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Leadership and Voting: The Connection at the State Level

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While it is now well established that Australian party leaders at the national level influence political choice in federal elections, little systematic study has been undertaken of the equivalent role that State Premiers and Opposition Leaders might play. In the 2001 Australian Election Study (n = 2010), questions were asked of a national probability sample of voters about respondent feelings towards their State Premier and State Opposition Leader, in addition to equivalent questions about Prime Minister John Howard, Opposition Leader Kim Beazley and other major political figures in federal politics. The data generated by this survey thus provide an opportunity to investigate the impact that contemporary State political leaders have on electoral choice. The analysis produces mixed results, but the findings show that State leaders generally do have an impact on voting behaviour in State elections, although in some cases this influence is eliminated when account is taken of voter attitudes towards the federal leaders. The analysis also affords an opportunity to test the extent of crossover between State and federal politics, in terms of how much State leaders influence federal voting and vice versa. While the results are somewhat uneven, they do indicate that some State leaders influence federal voting and that the federal leaders do influence voting in some States.

Introduction

Writing over 40 years ago in the preface to his edited work about State government and politics in Australia, Rufus Davis commented that 'So much more needs to be known' about, among other things, 'the political behaviour of the voter who consistently divides his [sic] party loyalty between Federal and State elections' (Davis 1960, x). In the early years of the twenty-first century it has to be said that, while those 40-odd years have seen great advances in our knowledge about political behaviour at the national level in Australia, there remains precious little significant research on the subject at the level of State politics. Notwithstanding the promise

in the early work of Colin Hughes (1969) and the numerous general studies of State elections, the focus in Australia when it comes to in-depth electoral behaviour research remains very much on federal politics.

This article attempts to contribute to the filling of this void in the study of political behaviour in Australian State elections by using data from a nationwide sample survey containing some State-level variables. The paper focuses on voter attitudes towards the political party leaders in each State and on the impact these attitudes have on individual voting decisions in State (and federal) elections. Starting from the position that leadership effects on voting behaviour are now fairly well established as a feature of national elections in many countries, including Australia (eg Graetz and McAllister 1987; Bean and Kelley 1988; Bean and Mughan 1989; Bean 1993; McAllister 1996), the analysis investigates whether this notion of leadership effects also applies in State politics. While modest in their size, leadership effects have been shown to be consistently significant in federal politics—regularly accounting for at least 1% or 2% of the overall vote and on some occasions as much as 4% or more—and there is little reason to assume that this phenomenon would not translate into the State political domain.

For one thing, as much if not more than at the national level, politics in the Australian States has been studded with political leaders whose individual person-alities and political styles have dominated the politics of a particular era—Premiers such as Don Dunstan, Neville Wran and Joh Bjelke-Petersen, to name but a few. Their prominence is reflected, among other ways, in the titles of books such as *The Dunstan Decade* (Parkin and Patience 1981), *The Wran Model* (Chaples, Nelson and Turner 1985) and *The Bjelke-Petersen Premiership* (Patience 1985). However, while these and other writings have clearly alluded to a powerful role for State Premiers in the electoral success of their parties, the analyses tend to be speculative in nature and lacking in a foundation of direct empirical evidence. Some authors have made more explicit claims about the electoral influence of particular party leaders in particular State elections (eg Bennett 2001; Williams 2001a, b), but the evidential basis for these claims remains relatively thin and still largely indirect.

The analysis in this article brings direct empirical data to bear on the question of leadership effects in contemporary Australian State politics, in the form of results from survey research, which allow a number of straightforward hypotheses to be tested. The foregoing discussion suggests, for example, that in addition to the well-established finding that federal party leaders influence voting behaviour in federal elections, we might expect to find that State party leaders would influence voting decisions in State elections. Some of the literature also points to the possibility of crossover effects whereby, within the appropriate jurisdiction, State party leaders may influence voting in federal elections and, conversely, federal leaders may influence voting in State elections.

For example, David Charnock (2001) has argued that State influences on federal voting tend to result 'from responses to State governments and political leaders', while Ian McAllister (2003) has shown that approval in opinion polls of Prime Ministers (and federal Opposition Leaders) is enhanced when State governments (or Oppositions) are of the same party as the federal leader. Furthermore, Don Aitkin (1982b) has suggested that State political leaders are highly influential in shaping the vote in national-level constitutional referendums. More broadly, we should not find it too surprising that State and federal voting might be strongly intertwined in the minds of electors, given the close parallels in political form

between the federal and State arenas and the extent of overlapping identification with political parties (Aitkin 1982a) and also given the confusion that is sometimes evident over the roles and responsibilities of the different levels of government (Vromen 1995). Although the crossover hypothesis is usually stated in terms of State effects on federal politics (Holmes and Sharman 1977; Charnock 2001)—perhaps because federal influences on State politics are taken as given—it is just as likely, if not more so, to apply in the reverse direction as well.

This paper tests the hypotheses outlined above using data from the 2001 Australian Election Study (AES), a national probability sample survey of 2010 voters conducted by mail immediately after the federal election held in November 2001 (Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002). The Australian Electoral Commission supplied the systematic random sample drawn from the Commonwealth electoral rolls for every State and Territory. The initial mailing was timed to reach the respondents on the Monday after the election, and after several follow-up mailings the response rate to the survey was 55%.

Initial Results

The first set of results comprises descriptive information about the political leaders who feature in the analysis, that is the Premier and Opposition Leader in each State and the Prime Minister and federal Leader of the Opposition. The key independent variables in the analysis are attitudinal ratings of each of these leaders, derived from the following survey question: 'Again using a scale from 0 to 10, please show how much you **like** or **dislike** the party leaders. Again, if you don't know much about them, you should give them a rating of 5.' The scale was labelled 'Strongly dislike' at 0, 'Neutral' at 5 and 'Strongly like' at 10. At the head of the list of 10 political leaders whom respondents were asked to rate were Kim Beazley, the Leader of the Opposition for the Australian Labor Party at the federal election, and John Howard, the Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Party. At the end of the list, respondents were asked to rate 'your State Premier' and 'your State Opposition Leader'.

Table 1 shows means and standard deviations for the ratings of these leaders, first at the national level, and then within each State where the subsample is large enough to allow for meaningful separate analysis. For the purposes of this analysis, the 'national' level refers to the five States which had a State Labor government in power at the time of the survey, that is New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania. Thus, in addition to the two territories, South Australia is excluded because of the technical difficulty of including in the nationwide analysis a Premier and Opposition Leader of opposite political affiliations to the remainder. Individual subsample analyses of South Australia are included, however, while the subsample from Tasmania of 59 was too small to subject to separate analysis.

The first section of Table 1 shows the mean popularity within the national sample for the State Premiers and State Leaders of the Opposition collectively and for the Prime Minister and federal Opposition Leader. The State Premiers generally rate much higher than the Opposition Leaders (with an overall mean in the nationwide sample of 5.6 on the 0–10 scale, compared to 4.2), a result that is repeated in each individual State and which may partially reflect the greater opportunities that Premiers have to generate positive publicity. The standard

Table 1. Popularity of State and federal party leaders (means on 0 = N10 scale)

	Mean popularity rating	SD
Nationwide[a] (n = 1779)		
State Premiers	5.6	2.7
State Opposition Leaders	4.2	2.2
Prime Minister (John Howard, Liberal)	5.6	3.2
Federal Opposition Leader (Kim Beazley, Labor)	5.8	2.8
New South Wales (n = 666)		
Premier (Bob Carr, Labor)	5.1	2.7
Opposition Leader (Kerry Chikarovski, Liberal)	4.2	2.1
Victoria (n = 497)		
Premier (Steve Bracks, Labor)	5.9	2.8
Opposition Leader (Denis Napthine, Liberal)	4.0	2.2
Queensland (n = 358)		
Premier (Peter Beattie, Labor)	6.3	2.7
Opposition Leader (Mike Horan, National)	4.5	2.2
South Australia (n = 171)		
Premier (Rob Kerin, Liberal)	5.0	2.7
Opposition Leader (Michael Rann, Labor)	4.0	2.5
Western Australia (n = 199)		
Premier (Geoff Gallop, Labor)	5.2	2.4
Opposition Leader (Colin Barnett, Liberal)	4.2	2.3

Note:
[a] Includes all States with a Labor government at the time of the survey, namely New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania.
Source: Australian Election Study 2001 (n = 2010) (Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002).

deviations show a wider range of responses to the Premiers than to the Opposition Leaders, which is probably indicative of the Premiers having higher public profiles, and so fewer respondents give them the neutral rating of 5. Again, this differential is repeated in most individual States. On this basis, the federal Leader of the Opposition could be judged to have at least as high a profile as any State Premier (the standard deviation for his rating being 2.8 compared to 2.7 for the Premiers), while, not unexpectedly, the Prime Minister has a higher profile still. In terms of popularity, however, Beazley outscores Howard (5.8 versus 5.6), as well as the State Premiers as a group. It is also worth noting that the scores for Howard and Beazley, from this less than totally complete national sample, are very similar to those in the full AES sample (Bean and McAllister 2002).

Turning now to leaders within the different States, we see that the New South Wales Premier, Bob Carr, has a lower popularity rating than any other Premier apart from South Australia's Rob Kerin. The Liberal Leader of the Opposition in New South Wales, Kerry Chikarovski, scores well behind Carr but, at 4.2, her mean rating is at a similar level to all of the other Opposition Leaders. Ratings of the Premiers, on the other hand, vary more widely. Although Carr, Kerin and the Premier of Western Australia, Geoff Gallop, all score at or just over the neutral point of 5, the Labor Premier in Victoria, Steve Bracks, has a mean rating of 5.9 and the Queensland Premier, Peter Beattie, scores 6.3, making him the most popular major political figure in the country at the time of the survey. Interestingly, not only is Beattie the most popular Premier, but the Opposition Leader in

Queensland, Mike Horan of the National Party, is also the most popular—or least unpopular, to use a more accurate characterisation—Leader of the Opposition.

One problem for this study concerns the subsample sizes for the different States. The small subsamples of under 200 in Western Australia and South Australia, in particular, mean that the ensuing results that emerge from the analyses for these States, and to a lesser extent for Queensland, need to be viewed cautiously and as indicative rather than definitive. Notwithstanding this and other methodological issues discussed below, the analysis in this paper is arguably a useful first attempt to model the impact of State political leaders.

Modelling the Electoral Influence of State Leaders

Having provided descriptive background about the relative standing of the State and federal party leaders, we move now to a sustained analysis of the electoral impact of the leaders and a test of the hypotheses outlined above. Before embarking on the analysis we need first to discuss various methodological details, starting with a description of the dependent variables. Voting in State elections is measured by the question: 'Which party did you vote for in the last **State** election?' Federal voting is measured by the question: 'In the Federal election for the House of Representatives on Saturday 10 November, which party did you vote for **first** in the House of Representatives?'

There is not a perfect correspondence between the State leaders at the time of the survey and those who led their respective parties into the previous State elections.[1] This, together with the fact that they are described in the survey questionnaire with generic labels rather than specific names, may serve to weaken the measured impact of State leaders in the analysis. However, given that there is a tendency among survey respondents to err towards their current preference when recalling past votes (Himmelweit, Jaeger Biberian and Stockdale 1978), this may not be as serious a problem as it might initially seem.

Tables 2–5 report, first, the zero-order correlation between the leader rating and the vote and then results from both ordinary least squares (OLS) regression and logistic regression analyses. For the OLS analyses (and the correlations), the dependent variable includes all votes in the State or federal election, with votes for Labor scored 0, votes for the Liberal and National coalition parties scored 1 and votes for minor parties and independent candidates scored 0.5. For the logit analyses, the dependent variable is restricted to votes for the two major party groups, with Labor scored 0 and Liberal–National scored 1. The OLS and logit analyses include controls for attitudinal scales measuring key political attitudes in Australia, that is attitudes towards trade unions and attitudes towards free enterprise

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[1] In the five States that are subject to separate analysis, 4 of the 10 leaders changed between the most recent State election and the post-federal-election survey. Two others changed roles, from Opposition Leader to Premier, while four retained their leadership and the same role. Only in New South Wales was there no change at all. In Victoria, Labor's Steve Bracks switched from Leader of the Opposition to Premier, while Denis Napthine became Leader of the Opposition, replacing former Liberal leader and Premier Jeff Kennett. In Queensland, the Premier remained the same, but Mike Horan replaced Rob Borbidge as National Party Leader of the Opposition. In South Australia, Rob Kerin replaced John Olsen as Liberal Premier, while the Opposition Leader remained the same. In Western Australia, Labor's Geoff Gallop switched from Opposition Leader to Premier, while Colin Barnett became Opposition Leader, replacing former Liberal leader and Premier Richard Court.

(Kelley 1988), plus party identification. Preliminary analyses also included 10 social structural variables (sex, age, education, occupation, employment sector, trade union membership, subjective class, religious denomination, church attendance and urban–rural residence), but their addition made little difference to the effects of the variables of interest. At the same time, having so many more variables in the equation markedly increased the quantity of missing data, which meant that some of the logit equations for States with the smaller subsamples could not be properly estimated, so the social structural variables were ultimately dropped.

For the purposes of the multivariate analyses, the key independent variables—the leader popularity ratings—have been divided by 10 so that they now run from a low of 0 to a high of 1, which means that the unstandardised regression coefficients (ignoring the decimal point) can be interpreted as percentage differences in the likelihood of voting for the Liberal–Nationals versus the Labor Party between those at the top and bottom of the leader attitude scales. Rather than overwhelm the reader with figures that are tangential to the focus of the article, only the coefficients for the party leader variables are presented in the tables within the body of the text. Coefficients preceded by a negative sign indicate that positive attitudes towards a leader coincide with a greater likelihood of voting Labor rather than Liberal–National. For the interested reader, an example of the full model specification is provided in Appendix Table A1 (which shows the equations for both State and federal elections at the national level).[2]

The investigation begins at the national level before moving to State-by-State analyses. At the national level, we consider the effects of both State and federal leaders in both State and federal elections. Table 2 contains the results. We might first note that in the nationwide sample the zero-order correlations are of considerable magnitude for all State and federal leaders with respect to elections at both the State and federal level. This pattern of sizeable zero-order associations between attitudes towards the party leaders and the vote is also evident in almost all cases within individual States in the tables that follow. At the national level, for both State and federal leaders the correlations are only marginally larger within the appropriate arena than they are in the alternative jurisdiction. In other words, the correlation between attitudes towards State leaders and the federal vote is not much weaker than the correlation between attitudes towards State leaders and the State vote, an observation that serves to underline the fact that in Australian politics there is a good deal of alignment between State and federal politics (the correlation between State and federal vote in the current data set is 0.76). Note that the correlations for the federal leaders, however, are larger than for the State leaders, in State as well as in federal elections.

Much more important, though, is what effects remain for political leaders after other factors known to have a significant influence on the vote—such as political attitudes and party identification—have been partialled out. Focusing initially on State elections, Table 2 provides results which address this question. At first we examine the effects of the State leaders with the federal leaders excluded from the equation. Both the OLS and logit results suggest that both the State Premiers and Opposition Leaders have significant electoral impacts in State elections. It is more

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[2] Results for the full model for each of the State-by-State analyses are available from the author on request.

Table 2. Effects of State and federal leaders on voting in State and federal elections: results at the national level[a]

	Zero-order correlation	Unstandardised OLS coefficient	Standardised OLS coefficient	Logit coefficient
State elections				
(Federal leaders excluded)				
Premier	− 0.40	− 0.22**	− 0.13	− 2.62**
State Opposition Leader	0.29	0.15**	0.07	2.03**
(Federal leaders included)				
Premier	− 0.40	− 0.18**	− 0.10	− 2.67**
State Opposition Leader	0.29	0.11**	0.05	1.76**
Prime Minister	0.59	0.19**	0.13	2.36**
Federal Opposition Leader	− 0.47	− 0.14**	− 0.09	− 1.66**
Federal elections				
Premier	− 0.37	− 0.05	− 0.03	− 1.41*
State Opposition Leader	0.26	− 0.04	− 0.02	− 1.13
Prime minister	0.64	0.29**	0.21	5.56**
Federal Opposition Leader	− 0.52	− 0.23**	− 0.14	− 3.76**

Notes:
[a] Results are for the five States with Labor governments listed in the footnote to Table 1. OLS and logistic regression equations control for political attitudes and party identification. See text for further details.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.
Source: Australian Election Study, 2001 (n = 2010) (Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002).

realistic, however, to allow for the potential impact of the federal leaders in State politics and thus the second part of the table shows the impact of the State leaders with the federal leaders included in the analysis. The effects for the State leaders are somewhat weaker with the federal leaders included, suggesting that State leaders do live to some extent in the shadow of federal politicians, but the effects of the State leaders remain clearly significant. The effects of the federal leaders themselves are not small by comparison and, if anything, the impact of the federal leaders in the State political arena may be greater than that of the State leaders. Even so, when the States are viewed collectively, as in Table 2, the hypothesis that State party leaders will influence voting in State elections is clearly supported.

When we switch the focus to the federal level, we see a different pattern. The impact of the federal leaders is clear and strong while there is little or no impact for the State leaders (there is a small impact recorded for State Premiers in the logit analysis of the two-party vote). Thus at the national level, although the crossover hypothesis is supported for federal leaders in State politics, it is not supported in any significant measure in terms of the notion that State leaders might influence federal election voting. It is nonetheless conceivable, that in particular States, some State leaders may influence the federal vote—a possibility that we explore below.

Returning to the State vote, Table 3 reports the results of detailed analyses conducted on a State-by-State basis. The first half of the table again excludes the federal party leaders from the equations, to allow us first to examine the impact of the State leaders in the absence of any influence their federal colleagues may bring. Under these conditions, in all but Western Australia, one or other of the State leaders records a significant effect. In New South Wales, both do, although interestingly the Leader of the Opposition, Chikarovski, has a stronger impact than

Table 3. Effects of State leaders on voting in State elections[a]

	Zero-order correlation	Unstandardised OLS coefficient	Standardised OLS coefficient	Logit coefficient
(Federal leaders excluded):				
New South Wales				
Bob Carr	− 0.31	− 0.14**	− 0.08	− 2.24**
Kerry Chikarovski	0.27	0.24**	0.11	3.47**
Victoria				
Steve Bracks	− 0.45	− 0.23**	− 0.13	− 2.39**
Denis Napthine	0.38	0.14	0.07	2.61*
Queensland				
Peter Beattie	− 0.51	− 0.32**	− 0.19	− 5.08**
Mike Horan	0.30	0.06	0.03	0.51
South Australia				
Rob Kerin	0.44	− 0.04	− 0.03	0.95
Michael Rann	− 0.51	− 0.19*	− 0.10	− 5.05*
Western Australia				
Geoff Gallup	− 0.30	− 0.16	− 0.08	− 1.23
Colin Barnett	0.13	0.05	0.02	− 0.35
(Federal leaders included):				
New South Wales				
Bob Carr	− 0.31	− 0.09	− 0.04	− 2.21**
Kerry Chikarovski	0.27	0.23**	0.10	3.72**
Victoria				
Steve Bracks	− 0.45	− 0.20**	− 0.12	− 2.58**
Denis Napthine	0.38	0.06	0.03	1.82
Queensland				
Peter Beattie	− 0.51	− 0.29**	− 0.17	− 5.51**
Mike Horan	0.30	− 0.06	− 0.00	− 0.53
South Australia				
Rob Kerin	0.44	− 0.09	− 0.05	− 0.83
Michael Rann	− 0.51	− 0.14	− 0.08	− 5.00
Western Australia				
Geoff Gallup	− 0.30	− 0.14	− 0.07	− 2.04
Colin Barnett	0.13	0.02	0.01	− 0.37

Notes:
[a] OLS and logistic regression equations control for political attitudes and party identification. See text for further details.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.
Source: Australian Election Study, 2001 (n = 2010) (Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002).

the Premier, Carr. Both Victorian leaders also have significant effects in the logit equation. The largest effect is for the Premier of Queensland, Beattie. In South Australia, attitudes towards the Leader of the Opposition, Michael Rann, are significant whereas attitudes towards the Premier, Kerin, are not. It is also generally worth noting that some of the coefficients that do not reach significance in these small State subsamples are nonetheless of a non-trivial size.

As we would anticipate from the national-level analysis, when attitudes towards the federal leaders are included in the equations in the second half of Table 3, the State leader effects are generally reduced. For example, once the electoral presence of Howard and Beazley is taken into account, Carr's impact on State voting in New South Wales is reduced to insignificance in the OLS analysis. Chikarovski's effect,

however, remains clear and strong in both equations. The Victorian and Queensland Premiers, Bracks and Beattie, also retain strong and significant effects, even with the federal leaders in the equation, while Opposition Leader Rann's impact in South Australia disappears.[3] Carr's weak impact in New South Wales, although perhaps surprising at first, is consistent with anecdotal evidence of Labor Party publicists deliberately keeping Carr's image in the background as much as possible in the last State election, due to a perception that he may do more harm to the party's cause than good.

Beattie, it would appear, is not only the most popular State party leader (at least at the time of the 2001 AES) but also the one with the strongest electoral impact. The unstandardised regression coefficient for Beattie indicates that, even taking account of the political shadow cast by the Prime Minister and federal Leader of the Opposition, voters who rate Beattie most highly are some 29% more likely to vote for the Labor Party in Queensland (as opposed to the National or Liberal Parties) than those who dislike Beattie most strongly. Given his high level of popularity, this means that Beattie's personal appeal confers a considerable electoral advantage upon his party, although, in terms of the percentage of the vote, the extent of that advantage may be less than many commentators would assume.

One reasonable way of calculating that advantage is to subtract the neutral point on the leadership rating scale of 0.5 from Beattie's mean of 0.63 and multiply that difference by the regression coefficient of –0.29. This calculation suggests that Labor's advantage in Queensland State politics from Beattie's personal standing is about 3.8% of the vote. When contrasted with the totality of the vote this may seem fairly small, but in the context of leadership effects generally this is a considerable figure (see, for example, Bean and Kelley 1988, on leadership effects in the 1987 federal election). It is also more than twice the size of the benefit conferred by the next most popular leader, Bracks, who, using the same method of calculation, bestows an advantage of approximately 1.8% on the Labor Party vote in Victoria. Chikarovski's effect, on the other hand, reduces the coalition vote in New South Wales by about the same amount.

Having considered the impact of State leaders within their own political domains, Table 4 turns our attention to the first of the two crossover hypotheses, that State leaders may influence voting in federal elections. The results are rather mixed and generally tend not to support the hypothesis. Beattie's strong effect in State politics, for example, disappears completely at the federal level, as does the effect for Chikarovski in New South Wales. Indeed, of the State party leaders, only Bracks in Victoria records a significant effect, in the appropriate direction, on voting in the 2001 federal election (the significant effect for the Queensland Opposition Leader, Horan, in the OLS analysis has the sign reversed from the direction the effect could be expected to take). In the three States with the smallest subsamples, not even the federal leader effects are all significantly different from

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[3] With the results from Table 3 in mind, it is possible to reflect further on the issue of changes in personnel between the previous State election and the time of the survey. The results provide only minimal indications that changes in leadership may have influenced the level of impact of the various State leaders, such that those having assumed their leadership positions more recently have lesser effects. Similarly, if we consider the timing of each State election (the dates of which range from 1997 in South Australia to 1999 in Victoria and New South Wales to early 2001 in Queensland and Western Australia) there is little, if any, indication of a correlation between recency and the size of the leadership effects.

Table 4. Effects of State and federal leaders on voting in federal elections within States[a]

	Zero-order correlation	Unstandardised OLS coefficient	Standardised OLS coefficient	Logit coefficient
New South Wales				
Bob Carr	− 0.30	− 0.01	− 0.01	− 0.61
Kerry Chikarovski	0.21	0.02	0.01	0.07
John Howard	0.64	0.25**	0.18	4.11**
Kim Beazley	− 0.50	− 0.24**	− 0.15	− 3.92**
Victoria				
Steve Bracks	− 0.47	− 0.16**	− 0.09	− 3.95**
Denis Napthine	0.34	− 0.08	− 0.04	− 1.47
John Howard	0.66	0.34**	0.24	8.88**
Kim Beazley	− 0.55	− 0.22**	− 0.13	− 3.69*
Queensland				
Peter Beattie	− 0.41	− 0.00	− 0.00	− 1.32
Mike Horan	0.33	− 0.13*	− 0.06	− 4.40
John Howard	0.70	0.38**	0.27	− 10.50**
Kim Beazley	− 0.51	− 0.14*	− 0.09	− 3.50
South Australia				
Rob Kerin	0.43	− 0.16	− 0.10	− 0.66
Michael Rann	− 0.45	− 0.00	0.00	0.36
John Howard	0.76	0.37**	0.28	9.56*
Kim Beazley	− 0.50	− 0.09	− 0.06	− 7.55*
Western Australia				
Geoff Gallup	− 0.29	− 0.03	− 0.02	− 1.69
Colin Barnett	0.09	− 0.03	− 0.01	− 3.98
John Howard	0.54	0.16	0.11	4.13*
Kim Beazley	− 0.48	− 0.21*	− 0.13	− 3.36*

Notes:
[a] OLS and logistic regression equations control for political attitudes and party identification. See text for further details.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.
Source: Australian Election Study, 2001 (n = 2010). (Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002).

zero. It is tempting to explain the Bracks effect as reflecting a deliberate party strategy to capitalise on the Premier's popularity by giving him a prominent role in the federal election campaign in Victoria. There may well be something in this account, yet such a line of reasoning would have been expected to coincide with a similar effect on federal voting for Beattie in Queensland. The absence of such an effect for Beattie makes it a less convincing explanation for Bracks.

The final part of the analysis involves consideration of the second crossover hypothesis, that federal leaders may influence voting in State elections. Table 5 presents data for the effects of federal leaders on State voting, by State (these coefficients are derived from the same equations that produced the effects for State leaders recorded in the bottom half of Table 3). While the picture at the national level, as shown in Table 2, indicated a clear effect for the federal leaders on State politics, this picture is not fully reinforced when the data are examined on a State-by-State basis. Howard records a significant impact in all States in the OLS equations and in three of the five in the logit analyses (the exceptions being South Australia and Western Australia). Attitudes to Beazley, however, are significant only in New South Wales and Queensland (in the logit equation). A joint inspection of Table 5 and the bottom half of Table 3 suggests that in some States—Victoria

Table 5. Effects of federal leaders on voting in State elections[a]

	Zero-order correlation	Unstandardised OLS coefficient	Standardised OLS coefficient	Logit coefficient
New South Wales				
John Howard	0.58	0.16**	0.11	1.96**
Kim Beazley	− 0.47	− 0.23**	− 0.14	− 2.68**
Victoria				
John Howard	0.62	0.21**	0.14	3.16**
Kim Beazley	− 0.47	− 0.06	− 0.03	− 0.08
Queensland				
John Howard	0.56	0.18*	0.12	3.48*
Kim Beazley	− 0.50	− 0.09	− 0.06	− 3.14**
South Australia				
John Howard	0.72	0.20*	0.14	4.15
Kim Beazley	− 0.52	− 0.10	− 0.07	− 1.31
Western Australia				
John Howard	0.57	0.30**	0.19	2.65
Kim Beazley	− 0.44	− 0.13	− 0.08	− 0.62

Notes:
[a] OLS and logistic regression equations control for political attitudes and party identification. See text for further details.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.
Source: Australian Election Study, 2001 (n = 2010) (Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002).

and Queensland—either the federal or State leader of each party has an impact, but not both. The evidence for a federal leader crossover effect would appear to be stronger than for a State leader crossover effect, but the results of the analysis depict federal effects at the State level that are certainly less than universal. The evidence before us also suggests that the Prime Minister may exert a stronger influence on State politics than the Leader of the federal Opposition.

Conclusion

There are a number of reasons why this paper must be seen less as a definitive account and more as a tentative first step in the analysis of the electoral effects of State party leaders. As emphasised throughout the analysis, the sizes of the subsamples from several of the States are smaller than desirable and as a result it is only the two or three most populous States whose results we can be reasonably confident about. The occasional aberrant results thrown up by the statistical analysis reinforce this caveat. Furthermore, the measurement of key variables would ideally be further refined, with questions asked about specific leaders in each State by name, rather than with a generic label, and with a more direct alignment between the leadership rating items and the voting questions in terms of timing.

Nonetheless, the findings point to clear evidence of State political party leaders having an electoral influence at the State level. In particular, prominent Premiers, such as Peter Beattie in Queensland and Steve Bracks in Victoria, have significant and substantial effects on voting in State elections, even when the influence of the leaders of the major federal political parties is controlled for. So too does the

Leader of the Opposition in New South Wales, Kerry Chikarovski, although the Premier in that State, Bob Carr, is overshadowed in terms of electoral impact by the federal leaders as well as by Chikarovski. In other States, such as South Australia and Western Australia, there is less evidence of leadership effects, but the smaller subsample sizes for these States make it difficult to reach definitive conclusions.

Examined closely, the results provide mixed support for the three hypotheses outlined at the beginning of the paper, namely that State party leaders influence voting in State elections, that State party leaders influence voting in federal elections and that federal leaders influence voting in State elections. For the first hypothesis, as the discussion in the paragraph above indicates, the effects are not as consistent across all leaders in all States as perhaps may have been anticipated. It is, however, quite conceivable that more adequate sample sizes would reveal significant leader effects in all States. With respect to the second and third hypotheses, although the argument about crossover effects in Australian politics is commonly framed in terms of State effects on federal politics, it manifests itself more strongly and more coherently in federal effects on State politics, although the results as they stand do not provide universal support for the notion of consistent crossover effects in either arena.

Finally, it is worth reflecting on the relative size of such leadership effects as we have identified. As we have come to expect from research on the influence of leadership in federal elections, even where the effects are statistically significant the electoral impact of leaders is always relatively modest, net of other influences. Compared to a factor like party identification, leadership images and the responses they provoke among voters add to the explanation of electoral behaviour more at the margins than at the core. The example given in the paper of the overall effect of a popular and highly salient leader like Peter Beattie illustrates this point well. And while it may be a surprise to some that Beattie is worth less than 4% of the vote to his party, the value of this effect is seen in perspective when we consider how elections can be won and lost at the margins. In a political system where large party effects frequently cancel each other out and elections are often very closely fought, leadership effects, while modest in absolute size, can and on occasion do come into their own as the difference between winning and losing.

Equally crucial is the potential for leadership to convert a comfortable victory into a landslide.[4] For example, in the Queensland State election of 2001, the total increase in the Labor Party vote was just over 10%, giving the party more than 20 additional seats. In that context, Beattie's contribution of 4%, while not pivotal, certainly added a very rich layer of icing to the cake. The effect of the leader in this instance may therefore have been to provide his party with the chance for long-term domination in State politics. Bracks may possibly have had a similar impact in the most recent Victorian election in late 2002. In a similar vein, analysis of electoral politics in the Hawke era (Bean and Kelley 1988) showed how Bob Hawke's popularity with the electorate helped solidify the Australian Labor Party's position in federal politics during the 1980s not only by enhancing the Labor vote at particular elections but also by gradually increasing the ongoing level of voter identification with the Labor Party.

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[4] I am grateful to one of this journal's anonymous reviewers for suggesting the addition of a discussion of this aspect of leadership influence.

In terms of the article's wider contribution to the field of electoral studies, the findings from this analysis add to the corpus of evidence on the influence of political party leaders on voting behaviour by providing confirmation of leader effects at the subnational level within a parliamentary political system. This is further evidence that the personal styles and characteristics of the individuals who lead political parties are electorally important, irrespective of the political arena in which these leaders are vying for power.

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Appendix

Table A1. Full model specification for multivariate equations at the national level[a]

	Zero-order correlation	Unstandardised OLS coefficient	Standardised OLS coefficient	Logit coefficient
State elections				
Premier	− 0.40	− 0.18**	− 0.10	− 2.67**
State Opposition Leader	0.29	0.11**	0.05	1.76**
Prime Minister	0.59	0.19**	0.13	2.36**
Federal Opposition Leader	− 0.47	− 0.14**	− 0.09	− 1.66**
Attitudes to trade unions	0.44	0.09*	0.05	0.85
Attitudes to free enterprise	0.24	0.02	0.01	0.65
Party identification	0.77	0.61**	0.57	3.36**
Constant		0.14**		− 2.28**
R^2		0.64		
Federal elections				
Premier	− 0.37	− 0.05	− 0.03	− 1.41*
State Opposition Leader	0.26	− 0.04	− 0.02	− 1.13
Prime Minister	0.64	0.29**	0.21	5.56**
Federal Opposition Leader	− 0.52	− 0.23**	− 0.14	− 3.76**
Attitudes to trade unions	0.44	0.03	0.02	1.23
Attitudes to free enterprise	0.26	0.03	0.02	0.48
Party identification	0.82	0.63**	0.60	4.29**
Constant		0.20**		− 2.49**
R^2		0.72		

Notes:
[a] Results are for the five States with Labor governments listed in the footnote to Table 1.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.
Source: Australian Election Study, 2001 (n = 2010) (Bean, Gow and McAllister 2002).