

***AN INVESTIGATION OF THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE'S POLITICAL PUBLIC  
RELATIONS CAMPAIGN IN THE 2009 SOUTH AFRICAN GENERAL ELECTIONS  
INCLUDING HOW SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE FACEBOOK WAS LEVERAGED  
TO HELP INCREASE THE PARTY'S VOTE-SHARE***

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the political public relations campaign of the Democratic Alliance in the 2009 elections in order to explain the party's performance in these elections. The research is premised on John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory. A number of quantitative and qualitative content analyses were conducted to provide answers to the main research questions. These involved: the party's 286 media releases; party leader Helen Zille's 2009 campaign speeches; and Zille's Facebook platform. Results revealed that although the DA demonstrated extreme political resilience amidst fierce challenges in the 2009 elections, the party primarily campaigned on an anti-ANC ticket and a fair amount of negative advertising against the governing party to win itself votes. Not only did the party fail to "associate" itself with real issues affecting South African voters—especially the poor Black African majority which constitutes the largest voting bloc—it failed to pronounce itself clearly on other issues. Instead, the party attached itself to a multitude of shared issues, often "trespassing" on issues of common concern not necessarily "owned" by any one political party. This study also deduced that while Facebook facilitated public opinion on the DA in the 2009 elections, it still could not be regarded as a genuine public sphere in the South African context.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>ACDP</b>	African Christian Democratic Party
<b>AIC</b>	African Independent Congress
<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>ANCYL</b>	ANC Youth League
<b>APC</b>	African Peoples' Convention
<b>AZAPO</b>	Azania People's Organisation
<b>BBC</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>COPE</b>	Congress of the People
<b>DA</b>	Democratic Alliance
<b>DASO</b>	Democratic Alliance Students Organisation
<b>DIRCO</b>	Department of International Relations and Co-operation
<b>DP</b>	Democratic Party
<b>EC</b>	Eastern Cape
<b>FEDUSA</b>	Federation of Unions of South Africa
<b>FS</b>	Free State
<b>FF+</b>	Freedom Front Plus
<b>GMAIL</b>	Google Mail
<b>GP</b>	Gauteng
<b>HSRC</b>	Human Sciences Research Council
<b>IDASA</b>	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
<b>ID</b>	Independent Democrats
<b>IEC</b>	Independent Electoral Commission
<b>IFP</b>	Inkatha Freedom Party
<b>IJR</b>	Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
<b>IOT</b>	Issue ownership theory

<b>KZN</b>	KwaZulu-Natal
<b>LIM</b>	Limpopo
<b>MF</b>	Minority Front
<b>MK</b>	Umkhonto we Sizwe
<b>MMA</b>	Media Monitoring Africa
<b>MP</b>	Member of Parliament
<b>MPU</b>	Mpumalanga
<b>NA</b>	National Assembly
<b>NCOP</b>	National Council of Provinces
<b>NC</b>	Northern Cape
<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NEC</b>	National Executive Committee (of the ANC)
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organisations
<b>NW</b>	North West
<b>NP</b>	National Party
<b>NPA</b>	National Prosecuting Authority
<b>NUMSA</b>	National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa
<b>PAC</b>	Pan Africanist Congress
<b>PADLAC</b>	People's Anti-Drug and Liquor Action Committee
<b>PIMS</b>	Parliamentary and Information Monitoring Service
<b>Political PR</b>	Political public relations
<b>POSIB</b>	Protection of State Information Bill
<b>RDP</b>	Reconstruction and Development Programme
<b>SABC</b>	South African Broadcasting Corporation
<b>SACP</b>	South African Communist Party
<b>SANRAL</b>	South African National Roads Agency
<b>SAPS</b>	South African Police Services

<b>SNS</b>	Social networking sites
<b>SOWETO</b>	South Western Townships
<b>Stats SA</b>	Statistics South Africa
<b>UCDP</b>	United Christian Democratic Party
<b>UDM</b>	United Democratic Movement
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>US</b>	United States
<b>VAP</b>	Voting Age Population
<b>WC</b>	Western Cape

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an introduction to the 2009 South African national and provincial election outcomes and the significance of the Democratic Alliance's (DA) electoral performance. This author provides a structural outline to the study including a background and context of the problem; the problem statement and research questions that need to be investigated; and the purpose, importance, scope; and related limitations of the study. Chapter One ends by providing a brief synopsis of each chapter.

### **1.2 Context of the problem**

South Africa staged its fourth democratic general elections on 22 April 2009 where approximately twenty-three million South Africans were eligible to cast a ballot. On Election Day, eighteen-million people—or 77.30% of the voting age population (VAP)—voted for their political party of choice (South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 1:6). For the 2009 poll, about forty-five-thousand votes—or 0.25%—were needed to secure a seat in the national parliament, the National Assembly (NA) (Booyesen and Masterson 2009: 401; Johnson 2013a). Of the twenty-six parties that contested the national ballot, only thirteen won representation in the four-hundred-seat NA. The African National Congress (ANC) won two-hundred-and-sixty-four seats (264); the DA sixty-seven seats (67); and Congress of the People (Cope) thirty seats (30). At provincial level, these three parties dominated too. The ANC won two-hundred-and-ninety-two seats (292) across the nine provincial legislatures; the DA won sixty-five seats (65); and Cope won thirty-six seats (36) (South Africa. Independent Electoral

Commission 2009: sec 1:6).<sup>1</sup> Please refer to *Appendix A: 2009 Election results and analysis* for a clearer illustration of these results.

Since South Africa's first democratic all-race election in 1994, the ANC has consistently won every general election, effectively establishing a dominant one-party "domination" system (Sadie 2006: 202-217; Schlemmer 2008). Opposition parties continuously strive to reduce ANC electoral majorities, but have hitherto only been modestly successful in communicating with voters in ways that get through to (or sway) those voters that have conventionally either supported the ANC or other opposition parties. Jackson and Jackson (1997:321) however argue that if the electoral conditions had to alter and three or more political parties attained more than 15% of the vote, only then would South Africa (or any other country) be classified as a *bona fide* multi-party democracy. Despite the governing-ANC's "super-dominant" electoral strength since 1994 (Schlemmer 2008), opposition parties have fared reasonably over the years, increasing from eight parties that won national representation in 1994 to thirteen parties in the 2009 general election (South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 1:6). The DA is the only opposition party to have increased its vote proportion consistently over time since 1994, on occasion courtesy of opposition realignment. This opposition party achievement happened approximately in tandem with ANC decline. Neither the ANC's decline nor the DA's growth has assumed major proportions, yet this growth-decline tandem trend has been significant. While the DA has manifested this modest growth, other opposition parties have been declining into ever-more miniscule status (Booyesen 2005).

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<sup>1</sup> See also ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe's 2012 organisational report presented at the National Conference on 16 December 2012 in Mangaung, Free State (Mantashe 2012: 59-60).

Simultaneously, by 2009 the question was being asked whether the ANC had reached a natural support ceiling and whether traditional ANC supporters had started becoming more available to opposition parties such as the DA. In such a case, the specific communication strategies and media used by contesting political parties could have a far-reaching impact—to help unlock new enclaves of support that had hitherto been lodged in either the ANC or in other opposition parties.

### **1.3 Background to the problem<sup>2</sup>**

The 2009 election campaign of the DA was premised on the threat to the South African constitution which the party speculated would be amended to free ANC leader Jacob Zuma from corruption charges (Faku 2009: 1-4). The DA was one of the first opposition parties to capitalise on this. As a result, the DA campaigned on two primary objectives in the 2009 election: to win the Western Cape and to reduce the ANC's two-thirds majority, thus denying it the power to unilaterally amend the constitution if it chose to do so (Booyesen 2009a: 21-26; Moakes 2011; Southall and Daniel 2009:119-120). The DA achieved both. In the final count, the DA captured two-point-nine million votes or 16.7% of the overall ballot, giving the party sixty-seven seats in the NA and thirteen seats in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) (South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 16: 104-109). What was even more significant for the party was an electoral increase of some 52.5% between the 2004 and 2009 elections—or an additional one million votes between elections (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 29). The DA assumed official opposition status in three provinces: Gauteng, Mpumalanga and North

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<sup>2</sup>Please refer to *Appendix A: 2009 Election results and analysis*.

West. South Africa's last apartheid-era president FW De Klerk (2010: 27-31) praised the DA's "significant victory" in the elections (in the Western Cape especially) as it broke the ANC's "monopoly" and signalled the ANC's first electoral decline since 1994. For the Nobel laureate, these were "positive developments" arguing that democracy needed "vigorous multi-party competition" to flourish (De Klerk 2010: 27-31).

Cope—formed in December 2008—rallied around the fears of the new "Polokwane ANC leadership" which it argued had lost its historical moral compass, asserting there was clear evidence this was not the same ANC of liberation giants such as Albert Luthuli, Oliver Tambo, Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela (Ndletyana 2010: 32-55; Southall 2009: 5; Southall and Daniel 2009: 113). For party leader, Mosioua Lekota, the ruling-party was fast-losing its credibility because its "moral core" had "withered" (Lekota 2012: 18). Cope's formation represented the "most concerted ideological battering" for the ANC after Thabo Mbeki was removed from office (Nyanda 2011: 2). For former Democratic Party / Democratic Alliance leader Tony Leon (2008; 2009b), the 2009 poll was the "grand opera" of South Africa's young democracy and Cope's emergence was merely the "game-changer". Cope captured 7.4% of the national ballot which gave the party thirty seats in the NA and eight seats in the NCOP (Monthly review...2009:11-12; South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 16: 104-109). Its strong electoral showing meant the party was the main opposition in four provinces: the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Limpopo and the Free State (Kersting 2009: 127; Mantashe 2010: 57-58; Southall and Daniel 2009: 115-121).

The success of both these bigger opposition parties—the DA and Cope—meant that other smaller parties suffered substantial electoral declines (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 28).<sup>3</sup> Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Zulu-nationalist party, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) continued its losses, shedding approximately three-hundred-thousand (300 000) votes or ten seats with other minor parties losing a combined total of seven-hundred-thousand (700 000) votes or twenty two seats. Ten of these parties shared only thirty-nine seats among themselves. Seven parties that had representation in 2004 lost a combination of twenty-six seats. Only the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) and the Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) maintained their 2004 allocated seats of four and one seat / s respectively. Both parties nonetheless suffered a decline in their proportional vote-shares (South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 16: 104-109).

The 2009 election was significant because this was the first time since 1994 where the space between the winning party—the incumbent ANC—and the official opposition declined below 50%. Please refer to *Appendix A: 2009 Election results and analysis*. In the previous two elections, the difference between the ANC and the official opposition was just under 55% (Leon 2009b). Also, despite an increase of 12.9% in “actual voters” between 2004 and 2009, the ANC's vote-share increased only 7.1% compared to the DA's 52.5% from the 2004 election (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 28). Despite the ANC's overall victory in the 2009 general election, the party lost support in all provinces except KwaZulu-Natal (Mantashe 2010: 57-58).<sup>4</sup> The party's overall majority in the region was

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<sup>3</sup> Please see *Appendix A: 2009 Election results and analysis*.

<sup>4</sup> See also ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe's 2012 organisational report presented at National Conference on 16 December 2012 in Mangaung, Free State (Mantashe 2012: 59-60).

attributed to the Zuma-Zulu factor: that for the first time in history an ethnic Zulu would become South African President (Ndletyana and Maaba 2010: 123-141). In the other eight provinces, the opposition—led by the DA and a new alternative offered in Cope—impacted on the ANC's support base (Booyesen 2009a: 21-26; Kgosana 2012: 5). The ANC's secretary-general Gwede Mantashe even remarked that the DA had become “the biggest beneficiary” of the 2009 poll (Mantashe 2010: 57).

For Commey (2009: 10-15) these elections were a “watershed election” because it marked the “end of the Mandela era”, with the new incoming administration pointing to where the country was headed in the next few decades. For Southall (2009: 1-4), the 2009 poll was perhaps South Africa's “most fluid and unpredictable” since democracy. Booyesen (2009b) concurs adding this was a much altered political terrain compared to the 1994, 1999 and 2004 elections. This time round, the ANC was a party divided, with its pre-and-post-2007 Polokwane divisions manifesting in the form of Cope, spearheaded by former liberation ANC elites (Habib 2009b). This was however not the first time the party had witnessed breakaway factions from within its ranks (Sidiropoulos 2008: 120). In 1959 Robert Sobukwe led a group of disgruntled members to form the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) (History of the PAC...2009; Maharaj 2012: 4). In 1997, former Transkei homeland leader General Bantu Holomisa collaborated with former National Party (NP) Minister Roelf Meyer to form the United Democratic Movement (UDM) (Basson 2012: 14; Maria-Heyn 2009: 164; Roelf Meyer and Bantu Holomisa...1997; Venter 2006: 10).

Booyesen and Masterson (2009: 387) however warn that this latest assault on the governing-party's hegemony was different because Cope was unlike the PAC, UDM or any other opposition party that had contested elections since democracy. On the contrary, Cope had "sprung from the very loins of the ANC" and its potential damage was threefold: the ANC could no longer lay claim to the moral high-ground of liberation politics as Cope's leadership was in the struggle and knew about the machinery of a functional government administration; secondly it was the only "legitimate" challenger to the ANC at the ballot box and lastly its premature arrival could spell disaster for other opposition parties in an already-fragmented, highly-contested opposition space (Booyesen 2009a: 21-24; Booyesen and Masterson 2009: 387-388). Habib (2009a) agrees with Booyesen (2009b) and Southall (2009) in affirming the 2009 poll was different because the leadership succession race within the ANC had politicised the electoral environment with fears of a Zuma presidency (Glaser 2010: 35) rallying the middle classes. For Habib (2009a) and Kgosana (2012: 5), the fissures within the ANC and the subsequent formation of Cope had made disaffected and disillusioned voters aware that a non-racial alternative was indeed possible—without the ANC. Of note, just before the 2009 general election Southall (2009: 1-4) speculated that even if the "ANC party machinery" defeated the opposition (especially the DA and Cope) at the ballot box with relative ease, the ANC's "perception of inviolability" had now been breached.

#### **1.4 Statement of the problem**

This study explores the DA's political public relations campaign in the 2009 South African general elections by means of three quantitative analyses and one qualitative content analysis. By suggestion, it is a descriptive and exploratory analysis to examine how the DA campaigned to own certain issues in these elections. This researcher will investigate the topics of the party's media releases; the content of its Facebook page on the World Wide Web to determine issue ownership; and its overall political public relations campaign involving party leader Helen Zille and her image management in the 2009 poll. Data involving the party's media releases and Helen Zille's Facebook page will be analysed from 1 January 2009—30 April 2009 while Zille's speeches will be accessed and analysed from November to April 2009. Moreover, this study envisages using structured interviews and 2009 election-related news media reports to provide support to the assumption that its leader's image management exercise and rhetoric aided the party's eventual electoral success on 22 April 2009.

#### **1.5 Purpose of the study**

The primary purpose of this study is to demonstrate exactly how significant the Democratic Alliance's improved electoral showing in the 2009 South African general elections was and what it means for the country's maturing democracy. Although there have been a number of analyses conducted on the outcomes of these elections, most of these have focused their energies on dissecting the salient, more visible trends of the April 22, 2009 poll result such as the ruling-party's reduced majority for the first time since 1994; and both the DA and Cope's performances and the general onslaught on

smaller opposition parties. None have penetrated deeper into how the DA was able to overcome the ANC in the Western Cape and more especially overcome the Cope threat. Also, this was the first South African election where social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and Flickr were employed with great emphasis (Fakir, Bhengu and Larsen 2009: 112-117). The DA optimised on this, recognising a new reality that the “younger” voter was changing the “political terrain demographic” (Southall 2009: 1-4). These younger voters were especially activated by Barack Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign for the United States White House (Chutel 2009; Habib 2009a), further galvanising the ANC’s own organisational structures and support bases. No analyses have yet been undertaken to probe the impact of this new reality and how politicians (and the DA) used technological advancements to enhance their electoral messages. Also, previous analyses on the 2009 elections have not probed the DA’s political public relations campaigning in the poll. Hopefully, with this study more depth will be added to the discourse on how the DA managed to win the amount of public confidence it did in the 2009 general election. Therefore, the objective of this study is to explore the possible connections between opposition party communication strategies in the 2009 South African general elections and relative successes in winning an increased proportion of votes in future elections.

### **1.6 Research questions**

The essence of this study is to determine how the DA managed its political public relations campaign and how it leveraged social networking site Facebook to win itself votes and create conversations about itself in the 2009 general election. For this

reason, a number of research questions were formulated to gauge the extent of its success in said poll. This study will seek to outline exactly how the DA branded itself during the 2009 South African general elections by examining elements such as the image management exercise of its leader Helen Zille; how the party used political communication to entrench its brand in the poll and how the party utilised political advertising and political marketing to communicate its electoral messages. Additionally, one envisages gauging how Facebook acted as a political public sphere facilitating public opinion on the DA during these elections. The aim is to assess how this political entity used political communication on both traditional and non-traditional media platforms (in combination) as part of its political public relations strategy. In the final analysis, this author hopes to establish some correlation with John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory, arguing that the DA campaigned to "own" certain issues in the 2009 election and that it was this electioneering combined with strategic political public relations that secured the party the success it achieved in South Africa's fourth democratic general elections.

### **1.7 Importance of the study**

The 2014 general election may prove to be one of South Africa's most important as a result of the new dynamics that are speculated to come into play. In the 2014 poll, the country will celebrate twenty (20) years of democracy (Gabara 2013). Comparisons to the 2004 elections when the country observed ten years of democracy will be almost-inevitable. In that year, the governing-ANC surged to its best electoral result in post-apartheid South Africa, winning a decisive 70% of the vote (ANC 2004 national...2004). It was during this first post-apartheid decade that South Africa's status domestically and

internationally became “almost unassailable” (Sidiropoulos 2008: 108). In 2014, the so-called “born-frees” or teenagers born after 1994 will be included on the voter’s roll.<sup>5</sup> Holborn Lucy (2013) estimates this group to number approximately 3.2 million or at least 10% of eligible voters in 2014. Borain (2013) approximates this figure to be in the region of five million or 20% of the electorate in 2014 and nearly half of eligible voters by 2029. Unlike their parents, this is a generation of youngsters who have no historical memory of apartheid. Will this post-liberation generation possibly alter the ANC’s electoral fortunes as issues and not memory will dominate politics? Is this new dynamic likely to alter the ANC’s hegemony post-2014? Will the country produce a new type of voter where factors other than historical legacy begin to shape voting loyalties?

Also, will 2014 usher in a new era in South African politics where one might see a two-party state emerging? Is this possible so soon into South Africa’s infant democracy? Which political players are likely to occupy this crucial space? Unsurprisingly, DA leader Helen Zille hinted at the idea of a two-party state while campaigning for the 2011 local government elections in Durban in April 2011. Zille asserted that such a political option where the ANC and DA shared the voting spoils of any future democratic South Africa would only be good for the country. For Zille, the choice was becoming clearer as the country’s democracy matured, adding that voters wanted an alternative to a “changed ANC” (A chance to transcend...2011; Kobue 2011). Habib (2011: 7) opined that Zille’s statement was more about consolidating the opposition and creating “one super opposition bloc”. Habib (2011: 7) added that although the DA has had some success by

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<sup>5</sup> Please see: Boyle (2012); Brown (2012: 24); Is there life...(2012); Malada (2012); and Molefe (2012).

attracting Patricia De Lille's Independent Democrats into a formal coalition mainly to garner the Coloured vote in the Western Cape and Northern Cape, other opposition parties like Bantu Holomisa's UDM might have an issue with the DA's "racial image", warning that unless the party transformed this racial tag, it would not be able to guarantee the support of other opposition parties that might be ideologically different from it. A *Sunday Times* editorial warned however that any gravitation towards a "two-party electoral system" would dangerously force political parties to "retreat" into racial enclaves where the DA represented the interests of minorities and the ANC the interests of the Black majority (A chance to transcend...2011).

In summary, South Africa is a fairly new democracy with many political lessons still to be learned. This study will demonstrate that successful party political communication strategies can work in the face of dominant one-party systems, especially in Africa where a number of liberation movements have entrenched themselves as *de facto* one-party states in the guise of new world democratic orders. As observed with the DA, the aim was clear from the beginning: not necessarily to dislodge the ruling-party from power but to re-distribute that power so that an effective opposition can keep a check on government, thus ensuring transparency and accountability. In this way, democracy matures, deepens and diversifies at the same time.

### **1.8 Scope of the study**

This study focuses on the Democratic Alliance and its 2009 election outcomes—nationally and provincially. The author observed the DA's electoral outcomes over the

1994-2009 period to extract patterns relating to the party's increased vote-share. Attention is also paid to the ANC's concomitant electoral performance since 1994—and 2009 especially—to provide context for the DA's improved electoral performance in 2009.

### **1.9 Delimitations and limitations**

This study is feasible in terms of costs, time and no harm posed to any individual as most of the data to be collected and analysed involves structured interviews with identified leaders of the DA and desk-based research using the party's 2009 election-related documents and other relevant documentary material such as election reports, media interviews and media reports (University of South Africa 2011:88-90). During the proposal stages, it was envisaged that the author would travel to Cape Town—the location of the DA's head office—to conduct personal interviews with key party leaders and managers. However, in the communication and planning phases, it was decided that such expenses would be avoided because the party could not grant any interviews to the researcher. Thus, potential costs relating to flights, car rental and the hire of recording equipment were eliminated. For this reason, the author chose to rely on media interviews already in the public domain. The other major cost for this project was the recruitment and training of an additional coder to help the researcher transcribe media interviews and the eventual commissioning of the various items of content analysis research.

Initially, there was a concern that data accessed via the World Wide Web—on which part of this study relies heavily—could have disappeared without warning including

content changing and live links going dead (Wigston 2010). Fortunately, it was proposed that the researcher and recruited second coder / fieldworker would painstakingly copy and paste all DA media releases from the relevant dates (and before the pilot test) onto a word document for safe-keeping. The researcher also downloaded and archived the Facebook data to ensure there were no access problems later; this data was also coded quickly by the two coders (the researcher and second coder). Throughout, the author was cognisant of the issues of copyright and storage space for the reams of data (Wigston 2010:38-41). If more time was permitted, it would have been good to factor in assessments of the DA's local election outcomes (1995, 2000, 2006 and 2011) as the 2011 poll is widely considered to have been a "watershed" and "historic" election for the party (Du Plessis and Davis 2011: 1; Kobue 2011a; Mazibuko, Zille, Coetzee and Moakes 2011; Okeowo 2011). In fact, the DA's result was so impactful that it made the list of *Africa's Top 10 Most Positive Stories of 2011* (Okeowo 2011). Seeing that technology is playing an ever-increasing role in transnational politics, it would have been opportune to focus on other technological platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, Mxit, short messages and e-mails to take the discussion to a superior level. Lastly, a case study of the Western Cape vote in the 2009 elections would also have been ideal because this was where the DA managed successfully to win a province from the incumbent ANC. One believes this could have aided the present study and perhaps provided more depth to the underlying factors governing the DA's win there.

### **1.10 Chapter outline**

This study comprises six chapters. While Chapter One provides a brief overview of the study and an account of South Africa's 2009 election outcomes, Chapter Two concerns itself with the methodological outline applicable to this thesis. In Chapter Three, the author will introduce the literary framework supporting this academic endeavour. Apart from detailing John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory to the reader, the author will define key concepts to be employed. In Chapter Four, the author expands on the Democratic Alliance's electoral fortunes since 1994 and background information is provided on the party's core constituency, including why the issue of race still haunts this political entity. This chapter will also expand on the DA's political public relations campaign in the 2009 elections. Chapter Five presents a synthesis of the main research findings together with a brief discussion. This study ends with Chapter Six where the author provides a conclusion; related limitations and this study's relevance to the Communication discipline; and recommendations for subsequent studies.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

The purpose of this first chapter was to introduce the reader to the topic of this thesis; the aims; objectives and possible outcomes of the study. Chapter One provided an overview of the main results of the 2009 South African general election, with a pronounced focus on the DA's electoral achievements. The author augmented this with a structural outline for the rest of the study including the scope and possible limitations. In Chapter Two, the methodology employed for this thesis will be discussed.

## CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Introduction

Chapter Two introduces the methodology to be employed for this study. In this chapter, the author outlines the goals and objectives; research design and method to be used for the four content analysis, including data collection techniques and methods. The chapter concludes by examining the feasibility of this academic undertaking.

### 2.2 Goals and objectives of study

The goal of this study is *basic communication research* because the aim is to expand one's general understanding of how an opposition political party used political communication to improve its electoral standing despite a changed electoral terrain in the 2009 South African general elections (Mouton 1996: 103). The objectives of this study are both exploratory and descriptive. It is exploratory because this thesis aims to obtain new insights into how an opposition party used political communication in the 2009 elections to increase its vote-share by communicating on multiple platforms. This study is also descriptive because one intends observing the DA's 2009 election campaign, including its media releases; party leader Helen Zille's Facebook posts; and all related online conversations about the 2009 elections and Zille's campaign speeches. Multiple content analyses—both quantitative and qualitative—will reveal which topics / issues the party focused on the most and these will be quantified and elaborated on through a narrative analysis.<sup>1</sup> This study also aims to draw data from

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<sup>1</sup> Please see: Stacks and Hocking (1992: 251).

primary documents (election manifesto, election reports); journal articles; newspaper articles (editorials and general news reports); and books and research reports (opinion polls and statistical fact sheets).<sup>2</sup>

### **2.3 Research method and research design**

Content analysis as a research method can be defined as the analysis of written, verbal or visual (communication) messages (Cole 1988). By inference it is “systematic” and “objective” when there is a need to “describe” and “quantify” a certain phenomenon.<sup>3</sup> This research method is also well-suited for analysing documents and for contextualising data to a wider context (Cavanagh 1997). Among some of the advantages of this research method are its non-obtrusiveness; cost-effectiveness; the fact that information for analysis is easily accessible; and its application for observing processes over periods of time in the form of longitudinal studies (Babbie 1998). Content analysis can be either quantitative or qualitative in nature. In quantitative content analysis, the focus is on counting “manifest textual elements” (Weber 1990) and observing communication as part of a social world that can be “measured objectively”—often through statistics and other data (Mouton 1996: 107-108). Qualitative research on the other hand is about a “subjective reality” and understanding the social world through the eyes of participants (Creswell 2002:58). Here, the researcher often assumes the role of measuring instrument and data is in the form of information-rich descriptions

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<sup>2</sup> A number of election reports were accessed to provide statistical support for the content. Apart from communicating regularly with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)—South Africa’s electoral body—this author tabulated data generated from multiple fact sheets with tables and graphs being used to condense the information. These statistics are interspersed in the next few chapters and Appendices.

<sup>3</sup> Please see: Downe-Wamboldt (1992); Krippendorff (1980); Sandelowski (1995) and Stacks (2002).

(Hsieh and Shannon 2005). Weber advises the best content analysis is one which utilises both forms, meaning quantitative and qualitative in combination—often referred to as triangulation or multiple methods. Mouton asserts (1996:38) using “multiple” methods and techniques affords a researcher the best way to improve the quality of his / her research. This is partly why this researcher chose to employ both a qualitative and quantitative research design for this study.

Four separate content analyses constituted the main research here. In the first content analysis, the author counted the DA’s 286 media releases issued before, during and after the 2009 elections; these media releases were collected from 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009. The second content analysis involved DA leader Helen Zille’s Facebook page and the twenty-seven different updates posted here during the period observed, again 1 January – 30 April 2009. Responses to these Facebook posts in the form of conversations by DA supporters and non-partisans alike formed the third content analysis of the study—the only qualitative content analysis of the four conducted. The fourth content analysis dealt with perusing DA leader Helen Zille’s twenty campaign speeches from 15 November 2008 until April 2009. The reason the author chose to use a different observation period for this part of the research was because Zille’s 2009 election campaign was said to have started in November 2008.<sup>4</sup> In summary then, only the content analysis of the online conversations on Zille’s Facebook page will be qualitative in nature. Here, the author specifically looked for key themes and topics in the online exchanges to provide support for the overall assumption that the DA

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<sup>4</sup> This is when the DA re-launched and re-branded at Constitutional Hill, Gauteng province.

campaigned to own certain issues in the 2009 poll. The results took the form of a narrative, descriptive analysis. The aim with the other three quantitative content analyses was again to provide research evidence that the DA chose particular issues to campaign on in said poll. These content analyses were guided by a coding rubric which comprised twenty-one different categories.<sup>5</sup> These analyses and findings were framed by the theoretical discourse as outlined in the Literature Review (Chapter Three).

## **2.4 The quantitative paradigm**

A quantitative research design was chosen for the three content analyses involving the DA's 286 media releases; Helen Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts and Zille's twenty campaign speeches. The aim was to quantify the number of times certain categories appeared so congruence could be established with John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory. This phase of the research was guided by the formulation of twenty-one categories—in the form of a coding rubric. This coding rubric was used for all three quantitative content analyses.<sup>6</sup>

## **2.5 Creating the measuring instrument, the coding rubric**

In the introductory note of the DA's 2009 election manifesto<sup>7</sup>, party leader Helen Zille outlined a summary of the party's vision for the country and its offer to the South African

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<sup>5</sup> Please refer to *Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses*.

<sup>6</sup> Please see *Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses*.

<sup>7</sup> The DA's 2009 election manifesto can be accessed by logging onto:

electorate. Most of this introduction was used to create a comparison between itself and the governing-ANC and the ideological contestation between “two political philosophies” (Introduction letter by...2009: 1-4). In subsequent paragraphs, attention was drawn to the ANC’s purported failures involving power abuse, corruption, cronyism, the party’s philosophy of cadre deployment and the suggestion that South Africa was heading in the “failed state” direction of Zimbabwe under the ANC (Introduction letter by...2009: 1-4). The DA suggested instead it was the “only” party that could stop this from happening and that it would use its governance credentials and track record in DA-run local government municipalities to demonstrate to potential voters that it was capable of running an efficient provincial and national government (Introduction letter by...2009: 1-4). There was also a constant reference to “Vote for the DA...vote to win” and “Vote for the DA to attain an open, opportunity society for all” (Introduction letter by...2009: 1-4); the latter was mentioned a number of times in the manifesto. The party subsequently identified five priority areas to realise this “open, opportunity society for all”; these included reduction of poverty, education, health, crime and corruption and defence of the South African constitution (Introduction letter by...2009: 1-4).

The researcher initially developed nine categories, inductively deduced from the DA’s 2009 election manifesto.<sup>8</sup> After four days of discussing and debating these with the recruited additional coder, this increased to twenty-one (21) after perusing the party’s 2009 election website; party leader Helen Zille’s campaign speeches and the party’s

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<http://www.da.org.za/campaigns.htm?action=view-page&category=6329&sub-page=6330>.

<sup>8</sup> Please see: Krippendorff (1980: 76) and Mayring (2000: 3-4).

two-hundred-and-eighty-six (286) media releases issued before and after the 2009 poll. During this process, open coding was utilised with the researcher making notes in the margin and providing tentative descriptions for the data assessed.<sup>9</sup> Preliminary headings were transferred to coding sheets; categories were “freely generated”<sup>10</sup> and these were collated under “higher-order headings” to narrow the amount of categories<sup>11</sup>. Before the actual creation of the final categories, they were defined by specifying what each category should include and exclude<sup>12</sup> because Wigston (2010: 17-19) emphasised this was a “crucial” step as it would determine if the content analysis was successful or not. Wigston (2010) warned that these definitions could not be too wide or too narrow and the more detailed the definition, the better. This initiative not only allowed for categories to be flexible and inclusive, it also permitted all categories to satisfy the three requirements of being exhaustive (all units of analysis fitted into categories), mutually-exclusive (all units of analysis were slotted into one category only) and equivalent (all units of analysis were equal in weighting with no one category superior to the other) (Berger 1991:27; Know your audience...2011). The final list of twenty one (21) categories was named using “content-characteristic words” and arranged alphabetically to avert any bias that could have emanated from the researcher’s ordering (Elo and Kyngas 2008: 111). The author deliberately chose not to operationally define each of the twenty-one (21) categories, choosing instead to use

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<sup>9</sup> Please see: Burnard (1991: 461-466); Burnard (1996: 278-281) and Cavanagh (1997: 5-16).

<sup>10</sup> Please see: Burnard (1991: 461-466); Cole (1988: 53-57) and Downe-Wamboldt (1992: 313-321).

<sup>11</sup> Please see: Burnard (1991: 461-466) and Downe-Wamboldt (1992: 313-321).

<sup>12</sup> Please see: Abrahamson (1983: 286) and Strauss (1987).

Stemler and Bebell's (1999) and Stemler, Bebell and Sonnabend's (2011: 416) coding rubric which allowed for more flexibility of the multi-layered definitions.<sup>13</sup>

## 2.6 Research questions

Political parties claim issue ownership through speeches, political advertising, election manifestoes and related electoral outreach programmes that demonstrate to the electorate it sincerely cares about those issues. Media coverage is thus an integral element of issue ownership (Walgrave and De Swert 2007: 39). In their study of issue-party identification in Belgium, Walgrave and De Swert (2007: 66) confirmed that not only did the media activate pre-existing notions of issue ownership; it was also “co-responsible” for the creation of issue ownership. For this reason the author chose to content analyse the Democratic Alliance's media releases in the 2009 general elections. To accomplish this, the author considered the DA's own focus on various issues. The content analysis of the DA's 286 media releases was therefore guided by the following research question: *is issue ownership created and maintained by political parties' own communication on certain issues?* This study is also concerned with discovering exactly how the DA handled its political public relations campaign in the 2009 elections. Not only did this political entity use traditional forms of media outreach, it leveraged social networking site Facebook—as an extension of web campaigning—to entrench its message and create publicity around its activities and leaders. For this reason, questions around how the DA used political advertising and political communication to

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<sup>13</sup> Please refer to *Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses*.

communicate its electoral messages in the 2009 elections will be probed. In particular, Helen Zille used Facebook to advertise her mobility while on the campaign trail. The DA leader posted updates on the social networking site so that potential voters and partisans bought into the party's campaign. Additionally, the researcher will probe just how Zille used campaign speeches to highlight issues that ultimately became *associated* DA electoral issues in the 2009 elections. Through these research questions, it is hoped some correlation is established with John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory and that a combination of *owned* issues and strategic political communication and political public relations are reasons why the DA managed the electoral success it did in South Africa's 2009 elections.

## 2.7 Researcher's role

The researcher and an additional coder were involved in all three quantitative content analyses. At the onset, the coder was briefed and trained by the researcher. Please refer to *Appendix C: Instructions for content analysis pilot study*. Once the additional coder understood what was expected of him, both the coder and researcher collected all 286 media releases issued by the DA between 1 January 2009 and 30 April 2009; the twenty-seven updates on Helen Zille's Facebook page; and Zille's twenty speeches. This had to be done in a very speedy but disciplined manner because working with Internet content is not very reliable (Wigston 2010). This data had to be saved onto hard disc and on a word document. Once the data was collected, categories and the coding rubric had to be created. Here, the researcher and coder were responsible for collecting

key documentary data such as the DA's election manifesto and the party's introductory note posted on its website. After the categories and different codes were created in the form of the coding rubric,<sup>14</sup> pilot tests were conducted using all three data sets (286 media releases, 27 Facebook posts and 20 campaign speeches). Both coders, the researcher and second coder, participated in this process. After all pilot studies were completed and Holsti's (1969) agreement levels established, the researcher categorised the 286 media releases; Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts; and Zille's twenty speeches. The results from these content analyses were then probed by the researcher and patterns extracted.

## **2.8 Data collection**

As with any quantitative study, a sample is needed. For the content analysis of the DA's media releases, the timeframe was 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009 and the units of analysis, accessible population and target population were the actual 286 media statements. With regard to Helen Zille's Facebook posts, here too each of the twenty-seven posts formed the units of analysis; and accessible and target populations; and the timeframe was 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009. Lastly, Zille's twenty campaign speeches observed from 15 November until 30 April were the units of analysis and both the accessible and target populations.

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<sup>14</sup> Please see *Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses*.

## 2.9 Quantitative content analysis of the DA's 286 media releases

A descriptive, quantitative, frequency-based content analysis was firstly conducted using the DA's media releases<sup>15</sup> before and after the DA's 2009 election campaign (1 January – 30 April 2009).<sup>16</sup> After accessing the media releases tab on the party's website, one had to insert "2009 elections" in the search box to ensure the most relevant data was brought up. Two coders—the researcher and recruited coder—collected the media releases from the DA's website.<sup>17</sup> The releases were copied and pasted onto a Word file to avoid any information disappearing without advance notification. Lastly, these media releases were sorted by month. Please refer to *Appendix D: The DA's media releases 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009* for a breakdown of the DA's 286 media releases. The DA issued 286 media releases between 1 January 2009 and 30 April 2009. Most of these media statements were issued in March 2009—91 or 31.81% of the total—with the least amount issued in April 2009 (60 or 20.87% of the overall total). This was an average of 2.38 statements issued per day over the 120-day period (1 January - 30 April 2009).

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<sup>15</sup> The author deliberately chose to use the term "media release" because the term "press release" is restrictive and by implication only includes print media.

<sup>16</sup> These releases were accessed directly from the DA's website [www.da.org.za](http://www.da.org.za) and by clicking on the "press releases" tab (<http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=view-page&category=press-releases>).

<sup>17</sup> Please see: [www.da.org.za/index](http://www.da.org.za/index).

## 2.10 Quantitative content analysis of Helen Zille’s 27 Facebook posts

When the author accessed the DA’s Facebook homepage in November 2012, it boasted 21 414 “likes”<sup>18</sup>—or online users that literally “liked” the party’s platform. On the front panel, the page has a banner with the DA’s leader, Helen Zille; its parliamentary leader Lindiwe Mazibuko; and Cape Town mayor—who is now a DA member—Patricia De Lille; complemented by the caption “Working for change, working for jobs”. Under the banner, the party lists itself as a “political organisation” and below this, there are five tabs: about; photos; likes; notes; and events. Please refer to Figure 2.1 below.



Figure 2.1: DA Facebook front panel<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> A Facebook “like” can be defined as an online user’s agreement with something—a statement, a position or perhaps even a picture on DA leader Helen Zille’s social networking platform.

<sup>19</sup> This screenshot was sourced from: <http://www.facebook.com/DemocraticAlliance> on 29 October 2012.

The author accessed DA party leader Helen Zille’s 2009 Facebook presence by logging onto <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille>. Again, one must have an existing account on the social networking website to access any content. As soon as one opens Zille’s personal Facebook page, a tab called “about” shows up which—when clicked—takes the reader to a detailed profile of the DA leader, including a background; a contact electronic mail address; links to the party’s website; and her Twitter handle for users to follow on the social information network.<sup>20</sup> Zille’s Facebook page also has a feature called “Timeline” which made it easier to go directly to all postings from each year. In this case, the author was only interested in Zille’s Facebook postings before, during and after the 2009 South African general elections. The author used the same dates—1 January – 30 April 2009—as the quantitative content analysis of the DA’s media releases. In total, DA leader Helen Zille posted twenty-seven (27) updates to her Facebook personal page. Both the researcher and coder helped copy and paste Zille’s twenty-seven (27) posts by using the “print screen” and “fn” keyboard functions in combination. Although the process was time-consuming, all twenty-seven (27) items were firstly copied and pasted onto a word document (Knowing your audience...2011) and then all one-hundred-and-fifty (150) pages of data were printed for analysis. Here, the author specifically looked for two things: “likes” and “comments” posted on Zille’s Facebook page.<sup>21</sup> Apart from the “likes” and “comments” tabs, users have the option of using the “share” tab to literally share the status from one Facebook page to one’s own

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<sup>20</sup> Please note that this study is only interested in social networking site Facebook. The author does list the potential of Twitter as a possible avenue for future studies—please see *Chapter Six: Conclusion*.

<sup>21</sup> A Facebook “like” can be defined as an online user’s agreement with something—a statement, a position or perhaps even a picture on DA leader Helen Zille’s social networking platform. A “comment” on the other hand acts as a forum for expressing one’s opinion on something on Facebook. These can be either positive or negative. Sometimes, political heads do reply to these comments.

list of friends. The author infers that these three elements could provide some indication on the popularity of each post. The author assumes also that Zille's Facebook page was not created before February 2009 and this was why there were no posts for the first month of the year. This is substantiated by the fact that only seven (7) posts were made in February 2009 with sixteen "likes" and twenty-five (25) "comments" by users. Please refer to *Appendix E: Helen Zille's Facebook posts 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009* for a breakdown of these posts, likes and comments.<sup>22</sup>

During the month of March 2009, despite Zille's Facebook posts declining by more than half from the previous month, the number of "likes" and "comments" increased substantially. In April 2009—the month of the elections—Zille's posts on her Facebook personal page increased by a large margin. In that month, Zille posted seventeen (17) statements or 62.96% of the overall number observed—the most of all four months observed. There was also a concomitant increase in user "likes" and "comments"—9609 "likes" and 2501 "comments" respectively.<sup>23</sup> Also, there was a marked increase in user "likes" and "comments" on this forum at the time of the dropping of charges against ANC president Jacob Zuma. For example, before 6 April 2009, user "likes" and "comments" were approximately 187 and 69 respectively. By 6, 7, 8 and 9 April 2009, these "likes" and "comments" spiralled into the hundreds. There was also a marked spike in "likes" and "comments" just after the April 22, 2009 poll. Upon closer inspection of these Facebook posts, one noticed that these posts were put up to thank people who

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<sup>22</sup> This section must be read in combination with *Appendix F: Categories, likes and comments on Helen Zille's 27 Facebook posts from 1 January 2009 - 30 April 2009*.

<sup>23</sup> While comments can be negative, this clearly illustrates that Zille is engaging with Facebook users.

supported the DA during the election. In effect, the DA was conducting a conversation with its voters and supporters, thus permitting them to feel as if they were part of a process where it was their vote that gave the party the Western Cape and kept the ruling-party below the two-thirds majority (Moakes 2011).

### **2.11 Quantitative content analysis of Helen Zille's campaign speeches**

An integral element of DA leader Helen Zille's image management project in the 2009 poll was the number of speeches the leader delivered on her campaign trail. This author counted Zille's speeches from the time the party re-launched on 15 November 2008 until 30 April 2009—a few days after the election. In total, Zille delivered twenty (20) speeches.<sup>24</sup> The coding rubric was applied to this element of the research too and 180 different coding combinations were yielded.<sup>25</sup>

### **2.12 Sampling methods**

As with all quantitative studies, a sample is needed. The author used census samples for all three content analyses, namely the content analysis of the DA's 286 media releases; the content analysis of Helen Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts; and Zille's twenty campaign speeches. The aim with all three was to count for frequency of the

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<sup>24</sup> DA leader Helen Zille's twenty speeches can be accessed by logging onto: <http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=searchpage&category=speeches&keywords=helen+zille+2009>.

<sup>25</sup> Please see: *Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses and Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches.*

twenty-one categories (in the coding rubric) to corroborate evidence that the DA communicated on certain issues more than others during the 2009 elections.

### **2.13 Data analysis**

Data generated from the three quantitative content analyses, namely the DA's 286 media releases; Helen Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts; and Zille's twenty campaign speeches were all coded using "manifest" (Wurtzel 1985: 13) coding because the aim was more towards the physical count of the units of analysis. In other words, the author was interested in the frequency of individual units or the appearance of single categories that—when counted—would provide evidence that the DA chose to focus on certain issues over others in the 2009 elections. All data analysed during the content analyses therefore assumed "nominal values" as "naming and labelling"<sup>26</sup> were more appropriate for the data.

### **2.14 Pilot study / studies**

Three separate pilot studies were conducted to test the suitability of the coding rubric and confidence levels of each of the quantitative content analyses. Firstly, once the allocation of all units of analysis to categories was completed for *the DA's 286 media releases*, the researcher and second coder conducted a pilot study using ten percent (28) of the 286 media releases issued by the DA during the period under observation (1 January – 30 April 2009). A random sample of seven (7) press releases per month was used, amounting to twenty-eight (28) or ten percent (10%) of the total population. Before

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<sup>26</sup> Please see: Stacks and Hocking (1992: 263-264).

the pilot test, the coder was briefed and trained by the researcher (Knowing your audience...2011). Please refer to *Appendix C: Instructions for content analysis pilot study* for a transcript of the instructions provided to the coder. Coding comparisons were carried out to establish reliability (Wigston 2010: 17-19) because if there were small differences, the study could be classified as safe and reliable; if there were big differences, reliability could have been compromised (Knowing your audience...2011; Wigston 2010: 25-28). Reliability was also secured by ensuring the additional coder was familiar with how to apply content analysis and how to use categories. When disagreements occurred, these were resolved amicably (Mouton 1996: 144-146). This is why the initial pilot study was integral (Knowing your audience...2011). Using Holsti's (1969) inter-coder reliability test, the following formula was used for the pilot test:  $2M / N + N = \text{agreement level}$ . The letter "M" represents the number of items agreed by both coders and "N" represents the number of coded items. For the purposes of the content analysis involving the DA's 286 media releases, this was the formula (and outcome) observed by the researcher:  $2 (26) / 28 + 28 = 52/56 \times 100 = 0.92$  or 92% agreement level. Thus, the pilot study enjoyed a confidence level of 92% (Holsti 1969; Stacks and Hocking 1992: 259).

Secondly, as indicated earlier, the author chose to use the same categories for the quantitative content analysis of party leader *Helen Zille's twenty-seven (27) Facebook posts* from 1 January – 30 April 2009. A pilot study involving the researcher and coder was conducted using seven (7)—or 25.92%— of the total population twenty seven (27) Facebook posts. Using Holsti's (1969) inter-coder reliability test, the following formula

was used:  $2M / N + N = \text{agreement level}$ . The letter “M” represents the number of items agreed by both coders and “N” represents the number of coded items. This was the formula for the pilot study:  $2(6) / 7 + 7 = \text{agreement level}$ ;  $12/14 = 0.85$  or 85.71% agreement level. The results of the test thus indicated an acceptable agreement level of 0.85 or 85.71%. Once the pilot test was completed, the categorisation of the twenty-seven (27) posts was concurrently checked by the second coder to ensure all were ordered into the correct categories.

Lastly, before the actual *content analysis of Zille’s twenty (20) speeches* to lend support to the theoretical grounding of this study, the author together with the coder participated in a pilot study to test the coding rubric and pre-created categories used earlier to gauge their applicability for this part of the research. Here again, the author deliberately chose to use the coding rubric employed in the earlier content analysis mostly to save time and costs. A total number of five (5) or 25% of the total population of twenty (20) speeches were used. Using Holsti’s (1969) inter-coder reliability test, the following formula was used:  $2M / N + N = \text{agreement level}$ . The letter “M” represents the number of items agreed by both coders and “N” represents the number of coded items. This was the formula used:  $2(4) / 5 + 5 = \text{agreement level}$ ;  $8 / 10 = 0.80$  or 80%. Thus, the pilot test enjoyed a confidence level of 0.80 or 80%.

## 2.15 Limitations and demarcations

According to Pollack (2008), press releases—or media releases—afford parties and candidates an attempt to set the media agenda. Initially, the author envisaged separating media releases issued by both the ANC and DA to determine what both parties said on each of the identified categories. This was however not feasible considering the DA disseminated 286 media releases and the ANC only 63 during the period under review (1 January – 30 April 2009).<sup>27</sup> The author also originally intended to conduct a concurrent web search of all 286 media releases that were content-analysed to illustrate and quantify how many of these were taken up by news organisations; and how these media houses framed the party's issues. However, for reasons of time and costs, this could not be fulfilled. Also, any generalisation that could have emerged from that exercise would have had to apply to online media news sources only because it would have proved practically impossible to locate the print, radio and television coverage of the media statements—four years after the 2009 general elections. With regard to Helen Zille's twenty speeches, manifest coding was used for the quantitative analysis because the researcher was interested in counting the category permutations present in these speeches. With more time, it would have been good to look at the latent codes in these speeches. For example, the research could have looked at issues such as voice inflection, attitude, intonation and other non-verbal cues during delivery. Granted, this would have called for the researcher's personal interpretation and thus reliability would have been compromised.

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<sup>27</sup> Please refer to *Appendix H: ANC media releases frequencies by month*.

## 2.16 The qualitative paradigm

The author chose to content analyse the conversations that transpired in response to DA leader Helen Zille's twenty-seven posts on Facebook. A qualitative research design was chosen for this aspect of the research because the aim was to understand the different themes and topics that online users discussed on DA leader Helen Zille's Facebook platform.<sup>28</sup> This part of the research was primarily driven by themes inferred from the literature review and key DA documents such as its election manifesto; its media releases from 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009 and Zille's twenty campaign speeches from 15 November 2008 until 30 April 2009. Initially, the researcher thought of applying the coding rubric with twenty-one categories used for the three quantitative content analyses (to follow later in this chapter). However, because the Facebook conversations were so voluminous, a decision was taken to first scour the volumes of Facebook messages; purposively select a manageable sample; and assign themes / subjects to groups of conversation data. These themes / subjects were deliberately kept to mirror some of the categories identified in the coding rubric. The following themes were subsequently identified: corruption; references to Zimbabwe's failed-state status and comparisons to South Africa; a robust and functioning democracy; the Stop Zuma campaign; the DA is the only opposition party to challenge the ANC; the DA's 2009 election campaign activities and the verbal exchanges between Zille and Julius Malema. This was primarily done to compare the results from this sole qualitative content

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<sup>28</sup> As mentioned in Chapter One, the author initially thought of content analysing the DA's Facebook page. This was not possible, however, after discovering that most of the DA's Facebook interactions and updates took place on party leader Helen Zille's own Facebook platform.

analysis to the three quantitative content analyses in the study to find similarities and associated patterns of issue ownership.

In the 2009 poll, the DA afforded party supporters the opportunity to engage with DA leaders through social network platforms like Facebook through applications such as walls, discussion forums, bulletin boards and groups. This in a sense was the extension of the party's web campaigning outreach. The party also used this platform to disseminate its media releases to its supporters and the media, facilitating direct engagement. In this way, policies and statements could be elaborated on. The researcher wanted to see what kinds of topics and discussions were debated. This helped to tie in with the theory—John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory—to see if these topics were congruent with the information in the party's media releases; and the party's 2009 election manifesto (Wigston 2010: 38-41).

### **2.17 Research questions**

Three research questions essentially drove the content analysis of the DA's Facebook presence in the 2009 elections: what were the main topics discussed on Facebook; did Facebook provide a platform for public deliberations on election issues; and did Helen Zille's Facebook page ultimately act as a public sphere for the dissemination of public opinion about the Democratic Alliance in the 2009 elections?

### **2.18 Researcher's role**

The researcher and recruited coder acted as primary collectors of information from Helen Zille's Facebook page. This voluminous information was first saved to hard disc and then to a word document (Wigston 2010: 40-41) to make working with the data manageable. After training the coder, both coders eventually narrowed these conversations through thematic analyses.

### **2.19 Data collection**

Various elements of a web page can act as possible units of analysis including sub-pages, page features, links, animation, audio files, illustrations and pictures. For the purposes of this study, individual comments in response to Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts functioned as the units of analysis. The accessible population was those comments selected by the researcher while the target population encompassed all comments posted in response to Zille's twenty-seven Facebook updates from 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009. It must be stated that these comments ran into the thousands and it would have been practically impossible to go through each one. This is why a random sample / accessible population of user comments were selected. This sample was thus guided by the themes identified earlier (Wigston 2010).

## **2.20 Sampling methods**

Due to the constraints of time and working with so much data—more-so over the Internet—it was not possible to dissect every communication thread on Helen Zille’s Facebook page. This was why the researcher selected a random sample where “all members in a population” had the same probability of being selected (Hinkle, Wiersma and Jurs 2003: 142). This random sampling would also allow for it to be generalised to the target population—all Facebook conversations that took place between 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009 in response to Zille’s twenty-seven Facebook posts.

## **2.21 Data analysis**

Once convenience samples of the hundreds of Facebook conversations were printed, the author analysed the data by looking for common themes / topics / subjects that could add to the idea that the DA campaigned to own certain issues in the 2009 election. The author eventually condensed this information into workable and thematic summaries. These summaries were considered when inferences were being drawn with regard to the DA’s overall issues the party chose to highlight in the 2009 poll.

## **2.22 The narrative**

Wigston (2010:38-41) advises that Internet content analysis is best suited to descriptive analysis because the aim is to describe the content one encounters over the World

Wide Web. Once the author managed to categorise the different conversations over Helen Zille's Facebook page, this was descriptively summarised in narrative form.

### **2.23 Limitations and demarcations**

As mentioned earlier, when one is working with information over the Internet, there is the concern that data can disappear without warning and some links can become non-functional. This was averted early in the research phase when the researcher and coder chose to copy and paste all relevant material to a word document and external hard disc. Also, because there was so much data to be copied with regard to the hundreds of Facebook conversations, the researcher deliberately chose to select convenience and random samples; these were quickly coded too. Unfortunately, with such a sample, no generalisation is possible. For the purposes of this aspect of the study, the focus was not on generalisation but on revealing underlying patterns and trends in the data.

### **2.24 Feasibility of study**

This study was feasible in terms of costs, time and no harm posed to any individual. Apart from costs the researcher incurred from transcribing media interviews of key DA managers and for the recruitment of an additional coder to assist with the content analyses, subsidiary costs such as printing, photocopying, telephone calls and basic Internet connections were kept to a minimum. Also, because most of the data generation involved some form of documentary analysis, costs were controlled with the researcher only needing access to party documents and media interviews which were sourced either directly from the DA and / or using the World Wide Web. Some parts of

this study were not feasible due to the fact that one was not able to conduct the interviews one initially wanted, namely structured interviews with DA leaders. Interviews with party leader Helen Zille and one / two of the party's election managers were proposed to obtain a deeper insight into the party's thinking during its 2009 campaign. Numerous unsuccessful requests were made to the party for a whole year. One strongly believes that interviewing Helen Zille and / or a campaign manager would have given the study more authenticity and yielded rich data that would ultimately have helped in solving the research problem. It was anticipated that interviews would also have provided answers rich with information on the party's inner workings during the 2009 election campaign, notably its political strategy. This author also made attempts to interview former DP / DA leader Tony Leon to add more context to this study considering Leon served as party head during the party's transition from the DP to the DA in 2001. At the time—2011 / 2012—Leon was serving as South Africa's ambassador to a number of South American states but was stationed in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This researcher contacted the DA head office for Leon's details but was referred to the Department of International Relations and Co-operation (DIRCO). The researcher eventually decided to go to DIRCO's website to locate Leon's details. An e-mail was then sent to Leon's Argentine address (LeonT@dirco.gov.za). Leon eventually made a personal telephone call to the researcher when e-mail communications failed due to server problems. It was decided then that all future communication be relayed through a Google Mail (gmail) address; this worked out better as all messages were received and replied to. During these cyber conversations, it was decided the researcher would refer

to Leon's book *Tony Leon on the contrary: leading the opposition in a democratic South Africa* and his blogs<sup>29</sup> instead and that no structured interview would be conducted.<sup>30</sup>

## 2.25 Conclusion

Chapter Two introduced the methodology applicable to this study of the Democratic Alliance. In this chapter, the author outlined the goal and objectives; research method to be used for the four content analyses including data collection techniques / methods; and chosen research design. The chapter concluded by examining the feasibility of this academic undertaking. Chapter Three will detail key concepts to be used in this study, including ideology; political communication; political public relations; political marketing; political advertising; public sphere and public opinion; web-based campaigning and social networking sites. Also, the author will go into great detail on the literature consulted including a thorough review of John Petrocik's (1996) "issue ownership theory" and its relevance to this study.

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<sup>29</sup> Please see: <http://tonyleonblog.blogspot.com>.

<sup>30</sup> The reason for not conducting the structured interview was because data yielded would not be applicable to this study as Leon was head of the party before 2007. This study is more concerned about the party's electoral prospects after the 2009 elections.

## **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **3.1 Section One: Introduction**

This chapter consists of section one and section two. In section one, the author will define a number of concepts applicable to this study, namely ideology; political communication; the public sphere and public opinion; web-based campaigning; social networking sites; political advertising; political public relations and political marketing. Section two will introduce the reader to the Democratic Alliance's previous election campaigns and its relevance for this thesis. John Petrocik's (1996) "issue ownership theory" and its utility for this academic endeavour will also be provided.

### **3.2 Ideology**

The term ideology was first conceptualised by French Enlightenment thinker Count Antoine Destutt de Tracy to mean a "science of ideas" (Ideology: New World Encyclopaedia...2008; Knight 2006: 619). The current definition of ideology—and arguably the most used—is however said to have emanated from German philosopher Karl Marx who highlighted a power relationship in the way society and its related institutions were structured. Marx subsequently coined the term "false consciousness" to demonstrate the unequal power relationship between the classes (Ideology: New World Encyclopaedia...2008). According to Marx, ideology was a two-pronged concept that included a "superstructure" and a "base" (Ideology: New World Encyclopaedia...2008). Owing to the ruling classes controlling the "means of production" or the "base", ideology would be disseminated to benefit this group the

most. For Marx, the engine that drove this “false consciousness” was the “economic superstructure” or the capitalist economy (Ideology: New World Encyclopedia...2008). Louis Althusser was a strong critic of this thought, suggesting rather that ideology was “the medium through which we experience the world” (Curran, Gurevitch and Woollacott 1982: 24).

In his multiple studies of ideology, its origins and development, Gerring (1997) notes with concern that not much progress has been registered in terms of a universally-agreed definition of the term. Over the years, it has become so ambiguous in meaning that it has become a “victim of its own popularity” because “it now means too much” (Gerring 1997: 979). Converse (1964: 207) also laments how “thoroughly muddled” ideology had become through its “diverse uses”. For Gerring (1997: 957-979), ideology continues to be a “highly-flexible conceptual tool” and is “no longer stable enough to be of much use”. Despite a number of authors struggling with the concept’s “elusive” nature (Jost, Federico and Napier 2009: 308; McLellan 1986: 1), Erikson and Tedin (2003: 64) believe ideology should encompass a “set of beliefs about the proper order of society...and how it can be achieved”. Converse (1964) and Downs (1957) are in agreement, describing ideology as a belief system. Lilleker (2006: 89-94) adds ideology deals with an “inter-related system of meanings generated by a system of artifacts that comprise a culture”.

Broadly speaking, ideology can be described as “the way a system rationalizes itself” (Knight 2006: 619). For Hinich and Munger (1994) ideology was about envisioning an

ideal society and how such a society could be realised. According to Mullins (1972: 509-510) ideology was a “logically coherent system of symbols which... links the cognitive and evaluative perception of one’s social condition...to a program of collective action for the maintenance, alteration or transformation of society”. In other words, ideology is about order and positioning one’s political ideas, thoughts and beliefs onto a liberal-conservative / left-centre-right continuum and using this as a “yardstick” to make sense of one’s political world (Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960; Jacoby 1991: 179; Jost *et al.* 2009: 310-311; Knight 2006: 624). Simply put, this left-centre-right continuum permits people to arrange their attitudes according to values such as equality versus inequality and egalitarian values such as basic rights and liberties. Citizens will voluntarily place themselves on this “left-right” dimension even if this does not agree with personal policy choices (Jacoby 1991: 179). Levitin and Miller (1979: 768) provide support for Jacoby’s (1991) assertion that personal ideological positions can differ from actual “issue or policy stands”.

According to Jost *et al.* (2009: 315), evidence demonstrates that “heightened political competition increases the pressure to structure political attitudes according to the single left-right dimension”. For Treier and Hillygus (2005: 1), ideological labels are rendered stronger when voters’ “ideological preferences” match a political party of choice. The authors label this the “black box of political ideology” (Treier and Hillygus 2005: 1). Converse (1964) however expresses doubt that people actually use this instrument to provide organisation over their political worlds. Jacoby (1991: 179) emphasises the utility of ideology as a tool to assist with developing “coherent, rational reactions to the

political world". It is these personal attachments to the liberal-conservative / left-right dimension that serve as heuristic electoral devices (Jacoby 2008: 2). For Hymes (1986), ideology facilitates the creation of categories according to the liberal-conservative / left-right continuum to organise incoming political information. Political parties, political candidates and policy leanings function as ideological "political stimuli" (Jacoby 1991: 202). Elements such as party identification and one's ideological beliefs are factors voters consider when making electoral decisions (Campbell *et al.* 1960).

This study deals exclusively with political ideology. Knight (2006: 623) says the concept is useful in political science because "it can communicate a broad, abstract concept efficiently". Political ideologies often position themselves on the left-centre-right continuum or the liberal-conservative scale (Bjornskov 2005). In the social sciences, political ideologies are employed by political actors such as political parties; political programmes in the guise of election manifestoes and policy blueprints on the type of political, social and economic system the country should adopt are examples of political ideology. South Africa—since 1994—is a pluralist democratic order where different political parties and various political ideologies are in constant competition. This concept will be explored more in Chapter Five and Chapter Six where the author aims to look at the ideological leaning of the Democratic Alliance. In the next section, the author looks at the concept of political communication and its relevance for this study.

### 3.3 Political communication

Chaffee (1975: 15) unambiguously defines political communication as the “role of communication in the political process”. For Kaid (1996: 448), this “broad and interdisciplinary field” was about the “construction, sending, receiving, and processing of messages that potentially have a significant direct or indirect impact on politics” (Graber 2005: 79). Senders and receivers of political messages are usually politicians, journalists, interest groups or ordinary citizens. Key to the success of this transaction is the assumption that messages should have a “significant political effect” on the behavioural traits of whole societies including individuals, groups, institutions and “the environments in which they exist” (Graber 1993: 305).

Denton and Woodward (1990: 14) define political communication as the “public discussion about the allocation of public resources, official authority and official sanctions”. This definition includes all verbal and written political rhetoric but fails to consider non-verbal political behaviours of modern-day politics. For the authors, the most important aspect of any political communicative act is “not the source of the message but its content and purpose” (Denton and Woodward 1990: 11). Graber (1981) on the other hand considers the multi-dimensionality of political language and paralinguistic features—that have come to characterise modern-era politics such as body language and political-expressive acts like boycotts and symbolic protests—as essential to any broad definition of political communication. Kaid and Davidson (1986: 188) label these non-verbal behaviours as “protolanguage”.

McNair (2011: 3-14) agrees with Denton and Woodward (1990) on the intentionality of political communication; this is why the author delineates it as “purposeful communication about politics”. For McNair (2011: 3-14), political communication is “largely mediated communication” and includes all written, verbal and visual elements; the political communicator then is a “performer” who is judged by the audience “partly on the quality of performance”. This thought mirrors Graber’s (1981) definition.

Nisbet and Feldman (2010: 284-287) however add that political communication involves the “transmission” of political messages among three key actors: politicians, the media and the public. This relationship is defined by its horizontal communicative relationships (different political actors), its downward communicative relationships (from government to citizens) and its upward communicative relationships (the public opinions of a country’s citizenry reaching government). For Gurevitch and Blumler (2000: 25) political communication is the “transmission of messages and pressures to and from individuals who are demonstrably unequal: the highly-powerful and the pitifully powerless, the highly-involved and the blissfully indifferent”. Jackson (2010: 16) agrees that political communication is an inter-linked “unequal” relationship between political actors, journalists and public opinion. Political communication then can be defined as “mediated communication” where the media act as intermediaries, altering the message when it reports and gives commentary on the news (Nisbet and Feldman 2010: 284-287; Norris 2004: 1). The media is viewed as an integral political actor shaping the public sphere; for this reason it will always be courted by other political players like political parties,

non-governmental organisations (NGOs), government and other stakeholders.

With the onset of major technological advances in the last few decades, a new gravitation towards the “professionalization of political communication” was registered (Lilleker 2006: 197-199). Kelley (1956: 204) agrees that technology has forced political communication to transform into “a highly technical—if not—professional field”. Graham (2008: 248) notes that political communication is in constant transformation with the World Wide Web reconfiguring the power relationship between elected officials and citizens. This transforming “period of decentralization” is giving rise to populations challenging the “legitimacy of institutionalized politics and traditional media institutions” with increasing frequency (Graham 2008: 248). A manifestation of this development is declining voter turnouts at the ballot box and a general apathy and cynicism towards politics. In their essay on redefining the so-called “third age” of political communication, Brants and Voltmer (2011: 5-6) propose another concept—“mediatization”—or where the media is viewed as a “colonizer” of multiple societal institutions with increasing concern (Lilleker 2006: 117-121). This “shaping” of political processes by the media is referred to as “mediacracy” (Brants and Voltmer 2011: 5-6; Holly 2008: 317). The authors question whether or not this communication revolution—driven mainly by technology<sup>1</sup>—was facilitating the change of political communication into some form of “Babel” of “grey noise...meaningless and disjointed messages” that nobody pays attention to (Brants and Voltmer 2011: 1).

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<sup>1</sup> Lilleker (2006: 197-199) calls this “technological determinism”.

Despite McNair's (2011) book being geared towards an introductory theory of political communication, his definition holds weight above other definitions because it is universal and encapsulates the main elements of political communication—as identified by numerous other authors such as Graber (1981) and Denton and Woodward (1990). McNair's conceptualisation also includes all written, electronic and visual aspects of political communication. For the purposes of this study then, the definition of political communication offered by McNair (2011) will be used.

### **3.4 The public sphere and public opinion**

Jürgen Habermas (1989) in his *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* conceptualises the public sphere to mean that open space where the ideas, thoughts and opinions of a country's citizens are mounted in a rich, interactive exchange. It is informed by the private, public and shared experiences of its *hoi polloi* (Borchers 2006: 185-187; Dahlberg 2009: 828). This forum—ideally—should be accessible to as many people as possible and arguments should be constructed using “rational discussion” (Habermas 1964: 49-50; Habermas 1989: 1-3). It is here where government policies and political developments are critically dissected; the media—in this regard—is instrumental in moulding the public sphere. Habermas argues that for any democracy to function optimally, citizens need to debate, discuss and reach rational decisions about issues that affect them. The public sphere then acts as a “buffer zone” (Habermas 1992: 89) between government and citizen and acts as a “counter-weight to absolutist states” (Fraser 1990: 58).

The quality of a nation's democracy is its ability to "communicate and deliberate" which transforms private opinions into public opinion (Calhoun 1993: 1-25; Fraser 1990: 56-80; Habermas 1989: 1-3). This public opinion is carried by the public (Balnaves and Willson 2011: 117). Also regarded as a synonym for a "consensus about the common good" (Fraser 1990: 59), Habermas (1964: 50) says "public opinion can only come into existence when a reasoning public is presupposed". Public opinion then becomes a natural outcome of the public sphere with the former being "crucial for politics" (Blumler and Gurevitch 1995; Hume 1994: 16; Price and Neijens 1997: 336-360). Public opinion is where governments derive legitimacy and political power. According to Habermas (1989: 246) the "contents of public opinion" are essentially "managed by the culture industry". In other words, the role of the media is emphasised. This is why Zukin (1981: 359) confirms that the mass media and the generation of public opinion are "inextricably wed".

In his seminal work on public opinion, Walter Lippmann (1922: 16-17) observes public opinion is about "those indirect, unseen, and puzzling facts...there is nothing obvious about them". Erik and Tedin (2007: 8) extend Lippmann's observations saying that public opinion is the "public preferences of the adult population on matters of relevance to government". For Lippmann (1922: 128-135) the "manufacture of consent" is how democracies achieve harmony and consensus through the "manipulation" of its population through "skilful" use of the media and its messages (Lilleker 2006:106-07).

For Luhmann (1981: 244-245), the political system shares a symbiotic relationship with public opinion because “the political system uses public opinion to observe itself”. Public opinion then refers to the “dominant opinion, the opinion of the majority”, it is only “transitory” and is formed through collective decision-making; public opinion is “not the tyranny of the majority but the considered product of deliberation in the public sphere” (The public sphere...2009: 5). Both democratic and autocratic governments need to consider the potential threat and rewards of a vibrant public sphere generating public opinion as “hostile public opinion” can disturb the prevailing political order (The public sphere...2009: 6).

Balnaves and Willson (2011: 95) caution that the public sphere should not be viewed simply as “an open physical or communicative space”; it is also not to be considered a “physical thing” as “there are different types of public spheres as there are different types of physical spaces” (Balnaves and Willson 2011: 117). Language and communication are essential to understanding the public sphere (Wright 2008: 21). For any public sphere to enjoy the confidence of the majority and be a “genuine” platform of public opinion, Balnaves and Willson (2011: 95) advise it needs to provide “institutional guarantees” such as “absence of coercion or force or exclusion”.

In his conceptualisation of the “political public sphere”, Habermas (2006: 416-419) explains that for this forum to be the “legitimate creator” of public opinion, political actors such as the media and politicians need to create and facilitate debate. This “political

public sphere” is characterised by “the communicative generation of legitimate power and the manipulative deployment of media power to procure mass loyalty, consumer demand and compliance with systemic imperatives on the other” (Habermas 1992: 286-287). According to Sen (2012: 490), political public spheres should ideally include social movements, the media (in its watchdog capacity) and other groups that take political action.

### **3.4.1 Genesis and eventual decline of the public sphere**

In Habermas’ *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, the author details the history, transformation and eventual decline of the bourgeois public sphere. However—to take the discussion forward—there is a need to deconstruct the idea of a “public”. McQuail (2005: 565) defines “public” to mean the free citizens of a functioning democratic order; citizens who also enjoy basic civil liberties. Dewey (1927: 15) extends this definition saying a “public” is not only a group of people but includes “all those affected by the indirect consequences of transactions to such an extent that it is deemed necessary to have those consequences systematically cared for”. The “*public*” is a “particular, purpose-built solidarity” whose private members’ interactions are “mutually-dependent” (Dewey 1927: 15). For Johnson (2006: 5), *the “public”* is therefore viewed as the combination of the “dialogical representation of these consequences and the political dimensions within a civil society”.

According to Plummer (2006: 329), public spheres are “historical constructions” that help structure public debate over matters of concern and they breathe life into democracies. The idea of a public sphere first came about in 17<sup>th</sup> century Germany, with signs of a “bourgeois public sphere” (Habermas 1989: 2-3) emerging in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. During this time, the ruling nobility undertook all political decisions on behalf of its citizens who were viewed more as passive receptacles of executive decisions (Duvenhage 2007: 3; Wright 2008: 29). Initially, citizens acquired knowledge through literature, art and philosophy. But by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was a marked increase in people wanting to learn and read more on these matters in places such as salons and coffee houses. These places of debate soon transformed into—what Habermas terms—political publics where people gradually began discussing political and economic developments. By the time the “political public sphere” became political, it was “predominantly male” and “middle class” (Roberts and Crossley 2004: 4). This emergent public sphere was aided by technological strides made in the printing industry through newsletters and journals and the media was used as an information source. This period is referred to as the Enlightenment Age, where citizens intentionally sought out information through the media and other outlets (Wright 2008: 29).

This gradually changed when political authority began vesting in what Habermas termed a nation state—or where the power of the nobility and church began to diminish—especially in Britain, Germany and France. The State was “progressively decoupled” (Roberts and Crossley 2004: 3) and capitalist societies emerged with tax bases introduced to finance governmental programmes. As a consequence, citizens

demanded accountability from elected politicians (Duvenhage 2007: 3; Graham 2008: 48; Wright 2008: 29). This eventually gave rise to a public sphere where tax-paying citizens could employ “critical reason” to discuss and debate matters that had a direct bearing on the way they were governed (Calhoun 1993: 272-273; Dahlgren 1991: 3; Graham 2008: 45-48; Jones 2000: 308; Lilleker 2006: 172-176; Roberts and Crossley 2004: 3-4; Wright 2008: 29).

By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the public sphere reached its climax and its decline followed (Roberts and Crossley: 2004: 3-4; Dahlgren 1991: 3; Dahlgren 2005: 34; Price 2008: 12; Wright 2008: 29). For Habermas, this reversal mirrored the social conditions that initially aided the rise of the public sphere. By the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, the public sphere was said to be “riven with contradictions and conflicting tendencies” (Roberts and Crossley 2004: 2). Capitalism permeated the journalistic process and commercial interests suppressed journalistic values. This led to a “regressive dumbing down” of public debate (Roberts and Crossley 2004: 6; Wright 2008: 29). In time, journalism was replaced with professional public relations and the idea of neutral public opinion compromised. Politics was said to have become trivialised through the development of the electronic mass media and politics dismissed as “a stage show” (Roberts and Crossley 2004: 5; Wright 2008: 29). In Habermas’ analysis, the decline of the public sphere can be attributed to “commodification”—or the advent and growing power of the mass media—(Graham 2008: 48; Newman 2005: 120); this “rapid development of the mass media” had altered the public sphere (Holly 2008: 318). Habermas argues that despite public opinion being “scientized” by public relations professionals, all was not

lost as “they have not completely undermined the forces of rational deliberation and critical argument” (Roberts and Crossley 2004: 6). To counter this “legitimacy crisis”, the public sphere had to be “repoliticized” by affording citizens engagement through “communicative interaction” (Duvenage 2007: 4; Newman 2005: 120). This author will explore this concept more in Chapter Five—and Facebook in particular—where the findings of this study will be discussed and deliberated upon.

### ***3.4.2 Institutional criteria and assumptions for a public sphere to exist***

According to Habermas (1989: 36-37), there are three institutional criteria for a public sphere to exist: a disregard of status; a domain of common concern; and the notion of inclusivity. For Habermas (1989: 36), the key to a healthy public sphere is the prospect of the better and more rational argument holding up. When status is discounted, society’s self-imposed hierarchy of rank falls away and the better argument surfaces. Secondly, all issues within the public sphere have to be of common concern. Previously, the nobility and church interpreted information in terms of art, philosophy and literature and citizens were mere spectators looking in from the outside. Thirdly, the public sphere needs to be inclusive; it cannot exclude people based on race, class and gender (Sen 2012: 491). Together with these three institutional criteria, Habermas (1989) identified four assumptions to strengthen the prospects for a healthy, fully-operational public sphere in a political democracy. Firstly, the public sphere assumes that all participants contributing to discussions and debates should be equals. Status and rank should not matter; status disparities were suspended or “bracketed” here as a result (Fraser 1990: 62). This is congruent with Habermas’ first institutional criteria—a disregard of status.

Secondly, a solitary public sphere is preferable to multiple ones. In this way, democratic discourse functions robustly and optimally. Thirdly, private issues should not manifest in the public sphere. This resonates with Habermas' institutional requirement of common concern. Lastly, a functioning public sphere requires there be a clear separation between State and civil society (Fraser 1990: 62-63; Habermas 1989: 9). This element of the study will be discussed in Chapter Five, *Section 5.6, Helen Zille's Facebook page...a public sphere.*

### **3.4.3 Observed criticisms of Habermas' public sphere**

Habermas' public sphere constitutes two dimensions: the empirical and normative dimensions. While the empirical dimension comprises all institutionalised written and verbal interactions, the normative element provides a platform for populations with no official power to permit the State to pay attention to its public opinion. Both dimensions received varying attention from scholars but it was the normative dimension that enjoyed more praise than criticism (Habermas 1989: 25-26).

Viewed through the classical liberal lens, Habermas' public sphere acts as a "zone of mediation" between elected representatives and society (Roberts and Crossley 2004: 2). Through public opinion, informal control is exercised to ensure government responsiveness and accountability. The classical liberal theory proposes a vertical channel of communication between the private individual and the State (Sen 2012:

492). The fourth estate (or the media) is an important political actor in this regard (Curran 1991: 29).

Curran (1991) notes with concern that consideration is not paid to how power is exercised by the various institutional structures that comprise society. The media's role in how it relates to the other institutional elements of society and related deficits is negated. The media is not a universal platform as it excludes some voices and includes others. The media's role in revitalising liberal democracy is also not considered. In contrast, seen through the radical democratic lens, the media is seen as a facilitator of public opinion and competing ideas. It acts as a platform for different and divergent views, providing a voice to citizens to discuss debate and deliberate on matters that affect them. The media therefore should be a reflection of society; "all significant interests" should be represented (Curran 1991: 29-30). The media should also perform its fourth estate watchdog function by exposing corruption and holding governmental institutions accountable. Thus, the radical democratic theory views the media as an interlinked web of different vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication streams between citizens, groups and power structures (Curran 1991: 32-35; Sen 2012: 492).

Unlike the radical democratic theory which postulates that the public sphere is where private citizens congregate to deliberate on issues that affect them, Marxism and communist thought view the media as ideological tools of control by the bourgeois class to subjugate the masses and extend its ideological hegemony (Curran: 35-38). In her work *Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the critique of actually existing*

*democracy*—an egalitarian interpretation of Habermas’ original public sphere (Gripsrud *et al.* 2011)—Fraser (1990) details a number of observed criticisms. Fraser (1990) firstly finds that Habermas is flawed in assuming that only a liberal public sphere exists. As such, it is discriminatory in terms of gender, race and class or the “sub-altern counter publics” (Fraser 1990: 63-67; Sitton 2003: 108-119; Wright 2008: 32). Fraser (1990) rationalises this may have something to do with the initial conceptualisation of the public sphere in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when middle class white men were interpreted as the *public* and the “universal class” (Eley 2002: 306; Landes 1988: 4; Wright 2008: 32). Feminist thinkers regard this exclusion as another form of “dominance and control” (Fraser 1990: 63). Also, rules and procedures for participation within the public sphere—“protocols of style and decorum”—were in themselves “markers of status inequality” that prejudiced groups such as women, different ethnicities and the so-called “unpropertied classes” (Fraser 1990: 63). This discovery is in contradiction to Habermas’ institutional criteria of inclusivity and disregarding status.

With regard to accessing the public sphere as “social equals” and disregarding factors such as “differences in birth and fortune” (Fraser (1990: 62-63), the author dismisses Habermas’ suggestion that people merely “bracket” their differences and gather as equals. Instead, Fraser (1992: 118-121) recommends substituting the word “bracket” in favour of “social equality” through some form of “rough equality”.

Habermas’ liberal public sphere also fails to consider other competing non-liberal public spheres. In fact, Fraser (1990: 61) argues that counter publics existed from the public

sphere's inception but that this relationship was "always conflictual". As a result, the bourgeois public sphere "deliberately sought to block broader participation" (Fraser 1990: 61). The author asserts this was detrimental to the representativeness of the public sphere as more publics would have surfaced as the bourgeois public sphere increased in popularity. Fraser (1990) illustrates this as another contradiction of Habermas' institutional criterion—of inclusivity.

Wright (2008: 30-31) is another author who finds the implication of free and open access to Habermas' bourgeois public sphere problematic. This is not the reality—Wright (2008) argues—as Habermas largely ignores the power of stronger and coercive groups within the platform. The architecture of the public sphere and its subsequent power distribution are integral factors for the emergence of democratic and rational deliberations (Fraser 1992: 115). This is why the public sphere needs to be "disorganised and anarchic if it is to resist co-optation" (Wright 2008: 31). Language also hinders the inclusivity ideal of Habermas' public sphere. Dominant groups benefit to the detriment of subordinate publics who cannot articulate themselves sufficiently using the public sphere (Fraser 1990: 64-65).

Additionally, Wright (2008: 31) criticises the manner in which Habermas over-simplifies the effects of media colonisation or —what he calls— the "dumbing down" of the fourth estate. Dismissing Habermas as a "cultural snob" and an "elitist" for this assertion, authors like Dahlgren (1995) and McGuigan (1996) say studies have proven that "dumbing down" the media can have non-negative effects because audiences are no

longer passive consumers as the media can create new public spheres in the process through platforms such as talk shows (Wright 2008: 31). For example, television talk shows have now employed multi-media facilities such as telephone calls, electronic mails (e-mails), live Facebook comments and live tweeting<sup>2</sup> to make audiences feel part of the content-generating process; their comments and questions are increasingly answered on site live to millions of people. By inference, the public sphere's role in mediating between State and citizen is too restrictive; the media's watchdog role should extend to "all relations when power is exercised over others" (Curran 1991: 32).

The bourgeois public sphere has also been labelled "unrealistic" because of its "rational biases" (Dahlgren 2005: 155) and its deliberate discounting of informal types of communication (Wright 2008: 31). Calling Habermas' conceptualisation of the public sphere as "rather dry" and "elitist", Wright (2008: 31-32) says more diverse communication forms are needed to shake off these labels. Wright (2008) is another critic who takes issue with the deliberative democratic ideals of Habermas' public sphere saying the system will not be able to cope with such deep divisions of thought. Instead, divergent voices should not succumb to consensus as such thinking may harbour "hidden power imbalances"; these alternative voices should be encouraged as a form of "agonistic pluralism" (Wright 2008: 32).

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<sup>2</sup> Tweeting is an action associated with social media website Twitter where subscribers are permitted 140 characters to post a status update. These posts are then visible to that person's followers on Twitter. For the purposes of this study, only Facebook will be looked at, not Twitter.

#### **3.4.4 A new digital public sphere**

Koller and Vodak (2008: 4-5) reflect on the notion of a new “global public sphere” driven by “money, people and ideas” travelling at an ever faster pace. Wright (2008: 33) illustrates that while the contemporary public sphere has taken cognisance of Fraser’s (1990: 63-67) “sub-altern publics”, the local-national conception is no longer applicable. This gravitation towards a “mosaic democracy” and the “fracturing of mass democracy into highly charged fast moving pieces” (Toffler 1990: 251) was altering the traditional nation-state. According to Lilleker (2006) and Spilchal (1999), the development of the mass media and its related technologies—better known as technological determinism—shifted the public sphere from a location to a communication network. The advent of the Internet signalled the arrival of a new “global public sphere” where citizens of the global community now had access to a “global forum” to mount ideas and arguments without fear of censorship or mediation (Ubayasiri 2006: 4). In brief, the Internet is viewed as a “force for radical democracy” and a “deliberative public sphere” for widespread citizen engagement (Sen 2012: 490). MacGregor (2003: 112) welcomes this technological evolution saying this new forum of a “non-centralized, non-hierarchical, anarchic network of computer networks” now possesses the potential to stimulate a public “grand debate” with peoples from all over the globe. Crick (2009: 495) is in agreement, arguing the Internet as a public sphere has “undoubtedly facilitated a greater explosion of previously unheard voices than any other time in history” and that this only seeks to demonstrate the “democratic potential of such a phenomenon”. Corrado and Firestone (1996: 17) are also optimistic that online discussions will eventually lead to a “conversational democracy”.

Dahlberg (2009: 829) draws attention to this global public sphere and its promise of enhancing democracy but warns that a number of factors such as access, censorship, corporate domination and state surveillance threaten this utopian ideal. Rasmussen (2008: 77) agrees but argues that while the digital dimension of the public sphere offers “less guidance for politics”; it offers more “possibilities for expression”. Graham (2008: 61) however warns that the current state of the global public sphere is “analogous to a world war of sorts” where binary oppositions in all sorts of thinking and thought were competing with each other. Graham’s (2008) assertions find currency in Bellamy and Raab’s (1999: 169) idea that the Internet as a public sphere (and its related information and communication technologies—ICTs) will “fragment” it “balkanising politics into multifarious and shifting constituencies that are incapable of being aggregated by any means”. Discussions will gradually become “narrower” as groups organically gravitate towards other like-minded groups (Davis and Owen 1998: 124). Wright (2008: 35) though is optimistic about the Internet and its promise to be an effective vehicle for public opinion. A clear example of the Internet’s political evolution is the 2011 Arab Spring revolutions in North Africa / Middle East. (Please see Section 3.5, Social networking sites, where more discussion is provided on the role of the World Wide Web in this uprising.).

The information gathered in this segment will be used to explore the notion of Facebook as a public sphere and potential facilitator of public opinion. This researcher will examine the Democratic Alliance’s 2009 election campaign in order to investigate whether or not the social networking site operated as a conduit of public opinion. In this

regard, the Democratic Alliance's Facebook page will be analysed according to the criteria discussed earlier on (Section 3.4.2, Institutional criteria and assumptions for a public sphere to exist).

### **3.5 Web campaigning**

There is no disputing the Internet—or World Wide Web—has altered the way people communicate today. Just over a decade ago, the Internet was classified as new media when compared—relatively—to traditional forms of media such as television, radio and print. Today, the World Wide Web provides the platform for an ever-increasing and interconnected global public sphere driven by multiple social media and social networking websites (SNS) such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and personalised blogs. Politics too has benefited from this communication reconfiguration (Tedesco 2004: 507) where modern-day political campaigns find it essential to factor in a simultaneous online presence to complement—and supplement—traditional offline electioneering (Han 2008: 74). Gibson and Ward (2009) suggest three reasons for a political party choosing to be online: for communication amongst its members (intra-party); to compete with other political parties (inter-party); and to fully leverage the opportunities offered by the Internet (systemic arena). For politicians, an online digital media presence is nowadays “a commodity” (Bimber and Copeland 2011: 2)—or an absolute must. Politicians who deliberately ignore this “post-party era with a new political ecology” (Carr 2008) face a bleak future. McClurg and Holbrook (2009: 503) support this assertion, reaffirming that “modern election campaigns” supported by a technological bias have a “substantial effect” on electoral outcomes and the voting

behaviours of an electorate. In fact, as Jackson, Dorton and Heindl (2010: 42) point out, the Internet and technological advances are effectively “altering” the very nature of electoral processes because elections are gravitating to another level to “accommodate an evolving generation with new values, goals, sensibilities and modes of communication”.

This author argues that newer technologies—over the Internet—are stimulating political interest, civic participation and political participation. Unlike developed democracies such as the US and those found in Europe where citizens are successfully engaging digital media technologies to supplement their offline searches for political information (Shah, Cho, Eveland and Kwak 2005: 531), South African politics is relatively new to the online political game. Of the many political parties who compete for votes in an election cycle in this country, only few have a *bona fide* website presence. For those parties who are online, such websites are barely updated on a regular basis. A perusal by this author establishes the validity of this argument. Also, only those thirteen parties represented in the country’s National Assembly boast a current online presence; those other parties that are online barely update their sites (South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 1:6).

### **3.5.1 Campaigning using the World Wide Web**

A vast repository of research demonstrates that election campaigns are influenced by a wide cross-section of issues such as party identification (Berelson, Lazarsfeld and

McPhee 1954); ideological leanings (Gelman and King 1993); economic assessments (Vavreck 2009); policy pronouncements (Johnson, Blais, Brady and Crete 1992); race (Mendelberg 2001); gender (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991); candidate image constructions ((Druckman, Jacobs and Ostermeier 2004) and emotional appeals (Brader 2006). There is evidence now also to suggest that successful candidates are those who embrace the nature of changing communications (Compton 2008); this is why they out-pace their competitors, coming across as more “in touch” with voters (How the presidential candidates...2012: 4). Butler and Collins (1999: 60) and Haley (2011: 3) argue that the Internet is facilitating a communication revolution, enabling “instant information flows” between citizens, political bodies and their representatives. For politicians, digital technology was facilitating a “new level of conversation with voters”, a dialogue that was dynamic and not static (How the presidential candidates 2012: 1). The Internet for this political class was the “ultimate democratizing technology” because of its vast digital opportunities and the fact that no “digital walls” existed in cyber space (Boyd 2008: 114).<sup>3</sup>

Politicians are increasingly committing themselves to closing the communication chasm that exists between themselves and their respective constituents. Coleman *et al.* (2011: 215) coin the term “disconnection” to illustrate this “disjuncture” between elected “officialdom” and the public. The web has transformed this relationship to such a degree that web campaigning today is “personal, interactive and instant” (Sweetser 2011: 296).

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<sup>3</sup> For a detailed account of the origins of web-based campaigning, please see: Chadwick (2006: 151); Compton (2008); Haley (2011); Hamilton (2011); Johnson (1999: 706); Lawrence (2007); McDonald (2008); Mossberg and Colbert (2010); Panagopoulos (2009); Stetler (2008); Stromer-Galley (2000); Sweetser (2011); Tedesco (2004) and Whillock (1997: 1213).

For example, political rallies, election speeches, media briefings and party launches—through the Internet—can now be streamed live for followers to tap into the process in real time (or as it happens). Social networking sites make it possible for online users to comment instantly on speeches, videos, statements and political rhetoric; users can either support or reject the message. Often, political messages are posted online to other users, causing material such as campaign videos to go viral over the World Wide Web. Prospective candidates nowadays are able to “permeate the lives of citizens on a daily basis” (Compton 2008: 3). This “relationship-building” is just one advantage of this new digital reality: “organizations can now meet and connect with their publics where one might meet a friend” (Sweetser 2011: 308)—a loose reference to political communication using social networking sites to be explored later.

Unlike the “one-way source-driven character of traditional media” (Gandy 2001: 150), the Internet has additionally permitted every single user to be a publisher (Gruber 2008). Traditional media outlets like radio, television and print are no longer the sole source of political information (Lawrence 2007). Murphy (2012) illustrates the fact that people are no longer confined to getting their political information from fixed sources anymore. For example, in the US where there is a long history of television advertising, Murphy (2012) observes that “not everyone is watching television spots anymore”. Instead—because the World Wide Web has set the precedent in terms of speed—expectations have been heightened and election campaigns have had to adapt accordingly to “get the information out” unlike before (Murphy 2012).

With the introduction of web campaigning, voting publics can choose to go directly to the “source”—actual campaigns—and in turn become sources themselves by transforming into generators of information through online discussions and commentary on political issues (Sweetser 2011: 300). Professor Montana Miller from Bowling Green State University in the US confirms that people are not just receptacles of information any longer; they are “agents themselves producing mashups, videos making t-shirts” and it was becoming increasingly difficult to establish what was amateur-produced and what was not (Jackson et al. 2010: 45; Noveck 2008: 6). Examples include commenting about a candidate’s issue positions in online forums, thus contributing to the overall debate. Tedesco (2004: 510) confirms this: the Internet allows people to engage with others as “peers, influencers...and in some cases agenda-setters”.

In their research on the online electoral habits of the Spanish population, Borge and Cardenal (2011: 1) found there was no compulsion for “skilled” Internet users to be motivated to take an active interest in politics. By virtue of their online experience, users were naturally motivated enough to “significantly” increase their “probability of participation” (Borge and Cardenal 2011: 23). Xenos and Moy (2007) reached a similar conclusion, augmenting the idea of online experience increasing users’ knowledge of the political world regardless of motivation. This idea is in agreement with what authors such as Krueger (2002); Gibson, Lusoli and Ward (2005) and Anduiza, Gallego and Cantijoch (2010) concurred on: they all argued for a new type of voter emerging as per their “mobilization effect” or the skilled Internet user now participating actively in politics

in the absence of motivation. It was this everyday use of the Internet and its many online applications that facilitated a certain familiarity that made online political information easier to look up and embrace. This study is specifically concerned with how social networking site Facebook was used by the Democratic Alliance as a form of web campaigning during the 2009 South African general elections. The author will elaborate more on this in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

### ***3.5.2 Web campaigning, its benefits and disadvantages***

Johnson (1999: 718) observes the main beneficiaries of web political campaigns are those citizens “already decidedly engaged in politics”, including people who attend political meetings, party volunteers and individuals who regularly engage with media editorials. The World Wide Web is just another information-rich avenue that provides the “raw material to become even more informed and active” (Johnson 1999: 718). The Internet has the potential to be an “extraordinary tool” for these citizens who are politically-engaged and motivated (Johnson 2008: 708). It has set in motion a “real revolution” where political candidates are no longer insulated from public scrutiny as records of politicians standing for office (and their opponents) are stored and accessed through the World Wide Web. Through the Internet, civic-minded citizens and the media are afforded “extraordinary access”<sup>4</sup> to public record documents, newspaper articles, video archives, government proposals, voting records, financial disclosure files and

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<sup>4</sup> A good example is Wikileaks and how this resource has unearthed some of the biggest news stories involving transnational governments. It is speculated the Tunisian protests started soon after a Wikileaks release of the Palestinian Papers by television channel Al Jazeera (Bohler-Muller and Van Der Merwe 2011: 7).

other valuable information (Johnson 1999: 716). The only disadvantage is the quantity of information and how this needs to be “synthesized” and “strategically crafted” in the shortest possible time (Johnson 1999: 716). The second benefit of mounting an online election campaign is that costs can be controlled and channelled to other elements of the communication strategy. Johnson (1999: 719) observes that political advertising is expensive—especially television advertising; through web-based campaigns, these costs can be curtailed and “better-managed”.

Perhaps one of the most important reasons behind web campaigning is its significance for connecting with the younger demographic<sup>5</sup> (Benoit and Benoit 2005; Bimber and Copeland 2011: 23) because research demonstrates this is the platform where “especially young...highly educated individuals” obtain most of their political information (Gil de Zuniga *et al.* 2010: 38). Hargittai and Hinnant (2008: 602) provide support for this observation, adding that young adults were the “most highly connected” demographic when it came to the Internet. Commenting on the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions in 2011, Bohler-Muller and Van Der Merwe (2011: 9) add the youth demonstrated they were “globally connected” and viewed democracy as part of their “identity”. As Han (2008: 72) discovered in his research, “well-educated young people” were more likely to engage with the Internet than “those who are either older or less well

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<sup>5</sup> Katz (1998) coined the term “digital citizen” as far back as 1998 to describe this technologically-savvy citizen who was “optimistic, tolerant, civic-minded and radically committed to change...to see a new digital nation...a new social class”. For Katz (1997), a digital citizen possessed three “powerful political forces” at his / her disposal: technology, education and communication. Armed with these realities, these “ascending young citizens” could construct an all-new world informed by civil society, rational politics, shared communications and information, the quest for transparency and truth and “new kinds of community” (Katz 1997).

educated". As illustrated by Schadler and Golvin (2005) and Gil de Zuniga et al. (2010: 38), these "technologically-oriented citizens" spend a "considerable amount of time" online. For Han (2008: 72), younger Internet users were "more likely" to use the interactive features of the Internet. Jackson *et al.* (2010: 43) and Sweeney (2005: 169) label this demographic the "digital natives", a generation defined by their relationship with technology—a generation that has literally "grown up with technology at their fingertips" (Fogg 2008). These digital citizens have "high-speed Internet access and the skills to use it every day" (Sims and Jorenstein 2011). This is also a group of people who "expect nomadic, anytime, anywhere communications"; they are "technologically-savvy, optimistic, fun-seeking and flexible" (Sweeney 2005: 169-170). Sweetser, Lariscy and Tinkham (2010) assert also that younger people are likely to be more receptive towards digital campaigning information than their older counterparts.

The fourth benefit of online campaigns is the elimination of traditional media gatekeepers (Sweetser 2011: 294) and the ability of politicians to "set their own agenda with journalists", especially when news corporations increasingly scour the web for stories (Hayley 2011: 3). Fifthly, Internet-based political campaigns offer unique interactive features to "increase the personalization factor" between politician and constituencies as outlined earlier (Compton 2008: 2; Cornfield 2005: 4; Stromer-Galley 2000: 111). A candidate's online interface can be utilised to supplement traditional media campaigns through multi-media downloads; to sell and distribute electronic campaign paraphernalia; content can be personalised, interactive polls can be carried out with supporters and key word searches can give users access to embedded website

information (Calderaro 2010: 3-4; Warnick *et al.* 2005). In this sense, new media campaign websites have “given rise to new literacies”—in other words campaign websites are deepening the conversation with relevant publics (Jones 2008: 435).

Sweetser (2011: 298) elucidates that digital communication is powered by interactivity as it “connects and mobilizes people”. McMillan (2002) and Kiouisis (2002) define digital media interactivity as the user’s ability to create and generate content. According to Trammell, Williams, Postelnicu and Landreville (2006: 23) and Sundar, Kalyanaraman and Brown (2003), candidates who offered a certain level of interactivity on campaign websites enhanced user perceptions of their “sensitivity, responsiveness and trustworthiness”. Warnick, Xenos, Endres and Gastil (2005) distinguished between two forms of interactivity found on campaign websites: campaign-to-user interactivity (mechanisms on websites to promote communication between politicians and voter) and text-based interactivity (how site content is verbally and visually expressed) (Endres and Warnick 2004). Not only did the authors find that interactive features on a candidate’s website increase the amount of time users spent on the site, it also assisted in their “accurate recall” of candidate issue positions (Warnick *et al.* 2005: 2). Too much interactivity however “can interfere with user recall of site content”; the key is moderation (Warnick *et al.* 2005: 2). There is the criticism though, that not many of the interactive options over the Internet are optimally used (Castells and Sey 2004; Levin 2003; McAllister-Spooner 2009). Tedesco (2004: 524) found that both candidates and citizens alike were apprehensive to “change the channel and fully embrace the net”.

Johnson (1999: 713) and Vaccari (2010: 1-5) however highlight the rise and “enormous potential” of electronic mail—or e-mail—to reach segmented audiences “through well targeted political messages” for campaigning purposes. This additional interactive facility allows for both audio and video to complement such messages at minimal costs to the paying politician (Trammell and Williams 2004). Krueger (2006) also found that using mail as a “mobilization tool” (Vaccari 2010: 3) was much better than typical offline canvassing exercises such as direct mail and telephone calls. There is the concern that this new form of instant communication is likely to increase the chances of “political spam” or political junk mail (Johnson 1999: 713).

The author introduced web campaigning; its history; its benefits and disadvantages and its importance for connecting with the younger demographic. In the next section, the author will introduce the idea of how social networking sites such as Facebook altered the political landscape in South African elections, looking specifically at the Democratic Alliance and how this political party leveraged the SNS in the 2009 poll.

### **3.6 Social networking sites**

Williams and Gulati (2007: 3-5) define a “network” as a “set of people, organizations or other social entities connected by a set of socially meaningful relationships”. When these relationships are helped along by a computer connection, it translates into “a social network” (William and Gulati 2007: 5). The terms social media and social networking sites should not be used inter-changeably. They do not mean the same

thing. Or at least this is what social analyst Ben Parr (2010) says. The author draws attention to the confusion around equating the term social media with social network. This is “inaccurate”; “social networking” is only a branch of social media and social media consists of both “social networks” and “information networks” (Parr 2010). The social analyst and commentator specifies social networks are literally just that: about one’s social network of friends, colleagues and acquaintances; these networks are about “sharing professional or personal experiences together”. Websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and My Space are examples. Information networks are a “more recent phenomenon” with their main aim being the distribution of information. Examples include YouTube (video distribution), Flickr (pictures) and Twitter (news and other information feeds) (Parr 2010). For Graham (2008), discussion forums such as blogs and wikis are considered “social media” while websites like My Space, Facebook and YouTube are considered “social media applications”. Like Graham (2008), Sen (2012: 490) regards websites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter as “Internet applications”—all of which facilitate the creation and sharing of web content.

Perhaps the simplest way to define social networking sites is to describe them as a “modern form of word of mouth” (Investing in...2012: 21). Author of *The Facebook Effect* David Kirkpatrick (2010: 66-67) says the concept of social networking is not new; its origins can be traced back to 1997. The “social networking bug” only hit America’s Silicon Valley and San Francisco in 2001/ 2002 with the first *bona fide* social network intended for Stanford University students launched in November 2001 (Kirkpatrick 2010: 77). The project was called Club Nexis and was designed by Turkish doctoral student

Orkut Buyukkoten to help students “improve their social life” by assisting Stanford students find romantic dates, study mates and sport partners (Kirkpatrick 2010: 77). Of Stanford’s 15 000-strong student population, 1500 members had a Club Nexis membership—a 10% penetration ratio. Thus, according to Kirkpatrick (2010), social networking sites are web-based database programmes intended to bring people together—socially, scholastically and otherwise. Social networking sites—according to Kirkpatrick (2010: 27)—allow individuals to create an online profile detailing personal information such as hobbies, interests and music tastes which are then linked to other friends’ profiles, thus creating “their own social network”. Social networking sites afford users the “freedom” to oscillate between the roles of content creators and content generators (Compton 2008: 8). This thought finds resonance in Bohler-Muller and Van Der Merwe’s (2011: 1-2) definition: social networking sites are “web-based tools and services” that afford Internet users options for creating, rating and sharing information through geographic networks. For example, one need only refer to the Arab Spring revolutions in North Africa and parts of the Middle East in 2011 / 2012. What happened during the political turmoil in those nations was a marriage between technology and social behaviour—“technosociality”—that gave rise to “digital activism” which brought together people of congruent socio-political persuasions (Bohler-Muller and Van Der Merwe 2011: 8). The Internet and its high mobilising potential afforded citizens “enhanced opportunities for political participation” and “new spaces for active citizenship” (Bohler-Muller and Van Der Merwe 2011: 1). Boyd and Ellison (2007) are more detailed in their conceptualisation; such “web-based services” facilitate the creation of both public and semi-public profiles “within a bounded system”; users

maintain a list of other users with whom they “share a connection” and all users browse each other’s profile within the system. As a result, users leverage a multitude of online tools to foster online friendships with other users (Lenhart and Madden 2007). Social networking sites also boast large user databases of personal information, considered a huge asset for database marketing purposes (Albarran 2006; Wills and Reeves 2009: 265-279). Unlike ordinary Internet websites, social networking sites have specific features: users create and generate content; users control the information on these sites; “like-minded” users can be connected through groups and connected users can share information in a number of ways including text, video, pictures, discussion boards and other media formats (William and Gulati 2007: 4-5).

Nations (2012) however notes that it is the “architecture” of social networking sites which facilitate interaction with relevant websites and other like-minded users. This structure is multi-dimensional and can include elements such as friends, groups, walls, blog posts, widgets and action tabs such as “pokes”—that can be found specifically on Facebook (Compton 2008: 8; Nations 2012). Some of the other advantages of social networking platforms such as Facebook include people providing real names to join geographic networks and a “political views” tab on the page that give friends, acquaintances and other users indications of the person’s political persuasions (Boyd and Ellison 2007; Wills and Reeves 2009: 265-266).

For Nations (2012), the element of interactivity is key to understanding social networking sites. Unlike the “one-way street” of traditional media, social networking sites

are altering relationships by offering users opportunities to interact with different sites and other users while at the same time searching for information (Nations 2012). These online platforms permit citizens to “life-stream” experiences and other events to friends using social networking sites such as Facebook and micro-blogging information networking site Twitter (Bohler-Muller and Van Der Merwe 2011: 5). There is the argument still that social networking websites—by virtue of their “open-ended” nature—can confuse newer users who may not be familiar with their technology (Nations 2012).

Arno (2012) and Thomas (2012) observe that social media and social networking sites are growing at a faster pace in developing nations than developed ones. Although the slow broadband penetration rate was negligible in developing countries compared to their developed counterparts, this fact was not hindering its rapid growth as users were using “relatively inexpensive” mobile connections to keep pace with the social networking revolution (Arno 2012; Sen 2012: 492). According to Thomas (2012), there are now 2.3 billion Internet users with a global penetration rate of 32%.<sup>6</sup> He also says that mobile usage, on the other hand, was growing at a “phenomenal rate” and now accounts for 10% of all web traffic and that there are now 1.1 billion people with 3-G

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<sup>6</sup> Of this number, the African continent accounted for six-point-two-percent or approximately one-hundred-and-forty-million users (Internet usage statistics...2011). Africa’s 13.5% Internet penetration rate was also much lower than the global figure of 36.1%. South Africa is placed fifth on the African continent with 6.8 million Internet users in a country of approximately fifty million people—a 13.9% penetration rate (Cerf 2012: 20). These figures clearly demonstrate that despite the marked technological leaps made by Western democracies, Africa—and South Africa in relative terms—have not kept pace. Apart from having major implications regarding modernity for its populations, these statistics point to a bigger disjuncture when it comes to elevating political communication to a cyber level; election campaigns will still need to be fought using the same traditional media route until such time as African nations (including South Africa) play catch-up with their Western counterparts. It must be borne in mind, however, that South Africa is a relatively new democracy. An important medium such as television advertising was only permitted in 2009, fifteen-years after democracy (Political parties tune into...2009; Teer-Tomaselli 2006: 432-437).

subscriptions—or around 18% of world total mobile subscriptions (Thomas 2012). A majority of these 3-G subscriptions are Smart Phones or hand-held mobile devices that boast an Internet connection. At present, there are 935 million Smart Phone subscribers, as compared to the 6.34 billion mobile subscribers (Thomas 2012).<sup>7</sup>

For the purposes of this study, the term *social networking* will be employed to refer to the social networking site, Facebook<sup>8</sup> because the author is concerned only with this SNS and how the Democratic Alliance leveraged it during the 2009 South African general election to connect with its supporters and claim (and extend) ownership of issues it campaigned on vigorously (in agreement with John Petrocik’s issue ownership theory—to be discussed later within this chapter). During its campaigning phase, the party used Facebook extensively as a subsidiary of its traditional media campaign—television, radio and print—to post speeches, announce events and facilitate online

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<sup>7</sup> For Cumming (2012: 21), mobile is set to mark the “second Internet revolution”. Chapman (2012: 16) calls this the “mobile Internet era”. Sweetser (2011: 309) agrees and says that mobile is the “next horizon for development” and it will continue to grow “as will the number of applications and tasks that one can do with a mobile device”. Unlike the “static” and “fixed nature” (Arno 2012) of personal computers, campaigns can now be accessed by audiences literally “on the move” (Arno 2012)—by people who always have their mobile phones on their person. By inference, it is an “always on device” (Ginsberg 2012: 22). Arno (2012) agrees “people are increasingly networking on the move” and mobile was now facilitating what Ginsberg (2012: 22) labels “dual screening” where people were simultaneously splitting their attention to an event or the television whilst “playing on their mobile” contributing to multiple forums. Mobile was now the “favored portal” to the online world for many people to share thoughts on a range of issues, to publish photographs, to play games and to connect with friends (Ackerman and Guizzo 2011). Due to the interactive and “powerful technical attributes” that mobile offers, traditional marketing campaigns can be reinforced by leveraging the web (Mobile strategy means not being too clever...2012: 21). This development is also likely to alter advertising completely for consumers and the brand (Mobile strategy means not being too clever...2012: 21).

<sup>8</sup> For a brief history of social networking sites, please see: Boyd and Ellison (2007); Castells (2009: 68-70); Kirkpatrick (2010); Steinfeld, Ellison and Lampe (2008: 434) and Terry (2008). Additionally, for a comprehensive history of the development and evolution of social networking site Facebook, please see: Ackerman and Guizzo (2011); Happy birthday...(2013: 19); Helft (2012); Kirkpatrick (2010); Lever (2012: 25); Protalinski (2011); Protalinski (2012a,b,c); Seward and Tabak (2004); Upwardly mobile...(2012: 21); Wasserman (2012) and Weitzner (2011).

discussions involving DA supporters and non-supporters around the poll. Facebook was used as a supplementary publicity generator for its leader, Helen Zille.

### **3.7 Political advertising**

Information is a power resource (Randall 1998: 1) that plays an important role in the management of public opinion in society—especially during elections (Botan 2007: 9). As information connotes power, controlling the flow of it is effectively the first step in generating propaganda (Lilleker 2006: 162-165; O’Shaughnessy 1999: 726-727). Bolland (1989: 10) defines advertising as the “paid placement of organizational messages in the media”. Thomson (1996: 211) states that advertising involves information about a brand or an idea that may include images, music and stories about that product. Advertising and in particular political advertising is aimed at informing and persuading and affording citizens rational choices based on information. Political advertising by inference then encompasses the purchase of commercial media time to broadcast political messages to a mass audience either through radio, television or print. Citizens need to know what the political candidate stands for, what his or her party’s policies are and why citizens should vote for them (Berger 2004: 87; Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 2006: 37-38; Tak, Kaid and Lee 1997: 175). Political advertising is often referred to as “paid advertising” (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 2006: 3), “issue advertising” or “advocacy advertising” (Kaid 2004: 156); political advertising is subjective (Lilleker 2006: 147-151), loaded with the “ideas and values” of the person paying for it (Randall 1998: 1-2). Regardless of whether audiences agree with the content, people know it is a politically-loaded message that amounts to propaganda (Randall 1998: 1-2; Severin and

Tankard 2001: 109). In other words, political advertising is tasked with an “overt function to persuade voters” (Tak, Kaid and Lee 1997: 175) and politicians will use political advertising as a tool to reach mass media audiences, specifically those voters disillusioned by political campaigns who are apathetic towards voting (Berger 2004: 87).

In Kaid’s (1981: 250) seminal work on political advertising, the author defines the concept as a “communication process” where a political candidate or political party “purchases the opportunity” to reach a potential mass media audience with the intention of “influencing their political attitudes, beliefs, and/or behaviors”. Fourteen years later, Kaid (1999: 423) improved on that definition affirming that any form of political advertising should typically include “control of the message” by the paying political organisation or politician and the mass media should be harnessed for distributing this message. Kaid and Holtz-Bacha (1995: 2) go a step further expanding political advertising to include “all moving image programming designed to promote the interests of a given party or candidate”. This newer definition was said to be flawed though as it failed to include printed forms of political advertising and the introduction of the Internet.

By the late 1990s and 2000s, political advertising using the Internet was regarded as one of the “most talked-about political phenomena” as this new medium not only gave politicians control over the content of their messages, it could be easily disseminated to large audiences at cheaper rates than traditional media (Kaid 2004: 180). For political organisations and politicians, the Internet has been embraced for its promise of doing a lot with a little; the World Wide Web now gives politicians “information density” unlike

paid advertising channels using traditional media (Denis and Dahmen 2010: 315-316). Tedesco (2004: 510) regards the Internet as a “master medium” as it has married the traditional elements of radio, television and print with the World Wide Web. This platform also affords politicians a “secondary medium” for political advertisements already screened on traditional mediums such as radio, print and television; followers can then refer back to what a politician said earlier (Kaid 2004: 181). Kaid (2006: 51) however warns the Internet has also spawned what the author calls “ad watches” or “web watches” that ensure more scrutiny and accountability “to expose inaccuracies and misleading claims” made by politicians. These are usually done by the media and other stakeholders such as independent bodies, academic institutions and non-governmental bodies. There is also the perennial criticism that politicians fail to fully leverage the powers of this new vehicle of political advertising by continuing to use the Internet like traditional media (Kaid 2004).

### ***3.7.1 Paid advertising and free advertising***

Schnur (1999: 145-155) distinguishes between two advertising types that political campaign managers employ during a campaign for office: paid media and free media. Kaid and Holtz-Bacha (2006: 3-34) call this “controlled” and “uncontrolled media”. Paid media includes radio, television, print, direct mail, telephone canvassing, billboards, bumper stickers, videos, flyers, handouts, souvenirs and any other form of community reach-out initiative that has financial implications. Also known as “earned media” (The future task...2012: 21), free media political advertising on the other hand encapsulates any form of mass communication without direct financial compensation to the

transmitting agent” (Schnur 1999: 146-149). Examples include print, general news coverage, participation in talk shows, public broadcast television, mass electronic mail and the Internet amongst others.

The biggest advantage of paid advertising is the candidate’s message is published with no outside interference and it reaches voters who would not ordinarily be accessible. Editorial control rests with the politician and not the media (as long as it stays within legal parameters and good taste). Amongst some of the disadvantages of paid political advertising, politicians only control the encoding and not the decoding and full interpretation of the political message. Voters “instinctively” identify paid-for advertisements which may harm the credibility of the candidate; this is the “built-in interference” which author Schnur (1999: 154-155) refers to. Another disadvantage of paid media is that political advertising costs money and more often than not election campaigns have limited sums to spend. Also, because voters are bombarded by media messages from a variety of media sources today, politicians need to maintain message consistency. In fact, for this reason alone it has become “even more critical” for the candidate to repeat the same message as it could be the “only way most people can ever hear it” (Schnur 1999: 146). There is also the criticism that political advertising places too much emphasis on images than on real issues or policy matters (Scammell and Langer 2006). Images are thus inherently linked with emotion rather than logical reasoning, which is normally associated with issue-driven political messages. There is however the odd political message that may combine both: advertisements that appeal to emotions but employ issue-laden points (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 2006: 3-13). Schnur

(1999: 149) advises that impactful and successful election campaigns are those that harness both the paid and free media which “mutually reinforce” each other.

For the purposes of this study of the Democratic Alliance, Devlin’s (1986: 21-55) eight-pronged typology of political advertising will be employed. This author will examine the types of political advertising the party used in the 2009 elections in Chapter Five. The various political advertising categories to be looked at include:

TYPES OF ADVERTISING	DESCRIPTION
Primitive	Rehearsed advertisements whose style and technique remains obvious to the viewer
Talking heads	These allow a candidate to explain how he / she will handle an issue
Negative	The candidate focuses on the negative aspects of a competing candidate
Concept	These convey important aspects of a candidate
<i>Cinéma vérité</i>	The candidate is seen interacting with potential voters in real-life settings
Personal witness	Ordinary people shown supporting the candidate
Testimonial	Endorsements by famous people
Neutral reporter	Viewers given facts about a candidate and left to make their own judgments

**Figure 3.1: The different types of political advertising**

### **3.7.2 Brief history of political advertising**

Political advertising is said to have originated in the United States (US) in the early 1950’s to get citizens actively involved and interested in the country’s political processes (Kaid 2004: 155-157). For this reason, it is widely viewed as an “American invention”

(Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 2006: 37). The advent of mass communications replaced old methods of distribution such as pamphlets, posters, parades and rallies, effectively introducing the concept of “reaching millions” (Lilleker 2006: 147-148). Scammel and Langer (2006) add the US was responsible for pioneering political advertising and elevating it to a more sophisticated level that eventually spread to other established democracies like the United Kingdom (UK). The US too alone pioneered the idea of “image-building” which became central to the public relations project (Holtz-Bacha 2008: 679). During its infancy, political advertising in the US was mainly centred around television advertising, with advertising spending using this medium running into millions of US dollars (Kaid 1996: 450; Kaid 2004: 157). This type of “American-style television advertising” spread to other emerging democracies, albeit in a limited manner (Kaid 2004: 157, 183).

Garramone (1986: 235) posits that much of modern-day television advertising concentrates on boosting the image of a candidate to render him/ her more positively in voter’s eyes. Image-building in modern-day politics is essential because voters are not motivated enough to seek out voting information actively. Garramone (1986: 236) defines candidate images as the “sum of the perceived personal and professional characteristics” of a candidate. Johnson and Elebash (1986: 310) add that candidate images essentially entail “dimensions of understanding” and political candidates are perceived and understood in terms of the “roles they fill”. As Nimmo (1976: 5) and Whillock (1991: 113) note, for voters images are more powerful communicators of “what we feel about a product...as what we know”. Sometimes, images of political candidates

can function as— what Cundy (1986: 234) terms an “inertia factor”—to counter negativity directed from an opposing side. The earlier this is done in the campaign, the more advantageous for the candidate.

### ***3.7.3 Political advertising from a South African perspective***

As a result of South Africa’s closed system of apartheid which denied the majority of the population universal suffrage, Teer-Tomaselli (2006: 429-441) observes that political advertising in the country before 1994 resembled the “pre-modern campaigns” seen in Europe and the US where voting was reserved for a select elite—the White population. It was only after 1994 that political advertising could be examined more in detail. Since then, only a few authors have undertaken studies involving political advertising in a South African context, including Fourie and Froneman (2003), Teer-Tommaselli (2006) and Fourie (2008). Before 2009, political advertising was only permitted on radio (Duncan 2009: 225; Political parties tune into...2009; Teer-Tomaselli 2006: 432-437). Television political advertising was only allowed during and after the 2009 general elections. For this reason one assumes political advertising in this country is at a very infant stage. However, through this study one will seek to understand the concept more and concurrently add to the very limited research on the subject matter.

### ***3.7.4 Social networking sites and political advertising***

Social networking sites are driving the rapid evolution of political advertising with information on these digital platforms now supplementing the reach of modern-day

advertising. Aside from keeping costs to a minimum, sites like Facebook are now increasing the personalisation factor between candidate and supporter. Facebook is also being used to bolster both the image of the party and its leaders. Online social networking platforms such as Facebook have another advantage: they generate much-needed data for potential advertisers and political campaigns (Compton 2008). As Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign demonstrated, social networking platforms were used to raise funds; to organise; to counter negative campaigns; and eventually to secure the vote (Weitzner 2011).<sup>9</sup>

McKeown and Plowman (1999: 324) observe that as newer technologies are introduced, political advertising is keeping pace, adapting to reach key target audiences. Social networking sites and the "new digital media culture" have altered the mass communication pattern with audiences now engaged in "bottom-up communication", instead of the previous "top down" way of communication (Graham 2008: 262; Sen 2012: 490). Social networking and its related applications are empowering audiences and challenging "traditional relationships" such as the ones between elected official and citizen (Graham 2008: 248; Sen 2012: 490-492). Through these technical innovations, mass audiences are no longer "passive receivers" of information but are now "actively engaged in recreating, questioning and / or personalizing the news media" (Graham 2008; 248). This "new era" has also given politicians more to worry about as candidates

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<sup>9</sup> Please see also: Abid (2012); Arthur (2010); Baines (2011: 131-132); Bowden (2010: 171); Chutel (2009); Collinson (2012: 22); Dahl (2008); Faucheux (2009); Fenn (2009); Hamilton (2012); Hardy, Jamieson and Kensi (2010); Harfoush (2009); Himelboim *et al.* (2012); Hayley (2011); Ifill (2009); Jackson, Dorton and Heindl (2010); Kirkpatrick (2010); Lefko-Everett (2009); Liu (2010); Roy (2012); Simba (2009); Smith (2009); Spaeth (2010: 439); Sweetser (2011); Waite (2010); Weitzner (2011); Wills and Reeves (2009) and Yellin (2012).

no longer claim “complete control over the message” (Johnson and Perlmutter 2010: 555). For example, audiences are now both receivers and senders of political information. Technology has made it possible for audiences to record campaign *faux pas* and post them instantly on social platforms such as blogs, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook—all with the help of hand-held mobile devices. This unfortunately was the nature of an “unstructured digital democracy” (Johnson and Perlmutter 2010: 557). Although social networking sites have been praised for their “democracy in action” features, critics have drawn attention to how they could have the opposite effect; and how social networking sites could threaten societal cohesion by “fragmenting the world by breaking down the common conversation” (Buckland 2011). The author further warns that this “silo-ing effect” could even harm strong two-party democracies such as the US (Buckland 2011). Johnson and Perlmutter (2010: 557) add that one of the pronounced advantages of social networking sites is that political cynicism was lowered when people sought political information on these platforms.

### **3.8 Political public relations**

Political public relations according to Stromback and Kiouisis (2011: 1-23) can be defined as a “political management process” where “purposeful communication” is used to foster “beneficial” relations with key stakeholders. It is informed by both political communication and traditional public relations<sup>10</sup> (Trammell 2006: 402). Its main aims

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<sup>10</sup> Blumenthal (1980: 12-13) acknowledges the role played by Edward Bernays whom the author credits as the father of the political public relations (PR) campaign and the person responsible for affording media consultants the “essential” role they play today. According to Kelley (1956: 202), public relations as a profession would amount to nought today had it not been for the influence of the mass media. Public relations is defined by Grunig (1996: 461) as the “management of communication between an

are to inform, persuade, to create dialogue in the form of “rich interactions” and to nurture relationships (Holtz-Bacha 2008: 677; Jackson 2010: 1-4). Put simply, political public relations is comparable to “lobbying” (Kelley 1956: 4). One of the most significant objectives of any political public relations endeavour is for political parties to harness the media to relay “specific political views, solutions and interpretations” to bolster its branding and policy-leanings on carefully-chosen issues in the political marketplace (Froelich and Rudiger 2006: 18). As a result, modern-day politicians find themselves trapped in a “chaotic information environment” (McNair 2004: 327). This is why Moloney and Colmer (2001: 965) suggest political public relations is strategic with political parties inclined to use “policy, personality and presentation” to attract the attention of potential voters. This can however have the opposite effect. Moloney and Colmer (2001: 965) label this “an obfuscating trellis of presentation” that will sometimes be employed to steer attention from issues potential voters and the media should not be privy to (Brissenden and Moloney 2005). Holly (2008: 318) concurs and laments how political communication has degenerated into something that has become “more visual, more performative, more theatrical and aestheticised”. Labeling this “performance politics”,

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organization and its publics”. Key is the implication that this is a “managed communication” process (Grunig 1996: 461). According to Grunig (1996: 464-465), there are four different public relations models still in use today: press agency / publicity; public information; two-way asymmetrical and two-way symmetrical. Sometimes referred to as a “mass media technician”, Kelley (1956: 210-216) regards the job of the political public relations professional as one of “significant influence”. Politics for this “political propagandist” is equal to a game of skill and chance with the political public relations professional guiding the “action of the politician toward the people and the people toward the politician” (Kelley 1956: 3). The political public relations professional then by implication is “a campaigner” who benefits from a “competitive political situation” and “frightened politicians” (Kelley 1956: 205). These “bad boys and girls of politics” convince politicians that having the right political consultants on board is integral to a successful election campaign (Kinsey 1999: 113). Today, no organisation is immune to the public relations machinery including governments, political parties, non-governmental organisations, churches, monarchies, unions, schools and celebrities (Cook 2008: 117). Despite being less regulated than advertising, public relations “permeates all media”; as a result it has become “deeply implicated in news reporting and political persuasion to such an extent that the degree of power which it exercises in the social sphere should give cause for concern in supposedly democratic societies” (Cook 2008: 124).

“politics colonised by the media” and a “mediocracy or mediated politics”, Holly (2008: 323-324) affirms images have now become “part of the theatricality of politics”. A good example here would be how events are carefully-planned and disguised as media briefings to announce policy proposals and party developments (Lilleker 2006: 165-167). Boorstin (1961: 16-20) calls this the “pseudo-event”. These “planned, planted or incited” events have the sole purpose of flooding the public sphere through mass media reproduction so audiences can no longer distinguish “what is the original of the event” (Boorstin 1961: 16). The only competition pseudo-events have is the concurrent staging of another media event (Dayan and Katz 1992: 49-58). These pseudo-events are increasingly being managed by hired public relations professionals whom Jackson (2010: 15) regards as “media agents” but whom McNair (2004: 325-326) dismisses as “a kind of communicative evil which threatens to take over the world and destroy democracy”. This phenomenon of “permanent campaigning” (Nimmo 1999: 74; Steger 1999: 661-681) has given rise to the spin doctor (Brants and Voltmer 2011: 5-6; De Vreese and Elenbaas 2011: 75-79; Lilleker 2006: 194-197). This form of “spin” communication has been dubbed “control freakery” by Heffernan (2006: 582-598) and “propagandistic”, often resulting in the opposite effect on voters through disillusionment with the political process (De Vreese and Elenblaas 2011: 76; Jackson 2010: 16).

Political public relations in sum then is a “strategic” (Moloney and Colmer 2001: 965) persuasive “political management process” (Stromback and Kioussis 2011: 1-23) aimed at benefiting political organisations and politicians using “policy, personality and presentation” (Moloney and Colmer 2001: 965) to maintain a positive image in the

political marketplace. This author will illustrate later—in Chapter Five, section 5.2—how the Democratic Alliance employed political public relations in the 2009 South African general elections to win it the support it garnered in that poll.

### **3.8.1 Political marketing**

Political marketing emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wring 1999: 49) and only recently as a field of academic study with various seminal authors documenting its development<sup>11</sup>. Political marketing is defined by Newmann and Perloff (2004: 18) as the “application of marketing principles and procedures in political campaigns by various individuals and organizations”. It is about the “explicit association between politics and consumer situations” (O’Shaughnessy 1999: 726). Key to the marketing exercise is the idea of building a brand: a name, a sign or a symbol that can be used to identify and differentiate one’s products or services from those of a competitor (Cook 2008: 114). Likening the political process to that of a commercial marketplace, Newmann and Perloff (2004: 18) say politicians are always endeavouring to “create value for their constituents”. As O’Shaughnessy (1999: 738) illustrates, politics is about personality and “personality is the product”. Politicians seeking office are “highly successful political marketers” who “develop high levels of name recognition, favorable evaluations among their constituencies” and who “raise large sums of money to usually deter strong challengers” (Steger 1999: 680). Political marketing in this sense is about selling a politician and his / her related policy positions in a “political marketplace” of ideas (Kotler

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<sup>11</sup> Please see: Farrell and Wortmann (1987); Harrop (1990); Henneberg (2004); Mauser (1983); Newman and Sheth (1985); O’Shaughnessy (1990); Plasser, Scheucher and Senft (1999) and Reid (1988).

and Kotler 1999: 6) to ensure public opinion is steered in a particular direction. The voter is therefore regarded as the consumer—the consumer of political goods and services—and the transaction referred to as “political consumerism” (Ward 2011: 167). These “political consumers” are “resourceful, highly educated and affluent...and demonstrate high rates of political interest and participation” (Ward 2011: 170). Candidates need to understand their respective markets to enjoy any kind of political success (Kotler and Kotler 1999: 3).

In his definition of political marketing, Harrop (1990) asserts political marketing is not only about political advertising, political broadcast messages or political speeches. Political marketing should be viewed by all political entities serious about attaining political power as a synonym for what Harrop (1990: 277-291) calls “party positioning in the electoral market”. It is about effective communication with key stakeholders such as “party members, the media, prospective sources of funding and the electorate” (Lock and Harris 1996: 21). Political marketing is also about keeping abreast of developments in the political market place by using tools such as “marketing analyses” to address voter concerns and concerns of potential supporters (Lilleker 2006: 151-157; O’Cass 1996: 48). This feeds into the overall media management process of planning and controlling campaigns. Gamble (1974: 6) says there are three components to the political marketplace: a mass electorate, multi-party competition between two or more political parties; and a set of rules governing the process. Lees-Marshment (2001: 693) shares a similar definition, saying political marketing is more of a “marriage”, one between “marketing and politics”. It should not be viewed in isolation as political

marketing has become a key feature of modern-day politics and political communication (Maarek 1995: 28). As a result of the idea of “permanent campaigning” (Lilleker 2006: 143-146) now becoming a reality, political marketing has metamorphosed into “the organising principle” of “strategic marketing” that is long-term rather than short-sighted (O’ Shaughnessy 2001: 1048; Smith and Hirst 2001: 1058-1073). This evolution has given rise to what De Landsheere, De Vries and Vertessen (2008: 217-238) call “political impression management” and “perception politics”. For the purposes of this study, the author will look at how the Democratic Alliance was politically marketed by the party’s spin doctors in the 2009 elections.

### ***3.8.2 The four ‘p’s of marketing***

Winger (1997: 651-663) draws attention to the traditional four “p’s” of the marketing exercise, namely product, promotion, place and price. For the purposes of this study, this will be applied to the political marketing process: product (or party image, a leader’s image and the party’s manifesto); promotion (how the party communicates through advertising); place (local work on the ground to canvass votes); and price (this may include economic, psychological and national). This study then will seek to outline exactly how the Democratic Alliance branded itself during the 2009 South African general elections by examining elements such as the image management exercise of its leader Helen Zille; how the party used communication to entrench its brand in the poll and how the party utilised paid-for political advertising and political public relations to communicate its electoral messages. These aspects of the present study will be discussed and elaborated upon in Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

### **3.9 Conclusion: Section One**

Section One of Chapter Three provided the reader with a comprehensive review of the literature relevant for this thesis. This chapter defined a number of terms applicable to this study including ideology; political communication; the public sphere and how this platform facilitates public opinion; political advertising in the global and South African contexts; and political public relations. The author also discussed the applicability of web-based electioneering and social networking sites and their relevance to this study on the DA and how this political actor employed Facebook during the 2009 South African general election. In Section Two of this literature review, this author will firstly introduce the reader to the Democratic Alliance's previous election campaigns and subsequent electoral performance / s. The author will then expand on different voting theories and provide a discussion on John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory—the theoretical paradigm used for this study.

### **3.10 Section Two: The DA's previous electoral campaigns and performance**

In the run-up to the 1994 elections, the South African International Republican Institute (1994) noted that the Democratic Party resorted to negative campaigning by using the ANC's violent history as a liberation movement and the NP's alleged mismanagement of the country to get it votes. For example, during the campaigning phase, the party used a "backward attack" by distributing posters such as "We killed Apartheid, not the people", a thought which purportedly did not sit well with the country's Black majority who viewed

the party as “elitist” (South Africa International Republican Institute 1994: sec 7: 128). The DA’s election posters by implication discount the role played by organisations such as the United Democratic Front and the anti-apartheid lobby inside and outside South Africa—spearheaded by the outlawed ANC (Basson 2012: 14; Ramsamy 2007: 471; South Africa International Republican Institute 1994: sec 2: 22). The party was nevertheless perhaps “the most disadvantaged” of the bigger political players that participated in the 1994 poll (South Africa International Republican Institute 1994: sec 7: 128-129). The Democratic Party won 1.7% of the national vote (338 000 votes) on 27 April 1994, a result that gave the party seven seats in the National Assembly (Hahndiek 2006: 49-51; Leon 2008: 243). Provincially, the party received almost 200 000 more votes than its national tally, reinforcing the assumption that the DP was still not the choice of White voters who still viewed the NP as protector of their interests (Besdziek 2006:130-132). Soon after the 1994 election, DP leader Zach De Beer resigned and Tony Leon was elected in his place (Leon 2008: 243-253).

For the 1999 general election, the DA campaigned on a “Fight Back” strategy (Davis 2012; Du Plessis and Davis 2011: 1; Johnson 2013b: 13; Leon 2008: 495) which other political parties and its critics capitalised on as the “fight Black” or “*Swart Gevaar*” (Ngwenya and Ndhlela 2004: 11) campaign—immediately ascribing a racial dimension to the DA’s image and election campaign (Booyesen 2005:131; Fransman 2012; Ngwenya and Ndhlela 2004: 11). The DA’s 1999 infamous “Fight Back” campaign was interpreted as a “fight back” against Black rule, a thought that had some resonance with the National Party’s notion of “*swart gevaar*”—or the dangers of a Black-led

administration—before democracy in 1994 (Tleane 2004: 18). This belief—according to Tleane (2004: 18)—is premised on the idea that Black people “cannot do anything right” and this is why a “fight back strategy needs to be in place to prevent “any encroachment on White privilege”. As a result, the party derived most of its support from minorities by “tactically positioning” itself as a new political home for these groups (Habib and Naidu 2006: 84; Ngwenya and Ndhlela 2004: 11). By 1999, the DP’s vote-share increased to 9.56% or 38 seats under new party leader Tony Leon’s stewardship (Besdziek 2006:130-132; Hahndiek 2006: 49-51; South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2004: sec13: 57-59). More significantly, the party was successful in replacing the NP as the official opposition (Hahndiek 2006: 40-41).

By 2004, the DP / DA began to entrench itself more as the “torchbearer for opposition politics” and the country’s “primary political watchdog” (Booyesen 2005:130). It was also during this election year that the country celebrated ten-years of democratic rule. It was for this reason the climate for opposition politics was not favourable because opposition political parties were viewed as anti-democratic and unpatriotic (Booyesen 2005:131; Philander 2011; Leon 2008: 281). The DA’s 2004 campaign was built around the slogan “South Africa Deserves Better – Vote DA for Real Change” (Booyesen 2005:131; Leon 2008: 612). During the campaigning phase, the DA tried to draw parallels to a collapsing Zimbabwe—which the party alleged resulted from affording the governing-party too much power and too little space for opposition parties (Booyesen 2005:131; Edigheji 2004: 16-18). Additionally, the DA’s 2004 election campaign was premised on the idea that the DA was the “saviour of multi-party democracy” and only it could protect voters

from a power-hungry ANC and its related policy blunders (Booyesen 2005:132; Fransman 2012; Ngwenya and Ndhlela 2004: 16-17). Party leader Tony Leon also remarked that South Africa would have been a one-party regime and not a democracy had it not been for the DA (Booyesen 2005:132; Edigheji 2004: 16-18). In that election, despite the governing-ANC surging to its best electoral result (69.9%) in post-apartheid South Africa, the DA won 12.37% of the national ballot—an overall growth of 2.8%, surpassed only by the ANC's 3.3% (Besdziek 2006:130-132; Hahndiek 2006: 49-51; South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 1999: sec 9: 75-78). This gave the DA fifty seats in the National Assembly (Booyesen and Masterson 2009: 427-443). The party was also the only opposition party to win seats in all nine legislatures (Booyesen 2005:129); and acceding to main opposition status in six provinces: Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and the Western Cape ((Hahndiek 2006: 40-41; Piombo 2005:259-260).

It should be noted that the literature on the DA's past political campaigns and its effect—if any—on the party's subsequent electoral performance is relatively thin. For this reason, the author chose to rely on originating a wealth of original data in this thesis. This is its main contribution. The study therefore contextualises the DA's electoral ascendance from its days as the former Democratic Party to the Democratic Alliance from 2001 onward, and in doing so, enables future studies to not only draw on this data, but will also hopefully encourage further imminent studies (see concluding chapter six for recommendations).

### **3.11 Introduction to voting theories and “issue ownership theory”**

Antunes (2010: 145-169) and Bartels (2008) list three models of voter behaviour, namely the sociological model, the psychosocial model and rational choice theory. While the sociological framework presupposes voting influences based on “social factors” such as social groups (Andersen and Heath 2000), “party identification” governs the psychosocial model (Andersen and Heath 2000; Antunes 2010: 145; Matsusaka 1995: 91). For the “party identification” model, there is the assumption that “attitude and issue preferences” motivate vote choices (Andersen and Heath 2000: 4). Rational choice theory—on the other hand—places its emphasis on issues such as “rationality, choice and uncertainty” (Antunes 2010: 145-146; Fisher 2001; Simon 1955: 99-118). In other words, voters will select a political party in the hope that party will deliver on its election promises if and when it gets into government (Edlin, Gelman and Kaplin 2007).

Two factors drive vote choice “to a large extent” in South African elections: party identification (closely associated with race) and party images (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 32). While party identification can be described as that “enduring psychological attachment to a political party that guides electoral behaviour” (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 29), party images are defined as those “mental pictures” or “psychological images” that voters have of parties (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 29). These images include the “intrinsic values” or “attributes” associated with a party: this may be either positive or negative because voters’ judge parties on how inclusive and exclusive they

are (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009b: 18). Historical legacy as a result plays a huge role in elections; such inclusiveness or exclusiveness inadvertently moulds both “the credibility and trustworthiness of a party” (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 35). If and when parties are perceived to be exclusive, voters will be “overwhelmingly repelled”; this is why voters need to be “convinced” on the “basic traits of the party” (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009b: 18). Any “ambiguity” or mixed signals inherent in a party’s image will gradually “drive voters away” (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009b: 20). Despite nineteen-years as democratic state, South Africans’ perceptions of political party images have changed “very little” since 1994 mostly through parties’ own non-committal transformation in the minds of voters (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 38). Parties deliberately choose instead to rely on the country’s racial past to win support in elections. This is why party images have become such significant “information cues” for would-be voters (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 35-37; Schulz-Herzenberg 2009b: 15). In South Africa, ethnicity and race “dominate” and they are classified as “powerful predictors” at the ballot box (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 32). While rational choice voting predicts that voters may occasionally respond to the political and economic performance of parties (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 32) and that performance appraisals are considered before voting, South Africa’s voting patterns are unique in that “racial party images” and a party’s “racial credentials” matter to a larger degree (Ferree 2006: 814).

Intimately linked to racial party images is the idea of party identification. The voting behaviour of the South African electorate is predominantly determined by race; this is why the ANC enjoys the support of the country’s majority—some 93% / 94% of Black

African voters (Schlemmer 2008). By these calculations, only some 6% - 7% of Black African support was available to other political parties. Earlier on, it was discovered that the DA's Black African support has been rising steadily, in the region of some 5% in the 2011 local elections. Studies have however confirmed that of South Africa's many political parties, the ruling-party still enjoyed the highest levels of party identification (Kersting 2009: 126; Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 45) and that this relationship was defined by education and income levels. In other words, the more educated an individual was, the less likely he / she were to identify with a political party (Kersting 2009: 126). In the 2009 election, the Democratic Alliance sought to reinvent itself in the minds of voters by becoming intimately associated with issues. For this reason, the author selected John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory to clearly illustrate this very point.

Party reputations begin to form from the first day a political party comes into being. Over time, this image and party reputation takes shape through the party's ideological leaning, its stance on a variety of policy issues and its daily interactions with the mass media. This reputation is further entrenched when the party is voted into government. Over time and during its time in government, the party will slowly become associated with certain issues (Van De Brug 2004: 226). A party will leverage these issues to either authoritatively campaign on during elections or establish a reputation for itself within legislative chambers (Belanger and Meguid 2005).

Soubreyan and Gautier (2008: 685-686) say that 21<sup>st</sup> century campaigning is now altering the nature of how parties win and lose electoral power. Despite Dalton, McAllister and Wattenberg (2000: 264) declaring party affiliation being the “ultimate heuristic”, de-alignment or the weakening of party identification is on the increase (Lilleker 2006: 66-67). Wring (1999: 41) calls this “consumer sovereignty” or the reality that voters are now abandoning previous party-specific allegiances. Performance more than traditional voting heuristics such as party identification and ideological positioning are determining voter choices. This is why it is imperative political parties begin to factor in ownership of certain issues and “issue-specific trusts” (Egan 2009: 9). Voters are increasingly turning to “issues” ownership to provide them with “electoral beacons” in a sea of competing political choices (Walgrave, Lefevere and Nuytemans 2007: 3). Carmines (1991: 75) extends this observation saying that “successful politicians instinctively understand which issues benefit them and their party and which do not...the trick is to politicize the former and depoliticize the latter”. A number of empirical studies confirm that issue ownership is an important element of any election campaign.<sup>12</sup>

The genealogy of issue ownership can be traced to voter identification studies, voting analyses and political issues research (English and Tedesco 2008). It was William Riker (1993) who first established that political parties will campaign on issues over which they enjoy considerable advantage, negating any prospect of engaging the opposition in

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<sup>12</sup> Please see: Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1994); Bellucci (2006); Benoit and Hansen (2004); Benoit and Airne (2005); Blomqvist and Green-Pedersen (2004); Damore (2004); Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2007); Hayes (2005); Holian (2004); Petrocik, Benoit and Hansen (2003); Simon (2002); and Theriault (2011).

dialogue or debate. Calling this the “Dominance” or “Dispersion” model, Riker (1993: 81) argues that parties will choose to rather emphasise issues the party has “saliency” over with the result that “most of the time opponents do not talk about the same things”. Parties as a result will focus only on “winning issues” (Riker 1993: 81). For Riker (1993: 82) debate is thus rendered “orthogonal” or parties will now “talk past each other in several dimensions” (Lutz and Marquis 2006: 79). This idea is in agreement with Budge and Farlie’s (1983: 23-24) “salience theory” which states that political parties would rather avoid “direct confrontation on issues” or “promote an educational dialogue” choosing instead to campaign on election topics they are strong on. This idea is supported by Stokes’ (1963: 368-377) valence model which advocates that voters vote for parties and candidates “most capable of delivering what everybody wants”.

In the next section, the author will introduce the main theoretical framework for this study, namely John Petrocik’s (1996) issue ownership theory. It is hoped that this theory will be used to illustrate just how effective the Democratic Alliance was in owning certain issues in the 2009 elections.

### ***3.11.1 John Petrocik’s “issue ownership theory”***

Although Petrocik (1996) is considered to be the first theorist to document issue ownership theory, the author acknowledges the work of Budge and Farlie (1983) for being “the first to use this idea systematically in studying elections” (Petrocik 1996: 826). In his investigation of the 1980 United States (US) presidential elections, Petrocik

(1996: 826) found that political parties “owned” a set of electoral issues which they were better at “handling” than an opponent. Petrocik defines “handling” as the party’s ability and entrenched authority to “resolve” issue-related problems that concern voters (Petrocik 1996: 826). Handling then “is a reputation for policy and program interests, produced by a history of attention, initiative, and innovation towards these problems, which lends voters to believe that one of the parties (and its candidates) is more sincere and committed to doing something about them” (Petrocik 1996: 826). In this way, parties establish themselves as distinctive brands in the political marketplace; parties and candidates standing for office leverage this “credible” and “competent” advantage to mobilise supporters during an election on matters on which they have a “long-standing” reputation (Petrocik 1996: 826). This “credibility” acts as a shortcut or heuristic to reduce voter uncertainty (Holian 2004: 98). For this reason, issue ownership theory coupled with eventual voting requires much less information because voters need only assess which party is capable of handling certain issues better (Belanger and Meguid 2005). Election campaigns are thus instrumental in setting the criteria for voters; candidates will choose issues they are better at; and framing<sup>13</sup> will be used to explain voting behaviour (Petrocik 1996: 826).

Walgrave, Lefevre and Tresch (2012: 1-2) extend this discussion saying apart from the “competence dimension”, one needs to factor in an “associative dimension” of issue

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<sup>13</sup> For more information on how framing impacts the degree of owned issues, please see: Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1994: 355); Belanger and Meguid (2005); Chong and Druckman (2007: 637); De Vreese, Peter and Semetko (2000: 107-122); Entman (1991; 1993a; 1993b); Lilleker (2006); Nisbet and Feldman (2010: 287); Reese (2007: 148-154); Van Gorp (2007: 60-78); Zaller (1992: 311); and Zillman, Chen, Knobloch and Callison (2004: 58).

ownership, an idea first proposed by Stokes (1963: 373). In other words, voters identify specific electoral issues with specific political parties and this relationship of trust develops over time—not necessarily over election cycles exclusively. Parties need only cultivate a “reputation of caring” by talking “a lot” around certain issues (Walgrave *et al.* 2012: 8). While competence issues were about “past performance”, associative issues are about “past attention” and how parties handled these (Walgrave *et al.* 2012: 7). Aalberg and Jenssen (2007: 120) call this “issue hegemony” or where parties begin to become identified and engaged with set issues. For voters, election promises do not matter as much as the confidence in a political actor’s ability to resolve a particular electoral problem. Voters sometimes want solutions so that problems can be “fixed” and this is why voters choose certain political parties with “strong reputations” (Walgrave *et al.* 2012: 5-7). The authors add that associative issue ownership is better suited for multi-party political systems.

For this study, Petrocik’s (1996: 825-850) theory of issue ownership will be used to demonstrate that political parties campaign to “own” certain issues during an election; issues they feel strongly about and know will yield electoral success. The “associative dimension” of issue ownership outlined by Walgrave *et al.* (2012: 1-2) will also be employed to augment this exercise. This study then will argue that in the 2009 South African general elections, the Democratic Alliance (DA) shifted political emphasis towards a number of issues it arguably owned to attract voters. While Petrocik’s (1996: 825-850) issue ownership theory will be employed to examine issue ownership emphasis and election outcomes in these elections, the concept of “associative”

(Walgrave *et al.* 2012: 1-2) issue ownership will be examined further. These aspects of the study will be expanded on in Chapter Five and Chapter Six. In the next section, the author will provide some detail on the many sources of issue ownership.

### **3.11.2 Sources of issue ownership**

When a party is perceived to own an issue, this is manifested in two ways: in the results outcomes and different stakeholders paying greater attention to its arguments (Brasher 2004). In Petrocik's (1996) model, there are two sources of issue ownership: the record of an incumbent party and the constituency of the political party itself. A "handling advantage" is created when an incumbent party does not perform, creating the perfect electoral platform for an attack or even an opportunity to discredit the incumbent Petrocik (1996:827-828). In this strategic blame-game, the reputation of the attacking party is only enhanced. Petrocik (1996: 827-828) calls this a short-term "lease" advantage on a "performance issue". "Party constituency ownership" on the other hand is much more enduring (Petrocik 1996:827-828). In other words, the social basis of a party is important: parties that enjoy the support of a certain social class "own" issues of interest to this group (Petrocik 1996: 827-828).

Petrocik (1996:828) adds there is a correlation and "strong linkage" between a party's issue agenda and the social demographics of its core support base. It would then seem natural that this group would support one particular party because it will use its time in government to "alter or protect a status quo that harms or protects them" (Blomqvist and

Green-Pedersen 2004:613). A good example here is how the ANC's continued electoral dominance is explained to be reliant on its pro-poor policies. Political analyst Zamikhaya Maseti (2011: 58-59) provides support here saying the ANC will always win elections at the ballot box because it has a "captive constituency". As long as the party provides social grants and RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) houses to millions of poor South Africans, the party will have their vote (Maseti 2011). Walgrave, Lefevere and Nuytemans (2009) warn also that issue ownership can be lost; it is not permanent. However, if and when a party loses ownership of an issue, this loss is only temporary and can be retrieved. Traditional "long-lasting party issue-identification" will outweigh the negative (Walgrave *et al.* 2009: 5).

For Walgrave *et al.* (2009: 34), issue ownership is not "a natural or exogenous variable" and as such not "an eternal asset for parties...it has to be acquired and earned in a competitive and ongoing process". Just as issue ownership is not a permanent asset of competing parties, Brasher (2004), Sides (2007: 466-467) and Therriault (2011) find that issue ownership is anything but static: it is ever-changing and dynamic. In their electoral survey of a recent Belgian election, Walgrave *et al.* (2009) agreed with the dynamism of owned issues saying parties and candidates owned and lost issues all the time. The key was vigilance. Sides (2006: 435) advocates that one way of doing this is the "art of agenda manipulation" or "heresthetics" (Riker 1986: 147-148).<sup>14</sup> The objective of heresthetics is to structure one's campaign issues and agenda in such a way that a win is non-negotiable, regardless of any persuasion. To maintain market-share, parties

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<sup>14</sup> Riker (1986: 147) defines heresthetics as the "art of political manipulation" through the use of language.

have to constantly campaign, even outside elections. This study will show how the Democratic Alliance constantly campaigned on an anti-corruption ticket before and during the 2009 election; it implicitly became associated with the anti-corruption lobby against the ANC when compared to other opposition parties. This will be discussed more in Chapter Five.

### **3.11.3 *The median voter according to Petrocik (1996)***

In his analysis, Petrocik (1996: 829-830) also conceptualises the idea of a “median voter” to mean someone who is interested in how his or her problems are to be addressed by competing political parties. The author is flawed however in his simplistic assumption of who this median voter is supposed to embody. According to Petrocik (1996: 829-830), the median voter is “uncertain about what represents a serious problem, lacks a clear preference about social and policy issues and is normally disinclined to impose thematic or ideological consistency on issues”. Key for the median voter is “not what policies candidates promise to pursue but what problems (medical care needs, high taxes) can be resolved” (Petrocik 1996: 830).

Petrocik (1996:830) inadvertently (or intentionally) adds a class-based dimension to this type of voter too: healthcare needs and how high taxes impact on one’s net income are working class issues. He also assumes this group to mean voters who are unsure about their vote choice. Elections instead for this group are about selfish short-term issues and not policy-related benefits one finds detailed in an election manifesto. In this

respect, the idea of “issue heterogeneity” would then guide actual voting choices on Election Day because voters were not easily persuaded by factors such as “priming” and “framing” (Petrocik 1996: 830).

Petrocik (1996: 847) emphasises issue ownership is not confined to a party’s “superior competence” on an issue. Individual candidates can at times by-pass this and independently carve out an issue reputation, minus the party which is the candidate’s political home (Therriault 2011). To illustrate, a good example here is how Cape Town mayor and former Independent Democrats (ID) leader Patricia De Lille took the ANC to task on the South African arms deal debacle.<sup>15</sup> At the time, De Lille was still a Member of Parliament (MP) but with the PAC, a former liberation political party synonymous with racial politics and land rights. Since then the fiery leader has developed a reputation for taking on the country’s most prominent politicians; and in the process spawned a ruthless reputation for intolerance of corruption (De Lille 2006). De Lille later entered her party into a coalition with the Democratic Alliance.<sup>16</sup> After the 2011 local elections, De Lille was promoted to Cape Town mayor (Merten 2011: 4). During the next section, the role of the media in this issue ownership will be elaborated upon. According to Benoit

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<sup>15</sup> The arms deal refers to government’s purchase of weaponry and defence equipment worth R30 billion which implicated a number of ANC politicians who were alleged to have solicited bribes to secure the deal. The costs have since escalated to over R70 billion (Basson 2012: 14).

<sup>16</sup> At the DA’s fourth federal elective conference held at the Cape Town International Centre in July 2010 where Zille was re-elected unopposed as party leader, De Lille put on a bright blue DA jacket over her orange ID shirt and vowed “this marriage will last”, as she signed a political agreement aimed at strengthening the opposition (Jolobe 2012: 137-138). In September 2010, Zille announced that De Lille would take up the position of Social Development Member of Executive Council (MEC) in her Western Cape provincial cabinet.

and Hansen (2004), the media is but one very significant stakeholder in promoting issues ownership especially before and after elections.

#### **3.11.4 Saliency, the media's role in issue ownership and issue convergence**

In his research, Egan (2009: 8) using US survey data demonstrates that issue ownership is a “long-term phenomenon” with voters using an “evolving set of criteria” to evaluate candidates and campaigns (Minnozzi 2010: 3). Issue ownership is a highly-prized “resource” that has to be exploited; this is achieved through a number of constructive engagements with the media: through debates, talk shows and general campaigning (Benoit and Hansen 2004:146).

Candidates will always seek to make certain issues more salient than others during an election campaign (Dulio and Trumbore 2009: 231-232; Sides 2007: 467). This is achieved through ensuring speeches and related political advertising are news-worthy; and candidates are responsive to the day's main headlines and lead election stories. The amount of news coverage is directly proportional to saliency, meaning that media coverage will boost a candidate's chances at the ballot box (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1994:336). Both Sides (2006) and Parker (2007) concur issue ownership theory is reinforced by saliency and that salient issues are more likely to be voting triggers at the ballot box (Song and Benoit 2003). Using an in-depth analysis of the 2001 and 2005 British elections, Green and Hobolt (2006) confirm this finding saying an owned issue is more important when certain issues are made to be salient than when they are not. This

“dominance” and “saliency” are reliant on historical reputation (Minnozzi 2010: 20-22).

During an election campaign, the media is viewed as one of the most important stakeholders with both political parties and candidates compelled to engage with it to communicate campaign messages to various constituencies (Bevern 2010). In their study of Belgian elections from 1991 – 2005, Walgrave and De Swert (2007: 37) confirm that issue ownership is related to both party communication and media coverage. When political parties manage to leverage the attention of the media, this is viewed as a two-fold victory: firstly for successfully warranting media time and secondly for reaping the electoral benefits once the results are out (Walgrave and Aelst 2004). The media then serves as heuristic cues or shortcuts to assess coverage as credible and not credible (Baum and Gussin 2005). Walgrave, Lefevere and Nuytemans (2009: 8) support this arguing the mass media “activate” existing issue ownership in voters by increasing or decreasing issue saliency and eventually impacting voter decisions. In this sense, the mass media also contribute to creating and maintaining issue ownership (Walgrave and De Swert 2003: 485). In their experimental content analysis of the 2000 US presidential campaign, Baum and Gussin (2005: 6) found the mass media was a very important and strategic partner in the generation and manifestation of issue ownership, with results suggesting the media had an “inherent imbalance” when it came to “owned issues”. In addition, journalists and the media in general are complicit in reinforcing party reputations on these owned issues (Walgrave and De Swert 2003: 482-483).

Journalists by nature of their gate-keeping role will not necessarily treat all competing candidates equally across all issues when reporting. Owing to journalists requiring stories and candidates needing the oxygen of publicity, questionable relationships will be forged. In this process, Petrocik *et al.* (2003) suggest that party stereotypes will influence news choices and what issues to pay attention to and what not to report on. There is empirical evidence that suggests where candidates and parties are traditional owners of certain issues; they will naturally enjoy the media's attention. This is why political parties need to pay attention to their reputations (Petrocik *et al.* 2003).

In his analysis of newspaper content from the 1992, 1996 and 2000 US presidential elections, Hayes (2008: 377-378) found that election news “shapes” voter perceptions of candidate issue credibility in the short term and this could have an impact on election outcomes. This only strengthens the “perpetuation of partisan issue-handling reputations” (Hayes 2008: 378; Walgrave *et al.* 2009; Werner 2005). Hayes (2008:377) therefore deduced that the media will tend to cover candidates more positively when they restrict themselves to their party issues instead of other party's issues. Walgrave *et al.* (2009: 20) further found that news exposure leads to “significant shifts” in issue ownership, especially on issues not traditionally claimed by the party. What also helps are television appearances and policy debates which may display the candidate or party in a much better position than the original issue owner. The authors also conclude that issue ownership is a “fluid” process and engaging about a number of election and policy matters in the media helps fuel the “constant issue ownership struggle” in the public sphere. Therefore through media exposure, voters are inadvertently “linked” to issues

(Walgrave *et al.* 2009: 20). Hayes (2004) agrees that adding the media does facilitate the issue ownership struggle of parties and candidates.

During political campaigns, it may happen that two candidates will begin to talk to the same issues. This is what Damore (2005:88) terms issue convergence. Issue convergence stimulates dialogue and political players will want to pay attention and be “more responsive” to voting-constituencies as issue-saliency increases (Damore 2005: 88). In their research on British and Danish elections, Hobolt and Klemmensen (2008) found that political parties were responsive to public issue preferences regardless of whether it was an owned issue or not. Apart from it being politically-strategic, issue convergence is also pursued in terms of a cost-benefit analysis to the parties involved (Simon 2002). Candidates will converge on issues for a number of reasons: to add saliency to some issues; to reinforce partisan-ownership; and to “ride the wave” as the campaign context evolves (Sides 2007:469).

The amount of media coverage a party or candidate receives is inherently tied to the concept of issue convergence. The media’s “priming” capabilities feed into issue convergence (Damore 2005; Insolabehere and Iyengar 1994:336-337; Riker 1993). In other words, although candidates will talk about their owned issues, they will also talk to issues the media primes as important during a campaign (Hillygus 2010: 6). As Damore (2005:76-77) argues, if both the opposition and the media are discussing it, it is likely to be factored into vote choice at the ballot box. For this reason, candidates will converge to avoid ceding issues to the opposition.

In his analysis of three US congressional polls, Minnozzi (2010) found that issue ownership encouraged and discouraged convergence but this was dependent on the saliency afforded to the issue. Context was important, meaning the structure of the respective party's political campaign was important, as convergence was aided by "competitiveness" and "incumbency" (Minnozzi 2010: 1). The author further argues that because candidates sometimes failed in their civic duty to engage each other on issue and policy dialogue, voters were the ones who were ultimately short-changed. If parties and candidates however had to "converge" on a few select issues and give the voter a more informed choice of alternatives, citizens would benefit in the long-term (Minnozzi 2010: 2). Baum and Gussin (2005) reason that elections are not only about issue convergence; elections can be about issues no single party can claim to own outright.

Election and issue-driven campaigns are also about appealing to what Willman (2010: 1) coins the "cross-pressured voter". A cross-pressured voter is someone who wants to vote for two parties at the same time because of the issues they pursue. These cross-pressures can emanate from religious beliefs, socio-economic status, occupation, group identity, class, tradition or influence from one's social circle such as family and friends. Cross-pressured voters are perceived unfavourably by political analysts because it is their voting dilemma that introduces elements of uncertainty, apathy and inconsistency in a poll. This group of voters can however stir interest when one considers their electoral volatility; campaigns would ideally target these cross-pressured voters because they can still be persuaded. If and when they feel that their own party is flawed

on any given policy issue, they may be willing to reassess their party loyalty. This is why the author affirms that “cross-pressured voters can be highly-valuable for electoral analysis” (Willman 2010: 1-5).

### **3.11.5 *Trespassing on owned issues***

Issue convergence is a natural by-product of election campaigns. However, there will be times when candidates will find it strategic to “trespass” onto another’s territory (Sigelman and Buell 2004: 650-652). As with all election campaigns, candidates and political parties will electioneer with the sole aim of winning power. Candidates will focus on their strengths and ignore the “issue assets” of an opponent (Petrocik 1996: 829). However, if by chance a candidate has to trespass on an opponent’s issue convincingly, this will only seek to strengthen his / her chances on Election Day (Brazeal and Benoit 2008). When issues are clearly “owned” by parties, talking around them will be futile as it will not make a difference (Walgrave *et al.* 2009: 21). Sides (2006: 409-410) agrees, adding that framing is very important in this transaction as successful trespassing depends on how one party “frames” the issues of another party in “a different way”. Holian (2004: 97-99) labels this “co-option” with the “correct spin”. If parties want to come across as current and attuned to the needs of voters and the issues of the day, they will trespass (Sides 2006: 426).

In his analyses of American elections from 1952 – 2004, Benoit (2007: 42) found that candidates who concentrated on their party’s “owned issues” more were more likely to

succeed electorally at the ballot box. He warned however that those candidates in this respect should never consciously restrict themselves to discussing their own party's issues "exclusively" (Benoit 2007: 44). Damore (2005: 88) observes that sometimes opposition voices may act as proverbial guinea pigs in testing out certain issues. These opposition parties will then accordingly allocate resources to issue-maintenance. Pfau and Kenski (1990) suggest that sometimes candidates may be forced to discuss issues to neutralise something that may be possibly disastrous for them in the long-term.

Is trespassing only about talking about another party's issues? Holian (2004: 95-123) questions how one party can trespass if it does not enjoy credibility on the trespassed issue? Will this not compromise its reputation? The author recommends two strategies to overcome this: firstly to discuss the trespassed issue vaguely; and secondly to talk broadly about these issues in alignment with party ideology and philosophy. If the trespassed issues are discussed in generic terms, the party will be safe and stands no risk of any damage to its existing reputation (Holian 2004).

Baum and Gussin (2005: 6) assert that issue ownership does not end when a party stakes claim to an issue or a set of issues; it is not an "ultimate victory". On the contrary, a party can only "cash in" on this advantage through its election campaign where successful persuasion and "coercion, skill, good fortune" and the media's subsequent "disproportionate" coverage will seek to favour it at the ballot box on Election Day (Baum and Gussin 2005: 6-7). Benoit and Hansen (2004:146) warn, though, that it is risky to poach "too many issues" from an opponent for two reasons: not all poached

issues yield success and there is a high likelihood that the party will “neglect” its core constituency. In the final part of this segment, the author will provide some criticisms of John Petrocik’s (1996) issue ownership theory.

### **3.11.6 Criticisms of issue ownership theory**

A comprehensive literature search on issue ownership theory did not reveal any South African research that has specifically employed Petrocik’s (1996) theoretical framework. The search did however yield a number of studies, albeit with a heavy American / European bias. Issue ownership theory then seems to have been formulated ideally for American presidential elections where two parties—the Democratic Party and the Republican Party—regularly rotate in power. This could be the theory’s biggest handicap because it suggests issue ownership theory was specifically created and formulated with a pronounced Western bias for established democracies like the US and Europe. In this sense, transferring Petrocik’s issue ownership theory to a South African context might prove challenging. Breaking new ground is what empirical research is all about and one feels confident this study of a South African election viewed through an African lens (founded on an American-formulated theory) will prove a worthwhile and fulfilling endeavour. Also, one has yet to see an application of Petrocik’s (1996) issue ownership theory to a Middle Eastern, Latin American or Asian setting.

As outlined earlier, Walgrave *et al.* (2011: 5-7) observe that Petrocik’s (1996) issue ownership theory is “conceptually vague” and defined “ambiguously”. This is why it has

been described as “maverick” (Walgrave *et al.* 2011: 23). For the theory to be sound, Walgrave *et al.* (2011) advise one needs to consider both the competence and associative dimensions. Petrocik’s conceptualisation—the authors complain—only considers the competence aspect which is “tricky to use as a predictor of voter behaviour” (Walgrave *et al.* 2011: 5-7).

Another criticism of Petrocik’s (1996) issue ownership theory is the assumption that parties’ reputations are developed over decades which in turn act as voting cues for voters when assessing political players in an election. This is problematic because it automatically shuts out post-colonial nations such as those in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. In many of these places, there has been one political party in power for decades with a leader serving multiple decades in power. This brings one back to one’s earlier criticism of Petrocik’s issue ownership theory of having a strong Western or North American / European bias. One needs to explore how issue ownership theory can be applied to these different electoral contexts.

In the application of his issue ownership theory, Petrocik (1996) also uses a dominant two-party system coupled with a presidential race to assess issue ownership. South Africa (and most present-day African states) is very different. South Africa has been under democratic rule for only nineteen-years (Landsberg and Mackay 2006: 1-6). Although the ANC was first established as a liberation movement in 1912 (Zuma 2011), its record in government can only be assessed from 1994. Unlike the US, there is no presidential race in this country *per se*. South Africans know their future president even

before an election begins. By virtue of it being the ruling-party, the ANC employs narrow democratic-centrism to choose its leaders (Gumede 2012: 24; Maimane 2012: 21; Mantashe 2010; Tamukamoyo 2012: 19); it is naturally assumed the party's president will become the country's first citizen. During actual campaigns, no two candidates compete directly with each other. Rather, competing parties send out representatives to discuss party owned issues and to canvass support for their parties in the poll.

The argument, though, is why can South Africa's liberation narrative not become an owned issue for a party such as the ANC? Although other Black parties were involved in the liberation struggle (the PAC and the Azanian People's Liberation Organisation), the ANC is the only party that vehemently claims ownership to the struggle for liberation. The Democratic Alliance however was quick to capitalise on this issue in the 2011 local government elections. Much to the chagrin of the ANC, the DA is now staking claim to the liberation struggle, some of its icons and the general struggle narrative (Zille 2011). Please refer to Chapter Five and Chapter Six for more discussion on this.<sup>17</sup>

Of the other criticisms levelled at Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory, Green and Hobolt (2006: 3) argue that apart from it lacking a "sound theoretical foundation" and "empirical support" for what the theory puts forward, issue ownership does not go into in-depth explanatory analyses of voter behaviour and the absence of voter preferences. Further, the authors assert that issue ownership neglects to "convincingly account" for

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<sup>17</sup> Please see *Appendix P: the DA's "Know your DA" campaign*.

converged issues such as health and education which are more performance-based issues than owned issues (Green and Hobolt 2006: 5).

Like Green and Hobolt (2006), Belanger and Meguid (2005) lament the fact that only two empirical studies have delved into the intricacies of the theory's take on issue ownership and voter behaviour. Parker (2007) for example questions why Petrocik never fully states how ownership is determined. For example, Walgrave *et al.* (2009) ask where issue ownership comes from and whether it can be changed. Therriault (2011) takes issue with the survey question used by Petrocik to determine issue ownership. The author calls it "problematic" as it is "vague" (Therriault 2011: 1-2). The author goes on further to lament a study by Petrocik *et al.* (2003) labelling it "absurd" for not considering the idea of different electoral contexts for political campaigns (Therriault 2011: 6). Damore (2005) and Therriault (2011) say issue ownership theory does not adequately address the context in which election campaigns are fought. This relates to how the theory does not adequately explain how campaign contexts and messages need to be adapted for different settings. This criticism has some resonance when applied to the South African situation because provincial political dynamics are very different compared to national.<sup>18</sup> Parties will have to adapt their messages to the new electoral context and tailor their campaign accordingly. There is the fear that this may give rise to what Minnozzi (2010: 20) calls "a disjointed campaign" where voters are the

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<sup>18</sup> For example, in a politically-volatile province like KwaZulu-Natal, one would expect issues such as political violence and the monarchy's annual budget to be high on the issue agenda. In a province such as Gauteng such issues would spell disaster for parties and candidates.

eventual losers as a result. Sometimes, campaigns may have very clear objectives but this can change when other issues (relating to context) begin to dominate the media.

As recently as 2007 and 2011, more authors have come forward suggesting alternatives and possible extensions to Petrocik's (1996) original idea of issue ownership theory. The minimal effects theory put forward by Sides (2007:468) is one such example which suggests campaign messages (as Petrocik observed) may not work altogether, postulating that citizens are generally apathetic and disinterested in politics and electoral messages. Therriault (2011) is another author who proposes an extension to issue ownership theory, one that incorporates both party reputations and party policy positions instead of Petrocik's initial one-dimensional focus. For the purposes of this study, John Petrocik's (1996: 825-850) theory of issue ownership will be used to demonstrate that political parties campaign to "own" certain issues during an election; issues they feel strongly about and know will yield electoral success. The "associative dimension" of issue ownership outlined by Walgrave *et al.* (2012: 1-2) will also be employed to augment this exercise. This thesis then will argue that in the 2009 South African general elections, the Democratic Alliance (DA) shifted political emphasis towards a number of issues it arguably owned, in order to attract voters. These aspects of the study will be expanded on in Chapter Five.

### 3. 12 Conclusion: Section Two

In this second part of this exhaustive literature review, the author introduced the reader to the Democratic Alliance's previous election campaigns in order to locate this thesis. The concept of issue ownership and its "intuitive appeal" were also discussed (Hayes 2004: 1-2). This literature review examined the multi-dimensionality of Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory, explaining in detail how political actors seek to capture ownership of certain electoral issues before, during and after an election. Media coverage—as discovered here—was essential for issue ownership by competing parties and candidates (Walgrave and De Swert 2007: 66). Also, despite Sides' (2007: 466) dismissal of "issue trespassing" as a "waste of resources" that could "jeopardize" a party's success on Election Day, consulted literature suggests otherwise; parties need to "trespass" to remain relevant and to appear concerned and attuned to the needs of voters. An important finding from the literature is the suggestion by Walgrave *et al.* (2011: 5-7) that the "associative dimension" should be an integral element of any investigation of owned issues. This author will apply this associative dimension to the DA's owned issues in the 2009 South African elections to add depth and texture to this academic endeavour. Another finding from the literature suggests that issue ownership is not only about issues / topics raised around elections but more about it being long-term. Issue ownership is about matters parties raise over a pro-longed period of time. For this to happen, the political party does not necessarily have to be in office; it can influence the policy-making process from the outside. The party's political behaviour and constant policy pronouncements would act as anchors for owned issues (Camyar and Gilcrease 2009). The next chapter will focus on profiling the Democratic Alliance—

the subject of this study. Chapter Four will detail the party's ideological evolution pre-1994 until present day; its electoral history; and how this political party managed its political public relations campaign in the 2009 South African general elections.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PROFILE OF THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on profiling the Democratic Alliance, including tracking its genesis before 1994 and its political evolution before the 2009 general election. This section also details the party's support base; and its political public relations campaign in the 2009 elections. The next section provides a brief background into the Democratic Alliance; the party's past electoral performance; and the DA's ideological positioning.

### **4.2 A brief background of the Democratic Alliance (DA)**

The Democratic Alliance (DA) is a South African political party created through the amalgamation of the former Democratic Party (DP), the Federal Alliance and the former New National Party (NNP) on 24 June 2000 (Jolobe 2009: 134; Leon 2008: 545). The alliance was forged to contest the 2000 local elections but was short-lived when the NNP—led by Marthinus Van Schalkwyk—took advantage of floor-crossing legislation and signed a political agreement with the governing-ANC in October 2001 (Daniel and Southall 2009: 266). Ideologically, the current Democratic Alliance is said to espouse liberal-democratic values and is “widely perceived” to be an urban-centric political party and “conservative protector of minority interests” (Piombo 2005:278). The party believes in a free market economy with minimal state intervention and the privatisation of key state assets (Tambo 2012). Issues such as family, law and order, a functional education and health system and the independence of the judiciary are priorities for the DA.

Venter (2006:10) adds these are ideals and values that define other middle class societies in industrialised countries. By inference, the DA is a political party aimed at South Africa's middle classes; with its strength primarily based on a "class-biased agenda"—or campaigning on issues that affect South Africa's middle classes (Mabona 2012: 5; Pressly 2011: 19; Tambo 2012; Worrall 2012).<sup>1</sup>

On 26 November 2006, Tony Leon announced he would not stand for re-election at the party's 2007 leadership congress<sup>2</sup> (Tony Leon to step...2006; Leon 2008: 674-675). At the party's elective conference in May 2007, Leon stepped aside and Helen Zille was voted in as new leader with 72% of the ballot (Jolobe 2009: 137; Leon 2008: 685; Mkokeli 2011; Tambo 2012).<sup>3</sup> By 2009, the political terrain had changed, the ANC had ruptured and the DA went into the general election with a new leader. According to the party's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the time—Ryan Coetzee—the DA contested the 2009 general election with three objectives: to keep the ANC below a two-thirds majority, to win the Western Cape and to strengthen its position as the official opposition (Coetzee 2009). In the final analysis, the 2009 poll witnessed the DA increase its national vote-share by 4.29% since 2004, winning 16.66% of the ballot or sixty-seven seats; the party registered gains in eight of the country's nine provinces, excluding Limpopo and the DA's biggest victory was realised in the Western Cape

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to *Appendix L: History of the Democratic Alliance* for a timeline of the DP / DA's history

<sup>2</sup> See also: Mkhwanazi (2012: 4).

<sup>3</sup> Leon remained in parliament until his term expired in 2009; he then took up a teaching post at Harvard University in the United States (Leon 2008: 15-20; Tony Leon, former visiting...2009) and an ambassadorial post to Argentina later that year (Tony Leon to step...2006).

where it won a majority of 51.46% (Besdziek 2006: 130-132; Greben 2012a; Greben 2012b; South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 16: 104-109).<sup>4</sup> Please refer to *Appendix A: 2009 Election results and analysis*. In the next section, the author goes into the typologies of a DA supporter and why the party is still perceived as an untransformed White party nineteen-years after democracy.

### 4.3 Profile of the typical DA supporter

According to Paton (2004), a typical DA supporter is someone aggrieved with the ANC's failures and unhappy with the ruling-party for a number of reasons. Booysen (2005:143), Jolobe (2009: 132), Piombo (2005:259); and Venter (2006:10) reveal the DA's main support base comprises liberal Whites, moderate Afrikaners, Indians, Coloureds and a small portion of Black African voters.<sup>5</sup> This Black African support—considered essential to any electoral surge in South African politics—was thought to be 0.4% in the 1999 election and 1.7% in the 2004 poll (Booyesen 2005: 142-143). Estimates from South Africa's founding all-race election in 1994 suggest the NP and DP won just 2% of the Black African vote (Booyesen 2005). The DA's main problem is its perceived "White image" which political commentator Adam Habib believes the party needs to "remodel" to come across as more inclusive (Bauer 2011; Piitso 2013: 21). For political analyst Aubrey Matshiqi, this was not surprising as the DA is still perceived as

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<sup>4</sup> This provincial win gave the party ten more seats than its 2004 outcome in the Western Cape legislature. As the winning party in the province, the DA claimed the premiership. Party leader Helen Zille was sworn in as Western Cape premier—the only non-ANC premier of the country's nine provinces. The 2009 general election results also translated into official opposition status for the party in three provinces: Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the North West (Booyesen and Masterson 2009:446-452).

<sup>5</sup> See also: Greben (2012a) and Grootes (2013).

exclusively White because the party still carries racial connotations of White privilege and domination over Black lives (Pitso 2013: 21) and not voting for the party in an election is about Black pride. Matshiqi finds concurrence with Dlanga (2011): denying the DA a Black vote is more about proving that Black people are competent to “fix their own problems” without “White supervision” and that Black people can self-govern (Edigheji 2004: 16-17; Friedman 2013: 17; Habib, Matshiqi and Friedman 2006; Paton 2004; Tleane 2004: 18).<sup>6</sup> In the next section, the author will detail the Democratic Alliance’s 2009 political public relations campaign.

#### **4.4 An introduction into the DA’s 2009 political public relations (PR) campaign**

This section introduces the DA’s political public relations (PR) campaign in the 2009 South African general elections. The author provides a detailed background into the party’s 2009 campaign, including information on how this political player re-branded a few months before the April 22 poll; how digital platforms such as Facebook were

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<sup>6</sup> An Ipsos / Markinor survey (Harris 2011) commissioned in April 2011 expands on the typical DA supporter. According to Mari Harris—a research director with the body—a typical DA supporter was the diametrical opposite of an ANC supporter (Harris 2011). This DA partisan voter lived in a metro (55%), large city or small town (19%) or a rural village (26%) and was fluent in English (55%) and Afrikaans (24%) [adding up to 79%]. This DA supporter had only a 21% probability of speaking any one of the country’s nine Black languages. In other words, one in every five DA supporter was Black African. A typical ANC supporter—according to Harris—on the other hand was resident in a rural village (52%), a large city or small town (18%) or was resident in one of South Africa’s eight metro cities (30%). This supporter was fluent in one of the country’s nine African languages (95%) and could speak very little English (3%) and Afrikaans (2%). This—remarkably—remained unchanged from 1994 (Harris 2011). A December 2012 study commissioned by research body Afrobarometer corroborates these findings. The DA is “fundamentally” an urban party with 88% of partisans residing in a town or city (Graham 2012: 2-4). Most of this support can be found in just three provinces, namely Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. A third of DA supporters (35%) speak English; 56% use Afrikaans as their primary language; and “a smattering” speak Xhosa, Northern Sotho / Pedi, Sesotho, Venda and Zulu (Graham 2012: 2-4). According to the DA’s own research carried out after the 2004 general election, it estimated that 81.8% of the ANC’s electoral support emanated from Black African voters while 74.9% of the DA’s support came from Whites (Leon 2008: 620; Leon 2009c; Leon 2010: 20), lending further credence to the assumption that South African voting patterns are distinctively race-based.

leveraged to improve its communication strategy; and how DA leader Helen Zille's image management utilised both personal campaigning and social networking—through Facebook—to entrench the DA's electoral messages. In the first section, the magnitude of the DA's 2009 election campaign will be discussed.

#### **4.5 An overview of the DA's 2009 political PR campaign**

Six months before the 2009 general election, the Democratic Alliance (DA) re-launched and re-branded with a new logo and tag line—symbolically—at Constitutional Hill, Gauteng. At the November 15 2008 gathering, DA leader Helen Zille announced to party members and the media that her party's logo reflected its “new” offer to South African voters that involved a “new determination to address the injustices and racial divisions of our country's past” (Jolobe 2009: 138-139; Mkokeli 2011; Zille 2009). During the unveiling of the party's logo, Zille said the DA's emblem reflected a “morning sun rising over the Rainbow Nation” to illustrate to South Africans the party's commitment to—what it termed—an “open society for all...of hope grounded in our diversity” (Zille 2009). The logo was complemented by the DA's slogan: “DA – One Nation, One Future” (Jolobe 2009: 138-139; Mkokeli 2011; Zille 2009).

At the time, Chutel (2009) and Pillay and Mataboge (2012: 3) asserted that US President Barack Obama's election to the White House inspired the DA's 2009 election campaign; younger voters especially were activated by Obama's 2008 presidential campaign. At the time of Obama's election, political rivals of the Democratic Alliance

accused it of replicating Obama's famous 2008 logo—an image of a rising sun draped in red, white and blue (Reece 2008).<sup>7</sup>

Preceding the actual poll in April 2009, the DA said in a media statement that it had deliberately pursued a “new digital strategy” to signal the end of the “one-way communication” pattern of conducting its business (Zille 2009). The party's former CEO and spin doctor during that time, Ryan Coetzee,<sup>8</sup> added that this new “digital communication strategy” involved five elements: interactive websites; online advertising; short message service communication; mobile web access; and user outreach initiatives using social networking spaces (Coetzee 2009). The party also announced that its main website—[www.da.org.za](http://www.da.org.za)—would now be used for purposes other than just providing party news; together with another website—[www.contributetochange.org.za](http://www.contributetochange.org.za)—both sites would involve active voter participation involving online interactive tools (Coetzee 2009; Zille 2009). The party went on to officially launch its 2009 election campaign in the politically-significant Soweto (or South Western Township) on 31 January 2009. Soweto is a sprawling Black township in Gauteng province and is home to some of the nation's most prominent anti-apartheid heroes including Nelson Mandela and Desmond Mpilo Tutu. At the height of apartheid, Soweto was the place where a number of protests and uprisings were staged. Zille said another reason for the launch in Kliptown, Soweto was to symbolically identify the party with the actual place where

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<sup>7</sup> Please refer to *Appendix M: The DA's new logo compared to Barack Obama's 2008 election logo*.

<sup>8</sup> Ryan Coetzee was appointed Strategy Director to Britain's Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in 2012 after reportedly drawing wide praise for his work with the DA in the 2009 elections (Watt 2012).

the Freedom Charter<sup>9</sup> was signed and adopted in 1955 (Follows 2007; Suttner 2012: 17); and to demonstrate that the party had “moved forward” in order to shake off the notion the DA was a party for the “wealthy, White and middle class” (Jolobe 2009: 141). The DA’s 2009 election manifesto was subsequently launched two weeks later in Johannesburg (DA to launch...2009; Jolobe 2009: 141-142).<sup>10</sup>

#### **4.5.1 Political television advertising permitted for the 2009 election**

In another development, the DA became one of the first political parties to take advantage of new election rules and regulations in the 2009 elections that allowed political television advertising for the first time (Duncan 2009: 225; Political parties tune into...2009; Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 15; Teer-Tomaselli 2006: 432-437). On 27 February 2009, the party launched a sixty-second advertisement with images of an idealistic “Rainbow South Africa” supported by a soft-playing “Somewhere over the Rainbow” music complementing the visuals (DA television ad...2009). In the advertisement, South Africans of all races were shown holding the country’s national flag with words such as “poverty”, “prosperity”, security”, “crime”, “change” and “vote to win” transposed across the screen (DA television ad...2009).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The Freedom Charter was a “manifesto” that spelled out the political, economic and social structure envisaged for a non-racial South Africa back in 1955; it was adopted and signed by the Congress of the People in an open field at Kliptown, Soweto on 26 June 1955 (Follows 2007). See also: <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=72>; Maharaj (2012: 4) and Suttner (2012: 17).

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed copy of the DA’s 2009 election manifesto, please see <http://www.da.org.za/docs/6674/21941%20DA%20Manifesto%20Eng.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> The DA’s 2009 television election advertisement can be viewed on You Tube at the following address: <http://www.viddler.com/v/c7ce168d>.

Apart from paid television political advertisements, parties were afforded free two-minute spots on the public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). Of the 84 free advertisements, only 40 were taken up by parties such as the ANC, DA, Cope and the IFP to name but a few (Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 15). The Ornico Group—which specialises in monitoring South Africa’s advertising landscape—found that a total of 368 party-political television advertisements were aired between February 2009 and Election Day (Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 15). Combined costs for both paid and free television advertising for major parties amounted to R8.1 million for the ANC and R4.1 million for the DA (Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 15). The Ornico Group also reported that the ANC’s 220 television advertisements were “seen” by 38% of citizens while the DA’s 83 spots were “seen” by 23% of the South African population (Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 16-17). When it came to radio, comparatively the ANC broadcast 3319 radio advertisements (reaching 29% of South Africa’s citizens) while the DA produced 1111 radio spots (reaching 12% of South Africans) (Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 15). The ANC and DA were the only two parties who mounted a full media onslaught with the ANC spending R17.8 million and the DA R9.7 million on their electronic media bill (Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 15). There was a marked distance between the ANC and DA and other political competitors: the IFP for example spent just over R2 million; the Freedom Front Plus R2.9 million and the ACDP R1.3 million (Schreiner and Mattes 2011: 16-17).

When it came to the SABC,<sup>12</sup> the DA enjoyed modest coverage by the public broadcaster in the 2009 election. According to media market intelligence company Media Monitoring Africa (MMA)—which was charged with observing the SABC’s election coverage over a five week period from 1 March – 31 May 2009<sup>13</sup>—the DA received twelve-percent (12%) of the public broadcaster’s election coverage<sup>14</sup> (Duncan 2009: 225; South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 1: 7). The party received most of its coverage in week 5 (4-10 April); week 7 (18-24 April) and week 8 (25 April-1 May) of the 2009 general elections (South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 4: 23-30). This could be attributed to the party’s media campaign against the election of ANC president Jacob Zuma and the impending charges against Zuma; this formed part of the DA’s “Stop Zuma” campaign (Moakes 2011; South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 4: 23). The party’s coverage on the public broadcaster peaked in week 8—25 April – 1 May 2009—mainly due to its victory in the Western Cape; the election of Helen Zille as premier; and the party’s improved showing in the election (South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 4: 23). In another more comprehensive report where the MMA’s mandate was expanded to track both print and electronic media coverage of the 2009 elections, the DA commanded 15% overall

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<sup>12</sup> The SABC is regarded as a key media player because of its audience penetration level on both radio and television. The public broadcaster comprises three television channels and 18 radio stations in a number of the country’s official languages. Through its radio services, approximately 6.2 million households are reached while television is received by more than 3.2 million households. This is why the SABC is considered a significant player when it comes to news and especially elections. (South Africa. South African Broadcasting Corporation: sec 1: 5-10).

<sup>13</sup> The different monitoring periods were: week 1: 1 – 13 March 2009; week 2: 14 – 20 March 2009; week 3: 21 – 27 March 2009; week 4: 28 March – 3 April 2009; week 5: 4 – 10 April 2009; week 6: 11 – 17 April 2009; week 7: 18 – 24 April 2009 and week 8: 25 April – 1 May 2009 (South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa. 2009a: sec 1: 7).

<sup>14</sup> By contrast, the ANC received 46% coverage; Cope 15% and the IFP 5% (South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 4: 23-30).

media space. Other parties like the ANC and Cope—which incidentally was considered the “darling of the liberal media” (Khoza 2013: 19) at the time—however received much more coverage than the DA, 48% and 21% respectively (Duncan 2009: 221; South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009b: sec 4: 14).

#### **4.5.2 The absence of debate in the 2009 elections**

Another feature of the 2009 elections was the absence of American-style debates between party leaders. Unlike most Western democracies where the norm is for competing presidential candidates to engage in live media debates to spell out policy persuasions,<sup>15</sup> South Africa is fairly new to such arrangements because of the country’s history and the fact that universal suffrage was only permissible from the 1994 elections. Despite media organisations such as the country’s public broadcaster, the SABC and privately-owned etv staging a number of such “town hall-style” meetings in 2009 (Duncan 2009: 226), not once did the political head of the ruling-party—Jacob Zuma— and main opposition leader Helen Zille share a common platform for such dialogue (Van Onselen 2012b). Prior to the ANC’s 2009 election campaign, Zuma was effectively dismissed as an ineffective communicator, making many reckless statements during his 2006 rape trial (Bassett and Clarke 2008: 798). When Zuma did speak about the ANC’s election manifesto and its related policy leanings, it was nearly-always alone at campaign rallies or in speeches. During an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Zuma’s then-spokesperson Mac Maharaj however effectively

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<sup>15</sup> One such example is the US, where regular high-profile debates are scheduled between Republican and Democratic presidential hopefuls.

defended the ANC president, citing the leader's lack of a proper formal education (Allen 2011). Maharaj told the BBC journalist that while Zuma did not "fit the normal mould of a president of a country" and that "there was an issue in South Africa around understanding the president", Zuma was more of a "self-educated man" who was a "tremendous communicator" (Allen 2011; Roberts 2011: 2). While Zuma was not "that powerful at formal occasions", the ANC leader was an effective communicator "at grassroot levels and informally" (Allen 2011; Roberts 2011: 2). Gareth Van Onselen, author of political blog *Inside Politics* does not however think a lack of debate has anything to do with individuals but more to do with the ANC as a party. Van Onselen says the tradition of open media debates between rival political parties was only ever present in the 1994 poll.<sup>16</sup> For every subsequent election, former ANC president Thabo Mbeki deliberately sought to deflect attention away from such proposals because of a heated live television debate between himself and the former National Party Foreign Minister, Pik Botha that went awry in March 1994 (Makhaya 1994: 2; The debate...1994: 2; Van Onselen 2012b).

#### **4.5.3 The DA and its use of social networking in 2009**

A key aspect of the DA's media footprint in the 2009 elections was its presence and use of social networking sites such as Facebook. For the purposes of this study, this author deliberately chose to focus on Facebook and not other platforms such as Twitter and YouTube. In the 2009 elections, Gumede (2011: 4) observed the DA was the only

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<sup>16</sup> Please also see Bulbring (1994: 1); Hartley (1994: 3) and Makhaya (1994: 2).

political party to maximise the benefits of social networking sites. Other political parties who failed to capitalise on the benefits of using social networking outlets effectively missed an opportunity to connect with voters, especially the younger demographic (Gumede 2011: 4; Rossouw and Donnelly 2011: 8). In both the 2009 (and 2011 local government) elections, the DA utilised social networking sites such as Facebook 69% and 67% respectively. Comparatively, the DA's main political competition—namely the ANC and Cope—used such sites modestly (47% and 43% respectively) in the 2009 poll (Gumede 2011: 4).

#### ***4.5.4 Capturing the youth vote in the 2009 election***

One of the other major talking points in the 2009 election was the capture of the youth vote (Duncan 2009: 227). Aided by developments in the US and Barack Obama's historic ascendance to the White House in 2008—mainly helped by the youth vote in that country (Simba 2008)—South African political parties competed vigorously to secure the country's approximately 25% registered youth (18-29 year olds) population (Chutel 2009; Duncan 2009: 227; Misra-Dexter 2009). Barack Obama's election to the White House inspired South Africa's 2009 election campaign; younger voters especially were activated by the former senator's 2008 presidential campaign (Chutel 2009; Duncan 2009: 227; Habib 2009a). This group—for parties—represented a valuable cluster of potential supporters because in the 1999 elections, approximately 43% of youth was reported to have cast a ballot and in the 2004 poll this figure had increased to 44.5% (Duncan 2009: 227; Malada 2012: 5; Misra-Dexter 2009).

Preceding the election though, there was the assertion that South Africa's youth was disengaged from the electoral process, unlike their predecessors—or the youth of the 1976 era—who were in contrast politically-engaged and politically-conscious from an early age (Malada 2012: 5; Mataboge 2009). This was a new, de-politicised generation characterised by modern-day luxuries such as video games, the Internet and American music. This is why the 2009 election result could have been a much altered one (Mataboge 2009). In a Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)-commissioned study, researchers Roberts and Letsoalo (2009: 1-2) challenged this generalisation and found the opposite: that South Africa's youth shared an equal interest in politics as the non-youth demographic (35 and above) and a "sizeable majority" considered voting a civic duty to deepen democracy. The report further found that a disconnect existed but the reason why youth spurned active political membership was because they favoured more meaningful activities "linked to their lives" (Mataboge 2009). This youth apathy was thus dismissed as "over-simplistic" and regarded as a "premature conclusion" because South Africa's youth had not lost interest in political processes; their participation merely "shifted" (Roberts and Letsoalo 2009: 1-2).

For Chutel (2009), the opposition—such as the DA—"misjudged" voters in the 2009 election by discounting the youth in their campaign strategies. Opposition party manifestoes and their related party websites failed to capture the imagination of issues affecting the 18-29 demographic such as HIV / Aids, unemployment and poverty. This—the author believes— was a "missed opportunity" as this demographic was key to Obama's victory in 2008 (Chutel 2009). These political parties—including the DA—

should have ventured into “lecture halls, offices and unemployment lines” during their campaigning (Chutel 2009). Despite the DA’s concentration on “online media” to keep “ahead of the market” the party failed to make “sufficient use” of both mobile and “multi-lingual social networking” (Duncan 2009: 228).

Regardless of the criticism levelled at the ruling-ANC’s 2009 election campaign, Chutel (2009) asserts the ANC in contrast ran an efficient campaign, emboldened by its incumbent party status. For the party, the youth represents a “crucial constituency” (Dlodlo 2013: 15). An area where the party capitalised was its youth outreach strategy and a “particular emphasis on face-to-face communication” (Duncan 2009: 227). The ANC Youth League for example used its website—[www.ancyl.org.za](http://www.ancyl.org.za)—to mobilise support among the youth for the ruling party. Links to issues such as career guidance, job listings and youth-owned businesses were provided on this forum. The Youth League had its “ear to the ground” as far as youth issues were concerned; they “presented opportunities” for active involvement to draw in this demographic (Chutel 2009). The ANC mother body specifically targeted the youth through its president, Julius Malema, using the leader as an icon to inspire and motivate youngsters. The party connected to matriculants for the “first time” at popular places where young people socialised such as car washes, *braais*<sup>17</sup> and “ride and *braai* parties” (Butler 2009: 79). The party’s communication methods also came across as modern to this demographic when the ANC communications team experimented with both Facebook and Twitter during the campaign. During the electioneering phase, the party launched a comic

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<sup>17</sup> The American equivalent is a barbeque.

series with the country's most-read newspaper, *The Daily Sun* (Duncan 2009: 227; The press in South Africa...2012). Butler (2009: 77) reasons that although "such innovations" did not have any "significant impact" on the campaign, it did help "signal the ANC's modernity to younger citizens". Social media analyst Matthew Buckland disagrees, however, arguing that the incumbent party "missed the opportunity" to convert its [www.myanc.org](http://www.myanc.org) website into one with optimal social networking functionality as Obama did for his 2008 campaign (Duncan 2009: 227-228).

#### **4.5.5 Helen Zille's image management exercise**

This section focuses on Helen Zille's personal image management because it formed part of the DA's overall PR election strategy. Not only was Zille actively promoted using social networking site Facebook, the leader essentially embodied the party's 2009 election campaign and its related electoral messages. In Chapter Five—the findings—this author will go into detail on how Zille's Facebook platform was used to boost her image management and how it facilitated conversations about the 2009 election.

The DA is perhaps the only opposition party in South Africa endowed with "many political assets" that include an "impressive organisational machinery" (Habib 2013b: 15) comprising "vast resources; its credibility; its army of pollsters...and its established brand" (McKaiser 2013b). In short, the party is "super-organised" (Pillay 2011). For the 2009 general elections, the DA actively sought to "revolutionise its image" (Duncan 2009: 228), including the way the South African media viewed the party. In the poll, the

party activated all of its resources, notably its leader Helen Zille, who went on to embody and assume the party's election campaign in the main. For any political party, its "most important medium" to communicate its policy views to the public is its presidential candidate (Kelley 1956: 170). Zille's image management in the 2009 poll was carefully and tactically managed by the party's spin doctors. Through the concept of "mediatisation" or "symbolic politics" (Brants and Voltmer 2011: 5-6), the DA deliberately "propelled" its leader Helen Zille from "a relatively unknown functionary" to a "darling" of the media (Duncan 2009: 228). Throughout the party's election blitz, not only was Zille always readily-available to take up interviews and answer media queries, she was also "direct"—a combination that proved extremely beneficial to the DA leader (Duncan 2009: 228). Even when it came to the leader's grooming, Zille reportedly used housekeeper Grace Voyiya as her personal "wardrobe consultant" and friend Steven Phillips as her on-call "hair stylist" (Brag book...2008). Phillips conceded there were many times where he had to get up very early—as early as 4am—every morning since Zille became Cape Town mayor in 2006 to "service her locks around the clock" (Brag book...2008). There were also media reports where Zille confessed to using "botox injections" to emboss her image in the public domain (All premier has done...2011).

In the lead-up to the April 22, 2009 election, DA leader Helen Zille campaigned for eighty-two (82) days, travelling to all of South Africa's nine provinces.<sup>18</sup> Two weeks

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<sup>18</sup> Helen Zille attended gatherings in Bela Bela (Limpopo); Botshabelo (Free State); Lindelani, Newlands East, Phoenix and Umhlanga (KwaZulu-Natal); Parkside, KwaNobuhle; East London and Buffalo Flats (Eastern Cape); Vosman, Siyabuswa, Thembisile and Sakhile (Mpumalanga); Zwelethemba and Khayelitsha (Western Cape). This material was sourced from Helen Zille's multiple speeches during the campaign trail which can be accessed by logging onto the following website and the relevant link: <http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=searchpage&category=speeches&keywords=helen+zille+20>

before the election, the party launched its *Vote to Win* bus in the Western Cape, with Zille using it to traverse all parts of the province to drive home the party's election message and to plead its case for securing the Western Cape—one of the DA's key objectives in the election (Moakes 2011). The party also “chartered” a plane to ensure the DA's message could reach voters in areas “not reachable by normal transportation” (Taking the DA message...2009).

Zille's election campaign however was said to have started as early as 2006, a few months before she replaced Tony Leon as party head. After being elected Cape Town mayor in 2006, Zille constantly involved herself in a number of party political, community-driven initiatives that sought to create and shape her image as a caring politician concerned about grass-roots issues. One such example was when Zille was invited to address disaffected ANC supporters in Cape Town's Crossroads, Langa Township. At the event, Zille was physically assaulted by a group who threw chairs at her, threatened her with a knife and stoned her vehicle. The ANC issued a statement the next day condemning the incident (Vom Hove 2008). Needless to say, the incident sought to raise her public profile and only inflict damage on the ANC's intolerance towards its political rivals. In October 2007, Zille made headlines when she and ten others were arrested following an anti-drug march by members of the Peoples Anti-Drug and Liquor Action Committee (Padlac)—a march in which Zille participated. Again, Zille's public profile received another likeability injection as a tough-talking leader who

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+2009. This information can also be accessed from the DA leader's Facebook page available at <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille>.

cared about issues that affected local communities. The media afforded the story extensive coverage, further cementing Zille's political capital. The case was eventually struck off the court roll for insufficient evidence (Maclennan 2007). Six months before the party's election campaign—in 2008—Zille's public profile enjoyed another unexpected boost when she was declared World Mayor 2008 by think tank group, City Mayors Foundation, for her governing of the Cape Town metropolitan municipality (Vom Hove 2008). In the award citation, Zille was praised as “an amazing lady who made a difference” with her only equals being Nobel Peace laureates Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu (Vom Hove 2008). She was called “a phenomenal woman” whose “humanity, charm, integrity, vision and political know-how” helped South Africa—a country “devoid of present-day role models” (Vom Hove 2008). The citation added that Zille was a “shining example of good governance” who had “taken a strong anti-corruption stance” (Vom Hove 2008).

Under Zille's watch as party leader, the DA's anti-corruption stance was further emboldened by the release of an eleven-page document issued in February 2008 detailing why the crime-fighting Scorpions unit should not be disbanded (The case for retaining...2008: 2-3). In its argument, the DA accused the ANC of wanting to “destroy the most effective corruption-busting force in the country” so that “prominent members” of the governing party could be insulated from criminal investigations (The case for retaining...2008: 2-3). The party cited six members from the ANC's highest decision-making body, the National Executive Committee (NEC), who were still “the subject of ongoing investigations” (The case for retaining...2008: 2-3). Apart from labelling the

move to disband the Scorpions as an “unedifying rush”, the DA said this was a mere illustration of “the contempt with which they (the ANC) hold democratic institutions” (The case for retaining...2008: 2-3). There is the argument that the DA released this document in 2008—and close to the 2009 election—to further galvanise its image as the only viable opposition party to take an ethical stand against corruption and that the DA was a party of constitutionalism ready to challenge the ANC when it came to perceived assertions of abuse of power through its numerical dominance in parliament.

Another much-publicised issue in the 2009 election was the DA’s apparent failure—more so reluctance—to use Zille’s background as a former anti-apartheid journalist working with the now-defunct *Rand Daily Mail* to the party’s advantage. During her time with the publication, one of the prominent stories Zille worked on was the death (in police custody) of anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko (De Vos 2013; Dlanga 2013). Zille and the DA however chose not to leverage such political capital during the 2009 elections (De Vos 2013; Dlanga 2013; Hidalgo 2010; Williams 2012). In a wide-ranging interview with the party’s CEO Jonathan Moakes,<sup>19</sup> it was revealed the party deliberately sought not to emphasise and associate itself directly with the country’s liberation history in the 2009 election (as compared to the 2011 poll) because it was not the “right time” (Moakes 2011). Moakes added though that it was a misconception to think the ANC was the only party to have opposed apartheid. Defending the DA’s right to claim utility of the country’s liberation narrative, Moakes said many organisations and civil society formations were opposed to the status quo at the time and the DA was one

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<sup>19</sup> Please see Appendix K: Questions for DA CEO Jonathan Moakes.

such entity. Prominent anti-apartheid leaders that emanated from the liberal tradition included “progressive leaders” such as Helen Suzman, Colin Eglin, Harry Schwarz and Frederik van Zyl Slabbert (Moakes 2011).<sup>20</sup>

In summary, the DA’s re-branding exercise for the 2009 election was said to have been conceptualised as early as 2006, when then-party strategist Ryan Coetzee circulated a document called “Becoming a party for all the people: a new approach for the DA” to party structures. Part of the party’s re-branding arsenal was to replace Tony Leon as party leader “whose tone was deemed offensive by many Black people” (Jolobe 2009: 136; Rossouw and Dawes 2011: 3; Zille 2012c). The document highlighted the DA’s inability to breach its “glass ceiling” of African voters and stressed that if the party intended growing as a viable opposition force in future polls, it needed to address this problem urgently; while at the same time retaining its “core constituency” (Jolobe 2009: 136). For this reason, it needed to “reinvent” itself with “new energy” and a “new vision” that would seek to attract African voters to the party and dispel any ideas of racism “within and about the DA” (Jolobe 2009; 136). In a radio interview in 2011, Coetzee said that the DP of 1994 “is not a party that could ever reflect present-day South Africa”; the party “had to change in some very specific ways” (Philander 2011). Despite Leon being mentioned in Coetzee’s strategy for the party, the former DA leader praised Coetzee’s “engineering” which he said was instrumental in winning the party the support it did (Leon 2009a). Leon (2009a) asserts the DA’s 2009 performance was in part because of

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<sup>20</sup> Please see *Appendix P: The DA’s “Know your DA” campaign* for an illustration of how the political party is now laying claim to South Africa’s fight against apartheid.

its “stop Zuma” campaign. According to DA CEO Jonathan Moakes (2011), contrary to popular belief, the party did not enlist the services of a professional branding company as all party strategy, branding and media relations “were handled in-house by the party”. Through its research unit, the party tracked its progress to streamline its electoral message on a constant basis and part of the DA’s arsenal in the poll was that a “substantial amount” of billboards, posters, pamphlets and personal canvassing through thousands of volunteers was employed (Moakes 2011). Western Cape ANC leader Marius Fransman (2012) however criticised the DA’s 2009 election campaign, calling it alarmist and based on “spreading doomsday prophecy messages” on a possible “*swartgevaar*”<sup>21</sup> Zuma-led administration—or the fear of another African Black-led government spearheaded by Zuma. The DA is said to have spent in the region of R50 million on its 2009 election campaign (Tonkin 2009: 9; Moakes 2011). The ANC—on the other hand—is speculated to have devoted approximately R200 million to its campaign (ANC spends R200 million...2009; Duncan 2009: 227; Tonkin 2009: 9). Butler (2009: 74-76) and Southall (2009: 235) estimate however this figure to be in the region of between R400 million - R500 million; the Ogilvy Group SA handled the party’s “look” and “feel” for approximately R100 million alone. The group managed the ANC’s previous election campaigns where the party is said to have spent R300 million on its 2004 campaign (Butler 2009: 73). As a result of the huge sums of money leveraged by the party in the 2009 poll, Daniel and Southall (2009: 235) assert the ANC had “outspent, out-thought,

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<sup>21</sup> This is an Afrikaans expression literally meaning “Black Danger” or in this sense it is supposed to convey fears of a Black-led government.

out-worked and out-maneuvred the opposition” and it was not surprising that other parties were “muscle out of every millimetre of public space” in the 2009 election.<sup>22</sup>

## 4.6 Conclusion

In summary, this section profiled the Democratic Alliance, including why the race issue still manifests when debating reasons of electoral support for this South African political actor. Despite the DA’s many assets—including “a hard-working collective leadership”—Habib (2013: 15) argues the party’s “political image” is a “huge liability” because South African voters still perceive the DA as ideologically elitist and representing business interests, as compared to the pro-poor bias of the ANC. The author warns it is this “elite imagery” that inevitably “dissuades” citizens from supporting the party in general elections. A detailed account of the Democratic Alliance’s political public relations campaign in the 2009 general elections was also provided, including how the party took advantage of political television advertising permitted on South African television for the first time. In the next chapter—Chapter Five—the findings will be presented.

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<sup>22</sup> For a detailed account of the ANC’s 2009 election campaign, please refer to: ANC’s Bollywood...(2009); ANC spends R200 million...(2009); Basson (2012); Bauer (2011); Booysen (2009); Booysen and Masterson (2009); Brulliard (2009); Butler (2009); Daniel and Southall (2009); Dhawraj (2012); Duncan (2009); Dutt (2013); Heleta (2009); Higgs (2012/05/14); Jolobe (2009); Kobue (2011c); Mabona (2012); Madawo (2011); Malema extends olive branch...(2009); Mbanjwa (2009); Mkhwanazi (2008); Moerdyk (2007); Smook (2009); Van Onselen (2012a) and Zuma drops Sunday Times...(2012).

## **CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter deals with the findings of this study. Of the four content analyses conducted, three were quantitative and one qualitative. The three quantitative content analyses involved the DA's 286 media releases in 2009; DA leader Helen Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts; and Zille's twenty campaign speeches. The hundreds of Facebook conversations that transpired over Zille's Facebook page formed the single qualitative content analysis. An attempt was made to understand if Facebook could be considered a public sphere that was a conduit for generating public opinion about the DA in the 2009 poll. The results are framed by the theoretical discourse as outlined in the Literature Review (Chapter 3). This chapter ends by providing a thorough discussion on the research results, with the author asking if "issues" truly dominated the 2009 election—to provide support to John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory, the theory supporting this thesis (see Chapter 3).

### **5.2 Results of quantitative studies**

In the first section of this findings chapter, the author presents the detailed results from the three separate quantitative content analyses of the DA's media releases; Helen Zille's Facebook posts and Zille's campaign speeches. All three content analyses

utilised the coding rubric—a measuring instrument comprising twenty-one categories—that was formulated for this study.<sup>1</sup>

### 5.2.1 Quantitative content analysis of the DA's 286 media releases

The quantitative content analysis of the Democratic Alliance's 286 media statements observed from 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009 revealed the party chose to communicate on a range of issues during the 2009 elections. Of the twenty-one (21) categories, there was only one category where no communication was registered, namely **Category 11** or category label *jobs / employment*. It must be noted that issues around job creation and unemployment could have filtered into **Category 5**, namely the *economy*. The top nine categories identified were however the following; please refer to Figure 5.1 below.

CATEGORY	LABEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
3	Corruption	66	23.07%
20	2009 DA election campaign activities	43	15.03%
2	A robust and functioning democracy	30	10.48%
9	Functionality of state-governed institutions	21	7.34%
4	Crime / justice	19	6.64%
5	Economy	18	6.29%
8	Foreign policy	16	5.59%
21	Others <sup>2</sup>	14	4.89%
10	Health	12	4.19%

Figure 5.1: DA's media releases - top nine categories identified

<sup>1</sup> Please see *Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses*.

<sup>2</sup> An "others" category was created in the coding rubric to accommodate those media releases which did not fit any of the other twenty category labels.

There were significant gaps between the top four categories identified, namely category numbers **Category 3: corruption**; **Category 20: 2009 DA election campaign activities**; **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy**; and **Category 9: functionality of state-governed institutions**. For example, while **Category number 3: corruption** registered 66 media releases (23.07%), **Category label 20: 2009 DA election campaign activities** was a number of percentage points lower than the first category (15.03%). The same patterns were observed for **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy**, and **Category 9: functionality of state-governed institutions**, both of which received the third and fourth most attention from the party. For a detailed listing of all 21 categories and the respective results, please refer to Figure 5.2 below.

NUMBER	CATEGORY	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	TOTAL	%
1	ANC's negative campaign against the DA	0	3	1	1	5	1.74%
2	A robust and functioning democracy	7	5	7	11	30	10.48%
3	Corruption	11	13	28	14	66	23.07%
4	Crime / Justice	3	4	10	2	19	6.64%
5	Economy	3	7	4	4	18	6.29%
6	Education	4	0	3	0	7	2.44%
7	Environment	2	0	0	0	2	0.69%
8	Foreign policy	5	4	4	3	16	5.59%
9	Functionality of state governed institutions	3	6	10	2	21	7.34%
10	Health	3	4	2	3	12	4.19%
11	Jobs / employment	0	0	0	0	0	0%
12	Land	0	1	1	2	4	1.39%
13	Local government and service delivery	0	2	1	0	3	1.04%

14	Nation-building and social cohesion	0	0	1	2	3	1.04%
15	Poverty	0	1	0	1	2	0.69%
16	Protection of the South African constitution	2	1	0	1	4	1.39%
17	Safe-guarding minority rights	0	0	0	1	1	0.34%
18	Sport	5	1	0	2	8	2.79%
19	Transport	2	3	1	2	8	2.79%
20	2009 DA election campaign activities	6	15	17	5	43	15.03%
21	Others	5	4	1	4	14	4.89%

Figure 5.2: Results of 21 categories by monthly breakdown

### **Category 3 sub-coding**

Upon closer inspection of each of the individual categories that registered the highest number of media releases, the author further dissected these categories to illustrate which were the most prominent coding combinations. This was done to introduce some sort of sub-categorisation into the data to make the results richer in meaning. For example, in the content analysis of the DA's 286 media releases, **Category 3: corruption** registered the highest frequency—66 times or 23.07%. Of the 21 categories listed on the coding rubric, this category was observed the highest number of times in January 2009 (11); the second highest in February 2009 (13) and the highest in both March 2009 (28) and April 2009 (14). A logical explanation for the spike in both February and March could have been that this was when the DA insisted on publicising the corruption charges against ANC president Jacob Zuma in order to bolster its “Stop Zuma” campaign (Moakes 2011; South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 4: 23). This strategy may have been aided by the fraud scandal involving disgraced party spokesperson, Carl Niehaus, who was forced to relinquish his position as a result in late

February 2009. If one diverts attention to the sub-coding of this category, one discovers that of the 66 releases, 27 (or 40.90%) were about the DA's commentary on the alleged ***cronyism by the ANC to protect politically-connected individuals***. Secondly, the DA's ***references to ANC and its affiliates campaigning for the party with food parcels and other State resources on State time*** achieved the second highest number of mentions, eleven or 16.66%.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Category 20 sub-coding***

After **Category 3: *corruption***, the next most frequent category identified from the content analysis of the DA's media releases was **Category 20: *DA's 2009 election campaign activities***. One reason for this could have been that the party chose to publicise its campaigning activities by issuing media releases to set the news agenda. Also, some of these media notices concentrated around voter information exercises to clarify voting matters. These media releases functioned as *de facto* party voter education drives. For example, some of these media releases included news on where voters could cast a ballot and the DA's presence on Election Day. Also, of the 43 media releases, a significant number—28 or 65%—focused on the party's voter education drive and election information campaign. Only 15 of these 43 media releases—or 35%—actually referred to the DA's campaigning activities. Another observation was that most of these media releases around the ***DA's 2009 election campaign activities*** were issued in February and March as compared to April 2009, the month of the

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<sup>3</sup> Please refer to *Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases* for a thorough outline of the different coding permutations.

election. This researcher assumes the party chose to utilise all of its media distribution mechanisms such as mailing lists to facilitate media attention before the 2009 election.

### **Category 2 sub-coding**

Another noteworthy observation is **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy** that registered the third highest frequency in the content analysis. Within this category, there were eleven different coding combinations. Of the 30 media releases, exactly 50%—or 15—focused entirely on the DA's commentary on ***the alleged and perceived ANC abuse of State organs for political benefit***. This observation—together with coding combination ***a working democratic order in South Africa***—can be linked to the way in which the DA campaigned vigorously to portray itself as the protector of South Africa's infant democracy in the 2009 elections against the perceived abuse of ANC power. Despite being the second most prominent category in January (7), this category became more important in April when no less than eleven (11) media releases were issued—the second most of that month after **Category 3: corruption**. One reason for this could be that the DA had stepped up its campaign message of it purportedly being the only political party to safeguard and protect South Africa's constitutional democracy—as compared to other opposition parties. This is why both **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy** and **Category 3: corruption** were the most prominent in April, the month of the 2009 elections. The party sought to remind voters that the ANC—notably its president Jacob Zuma—was facing 783 corruption charges (Leon 2010: 20; Southall 2009: 5) and that only the DA was big enough and could be trusted to provide a strong opposition to the governing-party's hegemonic dominance.

Surprisingly, coding references to ***the Stop Zuma two-thirds campaign*** only registered 6.66%; this researcher assumes the DA would have been more potent in their communication on this issue—one of the key pillars of its 2009 election campaign (Moakes 2011).

### ***Category 9 sub-coding***

From the data, one infers the DA was more focused in pronouncing and positioning itself as the alternative to a corrupt ANC and in sending the message that a stronger ruling-party was not good for South Africa's infant democracy. This is why it repeatedly chose to contrast itself to the ANC, as a possible alternate government to the ANC, one that believed in clean governance, transparency and accountability to voters. The DA subsequently ensured its governance successes in DA-administered municipalities and towns were reported in the media. Part of the DA's 2009 election strategy was therefore to highlight the ANC's weaknesses in effectively governing the many departments and agencies under its political watch. Evidence of this is provided in the fourth most frequent category observed, **Category 9: *functionality of state-governed institutions***. Here, the DA chose to communicate substantially on the matter, issuing no less than 12 statements (57%) on ***parastatal / government agencies' capacity to carry out functions properly***, with 24% addressing the financial problems at these bodies and 19% addressing management issues. It is clear the DA sought to single out the ANC government's inefficiencies in properly administering bodies under its control.

## **5.2.2 Quantitative content analysis of Helen Zille's Facebook posts<sup>4</sup>**

The researcher used the same coding rubric of twenty-one categories utilised for the quantitative content analysis of the DA's 286 media releases for this second quantitative content analysis of Helen Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts from 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009. This quantitative content analysis revealed that all twenty-seven posts fell into only four categories, namely **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy**; **Category 3: corruption**; **Category 4: crime / justice**; and **Category 20: 2009 DA election campaign activities** respectively. While twenty posts—or 74%—were slotted into the **2009 DA election campaign activities** category, the remaining seven posts (24.92%) were reconciled with categories that dealt with the National Prosecuting Authority's dropping of charges against ANC president Jacob Zuma two weeks before the election (South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 4: 23)—in other words **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy** and **Category 3: corruption**. Please refer to *Appendix F: Categories, likes and comments on Helen Zille's 27 Facebook posts from 1 January 2009 - 30 April 2009*.

### **5.2.2.1 Discussion of Helen Zille's Facebook posts**

This quantitative content analysis confirms the DA did indeed use Helen Zille's Facebook platform as an extension of its web campaigning arsenal in the 2009 elections. The DA used web campaigning as a means of supplementing its traditional

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<sup>4</sup> For a detailed outline of DA leader Helen Zille's Facebook posts, please refer to *Section 2.10, Quantitative content analysis of Helen Zille's 27 Facebook posts*.

media campaign. The Internet afforded the party an opportunity for “information density”—, a concept elucidated by Denis and Dahmen (2010: 16-17). Of the twenty-seven posts put up there between 1 January 2009 and 30 April 2009, approximately 75% dealt directly with DA campaign activities, illustrating that the party used this forum as a publicity-generating avenue. This researcher observes the DA could have done this because DA political strategists and spin doctors wanted to emulate US President Barack Obama’s 2008 election campaign and the way in which Facebook transformed it (Wooley, Limperos and Oliver 2010: 632). The DA could also have posted about their campaign activities as a way of reaching out to younger voters. This is something which the literature review (see Chapter Three) confirmed; that Internet campaigning was used to connect more with the younger demographic (Benoit and Benoit 2005; Bimber and Copeland 2011: 23). DA strategists could have assumed that leveraging a social networking site such as Facebook would enable the party to connect with South Africa’s youth segment; and cancel out the restrictive reality of the country’s image-based and race-based voting patterns (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a). Although Obama used the social networking site extensively, the DA in comparison only utilised certain aspects of Facebook’s many functionalities—again illustrating that South African political parties and politicians were not using the Internet (and web campaigning) in a non-traditional manner involving genuine two-way dialogue (Gandy 2001; Kaid 2004). Facebook for the party was another form of its media outreach; it was however utilised in a limited way. In the 2008 race for the White House, for example, Barack Obama was said to have had close to 600 Facebook groups campaigning and recruiting on his behalf across the country (Wooley *et al.* 2010: 638). The DA on the other hand used the “walls” update

feature to create publicity around the party. If more time was permitted, it would have been useful to compare how the DA's / Helen Zille's Facebook page compared to the party's website ([www.da.org.za](http://www.da.org.za)) as an extended channel of web campaigning for the party. It should however be noted that although this author has dwelt on the many benefits of web campaigning in *Chapter Three: Literature Review*, South African politics is fairly new to online political campaigning. Most examples covered within the literature review (Chapter Three) examined democracies with a proven track record of active political campaigning using the Internet. Some examples included the US, UK and other prominent European democracies. At the time, such examples seemed appropriate for this study because they helped contextualise the discourse the researcher aimed to bring to the fore.

### ***5.2.3 Quantitative content analysis of Helen Zille's campaign speeches***

An integral element of DA leader Helen Zille's image management project was the number of speeches the leader delivered at various places during the campaigning period. This author counted Zille's speeches from the time of the party's re-launch on 15 November 2008 until 30 April 2009—a few days after the election. In total, Zille delivered twenty (20) speeches.<sup>5</sup> The author identified the following categories in Zille's twenty (20) speeches<sup>6</sup>. Please refer to Figure 5.3 below.

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<sup>5</sup> DA leader Helen Zille's twenty speeches can also be accessed by logging onto: <http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=searchpage&category=speeches&keywords=helen+zille+2009>.

<sup>6</sup> Please refer to *Appendix G: Category-coding combinations in Helen Zille's 20 speeches*.

NUMBER	CATEGORY	ZILLE'S SPEECHES	%
1	ANC's negative campaign against the DA	10	5.55%
2	A robust and functioning democracy	37	20.55%
3	Corruption	26	14.4%
4	Crime / Justice	12	6.66%
5	Economy	9	5%
6	Education	4	2.22%
7	Environment	4	2.22%
8	Foreign policy	0	0%
9	Functionality of state governed institutions	0	0%
10	Health	4	2.22%
11	Jobs / employment	6	3.33%
12	Land	2	1.11%
13	Local government and service delivery	25	13.88%
14	Nation-building and social cohesion	14	7.77%
15	Poverty	6	3.33%
16	Protection of the South African constitution	6	3.33%
17	Safe-guarding minority rights	10	5.55%
18	Sport	0	0%
19	Transport	4	2.22%
20	2009 DA election campaign activities	0	0%
21	Others	1	0.55%
<b>TOTAL OF 180 DIFFERENT CODING COMBINATIONS</b>			

Figure 5.3: Categories identified in Helen Zille's campaign speeches<sup>7</sup>

Unlike the DA's 286 media releases, the party chose to communicate differently on a number of issues when leader Helen Zille traversed the country to rally support for her party. The quantitative content analysis of Zille's twenty (20) speeches unearthed 180 different coding combinations that provided an interesting insight into issues the party considered important in the 2009 poll. In other words, while only the presence of

<sup>7</sup> This table must be read in combination with *Appendix G: Category-coding combinations in Helen Zille's 20 speeches*.

seventeen (17) categories was observed, these categories appeared in a number of different combinations. For example, when the author dissected speech number one, delivered on 15 November 2008, **Category 14: *nation building and social cohesion*** surfaced fourteen times but in different combinations (**Category sub-coding 14-01: *DA's visions of the original Rainbow Nation***; **Category sub-coding 14-02: *DA's proposals for a non-racial South Africa***; **Category sub-coding 14-04: *DA's visions of a merit-based society with equal opportunity*** and **Category sub-coding 14-05: *The DA's assertions of fulfilling the original South African dream of 1994***). This tells one that while Zille's multiple speeches may have focused on specific broad themes, they more often than not involved different aspects of that issue. Also, of the 21 categories, Zille's speeches failed to cover four categories, namely **Category 8: *Foreign Policy***; **Category 9: *functionality of state-governed institutions***; **Category 18: *sport***; and **Category 20: *2009 DA election campaign activities***. Although **Category 20: *DA 2009 election campaign activities*** featured prominently in the DA's 286 media releases, it did not feature anywhere. The most prominent topics spoken about in Zille's speeches however fell into **Category 1: *ANC's negative campaign against the DA***; **Category 2: *a robust and functioning democracy***; **Category 3: *corruption***; **Category 4: *crime / justice***; **Category 5: *economy***; **Category 13: *local government and service delivery***; **Category 14: *nation-building and social cohesion***; and **Category 17: *safe-guarding minority rights***. Please refer to Figure 5.3 for a reflection on the frequency of these categories. The author will now extrapolate more on the varied category sub-codings present in the data.

### **Category 2 sub-coding**

The quantitative content analysis of Zille's speeches revealed that **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy** emerged as the most popular with 37 (20.55%) mentions. Of the eleven different coding combinations identified within this category, the DA campaigned mostly to ensure **a working democratic order in South Africa**, a coding combination frequency of 18.91%. The party campaigned equally on matters relating to **DA allegations of ANC power abuse; the need for a stronger opposition to counter the ANC's majority**, and **comparisons to Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe—the failed state**—and how South Africa could be heading in that direction. These three separate coding combinations registered 16.21% each, further lending support to the DA's campaign message against the ANC and its potential threat to the country's democracy.

### **Category 3 sub-coding**

The second most popular category identified from Zille's speeches was **Category 3: corruption**. Here, of the ten different coding combinations, the author quantified coding combination **cronyism by the ANC to protect politically-connected individuals** with 38.76% and the **DA's assertions of nepotism by the ANC** with 30.76%. Interestingly, although the party communicated about **the ANC and its affiliates campaigning for the party with food parcels and other State resources on State time** which featured quite prominently in the DA's media releases (16.66%), the subject did not feature at all

(0%) in Zille's speeches. This could amount to political tact on the part of the DA because Zille could have been addressing traditional ANC supporters where Zille—being White and female—could have harmed the sensibilities of potential voters in the audience because these voters could have benefited from previous ANC gestures such as the delivery of food parcels.

### **Category 13 sub-coding**

Another important feature of Zille's speeches was the persistent focus on **local government and service delivery**—or **Category 13**. Unlike its media releases, the party—through its leader—proactively campaigned to highlight its service delivery successes contrasted with the inefficiencies of ANC-led administrations. For example, although this category registered the third most category mentions—25 or 13.88%—approximately 40% of Zille's speeches mentioned the **DA's proven track record in delivery**. In choosing to focus on its **better-governed municipalities**, the DA chose to diametrically draw attention to **poorly-governed ANC municipalities**; the two coding statements registered 20% each. Lastly, the DA also chose to communicate intentionally on how **ANC cadre deployment hampers service delivery**; this coding combination accounted for 16% of the overall category total. Here again, the DA was in all likelihood propositioning potential voters by affording them two alternatives: the ANC and the DA. It used its delivery successes and record in government to plead its case with voters that the DA should be given a chance to prove what the party was saying. The DA was also subtly suggesting to ANC supporters that something was not well within the ANC; and that local communities were now paying the price for the ANC's

inefficiencies. This is why the DA singled out the ANC's cadre deployment policies and linked them to service delivery failures.

### **Category 14 sub-coding**

One significant category measurement was the occurrence of **Category 14: nation-building and social cohesion**, which despite being mentioned only three times in the party's media releases, was covered no less than 14 times (7.77%) in Zille's speeches. While the party proposed the **DA's vision of a merit-based society with equal opportunity** which received most of the category's attention (50%), the **DA's proposals for a non-racial South Africa** was also popular with 28.57% as was **the DA's visions of the original Rainbow Nation** with 14.28%. The frequency of this category demonstrates how the DA campaigned fervently to the South African electorate to remind them the South African electorate that the ANC of 2009 was not the party of 1994. The ANC was now a transformed party obsessed with race, racial politics and ideologically-driven by nationalist politics (Mazibuko *et al.* 2011) based on ethnicity and race (Ndletyana 2010: 32-55; Southall 2009: 5; Southall and Daniel 2009: 113; Kobue 2011c). This message strategy—more than likely—was targeted specifically at the country's minorities, namely Whites, Coloureds and Indians. Again, the DA's spin doctors employed political strategy by using fear appeals to connect with these minorities; and with disaffected ANC partisans. Here, the DA sought to remind voters of the kind of South Africa envisioned in 1994, the Rainbow Nation, and used images linked to Nelson Mandela and the reconciliation project upon which the former leader once embarked. The DA was indirectly stating that it was that multi-racial party capable

of now realising South Africa's Rainbow Nation where racial harmony and reconciliation were possible.

### **Category 17 sub-coding**

The argument above is validated by the popularity of **Category 17: safe-guarding minority rights**, a category that registered 5.55% of Zille's focus in her nationwide speeches. Proof is further provided by the mere fact that some of these speeches were delivered to minorities in their respective areas. For example, one of these speeches was delivered to the Indian community in Phoenix, Durban (A vote for the DA...2009) where Zille spoke about issues such as affirmative action and the protection of basic minority rights. When one interrogates this category further, one discovers that more than 50% of Zille's appeal was to promote and emphasise the **DA's protection and promotion of minority culture, rights and languages**. The DA again employed fear appeals to win over the minority vote. The party told minority voters that a two-thirds majority for the ANC did not augur well for South Africa's hard-won democratic gains; and that they especially would be affected. Key for the DA was to illustrate to these voters that the ANC of 1994 was a changed party; evidence of this was provided in the form of Cope. This fracture within the ruling party made it clear that the DA was the only opposition party strong enough—both organisationally and otherwise—to challenge the ANC and protect the country's democracy. This group according to Petrocik's (1996: 829-830) issue ownership theory represents the median voter—or the voter who will make his / her political selection based on how his / her problems are to be solved by competing political parties. For the DA, these minorities were its median voter.

### **Category 1 sub-coding**

A visible feature of the 2009 elections was the allegation that the DA was still a White-led party which was very much unchanged from its alleged racist past. During her travels across the country, Zille went to great lengths to dispel this assertion and to obliterate the **ANC's negative campaign against the DA**. In Zille's 20 speeches, this message was reinforced no less than 5.55% with particular attention devoted to ANC allegations that **the DA was an unchanged White party, the DA was anti-poor**, and that the **DA would stop paying social grants to the poor**. All three coding combinations received equal attention within category 1: 30% each. In the 2009 election, the DA tried very hard to shake off the ideological tag of it being a "White party" concerned mainly with protecting business interests and White capital.

### **Category 16 sub-coding**

The DA also sought to improve its image in the 2009 election by communicating to South African voters that it was the rightful protector of the constitution and the only party in opposition to the ANC that was strong and efficient enough to stop the ANC from any kind of power abuse. During Zille's speeches, **Category 16: protection of the South African constitution** emerged 3.33%, proof again that this was another major issue upon which the party chose to campaign; to which it elected to attach its brand. Of the six times this category surfaced in Zille's 20 speeches, 83% of these mentions focused on the DA's position as **the only opposition party big enough to protect and**

**defend the constitution** while 16.66% of this attention was paid to **any verbal, written or implied intention by the ANC to amend the country's constitution by its parliamentary majority**. As a matter of strategic positioning, in the 2009 election the DA tried to draw attention to itself and the ANC—in binary opposition to one another. For example, its leaders were contrasted with each other: while Zille was politically marketed as the caring, hard-working and courageous DA leader who was not afraid of the ANC, the party sought to portray the ANC's Jacob Zuma as corrupt and needing the ANC to win a two-thirds majority to free him of corruption charges. For this reason, the DA constantly compared itself to the ANC. The DA's spin doctors argued that while the ANC wanted to amend the constitution to free Zuma, the DA would lobby to prevent constitutional abuse for party-political selfish reasons.

### **Category 15 sub-coding**

Despite the DA's allegations that the ANC had been campaigning negatively against it, alleging that the party would stop paying social grants to the poor, the DA did not significantly counter this untruth. For example, Zille could have mentioned this category—**Category 15: poverty**—more when she personally addressed diverse crowds across the length and breadth of the South African political landscape. She could have used her addresses to rectify the alleged untruths about the reported stoppage of social grants by clarifying the DA's actual position on the matter. Instead, the category was mentioned only 3.33%. The DA has gone to great lengths to dispel the

purported claim that the party would take away social grants and RDP housing for the poor (DA will not bring back...2013).<sup>8</sup>

Another noteworthy observation of the data here was the almost-identical percentage of occasions Zille spoke about **Category 4: crime / justice**. In Zille's twenty speeches, this category was measured at 6.66%. During the content analysis of the party's 286 media releases, the issue of **crime / justice** registered a percentage of 6.64%. This research outcome speaks to the assumption that the DA considers issues relating to **crime / justice** as one of its key campaigning matters—but not one of the most important.

### **5.2.3.1 Discussion of Helen Zille's campaign speeches**

The quantitative content analysis of Helen Zille's twenty campaign speeches reveals that the leader's interactions with a wide cross-section of audiences across the country was just another way of strengthening the DA leader's image in the 2009 general elections. Of the three quantitative content analyses, Zille's speeches yielded the highest number of coding combinations. Political strategy was again utilised advantageously by Zille and the party's spin doctors when it came to these campaign speeches. They knew that each speech spoke to a number of issues simultaneously

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<sup>8</sup> Newly-installed DA parliamentary leader Lindiwe Mazibuko—in an interview with Britain's *Telegraph* publication—also emphasised repeatedly that the DA would “not bring back apartheid”—another untruth the party has had to address constantly in interviews (Laing 2012; Munsamy 2013). Some would argue that the DA has acknowledged some of its public relations mistakes committed in 2009 and this is why it is seeking to pronounce itself boldly on such contentious matters moving towards the 2014 poll.

and this was why these were packaged with a multitude of issues, concerns and political ideas. Another striking feature of Zille's speeches was how they seemed to have been tailored with specific audiences in mind as the leader travelled the country. For example, when addressing minorities in places like Phoenix and the Cape Flats, she deliberately spoke to minority issues such as affirmative action; minority languages; and minority rights. DA political communication strategists also used emotive appeals in these speeches to connect potential voters to issues that affected them directly.

### **5.3. Qualitative content analysis of Helen Zille's Facebook page<sup>9</sup>**

Although the Democratic Alliance ran a multi-pronged campaign using mostly traditional media channels such as television, radio and print, it was through social networking site Facebook—as a form of web campaigning—that Zille became the embodiment of the party's campaign. Zille used Facebook to entrench her image during the 2009 general elections. This is evident from the manner in which the leader—and the leader's spin doctors—leveraged Facebook to publicise her campaign trail. Speeches, announcements, pictures, videos and official statements were some of the tools the leader employed to promote herself and the image of the DA as the only South African opposition party strong enough and capable enough to counter the electoral muscle of the governing-ANC. Despite only posting twenty-seven (27) updates on Facebook,

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<sup>9</sup> These online conversations can be accessed by logging onto the DA's official Facebook presence at: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/DemocraticAlliance> and Helen Zille's personal page available at: <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille>.

these posts generated hundreds—if not thousands—of responses in “likes” and user “comments”. While Zille’s individual twenty seven (27) Facebook posts were not the subject of analysis in this part of the research operation, the comments generated in response to these posts were. The following sub-section is a summary of some of these online conversations.

A perusal of Zille’s online presence on Facebook revealed that while English was used as the main language of communication for comments and opinions, other languages such as *Afrikaans* and *isiXhosa* were employed to facilitate debate. This is an interesting development because both Zille and former DA parliamentary leader Athol Trollip—who are both White—are conversant in *isiXhosa*, one of the nation’s (Black African) official languages (Pillay 2011; Tabane 2011: 2). Additionally, during the 2009 campaigning phase and in the lead-up to the election, Zille was regularly seen dancing with Black African supporters at campaign rallies (Ansara 2008a; Madawo 2011; Pillay 2011) and town hall meetings, sometimes dressed in traditional African attire (Grootes 2011; Jobobe 2009: 138; Ngwenya 2012). At the time, Zille not only drew criticism from leaders within the ANC, she drew widespread condemnation from her party’s own supporters. For example, when the leader campaigned in the Karoo, one DA supporter compared her to former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher but went on to reprimand her for dancing in public. In her defence, Zille replied that dancing was “part of our culture” and that she was not expected to “stand stiff and say no thanks I don’t want to dance” (Zille hits out at critics...2009). The ANC Youth League’s Julius Malema said Zille reminded him of an “apartheid spy” when she danced (Zille hits out at

critics...2009) and “an ugly woman in a blue dress dancing like a monkey” (Du Plessis and Davis 2011: 1; Zille dances like...2009). According to media, brand and imaging strategist Janine Lazarus, there was something unsettling about Zille’s “diametric change from Cape Town housewife to the *takkie*-wearing<sup>10</sup> people’s person face of the DA” (Lazarus 2012/09/27). For Lazarus, it was “a case of too much too soon” because audiences respond to “credibility and authenticity...not to mixed messaging” (Lazarus 2012/09/27).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The English equivalent is casual shoes normally worn with a pair of jeans.

<sup>11</sup> On a 2013 charm offensive in the Eastern Cape soon after the ANC’s Mangaung National Conference, Zille’s dancing resurfaced when ANC deputy secretary-general, Jesse Duarte, branded the DA and Zille especially as “neo liberals” and “neo colonialists” whom she accused of “singing and dancing like we do” to connect with Black African voters (Musewe 2013: 15; Ngcukana 2013: 5). For Duarte, the DA and its leaders were not sincere and were only concerned with “protecting the interests of the minority” (Ngcukana 2013: 5). ANC stalwart Dr Pallo Jordan was more scathing of Zille’s attempts at “toyi-toying”, dismissing the leader’s actions as “a desperate attempt to wipe our memory banks clean by giving the liberals a deep suntan” (McKaiserEusebius 2013a). For the SACP’s Phatse Justice Piitso, the DA was just a “chameleon trying to master the traditions and culture” of South Africa’s liberation struggle with Zille “masquerading as an instant hero” (Piitso 2013a: 20).



**Figure 5.4: Sample of user comments on Facebook, sourced from <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille> on 29 October 2012**

In the conversations facilitated through Facebook with online users and supporters of the Democratic Alliance, Zille was often compared to former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher for her fearless stance against issues such as corruption and the alleged “Zanu-fication of South Africa”—a loose reference to South Africa’s neighbour Zimbabwe and how the ruling party there had allegedly compromised that nation’s hard-won liberation (Habib 2013a: 21). Called names such as “queen”; “first lady”; “Zille for president”; “the most fab lady under the sun” and an “icon of hope”, Facebook users took to the social networking platform to show concern for the leader and her efforts. Statements such as “go Zille go”; “don’t lose your fighting spirit”; “what a hero this lady”; “all success Helen” and “you’re the only person who can save South Africa from the fat

cats”, clearly illustrate that Zille managed to make that personal connection with potential voters. These Facebook users related to Zille on a personal level by referring to her as “Helen”, “Dear Helen”, “*tante*” and “Helen *tannie*”.<sup>12</sup> The extent of Zille’s election campaign being transformed into something personal was epitomised by online user Eileen Fisher who wrote on 27 April, “love to Johan and the boys for being awesomely supportive”. This statement proves that potential voters were deeply connected with Zille’s campaign where they knew the DA leader’s family on a first name basis. Another user said “she is a woman; she is a mother...what more qualities do we need for our next leader?” There were some instances where Zille was compared to great Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi, with some users commenting the DA leader was “great...you’re a legend”. While users praised Zille’s efforts, they also identified and empathised with the DA leader with many supporters offering words of comfort such as “please rest Helen”; “take care of yourself”; “we are praying for you”; “be strong”; “please don’t lose your fighting spirit”; and “the hand of God is on you”. In summation, Zille’s image management exercise—using Facebook—portrayed her as a hard worker willing to work long hours away from her family in the interests of the country.

An interesting aspect of the discussions that circulated on Zille’s Facebook page was how the platform was transformed into a forum where Zille was constantly compared, measured and juxtaposed against the ANC’s Jacob Zuma. From users’ comments, Zille’s campaign had thrust her into being the diametric opposite of what the ruling-party stood for and embodied. Accordingly, Zuma represented a corrupt and changed ANC

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<sup>12</sup> *Tante* and *tannie* is aunt in Afrikaans.

while Zille was praised as a loyal South African who championed the rights of law-abiding citizens who were against all forms of corruption and government wastage. To some users, Zille was projected as some sort of saviour. Anneri Venter for example wrote on 18 April that she would feel so much more at ease “knowing that Helen Zille was taking care of me”. Other users such as Leandi Wilmont wrote on 16 April “thank you for fighting for the people...thank you for digging this up”; Marlize Rossouw wrote “keep the ANC on its toes Helen”; Calvin Thomas wrote “Zuma hides the truth, Zille tells it” while Johan Keyser advised Zille to email him for sound advice on overcoming the ANC. The DA on the other hand surprisingly did not stifle this debate nor did it halt the binary comparisons; the party instead stoked the dialogue by putting up posts such as “Zuma is not innocent and the DA is going to fight this with everything we have” which allowed people to get more involved in the debate and to identify the party with its core election message; that post on 8 April eventually attracted 513 likes and 121 comments. In a post on 31 March, Zille said “Yesterday Jacob Zuma told me to back off...well I have news for him I will never do that”; this post drew 377 “likes” and 146 “comments”.

Users’ comments also revealed that while Zuma and the ANC were being mentioned, there was nearly-always some mild reference to the political crisis in Zimbabwe and the view that should South Africa’s present alleged political crises not be addressed, the same could spill over here. Intricately tied to this was the suggestion that should the ANC breach the psychological two-thirds majority in the 2009 election, it could amend the constitution if it elected to do so. Keith Tudhope for example wrote on 19 April, “ye ye enough of the Zanufication of RSA”; Lindie Fourie asked on 21 April “can we stop a

2/3 for the ANC?” and Emily B Gillham wrote on 22 April that “this country is in big trouble if the ANC gets 2/3 majority...with the ANC and corrupt politicians our beautiful country will end up like Zim”. Nearly all subsequent conversations revolved around the ANC and Zuma’s inadequacies. Lisa Dauman was one such person who highlighted these shortcomings when she declared on 14 April that Zuma was “going down”; while Jo-Anne Hughes Nel warned the ANC leader would have to “answer to Jesus one day for all the wrong he has done” but she thanked Zille for giving South Africans “some hope”. To these Facebook users and supporters of the DA, “stopping Zuma” translated into a vote for the DA, as proposed by Shan Emeric on 20 April. Another supporter, Renate Gallagher, seconded Emeric’s plea and wrote “tell all your friends to vote for this lady, she is the only one not scared to take on corruption” while Pamela Joy Robertson affirmed that Zuma needed to be “taken to task for all the corruption he is involved in” and that voters needed to ensure Zuma was held accountable.

Key to the DA’s message was its insistence that it was the only opposition party organisationally strong enough to take on the ANC. Gauging from users’ Facebook messages, one infers the party had made that connection and allowed potential voters to buy into this electoral message. For example, Eric Robinson wrote “grow the opposition to one that the ruling party will be scared of” and Glorya Alfreds wrote “vote for a government accountable to the people for the people...free from corruption”. For these supporters, Zille made that personal connection and allowed possible DA supporters to buy into the party’s brand as the only opposition party to counter the ANC. Another example was Gary Howard-Browne who wrote on 16 April that the DA was the

only party “making any difference, all the others are an absolute joke...the DA gets my vote” while Jaco Van Der Merwe commented on 24 April 2009 that “the DA is the only real multi-racial party for ALL” and “the opposition should definitely work together”.

There were instances where Zille’s posts activated local organising structures in various parts of the country. Sharon Bradfield Salmon was one such user who posted on 21 April that a DA branch was “set up and running” in her community and since then DA membership in the area had “risen dramatically”. Anglea Van Schalkwyk was another user who wrote on Zille’s wall on 23 April to thank her for the party’s emails a day before, adding that she and her family heeded the call and voted early the next morning. Other examples include Shelagh Doran who wrote on 21 April that she had motivated everyone she knew to “stand in line...make your cross” and that they had no reason to complain if they chose not to vote; in his post Kyle Van Der Walt indirectly offered to join the party as a card-carrying member, hoping also that he could help as a volunteer in the next elections; from Pierre-Andre Nel’s comment on Facebook one could infer the user had been campaigning for the party because he said he had “polled 1901 votes in my ward 2 in Oudtshoorn for you” while Liz Strydom Weideman emphasised she had not felt this “strong about politics” before assigning full credit to Zille and her “true leader” capabilities. There were numerous instances where like-minded users shared website addresses, email addresses and other relevant contact information to bolster support for the DA. One such user was Jacques Weber who continuously posted and shared the party’s Facebook group details in an effort to snowball votes for the DA.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Please see: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2226300562&ref=mf>.

Please refer to Figure 5.5 below for an example of how the DA activated local structures and how the party rallied potential supporters to get more people to vote for it in the 2009 election.



Figure 5.5: Sample of DA support on Facebook, sourced from <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille> on 29 October 2012

Zille's Facebook posts also managed to rally a number of South African expatriates in the Diaspora, notably Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom (including London and Wales),

Australia, New Zealand and Tanzania. These overseas supporters repeatedly pledged their support to Helen Zille—not so much the party directly—again demonstrating that Zille personified the DA campaign. These messages of support additionally tell one the DA and Zille were effective in stirring the interest of South Africans away from the country; that this was still their country and they had a right to voice their concern by voting for the party.<sup>14</sup> Please refer to Figure 5.6 below for a brief look into some of the conversations involving South Africans in the Diaspora.



Figure 5.6: Facebook Diaspora conversations, sourced from <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille> on 29 October 2012

<sup>14</sup> It is estimated that approximately one million South Africans were living and working abroad at the time of the 2009 election. After the counting of votes in April 2009, it was revealed that 77% of those abroad who cast a special vote chose the DA on the ballot while 10% voted Cope and 7% for the governing-ANC. Most of those who voted were in the US, Britain and Australia (Crawford 2011: 24-26; Daniel and Southall 2009: 240; February 2009: 61-62).

The DA's Facebook platform also facilitated conversations between users. There were a number of times where users responded to each other's comments, albeit rarely though. An example of one of these chats was between Nikki Van Coller who rallied all DA Facebook users on 9 April to log into the "Stop Zuma" website<sup>15</sup> to which Rickus Christie responded by pledging his support, adding they "could count on me" while another user, Jason Ebersey, replied that despite their group efforts, they were "fighting a losing battle". In another online conversation, Peter Ryder angrily rebuked supporters who were labelled "doomsayers" advising them to desist from being pessimistic about the country's future. His strong views elicited a response from Dawn Bashford Shanks who said that he / she agreed and that only voters possessed "the power to change", citing US President Barack Obama's "yes we can" 2008 election mantra.

Of the many comments on Zille's Facebook platform, there were only a few users that criticised and attacked the leader and her campaign. One such user was Siphumelele Siphemelele Kurteny Sigwebela who opined that Zille was "behaving like a 13-year old girl" that could not stop herself from "provoking Zuma" and advised her to "please leave the man alone". Another example was Rob Hayne who wrote on 21 April that "there is a small little problem with you and your campaign Helen baby and that is that South Africa does extend beyond the Orange River!!!". Brenda Taylor on the other hand lamented on 27 April that the election should have been about issues instead of the "opposition parties' obsession with Zuma" and that she had voted for the ANC because it was the

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<sup>15</sup> Please see: <http://helpstopzuma.co.za>.

only party's policies she could understand. Dave Fair wrote something similar on 14 April, saying "the DA has been very poorly advised" and that its campaign messages should have focussed on policies and not on "one man". For George Thapelo Ncebesha, his main issue was Zille's constant ANC-bashing and that the governing-party was not perfect. Ncebesha added that Zille "should recognise the good things the ANC does" and desist from her racist rhetoric, advising her to be more "objective and not stupid".

There was clear evidence from users' comments that they were paying attention to the heated verbal exchanges between Zille and expelled ANC Youth League leader, Julius Malema. Dale Robert Townsend for example instructed Zille not to "engage in gutter politics" by becoming "reactionary" to the Youth League's provocations; Doug Ross advised Zille to ignore Malema's "cheap shots" and not to "lend credence to them"; Stanton Abrahamson sprung to Zille's defence by saying she should not allow the Youth League's attacks get to her while Jo Craib empathised with the DA leader and likened the Youth League's "threatening intimidation" to the "oppression of apartheid". Another Facebook user Andre Grobler praised Zille's resolute stance against Malema's attacks and cheered her on for "standing up to that tyrant". For this reason alone, Grobler asserted that "your bravery has won my vote".

On Election Day on April, 22, 2009, the party deliberately chose to communicate with voters with no less than three Facebook posts. These posts were put up at different

times of the day, with the first issued in the morning, the second during the afternoon while voting was progressing; and the last two hours before the 21h00 voting cut-off time. All three posts were conversational in tone with the emphasis placed on words such as “thank you”; “your support”; “if you’ve already voted please make sure your family and friends have too” and “we can form coalition governments”. Please refer to Figure 5.7 for an example of these three separate posts along with the number of “comments” and “likes” each garnered.



Figure 5.7: DA posts on Election Day, sourced from <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille> on 29 October 2012

Lastly, soon after the April 22, 2009 election, the number of “likes” and “comments” on Zille’s Facebook portal increased substantially. Despite the party posting just two statements thanking voters insisting they were integral to the party’s success, these posts drew a record number of “comments” and “likes”. For example, in its 23 April 2009 post where the party said “To everyone who voted on Wednesday, thanks for understanding what it takes to build a democracy”, 1293 people “liked” the status while 349 comments were elicited. When the DA posted another statement on 28 April 2009 again citing the role of voters behind its electoral successes, that post attracted the highest number of “likes” and “comments” of the entire campaign—2631 and 486 respectively. The DA’s conversational tone made voters feel as they were a part of the election process and its eventual success at the ballot box. There is evidence of this in some of the comments. Megan Corbet for example wrote “we came close”; Stefan Barnard “hope that we helped you make a difference”; Sean O’Toole wrote “congratulations on a decisive victory madam Premier...it was a privilege voting for the Democratic Alliance as a first time voter”; Corinne Geldenhuys wrote, “Helen thanks to you and your team for all your amazing hard work...you have made the Western Cape proud”; Liz Palmer wrote, “great job Helen...thanks for all your hard work, it’s just the beginning” while Delene Mostert wrote, “*on’s eie Suid Afrika se yster vrou...jy het murg in your bloed*”.<sup>16</sup> This sampling of comments illustrate that voters bought into the DA’s message and practically connected to the party’s appeal. Another observation from the comments is the DA’s concession that although it was secure in the fact that it would not win the election, it aimed to communicate to voters the meaning of having a strong

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<sup>16</sup> This comment was posted in Afrikaans. The English translation means ‘Our South Africa’s own iron lady...Helen you have courage in your blood’.

opposition to a party that was always assured victory at the ballot box. A cursory glance at these comments tell one that voters were cognisant of this reality too and this was why they probably voted DA on April 22; for them the DA was this force.

### **5.3.1 Discussion of Facebook conversations**

In the 2009 elections, the DA set out to prove that social networking site, Facebook, could be used as a legitimate form of web campaigning; and the associated costs to the party were minimal in comparison to the benefits of such an interactive platform. It was a viable political communication tool that aided the party's prospects for creating positive public opinion about itself in the 2009 election. This was achieved by ensuring its leader Helen Zille became the *face* of the DA on Facebook. A noteworthy observation was how the DA used its presence on Facebook to divert attention towards it—and arguably to the ANC for reasons of binary comparisons. It distracted voters into believing the 2009 election was essentially about two parties, immediately discounting the fact that there were other opposition parties competing for votes.

This researcher observes it was also strategic not to use the party's own Facebook page, opting instead to fully exploit Helen Zille's page for all communication around the 2009 election. This was purposely done to bolster Zille's image in the poll and for voters to identify with the leader. The hundreds of online conversations in response to Zille's twenty-seven Facebook posts / updates are a good example of the penetration the party sought. It needed to steer the conversation—and public opinion—towards Helen Zille.

Additionally, DA strategists were cognisant of the type of conversations the party needed to create; this is why only responses to and deliberations on the posted twenty-seven updates were published on Zille's Facebook page. The party controlled the conversation—and public opinion of itself—by deliberately issuing the updates that it did. This idea is consistent with Lippmann's (1922: 128-135) "manufacture of consent" assertion. In the 2009 poll the DA and its spin doctors chose to use Facebook skilfully—as another media form—to "manipulate" its supporters and non-partisans alike (Lilleker 2006:106-07) on what "issues" were important in the creation of public opinion. This study also showed how the private opinions of citizens transformed into public opinion about the DA in the 2009 elections (Calhoun 1993: 1-25; Fraser 1990: 56-80; Habermas 1989: 1-3)—in this case the ideas, thoughts and views of DA supporters and non-supporters. As a result of the party controlling the direction of these online conversations, the DA used these "generated" issues to rightfully claim legitimacy over them. This is why the party could create the kind of dialogue it needed to "manufacture" for itself (Lippman 1992); and eventually claim these "issues" as its own in the 2009 elections. On the other hand, there is Erik and Tedin's (2007: 8) argument—as an extension of Lippman's (1922) observations as outlined in the literature review (see Chapter Three)—that these "issues" were just that, the public opinion and "public preferences of the adult population on matters of relevance to government". In this case, the "public preferences" of DA supporters who needed an avenue to convey their concerns about the 2009 elections were the deficiencies of the present ANC government; and the prospect of voting into power a stronger opposition to the ANC in

the guise of the DA. For these supporters, the party probably needed to guide the conversation; and this is why to them no agenda “manipulation” was evident.

Notwithstanding the DA’s emphasis on modern communications and the need for two-way dialogue in the 2009 election (Coetzee 2009; Zille 2009), analysis of its Facebook posts revealed the party did not optimally use the feedback mechanism provided by the social networking site and web campaigning. This is consistent with Gandy’s (2001) criticism that politicians and political parties have not fully embraced the two-way dialogue that web campaigning affords; and that the Internet was still being used in the same manner as traditional media. The DA, through its use of social networking site Facebook, proved Gandy’s (2001) argument through its minimalist and one-way use of the SNS. Only a few comments elicited official responses from the party and its leaders. A thorough perusal by this author of the thousands of comments on the DA’s (and Helen Zille’s) twenty-seven (27) posts supports this assertion. When there was any feedback, this assumed the form of an impersonal message. For example, when Facebook user Bradley Kardashian Swail wrote on 22 February, “Helen I’m trying to get a hold of you desperately”, he only received a response on 11 March when Zille wrote “Bradley write to leader@da.org.za if it’s a DA matter or mayor@capetown.gov.za if it’s a City matter”. The DA’s spin doctors could have leveraged this facility in a much more effective two-way manner, thus creating more dialogue and more brand loyalty perhaps for subsequent elections—especially considering that technology is likely to play an even more significant role in future polls in this country and globally. Database marketing for instance should have been borne in mind for future elections as this could

have helped the party canvass support and activate local structures across the nation (Albarran 2006). Additionally, Facebook is very much a *now* medium whose servers are always switched on. The DA should have considered this fact and perhaps scheduled a number of live, interactive question-and-answer sessions with key leaders. This would have helped the DA come across as more responsive to individual voters; and policy matters and issue persuasions could have been expanded upon more using this facility.

Despite the party's attempts to come across as South Africa's multi-racial alternative to the ANC, the hundreds of Facebook conversations proved otherwise. Apart from the odd comment from a non-White user, most of the comments emanated from White Facebook members. Although racial profiling was not a concern of this study, this reality was difficult to ignore. This observation again points to the issue of the DA's ideological positioning: if the party wants to rectify its perceived "White" image in the eyes of ordinary South African voters, it will have to embark on an aggressive image re-branding exercise—even more aggressive than its present overtures—to come across sincerely as a transformed, non-racial political entity. In the next section, the author will extend this discussion of DA partisans and non-partisans alike using the party's Facebook platform to create public opinion about the DA in the 2009 elections and to gauge whether this forum functioned as a public sphere or not. Habermas's three institutional criteria will be used to do this assessment.

### **5.3.2 Helen Zille's Facebook page...a public sphere?**

In this study, one of the main areas of focus was on social networking site Facebook and whether or not this platform acted as a public sphere for the DA in the 2009 general elections to facilitate public opinion about the party. According to Habermas (1989), there are three criteria for a public sphere to exist: a disregard of status; it needs to be a domain where common concerns are mounted and this platform cannot exclude anyone—please see *Section 3.4.2: Institutional criteria and assumptions for a public sphere to exist* (Chapter Three). After a through analysis of how the DA leveraged Facebook in the 2009 elections, the author found that only two out of the three requirements—as specified by Habermas (1989)—were present.

Firstly, the SNS subscribes to the notion of “disregard of status”: all discussions and comments about the DA through its Facebook page / pages took place on a number of online avenues such as wall posts and discussion forums. While anybody with a Facebook account could access the party's page, it was evident that mostly DA-partisans participated in these online deliberations. Also, although no details were given about the page administrator on the party's Facebook page and what his / her role was in editing published messages, it seemed as if the party facilitated free discussions among users, including both positive and negative comments. For this reason, Habermas' (1989) first assumption of “disregard of status” is supported: there was free access to all discussions and conversations regardless of party affiliation, race, gender; and / or any other limiting factor that could have biased dialogue.

Secondly, the author observed that in nearly all of the conversations on party leader Helen Zille's official Facebook pages, users discussed issues of common concern such as the threat of another ANC win; the prospects of a Jacob Zuma presidency; and assertions of how the DA would tackle corruption and wastage by the incumbent party. This idea finds support from what this author argued earlier in this chapter, that online users who made comments on DA leader Helen Zille's Facebook platform were merely expressing their "public preferences" on matters relevant to political governance (Erik and Tedin 2007: 8). For this reason, Habermas' (1989) second assumption of "matters of common concern" is supported: users—mainly DA-partisans—coalesced on Facebook to debate, discuss, exchange information and motivate other like-minded supporters to make their cross for the DA on Election Day. As a result, public opinion was produced.

Thirdly, on the idea of Habermas' (1989) third assumption—a public sphere needs to be inclusive and it cannot exclude anyone—this author found that while Facebook is freely available to any person regardless of station in life, race, gender, religious and cultural persuasion or geographic location, the SNS requires that one has an online account first. In other words, one needs to have a Facebook account to access another person's / organisation's account. For an individual, one need only invite another person: a "friend request" is sent and it can either be accepted or rejected. In the case of an organisation, the only requirement apart from having a Facebook account is "liking" the status / page which automatically gives one access to that entity's information including

updates. Facebook assumes that one has an Internet connection (mobile or fixed), that one has a Facebook account and that one is computer literate (and Facebook literate) to participate in any conversation. For this reason, Habermas' (1989) third criteria of "being inclusive" was not wholly fulfilled. In a country such as South Africa where there is still no universal online connectivity, a significant number of people are still excluded from any kind of online dialogue. Even if people are connected through mobile devices, one still needs the relevant literacy to understand how to use Facebook and its different forums to participate meaningfully (Cunningham 2009: 207; Graber 2008: 375-376; Hargittai and Hinnant 2008).

In summary, it was found that while the notion of Facebook as a forum for facilitating public opinion on the DA in the 2009 elections has been supported, it still cannot be regarded as a genuine public sphere in a South African context. Too many people are still excluded from the online dialogue. For now, an Internet connection and Facebook membership remains an elitist platform. Only when the millions of excluded South Africans are brought into the technological fold,<sup>17</sup> can the SNS be classified as a true public sphere and a "conveyor belt" (Von Meijenfeldt 2010: 17) of peoples' opinions on the politics of the country (750 million Facebook...2011; Hedley 2012; Social media breaks...2012).

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<sup>17</sup> Please refer to *Appendix N: Census 2011 data on Internet connectivity* and *Appendix O: Census 2011 data on first language profile*.

#### 5.4 Research outcomes from the content analyses

Results from the various quantitative and qualitative content analysis exercises revealed that while the DA chose to communicate on a wide cross-section of issues in the 2009 election, it used different strategies and platforms to communicate these. In the first content analysis for example, issues that Helen Zille thought were important in her Facebook posts and speeches received only conservative attention in the DA's media releases. Conversely, issues the party thought were important enough to disseminate a media statement on during the elections received only mild attention in Zille's speeches and Facebook postings. Across all three quantitative content analyses, **Category 3: corruption**—emerged as the most prolific category number capturing the most attention in the DA's media statements, second most in Zille's speeches and third most in Zille's Facebook posts (23.07%, 14.4% and 11.11% respectively). Intimately connected to **Category 3: corruption** was the presence of **Category 2: a robust and functioning democracy** that recorded the most mentions in Zille's Facebook posts (22%), 20.55% in the leader's speeches and 10.48% in the DA's media statements. The popularity of these two categories illustrates that the DA's main focus in the 2009 elections was the "Stop Zuma" campaign (Moakes 2011) and efforts to portray itself as the sole defender of South Africa's infant democracy. The party chose to use the impending corruption charges against the ANC president (Leon 2010: 21; Southall 2009: 5) and the perceived threats to the country's democracy by the ANC to mount its vigorous campaign.

The one major difference that defined all three quantitative content analyses was the DA's deliberate use of its media statements and party leader Helen Zille's Facebook

posts to publicise party election campaign activities. While Zille leveraged social networking site Facebook to broadcast her party's campaigning diary (74%), the party released 43 statements—or 15.03%—concurrently to draw attention to its events and issues. Surprisingly, Zille's twenty speeches did not feature this category at all. A logical assumption for this move could have been that the DA assumed Zille travelling around the country speaking to multiple audiences was a party campaigning activity in itself; this is why it selected its Facebook platform and its media releases to broadcast important party-related events and gatherings. The conversations over Facebook among users of the SNS illustrate that this form of web campaigning probably connected with DA partisans.

An important observation from the content analyses was the noticeable discrepancies between when and which mediums the party chose to publicise certain issues. In other words, although **Category 9: functionality of state-governed institutions** was mentioned 21 times (7.34%) in the DA's media statements, this issue was neither spoken about in Zille's twenty speeches nor in her 27 Facebook posts (0%). An additional example is the relative mild appearance of **Category 13: local government and service delivery** on the DA's media releases (1.04%), yet this category featured no less than 25 times (13.88%) during Zille's speeches. A third example is the party's media statements on **Category 8: foreign policy** which numbered 16 statements (or 5.59%) yet zero indications around this subject were given by Zille in her speeches and Facebook posts. This also indicates the flexibility of the different forums in distributing party-related information. While it proved feasible to use media releases to promote

issues such as foreign policy, this may not have been the best method to communicate on other issues.

An important observation from the data was the marked difference in issues the party assumed would be important to the media and to South African voters who turned up to listen to Zille on her campaign trail. To illustrate, there were three categories closely related in the DA's 2009 election message: **Category 14: nation-building and social cohesion**; **Category 16: protection of the South African constitution**; and **Category 17: safe-guarding minority rights**. While the party touched on all three categories only modestly in its media releases (1.04%, 0.69% and 1.39% respectively), it used its leader during her multiple speeches to drive home and emphasise the importance of these matters. All three categories registered a substantial increase when observed during Zille's personal visits to different parts of the country and varied audiences (7.77%; 3.33% and 5.55%). The data suggests that Zille (and the DA) probably appealed to the fears and hopes of South African voters, especially to minorities who may have been unsettled by Zuma's corruption charges and the ANC's prospects of achieving a two-thirds majority in the election. Further proof of a changed ANC was inadvertently also provided by the formation of ANC-breakaway party, Cope and this perhaps assisted the DA's campaign appeal too. Zille hinted at this in 2009 when she boldly declared that when the ANC splits the DA benefits (Terreblanche 2009). By implication, the ANC was now defined by factionalism and no one faction could be trusted over another.

Core issues the DA failed to attach itself to in the 2009 election include “health”, “poverty” and “education”, all issues one assumes that are of great significance to South Africa’s poor. Of the 286 media statements issued, only seven (7) focused on “education”; two (2) on “poverty”; and twelve on “health”. Zille in her speeches mentioned these three matters only in passing; “education” and “health” four times (4) each and poverty six times (6). The party missed a great opportunity to capitalise on so-called grass-roots issues that could have won it more support in 2009 and possibly demonstrate to an eager electorate that the DA cared about real issues plaguing South African society. Issues such as “foreign policy” instead enjoyed much more prominence—16 media statements in total. The party also failed to make adequate mention of pertinent issues such as youth unemployment (**Category 11: jobs / employment**) and work opportunities for South Africa’s millions of jobless youth. Instead, this category—together with its multi-tiered variances—was spoken about in Zille’s speeches only six (6) times or 3.33% and zero percent in both the party’s media declarations and Zille’s Facebook posts. Results of the content analysis revealed also that while the party spoke broadly about the “economy” and South Africa’s macro-economic framework—category 5—in its media releases (18 mentions or 6.29%) and Zille’s speeches (9 times or 5%), the leader’s Facebook posts failed to refer to this matter (0%). Going into the election, the emphasis was already on the youth vote, helped in part by the developments across the Atlantic (Ocean) and US President Barack Obama’s historic ascension to the White House just a few months before South Africa’s 2009 election. Intricately linked to youth matters is the issue of HIV / Aids (within

**Category 10: *health***), another issue said to have particular relevance to the youth segment of the country's voting age population. Also, it does not help knowing that South Africa has the largest infection rate globally (UN Aids reports a more than 50% drop...2012) yet the party deliberately chose to discount this matter in the election. Aside from the HIV / Aids issue being mentioned in the party's election manifesto, it failed to feature in all three quantitative content analysis results, namely the DA's media statements; Zille's speeches and Zille's Facebook posts.

Whether it was strategy or simply political tactical manoeuvring, the DA proved in the 2009 elections that it was serious about winning as many votes as possible in the poll. For many, it may have been a landmark election for reasons too varied to mention. Not only did the ANC come under attack from former comrades, resulting in a subsequent new political formation (in the form of Cope), its national president was facing persistent corruption charges. Adding to this was the dilemma of its disgraced national spokesperson Carl Niehaus only three months before the vote (Basson 2012: 14) and the scandalous possibility of a Bollywood star with alleged terrorist links being recruited by the party to campaign for it in minority strongholds (ANC's Bollywood...2009).

The DA knew the ANC was at its weakest since assuming government in 1994; it also knew that no other political opposition could equal its sheer organisational machinery going into the poll. For this reason, the party began leveraging what it knew well. Not only did the party use its service delivery successes in DA-run localities to illustrate to voters the prospect of it being in government (as compared to an inept ANC), it also

promised voters a more efficient administration and a more accountable political party committed to voters who installed them in positions of power. This is in agreement with what authors Van De Burg (2004) and Belanger and Meguid (2005) asserted: a party's reputation will be entrenched once that entity is voted into government; and over time it will campaign authoritatively based on its governance successes. It used the ANC's exposed failings including the vulnerabilities of its leaders—a form of negative advertising—to portray itself as the only party able enough to rescue South Africa's still-developing democracy. It constantly employed scare tactics such as references to Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe's failed state status (Introduction letter by...2009: 1-4); the real prospect of Jacob Zuma and other ANC elites abusing the precepts of the constitution to protect high-ranking politicians; and references to the nation's democracy being in danger should the ANC win the much talked about two-thirds majority (Introduction letter by...2009: 1-4). Part of its strategy was the capture of the minority vote; this was why the party ensured that minorities such as Indians, Coloureds and Whites knew what these dangers were and why their vote was so important on Election Day. The party's most potent communicator on these dangers was its leader. Not only was Zille despatched to far-flung areas of the country, the leader was specifically sent to known areas where these minorities lived. During these meetings, Zille went to great lengths to remind voters of a South Africa envisioned in 1994 and how the ANC government had changed by being obsessed with racial "nationalist" politics (Mazibuko *et al.* 2011). She also reminded these voters that their children faced a bleak future under the new, changed ANC by making constant references to controversial policies such as affirmative action and threats to minority languages and cultural privileges. The

party however also realised that to make a tangible dent in the ANC's electoral majority, it had to win over those undecided voters—specifically Black African voters—who were disillusioned with the ANC's delivery failures. This group after all comprised the largest voting bloc in any election (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 2: 21). Zille and her party actively targeted this group by venturing into places like Bela Bela (Limpopo); Botshabelo (Free State); Lindelani, (KwaZulu-Natal); Parkside, KwaNobuhle; East London and Buffalo Flats (Eastern Cape); Vosman, Siyabuswa, Thembisile and Sakhile (Mpumalanga); Zwelethemba and Khayelitsha (Western Cape).<sup>18</sup>

The Democratic Alliance employed a combination of political advertising methods in the 2009 elections (Devlin 1986: 21-55). This comprised paid and free advertising (Schnur 1999: 145-155) using “controlled” and “uncontrolled” media (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 2006: 3-34). While traditional media channels such as print, radio and television were used as part of its “paid” and “controlled” media contingent, the DA used social networking site Facebook as its “free” and “uncontrolled” media avenue (Kaid and Holtz-Bacha 2006: 3-34; Schnur 1999: 145-155). One of the key pillars of the DA's 2009 election campaign was its “Stop Zuma” campaign (Moakes 2011). In the poll, the party used this type of negative advertising to publicise the ANC leader's corruption charges and to position the DA in the electoral market as the only party strong enough to counter

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<sup>18</sup> This material was sourced from Helen Zille's multiple speeches during the campaign trail. These can be accessed by logging onto the following website and the relevant link: <http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=searchpage&category=speeches&keywords=helen+zille+2009>. This information can also be accessed from the DA leader's Facebook page available at <http://www.facebook.com/HelenZille>.

the realities of a Zuma presidency and an ANC two-thirds majority. This is synonymous with Western-type political systems where opposition parties focus on the weaknesses of opponents. Some examples include the US and the UK. A case in point is the installation of a shadow cabinet soon after the 2009 elections; capacitating DA Members of Parliament to monitor ANC ministers' performances; and to raise issues when accountability was required (Gwarube 2012/02/01). Zille was used to the maximum by the party, with the leader constantly contrasted against the ANC's presidential candidate either through the DA's overall election campaign or through its Facebook platform—as a form of web campaigning (and positive public opinion generator) to create intimacy between the party's messages and voters. Not only was Zille regularly seen interacting with ordinary South Africans in a number of different contexts (*cinéma vérité* advertisements) (Tabane 2011: 2), the DA leader—through her bold speeches—came across as a tough-talking, no-nonsense and corruption-busting politician who was not afraid to challenge the ANC (concept advertisements). This author also observes that Zille's intentional and unintentional messaging before the 2009 poll could have helped boost her image in the elections. A case in point is the DA leader's governing of Cape Town and subsequently being named world mayor in 2008, with the awardees comparing Zille to the likes of Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. This comparison could be regarded as “testimonial” advertisements for the leader (Devlin 1986: 21-55); and why Zille campaigned so vigorously to become Premier of the Western Cape in 2009. Please refer to *Section 4.6.5, Helen Zille's image management exercise* (Chapter Four: Profile of the Democratic Alliance) for a clearer illustration of this argument. Another example of the DA leader's feisty challenges to the

ANC include one of her twenty-seven Facebook posts where Zille wrote on 31 March 2009, “Yesterday, Jacob Zuma told me to back off...well I have news for him, I will never do that”. Whether it was her anti-corruption stance or issuing fresh dares to the ANC, the DA leader paid very close attention to her image management exercise in the 2009 poll. At times, she also made use of “talking heads” advertisements (Devlin 1986: 21-55) to pronounce on issues and how she and the party would handle such matters once in government. Some examples include her leanings on corruption and fraud. The party additionally used “neutral reporter” (Devlin 1986: 21-55) advertisements extensively to trumpet its service delivery successes in DA-run administrations in order to differentiate itself from the incumbent ANC. Despite Scammell and Langer (2006) arguing against political advertising placing too much emphasis on images—which are linked to emotion and devoid of any logical reasoning—the DA deliberately chose to use images through leader Helen Zille in the 2009 elections in an effort to appeal to voters’ emotions.

It could also be argued that the DA knows the party’s organisational capacity is what differentiates it from other opposition parties—and the ANC to a degree. However, as far as the DA’s leveraging of web campaigning—through a platform such as Facebook for example—is concerned, the party discounted one huge factor concerning the South African electoral market. Most of the country’s population do not have access to the Internet and Facebook. The 2011 census data corroborates this.<sup>19</sup> For the party to

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<sup>19</sup> Please refer to *Appendix N: Census 2011 data on Internet connectivity* and *Appendix O: Census 2011 data on first language profile*.

make any kind of significant impression on the majority Black electorate, this demographic firstly needs to have basic Internet connectivity to tap into the conversation. The census data again proves that this group is the most disadvantaged when it comes to being online (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 2: 21). While some may reason that the DA's 2009 electoral messages were specifically targeted at other groups such as Whites, Coloureds and Asians—who had much higher levels of Internet connectivity—this reality does not demonstrate in any way that the DA is making any ideological shift— on the political continuum as outlined by Campbell *et al.* (1960), Jacoby (1991: 179), Jost *et al.* (2009: 310-311) and Knight (2006: 624)—to the point where voters begin to see it as pro-poor. This is one of the main criticisms levelled at the DA: that it is too pro-business and not sufficiently pro-poor. Evidence from the three quantitative content analyses confirms this. Although the party's election manifesto touched on key developmental issues such as education, poverty, health, youth unemployment and HIV / Aids—again illustrating the party's willingness to move along the political continuum of left-centre-right (Bjornskov 2005)—research from this study revealed that the party failed to claim any ownership over these issues. One reason for this could have been that the DA assumed this was where the ANC's key constituency lay; that such issues were the domain of the ruling-party and that they would rather not “trespass” on these owned matters (Petrocik 1996: 829). Also, the DA could have feared losing or worse still alienating their traditional constituencies such as White business and the middle classes—to whom such issues did not matter as much. This political idea finds support in Petrocik's (1996: 828) affirmation that there is a “strong linkage” with a party's issue agenda and its traditional support base. There could

have been the innate fear that these constituencies would gravitate towards more identity-based parties like the Freedom Front Plus, the Minority Front and other such entities. Despite this, the DA seems intent on capturing the electoral imagination of South Africa's marginalised, notably disaffected ANC partisans. While the DA seems focused on improving and transforming its image as an all-inclusive, multi-racial party, evidence from the study here suggests the opposite. The party is failing to take ownership of issues that traditionally affect the country's poor, a demographic that is key to any election victory. This author calls this "ideological stagnation". In other words, while the DA is saying one thing, it is doing another. In the process the party is not realistically moving anywhere on the ideological political continuum. Its image is rather that of a political organisation for the "chattering classes"— (a loose reference to how the DA has evolved into a party for people who always complain about the direction the country is taking), an organisation not truly committed to South Africa's poor, in contrast to the ANC (Mabe 2012: 23).

This study proved the DA did campaign on *issues* in the 2009 election.<sup>20</sup> Regardless of these issues being positive or negative, the party campaigned to own its issues to highlight the flaws of an already weakened ANC. This anti-ANC ticket consisted of

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<sup>20</sup> Afrobarometer found that by October / November 2008 unemployment (59%), crime (32%), poverty (24%), the economy (22%), HIV / Aids (20%), housing (20%) and corruption (20%) were the most urgent issues of the day (Duncan 2009: 216). According to the Parliamentary and Information Monitoring Service (Pims)—a subsidiary of the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa)—unemployment (69%), crime (32%) and poverty (24%) were the main issues facing South Africans [Parliamentary Information and Monitoring...2009]. Ipsos / Markinor surveys conducted in 2008 and early 2009 revealed that while issues such as unemployment and poverty were viewed by ANC partisans as the most pressing matters of the day (88% and 58% respectively), DA sympathisers thought crime (83%), unemployment (71%) and corruption (49%) were the most urgent issues facing the country. Conversely, only 17% of ANC supporters thought that corruption by the governing-party was an issue (Kersting 2009: 132).

attacking the ruling-party and its leadership—namely Jacob Zuma—who was facing corruption charges at the time. Through constant rhetoric about the dangers of a compromised ANC achieving a two-thirds win and that the party would use its majority at the ballot box to protect its leadership, the DA indelibly became associated with these issues in the minds of voters. This is in agreement with Walgrave *et al.*'s (2012) *associative dimension of issue ownership* outlined in *Chapter 3: Literature Review*. By talking “a lot” (Walgrave *et al.* 2012) around issues of corruption and the protection of South Africa's constitutional democracy for example, the party demonstrated it had a “reputation of caring” by merely bringing up these matters in the public domain. It was this “issue hegemony” that eventually resulted in the DA becoming associated with the kind of issues it attached itself to in the 2009 election (Walgrave *et al.* 2012). The DA also benefited from what Petrocik (1996: 827-828) calls “a handling advantage”. The ANC's failings on issues such as service delivery and corruption gave the DA opportunities to attack and discredit the governing-party. Conversely, leveraging its own successes in government—in DA-led municipalities and councils—the party offered South African voters the choice of clean, accountable DA administrations compared to allegedly corrupt ANC ones. One way in which it did this was through the optimal use of the media to display its superior competency on a number of issues. It used its leaders through multiple platforms on radio, television and social networking site Facebook to engage voters, thereby deepening the party's ownership on issues such as anti-corruption. If one defines political communication in its most basic form as the “role of communication in the political process”—as outlined by Chaffee (1975: 15)—this study has shown that the DA was successful in communicating its political ideas to its

supporters and non-partisans alike. The party used a number of channels to get its message out before, during and after the 2009 elections. Also, when it came to the multi-dimensionality of political communication and issues such as the paralinguistic features and non-verbal behaviours of party leader Helen Zille in the 2009 election campaign trail, this author illustrated in *Chapter Four: Profile of the Democratic Alliance (DA)* just how Zille used dancing, toyi-toying and traditional dress to ensure potential voters bought into her message. This is in agreement with Graber's (1981) and Kaid and Davidson's (1986) definition of political communication and the use of "protolanguage". This thought also finds resonance with McNair's (2011: 3-14) definition of political communication, that all written, verbal and visual elements of a message need to be considered. DA leader, Helen Zille was therefore the "performer" who was judged by the audience "partly on the quality of performance" (McNair 2011: 3-14). As Graber (1993: 305) noted in *Chapter Three: Literature Review*, key to the success of any "political communication" transaction is the assumption that messages should have a "significant political effect" on the behavioural traits of their recipients. This author illustrated the significance of the DA's 2009 election results in *Chapter One: Introduction* and how the party increased its vote-share substantially from its 2004 result. One assumes the party's political communication outreach had a major role to play in this regard. Therefore, it is safe to assume the DA's political communication in the 2009 poll was successful.

Petrocik (1996) for instance argued that the media will cover parties and candidates more positively when they restrict themselves to their *own* issues. As outlined earlier,

the DA's most prominent *owned issue* in the 2009 election was its "Stop Zuma" campaign; this study has shown how the party became associated with this issue by talking "a lot" around it and other related matters such as the protection of South Africa's constitutional democracy (Walgrave *et al.* 2012). The mass media was thus complicit in the DA's *issues* ownership in the 2009 election by increasing / decreasing issue saliency. In other words—as was illustrated in *Chapter Four: Profile of the Democratic Alliance*—the DA's coverage on the public broadcaster, the SABC,<sup>21</sup> for example, peaked in week 5 (4 – 10 April 2009) and week 8 (25 April 2009 – 1 May 2009), which coincided with Jacob Zuma's corruption charges and the DA's subsequent victory in the Western Cape. In short, the media recognised that the DA's "Stop Zuma" campaign, coupled with keeping the ANC below the two-thirds majority, were clear DA campaign issues; it is for this reason the media paid it even more attention because the party effectively *owned* these issues; and they were bona fide DA election matters.

Another argument that demands introspection is the assertion that the 2009 election was personality-driven.<sup>22</sup> While this may be true and partly attributable to Jacob Zuma's corruption charges, it should be noted that Zille to an extent framed this assumption with her fearless challenges to the ANC. In a way, Zille was co-responsible for the 2009 poll being more about personality and less about issues.

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<sup>21</sup> According to media market intelligence company Media Monitoring Africa (MMA)—which was charged with observing the SABC's election coverage over a five week period from 1 March – 31 May 2009 —the DA received twelve - percent (12%) of the public broadcaster's election coverage (Duncan 2009: 225; South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa 2009a: sec 1: 7). In another more comprehensive report where the MMA's mandate was expanded to track both print and electronic media coverage of the 2009 elections, the DA commanded 15% overall media space.

<sup>22</sup> Please see: Duncan (2009: 221); Kersting (2009: 132); Schreiner and Mattes (2011); South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa (2009b: sec 4: 14) and South Africa. Media Monitoring Africa (2009b: sec 7: 50).

In the 2009 election, the DA campaigned aggressively to show voters it was the only South African political party committed to values of constitutionalism and the ideals envisioned in the Rainbow Nation of 1994. Helen Zille assumed the face of the DA's 2009 campaign: her image and the party's image in the minds of voters was the product in this political marketing transaction. The party used Zille to drive home its core message: the protection of South Africa's constitution and democracy and holding the ANC to account. The party promoted its electoral messages primarily through the construction of Zille's image using Facebook and her multiple speeches. The social networking site was also used to communicate with voters and canvass support. This form of web campaigning also helped connect voters in the Diaspora with the DA's 2009 campaign, proving that the DA's 2009 political public relations project was trans-national. Voters were reminded through Facebook and during Zille's travels around the country that should they choose not to vote DA on Election Day, South Africa's democracy would be at risk from an already too powerful ANC. This was the DA's core political marketing strategy, in agreement with Winger's (1997: 651-663) four "p's" of political marketing. It was also this "strategic" political public relations process and "persuasive political management process" that combined the DA's "policy, personality and presentation" that eventually won it the positive image it attained in the 2009 elections (Moloney and Colmer 2001: 965; Stromback and Kiouisis 2011: 1-23).

The various content analyses here have therefore proved that the DA used its media releases issued before, during and after the 2009 elections to foster issue ownership.

This is in agreement with Petrocik's (1996) idea that issue ownership was created and maintained by parties' own communication on issues. DA leader Helen Zille was instrumental in the party's political public relations campaign in the 2009 poll. This study discovered that it was her twenty speeches alone that supported the idea of aggressive issue ownership in said election. The author found no less than 180 different coding permutations in Zille's speeches, again affirming the goal of the leader's public appearances. However, DA spin doctors also knew that web campaigning through the use of social networking site, Facebook, was an essential component of the DA's communication repertoire. This study illustrated how this SNS was leveraged successfully by the party and how it enhanced Zille's image—through Facebook updates / posts and conversations around the DA's 2009 election campaign. The party too was strategic in this exercise; it only published conversations in response to the 27 updates posted on Zille's page. It must be said though that these conversations developed organically as more comments streamed onto the DA's Facebook walls. Thus, Facebook was operated as a valuable web campaigning tool for the DA and the author's qualitative content analysis showed exactly how these themes / topics about the party supplemented the party's attachment to certain issues. This study also provided evidence that although Helen Zille's Facebook page facilitated numerous conversations about the party in the elections, it still could not be classified as a true public sphere—as outlined by Jurgen Habermas and his three institutional requirements—for reasons of access, Internet literacy and the fact that Facebook was a subscription-based social networking site.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Please see: *Appendix M: Census 2011 data on Internet connectivity.*

Lastly, earlier during *Chapter 3: Literature Review*, the author highlighted the fact that literature on issue ownership within an African / Asian / Middle Eastern / Latin American context was very limited. As Chapter Three illustrated, most studies using this theoretical framework are nearly-always American-based or Euro-centric in nature. Despite this handicap, the researcher is confident that this quantitative / qualitative study on the Democratic Alliance in the 2009 elections will correct this academic deficiency—albeit in a minuscule way.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

Chapter Five presented the main findings of this study. The author presented the results from three content analyses involving the DA's 286 media releases; DA leader Helen Zille's Facebook posts; and Zille's campaign speeches. A descriptive, thematic analysis was also provided of conversations facilitated using Zille's Facebook page, done in part to lend support to the idea that this social networking platform acted as a public sphere which disseminated public opinion about the party in the 2009 elections. Discussion around all three content analyses was provided towards the latter part of the chapter. In Chapter Six, the author will revisit what has been covered in the preceding chapters. A reflection will be made on the various limitations that could have hampered this study; recommendations will be made; and the author will end the chapter with a conclusive summary.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This is the final chapter of the study. In Chapter Six, the author focuses on the limitations; recommendations for future studies; a chapter outline; and the study's relevance to the discipline of Communication. It concludes with the author revisiting the research questions first introduced to the reader in Chapter One; answers to these will be proposed and necessary conclusions provided.

### **6.2 Limitations**

As with every academic study, time is always a huge factor. If one had been granted more time, this study could have been elevated by leveraging more personal interviews with key DA leaders and dissecting more DA election results. One is of the opinion that the impact of technology on South African politics, and elections especially, needs to be probed further. Although this study focussed exclusively on Facebook, other social media such as Twitter, YouTube and Mxit could have been used to supplement the information yielded here. This study was also constrained in terms of no prior African / South African research existing involving John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory—see Chapter Three—and the limited research on web campaigning in both an African and South African context. Hopefully, after this study, there will be more interest in this theory and overall web campaigning.

### 6.3 Recommendations

Moving into the 2014 election space, it is widely believed that technology will alter communication and political communication specifically. While this study was limited to assessing Facebook and how the DA used this social networking site in the 2009 elections, Twitter for example is going to prove “cutting edge” technology in 2014 and beyond (Philander 2011). Not only is Twitter a virtual “24-hour news feed”, this social media website will give politicians and political parties access to supporters through a combination of text, images, video and real-time question and answer sessions with role-players (Philander 2011). This “rolling press conference” will ensure the news cycle literally disappears with politicians able to dictate to journalists by providing them with streaming news “all the time” (Philander 2011). Also, with the increasing importance and affordability of mobile telephony, campaigns are likely to be accessed by more people using handsets “on the move” (Arno 2012).<sup>1</sup> Facebook will still serve a purpose but Twitter will be “even better” (Philander 2011).<sup>2</sup> ANC stalwart and now ANC deputy

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<sup>1</sup> Wanendya (2012: 21) estimates that by 2015, mobile phone subscriptions in sub-Saharan Africa will have grown by 50% to 638 million, with the biggest growth trend recorded in mobile broadband. According to Tim Bishop—Chief Technical Officer of Prezence Digital—of the 50 million mobile handsets that South Africans currently own, 32 million of these are web-enabled and 14 million can be classified as “active” web mobile users (Wanendya 2012: 21). These so-called smart phones numbered approximately 758 000 in 2012 (Vermeulen 2012). Unlike the 2009 South African elections where mainly traditional methods of campaigning were employed, one envisages mobile technology playing an even bigger and more significant role in the 2014 poll. Websites such as Facebook will more than likely be accessed from a non-fixed Internet connection and potential voters will want to receive election-related information “on the move” (Arno 2012). There is also speculation that mobile will be used more aggressively to communicate with the younger demographic, notably the born-free generation.

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to *Appendix P: How the DA is using Twitter* for a brief illustration on how the DA has been using Twitter to issue media information around the party; and also how the party has used this facility to distribute multi-media content on key campaigns such as the “Know Your DA” campaign.

president<sup>3</sup> Cyril Ramaphosa (2009) acknowledges that Internet campaigning in the 2014 elections will be “critical”, adding that while the web was “important” in 2009, it was viewed as “elitist and exclusivist” because a large majority of South Africans “did not even have a computer”.

In Chapter One, the author highlighted the issue of maybe using the Western Cape as a case study for any future research on the Democratic Alliance. Since winning the province in the 2009 elections, the party has continually used its governance records here as a template for a future DA government. It would be useful to use the DA’s 2009 victory here and in Cape Town (in the 2006 local elections) to understand how the DA operates during election cycles. Also, by-election result outcomes can be used to supplement the research in this respect. Studies by Dhawraj (2012: 324-325) have shown the DA’s resilience at local ward level.

Another avenue for future exploration is the impact of a possible Cosatu and SACP split from the ANC. There is no denying the tripartite alliance has been experiencing its own set of problems recently, notably the public fights between some of its public representatives and policy clashes on issues such as the Protection of State Information Bill (POSIB) and the Gauteng e-tolls (Calland 2013: 34-35; Cosatu urges road

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<sup>3</sup> Cyril Ramaphosa was elected ANC deputy president in Mangaung, Free State province in December 2012. He replaced Kgalema Motlanthe who chose not to contest the position at the party’s five-day National Conference (Du Plessis 2012: 1-2).

users...2012; Ferreira 2012).<sup>4</sup> If a rupture was imminent, Cosatu would free up approximately two million (worker) members (Vavi 2012: 9) and the SACP 160 000 card-carrying members (Nzimande 2012: 1)—who more than likely voted ANC in past elections. If—for example—the DA teamed up with Cosatu—with whom they have shared a common platform on issues such as the POSIB and the e-tolls (DA, Cosatu team up...2013; Ferreira 2012; Segar 2012)—this might inject another interesting dynamic into the electoral equation. However, what still needs to be resolved is both Cosatu and the SACP’s “intolerance” towards the DA (Grootes 2013). The DA’s march to Cosatu House in May 2012 is a case in point.

The year 2014 is also set to mark the first set of born-free voters or those voters born after 1994 who have had no direct experience with Apartheid.<sup>5</sup> For this reason alone it would be fascinating to see how this demographic approaches the 2014 poll: what are their issues; upon what does this group base their vote choice; and to what extent does this segment of the electorate use technology to engage with the electoral process? The other suggestion using the born-frees is the idea of using two focus groups comprising voters born before 1994 and voters born after South Africa’s first election and gauging what motivates their vote choices and why.

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<sup>4</sup> Please see also Marrian (2013b: 6) where Cosatu asserts voters will use the Gauteng e-tolls as reason not to vote for the ANC in the 2014 elections.

<sup>5</sup> The 2014 vote will see the introduction of anything between 3.2 million and five million new voters—or just over 10%—to the voter’s roll, mainly sourced from the so-called “born frees” or that generation born after 1994 (Borain 2013; HolbornLucy 2013; Phakathi 2012; Stone 2013b: 7).

Lastly, one thinks there is still a dire need for more research on political parties and elections in this country. The literature review here—see Chapter Three—revealed that too little empirical enquiry has been pursued in the field of political advertising and political communication. As a start, more studies should be considered tracking the DA's political evolution from the time the party was still known as the Democratic Party until present times. Within this research, attention must be paid to the party's multiple election performance, namely both general and local government elections (1994, 1996, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2009, 2011 and 2014). The DA's results in the various local elections should not be discounted either, because it is in these polls where the party is said to be producing optimal results (Grootes 2011). ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe even jokingly remarked that in the run-up to the 2011 local elections, the DA was fulfilling 80% of the ANC's election manifesto (Grootes 2011).

#### **6.4 Chapter outline**

This study comprised six chapters. While Chapter One provided an overview of the study, Chapter Two detailed the methodology employed. In Chapter Three, key terminology was discussed in the first segment. A thorough review of John Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory was dealt with in the second part of the literature review. Chapter Four profiled the DA, including a focus on the party's political public relations campaign in said poll. Chapter Five presented the findings from the various content analyses; a brief discussion was also conducted using these results. The study

concluded with Chapter Six, where the conclusions, limitations, recommendations and relevance to the field of communication were presented.

## 6.5 Research questions

The main thrust of this academic endeavour was to gauge how the Democratic Alliance achieved the electoral results it did in the 2009 South African general elections. To help unlock these answers, several research questions were posed, namely what issues did the DA campaign to “own” in the 2009 general elections; how did DA leader Helen Zille campaign for the party in these elections; how did the party leverage social networking site Facebook to create conversations about itself in the poll; what were the main topics discussed on this platform; and did this SNS eventually act as a public sphere for the dissemination of public opinion about the party in the 2009 elections?

Findings from all four content analyses proved that the Democratic Alliance campaigned vigorously to “own” a number of issues in the 2009 South African general elections, namely **corruption; a robust and functioning democracy** (part of the Stop Zuma campaign); **functionality of State-governed institutions; local government and service delivery; nation-building and social cohesion; protection of the South African constitution**; and **safe-guarding minority rights**. While it was found that the 2009 electoral environment was highly-charged at the time owing to the corruption charges against ANC president Jacob Zuma and the emergence of Cope, the Democratic Alliance used a fair amount of negative advertising to appeal to South

African voters. Not only did the party use Zuma's impending charges in its daily rhetoric, it courted South Africa's minority groupings (Whites, Coloureds and Indians) especially, by asserting the constitution was under threat should the ANC (and Zuma) secure a two-thirds majority—the “median voter” according to Petrocik's (1996) issue ownership theory. To present itself as a credible alternative to the ANC, the party highlighted its delivery successes in DA-run municipalities, especially Cape Town—a city it won from the ANC in 2006—a “handling” advantage according to Petrocik (1996: 829).

As outlined in Chapter Two, the DA did not have a specific Facebook page for the 2009 elections. Instead, it used leader Helen Zille's public image to entrench the party's identity and overall message in the 2009 elections, including a personal Helen Zille Facebook page. Zille's page was kept updated on a regular basis and users were invited to comment on the latest posts and updates made here. At the time, it seemed as if the party was facilitating an online dialogue between users and the party. Zille's extensive 82-day campaign trail was highly publicised on Facebook and again users were invited to be part of that process through their “comments”, “likes” and “shares”—a variant of web-based campaigning. On Facebook, most of the discussions on the DA's “walls” revolved around the corruption charges against ANC president Jacob Zuma; the prospects of a two-thirds victory for the ANC; and comparisons to Zimbabwe's failed state status. The author outlined these deliberations in Chapter Five.

This study also affirmed that Facebook provided an arena for public deliberation for the DA in the 2009 South African general elections. However, as illustrated earlier, the social networking site did not fulfil Jürgen Habermas' (1989) three institutional criteria of being an optimal public sphere. This is mostly attributable to the fact that South Africa is still classified as a developing nation with huge disparities in Internet connectivity. Of the country's 50-million population, only ten-percent (10%) were on Facebook. To access this platform, one needs to have an existing account. This in itself excludes millions from the online conversation. The 2011 South African census data additionally corroborates evidence that when the DA communicated its electoral messages on Facebook, it mostly courted the attention of minority groups, namely Whites, Coloureds and Asians / Indians—all of whom had significant levels of Internet connectivity and first language familiarity with English (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 2: 26-27).<sup>6</sup> Lastly, the DA mostly communicated in English and Afrikaans with its supporters. In-depth content analysis investigations by this author revealed that while the party communicated primarily in these two languages, some DA supporters chose to comment in English, Afrikaans and occasionally in a vernacular African language. Notwithstanding the challenges, the DA achieved “much more” positive coverage of its issues, leader and electoral messages in the 2009 elections; the party was also successful in “reinventing” its image in said poll (Duncan 2009: 221).

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<sup>6</sup> Please refer to *Appendix M: Census 2011 data on Internet connectivity* and *Appendix N: Census 2011 data on first language profile*.

This study proved that the DA's political public relations campaign strategy in the 2009 South African general elections helped it increase the number of votes and the party's vote-share in said poll. Through the clever and strategic use of social networking platform Facebook, the party used party leader Helen Zille as its most effective political tool to entrench the DA's 2009 message. Zille's image management was carefully and expertly managed; and the leader's campaign speeches sought to only further strengthen this image in the eyes of potential voters. The party also used its media releases to publicise its campaign trail. In Chapter Five, this author showed that the DA campaigned vigorously to "own" certain issues in the 2009 elections. Using mostly "associative" issue ownership (Walgrave et al. 2012), the party became synonymous with highlighting issues that illustrated the ruling-ANC in a negative light. Chief among these was the much-talked about corruption case of ANC president Jacob Zuma. Through constant coverage, the media acknowledged that the DA had gradually become associated with the "Stop Zuma" lobby; and the subsequent objective of keeping the governing-ANC below a two-thirds majority. In sum, the DA was successful in achieving its target in the 2009 elections, namely to prevent the ANC from achieving a two-thirds win; and to secure the Western Cape.

As South Africa's democracy deepens and matures, the DA recognises the importance of strategy and the "importance of possessing an authentic attachment to a cause" (Philander 2011). This is why it is increasingly projecting itself as a real alternative to the incumbent ANC by steering the discourse towards issues and subsequently appending

its name to issues such as the Youth Wage Subsidy; the Protection of State Information Bill; the furore around Jacob Zuma's Nkandla homestead and the huge amounts of taxpayer monies being spent on upgrading the residence (Mkhize 2013: 5) and the e-tolls issue in Gauteng province (DA, Cosatu team up...2013).

## 6.6 Conclusion

Political communication research in South Africa is still in its infancy. This study confirmed there is a lack of such research and the comprehensive literature review here—Chapter Three—supported this. Additionally, television political advertising was only permitted in this country from 2009 onward. These factors combined with the knowledge that South Africa is relatively new when it comes to harnessing the Internet for political web campaigning purposes does not augur well for the country. The 2011 census results confirmed this concern; that South Africa is still very much behind when it comes to universal Internet connectivity and the utility of social networking sites such as Facebook for active political campaigning.<sup>7</sup> Please refer to *Appendix M: Census*

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<sup>7</sup> According to Stats SA census 2011 data, just under two-thirds of South Africans were not connected to the Internet: 64.8% (9 364 518 South African households). The 2011 report found that 85.62% (8 018 179) of the Black African population had no access to the Internet. The levels of inaccessibility were not that high for the remaining population groups: Coloureds 7.25% (679 211); Indians / Asians 1.54% (144 783) and Whites 5.08% (476 152) (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 3: 101-102). Secondly, the 2011 census data also points to a disjuncture in terms of first language preferences of the South African population. The primary language of communication over the Internet—and social networking site Facebook—is English. According to the 2011 South African census data, English as a first language was used by only 9.6% of the country's population. In terms of racial demographics, Black Africans numbered only 2.9% when it came to using English as a first language; Coloureds 20.8%; Indians / Asians 86.1% and the White population group 35.9%. (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 2: 26-27). The inference one draws from these statistics is that for the South African electorate to access the Internet and Facebook, they would first need to possess the requisite Internet access and skills to use the facility and secondly be familiar with the language of communication on Facebook, namely English. The 2011 census data reveal that because the Black African population group were mostly disadvantaged by a lack

*2011 data on Internet connectivity and Appendix N: Census 2011 data on first language profile.* Also, a thorough overview of the relevant literature confirms there is very limited empirical research on South Africa's infant democracy and just how exactly the country has fared in terms of political advertising and consolidating its democratic gains nineteen years after democracy. More research needs to be pursued to add to the discourse in this regard. Attention needs to be devoted to how South Africa's multi-party democracy manages electoral competition and how opposition voices are impacting the ruling-party's hegemony. Through this study, one hoped to pre-empt the 2014 South African elections where electoral conditions are said to look very different. This author believes that the present study is one of the foremost academic endeavours to record the DA's public relations 2009 election campaign. The researcher also strongly believes African politics is in the midst of great evolution. One envisages this study providing answers as to how opposition political parties can exploit the idea of issue ownership coupled with strategic political public relations and the subtle use of technology to increase their vote proportion at the ballot box.

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of Internet access (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 3: 101-102) and a lack of proficiency in English as a first language (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 2: 27), they would naturally be excluded from the bigger online conversation. One can however infer from the data that the DA's electoral attempts in the 2009 poll were—more than likely—mostly appreciated by the three minority groupings, therefore its vote-share may have been helped along by this fact. It is evident that for any political party to win or make any kind of significant impact on the South African electorate, its strategy must involve the Black African majority as this group comprises approximately 80% of the overall population (South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 2: 21).

In the 2014 poll, the DA has committed itself to winning 30% of the national vote<sup>8</sup> and majorities in provinces such as Gauteng, the Western Cape and the Northern Cape.<sup>9</sup> Writing an opinion piece for the *Mail & Guardian* on the DA's prospects for such a result, political analyst Eusebius McKaiser (2012) expressed his reservations on the DA's ambitious ideal stating that the party's "single biggest strategic mistake" remains its assumption that South African politics is a "brain challenge rather than a game of the heart". Instead of inundating potential voters with—what he terms "data dumps" and endless fact sheets about well-governed DA municipalities—the party needed to genuinely connect with voters and "empathise with the disenfranchised" (McKaiser 2012). The human touch was key.<sup>10</sup> Khadalie (2011) agrees, saying that while voters are attracted to issues such as clean governance audits, voters are also looking for a party that comes across as "exciting...take risks...enter the lives of communities more sincerely...and try to govern differently".

Notwithstanding McKaiser's (2012) and Khadalie's (2011) observations, DA leader Helen Zille boldly predicted that the governing-ANC will lose power in 2019—possibly "coming apart" (Zille 2012c) and dropping below the 50% mark for the first time since 1994 (Johnson 2013). There is also the prediction that the ANC will be in perpetual decline by 2024 as the former liberation movement will be forced into the minority

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<sup>8</sup> Please see: Kok (2012: 12); Louw (2013); Mabona (2013: 4); Mjikeliso (2012: 6); Phakathi (2012); Seabe (2012: 19); Zille (2012a); Zille (2012c).

<sup>9</sup> For Zille, the 2014 vote is regarded as the "most important" elections post-democracy (Buurman 2012).

<sup>10</sup> For McKaiser (2012), the DA needed to do three things if it intended challenging the ANC's hegemony in the 2014 election: alter the tone of its political communications, replace Helen Zille as party leader "as quickly as possible" and distinguish itself on policy much more clearly from the ruling-ANC.

(Johnson 2013). Voting age population research provides some evidence for this: voters supporting the ANC have been declining since 1994<sup>11</sup>. Studies however corroborate the assertion that the ANC is “substantially insulated from opposition parties” (Schlemmer 2008) because voters would rather boycott the vote than necessarily change their vote to another party—this is referred to as a “stalemate dynamic” (Cronje 2012; Kobue 2011e; Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a). This is why opposition parties like the DA are always emphasising the importance of higher voter turnout on Election Day. When more voters turn up at the ballot box, smaller parties tend to benefit more (Cronje 2012: 14).

South Africa is a fairly young democratic state, achieving “one person, one vote” (Turok 2012: 9) status only nineteen-years ago. History has proven that in most other post-colonial African states it took approximately two decades for any opposition party to legitimately challenge an incumbent post-liberation party (Grootes 2011). At present, South Africa is clearly defined by post-liberation politics with “strong and stable” single-party dominance (by the ANC) and “weaker unstable parties” (Toulou 2010: 13). Race, party images and voter identification have been proven as key voter determinants in South Africa (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a). Although the ANC’s hegemony may not be

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<sup>11</sup> There is the argument also that although the ANC has been winning every election in post-apartheid, the party’s share of the voting age population (VAP)—or that segment of an eligible electorate 18 years and older—has been declining. In 1994, 54% of the country’s VAP voted for the party; this decreased to 47% in 1999; 40% in 2004 and 39% in the 2009 election. The opposition as one concerted bloc too has been steadily declining in support from the country’s voting age population: in 1994 32% of voters who were eligible to vote supported opposition parties; this plummeted to 25% five years later; 17% in 2004 and then increased marginally in 2009 to 20%. This increase by the opposition was mainly attributable to the DA’s performance in 2009 and the emergence of Cope (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 27-28). When one observes these numbers, one realises that in the 2011 local elections for example, only 12 million out of approximately 24 million South Africans voted or spoiled their ballot paper. In other words, in any future election there are sixteen million possible voters to win over (Khadalie 2011).

under threat, there is speculation that parties like the DA can use the unpopularity of ruling-party elites; the poor service delivery records of the ANC; and voter disillusionment to its advantage in election campaigns. What also helps is a proven track record in government which provides voters with “additional information to compare parties” (Toulou 2010: 13)—in agreement with Petrocik’s (1996: 829) “handling advantage”. This can help break down the “pervasive but limiting nature of party images” (Schulz-Herzenberg 2009a: 45).<sup>12</sup>

When South Africa celebrates twenty years of democracy in 2014 (Gabara 2013), all eyes will be fixed on the southern tip of Africa and its fifth democratic elections. While the ANC may not lose at the ballot box yet, the DA will be guaranteed more attention as the party continues to make more advances against the incumbent. The issue of the “born frees” and distance between the ANC and DA will also be closely watched. There is also an expectation that Cyril Ramphosa’s election as Jacob Zuma’s second-in-command at Mangaung, Free State in 2012 will help bring those lost middle class voters back to the governing-party in 2014 (Villa-Vicencio 2013). ANC elites will be hoping that when voters go to the 2014 elections, Ramaphosa’s image will counter-balance the negativity that has consumed the party in recent times (Villa-Vicencio 2013).<sup>13</sup> The ANC

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<sup>12</sup> Party elites within the ANC-led alliance are worried about the DA too: Cosatu’s Zwelinzima Vavi has gone on record stating the DA was like a “prowling animal” that “smelled something”—in reference to the fractures within the tripartite alliance (Makhaye 2012: 1-2)—while Numsa’s (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa) Irvin Jim lambasted the ANC-led government for promoting and adopting the National Development Plan (NDP), a policy which Jim considers a de facto DA blueprint for the country (We don’t want DA policies...2013: 6).

<sup>13</sup> Ramaphosa was heavily involved in South Africa’s constitutional negotiations; he worked closely with Nelson Mandela and he is a well-known and respected businessman—a reality party bosses are envisaging will help reassure international investors (Worrall 2012).

is however aware of the DA's advances and the possibility of it forming coalitions with other parties such as Cope and anti-apartheid veteran Mamphela Ramphele's *Agang*<sup>14</sup> political party—especially in the larger cities.<sup>15</sup>

As the 2014 election approaches, there is speculation that the DA will target the “cross-pressured voter”—or those members of the electorate whose voting choices are known to be electorally-volatile because of indecision (Williams 2010: 1-5). This is a group still susceptible to persuasion, which rates parties based on issue delivery. This author assumes this is why the DA is especially courting the Black middle class<sup>16</sup> in the cities in 2014; and why the party has already begun attaching itself to issues such as the e-tolls debate in Gauteng<sup>17</sup> and the Youth Wage Subsidy.<sup>18</sup> The party is seeking to establish ownership in the early stages of both issues so that when intensive

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<sup>14</sup> *Agang* is an *isiXhosa* word meaning “Let Us Build”; please see <http://www.agangsa.org.za/>.

<sup>15</sup> South Africa is classified 62% urban and 38% rural (Waiting for the green...2013: 1-4).

<sup>16</sup> The ANC acknowledges it is increasingly losing the battle to retain the Black middle classes—a constituency that former ANC president Thabo Mbeki “worked so hard to bring aboard” (Chauke 2013: 5; Meersman 2012). According to Schlemmer (2008), it was the “better educated” upcoming middle class voters that abandon “identity-based allegiances” choosing “economic and occupational interests” instead.

<sup>17</sup> The Gauteng e-toll project will see residents of South Africa's most populous province paying a compulsory user-per-kilometre-fee to ease congestion on the main highways and freeways. Please see: <http://www.sanral.co.za/e-toll/>.

<sup>18</sup> Presently, it is estimated that 77% of young people aged 15-35 fall outside the formal economy (Omar 2013: 17); youth currently account for 4.5 million of all unemployed in South Africa at present (Williams 2013: 18). It is within this economic context that future election battles may be framed and possibly waged (Calland 2013: 34-35) because the “new battlefield”—according to DA strategist Ryan Coetzee—is nothing else but “economic liberation” (Philander 2011). The DA has identified this weakness and has sought to capitalise on the issue by releasing its Plan for Growth and Jobs initiative as early as 2012 when the party declared its intention to increase economic growth from 3% to 8% per year (James 2012: 21). This—the party said—was the “first phase”—of its 2014 campaign (James 2012: 21). Linked to this, the party has attached itself to the Youth Wage Subsidy. The party openly displayed its seriousness on this issue when some of the party's most prominent leaders marched to Cosatu House in May 2012 to protest the union federation's resistance to the R5 billion plan. In addition, the party challenged Finance minister Pravin Gordhan and President Jacob Zuma to release part of the funds to pilot-test the project in the DA-run Western Cape in an effort to show the feasibility of the Youth Wage Subsidy (Mazibuko 2012b).

campaigning for the 2014 poll begins, the DA can rightfully claim full ownership of these matters. Although the DA did not venture into the “issue assets” of the ANC such as the liberation dividend in the 2009 election, the party is slowly beginning to claim ownership of this previously ANC “owned issue”. The ANC acknowledges that the DA is “trespassing” on its previously-owned issue of South Africa’s anti-apartheid struggle by constantly appending its name to ANC heroes and the so-called liberation narrative (Landsberg *et al.* 2004).<sup>19</sup> The ruling-party also recognises the DA cannot be dismissed as just another “noisy opposition party”.<sup>20</sup> What remains to be seen in the 2014 elections and every subsequent poll is how the governing-ANC will “contort itself into even stranger shapes in its epic quest to retain power” (Steinberg 2012: 2) and just how successfully the DA is increasing its overall vote-share through the use of digital web campaigning; the promotion of its “owned issues” and strategic political public relations.

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<sup>19</sup> Please see *Appendix P: The DA’s “Know your DA” campaign* for an illustration of how the DA is using this latest campaign to claim “ownership” of South Africa’s liberation narrative. Also, please see *Know your DA; the story...*(2013) for a video posted on YouTube around this campaign.

<sup>20</sup> Please see: *ANC’s dithering on jobs...*(2012: 4).

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<sup>1</sup> Please note not all sources were used in-text due to limitations on an MA study. All sources mentioned here informed this study in terms of secondary and contextual reading and understanding of this topic.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: 2009 Election results and analysis

Table showing the 2009 elections results and seat allocation												
Party	NAT	EC	FS	GP	KZN	LIM	MPL	NC	NW	WC	Total	%
	2009	2009	2009	2009	2009	2009	2009	2009	2009	2009		
ANC	264	44	22	47	51	43	27	19	25	14	556	67
DA	67	6	3	16	7	2	2	4	3	22	132	16
COPE	30	9	4	6	1	4	1	5	3	3	66	8
IFP	18			1	18						37	4
ID	4			1				2		2	9	1
FF+	4		1	1							6	1
UDM	4	3									7	1
ACDP	3			1	1					1	6	1
MF	1				2						3	0
UCDP	2								2		4	0
PAC	1										1	0
AZAPO	1										1	0
APC	1										1	0
AIC		1									1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's research, based on data available from <http://www.elections.org.za> (various windows), accessed in 2010, 2011, 2012

Table showing the DA election's results 1994 - 2009					
ELECTION	1994	1999	2004	2009	1994-2009
VOTE	1.73%	9.56%	12.37%	16.66%	+14.93%
SEATS	7	38	50	67	+60

Source: [www.elections.org.za](http://www.elections.org.za) (various windows accessed by the author between January and June 2012); South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 16: 104-109.

<b>Table showing the DA's national and provincial election results 1994 - 2009</b>					
<b>PROVINCE</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>1994-2009</b>
<b>NATIONAL</b>	<b>1.73%</b>	<b>9.56%</b>	<b>12.37%</b>	<b>16.66%</b>	<b>+14.93%</b>
<b>Eastern Cape</b>	1.8%	6.3%	7.9%	9.99%	<b>+8.19%</b>
<b>Free State</b>	0.00%	6.7%	10.0%	11.60%	<b>+11.60%</b>
<b>Gauteng</b>	5.8%	17.8%	20.5%	21.86%	<b>+16.06%</b>
<b>KwaZulu-Natal</b>	2.5%	8.8%	8.8%	9.15%	<b>+6.65%</b>
<b>Limpopo</b>	0.0%	2.0%	4.1%	3.48%	<b>+3.48%</b>
<b>Mpumalanga</b>	0.0%	8.16%	6.7%	7.49%	<b>+7.49%</b>
<b>Northern Cape</b>	3.3%	3.3%	10.0%	12.57%	<b>+9.27%</b>
<b>North West</b>	0.0%	3.0%	6.1%	8.25%	<b>+8.25%</b>
<b>Western Cape</b>	7.1%	11.9%	28.6%	51.46%	<b>+44.36%</b>

**Source: [www.elections.org.za](http://www.elections.org.za) (various windows accessed by the author between January and June 2012); Hahndiek 2006: 49-51; South Africa. Independent Electoral Commission 2009: sec 16: 104-109.**

<b>Table showing parliamentary political space 1994 - 2009</b>			
<b>ELECTION</b>	<b>ANC SEATS</b>	<b>OPPOSITION SEATS</b>	<b>PARTIES IN THE NA</b>
<b>1994</b>	252	148	8
<b>1999</b>	266	134	13
<b>2004</b>	279	121	12
<b>2009</b>	264	136	13

**Source: Author's research, based on data available from <http://www.elections.org.za> (various windows), accessed in 2011, 2012**

<b>Table showing opposition party decline 2004 - 2009</b>					
<b>Party</b>	<b>2004 results</b>		<b>2009 results</b>		<b>2004-2009</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Vote-share Decline</b>
<b>ACDP</b>	1.60%	7	0.81%	3	(0.79%)
<b>AZAPO</b>	0.27%	1	0.22%	1	(0.05%)
<b>ID</b>	1.73%	7	0.92%	4	(0.81%)
<b>IFP</b>	6.97%	28	4.55%	18	(2.42%)
<b>MF</b>	0.35%	2	0.25%	1	(0.10%)
<b>PAC</b>	0.73%	3	0.27%	1	(0.46%)
<b>UCDP</b>	0.75%	3	0.38%	2	(0.38%)
<b>UDM</b>	2.28%	9	0.85%	4	(1.43%)
<b>FF+</b>	0.89%	4	0.83%	4	(0.06%)

**Source: Author's research, based on data available from <http://www.elections.org.za> (various windows), accessed in 2010, 2011, 2012**

<b>Table showing the differences between the ANC and the main opposition 1994 - 2009</b>			
<b>ELECTION</b>	<b>ANC VOTE</b>	<b>MAIN OPPOSITION</b>	<b>DIFFERENCE</b>
<b>1994</b>	62.65%	20.39%	42.26%
<b>1999</b>	66.35%	9.56%	56.79%
<b>2004</b>	69.68%	12.37%	57.3%
<b>2009</b>	65.90%	16.66%	49.24%

**Source: Author's research, based on data available from <http://www.elections.org.za> (various windows), accessed in 2011, 2012**

**Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses**

<b>1 ANC'S NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE DA</b>	
01	DA allegations of political intimidation by the ANC
02	ANC assertions the DA is an unchanged White party
03	ANC assertions the DA is anti-poor
04	ANC assertions the DA will stop paying social grants to the poor
05	Julius Malema's attacks on the DA

<b>2 A ROBUST AND FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACY</b>	
01	A working democratic order in South Africa
02	The 'Stop Zuma two-thirds' campaign
03	DA allegations of ANC power abuse
04	Alleged and perceived ANC abuse of State organs for political benefit
05	The need to hold the ANC administration accountable
06	Unaccountability by the country's President and his executive
07	Need for a stronger opposition to counter the ANC's majority
08	A vote for other smaller opposition parties is a wasted vote
09	Comparisons to Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe—the failed state—and how South Africa could be heading in that direction
010	Perceived ANC attacks on the South African media
011	Perceived ANC attacks on the judiciary and judicial decisions

Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses

<b>3 CORRUPTION</b>	
01	Wasteful expenditure by the ANC
02	ANC fraud / looting of taxpayer's money
03	Nepotism by the ANC
04	Cronyism by the ANC to protect politically-connected individuals
05	ANC refusal to release forensic reports into institutions under its control
06	Abuse of special privileges by ANC office-bearers
07	References to ANC and its affiliates campaigning for the party with food parcels and other State resources on State time
08	DA allegations of tender fraud
09	References to the Arms Deal
010	References to the Travelgate scandal in parliament

<b>4 CRIME / JUSTICE</b>	
01	Crimes against citizens
02	DA criticisms of government's inaction on crime
03	Timely release of crime measurements / statistics
04	Independence of the judiciary
05	References to the courts
06	SAPS / crime-fighting agencies staff dereliction of duty / incompetence
07	DA allegations of SAPS abuse of power
08	SAPS capacity to carry out functions adequately
09	References to the dissolution of the Scorpions

Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses

<b>5 ECONOMY</b>	
01	References to South Africa's overall economic framework
02	The strength of the South African Rand
03	Investment in South Africa
04	Disinvestment in South Africa
05	Economic policies to attract investment
06	Conducive economic environment for investment
07	Small business development
08	Strikes / labour unrest and its impact on the economy
09	Economic policies to stimulate job growth
010	Flexibility of South African labour laws
011	Inflexibility of South African labour laws

<b>6 EDUCATION</b>	
01	Failures of the South African education system
02	Successes of the South African education system
03	Failures of ANC political heads of education
04	Successes of ANC political heads of education

<b>7 ENVIRONMENT</b>	
01	DA's proposals on green/ environmental issues
02	DA commentary on green/ environmental matters
03	The DA's promotion of climate change matters
04	The DA's proposals on the provision of clean, renewable energy sources
05	The ANC's promotion of dirty energy sources

<b>8 FOREIGN POLICY</b>	
01	South Africa's positive relations with other nations
02	South Africa's negative relations with other nations
03	The country's policy towards refugees and conditions at refugee centres
04	Xenophobia involving South African citizens
05	South Africa's ineffective border controls
06	South Africa's visa policy
07	South Africa's participation in multilateral institutions
08	DA commentary on foreign policy matters

<b>9 FUNCTIONALITY OF STATE-GOVERNED INSTITUTIONS</b>	
01	Financial problems at parastatals / government agencies
02	Internal governance issues at parastatals / government agencies
03	Management problems at parastatals / government agencies
04	Parastatal / government agencies' capacity to carry out functions adequately
05	Parastatal / government agencies' capacity to carry out functions inadequately
06	Parastatals / government agencies and their capacity to remain functional

<b>10 HEALTH</b>	
01	The poor state of public health facilities
02	Skills shortages at State health facilities
03	Problems of governance and management at public health facilities
04	DA's position on health matters / issues

Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses

<b>11 JOBS / EMPLOYMENT</b>	
01	Employment with some financial/ skill reward
02	Access to opportunity
03	Youth employment
04	Youth unemployment
05	Job losses
06	References to the Youth Wage Subsidy
07	Living wage references

<b>12 LAND</b>	
01	The fast-tracking of land re-distribution and land restitution
02	The provision of land for sustained food security

<b>13 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	
01	Poorly-governed ANC municipalities
02	Better-governed DA municipalities
03	DA's proven track record in delivery
04	Efficient government administration
05	ANC cadre deployment hampers service delivery
06	Service delivery protests

<b>14 NATION-BUILDING AND SOCIAL COHESION</b>	
01	DA's visions of the original Rainbow Nation
02	DA's proposals for a non-racial South Africa
03	References by the DA of the ANC's 'ethnic nationalism' ideals
04	DA's visions of a merit-based society with equal opportunity
05	The DA's assertions of fulfilling the original South African dream of 1994

<b>15 POVERTY</b>	
01	Social grants to address needs of the poor
02	Basic income grant to assist job seekers
03	Free basic services to the indignant
04	Provision of free basic housing

<b>16 PROTECTION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION</b>	
01	Any verbal, written or implied intention by the ANC to amend the country's constitution by its parliamentary majority
02	DA only opposition party big enough to protect and defend the constitution
03	ANC irregular appointments in conflict with the South African constitution

<b>17 SAFE-GUARDING MINORITY RIGHTS</b>	
01	The DA's protection and promotion of minority culture, rights and languages
02	Perceived ANC threat to minorities' culture, rights and languages
03	Merit-based opportunities regardless of gender, religion and race

Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses

<b>18 SPORT</b>	
01	DA's sports proposals
02	References to sport governance and administration issues
03	References to South Africa's hosting of the 2010 Fifa World Cup

<b>19 TRANSPORT</b>	
01	DA proposals for providing safe, reliable and affordable public transport
02	DA criticisms of the ANC government's ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable public transport

<b>20 2009 DA ELECTION CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES</b>	
01	References to the DA's party activities in the 2009 elections
02	DA information campaign on the 2009 elections

<b>21 OTHERS</b>	
01	All statements that do not fit into the preceding categories

### ***Appendix C: Instructions for content analysis pilot study***

Dear coder, thanks for agreeing to be a part of this exercise. Your efforts, time and input is appreciated. The aim of this exercise is to find suitable categories for the Democratic Alliance's 286 media statements that the party issued before, during and after the 2009 elections. A coding rubric was created with corresponding descriptions. In total, 21 categories were created. These however still need to be tested to gauge if they measure the data correctly. This is why you have been recruited to participate in this pilot test; to see if the categories are sufficient and if they measure the data correctly and in the best manner possible.

Before proceeding with the actual pilot test, here is a quick example of what is required of you as the additional coder in this endeavour. Below, you will find six different media statements the DA released around the 2009 elections. Each one has to fit into a category; they can only fit into one category without any duplication. If for example there is a random media statement that speaks to a theme / subject that cannot fit into any of the 21 categories, there is an 'others' category—number 21—provided. This is why one has to read and understand the context of each statement. For example, one cannot simply slot in a statement about 'job losses' into the 'jobs / employment' category. If one looks at the 'jobs / employment' category on the document, one will see what it includes and what it excludes. There is another category that speaks to job losses labelled 'economy' or category 5. Here is a quick example to further illustrate the point of what needs to be done; please see below. There are six different media statements and this

is how the researcher would categorise them. Reasons are provided in the third column for the categorisation. These are the six examples<sup>1</sup>:

**MEDIA STATEMENT 1 - Rhino poaching: Minister must act before it is too late - 26**

**January 2009:** The biodiversity protected in South Africa's extensive national and provincial park system is held in trust for the nation by the state. It is thus worrying to note that the state is failing in its attempt to protect our wildlife, as is evident from the recent massive increase in the poaching of rhinos.

**MEDIA STATEMENT 2 - New DA election candidates combine excellence and diversity - 25 January 2009:**

The Democratic Alliance is pleased to introduce today a selection of our new candidates for the 2009 elections. These men and women come from a diverse range of backgrounds, but they all share a common attribute: a commitment to excellence and public service.

**MEDIA STATEMENT 3 - IEC's preferential treatment of prisoners: DA calls for common sense to prevail - 18 January 2009:**

The Democratic Alliance (DA) finds it completely unacceptable that the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) plans to roll out the red carpet for South Africa's prisoners, while simultaneously ignoring the urgent need to launch registration drives at schools and universities.

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<sup>1</sup> These releases were accessed directly from the DA's website [www.da.org.za](http://www.da.org.za) and by clicking on the "press releases" tab (<http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=view-page&category=press-releases>).

**MEDIA STATEMENT 4 - DA will reverse trend in child deaths - 16 April 2009:** South Africa is one of only a few countries in the world where the number of children dying due to inadequate health care is growing. Across the country, almost one out of every 10 children born will not survive until the age of five.

**MEDIA STATEMENT 5 - ANC delivery failures costing thousands of clothing and textile jobs - 14 April 2009:** The ANC's inability to implement its policies effectively has directly caused the downfall of South Africa's clothing and textile (C&T) industry, costing more than 50 000 jobs in the past seven years. Unless South Africa is able to reconcile its liberal trade agenda with its inflexible labour market thousands more manufacturing jobs will be lost.

**MEDIA STATEMENT 6 - DA concerned by high cost of poor rail safety standards - 8 April 2009:** The Democratic Alliance (DA) is deeply concerned by the announcement on Tuesday by Railway Safety Regulator (RSR) Chief Executive, Mr. Mosenngwa Mofi, that rail incidents cost railway operators R2 billion between 2005 and 2007. Saving on these costs would, for example, have doubled the meagre R2 billion which was "committed for the speedy overhaul of our rail system" ahead of the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>REASONS FOR CATEGORISATION</b>
1	Environment	This statement is clearly about an environmental issue
2	2009 elections	This is a party election issue / campaign matter
3	2009 elections	If you scratch beneath the surface, this statement is actually about voter registration for the 2009 elections
4	Health	This statement is about poor health facilities causing child deaths
5	Economy	This statement is not about youth job losses / unemployment but more about job losses through strike action and the ANC's economic policies which the DA has issue with
6	Transport	This statement is really about the country's high rail costs

### **DA media statements for pilot study**

Below, please find a list of the 28 statements that need to be categorised correctly. Please remember there is no right or wrong answer; if there are discrepancies between each coder's categorisation these will be discussed and resolved after the pilot test. Also, please note that each DA media statement headline is hyperlinked so as to route to the full statement. This is important because a reading of the full statement is essential as it provides context for the summary only listed. Please use the coding rubric provided for this part of the exercise.

## List of 28 media statements<sup>2</sup>

**14 April 2009:** [ANC delivery failures costing thousands of clothing and textile jobs](#): The ANC's inability to implement its policies effectively has directly caused the downfall of South Africa's clothing and textile (C&T) industry, costing more than 50 000 jobs in the past seven years. Unless South Africa is able to reconcile its liberal trade agenda with its inflexible labour market thousands more manufacturing jobs will be lost.

**14 April 2009:** [ANC abuse of social grants - DA writes to public protector](#): The following is the text of the letter sent by the Democratic Alliance to the Public Protector, Adv. Lawrence Mushwana, requesting that his office investigate the possible politicisation of special poverty relief grants by ANC officials.

**12 April 2009:** [DA to lay complaint with Public Protector about "food for votes" allegations](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) has noted with great concern fresh allegations in media reports of the ANC enticing voters with food parcels in numerous provinces. Alarming, this dishonest form of electioneering is conducted using taxpayers' money, involving officials from the Department of Social Development.

**9 April 2009:** [DA lays criminal charges against Michael Hulley and Arthur Fraser](#): This morning, the Democratic Alliance's (DA) Safety and Security Spokesperson Dianne Kohler Barnard MP laid criminal charges against Jacob Zuma's lawyer, Michael Hulley, on the grounds that he is allegedly in possession of illegal, stolen recordings of intercepted telephone conversations.

**9 April 2009:** [SA Today - Only the DA can stop Jacob Zuma](#): It has been a dismal week

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<sup>2</sup> These releases were accessed directly from the DA's website [www.da.org.za](http://www.da.org.za) and by clicking on the "press releases" tab (<http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=view-page&category=press-releases>).

for constitutional democracy. In dropping the charges against Jacob Zuma for political - not legal reasons - the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) acted irrationally and unlawfully. It violated its own internal policies and it violated the law. Most seriously, it violated the Constitution.

**8 April 2009:** [DA welcomes investigation of Zuma's legal team for possible illegal possession of tapes](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) welcomes the decision of the Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence (OIGI) to probe how Jacob Zuma's lawyer, Michael Hulley, obtained tape recorded conversations involving former Scorpions boss Leonard McCarthy and former National Director of Public Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka.

**8 April 2009:** [DA follow-up visit to Nyanga Refugee Centre shows no improvement in conditions there](#): Yesterday I conducted an oversight visit to the Nyanga Refugee Centre to follow-up on my initial visit in February this year to determine whether or not there has been any progress in addressing the chaotic situation at the Centre.

**31 March 2009:** [Mbeki phone tapping: DA believes Intelligence Inspector-General has grossly neglected his duty](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) believes that the Office of the Inspector-General of Intelligence (OIGI) has provided grossly inadequate reasons for dismissing a DA request for an investigation into claims that intelligence agencies illegally tapped the phone of a sitting president.

**31 March 2009:** [Hlophe closed hearing: DA finds JSC's reasons inadequate](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) believes that the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) has made a serious error in not allowing the hearing of Cape Judge President John Hlophe to be open to the public.

**30 March 2009:** [DA asks Public Service Minister to investigate Nehawu demands for release of public servants for ANC election campaigning](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA)

will also be posing parliamentary questions to every provincial and national department asking how many public servants were granted paid leave in order to campaign for the ANC in the upcoming General Election, in response to a request made by the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu). If this leave was granted additional to ordinary leave, we will ask Nehawu to financially compensate the state for the loss of these officials.

**29 March 2009:** [Why the DA is winning](#): *This is an extract of a speech delivered by Helen Zille at the Velddrift Town Hall on Friday.* This week's by-election results show that more and more South Africans are rallying behind the DA's vision of an open, opportunity society for all and taking to heart our message that South Africa is one nation with one future.

**27 March 2009:** [SA Today - Open letter to Adv Mokotedi Mpshe](#): Yesterday, I released what is perhaps my most important statement since I became Leader of the Democratic Alliance in 2007. It is an open letter to Advocate Mokotedi Mpshe, the Acting National Director of Public Prosecutions, attached to the DA's legal representations setting out the reasons why the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) should continue with its prosecution of Jacob Zuma.

**25 March 2009:** [DA questions NEHAWU on number of members granted paid leave to campaign for ANC](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) has definitive proof that NEHAWU is mobilizing public servants to take paid time off (at the taxpayer's expense) to help the ANC run its election campaign.

**25 March 2009:** [Why Brigitte Mabandla must go](#): This past Saturday, ANC President Jacob Zuma promised that the ANC would fire members of the party who were failing to do their job. Brigitte Mabandla has put up her hand to test whether this promise is true.

**25 March 2009:** [DA heartened by Hogan's pro-human rights stance on Dalai Lama](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) is heartened by Minister of Health Barbara Hogan's pro-human rights stance on the government's inexplicable decision to ban His Holiness the Dalai Lama's proposed visit to South Africa. This welcome break with cabinet solidarity harkens back to 1994 when then Minister of Housing, Joe Slovo, broke ranks to publicly question the ill-starred Arms Deal.

**20 March 2009:** [VIP Unit shooting: Parliamentary reply reveals no proper grounds for confiscation of footage](#): Democratic Alliance (DA) believes that false pretences were used to seize SABC video footage of an incident in which a motorist was allegedly shot by members of President Kgalema Motlanthe's VIP Protection Unit in January. Indeed, there is now clear evidence that VIP Unit officers grossly mishandled the incident on January 3rd, since the Minister of Safety and Security can provide no legitimate justification for the incident.

**8 March 2009:** [Another VIP Unit crash: Three weeks of mayhem follows Divisional Commander's directive](#): Yet another accident involving the South African Police Service's (SAPS) VIP Protection Unit must be seen as the final straw. Once again the ability of Mzondeki Tshabalala to head up the SAPS Protection and Security Division is seen to be utterly lacking - and we reiterate our call for Mr Tshabalala to be dismissed immediately.

**23 February 2009:** [Free State health crisis precipitated by department's poor financial management - it is owed R72 million in unpaid hospital bills](#): Auditor-General's report on the Free State Health Department proves that it was not factors beyond its control which caused the province's budget overrun, but its own gross mismanagement. The department could have more than paid for its entire AIDS treatment budget, and kept thousands of desperately ill patients in the province alive and well, simply by collecting fees owed by state patients and putting a lid on unauthorized expenditure.

**23 February 2009:** [VIP Protection Unit: DA welcomes internal directive; calls for enforcement](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) welcomes reports that the South African Police Service (SAPS) has issued a directive that clarifies regulations governing the use of emergency lights on vehicles operated by the VIP Protection Unit. The move is timely, but it is essential that regulations are actually enforced, and that a tough new code of conduct is brought in to ensure that officers are held to the highest standards.

**22 February 2009:** [Allegations of financial mismanagement at PANSALB: DA calls for full forensic investigation](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) calls on the Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr. Pallo Jordan to institute a forensic investigation into the recent allegations of financial mismanagement at the Pan South African Language Board (Pansalb), and suspend its Chief Executive Ms Rosemary Nkosi with immediate effect.

**22 February 2009:** [DA broadly welcomes NEDLAC task team strategies to protect jobs during economic downturn](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) has since last year been calling on government to outline a clear response to the global economic crisis we therefore broadly welcome the strategies outlined on Friday by the NEDLAC task team. We strongly endorse the major principle of the agreement which is to try and protect desperately needed jobs from the impacts of the international economic crisis, whilst improving our labour force's productivity so that our economy can take advantage of the next economic upturn.

**20 February 2009:** [DA calls on Safety & Security Minister to report to Parliament on the state of SA's airport security](#): Earlier this week, an SAA staff member contacted the Democratic Alliance (DA) on condition of anonymity. This person's testimony outlined the total collapse of security procedures in the SAA crew centre at Oliver Tambo International Airport, which is used as a transit point for between 600 and 700 SAA international and domestic flight staff each day.

**18 February 2009:** [DA unveils Private Member's Bill to amend the National Prosecuting Authority Act](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) is today presenting a Private Member's Bill that will amend sections 10 and 11 of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) Act No. 32 of 1998. We are doing so in order to protect and uphold the independence of the National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP). The DA's proposed amendments will help ensure that the NDPP is appointed on the basis of his or her ability to uphold and protect the Constitution, and limit the scope for the appointment of individuals simply on the basis of their connections to the governing party.

**18 February 2009:** [DA questions reveal torture in Police Service](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) is alarmed by testimony that reveals ongoing and widespread apartheid-style torture and murder of citizens by members of the South African Police Service (SAPS).

**18 February 2009:** [Ongoing crisis at MCC: DA calls on health committee to interrogate Registrar and Minister to investigate](#): Further information which the Democratic Alliance (DA) has been given shows that the Medicines Control Council (MCC) continues to be responsible for the delay or cancellation of clinical trials for potentially life-saving medications because of its antagonistic, obstructionist approach, aimed at limiting rather than expanding access to medicines in South Africa.

**26 January 2009:** [Rhino poaching: Minister must act before it is too late](#): The biodiversity protected in South Africa's extensive national and provincial park system is held in trust for the nation by the state. It is thus worrying to note that the state is failing in its attempt to protect our wildlife, as is evident from the recent massive increase in the poaching of rhinos.

**26 January 2009:** [Wide-scale corruption at Robben Island Museum: DA reiterates call](#)

[on Arts & Culture Minister to release forensic audit report](#): The 2007/08 Annual Report of the Robben Island Museum confirms allegations that emerged last year about the extent of the large-scale corruption in the management of the museum.

**25 January 2009:** [New DA election candidates combine excellence and diversity](#): The Democratic Alliance is pleased to introduce today a selection of our new candidates for the 2009 elections. These men and women come from a diverse range of backgrounds, but they all share a common attribute: a commitment to excellence and public service.

**23 January 2009:** [DAWN](#): Are you passionate about addressing issues that affect women in South Africa today - such as rape, domestic violence, child support and access to antiretroviral drugs, to name but a few? Do you want to help us make a difference?

**23 January 2009:** [NPA-decision flies in the face of logic](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) believes the explanation provided by the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) on the decision to provide Schabir Shaik with a R5-million windfall is unsatisfactory, and we will today write to the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Justice and Constitutional Development, requesting that NPA representatives explain themselves to parliament.

**20 January 2009:** [DA challenges ANC to stop using state resources to buy votes during election campaign](#): The Democratic Alliance (DA) is outraged by some of the ANC's campaign tactics for the upcoming elections. The governing party has embarked on what appears to be a vote-buying mission around schools in a desperate attempt to buy the votes of parents and eligible school children.

**20 January 2009:** [Suspension of R200 million Tourism SETA project - DA calls on Labour Minister to urgently investigate](#): With less than 507 days left before the 2010 FIFA World Cup kick-off, ensuring South Africa's readiness to host this important event is a priority for the Democratic Alliance (DA).

**19 January 2009:** [Motlanthe theft charges: one law for ANC politicians, another for everyone else?](#) The Democratic Alliance (DA) is concerned by the manner in which the theft charge brought against President Motlanthe has been dealt with by the South African Police Service (SAPS).

**18 January 2009:** [DA calls on NERSA to assess Eskom tariff increase proposal:](#) The Democratic Alliance (DA) regards reliable and sustainable energy supply as a critical facet of a fast growing economy which creates sustainable job opportunities.

**18 January 2009:** [IEC's preferential treatment of prisoners: DA calls for common sense to prevail:](#) The Democratic Alliance (DA) finds it completely unacceptable that the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) plans to roll out the red carpet for South Africa's prisoners, while simultaneously ignoring the urgent need to launch registration drives at schools and universities.

These statements must be read in combination with the coding rubric; please see *Appendix B: Categories developed for the three quantitative content analyses*

**...ends Appendix C: Pilot study documents – thanks – RESEARCHER**

**Appendix D: The DA's media releases 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1 – 30 April 2009	60	20.97%
1 – 31 March 2009	91	31.81%
1 – 28 February 2009	74	25.87%
1 – 31 January 2009	61	21.32%
<b>120 days</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SOURCE: <a href="http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=view-page&amp;category=press-releases">http://www.da.org.za/newsroom.htm?action=view-page&amp;category=press-releases</a></b>		

**Appendix E: Helen Zille's Facebook posts 1 January 2009 – 30 April 2009**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>POSTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>LIKES</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1 – 31 January	0	0	0	0
1 – 28 February	7	25.92%	16	25
1 – 31 March	3	11.11%	434	154
1 – 30 April	17	62.96%	9609	2501
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10 059</b>	<b>2680</b>

**Appendix F: Categories, likes and comments on Helen Zille's 27 Facebook posts from 1 January 2009 - 30 April 2009**

DATE	CATEGORY	LIKES	COMMENTS
<b>JANUARY</b>			
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>FEBRUARY 2009</b>			
2 February	20	2	9
10 February	20	1	1
11 February	20	1	1
12 February	20	1	5
16 February	20	3	3
20 February	20	2	6
26 February	20	6	0
<b>MARCH</b>			
13 March	20	16	8
16 March	20	41	0
31 March	2	377	146
<b>APRIL</b>			
1 April	20	144	53
3 April	20	187	69
6 April	2 + 3	555	174
7 April	3	560	145
8 April	2 + 3	513	121
9 April	2 +20	200	45
14 April	20	200	65
15 April	20	168	70
16 April	4	337	113
18 April	2	338	99
20 April	20	363	113

*Appendix F: Categories, likes and comments on Helen Zille's 27 Facebook posts from 1 January 2009 - 30 April 2009*

21 April	20	439	142
22 April	20	614	160
22 April	20	500	157
22 April	20	565	140
23 April	2 + 20	1294	349
28 April	20	2632	486
<b>TOTALS</b>			
<b>27 posts</b>	<b>4 categories</b>	<b>10 059</b>	<b>2680</b>

**Appendix G: Category-coding combinations in Helen Zille's 20 speeches**

SPEECH DATE	PLACE DELIVERED	SPEECH THEME	CODES IDENTIFIED
15 November 2008	Johannesburg	Party re-launch	14-01/16-02/04-01/02-01/14-04/03-04/13-03/13-02/02-05/05-09/05-01/05-05/17-01/14-05/14-02
23 November 2008	Zwelethemba,Cape Town	The DA is a changed party	14-01/14-02/01-02/01-03/01-04/02-03/03-04/ 13-01/13-02/13-03
1 February 2009	Johannesburg	Campaign launch	02-07/02-05/13-02/13-03/03-03/02-03/17-01 11-02/04-02/02-01/03-04/02-09/06-01/10-03/ 16-02
3 February 2009	Umhlanga, Durban	DA to stop ANC corruption	02-03/03-04/02-04/04-09/03-08/03-09/03-04
4 February 2009	East London	DA to stop ANC cadre deployment	02-09/13-05/02-04/13-01/03-03
12 February 2009	Not stated	The ANC's political intimidation	01-01/13-03/01-02/01-03/01-04/03-03/14-04 03-04
14 February 2009	Johannesburg	Manifesto launch	03-0303-04/14-04/02-01/15-01/15-02/05-09/12-01/10-04/12-02/11-02/07-04/16-02/17-01/15-04/14-02/04-01/02-09/19-01
21 February 2009	Phoenix, Durban	Minority votes for the DA	17-01/17-02/17-03/05-01/11-02/03-03/02-07/02-08/04-02/06-01/13-03/14-04
22 February 2009	Not stated	DA's promises to the South African voter	01-02/01-03/01-04/13-05/05-01/05-05/05-06/05-09/15-04/13-03/04-02/03-

Appendix G: Category-coding combinations in Helen Zille's 20 speeches

			03/03-04/04-09/15-01/15-02/10-03/10-04/07-01/19-01/17-01
1 March 2009	Not stated	Helen Suzman tribute	21-01
2 March 2009	Not stated	DA delivery successes	13-02/13-03/02-01/02-07
5 March 2009	Not stated	The ANC has failed the youth of South Africa	11-02/11-06/06-01/03-03/03-04/14-04/03-01/02-03/11-04
17 March 2009	Not stated	DA crime plan	04-09/03-03/03-04/04-01/04-08/02-03/04-03/
22 March 2009	Not stated	Climate change	07-01/07-03
1 April 2009	Not stated	Stop Zuma campaign	02-01/02-03/02-04/02-09/03-05/13-01/16-02
2 April 2009	Western Cape	DA's reasons for winning the Western Cape	13-02/13-03/02-07/04-02/06-01/19-01/19-02/13-04/13-05/03-02/14-02/14-04
4 April 2009	Northern Cape	Appeal to Northern Cape voters	17-01/17-02/17-03/14-04
11 April 2009	Western Cape	Election bus launch to campaign and win the Western Cape	13-01/13-03/02-07/02-08
14 April 2009	Not stated	Vote DA, Vote to Win!	13-03/02-02/02-04/02-10/02-11/02-09/02-07/16-01/16-02/02-01
15 April 2009	Not stated	Corruption	02-01/02-02/ 02-09/03-01/03-02/03-09/13-01 /13-05

**Appendix H: ANC media releases frequencies by month**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1 – 31 January 2009	15	23.8%
1 – 28 February 2009	10	15.87%
1 – 31 March 2009	20	31.74%
1 – 30 April 2009	18	28.57%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>100%</b>

**SOURCE:** [http://www.anc.org.za/list.php?pageNum\\_rs=6&totalRows\\_rs=165&t=Press%20Statements&y=2009](http://www.anc.org.za/list.php?pageNum_rs=6&totalRows_rs=165&t=Press%20Statements&y=2009)

**Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases**

<b>1 ANC'S NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE DA</b>		<b>5</b>
01	DA allegations of political intimidation by the ANC	1
02	ANC assertions the DA is an unchanged White party	0
03	ANC assertions the DA is anti-poor	0
04	ANC assertions the DA will stop paying social grants to the poor	0
05	Julius Malema's attacks on the DA	4

<b>2 A ROBUST AND FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACY</b>		<b>30</b>
01	A working democratic order in South Africa	6
02	The 'Stop Zuma two-thirds' campaign	2
03	DA allegations of ANC power abuse	0
04	Alleged and perceived ANC abuse of State organs for political benefit	15
05	The need to hold the ANC administration accountable	1
06	Unaccountability by the country's President and his executive	4
07	Need for a stronger opposition to counter the ANC's majority	0
08	A vote for other smaller opposition parties is a wasted vote	0
09	Comparisons to Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe—the failed state—and how South Africa could be heading in that direction	1
010	Perceived ANC attacks on the South African media	1
011	Perceived ANC attacks on the judiciary and judicial decisions	0

Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases

<b>3 CORRUPTION</b>		<b>66</b>
01	Wasteful expenditure by the ANC	7
02	ANC fraud / looting of taxpayer's money	3
03	Nepotism by the ANC	2
04	Cronyism by the ANC to protect politically-connected individuals	27
05	ANC refusal to release forensic reports into institutions under its control	1
06	Abuse of special privileges by ANC office-bearers	7
07	References to ANC and its affiliates campaigning for the party with food parcels and other State resources on State time	11
08	DA allegations of tender fraud	1
09	References to the Arms Deal	5
010	References to the Travelgate scandal in parliament	2

<b>4 CRIME / JUSTICE</b>		<b>19</b>
01	Crimes against citizens	2
02	DA criticisms of government's inaction on crime	2
03	Timely release of crime measurements/ statistics	3
04	Independence of the judiciary	0
05	References to the courts	5
06	SAPS / crime-fighting agencies staff dereliction of duty / incompetence	1
07	DA allegations of SAPS abuse of power	1
08	SAPS capacity to carry out functions adequately	4
09	References to the dissolution of the Scorpions	1

Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases

<b>5 ECONOMY</b>		<b>18</b>
01	References to South Africa's overall economic framework	8
02	The strength of the South African Rand	0
03	Investment in South Africa	0
04	Disinvestment in South Africa	0
05	Economic policies to attract investment	1
06	Conducive economic environment for investment	3
07	Small business development	2
08	Strikes / labour unrest and its impact on the economy	0
09	Economic policies to stimulate job growth	4
010	Flexibility of South African labour laws	0
011	Inflexibility of South African labour laws	0

<b>6 EDUCATION</b>		<b>7</b>
01	Failures of the South African education system	4
02	Successes of the South African education system	0
03	Failures of ANC political heads of education	3
04	Successes of ANC political heads of education	0

<b>7 ENVIRONMENT</b>		<b>2</b>
01	DA's proposals on green/ environmental issues	0
02	DA commentary on green/ environmental matters	1
03	The DA's promotion of climate change matters	1
04	The DA's proposals on the provision of clean, renewable energy sources	0
05	The ANC's promotion of dirty energy sources	0

Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases

<b>8 FOREIGN POLICY</b>		<b>16</b>
01	South Africa's positive relations with other nations	2
02	South Africa's negative relations with other nations	0
03	The country's policy towards refugees and conditions at refugee centres	3
04	Xenophobia involving South African citizens	0
05	South Africa's ineffective border controls	0
06	South Africa's visa policy	4
07	South Africa's participation in multilateral institutions	1
08	DA commentary on foreign policy matters	6

<b>9 FUNCTIONALITY OF STATE-GOVERNED INSTITUTIONS</b>		<b>21</b>
01	Financial problems at parastatals / government agencies	5
02	Internal governance issues at parastatals / government agencies	0
03	Management problems at parastatals / government agencies	4
04	Parastatal / government agencies' capacity to carry out functions adequately	12
05	Parastatal / government agencies' capacity to carry out functions inadequately	0
06	Parastatals/ government agencies and their capacity to remain functional	0

<b>10 HEALTH</b>		<b>12</b>
01	The poor state of public health facilities	0
02	Skills shortages at State health facilities	0
03	Problems of governance and management at public health facilities	4
04	DA's position on health matters / issues	8

Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases

<b>11 JOBS / EMPLOYMENT</b>		<b>0</b>
01	Employment with some financial / skill reward	0
02	Access to opportunity	0
03	Youth employment	0
04	Youth unemployment	0
05	Job losses	0
06	References to the Youth Wage Subsidy	0
07	Living wage references	0

<b>12 LAND</b>		<b>4</b>
01	The fast-tracking of land re-distribution and land restitution	3
02	The provision of land for sustained food security	1

<b>13 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY</b>		<b>3</b>
01	Poorly-governed ANC municipalities	2
02	Better-governed DA municipalities	0
03	DA's proven track record in delivery	0
04	Efficient government administration	1
05	ANC cadre deployment hampers service delivery	0
06	Service delivery protests	0

<b>14 NATION-BUILDING AND SOCIAL COHESION</b>		<b>3</b>
01	DA's visions of the original Rainbow Nation	0
02	DA's proposals for a non-racial South Africa	3
03	References by the DA of the ANC's 'ethnic nationalism' ideals	0
04	DA's visions of a merit-based society with equal opportunity	0

Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases

05	The DA's assertions of fulfilling the original South African dream of 1994	0
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<b>15 POVERTY</b>		<b>2</b>
01	Social grants to address needs of the poor	1
02	Basic income grant to assist job seekers	1
03	Free basic services to the indignant	0
04	Provision of free basic housing	0

<b>16 PROTECTION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION</b>		<b>4</b>
01	Any verbal, written or implied intention by the ANC to amend the country's constitution by its parliamentary majority	1
02	DA only opposition party big enough to protect and defend the constitution	0
03	ANC irregular appointments in conflict with the South African constitution	3

<b>17 SAFE-GUARDING MINORITY RIGHTS</b>		<b>1</b>
01	The DA's protection and promotion of minority culture, rights and languages	0
02	Perceived ANC threat to minorities' culture, rights and languages	1
03	Merit-based opportunities regardless of gender, religion and race	0

<b>18 SPORT</b>		<b>8</b>
01	DA's sports proposals	5
02	References to sport governance and administration issues	1
03	References to South Africa's hosting of the 2010 Fifa World Cup	2

Appendix I: The DA's coding combinations for its 286 media releases

<b>19 TRANSPORT</b>		<b>8</b>
01	DA proposals for providing safe, reliable and affordable public transport	6
02	DA criticisms of the ANC government's ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable public transport	2

<b>20 2009 DA ELECTION CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>43</b>
01	References to the DA's party activities in the 2009 elections	15
02	DA information campaign on the 2009 elections	28

<b>21 OTHERS</b>		<b>14</b>
01	All statements that do not fit into the preceding categories	14

**Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches**

<b>1 ANC'S NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE DA</b>		<b>10</b>
01	DA allegations of political intimidation by the ANC	1
02	ANC assertions the DA is an unchanged White party	3
03	ANC assertions the DA is anti-poor	3
04	ANC assertions the DA will stop paying social grants to the poor	3
05	Julius Malema's attacks on the DA	0

<b>2 A ROBUST AND FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACY</b>		<b>37</b>
01	A working democratic order in South Africa	7
02	The 'Stop Zuma two-thirds' campaign	2
03	DA allegations of ANC power abuse	6
04	Alleged and perceived ANC abuse of State organs for political benefit	4
05	The need to hold the ANC administration accountable	2
06	Unaccountability by the country's President and his executive	0
07	Need for a stronger opposition to counter the ANC's majority	6
08	A vote for other smaller opposition parties is a wasted vote	2
09	Comparisons to Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe—the failed state—and how South Africa could be heading in that direction	6
010	Perceived ANC attacks on the South African media	1
011	Perceived ANC attacks on the judiciary and judicial decisions	1

Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches

<b>3 CORRUPTION</b>		<b>26</b>
01	Wasteful expenditure by the ANC	2
02	ANC fraud/ looting of taxpayer's money	2
03	Nepotism by the ANC	8
04	Cronyism by the ANC to protect politically-connected individuals	10
05	ANC refusal to release forensic reports into institutions under its control	1
06	Abuse of special privileges by ANC office-bearers	0
07	References to ANC and its affiliates campaigning for the party with food parcels and other State resources on State time	0
08	DA allegations of tender fraud	1
09	References to the Arms Deal	2
010	References to the Travelgate scandal in parliament	0

<b>4 CRIME / JUSTICE</b>		<b>12</b>
01	Crimes against citizens	3
02	DA criticisms of government's inaction on crime	4
03	Timely release of crime measurements / statistics	1
04	Independence of the judiciary	0
05	References to the courts	0
06	SAPS / crime-fighting agencies staff dereliction of duty / incompetence	0
07	DA allegations of SAPS abuse of power	0
08	SAPS capacity to carry out functions adequately	1
09	References to the dissolution of the Scorpions	3

Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches

<b>5 ECONOMY</b>		<b>9</b>
01	References to South Africa's overall economic framework	3
02	The strength of the South African Rand	0
03	Investment in South Africa	0
04	Disinvestment in South Africa	0
05	Economic policies to attract investment	2
06	Conducive economic environment for investment	1
07	Small business development	0
08	Strikes / labour unrest and its impact on the economy	0
09	Economic policies to stimulate job growth	3
010	Flexibility of South African labour laws	0
011	Inflexibility of South African labour laws	0

<b>6 EDUCATION</b>		<b>4</b>
01	Failures of the South African education system	4
02	Successes of the South African education system	0
03	Failures of ANC political heads of education	0
04	Successes of ANC political heads of education	0

<b>7 ENVIRONMENT</b>		<b>4</b>
01	DA's proposals on green/ environmental issues	2
02	DA commentary on green/ environmental matters	0
03	The DA's promotion of climate change matters	1
04	The DA's proposals on the provision of clean, renewable energy sources	1
05	The ANC's promotion of dirty energy sources	0

Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches

<b>8 FOREIGN POLICY</b>		<b>0</b>
01	South Africa's positive relations with other nations	0
02	South Africa's negative relations with other nations	0
03	The country's policy towards refugees and conditions at refugee centres	0
04	Xenophobia involving South African citizens	0
05	South Africa's ineffective border controls	0
06	South Africa's visa policy	0
07	South Africa's participation in multilateral institutions	0
08	DA commentary on foreign policy matters	0

<b>9 FUNCTIONALITY OF STATE-GOVERNED INSTITUTIONS</b>		<b>0</b>
01	Financial problems at parastatals / government agencies	0
02	Internal governance issues at parastatals / government agencies	0
03	Management problems at parastatals / government agencies	0
04	Parastatal/ government agencies' capacity to carry out functions adequately	0
05	Parastatal / government agencies' capacity to carry out functions inadequately	0
06	Parastatals / government agencies and their capacity to remain functional	0

<b>10 HEALTH</b>		<b>4</b>
01	The poor state of public health facilities	0
02	Skills shortages at State health facilities	0
03	Problems of governance and management at public health facilities	2
04	DA's position on health matters / issues	2

Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches

<b>11 JOBS / EMPLOYMENT</b>		<b>6</b>
01	Employment with some financial / skill reward	0
02	Access to opportunity	4
03	Youth employment	0
04	Youth unemployment	1
05	Job losses	0
06	References to the Youth Wage Subsidy	1
07	Living wage references	0

<b>12 LAND</b>		<b>2</b>
01	The fast-tracking of land re-distribution and land restitution	1
02	The provision of land for sustained food security	1

<b>13 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY</b>		<b>25</b>
01	Poorly-governed ANC municipalities	5
02	Better-governed DA municipalities	5
03	DA's proven track record in delivery	10
04	Efficient government administration	1
05	ANC cadre deployment hampers service delivery	4
06	Service delivery protests	0

<b>14 NATION-BUILDING AND SOCIAL COHESION</b>		<b>14</b>
01	DA's visions of the original Rainbow Nation	2
02	DA's proposals for a non-racial South Africa	4
03	References by the DA of the ANC's 'ethnic nationalism' ideals	0
04	DA's visions of a merit-based society with equal opportunity	7

Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches

05	The DA's assertions of fulfilling the original South African dream of 1994	1
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<b>15 POVERTY</b>		<b>6</b>
01	Social grants to address needs of the poor	2
02	Basic income grant to assist job seekers	2
03	Free basic services to the indignant	0
04	Provision of free basic housing	2

<b>16 PROTECTION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION</b>		<b>6</b>
01	Any verbal, written or implied intention by the ANC to amend the country's constitution by its parliamentary majority	1
02	DA only opposition party big enough to protect and defend the constitution	5
03	ANC irregular appointments in conflict with the South African constitution	0

<b>17 SAFE-GUARDING MINORITY RIGHTS</b>		<b>10</b>
01	The DA's protection and promotion of minority culture, rights and languages	6
02	Perceived ANC threat to minorities' culture, rights and languages	2
03	Merit-based opportunities regardless of gender, religion and race	2

<b>18 SPORT</b>		<b>0</b>
01	DA's sports proposals	0
02	References to sport governance and administration issues	0
03	References to South Africa's hosting of the 2010 Fifa World Cup	0

Appendix J: Coding breakdown for Helen Zille's speeches

<b>19 TRANSPORT</b>		<b>4</b>
01	DA proposals for providing safe, reliable and affordable public transport	3
02	DA criticisms of the ANC government's ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable public transport	1

<b>20 2009 DA ELECTION CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>0</b>
01	References to the DA's party activities in the 2009 elections	0
02	DA information campaign on the 2009 elections	0

<b>21 OTHERS</b>		<b>1</b>
01	All statements that do not fit into the preceding categories	1

## **Appendix K: Questions for DA CEO Jonathan Moakes**

Questions drafted for interview with Chief Executive Officer of the Democratic Alliance (DA) – Jonathan Moakes. I've divided the questions into three distinct sections: the pre-election campaign, the actual 2009 election campaign and the 2014 general elections

### **Pre-election**

Where in your opinion does the DA's core support come from?

The DA's support comes from a variety of South Africans across all spectrums. It is difficult to break it down into racial or language demographics. Numbers wise, Gauteng and Western Cape produce a high number of voters due to the density of their populations.

Did the DA employ the services of a media branding/ imaging company to manage the party's electoral strategies in the 2009 general elections?

No. The Party's strategy and branding/media relations were all handled in-house by the party.

What was the DA's key message in the 2009 elections?

As is evident by our election campaign, the core message was the positive reinforcement of multi-party democracy for all South Africans and the idea that there is a clear alternative. This is evident from our message "Your vote can win it". It was a message meant to counter the growing apathy among voters and to encourage participation in the electoral process by stating that every vote counted.

What were the party's objectives in the 2009 elections?

Our primary objective was to gain control over a province, either in coalition or with an outright majority. We reached this objective by winning the Western Cape with an outright majority.

The party rebranded itself in 2008 and very strategically at Constitutional Hill in Johannesburg. What was the motivation behind this?

Political parties, like any other business, must evolve. We decided to rebrand the party to show South Africans that we had grown to become an alternative government that would be able to increasingly challenge the ANC for control of provincial governments

and ultimately, national government.

Also, your manifesto was launched in Kliptown, Soweto – the venue of the 1955 signing of the Freedom Charter. Soweto is also home to the country’s biggest Black population. This sprawling township is also intricately tied to South Africa’s long fight against apartheid. Please give us your thinking behind this?

The ANC is not the only organization to have opposed apartheid. Many organizations and civil society formations were opposed to the status quo at the time. It is logical for the DA to also lay claim to the fight against apartheid. The Democratic Alliance traces its roots to the progressive movement of the 1960s & 1970s. This movement counted among its leaders prominent anti-apartheid activists such as Helen Suzman, Colin Eglin, Harry Schwarz and Frederik van Zyl Slabbert. Our predecessor parties were one of very few who opposed the system from within. Helen Suzman was the sole representative for the Progressive Party for 13 (thirteen) years in Parliament, the sole principled opponent of racial discrimination in the whole South African Parliament. She fought against detention without trial; pass laws; influx control; job reservation on the grounds of colour; racially separated amenities; Group Areas; and forced removals. She demanded trade union rights for all and fought for better wages and working conditions. South Africans should be aware of this.

Many have said the DA jumped onto the Barack Obama bandwagon by emulating its logo and campaign narrative of ‘yes we can’ to rally South African voters. Is this a fair observation?

No. The party logo and our campaign were proudly South African. Mr. Obama may have been effective in the United States of America, but we do not have to convince American voters. We have to gain the confidence of South African voters. Emulating American politics at home will not win over South African voters. We also took a conscious decision to run positive campaigns, providing solutions to the myriad of problems facing our country.

Many have said that the Obama presidential campaign had a global knock-on effect in re-energizing voters, especially the youth. Did the DA also take advantage of this wave sweeping modern-day politics?

Any political party worth its salt will understand that the youth vote is always a growth market. This is especially true in South Africa, where the youth is not necessarily bound by the past, but have their own new ambitions which may differ from that of older generations.

## **Election campaign**

In your opinion, did the DA perform as expected in the 2009 elections?

Yes. We achieved what we initially set ourselves as our primary goal. We also saw substantial growth. In absolute terms, over than one million more South Africans voted for the DA in 2009 as opposed to the 2004 National Elections.

Did the party achieve the objectives set out for the 2009 elections?

Yes.

What were some of the issues you feel the DA 'owned' in the 2009 elections? And were these successful for the party?

Controversially, the "Stop Zuma" part of the campaign was very successful. As you will recall, at the time, President Zuma was faced with multiple charges of corruption during the 2009 election campaign. Although the charges were dropped in controversial circumstances, the message was clear, that the ANC was a threat to our hard won Constitutional democracy. In hindsight, we were right if one considers the myriad of what we believe to be unconstitutional legislation the ANC is attempting to bulldoze through Parliament and the court cases clearly showing that the President fails to adhere to the provisions of the Constitution.

Is the party truly a non-racial, inclusive party – now 17 years after democracy?

Yes. Independent research by the late Prof. Lawrence Schlemmer has proved that the DA is the most diverse political party in the history of our country. We have South Africans of all groups represented in all structures of the party, from branch level up to our National Management Committee.

It is no secret that our country's past and the issue of race are still huge issues in elections. Was the DA able to bypass this in the 2009 election?

We believe that we have made some progress in this regard. Yes, apartheid and race is still front and centre of our politics, but as the DA, we want to unite South Africans behind a shared future which is not based on racial nationalism and other divisive issues. We are slowly but surely making progress.

Do you think the DA was able to successfully penetrate previous so called Black areas?

The 2009 election results would not have been possible had it not been for South Africans of all colours and creeds voting for the Party.

Why do you think minority groupings like the Indian, Coloured, White and certain segment of the Black population support the DA as opposed to any other party?

As our democracy matures, South Africans are moving away from divisive issues such as race-based nationalism and they are rather engaging on the issues. Every person essentially wants the same thing, safety and security of their person and their family, the protection of their constitutional rights, the best opportunity for their children and the like. The DA's policies resonate with these values and as such, people are moving away from race and start to realise that ideology is the real issue. One will always have fringe elements who vote for parties like the Freedom Front, the ANC or the PAC. We appeal to the moderate middle who votes for the future, not for the past.

In your 2011 election campaign, the DA laid part-claim to a huge election issue, the liberation narrative. Yet this strategy was not used as much in the 2009 election. Why take ownership of this in the 2011 LGE only? Was there more at stake?

Every election is as important, if not more, than the previous one. In 2011, we felt that it was the right time to communicate to the electorate that the ANC was by no means the only organisation who was actively opposed to the apartheid regime.

In the 2009 election, the DA used Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube as part of its high-tech campaign strategy. What was the motivation behind this and did it work? [Provide us with figures if possible – how many status updates, questions answered, smses and tweets sent out]

Technology is becoming an increasingly valuable tool to communicate. More people have access to the internet and mobile broadband than ever before, so again, it is only logical to utilize these tools. Actual figures are very difficult to produce. The federal nature of our organisation means that provinces, regions and even individuals have fairly large levels of autonomy and are free to utilize these tools.

In the 2009 elections, smaller opposition parties were decimated. Why do you think the DA did not suffer the same fate?

Our support base has grown in every election we have contested since 1994 as more and more South Africans united behind our vision for South Africa. We were fortunate to have a clear strategy and campaign that galvanized more and more moderate South Africans. This, coupled with a positive campaign, gave us the edge which many smaller parties simply did not have. Smaller parties tend to gravitate towards issues which will attract fringe elements in our society like racial nationalists. The support base for these parties will wane over time, but will not necessarily disappear altogether.

What about the creation of Cope just before the 2009 elections? Was the DA mindful of this new political player?

All political parties were mindful of the formation of COPE. However, parties who form themselves by uniting behind positive shared values will succeed. If an organisation is formed merely to oppose something, without a positive plan of action to better the lives of all South Africans, it is doomed to failure.

What was the most difficult aspect of the 2009 campaign?

The endless campaigning in every corner of South Africa. We traveled the length and breadth of the country delivering our message of an Open Opportunity Society for All. The length of the campaign coupled with a grueling schedule makes it difficult.

What could the party have done better?

We believe we ran the right campaign at the right time.

## **Post-elections**

You're now a party in government. The DA won the Western Cape with a convincing victory in 2009. How do you envisage using this win to leverage more support (and possibly more provinces) in future elections?

There is only one thing worse than losing an election, and that is winning an election and governing badly. It is essential that, where the party is in government, we prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the trust the voters put in us was well founded. We have to earn the respect of the electorate.

The DA is one of the few political parties or perhaps the only one that has an in-house research unit. Can you tell us more about this unit? What does it do especially around election time?

Like all political parties, the DA seeks to track how it is progressing during a campaign. It is, however, quite a difficult task.

If possible, please provide us with the total cost of the DA's 2009 campaign?

It cost around R 50 million.

How many billboards, pole posters, pamphlets, house visits did the party produce/ make in the 2009 elections?

We produced a substantial amount.

How many parliamentary questions and bills were introduced/ asked by the DA perhaps between 2004 – 2009?

Please see the DA's 2010 and 2011 Parliamentary Audits attached. Unfortunately, obtaining the data for previous years has to be done through Hansard and the National Assembly's Table Office. We can request a letter from our Chief Whip asking the staff to assist you in this regard. It will however take some time for this information to be gathered.

## **2014 elections**

I see the DA has already kicked its 2014 election campaign into gear, as early as your final media briefing at the IEC centre for the 2011 local elections. Please tell us more about this?

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. We have already identified our objectives and will ensure that the appropriate resources are channeled towards attaining these goals on time.

Zille has recently hinted at possibly seeing a two-party system in South Africa. Is this country gravitating towards a possible two-party system? And will you be happy with this outcome?

South Africa is a multi-party democracy. The right of free association was wisely and correctly enshrined in the Constitution. South Africa is a very complex and diverse society. While it is unlikely that there will be only two parties who will serve the interests of all South Africans, it is true that the ANC and the DA are the dominant forces in our

current political landscape.

Is the DA likely to have a Black leader soon and what difference if any will this have on the party's future standing in the South African politik?

Leadership in the DA is not bestowed upon anyone. Any member of the party is free to contest any position up for election. Our principle for any position is that the person must be fit for purpose. If that person happens to be black, brown, Indian or white is of no consequence. We have promising people of every possible demographic moving up through the structures of the party and it is possible for any person to make their way to the top. This is the essence of our philosophy of an Open Opportunity Society for All. One's lot in life is not determined by some arbitrary matter like skin colour or the circumstances of one's birth, but by one's talents and efforts brought to bear on the opportunities one is afforded.



**Jonathan Moakes, CEO**

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**07 May 2013**

Dear Ronesh

I hereby consent to the use of the answers provided in our interview during 2012 in your academic paper.

Kind regards,

**Jonathan Moakes**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Appendix L: History of the Democratic Alliance**

ELECTION	DETAIL
1959	A number of United Party Members of Parliament (MPs) left it to form a new party, the Progressive Party (PP). Its first leader was Dr Jan Steytler. The Progressive Party took a firm stand against apartheid and demanded constitutional reform (Zille 2013c).
1961	Helen Suzman became the only Progressive Party MP and would be the party's sole representative for the next thirteen years.
1974	Six more Progressive Party members won seats in parliament (Democratic Alliance about...2009; History of the Democratic Alliance...2000; Johnson 2011; South Africa International Republican Institute 1994: sec 2: 26-27).
1975	The party later merged with another break-away group from the United Party called the Reform Party. Its name was subsequently changed to the Progressive Reform Party.
1977	A third break-away group left the United Party to form the Committee for a United Opposition. This group eventually joined forces with the Progressive Reform Party to create the Progressive Federal Party (Democratic Alliance about...2009; History of the Democratic Alliance...2000; Zille 2013c).
1987 / 1988	The Progressive Federal Party lost a number of its parliamentary seats. By this time an offshoot from the original National Party—the Conservative Party—assumed official opposition status in South Africa's White parliament (De Klerk 2012; Leon 2008: 152; South Africa International Republican Institute 1994: sec 2: 33). Zach De Beer was subsequently installed as leader of the Progressive Federal Party in 1988. As party leader, De Beer continued negotiations with other smaller parties.
1989	De Beer was successful in attracting the Independent Party and the National Democratic Movement into an alliance with the Progressive Federal Party. The new party was to be called the Democratic Party under the leadership of De Beer, Denis Worrall and Wynand Malan (Leon 2008: 176; Zille 2013c). The Democratic Party won thirty-six seats in the September 1989 elections—the last all-White general elections in South Africa (Democratic Alliance about...2009; History of the Democratic Alliance...2000).

**Appendix M: The DA's new logo compared to Barack Obama's 2008 election logo**



The DA's new logo launched in 2008, sourced from <http://www.da.org.za> on 28 October 2012



Barack Obama's 2008 election logo, sourced from [www.BarackObama.com](http://www.BarackObama.com) on 28 October 2012

**Appendix N: Census 2011 data on Internet connectivity**

<b>Net access</b>	<b>Black African</b>	<b>Coloured</b>	<b>Indian/Asian</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Home	443 447	90 884	78 623	615 560	10 672	<b>1 239 187</b>
Mobile	1 865 153	184 025	69 076	224 222	14 440	<b>2 356 916</b>
Work	334 095	57 221	40 848	242 088	3989	<b>678 242</b>
Elsewhere	699 696	44 734	13 877	48 609	4379	<b>811 295</b>
No access	8 018 179	679 211	144 783	476 152	46 169	<b>9 364 494</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 360 570</b>	<b>1 056 076</b>	<b>347 208</b>	<b>1 606 631</b>	<b>79 648</b>	<b>14 450 133</b>

**SOURCE: South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 3: 101-102)**

**Appendix O: Census 2011 data on first language profile**

Language	Black African	Coloured	Indian / Asian	White	Other	TOTAL
Afrikaans	1.5	75.8	4.6	60.8	15.2	<b>13.5</b>
English	2.9	20.8	86.1	35.9	29.5	<b>9.6</b>
IsiNdebele	2.6	0.2	0.8	0.2	2.1	<b>2.1</b>
IsiXhosa	20.1	0.6	0.4	0.3	1.9	<b>16</b>
IsiZulu	28.5	0.5	1.3	0.4	4.1	<b>22.7</b>
Sepedi	11.4	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.6	<b>9.1</b>
Sesotho	9.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	1.7	<b>7.6</b>
Setswana	9.9	0.9	0.4	0.4	2.4	<b>8.0</b>
Sign language	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	<b>0.5</b>
SisSwati	3.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	<b>2.5</b>
Tshivenda	3.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.5	<b>2.4</b>
Xitsonga	5.6	0.0	0.2	0.1	3.9	<b>4.5</b>
Other	1.5	0.1	5.1	1.1	37.4	<b>1.6</b>

**SOURCE: South Africa. Statistics South Africa 2012: sec 2: 26-27**

**Appendix P: The DA's "Know Your DA" campaign**

**DA**

**We played our part in opposing apartheid.**

Nelson Mandela with DA founder, Helen Suzman (photo: Helen Suzman Foundation)

**DA**

The party known today as the DA was founded in 1959 by Helen Suzman.

We were the official opposition – opposing the National Party – and we fought Apartheid for 36 years.

These are some of the laws we fought against:

- Detention without trial
- Pass laws
- Unlawful Organisations Act
- Mixed Marriages Act
- Immorality Act
- Job reservation
- Group Areas Act
- Forced removals

**Know your DA** #KnowYourDA

**Know your DA** #KnowYourDA

The DA's "Know your DA" campaign, sourced from [www.da.org.za](http://www.da.org.za) on 30 April 2013

**DA**

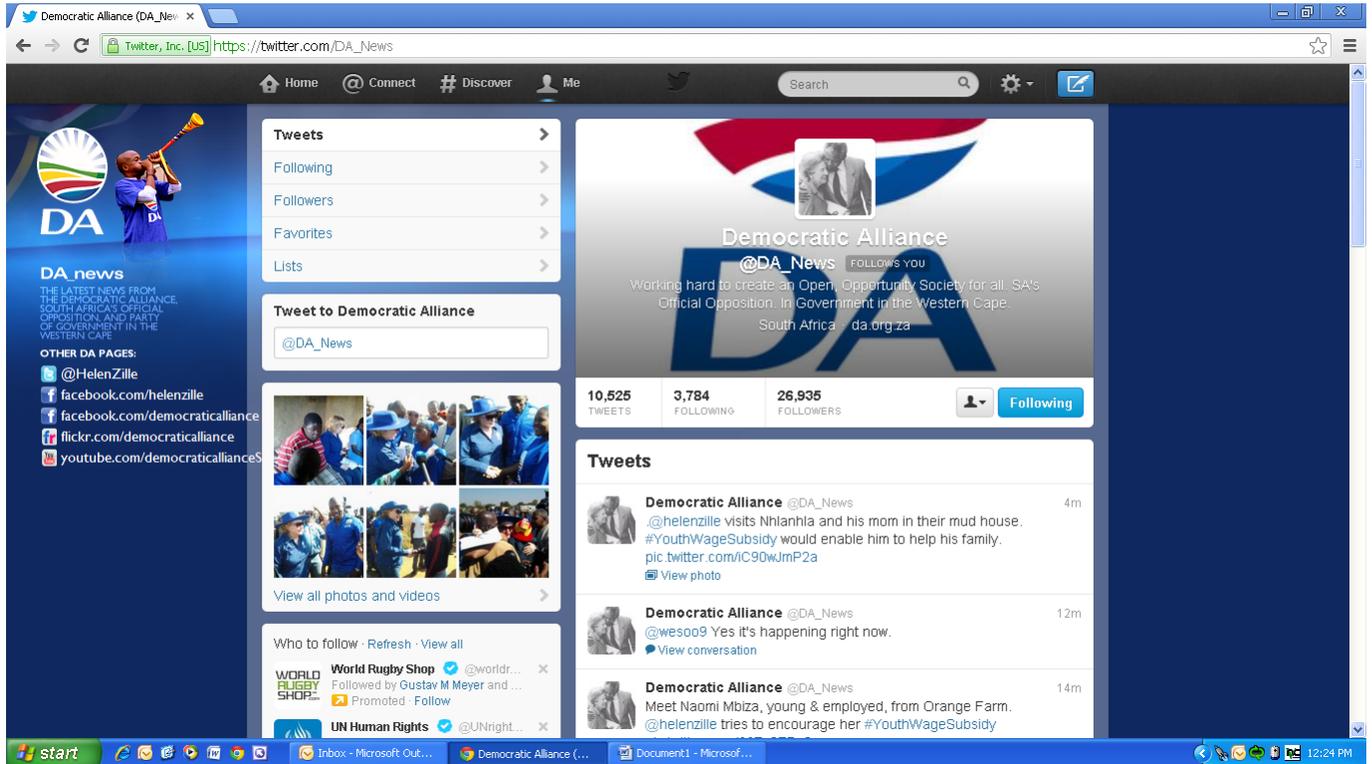
**This is what President Nelson Mandela said about Helen Suzman:**

"Your courage, integrity and principled commitment to justice have marked you as one of the outstanding figures in the history of public life in South Africa."

**Know your DA** #KnowYourDA

The DA's "Know your DA" campaign, sourced from [www.da.org.za](http://www.da.org.za) on 30 April 2013

## Appendix Q: How the DA is using Twitter<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> These screen shots were sourced from the Democratic Alliance's official Twitter page—[https://twitter.com/DA\\_News](https://twitter.com/DA_News) accessed by the author on 15 May 2013.

The screenshot shows a vertical list of seven tweets from the account Democratic Alliance (@DA\_News), all dated 13 May. Each tweet includes a profile picture of a man in a suit. The tweets are as follows:

- Tweet 1:** "We continue to fight oppression and racism to this day - @helenzille #KnowYourDA" with an "Expand" link.
- Tweet 2:** "WATCH the #KnowYourDA film here: [youtu.be/zfiF\\_8r3Dzk](https://youtu.be/zfiF_8r3Dzk)" with a "View media" link.
- Tweet 3:** "#KnowYourDA After her Steve Biko exposé @helenzille received threats and eventually went into hiding with her son. [pic.twitter.com/joeQblkJik](https://pic.twitter.com/joeQblkJik)" with a "View photo" link.
- Tweet 4:** "#KnowYourDA @helenzille hid various ANC activists doing the State of Emergency. [pic.twitter.com/FpkFBY5rvd](https://pic.twitter.com/FpkFBY5rvd)" with a "View photo" link.
- Tweet 5:** "Golden thread connects past, present & future: the fight against apartheid & its legacy of poverty & inequality- @LindiMazibuko #KnowYourDA" with an "Expand" link.
- Tweet 6:** "Every house meeting will start with a screening of the film, followed by in-depth discussion and question time.-@LindiMazibuko #KnowYourDA" with an "Expand" link.
- Tweet 7:** (Partially visible) "Democratic Alliance @DA\_News" dated 13 May.

At the bottom of the screenshot, a blue navigation bar is visible with a document icon and the text "Appendix DA TWITTE...".

 **Democratic Alliance** @DA\_News 13 May

WATCH the #KnowYourDA film here: [youtu.be/zfiF\\_8r3Dzk](https://youtu.be/zfiF_8r3Dzk)

 Hide media  Reply  Retweet  Favorite  More

 **YouTube**

Know Your DA - The story of the Democratic Alli...  



 **Dr. Wilmot James**  
DA Federal Chairperson

**Know Your DA - The story of the Democratic Alliance**

While much has been written about the liberation movements that spearheaded our struggle, there is another part of this history that remains largely untold. ...

[View on web](#)

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<b>13</b> RETWEETS	<b>5</b> FAVORITES	
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7:33 AM - 13 May 13 · Details Flag media

Appendix Q: How the DA is using Twitter

**Democratic Alliance** @DA\_News 2m

.@helenzille visits Nhlanhla and his mom in their mud house. #YouthWageSubsidy would enable him to help his family. pic.twitter.com/iC90wJmP2a

Hide photo Reply Retweet Favorite More



8:20 AM - 15 May 13 · Details Flag media

Reply to @DA\_News @helenzille

**Democratic Alliance** @DA\_News 30m

.@helenzille stops to greet a young man from Orange Farm #YouthWageSubsidy pic.twitter.com/VJU0hn2WhJ

Hide photo Reply Retweet Favorite More



7:57 AM - 15 May 13 · Details Flag media

Reply to @DA\_News @helenzille

Appendix Q: How the DA is using Twitter

**Democratic Alliance** @DA\_News 14m

Meet Naomi Mbiza, young & employed, from Orange Farm.  
@helenzille tries to encourage her #YouthWageSubsidy  
[pic.twitter.com/66Rz8EDc3y](https://pic.twitter.com/66Rz8EDc3y)

Hide photo Reply Retweet Favorite More



1 RETWEET

8:10 AM - 15 May 13 · Details Flag media

Reply to @DA\_News @helenzille

**Democratic Alliance** @DA\_News 2m

@helenzille says Nkandla was built on R206 million and Ethel, Naomi cannot even get R206 #YouthWageSubsidy  
[pic.twitter.com/spZv5veKWI](https://pic.twitter.com/spZv5veKWI)

Hide photo Reply Retweet Favorite More



8:54 AM - 15 May 13 · Details Flag media

Reply to @DA\_News @helenzille

Appendix Q: How the DA is using Twitter

**Democratic Alliance** @DA\_News 1h

We marched because Cosatu is blocking a policy that would change hundreds of thousands of lives. #YouthWageSubsidy  
[pic.twitter.com/i5f7PXxfu](https://pic.twitter.com/i5f7PXxfu)

 Hide photo  Reply  Retweet  Favorite  More



**5** RETWEETS 

7:37 AM - 15 May 13 · Details Flag media

Reply to @DA\_News

**Democratic Alliance** @DA\_News 13 May

#KnowYourDA After her Steve Biko exposé @helenzille received threats and eventually went into hiding with her son.  
[pic.twitter.com/joeQbIkJik](https://pic.twitter.com/joeQbIkJik)

 Hide photo  Reply  Retweet  Favorite  More



**9** RETWEETS 

7:32 AM - 13 May 13 · Details Flag media

Reply to @DA\_News @helenzille