Campaign Entrepreneurs in Online Collective Action: GetUp! in Australia

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ABSTRACT   *In recent years, multi-issue, online campaigning organisations have emerged and mobilised citizens on, mostly, progressive issues. For example, MoveOn in the United States is a renowned leader in the field, and similar organisations now exist in the UK, Canada, New Zealand and at the transnational level. In Australia, GetUp!, with over 600,000 members, has become part of mainstream political debate, while also bringing a disruptive social movement approach to online citizen mobilisation. The role of leadership is underexplored in understanding how these organisations discursively construct their actions and successes. This paper argues that online campaigning organisations are increasingly blurring the line between social change, activist politics and the market, and that leaders play a key role in this process. It uses three points of empirical analysis to substantiate this argument. First, the active diffusion of hybrid political repertoires between online campaigning organisations in the USA and Australia consolidates GetUp! within a transnational 'network forum'. It also demonstrates that that there is a distinct Australian political context based on the history of social democracy shaping progressive social movements and organisational relationships. Second, the career pathways of 23 GetUp! activist campaigners demonstrates the diffusion of personnel between these online campaigning organisations. Further, it highlights the shift some have made from progressive civil society to the creation of new entrepreneurial, market-facing, organisations. Third, qualitatively analysing how three high-profile GetUp! leaders have used both mainstream and social media to successfully promote their 'story of self' assists in the development of the concept of 'campaign entrepreneurs'.*

KEY WORDS: Online campaigning organisations, movement entrepreneurs, leadership, storytelling, Australia

Early in 2013, *The Economist* published an article titled 'Profit with Purpose: How a for-profit firm fosters protest' (The Economist, 2013). This article is about an online campaigning organisation called Purpose based in New York City and started by two Australians in 2010.

> The business was co-founded by Jeremy Heimans, who calls himself a 'movement entrepreneur'. Mr Heimans previously co-founded Avaaz, a campaigning group focused on poor countries, and GetUp!, a citizens'-rights group in his native Australia. Those were charities. Purpose aims to make profits, though not necessarily to maximise them. Like another big petitions business, Change.org, it is

structured as a B Corporation, the American legal term for a for-profit company with a social mission. It has a non-profit arm, which incubates protests and accepts donations. This is cross-subsidised by its for-profit arm, which makes money in a variety of ways.

It sells consulting services to big companies such as Google and Audi, and to charities such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the American Civil Liberties Union. It helps them to build mass movements to support their favourite causes. Mr Heimans says he will work only with clients that fit with Purpose's values. BP, Coca-Cola and McDonald's are out because, he says, 'they are bad for the world.' (Cars are fine, apparently).

Purpose is distinctive in the way it melds market-based profit incentives with new forms of online collective action. As a case it challenges us to understand the diffusion of core ideas and entrepreneurial leadership processes among the growing number of hybrid online campaigning organisations.

New online campaigning organisations have both hierarchical, bureaucratic structures *and* horizontal, networked structures. This means hybrid organisations emerge that have very little centralised infrastructure or resources, yet are also professional forms of activism with skilled staff leveraging the rapid response, 'nimble' and cheaper mobilisations that the internet facilitates (Bimber, Flanagin, & Stohl, 2005; Chadwick, 2007). These organisations and forms of online collective action also align with what Bennett and Segerberg have labelled 'organisationally enabled networks' as part of emerging forms of 'connective action' (2012, p. 755). Here I have used a single case study to analyse the construction of a new form of movement leadership that has emerged in online, multi-issue, campaigning organisations. The focus is on GetUp!, the leader in the use of online technologies among Australian civil society organisations (Marks, 2010), and can also be placed into the broader discussion occurring internationally that evaluates the novelty of new strategic repertoires used by online campaigning organisations. GetUp! has run over 50 campaigns since late 2005 and now has over 600,000 members[1] who can pick and choose which campaigns they are active on. While some campaigns have been much more successful than others, the campaign issues have ranged from electoral enrolment reform, abortion law reform, mental health policy, same sex marriage, deforestation, climate change and a carbon tax, coal seam gas and even one on unfair bank charges.

The majority of GetUp!'s campaign issues can be best understood as post-material: invested in quality of life, environmental and freedom of expression issues rather than being based on material concerns such as crime, social order, national security and fair economic distribution (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Valenzuela, 2011). Giddens (1991, p. 215) labelled these issues as the basis for life politics: a new, choice-based, moral identity politics that was contrasted with the emancipatory politics of old movements based on an ethics of justice, equality and participation. In Australia, post-material, or new politics, values are most likely to be held by those with a university education, no religion and vote for a minor party, such as the Greens (Western & Tranter, 2005, p. 91), and this is the base constituency that GetUp! appeals to. The context specific tension between material, emancipatory politics with post-material, life politics, sometimes characterised simply as 'old versus new', is important to understand as it enabled GetUp!'s emergence.

Traditionally, progressive politics in Australia was dominated by the close alliance between unions and the Australian Labor Party (ALP). When new progressive identity movements emerged, such as women's, gay and lesbian and indigenous movements, most used discourses of emancipatory politics, and worked directly with these social democratic institutions to create social and economic change. Further, since the creation of the post WWII welfare state most Australian movement NGOs received government funding to engage in service provision and state-focussed advocacy work. Individuals are more likely to donate their time than money to causes, and as a result there is not a well-developed culture of Foundation or philanthropic funding of progressive activism (Sawer, Abjorensen, & Larkin, 2009, pp. 232–236). As Diani (2010, p. 232) observed, this meant that Australia had an early middle class professionalisation of most movement action with a concomitant fragmentation of civil society and class-based grassroots campaigning. Inspired by experiences of American organisation MoveOn, including micro funding of campaigns, GetUp! developed a rapid response, democratically thin approach to civil society-based campaigning (see Chen, 2013, p. 140), largely underpinned by a post-material, life politics agenda. This has been mostly successful but the importation of new organising strategies also helps us to reflect more on context specific relationships between state, market and society for the emergence of progressive online movements.

The paper is structured around three main arguments:

- There is a diffusion of values within the exclusive 'network forum', made up of existing online campaigning organisations worldwide. However, these represent United States organisation-led ideas on campaigning that are built around a distinct theory of change; rapid response repertoires and emotion-laden storytelling.
- There is mobility of campaigners and leaders within the 'network forum' and this has also led to the creation of new market-facing (rather than state or society-facing) campaigning organisations.
- Leadership within online campaigning organisations is a deliberate and ongoing process of social construction and framing. Leadership is underpinned by value-driven storytelling *and* entrepreneurship; this can be seen in practice in a qualitative focus on three key GetUp! individuals.

Why does this matter? Because the role, and agency, of individuals within these organisations often remains hidden or underexplored. Organisation directors act as spokespeople, and their media role is tightly managed. Many of the other campaigners are invisible and, from anecdotal discussions with other researchers, are notoriously difficult to interview or engage with. Through highlighting the pathways of individuals within, and in the sustenance of, the network forum, we see the emergence of new versions of online collective action that are focussed on shared identity-building and cooperation across state, market and society boundaries.

Organisational Leadership in Online Campaigning and Social Movements

Bringing the study of political organisations back into our understanding of online campaigning and collective action 'helps us to see some of the transitions within the organisational layer of politics' (Karpf, 2012, p. 12). That is, organisations still matter, but

arguably these new campaigning organisations disrupt our existing understanding of how politics links individuals with the state through civil society organising. In describing the 'MoveOn Effect', Karpf (2012, pp. 42–49) suggests that the emergence of new online organisations with low overheads and a focus on multi-issue campaigns has a profound effect on the rest of the traditional, direct mail fundraising-oriented, single issue campaigning sector. MoveOn's use of targeted email related to a specific fundraising goal (e.g. getting an advertisement on television) is something traditional organisations with higher overheads cannot do as effectively or as rapidly. Inevitably, new groups adopt variations on the membership and fundraising practices pioneered by MoveOn (Karpf, 2012, p. 48). The mainstreaming of this approach to online organising is a response to the perception of MoveOn's political success (Bimber et al., 2012, p. 52), and as they grow in political importance, we still have much to learn about processes and actors within online campaigning organisations. It is clear that their strategies challenge existing institutional and movement politics, but do they also augur a new form of leadership?

Leadership is not a central topic of interest in social movement scholarship or the growing literature on online campaigning organisations. Taylor (2007, p. 313; and others: Kretschmer & Meyer, 2007) argues that most research on social movements neglects a focus on individual actors and makes only superficial reference to leadership. When leadership is discussed, it tends to use notions drawn from more traditional political organisation analysis, such as Michels and oligarchy or Weber and the institutionalisation of charismatic leadership.

If leaders are talked about positively, it is as intermediaries between movement actors broadly and the state: they are mainly facilitators. Leadership is rarely a key explanatory variable for analysing movement outcomes, as research prioritises structural analysis, such as political opportunity structures, and neglects agency (Aminzade, Goldstone, & Perry, 2001, p. 128). Aminzade et al. suggest that those who want to 'bring leadership back in' need to 'treat leadership as a variable that oscillates between certain culturally intelligible values, rather than a either an inimitable concatenation of individual eccentricities or an automatic outgrowth of environmental imperatives' (2001, p. 141). Thus, leadership is a process, not a product of either merely individual choice or structural constraint. They also point out that leadership actions *do* happen in grassroots movements, even if they are not recognised as such:

> Even though most grassroots and antiestablishment organizing aims for an absence of formal 'leaders' preferring to disseminate authority in collective forms, the key leadership *actions* – people-oriented actions of providing motivation, building coalitions and commitment, and articulating a vision that draws an emotional and enthusiastic response. (Aminzade et al., 2001, p. 152)

Others agree, suggesting that a central task of movement leaders is the 'manipulation of language and other symbols' (Morris & Staggenborg, 2007, p. 175). Thus, leadership is about framing movements, and it is leaders who take action frames from their institutional context and imbue them with meaning. This includes taking responsibility for devising both collective repertoires of contention and media strategies (2007, p. 187). As membership of online organisations and movements are often disparate and rarely spatially co-located such as in traditional social movements, a unique context arises for how the 'people oriented actions' of leadership are undertaken. How do online leaders

frame the movement, build commitment and solicit an emotional response to collective goals?

Marshall Ganz's work on the role of storytelling as part of leadership in political and social movement campaigning is important as he is both a social movement scholar (e.g. Ganz, 2009) and a practitioner-organiser. Ganz was an advisor to the successful Organizing for America Obama Presidential campaign, is now working on the Leading Change Network and before that had a long history as a community and union organiser (Karpf, 2012, p. 108; Kriess, 2012, p. 137). Ganz suggests that leaders' public storytelling is composed of three elements:

> A story of self, a story of us, and a story of now. A story of self communicates who I am – my values, my experience, why I do what I do. A story of us communicates who we are – our shared values, our shared experience, and why we do what we do. And a story of now transforms the present into a moment of challenge, hope and choice. (Ganz, 2008, p. 1)

Ganz explains how in contemporary campaigning the 'story of self' needs to be developed and used instrumentally by leaders: 'In a role of public leadership, we really don't have a choice about telling our own story of self. If we don't author our story, others will – and they may tell our story in ways we may not like' (Ganz, 2008, p. 11).

A series of workshops run by Ganz in 2007, known as 'Camp Obama', trained campaigners on how to use the strategy of storytelling for the 2008 Presidential election campaign (see also Alexander, 2010). In a workshop video, Ganz explains that organising work needs to shift towards communicating values that provide recipients of campaigning work with

> a felt experience that teaches the heart not just the head. [. . .] It's not philosophy, it's not statistics, it's lived experience. It's the choices that have influenced us, and the choices that we make in our own lives that enable us to communicate the values we hold to others. (Ganz, 2007)

This idea that all campaigning work starts with an explanation of values and a 'story of self' to mobilise others into the movement is an important shift in practice. It individualises connections to a broader collective identity and also facilitates the shift to entrepreneurial leadership described below. Ganz (2011) suggests that for most people leadership is still understood as a position, not as a creative practice 'rooted in an appreciation of strategy and motivation', and thus, many community organisers do not understand themselves as leaders. Leadership 'is not about being a star illuminating the universe with your brilliance, but about engaging with others' (Ganz, 2011).

A new style has also emerged in contemporary activist politics of a more individualised 'platform' and/or 'entrepreneurial' leader. Kretschmer and Meyer (2007, p. 1396) define a 'platform leader': 'who speaks on behalf of a position or a constituency, but beyond this, the actual relationship to that position or constituency is unclear'. Similar to Bang's (2005) 'expert citizens' who publicly represent ideas more than organisations, Kretschmer and Meyer suggest that platform leaders have emerged to amplify values and political positions at a time when the democratic role of members within many associations is in decline (2007, p. 1401). Platform leaders spend less time mobilising the grassroots and

have relative autonomy to communicate their vision to an outside audience, such that '[t]heir energy goes to projecting their ideas to legislators, media, potential supporters, and allies' (2007, p. 1409).

Others have focused on how the internet has changed organisational forms, and this inevitably leads to the emergence of new forms of leadership. For Earl and Schussman, the project-based nature of digital politics facilitates movement entrepreneurs. In an internet model, or logic of, action (rather than a social movement one), 'individualism, risk-taking and entrepreneurial action' are strong parts of the culture (2002, p. 179). New leaders, in their research, were computer science geeks with technical expertise and an ideological, project-outcome focused disposition, not actors motivated by traditional collectivist movement concerns. They argue:

> the dominance of movement entrepreneurs in internet-based movements is not fleeting or strongly related to age. Instead we expect that as movements emerge and are maintained primarily online, this transition from organizational infrastructure to entrepreneurial infrastructures will continue. (2003, p. 177)

While this idea of the more individualised platform or entrepreneurial leader is useful, it is not uncomplicated. Most who use the term 'entrepreneurial' to describe leaders emphasise their original and creative thinking, with their risk-taking behaviour for fostering innovation. Schneider and Teske (1992), for example, define a political entrepreneur as an individual who changes the direction and flow of politics and, coupled with the literature on policy entrepreneurs, there is also an emphasis on entrepreneurs fostering transformational policy change (Bellone & Goerl, 1992; Christopoulos, 2006). This idea of the entrepreneur as creative, original and 'thinking outside the box' is shared with many who write on movement entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs as well. The last twenty years has seen a growth in the idea of social entrepreneurs who bring civil society values of community and social capital to building new for-profit opportunities and enterprise. Underlying this discussion of the emergence of new entrepreneurs as leaders in civil society campaigning, we also need to think more explicitly about entrepreneurialism in a *marketised* sense (Christopoulos, 2006, p. 757). This is about the melding of social change politics *with* a new market logic. An entrepreneurial approach that blurs the boundary between market and society is seen in the professional, technologically savvy individuals who move between non-profit social change campaigning and for-profit public relations consultancy (see Kriess, 2012, pp. 6–18).

Methods

This single case study of the discursive construction of GetUp!'s leadership process brings together qualitative analysis of a range of publicly available sources. The data sources are: campaigners' work biographies on LinkedIn, media transcripts mentioning GetUp! campaigners and social media outputs about campaigners, mainly YouTube videos.

In June 2012 I collected data made publicly available on the professional social networking site, LinkedIn, to examine paid work trajectories of 23 past and present GetUp! campaigners. Using my own membership login for LinkedIn, I searched the site for any people mentioning GetUp! in their work history. GetUp! does not list the names of their paid campaigners on their website. Those included in the final sample had been

employed by GetUp! in a campaigning role for at least one year between 2006 and 2012. Included in the sample were eight women, and fifteen men; six current paid campaigners, seven from the start-up period of 2005–2006 and the remaining ten from sometime in-between. I did not include all existing GetUp! Advisory Board members, but they also play an important strategic role. Helpfully, three of the six current Board members are included in the sample as they were staff in the start-up period. I coded each individual campaigner's sex, country of origin, educational background, all organisations they held paid work in prior and subsequent to GetUp!

In September 2012, I searched newspaper database Factiva newspaper for mentions of three of GetUp!'s leaders, from mid 2005 till September 2012. This produced a total of 429 articles; however, only 75 articles that mentioned the leader in the headline or lead paragraph were included in the theme analysis here. The breakdown of mentions includes: Simon Sheikh: 211 articles (19% Headline/Lead Paragraph), peak in mid-2012; Jeremy Heimans: 92 articles (16%), peak in 2005 and Anna Rose: 126 articles (17%), peak in 2012. I also used general Google and YouTube searches on the three leaders to supplement the media mentions.

Interviews with key campaigners were deliberately not used as a source of data for this paper. I did not interview the three high profile leaders as I was more interested in their public, discursive construction as movement leaders. This aligns with the idea of the platform leader who focuses on communicating their vision to an outside audience, as well as Ganz's emphasis on the importance of leaders' public telling of the story of self. (The exception was an interview I conducted with an Avaaz campaigner in 2011, but who was not part of the sample of GetUp! campaigners.) Future research could fruitfully analyse ethnographic data collected from within organisations such as GetUp! to more fully understand the everyday process of leadership and organising, but this was not the primary purpose of this paper.

Diffusion of Values Within the 'Network Forum'

GetUp!'s structure is typical of online campaigning organisations where there is very little centralised infrastructure, overheads or ongoing resources. One way it is distinct is that it does not have formal partisan connections, like MoveOn has with the Democrats. GetUp! represents itself as a social movement, community-based organisation aimed at changing traditional partisan politics to be more citizen-oriented. Yet the organisation is well linked with traditional progressive political actors in Australia. As noted earlier, the tradition of Australian progressive politics has been shaped by unions and the ALP. GetUp! itself was founded in 2005 with a donation from Unions NSW, and during the 2010 national election campaign received one of the largest donations ever from a union that did not go to the ALP: $1.1 million from the CFMEU. GetUp! also has Green Party partisans on its Board and staff, and endorsed the platform of the Greens via its Election Scorecard at the 2010 and 2013 national elections (see Vromen & Coleman, 2011).

This is not a democratic, fully horizontal organisation as we may expect online networking facilitates. Instead, it is a blend of traditional hierarchical decision-making on campaign directions by the core staff and Board, coupled with rapid response networked member participation. This is a very similar setup to what Chadwick observed in 38 Degrees in the UK (Chadwick, 2013, pp. 187–193). Despite having a very small number of core staff, GetUp! has both a communications director and a media officer.

Senior staff have leadership and media training, and do weekly debriefs on media work with an external expert. Their communications strategy underpins all that they do. This is where we see the influence of technical professionalisation, public relations and the importance of brand construction. This was emphasised in a speech by co-founder Jeremy Heimans:

> Essentially, in many ways it [GetUp!] was like a brand, a brand that stood for all of the things that the broken political process didn't. A brand that was about participation, about the idea of actually taking action. (Heimans, 2010)

The maintenance of external national and international political networks underpins GetUp!'s organisational capacity-building. There is diffusion of new campaigning repertoires and discursive techniques between the USA and Australia, despite different political institutions and cultures. Ganz's ideas on storytelling and organising underpin the philosophy of The New Organizing Institute (NOI) where increasing numbers of online activists receive training in community organising. They run an annual RootsCamp loosely structured around issue caucus areas such as LGBT, youth, climate, ethnic identity, etc. Karpf (2012, pp. 106–109) has labelled NOI as the place where the 'network forum' for online campaigners is fostered. Once professional campaigners receive training they informally join a broader network of established and emerging 'theory of change' organisations such as MoveOn, Avaaz, Organising for America, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, SumOfUs and so on. In January 2013, these organisations, including GetUp!, met at the inaugural Online Progressive Engagement Networks summit in the USA to discuss new technological tools and strategic problems (Karpf, 2013).

A distinct generational network of young, well-educated, upwardly mobile, professional activists who move between the organisations, sustains this transnational network forum. Howard's study of campaign managers and political consultants who worked in e-politics during the 2000 US presidential election found an active network facilitated by regular technology conferences. Very few were tied to political parties, and 'enjoyed freelance work which gives them the option to leave politics altogether and to market other kinds of products with other kinds of consumer campaigns' (2006, p. 47; see also Kriess, 2012). Most GetUp! campaigners have worked in the USA and have ongoing personal and professional connections with US-based online campaigners. For example, one of the most high profile international online campaigning organisations in the network forum, Avaaz, currently claims over 35 million members, and was co-founded in 2007 by GetUp! co-founders Jeremy Heimans and David Madden, with Ricken Patel and Eli Pariser from MoveOn. These long-term relationships are sustained by mutual trust and recognition of their similar strategies:

> [It's about] trust. The other thing that helps a lot is just working on the same model. A lot of time spent with new partners is trying to help them understand why you're so weird and you want to work in these really strange ways. You don't have that with GetUp! or MoveOn. (Avaaz campaigner, interview, November 2011).

Howard (2006, pp. 48–49) found a sense of shared ideology and community was sustained by defining who was *not* part of the e-politics community: the traditional 'old'

media professionals and lobbyists. In the national context, GetUp!'s online campaigning 'network forum' shares a strategic repertoire and a theory of change approach includes:

- the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC), a youth-led, online campaigning organisation focused on environmental issues founded in 2007 by Anna Rose and Amanda Mackenzie. GetUp! current and former staff are on their Advisory Board;
- the Sydney Alliance, founded in 2010 by Amanda Tattersall, one of GetUp!'s original and ongoing Board members, to use organising strategies to bring together diverse community organisations, unions and religious organisations on common local issues;
- The Centre for Australian Progress, established in 2012 by former GetUp! and AYCC staff, Nick Moraitis and Glen Berman, to work on capacity building for Australian civil society organisations. It runs fellowship programmes and conferences, similar to NOI in the USA;
- Essential Media Communications (EMC), which unlike the organisations above, is a for-profit professional consultancy that works with 'organisations of social value'. EMC has organised conferences for the campaigning sector such as FWD 2012 and 2013, and has been the strategic force behind campaigns such as Every Australian Counts for a National Disability Insurance Scheme in 2012, and the 2007 Your Rights at Work union campaign. GetUp! staff have worked for EMC, and they regularly cooperate on campaigns, for example on the Great Barrier Reef and marriage equality;
- other large organisations that now use a theory of change approach and have worked on campaigns with GetUp!, including World Vision, Oxfam, Oaktree Foundation, the Wilderness Society and Animals Australia.

GetUp!'s organisational connections were also embodied by the 2011 wedding of Simon Sheikh (former Director of GetUp!) and Anna Rose (former Director of AYCC). The subsequent construction of this event (e.g. see Time Out, 2012) affirmed Stanyer's (2013, p. 6) finding that through a process of 'intimisation', political actors' personal lives have now become a 'ubiquitous feature of the mediated public sphere'.

In late November 2012, FWD2012 was held in Melbourne and was advertised as Australia's first online campaigners conference. Many of the speakers had either worked in the past at GetUp! or were closely connected through their sibling organisations such as AYCC. Keynote addresses by US-based online organisers, such as Nicole Aro and Jeremy Bird, fresh from the Presidential election, consolidated the close ties. FWD2012 and the follow-up events in November 2013, FWD2013 and the large activist NGO conference Progress 2013, run by Nick Moraitis, demonstrate that GetUp!'s strategic repertoire is being extensively shared with the Australian progressive activist sector. This diffusion process will need more detailed examination in the future.

This brief overview of GetUp!'s 'network forum', based in the USA and developing in Australia, suggests consolidation of an elite, insider group of online campaigning organisations. This is important for GetUp! positioning itself as the leading organisation in Australia that promotes a new form of politics as much about policy change and success, as the successful transmission of values. Next, I will demonstrate how individuals lead this values diffusion process.

Mobility of Campaigners and Creation of New Market-Facing, Campaign Organisations

Leaders' social backgrounds matter (Morris & Staggenborg, 2007, p. 175), yet we know very little about the backgrounds and pathways of online campaigners. In June 2012, I collected data made publicly available on the professional social networking site, LinkedIn, to examine paid work trajectories of 23 past and present GetUp! campaigners. This is the GetUp! leadership group who make decisions over day-to-day campaign priorities. Most of the 23 campaigners are Australian, except one each from France and the UK, and four from the USA. They are highly educated, with 18 listing a completed university degree and a majority (13) having studied at a university based in Sydney for either an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. Six had studied in the USA, including two Australians – GetUp!'s founders Jeremy Heimans and David Madden – who both studied at Harvard's Kennedy Graduate School of Government where Marshall Ganz's classes are offered.

GetUp!'s campaigners are from a range of paid work backgrounds, but mainly from the non-government organisation sector in Australia, including large organisations like the Wilderness Society and Oxfam, or similar online activist organisations, such as TakingITGlobal and AYCC. Table 1 shows a distinct pattern: campaigners gain experience in an online campaigning organisation and then move to another similar online organisation. Many of those destination organisations of the first post-GetUp! job are based in the USA (8 of 17, plus 1 in UK), and include high profile network forum organisations Avaaz and MoveOn (5 of 17). Importantly, former GetUp! campaigners were involved in creating, in an advisory or start-up role, similar organisations such as Avaaz, AccessNow, 38 Degrees and SumOfUs. The sharing of staff between these new online campaigning organisations is an easily identifiable way that diffusion of strategic repertoires and 'theory of change' values occurs.

Next port of call for many of GetUp!'s former campaigners is the corporate and public relations sector where they have set up new online organisations that bring social movement campaigning values to the market. This is evidence of Earl and Schussman's (2002) point that internet logic favours entrepreneurial structures. I have identified four main organisations started by GetUp! 'graduates', three based in Australia and one based in the USA:

(1) *Make Believe*, an Australian strategic communications consultancy, similar to EMC, which works 'with leading non-profits, movements and social enterprises. We ignite organisational innovation, re-imagine brands, revolutionise constituent engagement and develop public affairs campaigns that win'. It

Table 1. Trajectories of GetUp! campaigners (at June 2012)

	Job prior to GetUp! (n = 23)	First Job after GetUp! (n = 17)	Second job after GetUp! (n = 12)
GetUp! 1st job	22%	n/a	n/a
Online NGO	22%	40%	25%
Traditional NGO	35%	24%	0
Government	9%	12%	0
Corporate	12%	24%	75%

has run campaigns for the Australian Greens, Amnesty, Make Poverty History and GetUp! (see http://www.makebelieve.me)

(2) *One Big Switch*, an Australian online organisation that uses the switching power of consumers to source home loan and electricity offers with a group discount (see http://www.onebigswitch.com.au/aboutus).

(3) *Key Message*, a small Australian strategy and campaigning consultancy, whose objective is to 'create value by sparking, amplifying and changing conversations' (see http://www.keymessage.com.au/).

(4) *Purpose*, highlighted in the introduction, a USA-based online consultancy started by GetUp! co-founders Heimans and Madden. Purpose develops campaigns and platforms with similarly minded organisations, companies and public figures. On its website, the organisation states:

> *Purpose creates 21st Century Movements*: We deploy the collective power of millions of citizens and consumers to help solve some of the world's biggest problems. We develop and launch our own social and consumer movements using our model of movement entrepreneurship, and we work with organizations and progressive companies to help them mobilize large-scale, purposeful action. (see http://www.purpose.com).

In traditional activist trajectories, we would expect that individuals either stay active in civil society-based, non-government organisations or move into influential policy roles within the state. For example, McAdam's (1999, p. 121) influential research on the biographical consequences of activism found that most activists stayed active and tend to work in teaching or other 'helping professions'. In contrast, as Howard (2006) found, online action facilitates porousness between market and society, suggesting a more entrepreneurial style of campaign leadership. Organisations like Purpose that use social movement and collective action frames exemplify this trend towards a contemporary, campaign-specific entrepreneurialism. Individuals in the GetUp! sample attempt to harness their progressive ideals into changing corporate behaviour and facilitating responsiveness to citizen-consumers. This is not a new idea, but it has gained currency in the last 15 years. During this period, civil society actors using collective political strategies to influence change in market-based actors have also grown in prominence, such as political consumerism campaigns based on boycotting or buycotting goods for political and human rights causes (see Micheletti, 2010). These examples of collective movement leaders and campaigners using their knowledge and successful tactics to *become* market-facing movement actors is worthy of further scrutiny to see if it heralds a more generalisable tendency in the growth of entrepreneurialism in this sector.

Introducing Three Online Campaign Entrepreneurs: Leadership and the Story of Self

There are three areas from the research on leadership that we might expect to see reflected in the way online campaigners are constructed as leaders. First, the influence of storytelling, and especially the 'story of self', which includes reference to formative political moments, statements of personal values and discussion of social change. Second, an entrepreneurial influence on the leader would emphasise risk taking and show that their commitment is not primarily to formal or sub-politics organisations, but to values that can move across state-market-society boundaries. Third is the distinctness of the online

campaigning context where the online logic of action emphasises leadership as a *new* way of engaging civil society to become successful in creating political change. Allied organisations are fellow members of the online campaigning 'network forum'. This section focuses on the public faces of three high-profile GetUp! leaders: Jeremy Heimans, Simon Sheikh and Anna Rose, to develop a deeper understanding of these three dimensions in the construction of the online campaign entrepreneurial leader. Based on collecting media interviews and video presentations, I qualitatively analysed commonalities and differences in their presentation of a 'story of self'. I acknowledge that as these examples are second-hand, often through the filter of a media interview, individuals do not always control how they are described. Despite this, it is interesting to see that all three individuals are able to hold constant their background story of self across interviews, suggesting their adeptness at communicating information.

I identified seven main themes in analysis of these three key leaders' story of self that bring together the three different leadership concepts of storytelling, entrepreneurialism and an online politics logic. The differing approach of the three leaders to the themes is summarised in Table 2:

(1) Childhood political socialisation (and social background) (storytelling)
(2) Educational capital (storytelling)
(3) Entrepreneurial actions, Creativity and Risk-taking (entrepreneur)
(4) Values, acting with purpose (online politics logic)
(5) Leadership capacity, facilitating teams and media work (entrepreneur)
(6) Alternative, sub-politics organisations (online politics logic)
(7) Emphasis on recognition and rewards (entrepreneur)

Simon Sheikh

Simon Sheikh was the second National Director of GetUp!, from 2008 until mid-2012. He started in the role aged 22 and quickly built up a high profile in media and government circles (Aedy, 2012). He had experience in youth organisation activism and worked briefly as an economist for NSW Treasury Department. He had an inauspicious end to his tenure at GetUp! after fainting on the popular news and current affairs panel show Q&A on July 2. His resignation from GetUp! on July 27 was front page news in the *Sydney Morning Herald* daily newspaper (Snow, 2012) and over half the 2012 media mentions Sheikh received were about the fainting incident. In late 2011, Sheikh married fellow campaigner Anna Rose, and since their marriage, it is rare that either of them are interviewed or quoted in an article without mention of their marriage. They are regularly described as the new progressive power couple: 'They're not even thirty, and are two of Sydney's most influential movers and shakers' (Time Out, 2012).

Sheikh's story of self is built around his difficult childhood experiences, which are frequently referred to in interviews (Snow, 2010). For example in an article where he was named as one of Australia's Top Ten lobbyists:

> The son of an Indian-born industrial chemist, he's mature beyond his 25 years – and always has been. His parents never lived together, so when his mother suffered chronic mental illness he became her primary carer. He was 10 years old. (Knott, 2011)

Table 2. Leadership themes and constructing the story of self

	Childhood political socialisation	Educational capital	Creativity and risk-taking	Values and purpose	Leadership capacity	Political organisations	Recognition
Simon Sheikh	Mother mental illness, immigrant father, public housing	Selective state High School, connection with High Court judge Michael Kirby	Youthfulness; Online politics as risk taking	Progressive, social and political change	Teamwork; Sydney Leadership Course	Mainly online sub-politics, continues even though prese-lected to contest election for Greens	Rarely mentions personal recog-nition
Jeremy Heimans	Politically active running media campaigns on global poverty	School not mentioned, Harvard degree	Starts orgs: GetUp!, AVAAZ and Purpose	Progressive, social change and '21st century movements'	Entrepreneurial	Other online 'network forum' organisations	Lists awards in Bio
Anna Rose	Regional upbringing, grandparents farm drought; school enviro campaigns	State high school in regional city, USYD degree	Starts orgs: AYCC; Power Shift; public profile	Progressive; sustainability	Sydney Leadership course; media expertise	Mainly environmental, and online sub-politics	Lists awards in Bio

He often mentions both his upbringing in public housing with limited income (Sheikh, 2009) and that his political activism was spurred when Michael Kirby, openly gay Justice of the Australian High Court, visited his selective state high school in Sydney (Aedy, 2012; One plus One, 2011). Throughout his tenure at GetUp!, he had a high profile and acknowledgement of his political expertise and influence. For example, in November 2011, the blog called The Power Index published its list of the top 10 Lobbyists in Australia; Sheikh was ranked no. 4 on a list that included no other NGOs, only professional and corporate lobbyists (see http://www.thepowerindex.com.au/lobbyists/simon-sheikh).

In most interviews, he maintains the story of the distinct approach to online politics that GetUp! offers: progressive community, values driven, not partisan (Snow, 2010; Time Out, 2012). For example:

> We're not involved in partisan politics and it's important that we're not involved in that. Politics ultimately corrupts the people that get involved in it... If you're wedded to one party you're going down a slippery slope. (Sheikh quoted in Knott, 2011)

GetUp! spokespeople regularly portray their community-driven, online politics as more genuine than party and electoral politics (see Vromen & Coleman, 2011). In December 2012, Sheikh was preselected to contest a Senate spot in the September 2013 election for Australia's third party, the Australian Greens (Johnson, 2012). He ran a high profile campaign but was not successful. Sheikh attempted to maintain this position while campaigning to win a Senate spot by suggesting the Greens were also apart from traditional partisan politics and were grassroots campaigners (Peake, 2013); however, during the election campaign it was also revealed that he had been a member of the ALP from 2004 to 2008.

At a local level, the Benevolent Society's annual Social Leadership Australia course is also important for the development of GetUp! leaders. Sheikh completed it in 2009 and endorses the course on their website. This brief overview of the public construction of a leader implies that while Sheikh uses Ganz's storytelling techniques and supports the ideals of online politics, he is less likely to appear entrepreneurial in his outlook. His attempt to move into party-based, electoral politics and ongoing social justice concerns suggest he is also bound by the traditional emancipatory politics of the Australian left.

Jeremy Heimans

Jeremy Heimans started GetUp! in late 2005 with David Madden (ABC News, 2005), after they had both completed a Masters degree at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. They were inspired by the successes of MoveOn in the USA and made useful contacts with the growing online politics 'network forum'. The launch and subsequent media coverage highlighted GetUp!'s distinctive approach to politics: 'web-based politics averts a calcified staleness about institutional politics' (Heimans in Macdonald, 2005). After the GetUp! setup period, the pair returned to the USA to start Avaaz. They are ongoing GetUp! Board members and have significant influence on its campaign and strategic direction. Both are recognised as pioneers in the online politics world, and Heimans claims that: 'Online political activism has completely transformed politics and social movements more broadly' (quoted in Thomson, 2010, p. 6).

His story of self features his first political act trying to improve quality of life internationally, for example:

> From the age of 8 I was running media campaigns on global issues back home in Australia. I was ever so slightly precocious. I would meet with senior Australian government officials, including the prime minster and foreign minister, proposing various solutions third world debt and malnutrition. I tried very hard to make 'peace and environmental studies' compulsory in all schools. My parents didn't know quite what to do with me. (Heimans quoted in Kanani, 2011)

In interviews, he nearly always includes setting up GetUp! and Avaaz as the natural evolution for setting up his current corporate consultancy and campaigning organisation, Purpose. Heimans is well recognised in online campaigning circles and by both traditional and online media. He is a regular speaker on the conference circuit, including the Personal Democracy Forum, the annual conference on how the internet is changing politics, governance and advocacy, and he has been an invited speaker at TED conferences, including at TEDx in Sydney in 2012. TED is a highly regarded forum for promoting entrepreneurial thinkers. Heimans' recognition has also been cemented through winning awards, for example:

- 2011 Ford Foundation's 75th Anniversary Visionary Award
- 2012 Advance Global Australians Award for social innovation
- 2012 #11 in Fast Company's 100 most creative people in business
- World Economic Forum at Davos named him a Young Global Leader

For the last few years while he has been building Purpose, Heimans has framed himself as a 'movement entrepreneur' and describes the importance of market-facing activism. For example, in an article on movement entrepreneurs: 'Heimans predicts a shift towards the consumer realm, in which the mobilisation of consumers will effect significant social change' (Goldberg, 2011). This shift from mass social movement to consumer movement – what Heimans calls 'progressive consumerism' (Armitage, 2012) – is important in blurring the boundaries between market and society to suit entrepreneurial forms of leadership in online politics. As seen in Table 2, Heimans is the most entrepreneurial among the three leaders compared here.

Anna Rose

Anna Rose only worked at GetUp! for about a year as a climate campaigner after she left the AYCC, which she co-founded, and before she worked at Make Believe. In 2012, Rose was the subject of an Australian Broadcasting Corporation television documentary called *I Can Change Your Mind . . . about Climate* based on her international journey to try to change the mind of climate change denier, and former conservative Finance Minister, Nick Minchin (Money, 2012). Rose subsequently published a book about the experience, *Madlands: A Journey to Change the Mind of a Climate Sceptic* (Rose, 2012). Participating in this show, despite her misgivings, and writing a book about her personal reflection on the experience have now become a fundamental component of Rose's public construction of a 'story of self'. She builds on her early childhood socialisation story of becoming an environmentalist after seeing family farms in drought and environmental campaigning at her high school in Newcastle (Rose, 2009).

While she engaged with politics through student activism, Rose's leadership can be understood as entrepreneurial, driven by values and creative risk-taking. Like many environmentalists, she looks towards change in corporate practice as much as change in the regulation of the state to achieving sustainable environmental change: 'I look at people who have achieved huge social changes and most, if not all, of them have been outside the political sphere (Rose in Meares, 2008).

Similar to Heimans, there is an emphasis on public status and recognition through winning awards, for example:

- 2011 Churchill Fellowship to study climate movements and write book
- 2010 Sierra Club Earthcare Award for Contribution to International Environmental Protection and Conservation
- 2009 Australian Young Environmentalist of the Year
- 2009 Sydney's 100 Most Influential People in *Sydney Morning Herald*

Rose, like Sheikh, also completed the Social Leadership Australia course in 2010 and acknowledges that this is rare: 'I've spent 14 years in activism and it's pretty much a field where you learn on-the-job; it's quite rare for people to have formal leadership training' (see http://sla.bensoc.org.au/content/anna-rose-sydney-leadership-2010-real-convers ations-hot-issues).

This brief exploratory analysis showed that the three leaders share ideas and values relevant to the logic of online politics. This enables the consistent relaying of their stories of self, their activist pathways, and their organisational innovations. Yet the individualisation of campaign entrepreneurs means crafting an externally facing 'story of self' overshadows the other two dimensions of Ganz's storytelling and leadership strategy: the collectivist 'us' and the 'now' call to action. As is seen, however, in Table 2 these leaders are not portrayed in the same way, and we need broader scale research to properly understand the emergence and generalisability of entrepreneurial leaders in online campaigning.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that the logic of online politics in hybrid campaigning organisations is based on an emerging type of leadership that prioritises the sharing of values. These values and stories are diffused through an exclusive 'network forum' of likeminded organisations and individual campaigners. The entrepreneurial structures (Earl & Schussman, 2002) of these hybrid organisations makes it easier for individual campaigners to create distinctive career pathways that blur the boundaries between state, market and society as spaces for political and social change. This analysis matters because the role, and agency, of individual leaders within online campaigning organisations, and in contemporary forms of collective political action, often remains hidden or underexplored. Through highlighting the pathways of individuals within the network forum, we start to see new versions of online collective action being created. In applying the concept of the campaign entrepreneur qualitatively to examine the public construction of three campaigners, we see that not all leaders incorporate market-facing, risk-taking entrepreneurialism in the same way.

For GetUp!, and other Australian progressive 'theory of change' organisations, history and political context still matter for success and longevity. GetUp! remains unique in

Australia and differs from other organisations in the international 'network forum' through being shaped by traditions of Australian progressive politics that have centred on the ALP and the union movement, and the dominant discourses of emancipatory, materialist politics. Australia has always also had radical political actors, and the emergence and consolidation of the Australian Green Party over the last decade has created the space for a more high profile activist agenda shaped by new, post-material, life politics. Further, while Australia does not have a specialist taxation category like B Corporations that cover Purpose and Change. Org in the USA, there is also a nascent social entrepreneur sector with for-profit organisations, like Essential Media Communications, who are working on campaigns with organisations they deem to be of 'social value'. This suggests that in continuing analysis of online campaigning organisations, we ought to pay special attention to how the political context enables and constrains the diffusion of strategic repertoires initially developed elsewhere.

Note

1. Australia's total population is about 22.6 million. Approximately 80% of the population are over 15 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). This means that over 3% of the Australian population older than 15 are members of GetUp!

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