

# S M F

STELLENBOSCH MEDIA FORUM

2013



BRAVE  
**NEW**  
WORLD

OF PILLS, PILATES,  
& GLOSSY MAGAZINES

GOODBYE,  
MEDIAS AURUS

IS JOOST 'N HEILIGE  
KOEI VIR DIE MEDIA?



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*-Geoffrey C. Ward*



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# FROM THE EDITOR



**T**hroughout this year, countless characters have come through the doors of our journalism department to speak to our class on an array of topics. One golden thread trailing through these discussions has been the uncertainty surrounding the future of journalism.

We have come to realise that with this uncertainty comes a void filled with both apprehension and excitement. Undoubtedly, the media industry is in a state of flux, with social networks changing the way we communicate across borders, cultures and even rooms.

In die nadraai van die terreur aanval op die Westgate-winkelsentrum in Nairobi, het pres. Uhuru Kenyatta van Kenia via Twitter teruggekap ná Al-Shabaab wat in hul twiets verantwoordelikheid vir die aanval aanvaar het.

Die publiek het op sosiale media oor Oscar Pistorius se skuld besluit, nog voordat hy sy voete in die hof gesit het. 'n Nuwe presedent vir aanlyn-laster is geskep deur regter Nigel Willis se uitspraak oor lasterlike inskrywings op Facebook.

Aktiviste in die Arabiese wêreld beweer sosiale netwerke het dit vir hul makliker gemaak om met ander aktiviste te skakel en optogte, proteste

en petisies tydens die Arabiese Lente te reël. Hulle het boonop YouTube gebruik om dié protesaksies met die wêreld te deel.

The future of media is uncharted territory and this means there is space for pioneering journalism, for journalism that is brave and for journalism that is new.

We chose the name of this year's *SMF* with all of this in mind. When Aldous Huxley wrote *Brave New World* in the 1930s, apprehension surrounding Britain's post-industrialised future ran rampant.

This text became the symbolic forewarning of a future so meticulously engineered by man that human autonomy was removed all together. At the first sign of sadness, citizens of this world ingest a drug that inspires a type of anaesthetised contentment.

As journalists, we are learning that sometimes the sting of reality can be a hard pill to swallow too. Yet we hope to face this reality with a lucid excitement, void of preconceived cynicism for what the future of journalism may hold.

We hope to look back at this production in many years' time and know that, in contrast to Huxley, there was no sarcasm in our word choice when we named this year's *SMF*: *Brave New World*.

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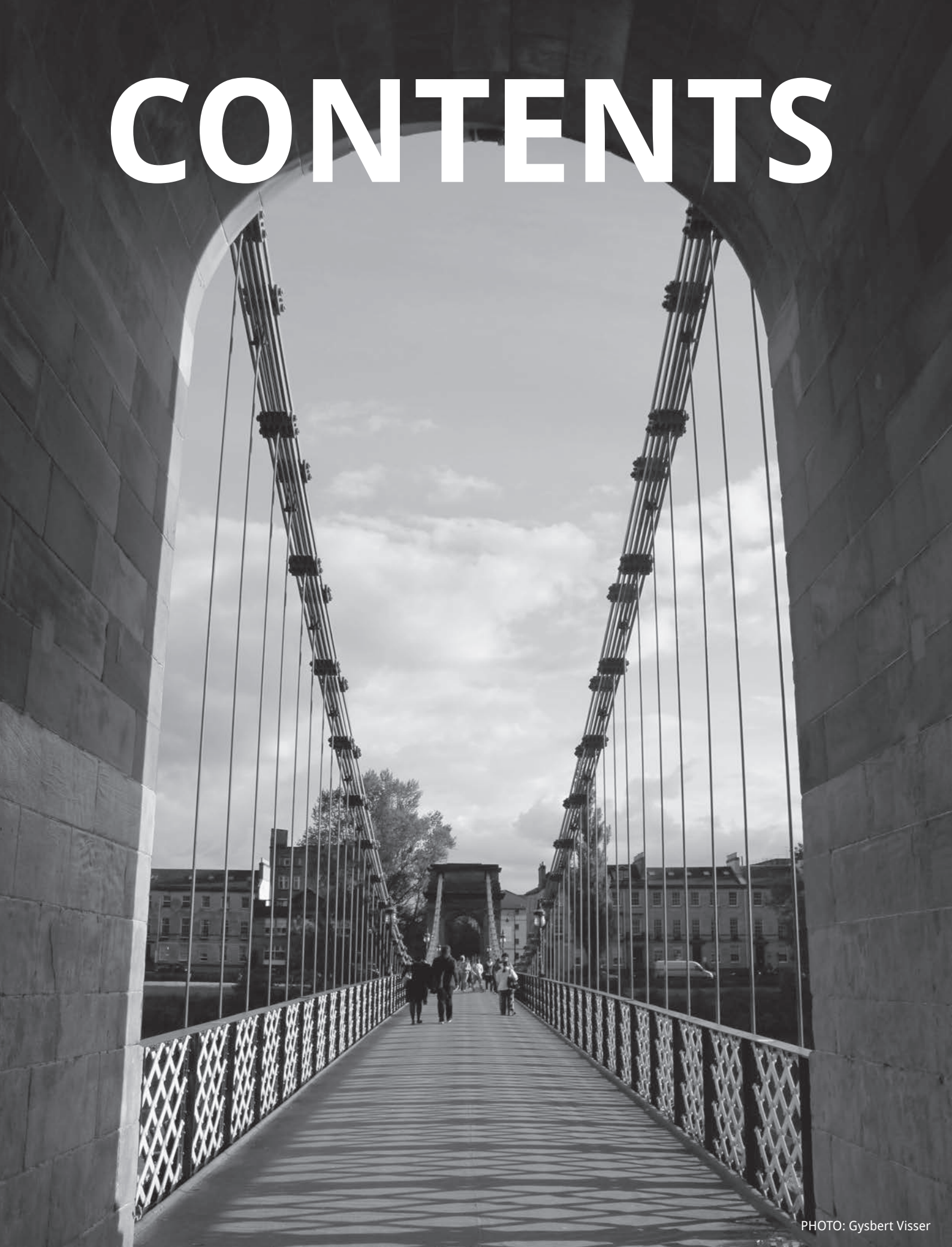
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We thank Roann Louw for providing the illustration used in the adaptation of Aldous Huxley's seminal book cover on our front page.

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# GOODBYE, MEDIASAUURUS



The current model of mass media is cumbersome, greedy and creatively stifling. And it should be left to die. But what comes in its place? **Francois Badenhorst** went from Cape Town to New York looking for answers.

“**T**o my mind, it is likely that what we now understand as the mass media will be gone within ten years,” wrote the author Michael Crichton in a 1993 article entitled “Mediasaurus” in *Wired Magazine*. “Vanished, without a trace.”

And yet here we sit, 19 years on, and the Mediasaurus endures – barely. Mass media’s survival has been a hollow victory. It is, after all, in dire straits. Recently, Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos bought the once great *Washington Post*, inspiring Salon.com’s Andrew Leonard to wryly note, “The iceberg just rescued the Titanic”. Everywhere, the fortunes of once indomitable newspapers like the *Post* floundering. And let’s not even speak about the

anachronism that is TV news.

What Crichton could not have predicted was the journalism that is starting to develop in the Internet age. In the shadows of that crumbling edifice of old media, a revolution is taking place, where journalism is thriving, creating and returning to the important things.

BRIAN STORM does not have a secretary. When I knock on the door of the loft in Brooklyn, New York, where his company, Mediastorm, is based, he answers.

Mediastorm is a four-time Emmy Award-winning multimedia journalism company. They specialise in producing videos and photo essays, all for the web. And, in this era of a seemingly

irreversible decline in journalism, they are a roaring success.

Their content is not the usual fare. In one story, “A Shadow Remains”, Phillip Toledano does nothing other than trace the decline and death of his parents. It’s brilliant: Beautifully filmed, intimate and of sublime quality. Stories like these are Mediastorm’s bread and butter – arrestingly human and utterly universal.

“We do stories that we think are going to matter for a long period of time. Stories that will touch you whether you live in South Africa or Brooklyn,” says Storm. “Because we’re the same, you and I are the same. We care about the same things.”

Mediastorm’s ability to produce quality human narratives is why they are thriving. Mediastorm does well because

its stories pluck at our natures. And in its subjects we see ourselves. They elicit a pathos that you can't find on the front page of the daily paper.

Storm's business attire consists of a black tee, shorts and leather sandals, quite a change from his days as MSNBC's head of multimedia. He beckons me in, showing me around the minimalist office as you would a stranger visiting your home. And this does seem to be Storm's home – or, at least, his spiritual home.

It doesn't take long for Storm's iconoclastic streak to manifest. "What really happened is that we sold our craft to business people." He plunges in head first. There's a second of silence as he formulates an argument to qualify his statement.

"Look at newspapers. Newspapers were amazing business, putting out 20-25% profit margins. And instead of those publications investing that money in their people and training them for this next generation, they ended up selling to business people." He describes this story like a man describing the death of his beloved dog. "And then they all went public and all of a sudden they aren't answering to their readers anymore, they are answering to shareholders.

"The problem with that model is: It doesn't matter how much money you make, it only matters that you make more. And that's not journalism – that's not our job. And if you're mandated to drive revenue, well no one in journalism wakes up in the mornings and says 'I wanna drive revenue today!'"

**STORM DOES** touch on a critical point: Profit. Media is a business and journalists don't work for charity. Profit is needed to fund excellent journalism. But the relentless pursuit of profit, the insatiable News Corporation-style desire to keep expanding, is wrong. And it's costing journalism.

"The numbers are important, of course. I've got to be able to pay these guys' salaries," says Storm. "But how much money do you need? I need enough money to keep doing what we're doing." Mediastorm is a media company that is not driven solely by profit.

On the other hand, the wrongheaded desire to constantly expand means many media companies have sabotaged themselves. And all the talk of pay walls and monetisation are rendered inane,

**It's as if media companies believe that the internet is a journalistic panacea.**

Because media companies are trying to artificially keep a defunct model alive.

In an analysis of the *The New York Times'* recently released digital revenue, Henry Blodget of Business Insider calculated an operating profit of \$70 million, enough to fund a newsroom of 850 journalists – a breathtaking amount. This crushes the idea that big media companies can't make the leap to digital.

But this 850-person newsroom is still significantly smaller than the *Times'* current newsroom. As Blodget writes, "*The New York Times'* digital news business will not support a newsroom the size of *The New York Times'* current newsroom."

The future of media lies with leaner, more tactile companies. "We're a nine-person company," explains Storm. "And I don't ever want that figure to go above twenty – no matter how big we get."

In South Africa, Moneyweb.co.za has made a success with a staff of just 35 people. Its editor, Ryk van Niekerk, expresses a view in line with Storm's. "I would like to keep it as small as possible. If had my way, I would only use freelancers," explains Van Niekerk with a brisk confidence.

"Journalists are expensive, especially for online. A good journalist earns R45 000 to R50 000 a month. So, we only have six journalists."

Moneyweb is ranked by Alexa Internet as the 149th most visited website in South Africa, with just over 300,000 visitors a month. Not exactly web titans. But they don't need to be. A leaner newsroom means they do well because they have to spend less. It's simple economics.

**BUT ALL** this talk of mediums, platforms and monetisation is diverting attention away from the real conversation.

"The problem that most people have when they talk about the future of media is they tend to limit their outcome within a specific medium," says Heinz Oldewage, product manager at News24. "They say 'print is dying and digital is taking over'. But none of that matters: Quality journalism will always be there."

Everyone wants to go "digital". But what does this mean? It's as if media companies believe that the internet is a journalistic panacea. Companies seem intent on merely reproducing the same exact content, just online.

The internet is an amazing opportunity, certainly, but it can't be the case of the same old poppycock, different platform. Before that changes, forget about pay walls and pay-per-view.

The medium is not the message. Journalists need to fall in love with their craft again. That means storytelling – human narratives that matter. And that also means embracing all the old journalistic values of true and accurate reportage, information gathering and impartiality. These are qualities that are borderless, universal.

Frustratingly, the uncertainty has led media companies to push for more deadlines, to churn out more stories. This fallacy has been driven by the familiar web 2.0 ephemera of viral content.

But journalism does not belong in the rat race for viral fame. "I argue that in this space there are two things you want to be: Really funny or really, really high quality," explains Storm. "Because those are the things that people post, those are the things that people will spread for you."

The insistence on volume in lieu of quality is a subversion of what people want. "Most of what journalism is, is speed, very low quality, and we don't get anywhere with that," says Storm. "What we do is we work on a story until we do not have the skill to make it any better."

Yes, there's social media. Yes, print is changing beyond recognition. And yes, journalists will lose their jobs in the rift caused by this epochal shift we are experiencing.

But there's hope. Just like the crafty, nimble mammals that found their way in the wake of the asteroid that wiped out the dinosaurs, media companies can forge a new path.

The Mediasaurus is gone. Long live the media mammal.

# SECTION 32



Community journalism, both by and for rural communities, has been shown to work and to work well. Is the same possible for the rural areas of the Eastern Cape?

**Kim Harrisberg** investigates.

It is in these areas that I began to understand the term “media” is far outshone by other elements of priority: water, electricity, housing and food.



Ayabonga Dinise stands outside a rondavel in Tsitsa.



He is leaning against the grey wall of the rondavel with his eyes fixed on something in the distance. Only later will I realise this is his discomfort, rather than disinterest. A rooster screeches just before he speaks, making him take another breath before continuing.

“My name is Ayabonga Dinise. I am eighteen years old. I am in grade ten. I live in Tsitsa.”

“And do you know the term ‘media’?” I ask.

“Media? No,” he says, his eyes now dancing between mine and the Xhosa translator.

“Television, radio, newspaper, these things are known as media.” He nods, showing his understanding. “Do you use these things?” I ask.

“I use the radio, only the radio. I use it every day.”

“Why do you listen to it every day?”

“When you listen to the radio, you hear interesting things about the world. You envy the host of the show.” He pauses, thinking. “To know more helps me at school.”

“And what do you want to do after school?”

“*Intatheli*”, he says. He raises his hand, mimicking holding up a camera like mine. “I want to be a journalist”.

TSITSA IS a small, rural village in the Eastern Cape, perched on top of a large hill overlooking the Great Kei River. I arrived here on foot as part of a month-long hike with four friends. This hike allowed us to enter communities as observers, communities nestled in such isolation that they were often only accessible through the use of our own two feet. It is in these areas that I began to understand that the term “media” is far outshone by other elements of priority: water, electricity, housing and food.

And yet alongside our basic rights to access the abovementioned necessities is Section 32 of our esteemed and valued Constitution: the right to access “any information held by the state or another person that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights”. The irony lies in the fact that, without media information to begin with, individuals like Dinise will remain ignorant of their constitutional rights and Section 32 will remain esteemed and valued in theory, but null in practice.

Dinise explains that he sometimes watches programmes on a shared television in his village. He does not read the daily paper; to buy it would mean a day trip to the nearest town and money that could rather be spent on food or cigarettes. Like others in the villages we come across, radio is their information-heartbeat. I am not the first to ask how the elusive concept of media could become a reality, not only for these communities, but also by these communities, by individuals like Dinise.

I speak to Siya Qoza, the spokesman for the Department of Communications.

“The government is interested and invested in people’s access to information,” he says. “In 1993, the government started supporting community radio stations. Now there are currently 130 community radios in the county. There are 8.5 million people listening to community radios every day.”

According to these statistics, in a period of twenty years there have been an average of at least six new community radio stations up and running every year. Qoza speaks about the requirements that need to be met before the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) can issue a community radio station with a licence: there must be a team of community members involved, it must fall within a specific geographic area and it must deal with relevant news. After this, the individuals are assisted with “equipment, training and ongoing support”.

But what defines “relevant news” and what makes access to it important in a place like Tsitsa to begin with? For Dinise, information may be his strongest weapon against governmental exploitation, against ignorance, and as an avenue to realising what he has the potential to become.

After one conversation in which I explained the terms ‘media’ and ‘journalist’, his perception of his own capacity had already changed. Suddenly there was a door to a world outside his village, where Dinise now had the right to question. With information comes the right to question the accountability of the accountable, of individuals like Qoza.

AT FACE value, Qoza’s words sound promising. But community reporting does not have to stop with radio. The

World Wide Worx report shows that radio may not be the only means of media access for rural communities. The annual report, compiled by media analyst Arthur Goldstuck, showed that, in 2012, rural Facebook and Twitter users were fast catching up with their urban counterparts.

The report explains that the number of urban, adult Facebook users is just less than double the number of rural users, but rural users are on par with where urban users were 18 months ago. The same goes for Twitter. It is important to bear in mind the numbers: in August last year there were 5.33 million South Africans accessing Facebook through computers, 2.43 million were on Twitter and 9.35 million on Mxit. This excludes the number of individuals accessing Facebook via their cell phones: an estimated 6.8 million people.

If social networks are bridging the rural/urban divide so rapidly, it seems strange to think there are not more news networks doing the same.

SOUTH AFRICA needs only look to the east of our continent to see that community journalism can even exist outside the typical confines of NGO hand-outs, where the prospect of profit is a far and distant enigma. In an article on [www.Journalism.co.za](http://www.Journalism.co.za), Benon Herbert Oluka, a Ugandan journalist, writes about the success of the Ugandan media company Vision Group. Benon argues that Vision Group has “changed the face of news reporting through crowd-sourcing news”.

This was done through a rather unconventional and innovative news-gathering technique.

In October 2010, a web of community, citizen reporters was born. Local stories were celebrated through the makeshift reporting of the locals themselves. Most of the stories were filmed on mobile phones and sold to broadcasters for anywhere between \$6 and \$10 an item. With time, this unconventional news channel became known as *Agataliko Nfuufu*, translating to mean “News without dust”. This hinted at the rough and real editing (or lack thereof) that gave *Agataliko Nfuufu* its de-westernised and authentic African feel.

Instead of competing with the prime-time viewership of other news channels, they scheduled the show an



hour later. Everything was reported in Luganda, the most commonly spoken language in Uganda. Benon believes this is what drew viewers to arguably the most successful television reporting in Uganda.

The site Idea Lab is a media forum for initiatives just like *Agataliko Nfuufu* all around the world. The site describes itself as “a group blog by innovative thinkers and entrepreneurs who are reinventing media in the digital age”. It is here where I come across a blog by Harry Dugmore in which he congratulates all the collective sources for a community radio station in Grahamstown, Eastern Cape. I soon find out that this project does not exist in isolation.

HARRY DUGMORE, the Director of the Discovery Centre for Health Journalism at Rhodes University, was one of the driving forces behind Grahamstown NOW, a mobile news network available through Mxit. “Grahamstown NOW was mobilised for cell phone users in rural areas. The users could spot headlines they were interested in and access these through the click of a button.”

Dugmore’s propensity to use the past tense creates the illusion that Grahamstown NOW is a thing of the past. “It is not what it is supposed to be,” he says. Although still up and running, the project did not pick up the

momentum they had anticipated.

“The biggest problem is that it is not in the vernacular of the people. We know that cell phones are the way to go, but the information needs to be made accessible in Xhosa.”

For Dugmore, the future of citizen journalism lies with the cell phone, but the interim medium is radio.

“We started two hyper-local stations in 2009: *Lunchtime Live* and *Radio Y4Y*. They were mainly in Xhosa and community members could SMS stories right in.” The term “hyper-local” has become part of the jargon of community journalists, used to describe a type of information-incubator where the events of the town are reported for and by the community members.

But, once again, Dugmore has used the past tense.

“These projects ended in 2011 because our funding ran out. A similar story to most community stations,” he says matter-of-factly.

A Grahamstown NOW colleague of Dugmore’s, Steven Kromberg, says that they have been in negotiations with government for nearly three years regarding funding. “We are just met with excuses,” he says.

Qoza’s words of “equipment, training and ongoing support” leap into my mind. And then I think of Dinise, and the other prospective writers, reporters and analysts whose potential is being

lost in this crossfire.

It is obvious that the potential for something like *Agataliko Nfuufu* has been planted in South Africa, yet the roots have yet to anchor.

I GET through to Thobeka Finca, an active community member in the Keiskammahoek village. Grahamstown NOW has been linked to this small community through the media project called *Ntaba ka Ndoda*, meaning “Rise up”. There were plans to help community members set up an independent newspaper and cell phone news services.

“Since 2002 I have been working with *Ntaba ka Ndoda*,” she says. “But when it comes to our media programme, we are not getting anywhere. We did a survey on cell phone use and found that most people have cell phones with working MMS. There is potential but we cannot do any more for now because there are limited resources and a lack of skills.”

Finca facilitates education, development and health programmes, sometimes going without a salary for more than eight months. So why do media hold such importance for her?

“Using media, people within and outside the village will know the things we achieve. Information and knowledge will be shared. The outside world will not believe that people in the rural village can do things like this,” she says with a sense of urgency.

MY INITIAL conversation with Dinise makes me think about the powerful, domino-like spread of information. I realise how a single conversation with an individual during an isolated hike can trigger an investigation of something bigger.

This surge in and accessibility of information has the potential to fill the holes where basic services are falling short. Hyper-local, citizen journalism promises empowerment, resourcefulness and, ultimately, sustainability. Examples like *Agataliko Nfuufu* and Idea Lab have shown that it can work and work well, once all the cogs are in place.

And finally, I think of something Finca said to me at the end of our conversation: “We cannot wait for government to change our lives, or we will always be waiting. We must simply do it ourselves.”

# SAVING THE WORLD ONE MILLION AT A TIME



PHOTOS: Marinette Potgieter



We often hear about the privacy dangers and disadvantages of social media, but few seem to realise the major positive impact mass communication can have on society. **Marinette Potgieter** explores.

Meet Gary Saaman. Gary seems like an everyday 33-year-old man from Atlantis: soft-spoken, yet confident with a dashing smile and sturdy physique.

“I like to smile,” he beams, “smiling colours the face and lightens the mood.”

But behind this smile lies a rough story that polished Gary into the man he is today.

Gary was a member of a drug-pushing gang in the small Western Cape town of Atlantis.

“We were *gevaarlik*. My friends all killed people. I would steal things and beat people, but I never killed. You see, it went against my morals.”

He started smoking “tik” (methamphetamine) at the age of 18 and was soon involved in cartelising the small town at a historically unprecedented rate.

“In a matter of six months we [the gang] had almost every youngster in town tikking. The whole place is fucked up now because of us.”

Gary speaks easily. He has told this story many times before.

“Before us, you bought a *straw* [0,5 grams] for R80. That was the going rate. But we bled the industry dry when we started selling the stuff for R20 per gram.

“Soon, every mob boss was out to kill us, because you just don’t do shit like that. It’s like a dealer’s code, you see? You have to maintain the price so people can make money.

“One day,” Gary continues, “we were *braaiing* outside our house when a storm broke loose and it started raining bullets all around us. Everyone dove into the foetal position.

“My friend’s daughter ran to me, her hand soaked with blood. Her finger got shot clean off.” Gary takes a deep breath and speaks nostalgically. “She is the same age as my daughter.”

It was just too close. After the shooting Gary envisaged his way out.

“I couldn’t do it anymore. I couldn’t put my family in constant danger like that. I wasn’t going to wait for someone close to me to die for me to learn my lesson.”

Before his words cooled, his best friend, and partner-in-crime, was brutally murdered in gang violence in 2008. Gary straightened himself out, packed his bag and knocked on the doors of RLabs.

RECONSTRUCTED LIVING LABS (RLabs) is a community-driven initiative



ABOVE: Gary Saaman is spotted laughing more often these days.

that strives to assist people with stories similar to Gary’s by providing counselling services – in person and online. People facing any social issue, whether an abusive spouse or unemployment, can seek help at the organisation.

“We are not a rehabilitation centre,” says founder Marlon Parker. “We only work with people who want to be helped.

“We are more of an incubator for success. Our main objective is to give people hope by offering counselling services and training them to become profitable members of society.

“We offer 15 practical academic courses – ranging from photography to business management – which give applicants of RLabs a chance to rebuild their lives.”

**My friend’s daughter ran to me, her hand soaked with blood. Her finger got shot clean off.**

IN 2008 RLabs joined forces with Mxit – South Africa’s most widely-used, free social networking site – by providing free online counselling services, similar to a chat room, where participants share their stories of defeat and hope.

“The online counselling service is a big part of what we do at RLabs,” says Parker. “We offer participants a chance to communicate their issues with our online counsellors, who have also been victims or proprietors of social crimes, like rape or drug addiction.

“With this method, affected people can open up a bit more. We have found that people, especially young people, communicate better on social media platforms, where it’s not face to face, and to people who can relate to what they are going through.”

Parker praises the role of social media in RLabs’ success. “Social media has fuelled our initiative. At first we were only five guys, counselling about 20 people online. Today, we have directly helped over 10 million people – not to mention their families, which would push the number up to about 50 million.

“We now work in 20 countries and have employed 70 counsellors in the past five years. It would never have happened as fast if it wasn’t for social media.

“We advertised on Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media,” Parker says. “We decided to use Mxit for the counselling service because it reaches around 10 million users in South Africa alone.

“It is the most popular free messaging service in the country and most of its users are under 25 and from impoverished areas.”

RLabs are taking advantage of the benefits of social media. They recruit people who have lost all hope and, by equipping them with the necessary skills and training, turning them into entrepreneurs.

Erik Qualman, world-renowned public speaker and author of *Socialnomics: How social media changed the way we live and do business*, ascribes RLabs’ booming success to the advertising properties of social media.

“It’s now easier to start and run a small business as a result of these [social] technologies,” says Qualman. “The key is to let the tools work for you rather than you for the tools. The better you can understand technologies the more you can benefit from them.”

Qualman is working on a project that showcases social media's ability to connect and educate people from desolate, hard-to-reach places in Africa.

"I want to show how easy it is for people to access information by just having internet connectivity – even if it's just from a phone.

"Information can be disseminated effortlessly over long distances, and from one person to 10 000 in one swift move, thanks to social media.

"In Africa, where schools aren't always easy to access, social media can serve as a major mobilising tool. It can be very liberating for oppressed people."

Siyabulela Qoza, spokesperson for the Department of Communications, says social media are widely used in South Africa and considered important by the government.

"Social media are very important for communication between South Africans," says Qoza. "It allows governments to communicate directly with the country's people and also simplifies communication over long distances."

Qoza agrees that social media can be used not only to provide emotional support, but also to educate people in destitute areas.

"The majority of South Africans who live in rural areas have access to a cellphone. If we could improve internet connectivity in the country, the majority of our population would have access to

**In Africa, where schools aren't always easy to access, social media can serve as a major mobilising tool.**

virtually unlimited information."

A report by World Wide Worx and Fuseware substantiates Qoza's views. According to *The South African Social Media Landscape 2012*, a tenth of South Africans were using Facebook in August last year. Twitter had 2,43 million users and Mxit had 9,35 million.

Ideally, all South Africans would have cellphones from which they can access the internet, but Qoza maintains that "there is not enough money in the

communications budget" to donate any number of phones to uneducated or poor people. Qoza says it is, however, "something [they] might look into in the future".

TODAY, GARY is a counsellor and co-chairman at RLabs. He recently launched his own business, where he designs and sells cellphone applications that offer a connection to counsellors and therapists.

He just bought a house and a car with the money made from his new business, and gave them both to his mother. "I owe the auntie after everything I've put her through."

RLabs have three offices in South Africa: Cape Town, Johannesburg and Atlantis. Gary now works at the Cape Town branch, but the one in Atlantis was initialised under his lead.

"I don't feel guilty about what happened, I just feel like I have a mess to clean up, and only I can do it since my friends are still part of that lifestyle."

Thousands of stories like Gary's are being written every day because of social media.

Social media can be one of the most valuable assets of modern society. It can mobilise and educate thousands, if not millions of people in an instant.

The time has come to embrace this shift to virtual communication, adapt it to our South African environment and allow education to spill over into the cyber realm for easy access.



**Marlon Parker initiated the social movement to help improve poor communities.**



**Students can easily access counselling services via their cellphones.**

# SPOEG-EN-PLAK- JOERNALISTIEK: DEEL JY, OF STEEL JY?



Talle nuuswebtuistes maak deesdae 'n bestaan deur nuus van ander bronne af te kry en dit te herskryf. Gee jy aan jou lesers 'n samevatting van die beste nuus, of kies jy 'n kortpad wat besaai is met plagiaat-slaggate? 'n Suid-Afrikaanse hofsak kan binnekort antwoorde op dié vrae bring, skryf **Mieke Vlok**.

**D**ie joernalis se skryfwerk is die vrug van sy pen, en aspirant-joernaliste word van dag een geleer die grootste sonde in die media is om in 'n ander man se vrugtemandjie te gaan loer wanneer jou eie storie-oes skraal lyk.

In die internet-era is die lyne tussen steel en samevoeging egter vaer, en internasionale nuusblaaie soos *Huffington Post* en *BuzzFeed* het 'n suksesvolle sakemodel geskep waar nuus by ander publikasies geleen word en dan vir hul eie lesers herskryf word.

Die internasionale pers het dié model *aggregation* gedoop, en terwyl *imitation* dalk die *sincerest form of flattery* mag wees, maak samevoeging baie joernaliste die jodie in en beweer hulle dié gonswoord in die joernalistiek is niks anders as plagiaat nie.

In Suid-Afrika het die kwessie onlangs kookpunt bereik toe die finansiële-nuuswebtuiste *Moneyweb* bekendgemaak het dat hulle hul mededinger *Fin24* hof toe sleep weens beweerde plagiaat. *Fin24* vorm deel van die *News24*-groep, wat die samevoegingsmodel gebruik om nuus by ander bronne te versamel en dan as hul eie te herskryf.

In hul hofstukke voer *Moneyweb* se redakteur, Ryk van Niekerk, aan dat sewe artikels wat *Moneyweb* tussen Julie 2012 en Julie 2013 gepubliseer het,

deur *Fin24* geplageer is.

Die artikels is na bewering op oorspronklike navorsing deur *Moneyweb*-joernaliste gebaseer en die inhoud is luidens hofstukke herskryf of net so gekopieer, met slegs 'n verwysing na die feit dat dit vanaf *Moneyweb* verkry is en 'n webskakel na die oorspronklike artikels.

In die hofstukke gebruik Van Niekerk *Moneyweb* se "*Chris Walker breaks the silence*"-artikel as 'n voorbeeld om te wys hoe *Fin24* dit geplageer het met hul "*Defencex boss opens up to Moneyweb*"-artikel. (Sien kassie regs.)

Van Niekerk meen die samevoegingsmodel benadeel nie net etiese en oorspronklike joernalistiek nie, maar dat dit ook finansiële gevolge het, omdat die uitgawe om joernaliste te betaal by die bron lê, en die versamelaar dié stories verniet kan kry.

Hy meen ook die metode waar 'n skakel na die oorspronklike artikel gegee word, is oneffektief, omdat min lesers die aanvanklike berig gaan lees nadat hulle reeds die versamelaar s'n gelees het.

"Die deurkliksyfers is baie laag en hulle is boonop 'n mededinger van ons," sê Van Niekerk.

Die implikasies van die *Moneyweb* vs. *Fin24*-saak is verreikend, omdat dit 'n Suid-Afrikaanse presedent gaan skep vir die aanvaarbaarheid van die

samevoegingsmodel.

Die debat het internasionaal ook uitgekring, met die Noorweegse nuusversamelaar *Meltwater* wat onlangs in die nuus was nadat hulle in beide Engeland en Amerika hofsake verloor het waarin hulle van kopiëregoortreding beskuldig is.

Prof. George Claassen, *Media24* se gemeenskapskoerante-ombudsman en 'n dosent in media-etiek aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch (US), meen "dié kwessie kom nou al 'n lang pad aan" en dat "hierdie hofsak 'n baie groot toetsaak is", omdat daar plaaslik nog nie vantevore 'n hofsak oor die kwessie was nie.

Hy meen die internet-era het die kwessie meer dringend gemaak, omdat die internet "*copy-en-paste-tegnieke*" vir nuusversameling maklik maak. Hy beaam egter dat die internet nie 'n verskoning is vir plagiaat nie, en dat dieselfde etiese- en regsbeginneels vir aanlyn- én gedrukte media geld.

Voorstanders van die model wat deur webtuistes soos *Fin24* gebruik word, meen egter dat die bron erken word én 'n skakel na die oorspronklike berig gegee word en dat die model daarom in voeling is met die Suid-Afrikaanse Wet op Outeursreg.

Ingevolge dié 1978-wet mag daar "billike gebruik" uit ander bronne plaasvind, mits die bronne erken word.

Jannie Momberg, die redakteur van *News24*, meen die wet spreek geensins die manier waarop inligting op die internet gedeel word aan nie, omdat dit uit 1978 dateer.

“Dit is ’n hele nuwe manier van hoe mense kommunikeer. Hulle noem dit nie net *aggregation* nie, maar ook *curation* – waar ons die beste inligting kies en dit opsit. Dié tipe goed word glad nie aangeroeur deur ons wetgewing nie, so in daardie opsig verwelkom ons die geleentheid dat daar nuwe riglyne gestel kan word, want daar is nog geen Suid-Afrikaanse voorbeelde nie.”

Momberg het ook in ’n verklaring op *Fin24* gesê dat *Fin24* “geensins gemaak het asof ander se werk hul eie is nie” en dat inligting duidelik toegeskryf is en skakels na die oorspronklike berigte beskikbaar was.

“Die media sukkel wêreldwyd hiermee, en die vraag is hóéveel van ’n storie mag mens dan nou op die internet deel?”

Claassen meen ook die Outeursregwet se gebruik van die term “billike gebruik” is vaag en maak skuiwergate in die joernalistiek moontlik.

“‘Billike gebruik’ impliseer jy kan een of twee paragrawe êrens leen, solank as wat jy aandui dit is nie joune nie. Jy moet darem jou eie werk óók doen en kan nie ry op die rûe van mense wat salarisse betaal en joernaliste wat uitgaan om ’n storie te dek nie.”

Dr. Owen Dean, regs-konsultant aan die Spoor & Fisher-firma wat in kopieregwetgewing spesialiseer en hoof van immateriële goederereg aan die US, meen die wet is spesifiek so vaag, omdat dit begrip het daarvoor dat elke geval van ‘leen’ uniek is.

## Die uitkoms van die Moneyweb vs. Fin24-saak gaan hewige implikasies vir plaaslike joernalistiek hê.

“Dit móét so vaag wees, sodat die hof sy diskresie kan gebruik. Intellektuele eiendomsreg is propvol van dié vertrouensstandaarde.

“Of jy inbreuk maak op iemand se kopiereg hang af van of jy inbreuk maak op ’n wesenlike gedeelte daarvan, maar wat is ‘wesenlike’ dan nou?”

Dié onduidelikheid van die wet laat party kenners met die mening dat dit hersien moet word, terwyl ander voel die wet se basis is voldoende en dat dit net beter toegepas moet word.

“Daar is goed in die Kopieregwet wat nie werklik vir my sin maak nie, so dit is tyd dat die oorspronklike wet hersien word,” sê Elmarie de Bruin, ’n kopieregprokureur by MacRobert-Attorneys.

Claassen meen daar skort nie veel met die wet nie, maar dat dit wel aangepas moet word om voorsiening te maak vir die nuwe uitdagings wat die internet stel.

“Elke media-instelling het etiese kodes en jy kan nie gaan sê ‘ons versamel van ander plekke af, en omdat ons die internet is, moet ons vrygestel word hiervan’ nie.”

Die uitkoms van die *Moneyweb* vs. *Fin24*-saak gaan hewige implikasies vir plaaslike joernalistiek hê. Indien *Moneyweb* suksesvol is, gaan webblaaiers soos *News24* moontlik hul sakemodel moet hersien en sal joernaliste én die publiek twee keer moet dink voor hulle op daardie *copy*- en *paste*-skakels klik.

Indien *Fin24* egter suksesvol is, gaan die oor en weer deel van nuus makliker kan geskied en sal joernalistiek wat gegrond is in die eeue-oue beginsel dat ’n joernalis sy eie stories moet versamel, volgens sommige joernaliste ’n knou kry.

## Só het hulle berig:

### Moneyweb

“Chris Walker, the mastermind behind the R800m Defencex scheme has likened the insurance industry and the banks to Ponzi schemes, while admitting that his battles with the Reserve Bank (SARB) could never have been won. He also claims not to have profited from his embattled business and suggests that the accounts linked to Net-Income-Solutions were frozen to protect the profit seeking interests of the banks and to allow liquidators and attorneys a slice of the R349m pie.”

### Fin24

“He likened the insurance industry and the banks to Ponzi schemes, while admitting that his battles with the Reserve Bank could never have been won. He also claimed not to have profited from his embattled business and suggested that the accounts linked to Net Income Solutions were frozen to protect the profit-seeking interests of the banks, and to allow liquidators and attorneys a slice of the R349m pie.”

# OF PILLS, PILATES, & GLOSSY MAGAZINES



Psychiatric illness is more prevalent than ever, and in response to the growing demand for mental health information, popular media reporting on mental health has proliferated. But, as **Xanthe Hunt** finds out, journalists' misguided focus on what their readers want to hear does a lot more harm than good.

**Y**ou fall down the stairs at work and break your arm. You run to the doctor, who puts plaster on the break as you faithfully pop the painkillers he prescribes.

But if you suffer from bipolar, schizophrenia or another psychiatric illness, the road from diagnosis to correct treatment is a far cry from the Paracetamol protocol of quotidian bumps and bruises.

One of the culprits complicating this

journey is the way popular media deal with mental health. Are headlines like “Skinny and Crazy vs. Fat and Happy”, and “Depressed? Look at Old Facebook Pictures.....” ever excusable?

And is the job of women's magazines to create a “strong lifestyle brand

identity”, rather than to provide medical nuance because they believe their readers are not interested?

THE INCIDENCE of psychiatric illness is at an all-time high – 1 in every 4 people, according to the World Health





Report.

These days, long-term admission to specialised hospitals is no longer feasible, making community-based care the treatment of choice, according to South African Society of Psychiatrists chief, Dr Gerhard Grobler.

Nowadays, 'Jane Doe' – with bipolar I – can live a fulfilling life and manage her illness without ever being hospitalised,

a vast improvement since the not-so-distant days of Shutter Island-esque isolation.

But not only the mentally ill have been affected by these changes: exposure to others living with psychiatric illness has left the public thirsting for mental health information, according to Dr Anthony Jorm, a Psychiatry Fellow at Melbourne University.

Jane Doe's friends are curious, so they Google "bipolar". They look at Wikipedia. They are overwhelmed.

At the supermarket till, headlines vie for their attention. As "The Truth about Depression" beckons from *Women's Health*, *Marie Claire's* "Are antidepressants making you fat?" catches their curious eye.

Keen to help Jane, they buy both. But, armed with conflicting reports, what now to tell their friend?

PUBLIC INTEREST in mental health makes accurate reporting indispensable.

But Jorm's studies reveal most people wrongly believe that psychiatric conditions are caused and cured according to adjustments in lifestyle

## Skinny and Crazy vs Fat and Happy

- Marie Claire

alone. In reality, mental illness originates and is treated according to a model whereby, Grobler explains, "biology, psychology and social factors play a role in causation".

The problem that Jorm's 2005 study reveals is that this uninformed public faith in lifestyle factors is resistant to contrary evidence because it forms part of a broader way of thinking about mental health.

So, if Jane's aunt reads an article that says running could cure bipolar, and this falls within her preconceived social beliefs, she will believe what she reads. If the article prescribed pills, on the other hand, she would dismiss the information as irrelevant.

## Tango the blues away

- Women's Health



There is a commercial imperative to cater to readers' desires, but how helpful are journalists who simply reinforce false beliefs instead of painting a balanced picture?

THERE ARE publications that choose to reflect back to their audiences lifestyle-loaded information, at the cost of painting a more medical picture of mental health.

"It's not *Women's Health's* place to go into in-depth discussions of psychiatric treatment, which is a minefield of conflicting paradigms. The subject matter would become extremely dense and that is not what our readers are looking for when they open the magazine," says *Women's Health* lifestyle editor Wanita Nicol.

"All magazines have an agenda," she continues. "Ours is that we promote a healthy lifestyle and this needs to influence any topic we cover in order for us to create a loyal readership and sell magazines."

But does this commercial imperative warrant a disregard for medical accuracy?

In the astonishingly titled "Skinny and Crazy vs. Fat and Happy", *Marie Claire's* Joshua Lyon tackles the subject of antidepressant-induced weight gain.

The first 500 of Lyon's 1 000-odd words are dedicated to a case-study of Jen Morrow's experience of "devastating" weight gain from taking Lithium.

Aside from suggesting that antidepressants are over-prescribed – "the question these days isn't who's on an antidepressant, but who isn't" – Lyon quotes sources supporting his thesis that weight gain is more detrimental to women than mental illness.

Although quoting a psychiatrist's testimony that "many women could stand to gain a few pounds, which are of small consequence compared with the risk of untreated depression", Lyon quickly adds that "untreated sudden weight gain is [also] dangerous".

Later, Lyon – discussing the case of Rachel Mackee – writes that "Within a year, she'd gain 7 – 7! – pounds" (emphasis not added).

Although not all articles are as questionable as Lyon's, many glossies still evidence a heavy lifestyle bias. *Women's Health* is a case in point,

its leaning towards lifestyle solutions merely reinforcing public prejudices.

Among the headlines by their mental health writer Tamar Houliston this year alone have been such platitudes as "Depressed? Look at Old Facebook Pictures.....".

And if social networking is not minimising your melancholy, Joy Niemack adopts an equally non-medical stance in "Yoga to Relieve Depression", "Laughter is The Best Medicine", and "Tango the Blues Away".

Stretch, giggle, dance and get over it.

The problem is not that lifestyle interventions should be disregarded, but that the weight given to them in women's glossies is disproportionate to their efficacy and undermines the medicality of mental health.

## Depressed? Look at Old Facebook pictures...

- *Women's Health*

ON THE other side of the debate are those like *Die Burger's* acclaimed science writer, Elsabé Brits, who advocate strict adherence to tried, tested and medically accepted science.

"Journalists over-report on the lifestyle factors," says Brits.

"My biggest problem is what happens in so-called 'glossy' magazines; one day it's 'drink coffee' for depression, and the other, 'red wine' – a lot is unsubstantiated.

"Say so if the findings are alternative, unproven, anecdotal or preliminary," she says, "like you would if you were reporting about cancer – or heart disease.

"You cannot exercise clinical depression away the same way you cannot pray it away," says Brits, "it's

pseudoscience."

But, as existing beliefs are stubbornly kept and – worse still – cause readers to ignore conflicting information, Brits's approach will not necessarily change people's minds.

How does one avoid dancing to the audience's off-key tune, but at the same time not relay facts that will fall on deaf ears?

The answer, Jorm suggests, lies in evidence.

WORKING WITHIN readers' beliefs in the importance of lifestyle in mental health, journalists need to provide accurate information that gives their readers a factual foundation.

Jane's aunt should be able to read about the neurochemistry and psychology that could make running ease bipolar.

"People fear what they don't know," says Grobler, "so the more they learn, the better.

"But what they need to know, is the whole picture. And if the problem is medical, that needs to be the focus."

Mental illness may not be as clear-cut a condition as a fractured arm, and public beliefs in treatment options may be biased, but that should not condemn reporting to the same fate.

2002

The Mental Health Care Act protects the rights of the mentally ill in SA

20th century

The medical approach to psychiatry emerges

19th century

Institutionalisation sky-rockets

Ancient times

Mental disorders are attributed to the supernatural

# FOGGY FUTURE FOR JOURNALISM GRADUATES



The future of journalism in the digital age remains a mystery. What are the prospects for hundreds of students enrolled in journalism courses across the country? **Puleng Koneshe** speaks to the lecturers of five journalism institutions.

**M**ost journalists who came to speak to the BPhil students at the Stellenbosch Journalism Department this year painted a bleak picture of the current job market in the media industry.

Earlier this year, 567 Cape Talk programme manager Tessa van Staden urged students to begin applying for internships. She said she had received emails from some former students who were still hunting for jobs.

The Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) recently announced that South African newspapers had recorded an average decline of 3.2% in the first three months of this year. *Mail & Guardian* dampened the mood even further when it announced that it would be prioritising digital. The newspaper's chief executive, Hoosain Karjieker, said this means 10 positions would be made redundant.

This raises the question: if the industry is so dry, why are so many journalism schools still flourishing? And

where are journalism graduates with no experience being employed, if people with years of experience are being sacked?

There currently are 15 institutions that offer journalism courses in the country. Rhodes University produces the bulk of the students yearly. About 600 students are enrolled in journalism courses at Rhodes across different levels.

However, some heads of journalism schools in South Africa do not seem fazed by these developments. "There is still a demand for new young voices, particularly ones who are digitally literate," says Anton Harber, Caxton professor of journalism at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Harber says many of their students are finding opportunities despite the decline in the job market. "We had 19 career-entry students and about 25 mid-career students doing honours. All those who wanted got internships, but I have not tracked how many of those turned into employment.

"Most students go into journalism in one form or another, but you have to bear in mind that the definition of journalism is changing as well.

"Journalism used to mean going into a newsroom for a major media company and working there as a reporter or sub-editor. It used to be automatic that you started by going into a newsroom, but increasingly I think journalists have to make their own way as independent content providers.

"People are operating in different ways now, but we find that the majority of our students are going into journalism. How long they are staying there, we have yet to see. Newsrooms might be shrinking, but journalism is not."

Rhodes University's professor of journalism and media studies, Herman Wasserman, says despite the changes in the industry, universities should not scale down on journalism training. He says scholarly engagement with journalism and media studies at university level should rather be scaled

## Print newspapers have a long life ahead in South Africa. How many readers of the Daily Sun will read it on a tablet?

up, because of the role that journalism and media plays in society. “Media pervades our lives, shapes our identities and affects our relationships,” says Wasserman.

The head of Stellenbosch University’s Journalism Department, Dr Gabriël Botma, admits that there is an oversupply of journalists in the system. “At Stellenbosch we have never felt guilty about training students for jobs that do not exist because we only train 25 students per year. People who might feel guilty are those who train 300 students yearly for journalism.”

Last year 21 students were enrolled in the Stellenbosch BPhil course. Twenty of them are employed, but only 14 are working in the journalism industry.

North-West University’s head of the Journalism Department, Prof. Johannes Froneman, says they only take eight journalism honours students per year. “We are wary of the possible overproduction of journalists and do not wish to be part of the problem. I think each journalism school should be responsible. That does not necessarily mean scaling down, but it does mean keeping an eye on numbers and not growing at this stage.”

Head of journalism at the University of Pretoria, Prof. Pippa Green, says that students from her university are still being absorbed by the industry. “We had 19 students in 2012. At least half of our honours students have gone into journalism. It is difficult to get in, but if you are good you will get a job. People need to keep up with trends and write well.”

Julie Reid, University of South Africa (Unisa) analyst and academic, is on the

same page as Harber and Green. Reid says there are still jobs available in the industry. “If you speak to print editors, they are a bit negative; they will not tell you that there are opportunities in digital journalism.

“South Africa is going into digital migration and with that there is hope that there will be more job opportunities, especially in broadcast,” says Reid.

AS THE face of traditional journalism morphs into a different creature, journalism training also has to change. Most journalism lecturers agree that the change in the newsroom should also be reflected in the classroom.

Harber says they review the content of courses yearly. “There is no doubt that we have to shift what and how we teach in journalism substantially. This is something that we grapple with all the time. We are finding we have to adjust our curriculum every single year.

“Courses are no longer done according to media types such as print or radio, but we do a broad journalism practice programme that incorporates all media types. This has meant a gradual shift from a focus on print and radio, where students chose a specialisation, to a multimedia approach where all students do some work in all media. Most recently, we have incorporated social media into journalism practice,” says Harber.

Botma says they have had to transform their journalism course to account for converging newsrooms. “The major changes involved the introduction of multimedia journalism as a year module. The individual

production courses in writing, radio and photography were also compelled to focus on digital production and publishing. We incorporated a student departmental website into the range of publishing options, and the class of 2012 developed an app for their end-of-year magazine.”

The University of Pretoria ran their first honours course last year. “Before then we were an undergraduate program me run under the auspices of the English Department,” says Green. “When I got here in 2009, we realised it was not an effective way to train would-be journalists, so we began a process to phase out the undergraduate programme and to start an honours course, which is an intensive one-year full-time course. From next year we will only offer a post-graduate programme.

“We deal with convergence by offering a range of platforms to choose from and have a high-powered course in digital journalism taught by Chris Roper, online editor of the *Mail & Guardian*.

“Students end off the year by doing a mini-thesis, which is a journalistic rendering of a topic that touches on one of the content specialisations that they can present on a variety of ‘platforms’. In this way we are also encouraging them to think about convergence and how to present material.”

The curriculum of the journalism (honours) course at the University of the North-West was reconfigured two years ago. “We are happy that we are in tune with the latest developments, which accommodate the convergence of old and new media. We kept all components, writing, lay-out, radio production, photography and theory of



PHOTO: Puleg Koneshe

the media, ethics and media law,” says Froneman.

“The practical skills are now integrated better, for example a story is done for all platforms in one go. Radio skills are still taught in separate time slots, but the idea is to use those skills in any context.

“But I believe the ability to write well will remain the mainstay of all communication professions. Less focus on print is not an answer. Print newspapers have a long life ahead in South Africa. How many readers of the *Daily Sun* will read it on a tablet?” asks Froneman.

Wasserman says the changes in the journalism and media landscape will take time to filter down to journalism education at universities. “Universities have to see their role in teaching journalism and media studies as encompassing more than merely training students for jobs. For instance, most universities now accept that they have to equip students for a converged media environment.

“Universities also have to help us develop an understanding of how the

media’s role in society is changing, how to make sense of media, how to live in a mediated world and how to respond ethically to the changing world of which media forms such a large part,” says Wasserman.

“It is about much more than ‘training’. We need people who know how to do research about changing media trends, so that the media industry can respond to them.”

LATE LAST year, newspaper columnist David Bullard said that studying journalism for years was a waste of time and money. Bullard said in the article published on *The Media Online* that a journalism degree was a bogus degree and a complete waste of daddy’s money, since you can either write or you can’t.

However, Harber says this is not true. “I think it’s nonsense. That’s like saying it’s either you are a good doctor or a bad doctor. I think everyone can learn writing. Everyone’s opportunities in life are enriched by learning how to research, write and produce media. If you want to be a journalist it is good to have a journalism degree.”

Green agrees. “Training is needed. People need to learn the different ethics and skills. Sometimes you send people out to do a story and they just can’t write. The problem is that people have learned things like Media Studies and that is important, but it does not equip you to be a journalist.”

Harber is still optimistic about the future of journalism. “I think that the job market and job opportunities are changing, but I have no doubt that if you are young and you are skilled and you have a fresh voice, there is still a demand for that in journalism.

“It’s a very dynamic and interesting era. Everyone is grappling with developing new business models and concerned about what happens to journalism as the old business models collapse, but I think we are equally excited about the enormous opportunities thrown up by new media and social media.

“There are a number of dangers; the industrial danger is how are we going to pay for journalism? Is there a business model to pay for journalism in new media? We have not found it yet.”

# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS CAN GET YOU INTO TROUBLE



What you post on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter may lead to a lawsuit for defamation or your dismissal. **Bronwyn Douman** sheds light on this uncharted territory in South African law.

If you think a Facebook status costs you nothing, consider what happened to Ms W of Gauteng. She probably was not the first woman to accuse a man of being a drunk and drug user who neglects his family. But when Ms W took to Facebook to air her grievances against Mr H, she set in motion a series of events that ended up in the South Gauteng High Court.

In January this year, Judge Nigel Willis finally intervened in Ms W and Mr H's Facebook quarrel by granting an interdict against Ms W, which prohibited her from posting any commentary about Mr H. Mr H had claimed he was being defamed and requested that the court order Ms W to take down her insulting Facebook comments.

Not only did the judge order Ms W to remove her defamatory posts about Mr H, he also ordered her to pay Mr H's legal costs.

As Mr H had not instituted a claim for damages against Ms W, this point was not considered by the Court.

Judge Willis did note, however, that "as with any defamation case, it's quite difficult to quantify damages". It is for this reason that the applicant in this instance applied only for an interdict instead of damages," says Rosalind Davey, director and social media expert

at Bowman Gilfillan, a law firm in Johannesburg.

"It would have been difficult for the applicant to prove that the respondent's comments had caused him financial damage. Then you also have to build his case around pain and suffering, which is generally difficult to quantify."

Another Facebook defamation case recently played out in the North Gauteng High Court in the matter of *Louise Dorothy Isparta vs. Charmaine Richter and Another*. This case involved a senior manager at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) who posted defamatory comments about her husband's ex-wife, saying, "To all moms and dads... what do you think of people who allow step-brothers to bath their little sisters each night, simply because it would make the mother's life easier???" The ex-wife took the woman and her husband to court, reported Sapa, and Judge Jan Hiemstra ordered the couple to pay the ex-wife R40 000.

The ex-husband did not author the posts but was tagged in them. In this regard, Judge Hiemstra noted that, even though the husband was not the author, he knew about the posts and allowed his name to be coupled with that of his new wife.

Judge Hiemstra noted that "Crude as damages for defamation may be,

our courts have consistently awarded damages to the victims of defamation, albeit in modest amounts. Since the defendants did not apologise or retract their defamatory comments, I believe that an amount of R40 000 is appropriate in the circumstances".

AS IT stands, there is no legislation in South Africa that specifically regulates the use of social media. "The starting place would be the Constitution because it deals with the right to privacy, right to freedom of expression and the right to dignity, which include your good name and reputation. The next step would be to look at defamation laws which would essentially protect your dignity and privacy rights," says Davey.

"If conduct would be unlawful off line, it is also unlawful online. A defamatory statement is one that would lower the esteem of the subject of the defamatory statement in the eyes of reasonable people," says Duncan Wild, an associate at Webber Wentzel Attorneys in Johannesburg.

COMMENTS POSTED on Facebook and other social media platforms have the same legal consequences as those published through other mediums, such as newspapers and magazines. If someone defames or insults you

on Facebook, commits hate speech, infringes on your privacy, or commits any other offence, the legal action you can take against them depends on the nature of the conduct.

“The ordinary rules of defamation would apply,” says Wild. “But a statement is considered published when it is made known (whether spoken or written) to one person other than the person making the statement, and the person to whom the statement relates. It is easy to see how almost any statement on Twitter or Facebook would meet this requirement. People who share or re-tweet the statement would also be publishers for the purpose of defamation.”

The person who will be considered the “publisher” is not just limited to the person who posted the comment on their own or someone else’s (or a group) page. The person responsible for the page may also be liable. For example, the administrator of a page is likely to be liable for defamatory content posted on that page. People who share or re-tweet the statement would also be publishers for the purpose of defamation law,” says

**If conduct would be unlawful offline it is also unlawful online**

Wild.

“If the publisher meets these requirements, they will be held liable unless they can show the statement was legally justified. For example if the author can prove it is both true and in the public interest to publish it,” says Wild.

Currently, there are no South African examples of defamation cases involving re-tweeting. However, if you were to re-tweet an offensive article and say you agree with it, then there is a risk that you can be liable for defamation, because you are essentially publishing and furthering the defamatory statement.

One study has found that Twitter users are “poor at determining whether a tweet was true or false, regardless of their experience with Twitter”, according



PHOTO: Bronwyn Douman

to Daxton Stewart, an attorney and journalist who wrote an article on law and social media in the *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, titled “When Re-tweets attack: Are Twitter users liable for republishing the defamatory tweets of others?”

You can protect yourself from defamation charges by putting the appropriate privacy settings in place. “Twitter users would certainly foresee the possibility that the tweets they post would be open to republication elsewhere on Twitter. Unless the user chooses to ‘protect’ his or her account through privacy settings, the tweets can be viewed by anyone with a web connection and re-tweeted by anyone with a Twitter account,” says Stewart.

SOCIAL MEDIA statements that can get you fired are the same as in any other context. If your employer’s code of conduct states that it is a disciplinary offence to insult your boss, sexually harass co-workers, bring the company into disrepute or disclose confidential information, an employee cannot say “but I did it on Facebook” to get away with it, says Wild.

An example is the case of McIntosh Polela, the former spokesperson for the Hawks, who tweeted after Jub-Jub’s conviction for murder that he hoped Jub-Jub supporters would bring him

Vaseline for his time in prison. Because Polela was associated with the Hawks, the comment had an impact on his employer, bringing it into disrepute. Polela was subsequently dismissed.

In 2012, Lance Witten, e-News Channel Africa’s sports reporter, was suspended after he tweeted, “Linkin Park is so badass, people are dying to see ‘em”, after a freak accident killed a concert-goer. Witten apologised and was later re-hired and ordered to go for social media training.

“There are going to be cases where it is better to walk away and focus on damage control, and other cases where it is worth taking the risk of filing a defamation lawsuit and going to court,” says Paul Jacobson, internet lawyer and Web•Tech•Law’s director specialising in digital and social media-related law.

“The courts are not going to entertain relatively trivial disputes. I also think the relative cost of litigation would still be a huge factor. Litigation is an expensive process and that’s going to determine whether people resort to the courts without attempting to do something else.”

“The case concerning H vs W does not change the law on defamation. Instead, it simply applies it to this context. But it does provide a backdrop for how similar cases are going to be dealt with in the future,” says Jacobson.

# VIRAL VIGILANTISM







**The concept of vigilantism is not a new one. However, the birth of the internet and the rise of social media have afforded this social phenomenon the opportunity to move online. Christopher Udemans investigates.**

**E**ach year, on the third Monday of April, residents of the American states of Massachusetts and Maine commemorate a day written in blood.

The day serves to memorialise the first skirmish between Great Britain and its American colonies in which 121 were killed and 213 were injured. This year, the celebration known as Patriots' Day fell on the 15th of April, a date now marked with notoriety.

Just before 3 o' clock in the afternoon, two homemade explosive devices were detonated during the marathon in downtown Boston. The attack left three people dead and another 264 injured.

The aftermath was dire.

In an interview with CNN, Kyle Pinto, a Boston resident, recalled the horrifying sight that awaited him in the street.

"There was a lot of blood everywhere. It was a – it was a scary scene, absolutely, because this had never happened before to Boston. It was just a scary, scary scene."

After the dust had settled and the wounds had been bandaged, the unexpected occurred.

Another explosion. However, this was an eruption like no one had ever seen.

It occurred on the internet.

FOR THE past ten years, the influence of social media has been growing drastically. The numbers are astounding. As of May 2013, Facebook's "population" reached almost one sixth of that of earth, Twitter membership reached 500 million and Instagram had 100 million members signed up.

However, it was on Reddit that this seminal social phenomenon occurred.

The social media network was founded in 2005 and has been dubbed "the front page of the internet". Within its pages, users post threads known as "subreddits" and the online

community votes on their significance. With each vote, the subreddit moves up in prominence, much like results in a Google search.

In the aftermath of the Boston bombing, the Reddit user, "oops777", created a subreddit entitled /r/findbostonbombers. The social network was a hive of activity. Online sleuths poured over photos from Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in an attempt to identify the perpetrators of the heinous act.

In an article written for *The Atlantic Wire*, Alexander Abda-Santos described the event as "the most crowd sourced terror investigation in American history".

Tauriq Moosa, lecturer in Applied Ethics at the University of Cape Town, believes that it was inherent to the nature of social media for the manhunt to reach the magnitude it did.

"Vigilantism has been around for hundreds of years," he says, "but it was the medium that allowed it to get much bigger than it otherwise would have."

The digital hunt began with a backpack. Officials believed that they had found a carrybag in which the pressure-cooker bombs were detonated. From there, Reddit users made use of crowd-sourced photos in an attempt to identify people in the vicinity of the attack with similar backpacks. Speculation quickly spread and innocent bystanders were labelled terrorists. One such unlucky individual was Sunil Tripathi.

Tripathi was a 22-year-old Brown University student who had been missing for a month before the bombings took place. However, Reddit users latched on to his name, quickly labelling him a suspect.

A number of Reddit users appealed to the community, imploring them to refrain from making rash judgments resulting in smear campaigns.

One user, going by the Reddit moniker TrollJugder, stated that it was "all purely speculation" and that "destroying an innocent man in a mad rush for answers would add another horrendous wrong to this tragic situation". But the search continued.

Tripathi was found dead a few days after his photo had migrated from Reddit to the front page of the *New York Post*. The cause of his death is still unknown.

How was it possible that these internet users could simply disregard the well being of another human being in a frenzied panic?

According to Michelle Badenhorst, a National University of Ireland graduate student specialising in the psychology of social media, the answer is more human than one may think.

"In a sense, the internet is the largest mob ever assembled. It can transform otherwise inhibited people into unrestrained, faceless rioters," says Badenhorst.

But how exactly do internet users transform into these anonymous monsters?

The reason has to do with social conformity. "It is in our human nature to fit in with our peers and not to question the majority," she says. "In psychological terms, conformity refers to an individual's tendency to follow the unspoken rules or behaviors of the social group to which they belong."

To put it simply, human beings strive for acceptance.

The idea of "mob mentality" is important when discussing issues relating to crowds. Groups breed the idea that no one individual can be held responsible, because "everyone is doing it". This leads to a loss of inhibition and the provocation of behaviour in which individuals normally would not engage alone.

The physical presence of other

**We would like to take this opportunity to state that we had nothing to do with the tragic events that took place during the Boston marathon**

participants in a crowd is not necessary for this crowd mentality to develop. According to Dr John Drury, senior lecturer in social psychology at the University of Sussex, “if all you know about people is their category membership, that they are ‘people like us’ or in our network, it can make influence and coordination easier and quicker”.

The digital activists known as Anonymous are testament to the unifying nature of the internet. Anonymous are a loosely connected group of ‘hacktivists’ (hacker activists). They have no management structure and no central command, and have led a number of online protest operations against a wide variety of groups.

Despite the decentralised structure, the group is highly social within their ranks. They patrol the pages of 4Chan, an image board website, and make use of Internet chatrooms. They are a close-knit group that find solace in the contrasting anonymity and camaraderie that the Internet provides.

In the aftermath of the bombing, the group released a video denying any involvement in the Boston attack.

“We would like to take this opportunity to state that we had nothing to do with the tragic events that took place during the Boston marathon,” said the computer-generated voice.

A number of years previously, the group had organised an operation against the well-known white nationalist, alleged neo-Nazi and holocaust denier Hal Turner. Turner ran an online radio station that he eventually shut down in 2008.

Anonymous conducted a multifaceted operation against the radio presenter. Firstly, they led a campaign of prank calls in which callers pretended to be members of minorities in order to inundate the berated Turner with phone calls.

However, the group’s main assault came in the form of a tool known as a DDoS (distributed denial of service) attack. This served the dual purpose

of limiting access to his site while inundating his online server with fake information, resulting in extremely high costs due to bandwidth usage.

Picture a million people trying to walk through a door one after the other. The only purpose of them entering the building is to prevent those who need to from entering the premises. This is the method in which a DDoS attack works.

An unnamed Anonymous member, interviewed in the documentary *We Are Legion*, shed light on a number of other tactics that the group used.

“We trolled him in real life. We sent countless pizzas to his house. We signed him up for escorts on Craigslist. Which he ultimately had to foot the bill for.”

Due to the financial implications of the attacks, Turner was unable to continue paying for his radio show.

Nevertheless the ultimate blow came when the group hacked his email account and discredited him in white supremacist circles by exposing the fact that he was a government informant.

DESPITE THE perceived moral basis for Anonymous’s attacks, the extent of their power raises a number of alarms.

“The concern with Anonymous lies in their name,” says Moosa. “However, the problem is not only anonymity, but the lack of accountability and responsibility.”

Moosa believes that the problem with groups like Anonymous is that they can take advantage of the turbidity that the Internet provides. Unlike traditional providers of justice, groups like Anonymous cannot be held accountable for wrongdoing. “Who watches the watchdogs?” he asks.

He worries about how information collected by Internet groups may be handled, whether they are users of social media, online activism groups like Anonymous, or the National Security Agency (NSA).

“There is a concern over how the information will be used. We are not living in Plato’s republic. We don’t live within a population of strong, smart and

good people,” says Moosa.

He believes that social media providers need to take a top-down approach in controlling the medium, and that the producers and consumers need to take responsibility for the actions of the medium as a whole.

Bennett Kelley, founder of the Internet Law Centre, an internet law firm specialising in digital law, understands that it is not technology that is in need of regulation, but the “challenge is to regulate conduct” on the internet.

“There already are restrictions,” he says. “I can’t say I’m going to kill you, for example. I can’t violate your privacy by revealing every detail about your life, or play Edward Snowden and reveal state secrets. Freedom of speech is not absolute.

“There are reasonable restrictions that can be put in place; the challenge is to define them in a way that does not prohibit permissible speech,” says Kelley.

Moosa shares Kelley’s views. “People will always cry freedom of speech violations without understanding the concept. When roads were built, no one said ‘you are restricting my movement’. They were working to build better transport systems. We are working towards building a better internet.”

BADENHORST SUMS up the actions of both Anonymous and Reddit users:

“On the internet, you don’t even need a large group to feel anonymous, you can say and do almost anything with little to no consequences. Hence people aren’t afraid to speak out and make their opinions heard. If you get enough people to agree with you, the situation can snowball into an online mob of sorts, each of whom feels absolutely zero consequences or sympathy.

“The main problem is that people see a difference between the internet and their everyday lives,” says Moosa. “If you go outside, you take care of your appearance. The same should be the case online.”

I can’t help but think back to that fateful day in 1775. The sounds of war were all around. Those involved in the Patriots’ Day Battles were swooned by the feeling of belonging provided to them by fellow soldiers. They were warriors on the frontline, just as Reddit users and Anonymous members believed they were headed off to battle.

# RACHEL JAFTA: MOEDER MEDIA



Rachel Jafta is vanjaar aangestel in een van die invloedrykste posisies in die plaaslike media, maar sy is lankal ook 'n engel wat ongesiens 'n enorme verskil in honderde lewens maak.

**Dayne Elizabeth Nel** het met haar gepraat.

In graad 11 het Abygail Lakey (nou 20) gewonder hoe sy ooit matriek gaan deurkom. Maar toe kruis 'n engel haar pad. Na 'n suksesvolle aansoekproses het sy deel geraak van die Media24 Rachel's Angels-mentorprogram. Drie jaar later was sy besig met 'n diploma in regte.

"Rachel het my gemotiveer om in my matriekjaar te presteer," sê Lakey van Idasvallei in Stellenbosch. "Sy het my geïnspireer om ander mense ook te help."

Hoewel haar mentor, 'n universiteitstudent, 'n groot rol in dié ommeswaai gespeel het, was daar groter magte wat tot haar sukses bygedra het. Lakey is net een van honderde leerlinge wat deur die Rachel's Angels-mentorprogram gehelp is. Agter dit alles sit die aartsengel, die moeder owerste van Rachel's Angels, Rachel Jafta.

OP DIE vyfde vloer van die Schumanngebou in Stellenbosch is prof. Rachel Jafta se kantoor. Op haar deur is 'n spotprent van twee dinosourusse wat kyk hoe Noag se ark sonder hulle wegvaar. Die een sê vir die ander: "O gaats, was dit vandag?"

Sperdatums is vir Jafta net so belangrik in die akademie as in die media. Vir iemand so modern is haar kantoor nog vol donker hout. Stapels papiere en vraestelle staan reg om gemerk of weggepak te word.

Op 'n winterdag sit die nuwe voorsitter van Media24 agter haar rekenaar en lees die oggend se nuus.

"Vandag het ek al *The Economist*, *Die Burger* en *Finweek* gelees," sê Jafta. "Dit word gedoen saam met oggendtee."

Jafta het vroeër vanjaar by prof. Jakes Gerwel die leisels van Media24 se raad oorgeneem. Sy dien al van 2003 in Naspersse Raad en van 2007 in Media24 s'n. Sy dra verskillende hoede: onderwyser, raadslid, mentor en netwerker. En dit doen sy alles met passie en ywer.

JAFTA GEE klas aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch se departement ekonomie. Sy is veral opgewonde om studente oor internasionale handel te leer. Vanjaar fokus sy op Afrika, en haar entoesiasme vir die ontwikkeling van die vasteland is duidelik.

"Om klas te gee is iets wat ek regtig geniet en wat vir my baie bevredigend is. Wanneer dit by merkwerk kom, kan



**Sy is nou die gesig van Media24 en sy maak seker dat Media24 se hart reg klop.**

'n mens jousef nogal vra, 'wat maak ek hier', maar as 'n mens sien dat 'n student iets vir die eerste keer verstaan, is dit vir my die beste. Dis 'n voorreg en 'n verantwoordelikheid om mense te help om hulself en hul wêreld beter te kan verstaan.

"My pa het nie die geleentheid gehad om skool toe te gaan nie. Sy droom was dat een van sy kinders 'n onderwyser sal word. Toe ek vyftien was, het ek vir hom gesê dat ek nie met ander mense se tieners gaan sukkel nie. As hy nog gelewe het, sou hy lekker vir my gelag het, want onderwys en tieners is nou 'n kerndeel van my lewe."

Jafta het onlangs haar ou skool besoek en saam met haar peetseun 'n ekonomieklas bygewoon.

"Die onderwyser het ekonomie so relevant vir die kinders gemaak. Ek sê altyd dat ek nie net ekonomie gee nie, maar ook as dosent 'n soort afrondingsrol speel. My studente mag dalk dink ek is 'n bietjie mal, omdat ek hul wêreldbeskouing probeer verbreed."

Jafta verduidelik hoe ekonomie deel is van hoe haar geliefdes haar sien. Toe haar peetseun vier was en die ekonomiese nuus een aand op televisie aankom, het hy meteens geskreeu: "Kyk, kyk, dis jou werk!"

"So, op 'n jong ouderdom het hy dit al met my geassosieer," sê Jafta. "Ek het 'n passie vir entrepreneurs en probeer altyd luister as jong entrepreneurs met my praat. Ek kan dalk nie self help nie, maar ek kan hulle in kontak met die regte mense bring."

VANJAAR IS Jafta se tiende jaar by Naspers.

"Ek is genooi om in die Naspersraad te dien. Tot op hede weet ek nie wie vir hulle my CV gegee het nie," skerts Jafta.

"Die grootse verandering die laaste jare," sê sy, "is hoe Naspers ontwikkel het van 'n maatskappy wat net drukmedia was, na 'n maatskappy wat betaaltelevisie in Suid-Afrika begin het en toe die internet omhels het."

"Ek het geleer dat jy nooit van enigiets seker kan wees nie. Jy moet altyd bewus wees van wat om jou aangaan. Jou strategie moet altyd kan verander."

"Nou het Naspers ook gekies om in ontwikkelende lande in te beweeg waar besigheid nog kan groei. Vanjaar is die eerste jaar wat internetinkomste dié van betaaltelevisie oorskry het."

"Rachel is die eerste vrou wat



**As 'n mens sien dat 'n student iets vir die eerste keer verstaan, is dit vir my die beste. Dis 'n voorreg en 'n verantwoordelikheid om mense te help om hulself en hul wêreld beter te kan verstaan.**

voorsitter van Media24 se direksie is. En dus natuurlik die eerste swart vrou,” sê Esmaré Weideman, uitvoerende hoof van Media24.

“Ons is ontsettend trots op haar, nie net omdat dit so 'n historiese aanstelling was nie, maar ook omdat sy 100% bekwaam vir die rol is. Sy ken die maatskappy deur en deur en verstaan die strategiese rigting waarin ons beweeg. Sy stel opreg belang en het 'n breë kennis van die maatskappy. Ek bewonder haar intellek, die manier waarop sy kan indril op wat regtig relevant is, en haar leierskapstyl.

“Sy kom ‘sag’ voor, maar ek belowe jou sy is nie! Daar is staal agter daardie vriendelike bruin oë!”

“Sy het haar oor en oor as kundige bewys en dit was 'n maklike besluit om haar leierskap te erken met die aanstelling as Media24 se voorsitter,” sê Ton Vosloo, voorsitter van Naspers.

TERWYL DIE wêreld vanjaar kennis geneem het van Jafta se nuwe posisie as voorsitter van Media24 se raad, weet min mense van 'n ander projek waarmee sy 'n enorme invloed op hoërskoolleerders se lewens het, die Rachel's Angels mentorprogram.

In 2007 het Media24 in samewerking met die Universiteit Stellenbosch, en Jafta, die Rachel's Angels Trust gestig. Leerders in graad 11 en 12 kry 'n mentor om sukses in hul matriekjaar te verseker.

“Sy inisieer nie net projekte nie, sy is aktief betrokke daarby,” sê Spurgeon Wilson, projekbestuurder van Rachel's Angels.

“So, dit is nie net 'n *feel good* poging

nie, maar regtig na aan haar hart.

“By die induksies van Rachel's Angels wil sy self met die studente en leerders praat, saam met hulle leer en saam met hulle groei deur die program.

“Sy is nou die gesig van Media24 en sy maak seker dat Media24 se hart reg klop.”

“Sy is uiters gedrewe, maar kalm en gebalanseerd in alles wat sy aanpak, van haar werk tot haar vrye tyd soos haar vakansies – waar sy haar ten volle uitleef,” sê Hanlie Retief, 'n joernalis vir *Rapport* wat kort na Jafta se verkiesing 'n profiel oor haar geskryf het. “Sy is intens betrokke by die organiseer en bestuur van Rachel's Angels.”

“Die Media24 Rachel's Angels is een van die projekte waarop Media24 die trotsste nog is,” sê Weideman. “Ons glo dit werk omdat dit nie net 'n akademiese fokus het nie, maar ook in die holistiese ontwikkeling van die leerders belê wat elke jaar aan die projek deelneem.”

“Ek is bekommerd oor ons onderwysstelsel,” sê Jafta. “Ons is besig om selfs agter Afrikalande te raak. En dit hoef nie so te wees nie. Elke lewe is kosbaar. Ek hoop ons kan fundamenteel 'n verskil maak, nie net kosmeties nie.

“Mense sê vir my, ‘ek wil help, maar die nood is oorweldigend’. Ek verstaan dit maar al te goed, maar die antwoord is om oor jou invloedssfeer te dink en dit is dan waar jy jou aandag kan fokus.”

Terwyl Jafta nie self kinders het nie, het sy al honderde kinders deur die mentorprogram grootgemaak. Leerders soos Abygail Lakey het 'n engel wat omgee vir hul opvoeding en toekoms.



PHOTO: Gysbert Visser

ABOVE: Smile FM Breakfast Show host, Bobby Brown.

# A NEW WAVE OF SMILE



Newly established Cape Town radio station Smile 90.4FM reflect on their journey as they celebrate six months on air.

**Fhumulani Justice Khumela** paid them a visit.

Smile 90.4FM was born exactly five years ago when radio news veteran Lizma Van Zyl brought together a group of diverse radio experts, academics and businessmen to discuss the possibility of a new radio station for Cape Town. Among them were former KFM CEO, Tony Mallan, KFM's former programme director, Clive Ridgeway, and eventually businessman and film maker Anant Singh.

Van Zyl reveals that when they met to discuss the then proposed model of

Smile 90.4FM, it was a resounding "yes" to go ahead and establish something fresh and different for the Mother City - a station that would be truly different and make a real contribution to the life of every person who listens to it.

The initial idea was to establish an Afrikaans station as, at that point, there were less than three minutes of Afrikaans on air, per hour, on the three existing commercial stations, Van Zyl explains. In the light of the Western Cape being predominantly

Afrikaans, the founder members hoped to fill an important language gap in the market. However, the station's primary market research showed that, although Capetonians wanted more Afrikaans on the airwaves, they did not want only Afrikaans. This led to the tailor-made format of Smile 90.4FM.

After a wait of almost three years, what started as a dream became reality in December 2011, when the independent consortium received the news that it had become the successful

## Smile 90.4FM has an unusual format, being a bilingual music and talk station, with a slant towards Afrikaans

bidder for the first commercial radio station license to be awarded in the Mother City in 15 years. Van Zyl explains that “the competition was extremely stiff. Twelve others, some of whom are very well-known radio houses, bid for this sought-after license.”

She says the process was a long and exhausting one, but also one of the most rewarding for all involved. The vision was to create something different; something more than a radio station – in fact, an audio brand that also incorporates other media platforms.

The founding members say that a lot of physical, mental and emotional labour went into the creation of Smile 90.4FM, with the core team often working 16 hours a day in preparation for the application before ICASA (the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa) in November 2009.

Van Zyl, who spearheaded the application process, recalls that the founder members almost weren’t able to present their bid to the communications authority were it not for the financial backing of Singh’s Videovision company.

Thanks to Videovision’s funding, Smile 90.4FM was able to launch on 25 March this year. The on-air team comprises some of the best and most well-known in the business. Presenters such as Bobby Brown, *Bravo’s* Tracey Lange, Eloise Pretorius and *50/50’s* Maurice Carpede – to name but a few – joined team Smile and say they haven’t looked back.

It’s a Friday afternoon, 12:20 pm, at Smile 90.4FM’s offices. The offices, as expected, are very busy. But the personnel look very relaxed and in control. They seem to be enjoying their work.

While breakfast show host Eloise

Pretorius goes through some of her research for her up-coming show, her breakfast show partner, Bobby Brown, entertains the midday listeners on Danie Marais’ “A Full Hour of Number Ones at One” time slot. The stand-in presenter says he is always alert and ready to fill in for any presenter.

“In radio you must always be ready and flexible,” says Brown. “I present a different show to this. But you must learn to adapt. It is very fun to do. I have been privileged to have worked in different radio stations and radio slots. The experience is fulfilling. You get to connect with people.”

With two minutes to the half-hour mark, news reader Jo Lennox arrives in studio for the 12:30 news bulletin. At exactly 12:30 she delivers the three-minute-long news bulletin in Afrikaans, ending with a round-up of the weather in English. After the bulletin, she quickly dashes back to her desk, alongside her senior news reporter, Unity Ruiters, to compile the 1 pm bulletin.

“Unlike other radio stations, our news is not necessarily centred on politics,” Lennox says. “We focus on a lot of social news – not just reporting on what happened, but also what is being done about the social issues we reported on.”

Despite her breakfast show being done for the day, Pretorius still seems focused. She does, however, finally break away from her work for a quick chat.

“Social media and the internet have made radio so interesting,” she says. “The internet has made working on radio fun. Radio can be combined with social media to create a very powerful medium. This makes my job very interesting.”

Station Manager Clive Ridgeway played a huge role in the design of the

format and purpose. Ridgeway says Smile 90.4FM is designed with a very specific purpose.

“That purpose is to make a tangible and meaningful contribution to a city that does not need another radio station,” Ridgeway says.

“The city needs inspiration and information that help build a better life for all, assisting the economy to move forward more rapidly in a sustainable and fair way. Smile’s core contribution to that – our core purpose – is to be an unflinching reminder to our listeners of the value in choosing the positive option, practising gratitude and being the change he or she wants to see in this city.

“Our aim is to build a tribe of passionate people – each one a leader – empowered with the knowledge that what you think affects how you feel, how you feel affects what you do, and what you do affects who you become.”

Ridgeway says he feels the station “empowers” the community because the station’s values and purpose are to encourage and spread a “positive” message. The station has chosen not to follow the traditional hard-news format, but rather to look at social news and possible solutions.

Smile 90.4FM has an unusual format, being a bilingual music and talk station, with a slant towards Afrikaans. Another differentiating factor is that the station has committed itself to the development of South African artists. Fifty percent of the music being played on Smile 90.4FM is that of local musicians.

Van Zyl, who heads up news and talk content, says another unique aspect of this station is the fact that talk content is presented in three-minute units in order to guarantee an easy flow between the talk and the music.

“Our aim is to entertain, inform, but also and especially, to inspire. Our news and other talk content have been designed especially to fulfil these criteria.

“One of the most amazing aspects of working at Smile 90.4FM is the fact that we all see this station as our baby; every single person in this team has taken ownership and has become true ambassadors of this brand. The passion and dedication is humbling and inspiring and we believe as we continue on this journey, our movement will grow,” Van Zyl concluded.

# NEW KIDS ON THE OLD BLOCK



Two new media have been launched in the three months before SMF's publication, Power FM, a talk radio station and *Bella*, a new Afrikaans women's glossy. **Nthabeleng Mzizi** asks who is starting out in these trying times.

Sitting on the magazine stand between copies of this week's *You* and the newest edition of *Sarie* is a brand new magazine. Simple in its cover, the magazine disappears in the fight for space on the small magazine rack. One would barely notice it even if you tried.

*Bella* is the newest magazine to enter the women's magazine market. On the cover, actress and model Zetske van Pletzen stares out suggestively, enticing women standing at shopping tills to buy the magazine.

"*Wees die mooiste jy!*" sits at the top of the masterhead and headlines such as "*Embrace jou Seksualiteit*" and "*Gidse wat jy móét versamel*" vie for your attention on either side of the cover. The magazine includes columns by actors Altus Theart and Diaan Lawrenson.

The unexpected birth of a new women's magazine contradicts the death knell that has been sounded for print media.

*Bella* magazine is not the only new player to venture into media this year. On the frequency 98.7 in Gauteng, you can now tune into Power FM, where you can hear the voices of Eusebius McKaiser, previously from Talk Radio 702, Lerato Mbele, who presented Newsday for the BBC, and Pabi Moloi, previously from Highveld Stereo.

Power FM is mainly personality

driven, with 70% of airtime devoted to talk radio. The star-studded presenter line-up proves this. Radio hosts who have enjoyed a significant break from the airwaves, Tim Modise, Lawrence Tlhabane and Paul Mnisi, are now presenting on the station.

ACCORDING TO the Audit Bureau of Circulations of South Africa, circulation for consumer magazines stood at over 6 million for the first quarter of 2013. The economic performance of magazine publishers relative to the performance of the economy declined.

Women's magazines have declined by 2% annually, meaning that a total of 186 000 copies have been lost by women's magazine publishers since 2009.

These circulation figures sketch a bleak picture for the consumer magazine industry. The question remains: why would one begin to publish a women's interest magazine when the magazine market is performing badly?

This is a question that Magdie Raats, editor of *Bella*, has to answer. *Bella* is an Afrikaans women's magazine, has been in stores since August. But what makes it different from other magazines competing in the magazine industry?

"*Bella* is an Afrikaans glossy magazine for women between the ages of 20 and 35. We are targeting an Afrikaans market that has not been catered for

yet."

With articles such as "Versterk só jou verhouding met jou kleuter", "Skat, kan ons 'n baba kry?" and an eight page special on weddings, it is clear who *Bella's* target market is: the young woman who is concerned with marriage, children, looking and feeling good.

According to the editor, the women in their market are faced with life-changing decisions and need the support and advice that *Bella* will hopefully offer.

In the Afrikaans women's magazine sector, Media24's *Sarie* and *Rooi Rose*, published by Caxton Media, compete for space on the same supermarket shelves as *Bella*. The competition seems to be tough, but at R26 a copy the new magazine is positioned well in the race for magazine readership; *Rooi Rose* retails at R28.95 and *Sarie* can be purchased for R31.

With this in mind, Raats and her team are aware of the role players that need to be nurtured to make a magazine successful.

"Just like with any new product the biggest challenge is to get readers, advertisers and distributors to take a chance on your brand and to keep them interested."

The challenge of creating a viable media product in South Africa today is not lost on the *Bella* team. Even when bearing the readership,



advertisers and distributors in mind, the threat of bigger, more established companies that have created effective models for magazine publication is all too real.

“Big media companies like Media24 and Caxton make it difficult for independent publishers to penetrate the market, because they are well-established and have good relationships within the industry,” says Raats.

Attempting to pull in the readership of different segments of women’s interest magazines, *Bella’s*

publishers want to compete with magazines specifically geared at the African women’s magazine market and the teenage magazine market.

“We have a lot of plans and dreams for the future. We would love to bring out *Bella Black* for the African market and also *Bella Teen* in the near future.”

ACCORDING TO the Radio Audience Measurement Survey figures released for the second quarter of 2013, the national weekly reach of Primedia’s Talk Radio

702’s increased, with an additional 147 000 listeners bringing its total audience to 768 000. SAfm’s listenership has grown to a total of 655 000.

These figures indicate that there might be more of a market for talk, radio with growth in listenership numbers in both a public and private radio broadcasting entity.

With just as much competition in the talk radio market as in other sectors of the media industry, Ferdinand Mabalane, Power FM station manager, states that there is



PHOTOS: Nthabeleng Mzizi

a definite need for more talk radio stations that are diverse in their content and address the current interactive vacuum between South Africans.

Peter Hornung, editor and reporter for NDR (Norddeutscher Rundfunk- North German Broadcasting), says competition among radio stations is getting harder and therefore there is a need for better

on any issue specifically, which often excludes a lot of people.”

In a column titled “Open up radio” in *Business Day* on the 20th of June, Anton Harber, professor of media studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, writes: “At the moment there is no space for the small entrepreneur to enter radio: you either have to have a big stash of cash, or grapple with the unworkable

“The only radio licenses we have are big public broadcasting licences, regional commercial licences and community licences for local stations. We can create a lot more opportunities if they allowed for lower power commercial stations.”

Low-power commercial stations are radio stations that are run at lower costs than regular radio stations. These radio stations are usually broadcast to smaller areas.

Mabalane shares these views when it comes to radio in South Africa.

“Contrary to popular belief, radio does have high start-up costs. Of course they vary from talk to music stations, as each has its own unique demands. A talk station, for instance, requires a huge investment in both infrastructure and human resources, as these are fundamental to the delivery of high quality and competitive content.”

Mabalane recognises that venturing into the talk radio station market is difficult, despite the diversity in the definitions other radio stations use to identify their listenership. Although radio stations believe they are competing in different markets and therefore for different listeners, one listener gained on Power FM is one lost to competing radio stations.

“It is not easy, because talk radio in South Africa is almost non-existent, with only 702 and 567 Cape Talk dominating the space.”

Yet Harber says that the presence of Power FM has been beneficial for the radio market.

“It’s a new and different voice. In a metropolitan centre like Gauteng it’s great for there to be competition in the talk radio market.”

## Big media companies like Media24 and Caxton make it difficult for independent publishers to penetrate the market

quality radio.

“Radio needs to be creating its own news agenda, strengthening journalistic profiles, credibility and social relevance.”

Mabalane echoes the this sentiment when talking about Power FM.

“Power FM is founded on the principles of normal conversations in which South Africans engage on a daily basis, and that is why we are not focused

complexities of community radio, with all its trusts and obligations and regulatory demands and restrictions. How exciting would it be if low-power licences were issued all over the place, allowing small operations to open up and bring more new voices into the field?”

Harber admits that radio has grown a lot since 1994, but that it can open up for even more growth.



# THE SOCIAL MEDIA (A)GANG



Never mind posters, next year's election is all about posting... tweets and statuses, that is. **Lauren Voges** finds out how new South African political party Agang is using social media as a campaign tool – and why other parties should like and re-tweet her methods.



**A**lmost every seat in the Endler Hall on the Stellenbosch University campus is occupied. Two thousand pairs of eyes will see Dr Mamphela Ramphele today. Two thousand pairs of ears will hear her speak. Two thousand students may decide to vote for Ramphele's political party, Agang, based on her speech today.

Two thousand votes won't win Ramphele the presidency, 30 000 might bring her closer to it though, and while 30 000 people could not possibly cram themselves into the Endler Hall, they can all follow Agang on Twitter.

Five years ago (perhaps more), political rallies, posters and badges emblazoned with political faces were the way to win an election. But today's techno-savvy crowd respond to hashtags, statuses and followers – badges cannot be liked or re-posted.

Back in the Endler Hall, I've found a seat near the exit where I can just make out the neat figure of Ramphele.

"I'm sure you all share my interest in the election campaign," the microphone booms. A murmur filters through the crowd. The uncomfortable truth for many students is that they (okay, fine ... we) are unconcerned by the elections. There's a prevailing attitude of unsatisfied acceptance that the same party will be re-elected and the same problems will continue to manifest themselves.

The sentiment hasn't escaped Ramphele. She expresses her disappointment at those young people who have abstained from voting because they believe "it won't make a difference". Her gentle chastising makes those people (okay fine ... me) feel guilty about neglecting their democratic duty.

"I have seen how young activists can change South Africa," she says conspiratorially. Her tone seems to urge the group of students seated before her to stand up and join the political realm. And Agang's social media platforms echo Ramphele's invitation to South Africans old and young.

Agang's communications director, Thabo Leshilo, explains that the use of social media is central to any electoral campaign. "When we started Agang, Dr Ramphele knew from the onset that social media would be the way to go. It provides us with the opportunity to

## Should social media be a tool for political campaigning?

**"We must remember social media (for example Twitter and Facebook) are not as prevalent in South Africa as in the US, where they've changed the landscape in political communication completely."**

**- DA Social Media Manager, Alex Molteno**

**"Through social media we can reach thousands. And we feel it is appropriate for us to use it as a campaigning tool because that is how many people use it."**

**- ANC Head of Communications, Keith Khoza**

communicate with all of our supporters, followers and stakeholders the way we want to communicate. For us, social media is a mobilising tool."

Just a click of a mouse or a tap on a touch screen reveals that Facebook, Twitter, Mxit and interactive websites have revolutionised the political campaigning process. Although social media are still relatively new in South Africa, it's not the first time the likes of Facebook have catapulted a politician to the presidency. Just ask Barack Obama.

In her Media Psychology blog, Pamela Rutledge says, "Like JFK was the first president who really understood television, Obama is the first social media president." In her blog, Rutledge demonstrates how using social media was the key ingredient in Barack Obama's winning presidential recipe.

Rutledge reminds us that, in 2008, Obama was the only presidential candidate who made full use of social media, instead of relying on traditional door-to-door methods, in his electoral campaign. "Obama dominated the social media space because his team got how networks work. The real power of social media is not in the number of posts or Tweets but in user engagement measured by content spreadability." While most of South Africa's political parties have joined the Facebook, Twitter, email or Mxit spheres, few of them are using the social media ingredient to elicit "user engagement". Agang is.

The interactive approach that Agang uses means you needn't go and fight for a seat in a stuffy auditorium to hear Ramphele's latest ideas; you can read live tweets on the discussion. You needn't attend one of her public addresses with a desperate hope that in the Q&A session she will notice your hand among all the others – just post your question on Agang's Facebook page. You needn't call a harassed and sharp-tongued personal assistant for information on the campaign – there is a politely worded website stocked with all the information you might need, and a Twitter page managed by several pairs of polite hands.

But, as pointed out by DA social media manager Alex Molteno, Facebook and Twitter do not reach everyone.

While South Africa's youth may be comfortable with Twitter, Facebook and

**Our mothers and fathers read newspapers, write letters (some have progressed to emails and SMSes) and listen to the radio – they receive information. We tweet, we share, we like, we post and we follow – we interact with information.**

Mxit, the same cannot be said for the older generation in our country. Our mothers and fathers read newspapers, write letters (some have progressed to emails and SMSes) and listen to the radio – they *receive* information. We tweet, we share, we like, we post and we follow – we *interact* with information. And social media allows the interaction that the youth thrive on and the older generations frown upon.

Interaction with the youth is exactly what Agang wants. “Our main target is young people. In the last elections, 40% of people who were eligible to vote did not vote. Those young people who did not vote respond to social media.” Leshilo’s confidence is not the empty kind. He’s backed by 50 000 people on the Agang Says Mxit community, 24 000 Facebook likes and 30 000 Twitter followers. The ANC and DA may have as many Twitter followers as Agang, but Zuma and Zille entered the Twitter sphere long before “Agang” was recognised by Google. As for Facebook – the DA and ANC use this medium as another soapbox.

Leshilo claims this is where Agang is different. “We want to set ourselves apart by being more responsive,” he explains. And after comparing the Facebook pages and Twitter feeds of Agang and the DA, it’s clear what he means.

While the DA uses Twitter as another podium from which to make announcements, Agang uses Twitter as a means for conversation; followers ask questions and within hours those questions are answered; Agang asks its followers questions and the followers respond with gusto. “We want people to engage on Twitter and on our other social media sites. On Mxit, we will send out messages to the people in our community, like ‘What do you think of our policy positions?’ and we will attach the policy so that they can look at it and

respond to the question.”

The DA and ANC use Mxit in a similar way – but what about their Facebook and Twitter followers? Don’t they get to comment on policy positions?

Agang’s Facebook followers get to do more than comment on policies. “We had a Facebook chat on the 1st of August. We invited people to join a discussion with Dr Ramphele on Facebook between six and seven pm. We all sat in a room together and looked at the questions and she chose which ones to answer. It’s crucial that she does these things herself – people like to connect with her on that level.”

Leshilo explains one of the practical reasons for Agang’s reliance on social media. “We don’t rely on the media to do our work for us. Some of the mainstream media are quite hostile towards us because they think we should have sided with the DA or the ANC. Often they will not report on what we have done unless it’s something negative. It can be frustrating not having the mainstream media on our side, but we have our ‘media’.”

But how effective is Agang’s use of ‘media’ in practice?

I posted a question on Agang’s Facebook page (“What is Agang doing to get the youth in South Africa involved in politics?”). Just a few hours later I got a response; “You should definitely volunteer and please spread the word to the youth around your area and everywhere you go. We will be having youth focused marketing to attract respective groups.” My query had been heard and I hadn’t pulled a muscle trying to put my hand up higher than everyone else’s in a crowded auditorium.

I then turned my attention to rival political parties’ social media presence. The DA and ANC both have Facebook pages, but as I mentioned, they are soapboxes not discussion forums.

As if to emphasise my point, the DA’s page does not have the option to post a

public message. You can comment on an existing post or send them a private message, but you may not grab hold of the metaphorical microphone yourself.

The ANC’s page does allow you to post messages on their page. I posted the same question that I posted to Agang’s page. Within two hours of posting, someone had liked my comment. Within two days the microphone had been wrenched from my hands – my post was deleted. After scrolling up and down the page searching for the message posted on September 18th 2013, I found myself wondering, “Am I being censored?”

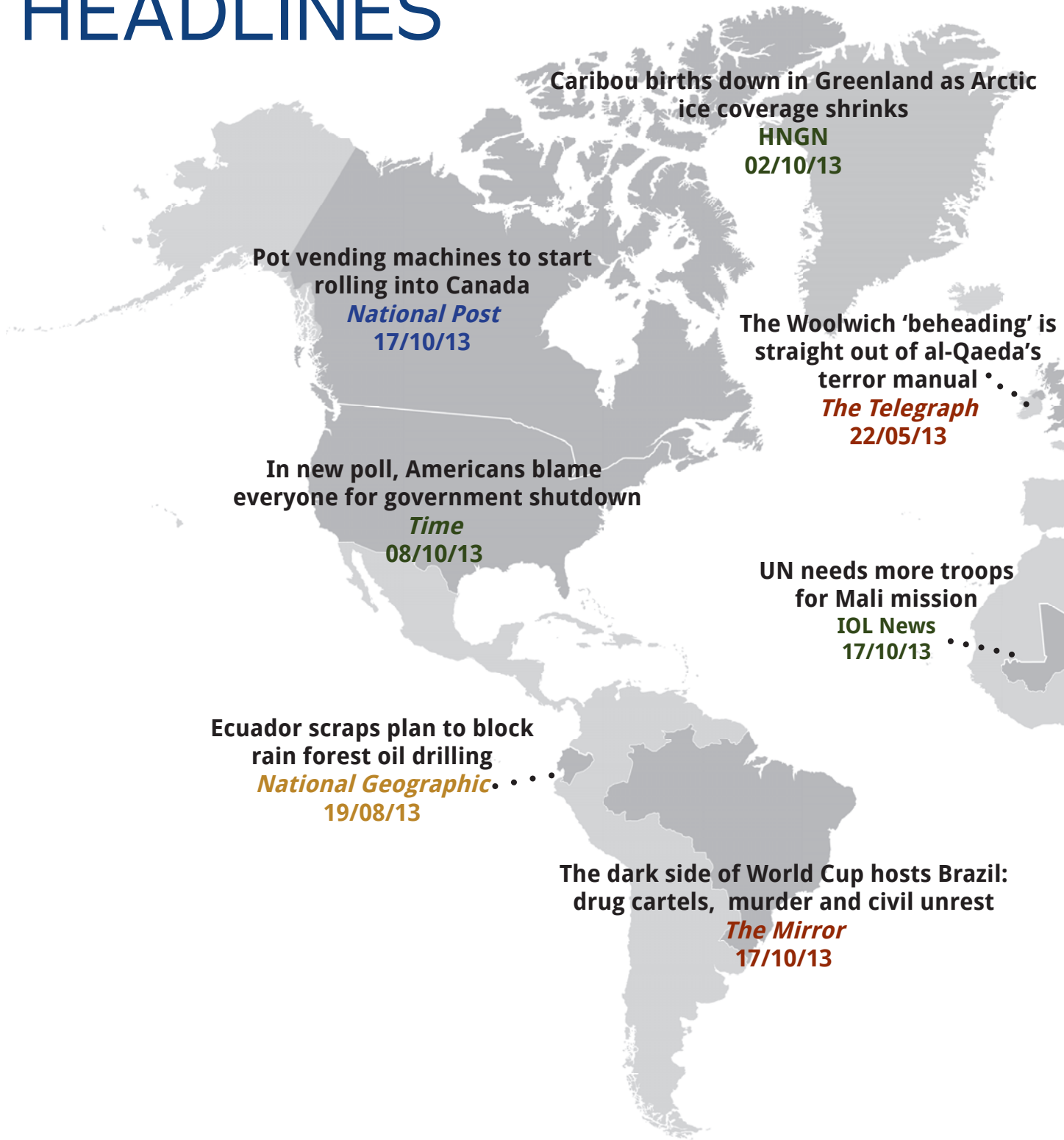
Both these microphone hoggers have Twitter profiles, DA\_news and ANC\_live, but with names like that they sound more like loudspeakers than sounding boards.

The head of Agang’s social media, Selaelo Manny, explains that there are three people who are responsible for monitoring all activity on social media. “We feed content to our supporters through Facebook and Twitter. We also use our statistics to see what the main languages are of people in different regions of the country. When we send them messages, we send them in the main languages because some people may not be able to understand English or Zulu, for example.”

Manny says that social media has been imperative to Agang because it has shaped their brand and set them apart. “Social media has a way of creating a one-on-one feel, it’s more personal and people like that.”

Despite its flaws, the social media campaign is an enticing one. I’d prefer having my questions answered while I’m in an armchair at home than while I’m standing on tippy-toes in a stuffy auditorium waving my arm frantically to get the speaker’s attention. Then again, I can afford a smartphone and airtime – one of Ramphele’s fellow “rural daughters of the Limpopo”, as she put it, might not have the same luxuries.

# WORLD HEADLINES



Caribou births down in Greenland as Arctic ice coverage shrinks

**HNGN**  
02/10/13

Pot vending machines to start rolling into Canada

**National Post**  
17/10/13

The Woolwich 'beheading' is straight out of al-Qaeda's terror manual

**The Telegraph**  
22/05/13

In new poll, Americans blame everyone for government shutdown

**Time**  
08/10/13

UN needs more troops for Mali mission

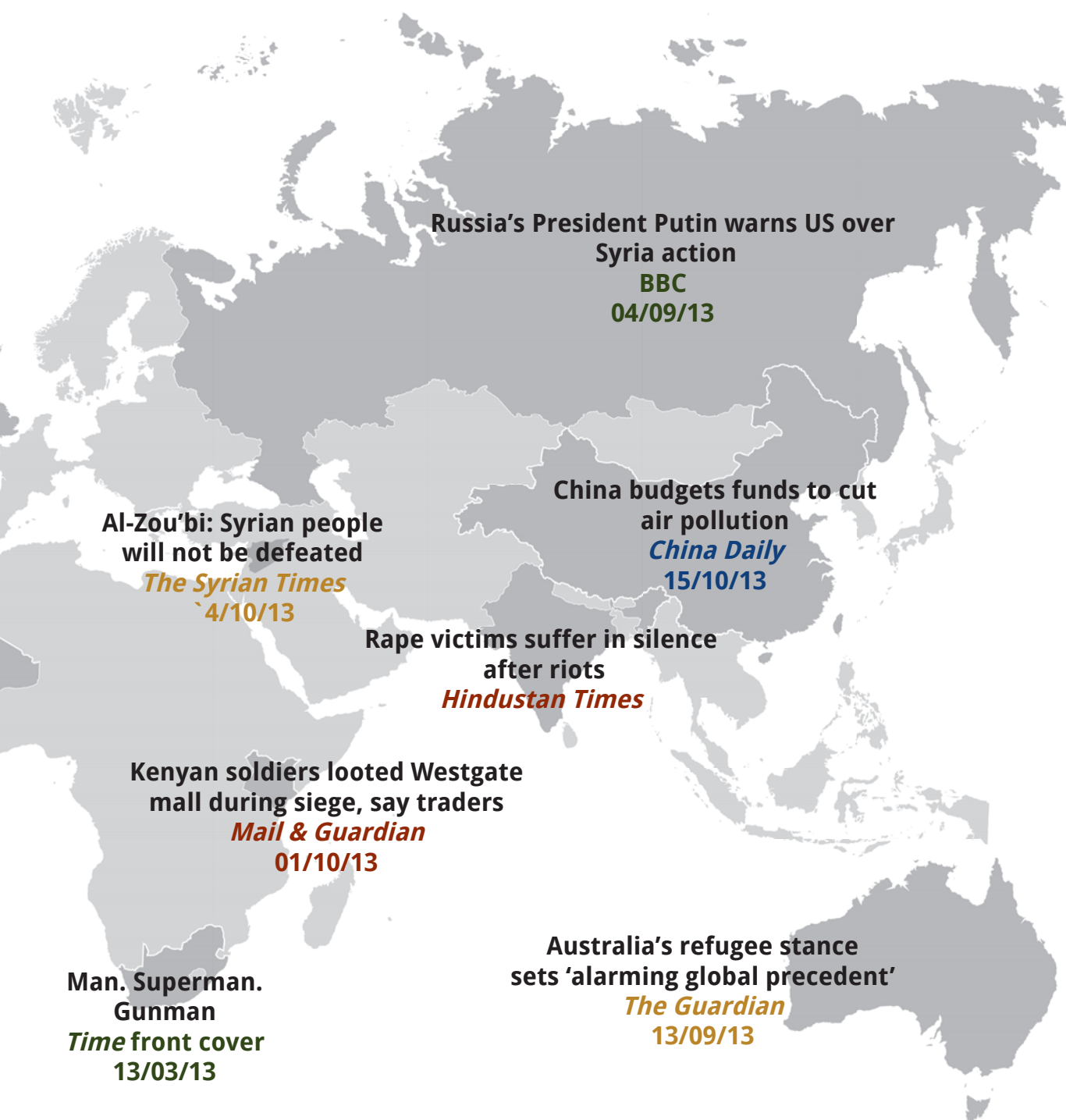
**IOL News**  
17/10/13

Ecuador scraps plan to block rain forest oil drilling

**National Geographic**  
19/08/13

The dark side of World Cup hosts Brazil: drug cartels, murder and civil unrest

**The Mirror**  
17/10/13



Russia's President Putin warns US over Syria action  
**BBC**  
04/09/13

Al-Zou'bi: Syrian people will not be defeated  
**The Syrian Times**  
4/10/13

China budgets funds to cut air pollution  
**China Daily**  
15/10/13

Rape victims suffer in silence after riots  
**Hindustan Times**

Kenyan soldiers looted Westgate mall during siege, say traders  
**Mail & Guardian**  
01/10/13

Man. Superman. Gunman  
**Time** front cover  
13/03/13

Australia's refugee stance sets 'alarming global precedent'  
**The Guardian**  
13/09/13

# 'PRAWN STARS' OP DIE PLATTELAND



Daar is min dinge só sexy soos 'n nat sjokoladekoek of sappige boerewors op die voorblad van 'n tydskrif. Glanspersoonlikhede en skrapsgeklede modelle in die rakke van Shoprite moes opyskuif vir ouer, meer bekende legendes soos Japie-segunsteling en Tant San se koeksisters. **Louzel Lombard** het agter die gordyne van dié sexy Suid-Afrikaanse supersterre gaan loer.

**K**osjoernalistiek kort 'n ouderdomsbepanking. Of ten minste ouertoesig. G'n kind onder 13 is geskik om te sien hoe Nigella Lawson 'n onderstebo-persketert maak nie.

Die kaalgat-perskes word geskil voordat sy hulle in skywe sny en in 'n pruttende suikerstroop laat lê. Sy proe tydsam aan 'n skyfie van elke vrug. Die tertdeeg word in ferm, vinnige drukke op die tafel geknie en die eindproduk... hhaaa! hmmm... sal enige etende wese na sy asem laat snak.

Dink daaraan. Amper-oorryp aarbeie met net hul punte in donker karamel gedoop ... 'n Sjokolade-fondant, oopgebars met 'n gulsige bol mascarpone daarop geskep. 'n Swaar, donkerbruin druppel heuning wat tydsam oor die kurwe van 'n pers vy streel ...

Kos is die nuwe superster. Óf, soos die koskenner en -skrywer Errieda du Toit sê, 'n nuwe (sosiaal-aanvaarde) pornoster vir spesifiek Suid-Afrikaanse lesers en kykers. Du Toit sê hoewel "die idee van kospornografie eintlik in die negentigs groot opspraak gewek het", beteken dit op die oomblik vernuwing vir veral Suid-Afrikaanse disse.

Waar Suid-Afrikaanse lesers en kykers

voorheen gesit en kwyl het oor Nigella se perskes, is hulle nou besig om vurige gevoelens teenoor hul eie ou terte te ontwikkel. Outydse melktert was nog nooit so sexy soos nou nie.

**VIR 'N KONSERWATIEWE** Afrikanernasie wat lank skaam moes wees oor hul herkoms en verlede, beteken die bevryding van die melktert en die droë, ou koeksister meer as wat dit onder normale omstandighede sou doen.

"Afrikaners het vir die eerste keer in jare nie meer nodig om skaam te wees oor hul erfenis nie," sê die kos- en kosjoernalistiek-kenner Sonia Cabano. Suid-Afrikaners, en veral Afrikaanse Suid-Afrikaners, het begin ontdooi in die hitte van die kosjoernalistiek-kombuis. Deesdae lê stroopsoet Maleise koeksisters op die voorblaie van vooraanstaande kospublikasies. Kopers raap dié tydskrifte en sexy resepte op, salig onbewus van die verleidelike happies se verskuilde agenda.

Die 'herontdekking' of aangewakkerde lus vir die koeksister beteken ook as't ware 'n erkenning van die verskillende kultuur-invloede in Suid-Afrikaanse kos.

Peter Goffe-Wood, eienaar van die Kitchen Cowboys-restaurant en een

van die beoordelaars op *MasterChef SA*, sê juis "Suid-Afrika het 'n baie diverse kos-erfenis as gevolg van die magdom kulture wat ons resepteboeke beïnvloed het". Die oorspronklik Maleise koeksister is maar net een.

Dit klink na min, dis immers net 'n koeksister, maar só erkenning was 20 jaar gelede baie onwaarskynlik. Dis 'n hap in die regte rigting.

Cabano sê "Afrikaanse kos is landelike kos, daar is niks, of hoof niks *grand* daaraan te wees nie." En tog sien ons dat dit dié einste landelike kosse is wat nou 'n stuitige streep bygekry het – een waarvoor ons ons lippe aflek.

Afrikaner-dames voel koel en sjiek as hulle polenta met 'n beesvleis-jus (née: pap en sous) vir gaste voorsit.

Ironies? Nie regtig nie.

Cabano is opgewonde oor hoe aanloklik ál die kos en verskillende kos-erfenisse in Suid-Afrika begin lyk. Sy sê daar is soveel meer op die Suid-Afrikaanse spyskaart as doodgewone bobotie en boerewors en dat kosjoernaliste én die publiek nou hul palette ontwikkel om al die smake in Suid-Afrika te kan waardeer.

Sy sê dit is te danke aan kosjoernalistiek en -joernaliste dat doodgewone kosse nuwe byt gekry het.



Abigail Donnelly van Woolworths se *TASTE*-tydskrif sê ook Afrikaners is “opsoek na ’n erfenis waarop hulle trots kan wees” en sy voel kos en sensuele samevoeging van verskillende kulturele disse is ’n goeie manier om sulke trots te vestig.

“Kos is die gemaklikste en natuurlikste manier om voorgeslagtelike kennis en vaardighede oor te dra,” sonder om kwade gevoelens daarmee saam te stuur. Vir ’n Afrikaner-boer is daar byvoorbeeld min disse aantrekliker as ’n Engelse ontbyt, ongeag enige negatiewe sentimente wat die bogenoemde boer dalk weens die Boereoorlog kan koester.

Roosterkoek of askoek – die klein vuurgebraaide broodjies wat hul oorsprong in die Transkei het – is vandag een van die mees gesogte baksels in ons land. Ons eet dit vuurwarm van die rooster af, net soos wat die swart vroue dit in die 80’s vir hul kinders in die tuislande bedien het.

**DIE BEVRYDING** VAN die doodgewone koeksister beteken ook op ’n manier die bevryding van elke doodgewone koek-suster soos Tante San, wat jare al in ’n kombuis met ’n linoleumvloer staan en inlê en verdroog.

Sý het vir die eerste keer ’n kans om haar voorskoot af te vee en ’n heldin op die voorblad van ’n *Sarie KOS* of ’n Woolworths *TASTE* te wees. Sý kan ook nou vir die eerste keer (soos Nigella) kóók.

Suid-Afrikaanse disse en hul meesters is besig om ’n sensuele hervorming te ondergaan. En in ’n revolusie waar kos die voorloper is, is oorlog eenvoudig en bevredigend. Daar is geen rede meer om jou onderklere te verbrand soos in die 60’s nie... blus gerus eerder die bolaag van jou crême brûlée en *viola!*

Du Toit sê juis “ons leef nie meer in die tyd van oorlogshelde nie. Ons het begin soek na nuwe helde en hulle gevind in die gewone ouens – die boere en die huisvroue.” (Boerewors was nog nooit



PHOTOS: Marinette Potgieter

só aantreklik nie...) "As jy deesdae 'n groentetuin kan onderhou, is jy ook 'n held."

Dit is nie net goed vir tydskrifverkope nie, dit is ook goed vir plaaslike produksie en volhoubaarheid.

DONNELLY SÊ OMDAT eet só 'n noodsaaklike deel van menswees is, het dit die vermoë om verskillende vlakke in die samelewing gelyk te maak. "Jy kan dit byvoorbeeld nie met mode-media of ander teiken-gerigte sensuele of aanloklike media vergelyk nie. Kos en kosjoernalistiek is toeganklik en terselfdertyd ook bewonderenswaardig en sexy."

Donnelly sê ook kosjoernalistiek, en die voorbeelde wat dit voorhou, al meer toeganklik word. "Anders as in die negentigs, toe kospornografie regtig tot op en oor die rand gedryf is, is dit deesdae beter om kos aanloklik én realisties te laat voorkom."

Goeie kosjoernalistiek is geloofwaardige kosjoernalistiek. As die roosterbrood op die voorblad effens gebrand is, stoot dit sirkulasiesyfers op.

Vroeër is daar tot ekstreme gegaan om kos ongelooflik mooi te laat lyk. Herman Lensing, die redakteur van Sarie *KOS*, sê byvoorbeeld dat kosstilleerders "vroeëre melk met houtlym vervang het omdat dit beter in 'n bakkie plastiek *post-toasties* gelyk het".

Maar nie meer vandag nie.

Hoewel die visuele aspek van kosjoernalistiek steeds baie belangrik is, het dit makliker geword om goeie foto's te neem sonder om te kroek. "Ons leef in 'n uiters visuele era," sê Lensing. Of dit nou lamsboude of modelboude is, hulle moet sexy wees. "Maar gelukkig het ons deesdae baie meer beheer oor digitale materiaal. Jy kan steeds die sensuele foto's neem sonder om 'n Photoshop-katalogus te publiseer.

"Dit is ook winsgewend om geloofwaardige foto's en resepte te gebruik. Mense koop die tydskrifte en kry dieselfde begeerlike resultate in hul eie kombuise as wat hulle op die voorblaaie sien. "Dit is goed vir besigheid," sê Lensing.

Klaarblyklik. Sarie *KOS* se sirkulasiesyfers is tans byna 50 000 sterk. Ook die betreklike nuwe Woolworths *TASTEflirt* met 'n leserstal van 40 000. Nie te sleg nie. Om nie eers die getroue kykers van



TV-kosjoernalistiek-programme soos *Masterchef* en *Kokkedoor* te noem nie.

*Kokkedoor*, die nuwe Afrikaanse kookprogram wat vroeër vanjaar op kykNET uitgesaai is, dien opsigself as voorbeeld van die nuwe oemf wat oudtydse Suid-Afrikaanse kookkuns ervaar. Die program was daarop uit om klassieke ou geregte – wat hulle 'onthoukos' gedoop het – te omskep in sexy, snak-na-jou-aseem-geregte wat op internasionale etenstafels voorgesit kon word.

Dit het met lof geslaag: sago-poeding sal nooit weer herinner aan laerskoolkoshuis-oorskietkos ná wat die winner van *Kokkedoor*, Tiaan Langernegger, se interpretasie daarvan opgelewer het nie.

Maar daar was meer as net sago-poeding sukses aan *Kokkedoor*. In die strewe om Suid-Afrikaanse kos sexy te maak, het daar ook 'n ander alchemie in die kombuis begin. Om te sien hoe 'n gemeenskaplike respek en liefde vir kos van iemand soos tannie Poppie Coetzer van Kriel en Henry Olivier, 'n ongeskoolde man van Prins Albert, goeie vriende kon maak, spreek boekdele.

Peter Goffe-Wood is heeltemal reg as hy sê "dit is 'n goeie ding dat kosjoernalistiek nou deel vorm van die hoofstroom Suid-Afrikaanse kultuur".

DONNELLY SÊ EGTER sy voel nie gemaklik om die huidige kossensasie as 'kospornografie' te klassifiseer nie, juis

omdat "die nuwe in-ding heilsaamheid is. Heilsaamheid is deesdae sexy," sê sy. "En tradisionele disse wat aanloklik gemaak word, ontketen 'n nostalgiese gevoel by die kykers, sonder om oudtyds óf, soos die term 'pornografie' impliseer, eksplisiet en oorbodig te wees."

R.B. Myers, die Amerikaanse skrywer van *A Reader's Manifesto*, stem nie saam nie. Hy skryf in 'n artikel op *TheAtlantic.com* dat "die gefuif rondom kos niks anders as vraatsugtigheid is nie".

Myers het 'n punt beet. Enige opgewondenheid en borrelde passies loop uiteraard die gevaar om in 'n ongesonde obsessie te verander. En in dié geval is dit veral maklik om jou vingers te verbrand.

Tog sê Goffe-Wood dat Myers se opinie een van vele ander veralgemenings is, wat kenmerkend konserwatiewe samelewings dikwels maak. "Dis merkwaardig dat slegs Amerikaanse en Britse kosskrywers 'n liefde vir kos as vraatsug uitmaak." Dit is dié samelewings wat gewoonlik wellus en vraatsug verwar.

Goffe-Wood sê dis " 'n Calvinistiese agtergrond wat mense maan om die viering van kos as vraatsug te sien. Maar daai oortuiging het niemand al ooit veel gehelp nie".

Herman Lensing stem saam. "As die liefde vir kos wat ek ervaar vraatsug is, is ek verseker die grootste vraat van almal!"

# PETROLPRYS: WORD DAAR GEKONKEL?



PHOTO: Gysbert Visser

rooi elke keer as die petrolprys styg, omdat hulle dan minder geld het om te bestee.

Weens die alewige verhogings beweer talle Suid-Afrikaners die petrolprys word op 'n onbillike wyse vasgestel. Sommige mense beweer selfs dat die regering die petrolprys misbruik om sy staatkoffers aan te vul vir spandabelrige wanbesteding.

Carin Smith, verslaggewer by *Fin24*, sê sy dink mense bevraagteken die belasting op petrol, omdat daar juis soveel ander belastingbronne is. “Die publiek wil weet waarheen hul geld gaan.”

**Die publiek  
wil weet  
waarheen  
hul geld  
gaan**

Smith sê mense lees die graagste oor enigiets wat hul sakke raak, soos die petrolprys. Op die internet is daar vir elke berig oor die petrolprys gewoonlik 'n versameling samesweringteorieë in die kommentaarblaaie te vinde.

HIERONDER VOLG 'n paar sulke kommentare op 'n *Fin24*-berig (gepubliseer op 2 Augustus 2013) oor die verwagte petrolprysverhoging: “Ons word om die bos gelei. Hierdie [styging] is niks meer as 'n korrupte manier om



**Talle Suid-Afrikaners twyfel oor die die petrolprys-formule. Gerrit van Rooyen stel ondersoek in na die media se pogings om hierdie onkunde reg te stel.**

**I**ndien jy op 'n Dinsdagaand 'n lang ry motors voor 'n vulstasie gewaar, weet jy één ding: Móre gaan die petrolprys styg.

Om middernag 7 Augustus het die petrolprys met 32 sent gestyg – die sesde keer in 2013 dat motoriste se beursies

deur 'n petrolprysverhoging geruk word. Teen druktyd was die verwagting dat die petrolprys later vanjaar tot 'n rekord-hoogte van R14 per liter kon styg.

Petrol is die lewensbloed van die ekonomie – feitlik alle pryse word deur die petrolprys geraak. Verbruikers sien

te betaal vir vlugte na Nkandla toe nie,” skryf Debbie du Plessis.

“Hoekom [het die prys gestyg]? Het die rand verswak? Dit was sterker toe ek laas gekyk het,” skryf Bobbie Booyen.

In reaksie hierop skryf Robin Smith: “Die ANC kort geld vir sy verkiesingskoste.”

“Hoeveel van hierdie bedrag is belasting? Aangesien ons baie van ons petrol van koolstof kry, behoort ons petrolprys nie meer stabiel as ander ontwikkelende lande te wees nie? Of lag Sasol al die pad na die ANC-bank?” skryf ene Liz.

“Botswana en Namibië koop hul petrol by ons, maar hulle petrolpryse is laer. Ek dink die ANC steel van ons,” skryf Stephen Rams.

In 'n 2007-artikel op *Fin24* het die joernalis Vic de Klerk vertel van die

## Of lag Sasol al die pad na die ANC-bank?

meer lagwekkende samesweringteorieë wat *Fin24* op daardie stadium ontvang het. Soos een persoon wat beweer het die verhogings word gebruik om 2010-sokkerstadions te finansier, en 'n ander wat beweer het die geld word gebruik om geheime vulstasies vir minibustaxi's te subsidieer.

“DIE [PETROLPRYS-FORMULE] is daar en word toegepas. Daar is geen komplot nie,” sê Ryk van Niekerk, redakteur van *Moneyweb*.

“Daar word daagliks in die koerante syfers gepubliseer wat die onder- en oorverhaling op die petrolprys toon.”

Een so 'n voorbeeld is *Sake24*, die sake-afdeling van *Media24* se Afrikaanse koerante. *Sake24* publiseer 'n klein inligtingkassie op hul voorblaai met die verskillende petrol- en dieselpriese in die land saam met die onder- en oorverhaling op daardie pryse. Hierdie inligting word deur die Departement van Energie (DME) verskaf.

“Volgens Mike Schüssler (hoof-ekonoom van *Economists.co.za.*) is die

petrolprys-formule 'n geheim, maar kan almal dit maklik bepaal,” sê Van Niekerk.

Schüssler bedoel hiermee dat die Sentrale Energiefonds, wat die taak het om die petrolprys vas te stel, nie die volledige berekening bekendmaak nie. Nietemin, op die DME se webwerf is daar 'n verduideliking van die prysstruktuur en metodologie, asook die pryse van die verskillende komponente van petrolprys vir elke maand.

“Die departement van energie is deursigtig wat betref die syferberekening,” sê Francois Williams, Wes-Kaapse redakteur van *Sake24*.

“[Die DME] verskaf gewoonlik 'n persverklaring waarin hulle die redes vir 'n prysverandering staaf, maar ek sal dan op *Bloomberg* en *Reuters* gaan kyk of the Brent-ruolieprys en die rand-dollar-wisselkoers in lyn is.”

Volgens Williams is raffinaderye se werklike winsmarge op die brandstof wat hulle verkoop 'n geval waar die stelsel ondeursigtig is. “Die petrolprys word vasgestel asof ons petrol invoer van Singapoer en Europa, terwyl die Shell-raffinadery in Milnerton miskien petrol veel goedkoper van Venezuela kan invoer.”

Die raffinadery kan hul wins op dié manier rek, maar omdat die inligting kommersieel sensitief is, word dit nie bekend gemaak nie.

Williams sê hy glo nie daar is 'n gekonkel tussen oliemaatskappye en die regering met die petrolprys nie. “Die oliemaatskappye vra dikwels die regering om hul marge te verhoog en die Mededingingskommissie ondersoek kort-kort samespanning tussen oliemaatskappye met die verkoop van olieprodukte en diesel.”

TALLE MENSE kla op nuuswebwerwe dat die regering meer belasting insamel wanneer die petrolprys styg. Hulle maak hierdie bewering, omdat hulle glo dat die belasting wat ons op petrol betaal 'n persentasie van die petrolprys is. Byvoorbeeld, as die petrolprys R9 per liter is en die petroltarief 10% van die petrolprys is, sou ons 90c belasting betaal, maar as die petrolprys tot R10 styg, sou die belasting tot R1 styg.

Dit is egter nie die geval nie. “Die belasting op petrol word een keer per jaar vasgestel en dit word vasgestel as

# WAAR-HEEN GAAN DIE GELD?

**53,1%**  
BASIESE PETROL-PRYS EN HEFFING

**27,9%**  
BELASTING

**19%**  
KLEINHANDEL-MARGE EN DISTRI-BUSIE

sent per liter. So die belasting wat 'n mens betaal, is nie 'n persentasie wat saam met die maandelikse prys op- of afgaan nie,” sê Williams.

'n Ander algemene misverstand is dat Suid-Afrikaanse petrol goedkoper behoort te wees, omdat Sasol die meeste van ons olie plaaslik uit steenkool vervaardig, wat baie goedkoper is.

Williams sê dit is nie heeltemal waar nie. Sasol vervaardig nie die meerderheid van ons petrol nie, maar slegs 30%. Teoreties kan ons petrol daarom goedkoper wees, maar omdat die petrolprys in Suid-Afrika gereguleer is, kan Sasol (al wou hulle) nie die petrol goedkoper verkoop nie.

“[Sasol] word bevoordeel, want steenkoolpryse is goedkoper as oliepryse

## Dis nogal 'n ingewikkelde formule en al wat die publiek wel nodig het om te weet is dat die olieprys en die wisselkoers 'n groot rol speel

en dit word nie heeltemal deur dieselfde faktore beïnvloed nie. So hulle kan groot winste maak as die olieprys kwaai styg.”

Sommige mense glo daarom dat die petrolprys gedereguleer moet word (soos in die geval met diesel), omdat die petrolprys dan volgens hulle laer sal wees. Williams sê dit mag aanvanklik die geval wees, omdat vulstasies sal meeding om die goedkoopste petrol te verkoop.

Oor die langtermyn sal motoriste egter dalk meer moet opdok, omdat kleiner vulstasies wat nie teen die laer prys kan meeding nie, die mark sal verlaat, wat die weg sal baan vir groter vulstasies om pryse te verhoog.

“EK DINK daar is baie dinge waaraan

die media te min lugtyd gee, maar die petrolprys is nie een van hulle nie,” sê Van Niekerk.

Volgens Van Niekerk moet die gesprek in die media fokus op hoe die formule verander kan word sodat die petrolprys goedkoper kan wees, eerder as die moontlike misleiding wat plaasvind waarvoor daar geen bewyse is nie.

“'n Mens kan altyd iets verbeter,” sê Smith van *Fin24*. Volgens haar kan sakejoernaliste meer patrone of tendense identifiseer asook die plaaslike en buitelandse petrolpryse met mekaar vergelyk.

Williams meen ook die media doen nie eintlik genoeg om mense in te lig nie. “Ons sal so nou en dan, minstens

een keer 'n jaar, 'n grafiek publiseer wat uiteensit hoe die petrolprys saamgestel word. Mense vergeet egter gou.

“Ons doen nie altyd die moeite om dieper te delf of te verduidelik wat presies op die prys inwerk nie.”

Williams sê hulle kan om praktiese redes nie altyd dieper delf nie. “As ons dit elke keer moet doen, neem dit plek.

“Mense kan die wisselkoers en olieprys volg wat elke dag gepubliseer word, maar daar is 'n saak daarvoor uit te maak dat ons die formule meer gereeld moet verduidelik.”

Dawie Roodt, hoofekonoom van Efficient Group, sê hy is nie bekommerd dat die publiek 'n gebrekkige kennis van die petrolprys-formule het nie. “Dis nogal 'n ingewikkelde formule en al wat die publiek wel nodig het om te weet is dat die olieprys en die wisselkoers 'n groot rol in die bepaling van die petrolprys speel.”

Roodt sê hy weet nie hoe beriggewing oor die petrolprys verbeter kan word nie.

Volgens Roodt het sakejoernaliste oor die algemeen 'n gebrekkige kennis van finansiële onderwerpe, maar hy sê: “Dit maak nie juis saak nie, want hulle kan mos by kenners aanklop!”

## HOE WERK DIE PETROLPRYS NOU EINTLIK?

DIE PETROLPRYS word deur die regering gereguleer en dit verander op die eerste Woensdag van elke maand. Die prys word deur die Sentrale Energiefonds namens die Departement van Energie (DME) bereken.

Volgens die Suid-Afrikaanse Petroleumbedryfsvereniging (Sapia) kan die petrolprys in 'n internasionale en 'n plaaslike komponent verdeel word. Die internasionale komponent is die basiese brandstofprys (BFP) wat 53,1% van die petrolprys verteenwoordig.

Volgens die DME is die BFP veronderstel om 'n realistiese en markgedrewe weerspieëling te wees van die koste om petrol na Suid-Afrika in te voer. Die BFP word bereken asof Suid-Afrika die helfte van sy petrol van die Mediterreense gebied invoer en die ander helfte van Singapoer.

Die BFP bestaan uit die internasionale prys vir petrol, gekwoteer in Amerikaanse dollars, plus ander kostes om die petrol na Suid-Afrika te vervoer soos: vraggeld, versekering, lêgeld, kustariewe ens.

'n Verandering in die petrolprys is hoofsaaklik weens 'n verandering in die BFP. Die twee faktore wat die BFP beïnvloed, is (1) die Brent-ruolieprys, omdat dit die toonaangewende prys vir internasionale petrolpryse is, en (2) die rand-dollar-wisselkoers, omdat die internasionale petrolpryse in dollar gekwoteer word.

Die plaaslike komponent bestaan uit faktore soos: verspreidingskoste, groothandel en kleinhandelwinstgrense (19% van die petrolprys) en belasting (27,9% van die petrolprys) wat bestaan uit die petrol- en die Padongelukfondse, en doeane en aksynsbelasting.

**Vir 'n volledige verduideliking van die petrolprys-formule besoek die Departement van Energie se webtuiste by: [http://www.energy.gov.za/files/petroleum\\_frame.html](http://www.energy.gov.za/files/petroleum_frame.html)**

# SKAKELWESE – LAND VAN MELK EN HEUNING?



Sedert die aanvang van die digitale era is gedrukte koerante en tydskrifte in 'n penarie gedompel. Vandaar dat al hoe meer joernaliste na skakelwese beweeg. **Amber Kriel** het met oud-joernaliste oor hul skuif na die sogenaamde Donker Kant gesels.

**D**aar is 'n ou grappie in joernalistieke binnekringe wat lui: “Dis okay. As ek my werk verloor, word ek net 'n gladdebek woordvoerder.”

Joernaliste trek dikwels hul neuse op vir hul kollegas wat na die skakelwese, of Openbare Betrekkinge (OB) soos dit beter bekend staan, beweeg.

In 'n tyd waarin die digitale wêreld besig is om die tradisionele drukmedia oor te neem, moet al hoe meer werkende joernaliste 'n ander heenkome vind. Ander besluit bloot hulle is lus vir 'n nuwe uitdaging en daarom verruil hulle die joernalistieke milieu vir dié van korporatiewe kommunikasie.

Emma de Villiers, 'n voormalige nuusleser en TV-joernalis by *eNews Channel Africa*, werk nou as 'n kommunikasie-spesialis vir Unicef. In haar dae as joernalis het sy baie met dié organisasie te doen gekry.

“Ek het begin navorsing doen oor die organisasie en het besef dit sal my die geleentheid gee om deel van 'n internasionale organisasie te wees wat 'n werklike en meetbare impak op kinders se lewens maak. Ek wou deel wees van die verandering en ek wou intellektueel meer gestimuleer word.

“In my nuwe werk voel ek ook meer vrymoedig om my ‘menswees’ uit te leef. Dit was by tye vir my moeilik as joernalis

om ‘hard’ op te tree wanneer die sagter kant van my eintlik glad nie die persoon wou wees wat op iemand se privaatheid indring nie,” verduidelik sy die rede vir haar skuif.

Karen Breytenbach, wat ses jaar lank die *Cape Times* se hofverslaggewer was, erken sy “was mal daaroor om 'n joernalis te wees”. Sy het egter in 2009 ook die skuif na die skakelwese gemaak. “Die poste het minder geraak met dié

**Dit was by tye vir my moeilik as joernalis om ‘hard’ op te tree**

dat groot media-maatskappye tydens die resessie in 'n krisis was. Ek het nie geweet wat die toekoms inhou nie.”

Siyavuya Madikane, voorheen 'n joernalis by die tydskrif *Forbes Africa*, werk nou by die advertensie-maatskappye *Ogilvy*. Hy skroom nie om te sê sy joernalis-salaris was 'n groot rede waarom hy die joernalistiek vaarwel geroep het nie. “Toe ons graad gevang het, het Media24 se uitvoerende hoof, Esmaré Weideman, vir

ons gesê joernalistiek is die beste werk in die wêreld, dit betaal net nie goed nie. En sy was reg.”

Hy draai ook nie doekies om wanneer hy vertel wat hy van die stand van die joernalistiek in Suid-Afrika dink nie. “Joernalistiek is verkoop aan adverteerders. Dit is nie meer 'n onafhanklike stem wat daarna streef om die waarheid te praat nie. Joernaliste sensor hulself nou om die guns van mense met mag te wen.”

Mohamed Shaikh, senior direkteur: kommunikasie en skakeling van die Universiteit Stellenbosch, is versigtig om te veel van sy persoonlike redes vir dié skuif te verklap. “Soms word jy aanbiedinge gemaak wat jy moet oorweeg; ander kere kyk jy na jou persoonlike omstandighede.”

Shaikh, wat al langer as dertig jaar in die kommunikasiebedryf is, het sy loopbaan in die drukmedia begin. Daarna was hy by die SAUK, voordat hy twee radiostasies bestuur het.

“Joernaliste werk baie ongereelde ure en wanneer jy eers trou en kinders kry, begin jy dink dalk is dit beter om dit waarvoor jy 'n passie het, skryfwerk en kommunikasie, in 'n ander opset te beoefen,” verdedig hy sy besluit om joernalistiek agter te laat.

Bun Booyens, tans redakteur van *Die Burger* en voormalige redakteur

## Ek mis dit om wakker te word en om op 'n storie uit te gaan, om daardie storie na te jaag, om dit te tik en om te sien dat dit gepubliseer word [...].

van die reistydskrif *Weg!*, het vroeg in sy loopbaan vir 'n paar jaar dié skuif gemaak.

Booyens meen dit is nie soseer 'n geval dat 'n joernalis ryk wil word wanneer die skuif gemaak word nie, maar dat joernaliste ook vir hul gesin wil kan voorsien. “Teen die ouderdom van 27 rond raak 'n joernalis bewus daarvan dat hy finansiële by sy portuurgroep agterraak. Hulle maak die skuif na die skakelwese nié om ryk te word nie, maar om ook finansiële meer stabiel te wees.”

DIT BLYK die skuif van die joernalistiek na die skakelwese verseker 'n meer stabiele toekoms, maar als is nie altyd maanskyn en rose nie. De Villiers gee toe sy mis die adrenalinie van nuuslees en “die ongelooflike storievertellers wat my lewe so verryk het”.

Maar sy kyk nie met spyt terug nie. “Joernalistiek is immers deel van 'n mens se wese. Dit kan nie vasgevang word in 'n publikasie of 'n uitsaaier nie. Dan is jy bloot 'n verslaggewer. Ek mis dus glad nie die joernalistiek nie – dis nog deel van my.”

Madikane mis nie die joernalistiek nét vir die werk nie, maar ook vir die leefstyl. “Ek mis dit om wakker te word en om op 'n storie uit te gaan, om daardie storie na te jaag, om dit te tik en om te sien dat dit gepubliseer word en om mense te hê wat my bel om te sê hulle het iets gelees wat ek geskryf het.”

Booyens het net voor die nuwe millennium weer na die joernalistiek teruggekeer. Hy sê die “bevrydende gevoel van geen langtermyn-stres” het hom teruggelok. “'n Spertyd is mities en twak. Daar is niks lekkerder om na 'n dag by 'n dagblad se nuuskantoor uit te stap en te weet jou werk is klaar tot môre nie.”

Hy erken prontuit hy het die adrenalinie, wat saam met die pligte van 'n joernalis gaan, gemis. “Soos die gesegde lui: Skoemaker hou jou by jou lees. Wanneer jy 'n belangstelling in die regte het, dan word jy 'n prokureur. Dieselfde was my geval. Ek hoort in die



PHOTO: Amber Kriel

verslaggewing.”

Breytenbach beaam dit. Wat sy die meeste van haar dae as joernalis mis, is om op 'n spesifieke storie te fokus en om op 'n spesifieke *beat* te werk. “Dit laat 'n mens toe om diep in 'n storie te delf.” Sy verlang ook soms na die adrenalinie en gevoel van *living on the edge* wat met die joernalistiek gepaardgaan.

Shaikh is egter oortuig dat die ooreenkomste tussen joernalistiek en die skakelwese “ongelooflik sterk” is en daarom verlang hy nie terug na sy dae as verslaggewer nie.

VIR DE Villiers voel dit ook nie asof sy die joernalistiek verlaat het nie. “Ek skryf steeds stories, ek maak steeds mini-dokumentêre en ek lê steeds mense op kamera vas. Ek dink in elk geval daar moet oor ‘joernalistiek’ herbesin word. Ek het besef dit sluit méér in as die konvensionele roetes wat ons as studente geglo het die enigste paadjies is om te loop.

“My loopbaan as joernalis is dalk kortgeknip, maar my roeping as storieverteller is gewortel in wie ek is. Dit leef ek steeds uit,” sê De Villiers. Adrian Lackay, voorheen *Beeld* se

parlementêre verslaggewer, het in 2003 die joernalistiek vir 'n pos as woordvoerder vir die Suid-Afrikaanse Inkomstediens verruil. Op die oomblik oorweeg hy nie om na die joernalistieke wêreld terug te keer nie. “Ek het nie saam met die nuwe fokus op sosiale media ontwikkel nie. Ek is nog 'n tradisionele, ou soort van joernalis.”

Madikane sê hy sal altyd 'n skeptiese, dapper en stryende joernalis in sy hart wees, “maar ek het ook ander dinge om in my lewe te bereik as om net 'n beroepsjoernalis te wees”. Hy sal dit wel weer oorweeg om 'n joernalis te word, mits dit op sekere voorwaardes is.

“Inhoud verkoop 'n tydskrif. Dit gaan nie oor hoe mooi daardie tydskrif of webblad lyk nie. Ek lees nie die *Mail & Guardian*, omdat dit 'n grys uitleg het nie; ek lees dit vir die brekende nuusstories. Dis hoogtyd dat media-eienaars dit besef.”

Booyens raai wel joernaliste wat oorweeg om dié skuif te maak, aan om goed met hul werkgewers te onderhandel voor hulle hul pos as joernalis verlaat.

“Jy moet jou kant skoonhou, want jy weet nooit wanneer die joernalis in jou weer begin roep nie...”

# PHOTOJOURNALISM: THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DYING OF THE LIGHT







## Newspapers are laying off photographers in droves and journalists with smartphones are taking over the job. Is the shutter finally closing on photojournalism? **Gysbert Visser** investigated.

**J**ohn H. White won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of Chicago, and is one of those historic photographers who made the difficult transition from film to digital. As a man who has also worked at the *Chicago Sun-Times* for 44 years, you would probably consider him a very valuable employee.

Yet, surprisingly, he was laid off just a few months ago.

Worse yet, he wasn't the only one. The entire photography department was struck down in one fell swoop – 21 professional photographers – many of whom had dedicated decades of their lives to the newspaper. The paper says they now expect journalists to take photos with their smartphones and the rest will be sourced from freelance photographers.

This story raised eyebrows when first covered by CNN earlier this year, but it's nothing new. The trend started more than a decade ago.

PARIS USED to be the capital of photojournalism; it hosted all the prestigious photo agencies that dispatched award-winning photographers across the globe. But sadly, Gamma, Sygma, Sipa, Magnum and others all closed their doors in the past 15 years.

"We held out as long as we could, but this business model just isn't viable anymore," said Stéphane Ledoux, chief executive of Eyedea – Gamma's holding company – in an interview with the *New York Times*.

What we are seeing is the rise of iphonography and the fall of photojournalism.

THE PIVOTAL moment, according to Johann van Tonder, came in 2005, when ordinary citizens took pictures with their phones of bombs exploding in the London underground. Van Tonder was photo editor at *Die Burger* for

four years and before that worked as a professional photographer for Gamma, among others.

"Editors realised that they could count on ordinary people to deliver publishable photographs taken with cell phones."

More than that, it became an accepted way of gathering news content.

"I can't imagine there being a photo editor in the world today who doesn't actively make use of this sort of user-generated content."

Since then, iphonography, as it is known today, has become a massive trend, owing its name to the high-quality photos taken by iPhones. Van Tonder himself has had photos published that were taken with his iPhone.

He sees many factors influencing this

**I think within the next few years newspapers will be getting the majority of their content from the agencies and will keep only one or two photographers around for local stories.**

shift, among them technology and time.

"The ease of digital cameras means everyone is a photographer these days, and the results are instant, which means there is a much steeper learning curve."

The pace of life has also changed; people no longer take time to sit back with a magazine and soak in life-size pictures. In fact, there frequently has been reference to 'the death of *Life*'.

*Life* magazine was dedicated to photojournalism and did wonders to promote and expand the profession, before it was finally closed in 2007. It is still known today as the embodiment of what once was the golden age of photojournalism, according to Van Tonder.

KIM LUDBROOK, European Pressphoto Agency's (EPA) Chief Photographer for Africa, sees a rosier picture.

"I don't think photojournalism is dying at all. In fact I see great photojournalism being produced every day."

What Ludbrook is referring to however is the photojournalism being produced by his agency and others like it. He agrees that the landscape is changing dramatically.

"I think within the next few years newspapers will be getting the majority of their content from the agencies and will keep only one or two photographers around for local stories."

But Ludbrook believes that this trend among newspapers will eventually backfire.

"You can't do all these things at the same time [taking notes, pictures and capturing video], the journalist and the photojournalist are both there to record a story. There is a reason why this model has been followed for decades."

He also believes values will play a crucial role in the future.

"Photojournalists understand about integrity, trust and accountability. After

all these years I am still accountable for every photo of mine that was ever published.”

Photographers learn to respect and uphold these values over time. And, although the same ethics apply to print, these are different mediums and the concern is that ordinary journalists won't approach the subject with the same respect and sensitivity, which could hold disastrous consequences for newspapers in the future.

“We are talking about completely different crafts, and I suspect we will see a significant loss in quality.”

THE ARGUMENT surrounding quality has been the mainstream counter-attack to this threat to traditional photojournalism. Van Tonder, however,

luxury.”

Ludbrook agrees that most people can't begin to see the difference between good and bad photojournalism, but it's more complex than that.

“There are more photos available today than ever before due to the internet, and this increases accessibility and appreciation. But there is also the possibility that something very important will get lost in the haze of images – the fact that we are documenting history.”

From an editorial viewpoint the picture looks slightly different. Paul Botes is the photo editor of *Mail & Guardian* and as such, supports the view of many editors today.

“Journalists today have to be multi-skilled, you can't just be a photographer.

it the financial model and the way we tell stories. Quality means working on different platforms and also packaging and selling those products on different platforms.” He is referring to content that is being produced simultaneously for print and online use.

When it comes to photo agencies such as AP, EPA and Reuters, quality photojournalism is very much alive and kicking.

“Our work is more popular today than it's ever been,” says Ludbrook.

He attributes it to the rise of online media. Many of the major publications, such as *Time* and *The Atlantic*, now have slideshows on their websites with content acquired exclusively from the agencies. Examples are *Time's* Lightbox and *The Atlantic's* InFocus.



does not see the merits of this argument.

“Quality is relative. I have conducted my own studies and my finding is that most people have little appreciation for quality photojournalism. They would gladly choose a photo of a child or animal above one that won the World Press Photo of the Year Award.

“The reader doesn't care whether the photographer has a Pulitzer or not. Their only concern is whether the photo gives greater comprehension to the article as a whole. You and I, we have appreciation for quality photojournalism, but we form part of a small niche market. It has become a

Those days are over.”

He agrees that one journalist can't do everything, “but that is why we send them out in teams of two now”. Botes also agrees that you can't be a specialist in all fields, yet he thinks it is “absolutely possible to produce very decent content.”

Photographers, journalists and videographers “are all observers. It is just a case of learning additional skills”. He sees an industry that is becoming multi-disciplinary, and journalists are now faced with an adapt-or-die scenario.

“The industry is changing, and with

Botes confirms that newspapers are using increasing numbers of photos from these agencies. “We are getting it at a very competitive price.”

The reason is the on-going recession in Europe. Countries such as Spain and Portugal can no longer pay the agencies for their produce, forcing the agencies to go in search of greener pastures, which they find in more emerging economies such as South Africa.

Ludbrook says that South Africa is the only country left with so many staff photographers.

“I think things will change dramatically in the coming years. There



will be less need for them with the growing role of the agencies.”

Yet he does see a great deal of potential for in-depth photography in South Africa, and the future of local photographers will depend on whether they can utilise it.

Botes is even more positive. “The agencies’ photographers aren’t producing nearly enough local content,” he says. This leaves a profitable gap for local photographers.

AS ONE can assume, funding lies at the root of the problem; every photographer and editor raises the issue. But money is ruled by supply and demand, and so it will be for photojournalism. It seems that if larger audiences again start demanding high-quality storytelling

through images, there will be an adequate supply.

However it is slightly more complex than that.

Jean-François Leroy started *Visa Pour l’Image* – the prestigious International Photojournalism Festival in Perpignan, France – in 1989. This year marks its 25th anniversary - a quarter of a century in which the festival promoted the profession of photojournalism. They did this by inviting and showcasing only the very cream the industry has on offer, both in terms of emerging and established photographers.

In an interview with *Time*, Leroy was asked how he sees the problematic financial side to photojournalism. As expected, his response was no ray of light.

“The financial aspect is a disaster. Less and less assignments are given by magazines. Photojournalism is in a very bad shape. When we started *Visa Pour L’Image* I knew a few hundred photojournalists who were living decently from their job, now I know about 20.”

At the heart of the problem, though, lies something much deeper and even more disconcerting. Leroy was quoted saying: “Photojournalism isn’t dying, the press is dying.”

When *Time* asked him about it, he responded:

“What do you make of the fact that so many magazines have lots of money to spend on a royal wedding but claim they don’t have enough to send journalists out into the field?”



Skets: ROANN LOUW

# IS JOOST 'N HEILIGE KOEI VIR DIE MEDIA?



**Van Suid-Afrika se gunsteling Nommer 9 na die oud-Bokkaptein met die kleivoete – Joost van der Westhuizen se lewe het in 'n Griekse tragedie ontaard. Dit blyk egter die publiek én die media het hom vir die wit onderbroek, die seksvideo en die dwelms vergewe, skryf [Anika Marais](#).**

**H**et jy nou die dag vir Joost op 5FM gehoor?" vra 'n vriend my onlangs. "Jislaaik. 'n Mens kon glad nie eers hoor wat hy sê nie. Siestog, lyk my hy is regtig siek," vertel hy verder. "Nie eens Gareth Cliff het gewaag om met hom lelik te wees nie."

Vier jaar gelede het die media Joost van der Westhuizen onverhoeds met sy wit onderbroek op sy knieë gevang. Vandag is hy besig om op die voorblaai van Suid-Afrikaanse tydskrifte en koerante te sterf, nadat motorneuronsiekte in 2011 by hom gediagnoseer is.

"Die media sal dit nie nou waag om enigiets negatief oor Joost te skryf nie," sê André Neveling, redakteur van *heat*. "Die publiek sal ons kruisig." *heat* en die Sondagkoerant *Rapport* het Joost se seksvideo in 2009 onthul, nadat 'n ontkleedanseres se intieme oomblikke saam met dié oud-Springbok-rugbyspeler skelm verfilm is.

Sommige lesers het 'n baie sterk lojaliteit teenoor Van der Westhuizen, beaam Peet Bothma, redakteur van *Sondag*. "As ek in my koerant sou skryf: 'Joost is 'n poephol', sal my lesers dadelik negatief reageer. Ons sal

terugvoer kry soos: 'Sies, 'n mens kan nie só van Joost praat nie. Hy is besig om dood te gaan. Hy is ook maar net 'n mens.' Die Suid-Afrikaanse publiek het hom definitief vir sy sekskapades vergewe."

Dié vergifnis herinner Bothma aan die publiek se destydse simpatie teenoor die voormalige Protea-kaptein Hansie Cronjé. "Hansie het 'n vreeslike ding aangevang, maar toe huil hy darem in die hof daaroor. Toe dink almal Liewe Jesus het hom nou vergewe, so ons kan hom maar vergewe."

Cronjé het in 2000 voor die King-kommissie van ondersoek sy betrokkenheid by wedstrydknoeiery erken en is daarna lewenslank uit krieket geskors. Hy is in 2002 in 'n vliegtuigongeluk oorlede. "Nou het Joost hierdie verskriklike siekte gekry. So ons kan hom óók maar vergewe, want hy het min dae oor," sê Bothma.

Die publiek voel skuldig dat hulle Van der Westhuizen in die verlede fel veroordeel het, meen Neveling. "Joost se seksvideo was die grootste skandaal wat die Suid-Afrikaanse vermaaklikheidsmedia nog ooit onthul het. Dit blyk egter die publiek het nou heeltemal van die era van die prostituut en die dwelms

en die huismoles vergeet. In hulle oë is Suid-Afrika se held terug."

Ondersteuners dink tans met nostalgie terug aan die skrumkakel wat vir Suid-Afrika in 1995 die Wêreldbekerrugbytoernooi help wen het, meen Hannelie Booyens, voormalige *Huisgenoot*-joernalis en joernalistiekdosent aan die Noordwes Universiteit. "Joost is 'n *golden boy*. In Suid-Afrika is ons geneig om sportsterre tot absolute gode te verhef."

Dalk vandaar Nando's se besluit om Van der Westhuizen vanjaar met 'n spesiale advertensie te vereer. Dié advertensie lui: "*That's why, at Nando's, number nine will always be our number one.*"

Dit nadat Nando's vier jaar gelede met Van der Westhuizen in 'n soortgelyke advertensie gekgeskeer het. Dié advertensie het gelui: "*Joost, if you're not eating eat at home, rather eat at Nando's.*"

Nando's se nuutste advertensie probeer die publiek se algemene gevoel teenoor Van der Westhuizen vasvang, verduidelik Geoff Whyte, uitvoerende hoof van Nando's. "Ek dink daar is tans 'n baie simpatieke gevoel teenoor Joost, ten spyte van persoonlike probleme wat

hy in die verlede gehad het.”

Die selfde joernaliste wat Van der Westhuizen 'n paar jaar gelede op voorblaai verneder het, is nou sy beste vriend, sê die Jacaranda FM-radio-omroeper Martin Bester. Bester bemerk tans die liedjie “Nommer 9” wat onlangs spesiaal deur dié radiostasie vir Van der Westhuizen opgeneem is. Luisteraars kan dié liedjie vir R14 op hul selfone aflaai. Só het Bester reeds ongeveer R80 000 vir Van der Westhuizen se persoonlike mediese onkoste ingesamel.

Van der Westhuizen se nuwe boek, *99 Dinge Wat Ek Wil Hê My Kinders Moet Weet*, het binne drie weke heeltemal uitverkoop, sê Franine Hattingh, produksiekoördineerder van Carpe Diem Media, wat dié boek uitgegee het. Sy boek is teen R67 in boekwinkels te koop, waarvan R10 direk tot Van der Westhuizen se persoonlike mediese rekeninge gaan bydra. “Hierdie boek beeld 'n hartroerende kant van Joost uit. Ek glo mense is dalk nou bietjie sagter op Joost. Die siekte het hom insig en waardering geleer,” sê Hattingh.

Dit is egter nie nét die publiek se gesindheid wat teenoor Van der Westhuizen verander het nie.

Booyens meen daar is ook tans 'n absolute desperaatheid onder joernaliste om groot name, soos Van der Westhuizen, se guns te behou. “Die sirkulasie van gedrukte media is in die moeilikheid. Ek dink nie noodwendig daar is nou skielik 'n vergewingsgesindheid onder joernaliste teenoor Joost nie. Ek dink dit is meer 'n monetêre gesindheid.”

*Huisgenoot* verkoop meer eksemplare as Van der Westhuizen op die voorblad pronk, erken Nadia Sadovsky, *Huisgenoot* en *YOU* se nuusredakteur. “Baie van die goed wat Joost die afgelope tyd gesê het en die manier waarop hy sy siekte hanteer, is vir ons lesers inspirerend.”

*Huisgenoot* het Van der Westhuizen juis onlangs as persoonlikheid van die jaar by die Tempo-toekennings aangewys. “Die punt is, hy is nog steeds baie van ons lesers se held. Hulle hou van hom, hulle voel jammer vir hom en hulle stel in hom belang,” sê Sadovsky.

Joost gebruik die media heel moontlik ook tot sy eie voordeel. Bothma meen Van der Westhuizen is baie meer toeganklik vir die media sedert hy met motorneuronsiekte gediagnoseer is.



## WAAR MOET DIE MEDIA DIE LYN TREK?

Uiteindelik is niemand bo kritiek verhewe nie – óók nie die sterwende nie, meen die adjunkpers-ombudsman, dr. Johan Retief.

“As daar iets nuuswaardigs vorendag kom oor 'n persoon wat sterwend is of 'n persoon wat reeds oorlede is, is die pers natuurlik vry om daaroor te skryf. Die naasbestaandes moet egter nie onnodig seergemaak word nie,” voeg Retief by. “Een van die belangrikste etiese punte is juis om onnodige skade te beperk.”

Chris Barron, rubriekskrywer van die *Sunday Times*, stem egter nie saam nie. Hy meen eerlike beriggewing word gekniehalter as joernaliste die emosies van die naasbestaandes in ag neem. “Daar is 'n groot verskil tussen 'n grafskrif in 'n koerant en die huldeblyk wat by 'n begrafnis gelees word. Joernaliste moenie die twee verwar nie.”

Barron is bekend vir eerlike en genadelose grafskrifte. Dit sal interessant wees om te sien watter publikasies alle fasette van Van der Westhuizen se lewe in sy grafskrif gaan insluit, sê Barron. “Ja, hy was 'n briljante rugbyspeler. Ja, hy het sy vrou verneuk. En ja, hy was baie siek. Dit sal álles moet uitkom.”

“Hy sal dom wees om nie nou van die simpatie gebruik te maak nie. Dis hoe hy kan verseker dat sy stigting, die J9 Foundation, gaan voortbestaan.”

Van der Westhuizen soek simpatie by die publiek deur sy siekte in tydskrifte, soos *Huisgenoot*, te bemark, sê die satirikus en kunstenaar, Anton Kannemeyer. In een van sy nuutste spotprente wat op die webtuiste watykyjy.co.za verskyn het, sit Van der Westhuizen in 'n rolstoel by die poorte van die hemel. 'n Christus-figuur en 'n engel – beide naak – verwelkom Van der Westhuizen met die belofte: ‘Kom Dadda! Hier is baie p\*\*s en cocaine vir jou!’

Volgens Kannemeyer gebruik Joost doelbewus sentimentele woorde soos ‘Dadda, gaan hemel toe’ om simpatie by die publiek uit te lok. “Dit is die satirikus se plig om hierdie ‘Dadda’ in 'n breër konteks te plaas. Die boodskap van my spotprent is dat ‘Dadda’ 'n hypocrite is.”

Booyens meen Van der Westhuizen se gewilligheid om in die media te verskyn, kan op 'n mate van ekshibisionisme dui. “Hy is moontlik verslaaf aan die media. Maar ek dink ook Joost is alleen en onseker. Vir sulke mense raak hul pyn eers vir hulle 'n realiteit as hulle dit in die media sien.”

Van der Westhuizen sit sélf sy lewe daarbuite, sê Gavin Prins, adjunkredakteur van *heat* en skrywer van die boek *Joost en Amor: Agter die Skerms*. Van der Westhuizen het Prins onlangs hof toe gesleep om die druk van dié boek stop te sit, maar die aansoek is van die hand gewys. “Ek verstaan nie hoekom Joost dit wil stop nie? Ek dra dan die boek aan hom op?”

Prins is nie verbaas oor die publiek se simpatie met Van der Westhuizen nie. “Ek kom by die hof aan in my *Armani*-pak en *Police*-sonbrille. En Joost kom in sy rolstoel. Wie se kant sal jy kies?”

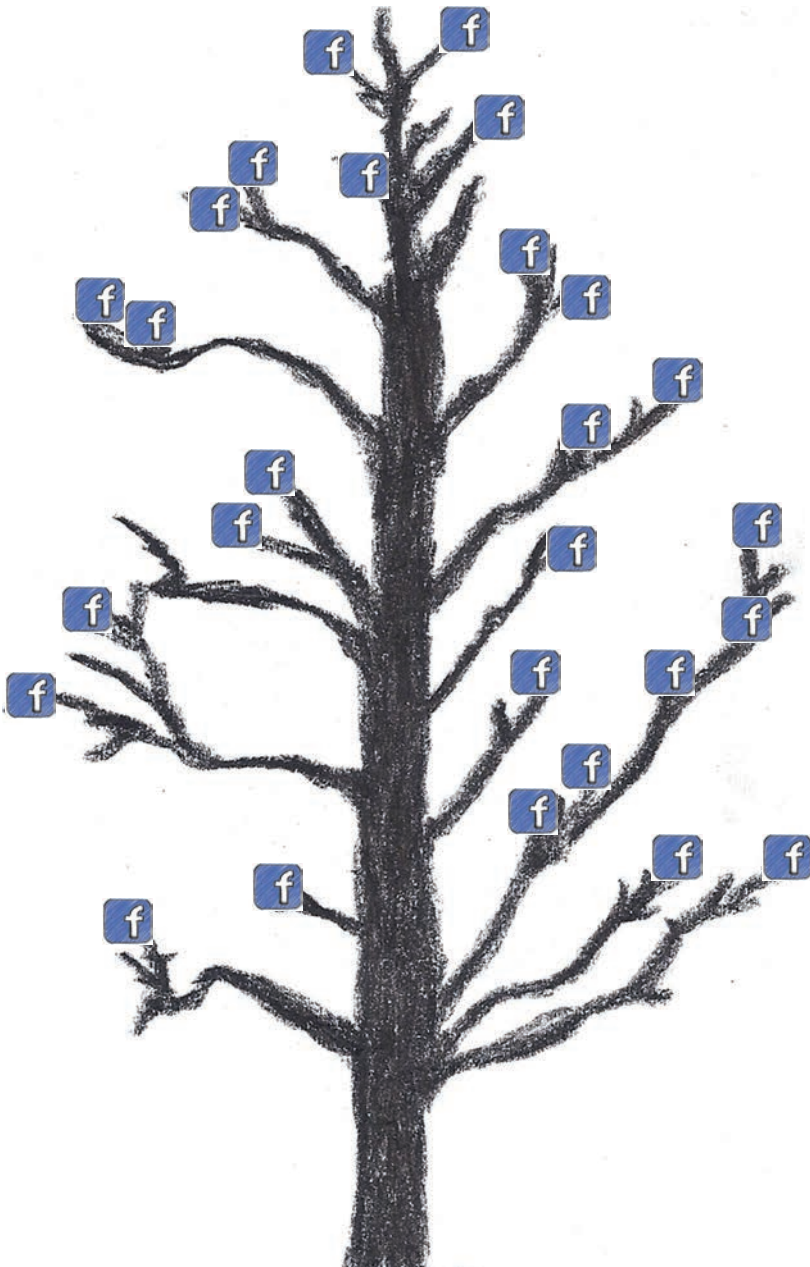
Van der Westhuizen se vrou, Amor Vittone, speel ook 'n rol in hul gesin se gereelde verskyning in die media. “Amor is totaal en al verslaaf aan die media. Sy sal enigiets vir 'n *Huisgenoot*-voorblad doen,” sê Booyens.

“Dit is vir haar 'n hoogtepunt. Na Joost se dood, sal ons definitief nog baie van Amor te sien kry. Sy sal beslis die golf ry.”

Van der Westhuizen en Vittone gaan nog baie tydskrifte en koerante in die toekoms verkoop, beaam Neveling.

“Hierdie storie is nog ver van verby.”

# VIRTUELE BEWARING EN SY REWOLUSIE



Tegnologie groei teen die tempo van wit lig en vandag kan enigiemand, enige plek, enige tyd inteken op sosiale media. Vir baie organisasies is Facebook en Twitter die nuwe ruimte vir bewaring. **Liani Jansen van Rensburg** het hul profiele gaan besoek om uit te vind of dit 'n wenresep is.

**D**ie bewaringsorganisasie WWF (World Wildlife Fund) Australië het vroeër vanjaar derduisende mense opgekommandeer om deel te raak van hul Facebook-blad en terselfdertyd 'n aanlynpetisie te teken. Alles in 'n poging om die Groot Koraalrif teen besoedeling en onderwatermynbou te red.

In 'n paar minute het hul Twitter-blad van 10 500 aanhangers na 27 007 gegroei.

Hul Facebook-blad het vanaf sowat 15 000 aanhangers na 31 334 verdubbeld.

Op dieselfde dag het meer as 6 877 mense op Facebook gesels oor dié organisasie en sy poging om die Groot Koraalrif te red.

Die organisasie se aanlynpetisie, met 'n mikpunt van 20 000 virtuele handtekeninge, het in die eerste 10 sekondes 2 300 handtekeninge van so ver as China, Amerika, Rusland en selfs Suid-Afrika gewerf.

Die volgende dag het die tydskrif *TIME* op sy webwerf berig oor dié virtuele veldbrand en hoe die Australiese regering sy sokkies moet optrek om die Groot Koraalrif te beskerm. “'n Sosiale rewolusie het plaasgevind,” sê Qhuatar Jacobs, mediaverteenwoordiger van WWF Suid-Afrika. “Die internet is nou ons oorlogsveld vir bewaring en bewusmaking.”

DEESDAE IS daar talle organisasies soos WWF wat die sosiale media as 'n platform gebruik om bewusmaking te kweek. Of dit nou is om 'n renoster te red of 'n seldsame plant te beskerm, dit sal iewers op Facebook of Twitter rondwaal.

“Ek sê jou dinge het verander! As jou organisasie nie sosiale media gebruik nie, kan dit net sowel sy tasse oppak en bloot nie bestaan nie,” sê Kate Petit, sosiale media- en kommunikasiebestuurder van die bewaringsorganisasie Green Pop.

“Die sukses van jou hele veldtog hang af van die hoeveelheid *likes* wat jou Facebook-blad kry. Dit is al manier hoe mense regtig van jou weet.”

Green Pop is 'n Kaapsgebaseerde organisasie wat al 23 012 bome in Afrika geplant het. Hulle het alreeds 10 553 aanhangers op Facebook en 3 830 mense wat hulle op Twitter volg.

“Sosiale media laat ons toe om gehoor en gesien te word, sonder om vir die

publisiteit van 'n koerantberig of 'n artikel in 'n tydskrif te wag. Ons is deesdae ons eie media,” sê Petit.

Juis hieroor kon Green Pop verskeie internasionale aanhangers lok.

“Die idee van bewaring en wat bewaar moet word, is nou toeganklik,” sê Ruda Malgas, dosent van bewaringstudies aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch.

“Almal kan 'n sê hê. Ek, jy, Jan Alleman. As jy 'n kwessie het, kan jy daarvoor praat en in 'n blitssekonde

**As jou organisasie nie sosiale media gebruik nie, kan dit net sowel sy tasse oppak en bloot nie bestaan nie**

honderde mense daarvoor inlig. Jy weet, destyds het bewaring slegs in 'n paar mense se skote geval, nou is dit almal se probleem. Die idee van eksklusiewe *preservation*, het nou verander na universele *conservation!*”

Vir Duncan Meisel, kommunikasiebestuurder van die internasionale maatskaplike- en bewaringsorganisasie 350.org, is die misbruik van sosiale media deur ander organisasies sy grootste frustrasie.

“Jy kan nie net staat maak op een stel reëls nie. Jy moet aanpas, jy moet 'n fyn lyn trek tussen om mense met inligting te bombardeer en te min met mense jou vordering te deel.”

Meisel meen dit is juis hieroor dat die meeste organisasies hulle met sosiale kommunikasie misgis.

“Dit is 'n hulpmiddel waar jy bewusmaking kweek, nie jou hele strategie deel nie. Dit is die vishoek en die lyn wat mense nooi na jou eintlike webwerf en jou veldtog. Jy kan wragtig

nie net 'n Facebook-blad skep en verwag daar moet manna uit die hemel val nie!”

Manna mag dalk nie maklik uit die hemel val nie, maar 350.org is steeds 'n gewilde organisasie in die kringe van sosiale media-gebruikers. Die organisasie het reeds 291 437 aanhangers op Facebook en 153 000 op Twitter.

“Ons verander gereeld ons strategie,” sê Meisel. “Sodra dit lyk of ons mense verloor, begin ons op 'n ander manier dinge sê. Dit is 'n konstante uitdaging.”

350.org hou gereeld optogte wêreldwyd teen kwessies soos aardverwarming en besoedeling. Hul bekendste en uitdagendste is die 400 km optog teen steenkoolproduksie in Bangladesj wat die Sandarban-woud se voortbestaan bedreig. Elke dag plaas hulle 'n foto van die optog op Facebook met 'n kort dagboekinskrywing.

Meer as 1400 mense *like* hierdie tipe foto en dagboekinskrywing.

“'n Organisasie moet aanpas soos die tegnologie ontwikkel, dit is hoe die trant van kommunikasie deesdae gegroei het. Jy kan nie meer staat maak op A5-papiertjies met inligting en bankbesonderhede nie,” sê Nomonde Mxhalisa, kommunikasiebestuurder van die Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT). “Alles is virtueel, aanlyn en alle kommunikasie is via Twitter en sosiale media.”

Meisel meen die vordering in tegnologie het nie bewaring se proses vergemaklik nie. “Dit is nie 'n resep vir sukses nie! Inteendeel, dit raak moeiliker, want waar jy vir 'n bedreigde spesie baklei, is daar nou duisende ander organisasie wat vir dieselfde diere op Facebook, Twitter of You Tube baklei. Wat motiveer die persoon om jou spesifieke blad bo die ander ene te steun?”

GEEN VELDTOG kan egter groei sonder 'n goeie stel kommunikasie- en besigheidsvaardighede nie, meen dr. Marlize Terblanche-Smit van die Stellenbosch Besigheidskool.

“Enige organisasie moet 'n duidelike strategie en einddoel lê, veral oor wat hul presies met 'n sosiale media-veldtog wil bereik. Om slegs sosiale media te gebruik om sigbaar te weeste Organisasies moet ook onthou sosiale media is 'n tweerigting-kommunikasiemiddel. Jy kan nie net



soos 'n mal hoender op Facebook of Twitter skryf en geen terugvoer of interaksie verwag nie. Jy kan ook nie alle vorme van sosiale media gebruik nie, jy moet kyk wat vir jou organisasie geskik is.”

Hoewel sommige organisasies sosiale media as 'n kompetisie beskou, is daar steeds organisasies soos Wildlife Act wat dit bloot vir bemerking gebruik.

“Dit gaan regtig nie meer oor hoeveel mense aanhangers van jou Facebook-blad is nie. Dit is slegs 'n gemaklike hulpmiddel,” sê Johann Maree, kommunikasiebestuurder van die

plaaslike Wildlife Act, 'n organisasie wat die grootkatspesie van Afrika bewaar en 16 160 aanhangers op Facebook het.

Tog, met vandag se tegnologie kan enigiemand deel van 'n bewaringorganisasie raak.

Jy kan die bere van Alaska red oor 'n koppie moerkoffie op die stoep van jou plaas op die Vrystaat.

“Jy hoef nie meer in die boendes in te neuk of jouself teen 'n boom vas te maak om 'n verskil te maak nie. Dinge het baie makliker geword vir Jan Alleman,” sê Meisel.

Sosiale media laat 'n nuwe manier van

bewaring toe, 'n rewolusie soos baie organisasies soos WWF dit beskryf.

“Ons moet onthou mense sal altyd bly lees, veral waarin hul belangstel en waaroor hul omgee,” sê Mxhalisa.

“Hoe 'n organisasie die aanhangers en volgelinge gaan behou, is slegs in die manier hoe daar met hulle gekommunikeer word.

“Ons moet net besef dit gaan nie oor 'n kompetisie nie, ons verkoop nie 'n produk nie. Ek dink as organisasies daardie perspektief behou, sal hulle 'n reuse uitkrangeffek onder die publiek kan veroorsaak.”





If you go onto a news website such as News24 on any given day you might find headlines such as “Girl, 6, shoots best friend” or “Rubber bullets fired at WSU students” glaring at you. Once you check the story it is common to see over 30 comments within 10 minutes of the story being posted.

In the “Most Read” section on 27 August, for example, were stories about crime (“Man gets life for raping niece”), scandals (“Miley’s shocking transformation” and “Celeb power couple calling it quits?”) and disasters (“Heavy rain hits WC”).

News24’s “Hot Topics” section, which represents tags relating to a specific topic that users frequently search for, boasted tags such as “Strikes|Syria conflict|Arms

deal|Marikana|ANN7|EFF|Rand”.

Not everything is as depressing as the above-mentioned stories though.

There is a “Good News” section containing stories such as “SA to get new low-cost airline” and “Economic growth quickens to 3.0%”.

This section can be found after a long scroll down the page, in a small corner on the right. It is not updated regularly and includes features stories that are several days old.

These stories garner, on average, eleven comments in a day, a stark contrast to a story such as “Toddler dies after dad runs over her”, which saw 96 comments being posted in 45 minutes.

Based solely on the data above, can it be safe to assume that people are more interested in reading what is wrong with the world than what is right with it?

“It is likely that most people seek information that is out of the ordinary, out of the range of most everyday human experiences.

“News is both information about current events, but also, increasingly, entertainment,” says Prof. Ashraf Kagee, chairperson of the Department of Psychology at the University of Stellenbosch.

“Just as car chases, explosions and gunfights excite us in movies, so too can the news,” Kagee adds.

“News stories portray such events more vividly, as these are real-life phenomena. Our lives are routine most of the time. When we read or watch television we seek entertainment. The media establishment knows this and panders to the people’s need to be entertained by news.”

# BLAME IT ON THE BRAIN?



**Why do news stories about war, calamities and fatalities, or some good old-fashioned crime, capture the attention faster than a feel-good story about fuzzy kittens? [Monique Mortlock](#) learned it is the brain's fault.**

THE INNATE fascination mentioned by Kagee stems from our ancestors.

Psychologist and Nobel laureate Daniel Kahneman, an expert in the fields of judgment, human behaviour and decision making, discusses the negativity bias of human beings on the website *Being Human*.

"The brains of humans and other animals contain a mechanism that is designed to give priority to bad news. By shaving a few hundredths of a second from the time needed to detect a predator, this circuit improves the animal's odds of living long enough to reproduce," says Kahneman.

We are adapted to be more aware of danger than possible rewards like food. Our ancestors would, therefore, while hunting, react quicker to a possible threat rather than take the risk of going

after a tasty piece of meat. This survival technique, of being more attuned to the destructive, seems to have been passed on through the generations, causing us to be more inclined to negative news than the positive.

*Being Human* also reports on a study done in 1998 by John Cacioppo. He tested how the brain processes negative and positive stimuli. His findings showed there was greater electrical activity in the brain when participants were given negative stimuli than when given positive stimuli.

Does this mean that good-news journalism is a lost cause?

*KUIER* IS an Afrikaans magazine that prides itself on publishing inspiring stories. The magazine is also one of the top-selling women's magazines

in the country. According to [www.bizcommunity.com](#) it sells on average over 95 000 copies every two weeks.

"It is certainly a perception by some that readers only want bad news, but I don't believe that's true," says editor Kay Karriem.

"If you're at a buffet and 80% of the food is meat, then most people will go for the meat. That doesn't mean there's no room for vegetables. In the same way, the media offers mainly sensationalistic and negative stories, and that's what people read."

Ernusta van Wyngaard, a journalist at *Kuier*, says they focus on positive stories while not shying away from topical issues such as sexual abuse, violence and tragedy.

"People like reading stories about hardships and struggles because

**People like reading stories about hardships and struggles; it places their own problems into perspective.**

it places their own problems into perspective,” says Van Wyngaard. “Bad news makes people ‘happy’ because they realise how lucky they are, and it leaves you with the thought of ‘I’m lucky that didn’t happen to me’.”

South Africa: The Good News is a website aimed at reporting good news. The website was started by its CEO, Stuart Pennington, six years ago.

The aim of the site is to highlight the country’s progress and positive developments with stories such as “SA’s mining industry ranks top for gender diversity in the boardroom” and “Building starts today on Africa’s first Child Safety Centre”.

Pennington says the website is his way of trying to positively influence the

South African narrative.

“People don’t understand the facts about their country; they focus so much on the negative like crime that they do not know 88% of citizens have access to fresh water or all the other good things happening in the country,” says Pennington, who spends his days researching facts like these in order to inform people about them on the website.

He thinks South Africans are optimistic.

It is only certain groups that prefer reading bad news because they are so used to it.

“White middle class South Africans are the most cynical,” says Pennington adamantly..

PENNINGTON BELIEVES the media are at fault for publishing negative news in a sensationalist way, which desensitises readers.

Jannie Momberg, editor-in-chief of News24, disagrees. “I can assure you News24 does not go out of its way to publish only ‘bad news’. We try to keep a balance between the type of stories we publish, but ultimately news value dictates.”

Momberg says bad news is usually important news. “Take one example – the Marikana massacre. Although all the stories around this could be classified as ‘bad news’, the event has had huge repercussions for the mining sector and South Africa’s international image.”

IT IS not all doom and gloom though.

There are positive stories that seem to receive as much interest as stories about crime, death and wars on News24. A story about a female chocolatier in Nkandla and her new business venture, titled “Nkandla entrepreneur: I don’t have to be a man to succeed”, received 23 comments within an hour, with people saying: “We need more such women in our society. All the best Macingwana.”

There might still be a future for good-news journalism.

## PERKS AND QUIRKS OF SUNSHINE JOURNALISM

In September, President Jacob Zuma told journalism students at Tshwane University of Technology that South African media are too negative and unpatriotic. The media should rather use their power to promote the country by reporting more positively.

He made a comparison to Mexico’s media, which, according to him, do not report on crime because they are so patriotic.

He was taken to task by Javier Garza, editor of Mexican newspaper *El Siglo de Torreón*, who said Mexican media do not report on crime and violence in their areas due to threats from crime organisations, which the authorities are unable to stop, rather than patriotism.

According to the *Mail & Guardian*, Garza said media outlets brave enough to report on criminal activities are frequently criticised by government officials.

Garza feels Zuma was misinformed by Mexican officials during a visit to the country.

In an editorial, Bun Booyens, editor of *Die Burger* said his paper will not succumb to Zuma’s demands and will continue reporting the truth.

Other experts see some good in Zuma’s remarks. “There is some merit in the criticism that media tend to be very cynical, and often just point out problems and conflicts rather than try to also suggest solutions,” says Herman Wasserman, deputy head of Rhodes University’s Journalism and Media Studies School.

Wasserman says the media could celebrate achievements and find solutions to problems.

“The media should not close down all other options for doing things differently than the standard adversarial, attack-dog type of journalism.”

# GETTING A SHARE OF THE FOURTH ESTATE



PHOTO: Leigh Schaller

Newspaper House, at 122 St George's Mall, Cape Town, has housed Independent Newspapers' staff since the 1850s. In 2011 it was sold off for R86 million. Independent staff are tenants on the top floor, while other businesses occupy the rest of the building.



After a four-year-long battle, Independent staff are set to become part owners of the company. **Leigh Schaller** investigates how Sekunjalo Consortium, led by Dr Iqbal Survé, is introducing employee ownership to this South African newspaper giant, and the possible implications of this.

Since 2008, 3 300 workers at Independent Newspapers have lost their jobs. Cape Town's Newspaper House, which has been home to the group since the 1850s, was recently sold.

This occurred despite the South African company making an operating profit of €27 million last year.

The downscaling serves as a practical example of what has been referred to as "the threat [to media] from within" by *Cape Times* editor and Independent Newspaper employee, Alide Dasnois. Speaking during Press Freedom Day celebrations at Stellenbosch University, she describes the threat as "the stripping down of our newsrooms in the name of profit and the relentless pursuit of returns to shareholders". She regards it as being as serious as the threat posed by state intervention.

In the case of Independent Newspapers, the party responsible for the stripping down of newsrooms is the Irish company Independent News and Media (INM). INM bought the South African newspaper group, which produces 18 titles (including *The Star*, *Cape Times*, *Cape Argus*, *The Voice*, *Sunday Independent* and *Isolezwe*), back in 1994.

Fans of Manchester United FC, who have been subjected to foreign owners using the club's success to repay debts, should be familiar with INM's *modus operandi*. The Irish company has a massive net debt value of around €422 million. Similar to Man U, Independent's former owners regularly squeezed profit without reinvesting in order to make debt payments.

"The company has been starved of any funding for the past say 10 years," said Anne Crotty, editor of Independent media's *Business Report*, on SA's Moneyweb broadcast after the group was finally sold earlier this year.

SEKUNJALO INDEPENDENT Media Consortium (SIM) and the Public Investment Corporation are Independent's new owners, with SIM owning 75% of Independent and the Public Investment Corporation owning the remaining 25%.

Four years before the sale, the staff of the company decided that the narrative of people far removed from the

newsroom making decisions that affects the quality of journalism needed to change. Journalists are great at talking, but in this instance they took action and formed the Indie Trust.

The trust aims to give employees and readers a significant say in the company, by securing a 20 to 25 % share in ownership. The trust's website explains the plan that was formulated.

**This is the virtuous circle that we are all told is the essence of a good model in the private sector. The recent economic downturn and the digitalisation of media has interrupted this cycle**

"We would find a financial backer for the bid – journalists and other staff would not have to put up any money. The backer would be repaid from dividends and once the full loan had been paid, the shares would revert to the trust and its members." Although it is not mentioned on the Trust's website, Dasnois, who is also a trustee, says that the trust also seeks shares for their readers.

Dasnois says that she believes employee ownership is needed, not just to represent workers, but because the *status quo* no longer works.

"The classic model is that you have quality journalism, which brings you lots of readers, so you have high circulation. That brings in lots of advertising, which

means you make lots of profit, which means you can re-invest lots of money in the newspaper. This is the virtuous circle that we are all told is the essence of a good model in the private sector."

The recent economic downturn and the digitalisation of media has interrupted this cycle. Dasnois explains: "If revenues fall and you want to protect profits, you cut costs. There is no other way to do it. You can see this in various ways. One of the ways is that the newspaper itself shrinks and circulation falls further. In a newsroom, what starts to happen, is that it leads to posts being frozen."

She explains that this reduces the size of your newsroom, which will include fewer specialist journalists. Ultimately, cost cutting becomes a recipe for mistakes.

Dasnois believes that employees and readers make good shareholders, since they have a long-term interest in a publication, whereas shareholders are often only "interested in quality and ethics and so on to the degree that it affects profit".

It seems that Dr Iqbal Survé, the chairman of SIM, agrees to some extent. When disclosing the makeup of the consortium that will own 75% of Independent, Survé announced that a special-purpose vehicle for employees would own a 10% stake in the consortium.

Although this is not exactly what the Indie Trust wishes for, it seems as if some sort of employee ownership is going to be implemented.

The details of this special-purpose vehicle have yet to be made clear. But what is apparent is that the 10% of SIM actually translates into just over 5% ownership of Independent newspapers. This occurs because it has recently been announced that Chinese investors will have a 20% stake in the company. Together with the 25% that the PIC owns, SIM only owns 55% of Independent.

IN A time where everyone in the media industry is looking for answers on how to succeed in this uniquely challenging period of global downturn and the rise of online journalism, can employee ownership be a part of the solution?

Supporters argue that, if staff have a share of ownership, they will naturally

become more invested in the company. The company's profits become their joy, its challenges their challenges. Arguably, the traditional separation between the owners of capital and labour, critiqued by Marx, is broken down.

The majority of studies show that staff ownership can work, and at worst doesn't have a negative effect on business.

A study of French companies with employee ownership, which was published in the *Journal of Corporate Finance*, found that when employee shareholders elect company directors, "It may actually increase firm valuation and profitability".

It seems that the move by Survé to grant staff a slice of the ownership pie is in the interests of both staff and investors. The media, however, is no ordinary type of business.

A newspaper that was entirely owned by staff, *Le Monde*, paints a more sober picture.

The paper, described by many as France's paper of record, was bought by a private investor from staff in 2010 in an effort to save it from bankruptcy. It seems that, although journalists have an interest in keeping their jobs, it does not automatically make them brilliant at managing the business of a publication.

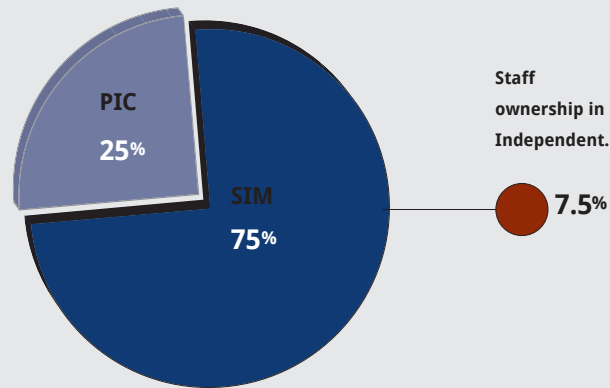
There is also the argument that journalists need to remain as far away from the bean counting as possible, because it could affect the editorial content.

Investigative journalist Stefaans Brümmer is a founding member of a non-profit group, *AmaBhungane*, which also seeks to escape the pressure of the bottom line and focus on investigative reporting. He fears that if staff were to have a share of profits, they could be inclined to include more stories on sport and sex, since the commercial value of such stories would end up in their pockets.

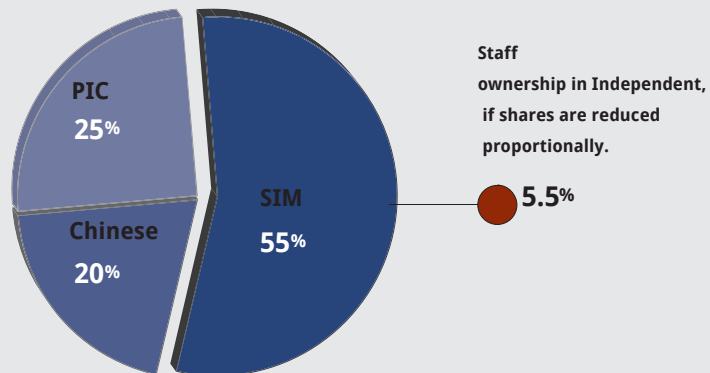
Dasnois disagrees, believing that "journalists and other members of staff are far more likely to opt for more investment, so that they can improve the quality of their work, than to aim at higher profits".

ULTIMATELY, HOW much of a say staff will have in Independent Newspapers is still to be determined.

Shareholders of Independent as announced in June 2013.



In August it was announced that Chinese companies would get a 20% stake, reducing the size of SIM's shareholding, and presumably of the staff shareholding.



"I think it's good for staff to own 10%. It very much depends on the detail of what powers they give to the trust and what voting powers the trust has. Will the trust have a board member, for example?" says Professor Anton Harber, the director of the Journalism Programme at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Survé has yet to spell out the details of how the special-purpose vehicle for staff will work. "It seems individual staff members will get shares," says Dasnois. "That is different from the Indie Trust plan, which was to hold shares in a trust on behalf of all staff."

Perhaps the answer to whether this story is ultimately a victory for media employees and the media depends on which side of the optimist-pessimist

divide you fall.

"It is disappointing that the Indie Trust did not succeed in securing a meaningful 25% stake for staff. We still think a significant stake for staff and readers is the best way to encourage quality and independence," says Dasnois, commenting after the Competition Commission approved the sale of Independent.

"But we are pleased that our efforts have encouraged Survé to offer shares to staff, even if the stake offered falls far short of our goals."

Regardless of your views on staff ownership, the journey of a group of media workers challenging the status quo - taking action and participating in this bold enterprise - is in itself inspiring.

# THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF MANTO, MEDICINE AND THE MEDIA



**Manto Tshabalala-Msimang's reign as minister of health was easy pickings for the media. Incompetent, uncommunicative and vastly inefficient, she became public enemy number one. But now that Manto is gone, has HIV and Aids reporting moved past her? Terzel Rasmus finds out more.**

**M**anto Tshabalala-Msimang's term as South Africa's health minister, from 1999 to 2008, caused controversy. Under the denialist eye of President Thabo Mbeki, Tshabalala-Msimang's policies on HIV and Aids failed to make provision for the treatment of patients with anti-retroviral medication (ARVs).

The Mbeki government was widely criticised in the media for its denialism. On 31 October 1999, *The Sunday Independent* published an article titled "Scientists reject Mbeki's claim on AIDS drug", exemplifying this phenomenon. The article referred to Mbeki's claim that the mother-to-child prevention drug, AZT, was toxic.

Another example of an incident that caused controversy was in 2002. Tshabalala-Msimang appointed Roberto Giraldo, a known Aids denialist, as an advisor. In response, Zapiro published a cartoon that labelled the duo "Manto's Aids controversy grand reopening".

According to a study by Harvard, published in the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome* in 2008, these misguided health policies contributed to as many as 300 000 premature deaths due to HIV and Aids in South Africa.

With all this controversy in the public eye, the media leapt to its feet to grab hold of stories that showed evidence

of government's inefficiency. The HIV message became skewed and politicised.

Willemien Brümmer, who was a health reporter for *Die Burger* during the 'Manto years', says that the problem with HIV reporting was that the debate was extremely polarised. The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) were the heroes because they were on the side of justice and correct media reporting.

The narrative was familiar, and Tshabalala-Msimang made an easy villain due to her disastrous disavowal of mainstream HIV science. "There was extreme polarisation between the administration and the media because there was no real discussion between the two," says Brümmer. "Most of the information we got on public health would be from the TAC."

Tshabalala-Msimang, who's department rarely engaged with the media and failed to address mounting queries, exacerbated the communication divide.

"There was so much hostility between her department and the media that we hardly ever got the opportunity to hear her side of the story because they just would not speak to us," says Brümmer. "So it might have been that she had a point about something but there was no real discussion because it was so polarised."

But the media's tendency to side with the TAC might have been ill-considered:

the theatrics of civil society versus Tshabalala-Msimang overrode accurate scientific reporting.

"We were not critical enough of the TAC: if they made mistakes, we did not report on that," says Brümmer.

To be fair, the journalists' myopic focus was caused by Tshabalala-Msimang's overwhelming incompetence: the inefficiency needed to be reported, but unfortunately analysing the micro came at the cost of portraying the macro.

Now, with the change in administration and Dr Aaron Motsoaledi's appointment as health minister, the HIV policy has improved.

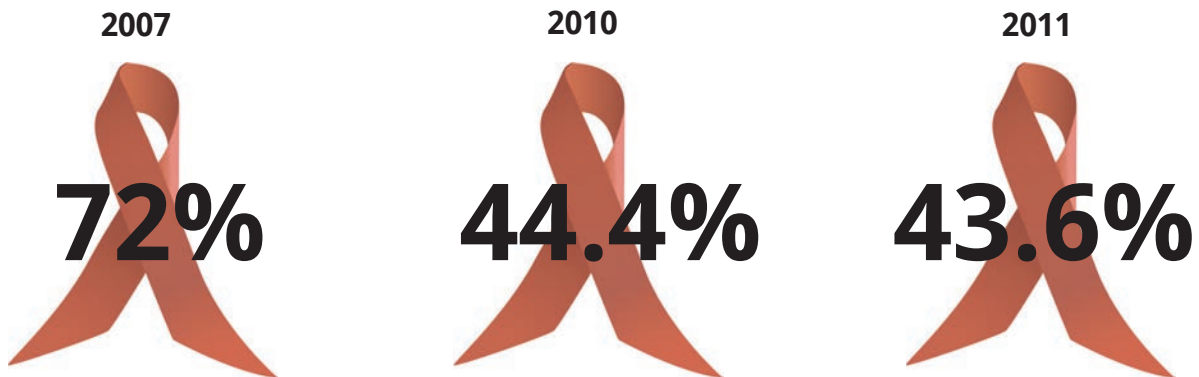
SOUTH AFRICA is the country with the biggest number of people using ARVs, and the media's role in spreading awareness and education is imperative.

Motsoaledi is no Tshabalala-Msimang. According to Anso Thom, former editor of *Health-e*, Motsoaledi's door is always open to the media and he engages with journalists. "You can talk to him and question him. People will have an attitude towards someone with a closed door and who is not prepared to talk to you," she says. "He is saying the right things and making the right noises."

In the Tshabalala-Msimang years, instead of analysing South Africa's health system and seeing if it was going to cope with the number of infected people, the media were forced to play



**Without compromising our editorial independence we had to become activists in a way**



## AIDS-RELATED DEATHS IN SOUTH AFRICA

lone advocate for common sense and treatment seeking. “We were trying to fight Mbeki denialism and the media had to play an extraordinary role during those years. Without compromising our editorial independence we had to become activists in a way, but it was a tightrope trying to maintain our independence,” Thom says.

The problem is that Motsoaledi is such an improvement on Tshabalala-Msimang’s gross inadequacy. But no one is perfect and the media need to raise the bar, and not become uncritical and complacent with small gains. There are real challenges in the health system, even though Motsaoleli has done more than the previous administration.

“We report on the hospitals and the clinics and we know of people who are not getting treatment and people dying in the queue. These are good stories, but the message of the health system, in itself is not coming through,” says Thom. “I think it is because we don’t have the expertise to look at the state of our health system which might not be as good as we hoped.”

INA SKOSANA of the *Mail & Guardian’s* health journalism centre, Bhekisisa, agrees that health reporting

5.38 million  
people living  
with HIV

2011

5.26 million  
people living  
with HIV

2010

5.5 million  
people living  
with HIV

2005

Source: Statistics South-Africa

is different now. “One must be careful not to trivialise health reporting because it is the kind of information that needs clarity,” she says. The focus of health reporting needs to shift from politics to the functioning of the health-care system.

It is important that the reporter understands the science behind the illness because, as a journalist, you need to have a firmer hold on the facts than your readers: The writer enlightens the reader. “The scientists do the research, policies are put into place based on the research and the media guide the public about what is going on,” says Skosana.

Skosana believes that science is often misrepresented in the media because it is not reported on properly. HIV suffers the most from this misguidance due to its complexity, and journalists lack the time to do much-needed in-depth research. It might seem like an obvious statement, but HIV and Aids is important. Six million South Africans are living with this disease, and they need the fourth estate to fight for them. But the media’s role does not end there: they also need to ask the hard questions and spread the answers that save lives, even after Tshabalala-Msimang has left office.

# MENSE VAN STAAL



Rolprente skets 'n beeld van die joernalistiek as 'n beroep waar jy 'n ystermondering moet hê. **Amanda du Pisanie** vind uit of hierdie beeld sy wortels in die werklikheid het.

In die Superman-flik *Man of Steel* wat vanjaar op Suid-Afrikaanse skerms ontplof het, gesels Clark Kent met sy ma oor sy besluit om 'n joernalis te word. “I’m going to find a job where I can keep my ear to the ground. Where people won’t look twice when I want to go somewhere dangerous or start asking questions,” sê hy.

Oor die gehalte van die flik kan ons op 'n ander dag praat, maar die toneel sê baie oor fliks en televisie se uitbeelding van die joernalistiek as beroep.

Die voorbeeld van Superman is vir my nogal persoonlik. Ek was klein toe *Smallville* my aan die joernalistiek as beroep bekendgestel het.

Lois Lane was vir my die tipiese joernalis – hardkoppig en bereid om enige reël te breek om die storie te kry. Sy het alle struikelblokke, insluitend mense se gevoelens, soos 'n stootskraper uit haar pad gegee.

Fliks skep die beeld van 'n joernalis waar die trauma wat hulle aanskou soos koeëls van Superman se bors afbors.

DIE JOERNALISTE met wie ek gepraat het, stem saam dat jy nie goeie stories gaan skryf as jy jouself ten volle afsluit van die ontstellende gebeurtenisse nie.

“Jy moet menslikheid toon om 'n storie met respek te kan vertel, want jy moet jouself in 'n sin blootstel,”

sê Karen Breytenbach, voormalige misdaad- en hofverslaggewer van *Cape Times*.

Marida Fitzpatrick, senior verslaggewer by *Beeld*, beaam dit. “Die dag as 'n storie jou nie meer raak nie, moet jy nie meer 'n joernalis wees nie.”

Pieter van Zyl, 'n verslaggewer by *Huisgenoot*, sê daar is beslis min plekke in die bedryf vir stootskraper-joernaliste. “Ek het nou al gesien hoe hierdie *hardcore, double clutch*,

sê hy het homself probeer afsluit van die trauma toe hy jonger was. Hy is eers onlangs met post-traumatische stres gediagnoseer.

FLIEKS DRA by tot die persepsie van stootskraper-joernaliste, sê Van Zyl. “Joernaliste in fliks is hierdie harde mense wat die mikrofoon in mense se gesigte druk en vir hulle hartelose vrae vra.”

Tog is daar 'n saadjie van waarheid in dié beeld. Joernaliste sien so

“Ek het nou al gesien hoe hierdie *hardcore, double clutch*, bul in 'n china shop-joernaliste nie lank hou nie.”

bul in 'n *china shop*-joernaliste nie lank hou nie.”

Joernaliste wat simpatie en medemenslikheid toon, sal meer uit mense kry. “Mense sal baie eerder met jou praat as hulle besef: ‘Hierdie is nie net 'n robot wat oorkant my sit en alles opneem nie’,” sê Van Zyl.

Breytenbach voel verder dit is onmoontlik om jouself werklik af te sny van die gebeure wat jy sien. Joernaliste wat dit probeer doen, onderdruk net die trauma en vind ander destruktiewe uitlaatkleppe. “Jy kry baie joernaliste wat net van koffie en sigarette leef.”

Jacques Steenkamp van *Rapport*

baie trauma op misdaadtonele dat hulle hulself op een of ander manier daarteen moet beskerm, sê Fitzpatrick. “As jy gaan huil oor elke lieue moord en roof, gaan jy 'n wrak wees.”

Fitzpatrick sê “professionele afstand” is baie belangrik as jy met getraumatiseerde slagoffers praat. Dit beteken egter nie jy is gevoelloos nie. “Jy vervul net 'n ander rol, om die storie te kry. Die dominee is daar om mense te troos.”

TEN SPYTE van joernaliste se pogings om 'n professionele afstand te handhaaf, is daar sekere traumas

wat selfs die sterkste staalmondering binnedring.

Die een tipe storie wat vir Elsabé Brits, verslaggewer van *Die Burger*, té traumaties is, is as sy oor dieremishandeling moet berig – haar persoonlike *Kryptonite*.

Een van haar moeilikste stories was die Sizzlers-moorde in 2003 gepleeg, waar nege mense ure lank gemartel is voor hulle vermoor is. “Die toneel was vreeslik, vreeslik. Dis ’n lang storie. ’n Swaar storie.”

Bomontploffings in 2000 en 2001 was ook vir haar baie moeilik. “Daai trauma is vreeslik – dit verander iets in mense.”

Fitzpatrick kon as jong verslaggewer eenkeer nie haar trane keer toe ’n ontstelde vrou wie se dogter vermoor is, haar met ’n boks foto’s gegooi het en op haar geskree het nie. Die vrou se man het toe vir haar ’n glas *Cream Soda* gebring. “Toe troos hy my en sy dogter is dood.”

Maygene de Wee van *Die Burger* voel ook enige storie met kinders is vir haar baie erg.

Dit spruit uit haar eie ervarings toe haar peetkind ’n paar jaar gelede ontvoer en vermoor is.

Stories oor kinders is baie moeilik en dit is te verstane. Dit tref jou erger wanneer jy eers self ’n ouer is, sê Steenkamp.

Dit is moeilik om met geliefdes van slagoffers te praat. “Onderhoude met die familie van slagoffers van

## Moenie dit jou wêreld maak nie.

geweldsmisdaad bly moeilik en sal altyd wees, véral as kinders dood is,” sê Brits.

Breytenbach sê dit was selfs vir haar traumaties om na mense se stories in die hof te luister. “In ’n stadium het ek opgehou om na die foto’s in die lêers te kyk.”

HOE VIND jy dan ’n balans tussen stories met menslikheid skryf en om jouself teen die emosionele aanslae wat jy elke dag moet aandurf te beskerm?

Daar is nie ’n maklike antwoord nie. Om net ’n klein bietjie na die verkeerde kant toe te leun, kan jou in die moeilikheid laat beland.

Die slegste ding wat jy kan doen, is om dit op te krop, “want dit haal jou later in”, sê Steenkamp.

Fitzpatrick stem saam: “Moenie ’n cowboy wees nie. Die eerste gevaarteken is as jy daarvoor begin droom.”

Dié drome is ’n teken dat jy nie die trauma verwerk nie. Breytenbach sê sy het self in ’n stadium nagmerries gekry.

Almal stem saam dat jy ’n sterk ondersteuningsnetwerk om jou nodig het om dié balans te handhaaf.

Om met jou familie en vriende te praat oor wat jy ervaar, kan baie help.

“Om jou werkstories vir jou geliefdes te vertel, kan hulle ook beter insig gee sodat hulle jou beter kan ondersteun,” sê Breytenbach.

Vriende en familie is egter nie altyd genoeg nie. Vir baie joernaliste is professionele sielkundige hulp nodig. “Ek gaan lê gereeld op daai bank. Dis niks om oor skaam te wees nie,” sê De Wee.

Van Zyl beveel aan dat jy ten minste een keer elke drie maande met ’n terapeut of enige ander professionele persoon praat. Steen-



# CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE IN THE RAPE CAPITAL



Last year, Interpol named South Africa “the rape capital of the world”, where a woman is raped every four minutes and one in four men admit to having raped a woman. Several media campaigns were launched this year to address the rape epidemic. **Megan Bursey** investigates whether it was all talk.

**T**his year has not been good for women in South Africa. It started with Anene Booysen’s gang-rape, mutilation and murder in Bredasdorp during the early hours of Saturday 2 February. On Valentine’s Day, Olympic athlete Oscar Pistorius shot and killed his girlfriend. A day later, a man in Daveyton killed his wife and cut off her head

These three incidents are droplets in the ocean, part of the wave of horrific stories that swept through the country.

The South African media have been awash with stories of rape. Daily newspapers were inundated with horrific reports of a mother and her two toddlers being raped and stabbed in the Free State in March. Her two-month-old child survived the ordeal, but the mother and the one-year-old died. In July, an 80-year-old woman was raped by her 18-year-old neighbour. In August, a man raped a four-month-old baby girl and her seven-year-old brother in Ceres.

MEDIA CAMPAIGNS have sprung up like mushrooms after a spell of humid weather. These include the Stop Rape Campaign, launched early this year by the Department of Basic Education in collaboration with Lead SA. The campaign seeks to educate the 10,2 million learners in schools across the

country about rape.

Lead SA’s role as an activist organisation is on-going. “The awareness needs to continue and a lot of work needs to be done. One statement from government is not going to help,” says Yusuf Abramjee, one of the leading and founding activists of Lead SA.

The Stop Rape campaign created a pledge that was to be circulated among schools and which they urged schools to recite in assemblies. One of the lines of the pledge reads: “I pledge not to rape or commit any form of sexual harassment, abuse or violence. I pledge to report any form of wrongdoing to authorities.”

Weekly newspaper *City Press* stepped in on the crisis by publishing a ‘rape map’ on page 2 every Sunday. The map pinpoints where rapes were reported around the county.

“I was initially sceptical of the idea,” says Natasha Joseph, news editor of *City Press* and the person in charge of the map. “I thought, what is the point? Will people even take notice of it?”

“After Anene Booysen’s story broke, we all sat in a conference, gobsmacked. We tried to figure out how to tell the story.” Joseph explains that the concept of the map came from *City Press* editor, Ferial Haffajee, who suggested displaying the statistics in a graphic way, all in one place.

“It is an on-going campaign, with no end date in sight,” says Joseph. The attention the map drew was unexpected, and Joseph reports that many people called in to comment, reacting with shock at the reality of the scourge.

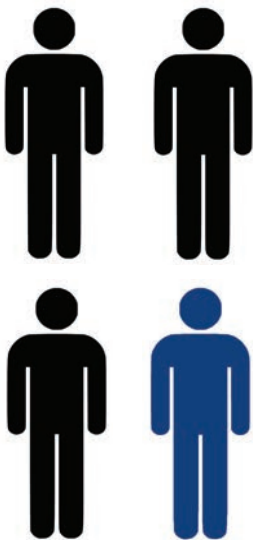
On 8 February 2013, Primedia Broadcasting played a ‘beep’ every four minutes across its four radio stations in Gauteng and the Western Cape as part of Lead SA’s campaign. While this was a once-off exercise, “Lead SA continues to cover issues of rape and abuse on air, through social media and their website,” says Tshiamo Ndlovu of Lead SA.

The Wits Rising campaign is based on the One Billion Rising campaign, founded by activist and playwright Eve Ensler. It is an international movement that called on one billion people to demonstrate against gender-based violence. The campaign’s website claims it is the biggest mass action in human history. The campaign is active in 205 countries. The University of the Witwatersrand joined the campaign on 14 February, participating in the theme of ‘Strike, Dance and Sing’ in protest against rape.

While these campaigns all seek to raise awareness of the crisis, the question is raised whether they have actually done anything to stop the violence.

**1/20**  
rapes are  
reported  
to the SAPS

**40%+**  
of women will  
be raped in  
their lifetime



**1/4**  
men admit to rape

**These campaigns  
cannot simply stop  
the scourge  
of rape**

IT IS true that these campaigns cannot simply stop the scourge of rape. Their role is more of an awareness-creating one. “The media is a powerful tool to drive awareness and in many cases holding those in power accountable to act,” says Marisa Oosthuizen, the coordinator of Lead SA and Crime Line.

Oosthuizen says it “would be premature to measure the effectiveness of the campaigns in such a short time, as this category of crime is particularly sensitive, with many layers of social challenges that need to be addressed”.

She believes the campaigns have been effective in placing the issue on the agenda, “reviving conversation and openness” and resulting in “an escalated number of reports in the media”. The campaign has drawn “a commitment from the highest office in the country to act and subsequently re-introduce the sexual offences courts – which Stop Rape called for.”

WITS’S CAMPAIGN was a temporary endeavour, as it sought to join forces with a global demonstration on 14 February. However, it was reported that thousands of supporters attended the event.

The Stop Rape campaign appears to have kept its momentum and produced tangible results. It has been successfully absorbed into the curriculum of Life Orientation, a compulsory subject, at schools in South Africa. In this avenue learners are educated about their rights and responsibilities and taught what to do if they should fall victim to sexual abuse.

CITY PRESS’S endeavour has no end in sight. For Women’s Month (August), the newspaper published three in-depth stories about rape cases. These are what Joseph calls “the lives behind the stories,

about the actual human beings. The idea is to make people pause, and hopefully realise that the newspaper is not trying to shock or titillate them.”

There is a sense that the public’s attention has somewhat abated and that the various media campaigns against rape have fizzled out.

Joseph concurs. “The media and the people who consume it have a short attention span. There is always another scandal to distract us, and sadly, there will always be another Anene Booysen.”

She is disappointed at how quickly the focus was lost and suggests that one of the reasons for this waning attention is because “people don’t really like bad news”. On the flip side, when *City Press* missed a week of publishing the map, Joseph says people immediately noticed and complained. This means that the map draws attention.

OOSTHUIZEN IS more optimistic. “The momentum continues on a level that is absolutely integral – our youth.” She says their media partners also continue driving the goals and principles of the Stop Rape campaign.

“The easiest thing we can do now is to keep this conversation going, empowering victims to do the same without fear of persecution.”

Abramjee proposes “one sustainable, long-term campaign. Something more than just a beep, perhaps a shock tactic. We need to do much more.”

Joseph says that people need to be called out on their behaviour. “Anger is good, but it can’t be sustained. It burns too hot and too brightly. We need to take the screaming anger from Anene and tell men that it’s not acceptable.”

“While it’s not the job of the media, the media should not allow these attitudes any space,” says Joseph.

# TWITTER: NIE NET HASHTAGS EN GLITTER



Dit is deel van die joernalis se DNS om altyd 'n vinger op die pols van moontlike nuusgebeurtenisse te hou én hul vinger op die stuurknoppie van Twitter. **Ineke Coetzee** het bietjie met van die “vinnige vingers” gesels.

**E**k dink baie keer aan 'n joernalis as 'n unieke spesie wat elke dag ontwikkel en in iets nuut verander.

Charles Darwin sou boeke kon skryf oor die evolusie van die joernalis oor die jare. Voorheen was deelname aan media net beskore vir sekere mense met baie geld. Dit was duur om 'n koerant op die been te bring of om by die staat om 'n radiolisensie aansoek te doen.

Darwin sou ook iets kon skryf oor die joernalis se postuur vandag: geboë rûe met oë teen die slimfoon of rekenaar se skerm. Met vingers wat nie ophou tik tot die spertyd aanbreek nie.

Die wonderlike ding van die joernalis is sy of haar vermoë om aan te pas. Want kyk, 'n joernalis sal 'n manier vind.

Een só 'n joernalis en deesdae 'n bekende naam (hoewel hy dit nie self so sien nie) is Barry Bateman, korrespondent van *Eyewitness News*. Hy het vanjaar as 'n Twitter-sensasie ontpop toe hy oor die moordsaak teen die paralimpiese atleet Oscar Pistorius, wat sy vriendin Reeva Steenkamp doodgeskiet het, getwiet het.

As 'n verslaggewer twiet hy al twee jaar lank, maar vanjaar was véral die jaar wat sy joernalistieke vernuftigheid raakgesien is. Verskeie plaaslike en internasionale nuusinstansies, soos *The Guardian*, het sy twiets in hul artikels gebruik.

Tydens Pistorius se verhoor mag joernaliste nie kameras, skootrekenaars of opname-toerusting in die hofsaal inneem nie. Natuurlik moes Bateman saam met ander joernaliste aan 'n ander manier dink om inligting deur te gee. Regstreekse twiets (*livetweeting*) was

die perfekte oplossing. Regstreekse twiets is wanneer 'n joernalis, byvoorbeeld, elke paar sekondes of minute iets belangrik aan sy of haar volgelinge stuur.

Waar normale gebruikers miskien twiet oor watse kos hulle vir middagete geëet het, kan joernaliste brekende nuus twiet. Dis soos om vasgenaël voor die radio te sit en na die kommentators tydens 'n regstreekse rugbywedstryd te luister. Jy draai die volumeknop al hoe harder en jy verorber elke lieue woord tot die speler die bal onder die pale druk.

In Bateman se geval het mense voor hul rekenaarskerms of slimfone gesit en hul Twitterblad elke minuut verfris vir nuwe brokkies inligting.

“Die dag voor Oscar Reeva geskiet het, het ek 9 000 volgelinge op Twitter gehad. 'n Week later, met sy aansoek om borgtog, het ek 139 000 volgelinge gehad en vandag het ek 131 112. Ek het geweet die storie gaan groot wees, maar ek kon

nooit die toename in Twitter-vogelinge voorspel het nie.”

Bateman glo in die krag en eenvoud van Twitter, maar hy twiet nie net blindelings nie. “Dit het gehelp dat ek oor die Suid-Afrikaanse regstelsel ingelig is. Ek het ure spandeer om vrae te beantwoord en om seker te maak dat die regte inligting deurgegee word. Ek het ook verseker dat ek as 'n betroubare bron gesien word en ek het geweier om spekulasie en gerugte aan te moedig.”

Een van sy tipiese twiets tydens die Oscar-sage laat dit voel asof jy 'n CSI-program volg:

*#OscarPistorius Nair at this point in time, I cannot rule out premeditation for the purpose of bail - we go schedule 6.*

“Regstreekse twiets bring die nuusverbruikers nader aan die joernalis. Ek doen steeds wat ek gedoen het voor 14 Februarie, behalwe nou het ek net meer mense wat na my luister.”

Selfs met die Gupta-storie het Bateman aangehou om met sy volgelinge te kommunikeer. Hy sê trots hy het dié brekende nuus op Twitter oopgelek:

*3 May: I received a tip and rocked up at the base @Dronespy: Barry how did the Gupta gate story break?*

Liesl Pretorius, digitale redakteur van *City Press*, 'n koerant met 'n indrukwekkende teenwoordigheid op sosiale media, het haar eie definisie van 'n suksesvolle regstreekse twieter.

“Die beste *livetweeters*, volgens my, twiet nie nét die feite nie – hulle is fyn waarnemers en voeg waarde toe deur byvoorbeeld te verduidelik hoekom een stelling of feit belangriker as 'n ander is of wat 'n verwikkeling beteken. Hulle

BARRY BATEMAN

VOOR 14 FEB

9 000

VOLGELINGE

139 000

NA EEN WEEK

1 400%

STYGING

sien raak wat 'n spul ander joernaliste nie raaksien nie.”

Alhoewel Twitter baie handig vir 'n joernalis is, sê Peet Kruger, vorige redakteur van *Beeld*, sal dié koerant nie verslaggewers verplig om Twitter te gebruik nie. Hy voel wel Twitter kan 'n uitbreiding van hul koerant wees.

En in vandag se tyd waar koerant-verkope nie meer so sterk is nie, is dit belangrik om belangstelling onder verbruikers te genereer. “Twitter is handig as jy dit kan doen,” sê Kruger. “Ons Twitter-beleid is dat dit mense moet intrek. Ons sien dit as 'n straatplakkaat wat hopelik 'n leser sal prikkel om die koerant te koop en te lees.”

Maar volgens Kruger kan Twitter ook gevaarlik wees en dit is wanneer jy moet besluit óf jy die Twitter-nessie gaan verlaat en óf jy steeds snoesig binne wil bly.

“In die koerant het ons subs wat die joernalis se stories deurgaang, maar op Twitter is die joernalis op sy eie. Hy moet verantwoordelikheid neem vir dit wat hy twiet. Laster is veral iets wat my baie pla en dit is ook 'n groot bekommernis onder joernaliste en nuusinstansies.”

Kruger meen laster hou nie net 'n gevaar vir die verslaggewer in nie, maar ook vir sy of haar werkgewers. “Dit kan 'n media-instansie vreeslik baie geld kos, die verslaggewer kan sy werk verloor en jou reputasie kan geskend word. By *Beeld* byvoorbeeld, as iemand 'n lastereis instel, dan aanvaar die koerant verantwoordelikheid. Die koerant betaal ook die koste. Die koerant neem verantwoordelikheid vir die redigering en die veiligheid van die publikasie.”

Charl du Plessis, regsverslaggewer by *City Press*, loof Twitter, maar is ook van die gevare bewus. “'n Mens moet veral versigtig wees om nie gewaagd op dié platform te probeer wees nie. Suid-Afrikaanse *tweeps* het geen genade wanneer dit kom by enigiets wat hulle as rassisties of seksisties beskou nie.”

Anton Harber, professor van joernalistiek aan die Universiteit van Witwatersrand, erken dat die gevare van laster op Twitter groot is, maar voel ook dat opinies en vryheid van spraak belangrik is. “Omdat daar nie hekwagters op Twitter is nie, skep dit risiko's vir verslaggewers om laster te pleeg. Maar dit maak dit ook 'n vry en gelykstellende nuusmedium waar ons almal dieselfde mag het om ons opinies te lug. Ek dink die voordele van Twitter troef die gevare.”

Of Twitter nuus vervlak, blyk nie so 'n groot probleem vir Harber te wees nie. “Nuus word net vervlak as jy Twitter as jou enigste nuusbron gebruik. Daar is ook geen rede dat bondigheid tot die vervlakking van nuus lei nie. Twitter kan skerp wees, selfs met net 140 karakters.”

DU PLESSIS EN Kruger twiet ook albei graag. Kruger is veral beïndruk met joernaliste se SMS-vingers wat notas neem én tussenin twiet. “Regstreekse twiets is veral lekker met groot stories, maar Carien du Plessis, politieke verslaggewer by *City Press*, twiet selfs terwyl sy Comrades hol.”

Dan moet sy seker 'n groot Twitter-liefhebber wees? “Ja, Twitter is 'n heerlike manier om teen die verveling te help (as 'n mens lank wag voor 'n perskonferensie of as 'n toespraak vervelig is). Dit is 'n manier om mense te ontmoet, positiewe terugvoering te kry en om ander kante en denke op 'n storie te kry,” sê Du Plessis. “In die geval van die Comrades-storie gee dit jou 'n *pocket crowd* wat veral help as dinge rof raak.”

Sy bieg sy het al 'n Twitter-flater begaan, maar dat dit darem 'n snaakse en onskuldige foutjie was. “Ek het op 'n besige dag my ma se hond gaan kosgee en het bedoel om 'n foto vir haar te *whatsapp*. Ek het dit getwiet met die effense growwe taal wat ons altyd gebruik om grappies te maak. Die heelyd wonder ek hoekom sy nie

antwoord nie, totdat ek reaksie op Twitter begin kry het.”

Twitter het veral bekend geword oor groot stories wat op dié platform gebreek het. Dit het 'n noodsaaklikheid onder nuusinstansies geword om die nuus vóór hul mededingers te breek.

“Ons het die Oscar-storie eerste op Twitter gebreek,” sê Kruger. “Die een wat eerste uit die blokke is, is die eienaar van die storie. Omdat dit vroeg die oggend gebeur het, moes ons dit twiet, want as ons dit moes hou vir die koerant, sou dit eers die volgende dag uitgekom het,” sê Kruger.

Charl du Plessis stem saam dat 'n groot storie op Twitter soos 'n veldbrand sal versprei, maar dat daar ook joernaliste is wat nie sommer 'n groot storie sal breek nie. “Veral ondersoekende joernaliste sal nie sommer 'n storie op Twitter breek nie. Ek is nie seker hoekom nie, maar ek dink dit gaan maar oor die intelligensiereël dat jy nie sommer 'n stuk informasie deel nie.”

Bateman hou weer daarvan om vir sy Twitter-volgelingen die eerste smakie van 'n storie te gee. “Terwyl ek op die foon was om regstreeks met die ateljee te praat, het ek die Gupta-storie saam met 'n foto van die Waterkloof-lugmagbasis op Twitter gebreek. Twitter het die radio met 'n paar sekondes gewen.”

Maar Twitter is ook 'n voorbeeld van 'n platform wat jou kan maak of breek. Bateman het die Twitter-golf gery, maar ander joernaliste is nie só gelukkig nie.

Octavia Nasr, 'n veteraan Midde-Ooste-verslaggewer van *CNN*, het haar lelik misgis en bewys, al werk jy 20 jaar lank vir *CNN*, kan jy ook afgedank word. Sy het oor die dood van Sayyed Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah en die respek wat sy vir hom het, getwiet. Verskeie groepe het hom as 'n terrorist gesien en was seergemaak deur haar uitlating. Sy is summier afgedank. #dinkvoorjytwiet



# FOUR THINGS TO ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media often gets lampooned for being shallow and inane. But it has transformed the way we live and interact with one another. **Xanthe Hunt** outlines some of the ways this revolution has been for the better.

## 1.

### Using social media makes us more empathetic.

The term “virtual empathy” was coined in 2011 by scientists at the University of California studying the effect of Facebook on children’s social skills. The best predictor of virtual empathy? The use of instant messaging and average time spent on Facebook.

## .2.

### One hundred and forty characters for a good cause

The first Twestival was held on 12 February, 2009. Two-hundred-and-two cities hosted fund-raising events for local Twitter communities. The result: \$250 000 for the charity ‘water’. Similar initiatives such as Tweetsgiving in the States, and last years’ Water is Life Tweetathon all employed little blue birds to spread word of their cause, sat back, and watched the golden eggs roll in.

## .3.

### Social-network suicide watch

In 2012, artificial intelligence and medical experts from Dartmouth University joined forces with United States Veterans Administration, to launch The Durkheim Project. By developing applications (on Facebook, iPhone and Android) that automatically upload the research participants’ posts, these scientists use linguistic analysis to predict suicide risk among one of the most at risk populations in the world: war vets.

## .4.

### Chatting away addiction

Dr. Joe Phua and his team from the University of Georgia made an astonishing discovery in September of this year: social-networkers are quitters – of the best possible kind. Focusing on social networking sites that bring aspirant non-smokers together to help them kick the habit, Phua found that people using the site were more likely, and found it easier, to quit smoking.

Instead of wallowing in scholarly Ludditism, researchers have capitalised on the social media revolution for scientific gain. Whether they are using social media data to answer tough questions, or spreading word of new discoveries with hash-tags and vines, scientists are among the best users of social media. Unsurprisingly, The #Science Shorty Awards came into being in 2012, the Oscars of online recognition of visionaries who best use social media for the betterment of scientific ken.



# GRIM REALITY OR GROTESQUE SPECTACLE?

## FRANCOIS: GROTESQUE SPECTACLE

“Everyone was happy. I knew that if I tried to intervene I would be taken away, and that the executions would go ahead,” explained the anonymous photojournalist to *The Guardian*. He knew that he wouldn’t be able to change what was happening. What would be the point? OK, there is need for reportage. But where is the line drawn? When does reportage lapse into a grizzly spectacle?

The argument goes that a journalist’s job is to sensitize individuals, not necessarily to change the world. Fine, but maybe by our attempts to sensitise, we actually desensitise. What if we promulgate the pernicious disease of violence in our societal conscience? And make no mistake, violence is a disease – research shows it. “As for modes of transmission, violence seems to spread not just via human connections but also via media, even when the violence portrayed is fictional,” wrote Rebecca Rosen in *The Atlantic*. What have the pictures added to the discussion surrounding Syria besides making the violence quotidian?

All that these photos have done is package the violence; brought a distant happening to our laptop screen. But for the observer of the photo – for those not standing in the dusty streets outside Aleppo – the violence isn’t real. It’s not visceral – you can’t hear the man’s bloodcurdling scream or the chatter of his teeth as he approaches his end.

It makes it consumable; we are able to shake it off. It makes violence remote. The photojournalist argues that he is documenting it. But for who? Cui Bono? Photos like these only ramp up internet chatter and sell newspapers.

The Italian war reporter Francesco Borri recently wrote about how

journalists have failed Syria and Syrians by not contextualising the conflict. It has only been blood and more blood. The mayhem is underlined and the Syrian people are stripped of their humanity, demoted to barbarians embroiled in an internecine conflict.

In the end, the furore attenuates, and all that is left is the photo of the nameless Syrians who lost their lives – abstract subjects preserved for posterity in the internet maelstrom. For the observer, the man having his head sawed off has no name, no history, and no redeeming qualities.

He is dead. And the observer’s pupil only dilates briefly before he scrolls on. I hate the violence as much as anyone. It is ghastly. We shouldn’t ignore the violence, but we shouldn’t normalise it either. And we certainly shouldn’t add to this awful narrative of the barbarous Arab.

We can’t operate as if we have no effect. With the fourth estate comes responsibility.

## GYSBERT: GRIM REALITY

Hundreds of thousands of images have been produced in Syria over the past three years - all trying to capture the essence of a heart-wrenching civil war. The photographs published by *Time* raised certain questions: Are images this brutal necessary to prove that war is cruel? Is this fair to young or sensitive viewers?

The answer in both cases, is yes.

The article containing the images opens with: “All wars are vicious, but the civil war in Syria seems every day to set new standards for brutality. As the fighting rages in its third year, increasing numbers of atrocities are committed...” This alludes to the fact that people have become desensitised by the enduring Syrian conflict, and to a large extent

Recently *TIME* published photos of a public beheading in Keferghan, just outside Aleppo, Syria. **Francois Badenhorst** and **Gysbert Visser** debate the value of allowing these images to reach the public.

the media also stopped reporting on it. A new trigger was necessary to stir a slumbering world, to show the throbbing, bleeding heart of war.

It is also a message to Syria; it needed to see itself reflected even more harshly in a camera lens. Not only that, but there was a duty to seize the moment, as this photojournalist suggests:

“I was feeling awful; several times I had been on the verge of throwing up. But I kept it under control because as a journalist I knew I had to document this.”

There was a duty to show the world what it means to be judged and executed without trial; that the biggest atrocities of war occur off the battlefield. The issue was treated with sensitivity. The images were not printed but posted online, along with multiple warnings of “graphic content”. Also, the images stop just before the actual beheading. In that sense they are less gruesome, but they are suggestive and thus all the more powerful. It forces you to envisage what comes next, to delve into yourself and look straight into that deep black hole that is inhuman cruelty.

*National Geographic* recently interviewed a group of respected photographers, who all made the same point: photography can change the world.

They said that images are so powerful that they can change the course of history. They let you realise that it could be you in that photo. And this, if nothing else, should make people scream for change.

If photography is about showcasing the beauty and brutality of our world and journalism is about exposing the truth, then it is first and foremost the duty of photojournalism to hold a mirror up to society. And the more brutal the reflection, the more vital it is that we see it.

If it makes you flinch, think why.

# 2013 NEWS QUIZ

**Q1**

Which film won best picture at the Academy awards earlier this year?

1. Argo
2. Life of Pi
3. Lincoln

**Q2**

What illness nearly claimed Schalk Burgers life this year?

1. Pneumonia
2. Motor Neuron
3. Bacterial Meningitis

**Q3**

Who succeeded Pope Benedict as the leader of the Catholic Church?

1. Pope Alexander XVI
2. Jorge Mario Bergoglio
3. Pope Leo XII

**Q4**

What percentage increase were petrol attendants striking for recently?

1. 8%
2. 11.6%
3. 10%

**Q5**

Where does NSA whistle blower, Edward Snowden, now call home?

1. Hong Kong
2. Russia
3. Bolivia

**Q6**

Which Syrian suburb of Damascus was targeted by chemical weapons?

1. Ghouta
2. Aleppo
3. Al-Kiswah

**Q7**

What is the name of the Kenyan mall where Al-Shabaab militants killed 67 people?

1. Westgate Mall
2. Highbury Mall
3. Newgate Mall

**Q8**

What is the name of the new mammal discovered in the Andes?

1. Eastern Lowland Olingo
2. The Civet
3. Olinguito

**Q9**

Which trendy fashion label's garments were produced in the collapsed textile factory in Bangladesh where 1129 people died?

1. Gucci
2. United Colours of Benetton
3. Armani

**Answers:**

Q1: 1, Q2: 3, Q3: 2, Q4: 2, Q5: 2, Q6: 1, Q7: 1, Q8: 3, Q9: 2

# SAY WHAT?

**Sy was niemand ... en tog het die verkragting, verminking en dood van Anene Booysen ons met afsku gevul**

- Uit 'n omstrede artikel in die Sondagkoerant *Rapport*.

**Cry me a Reevea.**

- A headline on the *Daily Voice's* cover page on Oscar Pistorius' crying in court.

**Wens julle nie ook Mandela gaan nou dood nie?**

- Prof. Jonathan Jansen, die rektor van die UVS, oor Nelson Mandela se aanhoudende kritieke toestand. Hy beweer hy is buite konteks aangehaal.

**I propose correctional rape and sterilisation for any white person who twerks.**

- One of the Facebook comments that led to the firing of FHM's Montle Moorosi and Max Barashenkov.

**The internet is making the new generation lazy.**

- Prof. George Claassen to the 2013 Journalism class on them wanting to Google everything.

**They should drill the Karoo until it looks like a sieve.**

- Ryk van Niekerk shares his view on the pros of hydro-fracking for SA's economy to the 2013 Journalism class of Stellenbosch.



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# STELLENBOSCH JOURNALISM



Die Departement Joernalistiek aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch is 'n gespesialiseerde nagraadse opleidingsinstelling vir hierdie beroep in Suid-Afrika. Dit is een van UNESCO se top 12 Joernalistiek- skole in Afrika en stel die standaard vir professionele Joernalistiek-opleiding in die 21ste eeu. Dit bied 'n balans tussen praktiese vaardighede en blootstelling aan die etiese, tegnologiese en kulturele aspekte van die media.

Die kursus gee studente vaardighede in radio-, televisie- en drukmedia. Kortkurse word ook deur werkende joernaliste aangebied wat praktiese ondervinding in die klaskamer inbring.

Aansoeke vir die naagradse, honneursvlak BPhil in Joernalistiek sluit elke jaar op **31 Augustus**.

Vir meer inligting: [www.sun.ac.za/journalism](http://www.sun.ac.za/journalism)