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.

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