Applying a race-class narrative for Australia
White supremacy & us

- This project is not *just* about Nazis
- But we do have a problem with Nazis.
The "race-class" narrative

Developed in the United States. Progressives used these narratives in key races to oust Trump.
Working people can fight back.
Project outline

Language analysis

Message Testing

Field application
Awesome language we already use

Assumed inclusion/Anti-racism is union business: “The CFMEU sends its deepest condolences and prayers to the fallen victims... in the devastating tragedy in Beirut, Lebanon. To our Members whose families may have been affected, our thoughts and prayers are with you also.”

Worker/Person-first language: “The crew, made up of Chinese and Burmese nationals, have been on board the ship for 14 months and claim they are being intimidated into signing contract extensions.”

Anti-racism as professional responsibility: “Schools, and everyone who works in them, play a vital role in supporting refugees, people seeking asylum and people from a refugee or asylum seeker background.”

Every worker in Australia: “Every worker counts. If you work in Australia, you deserve a safe and dignified workplace, no exceptions.”
Victim-blaming:

“Our government allows this international workforce to undermine Australian training and drive wages down.”

“This leads to displacement as skilled workers leave their communities in search of work while foreign labour is brought in to fill jobs cheaply.”

“...private pathology providers who are looking for another easily exploited group to use.”

“[Union official] said despite the high numbers of Australian workers looking for work in these regions... work on these jobsites is increasingly being done by foreign, often unlicensed workers.”

Counter "scarcity" narrative with solidarity between local and migrant workers in demanding fair wages and safe workplaces for every worker in Australia.
Message testing

• Can union messages avoid victim-blaming and still be as effective?

• What is the impact on message appeal of evoking race or nationality in a typical class narrative?
Research methodology

- online panel (n = 1,023) representative of Australian general population
- Segmented by political attitudes and moral foundations
- Two sets of message testing:
  - Preference between class-only and race-class constructions
  - Perceived accuracy of employer-blaming vs victim-blaming constructions
### Table 1 – Demographic profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>NT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>26%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45-59</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>60 plus</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3 – Union membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Union membership</td>
<td>Never a member 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Former member 33%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current member 11%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 – CALD profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Migration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Citizenship</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Born in Australia</td>
<td>Australian Citizen</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emigrated to Australia within the last 5 years</td>
<td>Permanent Resident</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emigrated to Australia 5-10 years ago</td>
<td>Applied for Permanent Residency</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emigrated to Australia 10+ years ago</td>
<td>Temporary Resident</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOTE</strong></td>
<td>Speak only English at home</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speak a language other than English at home</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speak mainly English at home</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The research design drew on previous research on race-class narrative such as the Minnesota Dial Survey, and on moral foundations theory as a predictor of attitudes and to shift attitudes.

Respondents were asked to consider the extent to which they agreed with a battery of statements about migration and race. The battery consisted of two positive (tolerant) and two negative (intolerant) statements:

- “Australia’s migrant intake was much too high (prior to the COVID-19 crisis)”
- “People from racial, ethnic, cultural and religious minority groups should behave more like mainstream Australians”
- “It is a good thing for Australian society to be made up of different cultures”
- “All migrants should be accepted regardless of where they came from”

Based on these responses, a Racial Tolerance Index score was calculated for each respondent.
Moral Foundations

Care and Fairness

Appeal more to PROGRESSIVE principles of morality

Loyalty, Authority and Sanctity

Appeal more to CONSERVATIVE principles of morality
Average racial tolerance index by political position

Base: All 18+, n=1,023
Average racial tolerance index by demographics

Base: All 18+, n=1,023
When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking?

Source: FQ1. When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking?

FQ2: Please read the following sentences and indicate whether you agree or disagree.

Base: All 18+, n= 1,023
Test 1: Preference between class & race-class

Respondents asked to choose between four statements. 1B, explicitly referencing nationality and language differences, was preferred across the board and by most segments.
Message Test 2a: Accuracy of boss vs migrant blaming messages

Respondents randomly assigned to message A, B, or C, and asked to judge the accuracy of this message in isolation.

Blaming migrant workers is costing your union 10% of your potential supporters.

Source MQa: How accurate do you think the following statement is? Source MQc: Please read the following sentences and indicate which one you prefer. Base: All 18+, n=1,023
Message test 2b: preference between employer-blaming and migrant-blaming messages

2C: Workers, whether Aussie born or newly arrived, can't make ends meet when dodgy bosses are paying us as little as $1 an hour
47% - Boss blaming with race

2B: Aussie workers can't make ends meet when dodgy bosses are paying migrants as little as $1 an hour
39% - Boss blaming (passive migrant blaming)

2A: Aussie workers can't make ends meet when migrant workers are working for as little as $1 an hour
14% - Migrant blaming

Source MQc: Please read the following sentences and indicate which one you prefer.
Base: All 18+, n= 1,023
Conclusions

- Links between moral foundations, racial tolerance and vote intentions
- To maximise the appeal of union messages (and unions) we should utilise the race-class narrative in message design
- Eliminating victim-blaming constructions may prove effective in inoculating union members against far-right and fringe political influence