Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.
ADVERTISING AND THE MARKET ORIENTATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES CONTESTING THE 1999 AND 2002 NEW ZEALAND GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

A THESIS PRESENTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICS

AT MASSEY UNIVERSITY, PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND.

CLAIRE ELIZABETH ROBINSON

2006
This thesis proposes an alternative way of establishing a link between market orientation and electoral success, by focusing on market orientation as a message instead of as a management function. Using interpretive textual analysis the thesis examines the advertising messages of the highest polling political parties for evidence of voter orientation and competitor orientation in the 1999 and 2002 New Zealand general election campaigns. Relating manifest market orientation to a number of statistical indicators of electoral success the thesis looks for plausible associations between the visual manifestation of market orientation in political advertisements and parties’ achievement of their party vote goals in the 1999 and 2002 elections. It offers party-focused explanations for electoral outcomes to complement existing voter-centric explanations, and adds another level of scholarly understanding of recent electoral outcomes in New Zealand.

While the thesis finds little association between demonstration of competitor orientation in political advertisements and electoral success, it finds a plausible relationship between parties that demonstrated a voter orientation in their political advertisements and goal achievement. The parties that achieved their party vote goals in 1999 and 2002 tended to demonstrate an affinity for their target voter groups by showing images of voters and their environments and images of party leaders interacting with voters. They demonstrated concern for the satisfaction of the needs of existing voters by using words of togetherness and proving they had met their previous promises. They did not change their policy or leadership messages dramatically between campaigns. There was a visual consistency to their television, print and billboard advertising messages which rendered the messages easy to recognise and remember. They were clear about what they were offering in exchange for the party vote and recognised the need to offer something in addition to previous offerings in order to attract new voters.
I wish to firstly acknowledge my father, the late Dr Alan Robinson, who was one of New Zealand’s first psephologists, and my mother Marijke Robinson, a founder of the New Zealand Women’s Electoral Lobby. They raised me in a household in which a fascination for New Zealand elections was assumed to be normal behaviour! I am indebted to my supervisors Drs Kerry Taylor and James Watson of the School of History, Philosophy and Politics at Massey University, who provided consistent support and essential feedback on this text, in its many iterations, over the past six years. Thanks go to the Rt Hon. Jenny Shipley, the late Rod Donald, another party leader who did not wish to be named, Doug Woolerton, Mike Williams, Mike Smith, Pat Webster, and Fraser Carson, whose personal reflections on the 1999 and 2002 election campaigns provided invaluable background context. Approval to interview these people was obtained from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. I am grateful to Professor Jack Vowles of Auckland University for permission to use data from the 2002 New Zealand Election Study. At Massey University’s College of Creative Arts, my thanks go to Professors Duncan Joiner and Sally Morgan, and Associate Professor Lynne Ciochetto, for their support throughout my studies. I was privileged to receive teaching release through the Massey University Academic Women’s Award and the Massey University Advanced Study Award. Brett Lineham’s many years of encouragement is gratefully acknowledged. My children’s faith in my ability to complete this journey is humbling; thank you Anna and Thomas. I have had to confront many challenging personal moments over the past couple of years. Heartfelt thanks go to Mark McQuillan for holding my hand to the finish line.
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<td>9/11</td>
<td>September 11, 2001, when New York City’s Twin Towers were destroyed by Al Qaeda terrorists.</td>
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<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPP</td>
<td>First Past the Post electoral system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE</td>
<td>Genetic Engineering; the deliberate modification of the characteristics of an organism by manipulating its genetic material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gestalt</td>
<td>An organised whole that is perceived as more than the sum of its parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMP</td>
<td>Mixed Member Proportional electoral system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Member of Parliament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZES</td>
<td>New Zealand Election Study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sans Serif</td>
<td>A form of type without serifs, the slight projections which finish off each stroke of a letter; e.g., T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serif</td>
<td>A form of type with slight projections which finish off each stroke of a letter; e.g., T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still</td>
<td>A single image captured from a moving image sequence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVNZ</td>
<td>Television New Zealand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URL</td>
<td>Uniform (or universal) resource locator, the address of a World Wide Web page.</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States.</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>V/O</td>
<td>Voice over; narration in an advertisement not accompanied by a picture of the speaker.</td>
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<td>Image</td>
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