

FOREWORD

What happened? That was the question most Australians were asking when facing the result of the May 2019 federal election. Even the victor described it as a miracle.

Scott Morrison became Australia's 30th prime minister against the predictions of all the national opinion polls. His Liberal–National Coalition had suffered a major swing in the Victorian State election just over six months earlier. He had himself been prime minister for only nine months, following the ousting of Malcolm Turnbull, which precipitated a by-election with another Liberal loss.

This volume investigates what happened. It is drawn from the contributions of 36 political scientists, analysts, journalists and commentators who took part in a post-election workshop sponsored by the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. It explores the new circumstances of this election. The loss of trust in political institutions seen across most Western democracies has been accompanied by the disengagement of citizens at least from the mainstream political process. We have seen the rise of populism, derision over 'fake news' and the way that social media fragments public discussion. And in the 2019 election we saw the influence of former federal MP Clive Palmer, who spent more money on the campaign than both major parties combined.

Morrison's Miracle provides in-depth analysis of the usual contributors to election wins and losses: patterns of voter behaviour and the campaign strategies of political parties and third parties. It also analyses regional variations in voting, the rise of Independents, the performance of the polls, the ideological contests and the role of the media. This is the ninth in the academy's election series covering federal campaigns. It builds on the preceding work and offers more in terms of comparing the 2019 election with those that went before.

MORRISON'S MIRACLE

I commend this book to all readers—scholars, practitioners, students and interested Australians—seeking to understand what happened in 2019. I congratulate and thank the editors for this important work.

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President
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This text is taken from *Morrison's Miracle: The 2019 Australian Federal Election*, edited by Anika Gauja, Marian Sawyer and Marian Simms, published 2020 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.