The first democratic elections in South Africa, in April 1994, resulted in a victory for the African National Congress (ANC). In two major provinces, however, the ANC was defeated. In the Western Cape the ANC lost to the National Party (NP), and in KwaZulu/Natal it lost to the Inkatha Freedom Party. Most interpretations of the elections assert the pre-eminence of race and ethnicity. Our analysis of the ANC and the elections in the Western Cape suggests that such interpretations underestimate firstly the significance of the parties' election strategies and campaigns, at least in this province, and secondly (and more broadly) the complexity and variety of voters' decision-making. Political struggles within the ANC led it to adopt an election strategy which prioritised the large number of undecided coloured voters in the province, but did so in ways that limited the party's appeal to these target voters.

Introduction
In April 1994, South Africans voted in their country's first nationwide and non-racial general election. The African National Congress (ANC) swept to a comfortable victory, winning over 62 per cent of the vote. The ANC also gained outright control over six of the nine newly-demarcated provinces, and assumed control over a seventh (the Northern Cape) after winning exactly half of the seats in the provincial legislature. But the ANC was defeated in two provinces. It lost the election in KwaZulu/Natal to the Zulu nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party, and in the Western Cape to the National Party (NP).[1]

Most analyses of the election results have been framed in terms of race. Some scholars have described the elections as a ‘racial census’ (or ‘ethnic census’) in that there was a broad correlation between race and party support. Most white, coloured and Indian voters opted for the NP, whilst most African voters voted for the ANC. Thus, we are informed that the election constituted ‘to a large extent a mere “ethnic census.”’[2] Or that the results came ‘uncomfortably close to being a census of racial-cum-ethnic categories in South Africa.’[3] Proponents of this approach rarely explain precisely why voters voted along racial lines, i.e. there is no explicit theory of individual voting behaviour.[4] Implicitly, however, proponents of the ‘racial census' suggest that the correlation between race and voting reflected a causal relationship between the two, with (for example) African voters opting for the ANC because they were African and because the ANC was seen as the party for African voters. According to Welsh: ‘Overwhelmingly, race was the basis of voter choice’. [5] For Giliomee, it was a primarily race-based 'cultural identity' which determined voters' choices.[6]

The ‘racial census’ approach draws heavily -- and often explicitly -- on the work of American political scientist Donald Horowitz. In his Ethnic Groups in Conflict, Horowitz argues that party systems in societies with deep ethnic divisions tend to be dominated by ‘ethnic parties’, i.e. parties which normally derive their support from a single ethnic group and tend to run campaigns that play to ethnic nationalism. Voting is said to be ‘ascriptive’ in that it is determined by ethnic group membership or identity.[7]

Embedded in the ‘racial census' approach is a crude view of voters who mechanically record their race on the ballot papers rather than exercise any discretion, and a view of party electoral strategies and campaigns as significant only in terms of voter turnout.[8] These views fly in the face of available evidence. Firstly, Mattes' study of nationwide post-election polling data challenges many of the assumptions about individual voting behaviour implicit in the ‘racial census' view: voters did not vote in solid ethnic or racial blocks, few saw themselves as voting along ethnic or racial lines, and very few perceived their preferred parties as being ethnically or racially exclusive.[9] Secondly, at least one proponent of the ‘racial census' approach has himself provided a nuanced account of the NP's campaign which shows how it was not simply the kind of ethnic nationalist campaign that Horowitz might expect.[10] Both major parties campaigned as if they sought to win new supporters from outside their historical support bases.[11]

In this paper we examine the ANC and the elections in the Western Cape. The Western Cape is interesting not only because of the election outcome (i.e. an NP victory over the ANC) but also because of the composition of the electorate. The Western Cape is unique among the major provinces in South Africa in that African voters constituted a minority of the electorate. A majority of the electorate was coloured, and a quarter white.[12] The provincial election hinged upon the votes of coloured voters. It thus pitted the party that established apartheid (the NP) against the pre-eminent party of liberation (the ANC) for the votes of South Africans who had been neither the clear beneficiaries nor the main targets of either apartheid or liberation.

Most accounts of the elections in the Western Cape belittle the significance of the parties' election campaigns, reducing the outcome to apparently pre-set allegiances among voters. The NP's provincial
victory has been widely attributed to the numerical predominance of white and coloured voters in the electorate, as the NP won almost all of its votes from white and coloured voters. The preferences of coloured voters are explained either in cultural terms (in that coloured voters shared a language and religion with white voters and therefore voted for the NP) or in racial terms (in that the alleged racism of coloured voters against African people led to them voting against the ANC, hence for the NP). Both explanations see the outcome as pre-determined. If party campaigns played any role, it was simply to compound the influence of these factors.

We do not wish to discount entirely cultural or racial factors in the Western Cape elections, but we point to other factors which put these into perspective and to emphasise the contingency of the election result. The elections were fiercely contested, with the ANC and NP competing for the votes of a large number of initially undecided voters. The eventual victory of the NP reflected the interaction of campaign-specific factors with the underlying attitudes and concerns of the electorate. Race was, indirectly, an important factor in shaping the views of the electorate. But the ways in which race influenced the results were themselves shaped by the strategies and campaigns of the major political parties. Both the NP and ANC chose to run primarily issue-oriented campaigns, and on an ostensibly nonracial basis (although neither party entirely fulfilled their nonracial claims). Moreover, the strategy and campaign of at least one of the major parties -- the ANC -- was far from pre-determined, being rather the outcome of considerable internal debate.

The first half of this paper examines the ANC's choice of an election strategy and its actual campaign. After a bitter struggle within the party, the ANC adopted a strategy focused on winning support among coloured voters. The ANC initially sought to appeal to these voters through a forward-looking, issue-oriented campaign focused on the policies that the ANC promised to implement if elected. The NP also ran an issue-oriented campaign, but one focused on the alleged costs of ANC policies to coloured voters. In the Western Cape it was the NP and not the ANC which succeeded in defining the issues that framed the election. The second half examines the interaction between the parties' campaigns and the electorate. This section uses opinion poll data from July/August 1993, i.e., before the election campaign really took off; details of the survey are provided in an appendix. This pre-election polling data suggests that voters' attitudes on a range of issues, and not simply their ethnic identity, underlay their voting intentions. Any correlation between race and voting is due to a third factor -- attitudes on key issues -- rather than to a causal relationship between race and voting themselves.

ANC Strategy
The composition of the Western Cape electorate posed strategic challenges to both the NP and ANC. Only about 18 per cent (or just under 440,000) of the estimated 2.4 million voters in the province were African, and only 25 per cent (or about 600,000 voters) were white. About 56 per cent (or about 1.3 million voters) were coloured.[13] Both the NP and ANC were therefore compelled to extend their historical support bases if they were to win the election, and to do so each had to fashion a new image without losing existing supporters. The NP sought to appeal to coloured voters -- whom it had previously discriminated against -- without losing the support of white voters to far-right-wing parties. The ANC similarly sought to win the support of coloured voters, but without losing the support of African voters to the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). Both parties also prioritised the Western Cape, spurred on by the uncertainty of the provincial election result and the desire to demonstrate their nonracial credentials.

The NP chose to concentrate on winning the support of coloured voters in the province, and largely disregarded the challenge posed by far-right parties for the support of white voters. The party ran a predominantly negative, issue-based campaign against the ANC.

The ANC is bad news for the country. The NP builds schools; the ANC disrupts schooling. The NP builds houses; the ANC breaks houses down. The NP stands for peace and reconciliation; the ANC intimidates people. The NP builds hospitals; the ANC's supporters toyi-toyi in hospital corridors while people die inside.[14]

When African squatters occupied houses built for coloured families, the NP warned voters that: 'Your house is not safe under the ANC'. Its newspaper advertising proclaimed: 'The ANC is not yet part of the government and already its supporters are taking houses which belong to legitimate owners'. 'Stop the Comrades, Vote NP' was a widely used slogan. The NP campaign constantly flirted with racism. One NP photo-magazine contained such overtly racist material that the Independent Electoral Commission ordered the party to recall all 80,000 copies. At the same time, the NP proclaimed itself reborn as the 'new' National
Party, distancing itself from apartheid and claiming the credit for inaugurating the 'new South Africa'. The election was presented as a choice between 'the new NP', and especially its leader, De Klerk, and an ANC committed to Africanisation and responsible for disorder.[15]

The ANC nationally ran a very different campaign.[16] Informed by extensive polling and focus group research, the ANC's leadership implemented a dual strategy. On the one hand the ANC sought to mobilise its massive support base among African voters through asserting the importance of this 'liberation' election. This approach was reflected in its initial campaign theme and slogan, 'Now Is The Time'. On the other hand, the ANC sought to broaden its support among coloured, Indian and even white voters, and give credence to its claims to be a nonracial party. Its massive advertising campaign in the print media detailed its policy proposals, with the objective of convincing undecided voters and weak supporters of other parties that the ANC would ensure 'A Better Life for All' -- as it proclaimed in its key slogan in the last months of the campaign. Never confident of securing a decisive victory, the ANC's national leadership employed both approaches.[17]

In the Western Cape, the ANC provincial leadership concurred on the need to implement both these approaches. But there was deep disagreement over how or where to strike a balance between them in terms of the distribution of resources. Provincial leaders divided into 'Africanists', who sought to prioritise a 'liberation'-oriented campaign among African voters, and advocates of a 'coloured focus' who urged the ANC to target undecided coloured voters. The contrast between these two approaches was particularly marked in the Western Cape because of the province's demographic profile.

The Africanists within the Western Cape ANC argued that the ANC should initially concentrate on consolidating support among African voters in townships and squatter settlements. Only after it had shored up its core constituency of African voters, they argued, could the ANC move effectively and from a position of strength into coloured areas. This approach was based on four beliefs. Firstly, the Africanists understood the ANC's historical mission as the emancipation of the African majority, which had been more oppressed than any other racial group. Secondly, key Africanists believed that African voters comprised substantially more than 18 per cent of the electorate. The ANC thus not only had a moral obligation to ensure the vote of its support base, but would also benefit thereby since there were many more African ANC voters than generally thought. The Africanists further believed that the ANC had to counter not only the challenge of the PAC but also the NP's attempts to secure African support in the province's huge shack settlements through the NP's alliance with prominent shack-lords.[18] Finally, the Africanists argued that a multiracial strategy played into the hands of the NP by accentuating supposed racial differences.[19]

Critics of the Africanist approach countered that the ANC could only win through securing a considerable number of votes outside of its core constituency. They pointed to public and internal ANC research which consistently showed that ANC support was very strong among African voters, but weak among the coloured voters. Whilst the support of African voters should not be taken for granted, they argued, resources should instead be concentrated on winning the support of the large number of undecided, mostly coloured, voters. The ANC should seek to reassure them on the issues of jobs, housing, education and violence, and to persuade them that the ANC was the home for their hopes and aspirations. To do this, these activists argued, the ANC had to address the distinct fears and concerns of coloured voters.[20]

The multiplicity of issues involved in this debate rendered it difficult to clarify or resolve. Arguments ranged across questions of strategy, of tactics, of principles, and of power within and over the Western Cape ANC. This meant, as one official notes, that 'the debates were quite subtle and not necessarily neatly boxed into the two camps'.[21] In general, the Africanists understood the debate as a zero-sum contest over resources between African and coloured areas,[22] whilst their critics saw it as a question of tactics. As one of the latter put it, it was a question 'of how to talk about coloured people as 'coloured people'; the differences were in terms of what our emphasis should be'.[23]

The debate within the ANC over its strategy in the elections was far from novel, being in some respects just the latest chapter in a long-running controversy. For decades the Charterist movement adopted an eclectic approach to organisation and strategy, hovering between nonracial and multiracial positions. The ANC and its allies were committed to a nonracial political settlement, in which South Africans would be enfranchised equally without regard to race. Since African people were not only particularly oppressed, but also constituted a majority of the population, nonracialism entailed the leadership and primary role of the 'African masses'. At the same time, however, the Charterist movement consistently sought to extend its
support base through an appeal to coloured, Indian and white South Africans, and repeatedly employed a multiracial approach to accommodate what it saw to be the varied needs and interests of the different constituencies. The Congress Alliance in the 1950s was explicitly multiracial, and the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the 1980s accommodated de facto multiracialism (and was therefore regarded with some wariness by important Africanist groups within the Charterist fold).

Debates in the Western Cape over multiracialism and nonracialism were centered around the so-called 'coloured question'. Should Charterists organise coloured people along nonracial lines, or within separate structures specifically for coloured people? The unbanning of the ANC in 1990 seemed to have resolved this question, with the nonracial ANC incorporating most Charterist organisations and activists. But many coloured people continued to regard the ANC as an organisation for African people -- a perception supported by the ANC's overwhelmingly African membership, even in the Western Cape. A number of prominent coloured ANC activists felt marginalised within the ANC. This led to some discussion in the early 1990s of reviving the UDF or some other organisation tailored more explicitly to the needs and fears of coloured people in the province. Whilst the ANC decided against separate organisation on the grounds that it would violate its nonracial character, the debate around strategy continued.[24]

At the outset of the debate around election strategy, in 1993, the Africanists were in an apparently strong position in the Western Cape ANC. They included Tony Yengeni, the provincial general secretary, and Zou Kota, the initial election campaign co-ordinator, and enjoyed strong support from the ANC's branches (most of which were located in African areas). But in the course of late 1993 the Africanists were marginalised within the election campaign machinery and eventually lost the debate over strategy. This was not the result of any formal decision taken in the ANC's regional structures, since the predominance of branches in African areas constituted an obstacle to the formal privileging of leaders or tactics concerned with coloured or white areas. Rather, the advocates of a coloured focus -- mostly white and coloured former UDF activists -- managed to extend incrementally their control over the provincial electoral machinery and steer ANC strategy along their preferred lines.

The Africanists were marginalised in two ways. Firstly, they lost their positions of influence at the top of the electoral machinery. In November 1993 Yengeni was defeated in elections for the post of provincial secretary general by Lerumo Kalako, who was African but was not so closely associated with the Africanist approach; overall responsibility for the elections was moved from Yengeni and Kota to the (coloured) provincial treasurer, Ebrahim Rasool, whilst administrative control was transferred to Garth Strachan, a former (white) exile. Secondly, the design of specialised elections structures further sidelined the Africanists. Yengeni and Kota retained control of the African Areas Committee which co-ordinated the campaign in African townships and shack settlements, but retained little influence elsewhere. Neither participated in the 'Command Centre' formed to provide overall campaign co-ordination[25]

A key factor in the choice of a coloured focus was pressure from the ANC's national leadership. On the details of the campaign, the national leadership allowed the Western Cape ANC considerable latitude. Much of the campaign material -- including leaflets, posters and even newspaper advertisements -- was designed and organised at the provincial level. But the national leadership went to considerable lengths to persuade the Western Cape ANC to adopt a strategy in line with its perceived national priorities. From mid-1992, if not earlier, it suspected that the ANC faced likely defeat in the Western Cape,[26] a view later reinforced by the party's own polling research. The national leadership's diagnosis was that a special effort should be made to convert coloured voters to support the ANC.

Mandela himself had repeatedly urged the ANC to pay heed to the particular concerns of coloured voters. In late 1991 he controversially intervened in the Western Cape ANC in support of the candidacy of Allan Boesak for the post of provincial ANC chairperson.[27] In late 1993 the ANC's national elections organisers sought to intervene more subtly, structuring the process of strategic decision-making on their terms. Crucially, they used the ANC's own opinion poll and focus group research both to inform and to frame election strategy meetings, focusing organisers' minds on the composition and concerns of the ANC's target voters. Provincial activists discussed possible strategies after they discussed the research results.[28]

The national leadership was sufficiently worried about the Western Cape that they flew the ANC's American advisers Stan Greenberg and Frank Greer to Cape Town in October 1993 to add their considerable authority to discussions of the ANC's polling data for the province. Greenberg, a pollster and academic with specialist South African expertise, and Greer, a media strategist, had played central roles in Bill Clinton's successful
1992 presidential campaign in the US. Greenberg and the ANC's South African pollsters argued that the ANC had to direct its efforts into increasing support among coloured voters. Notwithstanding some Africanists' wariness of the polling 'experts', the strategic debate was recast. Henceforth, to challenge the strategic focus on coloured voters meant challenging the 'evidence' presented by the ANC's own advisors and endorsed by the national leadership.

A second factor in the adoption of a coloured focus was the role played by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). COSATU was particularly sensitive to the 'coloured question' since many of its members in the province were coloured. Moreover, whilst COSATU's leadership, officials and shop stewards overwhelmingly backed the ANC, a majority of rank-and-file members were acknowledged to hold more conservative, often pro-NP views.[29] In late 1993 and early 1994 the ANC's electoral machinery was restructured so that it was formally accountable not to the ANC alone but to the ANC alliance, including COSATU. This enabled the ANC to draw on the expertise and resources of COSATU, especially among the coloured working-class. In so doing it strengthened the advocates of a coloured focus relative to the Africanists.

**The ANC's Campaign**

The ANC effectively ran two election campaigns in the Western Cape. The continuous, often subtle tension over strategy and emphasis was resolved, in practice, by running these two campaigns separately -- although this was never the explicit intention. The first was aimed at coloured voters, and was waged through the press[30] and high-profile rallies, and later through door-to-door canvassing. The second was aimed at African residents of the province's townships, shack settlements and farms. It was conducted primarily through mobilisation and organisation at the local level, with little use of the press or of rallies.[31] These two campaigns had separate co-ordinating structures: the Command Centre (which took over from an initial Elections Co-ordinating Committee) and the de facto independent African Areas Committee, respectively.

In South Africa as a whole the ANC directed about two-thirds of its resources to consolidating existing support, which was concentrated in African areas, and only one-third on recruiting new supporters. In the Western Cape, these proportions were reversed. This meant that resources in the Western Cape were concentrated in coloured rather than African areas. The Western Cape also enjoyed a disproportionate share of the ANC's national election expenditures, receiving some 20 per cent of total campaign monies despite the province accounting for only 10 per cent of the entire electorate.[32]

The ANC's campaign for coloured people's votes in the Western Cape went through three broad phases. Firstly, the ANC concentrated on presenting its 'Plan', based around proposals in its draft Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). In early March it shifted to a more aggressive approach, contrasting the ANC with the NP and even attacking the NP directly. It also began to publicise endorsements of the ANC by prominent community leaders. In the last weeks of the campaign, in April, the ANC stepped up the intensity of its attacks on the NP, whilst publicising further endorsements and offering optimistic messages about the future.

The first phase of the provincial campaign was closely tied to the ANC's national strategy, which was formulated in a series of planning sessions in the second half of 1993. The ANC's national leadership heeded the advice of its American advisors Greenberg and Greer to run a positive campaign, focused on the real 'issues' and the ANC's capacity to deal with them. As Greer put it:

South Africans so clearly want the elections to be about their lives. I believe the NP will seek to divert attention to other subjects -- like how many communists [are] on the list. And our challenge, the ANC's challenge, is to keep the election on the issues.

Greenberg added:

You have an electorate that's serious. South Africans are not just voting to affirm history, they're voting for a direction and a set of policies.[33]

Greenberg and Greer advocated a campaign which mirrored, in several respects, the 1992 Clinton presidential campaign. The first step of this campaign comprised a series of 'people's forums', not unlike Clinton-style town meetings, in December 1993. The forums were designed to allow voters to put across their views to the ANC -- or at least to show the ANC giving voters this opportunity. As an ANC advertisement invited:
Join us at a People's Forum in the Western Cape. Give us your views on jobs, affirmative action, crime, security, language and culture. Tell us where you stand. Because, above all, the ANC stands for you. The forums were aimed primarily at coloured voters. In one key week, only one out of twelve forums was held in an African residential area.[34]

The ANC began to advertise its policies on key issues from mid-January 1994, following this up in the second half of February with extensive newspaper advertising.[35] Most of the ANC's ads during this phase comprised masses of grey print, summarising the proposals in the RDP. As Greenberg explained: 'Even if you don't read or can't read the details you get the message: the ANC has a plan; it's serious'.[36] The foci of the six main national 'Our Plan' ads is evident from their headlines:

"WHY TEN YEARS FREE QUALITY EDUCATION MAKES SENSE'
'MAKING EDUCATION FREE AND EQUAL TO ALL'
'BUILDING HOUSES AND IMPROVING SERVICES'
'PUTTING A STOP TO CRIME AND VIOLENCE'
'2.5 MILLION JOBS AND FREE EDUCATION'
'IMPROVING THE LIVES OF WOMEN'

ANC speakers also focused on the RDP as 'Our Plan' in their speeches at party rallies and other events. At a rally in Cape Town's predominantly coloured suburb of Retreat on 13 February, Mandela said that the ANC would create 2.5 million jobs over 10 years and build a million houses in five years. Other ANC speakers echoed these themes, sometimes reciting them like a mantra.[38]

The Western Cape ANC produced a number of ads which added a local angle to 'Our Plan'. Besides advertising its candidates in the province, the ANC responded to the NP's attack over the illegal occupations of houses in Delft, undertook to create housing and jobs in the Western Cape, and pledged adequate spending on education.[39] Speakers at rallies sought to reassure coloured voters. At the Retreat rally, for example, Mandela attempted to quell rumours that the ANC would take away coloured people's homes and give them to Africans, or that it would adopt a similar approach to jobs through affirmative action. But the main thrust of electioneering in this first phase was the broad presentation of the ANC's plan, which was not tailored to the particular needs and fears of coloured voters. The ANC produced few pamphlets for local distribution during this phase, and posters were primarily concerned with advertising rallies and meetings.[40]

Almost as soon as the ANC saturated the press with its Our Plan ads, in the second half of February, ANC leaders in the Western Cape began to worry about the appropriateness of this approach in their province. The NP's provocative campaign had transformed the context. Grassroots ANC activists were demanding ammunition to throw back at the NP. At the same time, polls suggested that the ANC's initial approach was not attracting significantly more votes. The somewhat desperate provincial campaign leadership therefore decided to shift toward a more aggressive approach, attacking the NP. Provincial ANC officials later claimed that they had not expected this new approach to win many more votes -- because, survey research suggested, undecided voters were more interested in looking ahead to the future rather than back at the NP's checkered past. Rather, they explained, aggressive campaigning would motivate local ANC activists.[41]

The second phase of the campaign, described by the campaign administrator as 'Attack, Contrast and Endorsement (ACE)',[42] commenced in early March. ACE comprised attacks on the NP, contrasting the ANC's RDP to the NP's alleged lack of a plan, and endorsements of the ANC by community leaders at rallies and in the press. The 'contrast' component was part of a national shift in strategy,[43] but the Western Cape put a particularly aggressive spin on it, emphasising 'attack'. ANC head-office was reportedly furious at the Western Cape's shift to a directly negative campaign. But, having already allowed the province some leeway, they could do little to rein it in.

Attacks were focused on the NP's candidate for provincial premier, Hernus Kriel, who the NP itself was downplaying in favor of De Klerk.[44] At many ANC events and rallies at least one speaker would target Kriel.[45] More importantly, the ANC distributed aggressive pamphlets. One showed a photo of Kriel under the headline, 'A Vote for the NP Is a Vote for Fear', picking up on comments made by Kriel which implied that he approved of torturing prisoners. The pamphlet combined this attack with drawing a contrast between the NP and ANC. 'The NP has no plan', it alleged; the ANC's plan to deal with unemployment, housing, education, crime and violence was detailed on the reverse side. In March, three quarters of a million pamphlets were printed -- 10 times the combined total in the previous two months.[46]
The change in tack toward an aggressive campaign coincided with renewed efforts to organise widespread door-to-door canvassing in coloured areas. Some provincial leaders felt that canvassing was more important than rallies where speakers just preached to the already converted. Earlier efforts to promote canvassing through the recruitment of canvassers at branch level had largely floundered due to financial hold-ups, lack of training, and inertia in many branches. Provincial organisers therefore formed, in March, a centrally controlled task team, comprising 120 canvassers in at least eleven vehicles. In the style of UDF 'blitzes' a decade before, the task team would be used to distribute leaflets and, together with ANC candidates, visit voters on a door-to-door basis. The team was mainly deployed in coloured areas such as Kraaifontein, Mitchell's Plain, Grassy Park, Retreat and Macassar, where there were believed to be many undecided voters but inadequate local ANC organisation.

At rallies and in advertising, the ANC publicised endorsements of the party by well-known provincial figures. The intention was to show that the ANC provided a home to coloured voters, for example, as well as emphasising the party's claimed respectability. At rallies, the endorsers would share the platform with ANC candidates and speakers, and would be called on to stand and be recognised by the audience. The ANC also sought to reassure and appeal to coloured voters in terms of the composition of its list of candidates, nearly half of whom were coloured, as was the party's candidate for the post of provincial premier.

The endgame or final phase of the campaign got underway at the very end of March. The shift to this third phase nationally was initiated at an ANC conference on 26 March, where the RDP was formally launched. Ironically, the RDP itself played a minor role in this phase, which was instead marked by intensified attacks on the NP, further endorsements by community leaders, and upbeat messages about the future under an ANC government. The ANC was particularly aggressive in its attacks on the NP in the Western Cape. This third phase involved a massive increase in pamphleteering.

Newspaper advertising was extensively used to portray the NP as the party of apartheid crimes and atrocities. Several of the more vicious attacks were made by COSATU, which had hitherto taken a cautious back-seat in public. For instance, COSATU sponsored an ad showing a woman grieving over the coffin of a youth reportedly killed by the South African Police in 1985. 'This Is the Reality of 46 Years of National Party Rule', proclaimed the headline; 'Don't Let Them Stain Your Hands with the Blood of Our Children'. (Ironically, it turned out that the woman in the photo was now an NP supporter!). Another COSATU ad pictured a full-page cemetery of white crosses on a black background, and under each cross appeared the name and date of death of well-known anti-apartheid activists killed in the struggle against apartheid. 'Now', it asked, 'on April 27 where are you going to put your cross? Stop the National Party. Vote ANC'.

Canvassing efforts kicked into high gear at this time and were supplemented by greatly increased volumes of leaflets. In April the Western Cape ANC printed 3 million pamphlets, i.e. four times as many as in March, as well as 84,000 posters. The leading pamphlets struck out at the NP as aggressively as the ANC's newspaper ads. Under the words, 'Beware of Kriel's 'new' NP!' one leaflet showed a cartoon caricature of Kriel holding three mean-looking dogs, two of which wore collars identifying them as notorious African warlords widely seen as responsible for violence in Cape Town's sprawling shack settlements, and now standing as NP candidates. R50 notes are falling out of Kriel's pocket, whilst burning shacks line the background horizon. 'Will you be safe in their hands?', asks the leaflet. The leaflet offered a neat inversion of one of the NP's own campaign slogans, linking the NP (rather than the ANC) to arson and destruction. The ANC printed at least three-quarters of a million copies of this leaflet.

At rallies, too, ANC candidates carried on this anti-NP offensive. A banner used at a series of rallies proclaimed 'Save the Cape from NP racism', and speakers castigated the NP for its 'racist' campaign. Anti-NP invective was combined with further endorsements of the ANC by community leaders such as the educationist Franklin Sonn (who was appointed as South African ambassador to Washington after the elections).

The Western Cape ANC also emphasised its optimistic vision of the future, in line with the national ANC plan to reassure doubting voters. A series of ads featured portraits of Mandela or Boesak with 'personal' messages to the voting public, and noted their calls for all South Africans to vote for 'A Better Life for All'. Voters were urged to mark their ballots for freedom. Boesak summed this up when he confidently told the crowd at a rally in Mitchell's Plain that:
What you've been fighting for, what you've been working for, what you've been suffering for is coming true next Tuesday. What the ANC said 82 years ago will now come true next week. We will all be free next week. Mandela will be president next week. And the ANC will win in the Western Cape next week.[57]

Explaining the Results
At the staff of 1994 many ANC candidates and grassroots activists had confidently predicted victory in the Western Cape. Like Boesak on that sunny afternoon in Mitchell's Plain on the eve of the election, many activists felt that an ANC victory was an historical inevitability, the unavoidable culmination of the liberation struggle. Even in the face of opinion polls and other evidence, many activists refused to think of defeat, and anticipated that the election would, at worst, result in a tie or hung provincial legislature.[58] But when the votes were counted, the NP was found to have won an outright victory, with over 53 per cent of the provincial vote. The ANC had only won two-thirds as many votes, with 33 per cent of the total. The smaller parties shared the remaining 14 per cent.[59]

The NP's victory was based on their success in attracting the support of coloured voters. It is estimated that just under 60 per cent of all coloured voters cast their votes for the NP, against about 20 per cent for the ANC and 15-20 per cent who did not vote. This means that at least two out of three of the NP's votes came from coloured voters.

But neither the level nor the pattern of NP support was pre-determined. The most important feature of the Western Cape electorate at the outset of the campaigns was the high proportion of voters who were undecided about which party they would vote for (or even if they would vote at all). In mid-1993, 32 per cent of Western Cape voters were undecided, compared to just 18 per cent of voters nationwide.[60] In the election, eight months later, only 13 per cent of Western Cape voters are thought to have abstained from voting, i.e. much the same proportion as nationally.[61] The parties' support in mid-1993 and in the actual elections are tabulated in Table 1.

NP support grew by almost 50 per cent during the campaign through the conversion of previously undecided, mostly coloured, voters.[62] The question we must ask of the campaigns in the Western Cape is therefore why was it the NP rather than the ANC that attracted these initially undecided voters?

In mid-1993, 30 per cent of the electorate declared they would vote for the NP if an election was held 'tomorrow'. Only slightly fewer voters -- or 26 per cent of the electorate -- chose the ANC. Support for the Democratic Party (DP) and other small parties was negligible (with each of the NP and ANC enjoying over twice as much support as all of the smaller parties put together). Neither the considerable number of undecided voters nor the major parties' support bases were evenly distributed across the different racial groups. Less than one per cent of African voters were undecided, compared to 15 per cent of white voters and a massive 51 per cent of coloured voters. More than seven out of eight undecided voters were coloured. There are also clear patterns of support by race for the different parties, as is clear in Figure 1 and Table 2.

African voters opted en masse for the ANC, with the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) picking up limited support. Three out of four white voters preferred historically white parties: the NP, DP and one or other of the far right-wing groups. One in every two coloured voters was undecided, as we have already seen, whilst one in three opted for the NP.

In Table 2 these results are presented as percentages of the total Western Cape electorate -- i.e. weighted according to the estimated composition of the total electorate. In other words, the rows and columns altogether add up to 100 per cent.

Table 2 shows that in mid-1993 NP-supporting coloured voters comprised 18 per cent of the total electorate, for example, and NP-supporting white voters comprised 12 per cent. From this we can see, for example, that the support base of the NP was three-fifths coloured and two-fifths white.

When the elections were actually held, eight months later, many commentators identified a correlation between race and party preference, and concluded that the elections were merely a 'racial census'. The data shown in Figure 1 and Table 2 raise some problems with the application of this approach to the Western Cape. In mid-1993, only one in three voters intended to vote for their 'natural' ethnic party (i.e. African people intending to vote for the ANC or PAC, and white people intending to vote for the DP, NP or far right-
wing parties). Even if we go so far as to treat the NP as the 'natural' ethnic party of coloured voters, then just over 50 per cent of the voters surveyed corresponded to the voters in a true 'racial census'. The reason for both of these results was that coloured voters were conspicuously not lined up in unanimous support for the NP at the start of the campaign. Less than one-third of coloured voters in the province said that they would vote for the NP if an election were held 'tomorrow'; over half the coloured electorate were undecided, whilst 18 per cent preferred to vote for the ANC or DP. The pattern of voter preferences in this province in mid-1993 undermines any argument that the elections were simply a racial census.

Many undecided coloured voters did indeed convert to the NP during the election campaign, but this raises the questions 'why?' and 'what changed between mid-1993 and April 1994?'. Simply 'being' coloured was an insufficient explanation: Why did being coloured (supposedly) mean voting for the NP in April 1994 but not intending to do so eight months earlier? Why did a correlation emerge between race and voting? Secondly, how do we explain those coloured voters who 'deviated' from the supposed 'norm' of voting for the NP by voting (or intending to vote) for the ANC or DP, or by not voting at all? As we can see in Table 2, two out of five prospective ANC voters in the Western Cape in mid-1993 were coloured or white.

In industrialised societies, such as in Britain and elsewhere in Northern Europe, there has been a close correlation between class and voting patterns (although voting analysts desist from 'explaining' the results as simply a 'class census'!).[63] Post-election survey data for South Africa as a whole suggests that there was a strong correlation between income and voting, and between occupational class and voting. This correlation remains even when we control for the effect of race.[64]

Was there any relationship between class and voting in the Western Cape? We have not been able to compute the relationship between occupational class and voting preference from the mid-1993 survey data, and data for incomes are notoriously unreliable in opinion polls, especially in settings such as South Africa. But we have been able to examine voting preferences according to level of education, which we believe represents a reasonable proxy for class -- working-class voters have consistently less schooling than middle-class voters. Voters with schooling up to and including standard 8 can reasonably be considered as 'lower class', and voters with standard 9, matric or post-matric education as 'higher class'.[65]

Table 3 shows the declared voting intentions of the different educational categories as percentages of the total electorate (i.e., in the same way as declared voting intentions according to race were presented in Table 2). Counter-intuitively, perhaps, and in contrast to the situation nationally, both the NP and ANC attracted support across the educational (or class) spectrum in the Western Cape. There does not appear to be any relationship between education (or class) and voting, with the NP having marginally more support than the ANC among both lower-class and higher-class voters.

Class should not be written off as a factor in voting preferences, however, Figure 2 shows how education or class combined with race in relation to declared voting intentions. The NP's support base comprised predominantly lower-class coloured voters on the one hand, and predominantly higher-class white voters on the other.[66] The ANC's support base comprised predominantly lower-class African voters and higher-class coloured and white voters. This is not to say that higher-class African voters or lower-class coloured voters did not support the ANC, but rather that they were relatively less important than other sections of the same classes. The Western Cape electorate is divided by class as well as race. In other words, each class is racially-fragmented and each racial group is differentiated by class. The had news for the ANC was that most undecided voters were lower-class coloured voters, i.e. they shared the same background as many supporters of the NP but few of the ANC.

Were there any other demographic or socioeconomic factors which correlated significantly with voting patterns? The ANC had negligible support among coloured voters in rural areas, and disproportionately high support among English-speakers. But these factors were not independent of class, since coloured voters in rural areas were almost all low income farmworkers with very limited schooling, and English-speaking coloured voters were predominantly higher-class. Similarly, coloured women were more likely than coloured men to be undecided voters -- but they were also less qualified in terms of schooling, and therefore more likely to be lower-class by our criteria. Differences of class, broadly understood, explain most of the variations in declared voting intention within racial groups.

The combination of race and class provides a close correlation with voting patterns in the Western Cape. But why? What is it about race or class that inclined different voters to support one or other party? Why was it
the ‘norm’ for lower-class coloured voters to tend towards the NP, whilst a sizable proportion of higher-class coloured voters supported the (and DP)? We can shed some light on these questions by examining voters’ concerns, and their attitudes to the parties, their leaders and policies.

Let us start by considering the voters’ mood. In mid-1993 Western Cape voters, like their counterparts in other provinces, were deeply unhappy about the situation in South Africa. Asked ‘what are the things that are going right in this country?’, two out of three Western Cape voters replied ‘nothing’! The main things mentioned as going wrong were political violence, the economy and lack of jobs, and crime. Only one in five voters mentioned the continued existence of apartheid and racism --almost all of whom intended to vote for the ANC. NP supporters and undecided voters were more likely than ANC supporters to worry about increasing political violence and crime.

There were sharper differences between NP supporters and ANC supporters in terms of their expectations. The overwhelming majority of African voters -- who were almost all ANC supporters -- expected their living conditions to improve, the country to become more peaceful, and (unsurprisingly) there to be more freedom. Over 80 per cent, for example, expected that their living conditions would improve, against just four per cent who expected them to worsen. White voters, by contrast, were pessimistic: two out of three expected their living conditions to worsen. Coloured voters had more varied expectations, with about 40 per cent broadly optimistic, 20 per cent pessimistic, and the remainder unsure. ANC-supporting coloured voters were notably more optimistic than NP-supporting voters, whilst undecided coloured voters were the least optimistic, and most uncertain, about their futures.

Overall, ANC supporters were more concerned about the continuation of apartheid, and more optimistic about future changes, than NP supporters or undecided voters. In other words, most voters who welcomed change and bemoaned the lack of it hitherto intended to vote for the ANC, whilst voters who were most perturbed by present changes (including crime and violence) and pessimistic about future change either opted for the NP or were undecided.[67]

Voters expressed particular concern over political violence, and viewed the ANC poorly on this issue. Forty per cent of Western Cape voters named the ANC as a party that caused a lot of violence, compared to just six per cent who named the NP. Over ten times as many white and coloured voters named the ANC as named the NP. Similarly, 30 per cent of coloured voters named the ANC as a party which ‘cannot control its supporters’. Undecided voters were particularly concerned about political violence and opposed the ANC because of it. A second pressing concern among Western Cape voters was the economy, and especially employment. Voters divided almost equally over whether the ANC or the NP was the party most likely to ‘provide jobs for the people’, although the ANC was seen as most likely to ‘do a lot for poor people' in particular. But when asked directly whether ‘an ANC government will mismanage the economy?’, almost half of the electorate agreed, and a further one in six voters were unsure. Twice as many undecided coloured voters agreed as disagreed with the statement. The ANC was thus compromised in the eyes of undecided voters in terms of the two most pressing issues, violence and jobs.

The ANC was also seen by many coloured and white voters as being distanced from them and their problems. One in two coloured voters and almost three out of four white voters agreed that ‘an ANC government will neglect the problems of coloureds, Indians and whites'; one in four coloured voters identified the ANC as a party they were afraid of (compared to a meager two per cent who mentioned the NP). Only one in five coloured voters named the ANC as a party ‘with a place for people like me’.

The ostensibly ‘new’ NP was seen in a much better light among the crucial category of undecided voters. Some voters were critical of the NP’s past performance, but generally viewed it positively in terms of the future -- and certainly did so by comparison with the ANC. For example, one-third of coloured voters agreed that ‘the NP has ruined our economy and created unemployment’, but a similar proportion of voters disagreed with this statement. Only one-fifth of coloured voters believed that ‘the NP cannot be trusted to improve our lives’.

There is further evidence of the NP’s advantage over the ANC in terms of issues of concern to key voters. Voters were asked to identify the most important problem the new government should work on after the elections, and were then asked which party would be best to deal with that problem. Almost half of the coloured electorate chose the NP, with only one in five voters choosing the ANC. Among undecided coloured voters, the NP was chosen almost three times as often as the ANC.
One of the NP's big drawcards was its leader, F.W. De Klerk. Forty-two per cent of the electorate said that De Klerk was the best person to be president, compared to just 26 per cent who favored Mandela or other ANC leaders. Support for the individual ANC leaders thus ran at the same level as support for the ANC as a party, but support for De Klerk was almost one-and-a-half-times the support for the NP. Among coloured voters De Klerk had a clear advantage, with 55 per cent saying he would be the best president against 10 per cent who said Mandela. De Klerk also led Mandela by 46 per cent to six per cent among undecided coloured voters. These contrasting attitudes to the rival party leaders was also evident in answers to the question, 'do you trust and believe what X says?', as we can see in Table 4.[68]

African voters generally liked and trusted Mandela and other ANC leaders. Undecided coloured voters, on the other hand, were conspicuously wary of the ANC's leaders. Mandela himself was trusted by 18 per cent, but distrusted by 28 per cent of undecided coloured voters. Allan Boesak, the controversial (coloured) ANC Western Cape chairperson and candidate for provincial premier, was better known and much better trusted among African than among undecided coloured voters. De Klerk, whilst distrusted by African voters, was widely trusted among undecided coloured voters.

In summary, at the outset of the campaign about one-quarter of the Western Cape electorate supported the ANC, about one-third supported the NP, and a further third were undecided. The NP's support was strongest among coloured (especially lower-class coloured) voters, as well as white voters (most of whom are higher-class). The ANC, with significant (but minority) support among higher-class white and coloured voters, was strongest among African voters (most of whom are lower-class). The outcome of the election rested on the competition for the votes of undecided voters, and the NP had several advantages in this contest. Most broadly, these voters were overwhelmingly lower-class coloured voters, similar in socioeconomic and attitudinal profile to many of the NP's existing supporters.

More specifically, the NP was the favoured party of voters who worried about change, including most undecided voters. Undecided voters saw the ANC as bearing responsibility for political violence, viewed its leaders with wariness (especially in contrast to the highly popular De Klerk), and worried that it would not provide jobs for coloured people. These views may have been linked to so-called 'coloured racism', but were more likely to be the result of an assessment of the possible costs to working-class coloured voters of the transition to a non-racial South Africa. The NP's election victory turned on its success in framing the election in terms of these issues, thereby reinforcing undecided coloured voters' fears. Many working-class coloured citizens assessed that change would affect them adversely, and so voted conservatively --against the party of change, the ANC.[69] Anxiety about change thus drowned out any enthusiasm over the passing of the old apartheid order. This fear of change was sharpened by the belief that 'being coloured' made them especially likely victims of changes introduced by an ANC government. The NP's election victory turned on its success in framing the election in terms of the issues that worried working-class coloured voters --thereby reinforcing these voters' fears and pulling undecided voters into supporting De Klerk at the NP.

**Assessment**

The ANC's provincial election campaign had both strengths and weaknesses in terms of the attitudes and beliefs of the electorate. It seems to have been entirely appropriate with regard to African voters, among whom the ANC enjoyed overwhelming support from the outset of the campaign. The challenge facing the ANC was therefore ensuring a high turnout, which the ANC sought to do through its grass-roots organisation in townships and shack settlements. The ANC seems to have succeeded in this, in the Western Cape as elsewhere in the country. But among coloured voters -- and especially among the large number of undecided coloured voters -- the ANC's strategy had its limits, The ANC maintained significant support among coloured voters, but made few inroads into the many initially undecided coloured voters. The ANC's big budget, media-oriented strategy rightly targeted undecided coloured voters. Its focus on issues was also appropriate, since these undecided voters were essentially 'issue-voters' with weak or no allegiances to any of the competing parties, But there were problems with both the form of the ANC's campaigning and its precise content.

Undecided coloured voters clearly felt distanced, perhaps even alienated, from the ANC. Few saw it as a party for people like them. The ANC sought to transform its image through promoting coloured leaders at the provincial and national levels, and through the People's Forums and rallies in coloured residential areas. But the weaknesses of the ANC's branch-level organisation in many coloured areas meant that the ANC always remained something 'out there'. The NP, by contrast, could utilise locally-based electioneering
structures which coloured NP activists brought to it from their days in the old, pre-1994 Tricameral Parliament, before they joined the NP.

More importantly, the content of the ANC's campaigning was self-limiting. The ANC rightly diagnosed that most undecided voters harboured deeply-rooted concerns about the ANC, linking it to changes that were seen as directly or indirectly prejudicial to them -- i.e. to issues such as violence, and discrimination against the coloured working-class with regard to housing and jobs. The main thrust of the ANC's election campaign comprised attempts to address directly such concerns. During the crucial first months of 1994, the ANC concentrated on its 'plan', emphasising that it had detailed policy positions on the issues worrying the voters. This was a strategy designed at the national level with potential swing voters in mind: convince them that the ANC could run a responsible government, it was reasoned, and they would vote for the ANC. The ANC's strategy was conceived with the right voters in mind, but the message was not tailored effectively. The content of the Our Plan campaign was too academic and too broadly nonracial, notwithstanding efforts to reassure coloured voters in particular, in advertisements and at rallies. The constraints on ANC support in the Western Cape were not simply due to fears of ANC incompetence. Rather, they stemmed from the perceived association of the ANC with violence and its perceived neglect of the particular interests of coloured people, especially working-class coloured voters. The Our Plan campaign detailed the ANC's proposals for building houses and providing jobs, for example. But coloured voters might have asked 'so what?', if an ANC government gave these to African and not coloured families? The strategy may have edged support upwards very slightly, but failed to challenge deep-rooted perceptions about the ANC. To do the latter would require, we suspect, much longer than the four months of the election campaign, as well as a less competitive political environment.

Like the ANC, the NP ran an issue-focused campaign in the Western Cape. Unlike the ANC, however, the NP's campaign was aggressively negative from the outset. NP advertising pointed to issues such as violence, housing and employment, with the message that an ANC government would be bad for undecided, coloured voters on these very issues. The ANC and NP concurred on the agenda for the election in the Western Cape, but it was the NP which succeeded in setting the terms in which the core issues were understood by voters. The election was thus defined primarily in terms of the ANC's weaknesses.

The ANC's principal mistake, with hindsight, was not taking the fight to the NP from the outset, contesting the very basis on which the provincial election was framed. The ANC might have adopted a two-pronged strategy, combining an emphasis on the ANC's positive attributes with a hard-hitting attack on the NP. The second prong might have combined criticism of the performance of the 'new' NP since 1990, including its failure to address issues such as crime, housing, and unemployment, together with a more pointed questioning of whether the 'new' NP was really so 'new' after all. The ANC could have appropriated and inverted the NP's own slogan, proclaiming 'NP destroys, ANC builds'. Advertising could have pointed to NP-built houses falling down, NP-commanded police failing to control crime, and other aspects of the NP's performance in office.

Undecided voters may not have been persuaded that the ANC's history was unblemished, but they might have been dissuaded from voting for the NP. The NP itself recognised that many of its supporters were somewhat ambivalent about voting at all, leading party organisers to worry over how to motivate them? Some voters may even have been persuaded to vote for a flawed ANC rather than a flawed NP. In other words, the ANC might have cast the election in terms of the NP's weaknesses rather than its own. The Western Cape ANC belatedly recognised this, adopting a more aggressive campaign. However, this shift came too late and the ANC probably only succeeded in limiting the scale of its defeat.

The ANC's national and provincial leadership had initially inclined towards a negative campaign, focusing on the NP's responsibility for apartheid. They had decided against this after consultations with Greenberg and other advisors, who drew on polling evidence to suggest that a campaign focused on apartheid would alienate many voters, especially the undecided voters whom the ANC sought to recruit. As Greenberg put it, 'an unrelentingly negative campaign might backfire and put the ANC out of sync with the mood of the country'.[71] An overwhelmingly positive campaign was probably a wise strategy in other provinces, but among undecided coloured voters in the Western Cape it was less appropriate.[72] A negative campaign focused not on the NP and apartheid but on the 'new' NP's poor performance since 1990 would have been more 'in sync' with the targeted Western Cape voters -- as the NP's own campaign showed.
The real obstacle to the ANC running a negative, issue-focused campaign in the Western Cape, even as part of a two-pronged strategy, was that this would be ‘out of sync’ with the ANC’s campaign nationally. As some provincial officials recognised at the time, the ANC’s choice of strategy in the Western Cape reflected not just its appraisal of the electorate but also the organisational dynamics of the ANC, i.e. the relationships between provincial and national leaders and among provincial leaders themselves. Firstly, the ANC’s national elections leadership had considerable influence, especially in late 1993 and the beginning of 1994. The national leadership had good reasons for averting a negative campaign nationally, and they were not equipped to run a dramatically different campaign in the Western Cape than elsewhere.

Secondly, the provincial ANC leaders were in no position to challenge or defy the national leadership. The advocates of a coloured focus had drawn heavily on the support of the ANC’s head-office during the process of choosing which voters to prioritise in the Western Cape; they could hardly turn around and tell the national leadership that they were going to run a very different provincial campaign. These provincial leaders were organisationally vulnerable, given the predominance of African branches in the province, and were unlikely to defy key mentors or supporters. Moreover, none of the national or provincial ANC leaders had experience in running election campaigns, and understandably tended toward caution rather than boldness.

The elections in the Western Cape did not constitute a ‘racial census’. Voters chose to support one or other major party on the basis of issues rather than racial identity alone, rendering the election results highly contingent upon the parties’ campaign strategies. Contrary to what we might expect from Horowitz’s arguments, both parties ran issue-oriented campaigns instead of focusing exclusively on racial (or ethnic) identities. The underlying reason for this was that the 1994 election was a founding election -- South Africa’s first nonracial general election -- in which both major parties sought to win votes beyond their previous support bases.

In the Western Cape, the parties faced the demographic imperative of appealing to coloured voters -- who in the past had not fallen into either parties’ established support base. The NP and ANC chose to appeal to coloured voters through issue-oriented campaigns, albeit each with a racial gloss, for a combination of reasons: they sought to establish their nonracial credentials (with the ‘new NP’, in particular, distancing itself from apartheid) and they assessed that the targeted voters would respond to issues more positively than to solely identity-oriented appeals. The Western Cape electorate is, therefore, not merely racially divided -- as many have argued. This casts doubt on the extent to which, in this case, parties would have been expected to run what Horowitz would term ‘ethnic’ campaigns.

Postscript
In 1995-1996 voters in the Western Cape returned to the polling stations to elect representatives to new, racially-integrated local authorities.[73] The local election results provide further detail on the electoral geography, voting patterns and importance of election campaigns in the Western Cape.

Turnout in the 1995-96 local elections was only half of the turnout in the 1994 general election. Whilst turnout in local elections is almost always much lower than in national elections, the issue of turnout had a special significance in the Western Cape because the two major parties were affected differently. The ANC won almost 60 per cent as many voters in 1995-1996 as it had in 1994. The NP, by contrast, won under half as many votes in the local as in the national elections. This was reflected in the ANC’s share of the vote rising slightly, whilst the NP’s share plummeted.

Without detailed data from public opinion polls it is impossible to be certain about trends in individuals’ voting behaviour, but voting patterns in the local elections are consistent with the analysis provided in this paper of the Western Cape electorate. It seems that, in 1995-1996, the NP vote collapsed because many of its weak supporters -- many of whom had been undecided in mid-1993, but eventually voted for the NP in April 1994 did not vote in the local elections. In addition, a significant proportion of the NP’s 1994 voters voted for civic and independent groups in 1995-1996, in preference to the NP (and the ANC). There is little evidence that former NP voters actually voted for the ANC in 1995-1996. The collapse of the NP vote was most marked in the small towns of the Western Cape. Indeed, in many small towns the ANC won more votes than the NP in wards in predominantly coloured residential areas. In metropolitan Cape Town, by contrast, the NP performed much more strongly, and maintained its lead over the ANC in almost all coloured wards.
In the local elections, as in the general election, campaign-specific factors influenced the turnout and the parties’ respective shares of the vote. In 1994, many initially undecided voters chose to vote for the NP because the NP succeeded in defining the election to its advantage. In the 1995-1996 elections, the NP was much less successful -- and in the small towns it failed altogether. By putting forward locally-known, coloured candidates, in coloured wards in the local elections, the ANC was able to reduce the alienation and suspicion felt by many coloured voters. In addition, in many small towns, racial politics divided the white upper and middle-classes from the coloured lower middle-class and working-class at least as much as it divided the latter from the African working-class. The focus on local issues also reduced the appeal of the NP’s national leader, De Klerk. The result was that in many small towns coloured, former NP voters did not feel the need to turn out and vote against the ANC as they had in 1994.

In the local elections in metropolitan Cape Town, class and race combined to provide the NP with a much larger and more reliable support-base. The NP mobilised this support base by emphasising much the same issues as it had in 1994 -- and by making considerable use of De Klerk. The ANC played into the NP’s hands by implementing a national educational policy that involved massive reductions in the teaching staff of schools in coloured (and white) areas of the Western Cape. Strong performances by the ANC in coloured areas were confined to wards which were solidly middle-class or where the ANC candidate was identified and promoted primarily as a ‘community’ leader (downplaying the ANC connection!).

The local election results thus confirm the lesson of the 1994 general election in the Western Cape: the presence of a large number of voters with no strong attachments to either major party means that elections are won by the party which best succeeds in defining the issues in the election[74]

**Appendix**

Survey data used in this paper is drawn from a nationwide survey conducted during July and August 1993 by Research Initiatives CC with the assistance of Marketing and Media Research. In the Western Cape, a total of 1282 people were interviewed at home in the language of their choice. This included 382 African people, 800 coloured people, and 100 white people. Within each racial category, a random sample of men and women aged seventeen and over was constructed on an area stratified basis. The sample does not exactly correspond to the estimated racial shares of the electorate, and the results have been reweighted where appropriate in this paper. The sample covered metropolitan Cape Town, small towns, and farms. It included people living in hostels, backyard shacks and shack settlements, as well as formal housing areas. A standard, structured questionnaire (including open-ended questions) was used, with the fieldwork administered and checked by Decision Services International. We are grateful to Craig Charney and Susanne Booysen of Research Initiatives CC and to other participants in the survey research, but the analysis presented in this paper is our own and does not necessarily reflect the views of anyone else involved in the original survey.