principle. "The Greasy Pole"

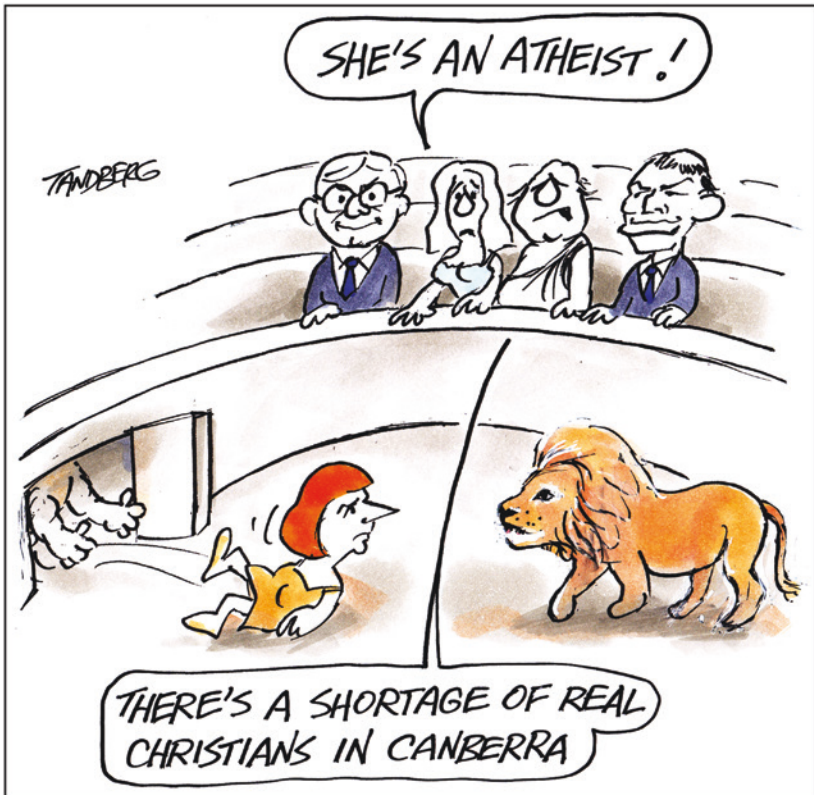


Fig. 2.9 Untitled, drawn by Ron Tandberg, originally published in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 June 2013. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist.

episode of *Yes Minister* (1981) depicts such versatility—or direction “by the momentary fluctuations of affairs”, as Adam Smith put it in his own dismissal of politicians—when the minister, Jim Hacker, rejects approval to build a chemical plant because of community protests. He explains to the furious CEO of the excluded chemical company, “I am their leader, I must follow them”. This weak-kneed retort provokes precisely the Platonic contempt for pandering to the masses that was intrinsic to the conservative critique of democracy in the nineteenth century. The statement itself possesses an equally long historical pedigree, the words

having been placed in the mouth of Bonar Law, British Conservative prime minister in 1922,⁵⁸ and also attributed to the nineteenth-century French democrat, Alexandre Auguste Ledru-Rollin.⁵⁹

Leaders themselves frequently seek to dismiss any hint of pandering at the expense of principle. Statements about the nature of leadership made by three recent Australian prime ministers all use very similar wording. Each had critical difficulties with public opinion, so perhaps they were making a virtue of necessity by tying their reputations to a common caricature of leadership:

Leadership is not about being popular. It's about being right and about being strong ... it's about doing what you think the nation requires, making profound judgements about profound issues.

Paul Keating (Prime Minister, 1991–1996).⁶⁰

You can't chase popularity. Chasing popularity is the death of purpose.

Julia Gillard (Prime Minister, 2010–2013).⁶¹

Leadership is about making the right decisions for our country's future. It isn't a popularity contest. It's about results; it's about determination ...

Tony Abbott (Prime Minister, 2013–2015).⁶²

Despite their individual resolve, all three prime ministers suffered political humiliation because they could not sustain enough popularity in the delicate balance of relationships, goals and context that make up that nebulous skill called leadership. Keating experienced a resounding electoral defeat in 1996 because his opponents were able to damn him as arrogant. Gillard and Abbott were both deposed by their own parliamentary parties which desperately sought new leaders to avoid electoral rout.

Regardless of such case histories, the belief generally persists that real leaders do not follow public opinion. Great statesmen such as wartime leader Winston Churchill are resurrected from their graves to haunt current politicians and demean them as less substantial leaders by comparison, ridiculous by reason of their cravenness and self-interest. While this measure of a mythical ideal against a purportedly grubby present is a community resource, it is also the common means by which satirists and humorists persuade us to their views. They construct the incongruities and gulfs between an ideal and a real that serve as the tools of their trade.

The effect is well demonstrated in the first episode of *Yes, Prime Minister*, “The Grand Design” (1986). Although Hacker has only been in office as prime minister for three days, his time is already consumed by a proposal from his scientific adviser to cut spending on nuclear weapons and spend the money on conventional defence while also introducing conscription. By a single measure (it is supposed), he will save money and soak up unemployment. With one hand on his lapel, Hacker addresses the imaginary crowds outside his office window in mock Churchillian style: “I will lead my people from the valley of the shadows into the broad sunlit uplands”. Then he waves—restrainedly but triumphantly—to the imaginary people. Hacker not only lifts phrases from Churchill’s famous 1940 “Battle of Britain” speech, but also assumes the famous stance and gesture: the powerful satirical comparison compels a judgment of Hacker’s ridiculous inadequacy.

As noted above, such comparisons conveniently sidestep complexities in both the careers of the great men being referenced and the mythologies that have grown around their leaderships. For instance, in 1941, Franklin Roosevelt was trying to cope realistically with overcoming an isolationist climate in the USA which was firmly against involvement in another European war. His most intimate political adviser nevertheless remarked critically that “the President would rather follow public opinion than lead it”.⁶³ Roosevelt’s balancing act ran completely contrary to the beliefs of Keating, Gillard and Abbott: he was in fact constantly using polls to gauge opinion, as any effective leader must do in order to lead while not straying too far from those led.

It seems that two centuries of democratic thought have afforded satirists and comedians a pretty easy time flaying the politicians of Australia, England and the USA. Nor has it required much daring or risk to encourage people to laugh at their leaders. This contradicts the laudations traditionally showered on comedians who are seen as fearless risk-takers confronting the powerful. This view of the role of satirists, as noted at the outset of this study, is also one elaborated recently by scholars using Foucault’s definition of *parrhesia* whereby the rebel speaks uncomfortable truths from the margin against some form of dominating power. According to Foucault, this places the person in some sort of danger to life or reputation. This may have been the case for the speaker telling unpalatable truths to intimidating fellow citizens (the *demos*) in the Athenian democracy, or to a tyrant of ancient Greece, or to an early modern European monarch possessing power over life and

death. Danger lurked in all three situations. As an aside, it is ironic that Foucault recycled conservative criticisms of the troublesome Athenian *demos* into this conception of *parrhesia*, seeing them as resistant to unpalatable truths. Nevertheless, in all three situations, he sees a significant distinction of status between speaker and audience, as well as a sense of moral obligation to truth and a duty to help others that warrants the definition of *parrhesia* as “fearless speech”.⁶⁴

Modern criticism of Foucault’s reading of classical texts, however, points to more circumstantial and contextual interpretations of *parrhesia*. Certainly, free and frank speech was considered essential to Athenian democracy, and as such it was an attribute of the *polis* rather than a virtue of the individual; but it also co-existed with other concepts in the assembly (for example *isegoria* or equal speech) which were determined by the community and were not individual rights as we might conceive them. The assembly could heckle, jeer and laugh at a speaker (thereby displaying *thorubus*), exercising their rights to free speech and to voice concern that the persuasive power of a speaker was being abused (there were no time limits to speeches, for example). Yet there is little evidence that the *demos* were intolerant of alternative opinions.⁶⁵ Athenians were not expected to sit listening silently in assembly: that was considered something expected only by tyrants wishing to silence opposition. So hubbub frequently bubbled from the crowd and was expected.

Such a critique also suggests that Foucault separated ethics from politics, thereby precluding the rhetorical understandings of *parrhesia* held by Aristotle. He cast frankness only into a relation with truth rather than with candour or outspokenness, a quality which may be appropriate or inappropriate, according to the judgements of social, political or private situations. Mulhern points out that such complexity requires any political actor to judge individual circumstances, including “actions, passions, habits, character, customs, laws, citizens, cities and citizenship”,⁶⁶ before employing *parrhesia*. On occasion, orators may have presented themselves as courageously speaking their minds; but such a claim should not be taken at face value as evidence of *parrhesia*: the orator may merely have sought to enhance their credibility with their audience.

In general, it is not safe to conclude that all satirists and humorists are risk-takers living in dangerous times, worthy of the Foucauldian accolade of *parrhesiastes*, fearless tellers of uncomfortable truths. Some undoubtedly are, such as the unfortunate victims of shootings at the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in Paris in January 2015 and many cartoonists

detained and punished for their work under authoritarian regimes, past and present. Judgements should be made on a case-by-case basis. The same caution also applies to those who assert principled stands against so-called “political correctness” (PC). Such claims are often accompanied by absolute and abstract demands for total freedom of speech, when in fact judgements about the practice of this principle are necessarily occasional, circumstantial and often complex. Moreover, the ambiguity and even vagueness of the term complained of allows it to cover a multitude of sins in a variety of situations and allows some rhetors to claim underdog status for themselves as well as the high moral ground of free speech versus censorial oppression.

One such voice is that of controversial French comedian Dieudonné M'bala M'bala (b. 1966), whose anti-Semitic utterances align with those of members of the French Front National and with their populist stance as outsiders challenging the French establishment.⁶⁷ Another highly complex instance is the 2009 sacking of an 80-year-old cartoonist for *Charlie Hebdo*, Siné (Maurice Sinet), for alleged anti-Semitism,⁶⁸ an event which must be viewed against a background of bewilderingly intricate French political machinations.⁶⁹ Such details are usually quickly trampled in the global rush to declare fidelity to abstract principles and to choose sides in a controversy.⁷⁰ In effect, some satirists and comedians are not *parrhesiastes*, although historic and widespread expectations about satire can easily lead us to think that they all are. Jon Stewart, for example, has never claimed the title, despite his influential views; and indeed it is hard to think of him as a dangerous rebel when he has so often interviewed President Obama on his show.

Despite this, the power of satire is undoubted. Television programmes like *Yes Minister* and *The Hollowmen* have become such staples of the journalistic critique of politics that their very titles function as slogans, injecting a range of associations into any article or commentary that uses them.⁷¹ As cartoons do, these familiar titles draw on many little universes of communal knowledge that sit just a few millimetres outside their narrow frames—the knowledge resources needed for decoding the humour. The satires and cartoons examined here all tap into what is familiar to their audiences, the long-standing tradition of anti-politics. The thematic recurrence in political satire over the last 200 years has happened for precisely the same reasons that it has occurred more generally in democratic discourse: it reflects unresolved tensions at the heart of representative democracy. To the politicians caught both ways, coming and going, this

tradition undoubtedly seems highly volatile, contradictory and confusing, but in practice this is surely no bad thing. It keeps “pollies” on their toes, supporting a conclusion that laughing at politicians has been essential to the health of our democracies for a very long time.

NOTES

1. Charlie Pickering, “‘The Colbert Report’ Wraps”, 19 December 2014.
2. Michel Foucault, “The Word *Parrhesia*”, 2001, pp. 9–24.
3. Jamie Warner, “*The Daily Show* and the Politics of Truth”, 2010, p. 37.
4. Matthew Jordan, “Thinking with Foucault about Truth-Telling and *The Daily Show*”, 2008, pp. 7, 9.
5. Specifically, I am drawing on vol. 1 of Quentin Skinner’s *Visions of Politics*, 2002. See also Terence Ball, “Professor Skinner’s Visions”, 2007; and Aletta Norval, “Review Article: The Things We Do with Words—Contemporary Approaches to the Analysis of Ideology”, 2000.
6. Andrew Robertson, *The Language of Democracy: Political Rhetoric in the United States and Britain 1790–1900*, 1995, p. 9.
7. Charles Postel, *The Populist Vision*, 2009, pp. 212–49.
8. Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*, 1998, pp. 1–24.
9. E.g. Paul Taggart, *Populism*, 2000, pp. 1–3; Margaret Canovan, “Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy”, 1999, pp. 2–16; Francisco Panizza, “Introduction”, 2005.
10. Canovan, pp. 2–16.
11. Barry Hindess, “Antipolitical Motifs in Western Political Discourse”, 1997, p. 21.
12. *Jon Stewart with Bassem Youssef in Egypt*, 21 June 2013. During the uprising in Cairo in 2011, Yousseff used his skills as a surgeon to help injured protesters but later became a satirist through shows on YouTube that were modelled on Stewart’s programme. This led to a satirical TV show, *Al-Bernameg*, which ran successively on two Egyptian channels and a Saudi channel from 2011 to 2014, as well as a newspaper column. However, he thought the political climate in Egypt under the military was problematic and cancelled the show in 2014 before its relaunch on an Emirates channel.
13. Mark Thomas, “Bruce Petty and Patrick Cook”, 2008, p. 242.
14. Geoff Pryor, “The Working Cartoonist”, 2008, p. 17.
15. Russ Radcliffe, ed., *Dirt Files: A Decade of Best Australian Political Cartoons*, 2013.
16. Jürgen Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, 1992, see for this chapter, especially pp. 32–4, 105–8, 142–3 and 231–2.
17. Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric (of) Aristotle*, trans. J.H. Freese, 1982, p. 467.

18. Conal Condren, *Satire, Lies, and Politics: The Case of Dr Arbuthnot*, 1997, pp. 13–8.
19. Conal Condren, 2002, p. 147.
20. Mary Berry and Josh Gottheimer, *Power in Words: The Stories behind Barack Obama's Speeches, from the State House to the White House*, 2010, p. 124.
21. Barack Obama, *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream*, 2010, pp. 3–4.
22. “politician, n. and adj.”, *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed, 2006.
23. Ralph Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party: The First American Presidency, 1789–1829*, 1984, p. 29.
24. Jennifer Mercieca, *Founding Fictions*, 2010, p. 43.
25. Jeffrey Smith, *Presidents We Imagine: Two Centuries of White House Fictions on the Page, on the Stage, Onscreen, and Online*, 2009, p. 7.
26. Paul Taggart, *Populism*, 2000, p. 25.
27. David McCullough, *Truman*, 2003, pp. 198, 206.
28. This British TV series is discussed in detail in Chap. 8 by Conal Condren.
29. “The Distinguished Gentleman (1992) Trailer”, 2011.
30. *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Quotations*, 2012, sv. Kin Hubbard.
31. Mark Twain, *Mark Twain At Your Finger Tips: A Book of Quotations*, 1948, pp. 65–6.
32. John Hirst, *The Strange Birth of Colonial Democracy: New South Wales 1848–1884*, 1988, p. 172, where the image in Fig. 2.2 also appears.
33. Martha Rutledge, “Johnson, Robert Ebenezer (1812–1866)”, 1972.
34. “Address”, *The Satirist and Sporting Chronicle*, 4 February 1843, p. 1.
35. Mark Rolfe, “Looking Backwards to the Future: The Evolving Tradition of Ideal Political Rhetoric in Australia”, 2014, pp. 130–1.
36. Nancy Wright and Andrew Buck, “Tropes of Dispossession: The Political Unconscious of ‘The Land Question’”, 1998, p. 13.
37. Mark Rolfe, “The Pleasures of Political Humour in Australian Democracy”, 2010, p. 368.
38. “Disloyalty”, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 January 1872, p. 3.
39. “American Electioneering Tactics”, 13 March 1888, p. 7.
40. “Tammany Ring”, 12 April 1876, p. 3.
41. For Hartt's extensive cartoons on wartime service, see Chap. 1 by Jessica Milner Davis and Lindsay Foyle.
42. See Editorial, discussing William Tweed and Tammany Hall, 1874, pp. 4, 5.
43. Marcus Clarke, “The Typical Victorian Political Minister”, 1972, pp. 23–4.
44. Editorial, “Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer”, 21 September 1855, p. 2.
45. “Ithuriel”, “Among the Federal Members”, 1 September 1906, p. 7.
46. Quoted by (then) Senator Margaret Reid, “For Peace, Order, and Good Government: Speeches at the Launch of the Senate Exhibition”, November 2001.

47. E.g. Humphrey Carpenter, *That Was Satire That Was: The Satire Boom of the 1960s*, 2000.
48. Graeme Turner, *Ending the Affair: The Decline of Television Current Affairs in Australia*, 2005, in this chapter.
49. Paul Lyncham, 1993, pp. 13, 17.
50. Will Self, "Have I Got News for You: TV Satire's Lost its Teeth", 2007.
51. Ibid.
52. Steve Jones, "Dan Ilic to Head Satirical Comedy Project for Al Jazeera in US to Woo Younger Audience", 19 December 2014.
53. P.J. O'Rourke, *Parliament of Whores: A Lone Humorist Attempts to Explain the Entire U.S. Government*, 1991, pp. 5, 30.
54. Working Dog Productions, "Episode 1: Fat Chance", 2008.
55. Jonathan Lynn and Antony Jay, *The Complete Yes Minister: The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*, 1989, p. 7. For detailed analysis of this series' use of political and bureaucratic language, see Chap. 8 by Conal Condren.
56. See Rolfe, 2014.
57. Drawing by Ward O'Neill, *Australian Financial Review*, 14–15 June 2003, p. 21.
58. Stephen Lee, *Aspects of British Political History 1914–1995*, 2005, p. 28.
59. In the form, "There go the people—I must follow them, for I am their leader."
60. Paul Keating and Mark Ryan, *Advancing Australia: The Speeches of Paul Keating, Prime Minister*, 1995, p. 6.
61. Jacqueline Kent, "Julia Gillard: From the Welsh Mines to the Summit of Australian Politics", 7 June 2013.
62. Tony Abbott, "Address to the National Press Club of Australia", 2 February 2015.
63. George C. Edwards III, *The Strategic Presidency: Persuasion and Opportunity in Presidential Leadership*, 2009, p. 32.
64. Michel Foucault, "The Word *Parrhesia*", 2001, pp. 13–9.
65. Robert Wallace, "The Power to Speak—and Not to Listen—in Ancient Athens", 2004, pp. 225–226. Wallace points out that Aristophanes and other dramatists repeatedly lampooned Athens, the *demos*, politicians, the gods, and conduct of the war with Sparta, yet year in year out, the citizens paid for their plays. Although Socrates never left Athens, he was for many years free to criticise democracy, as was Critias. Only after the coup of 404 BC, which instituted the murderous reign of oligarchs, did criticism of democracy become more tendentious with the citizenry. Even then, the *demos* did not wish the death of Socrates for his blasphemies in 399 BCE.
66. J.J. Mulhern, "*Παρηγορία* in Aristotle", 2004, pp. 329–330; and also Chap. 9, 11 and 12.

67. For a description of his performances, see *Dieudonne: France's Most Dangerous Comedian?*, 31 January 2014.
68. H. Samuel, "French Cartoonist Siné on Trial on Charges of anti-Semitism Over Sarkozy Jibe", *The Telegraph*, 27 January 2009.
69. Jason Bourke, "'Anti-Semitic' Satire Divides Liberal Paris", *The Guardian*, 3 August 2008.
70. See Mark Rolfe, "Clashing Taboos: Danish Cartoons, Life of Brian & Public Diplomacy", 2009.
71. E.g. Shakira Hussein, "Asylum-seekers and Anxiety: 'I am Their Leader. I Must Follow Them'", *Crikey*, 19 July 2010.

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