

# Preface and acknowledgements

This book has a dual purpose: to provide an account of the 2014 general election in New Zealand, and to inquire into the implications of social and economic inequality as a matter of political party contest in that country. We chose the latter as a theme both because of its importance nationally and internationally, and because it posed a puzzle. Adapting a metaphor from a famous Sherlock Holmes story, during the 2014 election campaign, inequality was a dog that barked but did not bite. On the basis of well-known assumptions, its salience in the campaign should have benefited the centre-left, but did not. In a nutshell, this was our starting point.

This book is a collaboration by three authors, all principal researchers of the 2014 New Zealand Election Study (NZES). We want to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of others, both financial and in kind. Our funding came from three main sources: Victoria University of Wellington, the New Zealand Electoral Commission and the University of Auckland. We particularly thank Robert Peden, Anastasia Turnbull, Kristina Temmel and Robert Marsh of the Electoral Commission. Working with them all has been a pleasure. More particular thanks go to Gerald Cotterell and Martin von Randow at the University of Auckland's Centre of Methods and Policy Application in the Social Sciences (COMPASS). COMPASS was responsible for administering the NZES fieldwork and did so smoothly and efficiently. The COMPASS commitment to the NZES is much appreciated, and invaluable. Gerry Cotterell was another principal researcher, and his NZES-related research is the subject of a separate Marsden Fund project. Ann Sullivan, Lindsey MacDonald and Brian Easton read sections of the manuscript. Within Victoria University, Sam Bigwood helped us with tidying up the manuscript, the figures, the tables and the references. Simon Hay was a meticulous copyeditor, vigilantly detecting errors everyone else had missed and helpfully pointing out how we might better clarify otherwise cryptic or confusing sentences.

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