ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book began as a small graduate school project. A professor saw my interest in parties and elections and my curiosity about California politics and encouraged me to dig a little bit. So I dug. I was astounded to find that, as recently as the 1950s, California had nearly nonexistent legislative parties, and it appeared that most state legislative elections were going uncontested. I was interested, as was my professor, who encouraged me to find out more.

That professor, who later became my mentor, colleague, and friend, is John Zaller. Although he is primarily known for his work in public opinion, he had come to develop an interest in party organization right around the time I started graduate school. The little research project he was prodding me to pursue ultimately became the book you are holding now. His encouragement, his enthusiasm for the project, and the high standards he sets for his own work and for that of his students fueled my long but fascinating journey into the history of California's political parties and helped me develop a deeper understanding of my home state. John Zaller's mentorship remains my touchstone as I work with students of my own.

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