

# A Descriptive Summary of the Sunday Star Times and Psychology @ VUW 'Politics and Rugby' Survey

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Welcome. This document describes just some of the results from the survey promoted by the Sunday Star Times in September, 2011, that was developed and analysed by me. This is not a complete summary of results but a snapshot of some of those things that were of particular interest to the SST when serialising the results, but that could not be included in their full glory. I owe a debt of gratitude to the Star Times and, in particular, Adam Dudding, whose job it was to turn the results into something digestible. Most important of all are those people who took the time to participate.

Quick note 1: I have tried to make this summary as easy to follow as possible. I do make reference to statistics to illustrate what I think is interesting or important, and I hope that doesn't detract. I will describe what the statistic 'means' in everyday terms but I've also provided the statistics themselves, along with their significance values (anything that says things like " $p < .01$ " or " $p = .50$ ") for those who care. A quick guidance to significance levels is quite simply that the number that follows the " $p <$ " or " $p =$ " is the probability that a particular result has occurred by chance. For example, " $p < .05$ " means a 5% chance, " $p < .01$ " means a 1% chance, " $p < .001$ " means 1 in 1000 chance, and so on. It is typical in psychology (and numerous other disciplines) to accept that anything that has a less than 5% chance ( $p < .05$ ) of just being random variation, is more likely than not to be meaningful.

See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistical\\_significance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statistical_significance) for a bit more detail if you're interested!

Quick note 2: Feel free to distribute and quote from this document. Please make sure to attribute it appropriately and acknowledge where it came from. You can cite it (if you need to) as:

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## **Survey Rationale:**

While this survey was promoted by a national newspaper, the survey was designed to address a range of significant theoretical arguments about political and social behaviour. The majority of questions used in the survey have an existing tradition in international research, and therefore have the benefit of having been developed and tested rigorously (so we know they do a good job of measuring what we want them to measure). Using them also means that comparisons may be drawn between the results of this survey and other international studies that have used the same questions. In short, if you object to particular questions you can take heart in the knowledge that, firstly, just because they're there doesn't mean I believe them personally and, secondly, they're not my fault!

That's not to say we didn't throw in some questions or measures just because they were fun, or to see what would happen.

## **Summary of 'constructs' assessed:**

In psychology, a 'construct' is something that we are interested in. Examples might be intelligence, or racism, or identity. Generally speaking, people vary in the extent to which they exhibit the hallmarks of all of these constructs – some people are more or less intelligent than others, for example. We spend a lot of time trying to find ways to investigate these psychological constructs and one of the first steps in doing so is working out how to measure them, particularly when there may be several ways of doing this.

A good example is political ideology - simply, how people think about politics.

In the survey, this has been done in a variety of ways, by asking you:

- where you place yourselves relative to the labels 'left-wing' and 'right-wing'
- where you place yourselves relative to the labels 'liberal' and 'conservative'
- by asking you how you feel about a range of topical and historical ideas (like 'legalised prostitution' or 'increasing tax rates for rich people')

I know that some people object to labels like 'liberal/conservative' but... and it's an important but, where people put themselves does a good job of predicting who they vote for. That, ultimately, is one of the major purposes of the survey – to try and understand why people vote the way that they do.

Where possible, we try to use several questions to measure the same construct, because it is more 'reliable' to do it this way – for example, if I want to measure how environmentally friendly a person is I could ask them only whether or not they buy products with recyclable packaging. This would probably do a good job for lots of people but might miss others – for example, people who explicitly live in a way that involves avoiding buying supermarket products fullstop, or who would buy recyclable products if they could afford them. In this survey I have used at least two questions to measure important ideas. In all cases I either used established short measures or selected those items that loaded most highly on published scales and subscales.

Those ideas include:

- Death anxiety (based on Templer et al's (2006) Death Anxiety Scale)
- Disgust sensitivity (based on Haidt and colleagues Disgust Scale. See the following web page for more fascinating details: <http://people.virginia.edu/~jdh6n/disgustscale.html>)
- Right-Wing Authoritarianism (based on Altemeyer's 1996 scale)
- Social Dominance Orientation (based on Sidanius and Pratto's (1999) scale)
- Personality (using Rentfrow and colleagues Ten-Item Personality Inventory, which can be found at: <http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/faculty/gosling/>)
- Happiness (based on Lyubomirsky et al, 1994)
- Social Values (based on Schwartz' (1994 and other) work)

- Materialist/Post-Materialist Values (by Ronald Inglehart)
- Materialism (Richins, 1987)
- Modern Racism (from McConahay, 1986)
- Hunting attitudes (my own Hunting Attitudes Scale 13)
- Team Identification Scale (based on the work of Wann and colleagues, 1990)
- Paranoia (adapted from Freeman et al's, 1992, scale)
- Empathy (based on Davis' 1996 scale)
- Aggression (based on Buss and Perry, 1992)
- Competitive and Dangerous Worldviews (based on the work of Duckitt, 2005)
- Handedness (questions I've developed and validated myself)
- Food Diary (based on my work with Michael Allen and colleagues, 2000)
- Attitudes towards Vegetarians/Vegans (based on Chin et al, 2002)
- Impression Management and Self-Deceptive Enhancement (based on Paulhus, 1994)
- Anomie and Distrust (based on Goertzel, 1994)
- Conspiracy Beliefs (based on the work of Chelsea Rose, my PhD student)
- Religious orthodoxy and fundamentalism (based on Altemeyer and Hunsberger, 1992)
- New Zealand Identity (our own work)
- Patriotism and Nationalism (based on Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989)

There were also a bunch of other questions about background, attitudes to a range of political, economic and social issues, politicians, and political parties. Below is a selection of the results.

### **Sample characteristics**

First things first – who participated?

81% Identified as New Zealand European/Pakeha (4% Maori, 6% Other European, and 1% Chinese), and 61% were female. 91% identified as New Zealanders in terms of nationality, with 4% from the UK, and a shade over 1% from Australia. Median age was 41 years old, and age ranged from 14 to 71 (unless the response "70+" means older than 71). Modal height was 5 foot 7 (reflecting the greater number of women in the sample). While 4% had not completed a 5<sup>th</sup> form qualification, 18% had completed at least 7<sup>th</sup> form, 20% had completed at least one year towards a tertiary qualification and a further 35% had completed one. 20% were not in paid employment at the time they completed the survey, and the majority identified the nature of their work as "Professional or managerial", 14% as "Clerical/sales/service", 6% as "Technical, craftsman or skilled trades", with an additional 3% as "Manual worker/semi-skilled/labourer". Median (before tax) personal income for the sample fell into the "\$40,001 - \$60,000 a year (\$770 - \$1153 a week)" category. 15% indicated a personal income of more than \$100,000. 29% came from Auckland, 23% from Wellington, 12% from Christchurch, 3% from Dunedin, with 10% saying they lived in North or South Island towns (5% in smaller centres or areas).

As a result, the sample is more female, more Pakeha, more educated and more affluent than average. Bear this in mind when interpreted ABSOLUTE levels of things in the survey (for example, % voting for particular parties). At the same time, after weighting the sample for some of these demographics to MAKE it more representative, the findings reported here still hold unless otherwise stated.

## Political Preference:

More than 5,000 people indicated who they would cast their party vote for. Only three parties received more than 5%:

National	48%
Labour	20%
Greens	16%
Act	3%
NZ First	2%
Maori Party	1%
Mana Maori	.05%
United Future NZ	.03%

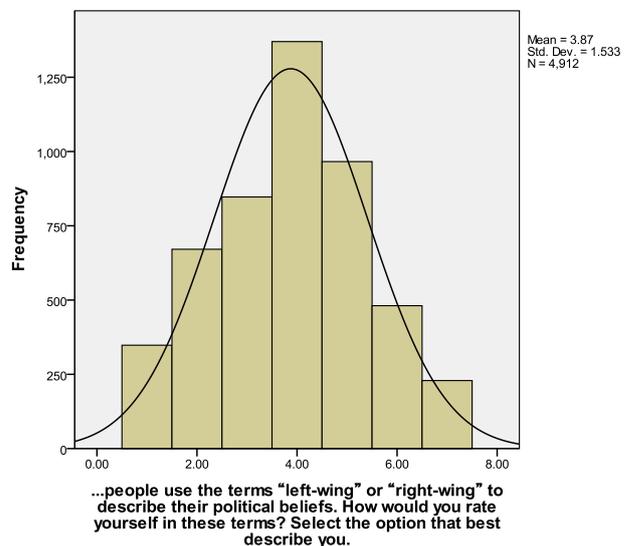
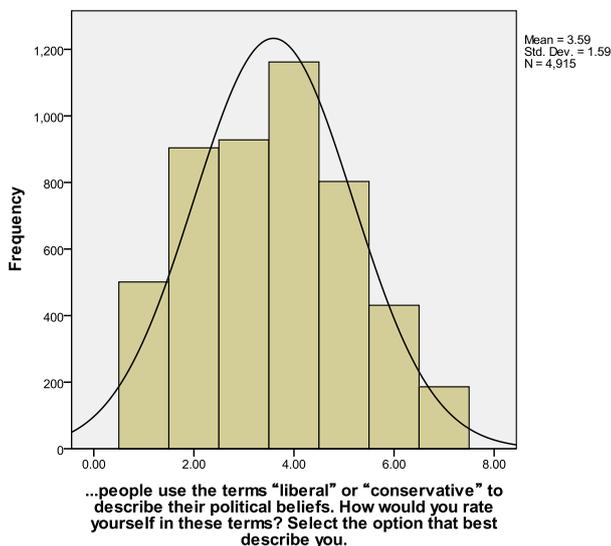
Remember that the 5% threshold is important – parties that do not achieve 5% of the nationwide party vote OR don't get a single electorate seat will not be represented in parliament. Women are more likely to vote for Labour and the Greens than they are Act and National, while the reverse is true for men.

Now is a good time to note that the sample is not representative of the population as a whole – for a start, 60% of the participants are female. Additionally, the sample is, on average, more educated and richer than average. However, after the sample is weighted according to sex and income (two variables reasonably strongly associated with votership), the picture above doesn't change particularly dramatically: The National and Green votes decline by 5%, and Labour by the same, Act halves. Additionally, the number of undecideds almost doubles. However, this is only after weighting according to two other variables – there are a range of other things that also relate to vote (like ethnicity and education, to name but two).

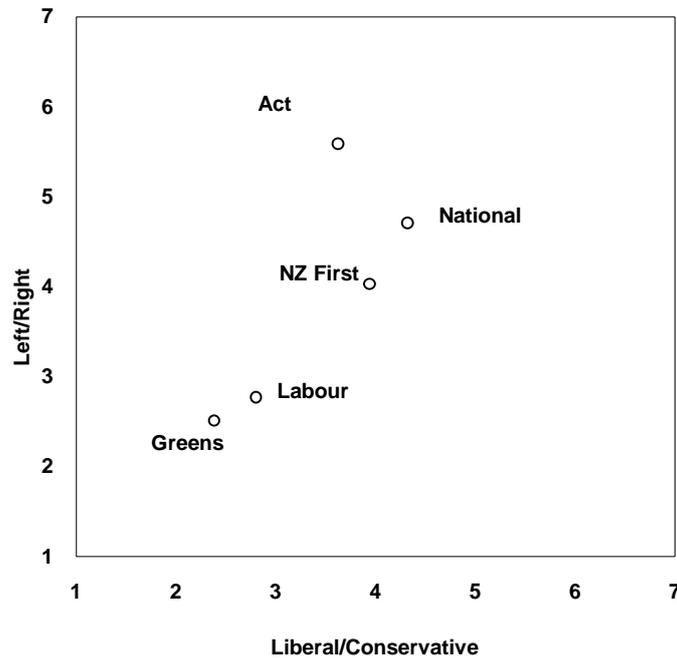
My prediction? National will come close to a majority, but will still need the support of a minor party to govern. There's a risk for Labour that they will be seriously undermined by the Greens. Act is dog tucker, even if John Banks stands for, and wins, Epsom, I don't believe he will bring more than one other Act MP with him. The survey hugely under-represents Maori, so it's not clear what will happen there. An easy prediction is for the Maori Party to take out at least three Maori electorates, Maybe Labour one and Hone Harawira one, but they may well sweep them all.

## Political Ideology

As already mentioned, one way to ask about political position is the traditional liberal/conservative and left/right continua. Even where people can't articulate what these mean, their responses still vary systematically with who they support. The figures below show the distribution of responses to the two questions.



The average response was just below the midpoint ('4') on the 7-point scales. Even though the difference between the two sets of responses looks small (the averages are only .29 apart – less than a third of one point) the difference is statistically significant: Participants are more right-wing than they are conservative. Additionally, people's responses were correlated (they varied systematically with each other) at .61. Basically, the more conservative you say you are, the more right-wing you say you are – but it's not a perfect relationship, and here's why:



This scatter plot shows the average response to the two ideology questions for groups who said they would vote for one of Act, National, NZ First, Labour and the Greens (parties that received at least 100 survey votes). Note that parties are arrayed from left-wing to right-wing in the order that most people think of them: Act, National, NZ First, Labour, Greens, but the order is not as straight forward for Liberal/Conservative - Act shifts to the middle.

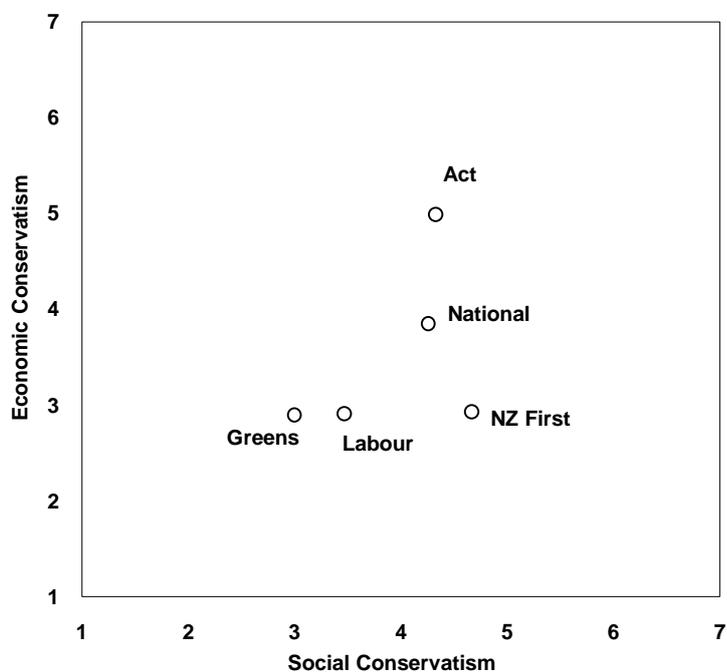
What does this mean? Research, over a long time, has suggested that there are two 'kinds' of 'conservatism' – social and economic. Maybe that's the difference between Left-Right (economic) and Liberal-Conservative (Social)? To get further into this, consider a set of questions that asks participants how positive they feel about a range of political issues, such as immigration, the death penalty, the Treaty of Waitangi, taxes. When they are statistically analysed to see which of these go together, they break into two families:

	Component	
	1	2
The Treaty of Waitangi.	.675	
Same-sex civil unions.	.658	
The death penalty.	.610	
Smacking children for the purposes of discipline.	.588	
Reducing the number of refugees that New Zealand accepts each year	.586	
Increasing the number of immigrants entering New Zealand	.558	
Legalised prostitution.	.502	
Crown (government) ownership of the seabed and foreshore.	.369	
Selling rights to New Zealand natural resources to overseas companies.		.683
Lower taxes for businesses.		.614
Government policy promoting closer trade ties between China and New Zealand.		.594
Decreasing the minimum wage.		.573
Increased taxes for rich people.		.508
Raising the retirement age.		.449

As expected, the first ‘family’ have in common that they’re social issues (they are to do with the relationships and management of social groups), while the second ‘family’ concerns economic issues. Some issues don’t fit as neatly, but they’re also the ones that are less important in the statistical solution. For example, the retirement age isn’t the most important variable in the second family, but people are responding to it in a way that has more in common with the other economic issues than the social issues. Basically – people are responding to that item as IF IT IS an economic issue.

People’s average scores for the two conservatisms are also weakly correlated ( $r=.20$ ,  $p<.001$ ) – the more socially ‘conservative’ your scores, the more economically ‘conservative’ your scores. Additionally, people’s scores on the Liberal/Conservative self-identification question are also more strongly correlated with their scores on the social conservatism scale ( $r=.54$ ,  $p<.001$ ) than they are with the economic conservatism scale, while the reverse is true for Right/Left – it’s more strongly correlated with scores on the economic conservatism scale ( $r=.52$ ,  $p<.01$ ) than the social conservatism scale. This suggests that the liberal/conservative labels tend to reflect more social issues, while left-wing/right-wing labels tend to reflect more economic issues.

What happens if we plot party supporters on these two scales as we did for the liberal/conservative and left/right self-identification?



There are some similarities between the two scatter plots (for example, though Greens, Labour and NZ First are all bunched up on the economic dimension all five parties are, on average, arranged perfectly from left to right), but also some important differences – NZ First supporters responses to social issues make them the most socially conservative (Greens and Labour least). Sooo... what will separate Greens/Labour/NZ First from National and Act are the economic issues, while Act/National/NZ First are differentiated from greens/Labour by their stance on social issues. This election will be about different things for different parties.

## 'Ideological Attitudes'

This is a term that has been coined to describe two important ideas that have been a bit tricky to talk about in terms of personality (who you are) or attitudes (what you like) because those terms don't seem to fit nicely.

The first of these is Authoritarianism – the extent to which someone thinks that people should do what the 'authorities' tell them, whether people should be punished for not doing what they're told, and a generally traditional view of the world. In New Zealand, people are (on average) not particularly authoritarian, but people supporting different political parties may still show relative differences in their levels of authoritarianism. The idea of Authoritarianism has been around since the 1950s, and has been important in understanding a range of things, including prejudice (the MOST authoritarian people also tend to be the MOST prejudiced) for instance.

The 1990s saw something of a revolution in how we think about many areas of political psychology, with the development of something called Social Dominance Theory (developed initially from the work by Professor Jim Sidanius, now at Harvard). Basically, this states that society is organised in hierarchies, with some groups of people at the top and some groups at the bottom, and that these societies have developed systems and processes that maintain these group distinctions.

One of the key ways of testing this theoretical position makes use of essentially assessing how comfortable people are with the idea of society being organised from top to bottom like this. This is usually referred to as Social Dominance Orientation, and I have used some of the questions typically used to measure this, in the survey.

As I'm not using all of the questions, I'm going to call the average score that people get from those questions 'antiegaltarianism' instead. It is REALLY important to note that, in New Zealand, people are (on average) not particularly supportive of marked social differences – we're talking about relative antiegaltarianism. The question at hand becomes whether or not supporters of different parties differ in terms of how they think the world should be structured. I'll illustrate this shortly, but the basic answer is yes – while New Zealand voters are generally opposed to marked social differences, some are less opposed than others!

While antiegaltarianism has proven an important subject of study in its own right, when it is combined with authoritarianism it becomes a part of something that is as close to a grand theory of social behaviour as psychological researchers have ever had.

For example, in combination, these two psychological characteristics explain a lot of the variation in people's socio-political viewpoints. They are also the best predictors of racism and many other prejudices (e.g., sexism), BUT... they also explain subtly different types.

For instance, there are two broad types of sexism - Hostile (e.g., "All women are teases") and Benevolent ("Women are wonderful creatures that should be protected from the world"). Hostile sexism is founded on antiegaltarianism and benevolent sexism is founded on authoritarianism. At the same time, there are adaptive reasons why authority and hierarchy might benefit societies – strength against other competing groups is aided by having authorities to run the show, for instance. These are not good things, however, when taken to extremes.

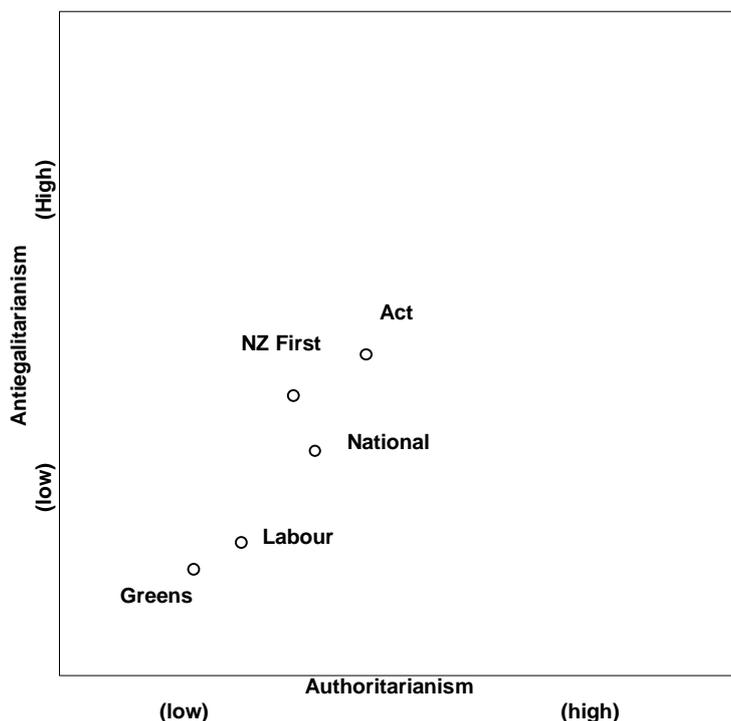
REMEMBER! People vary in the extent to which they display these characteristics, but on average people in New Zealand ALL typically prefer an egalitarian and relatively un-authoritarian world. Just some prefer it less than others!

Sooo... how do the parties fit on these two dimensions...

First, Antiegaltarianism and Authoritarianism are moderately correlated ( $r=.43$ ,  $p<.001$ ) – the more Antiegaltarian you are, the more Authoritarian you are. Here are the average scores for the five parties that have received at least 100 'votes' in the survey:

	Act	National	NZ First	Labour	Greens
Authoritarianism	3.06	3.25	3.7	2.6	2.18
Antiegaltarianism	3.53	3.03	2.9	2.2	1.96

Remember that these scales are measured on 7 points, so '4' is the theoretical midpoint. Superficially, what this shows us is that ALL party supporters are relatively egalitarian and un-authoritarian, BUT they are different. To help see how they differ, let's use a scatter plot:



Once again, there's remarkable consistency between how parties are typically perceived on an ideological continuum – Greens, Labour, National, NZ First, and Act, on Authoritarianism, and almost the same for Antiegalitarianism excepting that NZ First and National swap places. Basically, Greens and Labour supporter want things to be more equal than supporters of the other parties, and also have a more negative view of 'authorities'.

In fact, Antiegalitarianism correlates more strongly with Liberal/Conservative self-identification ( $r=.49, p<.001$ ) and Authoritarianism correlates more strongly ( $r=.52, p<.001$ ) with Left/Right-wing self-identification.

When you predict people's overall economic AND social issues conservatism, they 'predict' more than half of the variation in people's issue positions (Multiple-R=.71, R-Square=.51). Basically, the lion's share of people's positions on issues is founded on how they think of the world in terms of authority and hierarchy.

### Your political views can influence how you see the world...

The more you like National, the taller you think John Key is (and the shorter you think Phil Goff) while the reverse applies for liking Labour. This isn't particularly surprising. It's been shown overseas as well (Labour voters overestimate Blair's height, etc). A great piece of research in the 80s by former professor of Psychology at VUW, Sik-Hung Ng, showed that our group affiliations influence how we see the world in a cunning way. He showed photos of the same group of women wearing either Australian or New Zealand netball uniforms and then asked people to estimate how tall the women were (remember they're the same women!) and he found the same thing – New Zealanders overestimate the height when it's a New Zealand uniform – basically we overestimate the prevalence of positive characteristics in targets associated with the groups that we value or feel we belong to!

Interestingly, it's not just liking National/Labour that shows this effect – the same thing happens for 'ideology' – where you self-identify in terms of liberal/conservative and left/right – conservative/right means overestimating Key's height, etc. Wikipedia says Key is about 5-10 or 5-11, which is interesting because there has only been one US president in the past 100 years who was shorter than the US average. In fact, only Carter (5 9 ½), Harry Truman (5 9), Calvin Coolidge (5 10) and Teddy Roosevelt (5 10) of the presidents since 1900 were shorter than Key.

Why? Well, there is evidence that height is among a range of attributes perceived as 'leadership' characteristics. We tend to think more positively of tall people, and in fact tall people also earn more than average. In the survey the correlation between male height and income is a little under .10 (which is around the same size as the relationship between smoking and developing lung cancer). Basically, about 1% of the variation in what a man earns is associated with his height.

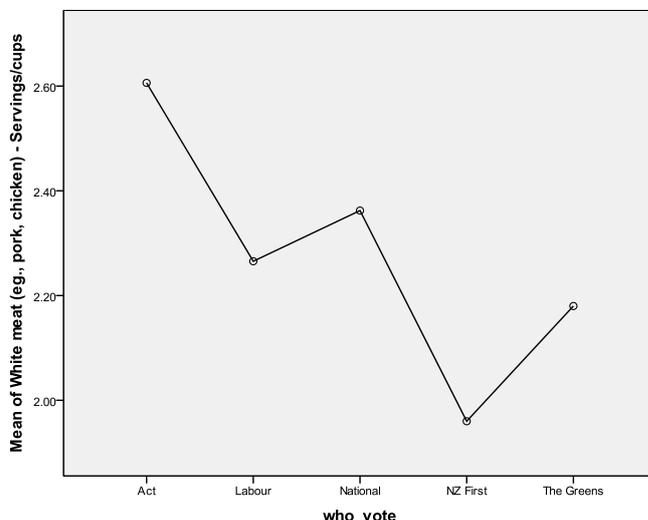
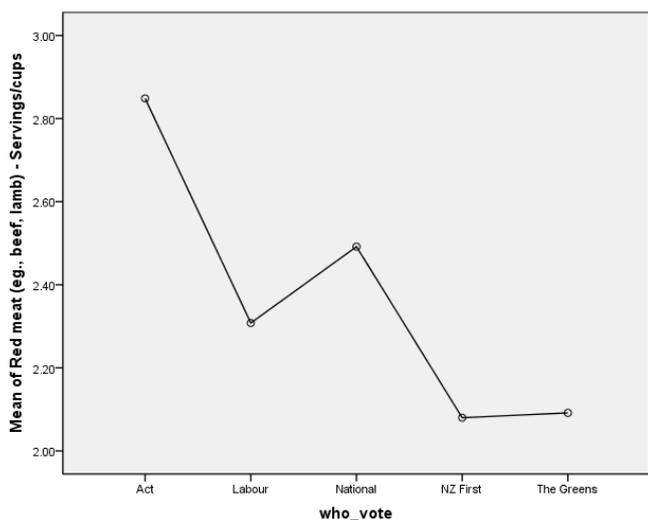
### Diet and Politics

I also asked about what survey respondents eat. What we eat is affected by a lot of things, not just our own psychology – for instance, our health (gluten or dairy intolerances, etc), cultural or religious background (which might proscribe against certain types of foods that we might otherwise eat, for instance) or our incomes (if we can't afford it, we eat less of it), so the question shouldn't be how our psychology relates to our diet but if it does at all, given the myriad other factors!

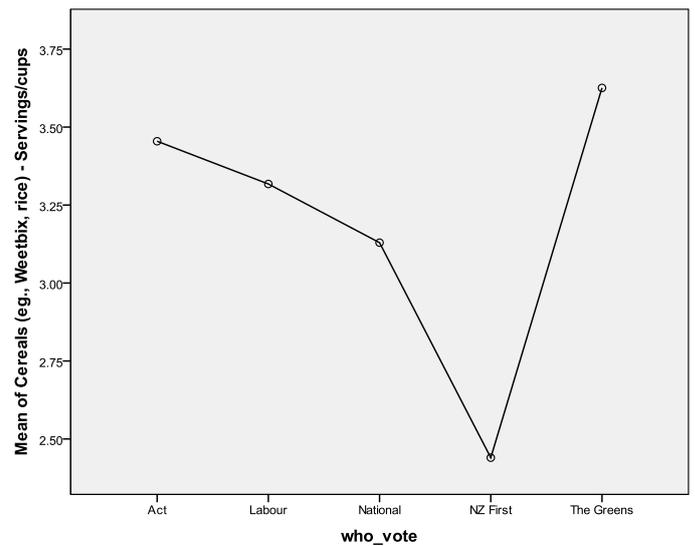
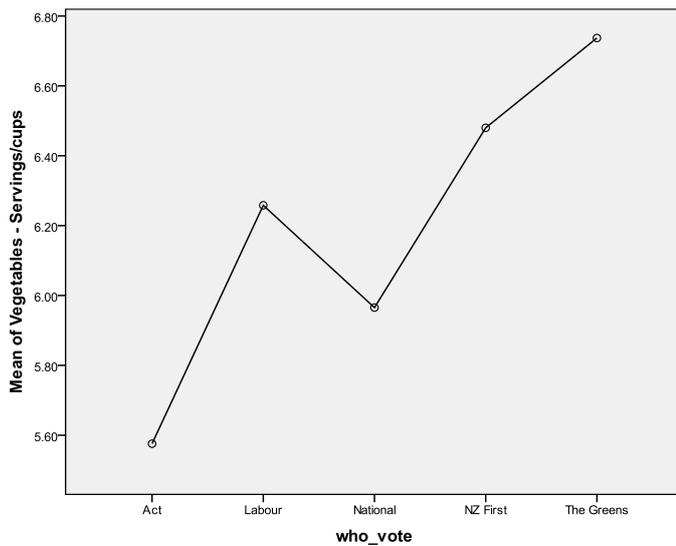
In response to the question of how many servings (or cups) of different things people ate in a three-day period (long enough to get some variation but not so long that people are just making it up) here are the average responses:

	Mean
Red meat (eg., beef, lamb) - Servings/cups	2.3475
White meat (eg., pork, chicken) - Servings/cups	2.2955
Seafood / fish - Servings/cups	1.8057
Vegetables - Servings/cups	6.1921
Fruit - Servings/cups	5.0420
Cereals (eg., Weetbix, rice) - Servings/cups	3.2468
Dairy (eg., milk, cheese) - Servings/cups	4.4966
Eggs - Servings/cups	2.5742
Alcohol - Servings/cups	3.9634
Soft Drinks - Servings/cups	2.1436
Coffee - Servings/cups	5.1727
Tea - Servings/cups	4.5937

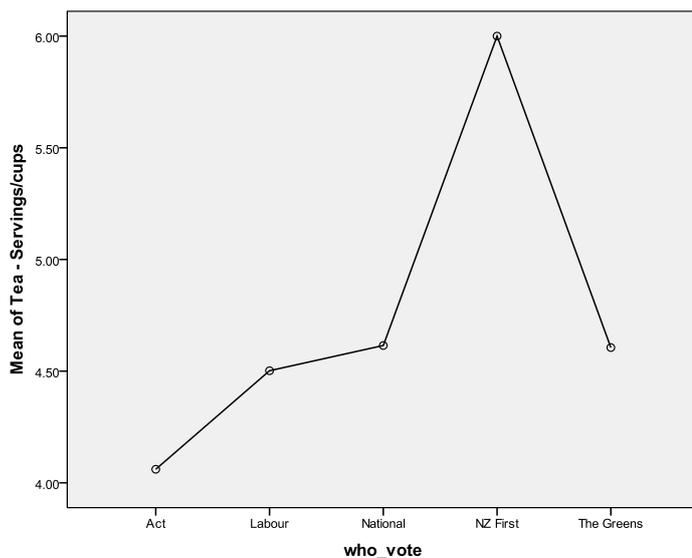
As it happens, the survey data shows that not only do 'we' eat, on average, more servings of red meat compared to white meat or seafood, but there is a difference across supporters of political parties.



First, Greens, NZ First, and Labour supporters eat less red meat than National and (notably) Act supporters, with a similar pattern for white meat (though the magnitude of the difference is less and NZ First supporters eat less than anyone else).



Secondly, the pattern for vegetables almost perfectly reverses that of red meat – more for the Greens (haha!), Labour, NZ First, and less for National and Act supporters. For cereals, NZ First supporters are the stand-out, eating less than other supporters. Just for laughs, here's the figure for drinking tea:



Sadly, though it looks like NZ First supporters drink more tea than anyone else it's only true that this is the case 'on average' – that's to say, the differences is not statistically significant, and therefore not reliable enough for us to consider meaningful.

Given that political votership is associated with (note that I don't say 'caused by') dietary behaviour, it shouldn't be a surprise that the ideological position variables are as well – the correlations between Lib/Con, Left/Right, Social Conservatism and Economic Conservatism, the Red meat range from .17 to .21 ( $p < .001$ , not exactly huge but still statistically meaningful) – the more politically right/conservative you are, the more red meat you report eating. White meat consumption is only (and weakly) associated with Lib/Con and Social Conservatism. Importantly, given what I've already said about other contextual factors that affect what we might eat, even if we control for people's incomes conservatism is still correlated with red meat consumption.

Why? Could it be that voting Labour MAKES you more vegetarian? Maybe eating meat MAKES you support National? Of course not, but another plausible hypothesis (idea about why this happens) is that both political and dietary behaviour may share similar foundations? I've already suggested that political position is predicated upon the combination of Authoritarianism and Antiegalitarianism, so maybe the same is true (to some extent) for diet. Both of

these are also correlated with Red Meat consumption ( $r$ 's=.16 and .19,  $p$ 's<.001) so the higher you score on Authoritarianism and Antiegalitarianism, the more red meat you report eating. This is consistent with some research that suggests that vegetarians see the world differently from meat-eaters: As interconnected with nature, animals, and people on the same level, rather than hierarchical.

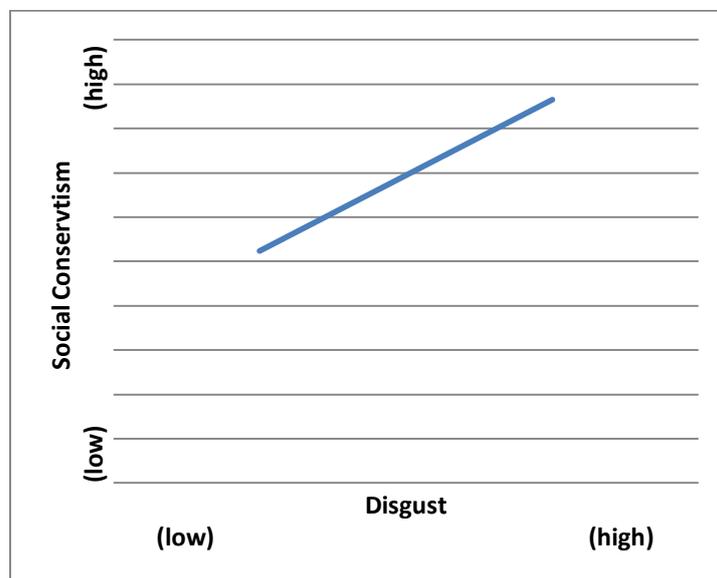
### **Morality and Disgust**

It has been suggested that a lot of our moral sensibility has evolved from disgust-related experience towards things that are bad for us. If you think about what we find 'disgusting' there are things like spoiled milk, rotten food, blood, etc, that all have in common that they're a bad physical sign for us (rotten food makes us ill, blood coming out of us isn't good). But... we also find non-contamination/blood-like things 'disgusting', including sexual transgressions, unfair treatment of people who can't defend themselves, and even people who hold different beliefs to ours. The argument runs that these still represent contamination but of our values, norms, and symbols. At its core, it's important to remember that disgust is, on balance, an adaptive experience – if you don't listen to your inner disgust you are more likely to fall foul of something unpleasant!

(For more information about disgust, see Jonathan Haidt's webpages, including <http://people.virginia.edu/~jdh6n/> for stuff to do with disgust, morals, and politics)

Given that in some western democracies many of the 'family-values' type issues fit this kind of category (e.g., legalised prostitution, civil unions, etc) it might be expected that people's sensitivity to experiencing disgust might be associated with their issue-position, and ultimately their votership. So let's have a look!

As it happens, disgust is associated with people's issue positions, but ONLY social issue conservatism ( $r$ =.17,  $p$ <.001). This is particularly strong for contamination-related disgust (sensitivity to, for instance, the smell of urine, or sitting on a warm bus seat or public toilet seat). Here is the statistical best-fit line for the relationship between disgust and social conservatism:



In terms of votership – National and NZ First voters (in particular) display greater disgust sensitivity and, Perhaps unsurprisingly, Authoritarianism is also associated in a similar way with contamination-based disgust sensitivity.

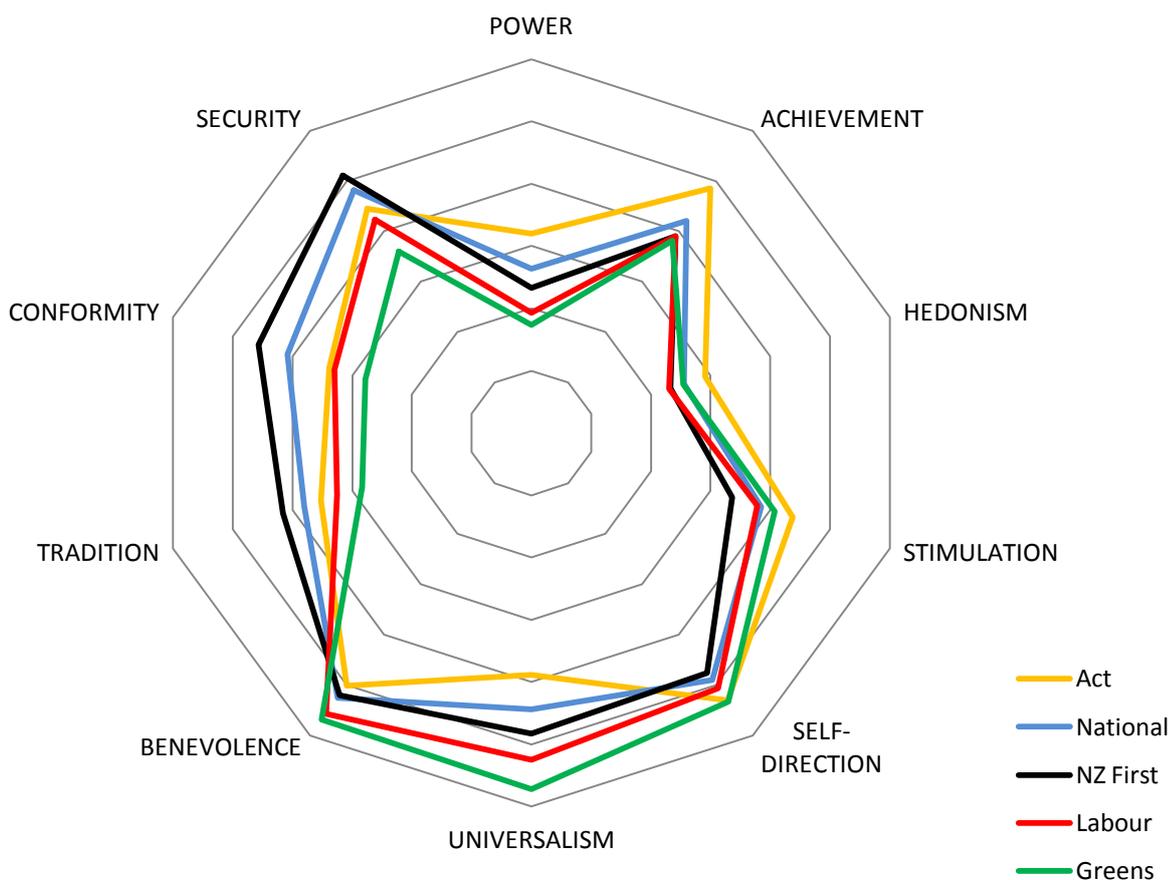
Greater disgust sensitivity is also associated with more negative views of civil unions and legalised prostitution (what some conservatives would characterise as deviant sexual practices) and also towards immigrants and refugees (remember what I said about concern over contamination of our norms, values, and ideals?).

## Values and Politics

In the survey I ask how important a bunch of 'values' are as guiding principles in people's lives. Values are theorised as the foundation of a lot of things, including attitudes - there might be an infinite number of things you can have an attitudes about, but those attitudes all tie back to a finite set of values. For examples, your attitude towards censorship, democracy, equal opportunities, and a lot of other issues will all be tied back to a more basic value such as freedom. Research identifies that, pretty much anywhere in the world, there are ten basic families of values that subsume ALL others. These values (with examples) are:

1. POWER (social power, authority, wealth)
2. ACHIEVEMENT (success, capability, ambition, influence on people and events)
3. HEDONISM (gratification of desires, enjoyment in life, self-indulgence)
4. STIMULATION (daring, a varied and challenging life, an exciting life)
5. SELF-DIRECTION (creativity, freedom, curiosity, independence, choosing one's own goals)
6. UNIVERSALISM (broad-mindedness, beauty of nature and arts, social justice, a world at peace, equality, wisdom, unity with nature, environmental protection)
7. BENEVOLENCE (helpfulness, honesty, forgiveness, loyalty, responsibility)
8. TRADITION (respect for tradition, humbleness, accepting one's portion in life, devotion, modesty)
9. CONFORMITY (obedience, honoring parents and elders, self-discipline, politeness)
10. SECURITY (national security, family security, social order, cleanliness, reciprocation of favours)

Here is a figure showing how much supporters of different parties endorse these values as important.



Remember, these are ALL pretty important – we're talking about relative differences here.

Values have been proposed as important for political affiliation. For example Milton Rokeach noted in the 70's that parties mightn't easily be classified into a simple left-right or liberal-conservative position. He suggested that social-democratic parties would value equality and Freedom equally, communist parties would value equality but NOT freedom, republican (National-style) parties would value freedom more than equality, while fascist parties would value neither equality or freedom. In fact, I published some research in the early 2000s that showed this was true for the way that New Zealand politicians from different parties talked about the importance of equality and freedom.

As you can see - Universalism differentiates the parties more than any other (and in the same order they fall ideologically from left on the outside and right on the inside). This isn't a surprise – Antiegalitarianism and Universalism are frequently shown to be negatively correlated – the more antiegalitarian you are, the less you value Universalism. In the survey, this correlation was  $-.40$  ( $p < .001$ ). Security and Conformity are the second and third most important - with NZ First voters valuing these most, followed by National, Act, Labour and Greens). A desire for Power is statistically the fourth best predictor, and again the parties value this in order from left to right with Act supporters valuing this more than other voters.

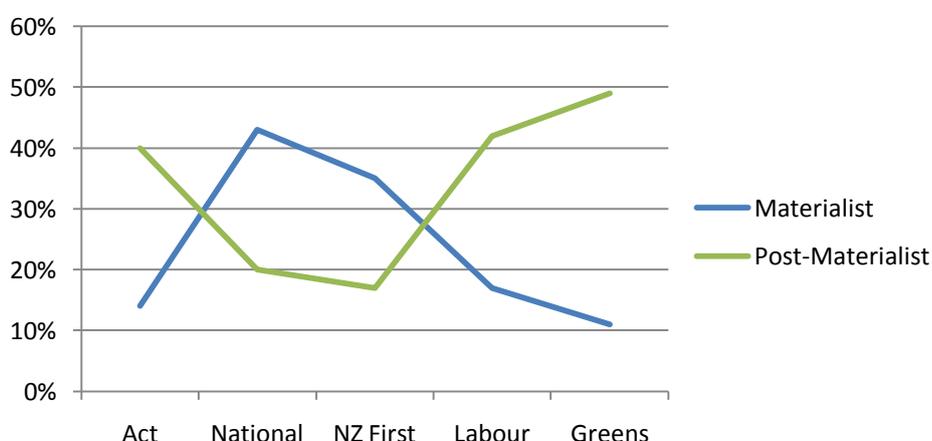
Sadly, for Rokeach anyway, the importance given to self-direction (the value family including Freedom) doesn't do a very good job - everyone values this in New Zealand! While it is one of the weaker predictors, different parties do differ statistically and interestingly – Note that Act and Green supporters value Self-Direction almost equally highly.

(See [http://changingminds.org/explanations/values/schwartz\\_inventory.htm](http://changingminds.org/explanations/values/schwartz_inventory.htm) for more info on Shalom Schwartz' work on values).

Another very influential model of 'values' is that proposed by American political scientist Ronald Inglehart (see <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/>). He suggests that since the world wars post-industrial societies have improved in terms of the standard of living to the point where we typically don't have to worry as much about 'materialist' concerns such as our day to day security, where our next meal is coming from, or a roof over our heads. This has meant we can turn our attention to more 'post-materialist' concerns such as democracy, freedom of speech, the environment, making the world a more beautiful place... This theory has been used to explain, among other things, the rise of green politics. In the survey I used Inglehart's original measure of materialism. Basically I asked everybody to indicate which of the following four goals they ranked first and second:

	First	Second	First	Second	
Maintain order in the nation	1,331	865	32%	21%	materialist
Give people more say in the decisions of the government	848	1,068	21%	26%	post-materialist
Fight rising prices	779	1,015	19%	25%	materialist
Protect freedom of speech	1,168	1,178	28%	29%	post-materialist

Not a lot of variation you might think. But... the next thing is to classify people depending on what they nominated. Basically if you selected BOTH of the materialist goals you're a materialist, if you selected the two post-materialist goals you're a post-materialist, and if you selected one of each, you're mixed...



Really interestingly, with the exception of Act this shows that the proportion of materialists and post-materialists varies sensibly across the ideological spectrum, with leftist parties more post-materialist and rightist parties more materialist. BUT... oh Act! Messing up the theory, or does it? In fact, Act supporters endorsed 'protecting freedom of speech' more than any other party (remember they value self-direction as much as the Greens), but (paradoxically) were also second-least concerned about giving people a say in government decisions.

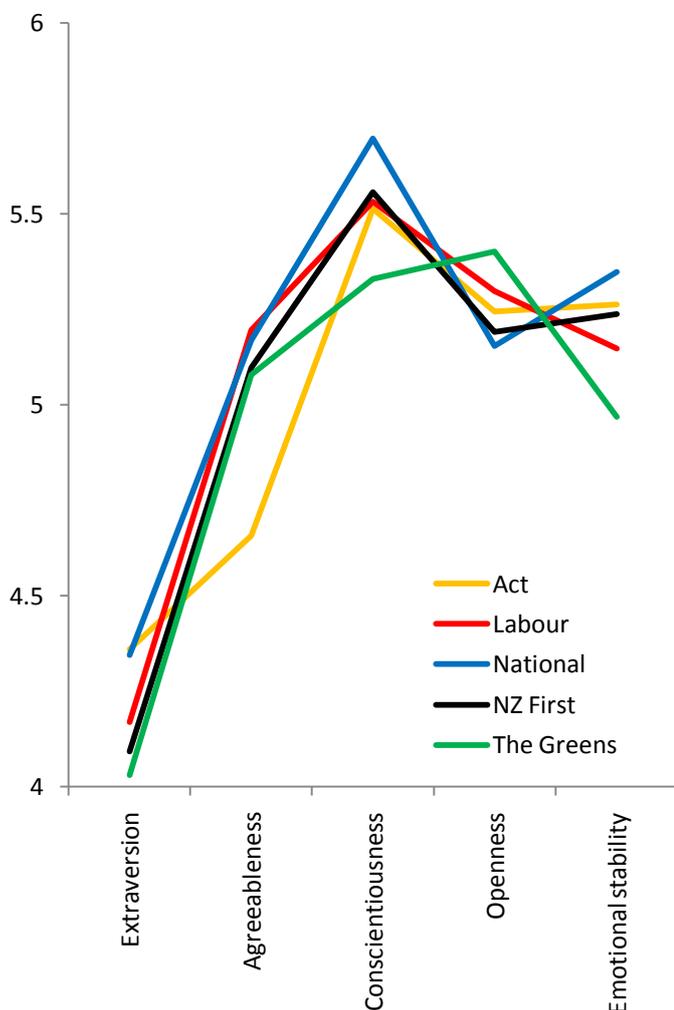
## The Prime Minister's Personality?

The survey focused on a variety of aspects of personality. Your personality is the way that you typically behave as you go through the world – what friends would say if they were asked to describe you as a person.

In this survey I used a measure of the 'Big Five' personality characteristics - Rentfrow, Gosling and Swann's (2003) Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI). The TIPI assesses where people sit on the continua of the five primary personality characteristics (the 'Big Five') that we now know reflect the 'core' of our personalities. Everybody possesses these five traits to a greater or lesser extent. Therefore, while we all have these characteristics, it is the particular combinations of the five that makes us pretty close to unique. This is currently THE way of thinking about personality (broadly speaking) among credible researchers. The Big Five (sometimes called the OCEAN model, as an acronym, though not all of the labels are the same, the 'N' for Neuroticism, for instance, is typically replaced with 'Emotional Stability') are:

<b>Openness</b>	High scorers are imaginative vs down-to-earth, likes Variety vs routine, is Independent vs conforming.
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	High scorers are well organised vs disorganised, careful vs careless, disciplined vs weak-willed.
<b>Extraversion</b>	High scorers are sociable vs retiring, fun-loving vs sober, affectionate vs reserved.
<b>Agreeableness</b>	High scorers are soft-hearted vs ruthless, trusting vs suspicious, helpful vs uncooperative.
<b>Emotional Stability</b>	High scorers are calm vs worried, secure vs insecure, self-satisfied vs self-pitying.

How did the supporters of parties do in terms of personality? Well, for a start, there are more similarities than there are differences (as is ALWAYS the way). Here are the average scores for each group of party supporters.



Remember that '4' is the theoretical midpoint. First thing to note is that everyone is (on average) more Extravert than not, more Agreeable than not, etc.

At the same time, there are statistically significant differences on all five traits. Statistically, the biggest difference relates to Conscientiousness – National supporters score higher, and Greens lowest.

Next off the rank is Stability, which follows a similar pattern to Conscientiousness (National highest, Greens lowest).

Third biggest difference is Agreeableness, and it's a clear one too – Act supporters are far and away lower than anyone else (half a point lower, but still Agreeable remember).

Fourth is Openness, with Greens topping the table (Labour in second) and National marginally lower than NZ First.

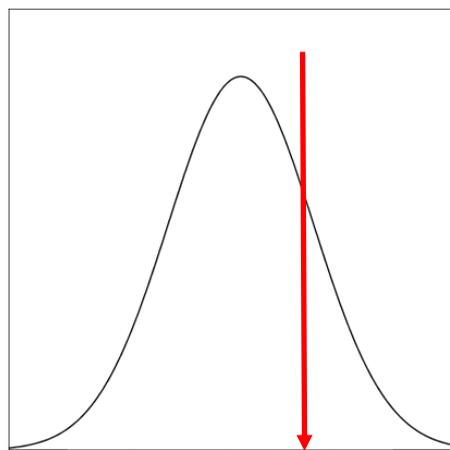
Finally, but still significant, is extraversion – National and Act supporters score highest on this.

This is consistent with previous research that has shown centre-left voters to be relatively more Agreeable and Open, but lower in terms of Extraversion and Conscientiousness.

What about politicians? A few weeks prior, Adam Dudding of the Star Times interviewed John Key. As part of that we asked the Prime Minister to complete the same measure of the Big Five.

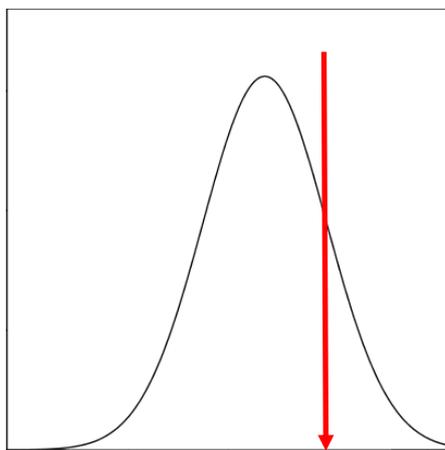
### Where does John Key fall on these continua?

The red arrow tells us where John Key is on the spectrum of each of these five. The normal curve represented here is based on the responses of thousands of New Zealanders drawn from the general population. In all cases a '4' on the scale is the theoretical midpoint so we can see that, on average, New Zealanders are neither particular extroverted or introverted, a little on the agreeable side, quite conscientious, more emotionally stable than not, and (relatively speaking) VERY open-minded.



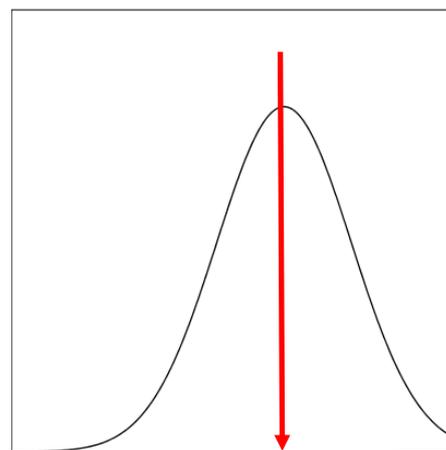
Extraversion

(JK is in the top 20% of the New Zealand Population)



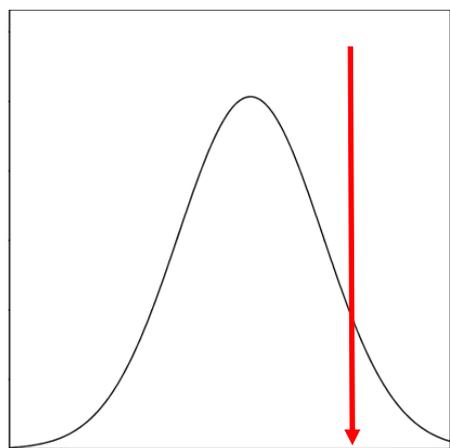
Agreeableness

(JK is in the top 10% of the New Zealand Population)



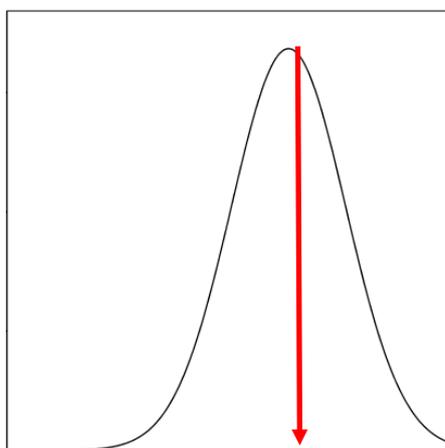
Conscientiousness

(JK is a smidge over the exact middle – within the 51%-64% band of the population)



Emotional Stability

(JK is in the top 5% of the New Zealand Population)



Openness to Experience

(JK is in the top 40% of the New Zealand Population)

Our Prime Minister, on the other hand, is considerably more Extraverted, Agreeable, and Stable than average, and just a smidgeon more Conscientious and open than average. Research overseas has indicated, firstly, that politicians are often more Extravert and Agreeable than the general voting public and, secondly, that voters pay particular attention to Extraversion and Agreeableness as 'anchors' for how they think about politicians. In this regard, it doesn't hurt that John Key is above average on these two in particular. Additionally, international research suggests

some differences between politicians from different parts of the political landscape – for instance, on average, centre-right politicians are more Extraverted and Conscientious than centre-left politicians.

He is unusually Agreeable (means he actually likes people) and Stable (handy when you're running a country). He probably doesn't get flustered easily, and probably doesn't make snap decisions. Extraversion is handy when you have to go out and be around people a lot (like in an election campaign) because it makes it easier to keep smiling day-in and out.

Anyone interested in finding out more information about the Big 5 can find it easily on the internet (one place to go is: <http://ipip.ori.org/>). The scale presented here was developed by Gosling and colleagues and more detail can be found by looking for:

Gosling, S.D., Rentfrow, P.J., & Swann, W.B. (2003). A very brief measure of the Big-Five personality domains. *Journal of Research in personality*, 37, 504-528.

You can also have a look at <http://homepage.psy.utexas.edu/homepage/group/GoslingLAB/index.htm> (Sam Gosling's webpage) that details some of the uses of the TIPI and introduces some really interesting work that has looked at personality in relation to lots of types of behaviour (including political behaviour).

## Rugby

At the time the survey started, the Rugby World Cup had just started. I don't need to provide evidence that rugby is clearly a big deal in New Zealand (look outside!) but there is research that has shown that rugby is a part of our national identity. This isn't surprising or even limited to New Zealand – Pretty much every nation in the world has a national sport. Why? At all levels, we like to psychologically identify with things and groups that are positively valued by others – it makes us feel good about ourselves (boosts our self-esteem) when those groups or things do well. When we think of ourselves in terms of the groups to which we belong that is our 'social identity'. We're lucky, because the All Blacks almost always do very well indeed. The downside is that when the groups we've attached our self esteem to don't do so well, we take a personal knock. How do we deal with this? There are several well-established strategies that people engage in when a social identity is threatened: Try to change the fortunes of that group (perhaps by supporting the All Blacks even more heartily, with more merchandise), by changing the domain on which we compare our group to other groups (we might not have won the last World Cup but we played the most exciting rugby), or by changing our group membership (Never really cared much for rugby, how are the All Whites doing?).

Psychologically, we also value rugby because it provides us with 'optimal distinctiveness' - we don't just like to be associated with things that make us feel good (because they're valued by others), we PARTICULARLY like things that make us feel good AND make us different from others. Research shows that the day after a local team wins, people are much more likely to wear symbols (team shirts, caps, badges, flags, etc) that show they support the team, and psychologically therefore are a PART of the team. It's referred to as 'Basking in Reflected Glory' (or BiRGing for short) and it makes us feel like we played a role in the success.

But we're also good at rowing I hear you say. Weeeell, yes, but historically rugby has a long long tradition. Rowing is also a truly international sport, whereas rugby is a particular historical tie back to the old empire - there's nothing like beating our former owners at the game they invented.

In spite of the importance of rugby, there is remarkably little psychological research on it anywhere, let alone New Zealand. For this reason I included a set of questions about rugby in the survey.

	No	Yes
Do you think of yourself as a sports fan?	37.2%	62.8%
Do you think of yourself as a rugby UNION fan?	43.5%	56.5%
Do you have a favourite rugby Union team?	47.5%	52.5%

Less women answered 'yes' to these questions and even when they did, they also tended to say that feeling was not as strong as males that identified as fans. Women also tended to be slightly less positive towards the All Blacks but the difference was reeeeeaaaally small ( $p=.038$ ). Participants were asked what they thought the chances were for an All Black victory at the RWC, and the average response was 78%. Only 11.3% rated it as less than 50%, which is less than the 16.6% that suggested it was a done deal between 91 and 100%!

18% often have a particular ritual, routine, or things they wear, when they are watching a game of rugby. Examples of particular things include (I just looked at the first 20-odd answers):

- Stand and sing the anthem, hand on heart
- Clothes which support my team, flags, making food related to the team
- appropriate meal during or before the match, relevant clothing worn
- As long as I am wearing something black
- Wear All Black Jersey when All Blacks are playing
- for a Scotland game I normally wear my Scotland jersey - if I go to the game I will wear my kilt and full Scottish dress with the rugby jersey
- Always stand for the national anthem
- Red and black to watch Crusaders or black for All Blacks Laying our rugby clothes carefully day before etc

- Drink beer
- wear all black jersey
- Colours and flags
- No chit chat during game
- Particular jeans, top, gumboots
- Always wear black when ABs are playing
- Wear the colour of the team I support
- Appropriate shirt (red and black or AB black)
- England shirt

Argentina		11.5%
France		6.1%
Namibia		4.7%
Scotland		16.7%
Australia		9.2%
Georgia		5.5%
New Zealand		95.3%
South Africa		4.1%
Canada		12.2%
Ireland		30.0%
Romania		4.6%
Tonga		12.0%
England		9.4%
Italy		7.5%
Russia		5.7%
USA		6.9%
Fiji		8.1%
Japan		12.6%
Samoa		19.1%
Wales		19.2%

Participants were also asked which team (or teams) they would support at the World Cup. Unsurprisingly, the All Blacks were most popular, but other teams also got a mention. Ireland, Wales, Samoa, and Scotland also received a fair bit of support, but... if you look at the teams that are also the most likely threats to an All Black win, they are also considerably less popular (England 9.4%, Australia 9.2%, France 6.1%, and South Africa the LEAST supported with 4.1%)

35% watch rugby on TV at home at least fortnightly, and about 4% said they did so at a pub or club at least fortnightly. Just over 3% said they watched games at the ground at least fortnightly, and a very small 1% said they actually play rugby that frequently...

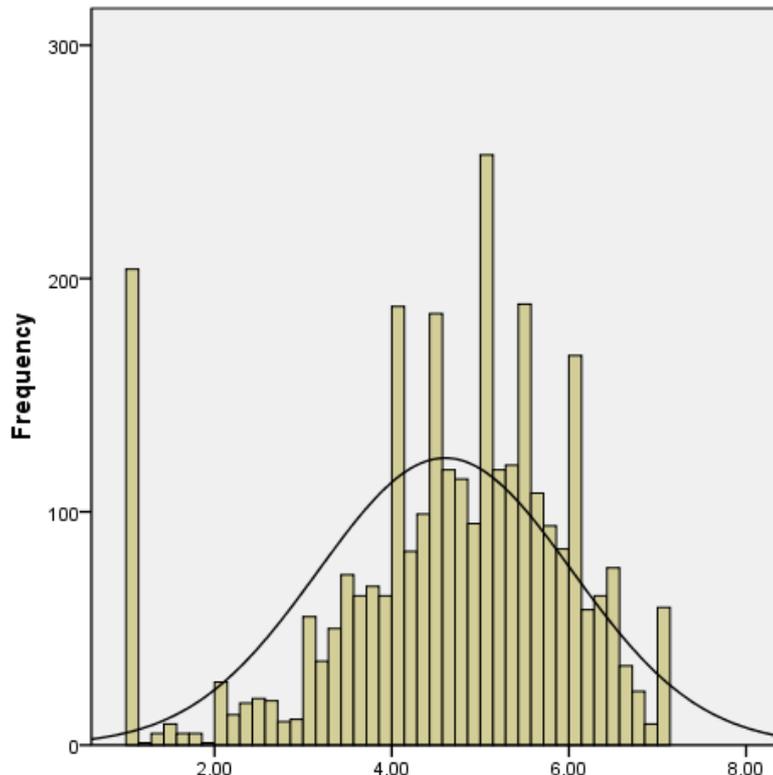
### *Rugby and Identity*

Coming back to the issue of identity. I modified an existing scale (the Team Identification Scale, or TIS) that asks questions about how important your team (in this case, your rugby team) is to how you see yourself, how positively you think others see your team, the extent to which you see your team's successes as your own, etc.

On average, people showed a fairly strong level of identification (the mean was 4.6 on the 7-point scale), and you can see that though it's generally 'normally' distributed (looks a lot like a bell curve) there's a big group (200 people) who score as low as you can get.

Now that we have a Rugby Identification Scale, we can see how it relates to the other things in the survey...

Consistent with my argument about rugby as an important part of identity, the stronger your national identification (the more important being a New Zealander is to you), and the more nationalistic and patriotic you are ( $r$ 's .26 to .31,  $p$ 's < .001). Additionally, the stronger your rugby identification, the happier and more optimistic you are, and the higher your self-esteem (these are weak correlations though between .11 and .12,  $p$ 's < .001). Unsurprisingly you also tend to rate the All Blacks chances of winning the RWC higher. Act supporters feel least positively about the Abs, National (then Labour) the most positive. National supporters are almost 5% more positive in their assessment of the Abs chances than the average, and 9% MORE optimistic than Labour. However, those people who say they have yet to make up their mind who to vote for come in at around 52%.



About 11% of the sample say the Abs SHOULDN'T perform the Haka before game and, interestingly, it is NOT the non-New Zealanders that are saying that (well, a few of them do, but it's mainly New Zealanders). National identity, nationalism and patriotism all predict support for the Haka – again, it's a ritual that expresses something about how we feel about New Zealand. However, 54% say rugby is too important in New Zealand, and 60% say New Zealanders are poor losers when the ABs DON'T win the RWC. Those Mainlanders down south also tend to have stronger rugby identification than North Islanders.

There are a couple of darker things too, though. People who report that rugby is important to them also tend to report (slightly) more aggression, and (again slightly) more death anxiety.

Remember '95? In 1995, the All Blacks made the final of the World Cup in South Africa, losing a nail-biter to South Africa. It was later suggested that the majority of the ABs were affected by food poisoning - attributed in some circles to a deliberate poisoning. In my last big survey with the Star Times in 2008 (again, about 6000 New Zealanders), I found that only a quarter of us don't believe in the conspiracy theory, BUT more than 40% do.

If you're interested in hearing more about the application of psychological research and theory (including some of the material covered here, but in more detail) You can watch a recording of a public lecture presented in September at:

<http://mdsweb.vuw.ac.nz/Mediasite/Viewer/?peid=82e9f4ef4c864916baf3eb9649e25e86>

The first half is an excellent lecture about gladiatorial combat (with some connections to rugby) and if you fast forward to 88 minutes, the rugby psychology presentation starts.

### **Interested in finding out more?**

New Zealand punches above its weight in terms of research on political psychology (in fact New Zealand ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the world for the impact of its psychology/psychiatry research). I've included a list of some of my work on the topics covered above, and some of the work of the people I collaborate with (particularly Prof. John Duckitt and Dr. Chris Sibley at the University of Auckland). These are published in academic journals and therefore are (a) maybe not as easy to digest, and (b) might not be easy to access without going to a library...

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