



**AFTER THE SMOKE CLEARS: ON THE
COMPETENCY AND ACCURACY OF
RECENT POLLING RESULTS ON
HOMOSEXUAL 'MARRIAGE' – JULY 2014**

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Executive Summary

In the backdrop of loud clamour over the issue of homosexual 'marriage', two surveys were released, a day after each other.

The first was the Crosby Textor poll, commissioned by Australian Marriage Equality, on Tuesday 15 July 2014. The second was from Newspoll, released on Wednesday 16 July 2014.

Both surveys purported to reveal an overwhelming consensus across the Australian community on the issue of homosexual 'marriage' demonstration that the issue had been won by the advocates and there was no need for further debate or delay in legalising it. These were to be used as tools to pressure the Coalition to abandon its policy position in favour of marriage to a position of no policy, thus shifting it to the position of a full conscience vote.

Upon closer analysis of available data, a different picture emerges. The Crosby Textor poll contains omission of crucial topics, clumsily worded questions that contain internal contradictions, broad questions that serve no useful purpose, a small polling sample size and a base of "Strongly in Favour" that was 9 percent higher than the larger sample size of Newspoll on the same question. These considerations deeply undercut the credibility of the survey.

Newspoll, despite the larger respondent base, sought to push its respondents to a position despite them having declared that they were "neither for or against", and used these numbers in vague categories to declare overwhelming support for homosexual 'marriage'. The question began as a simple for, against or neither.

Rather than revealing overwhelming support, closer analysis shows that only 39 percent of respondents were strongly in favour and a very large body of respondents – **47 percent had not truly made up their minds.**

On the basis of polling alone, setting aside the issue of policy quality, the Coalition can and should retain its policy in favour of marriage and not be swayed by these 'results'.

Background

During the first half of the week commencing Monday 14 July, the last sitting week of Parliament before the winter recess, two polls were released under the pretext of sensational claims that Australia had decided in favour of gay marriage, opposition to legalising it had collapsed and there was no reason to delay this.

The contextual background of this followed the public interest in the declaration by Ian Thorpe of his sexual identity in a paid television interview with Michael Parkinson broadcast on Sunday 13 July. This has nothing to do with redefining marriage, nor should it.

Also, there was the declaration of intent by new Senator David Leyonhjelm on 13 July 2014 that the first action he wants to do in Parliament is introduce a Same-Sex Marriage Bill – but one which is to “deregulate marriage”, limiting it to the private sphere.¹ Andrew Bolt addressed the heart of the issue:

Truth is that marriage – the institution, tradition and ceremony – are indeed all public matters. Marriage is a social, not private, construct to bind men to women for the sake of their children, so that the next generations are properly socialised to the benefit of all.

Then there is this problem with Leyonhjelm’s argument: if your choice of partner is entirely a private matter, and state intrusion on that choice silly and petty, then why have any state definition of marriage at all?

Why not allow polygamy and incestuous marriage as well? Isn’t that the true libertarian position?²

At the same time Greens Senator Sarah Hanson-Young wants to create an internal incoherence in the Marriage Act by having two contradictory ideas of marriage functioning side by side. She wants to keep the definition of marriage as in Section 5 of the Act, while having an alternate definition in the same act recognising homosexual ‘marriages’ from overseas jurisdictions in Australian law. This is only a stepping stone to full redefinition however, and she admits as much. In the Second Reading speech on the Bill on 15 May

¹ ‘Guest post from David Leyonhjelm, “Marriage is a private matter”, from the *Financial Review*, Catallaxy Files, <http://catallaxyfiles.com/2014/07/13/guest-post-from-david-leyonhjelm-marriage-is-a-private-matter/> (Accessed 17 July 2014)

² Andrew Bolt, ‘If Leyonhjelm is a true libertarian, why not allow polygamy, too?’, 15 July 2014, 12:59am, *Herald Sun Online*: http://blogs.news.com.au/heraldsun/andrewbolt/index.php/heraldsun/comments/if_leyonhjelm_is_a_true_libertarian_why_not_allow_polygamy_too (Accessed 17 July 2014)

2014 at 11:55 am, she states that “This Bill offers a modest and practical step forward to marriage equality”.³

Last Labor’s Tanya Plibersek wants to introduce a Bill to legalise homosexual ‘marriage’, based upon having a Coalition member to co-sponsor it, and wants Tony Abbott to grant a Conscience vote.⁴

Amidst these circumstances the two polls appear.

The Crosby Textor Poll – 15 July 2014

To great fanfare the C I T Group, or Crosby Textor Group published the results of a survey commissioned by the Australian Marriage Equality (AME) lobby organisation on Tuesday 15 July 2014.⁵ Crosby Textor is the Liberal Party’s national pollster.

The survey had a relatively small survey size, n=1000, with a margin of error claimed at +/-3.1%, and this was used to make a wide number of claims.

The question order and structure are not revealed and are left to be informed of in three articles – by Mark Textor, cited, Lisa Cox⁶, her article is linked in the Textor article and Patricia Karvelas.⁷ Much of this needs to be inferred and we rely upon the testimony of the authors, who, in the case of the latter journalists, must be presumed to have read it.

Once again, the survey data itself is not available.

The bold claims are that

New poll shows record 72 percent support for marriage equality

³ Senate, Official Hansard, No. 5, 2014, Thursday, 15 May 2014, Forty-Fourth Parliament First Session—Third Period, page 2726, http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/chamber/hansards/ec1aa7d7-8aac-44ed-95b8-9d749c60fe85/toc_pdf/Senate_2014_05_15_2437_Official.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (Accessed 17 July 2014)

⁴ Benedict Brook, ‘Tanya Plibersek: I won’t rush marriage equality bill’, in *Star Observer*, <http://www.starobserver.com.au/news/local-news/tanya-plibersek-i-wont-rush-marriage-equality-bill/124726> (Accessed 17 July 2014)

⁵ Mark Textor, *Record Support for same-sex marriage*, 15 July 2014, <http://www.crosbytextor.com/news/record-support-for-same-sex-marriage/> (Accessed 19 July 2014)

⁶ Lisa Cox, Poll shows growing support for same-sex marriage, in *The Sydney Morning Herald* online, 15 July 2014, <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/poll-shows-growing-support-for-samesex-marriage-20140714-3bxaj.html> (Accessed 19 July 2014)

⁷ Patricia Karvelas, Majority supports same-sex marriage, in *The Australian* online, 17 July 2014, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/majority-supports-samesex-marriage/story-fn59niix-1226991487768> (Accessed 19 July 2014)

– Crosby|Textor research shows strong support for marriage equality across all key demographics

– Free vote has over three-quarters support, including majority of those few opposed to reform

An overwhelming majority of Australians now believe that marriage equality – the ability of same-sex couples to marry – should be allowed in Australia.⁸

Closer inspection of the kinds of questions asked revealed another story, including incompetence that casts doubt on the veracity of the whole study of only 1000 respondents. The devil lies in the available detail.

The Polls Compared

As stated, the sample size of the Crosby Textor Poll was n=1000, with a margin of error claimed at +/-3.1 percent, between the period 12-22 June 2014.

The sample size of the Newspoll, which will be evaluated more fully below, is n=1215, and the survey was taken over 27-29 June, according to the online data.⁹ It also states in the print edition that “The maximum margin of sampling error is on the total is plus or minus three percentage points”. Of note, the contextual data to the survey is more detailed in the print edition of *The Australian* than is revealed in the online edition.

We know the question in full in the print edition of *The Australian* and can infer the response categories of the Newspoll data, but all the questions and wordings are not revealed by the Crosby Textor poll.

One striking difference between the two, besides the sample size and the transparency of the questions, is that the Crosby Textor poll has a question producing a result in the same “Strongly Supporting” category of legalising homosexual ‘marriage’, but the result is 48 percent to the Newspoll’s 39 percent. Note that both surveys claim about a three percent error rate.

A nine percent difference is not only significant, but wild. It further undercuts the **credibility and competence** of the Crosby Textor poll. What we don’t know is what kind of questions elicited the total of 72 percent, nor how they were asked.

⁸ Textor, op. cit.

⁹ *The Australian*, 16 July 2014, page 2, and online at <http://media.theaustralian.com.au/multimedia/2014/07/samesex/tabs.html> (Accessed 25 July 2014).

Another consideration emerges, in that with a n=215 higher sample size in Newspoll, and a 9% drop in the key category of “Strongly support”, what may be the change with larger sample sizes again?

The Significance of the Textor Findings in the light of Newpoll Results

The 9 percent drop in the category of “Strongly Supporting” homosexual marriage between Newpoll and the Textor Poll, must also cast doubt upon the remainder of Crosby Textor’s findings.

We do not know how the less than “Strongly Supporting” categories were identified and ranked, but they too become suspect, especially in the light of the clumsy and contradictory nature of the way the question wording appears, as revealed by Patricia Karvelas in *The Australian* on 17 July 2014.¹⁰

Hence the great fanfare about the identification of levels of support for homosexual marriage is suspect, and this extends to the issue of the free vote.

On the question of the free vote – the implication is that the Coalition abandons its support for the bedrock institution of society and moves to having no position. The Coalition suffered no loss, but actually won the last Federal election supporting marriage as policy, in contrast to Kevin Rudd’s desire to overthrow it in his first hundred days of reelection by seeking to replace marriage with homosexual ‘marriage’. That this issue is one which at present is fashionable, it may change in future – such as the issue of the Republic, it will do the Coalition no harm to retain this as fixed policy.

Hence, claims such as what follows allows no distinction between very soft support and hard support for redefining marriage, which we now know to be lower in the latter case. We don’t have a good understanding of what a “majority” means, whether some of these are still making up their minds, or have not really thought about it.

- A majority of those identifying with major religions supported marriage equality, including Catholics, Anglicans and non-Christian religions.
- A majority of older Australians (aged 55 years or over) supported marriage equality.
- A majority in all states and regions across Australia including Western Sydney and regional Queensland.
- A majority of (heterosexual) people already in a marriage supported marriage equality.
- A majority of people with children supported marriage equality.¹¹

¹⁰ Patricia Karvelas, ‘Majority supports same-sex marriage’, op. cit.

¹¹ Textor op. cit.

Additional questions begged here include:

1. What does a majority mean in the context of this survey?
2. How many were polled from Western Sydney and regional Queensland out of a thousand?
3. What is “Western Sydney” and “regional Queensland”?

The Significance of the Karvelas Article – 17 July 2014 – “Majority supports same-sex marriage”

The articles by Textor and Cox relate findings, but it is not until the article by Patricia Karvelas¹² appears and some of the findings of the Newspoll research appear that a major revision of the competence and veracity of the survey is needed. Both works undercut the claims of the Textor polling.

Also, Textor, as Liberal Party’s national pollster makes inferential statements about what Coalition policy should be:

The seismic shift in public attitudes towards marriage equality is undeniable. Almost everyone agrees that this is the right thing to do and there is no need to have a grand fight on this issue.¹³

Textor also neglects to consider that of those against homosexual ‘marriage’ in his survey, if the Coalition were to follow his inference, where would they vote in the next election? How would this play out in the next Senate as these voters desert the Coalition? Would primary votes in marginal seats shift away from the Coalition?

Textor does not mention the results of the findings of the successful motion moved by Greens MP Adam Bandt November 2010, where the so called 60 percent of supporters of homosexual ‘marriage’ where expected to show themselves in overwhelming numbers, where over 20 of the 30 MPs who spoke said their constituents were strongly against any change to the Marriage Act.

He also neglects to mention that Kevin Rudd made this a key 2013 election issue saying “Frankly, in 2013, I think the time has come to put this acrimonious debate behind us.”¹⁴ Is Textor now backing 2013 ALP election

¹² Karvelas, ‘Majority supports same-sex marriage’, op. cit.

¹³ Textor, op. cit.

¹⁴ Agence France-Presse, ‘Australian PM Kevin Rudd makes gay marriage an Australian election issue’, in *Global Post*, August 8, 2013 7:33 and 11:02, <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130812/rudd-makes-gay-marriage-australian-election-issue-0> (Accessed 20 July 2014).

policy, which he was employed to help the Coalition win against and which did?

The Karvelas article however reveals that some questions are worded so broadly that I could agree with them, for example,

The Crosby-Textor poll found 80 percent agreed that “all Australians should be treated equally under the law, and that includes being able to marry.”

Very well, but why is this contentious? What is the big story in this?

Where did this question appear in the order of questions? If early, it must appear only for the purpose of disposing the interviewee to more sympathetic and desired results.

The same with the questions contained in the statements by Karvelas that:

Seventy-eight percent also agreed “marriage is a beneficial institution and should be accessible to everyone” and 74 percent agreed “marriage solidifies and stabilises a relationship and everyone should have access to that.”¹⁵

Once again, where is the controversy? The concerning factor is that it was not higher, but perhaps a certain percentage of the population remains confused about the issue and unable to grasp the context.

In the same paragraph she reveals the content of another question.

Seventy-eight percent agreed “if it doesn’t hurt anyone else, gay couples should be able to do what makes them happy, including marry.”¹⁶

The question asked reveals a logical fallacy, that of begging the question – assuming the response in the question – “if it doesn’t hurt anyone else”. This is borne out by the fact is that this expression is used by Rodney Croome, AME national director, where the “if” has morphed into a fact, as he is quoted in the same article as saying “given no-one is hurt by this reform, it should be passed”.¹⁷

Doesn’t it hurt anyone? This has been a key problem with this “debate” so far. The arguments on this point are passed over and neglected, but they are **absolutely crucial**. They follow in point form:¹⁸

¹⁵ Karvelas, ‘Majority supports same-sex marriage’, op. cit.

¹⁶ Ibid. My emphasis.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Largely cf. National Marriage Coalition, *Submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, on the Recognition of Foreign Marriages Bill 2014*, unpublished as at 25 July 2014.

- Redefining marriage redefines **everybody's** marriage immediately in law and society. The Commonwealth must support this crucial pre-state institution and **has no right** to redefine it. **The idea that “it does not affect my marriage” is utterly false.**
- Children have a natural right to a mother and a father and this is reflected through the Commonwealth's regulation of marriage. Redefining marriage away from this right robs them of this birthright.
- Homosexual 'marriage' severs the intrinsic connection between marriage and children, as two men or two women cannot reproduce and cannot be both a mother and a father to a child. Such a development renders the categories of motherhood and fatherhood irrelevant, as two men in 'marriage' makes motherhood irrelevant and two women in 'marriage' does the same for fatherhood. It is an absolute scandal even to consider having to explain this concept to a young child, should they be confronted with an example of it.
- The state has an interest in marriage because it has an interest in each next generation of Australians. We need to strengthen marriage, the bedrock of our society, our foundational social institution, not suppress and replace it with something that it is not.
- Dr Patrick Parkinson in his 2011 report, *For Kids' Sake*, concludes that “The overwhelming evidence from research is that children do best in two-parent married families.”¹⁹
- Homosexual 'marriage' shifts the orientation of marriage away from a child oriented focus to one of adult mutual affectation. The bedrock institution of society, binding mother and father to any future children in law and society disappears. What remains is what possibilities exist in how far defining “mutual affectation” can reach.
- Once homosexual 'marriage' is in legislation, marriage itself is overthrown and the former must expand its influence across all facets of society. Overseas examples show that no freedom to dissent is tolerated – all must conform to the new order. One such example is as follows:

A Colorado cake artist who declined to use his creative talents to promote and endorse a same-sex ceremony [appealed](#) a May 30 [order](#) from the Colorado Civil Rights Commission to the Colorado Court of Appeals Wednesday.

¹⁹ Professor Patrick Parkinson AM with Antoine Kazzi, *For Kids' Sake: Repairing the Social Environment for Australian Children and Young People*, Faculty of Law, University of Sydney, July 2011, 48, <http://www.acl.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/FKS-ResearchReport11.pdf> (Accessed 23 July 2014).

The commission's order requires cake artist Jack Phillips and his staff at Masterpiece Cakeshop to create cakes for same-sex celebrations, forces him to re-educate his staff that Colorado's Anti-Discrimination Act means that artists must endorse all views, compels him to implement new policies to comply with the commission's order, and requires him to file quarterly "compliance" reports for two years. The reports must include the number of patrons declined a wedding cake or any other product and state the reason for doing so to ensure he has fully eliminated his religious beliefs from his business.²⁰

- For further treatment of some of the wider harms of homosexual 'marriage', and why it is above all **bad policy**, see an earlier work in this publication, *Same-sex 'marriage' and its consequences*.²¹

The clumsiness of the poll, further undermining its competence, comes from the citation:

And 69 percent disagreed that "marriage is only meant to be between a man and a woman, so this is wrong."²²

I disagree also! However the question is convoluted and confusing. The clause at the end "so this is wrong", inverts the whole former statement. It makes the earlier part of the question out to be wrong, which again is begging the question. So if I disagree that the statement quoted is wrong, I must be saying that "marriage is only meant to be between a man and a woman" is right.

This boldly **contradicts** the claim of Textor that "New poll shows record 72 percent support for marriage equality" and undercuts the competency of all the polling results in this poll.

The vagueness and ambiguity of the poll is also found in the following:

It found that 70 percent agreed that "excluding same-sex couples from marriage fosters discrimination".

What does "fosters discrimination" mean? How am I to understand it? Is it discriminatory? If so how? How in a negative sense? How in a positive sense? Fosters? This is question by inference. It remains untested and unqualified. A respondent should not need to fill in the gaps.

²⁰ *LifeSiteNews* staff, 'Colorado baker appeals gvmt 're-education' order', in *LifeSiteNews.com*, 21 July 2014, http://www.lifesitenews.com/opinion/a-moral-revolution-at-warp-speednow-its-wedding-cakes#/news/colorado-baker-appeals-gvmt-re-education-order?&_suid=1406117478015049050228659840134 (Accessed 23 July 2014).

²¹ Gerard Calilhanna, 'Same-sex 'marriage' and its consequences', in *News Weekly* online, 15 March 2014, <http://www.newsweekly.com.au/article.php?id=56519> (Accessed 25 July 2014).

²² Karvelas, 'Majority supports same-sex marriage', op. cit.

Returning to the opening statement of the article:

AN analysis by the Liberal Party’s national pollster has found people believe gay couples need the benefits of marriage and most people agree legalised gay marriage is inevitable so “why not do it now”.

Are the benefits of marriage cited purely material, or financial? This is not stated. It is vague. The inevitability question was raised, with the follow on part quoted -therefore “why not do it now”. The question leads the respondent to the desired result – if you accept the claim of inevitability, then you must accept immediacy because by that stage it makes no difference. This question structure, as inferred by the text, does not elicit a response or an attitude, rather it drives a response.

Omitted Topics

The polling timeline covers the period of the Ambrose Centre for Religious Liberty Research Poll, November 2011, but crucially ignores its contribution that demonstrated the contradictions held in the minds of those who professed to support homosexual marriage.²³

See for example:

% who agree (Base = All respondents)

Marriage between a man and a woman and them having children together is an important social institution and we should uphold marriage and its traditional meaning 69%

Marriage is not just about love and commitment between two adults. It is also the best way to help ensure that children are raised by their own mother and father59%

Where possible, as a society we should try to ensure that children are raised by their natural mother and father, and promote this 73%

Debating same sex marriage is a distraction and a waste of resources, and our politicians need to re-focus on the more important issues that really matter to mainstream Australians61%

Same sex marriage would be a significant change to Australian society, and we should not rush into this without knowing the social impact, especially on children 59%

²³ Ambrose Centre for Religious Liberty, *Public Attitudes Towards Same Sex Marriage in Australia – Report of Research Findings November 2011*, <http://ambrosecentre.org.au/> (Accessed 20 July 2014).

Children will usually grow up happier if they have a home with both a mother and a father 53%²⁴

Confusion still remains, with little oxygen available in the public ‘debate’ that deals seriously with these matters. A comprehensive opposing view is rarely heard and apart from a few exceptions media and television are solidly behind the proposed redefinition. Much too little inquiry appears in relation to the above sample of issues and these are not being factored into public consideration, and the impact this would have on thinking on the issue.

Of note Textor does not consider these issues as the polling was done on behalf of AME, which has no interest in pursuing these questions, as it undermines their basis for campaign. Putting questions such as these to the respondents would have elicited a far different overall response. The poll design shaped its outcome, which is another mark against its utility.

The Newpoll – 16 July 2014

The second poll appeared in *The Australian* on Wednesday 16 July 2014 on page 2. The headline proclaimed that “Marriage Equality wins support of two out of three” Australians.²⁵ 69 percent are said to be in favour, while 26 percent are said to be against.

However, on closer inspection the only firm figures are the Strongly in favour, which is 39 percent and the Strongly Against, which is 15 percent. The devil lies in the detail here also.

There are three areas of doubt.

First is the question itself. The question asks:

Are you personally in favour or against marriage between same sex couples, or are you neither in favour or against it? IF NEITHER If you had to choose, would you say you have a leaning towards being in favour, or against, marriage between same sex couples?²⁶

²⁴ Ambrose Centre for Religious Liberty, *Public attitudes towards changing the Marriage Act to include same sex marriage – Analysis of Survey findings – September 2011*, 1-2, <http://www.ambrosecentre.org.au/images//analysis%20for%20web.pdf> (accessed 20 July 2014).

²⁵ Natasha Bitá, ‘Marriage equality wins support of two out of three’, in *The Australian* online, 16 July 2014, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/marriage-equality-wins-support-of-two-out-of-three/story-e6fgr6n6-1226990227810> (Accessed 25 July 2014).

²⁶ Note that the full question appears on page 2 of the print edition of *The Australian*, it does not appear in the online version of the poll. The distinction is crucial. The online question only states “Are you personally in favour or against marriage between same sex couples, or are you neither in favour nor against it? (%)” There is nothing about the following question asked to those who nominate in the “neither” category. See above reference 9.

The first part of the question reveals a three type of response answer – Yes, No, Don't know / Neither. The yes and no would account for Strongly in favour or against, the Neither the remainder.

The Neither, “neither in favour or against it” are then pressed “IF NEITHER” – they are discouraged from being “Neither” in a somewhat intimidatory way by use of the uppercase text, though this is how the respondents have answered.

Where else does this kind of pursuit occur?

The respondents are asked “if you had to choose”, but by this point they have *already* chosen. Their following response is hardly a considered decision.

Second, the results of the pursuit line of enquiry are presented as “Somewhat in favour”, “Leaning in favour”, “Leaning Against” and “Somewhat Against”.

These do not give the impression of a decided nation – yet they are made out as such. What does “Somewhat” mean and what does “Leaning” mean, both in themselves and in relation to each other? The terms are vague and highlight the level of ignorance, indecision and lack of importance of the matter in the eyes of some. All together the Somewhats and the Leanings total 41 percent.

In addition four percent remained with Neither, one percent did not know and one percent refused to answer the question. These categories total 47 percent.

Last, rather than “marriage equality wins support of two out of three”, the real story is that **almost half, 47 percent, of the respondents have not made up their minds**. The survey seeks to compel an answer in vague categories, placing the respondents “on the spot” when respondents are not really sure, and then claims an overwhelming victory for homosexual ‘marriage’. The picture is really one on an **undecided Australia**.

Patricia Karvelas, in an accompanying article on the same page, “Same-sex free vote becomes inevitable” makes the bold claim, along with the decision on behalf of the Coalition, that “It is inevitable the Abbott Government” will finally allow its MPs a conscience vote on gay marriage this term”.²⁷ Is it?

Based on the fact that about half the population are genuinely undecided on this issue, the Coalition is safe to maintain its policy in support of marriage and not shift to a conscience vote on the basis of polling alone.

²⁷ Patricia Karvelas, ‘Same-sex free vote becomes inevitable’, in *The Australian* online, 16 July 2014, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/samesex-free-vote-becomes-inevitable/story-e6frg6zo-1226990232597> (Accessed 25 July 2014).

This poll carries a degree of unreliability beyond the poles of conviction, that is the Strongly in favour or against, and should not be taken as an endorsement of anything beyond this.

The “winning” category is the remaining uncertainty in the Electorate.

Conclusion

The most that can be said for the polling done is that they reveal a growing base level of support for homosexual marriage, as indicated by the 39 percent “Strongly in Favour” identified by the Newspoll, which though in itself is flawed; in this respect has a far greater credibility than the Crosby Textor poll, but both are overstating what ‘evidence’ they have.

In terms of polling to be used to change a position, the onus is upon the pollster to reveal a population basis for this change. The claims of both despite the claim for this and upon closer inspection clearly fall short, and there is every possibility that numbers can recede over time.

Of what is known of the questions and results of the Crosby Textor poll, it leaves one with little confidence of the veracity of its claims and should not be embraced as an instrument with authority. The poll’s topic omissions, poor and clumsy wording, low sample size, presenting its 9 percent percentage points higher on the same issue as the Newspoll for the Strongly in favour category, and the partisan nature of the study’s commissioners strikes hard at its worth. The poll was not done on behalf of the Liberal Party, but AME.

The Newspoll undermines itself by seeking to push respondents to a position after they had already answered. What it unwittingly revealed was that despite the enormous, sustained propaganda push by politicians, journalists and the mass media, 47 percent of respondents are still finding their way on the issue. This is also a large group to fall potentially out of favour with.

It also **directly contradicts, or makes false** the proclamation of AME national director Rodney Croome that "With Australians across all key demographics supporting marriage equality in record numbers, it's fair to say the public has made up its mind, the community debate has been won, and it's time for politicians to act."²⁸

They have not, it is not, it has not and no.

The Coalition can and should retain its policy in favour of marriage and not be swayed by these ‘results’.

²⁸ Cox, op.cit.