APATHETIC LANDSLIDE: THE 2001 BRITISH GENERAL ELECTION
By PIPPA NORRIS
What explains the remarkable scale of the second Labour landslide? The introduction highlights and summarizes the major features of the election results - including the striking impact of the British electoral system, the main reasons for the plummeting turnout, and the significant changes in party fortunes. Subsequent sections discuss alternative theories explaining the outcome, focusing in particular on accounts of policy mood cycles, and the conclusion considers the implications for the future of British party politics.

THE CAMPAIGN
PARTY POLICY & IDEOLOGY: STILL NEW LABOUR?
BY JUDITH BARA AND IAN BUDGE

Most election analyses of party strategy base themselves on only half the evidence - on voter perceptions of party stands rather than what the parties themselves are saying. Analysis of the manifestos enables us to peer directly into party strategy and objectives. We can use the policy time series produced by the Manifesto Research Group to compare what the parties are saying now to what they have said in the past, and to what their counterparts are saying elsewhere. The main questions are whether Labour has retained the centrist position it moved to in 1997 and whether the Conservatives remain in a relatively isolated right-wing position. The answers are that Labour has remained in broadly the same position. The Liberal Democrats have moved rightwards but remain just to the left of Labour. The Conservatives, although moving significantly towards the centre, remain clearly differentiated from the other two parties.

THE LABOUR CAMPAIGN
By PATRICK SEYD
The Labour party’s campaigning efforts to win a second, consecutive general election in 2001 can be distinguished along both temporal and spatial dimensions. During the four-year period of Labour government various phases of campaigning occurred involving long, medium and short time frames. Over the long period the party’s overall strategic aims and objectives were established. They were firstly, to establish a governing reputation for economic competence and the improvement of public services, secondly, to maintain an electoral strategy of appealing to ‘middle England’ voters and, thirdly, to manage a single-minded and united party.
CONSERVATIVES IN OPPOSITION
By DANIEL COLLINGS AND ANTHONY SELDON
The Conservatives from 1997 to 2001 experienced their most futile period in Opposition in the last one hundred years. It was an utterly black period which was also largely avoidable. This study examines changes in the party in opposition and the reasons for the failure of their campaign.

THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT CAMPAIGN
By DAVID DENVER
There is no doubt that the 2001 general election was widely seen as a success story for the Liberal Democrats and for Charles Kennedy in particular. This study examines the problems facing the party and the ideological and campaign strategy they used to maximize their support.

THE OPINION POLLS: STILL BIASED TO LABOUR
By IVOR CREWE
The significance of opinion polls for an election, and their prominence in campaigns, have ebbed and flowed over the years. In 1997 the opinion polls departed centre stage; and in 2001 they withdrew further into the wings. There were fewer of them, they figured less conspicuously in the media and they appeared to exert less influence on the campaign. Despite their lower profile, however, in 2001 they made a significant contribution to the ambience of the election. An unchanging backdrop to the contest, the campaign polls influenced the assumptions of politicians and public alike; but the backdrop was deceptive, and had the polls been more accurate the character and consequences of the election might have been a little different.

PRESS AND BROADCASTING: REAL ISSUES AND REAL COVERAGE
By DAVID DEACON, PETER GOLDSING AND MICHAEL BILLIG
The most dramatic media aspect of the 2001 campaign was the increased level of Labour support in the press, consolidating the switch in newspaper partisanship in the 1997 general election. To assess the role played by the media, the Communications Research Centre at Loughborough University, conducted a weekly analysis of reporting of the campaign in the national press and broadcasting, as it did in 1992 and 1997. In this article we present several measures of media participation in the campaign. These include: the extent of media attention to the campaign, the distribution of party coverage, the range of issues coverage and the evaluative dimensions of media commentary.
ONLINE CAMPAIGNING
By STEPHEN COLEMAN
Portentously heralded as the UK’s ‘first internet election’, the online campaign of 2001 inspired heady expectations and resulted in prevalent disappointment. 2001 witnessed a new medium in search of a purpose, not unlike television in the UK election of 1959. There were four rather different types of online activity. Firstly, there was e-marketing of party policies and candidates, essentially little more than e-commerce applied to politics. Secondly, there were new online resources available for voters, including websites for vote swapping, poking fun at politicians, and debating the issues. Thirdly, some of the traditional news media moved online to provide a range of accessible, personalised information that had not been available to voters in previous elections. And fourthly – though this approach was mainly conspicuous by its absence – there were those who regarded the interactivity of the internet as a setting for a new, more participatory style of politics. Each of these activities and aspirations need to be evaluated separately if sense is to be made of the impact and potential of the internet in 2001 and beyond.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE: ELECTION UNDER NEW RULES
BY JUSTIN FISHER
The financial rules under which the 2001 election was held represent a new era in British elections. The electoral battlefield in 2001 was substantially altered from that prevailing four years earlier due to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. Yet the impact of the new legislation appears to have been slightly different than had been envisaged. On the one hand, it did mean that parties were more disciplined in evaluating their spending. However, equity in spending levels has only really been employed with regard to the main two parties. The playing field has become slightly more even for the Liberal Democrats and the smaller parties, but the spending gap between them and the main two parties remains large. This study examines the patterns of campaign finance in the 2001 election.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

SCOTLAND
By ALICE BROWN
The 2001 General Election in Scotland was another ‘first’ and historic landmark in the country’s contemporary political history. As the first general election held after the establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999, many questions were raised in the minds of political, academic and media commentators. Just how significant would this election be for Scottish voters and how would it impact electoral turnout? Also, what would emerge as the key issues in Scotland and how would these differ from other parts of the UK? And to what extent would voters differentiate
between Westminster and Scottish elections, and would they judge the political parties by their performance in the Scottish Parliament? This study examines these issues.

WALES
By RICHARD WYN JONES AND DAFYDD TRYSTAN
Outlining what might be termed the ‘conventional wisdom’ concerning the significance 2001 general election result in Wales, a view profoundly influenced by the changes wrought by devolution to the Welsh political landscape, this study provides an overview of some of the salient features of the pre-campaign phase of the general election in Wales; describes the nature of the campaigns of each of the four main parties; and, briefly assesses the implications of the results for the future development of post-devolution politics in Wales.

NORTHERN IRELAND: FLANKING EXTREMISTS BITE THE MODERATES AND EMERGE IN THEIR CLOTHES
By BRENDAN O'LEARY, PAUL MITCHELL AND GEOFFREY EVANS

After signing the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement it was the considered policy of the sovereign governments to isolate what they called the ‘political extremes’ in Northern Ireland and build up what they called the ‘moderate centre-ground’, from which a power-sharing government could be constructed. This study provides an overview of the 2001 election results in Northern Ireland and examines the consequences for the province and for the peace process.

WOMEN AND POLITICS
By JONI LOVENDUSKI
Overall, the results of the general election of 2001 support both cautious optimism and general concern by those who advocate equality of women's representation. Matters for concern include the failure by major parties to boost the numbers of women in parliament by expanding the number of women candidates in winnable seats. There was a particularly, and widely remarked, ‘masculine’ campaign in which the wives/partners of party leaders generally received more national media attention than woman politicians. In terms of policy, all parties appeared reluctant to make gender an explicit dimension of political issues and, in terms of image, the gender coding of the ‘job’ of politician as male continued. On the other hand a women's lobby, much strengthened since 1997, attempted with some success to draw attention to party neglect of gender politics. The new Blair government immediately honoured its manifesto pledge by including proposals in the Queen’s speech to change the laws prohibiting positive action in favour of women candidates. These examples suggest that the feminisation of party and electoral politics continues, but is contested.
THE RACE CARD, AGAIN
By SHAMIT SAGGAR
Against expectations, the 2001 general election campaign illustrated the depth of on-going disputes over race and immigration in British politics. These political differences were as much intra-party as inter-party in their nature and impact. This study examines how the politics of race played out in the 2001 election.

TURNOUT
By PAUL WHITELEY, HAROLD CLARKE, DAVID SANDERS AND MARIANNE STEWART
In many respects the 2001 general election was a rerun of its 1997 predecessor, with the parties obtaining rather similar shares of the votes and seats in the House of Commons. In one very important respect, however, it was a very different election. The turnout of 59 per cent was the lowest in a general election since universal adult franchise was established in Britain in the 1920s. The purpose of this study is two-fold. Firstly, to describe the variations in turnout in the general election of 2001, looking particularly at aggregate effects attributable to the constituency context in which voters found themselves. Secondly, to test a model of turnout based on individual level survey data from the 2001 British Election Study.

THE ECONOMY AND VOTING
By DAVID SANDERS, HAROLD CLARKE, MARIANNE STEWART AND PAUL WHITELEY
There has been a long-running controversy as to how far economic performance and voters’ economic perceptions affect the electoral fortunes of incumbent governments. At its simplest, the "economic voting" model suggests that voters support the ruling party (or coalition) if the economy is going well and transfer that support to the opposition if the economy is going badly. This study examines the extent to which New Labour’s economic performance, and voters’ perceptions of that performance, affected the outcome of the 2001 general election. Section 1 summarises the "objective" performance of the economy and compares it with the performance of the previous Conservative government. The evidence reported suggests that "objective" macroeconomic conditions do not explain New Labour’s success in 2001. Section 2 uses aggregate-level data in order to show that voters’ economic perceptions exerted a continuing influence on the pattern of party support during the 1997 parliament. Section 3 uses individual-level data, based on the 2001 British Election Study, to assess the relative importance of economic perceptions as determinants of voters' electoral preferences. The results provide strong support for the conclusions arrived at in Section 2. Controlling for a large of the other factors that are known to influence voting, voters’ economic perceptions play a significant role in determining their electoral choices.
THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM: BIASED TO BLAIR
By JOHN CURTICE

Labour’s second landslide victory raises significant questions about the operation of Britain’s electoral system. It appears to have treated Tony Blair in an unprecedentedly favourable manner. Why was this so? And what are the implications of our findings for the debate about electoral reform in Britain? These are the two questions that this study seeks to address.

THE COMMONS: MR. BLAIR’S LAPDOG?
By PHILIP COWLEY

Despite coming to power promising to modernise Parliament, the most frequent complaint from the media, Opposition politicians, and even some Labour backbenchers has been that the independent role for Parliament in scrutinizing the government’s legislative program became yet further marginalized under Blair. A common criticism was that Labour’s MPs have become excessively loyal and deferential lapdogs, unquestioningly trooping through the division lobbies in support of the government. If these complaints are fair it suggests that Westminster has lost one of its prime functions in criticizing, counterbalancing and checking the excesses of executive power. But are the gripes about the deference and acquiescence of Labour MPs actually valid? And has the project to modernize Parliament made it a more effective and efficient body? This study examines these issues in the light of the new parliament.