

‘Reframing’ the big issues for a transformational government

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<https://doi.org/10.34074/whan.007105>

Abstract:

It is widely agreed that, while Jacinda Ardern’s first term as Prime Minister achieved many positive social and economic changes, her Labour Government has not yet proved to be the transformational administration that was promised. (In the Speech from the Throne, delivered to Parliament on 26 November 2020, the government reiterated its commitment to deal with child poverty, homelessness and the climate crisis [New Zealand Government, 2020].) A number of commentators, including lawyer Cat McLennan (2020) and economist Colin James (2020), have suggested that Ardern may not have the courage to carry through on her promise to make the radical moves that a serious focus on wellbeing for everyone would require. On the other hand, Anne Salmond, in a wonderful article for the online newspaper Newsroom immediately after the election, argued that Jacinda Ardern is not the cautious leader that McLennan, James and others see – rather she is “bold and visionary,” while understanding “the need to take New Zealanders with her on the wild ride ahead” (2020, para. 6).

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This publication may be cited as:

Hanne, M. (2021). ‘Reframing’ the big issues for a transformational government, *Whanake: The Pacific Journal of Community Development*, 7(1), 96–109.
<https://doi.org/10.34074/whan.007105>

About this journal:

Whanake: The Pacific Journal of Community Development is a digital journal for practitioners and academics who love community development. For more issues please visit:
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ISSN
2423-009X