Digital Media, Ground Wars and Party Organisation: Does Stratarchy Explain How Parties Organise Election Campaigns?

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Campaigning is an essential function of modern political parties. According to some of the most well-known and widely-cited parts of the party scholarship it is also one of the defining features of party organisation. Yet this centrality is not reflected in the recent literature which has analysed the power dynamics within contemporary party organisations. These analyses have focused on a variety of party related functions, but none have considered campaigning. In this article, I apply the theory of stratarchical party organisation to campaigning in two Australian cases. Drawing on extensive interview data with those at the cutting edge of campaigning in these parties, I argue that there is evidence to suggest that the stratarchical model can explain how parties organise a modern campaign. However, unlike recent analyses, I argue that there is evidence of both power-sharing and mutual autonomy.

Keywords: Campaigning, Comparative Politics, Digital, Elections, Party Organisation

Campaigning has significant implications for party organisation. The party organisation literature has told us this time and time again. In making the case for the cartel party thesis, Katz and Mair (1995, p. 136), for example, cited the 'nature of party work and party campaigning' as one of the central characteristics of their ideal-types of party organisation. Similarly, in outlining his electoral-professional party type, Panebianco (1988) noted how important changing modes of political communication were for shaping party organisation. Yet despite this emphasis on campaigning in the theoretical literature on party organisation, there are few original contributions which test whether our theories and models about how parties organise and where intra-party power lies matches the empirical reality of campaigning. This is clearly a problem for party scholars as

theoretical models of party organisation which exclude campaigning will only ever provide partial explanations. This article bridges this divide by analysing two cases from Australia and tests whether the way these parties organise their election campaigns reflects the stratarchical model of party organisation. Recent discussions of stratarchy within parties has focused on a variety of party related functions and included both single country and comparative analyses (Cross and Gauja, 2014a,b; Cross, 2016). However, none of these have focused on campaigning. In testing whether the stratarchical model of party organisation can explain the way parties campaign, this article aims to contribute to the multi-faceted debates about the evolution of political parties and intra-party power. It will also provide some much needed answers about campaigning, which Farrell (2006, p. 130) has said remains 'one of the most secret of gardens'.

Australian parties and Australian federal elections provide excellent cases to test whether stratarchy is applicable to party organisation for a few reasons. First and foremost, because of federalism, Australian parties, while organisationally diverse, have structures which makes distinguishing between different party layers straightforward. This is important as stratarchy is about autonomy and the degree to which power is concentrated or dispersed. Hence, by investigating how dispersed power is between local, state and national party units, the degree to which campaigns are organised along stratarchical lines can be determined. Second, Australian federal elections present an opportunity to determine what level of autonomy and/or power sharing is present due to the multi-level focus required because of the mixed electoral system. By utilising Alternative Vote (AV) in the House of Representatives and Single Transferable Vote (STV) in the Senate, elections are simultaneously fought on local, regional and national issues.[1] While Australia has employed compulsory voting since 1924, this provides further opportunities for analysis. According to Gibson and McAllister (2011), 'significant gains in candidates' support in the Australian system can only occur through the conversion of existing voter preferences rather than mobilization of latent preferences'. Theoretically, then, the need for a well-established 'ground war' and stratarchical organisational structures should be less than in other jurisdictions with voluntary voting as mobilisation is not required.

In analysing these cases, my aim is to investigate whether the evidence suggests that the way these parties organise their election campaigns reflects the

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[1]This should not be taken to mean that, for example, in a jurisdiction with a unicameral legislature that uses the single-member-plurality electoral system, that this is not possible or that elections are also not fought on multiple levels. However, the institutional structure in Australia allows different layers of the one party to be clearly identified. This is important here as this is the first article which has attempted to test whether the way parties organise their campaigns reflects the stratarchical model of party organisation.

stratarchical model of party organisation. In undertaking this analysis, I rely primarily on interview data generated from interviews with 31 party officials and key party figures who are at the cutting-edge of campaigning in Australia. An initial round of interviews was conducted between February and September 2015. Some interviewees were asked for a follow-up interview in May and June 2016. A second round of interviews were conducted between February and June 2017. Interviewees were selected based on their experience working on recent campaigns at the federal level in Australia. They included current and former state and assistant state secretaries of the ALP, current and former state directors of the Greens, as well as national office staff in both parties. Each interviewee has an intimate knowledge of how campaigns are organised in these parties and there is diversity in terms of their campaigning skillsets. While some interviewees specialise in field campaigns, others specialise in digital campaigning. All interviews were conducted on the basis that their anonymity was to be maintained and therefore no details about the region they come from or the specific role they perform is provided.

As the focus of this article is to test the stratarchy thesis, interviewees were asked a range of questions relating to intra-party power, as well as to the four modes of campaigning (discussed further along). This included: how campaigning, if at all, has changed over the past decade; what implications any changes have had on intra-party power; who controls specific aspects of the campaign, for example, the direct mail strategy; and, how the interviewee would characterise the level of power and autonomy that national and sub-national party units have over campaigning. Unlike other areas of party organisation where there is generally an official or formal story available in the party documents, there is usually no official campaigning story. Campaigning is shrouded in secrecy as parties try to closely guard the strategies they employ and the success of these strategies. It is only through fine-grained qualitative research, therefore, that the unofficial story about how these parties campaign can be unpacked and related to our theoretical models of party organisation. This article will proceed in the following way: I begin by considering the literature on campaigning and party organisation. I then proceed to test the stratarchical thesis by applying it to how campaigns are organised in the two cases. I conclude by considering what the findings from these cases can tell us about campaigning and party organisational theory.

1. Campaigning and party organisational theory

Modern campaigns are often defined by their use of big data, micro-targeting, campaign consultants, and the centrality of parliamentary leaders and the party headquarters in shaping a message (Smith, 2009). Norris (2000, p. 138), as one example, has previously theorised that campaigning can be divided up into three

distinct eras. First, was the pre-modern era typified by direct communication. Second, was the modern era which was typified by the linkages between voters and parties declining and communication occurring primarily through broadcasting via the mass media. Finally, in the post-modern era, Norris argued, the links between parties and voters returned, but this was largely superficial, via micro-targeting. Campaigning was therefore largely viewed as capital intensive rather than labour intensive (Gibson and Römmele, 2001).

This account is now unquestionably dated. Technological and social change in the last decade has meant that parties are increasingly focussed on methods of persuasion that challenge this heuristic about how campaigns have evolved. While it is unquestionably true that campaigns remain capital intensive, recent developments suggest that there is a renewed focus on mobilisation and in-person canvassing. For example, it has been evident in a variety of recent election campaigns across advanced democracies that there is a re-emphasis on voter contact and the 'ground game' (BBC, 2010; Mills, 2014b). The success of Barack Obama's campaigns in the 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns are important in this regard as they provided a playbook on how to combine data with field campaigns, how to use social media effectively and fundraising with a focus on small donations (Nielsen, 2012; Chen, 2013; McKenna and Han, 2014, p. 28). To systematically explore what impact campaigning has on party organisation, then, we need to return to the literature on how parties organise themselves. While this is multi-faceted, Scarrow *et al.* (2017, p. 7), have said there are four structural sub-dimensions which allow scholars to answer questions about party organisation and show 'the location of decision-making within the party, and at what level (if at all) these decisions are enforced'. Of the four they outline, it is the 'centralisation-localisation' dimension of relevance here. Put simply, this is the degree to which a party is centralised or decentralised on a range of party functions.

These debates are far from new. In considering party structures, Eldersveld (1964, p. 9) considered whether a 'special type of hierarchy obtains in parties . . . stratarchy'. In seeking to dispel the argument that parties were inherently oligarchic (Michels, 1911), Eldersveld (1964, p. 9) argued, that 'strata commands exist which operate with a varying, but considerable degree of independence'. This meant that local units developed their own processes, norms and structures to deal with conditions on the ground while still maintaining integration at the national level. In reflecting on debates about where power lies in party organisations with specific reference to the 'three faces' of party organisation—the party on the ground, the party in the centre and the party in public office— Mair (1994, p. 17) would say that debates about whether one face or another was becoming more powerful were perhaps misleading. Instead, he suggested, 'we may actually be witnessing a process of mutual and growing autonomy'. Mair (1994, p. 17) would go on to say that there was widespread consensus that

relationships between different party units were more 'stratarchical than hierarchical'.

While agreeing with the general thrust of what Mair (1994)—and Katz and Mair (1995)—would say about stratarchy, Carty (2004) would operationalise stratarchical party organisation more clearly by suggesting the level of autonomy party units possessed would not be set or be the same in different parties. Instead, it would be on a *continuum of stratarchy*. This model, which Carty (2004, p. 10) referred to as a franchise system, could be centralised, decentralised or federalised. In building on the work of Carty (2004), Bolleyer (2012), paid specific attention to what she argues scholars have often overlooked in the Carty model; the hierarchical features inherent in it. In noting this, Bolleyer (2012, pp. 317–318) suggests that Carty's model is actually located 'in the middle of a continuum of power-concentration and power-dispersion'. Along the continuum are three models of party organisation: party hierarchy, party stratarchy and party federation. In Bolleyer's view, then, stratarchy can be understood as, 'a division of labour between two mutually dependent yet distinguishable levels to which functionally different competences are assigned, none of which is able to fully dominate the other' (2012, p. 351). Moreover, stratarchy can therefore be defined 'as a template for party organisation based on the notion that power in a party cannot be located in one single place' (Bolleyer, 2012, p. 136). While this model of stratarchy has recently been applied to a variety of party related functions and included both single country and comparative analyses (Cross and Gauja, 2014*a*, *b*; Cross, 2016), none of these have analysed campaigning.

While there may be some debate about what activities should and should not be considered campaigning, the interviews conducted for this project suggested that there are four pillars of the modern election campaign in parliamentary democracies. These are: direct mail, legacy media advertising, digital and field campaigns. As campaigning is informal and part of the unofficial rather than the official story of how parties organise themselves, using the categories that the campaigners themselves use means that greater understanding of the informal practices and beliefs of these actors can be attained. This is consistent with the interpretive tradition that guides this research and will therefore allow a distinction to be drawn between the formal and informal organisational structures of these parties. Stratarchy is also important in this regard as this framework allows scholars to capture and theorise the behavioural and therefore informal dimensions of party organisations which are more nuanced than what party documents suggest. While in recent analyses of stratarchy, Cross (2016) focussed on large governing parties and Bolleyer (2012) focussed on newer minor parties, this analysis will use one major party and one minor party. While Cross (2016) and Bolleyer (2012) provided important insights, they do overlook important institutional pressures. For example, what effect the electoral system has on parties large

and small. Indeed, if stratarchy really is a continuum, then different parties should resolve the same intra-party challenges in different ways. This should tell us a great deal about stratarchical party organisation and the stratarchical imperative that parties face. These parties also have very different *formal* organisational structures. The Greens are formally organised along confederal lines, while the ALP is formally organised along federal lines. Considering what we already know about stratarchy and these parties, we can hypothesise that *informally* the ALP is likely to reflect Bolleyer's (2012) stratarchical model with power-sharing between the party's head office and the sub-national parties. The Greens, in contrast, should *informally* reflect Bolleyer's (2012) federal model with the sub-national parties having a significant amount of autonomy.

2. Unpacking the riddle of campaigning

The two parties analysed here are vastly different. The ALP is Australia's oldest surviving party and, as a result, has had to evolve, adjust and respond to multiple changes in the political landscape. The ALP *was* a classic mass party. What it became next is, like so many other parties, a source of serious debate. Electoral-professional, catch-all and cartel have all been used to describe the modern ALP (Warhurst and Parkin, 2000; Jaensch, 2006; Ward, 2006). Nonetheless, there is widespread agreement among Australian scholars that the way the ALP campaigns dramatically changed from the late 1960s (Ward, 2006, p. 77; Mills, 2015, pp. 121–123). Not immune to broader societal changes, the ALP embraced the broadcast style campaigning synonymous with the spread of television (Mills, 1986, pp. 1–2). From the 1990s, the ALP started to develop a web presence and by 2010, social media became a part of the mediums they were using. Then, in 2013, as Chen (2015, p. 82) noted, 'a wider range of channels were employed, including email, search and display advertising'.

The Australian Greens sit at the apex of a confederation which consists of the various state based green parties. While they had previously been more successful at the sub-national level, the Greens have successfully remained in the Australian Senate since 1998.[2] Since 2010, they have also held the seat of Melbourne in the House of Representatives. Beyond these federal representatives, at the time of writing the Greens had an additional 23 members of parliament (MPs) in the states and territories. Core to the in-roads the Greens are making in many inner-city seats in the House of Representatives is, according to interviewees from the party, the growing appreciation and focus on campaigning. These developments are technological, in that they include the growing use of content management

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[2]The West Australian Greens did have representation in the Senate prior to this, however, they were not formal members of the Australian Greens till 2003.

systems such as Nation Builder, but they are also agential. Increasing and improving the training of those involved in their campaigns has been critical. The Greens are now active participants in the digital space (see Gibson and McAllister, 2015, p. 537), but have also embraced field campaigns.

Campaigning is unlike any other aspect of party organisation for the simple fact that it is subject to disruption technologies and there is no formal story about campaigning. In terms of the core areas of party organisation, campaigning has changed the most and the most often. Indeed, even those modes of campaigning which appear to have remained largely the same since the 1970s such as television advertising or direct mail are no longer simply about market saturation. Instead, these legacy techniques are underpinned by growing datasets that the parties have on the electorate. In the words of one interviewee: 'Better use of data and targeting means that direct mail and TV are like voter contact and social media and are now much more effective in persuading voters'. To unpack the riddle of where power lies in parties when it comes to campaigning, each of the four modes of campaigning outlined previously will now be discussed.

2.1 Direct mail

Direct mail may appear to be archaic or 'unsexy' given the data and digital revolutions, however, parties large and small continue to utilise it as a cornerstone of most campaigns. According to Renner (2012, p. 112), one of the key reasons that direct mail remains a key campaigning mode is for the simple reason that most voters still read their mail and parties can try to explain their positions in more detail as they know many voters will open mail addressed to them. In the Australian context, there is also another reason the parties continue to use direct mail. While the parties spend significant resources on maintaining a database on the electorate, the most accurate information they still have on Australian voters comes from the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) who provide Australian parties with the electoral roll which includes the addresses of all registered voters.

In discussing direct mail with interviewees from both the ALP and the Greens, two important points were raised. First, what was clear was that both parties still had a direct mail strategy, and this was going to continue for the foreseeable future. However, the spend on this mode of campaigning was either unlikely to increase or was going backwards as a proportion of total campaign spend. This was, it was explained, directly related to the success of field campaigns and digital. Second, and with specific reference to who had autonomy over direct mail, this was consistent across interviewees in both parties. The sub-national party organisation had total control of direct mail in both cases. In other words, the state and territory based parties in both the ALP and the Greens have total autonomy over direct mail and their head offices were not involved in the content used or the

strategy devised. This was especially important according to interviewees as the state based parties would shape their messages to suit local contexts and opportunities. Considering the use of AV in the House of Representatives this makes sense, as local units will be better informed about the local context and the issues resonating strongly in each electorate. Whether this would remain the case if the only electoral system used was a multi-member nationwide electorate contest is debatable. Nonetheless, this may be indicative of the stratarchy continuum as the parties would inevitably respond differently if the campaigns occurred in multi-member electoral contests.

2.2 Legacy advertising

Like direct mail, legacy media advertising (television, radio, print), is often seen as unfashionable, yet it also remains part of the campaigning arsenal that most parties use. The problem in the Australian context, like that of other jurisdictions, is that when it comes to legacy media, the media landscape is now highly fragmented. One high profile campaigner contextualised this in the following way: 'When I first started out as a campaign director you could literally buy an ad on commercial television on Sunday night and know you were going to hit 40 per cent of the audience. That is really just hopeless now'. It is extremely difficult to know with any degree of certainty what Australia's political parties spend on legacy media advertising as Australian electoral laws allow the parties to not disclose what they spend their funds on (Young, 2015). Nonetheless, the evidence suggests this is decreasing as a percentage of total campaign spend based on responses from interviewees.

Legacy media advertising is viewed differently by campaigners from the two cases. While the ALP is a major party with significant financial resources and has used legacy media extensively, the Greens have far fewer financial resources and rarely use legacy media advertising. This partially explains each parties' approach. Put simply, the ALP still uses legacy media advertising, though this is decreasing, while the Greens maintain what could be described as a minimalist presence. In terms of who had control over legacy media advertising, in the ALP, this was described by interviewees as a shared responsibility. One interviewee said that, in his experience, 'broadcast advertising (TV and radio) is led nationally. State office provides input early and ads are researched locally before going to air'. While another suggested that because of the challenge of managing a mixed electoral system as well as to streamline messaging that, 'Some of the advertising content was nation-wide, and some was state focussed'. Print media was the only point of difference here and this only related to hyper-local content. In these instances, this would be managed by what is effectively 'the party on the ground' (Katz and Mair, 1994). As a result, while the party in the national head office had the core

responsibility and significant control due to the need to maintain consistent messaging and spent a considerable time developing their broadcast messages, they worked with the sub-national party office to manage this challenge. But there were three layers contributing to this area of campaigning.

For the Greens the situation was somewhat similar. But to use the language of Carty (2004, p. 9), their position on the stratarchical continuum was different. In regard to this mode of campaigning they were more in line with the party federation from Bolleyer (2012, p. 320). While they are similar to the ALP in that there was a tension that had to be managed between national and sub-national campaigns, the majority of interviewees from the Greens stressed the level of autonomy the sub-national parties had over legacy media advertising. But some interviewees noted how this was changing. According to one interviewee, 'the national office has played an increased role in managing advertising buys and deciding the content strategy, but still requires the delegated authority of state campaigns to make these decisions on their behalf'. Again, it is important to stress that legacy media advertising has never been a core part of the Greens repertoire as it has been in the ALP. Hence, while there are similarities here with the ALP, the evidence suggests that power ultimately remains with the sub-national parties, even though this authority is gradually moving towards the national head office.

2.3 Digital

While there may be some debate about what constitutes digital and the ways in which it overlaps with some aspects of, for example, the contemporary field campaign (Kreiss, 2012; Gibson, 2015; Vromen, 2016), for the purposes of this analysis digital will refer to all online messaging which aims to go *directly* from parties to voters. This contrasts with the use of digital media technologies to co-ordinate party members and supporters which will be discussed as part of the field campaigns. Digital here, then, includes the use of social media such as Twitter, Facebook and email to message, advertise and fundraise. In general, interviewees suggested that email was the primary digital tool used for fundraising, while social media, and especially Facebook, was primarily being used for messaging, including micro-targeting (see also Gauja, 2017, p. 70). The digital space is therefore not a broadcast form of communication, but neither is it simply about voter engagement. As Karpf (2016) has noted in relation to online organisations, digital is also about listening, measuring and testing. The use of a variety of big data tools to analyse social media has facilitated this and parliamentary parties across advanced parliamentary democracies have replicated the tactics of the Obama campaigns and a variety of online movements such as MoveOn (Karpf, 2012; Vromen and Coleman, 2013).

Both parties analysed have enthusiastically embraced the digital space. While there is secrecy around how many supporters the parties have signed up to email lists and digital communications, it has been noted by Vromen (2016, p. 88) that the Greens has 80, 000 people signed up to receive digital communications. According to one ALP interviewee, the growth in the digital space is evident in their burgeoning ability to fundraise via email and the number of voter contacts they achieve online. They said that 'In 2010 we had an email list of 70, 000 and we raised around $30, 000. In the 2013 election, we had an email list of 150, 000 people and we raised a million dollars. By the next election, we want an email list of close to a million people and to raise 3 million'. Within the ALP, interviewees overwhelmingly agreed that the sub-national parties had little influence or authority over the digital space in terms of the messaging the party utilised via digital mediums. Interviewees did note, however, that hyper-local digital communications would be co-ordinated at the electorate level. Hence, the 'party on the ground' were also playing a role.

In contrast to this, Green interviewees told a different story. Most suggested that digital messaging was primarily controlled at the sub-national level. While there would be regular communication between the state based parties and the national head office about strategy, digital teams at the state level would co-ordinate and implement the plans of the state or territory election committee. Interviewees did, however, note two caveats. First, the messaging from the sub-national parties was often layered with, what one interviewee described as, 'broad digital campaigns which are not geographically targeted but managed nationally without direction from the state bodies'. Second, like legacy media, it was noted by some interviewees that the national head office was increasingly playing an influential role in the digital space, but they still required the state parties to delegate it authority. According to interviewees, the frequency of this was increasing.

2.4 Field campaigns

The increased focus that parties are placing on having a well-organised field campaign appears puzzling when the literature on party organisation and campaigning in parliamentary democracies is reviewed. This is especially evident when the burgeoning literature from the US on field campaigns is explored (Nielsen, 2012; McKenna and Han, 2014). In describing field campaigns in the US, Nielsen (2012, p. 7) argues that American political campaigns are now pursuing 'personalized political communication'. Central to this approach are doorknocking and phonebanks, but the 'ground war' is increasingly informed by data to allow field organisers to co-ordinate volunteers for maximum impact. Hence, field campaigns here involve parties using their members and supporters to canvass voters and generate resources (Gibson, 2015). In Australia, canvassing has long been a

part of the 'ground war' (Mills, 2015, p. 123). But as Kreiss (2015, p. 118) has noted, the 'Internet has significantly amplified certain electoral practices'. The increased focus on field campaigns in Australia as well as in other parliamentary democracies in recent times supports this argument.

In terms of the locus of power when it comes to the field campaign, interviewees almost unanimously suggested that the state based parties had autonomy over the strategy and co-ordination of the 'ground war'. In the ALP, interviewees noted that in each state or territory they would have a field director who would lead the campaign, with individual field managers in each seat. Informing this, according to one interviewee, were 'data metrics reported on a daily basis to the field director and our campaign committee'. Interviewees all noted that the national office still had some input, contributed whatever data they had and worked with the sub-national party to create a list of target seats or regions. However, the success of these field campaigns were still dependent on the state based party implementing their strategy, attracting enough volunteers to door-knock, phonebank and to canvass voters which they did autonomously from the national office (Mills, 2014*b*; Murphy, 2016).

In terms of the Greens, the situation was similar except the role of the 'party on the ground' was also noted as important. One interviewee put it this way, 'The state parties are responsible for voter contact activities and all have different capacities and priorities, but in general, field organising is an activity that is shared between state and electorate teams'. Therefore, in the Greens, like the ALP, the state based parties played a critical role and had autonomy over the field campaign, but they also had input from the grassroots. What role the national office had, according to interviewees, was to provide infrastructure, materials and training to enable field organising as necessary. Another point raised by some interviewees was that, like the ALP, the Greens were utilising data to refine their messaging and it was suggested by some interviewees that this may lead to some level of centralisation in the future. But at present the state based parties and the party on the ground had shared autonomy over this mode of campaigning.

2.5 Campaigning and stratarchical party organisation

While these components of the modern campaign have been unpacked so that a systematic analysis of stratarchical party organisation can occur, the reality is that they overlap with one another. Indeed, this is the purpose. Layering the messaging with voter contact is an integral part of the strategy behind modern campaigns. In discussing field campaigns, Nielsen (2012, p. 9) suggested that the 'ground war is fought under the cover of an air war'. While what constituted the 'air war' might be slightly different for each party analysed here, maintaining ground and air offensives alongside one another was certainly consistent with the overarching

Table 1 Which party layer had authority over X mode of campaigning?

	ALP	Greens
Direct Mail	Sub-national	Sub-national
Legacy Media	Shared but national office more powerful	Shared but sub-national more powerful
Digital	National office	Sub-national but role of national office increasing
Field	Sub-national	Sub-national and local campaign teams

Table 2 Which of the following do you think best describes the relationship between head office and the state/territory based parties during a federal election with specific reference to campaigning?

	ALP	Greens
Power-sharing	11	6
Head office is dominant	0	0
State/territory party has a large degree of autonomy	6	8

goals and strategies of those interviewed. A summation of the previous analysis of the various modes of campaigning is captured in Table 1. What this suggests is that there are some pockets of autonomy in both cases in how they organise campaigns. In the ALP, the sub-national parties have control of direct mail and the field campaigns, while the national office has significant control of digital and greater control over legacy media advertising. In contrast, in the Greens, the sub-national parties dominate, but there is some evidence that suggests this is changing and the national office is playing an increasingly significant role.

In relating these findings back to the stratarchy thesis and to Bolleyer's three models of party organisation, interviewees were also asked whether they thought that the best description of how the party was organised was power-sharing, the national head office was dominant, or the sub-national party was dominant. The results, shown in Table 2, illustrate the way that parties with different *formal* organisational structures try to resolve the same problems *informally.* If the Bolleyer (2012) framework is applied, the ALP broadly fits the way stratarchy is operationalised. This confirms the earlier hypothesis. The Greens, in contrast, fit the federal model as operationalised by Bolleyer (2012). Again, this also confirms the earlier hypothesis. But this is also a simplification.

It is evident from what interviewees revealed about how these parties organise election campaigns that intra-party power is dynamic and fluid. This is

underlined by the acceptance by most interviewees that the locus of intra-party power may alter if ground campaigns and digital play a larger role in the future. Campaigning needs be unpacked, as has occurred in this article, to systematically determine the degree of autonomy and whether power-sharing exists within political parties. This is particularly relevant considering how new some of these modes of campaigning are in these parties and it also suggests that the idea of a stratarchical continuum has salience. This also has implications for how stratarchy is currently operationalised and for party organisational theory.

3. Conclusions: campaigning and party organisation

Recent high-profile contributions on party organisation (and how it is changing) have largely ignored campaigning. The evidence from these cases suggests that this is a mistake. If we better understand where intra-party power lies in the way parties campaign, we can generate important insights about the fluidity of intra-party organisation. Like the findings in Cross (2016), the evidence from these cases support the argument put forward in Bolleyer (2012) that stratarchy should not be one end of a spectrum with hierarchy at the other end. This suggests that campaigning, like other core aspects of party organisation, involves a form of power-sharing between different party layers. However, stratarchy, as it is currently operationalised by Bolleyer (2012) and Cross (2016), does not match the empirical reality of campaigning in these cases.

In analysing a range of other party functions, Cross (2016, p. 20) suggested that while the stratarchical model 'is useful in that it predicts shared as opposed to either hierarchical or completely devolved distribution of power within a party, its characterisation of individual areas of authority parcelled out to different levels of the party is not supported'. Intriguingly, the evidence about campaigning from these cases suggests something altogether different. In four of the eight areas of campaigning across the two parties, full authority and autonomy was given to one party layer or another. Hence, while there is mutual inter-dependence at the macro-level, at the micro-level mutual autonomy and power-sharing is evident. The way power is divided and shared is not a simple demarcation between the 'party on the ground' and the 'party in central office' either (Katz and Mair, 1994). Instead, we see a more complex and more dynamic division of labour and power to different strata of the 'party in the central office'. An argument could be made that we need to examine the sum of all parts and not the individual components in considering the locus of power.[3] This would, however, be simplifying the

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[3]In examining candidate nomination, leadership selection and policy development, Cross (2016, p. 7) has said of power-sharing that 'This reflects both an unwillingness of either level of the party to abstain from participation in any key area of decision-making and an awareness by both levels that they can

complex interplay between different party layers in trying to resolve their organisational challenges. This leads to the next significant point: Is campaigning simply different to other areas of party organisation?

Quite evidently, campaigning is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional. This by itself separates it from other areas of party organisation. In contrast to developing and maintaining the membership, developing policy, or selecting candidates or the leadership, campaigning is more open to intra-party insurgency by influential actors and technological disruption. Campaigning is, therefore, fluid and the delicate balance between different party layers is likely to move along the stratarchical continuum depending on intra-party actors and technological innovation. Campaigning is not a part of the 'official story' of the modern political party. Instead, it is informal and there is little if anything said about campaigning in the key party documents. Hence, unlike what Bolleyer (2012) and Cross (2016) found in relation to other party functions, campaigning more closely reflects what Eldersveld (1964, p. 9) argued. Namely, that 'strata commands exist which operate with a varying, but considerable degree of independence'. One explanation for this is that those involved in campaigning have specialised skillsets in organising field or digital campaigns. These skilled intra-party actors are therefore able to move between different party layers far easier than those without such highly prized skills. It also suggests that, in contrast to earlier periods where the number of party officials who could be referred to as the 'election professionals' was probably quite small, this number has expanded greatly (Mills, 2014a). The effect of this on intra-party power is worthy of further consideration.

The evidence from these cases also suggests that the way parties organise their campaigns is increasingly going to reflect the stratarchical model. While Mills (2015, p. 123) has said that party officials 'do not see the ground war as decentralising their authority', the evidence from these cases suggest something different. Indeed, there was acceptance from interviewees that the 'ground game' is likely to increase in importance and that it does change the nature of intra-party power. This will inevitably mean that sub-national parties, as in the cases here, or 'the party on the ground' in unitary systems, will need to have some degree of autonomy over its implementation. But countering this potentially decentralising trend is the increasing use of digital media for direct voter contact and fundraising. While more research is required here, if the research on campaigning in the US is a guide, this will drive party organisation in the opposite direction leading to greater centralisation (Chadwick and Stromer-Galley, 2016; Kreiss, 2016). While seemingly contradictory, this riddle can be explained by stratarchical party organisation and the stratarchical continuum.

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best achieve their primary goal of electoral success by working together across the various competencies'.

Bolleyer (2012) and Cross (2016, p. 21) have persuasively argued that stratarchy should be understood as power sharing instead of mutual autonomy or a separation of powers. But neither looked at campaigning. The evidence from these cases suggests that there is mutual autonomy and that is driven by the stratarchical imperative. What areas of campaigning each party layer should have autonomy over or what areas they should share is based on this imperative. And, to quote Carty (2004), 'mutual autonomy does not necessarily imply either indifference or independence: the very idea of mutuality suggests interdependence'. Intra-party actors involved in campaigning recognise the importance of maintaining the organisational character and unity of the party. But they also understand the realities of the modern campaign and the need to divide or share areas of campaigning in a quest for organisational efficiency. One interviewee when asked why power sharing described how campaigns functioned put it this way: 'Ultimately, the stakeholders are the same and the objectives are the same'. While there will always be some degree of friction between local, sub-national and national party organisations about power and resources, the difference between campaigning and other areas of party organisation such as leader and candidate selection is that election campaigns are not zero-sum for intra-party stakeholders. The sub-national and national party layers can both win and they can both lose.

Writing over a decade ago, Carty (2004, p. 7) started his article on the franchise system within parties by asking 'How do modern parties organise?'. Despite the amount of work devoted to this question, answers remain elusive and as Carty (2004, p. 7) himself went on to say, 'The puzzle is that the most dramatic of these changes point in contradictory directions'. The evidence from the cases demonstrates that this remains correct. This article has also shown how dated the literature on campaigning is compared to the revitalisation that has occurred in other areas of the party organisation literature such as that on party membership. Modern campaigning, at least in these cases, involves the use of advanced campaign software, digital media, big data and micro-targeting. But it also requires an extensive and well-organised field campaign. This highlights the complexity of campaigning and by systematically analysing the components of the modern campaign it has been shown that campaigning is driven by the stratarchical imperative. While the evidence here supports the idea of stratarchy, it also suggests that mutual autonomy and power sharing are both identifiable when campaigning is systematically unpacked. This raises more questions about party organisation and suggests more work is required in thinking through the relationship between campaigning and party organisation.

Conflict of interest

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