

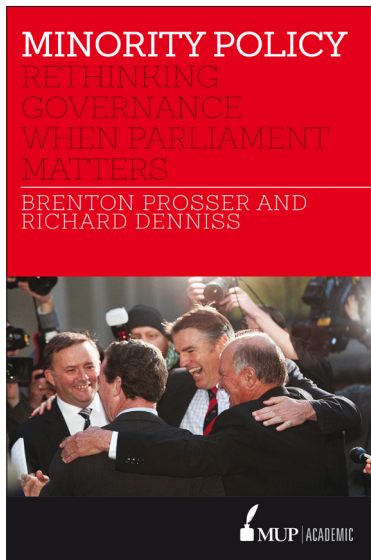
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MINORITY POLICY

Rethinking Governance When Parliament Matters

by Brenton Prosser & Richard Denniss

'You can't understand contemporary Australian politics if you don't understand how the crossbench and the backbench work ... this book provides insight into how policy is really made and how politics really works.'—
FORMER INDEPENDENT MP TONY WINDSOR

Topical and up-to-the-minute, *Minority Policy: Rethinking Governance When Parliament Matters* explores the influence of marginal parliamentarians both within the major parties and on the cross benches in the formations of contemporary public policy.

Despite Australia having minority government in some form for almost three decades, in theoretical and popular terms it seems that this nation has not yet come to terms with minority as the new norm. Further, prominent policy cycle theory overlooks the subtle but significant influence of marginal parliamentarians on public policy. This book argues that these influences not only have important implications for the outcomes of public policy, but also the work of policy scholars, departmental policy makers and policy advocates.

Drawing on the experiences of two former policy advisers who have worked at the coalface of policy-making, as well as on examples from the last two parliaments, *Minority Policy* takes the discussion up to and beyond the introduction of the new Senate in July 2014 to take in the significant impact of this much more complex Upper House.

Dr Brenton Prosser was Senior Policy Adviser to Senator Nick Xenophon during the period when the Senator first shared the balance of power in the Australian Senate. He has previously published three books on health and education policy, as well as numerous papers in the areas of parliamentary integrity, media and politics. Currently, he is a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian National University.

Dr Richard Denniss was Chief of Staff to the leader of the Australian Democrats, Natasha Stott Despoja, during the period that party held the balance of power in the Senate. He is now Executive Director to the Australia Institute policy think tank. He has recently published the book *An Introduction to Australian Public Policy: theory and practice* with Sarah Maddison, and is the co-author (with Clive Hamilton) of the bestselling book, *Affluenza: When Too Much is Never Enough*.

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