Does anyone know how to photoshop him strangling a kitten?

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Issue

If, by the image selections and omissions they make, the press effectively support the electoral fortunes of the incumbent, we may question:

(i) the independence of the press from political power;

(ii) the ability of voters to make well informed and objective voting choices; and

(iii) the ability of political parties and candidates to participate in a genuinely fair contest in which all have the opportunity to be seen and heard

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election
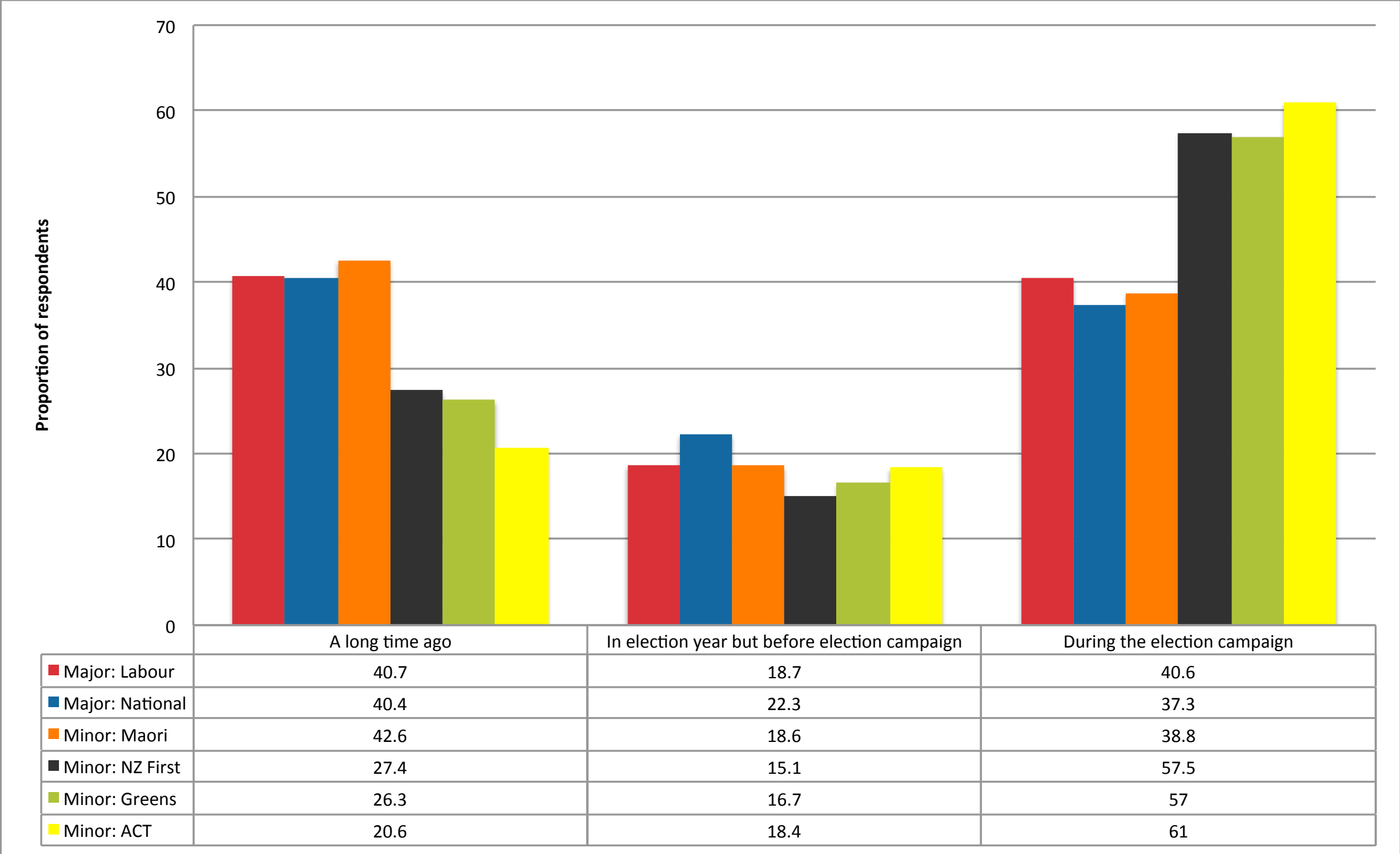
Design
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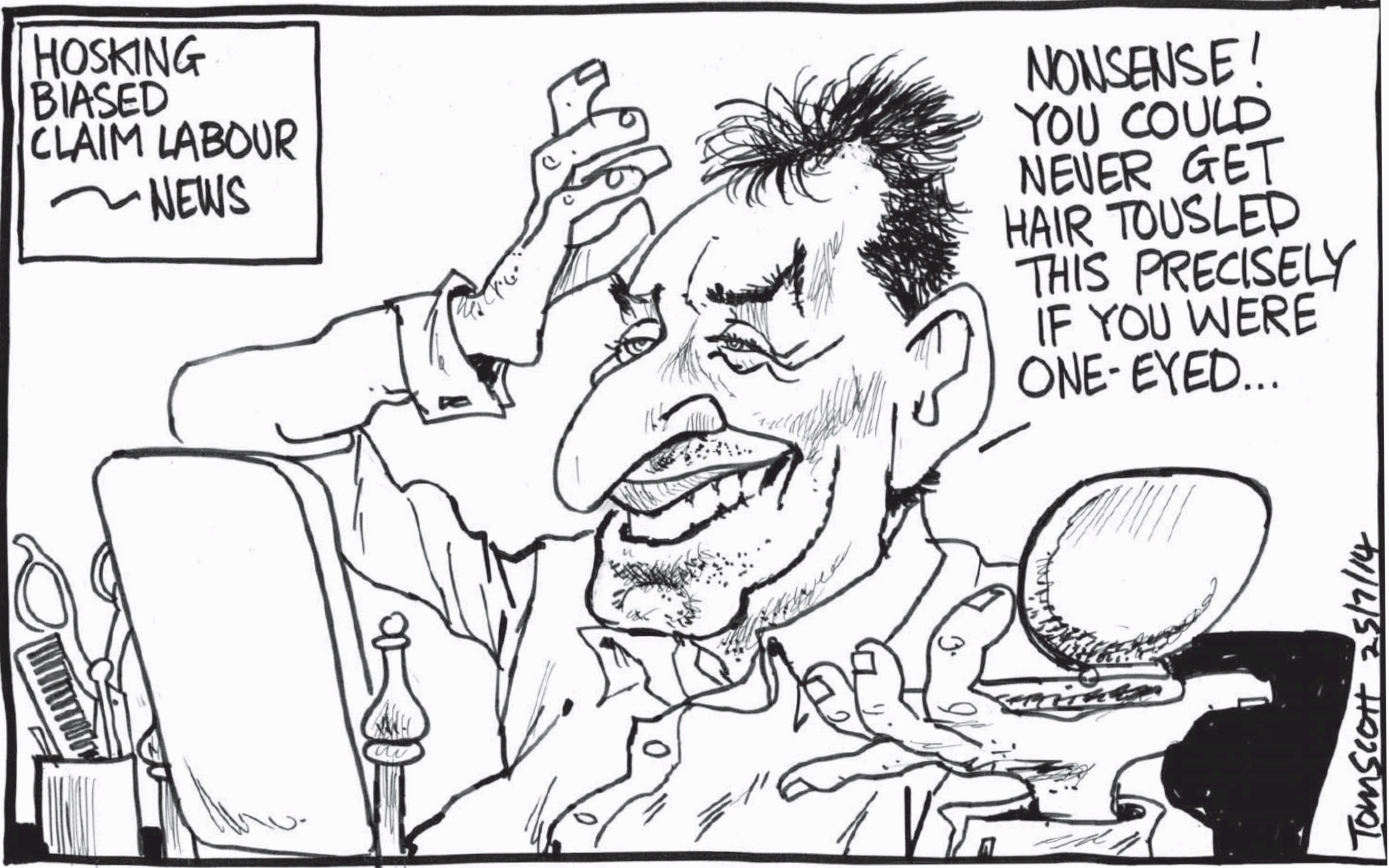
Accuracy, Fairness and Balance

"Publications should be bound at all times by accuracy, fairness and balance, and should not deliberately mislead or misinform readers by commission or omission. In articles of controversy or disagreement, a fair voice must be given to the opposition view."

New Zealand Press Council Statement of Principles

Time of vote decision

	A long time ago	In election year but before election campaign	During the election campaign
■ Major: Labour	40.7	18.7	40.6
■ Major: National	40.4	22.3	37.3
■ Minor: Maori	42.6	18.6	38.8
■ Minor: NZ First	27.4	15.1	57.5
■ Minor: Greens	26.3	16.7	57
■ Minor: ACT	20.6	18.4	61

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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Justification of bias on the basis of **news value** rather than **partisanship** is unlikely to satisfy opposition parties and their supporters at election times, should they find their ability to participate in a fair contest compromised, and their **visibility minimised**, by the news media's effective **facilitation of the incumbent's campaign**

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"Over many thousands of words in this campaign, coverage has been equally detailed and exacting of the major parties"

Editor
New Zealand Herald, 7 November 2011, p. A8

2011
Campaign
Image Data

4 papers **138** Key **80** Goff

63% Key images over campaign (no ads)

70% Front page images featuring Key

71% Key images during 'Teagate'

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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A **"batshitstudy"**
(Tim Murphy, then Editor in Chief *New Zealand Herald*, on Twitter)

"Wilfully misleading"
(Shayne Currie, then Editor *New Zealand Herald*, on Twitter)

**"Hardly cutting edge", "narrowly focused", "virtually worthless"
research based on "simplistic notions of what constitutes unbiased
coverage"** (Sean Plunket, *Dominion Post*, 1.12.13)

**"Knickers in a knot", a "crush on the Prime Minister", and should
"have more to worry about" given that I am "believed to be
earning more than $100,000 a year"** (Rod Vaughan, *NBR* online,
27.11.13)

"The meeting place of intelligent business"

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"Allegation of Election Coverage Bias Doesn't Wash"

associate professor says her research, titled *The eyes have it: Measuring Visual Image Incumbency Bias in the Print Media* shows Labour and Phil Goff have real grounds to feel they were unfairly treated by the major newspapers.

So much so there are grounds for a complaint to the Press Council that those newspapers breached the principle of fairness and balance in their coverage.

Labour is not so silly as to follow such advice — and not solely because that particular horse has long since bolted.

Anyone making such a complaint would be laughed out of that particular court. That is because in taking a fresh look at the coverage of the 2011 election campaign — at least that of the *Herald* — one is struck by the degree to which news editors ensured Goff received pretty equal coverage, including "filler" photographs on days when Key was making all the news.

Only on the final day of the campaign did things get seriously out of kilter with Key's face appearing six times in the news pages to Goff's three. Even then, Goff featured prominently in a front-page graphic.

If anything, it is the minor party leaders who have strong grounds for complaint in terms of their omission from what looks very much like traditional two-party first-past-the-post-driven coverage.

It is worth noting that a major *Herald* investigation into Goff's background and motivating factors — including copious images of the Labour leader — fell just outside the period covered by Robinson's study.

John Key startles Isabelle Mein, 2, as she clings to mother Cathy during a walkabout in Ponsonby.

The eyes have it . . . Key's charms fall flat

The Massey University research looked at the number, size and tone of the photos of the two leaders

John Armstrong comment
john.armstrong@nzherald.co.nz

There also seems to be a fundamental flaw in her methodology. She comes up with numerous measures of the number and size of the photos of the two leaders. There are assessments of the tone of each photograph in terms of whether it positive, neutral or negative. But there appears to be no formula which combines all these factors and makes a meaningful assessment of the influence of a particular photo, potential or actual.

The reason there is no such formula is because at the end of the day the impression left by a photograph is highly subjective.

Neither does it stand in isolation

At the end of the day the impression left by a photograph is highly subjective.

from its context.

How, for example whether it is positive John Key to get a fr when it concerns a character assassin of actor Robyn Mal campaign launch?

How do you asse a picture of a smilin accompanying sto keeping his face of hoardings? The qu on coming. Robins be exhaustive. But any meaningful ar questions.

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Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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Were the 2011 findings anomalous?

What was the impact of structural bias on minor party coverage?

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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We make
visual
judgments
before the
rational
brain kicks in

13ms

speed at which brain can extract
conceptual information from a
photographic image

We make
visual
judgments
before
rational
brain kicks in

"A picture is worth a thousand words"

13ms

speed at which brain can extract
conceptual information from a
photographic image

We use
images as
shortcuts
to political
judgment

"Seeing is believing"

100ms

sufficient exposure to make a political trait
assessment after viewing a still image

Quantity = Visibility

Repeated visibility = Automatic retrieval

Mere Exposure Effect : Preference for a stimulus is increased by repeated exposure to it

Converse = Out of sight out of mind

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2014 Study

9 parties 12 leaders

Average Net Circulation per issue 144157

New Zealand Herald (daily) Average Readership per issue 451000

118456

Sunday Star Times (weekly) 367000

99191

Herald on Sunday (weekly) 329000

70211

Dominion Post (daily) 190000

65379

Press (daily) 183000

23742

Southland Times (daily) 63000
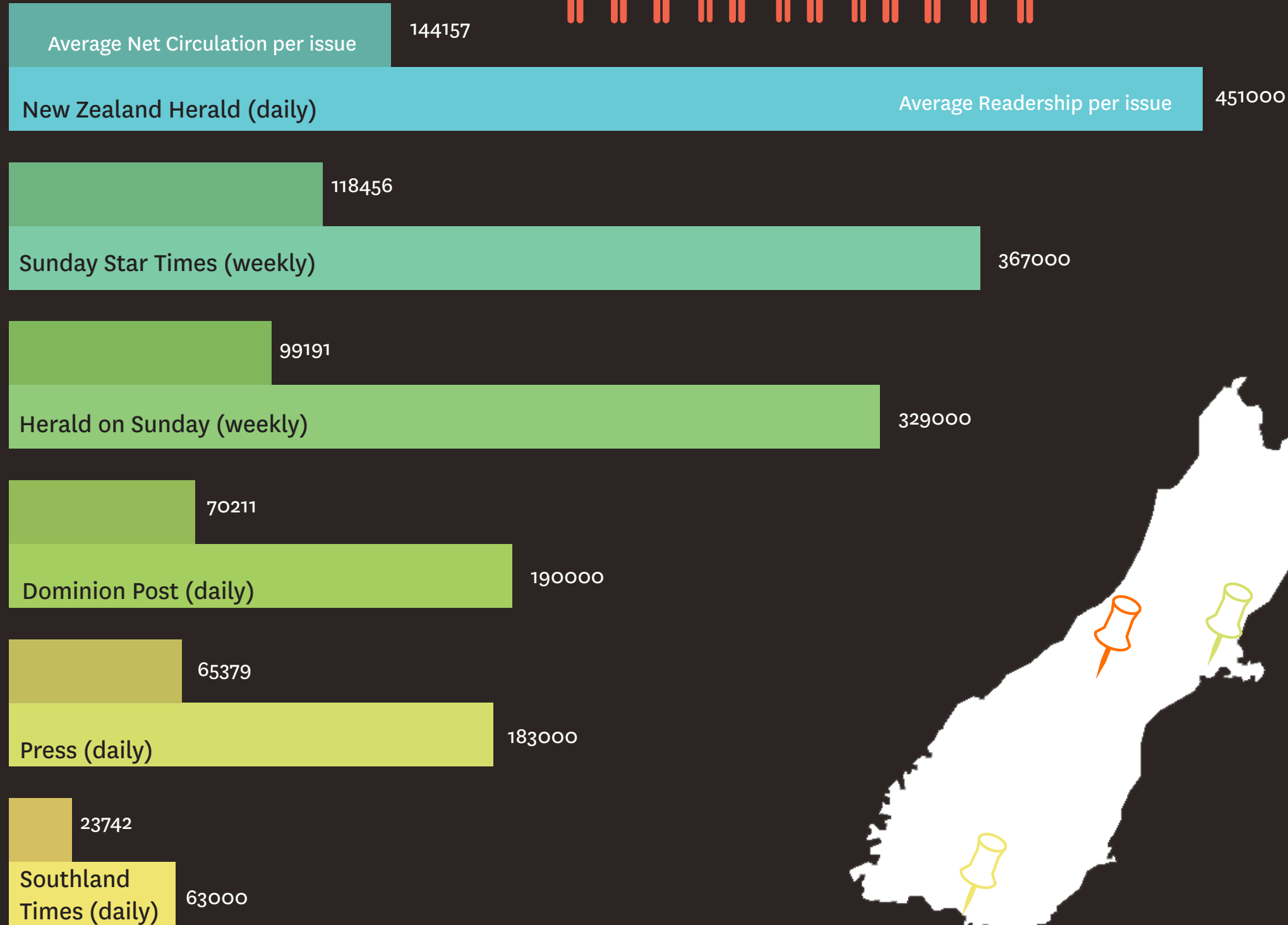
262 days

974 papers

1441 images

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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Major Party Leaders

60.5%
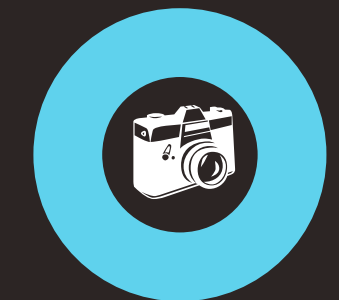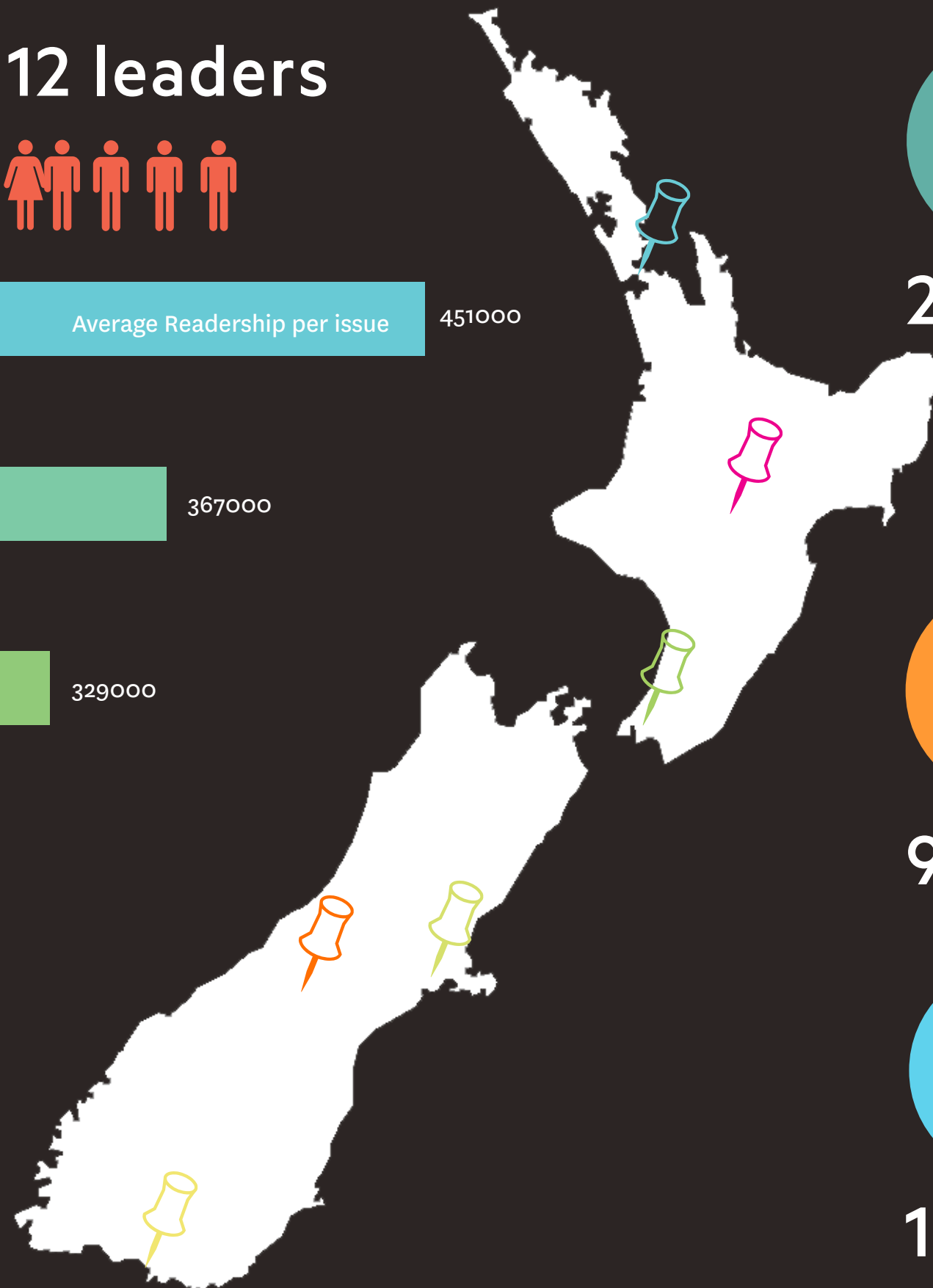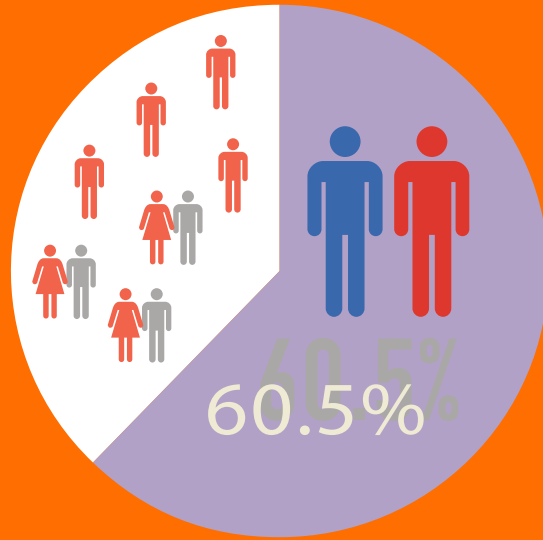
WHOLE YEAR **62%**
PRE-CAMPAIGN **60%**
CAMPAIGN **66%**
FRONT PAGE **66%**
DIRTY POLITICS **73%**

WHOLE YEAR **38%**
PRE-CAMPAIGN **40%**
CAMPAIGN **34%**
FRONT PAGE **34%**
DIRTY POLITICS **27%**

David Cunliffe

John Key

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

Southland Times · Dominion Post · The Press · NZ Herald/Weekend Herald · Sunday Star Times · Herald on Sunday

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

Design +Democracy
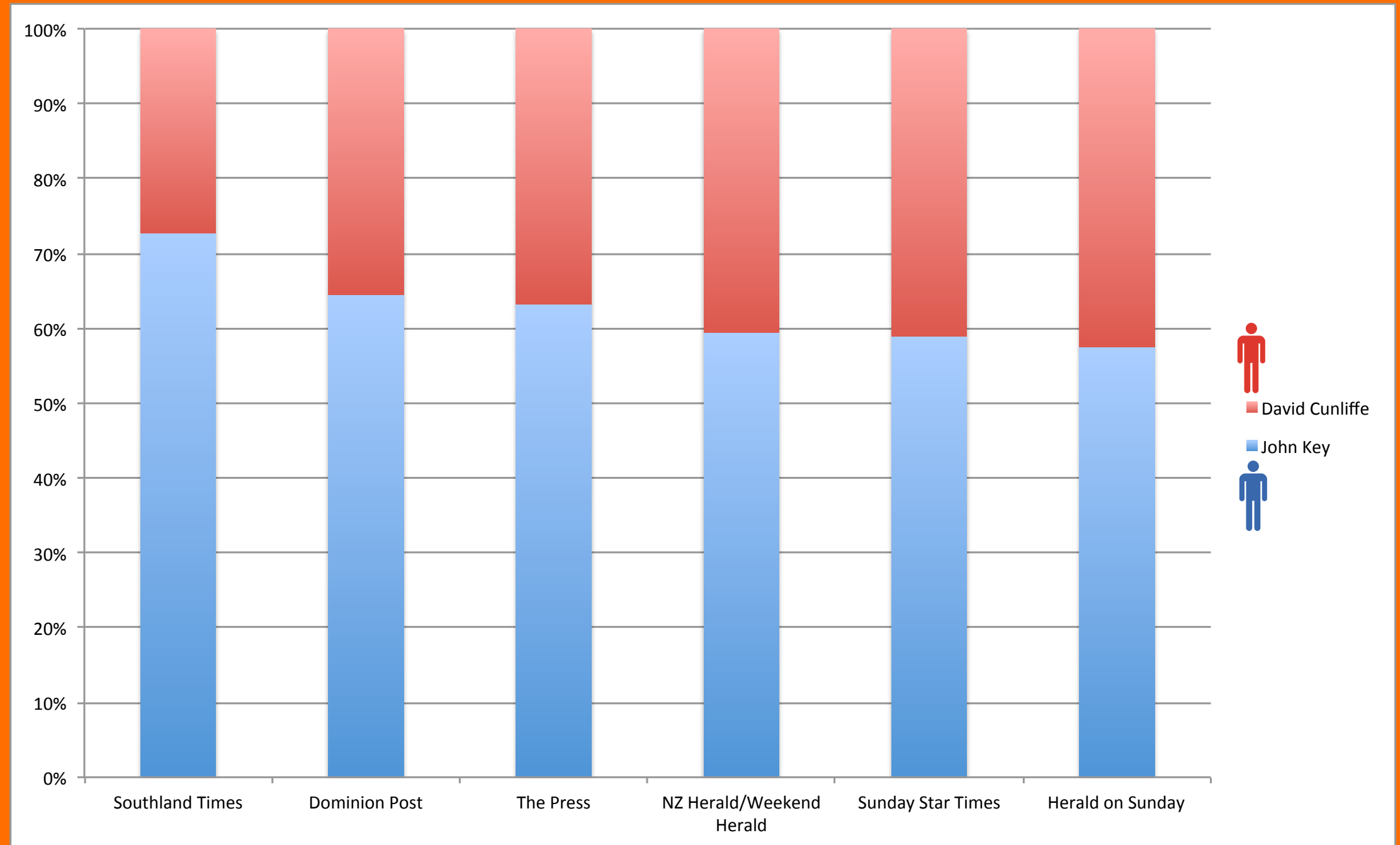
Major Party Leaders

ACTUAL NUMBERS
BY MONTH
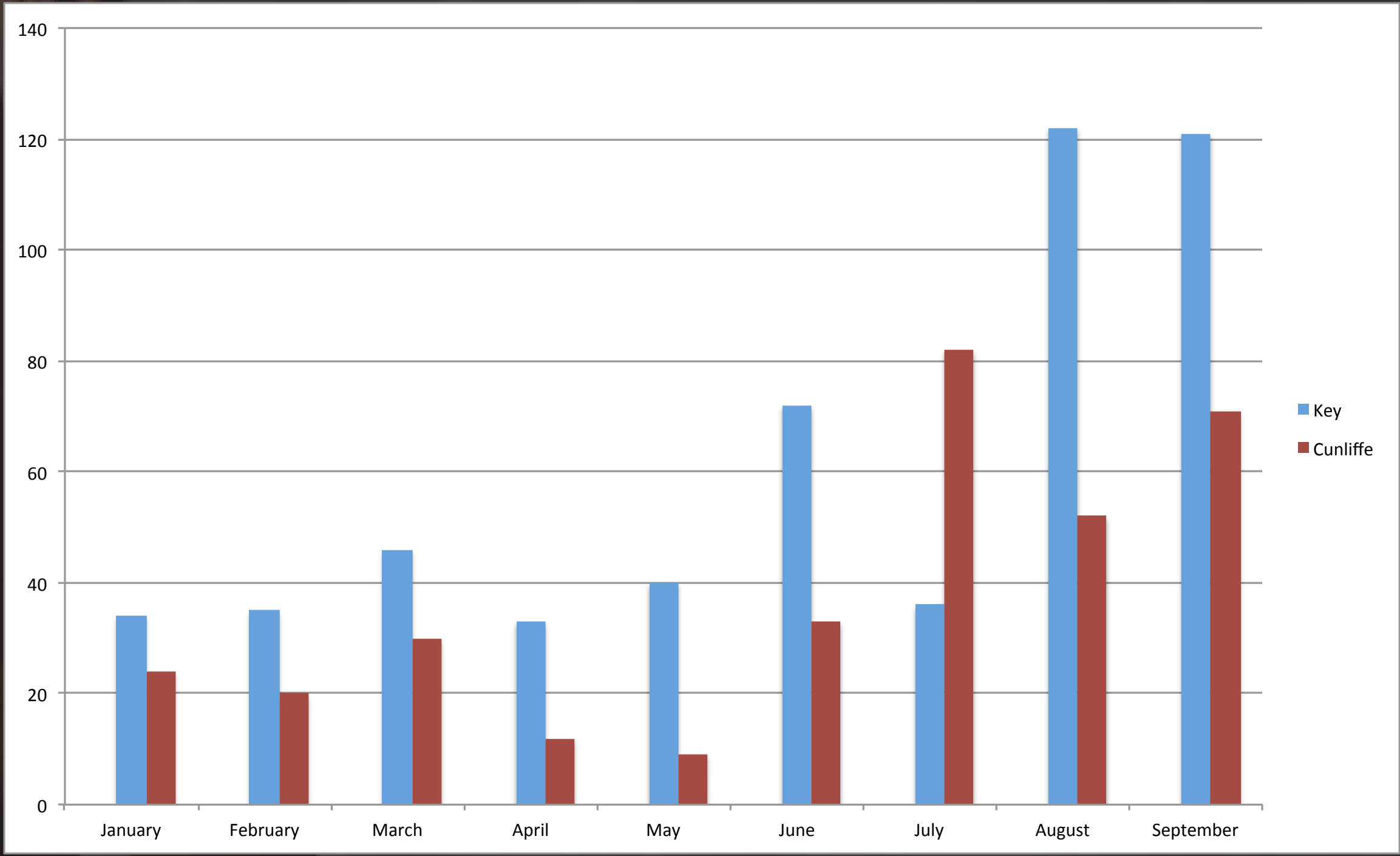
17 February 2016

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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Major Party Leaders

Number	WEEK 0-1 9-15 August	WEEK 0 16-22 August	WEEK 1 23 -29 August	WEEK 2 30 Aug - 5 Sept	WEEK 3 6-12 Sept	WEEK 4 13-19 Sept
Key	15 (50%)	39 (76.5%)	45 (79%)	34 (58%)	27 (57%)	70 (67%)
Cunliffe	15 (50%	12 (23.5%)	12 (21%)	25 (42%)	20 (43%)	35 (33%)

Dirty Politics released 13 August

Judith Collins resigns 31 August

'Moment of Truth' 15 September

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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Major Party Leaders

NEGATIVE V POSITIVE

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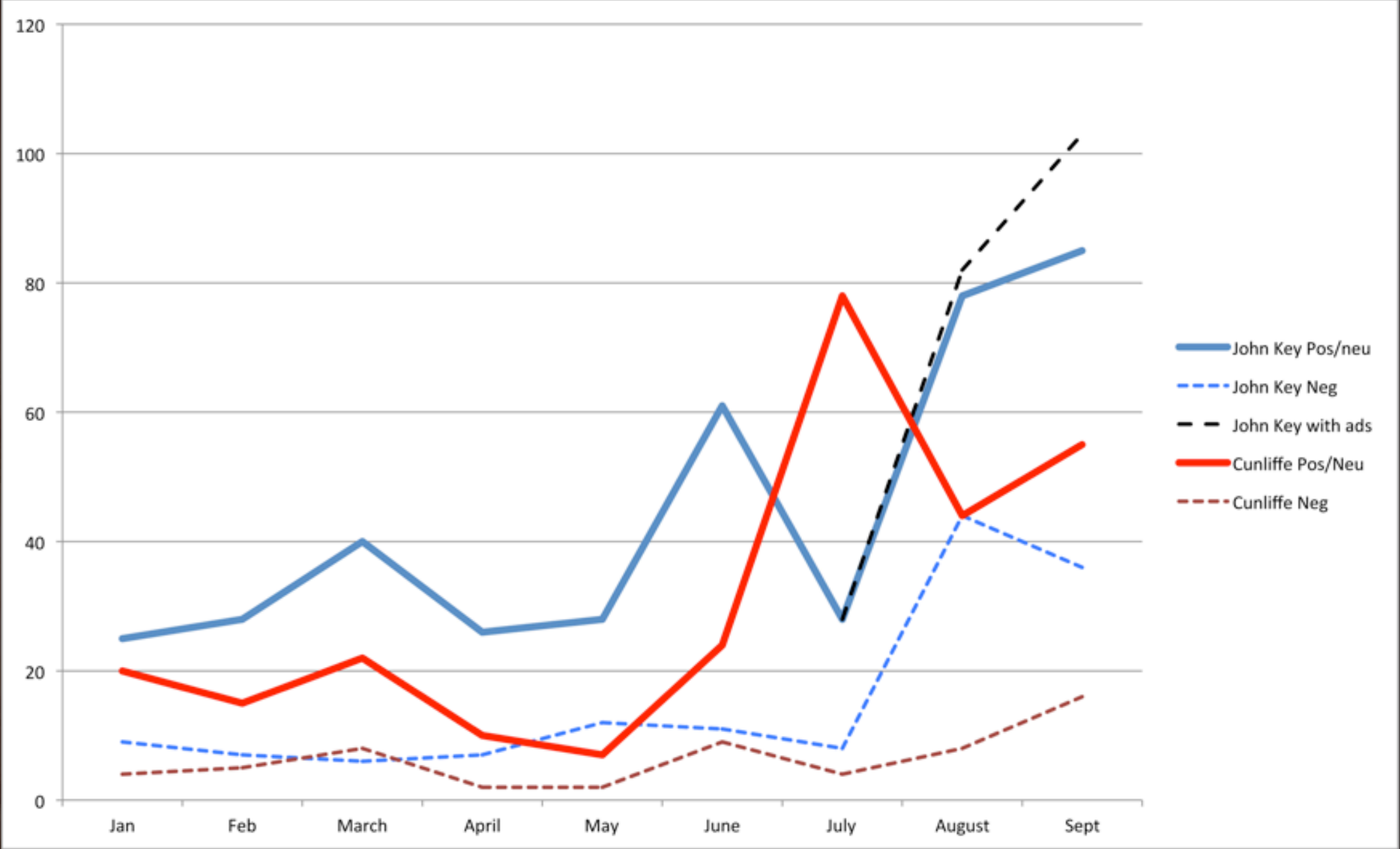
All Party Leaders

CAMPAIGN NUMBER

BY WEEK

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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All Party Leaders

Proportion of number	WEEK 0-1 9-15 August	WEEK 0 16-22 August	WEEK 1 23 -29 August	WEEK 2 30 August - 5 Sept	WEEK 3 6-12 Sept	WEEK 4 13-19 Sept
Key (National)	25	54.2	59.2	35.4	24.8	40
Whyte (ACT)	1.6	0	0	2	8.3	3.4
Flavell (Maori)	0	0	0	3.1	2.7	1.1
Dunne (United Future)	1.7	1.4	0	4.2	3.6	0.6
Turia (Maori)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Craig (Conservatives)	6.7	2.8	5.3	3.1	8.3	8
Cunliffe (Labour)	25	16.6	15.8	26	18.3	20
Peters (NZFirst)	11.7	5.6	5.3	9.5	18.3	11.4
Norman (Greens)	5	8.3	7.9	9.5	6.4	6.3
Harre (Internet/Mana)	11.7	1.4	3.9	5.2	2.8	4.6
Turei (Greens)	3.3	9.7	0	1	0.9	2.3
Harawira (Internet/Mana)	8.3	0	2.6	1	5.6	2.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

All Party Leaders

MINOR PARTIES BLOC

Visual Press Bias in the 2014 NZ General Election

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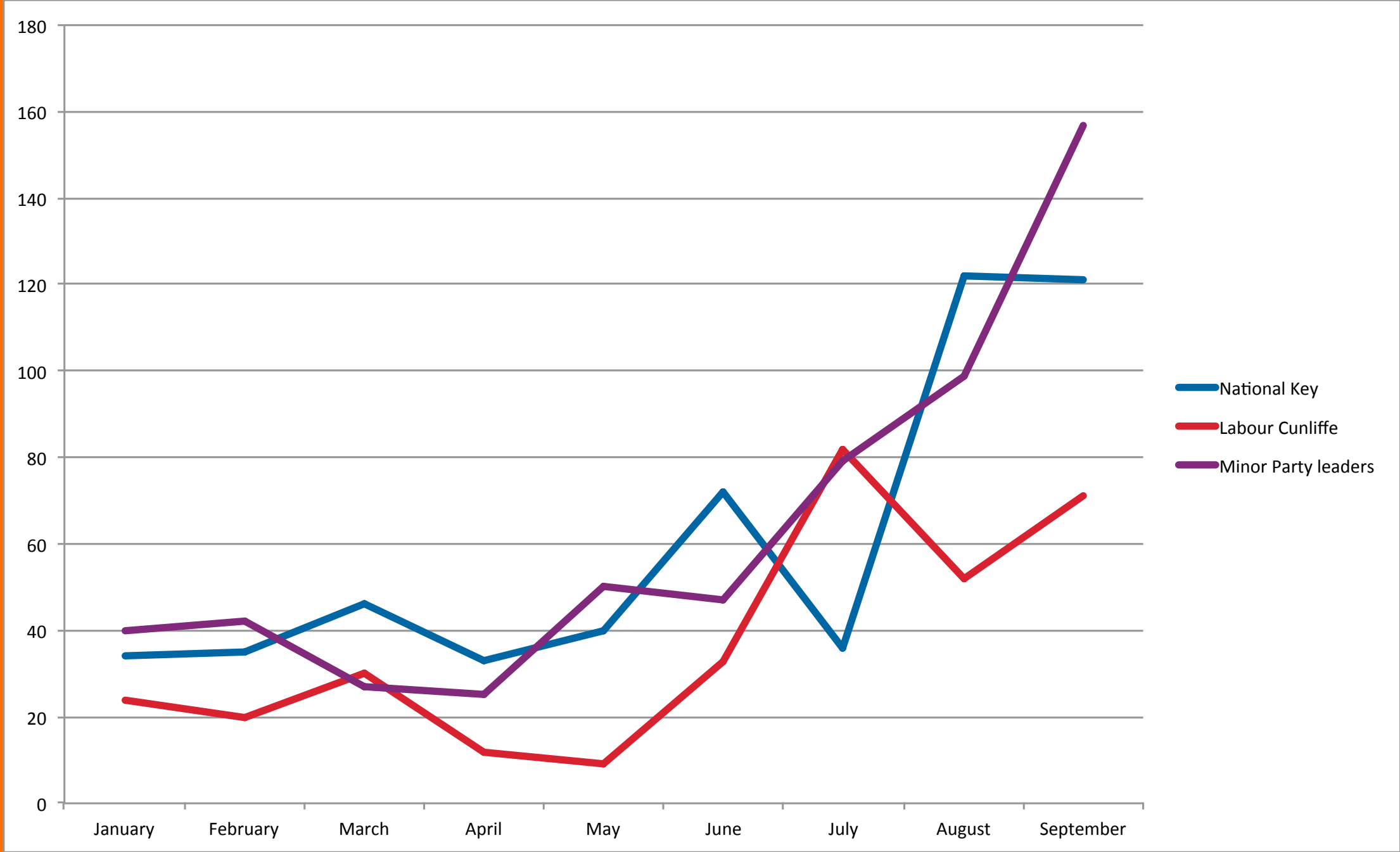
All Party Leaders

INCUMBENTS V

CHALLENGERS

Chart legend:
- National Key
- Labour Cunliffe
- Minor Incumbent
- Minor Challenger

'KING/MAKERS' V OTHERS

Chart legend:
- National/NZFirst/Conservatives
- Labour/Greens/InternetMana

Design
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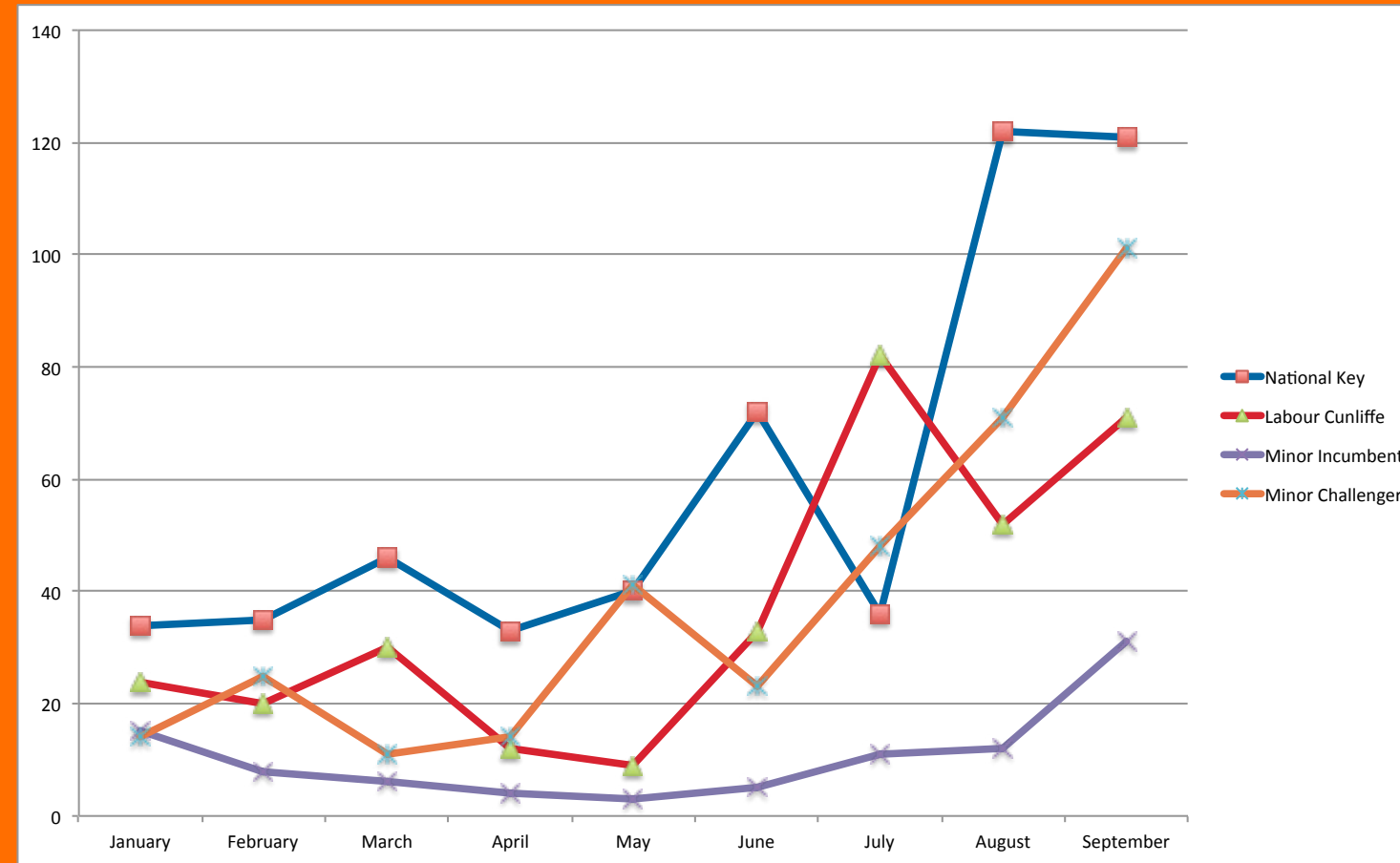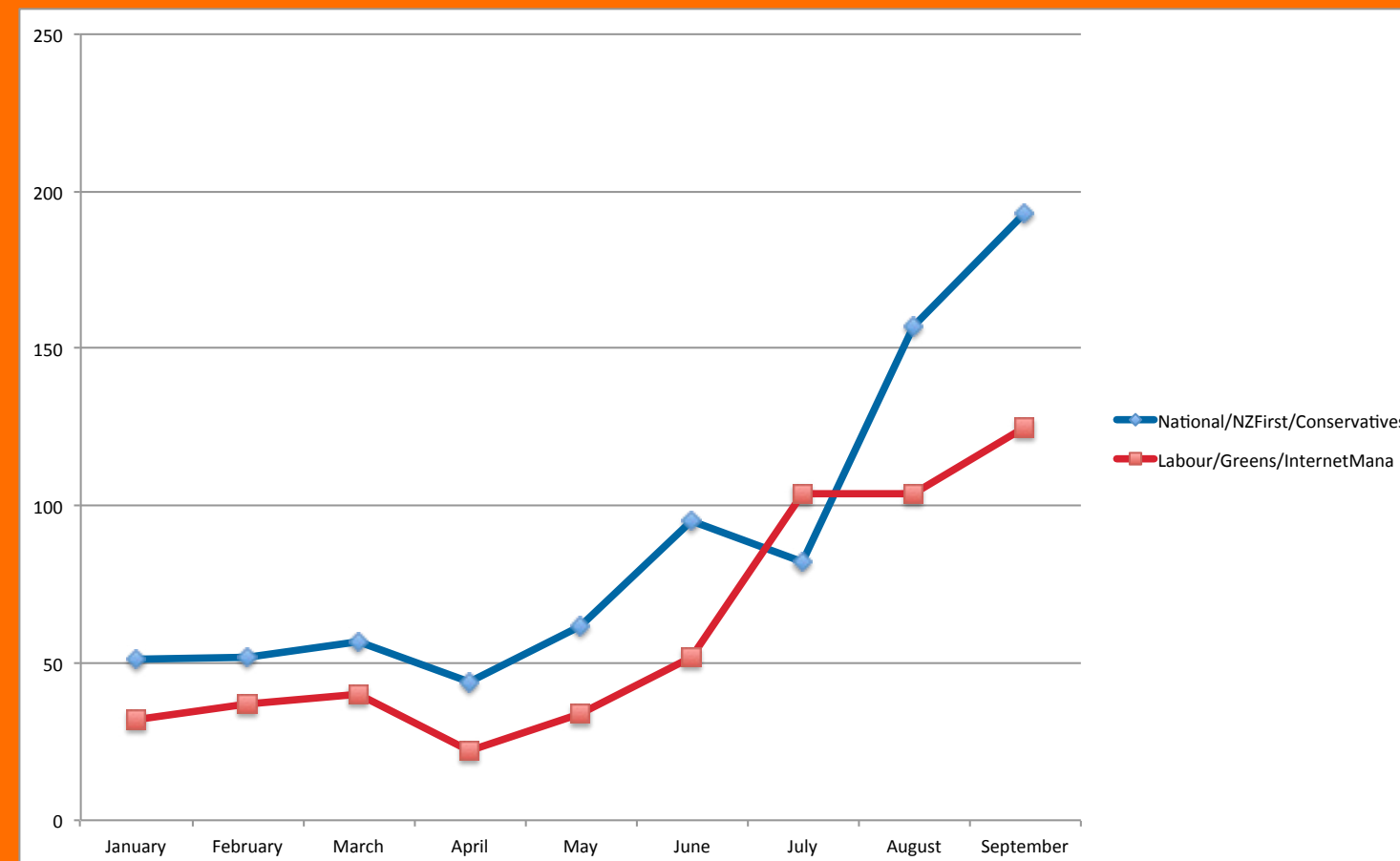
"Pretty much every time we featured Colin we did so mockingly …. He made a fantastic target for humour"

(Jane Clifton, Moments of Truth 2014, p. 188)

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INDIVIDUAL LEADER	Full Year number	Most Published Individual
John Key (National)	539	1
David Cunliffe (Labour)	333	2
Winston Peters (New Zealand First)	130	3
Colin Craig (Conservatives)	123	4
Russel Norman (Greens)	76	5
Laila Harre (Internet/Mana)	55	6
Hone Harawira (Internet/Mana)	54	7
Jamie Whyte (ACT)	47	8
Metiria Turei (Greens)	34	9
Peter Dunne (United Future)	27	10
Te Ururoa Flavell (Maori)	19	11
Tariana Turia (Maori)	4	12
TOTAL	1441	

PARTY	Most Published Party	2014 Party vote
National	1	1
Labour	2	2
New Zealand First	3	4
Conservatives	4	5
Greens	5	3
Internet/Mana	6	6
ACT	7	8
United Future	8	9
Maori	9	7

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Co Leaders

Metiria Turei **35%**
Russel Norman **65%**

Tariana Turia **13%**
Te Ururoa Flavell **87%**

Laila Harre **49.5%**
Hone Harawira **50.5%**
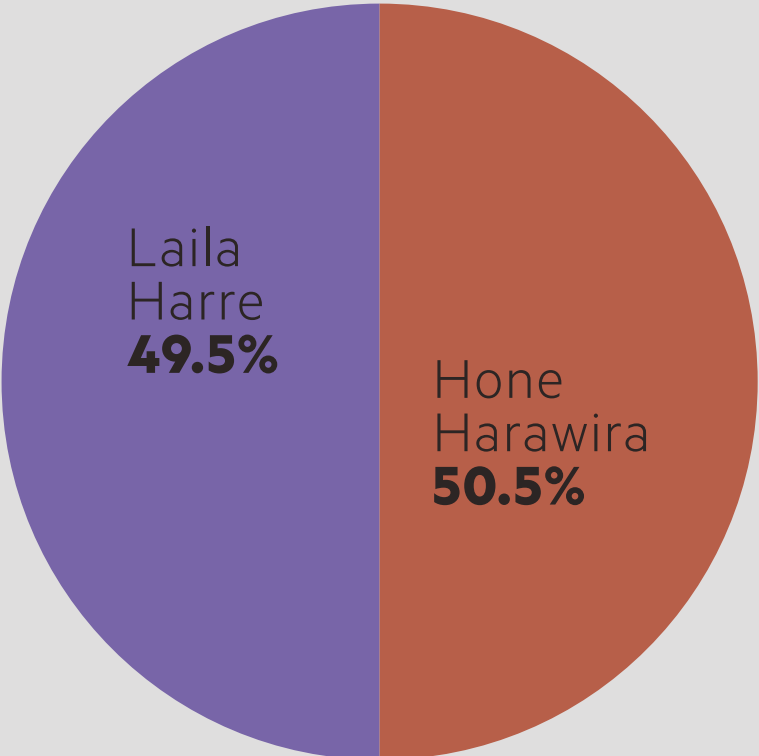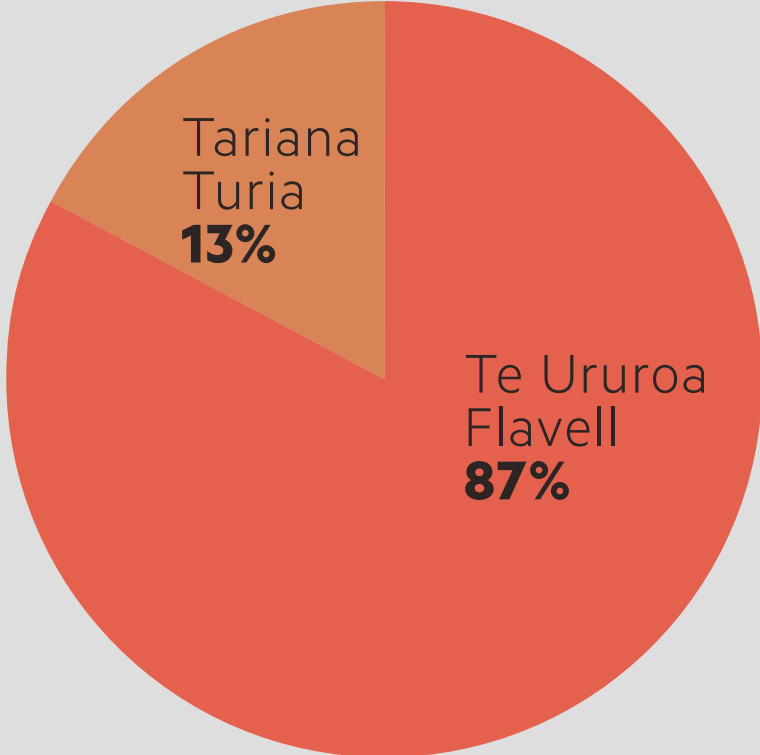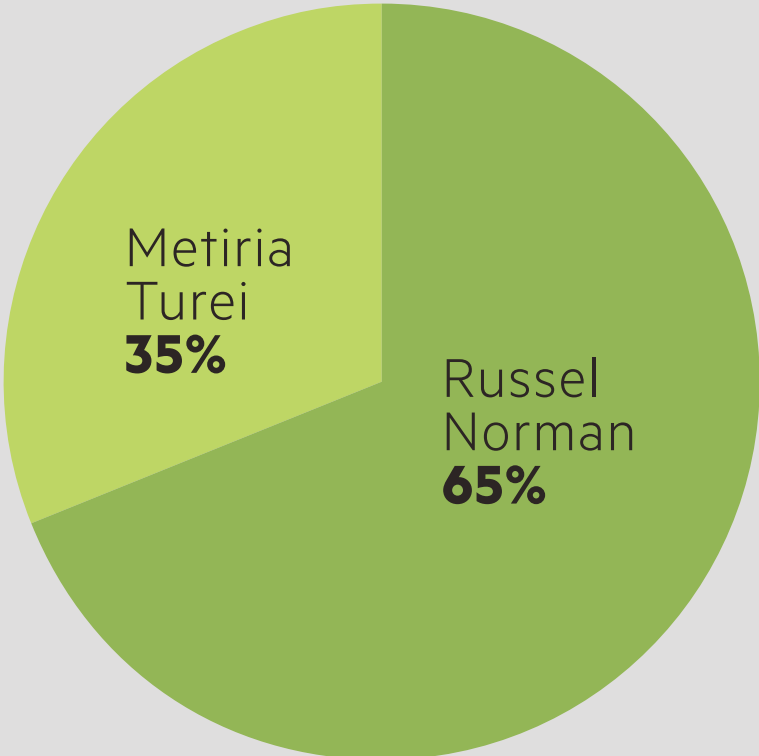
Insights

1: 2011 results weren't anomalous

2: Practically invisible if didn't tick a limited
range of news factors:

+ Being major incumbent leader

+ Having a lead in polls and likely to 'win'

+ Having 'kingmaker' coalition potential

+ Being pakeha and male

+ Challenging the press for control of the news agenda

Press as actor

Hacked emails. Dirty politics. Burning effigies, inquiries and investigations
Welcome to Campaign 2014.

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+Democracy

Cybernetic Director

Nominated by Matías Duarte, VP, Material Design at Google

Cybernetic directors will be responsible for the creative vision and autonomous execution of highly personalized media services. They will train cybernetic art directors and visual-design bots in the distinct visual language of a brand. They will provide conceptual leadership on creative projects from starting point through execution, and will actively participate in the growth and development of machine-learning infrastructure to keep current with innovations.

Cybernetic directors will need to be well versed in the visual language and traditions of North American audiences and their subcultures. The job requires at least four years of formal training in visual communication, graphic arts, modern American studies, or equivalent, and at least 10 years of relevant experience working in media, communications or entertainment. Exposure and familiarity with modern popular Western media is a bonus, but not a substitute. Also requires experience with learning systems training and reasonable fluency in HALtalk 9000, Lovelace++, and human-cyborg relations.

"IN FIVE YEARS MACHINE LEARNING WILL ENABLE COMPUTERS TO MAKE THE KINDS OF AESTHETIC CHOICES THAT HUMANS MAKE TODAY."

In five years machine learning will enable computers to make the kinds of aesthetic choices that humans make today—the more on the production end of the spectrum, the more quickly it will happen. This will enable massively more personalized experiences. Imagine reading a magazine article where the photo editor wasn't just aware of you as part of a broad demographic, but knew your visual fluency and consumption more intimately than your spouse. Yet who teaches the computers to make those creative choices? How do we balance the possibilities of personalization when each article wants to have its own editorial flavor, each publication its own style? Training and directing creative machines will be one of the most exciting and important creative jobs of the future. It's starting today.

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

Claire Robinson
Clairerobinsonnz.com
@spinprofessor

designdemocracy.ac.nz
@designdem

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