

smf



Stellenbosch Media Forum
Department of Journalism, Stellenbosch University



Editor's letter

Rego's two cents

Whenever a guest lecturer begins to address us, the most prominent issue running through our minds is, "Please, don't make us introduce ourselves." We've had to do that more than we'd dare to count.

The thing is, we know each other so well that we could write volumes of the world's most predictable introduction spiel for every individual in class. #NoExaggeration.

But when we first made our way through our department's revolving door, we were keen to uncover the mystery behind the new faces and the burning interests beyond the name tags.

Throughout the year we have bonded with journalism and have come to a solid understanding of who we are because of it.

When we're told that the media landscape is undergoing a slow yet radical transformation, we're not afraid of the change. We embrace it because we are the impetus and drivers. We are that change.

We all know that content is king and that's why the theme of this year's magazine, *A New Media Identity*, is not splashed across the cover. It's best informed by our

stories.

We explore matters concerning how technology and the digital world have redefined what a traditional audience is; the direction journalism is heading in the light of social media exposure, user-generated content and the need for multi-skilled individuals.

At the heart of it all, in this edition we poke the digital beast, add depth to stories that are told only superficially and remind you that there are things to remain cognisant of when faced with change. Good and bad.

The media will forever be identified as the greatest informer and storyteller.

That messy but age-old recipe – the right story, coupled with great courage and integrity, a dollop of talent and heaps of curiosity that forces closed doors open, can never be discarded. But we're also here to switch it up a little so the world keeps coming back to taste our creations.

As future media leaders we're confident and ready to lead the way into uncharted territory, identity intact. Like that fingerprint on our cover, we are set on making a lasting impression.

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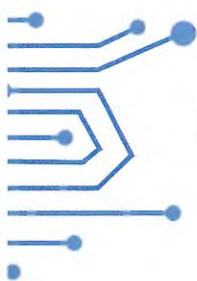
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Lizelle le Roux
maak seker alles
by die Toeter-
kantoor verloop
klopdisselboom

KIBBEL,

KLETS EN KLA – ALLES IN AFRIKAANS



Dit gons behoortik daar in Groenpunt by die Toeter-hoofkwartier waar Frans Roelofse en sy span Suid-Afrika se eerste selfgemaakte sosiale mediaplatform op die been gebring het. En dit boonop nog in Afrikaans. **SMF** het 'n toet die kuberruim ingestuur om te ontdek waaroor al die bohaai gaan.

deur Petrus Malherbe

Diep in die hartjie van Hatfield, Pretoria staan Herman Fourie elke oggend skuins voor agt op. Nog voor hy sy eerste lepel suiker in sy koffie gegooi het, klim hy soos duisende ander mense op sy selfoon om te sien of die wêreld nog in een stuk is.

Herman is Afrikaans. Hy kibbel, klets en kla graag in die taal van sy hart. Daarom gaan hy elke oggend

direk na toeter.com: Suid-Afrika se eerste volwaardig self-geskepte en volledig Afrikaanse platform vir sosiale media.

"Dis nie net soggens nie, *mind you*," sê Herman beslis. "Ook wanneer ek by die werk asem skep, loer ek kort-kort in.

"Ek kan skaars 'n uur daarsonder."

Met meer as 'n duisend toete onder sy belt en amper 600 volgelinge, is @hfourie146 op die oomblik een van die vernuftigste Toeter-ge-

bruikers. Vir hom is alles beslis nie net Bybelverse en klakouse nie.

Herman volg vir @SmokeyJoe. Smokey het 'n vreemde obsessie met sigarette. Hy maak rook deel van die geselskap en vra gedurig ander gebruikers om by hom aan te sluit in Toeter se "#rookhoekie".

@ChefMo, 'n kok van Kaapstad, deel graag resepte en raad oor 'n gesonde leefstyl terwyl @tanniepoppie weer haar volgelinge inlig oor die belangrike dinge in die lewe, soos

hoe om gebrande rys te red of om uitjies suksesvol te bottel.

"Toeter is lig en vars en ek sien goeters daar wat ek nie sommer op enige ander platform sal kry nie. Dis baie keer praktiese raad en inligting," brei Herman uit.

Engela du Toit, een van die grootkoppe by Toeter, vertel dat dié platform nog deur verskeie nukke en grille gaan. "Jy kry die konserwawiewes en die erg kommin onder een dak."

"Ons het baie verveelde jong huisvrouetjies wat hul dae om verwyd op sosiale media en goed sal kwytraak soos: 'Waar steek Toeter al die mooi seuns weg, ek is lus vir *window shopping* in plaas van werk?'"

Tog voel sy hulle beweeg minstens in die regte rigting. "Ons wil die diskoers op die platform lig en vermaaklik hou, maar ons moet deurentyd waak teen platvloersheid. Ons sien al klaar baie humor."

'n Duisend dae en 'n duisend nagte

Toeter is nog nie besonders groot nie. Dit is in Mei vanjaar geloods nadat daar meer as 'n duisend dae daaraan beplan, geskryf en ontwikkel is. Teen einde September het net meer as 32 000 unieke gebruikers al aangesluit.

"Die belangstelling daarbuite is uiters positief," vertel Engela. "Dis omdat Toeter vir enigiemand tussen die lesers van *Die Son* tot *De Kat* is. Dit is vir liefhebbers van die Afrikaanse kultuur, nie net die taal nie."

As die geesteskind van die Kapenaar Frans Roelofse, het die idee vir Toeter gekom toe hy 'n besigheidgeleentheid raakgesien het in die opbloei van Afrikaanse musiek en boeke so paar jaar gelede.

"Ek het drie en 'n half jaar gelede begin wonder hoekom het ons nie 'n Afrikaanse sosiale mediaplatform in Suid-Afrika nie? 'n Tipe uitlaatklep en kuberkuierkamer vir al die Afrikaanse talent in ons land."

Met die saadjie geplant van 'n eie sosiale netwerk, het 'n verdere twee jaar se beplanning, navorsing en nog beplanning gevolg. Terwyl hy steeds voltyds as advokaat en later as konsultant in die Kaap gewerk het, het Frans geleidelik al meer van sy tyd aan sy droomprojek begin afstaan.

So het dinge stadig aan beweeg totdat hy vroeg laasjaar besluit het die tyd is nou ryp om hierdie idee van hom van die grond af te laat opstaan.

Die aksieplan was om eerstens die argitektuur agter die platform te laat skryf en te programmeer. Daarna sou Frans en sy span die teks na vernuwende (en soms ook ouderwetse) Afrikaans vertaal.

"Met die taal wou ons hoender-vleis-oornblikke skep," vertel Engela. "Want op Toeter toet mens nie net

nie, jy 'snuffel' ook as jy iets soek en 'ontdek' so nuwe dinge; jy sê 'ja wat' en 'nee wat' en gil 'bliksem!' vir die nuus en groet 'totsiens' as jy baai sê."

Frans vertel dat hulle met Toeter iets wou regkry wat oorspronklik en ook *genuine* is. "Selfs die naam moes 'n sterk artikel wees; nie net 'n woord wat bloot vertaal is nie. Dit moes iets wees waarmee Afrikaanse mense kan identifiseer, maar wat nie in die verlede vasgehaak het nie."

Toeter is geheel en al deur Suid-Afrikaners in die Moederland (en grotendeels in die Moederstad) ontwikkel.

Engela meen hierdie feit is een van die grootste trekpleisters vir adverteerders en beleggers wat by Toeter betrokke wil raak. Dit gaan nie net oor die taal nie, maar ook omdat die hele projek trots Suid-Afrikaans is.

"Ek is nie 'n Afrikaanse stormtroep of so iets nie, jy weet," voeg Frans by. "Ek dink nie taal is iets waarmee mens die wêreld kan oorwin nie. Ek dink bloot dis 'n baie mooi taal met 'n vreeslike klomp lekker en kleurvolle woorde."

Wat maak dit tik...?

Toeter se besigheidsmodel steun ook swaar op die steeds onluikende gebied van selfoontechnologie en mobiele internet.

Frans het in sy navorsing gevind dat party mense tot soveel as 147 minute per dag op sy of haar selfoon spandeer. Daar is glo al meer as 1,5 miljard slimfone op aarde. Mobile internet raak ook by die dag vinniger.

Dit laat nou wel dié kopkrapper: hoe oortuig mens hierdie massas selfoongebruikers om jou sosiale media te gebruik in stede van 'n ander?

"Toeter moes beskik oor 'n inherente doel," sê Frans. "Dit gaan alles oor die idee van *digital tribalism*. Meer en meer mense gaan na kleiner ekosisteme beweeg wanneer dit kom by hulle sosiale media-gewoontes. Liefhebbers van sokker sal byvoorbeeld saam een *tribe* vorm; daarteenoor vorm liefhebbers van joernalistiek weer 'n ander. Verbeel jou egter al hierdie *tribes* woon langs dieselfde rivier en is almal met mekaar verbind. Die sportliefhebber sal 'n sport-*app* aflaai, terwyl die liefhebber van joernalistiek weer 'n

“

Dit gaan alles oor wat relevant is vir die gebruikers. Op Toeter is 80% van die inhoud vir 80% van die gebruikers relevant. Op Twitter en Facebook is dit net 5%.

”



Frans Roelofse

nuus-*app* sal aflaai. Beide *apps* is steeds deel van die algehele internet."

Die hele idee van relevansie kom so ter sprake. "Op Toeter is 80% van die inhoud vir 80% van die gebruikers relevant; op Facebook of Twitter sal daar net 5% relevansie wees vir dieselfde gebruikers. Daarom het ons met Toeter juis probeer kyk na wat vir Afrikaanse mense relevant is."

Al gebeur dit dan soms dat sekere gebruikers soos @AfrikaansinLeipzig die vreemde obsessie het om foto's van kerkaltare van reg oor die wêreld op sy Toeter-blad te deel, is dit ook in orde so.

"Ons keer nie mense om te deel en te gesels oor wat hulle wil nie," verduidelik Engela. "Maar sommige toeters se gewoontes is dalk nie heeltemal in lyn met wat ons graag op Toeter wil sien nie."

Die enigste werklike taboe onderwerp is enigiets wat rassisme aanwakker. So iets kan jou gou-gou in die knyp kan laat beland wanneer die Toeter-kaptein, LJ de Vos (@kaptein), jou opspoor.

Dit ook LJ se verantwoordelikheid om die diskoers op Toeter subtiel in sekere rigtings te stuur om die pot deurentyd aan die kook te hou.

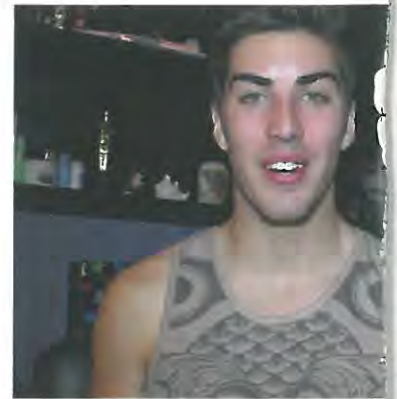
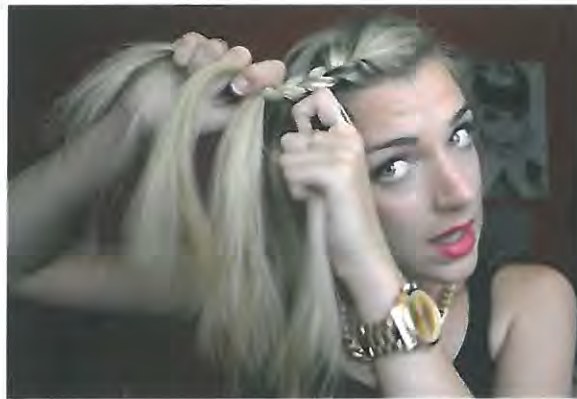
Toeter het ook die teiken van verskeie swendelaars geraak wat die geleentheid aangryp om vals Toeter-profiel in die naam van bekendes soos Steve Hofmeyr en Bobby van Jaarsveld te skep. Die Kaptein moet ook hulle onderduimshede kort-kort in die kiem smoor.

Die agteros kom ook in die kraal

Toeter is 'n skip wat stadig voortbeur die toekoms in. Volgens Arthur Goldstuck, 'n media-kenner van Johannesburg, is dit irrelevant en onregverdig om Toeter op te weeg teen ander globale spelers soos Facebook en Twitter. "Toeter het 'n gaping in die mark raakgesien en daar is geen rede hoekom dit nie winsgewend kan raak nie."

Intussen erken Frans dat Toeter nog heelwat sal moet groei voordat hy 'n opbrengs vir sy belegging sal sien. Persoonlik het hy meer as R8 miljoen van sy geld in die projek ingestort. "As jy my oor vyf jaar by die Spur sien werk, dan weet jy my plan het nie gewerk nie." Net die tyd sal leer. ■

WHAT THE VLOG?



Online videos of daily rants, Lady Gaga reviews and how to make the perfect side-plait is a small part of a massive phenomenon. **SMF** explores the rise of the South African vloggersphere.

by Chelsea Johnstone

While speaking into a camera lens about how embarrassing your mom is, with your unmade bed in the background while wearing a fluffy animal onesie, may seem ridiculous – but what about going one step further and posting numerous such videos online?

Well, this is exactly what South African vlogger Lara Srot does. With no theme to her online videos, Srot posts whatever she feels like and people seem to love it.

"This is my life, but only I record it for everyone to see. I post what I want and when I want. There are rules for me. I just post, upload and hopefully people think I'm cool."

This is the sensation known as

"vlogging" – or video blogging, as some may call it. Usually using their bedroom as their set, vloggers take to YouTube to share their lives with the world.

It is something that has been around for quite some time in countries such as America and England, but only recently escalated locally.

Caspar who?

Does the name Caspar Lee mean anything to you? You know, the blue-eyed YouTube star, hailing from Knysna, who has finally become as famous in his homeland as he is in every other part of the world?

With online videos on "how to be a hipster" and why he loves One Direction so much, Lee seems to have crept into the hearts and onto the screens of more than a million

followers.

And the rise in Lee's popularity seems to have ignited the creativity and unleashed the confidence of fellow South Africans to venture into the vloggersphere.

People love sharing their lives online

The need to divulge information in a public domain is something our digital generation knows all too well.

"People are intrinsically social creatures," says media analyst Wadim Schreiner.

"We like sharing information. Some are more direct and gather with friends or family, others prefer an indirect engagement, perhaps through writing letters, blogs, emails and so on. It is based on a need for feedback and recognition."

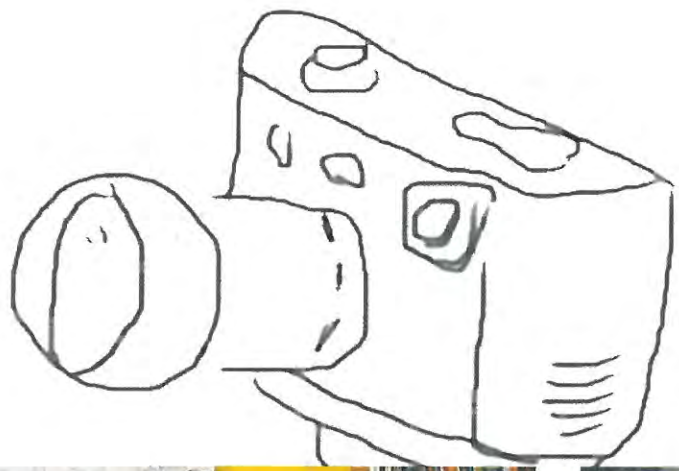
Schreiner explains that this is where vlogging fits into the picture. "Because technology has so rapidly changed and advanced, people now have a further way to engage. Bandwidth becomes cheaper, phones record in high definition and apps take care of basic editing. Your story now is narrated and visual.

Content is everything

"However, the challenge is content," he adds.

"As always, a story is only a story if it has content. If it is not relevant, people will not engage. So many people will vlog, but be disappointed due to a lack of engagement. It simply means it's not relevant.

"That has always been the case, and continues to be the case in traditional media, which is why many



images: YouTube



papers die. It is not because of the medium, but because they are no longer relevant."

For beauty vlogger Anja van der Spuy, content is sitting in front of her mirror, trying to juggle a wide-toothed comb and bobby-pins, so that she can show you how to make the perfect messy-bun.

Brandon Berg, on the other hand, chooses to parade in an oversized tank-top and uses an unrealistically deep voice while talking about gym and why some guys are "just douchebags".

Choosing a topic

Finding the right topic is seemingly easy in the virtual realm. There almost always is a group of people who can relate, learn from it and who genuinely like what you have

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Then you get people who completely ignore what I say and focus on how I look. There's always that one person who calls me ugly and tells me to get off YouTube.

”

to say – and that is exactly why a whole host of unique vloggers exist in South Africa.

Van der Spuy says she uses the advantage of being local to choose a topic for her beauty vlog.

"I think a lot of it has to do with the utilities in the international vlogs. I've watched international vlogs where girls use products that we don't have in SA, and it's discouraging. You immediately think, 'I won't be able to do this, because I don't have that product.'

"I mostly do hair tutorials and even with a plethora of beauty tutorials on YouTube, it seems like South Africans want to learn from other South Africans."

"I just listen to what people ask me to do," says controversial funny-guy Mark Fitzgibbon, whose vlog is aimed at the Cape coloured community.

The not-so-nice part of vlogging

However, putting yourself out there on a global platform comes with the risk of being cyber-butchered.

"I am honest and sometimes that comes across as funny – and sometimes it doesn't," says Mark.

"Then you get people who completely ignore what I say and focus on how I look. There's always that one person who calls me ugly and tells me to get off YouTube."

"The secret to being a successful vlogger is to learn that life is like a YouTube video," says Fitzgibbon.

"Your like-bar will never be entirely green and getting a thumbs-down from someone is almost inevitable. And that's okay."

The important aspects of vlogging extend far beyond the girl ranting in



her onesie about how rude people can be or sharing make-up secrets with thousands of teens.

It is also about the subscribers and inter-vlog relationships as a result of posting these videos online.

Srot says this is exactly what keeps her motivated and inspired to keep uploading. "There's a whole community that surrounds vlogging here in South Africa. It's through vlogging that I have met so many people who are now friends.

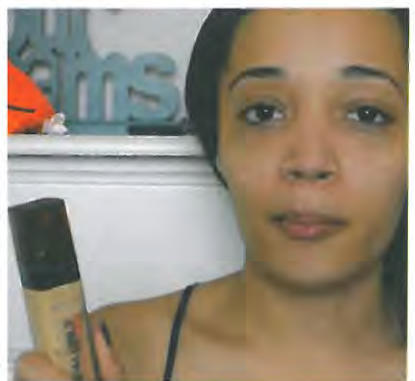
"We even have little get-togethers with other vloggers and often collaborate on videos. "This is also why I probably won't make a business out of my vlog. For me it's not about that. It's about the people."

Turning a vlog into a business

However, turning your vlog into a business is something many other vloggers would like to do.

While the majority of us cannot wait to "Skip Ad" on YouTube, those are the very seconds that give some vloggers an income.

"And it's only the really cool



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I hope that one day my YouTube channel will be a way of selling my clothing and hopefully becoming a comedian too.

”

people who have ads before their videos," says Fitzgibbon. Besides the adverts, creating and sustaining your personal brand can also help generate a few extra Rand.

According to Socialblade, a site that tracks YouTube channels' progress, Lee can make up to R5 million a year. And for the YouTube newcomer, this is a vlogging dream.

Berg wants to use his vlogs to become a well-known fashion designer and comedy-guru. "I hope that one day my YouTube channel will be a way of selling my clothing and hopefully I will become a comedian too."

Christa Morrison, multimedia storyteller and content producer for *MultiMedia Tales*, says that vlogging will continue to grow as a platform for sharing stories.

"If the global consumers' internet traffic trends continue – and all indications are that they do and will – online video will keep on becoming the choice content format on all platforms, accessed from all devices.

"As devices, internet access and costs will improve, South Africans will keep on following the international trends," she adds. ■

Do you want to give vlogging a go? Here are some things to remember:

- Choose a topic you are comfortable speaking about – whether it is fashion, cars or just about yourself in general.
- Don't be camera-shy. We all hate the sound of our own voice, but other people don't really care. Just be yourself.
- Not everyone can be funny. Sometimes an educational vlog is just as appealing as a full-on mini-comedy.
- Share, post and retweet the link to your vlogs. It's okay to be a self-promoter. How else are you going to up those views?

IGNORANCE, NONSENSE AND FEAR

blocking South Africa's
data-fuelled future

Data journalism isn't just a fad; it's a field of journalism perfectly in touch with the new digital world. Journalists must change, but so too must the view that South Africa isn't ready for it.

The most difficult part of being a modern journalist is not knowing whether or not your publication is going to survive – it is knowing that your decisions could either keep you relevant to the new age forming around you, or ultimately doom you.

Data journalism is real journalism



by William Horne

Alberto Cairo is a Professor at the University of Miami and world-renowned data visualisation and visual communications expert who has hosted workshops at numerous major American publications and has helped establish the field of data visualisation in journalism.

Data journalism, which includes data visualisations, infographics and all the latest buzzwords, is not a new phenomenon, Cairo explains.

"It's been around under other names – computer-assisted reporting, precision journalism, etc. – since the beginning of journalism itself.

"But, why are data, visualizations, and infographics so relevant nowadays? There are two main reasons. First, there are certain important and wonderful stories that cannot be told

GOOGLE SEARCH INTEREST OVER TIME IN 'INFOGRAPHICS'

Tomorrow's journalists

What is the main goal of journalism today then? It is making relevant, newsworthy, or useful information available and understandable to people so they can conduct better lives."

Cairo, and others like him, make the case for the pervasive inclusion of data journalism in the reporter's arsenal, but encounter puzzling resistance.

"I started to realise that journalists, in general, self-impose several constraints. One of them is, 'I just want to be a writer', and they just write.

"There are certain stories that are better told using words, but when it comes to delivering, for instance, the numerical or statistical evidence to support an idea, words are a very inefficient way of explaining that."

Cairo argues that, to make large, complex or novel datasets relevant to news, they have to be made relevant to readers. This is the equivalent of the age-old human interest angle, which Cairo refers to as the 'you' angle.

"This 'you' element is extremely important. You're not just creating a traditional data visualisation, you're creating a piece of software that lets people approach the information from their own angle or perspective."

Jeanne van der Merwe is a senior data journalist at Media24's *City Press*. Her career was shaped by learning small new skills along the way, mentorship by an editor, Andrew Trench, who was in tune with international trends, and no small amount of luck.

She says that hard news-driven data journalism in print is limited by space restrictions and runs the risk

of being very dry. To avoid this, she employs her own version of the 'you' approach.

"There's this thing called the Donkey analogy. It's said that all this data journalism is beautiful and all, but the story still needs a donkey to carry it, and the donkey is like a person."

In this way, she argues that "you can use high-level data to tell a low-level story, in a different way that is more compelling, but also to make it more real."

Van der Merwe doesn't work with the visualising side of data journalism due to the limited needs of the print publication she works for, combined with time pressures.

"I would like to learn the visualisation stuff a bit more, because it means you can do a lot more with your data," she says.

The movement to include various forms of data journalism in all mediums has encountered another setback, apart from general ignorance. It requires many new skills.

Cairo provides an example of how new technology and trends in data journalism have opened the doors to whole new worlds of possibility in journalism.

"When I was living in Brazil, I was reading a newspaper, and there was a story that caught my attention. It was an interview with a very young computer science student who, in his own time, decided that as a fun project he was going to get public data from the government on floods.

"One of the problems in Brazil, you see, is that when it rains really, really hard, there are many areas of, for instance, Sao Paulo that get floods. The thing is the government records the coordinates of the points in the city that flooded. There is a huge, longitudinal database with every single point that flooded in the past decade.

"This person then, who is not a journalist, but a computer scientist, decided that he needed a project. So he created a data visualisation that basically pulled the data from the government websites and transformed that data into a map and an interactive graphic. So then you could see what areas of Sao Paulo have flooded, which areas were flooded more often, more severely, and what patterns there were.

"The guy calls himself a hacker; I call that person a journalist. That is the journalistic mind – he is taking information that is relevant and making it available and understandable to readers, and making their lives easier and better."

To do data journalism properly, then, no journalist can get away with not understanding basic mathematics

without graphics. Second, readers just like data and graphics when they are well presented.

"Humans are a visual species, whether we like it or not. Before we developed spoken and written language, we learned to communicate with each other by means of hand gestures, facial expressions, and drawings. A huge portion of our brains is devoted to processing visual information."

Cairo argues that editors must get over the idea that writing comes first and should be given some special preference.

"They see design, maps, charts, diagrams, and even photographs and video, as add-ons, as decoration, stuff to make pages and websites prettier. They are dead wrong.

"I believe we are at the point where we have to redefine the very task of journalism. Journalism is not just about telling the story. Telling stories is just one of the delivery methods.

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DIGITAL

and statistics anymore. Cairo argues, however, that it is the requirement of the times – not just of data journalism – that is putting numbers and graphs on the horizons of journalists' futures.

"We are very bad with numbers in general – very, very bad. But that is another self-imposed constraint.

"We defend our ignorance by saying things like, 'well I'm not very good at maths, and I just want to be a writer'. But you cannot be a proper writer if you cannot evaluate evidence. You just can't write properly if you don't have a basic understanding of numerical critical thinking.

"I believe that every single modern journalist needs to have, not an expert, but a foundational knowledge in writing; critical thinking, which involves mathematics and statistical thinking; visual communication and graphical representation, which means graphic design; and perhaps infographics and data visualisation," he explains.

Cairo believes that this transformation is possible for every journalist. "I can teach anyone to do data visualisations. You will not become a New York Times-level data visualiser, but you can teach anybody to do simple and effective data visualisations in a week.

"Some of the changes that we have implemented in our own school of communications go in that direction. We have made visual design classes mandatory to all students – which means graphical communication. Mathematics and statistics – mandatory for everyone," he explains.

"Any journalism school that doesn't take these skills seriously and dismisses them as electives or add-ons is on the path to oblivion."

“

It is that fear of not understanding that leads journalists to say that data journalism is not real journalism. What they are trying to say is 'I don't know how to do this kind of journalism; therefore it is not relevant or proper journalism'

”

The South African case

In countries like South Africa, many journalists are ignorant of the potential of data journalism, as well as of their capacity to catch up if they do see the potential. Many also feel it is too complex, academic or out-of-reach for most media consumers in the country.

Van der Merwe also touches on this local contention. "It will have to be a conscious adoption where people come to the party. What doesn't help is that journalists generally don't like numbers and they're intimidated by spreadsheets. But when that isn't an issue you look at things differently. That's why data journalism seems so different to those who don't use it or see its purpose – they aren't thinking the same way.

"For instance, at the annual Power Reporting Conference last year, a colleague of mine was sitting with a bunch of investigative journalists from a very big paper. This colleague came back outraged at these senior journalists who rolled their eyes and said, 'oh data journalism, oh whatever. We're not interested in that, how is that going to help us.'

We were completely horrified at their attitude."

There is an easy explanation for this resistance from journalists who claim data journalism stories are "too advanced", Cairo says.

"It is that fear of not understanding that leads journalists to say that data journalism is not real journalism.

"What they are trying to say is 'I don't know how to do this kind of journalism; therefore it is not relevant or proper journalism'.

"If you go to the best news publications around the world, they all use data visualisations extensively. They don't usually get a lot of complaints

from their readers saying, 'hey, this is very complex, I don't understand what this graphic is saying'. Actually, graphics are the most viewed pieces of content they produce.

"Readers are usually much more intelligent than we are as journalists. Particularly ones that care about the specific story that you're writing, those people usually know as much as you do, at least."

There is also a big case to be made for the use of data journalism, with all its novel creativity and digital flair, in South Africa as well, Cairo emphasises.

"Think of a statistical chart. Bar graphs, line graphs and pie charts – everybody can understand those. Those kinds of charts we take for granted today. Because two hundred and something years ago a Scot called William Playfair decided that presenting data just with tables was a very ineffective way of presenting it.

"It sounds like a no-brainer today. But he got a lot of push-back at the time, from people who said, 'people will never understand this kind of thing'."

In South Africa this logic still holds true. If we argue that the consumers are not smart enough to ever understand this kind of story, and therefore we will never publish this kind of story, then the consumers will never have the opportunity to learn to understand, Cairo explains. "If you don't try, and keep trying, it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy." ■

DIE WÊRELD IN DIE PALM VAN JOU HAND

Selfone se invloed op joernalistiek is onmiskenbaar. Dit het verander hoe mense inligting lees en hoe joernaliste dit moet skryf. Maatskappye wat vinnig aanpas en vir die nuwe generasie selfoonlesers inhoud kan bied, sal in die toekoms floreer.



foto: Roxanne Eastes



deur Roxanne
Eastes

Suid-Afrika se huidige selfoonpenetrasie is 84,6% en byna driekwart van internetgebruikers gebruik hul selfone om aanlyn te gaan, luidens 'n onlangse verslag van PWC. Dit word voorspel dat Suid-Afrika se selfooninternetgebruikers teen 2016 tot 23,1 miljoen sal groei.

Indien mediamaatskappye relevant wil bly, sal hul digitale strategie vir selfoongebruikers se behoeftes moet voorsien.

Wat is die groter impak van selfone op joernalistiek?

Christa Morrison, 'n dosent verbonde aan die Sheridan Institute for Technology and Advanced Learning in Toronto, Kanada, wat fokus op nuwe media-onderrig en wêreldwyd klasgee, meen die mediabedryf sal nooit weer dieselfde wees vanweë die invloed van digitale platforms, spesifiek selfone.

Sy verduidelik daar is drie dinge wat hierdie verandering dryf.

Eerstens het die toestelle wat ons deesdae gebruik, veral selfone, 'n invloed gehad op mense se leesgewoontes.

"Mense word wakker, hulle reik na hul selfone wat langs hulle lê en dit is waar hulle heel eerste begin nuus kry. Soos die tegnologie verbeter, vervaardig meer maatskappye slimfone en raak dit ook goedkoper, sodat almal dit kan bekostig. Ook datapakkette se pryse neem af."

Tweedens het die platforms

waarop mense hul nuus ontvang ook verander. Daar is ook aanhoudende ontluikende platforms wat meeding om die leser se aandag te hou.

"Die grootste dryfveer agter die gebruiker se keuse van platform is tans sosiale media. Jou artikel moet dus van so aard wees dat mense dit raaksien, wil lees en wil deel met hul netwerk van mense op hul sosiale platforms.

"Geen nuusorganisasie kan beweer dat hulle 'n 'bestemming' of 'eindpunt' is waar gebruikers nuus ontvang nie. Dit gebeur deesdae selde dat mense in 'n motor klim en kafee toe ry vir een koerant of tydskrif, of dat mense kom nuus soek op jou tuisblad: hulle gebruik 'n verskeidenheid nuusbronne."

Laastens het selfone ook die manier waarop mense artikels lees, verander en dus ook noodgedwonge verander hoe joernaliste artikels moet skryf.

"Studies wys as ons op 'n rekenaarskerm lees, doen ons dit in die vorm van 'n 'F'. Jy lees die boonste paragraaf, dan sak jou oë af en jy

lees die eerste klomp woorde van die tweede of derde paragraaf. Daarna begin jy vuglees soos jou oë afrol.

"As iets in die eerste paar woorde jou nie oorhaal nie, dan gaan jy nie die hele artikel lees nie.

"Gebruikers op 'n selfoon lees vlugtiger as dit. Hulle wil nie hulle duime meer as drie keer rol nie. So joernaliste het drie skerpies waarop daar 50-150 woorde kan pas om die leser se aandag vas te vang en oor te haal om meer te lees."

Hoe die tipe selfoon die tipe produk moet beïnvloed:

Daar is hoofsaaklik twee soorte fone wat internettoegang bied – slimfone en *feature*-fone. Slimfone is fone wat met 'n bedryfsstelsel (*operating system*) werk, soos die Blackberry-, iPhone- en Samsung Galaxy-reekse. Dis die fone waarvoor *apps* vervaardig word.

Feature-fone het nie 'n bedryfsstelsel nie, maar wel gevorderde kenmerke soos kameras en dit kan

ook op die internet rondsnuffel en *mobi*-tuistes (selfoon-webtuistes) besoek. Hulle kan nie die *apps* van slimfone gebruik nie. Dis byvoorbeeld die Nokia Asha, Samsung E250 of LG KF510.

Waar die selfoongebruiker in die VSA en Europa grootliks Android of iOS gebruik, is die Suid-Afrikaanse mark baie divers. Luidens 'n verslag van Deloitte is 65% van selfoonverkope in Suid-Afrika steeds *feature*-fone, alhoewel dit lyk of slimfoonverkope in die toekoms dié van *feature*-fone mag verbystee.

Om as 'n mediamatskappy suksesvol te wees met 'n selfoon-strategie, moet jy dus vir beide *feature*- en slimfoongebruikers kan voorsien.

Wat doen van die voorlopers in Suid-Afrika met hul digitale strategieë?

Die *Daily Sun*, een van Suid-Afrika se grootste dagblaie, het in Mei 2013 'n *mobi*-tuiste vir *feature*-fone van stapel gestuur wat vinnig een van die grootste in die land geword het.

Thabiso Sekhula, digitale redakteur by dié koerant, vertel dat hulle daaglik ongeveer 150 000 unieke besoekers op die *mobi*-tuiste kry.

Volgens Sekhula moet 'n goeie *mobi*-tuiste toeganklik wees, vinnig laai en so min as moontlik vir die gebruiker kos.

"Dit moet ook so eenvoudig as moontlik wees en gereeld bygewerk word. Ons maak so min as moontlik gebruik van 'ryk' media soos video's wat nie op *feature*-fone sal werk nie of baie data sal kos."

Die meeste van die stories op die *mobi*-tuiste is dieselfde as dié in die koerant, maar daar is ook 'n span wat unieke inhoud vir die *mobi*-tuiste skryf.

"Met die Oscar-saak byvoorbeeld, het ons onmiddellik ná die uitspraak 'n storie geskryf en opgelai – ons kon natuurlik nie wag vir die koerant nie," vertel Sekhula.

Die artikels in die koerant is kort en pas maklik by die *mobi*-tuiste in. "Ons pas wel die grootte van die foto's aan om so min data as moontlik te gebruik. Verder herskryf ons ook die titels, want dit is gewoonlik die trekpleisters op sosiale media wat die

mense na ons toe lok."

Sekhula skryf die sukses van die *mobi*-tuiste toe aan hul begrip van hul teikenmark. "Ons sukses is grootliks te danke aan ons inhoud. Ons het die waters baie getoets aan die begin en gou agtergekrom wat dit is wat ons lesers lok.

"In die toekoms glo ek beslis dat *mobi*-tuistes en *apps* vir selfone die troefkaart is. Ek dink nie dis iets wat sommer gou weer gaan uitsterf nie."

Nerisa Coetzee, hoof van Media24 se digitale tydskrifte, vertel in 2013 het 59% van internetgebruikers hul tydskrifte via 'n rekenaar besoek en 41% via 'n selfoon. In 2014 het hierdie getal amper heeltemal omgeswaai met 60% van besoekers wat via 'n selfoon besoek en slegs 40% via 'n rekenaar.

"Die syfers laat geen twyfel dat 'n mens 'n *mobile first*-strategie moet hê nie," vertel sy.

“

Selfone het wel die speelveld omgedolwe, maar dit is nie 'n gevaar vir die joernalistiek nie. 'Ons is in die bloeitydperk van joernalistiek,' meen Morrison.

”

JanDirk Engelbrecht, hoof van kommersiële produkte by Media24 se digitale tydskrifte, vertel een van hul nuwe inisiatiewe is *MyEdit*, 'n *app* vir slimfone.

"Die mark verstaan nie altyd dat slegs 10-15% van tydskrifte se inhoud aanlyn beskikbaar is nie. Met *MyEdit* betaal jy R60 per maand en dan het jy toegang tot artikels van al Media24 se tydskrifte.

"Die plaaslike mark vir *apps* is egter vrek moeilik in hierdie stadium, want gebruikers is data-sensitief en die slimfoonmark is nog beperk."

Coetzee verduidelik dat die digitale mark in hierdie stadium nog baie eksperimenteel is en dat almal jaag om nuwe produkte op die mark te kry. Die verskeidenheid produkte het egter 'n fragmentering van die gehoor tot gevolg en in digitaal is die grootte van jou gehoor juis dit wat geld maak en adverteerders lok.

"Verlede jaar het *Ideas*, *Home*- en *Fairlady*-tydskrifte hul digitale produkte saamgesmelt om *The Daily Fix* te skep. Dis een webtuiste waar jy al hulle inhoud gratis kan kry en daar is nou bemerkbare volumes op die webtuiste."

Wat wag in die toekoms?

Sekhula vertel die *Daily Sun* wil hul *mobi*-tuiste uitbrei na 'n *media responsive*-tuiste. Dit beteken dat die webtuiste kan agterkom van watter platform, hetsy selfoon, tablet of rekenaar, jy aanteken en sodoende die uitleg aanpas om ideaal te vertoon op elke skerm.

"Ons is ook tans besig met opleiding vir ons joernaliste om hulle te leer hoe om op hulle voete te dink en met hul selfone berigte te skryf, klankgrepe en video's op te neem en te *tweet*."

Engelbrecht meen dat die media die *silver bullet* moet vind om geld uit digitale gehore te verdien. "Vertoonadvertensies soos ons dit vandag ken is nie die langtermyn uitweg nie.

"Addisionele dienste aan gebruikers, soos *ecommerce*, bied die geleentheid vir toekomstige inkomstrome.

"Die realiteit is dat digitale media nog nie 'n lewensvatbare besighheidsmodel ontsluit het nie en dat dit grootliks nog oor eksperimentasie

gaan. Die gebruikers se gedrag het verander en die eerste mense wat uitwerk hoe om hierdie nuwe gedrag te 'manipuleer' en te vorm op 'n manier wat vir hulle verkeer gaan dryf en geld gaan maak, gaan die digitale mediaplatform wen."

Selfone het wel die speelveld omgedolwe, maar dit is nie 'n gevaar vir die joernalistiek nie. "Ons is in die bloeitydperk van joernalistiek," meen Morrison.

"Ons is egter beslis in die era waar die manier waarop ons joernalistiek gedoen het, hoe daar geld gemaak is en joernalistiek gestut is, verander en bedreig word.

"Wanneer in die geskiedenis van die mens is daar al ooit soveel inhoud vervaardig en was ons al ooit 24 uur per dag in staat om te weet, te sien en te hoor wat in elke land in die wêreld gebeur?" ■

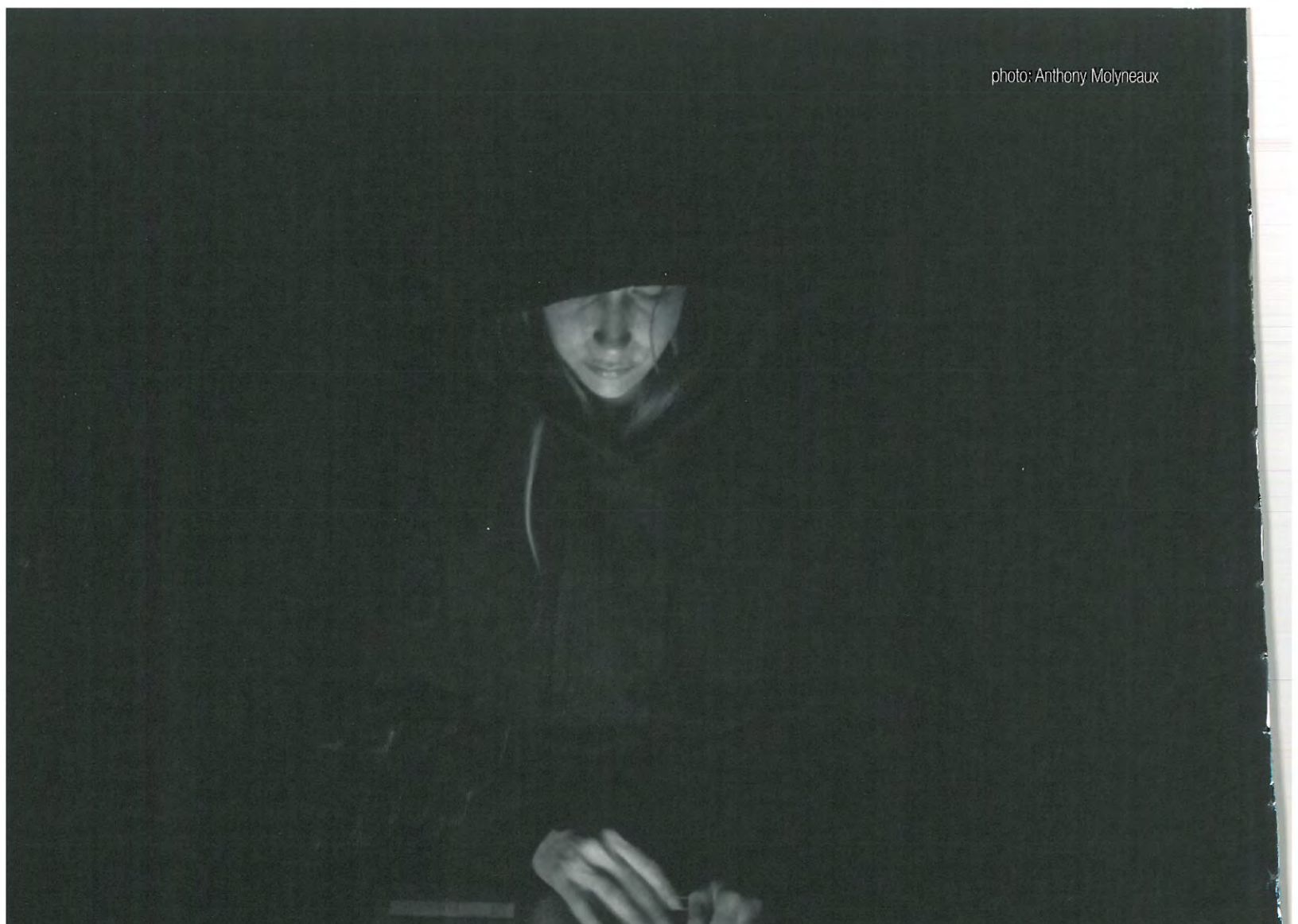
Joernaliste en hul slimfone

Volgens Aletta Gardner, multimedia-joernalis by *EWN*, is selfone belangrik in die joernalis se lewe. Sy vertel dat baie joernaliste slegs met 'n slimfoon uitgestuur word en dan 'n volledige berig van begin tot einde kan inhandig.

"Sekere vaardighede is so half gedistilleer deur die tegnologie, maar jy het 'n wyer spektrum van vaardighede nodig om nou suksesvol te wees."

Joernaliste gebruik hul slimfone vir:

- Twitter monitor
- radio luister en koerante lees vir storie-idees
- kontak hou met die kantoor en mede-joernaliste
- die artikel tik
- foto's en video's neem en redigeer
- klankgrepe opneem en redigeer
- die storie stuur
- 'n flits, padkaart en posbus



THE DEEP WEB AS A SOURCE AND SAVIOUR

The deep web harbours illegal drug-dealing, hit men for hire and techniques on the best ways to dispose of a body. But can this vast space, infamous for its hundreds of child pornography rings, be used by journalists to find new story ideas and protect sources? **SMF** goes in search of what good can come out of the dark.



by Anthony Molyneux

Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward were investigating President Richard Nixon and the Watergate scandal today, there is no doubt they would be using the deep web. Deep Throat could have whispered his secrets in a secure, anonymous space similar to the dark, deserted parking lots and abandoned warehouses drenched in moonlight, used back in 1972.

In places like Syria, the Middle East and China, where the common internet is censored and online surveillance is high, journalists and activists find a sanctuary in the deep web. It offers a space where their movements and conversations cannot be monitored.

Standard search engines like Google, Bing and Yahoo show search results from roughly one billion documents, while the deep web contains more than 550 billion documents. This estimate, made by Brightplanet, a harvester of big data from the deep web, shows that we are only exploring the first shelf of a humongous library through Google and the surface web.

Are journalists using the deep web for stories?

Patrick Howell O'Neill is a writer for DailyDot.com, a renowned site for the reporting of original internet-community news. O'Neill has written scores of articles on the deep web.

One story is about *The Initiation Rites of Deep Web Child Porn Communities*, which documents how a newbie to the child porn scene of the deep web would need to upload a certain amount of hardcore child porn before being allowed access to the community.

Another story O'Neill has sourced from the deep web concerned an

online hack heist of a marijuana dealing site that stole \$100 000 from the group and crippled the site indefinitely overnight.

"I guess it depends what you are looking for but I've used the deep web as a source for my stories for years," says O'Neill.

Shaun Swingler, a multimedia journalist based in Cape Town, also found that the deep web harbours unique story ideas. In 2012, while researching the deep web, Swingler came across a website offering a 'SWATing' service.

SWATing is the act of prank calling the police with a believable enough story to lure them into sending a SWAT team to the prank victims' house or workplace. It has become a thorn in the side of America's police service and numerous celebrities, including Justin Bieber, Tom Cruise and Miley Cyrus, have been targeted.

"If there had been anything written on it by that stage, it wouldn't have been much, so that was a great potential story idea. VICE just released a documentary on SWATing in June 2014 and I could have been on it since 2012," says Swingler.

The deep web has not gone unnoticed by larger media companies either. Vocativ, a new online media company based in the USA, hires journalists who work with data miners, also known as Data Ninjas, to unearth unique stories like SWATing before they reach the surface web.

Vocativ recently reported on the Syrian civil war, but from an untouched angle. Through monitoring internet chatter in the deep web they found sex tapes of prominent Syrian officials being traded off as a form of blackmail or propaganda against the opposing sides.

The British journalist, Alan Pearce, wrote in his book, *Deep Web for Journalists*: "If you know the right entry points, you can mine a rich seam of multimedia files, images, software and documents that you cannot find on the Surface Web.

"Top secret papers are posted in the deep web, as are guides and wikis for every type of activity, legal and otherwise; and all manner of unconventional views are expressed.

"Here you can lurk hidden and surreptitiously store any amount of data for free.

The good, the bad and the downright nasty

There are benefits for journalists and sources operating in this hidden manner, but this anonymity also draws a darker side. In this dark side of the deep web, criminal activity is rife.

Websites are selling illegal drugs, firearms, fake passports and credit card information like Gumtree sells furniture and used tea sets.

Jason Norwood-Young, a journalist and the ex-head of technology at *Mail & Guardian* online, has accessed the deep web countless times but is apprehensive of some of the material found in this darker side.

"If you could manage to find out how many British passports are sold per year or the techniques adopted by identity thieves in credit card fraud, it could make for a great, informative piece.

"But I personally don't hang out on Tor because there is so much weird stuff that I don't want to see," says Norwood-Young.

'Tor' is The Onion Router, software that allows you access to the deep web. Tor offers the platform for users to see sites and information that you cannot locate through the surface web.

“

Top secret papers are posted in the deep web, as are guides and wikis for every type of activity, legal and otherwise; and all manner of unconventional views are expressed.

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The US navy developed the Tor network in the late 90s to anonymise internet traffic. It was open sourced to the public, enhanced and used by the masses to create a space where anyone who accesses the deep web cannot be traced or identified.

This anonymity is vital for journalists as whistle-blowers to interact with the certainty that they will be safe and completely anonymous. The deep web offers a more secure and trusted communication than can be found in the surface web.

Activists, whistle-blowers, leaked official documents and the varying, unknown sub-cultures and entrepreneurs who make a legal living in this space are there to be written about.

But this anonymity also draws drug dealing, child pornography and some dark, depraved footage and material, including death, rape and vile fetishes like 'zoonecrophilia' (the act of sex with dead animals). "There are things that cannot be unseen," says Norwood-Young.

"So if you are searching through Tor you have to have quite a tough skin, similar to the type of people who were crime reporters back in the day," he says.

Swingler mentions a similar fear to Norwood-Young regarding the exploration of the deep web. Using sites like The Hidden Wiki, a website within Tor that contains links to sites in the deep web, makes searching for usable content in this massive space easier, but it can also lead to trouble.

"The problem is if you click on links that maybe haven't been labelled correctly or are a bit ambiguous, it could lead to incriminating material," says Swingler.

"These links could open graphic, disturbing material such as child porn, black market sites selling illegal substances or hit men for hire," says Swingler.

Upon accessing The Hidden Wiki site, you are literally just two clicks away from viewing child porn.

Links leading to hit men sites that openly advertise their assassination services are just one click away. The fee for assassinating a journalist ranges between \$10 000 and \$100 000.

Ex-lovers and annoying neighbours are substantially less.

Staying safe in this deep space

Is it really worth sneaking into this questionable environment to seek stories? Is safety from online surveillance worth the possibility of being led down the rabbit hole?

Raymond Joseph is a journalist trainer and the convenor of HacksHackers Cape Town, which is a grassroots journalism organisation facilitating a network between journalists and technologists.

Joseph is an avid believer in online security and protecting yourself and your sources. He uses encryption tools and sends his emails in a coded format.

"My problem with the deep web is that people are taking such extreme steps to cover their tracks, so how do you verify information," says Joseph.

"How do you know you're not walking into the middle of a scam or being set up yourself?"

"Anything that somebody wants to hide is a good story, that's what years of journalism have taught us. But if you're going to go play in the badlands, make sure you've got a map and proper protection.

"So I would love to see highly specialised training for journalists, not only in how to use it, but why to use it," suggests Joseph.

O'Neill, the writer for *DailyDot.com*, shares a similar difficulty about trusting sources and leads for his stories.

"The first thing that comes to mind is confirming the veracity of stories. By design, it's hard to be sure of what is what on the deep web. People are purposefully deceitful in order to stay anonymous, or just for fun," says O'Neill.

"That combination has led to a lot of bullshit stories from journalists about deep web hit men trying to kill Ben Bernanke [previous chairman of US Federal Reserve] for bitcoins or whatever ridiculous story gets hits but doesn't resemble the truth."

The surface web's privacy seems to be diminishing daily, thanks to Edward Snowden's leak of NSA surveillance information; the world is realising that the internet could lead to a situation similar to what George Orwell predicted in his disconcerting novel, *1984*.

“

The fee for assassinating a journalist ranges between \$10 000 and \$100 000. Ex-lovers and annoying neighbours are substantially less.

”

SURFACE WEB VS DEEP WEB



Locally, Norwood-Young and his team at Afridocs are attempting to prevent this 'Big Brother' world. By utilising the deep web and smart software, Norwood-Young has devised a way to gain the benefits of the deep web's anonymity without the risks and dangers faced when accessing the deep web.

Green Hornet is free, open-source software that allows safe, anonymous interactions between journalists and whistleblowers and is set to launch in 2015.

Initiatives such as Green Hornet offer investigative reporters and their sources the opportunity to remain hidden in an increasingly monitored online world.

Through the deep web, much

more can be gained than security and new story ideas.

Craig McKune, an investigative reporter for the *Mail & Guardian's* AmaBhungane division, explains the importance of the deep web and anonymity.

"Being able to have little secrets in your life and secret spaces where you are allowed to explore thoughts and ideas without big brother watching your every step allows you to be more creative, more thoughtful and more challenging, and that's a very important civil liberty."

Perhaps the deep web can be thought of as a new Deep Throat; a dark, unknown entity that is waiting to unveil top-secret material or expose the next Watergate. ■

Here are some tips from the experts to stay secure:

Craig McKune

"Always assume that your digital information can be hacked into and be accessed; assume the worst. Therefore if it's a sensitive source, go and meet them and take precautions, even if those precautions don't seem fancy."

Jason Norwood-Young

"Be careful of maintaining your anonymity and respect other people's anonymity on the deep web. Realise that any anonymous source who is truly anonymous can be extremely suspicious and might bring up journalism ethics."

Raymond Joseph

"Every journalist should be using strong passwords; when going around the web they should be in stealth mode. A sensitive email can be encrypted through free, easy-to-use software that turns emails into garble to unwelcome viewers. I also use Duckduckgo.com instead of Google – it's a great search engine that doesn't track you or any of your searches."

If you do attempt to take on the deep web, be prepared. Shaun Swingler shows us how to get in:

- 1) Download the Tor browser online by searching for it on Google.
- 2) Open the link to the Hidden Wiki in your Tor browser. This link won't work in a normal internet browser.

A word of warning: Just be sure you understand how Tor and the deep web work before you decide to explore.

"If you're going to go play in the badlands, make sure you've got a map and proper protection."

- Raymond Joseph

GRASSROOTS MEDIA: THE FACE OF DIVERSITY



by S'thembile Cele

While some newsrooms get smaller and others shut down altogether, hyperlocal media continues to grow. It is relevant, useful and necessary. It is a form of media with a good story to tell, despite a lot of disruption in the media landscape.

In Tzaneen, Limpopo Mashile Phalane has established a small community newspaper called the *Eye News*. In the earlier days of the paper, Phalane – who did not own a car – would book two seats in a bus from Johannesburg to Tzaneen.

A seat for himself, and another for the copies of his paper, which was printed in Johannesburg. Phalane was determined to use the publication to make a difference in his community.

After 10 years of working as an engineer, Wendell Lawrence of Stellenbosch left his job to pursue a dream of owning a community newspaper. Together with his wife, Shanae, they have been printing 7 000 to 10 000 copies of *Riviernuus* bi-weekly since October 2011. It is a paper devoted to telling the stories of the communities that it serves. The slogan of the paper is, "bad news sells, good news is free".

While mainstream media are in a panic over new business models and innovative strategies to meet the challenges of digital media, grassroots/hyperlocal media have

a good story to tell. Independent publishers are in the business of educating, empowering and informing their communities.

Hyperlocal media in a democracy

Mark Weinberg, of the Right2Know campaign, is a fierce supporter of hyper local media because of its role in democracy.

"For democracy to work we need to have a variety of views and sources of information. When one set of interests controls too many platforms of information, it undermines the ability of citizens to be informed and make choices."

South Africa's media landscape is dominated by four big media houses: Media24 (who owns 40% of the media market), Caxton, Times Media, and Independent News & Media – who were taken over by Sekunjalo Independent Media in 2013.

Louis Vale of the Associated Independent Publishers (AIP) – who work with and equip hyper local

newspapers and publishers—says that these big-time players are not able to relate to and ultimately serve the communities where hyperlocal media operates.

"The mainstream media are elitist and middle class, which is a major problem. For example, it took two weeks before mainstream media even started talking to the miners at Marikana. Our readers are those people involved there; they need to know there and then what is happening."

The face of media diversity

Apart from their failure to represent different groups, mainstream media are struggling to meet the demands of a dynamic shift in media internationally. Newsrooms are getting smaller and higher demands are being placed on journalists.

Vale says that hyperlocal newspapers are able to provide a custom experience for readers where it is most needed.

"There are about 250 independent

publishers around the country. The people we are talking about live in their communities and are a part of them, their children go to school there, they understand the needs of the communities. This is not true of your major role players like Caxton and Media24.

"Independent publishers are grassroots initiatives that tend to be in rural and disadvantaged areas. Some of them operate in places with no media reach, including radio. They are 60% black owned and 97% are published in indigenous languages. Their content varies in terms of race, gender, class, etc. They really are the face of media diversity."

Funding as a challenge

Despite the obvious need for this kind of media, funding remains an obstacle. This is especially true for small-time publishers like Lawrence.

"We have skipped a few editions because of the lack of advertising. I can't afford to pay for someone to go and find ads. So I do it myself,

TURN ME AROUND

A SIMPLE TRUTH

- 1 Graph one is the decline in daily newspapers' circulation in the United States from 1984 to 2011.
- 2 Graph two is the quarterly decline in daily newspapers' circulation in South Africa from 2010 to 2014.
- 3 Graph three, when viewed horizontally, is the trend line or the average decrease in circulation in South African print daylies from 2009 to 2014 based, on graph two. This is a rate of about -6.5% per year.
- 4 NOW TURN the page until the big grey line is parallel with the desk you are sitting at, or becomes horizontal. Graph three's yellow line becomes graph four, and shows the quarterly increase in digital subscriptions to Media24's online titles since 2012. A rate of 69% growth, year-on-year. The blue dotted line represents the actual subscriptions over these quarters.

by William Horne



Make me horizontal to view graph 4

INTERACTIVE PRINT GRAPHIC

4



but don't have enough time to spend on it. There is also the issue of companies rather advertising in the traditional newspapers and we need to go the extra mile to convince them that we're just as good (or even better) than other newspapers."

The Right2Know campaign has become a voice for hyperlocal media in the fight to secure funding and support from the state. State-funded media, however, is a concept that raises some concerns among media players, who are sceptical about the hand of the state in the media. Weinberg argues that, in such a model, the state will have no right to interfere with the media, apart from supplying the funds.

"For instance, an alternative option to support community print and broadcasting would be to do so through other institutions that are more functional, for example the South African Revenue Service (SARS). An institution like SARS would not give the newspapers any money, but would not charge them tax. When they submit their print bills they would get a rebate."

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Community print media are growing unlike any other media.

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Mainstream and hyperlocal media

Despite the many differences in structure between mainstream and hyperlocal media, the two do still need to come together, explains Vale.

"Community print media are growing unlike any other media. It is different forms of information you are looking at; mainstream media are about mainstream news, national, international, continental etc. They should be bringing in stuff from the local areas but they have not got the resources to do that."

Vale adds that a solution to the disconnect between the two media streams would be a syndicate platform, which she is currently looking into creating. It would run the same way that the South African Press Association (SAPA) does, where mainstream media pay local media for access to their content.

The AIP released a report on forms of state support for media diversity in May 2014.

The study considers a number

of support structures, such as tax concessions, anti-trust legislature, and subsidies. These structures have proven to work in Scandinavian countries, where state-funded and supported media have worked out well. The study finds that the success of the models, however, is related to the political environment of the countries.

In Africa, political structures are fragile—many countries have freedom of expression enshrined in their constitutions and have a relatively diverse media. However, the threat of state re-regulation is a reality. In South Africa this can be seen through the threat of the Protection of the State of Information Bill.

The AIP study may not have all the answers; however, the purpose of the report was to be proactive about the debate, and to develop thinking in the community and the independent press about what needs to be done to promote diversity.

It is a cause that is welcomed by small-time newspaper owners like Lawrence and Phalane, who want to bring change to their communities. ■

JOURNO- PRENEURSHIP

AN UNEXPECTED PALATABLE BLEND



by Megan Damon

As jobs become scarce in the corporate media sector, and as adapting to the changing media landscape becomes increasingly challenging, some journalists have caught on to an opportunity in the form of journopreneurship. **SMF** explores the potential of this new career possibility for young journalists.

Journopreneurs

Two working journalists, who decided to take this route the past year, are Daniel Malherbe and Willem Breytenbach. As two former employees of the Media24 Magazines Digital Division, they had played an integral part in helping magazines adapt to the digital revolution.

With the change in media landscape, Malherbe and Breytenbach identified a gap in the corporate media sector. In June they launched Lumico, a digital execution agency. The company offers assistance to small and large businesses that need to develop an online presence and foster a digital communication strategy.

For Malherbe, the independence that entrepreneurial journalism allows encouraged him to shift away from traditional media platforms.

"Entrepreneurial journalism breaks away from what would be considered traditional media thinking by handing authors the power to publish their own work. In a sense, the rigours of publishing and editorial work are intertwined and content is always cross-platform."

Similarly, Amelia Burger, a Stellen-

bosch University journalism graduate from the class of 1992, launched Lemonade Hub in 2003. This company offers editing and translation services, but prides itself on helping businesses establish ideas, doing training for corporate companies and assisting with content strategies. Before Burger started her own company she worked for Afrikaans newspaper *Die Burger* while completing her studies in industrial psychology.

For Burger, her curiosity, desire for continuous growth and agitation at being bored led her to venture out on her own.

"I get bored constantly – and I think that is probably an entrepreneurial quality," says Burger.

"People will often study journalism because they have curious minds. These are people who constantly want to find out new things about new people and new ideas.

"A small part of what I do is what I learnt in journalism in '92, but if you don't constantly grow with the industry, you are a dead duck. If we look at the way the internet works today, for example, it needs to be responsive. Users want to interact with the internet," she adds.

"Constantly learning is something that

attracted me to the entrepreneurial industry.

"What initially attracted me to journalism was dealing with different people and their world. You are always being challenged to go out of your comfort zone. I walk into the office in the morning and then I have this nice idea of what my day will look like, and then my phone rings, and everything changes," she explains. Burger believes that entrepreneurial journalism means finding what makes you tick in the journalism industry and then charging it.

Mari Lategan was in the Stellenbosch University Journalism class of 1993. She is now the CEO and founding member of InContext, a strategic business consultancy company. The company provides business mentorship, training and advisory services. They also work in publishing and events management. Lategan strongly considers herself an entrepreneurial journalist. Her 20 years in the media and marketing industry helped her establish business skills that are coupled with the skills that she acquired as a journalist. She worked for Media24 and New Media Publishing before launching InContext in 2007.

Seven of the 24 journalism honours students at Stellenbosch University already have secure employment for 2015. For the rest of the class the idea of venturing into the working world is a daunting one.

In May this year, Professor Lizette Rabe of the department presented a short course on entrepreneurial journalism. This was the first time a course of this nature was included in the honours syllabus.

"I feel a short course of this nature is important. You need to know that there are more opportunities for you once you leave Stellenbosch at the end of this year," said Rabe optimistically towards the end of the course.

The short course encouraged students to establish business models, use the communication resources that are available, share ideas and establish networks. In this way, students are urged to initiate start-ups with companies or develop their own brand.



"Once you realise the incredible skills you acquire through journalism, the opportunities are evident. It remains a continuously changing environment – if you venture out on your own you have no choice but to stay ahead; that's the exhilarating bit," says Lategan.

The career option

Entrepreneurial journalism has enabled journalists to establish their own brands, shift away from legacy media and take business risks.

"I think journalists as entrepreneurs are a new concept and not something that young people necessarily contemplated when they applied to continue their postgraduate studies in journalism," says group content director and founding member of New Media Publishing, Inna van Zyl. "Young people still dream of being employed by a big corporation and gaining experience before they might want to venture out into the unknown world of self-employment. And there is nothing wrong with such an attitude," she adds.

"The 2008 recession, combined with the explosion of digital media, has meant that far fewer jobs are available at media corporations, which are retrenching staff every year in order to make budgets and targets in an increasingly competitive environment.

"However, the rise of all kinds of media and the notion of storytelling, be it on mobile, social media

platforms, or through the production of videos, has created numerous new opportunities for journalists, especially the ones who are brave enough to venture out and create their own work opportunities," she adds.

"For years journalism was seen as the right of big media houses. Through digital and social media we have learnt that this notion is flawed," says Malherbe.

The evolution of the internet has allowed for it to become increasingly easy for journalists to establish their own brands. Professional social media platforms like LinkedIn allow

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Journalism, like being an entrepreneur, is a quest for integrity, quality and an audience.

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for networking, and websites like Wix.com enable users to create their own personal professional website. These tools equip journalists with ammunition to tackle the changing media

landscape.

The true essence of journalism should not be forgotten, it is still about storytelling. The means through which the stories are told may change, but the need for it will not.

"We live in an era of constant change. Change in all aspects of journalism," says Christa Morrison, lecturer in Interactive Media Storytelling and Entrepreneurial Journalism at the Sheridan Institute of Technology in Canada.

"It creates opportunities for finding new ways of managing the business of news.

"Journalism schools weren't graduating people with strong digital skills. Now they are. Getting professional journalism training is more valuable now than at any other point in the past.

Pen to paper money

"To be a successful journalist you have to think like an entrepreneur and understand the business you're in. You have to build your audience, whether you work for an organisation or not," she says. "Make sure that

what you want to do is not only an idea, but an opportunity. People are full of ideas, but you have to ensure that your idea is what the market wants," explains Burger. "Ask yourself what is going to be your unique selling point. What do you offer and what are your rates? Make sure you know how you are going to frame your offering." "Understanding what it is that you do really well, packaging that into an interesting offer and selling it, is one of the challenging aspects when deciding to start your business," explains Lategan.

"Finding the work, delivering what your client wants and getting paid. The trick is having 'radical clarity' as to exactly what you offer and then to exceed expectations. "Be true to yourself, be original and never miss a deadline. Make sure that you understand what your client wants, deliver on that and don't give them what you think they need until you really know them well," advises Lategan.

"The challenge is saying bye-bye to a salary, a stable income and then you start asking yourself, 'Am I going to earn enough money?' You need to put a price on your brand. Don't sell yourself cheap. People always expect freebies, you need to explain that what you are offering is a service," says Burger.

For Burger one of her stumbling blocks was that, she had to realise that in order to pursue a career in entrepreneurship, you have to start somewhere, and most of the time that somewhere ensures no stable income and many financial sacrifices.

"I did the practical thing. I asked myself, 'How much money do I need to earn every month to actually honour my obligations?' So one of the first things I did was close all my accounts; the only card that I still have is my credit card. Today I still do not have these cards. They are just traps, they force you to spend money that you don't have. You must be really disciplined with your money," explains Burger.

Malherbe believes that there is a fundamental link between journalism and entrepreneurship that allows the two to work in unison.

"Journalism, like being an entrepreneur, is a quest for integrity, quality and an audience." ■



THE YOUNG, THE RESTLESS AND **THE MUTED**

There is disturbingly little teen media available for South African girls. The media industry cannot afford to mute one of the most promising portions of the population.



by Iske Conradie

Media professionals puff up their chests when they speak about their role in society.

"We create an open and independent public forum where all people can tell their stories, become informed and resolve societal issues. We help shape a better future," bellows the idealist.

This is a challenging task for any media professional, but it is impossible if we knowingly exclude teenage girls, who make up 11% of all South Africans.

*Millions left
media deprived*

TeenZone is the only competitive print magazine on the market for teenagers. The SABC have very little

content aimed at teenagers and the online South African teen media is scattered and unsubstantial.

The concerns of 4,8 million diverse teenage girls cannot be voiced and resolved by a few limited media publications.

Educational psychologist Elana Burger says this large segment of our society is especially susceptible to any messages, because they are in process of developing their sense of self and of morality.

"Teenagers are in an identity-seeking phase of their lives," says Burger.

If media professionals aim to empower citizens, it would be foolish

to ignore a confused and vulnerable group who represent about a tenth of the population and South Africa's future work force.

Goodbye teenzines

Seventeen magazine closed its doors at the end of 2013. Its rival, *Saltwater Girl* magazine, announced the final "collectors issue" this year.

"For the entire duration I worked at *Saltwater Girl*, I felt it was my responsibility to adequately help get teen girls, who read the mag, through their teenhood and provide them with the knowledge and information they



needed to be the very best version of themselves, be responsible, make better decisions and change the world," says Bryony McCormick, editor of *Saltwater Girl* magazine.

"Without publications like *Saltwater Girl*, there is one less voice responsibly shaping the minds of the youth, and inspiring them to be great," says McCormick.

"The long and short answer is simply that none of them were profitable," explains Egbert de Waal, the strategic manager of the media conglomerate Media24, the owner of both *Seventeen* and *Saltwater Girl* magazine.

De Waal suggests that teenagers are moving away from print magazines to discuss and express their issues on other media.

Defunct teen mags

The demise of print is hardly a surprise in the light of the global shift towards digital media, but according to a 2009 study on South African teen magazines, this is not necessarily a loss. Emma de Villiers's study, at the University of Stellenbosch's Journalism Department, concluded that print magazines aimed at teenagers lacked relevant and constructive content.

Her study "indicated that the femininity that was constructed in the studied texts did not take the greater South African context into account, and that it served to entertain readers from higher LSM groups rather than all South African girls".

According to De Villiers these magazines communicated that

femininity "revolved around consumerism, fashion and boys".

Teen created content

"There's definitely a drop in teens' access to magazines, especially in South Africa, but coupled with that is a dramatic increase in teen voices in the online space," says former *Seventeen* editor Janine Jellars.

Student Zovuyo Mputa could not relate to printed teen magazines when she was a teenager.

"I felt like they focused too much on one type of girl perhaps. Everything was very generalised and revolved around stereotypes, so it really wasn't what I wanted."

Mputa started *Zovuyo Mputa Blog* to fill the void of appropriate media. She uses the platform to voice her take on fashion, relationships and topics that trend online.

"We have blogs now, we don't have to rely on magazines and publishing companies, because we drive our own media. We basically create our own content," says Mputa.

"So now I get to see what someone in China is doing and I get to see what someone is doing in America. Before we could only read about Lindsay Lohan and the typical South African girl next door in magazines."

Teens raise their own voices

Seventeen year old American teen Austin Wright, the voice behind the candid Twitter account @BandsThatSave, has more than

150 000 young followers – including South African teen girls.

Wright believes social media offers teenagers the freedom to open up. "Not everybody is comfortable talking face to face."

After an attempted suicide, Wright woke up in the hospital surrounded by loved ones. He then realised people cared about him despite him believing differently. Wright started the account @BandsThatSave, to tweet about his struggle with feeling lonely and marginalized, to help other teenagers realise the same.

"Social media and blogs can serve as containers for the very intense emotions teenagers feel," says Burger.

Teenagers resort to social media to vent their emotions and to find like-minded people, because there is not necessarily another suitable place to do so, according to Burger.

The necessity for media professionals

Burger believes parents are too overcome by anxiety to offer teens a judgment-free space to explore their issues. Yet she contends that teen-created content calls for a guiding voice in the media.

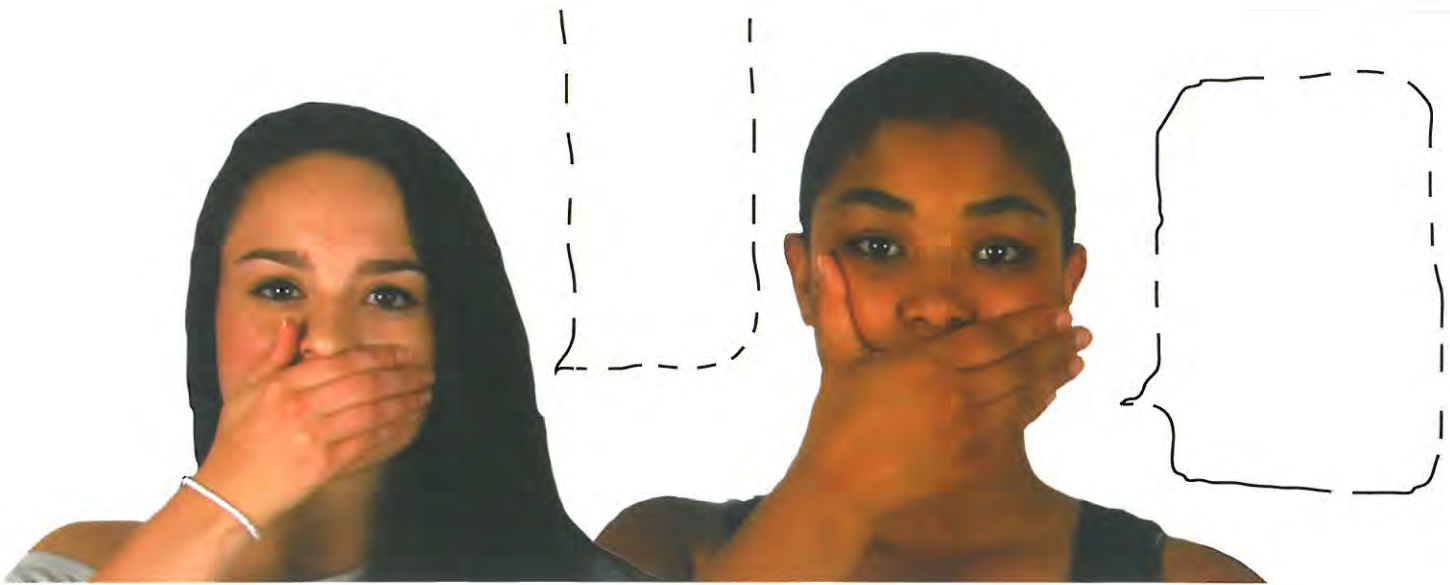
"Teenagers have a free pass to age-inappropriate content online. They can use social media as an outlet for their emotions, but people who will take advantage of such information, also have access to it," she says.

"In their search for a place to belong, teenagers are very vulnerable to the content and opinions of others



The concerns of 4,8 million diverse teenage girls cannot be voiced and resolved by a few limited media publications.





and to sexual predators."

The danger of online media is the presence of destructive content. Websites, blogs and cyber bullies promote trends like thinspo, which motivate teens to indulge in anorexia and other eating disorders.

In 2013 cyber trolls launched the Twitter hashtag #cutforBieber, to motivate young fans to wound themselves to encourage singer Justin Bieber to stop using marijuana. Many teenagers used the hashtag to post pictures of their cuts.

Neither traditional teen media nor online teen generated media offer the constructive and safe forum teenagers need to resolve serious and age related problems.

Unmuting great dialogues

"Teens are bright and tech savvy. They will turn to the Internet for advice, and potentially be drawn to international media as opposed

to South African media," says McCormick.

The migration of teens from print to online media is inevitable, yet the online sphere is an unguarded public sphere, which can be very threatening to young and vulnerable minds.

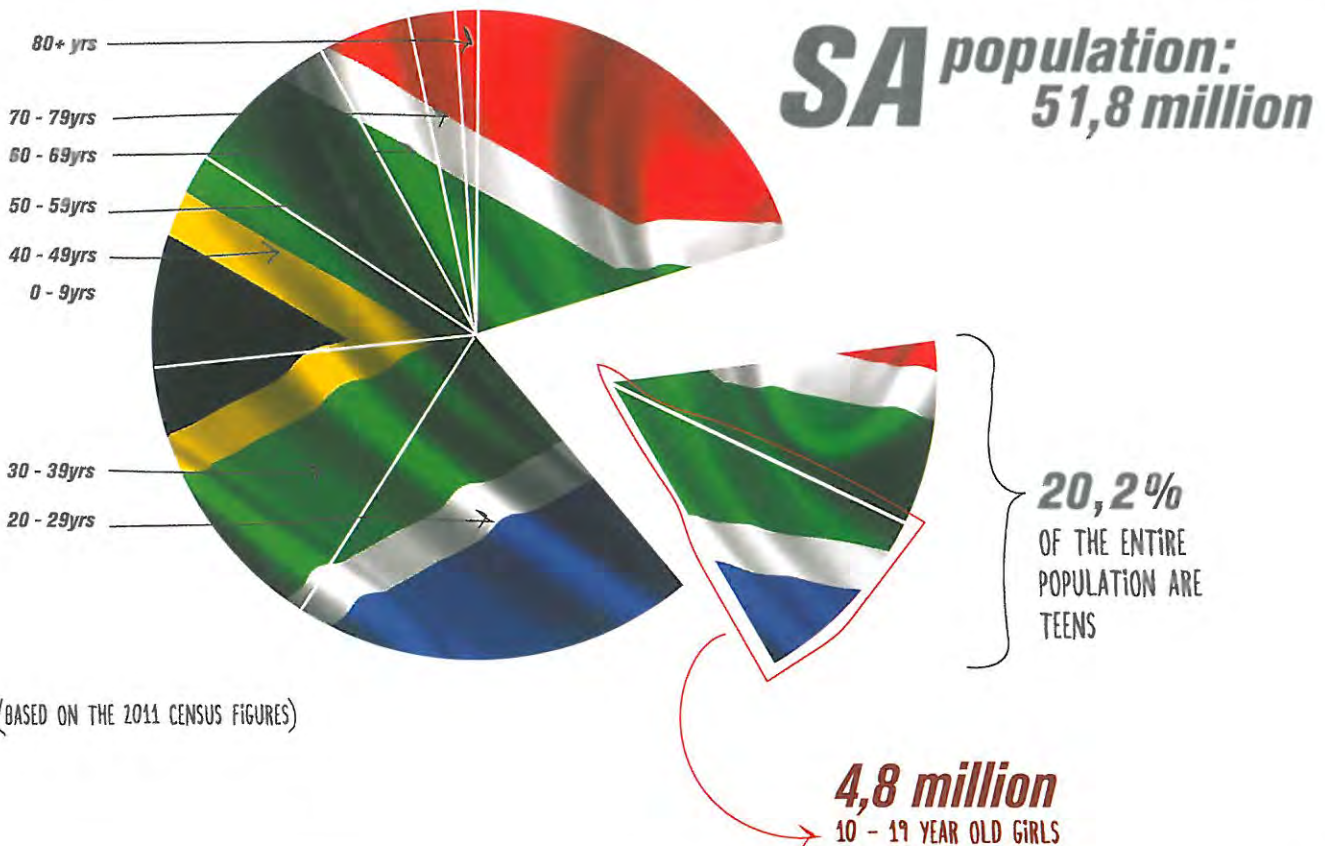
The lack of supportive media for this large and influential audience is a call to all media professionals for alternative media.

The media entrepreneur, who can create a digital, safe and non-judgmental space for teenagers, may

hold the key to offering this significant segment of South Africans their due access to constructive media.

"I'd like something very different to the normal girly, pop music kind of content. Something with a bit more content, not just about boys, lip-gloss and clothes.

"Something more mature for a younger audience would be better. Something like that would have opened my eyes to the world," says Mputa, describing what she believes is ideal teen media. ■



Women are emerging from the shadows of male sports journalists and claiming their place in the sport spotlight. But are they doomed to be forever second best?



by Tamsyn Lunt

During the 1960s, one of South Africa's first female sports journalists, Amanda Botha, was nominated by the South African Sports Writers Association in their most promising sport writer category. Nominees of these press awards were invited to a prize-giving ceremony where the winners were announced and celebrated.

Unfortunately for Botha, her gender meant that not only was there no chance of her actually winning the award, but she was also excluded from attending the prize-giving ceremony; all together because it was reserved for "males only".

Botha describes the newsroom that she worked in as being fundamentally patriarchal, with no room for women to have aspirations of reporting on anything but "feminine sports" such as netball or tennis. "My position was one in which I had to be submissive as it was a very much male-dominated world and I was excluded from all social gatherings of sport writers.

"It was a time of Afrikaner male dominance where women were fine to do the work but not fine to be

recognised."

Decades later and the state of women in general, and women journalists in particular, has improved tremendously.

Journalism professor at Stellenbosch University, Lizette Rabe, highlights the triumphs for and by female journalists over the decades. Everything from equal pay to equal opportunities have improved the position of the woman journalist.

"Things we take for absolute granted today were achievements made over the years. We fought for years."

There does, however, appear to be one field of journalism that continues to be male dominated.

The old boys' club

Marizanne Kok is currently a journalist for Sport24 and began her career in 2009, years after Botha's experience of gender discrimination. "When I was just starting out, I said I wanted to write rugby because that was the big thing in Afrikaans sports journalism and my editor at the time said, 'no way a woman will ever write rugby at this newspaper'. So I sort of gave up on it and haven't tried again."

THE GLORIFIED IPAD HOLDERS

NICHE

Julia Stuart, eNCA's sports anchor, deals with additional pressures to the ones faced by ordinary journalists. Her gender means that she has had to work harder to prove her worth and to manoeuvre around a system designed to exclude her.

"You are constantly fighting a battle to be seen as more than just a poppie. There is a notion of the "old boys' club", and they have this network and they help each other out. A lot of times that's how you get discriminated against. The managers of clubs invite certain members of the media to come and have a whiskey with them and, as a woman, you are not privy to that boys' club."

A man's world

Kok has experienced the idea of a boys' club first hand in her coverage of golf, although she believes her encounters aren't close to what they might have been for Botha. "Women can't walk into all the clubhouses. Like at Leopard Creek there is a rule you aren't allowed in the clubhouse if you are a woman. But then you just wait for the players outside. I don't think it's as big a problem as it used

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My editor at the time said, 'no way a woman will ever write rugby at this newspaper'. So I sort of gave up on it and haven't tried again.

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to be."

Eunice Visagie, a former sports journalist, says that she was always waiting for "full-blown" discrimination to come but it never did. "What I experienced wasn't discrimination, it was just men being petty."

It was fellow journalists, rather than sport stars, who gave Visagie the most grief during her career. "I went on a cricket tour in 2004 and I spent probably a month with the South African cricket team on the road against Zimbabwe. There for the first time ever I felt something from fellow journalists. When I walked into the press box, a few of the more experienced journalists did have a smirk and you kind of felt they were laughing behind your back."

"During press conferences they barely gave you a chance to ask a question. I will never forget that Graeme Smith actually once, after the third or fourth press conference, had started to know my face and he said, 'Eunice, do you have questions for us?' If he hadn't given me the opportunity I wouldn't have gotten it from my fellow journalists."

Even in the process of normal fieldwork and networking, female sports journalists experience obstacles that men might never even consider, says Stuart. "If you are going to be hanging out with players, it's very difficult, because you are a young woman so you leave yourself open to those kinds of rumours. People just assume you are crossing the line somehow and it's extremely difficult."

Visagie admits she has experienced this kind of reaction first hand. "I wrote a positive article about a South African cricket player who had been receiving criticism from media at the time. When the article came out one of my colleagues told me, 'oh but you wrote that article because you're in love with him hey?' That's something male junior reporters would never have to deal with."

An inevitable problem

For Rabe, the lack of female sports journalists stems all the way to the way children are brought up. "It is the way women are raised. Girls must wear frilly stuff and boys wear blue."

"Women are acculturated to behave in a certain way and not to question certain traditions and certain cultures and that's part of the reason we don't see women on sports pages. Feminism has almost become a swear word."

Scott Seward is an executive producer at SuperSport and believes that South Africa's historical dominance of male officialdom is the reason behind the low number of female sports journalists. "In broad terms of sport, less attention was paid to 'disadvantaged' citizens which included females. The idea of females reporting on the major sports was unthinkable. I presume a rationale of 'if you haven't played the game, you cannot comment on it' prevailed."

Pretty young things

The problem that seems most apparent when it comes to the question of female equality in sports journalism is that women are often hired because of their looks and not their qualifications.

This is a concern that, Stuart believes, hinders the entire shift to gender equality. "You see the injustices and you don't really know how to get around it so a lot of the girls are just glorified iPad holders. It's so unfair. It's not because they necessarily don't know as much, but sometimes companies are hiring the girls for their looks."

Stuart was recently being considered for a television show about soccer. She lost the bid to a different woman, who happened to be a model, because the show wanted someone who could be "a brand".

Botha adds to this idea of women journalists being considered as purely aesthetic additions for their male viewers. "There is this male-orientated view that sport is there simply to entertain the boys."

As a sports enthusiast, Visagie admits to not trusting the reporting by women on particular television stations. "I don't take women on SuperSport seriously. They ask bad questions, they giggle on TV, they do everything that stereotypes women. They are just goodlooking, but I don't think they know very much about the topic."

So what happens when you type

"female sports reporter" into

Google?

Not much sport.

"The Top 10 Sexiest Female Football Presenters in the World"

"Top 5 Smokin' Hot Sky Sports News Presenters"

"Top 8: Hottest anchorwomen in sport"

"Who is the sexiest Sky Sports news girl?"





photo: Tamsyn E...

Not quite there

Undoubtedly, female sports journalists have increased in both presence and in quality since the days of Botha's nomination, but there still is room for major improvement according to Rabe.

"Women need to break down discrimination everywhere around us. Not accepting things the way they are but questioning them. If they still have value, accept them but, if not, break them down and raise another construct until it has also served it's

time." Rabe stands firm that women can only be satisfied once female reporters are accepted as analysts of rugby games, once their opinions on traditionally male sports are respected and sought after - when women are hired as sports reporters because their comments are valued and not because they look good in photoshoots.

The only way for the situation to change drastically is if executives and directors of broadcasting groups and news houses make an active decision to tackle the issue head-on, Stuart

believes.

"I think what the heads of these corporations need to stop doing is side-lining women by hiring people based on their looks. Give women who are passionate about sport more prominent roles and more responsibilities."

Let's make some noise

Stuart has a lot of hope for the future, however, and believes that the women who are currently doing sports journalism well can show other South

African women that sport is another opportunity for them.

She believes that, soon enough, broadcasters will be relying on women to bring people the day's sport. "They can't ignore us forever, not if we make enough noise."

Visagie added that it was up to women themselves to address what discrimination may still exist in the field. "Keep pushing that ceiling because eventually it will start shifting. Stop thinking of yourself as 'different' or as 'female'. Just think of yourself as a bloody good sports reporter." ■



TAKING A **BYTE**

photo: Gretchen Dietz



OUT OF AFRICA

by Gretchen Dietz

Tech reporters in Africa have their eyes on the continent's digital rise, and it is only a matter of time until the world takes note of it too.

On a continent where only a fifth of the population is online, digital technology is not just a luxury, it is a business plan waiting to happen. As Africa boosts its byte size in the world's digital industry, tech reporters are exploring exciting startups to share Africa's tech surge with the world.

"Africa is where it's all happening," says Bloomberg TV Africa's technology correspondent Elizabeth Gould. "We're going to see a lot more overseas investment in technology in Africa. I'm here because I see this trend and people are starting to pay attention to it. Those that aren't

already are going to have to pay attention to it the next five to ten years."

The age when the developed world turns only to Silicon Valley and Tokyo for innovative tech is losing steam and investors are looking to African startups to develop the social problem-solving software of the future.

These are young companies that develop innovative solutions for everyday struggles in transport, infrastructure, energy, healthcare and education – all using technology.

Currently, only one in ten African households is connected to the internet. However, online access per household in Africa continues to grow at double-digit rates of 18 per cent. According to the International

Telecommunication Union's 2014 figures, that is more than twice the world's average growth rate.

Investors, take note

"I think that tech development in Africa is happening so much faster than in other countries basically because the hunger for connection is much stronger in Africa, whereas in America the market is saturated," says Gould.

"There's a fatigue of startups in the States and there are many people asking questions about what the meaning of all this is. You can create a new photo editing app but there are a thousand other photo editing apps out there, and a lot of people are



I see this as a very positive time for entrepreneurs to actually solve problems that are bigger than kids playing Candy Crush.



recognising that.

"I see this as a very positive time for investors to actually solve problems that are bigger than kids playing Candy Crush."

Other tech reporters agree. "Google, Nintendo, Microsoft and all the big brands know that it's in developing markets where they will experience growth," says creator and former producer of eNCA's *Tech Report*, André-Pierre du Plessis. "Africa is very important to them."

"Startups out of Africa are trying to solve real problems, and most of them social problems," says Ventureburn tech reporter Jacques Coetzee. "There's often a greater sense of urgency behind the need to start a business in Africa. It's not just a Harvard University student starting his own business because he wants to become a millionaire one day; it's someone with a desire to help other people. They don't see profit first; they see a problem and then find a creative solution to that problem."

Ventureburn is a tech-focused website that reports specifically on startups, entrepreneurship and business in Africa. With an audience of mainly entrepreneurs and venture capitalists, it attracts investors to the exciting and innovative technology emerging on the continent.

"I believe there's something happening in Africa and there's a lot of potential that could rival international companies or technologies," says Coetzee.

Going global

Entersekt – a South African company that develops online security for banking on mobile phones – is an example of the potential in African startups to make their mark on the global tech scene.

Their app Transakt, which reduces fraud and improves transactions, won the 2013 Frost & Sullivan Award for Technology Leadership in South Africa and has since partnered with SwissCard, a Switzerland-based credit card company.

"Switzerland is known for having world-class banking systems, so for them to adopt a South African company is great news for Africa," says Coetzee.

Ushahidi is another example of

African startup technology that has been adopted and applied globally. Developed by Kenyan software developers, the Ushahidi Platform is an online interactive mapping service used for disaster management.

"During the 2007 elections in Kenya that became really violent, their tool was developed to keep track of where all the crises or hotspots were," explains Coetzee. "Basically, people can go online and either report an area or see where to stay away from."

The platform has since been applied globally to manage natural and manmade crises around the world, such as the 2010 Haiti earthquake and the tsunami in Japan in 2011.

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Technology journalism is culture journalism today. We want the general population to read up about geeky stuff and not be bored by it.

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Time to get techie

While the tech industry in Africa grows, the role of tech reporters in Africa is expanding along with it.

As more startups in Africa go global, sharing African stories with the rest of the world is only the first step in changing perceptions that the poorest continent with the lowest online presence is far behind the rest of the world.

"There was a German lady that I did a Skype interview with," Coetzee says. "It wasn't easy to convince her that I was a South African in South Africa on Skype. She was so surprised."

Gould has experienced similar responses from her American audience. "People are quite surprised by how advanced it is and I think it's been a

real eye-opener for a lot of people about what's happening in Africa," she explains. "A venture capitalist from Colorado said to me, 'Rwanda has 4G LTE Broadband? Really? I never would have thought that!'"

"So the perception as a whole is that Africa is far off, but that's changing very quickly," she says. This is because their tech reports are reaching a wider audience across continents.

Listen up, Africa

When it comes to reporting on African technology to an African audience, local audiences are more tech-savvy than one might think.

When Gould moved from New York to Cape Town, she hardly saw the need to 'dumb down' the information for her new African audience. "It's not about, 'Oh, Africa is so far behind,'" she says. "If you have access to the internet you have the same basic access to information that everybody has anywhere."

"In the stories that I do I always have to explain complex concepts in plain English and that doesn't change whether it's for an African audience or for an American audience."

Coetzee believes it is necessary not only to share tech stories with the tech-savvy, but to attract a wider audience to the African startup scene. "In South Africa we don't have that big an online market, and even though it is growing, we want to get to those people who aren't all that techie," he says. "Technology journalism is culture journalism today. We want the general population to read up about geeky stuff and not be bored by it."

To achieve this, tech reporters try to minimise hard-to-swallow technological jargon.

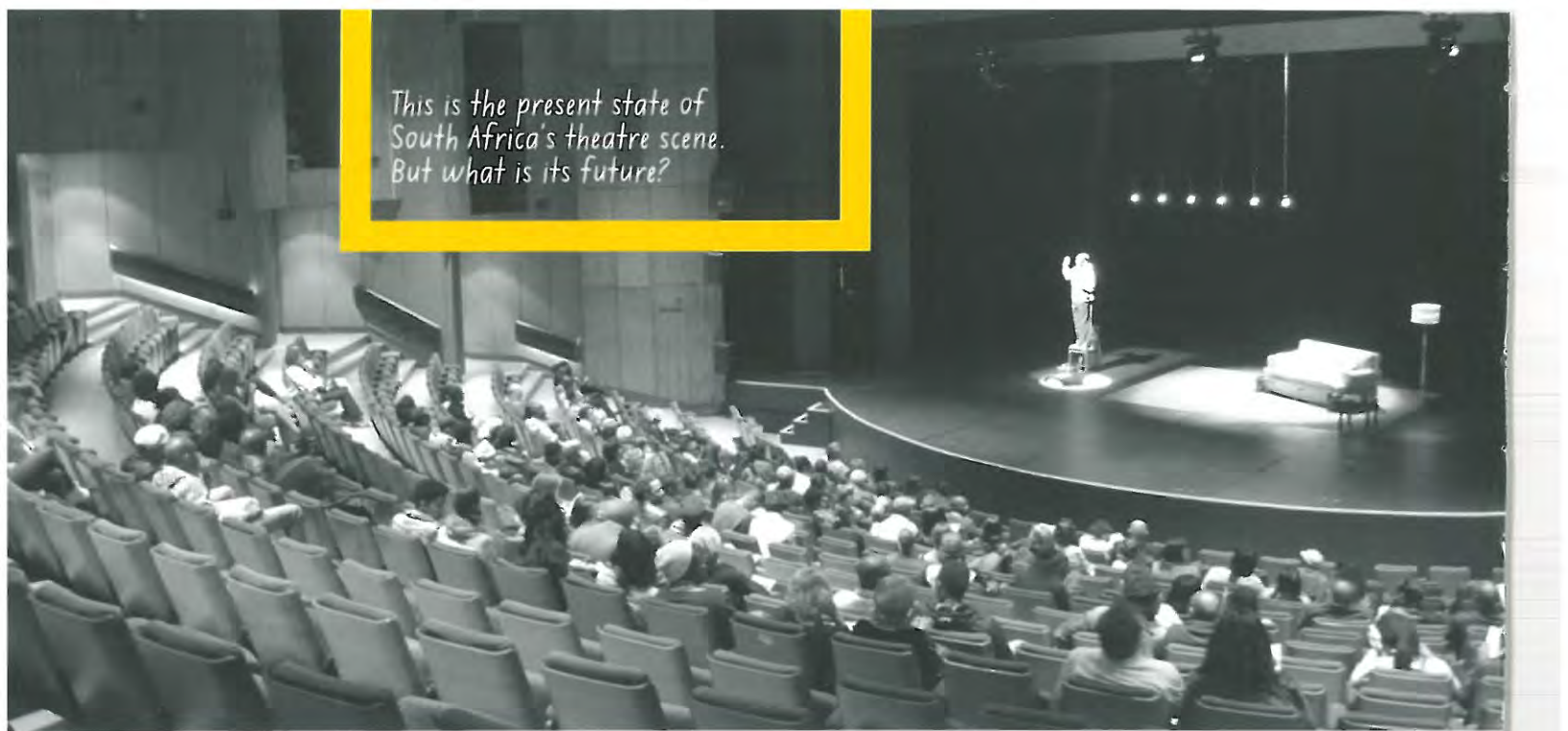
"When it gets to the really boring, technical hardware specs, we don't go too in depth," says Coetzee. "You don't want to write a bunch of numbers down and expect people to enjoy the story; you've got to make it interesting."

Another approach is to report on local news to attract an audience closer to home. "You look at local technologies," says Du Plessis, "guys in townships who start their own internet cafes; South African startups;

profiles of people working for big tech companies around the world who are from here."

By doing so, tech reporters not only spread news of African startup success with tech-enthusiasts around the world, both attracting investors and altering perceptions of an Africa in the dark, but also improve tech awareness among Africans themselves. ■





This is the present state of
South Africa's theatre scene.
But what is its future?

"THEATRE IS ALWAYS ON ITS DEATH BED BUT NEVER DYING"

How is arts journalism providing news for audiences in spite of the dying print industry? Is online content giving new life to arts journalism?



by Melissa Cohen

Arts journalism in South Africa is currently undergoing a shift from print to digital media and, although many people are looking forward

to see what the outcome will be, some newspaper publications have suffered.

Beeld newspaper, which previously produced a daily supplement section of six to eight pages a day on arts, entertainment and lifestyle, compressed this to only a page in 2008. In June this year, the arts page was shut down.

A closing chapter

Anna-Retha Boucher, who worked as an arts journalist at *Beeld* from 2006 until July this year, is saddened by the closing of the arts page. "I saw the editorial team get smaller and smaller

and it went from a big team of people to only three of us. I became a general journalist and relied on online news and stories because there weren't enough of us to step out of the office," says Boucher.

She was told that *Beeld's* art page was going to be closed because not enough interest was being shown by the public in the page.

The newspaper said that they would be incorporating arts into the body of the paper's content. "People were horrified that the arts page was closing down because the Afrikaans arts festivals rely on the paper to advertise," says Boucher.

Boucher believes that although

arts journalism is going through a transition period and social media is the new way to communicate and debate about the arts, it cannot compete with the real arts and theatre critic.

"There is definitely a need for people with an understanding of the arts and for people who appreciate it to be writing," explains Boucher.

From fact to opinion

Like Boucher, Dr Gabriel Botma of Stellenbosch University's Department of Journalism and former arts editor at *Die Burger* believes that there are fewer arts critics and more people



PHOTOS: ANTHONY MOYNEAU

who share their opinions on social media.

"The industry has suffered in its print capacity. There has been a shift from the voice of an individual critic to the opinions of ordinary people," says Botma. Botma believes that there is a lack of funding for arts journalism because of social media and the shift to digital media.

"The quality and independence of arts journalism took a knock because the space in newspapers became less," says Botma regarding newspapers such as *Beeld*. He says there was a decrease in the quality of content through the loss of arts pages and the transition to online, as people with little knowledge are able to voice their thoughts, although not from a critical perspective.

Hope is still out there

Although many of the local newspapers have condensed their arts page to cut costs because of decreasing readership, Cape Town-based arts newspaper *The Next 48 Hours* is still flourishing. The editor of the newspaper, Peter Tromp, mentions how the company not only uses print media, but also has an online social media presence, website and TV show. "In recent years particularly there has been a strong focus on digital. For years people were able to download PDF versions of the paper

on the website. In recent years, the website has grown even further to now include original content - for Johannesburg and Durban as well - and even online video content with the *48 Hours TV channel*," says Tromp.

Tromp says that most of their revenue comes from advertising in the print edition of the newspaper. "At this moment monetising online is still difficult to do. Certainly the long-term aim is for the website to become the primary hub, but until advertising revenue online matches print, the main focus remains print."

Tromp explains how, while other publications are pushing arts journalism to the wayside, *The Next 48 Hours* is using the declining interest shown by other papers in the arts as a way to get their brand out there. "I would say we have experienced a growth in readership, as *The Next 48 Hours* brand has become more and more well-known and embraced as a quality alternative source of information to the bigger publishing conglomerates. There is a steady growth in visits to www.48hours.co.za, so we have the data to back up such a statement," continues Tromp.

Just one click

What's On is an online arts publication that provides a variety of arts and culture content to its audience.

"I believe that we aim to be everywhere and offer something to our audience that is driven by quality and gives users what they want. We also hope to limit advertising on the site," explains *What's On* editor, Murray Walker.

"I think that online is the way to go because it provides a sense of immediacy to the reader and is less expensive. Not only that, but it tells the user what is happening today and we embed links to websites that sell tickets for the events, which print can't do. This means that even though you read a newspaper, you still will have to use a laptop to buy tickets for the show," says Walker.

The shift from print to digital has put huge pressure not only on daily newspapers, but especially publications devoted to arts and culture. Botma mentions how arts journalism is believed to cater to a marginal group of people in society, as it is believed that arts and culture activities are aimed at the elite. However, Botma expresses his excitement about the future of arts journalism in the digital sphere. "Theatre is always on its death bed but never dying," explains Botma.

From the stage

Rosebank Theatre's Manager, Sean Whitehead, explains how the arts industry will have to adjust to the transition from print to digital media.

"The audience would have to adapt first. Most of South Africa's theatres rely on print media to sell their shows. Print advertising is expensive and it can cripple smaller theatres. An audience shifting to digital can engage more with an online article and the theatres can reach out in cheaper ways to catch these audiences - if we can get more youth to come into the theatre that will aid the growth of theatre immensely."

Keeping the crowd

Although Rosebank Theatre is one of the smaller ones in Cape Town, it has made use of various online platforms to help grow its audiences.

"The Rosebank keeps a very personal relationship with its patrons. Feeling part of a unique community and knowing every show is going to be enjoyable is vital. We continue to grow our audience by bringing different types of shows as well as bringing back artists that appealed to our audiences before. It's all about knowing your audience before growing it that is so important. With a stronger online presence, we aim to keep this intimacy," explains Whitehead confidently.

Along with Botma and Whitehead, Boucher believes that the theatre is still going to be around for a long time. "As long as there are people, there is art," laughs Boucher optimistically. ■

Luidens 'n verslag
van die Wêreld
Ekonomiese Forum is
Suid-Afrika sewentiende
op 'n lys van 136 lande in terme
van geslagsgelykheid.

Na die verkiesings vanjaar was 43% van die ministers in die kabinet en 46% van adjunkministers vroulik en vroue het 41% van die Nasionale Vergadering uitgemaak. Die vrou in Suid-Afrika behoort dus 'n vryheid en mag te ervaar wat ongeken is vir miljoene vroue regoor die wêreld heen. Wanneer 'n mens vergelyk hoe daar vanjaar oor vroue teenoor mans in die media geskryf is, skets dit egter 'n ander prentjie.

Met die staatsrede vanjaar is die ANC-LP Thandile Sunda za oorweldig met kritiek vir haar keuse van 'n noupassende geel rok. Die aanmerkings het gou persoonlik geraak op sosiale media en kort voor lank het mense haar gewig begin spot.

Verashni Pillay, mederedakteur van die *Mail & Guardian*, skryf in dié koerant dat "hierdie insident illustreer hoe Suid-Afrikaners die kultuur wat vroue onderdruk, laat voortbestaan".

Thuli Mandonsela, die Openbare Beskermer, was vanjaar ook in die spervuur. Haar aanbevelings oor die presidensiële tuiste Nkandla het vlae kritiek ontlok en tot en met hede is haar aanbevelings grootliks geïgnoreer. Daar word eerder gepoog om haar outoriteit te ondermyn. Kort na die bekendmaking van die verslag, het *Beeld* berig oor Cosas se sekretaris, Tshiamo Tsotetsi, wat Mandonsela uitgejou het as "daai vrou met die groot, lelike neus".

Die adjunkminister van Verdediging en Militêre Veterane, Kebby Maphatsoe, het Mandonsela 'n paar weke gelede 'n CIA-spioen genoem volgens *The Star*.

Die vrou wat seker onlangs die ergste deurgeloopt het, was regter Thokozile Masipa wat oor die Oscar Pistorius-saak beslis het. Nadat sy Pistorius van moord vrygespreek het, het daar 'n vloedgolf van kritiek oor haar gespoel in die media.

Skielik was almal 'n regskenner en mense het haar persoonlik begin aanval. Dreigemente het so erg geraak, dat die polisie moes ingryp om haar te beskerm.

Regsorganisasies regoor Suid-Afrika voer aan dat almal geregtig is op 'n opinie oor die uitspraak, maar het kommer uitgespreek oor die kritiek teen haar wat grens aan haatspraak. Masipa is 'n voormalige joernalis en een van die eerste swart vroulike regters in Suid-Afrika. Sy is bekend vir haar regverdigde uitsprake en haar onverskrokke soeke na geregtigheid.

Die kritiek waaronder hierdie drie en verskeie ander Suid-Afrikaanse vroue vanjaar deurgeloopt het, bevestig net weereens die lang pad wat Suid-Afrika nog moet stap voordat die speelveld gelyk sal wees vir mans en vroue in magsposisies.

Die media is veronderstel om regverdig te berig en moet nie bydra tot die onregverdigde aanvalle nie. Die media moet nooit sy vermoë om opinies te vorm onderskat nie en moet mooi dink oor die tipe beeld van die vrou wat hy oordra.

deur Roxanne Eastes

Boelie die MEDIA Suid-Afrikaanse vroue?

OOP KAARTE — MET — MURRAY LA VITA

Dit wat van **Murray La Vita** 'n gerekende profielskrywer maak, blyk ook sy grootste uitdaging te wees. **SMF** gesels met *Die Burger* se profielskrywer.



deur Jamaine Krige

Die groot man met die sagte stem sit in 'n klein kantoor by die Naspers-gebou en vee senuweeagtig sy lang hare uit sy gesig. Hy kyk gereeld na die hoek van die kamer. Dit wat van Murray La Vita so 'n gerekende profielskrywer maak, blyk ook sy grootste uitdaging te wees. As hy die dag oop kaarte speel, erken hy dat hy 'n introvert is.

“Die vermoë om goed te luister en goed waar te neem, is belangrik om 'n profiel te skryf. Die mens met wie jy 'n onderhoud voer, moet voel dat jy belangstel in wat gesê word, want die uiteindelige doel is dat iemand iets van homself moet deel. Net so is 'n goeie algemene kennis nodig en uiteraard moet 'n mens goed voorbereid wees.”

Murray, die profielskrywer, praat stadig. Elke klank resoneer eers in sy mond voor sy stem die boodskap die kamer indra. Hy praat met dieselfde afgemetenheid wat sy skryfwerk kenmerk. Sy woorde is sy instrument en die melodie van sy taal weergalm deur een van die klein kantoortjies by *Die Burger*.

“Tot 'n groot mate kom skryf vir my natuurlik. Dit was egter nie altyd so maklik nie, omdat ek eintlik 'n introvert is. Dis soms nou nog vir my moeilik om 'n onderhoud te voer; ek raak op my senuwees. Ek moes dit aanleer – om te ontspan.”

“

Dis soms nou nog vir my moeilik om 'n onderhoud te voer; ek raak op my senuwees. Ek moes dit aanleer - om te ontspan.

”

foto: Michael Hammond

Sy kaart is op die tafel, maar Murray skryf eerder oor die spel as oor sy eie hand. Oor sy Van Alle Kante-rubriek sê hy: "Dit raak moeiliker om te skryf. Dis miskien net 500 woorde, maar ek hou nie daarvan om oor aktuele goed te skryf nie. Soos Steve Hofmeyr wat Die Stem sing, dis net vir my ... nie my plek nie. Dis of ek nie die gesag het om myself uit te laat en menings te lug oor sulke kwessies nie. So ek skryf maar gewoonlik oor iets onbenulligs soos 'n skilpadjie ... of 'n slak."

Sy liefdesverhouding met die joernalistiek het in Stellenbosch begin toe hy joernalistiek studeer het. In 1987 het hy by 'n koerant in Pretoria aangesluit.

"Ek het direk na Stellenbosch by *Die Transvaler* as 'n misdaad-verslaggewer gaan werk; en toe as 'n militêre korrespondent, soos dit destyds genoem is ... in 1987 toe die weermag nog 'n groot teenwoordigheid in die samelewing was.

"Ek was nuusredakteur van *Die Transvaler* nadat *Die Transvaler* en *Die Vaderland* saamgesmelt het. En

daarna was ek Transvaalse redakteur van *Personality* en *Keur*." Toe word hy *Beeld*'se nagnuusredakteur en later kunsredakteur. Maar in 2002 pak hy sy tase en begin in die Kaap as nagedakteur by *Die Burger*.

"Ek voel tuis in die Kaap. As kind het ek al met vakansies lief geword vir die omgewing. Veral die Kaapse winters voel ek ... is vir my ..." Hy kyk weer na die hoek van die kamer en kies sy woorde versigtig. "Die winter in die noorde is vir my baie *depressing*, veral daai droë, stowwerige wêreld. Maar die winter in die Kaap ..."

Daar is nog 'n lang stilte. "Ag, ek weet dis 'n voorspelbare ding, maar dis net 'n geweldige mooi plek. Kaapstad is op 'n manier soos 'n Europese stad." Hy trek sy skouers op, asof hy die cliché probeer afskud. "Die ou geboue gee 'n mens daai gevoel van 'n ou stad wat jy nie in Johannesburg kry nie. Maar deesdae is dit meer opwindend, want hier is baie mense van ander Afrikalande en dit begin meer soos 'n Afrikastad voel."

Die Kaap het vir hom verandering gebring. Die koerant se profielskrywer

“

Ek stei baie belang in mense en hul stories is vir my boeiend, so in daai opsig is ek 'n mens-mens. Maar dan weer...

”

het bedank, en Murray het aansoek gedoen vir die posisie. Hoewel hy die nagkantoor geniet het, was dit nooit 'n langtermynopsie nie.

"My *beat* was eerder kuns as misdaad, en dan meer spesifiek om onderhoude te voer. Dis 'n wonderlike geleentheid om elke week met 'n interessante persoon te gesels. Ek het al met uitsonderlike mense onderhoude gevoer en dit is my gunsteling." Murray het by *Die Transvaler*, *Keur* en *Personality* ook onderhoude gedoen, en het ook destyds vir *De Kat* en *Die Suid-Afrikaan* vryskut geskryf.

Tog beskryf hy homself as skaam. "Mens kry verskillende soorte introverte. Mense sê dikwels ek kom nie oor as 'n introvert nie. Ek kan lekker *engage* as ek moet. Ek dwing myself. So ek is 'n introvert, maar ek sorg dat ek met die nodige geesdrif met mense gesels. Jy wil nie die een met wie jy praat oorweldig nie. Miskien is 'n introvert iemand wat beter reaksies ontlok met 'n sagter, matige benadering.

"Ek stel baie belang in mense en hulle stories is vir my boeiend, so in daai opsig is ek 'n mens-mens.

Murray La Vita in gesprek met Elio Menzione, die Italiaanse ambassadeur in Suid-Afrika



Maar dan weer . . ." Die stiltes raak langer maar word nooit ongemaklik nie. "Ek's nie iemand wat graag sosialiseer nie en hou nie daarvan om tussen 'n klomp mense te wees nie."

Verskeie faktore bepaal die onderhoude wat gevoer word. Soms kom dit van sy redakteur; soms kry hy wenke van ander mense.

"Ek is ook altyd op die uitkyk vir moontlike stories. Ek het byvoorbeeld nou die dag vir Mynie Grové raakgeloop by Casper de Vries se kunsuitstalling. Ek het met haar gesels en gedink ek wil graag met haar 'n onderhoud voer. Sy is bekend as 'n sanger, maar doen ook ander interessante dinge."

Murray se onderhoude is nooit kort nie. Met mense soos Katinka Heyns en Peter Veldsman het hy al ses uur lank gesit.



“

As ek 'n onderhoud geniet en dit maak 'n indruk op my, skryf ek ook lekker daaraan. Ek dink dis omdat mens so begeesterd is.

”

"Dis natuurlik makliker om 'n onderhoud te skryf wat meer gekonsentreerd was wat tyd betref. Dis moeilik om na ses uur se inligting te kyk en te luister en te distilleer."

Die notaboekie wat gereeld in foto's voor Murray gesien word, word meestal gebruik vir opmerkings oor die persoon en die omgewing. "As dit by iemand se huis is, skryf ek hoe dit daar lyk en is. Die ideaal is om die onderhoud in 'n omgewing te doen wat vir jou ook iets vertel oor daai mens, soos in 'n vertrek met foto's of dinge wat iets vertel oor hulle lewe. Dis dan 'n bykomende bron van inligting."

Maar 'n onderhoud is meer as net lekker gesels. Geweldig voorbereiding is nodig, nog voor

Murray die persoon se hand skud. "As dit 'n skrywer is, dan lees ek natuurlik die boek, en ander werke van die mens. En dan kyk ek wat reeds oor hulle gepubliseer is. Ek kom dikwels af op ander onderhoude en van daar af kry ek pointers en idees. Ek vra ook ander mense uit wat die persoon ken.

"Breyten Breytenbach het my al baie gehelp, want hy ken mense en het dikwels 'n goeie insig en kan ook voorstelle maak van wat om aan te roer."

Hy weier om 'n onderhoud uit te sonder as gunsteling, want "elke onderhoud is spesiaal op sy eie manier", maar bieg tog dat die lekkerste onderhoude ook dikwels die lekkerste lees. "As ek 'n onderhoud geniet en dit maak 'n indruk op my, skryf ek ook lekker daaraan. Ek dink dis omdat mens so begeesterd is."

Mense soos Annie Lennox van Eurythmics en Garry Kasparov "wat die wêreld se grootste skaakspeler is, is vanselfsprekend 'n belewenis". Professor Elize Botha was ook 'n hoogtepunt. "En Helen Suzman. Ek het met haar gepraat net nadat sy 90 geword het. En Breyten, natuurlik . . ."

Bo-aan die lysie van onderhoude wat nog gevoer moet word, is die musiek-legende Mick Jagger. "Oukei, dis 'n ligsinnige opmerking, want jy gaan nie maklik 'n onderhoud met so

iemand kry nie, en jy gaan nie veel van hom kry nie. Maar hy fassineer my . . . dat hy en die Rolling Stones pas 'n wêreldtoer gehad het, en hy is 70.

"Daar is natuurlik die uitdaging van iemand soos Karel Schoeman, wat so groot skrywer is maar . . . miskien is dit omdat hy so onbereikbaar is dat dit so groot behoefte vir my is om 'n onderhoud met hom te doen. Hy doen nie eintlik onderhoude nie, maar ek het regtig respek vir hom. Mense soos hy en JM Coetzee . . . hulle praat nie eintlik met mense nie."

Murray se boek, 'n omvattende bundel van sy gunsteling onderhoude met merkwaardige en bekende Suid-Afrikaners, het in 2012 verskyn. Die een teleurgestelling was dat 'n onderhoud met die kunstenaar en fotograaf Lien Botha weens 'n misverstand uitgeval het, "want ek wou regtig haar storie inhê".

Murray praat moeilik oor sy private lewe. Hy lag ongemaklik en vee sy hare uit sy gesig as daar gevra word oor die lewe wat hy nie in Saterdag se bylae met sy lesers deel nie. "Daar is geen troeteldiere wat saans vir my wag nie. Daar is 'n porselein-kat in die tuin . . . en ek het 'n vriendin saam met wie ek woon.

"Ons is seker al tien jaar saam. Sy's 'n kunstenaar en ontwerper."

Murray het 'n tyd lank meubels

gemaak, maar ontwerp nie meer nie. "Ek het nog 'n obsessie met stoele. 'n Mooi stoel is vir my moeilik om te weerstaan."

Vir skryf was daar geen kompetisie nie. Uitsaai-joernalistiek was nooit aanloklik nie. "Ek het nooit regtig in enige ander medium as *print* gewerk nie. Miskien omdat ek 'n introvert is. Ek het verlede week met iemand 'n onderhoud gevoer by sy boek-bekendstelling en dit was vir my . . ." Hy skud net sy kop en vee oor sy gesig asof hy steeds voor die skare staan. "Die sweet tap my af as ek voor mense moet praat. Dit verloop altyd goed en dit sou miskien oor die radio baie goed geklink het, maar as jy naby aan my sit dan kan jy sien hoe tap die sweet my af." ■

Murray se profielonderhoude, Oop Kaarte, verskyn Vrydae in *Die Burger*, en die rubriek 'Van Alle Kante' elke tweede Saterdag.



IT'S HAMMAN TIME



by Andrea Krüger

For just a short while, Nick Hamman was the new kid on the block at 5FM. Since the station's line-up changes in May this year, Nick has settled into the dynamic new breakfast show seamlessly. Now, "newbie" and "Nick" seem like the most unusual combination.

It's 07:55 and Nick Hamman is taking the last sip of his coffee. In the following minutes he puts on his headphones, adjusts the microphone and clears his throat. At 08:00 he greets the world.

In the radio industry the voice rarely matches the picture you have in your head. With a voice that will make a waterfall sound scratchy, along with his boyish looks, Nick is no exception. He is exceptional though.

Grant Nash, ex-5FM radio personality and radio broadcasting lecturer at Boston Media House, explains it well.

"There are 4 500 brain surgeons registered in South Africa. On the other hand, there are only 968 people in South Africa who make a living out of radio. It is easier to become a brain surgeon than a radio person."

After Gareth Cliff left 5FM, Nick took over his place and he is loving every single second of making a living out of radio.

"The fact that there are no massive egos at 5FM was the biggest surprise. Having worked in the broadcasting industry long enough I have come to meet many incredibly arrogant and unprofessional people."

Nick pauses to think for a moment. "5FM is the antithesis. People at the station are friendly, approachable and professional with a shared love for the art of radio."

The interest from 5FM began back when Tim Zunckel, programme manager of the station, was made aware of Nick's submission to the 2012 MTN radio awards for best campus drive show, which Nick ended up winning.

From there they kept in contact and eventually the offer came for him to join the team.

"I think they wanted me for my ability to do what a lot of people in the industry can't, which is to be versatile and informed. As well as for my ability to create unique content and because I fit within the epicentre of their target audience."

Zunckel likes to emphasise the mind shift that accompanies successful radio personalities.

"You have to invest in yourself. If you are not prepared to move yourself from your comfort zone, your



5FM is the antithesis. People at the station are friendly, approachable and professional with a shared love for the art of radio.



chances of success are far less. If you are passionate about the industry, you will go to where the job is."

That is exactly what Nick did. Having only ever lived in Cape Town, the move to Johannesburg was a big one.

He struggles to sit still. "The city has been fantastic though. Jo'burgers are very friendly, driven and positively competitive people. 5FM had been a dream for a long time and it's still sinking in that it's a reality."

His passion for the arts started from a young age. From magic shows from the age of five, to improvised sketch comedy performances at seven, he always knew he liked performing. Just not that he would end up in radio performance.

"In school I was involved in drama, the choir, the jazz band and the concert band. To make money as a teenager, I would play at restaurants, weddings, 21sts, 50ths, etc.

"It wasn't until being serendipitously introduced to radio during my second year of varsity that I realised it was a way to combine and pursue all the cultural disciplines that I loved."

After school, Nick went to Stellenbosch University to study BA Humanities and became involved in the campus station MFM92.6. In his two years there he became head presenter, station producer and host of the afternoon drive show.

At first he was hesitant to talk about his awards and achievements, but he complied after a while.

"I won five MFM awards in 2012, as well as an MTN radio award and Good Hope FM's campus DJ search. I was then picked up by Good Hope FM and given the weekend breakfast show which I hosted until March of this year."

When discussing MFM, Nick gestures passionately. It was here that he once got a compliment from the programme manager, Michael Bossenger, which he will never forget.

"He was the first person to ever tell me that he thought I could have a career in the radio industry."

Fans on different social media platforms seem to think so too. Yvonne Hulley commented on 5FM's Facebook page that she loves Nick's wit, his way and his wisdom. And ac-

cording to Tarryn Barnard, Nick is like a breath of fresh air in the mornings.

Charl Edwards, who went to school with Nick, has been one of his biggest fans from the start.

"Nick is quite literally the personification of the word hilarious. Not just 'kinda funny' or your run-of-the-mill funny guy, he comes up with the sharpest wit since Jeremy Clarkson."

Being asked what he thinks are the most critical problems faced by people in the radio industry, Nick has an answer ready.

"Many people feel they deserve a shot in this industry. The reality is, it's competitive and not for everybody. Also, people can be incredibly mean to those in the industry."

"A lot of people in the public eye do not take abuse as well as some people might think. I think the trick is to separate yourself from it and also learn to laugh at yourself on occasion."

With a freshly brewed cup of coffee, things take a lighter turn. Nick's entertainment streak is evident from the nonchalantly serious yet bemused look he has perfected.

"I lost my right pinkie in quite a mundane accident when I was two. I've had countless hours of fun telling people stories of how that happened and convincing drunk people that I've made my finger disappear."

He suddenly remembers another childhood tale.

Grinning widely, Nick explains. "I used to detest wearing clothes as a child, which I showed the world when I was about five and I ran away from my mother's trolley in Pick n Pay and was found naked in the sweet aisle."

It seems as though he enjoys living on the wild side, seeing as he gets a kick phoning into other people's radio shows. With an accent, of course, so as to not get recognised.

He can also do fire poi.

"You know, when people dance around shirtless, rhythmically swinging around metal chains with balls of fire on the end of them?"

As he gets ready to meet with his executive producer, Nick seems deep in thought.

"I've been thinking about it and you know what, I can actually say that I wake up each morning excited to go to work. That makes me really proud." ■

FAVOURITES:

Live performance?

"Muse's performance at Cokefest in 2008."

Song?

"I once read a quote saying, 'The best music is that which I have not yet heard'. I really like it and agreed with it. I can't say I have a single favourite song as it depends on my mood, the space I'm in, who I'm with."

Music festival?

"This is a close call between Oppikoppi and the Cape Town Jazz Festival. I'm going to have to go with Koppo though."

Artist?

"It really does change constantly, but as a safe stock-standard, Frank Zappa."

PUPPETS & Politics



by Sherlin Barends

SMF discusses "South Africa's culture of blackface" with ventriloquist Conrad Koch and his political puppet, Chester Missing, who not only accuses Koch of doing blackface, but of profiting from it too.

Chester Missing is angry. "Who the f*ck is this guy? First he corrects me and dominates me to be something that I didn't choose to be. Now this? I mean is his surname Verwoerd? No, he can go to hell!"

The puppet is responding to Conrad Koch threatening to paint him purple. Though I should probably call him Doctor Chester Missing. I should also probably mention that "Chester is the boss". Dr Chester Missing received his PhD from "the university of life". "I just expropriated the title, without compensation, at the same place Pallo Jordon got his from," Chester remarks.

Chester accuses Conrad of profiting from blackface: With Conrad being the white puppet master and Chester the black/brown puppet and all.

"But he does, he does it all the time and it is absolutely disgusting. How do you think he makes money? Someone needs to do something about it. Can the Human Rights

Commission not get involved?"

The "puppet" made this accusation during the Johannesburg Blacks Only Comedy Show, in front of a crowd of 3 000.

I say "puppet" in quotation marks because Chester is more of an institution.

"Chester became a big brand on his own," Conrad explains. "We do the gig and it's my show, but they're booking Chester Missing. I was once booked into a hotel room under the name Chester Missing."

Some of Chester's more memorable interviews include Malusi Gigaba. "He gave me ties for Christmas. It's always nice when you get a bribe from a senior politician.

"Then there's Helen Zille, whom I asked how many hours a day she practices being black. She told me that my head looks like Jacob Zuma's. I only have one head, so I don't know what she means.

"I also really enjoyed interviewing Sports Minister Fikile Mbalula earlier this week. I got to ask him about bringing the Olympics to South Africa. We can hold it in Nkandla since we have already built the swimming pool

and auditorium."

Chester is yet to interview Jacob Zuma. "No. It's always too complicated. He is always waiting for the Nkandla report, lying about the Nkandla report or hiding the spy tapes."

So paint Chester purple and the problem of blackface is solved?

No. "We need to become more culturally aware of the dynamics of race," says Conrad. "We need to be more aware of how we isolate black people by pointing out their race when it is unnecessary, but at the same time we need to be conscious of the historical unfairness of race politics."

Does this mean that characters like Chester Missing and Leon Shuster's Mama Jack perpetuate the culture of blackface?

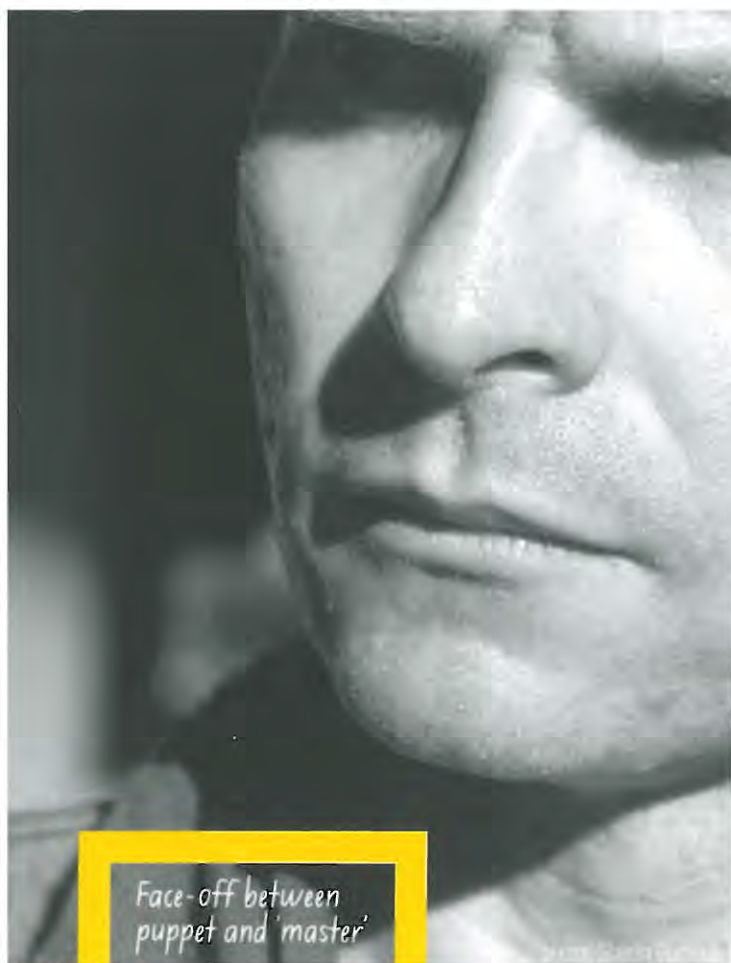
"This is exactly why I feel uncomfortable with being Chester. So immediately it's a 'well you do it too' sort of thing. It is a problem, which is why I'm going 'mmm what race should Chester be?'"

"Please don't make him purple!" The words fall clumsily from my mouth and journalistic objectivity flies out of the window. I am surprised and embarrassed at how invested I am in the colour of the puppet with the foam and latex head and body out of dense foam.

"The number of black people that are going 'please don't make him purple' is ridiculous, so I get it," Conrad adds swiftly.

Then why is Chester Missing "completely different to Mama Jack," as Conrad puts it. Both characters are black and their creators are white.

Local male satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys, who often frequents the stage as Evi-ta Bezuidenhout, explains: "Conrad Koch does not put black make-up on his face. He has a black puppet, yes, but this is not blackface. I think Conrad does great work. Blackface is when you put black make-up on your face, like what Leon Schuster



Face-off between puppet and 'master'

does with Mama Jack."

Conrad agrees. "Mama Jack references black identity in a stereotypical way that makes you laugh at black identity. Also what makes *Late Nite News* with Loyiso Gola' (an Emmy-nominated satirical show Chester often graces) a completely different context, is the fact that it's a black satirical show: the questions are written by a black guy, the producer is a black guy and the host is a black guy. It is completely ridiculous to talk



Blackface is when you put black make-up on your face, like what Leon Schuster does with Mama Jack.



about that as comparable with Mama Jack. Chester is primarily talking back to me about me. Chester does no jokes, literally no jokes about coloured people.

"If he does do a coloured joke it will be about how the media has gotten so used to portraying colour-edness in a negative light. This guy started to think that Trevor Manuel is Italian. That is Chester's only coloured joke. So you can see quite clearly that it is completely different to Mama Jack walking out there and just 'naturally' being black."

Nonetheless, Conrad is the first to admit his failings. "Yes of course, I often get it wrong. Chester started out as a coloured guy. At first he used to say 'bra' with a heavy accent. I was conscious, so I did not want to keep up the stereotype for long.

"I sort of broke that identity apart. I got a whole new puppet: a whole different looking, sounding thing. I came back with something that was more conscious. So that's why I understand when white people get it wrong. I understand the confusion. We are naïve. But I'm not going to let white people off, because in a sense

it's like letting myself off. And I can't afford to do that, if I'm going to be questioning black people who went to Robben Island and stuff.

"I get it wrong less now. But sometimes I can be too strong on white people. What this does is that it sort of alienates a section of the room. They are laughing ... but it's difficult because when you upset them, they just run away. They have the power, the status quo, they have the most money as far as ticket sales in the country are concerned. So this really evil self-perpetuating world exists where white audiences only see stuff that make them feel okay about their whiteness. They never see stuff that challenges them. Those artists then become more successful and you hear more of them. I call it the Steve Hofmeyr syndrome."

Does this heightened awareness and a black alter-ego make him a self-hating white?

"He is!" Chester shouts.

There is a two-second pause, which compared to the constant chit chat, feels like an eternity. "I love myself. I have loads of white friends, whom I love dearly. I know some super progressive, forward thinking and intelligent white people," Conrad says.

"The problem is that we need to deal with whiteness and white privilege. And that is all I am trying to do. The problem is not white people as a whole. Because white people are much more complex than just their race. So it looks like I'm bashing white people, but it is because a certain debate has not happened.

"We need to acknowledge the past, because all of the platforms we have right now allow us to go 'well when are you getting over Apartheid?' which is completely unreasonable. At the same time it is not unreasonable to say that we should create shared joy at the good parts of our country.

"It is true that the oppressor's tools can't liberate the oppressed", is the pale man's response to his dark political puppet who claims to unshackle South Africa's mentally enchained. Still, "Chester could be the 'Trojan horse to get the idea across'." ■

THE THEN AND NOW OF BLACKFACE

"Blackface is more than just burnt cork, or black paint, applied as makeup" to a white face, says Blackface.com. Instead it is also a form of entertainment centred on racist black stereotypes, which was popularised in the 1820s. Here the idea that blacks were "racially and socially inferior" was perpetuated through exaggerated portrayals of blackness, on and off the stage.

Light was again shone on this contentious issue this year. Two white, female students from the the University of Pretoria appeared in a photograph, bodies covered in black paint and donning domestic worker outfits. An investigation has since been launched and the perpetrators have been suspended from their residences.

Barely two months later, at the end of September, two male students from Stellenbosch University covered themselves in a black substance. They were dressing up as tennis-star sisters Venus and Serena Williams, for a birthday party. "No disciplinary action" was taken against the students.

#BLACKFACE TWEETS

— @chestermissing —

"Blackface dudes from Stellenbosch not getting punished at all because 20 years was just not enough to get the f**cking point"

"Does this mean Pallo Jordan is academicface?"



Mel 

"I want to inspire, educate and encourage future South Africans to enter into the world of the arts. I want my knowledge and passion to resonate through my work."



@foxyanne_2

"Eendag as ek groot is wil ek my eie vroegoggend- of laataandkletsprogram hê. Tot dan wil ek so veel ervaring as moontlik opdoen in alle aspekte van joernalistiek"



REGO


"There will come a time when you won't be able to switch your radio on without recognising my voice, you also won't be able read something without my name being on it and you especially won't learn things without my involvement being tied to it."



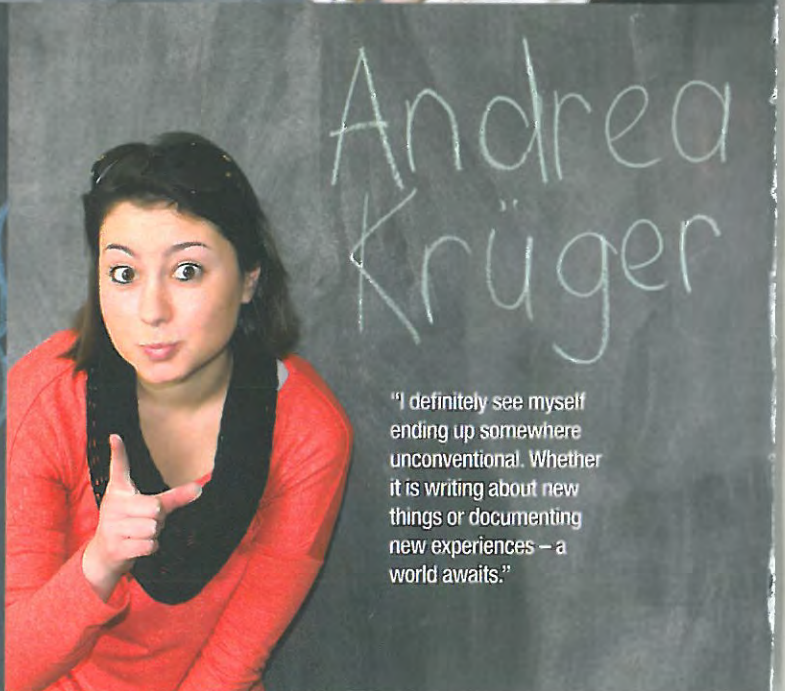
Gretchen

"I want to make people excited about the world around them by sharing stories that people didn't know they wanted to hear about until they heard them."



Tamsyn Lunt 

"I want to tell stories for the rest of my life. I want to produce new content that makes people change their world perspectives. Mostly, I want to ask questions."



Andrea Krüger

"I definitely see myself ending up somewhere unconventional. Whether it is writing about new things or documenting new experiences – a world awaits."

Dominique ♡

"If I was today where I thought I would be 10 years ago, I would have restricted myself to my comfort zone. So for now, I will embrace every opportunity to go above and beyond what I might limit myself to today."



Anvra Denita

"Using the power of video, I will find the strongest, weirdest, most exciting stories all over the world and share it on whichever platform I can."



WILLIAM HORNE

"With novels, graphic design, stats, data, coding and anything ground-breakingly digital, I'll tell stories all over the world. Novelty is key; the cutting-edge is crucial."



Chelsea

"I'm the living cliché of a girl with a passion for fashion – and proud of it. Hopefully, one day I'll be combining my love for shoes with my love for storytelling."



iske

"Currently there is only one competitive teen magazine in South Africa and limited alternative voices in teen media worldwide. I'm going to fill that gap with excellent teen media."



Nic

"Dirty oceans. Fast food. Corrupt politicians. Money hungry. The balance is wrong. We can fight for a life outside this one. I'm here to pursue it."





Hesmari
Greyvenstein

"I want to combine my passion for cooking with my love of travel; exploring and getting to know more than the world around me, and giving the rest of the world an opportunity to know them too."



"I want to tell the world's stories through my writing and my camera. Everyone has a story but with my love for people, journalism and photography, mine has just begun."

Megan



Jamaine

"Outside of my comfort zone is where the magic happens. I would love to work as a conflict correspondent - making stories that would otherwise go untold, accessible to the masses."

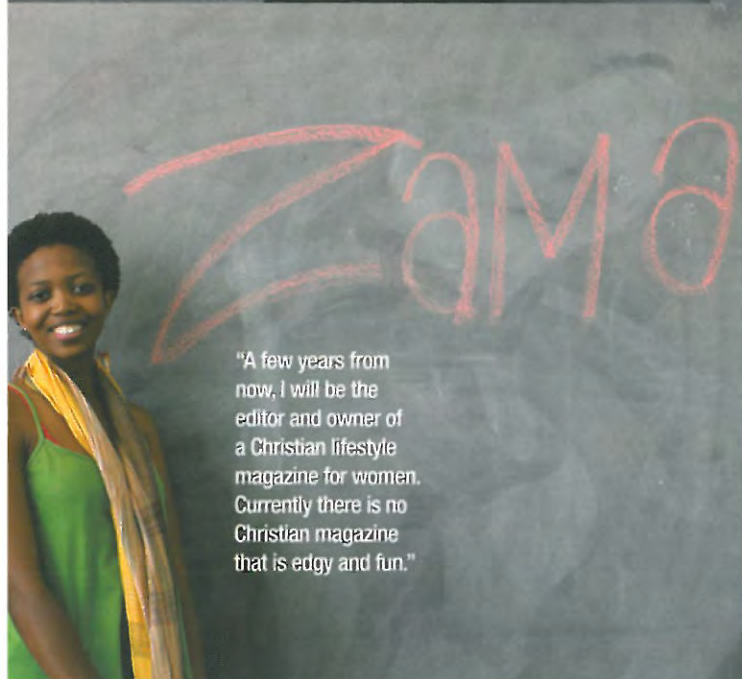


Krige



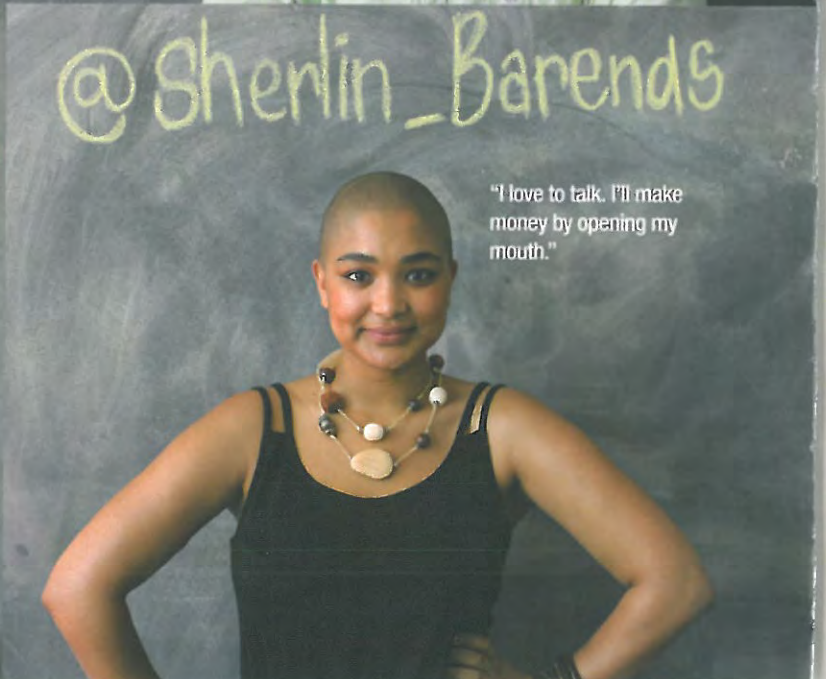
jacoduplessis.co.za

"Solank ek gereeld uit my gemaksonne beweeg, is ek gelukkig. Ek wil skryf, foto's neem en video's maak, maar ook eendag 'n publikasie bestuur."



Zama

"A few years from now, I will be the editor and owner of a Christian lifestyle magazine for women. Currently there is no Christian magazine that is edgy and fun."



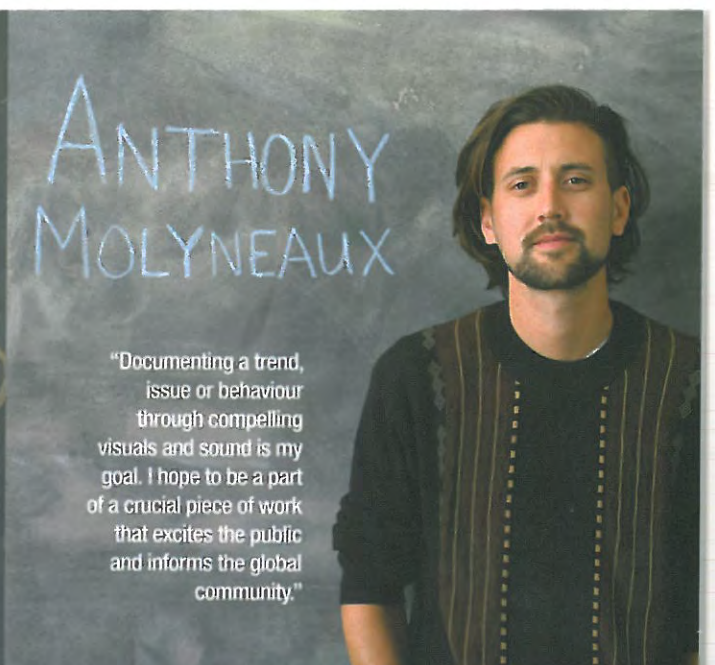
@Sherlin_Barends

"I love to talk. I'll make money by opening my mouth."



Alita Wilkens

"I want to be surrounded by politics without being a politician. News is my passion and I want to bring it into people's homes as a trusted reporter."



ANTHONY MOLYNEAUX

"Documenting a trend, issue or behaviour through compelling visuals and sound is my goal. I hope to be a part of a crucial piece of work that excites the public and informs the global community."



GOSE TSEMANG

"Through writing and telling stories, journalism has the ability to make a positive impact on people's lives and I want to be a part of that process."



Petrus

"Ek wil die artikel skryf in die tydskrif op jou tafel. Ek vertel stories oor enige iets, solank dit oor mense gaan. Daarbenewens sal ek ook die fliëkresensie wil skryf voor jy die bioskoop op 'n Vrydagaand besoek."



BAm!

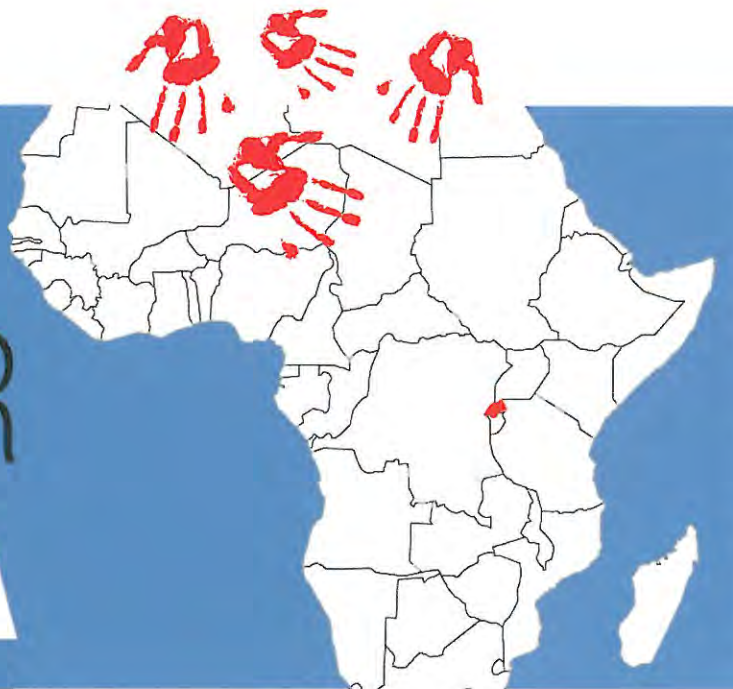
"I want to use words and visuals to educate and empower audiences, and promote social justice and democracy."



@the_sthem92

"Looking forward to contributing to radio. It is relevant, engaging, breaks boundaries and is easily accessible by many. It is the best platform to change hearts and minds."

NO REST FOR RWANDA



by Nicholas Glanvill

South Africans experienced a miracle in 1994, the beginning of a peaceful transition from one of the most oppressive regimes in the 20th century. This year marks 20 years of celebration, but less than 4 000km north, Rwanda struggles to do the same.

While South African leaders were organising the country's first ever elections, Hutu leaders in Rwanda were orchestrating a genocide against the Tutsi population, with near no reprieve from the international community.

The Akazu, the Hutu elite that instigated the mass killings, have largely been accounted for, bar some. Callixte Mbarushimana has been tried on five accounts of crimes against humanity, and enjoys refugee status in France. Callixte Nzabonimana,

named after him, is functioning as a Rwandan rebel group in the east of the DRC. Protais Mpiranya is being looked after by ZANU-PF.

Some Akazu henchmen have been imprisoned for killing a hundred, or several hundred, or a thousand. Bill Clinton said that had Western leaders acted sooner, they could have saved at least 300 000 lives.

General Romeo Dallaire of the United Nations Mission for Rwanda spoke at the UN headquarters in New York, three months prior to the beginning of the killings. During the height of murder, the US requested \$10 million before armoured vehicles could be sent over for defence. They also deemed \$8 500 an hour too expensive an operation for shutting down the murder-enticing Radio des Mille Collines.

“ Money follows interest, and interest is largely driven by media attention, which is more easily captured by the drama of conflict than by peace. - Roméo Dallaire ”

A Belgian military contingent deserted a refugee camp of 2 500 Tutsis to find sanctuary at a nearby airport.

Not long after, those they left behind were massacred. And it was the Belgium colony that had created the caste system, fueling decades of the Hutu's hate for the then preferred, and politically engineered, 'racially superior' Tutsis.

At the time, Western media were more enthused by the violence that was supposedly inevitable in South Africa, and the Bosnian ethnic cleansing, where Western powers had supplied 50 000 troops. Compare this to the 400 soldiers reluctantly provided by the UN Security Council to Rwanda.

The UN only recognised the killings as genocide six months after they had stopped.

There were five murders and four rapes a minute in those 100 days. And so 20 years later, apologies for inaction are still being issued. And they look to continue.

The more this is done, though,

the more fingers will continue to be pointed. The more it will hurt to remember that nothing was done.

Aid for Rwanda has been frozen by most of these apologetic nations, who accuse President Paul Kagame of supplying artillery for M23 rebels in the DRC, a country Rwanda has been at deathly odds with since 1996 as a result of the genocide. Hutu rebels found sanctuary over the border, and Kagame will never forget.

It is estimated that the conflict in the DRC has caused five times the casualties of those 100 days. Twenty thousand UN troops are on the ground trying to stop the rebel group.

Eight years later, and still no result. Those who have suffered are able to point their fingers at the West, but there is still no respite from the killing.

After 20 years, all Rwanda needs is a rest. Leaders have had time to do something, and they haven't. The international media aren't helping enough. Tensions still exist between Paul Kagame and the exiled Hutus. Something the apologisers might again someday be sorry for. ■



TRUTH AND PREJUDICE



by Helené Bam

What makes coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict so globally absorbing is the way truth is presented on both sides of the barbed-wire fence.

The recent conflict in Israel-Palestine has put the complexity of truth in conflict zones under the global microscope. In part this is a result of the tangible historical involvement of the United States of America as well as the greater Middle Eastern region in the conflict. There are plenty of geopolitical, religious and economic interests at stake.

Matti Friedman, a former Associated Press journalist working for Haaretz, argues that the Israel-Palestine conflict "creates a certain divide all over the world": people are pro-Israel or pro-Palestine, supportive of the oppressors or the oppressed. Israel is either the bully or the suffering hero. On the other side Palestine is either the victim or the unlawful aggressor.

Hamas claim to be freedom fighters, battling the oppression dished out by Israel. They believe that their tunnelling into Israel and their erratic and seldom effective rocket fire are justified because Israel actively violates every Palestinian's human dignity. Israel claims that Hamas is

nothing more than a terrorist group.

These conflicting narratives have the double impact of attempting to justify military action to protect Israel's sovereignty as well as Hamas's attacks against Israel.

Anton Harber, from the department of journalism at The University of the Witwatersrand, offers insight into the complexity of reporting the truth in conflict zones. "A journalist's job is not to select a narrative, or to attack another one, but to sift through them as best one can and convey to the audience the complexities of competing narratives."

This notion lies at the very core of journalism, but Harber is careful to temper it with a realistic approach. "This does not mean that we give the same weight to all versions, thereby trying to balance the truth, but that we give our audience the tools to assess their relative validity.

"There is a place for both neutral, arms-length reporting and for subjective opinions and analysis, as long as one does it with honesty, veracity, and transparency, so the audience is fully aware of what you are trying to do.



In our own country, we have seen that advocacy journalism has produced some of the best and some of the worst journalism.

"The worst comes from narrow advocacy of a political party or special interest; the best comes from advocacy of broad social goals, such as human rights. The test then is whether one is honest, fair, balanced and acting in pursuit of the truth rather than any special interest."

The complexity of truth

Both Israel and Palestine know the value of their respective narratives within the global community. Paul Shinkman, a national security reporter for the US News & World Report, states that the most recent conflict "is as much a battle of firepower as a battle of news feeds".

In both the battles, it is Israel that boasts technological superiority. The Israeli Defence Force (IDF) has an English Twitter account that was updated daily during the July and Au-

gust conflict; they have spokespeople fluent in English and a much more polished overall news production.

Hamas's means of producing and distributing its narrative is a bit like its rocket fire and tunnels: primitive in comparison to Israel's. They only have an Arabic Twitter account and their correspondents struggle to speak fluent English. But that does not mean that their side of the story is not heard. The global community is as drawn to Hamas's version of events as it is sympathetic to their defence against the IDF offensive.

On July 29, the IDF bombed a building in Gaza containing the offices of the Hamas-run news station, Al-Aqsa. At the same time it became apparent that Israel was specifically targeting news outlets throughout Gaza. The reasoning seems ruthless but effective: destroy the opposition's means of producing and publishing their own narrative so that only your's remains. The week before, the Israeli Broadcasting Authority prohibited a feature by BTselem, an Israeli

NGO, which listed the names of 150 children killed in Gaza.

But the physical capacity to produce and publish one's narrative is not the only limiting factor standing in the way of making one's voice heard. Seth Frantzman, a journalist working for the *Jerusalem Post*, argues that language and accessibility also hamper the construction of accurate narratives.

"Our staff is basically all Jewish journalists, so covering a conflict that involves Palestinians may be problematic, because only one or two of our reporters speak Arabic. How can a newspaper fully do justice to a minority community or a conflict when it has few reporters from that community, especially in a conflict with deep polarisation?"

"Few Israeli journalists even go into Arab towns in Israel or the West Bank, and none, as far as I know, go to Gaza anymore. So that harms the ability to give the full story and creates cookie-cutter narratives about Arabs, rather than the journalists

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While it is important for a journalist to be as unbiased as possible, inevitably a person ends up taking sides

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photos: South African Friends of Israel



going to see for themselves what is happening."

Propaganda and censorship in the Israel-Palestine conflict are deeply controversial but also ingrained in the attitudes of the two nations toward each other, so that one can rightly enquire as to the existence of any objective truth, anywhere, in the entire conflict.

Frantzman adds that most journalists covering the conflict are "based in Israeli Jewish areas, not among Palestinians, and when they visit Palestinians they do so in an SUV with a 'minder' or 'fixer' who tells them who to meet; rarely do they walk the streets and find the story or narrative themselves".

The journalist's mandate

How must a journalist, intent upon an ethical and thorough investigation, even begin to make sense of this complexity of narratives, firstly for him- or herself, and secondly for his

or her audience?

Paula Slier, a celebrated conflict journalist who set up her own media company in the Middle East called Newshound, is quick to point out that "the sooner a journalist can become familiar with the different role players and their respective political agendas, the easier it is to discern fact and opinion.

"When joining together reports from many different sources on a single issue, you will never come away with one objective, whole truth. Rather, you will realise the multitude of perspectives that exist and you must deal with a relative truth."

Once the political narrative has been established, it is up to the journalist to do what journalists are paid to do: check and double-check the facts, the sources and the narratives.

"Our job as a conflict reporters is to relay events happening on the ground. We provide the dry facts and let the subjects tell their own story so the viewer draws his or her own conclusion."

Foeta Krige, editor of *Monitor* and *Spektrum* at RSG, adds that the journalist working in war zones has to remain humble, and above all, honest.

"Tell the listeners what you see, but also what you don't see. Observe everyone's actions.

"Talk to the victims, quote the leaders, the families, the NGOs, the eyewitnesses and ordinary people. Let them tell the story without trying to explain or editorialise."

Various prominent South African and international journalists have weighed in on the subject of truth, or truths, in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

But, as Slier says, "being unbiased is impossible by definition as after all we are humans and therefore tend to support the oppressors or the oppressed.

"While it is important for a journalist to be as unbiased as possible, inevitably a person ends up taking sides," she adds.

The temptation to report both sides of every skirmish equally and to give one's audience the means to validate

relativity for themselves could possibly lead to a false balance in reporting, where the same amount of time and attention is given to invalid positions.

But perhaps there aren't always two sides.

"There are circumstances when one steps outside the traditional role of an objective, balanced observer, but they are rare," says Franz Kruger, ombudsman for the *Mail & Guardian*.

"But what one considers important would obviously be shaped by what one believes to be the 'truth' of the situation."

Jan-Jan Joubert, South African journalist, contends that "sometimes evil is just evil".

"But when you realise the other side is wrong you don't just ignore them, you simply show what they do. It will be a lot more powerful if you show your reader and audience what takes place instead of telling them.

"When there is evil taking place it is your responsibility as a human being as well as a journalist to reveal it for what it is." ■



photo: Anthony Mayneaux

MEDIA FEAST ON REAL MEAL REVOLUTION



SMF explores the media's role in the phenomenon of Tim Noakes's diet book *The Real Meal Revolution*.

by Dominique Oosthuizen

how South Africans must fight obesity and diabetes by eating high-fat, low-carbohydrate food.

MPs and the staff of parliament expressed support for the diet and advocated that they would soon be introducing elements of the high-fat low-carbohydrate diet into the parliament menu.

No mention was made of the science behind the diet and whether or not dietitians or doctors agree with Noakes.

Less than a week later, on 25 August, the newspaper's front page headline read: "UCT doctors slam Noakes".

Noakes was taken on by medical experts over the claims he made.

Why did the media not include

critique of his claims initially?

Why did they report on a diet that is not supported by any clinical studies?

Most importantly, why did the media make Noakes and *The Real Meal Revolution* the most reported health topic this year?

Magazines included high-fat low-carbohydrate recipes, the *Real Meal Revolution* became a phenomenon, and Noakes became a synonym for weight loss.

His book sold over 120 000 copies and was number one on the Exclusive Books' best seller list, despite cardiologist Anthony Dalby calling Noakes's claims "criminal" and Jacques Rousseau, ethics lecturer at the University of Cape Town, calling it "bad science".

“

The media 'took sides' and positioned Noakes as the messiah delivering the world from eise that is evil.

”

It is rarely that you find two conflicting reports on the cover of a newspaper in one week.

On 19 August 2014, Professor Timothy Noakes, a renowned sport scientist at the University of Cape Town, appeared on the front page of *The Cape Times* after he addressed parliament on the Banting diet and handing over his diet book, *The Real Meal Revolution*, to the deputy speaker of parliament, Lechesa Tsenoli.

The article's headline read 'SA's ticking time bomb' and emphasised

What Noakes says

According to Noakes, people only criticise the diet because the high-fat low-carbohydrate element is threatening to medicine and dietetics.

"The high-fat low-carbohydrate diet suggests that the pharmacological model of disease is all wrong. Dieticians have been taught only one model of nutrition: Fat is bad and cut the fat," Noakes told SMF.

"People are tired of getting the wrong information from the 'experts'. People do the Banting diet and it works for them. The Real Meal Revolution is a phenomenon that is unprecedented and it will go global. South Africa is just the beginning."

Academics' criticism

Academics such as Professor George Claassen, lecturer in science and technology journalism at Stellenbosch University, are not as enthusiastic about the diet's success and the role the media played in making it a social revolution.

"It is easy to say that you must reduce your carbohydrate intake and that you can eat as much fat as you want because it is healthy for you.

"But there are no clinical studies to support his evidence. We do not know whether or not people who follow this diet will die of a heart attack within the next 10 years."

Claassen believes that a lack of criticism from the media and poor health reporting contributed to making the diet as popular as it is.

"The biggest criticism of Noakes comes from scientists, not from health journalists, because for journalists Noakes makes a good story.

"Where are his clinical studies? Journalists only started asking critical questions regarding Noakes's research recently. Why did the media not ask critical questions from the beginning?"

"Unfortunately the media cannot distinguish between quackery and the real McCoy and therefore did not ask critical questions regarding the diet soon enough."

Dr Vash Mungal-Singh, chief executive officer at the Heart and Stroke Foundation (HSFSA), says that the media 'took sides' and positioned Noakes as the messiah delivering the

world from all that is evil.

"The press played the devil's advocate role and used it as a strategy to increase readership. Controversy and conspiracy theories generate interest; sensible advice does not."

Stellenbosch University's Centre for Evidence-based Health Care published research that concluded that Noakes's Banting diet is neither healthier nor more effective for weight loss than other recommended balanced diets.

The review, which was published in the *PLOS ONE* journal, consisted of a meta-analysis of 19 international studies and was led by Dr Celeste Naude.

According to Mungal-Singh, a number of inaccuracies emerged in the media's interpretation of the Stellenbosch University review.

"Unlike what the media said, the purpose of the research was not to 'attack' Noakes, but rather to find answers to the many questions posed to us by the public.

"Unlike what the media said, the Heart and Stroke Foundation did not pay for the study – it was an independent research activity in which the HSFSA played no role."

Mungal-Singh says that the media played a significant role in creating confusion in the public space by reporting on the Banting diet excessively.

"The media should not stir controversies. The media have a great responsibility and should better understand what the medical debate (about whether or not a high-fat low carbohydrate diet is healthy for you) is based on. This will ensure unbiased reporting."

"Journalists have the responsibility to disseminate safe, sensible, and scientifically sound information," says Harry Dugmore, director of the Centre for Health Journalism at Rhodes University.

The media's response

"It is the duty of journalists to make sure that what you are writing is true, that it is right and that it is factual.

"Yes, the Noakes diet made a media storm," adds Dugmore. "But it also got people talking and thinking about the need to be healthy, the need to get fit and the need to eat properly. That makes him a rock star."

A health journalist for one of the major daily newspapers agrees that the media promoted a diet that might have negative medical implications in the long run.

Because she agrees that the media played a role in promoting the diet she does not want to be named, as she fears that she might be discredited.

"The media wrote about him not because they care about nutrition, but because Noakes is popular and people like to read stories about him.

"We wrote about Noakes because it sells papers and gets clicks."

Furthermore, this journalist believes



The media play a crucial role in spreading bad science by creating and sustaining the 'wave' of interest and 'cultish' nature of these movements.



that most health journalists do not have the scientific knowledge to disseminate accurate information – and because Noakes was able to speak easily to the media and was willing to go on television he could promote his message

"Most scientists will not speak to the media openly.

"Noakes used the media to fuel the diet and promote his book and he did it well."

However, she is of the opinion that the increased interest in health is a good thing.

"Noakes has popularised the

idea that sugar is toxic and refined carbohydrates are not great. That is an important message for the people to hear.

"Yes, maybe the media allowed Noakes to promote a high-fat, low-carbohydrate diet that could harm people in ten years from heart disease.

"It is not like what we are eating now is any better.

"There is evidence in support of Noakes's claims and there is evidence against the diet. Frankly, if people use the high-fat diet to lose weight – then that is great. Losing weight is important for our health."

Petro-Ann Vlok, who recently covered the Noakes diet for *You* and *Huisgenoot*, holds that the media fuelled the debate to a certain extent.

Vlok's article titled, "Just Another Fad?", appeared in March this year. The article states Noakes's arguments as well as the arguments dieticians make regarding a high-fat low-carbohydrate diet.

"It is a hot topic. That is why the media wrote about it. We need to write for our readers and that is what the readers want to read about.

"It is not necessarily a bad thing that the media fuelled the debate and that the diet got so much media attention.

"The result was that people got to look at the diet more critically instead of the diet just being accepted.

"I think it is like a chicken and egg situation. What came first? Was the diet popular before it got so much media attention or did the diet become popular because it got so much media attention?"

Spreading bad science

Naude says that questioning current knowledge is a fundamental part of the advancement of science, but reporting on it must be done in a reasonable way.

"Media can play a crucial role in spreading bad science by creating and sustaining the 'wave' of interest and 'cultish' nature of these movements.

"Giving an unreliable, controversial health message 'airtime' by reporting on it continuously because it sells media is not responsible journalism, especially in a country with many vulnerable people." ■

DEALING WITH THE MEDICAL INNOVATION BILL



by Nicholas Glanvill

Parliament will decide if cannabis should be legalised in March 2015. Since the bill's introduction in February, the media have reported, informed and prompted discussion among South Africans. It seems the marijuana debate is high on the public agenda.



South Africans against Dagga and Satan is a Facebook page that labels marijuana users Satanists. Since July, the page has accumulated over 6000 followers, most of whom don't know if it's a humorous ploy to frustrate or entertain the marijuana community. Regardless, the page is an example of the many platforms South Africans used this past year to engage with the marijuana legalisation debate.

The late Mario Oriani-Ambrosini of the Inkatha Freedom Party was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer last year. He was told he wouldn't be celebrating Christmas and that chemotherapy would prolong his life by a mere three months. On February 15, Ambrosini decisively walked to the podium in the National Assembly to introduce the Medical Innovation Bill (MIB). The bill looks to "legalise

and regulate the use of cannabinoids for medical purposes and for beneficial commercial and industrial uses".

His raspy, ailing voice pleaded with President Jacob Zuma to have the MIB considered through Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi.

"There is no rational argument in continuing to deprive medical marijuana to people like me who need it.

"It is a crime against humanity," said Ambrosini.

Many only saw and heard this plea a month later when *Carte Blanche* aired a segment discussing the bill.

"With someone of Ambrosini's stature speaking out in parliament, we thought it was time to look at the issue and see what the research was saying for and against it," says producer Bernadette Maguire. The show interviewed individuals who use medicinal marijuana for illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, and included medical doctors who contested the legalisation until scientific research

can suggest otherwise.

"What was alarming is that there was very little peer-reviewed research. With the exception of Harvard, no one seems to be taking it that step further.

"We had a lot of praise from our viewers. The positive responses heavily outweighed the negative. It was one of the most tweeted (#whyweed) and shared stories of the year," says Maguire.

Take your positions

This got conversation rolling, and people thinking. Radio stations such as 567 Cape Talk and Talk Radio 702 have since hosted discussions regarding the decriminalisation of marijuana.

Yusuf Abramjee, current affairs and news editor of Primedia, simultaneously spearheads Lead SA (a Primedia community initiative), as well as Crime Line and Drug Watch, both

Lead SA projects.

In a Crime Line press release, Drug Watch's reliance on citizen tip-offs in Gauteng was shown to have assisted in 12 000 arrests for drug possession from June to August 2013. In total, 99% of the drugs confiscated in those arrests were marijuana.

"Crime Line prescribes to the law and the law states that dagga is illegal. However, we encourage debate and engagement on this matter," says Crime Line co-ordinator Marisa Oosthuizen.

In an interview on SABC's Morning Live breakfast show, Abramjee said Drug Watch isn't out to get the person dealing zol around the corner, but rather the traffickers and manufacturers.

Ian Bredenkamp from KFM is another Primedia employee who stands firmly against drugs.

The 'I have a drug problem' campaign was launched by the City of Cape Town a month after the intro-

duction of the MIB. Bredenkamp, as well as Chester Williams and mayor of Cape Town, Patricia de Lille, are the faces of the city's campaign. Their disapproving faces can be seen on billboards, bus stops and newspapers. "It's one of the city's interventions in the ongoing fight against drug abuse – which is significantly different to using drugs for medicinal purposes," says De Lille's spokesperson Pierinne Leukes. The Independent Newspapers group jointly supports Primedia's Lead SA initiative in encouraging an active citizenry, helping report on drug dealings in communities.

An article titled *Mediese voordele of newe-effekte van cannabis nie bekend* in *Die Burger*, highlights how easy it is to frame an article. The journalist solely quoted one of the leading voices in delaying marijuana legalization in South Africa, Prof. Charles Parry, and referred to a single study by the United States National Institute on Drug Abuse.

"Ideally journalists would seek inputs from various experts and not just rely on the first person they speak to, or people who reinforce their own ideological position on the issue," says Parry.

Parry is the Director of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Research Unit at the Medical Research Council and is not popular among marijuana lobby groups. Media coverage on Parry has portrayed him opposed to marijuana legalisation, but this is not case.

"There would be many advantages to legalising marijuana but I have concerns about our capacity in South Africa to manage the legalisation process and protect young people from experimentation.

"My position with regard to legalising medical use is based on the lack of evidence. I think that sufficient supporting evidence will probably come at some time, but we and other

WHO HAS DECRIMINALISED MARIJUANA?

Italy
The Netherlands
Spain
Canada
Czech Republic
Israel
Germany
USA (23 states)
Peru
Switzerland
Slovenia
North Korea
Portugal
Germany
Uruguay
Costa Rica
Ukraine
Germany

countries need to do the necessary research," says Parry.

"Parry's not against marijuana, he's against people adopting substance abuse habits. You can't always capture everything in a single story," says Director of Health Journalism at Rhodes University, Prof. Harry Dugmore.

"However, if you're smart with Google, all the resources are there. There's enough information in the digital age. Go and look at proper medical sites," says Dugmore.

"Marijuana should be legalised. Prohibition is archaic and people should be allowed to make up their own minds. This should be accompanied by public health campaigns protecting people from excess, but the same goes for alcohol and fizzy drinks," says Dugmore.

Let's go viral

In a debate on SABC's *Newsroom*, Mamazane Maphanga, spokesperson of Concerned Youth of South Africa, debated William Wallace representing the pro-marijuana legalisation group Below The Lion. Maphanga argued that marijuana is a reason for South Africa's rape culture.

The debate went viral.

"Because of the huge response we received after the debate with Ms Maphanga, we are keeping the debate alive (#DaggaDebate)," says show producer and presenter Annine Dormehl.

"We have realized how large the dagga community in South Africa is, and that the media is not paying enough attention to the topic."

Newsroom invited the Dagga Couple, the team of Myrtle Clarke and Julian Stobbs of the pro-marijuana group Fields of Green for All in a follow-up debate. The duo have committed their lives to legalising and destigmatising the cannabis culture in South Africa.

In the July issue of *Fair Lady*, the Dagga Couple were given equal column space to substantiate their arguments against Prof. Bronwyn Myers, a colleague of Parry who also advocates for extensive empirical evidence before legalisation is considered.

"The big problem is prohibition," says Clarke. "It's depressing to see the number of people who are incarcerated every day. Prohibition is destroying the lives of so many South Africans and that is the main thrust of our campaign."

Since the introduction of the MIB in February, the marijuana activist duo have featured in multiple television shows and has an ever-growing Facebook presence with over 28 000 followers.

Special Assignment on SABC3

interviewed the couple in their home and showed the varying medicines of marijuana and how they're used. In addition, the show identified the dangers of black-market medical marijuana, to the point that Ambrosini revealed he had suffered arsenic poisoning. Ensuring quality control is one of many reasons marijuana users are asking for the regulation of the substance.

The countdown

"People seem to have a simplistic opinion of what should be done, whether to support medical cannabis and legalize it, or ban any use of cannabis and the research into its effectiveness," says Parry.

It's difficult to assume that any broadcaster or publication in South Africa would be as bold as the *New York Times* editorial board when they wrote an opinion piece on marijuana, titled *Repeal Prohibition, Again*.

The MIB lapsed before the May elections and was revived later by Ambrosini on July 22nd. It lapsed once more with his passing, but has since been revived again. The media have reported on it every step of the way. It's a topic that's high on the public agenda.

"Some journalists find and present evidence that supports their viewpoints, whereas others are better at objectively reporting on the complexities of the issue," says Parry.

"Articles should ideally take a more nuanced approach that articulates on these complexities, which become apparent if journalists do their homework."

South Africa will only know where the government stands on the issue in March 2015, when Parliament will decide if the bill should become law. It is clear that even if it's denied, the debate on marijuana legalisation in South Africa won't be easily subdued.

DID YOU KNOW?

South Africa was the first country in the world to illegalize marijuana, in 1820.

North Korea is the only country to fully legalize marijuana. Uruguay looks to become the second next year.

The U.S., New Zealand, Canada, Australia & Nigeria are the most active cannabis-user countries.

Indonesia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, China, Malaysia, the U.A.E and Singapore have all imposed the death penalty for trafficking cannabis.

EFF AND THE MEDIA



photo: Gosetsemang Sebogodi



Although the Economic Freedom Fighters is a relatively new party, it has been a cover story in many publications as often as the big political parties, if not more. **SMF** spoke to representatives of the media and the party to find out how the relationship between the two is getting along.

by Gosetsemang Sebogodi

The biggest story this year in the country right now is the EFF, "hands down", declared Richard Poplak this year during a talk at the journalism department of Stellenbosch University, where he was promoting his recent book, *Until Julius Comes*.

Poplak, an author and journalist, writes for the *Daily Maverick* and has written extensively on the rise of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF).

While it was still in its infancy, before the 2014 election, the EFF's future seemed undefined. Nobody

knew what impact it would have on South African politics.

"From the start the media knew that something was coming, I mean this was Julius Malema, the rip-off artist, and all of a sudden he is starting a political party with a bunch of his pals," says Poplak.

The EFF was launched officially in July 2013 and a few months down the line it joined other political parties to participate in the historical 2014 national democratic elections.

With a committee consisting of celebrity actor Fana Mokoena and controversial figures such as Kenny Kunene (the Sushi King), and drawing

long-term serving ANC members such as Dali Mpofu, the EFF surely showed potential to become a force to be reckoned with in South African politics.

SMF spoke to the spokesperson of the EFF, Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, and the *Sunday Times* political reporter, Sibongakonke Shoba, about the media and this new party.

Shoba was the first to answer our questions:

How would you describe the EFF's relationship with the media?

Shoba: The EFF's whole election campaign revolved around one individual, Julius Malema.

He was welcoming to the media. He always invited the media to the EFF's events.

I guess he knew that he needed the media coverage to reach as many people as possible, since he is the only recognisable face representing the party.

The only hostilities I experienced were from the EFF supporters, as they expressed that they didn't appreciate the way the media are reporting on Malema, about his corruption and fraud cases.

Was the EFF spokesperson accessible?

Shoba: I had a good relationship with him, as we were following them during their elections campaign. He answered questions posed to him, although sometimes not to my satisfaction.

Where does the EFF stand on the Protection of State Information Bill?

Shoba: I'm not based in parliament so I have not been able to interact with them or question them about the Protection of the State Information Bill. So I really don't know about their position in that regard.

What do you think life will be like for South African journalists if the EFF were to gain power?

Shoba: (laughs) I haven't imagined that life because I think it is impossible, it's just impossible for EFF to gain state power.

What do you think of the EFF's behaviour and the culture they portray?

Shoba: The history of the party is important in relation to the way they are currently behaving. Prior to the EFF's formation there was already a media hype surrounding Julius Malema. It then makes one question if the EFF is a legitimate party fighting for the poor or if it is just out for vengeance.

What makes the EFF different from other parties?

Shoba: The EFF stands out from other parties because of the Malema brand, and one can even go as far as saying there's no EFF without Malema.

Whatever Malema says or does always ends up in the news. He can catch a mild cold and tomorrow it will be headlines.

Another thing that is working in

their advantage is the fact that they managed to identify and occupy a space in the South African political sphere where there was a vacuum. Marikana is the perfect example of how they exploited the opportunity.

Ndlozi answered SMF's questions on behalf of the party .

What is the EFF's media policy regarding their communication and relationship with the media and the public?

Ndlozi: The only thing I can say about that is that we have a broad articulation in terms of communication with the media, but I can't give away our strategy.

Where does the EFF stand in terms of the Protection of State Information Bill?

Ndlozi: As the EFF we have consistently indicated that the right to access of information must be protected and not only for the media, but for the health of our democracy. We find this bill to be a regression in the democratic dispensation.

Should people be concerned about the EFF's relationship with Zanu-PF and Robert Mugabe? Considering the suppression of journalism in Zimbabwe?

Ndlozi: We don't have a relationship with Zanu-PF; we stated that we differ with the articulations of Mugabe around homosexuals, the torture of people during elections and the oppression of journalism.

However, what we are not going to apologise for and distance ourselves from is that land expropriation without compensation is, in all of Africa, the only policy that can restore the dignity of our people.

The ANC is the one in alliance with Zanu-PF, not us.

Is the portrayal of the EFF by the media accurate?

Ndlozi: The way the EFF is portrayed differs according to various publications. Political reporting in South Africa portrays a lot of things in a comical fashion and political leaders are always targeted, so that is not our worry.

Our main worry is how the party is being portrayed as a violent organisation and I think we should continue to explain our policies, so people can realise that we try to pursue our policies militantly and not militarily.

What was the EFF's strategy to attract supporters?

Ndlozi: Our campaign was unique in terms of plugging into popular ideas about how to resolve problems in South Africa. People like the clarity with which we speak and they also like the fact that we challenge power.

In terms of social media we are doing very well, especially in attracting young people. The commander in chief has the largest social media account of any politician in the country.

What will life be like for journalists if the EFF had state power?

Ndlozi: I can't answer that question. I have a feeling you are assuming that journalists are under threat from the EFF. ■



“

Prior to the EFF's formation there was already media hype surrounding Julius Malema

”

As journalism students about to enter the working world, we are often reminded that we are to remain objective – in every sense of the word.

Our own views are not to influence our work and we should avoid harming others with the words we write and speak.

But once we establish ourselves and reach a certain status within the media industry, this might change – which is not always a good thing.

So, why is it that when you are considered a “celebrity journalist” that you are allowed to speak your mind regardless of how offensive you may come across?

I use the term “celebrity journalist” to refer to people who have reached a certain status within the industry and who have attained some sort of fame for what they do – be it on TV, radio, or in print.

I also use the disclaimer that this is not all well-established journalists, but certainly some.

Why is it that you are allowed to use radio shows, opinion pages, television snippets and even social media to be blatantly rude and disrespectful?

Journalists waving their fingers in an interviewee’s face, viciously demanding the answers so that they can get all the juice, is not okay.

It is also not okay when a radio journalist dismisses “fat people” as “lazy people”.

And it is definitely not okay to ridicule people for not being “as intelligent” because they choose to believe in God.

I hear it. I see it. And I say this again, it is not okay.

Is it to be purposely controversial and get tongues wagging?

Because that is certainly not the journalist I want to become – and it certainly will not make me more of a journalist if I did.

I often hear and see “celebrity journalists” abuse the platform they are given and excuse their dodgy comments and raging

judgments by calling it “freedom of expression”.

It is correct that we are taught to be fearless and to be firm in presenting an accurate reality, but it is not correct that we become impatient with others and relentlessly run our mouths because “someone should say it like it is”.

In this career we are dealing with people. These are people who can sometimes be sensitive and impressionable and who have every right to feel offended when we say something they do not like.

Yes we, as journalists, are human too and sometimes our staunch opinions aggravate what we put out there.

We are so quick to criticise the behaviour of the public and people in power, but we forget that we are subject to criticism too.

Our job is to be tactful. That is a responsibility that we have.

No, that is our duty.

I am not saying that we should sugar-coat the world we present, but I am saying that we are to be aware of the way we impart information.

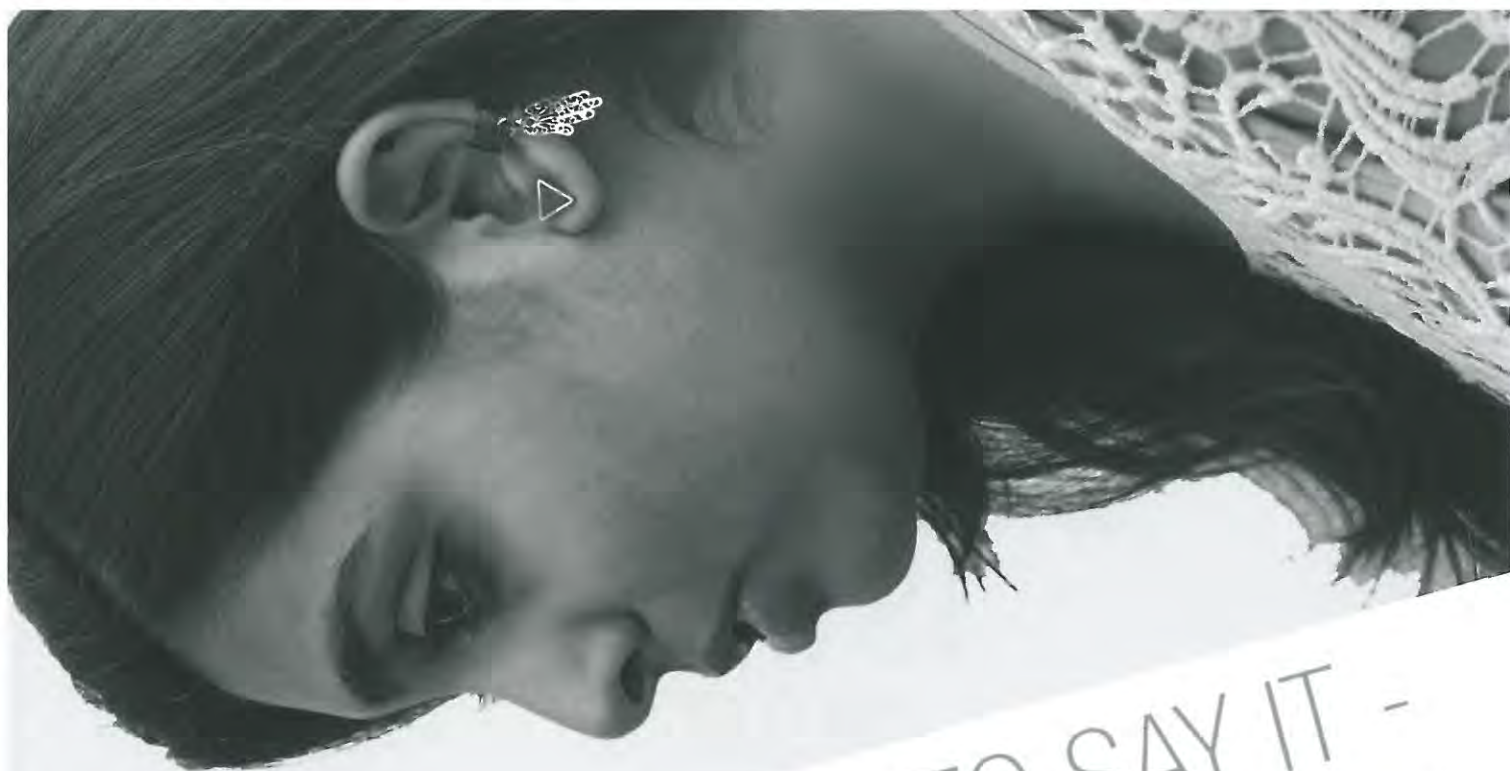
I take absolutely nothing away from those who have spent years slaving away to get where they are today. And I take nothing away from good, credible journalists who are recognised for being brilliant at what they do.

But I do not agree with people in the media who feel that they are entitled to say as they please. And I definitely do not agree that the platforms we, as journalists, are afforded should be used to do so.

“THAT’S **NOT** THE JOURNALIST
I WANT TO BECOME”

by Chelsea Johnstone





“IF YOU’RE GOING TO SAY IT - SAY IT WITH **CONVICTION**”

by Annzra Denita

There are three reasons why I pursued a career in journalism:

1. I want to tell stories.
2. I want to learn as much as I can about the people around me and I want to share this knowledge with the world.
3. I want to make a difference.

While my reasons may be horribly clichéd, they are shared by the majority of my class mates, and is an important anchor keeping us on this path that so many people have warned us against.

Yet, after working as a general reporter at a daily newspaper, interning at an online media site and local lifestyle television programme, one thing is very clear – you hardly ever get to do the work you want to do.

The stories you work on reflect the reality of your employer’s brand rather than the whole reality of the country. You tell the stories of a chosen few. You share carefully selected knowledge that barely broadens the minds of your consumers. You barely make a difference.

It is for this reason that I admire well-established journalists who stand up, and use their influence to tell the truth – no matter how ugly it may be.

When studying journalism we are taught to be objective and fair in our reporting. But we are hardly objective or fair. When we choose one story over another because it will sell more, we are being biased and unfair. By doing this we do not let the public know the whole truth and, with the high levels of complacency in the country, it sometimes takes bold, controversial statements to shock people out of their comfort zone and move

them into their learning zone.

Who better to deliver these statements than well-established or celebrity journalists?

We live in a very sheltered world, and while the media do try to objectively tell us about the harsh realities around us, this is done in a comfortable way, as to not alienate their audience. I understand that the media industry is in a state of flux and cannot afford to lose their audience by shocking them constantly, but that is why it has become so important for someone to do it.

We know that every four minutes a woman is raped. We know about the thousands who are dying from Ebola. We know that three million refugees have fled Syria alone. We know this, but do we understand it?

By using the knowledge and power they have accumulated over the years, well-established journalists are in the perfect position to help us understand these issues.

They may not address these issues directly, but by blatantly stating their opinions on which ever platform they choose, they can encourage debate and start necessary conversations about what is really going on. This can lead to people looking at the media more critically.

It’s not our job to be popular, selective or sensitive. It is our job to tell the truth. And while the truth may be offensive or unwelcome, it may also be a necessary evil that could change the world for the better. Think about it. Women voting, AIDS not being a homosexual disease, climate change – these were all controversial topics at one time, that some spoke up about regardless of the consequences.

Having said this, I do not think that journalists should be controversial to boost their own egos. There is a difference between being brutally honest and being unnecessarily cruel. However, I do believe that if you are going to say something controversial, say it with conviction and have the balls to stick with it.



DIE POT IS MIS GESIT

deur Helené Bam

Dit het die wêreld se verbeelding aangegryp en 'n globale gehoor voor hulle kassies geanker. Die regstreekse uitsending van die hofspraak van die wêreldbekende Paralimpiese atleet Oscar

Pistorius was sonder twyfel een van 2014 se mees opspraakwekkende verhaale.

Regter Thokozile Masipa, advokate Barry Roux en Gerrie Nel, Oscar Pistorius se jonger suster, Aimee, en Reeve Steenkamp se ma, June, het oornag huishoudelike name geword. Roux en Nel het selfs 'n mate van kultus-status behaal.

Die grondslag vir hierdie regstreekse uitsending – baanbrekers- werk wat betref hofverslagdoening – sowel as die gepaardgaande, dikwels oordadige aandag wat die Suid-Afrikaanse en internasionale media aan die saak geskenk het, is egter kort voor 3 Maart 2014, waarop die hofspraak begin het, gelê.

Met regter Dunstan Mlambo se uitspraak op 25 Februarie 2014 dat hofverrigtinge uiteraard in die openbare sfeer behoort en die daaropvolgende besluit om die media toestemming te gun vir die regstreekse uitsending van die Pistorius-hofspraak, het verskeie agentskappe die geleentheid aangegryp en geredeneer dat Jan Alleman daarby baat sou vind om die

hofverrigtinge in geheel te volg.

Voorstanders van die uitspraak het volgehou dat dié besluit deursigtigheid, gelykheid en begrip van die Suid-Afrikaanse regstelsel sal bevorder én dat dit in die publiek se belang is om hofverrigtinge regstreeks te aanskou. Prime Media en Multichoice was voor in die koor.

Daar is immers 'n enorme gelustig regoor die wêreld wat hulle verlustig in die lewens van vermaaklikheids- en sportsterre, maar daar is 'n wilder verlustiging in die vernietiging van sulke sterre – soveel te meer wanneer hulle in die beskuldigdebank opeindig!

Pistorius se hofspraak was soos manna uit die hemel vir kwynende sirkulasiesyfers. In die eerste week van die hofspraak was hy byna daaglik op byna elke Suid-Afrikaanse koerant (sowel as 'n paar internasionale koerante) se voorblad, vergesel deur 'n vetgedrukte, sensasionele opskrif.

Van die land se mees gerekende joernaliste het vir die duur van die hofspraak op die hooggeregshof in Pretoria toegesak soos brommers om 'n vars miskook en hul vaardighede aangewend om die sweetdruppels op Oscar se voorkop te tel en oor June Steenkamp se haarstyl te tweet.

As dit die opdrag en etiek van die media is om 'n gegewe gehoor in te lig, op te voed en te vermaak, is daar beslis met die duur van dié hofspraak meer vermaak as wat daar ingelig is.

Dolus eventualis is wel tot die woordeskaf van baie Suid-Afrikaners gevoeg, maar 'n mens kan nie help om te wonder of die gesprekke wat rondom braaivleisvure plaasgevind proporsioneel verdiep en verryk is deur die hoeveelheid tyd, geld en mannekrag wat die media daarin geïmpleeër het.

Die nasionale verkiesing het aansienlik minder media blootstelling as Oscar ontvang.

Die Suid-Afrikaanse media het die pot mis gesit wat betref die bevordering van die land se demokrasie en politieke deursigtigheid en in die proses kiesers en die breër Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing 'n groot onreg aangedoen.

Stel jou voor: 'n televisiekanaal wat vier-en-twintig uur lank inligting verskaf aan kiesers, koerante wat toegewyd artikels en berigte publiseer wat bydra tot die nasionale diskoers oor die politieke en sosiale landskap, en radioprogramme wat ingeligte, diepgaande praatjies en debatte

voer met politieke partye en politieke ontleders.

Watter waarde het die regstreekse uitsending van die Oscar-hofspraak eintlik tot die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing gevoeg? Het die deursnee Suid-Afrikaner enige wesenlike baat gevind by die dag-tot-dag, uur-tot-uur en selfs minuut-tot-minuut beriggewing?

Indien dit die opdrag van die media is om in te lig, op te voed en te vermaak, is dit eerstens noodsaaklik om te erken dat die blootstelling wat die Oscar-saak ontvang het gerig was op vermaak.

Om te veronderstel dat Jan Alleman iets oor die Suid-Afrikaanse regstelsel moes wysraak, is 'n groot spul wensdenkerij.

Die Suid-Afrikaanse media het die weergawes van die noodlotige gebeure op 14 Februarie 2013 tot so 'n mate gekommersialiseer dat die lewens en waardigheid van verskeie rolspelers in die slag gebly het – uit die aard van die saak is Pistorius en veral Steenkamp bo-aan hierdie lys.

Die media het twee potte misgesit: om in 'n verkiesingsjaar sowel aandag weg te neem van die politieke diskoers, veral in Suid-Afrika waar 'n groot mate van die verkiesing bepaal word deur die ingeligtheid van die kiesers, is 'n skande. Om 'n realiteitsprogram met die mantel van opvoedkundige beriggewing te drapeer, is onverskoonbaar. ■



Pistorius se hofspraak was soos manna uit die hemel vir kwynende sirkulasie syfers.



OP SOEK NA DIE FOTOGRAAF SE HEIL



foto: Jaco du Plessis



Koerante trek hul gordels stywer as ooit. Foto-afdelings is van die duurste by 'n koerant, en daarom word na nuwe, goedkoper modelle beweeg om foto-dienste te bekom. Terwyl fotograawe wonder waar hul brood vandaan gaan kom, bied nuwe verwikkelings in tegnologie en die internet vir hulle verdere uitdagings.

deur Jaco du Plessis

Vroeër vanjaar ry ek saam met 'n fotograaf na Simonstad. Hy verduidelik breedvoerig aan my hoe hy, saam met 'n paar vennote, wil aansoek doen by die staat om 'n koöperasionele boerdery (hoofsaaklik varke) naby Mamre of Darling op die been te bring.

"Ek maak solank 'n plan vir die dag wanneer ek my werk gaan verloor," sê hy.

Internasionaal is dit nie meer maklik vir koerante om geld te maak nie, en hulle is besig om hul fotografie-afdelings te verklein. Dis al ou nuus.

Tog het dit as 'n verrassing gekom toe die *Sunday Times* vroeër vanjaar amper twee derdes van hul fotograawe in die pad gestee het. Meer as een persoon is oortuig dat 'n soortgelyke eksodus binnekort by Media24 gaan plaasvind.

Werner Beukes, 'n fotograaf by SAPA, som dit eenvoudig op:

"Ek dink daar word in hierdie ekonomiese taai tye na koerante se koste gekyk en dis hoekom koppe rol. Die fotografie-departement is die eerste wat deurloop as die gordel stywer getrek moet word."

Die voormalige hoof van Afrikaanse Nuus by Media24, Tim du Plessis, sê die maatskappy het ná sy vertrek in Mei 2014 'n proses begin om healtydse fotograawe in daardie afdeling te verminder. Terwyl hy daar was, het die bestuur gepraat "oor die wêreldwye tendens om minder

healtydse fotograawe in diens te hê".

"Dit sou altyd een of ander tyd ook by Media24 onvermydelik word," sê hy.

"Ek dink nie die media maatskappye sal ligtelik healtydse fotograawe afdank as dit enigsins moontlik is om hulle in diens te hou nie. Dit maak klaarblyklik nie finansiële sin nie. Onthou, hulle veg almal deur die bank vir oorlewing. Dis gewoon goedkoper om deelydse en vryskut-fotograawe se dienste te huur as om groot spanne fotograawe in diens te hê

wat aanspraak maak op voordele.”

Die vraag is dan waarom koerante enigsins fotografeer voltyds in diens geneem het.

“In die tye toe die koerante goed geld gemaak het, was daar genoeg en soms meer as genoeg mense in die afdelings,” sê Tim.

“Die koerantdiktes was destyds ook veel hoër as vandag, vandaar die noodsaak om meer mense in diens te hê.”

Die *Sunday Times* het vroeër vanjaar twee derdes van hulle fotografeer afgedank. 'n Span van sewentien, versprei oor die land, het gekrimp tot een in die Kaap, een in Durban en vier in Johannesburg.

Tog is die *Sunday Times* een van die enkele koerante wat 'n stygende sirkulasiesyfer het. 'n Media-veteraan verduidelik: koerante hoef nie finansiële sukses om fotografeer af te dank - en geld te spaar - nie.

Dinge het anders gewerk in die verlede, vertel die veteraan.

“Ek het as verslaggewer begin werk voordat dit digitaal geword het. In daardie tyd sou 'n fotograaf op 'n dorp wees om 'n foto te neem. Hy het dan so gou moontlik die foto self ontwikkel, gewoonlik in die backkamer van die plek waar hy geby het. In daardie tyd kon fotografeer dit doen; hulle het al die chemikalieë by hulle gehad.

“Dan moes die foto na die produksiekantoor gestuur word. As daar 'n lughawe naby is, is dit met 'n vliegtuig gestuur. Indien nie, moes jy rygeleenthede soek. Dit was selde direk - jy moes mense op verskillende dorpe bel en dit so by die kantoor kry. Hoe meer mense jy geken het, hoe beter.”

Kortom, fotografeer het in die verlede meer vaardighede nodig gehad, beide prakties en sosiaal.

“Vandag is fotografeer *ten a penny*. As hulle so maklik is om die hande te kry, waarom sal jy ekstra betaal vir voordele?”

Bun Booyens, redakteur van Die Burger, ontken gerugte dat Media24 sy fotografeer wil verminder.

“Daar is nie planne om die fotografie-afdeling hier te verklein nie. Ek dink dit sou die gehalte van ons joernalistiek op al ons platforms skaad as ons dit sou doen. Wêreldwyd is daar wel verskeie



koerante wat nou letterlik enkele fotografeer behou en eerder inskakel by fotografieagentskappe. Dis te begrype en so 'n stelsel werk reeds heel skaflik met sporttoere vir die lewering van brood-en-botter-foto's.

“Daar is egter ernstige beperkinge. Namate koerante visueel meer gesofistikeerd raak, moet jy as't ware 'ontwerpersfoto's' laat neem: jy kort 'n spesifieke stel foto's en 'n agentskap gaan dit nie vir jou kan lewer nie.”

Boonop, sê Booyens, word fotografeer eintlik al belangriker.

“Die sosiale media lewer 'n ontsettend belangrike bydrae wat betref foto's, maar daar is altyd 'n element van toevalligheid daaraan. Vir werklik belangrike gebeure het jy iemand nodig wat professioneel is. Of daar is geleentheid wat werklik gevaarlik is, waar jy, by wyse van spreke, nie iemand sonder 'n koeëlvaste baadjie en 'n mediese fonds behoort in te stuur nie. Die sosiale media gaan nie daardie foto's vir jou lewer nie,” sê Booyens.

“My indruk is dat foto's vorentoe al hoe belangriker gaan word. Almal se aandag word in beslag geneem deur die huidige sakekrisis waarin die media hom bevind - en dit is reg so - maar die ander belangrike tendens van veral die eerste 15 jaar van die nuwe eeu is die vestiging van fotografie as iets wat amper as 'n amptelike taal erken kan word. Die werklik goeie fotografeer gaan die digters wees in hierdie nuwe taal. Ek kan my nie indink dat enige publikasie bv. op iPad/tablet sal kan

oorleef as dit nie absoluut voortreflik is met sy fotografie nie.”

Du Plessis sê koerante beweeg bloot na 'n nuwe model van indiensname.

“Nie net fotografeer nie, ook die meeste joernaliste met wie ek in langer as 38 jaar in die media saamgewerk het, glo en voel nie hul bydraes word na behore waardeur nie.

“Ek weet egter van talle goeie fotografeer wat oor jare heen skitterende koerantfoto's geneem het wat ten seerste waardeur is deur redakteurs en redaksies.

“Wat nou gebeur, is dat die dienste van fotografeer op 'n ander manier benut word.

“Hulle word hoofsaaklik as vryskutte betrek wat gehuur word vir 'n tydperk - 'n paar uur, 'n dag, wat ook al, om 'n bepaalde opdrag uit te voer. In televisie is dit al jare lank vaste praktyk om TV-kameramense per *assignment* te huur.”

Booyens sê nuusorganisasies beweeg na 'n hibriede model.

“Jou 'basiese' foto's kry jy van 'n nuusdiens (bv. oorsese sporttoere) of uit 'n poelstelsel (bv. soos met Oscar se verhoor), maar dat jy jou eie fotografeer benut vir spesialisopdragte (hoëvlak-opdragte of plaaslike inhoud).

“Hiermee saam lê die addisionele inkomste waarskynlik daarin dat jy jou eie foto's - of dan 'n porsie daarvan - via 'n agentskap beskikbaar stel, soos ons doen met Gallo. Hulle verkoop ons foto's.” ■

“

Die koerantdiktes was destyds ook veel hoër as vandag, vandaar die noodsaak om meer mense in diens te hê.

”

Stuiwers in die armbeurs



Mouton van Zyl, voormalige koerantfotograaf: Media24

"Ek kry net die idee dat koerante in vandag se tye nie meer worry oor fotografe nie."

Met sy vertrek by *Die Burger* ongeveer vier jaar gelede het Mouton van Zyl voorgestel om op 'n retensie-basis aan te hou werk, maar hy sê die koerant het die voorstel nie aarliklik gevind nie.

"Hulle sien nie meer die waarde wat ek vir hulle kan bied nie."

Mouton sê daar het 'n skakel tussen fotografe en die res van die redaksie verlore gegaan. Eerder as kwaliteit, maak die rakgankoor "net die gat vol met 'n foto wat 'n ou sommer met sy selfoon geneem en ingestuur het".

"Ek kritiseer steeds elke dag die koerant, en ek sien baie opsies (as persfotograaf). Dit is net baie hartseer dat ek nie daardie geleenthede kan uitvoer soos ek graag sou wou nie, omdat niemand die moeite en die eindprodukt waardeer nie."

"Die passie waarmee ek 'n storie gejag het – uit my pad gegaan het om 'n sekere foto te soek en te kry en vir die wêreld te wys – is nie meer daar nie."

"Ek het besef uit fotografie gaan ek nie 'n bestaan kan maak nie. Ek sou al 'n bergie gewees het as ek nêl dit gedoen het, want daar is nie geld in fotografie nie. *Bottom line*. Jy kan nie al jou eiers in een mandjie lê nie."

Buiten vryskutwerk wat hy vir verskillende publikasies doen (onder andere paparazzi-werk vir 'n Australiese maatskappy), reël hy motorfietsroes, en bied privaat-funksies by sy huis aan.



Bertram Malgas, intern-koerantfotograaf: Media24

"Die beroep is in gevaar."

Selfone het alles verander, sê Bertram Malgas, vanjaar 'n intern-fotograaf by *Die Burger* nadat hy sy studies met 'n Media24-beurs voltooi het.

"Mense op die toneel kan nou foto's neem waarvan die kwaliteit glad nie sleg is nie. Publikasies maak al hoe meer op hierdie foto's staat, en om twee redes: een, dis foto's wat nie duur 'n fotograaf geneem kan word nie, en twee, dis goedkoper as om 'n fotograaf uit te stuur."

Bertram vermoed dat Media24 se koerante ook, soos die *Sunday Times*, sy fotoredaksie verder gaan verklein. Maar Media24 is groter en het meer geld, so hulle is nie te haastig daarmee nie, reken hy.

"Meeste van die fotografe hier is maar gespanne, omdat hulle weet dat dit een of ander tyd gaan gebeur."

"Die ouer ouens kyk maar vir goeie afree-pakette omdat hulle loopbane verby is."

Mens kry die idee dat Bertram glad nie te veel hieroor bekommerd is nie, waarskynlik omdat hy die beroep betree met die wete dat dit 'n tydelike een is.

"Ja, die badryf is besig om uit te sterf, maar dis nog nie dood nie. Die werk is nog daar om gedoen te word, en ek het 'n passie om goeie nuusfoto's te produseer."



Nicolene Olckers, voormalige fotoredakteur: Rapport

"Frustrasie. Jy sit met skilts, *expertise* en *know-how*, en die plek waarvoor jy werk wil dit nie benut nie."

Nicolene Olckers het onlangs bedank as fotoredakteur by Rapport.

"Bygesê, ek het my werk geniet. Ek wil 'n fotograaf wees. Ek wil 'n foto-journalis wees."

"Met hierdie nuwe *citizen journalism* wat inkom, kry mens die idee dat jy, as 'n fotograaf wat hoë-kwaliteit foto's lewer, van nul en geen waarde vir die koerant is nie."

"As jy 'n *in-house* fotograaf is – gebonde aan een publikasie – en hulle verskaf jou toerusting, jou vervoer en al daai goed, dan het jy 'n struktuur waarbinne jy werk. Die oomblik wat jy buite daai struktuur sit, dan beseef jy hoe moeilik dit is. Jy moet nou jou eie struktuur skep om geld te genereer."

Nicolene sê sy verdien as vryskut " baie minder".

“

Op die internet word 'n foto se waarde bepaal deur hoe vars dit is. Dit gaan nie oor kwaliteit nie, dit gaan oor spoed.

”



Shelley Christians, voormalige koerantfotograaf: Sunday Times

"Jy weet ek is algedank, nê?" vra Shelley Christians.

Shelley meen die kwaliteit van die koerant "het definitief agteruit gegaan" nadat sy en 11 ander kollegas moes waai.

"Hulle gebruik nou baie foto's van Reuters en AFP. En dié wat nog daar [*Sunday Times*] werk se kwaliteit gaan ook agteruit, want hulle moet permanent rondhardloop om sewe stories op 'n dag te doen."

"Op die internet word 'n foto se waarde bepaal deur hoe vars dit is. Dit gaan nie oor kwaliteit nie, dit gaan oor spoed."

"Die bestuur het vir ons voorbeelde gewys van oorsese koerante (wat klein fotografie-spanne het), en gesê ons is die duurste afdeling van die koerant. Ons is algedank om finansiële redes."

Sy werk nou as vryskut-fotograaf – enigiets van korporatiewe foto's tot nuusfoto's. "Om die waarheid te sê, werk ek vandag vir *Sunday Times*," lag sy oor diefoon.

Vryskut-fotografe kan nie kies en keur vir wie hulle werk nie. Die meeste van die afgestankte fotografe trek die vryskut-baadje aan, en almal moet met mekaar kompeteer.

"Dit gaan baie erger raak as Media24 ook nou begin afdank."

"Media24 het ook 'n vergadering gehad oor afdankings, maar dit is nou uitgestel. Maar daar sal afdankings wees."

"Sy die *Argus* moet fotografe nou alles neerskryf wat hulle doen. Hulle word gemonitor, en dit lyk of daar ook afdankings gaan wees."



But are **THEY** ready

for the industry?

Journalism graduates swap their student cards for press cards at the end of their gruelling academic courses. **SMF** investigates the readiness of the new interns at various publications.



by Zama Sigasa

Justice Khumela, an intern at *Sowetan*, trots into an almost vacant court room. His assignment of the day is to report on a court case. It is 10:30 on a Tuesday and his deadline is at 14:00. He plops down in one of the seats and hastily skims

through his notes. Fifteen minutes later and only three people linger in the room. He turns to Facebook and Twitter while the case is delayed. Or so he thinks ... The court case is in session in another room.

Students pursuing journalism honours qualifications at universities spend a year training to work in various mediums such as broadcasting, print and digital. However, are schools of journalism producing interns who can fit the demands of the media industry?

"Many youngsters get into journalism thinking it is fun and games until they get into the newsroom and realise that it is hard work," says Nonzwi Cekete, the deputy editor of *Move!* magazine.

"Our former intern took an article

word for word from the net. She said she was not aware that plagiarism was the biggest crime in journalism. The stealing of anyone's idea is a universal crime even in academia, an environment that they come from."

Writing skills and general knowledge are some of the crucial qualities editors say interns lack.

"Writing is a big problem. Most interns get into a newsroom and are tasked with a story. The end result is a nightmare because of their writing; if it is not academic, it is street or SMS lingo," says Cekete.

Dr Gabriel Botma, head of the journalism department at Stellenbosch University, says they hope to send their graduates to the working environment with basic writing skills and the ability to be critical of their

own work and industry.

The students are exposed to producing their own newspaper, magazine and working at the radio station, blogging and building a website," emphasises Botma.

Anthea Garman, the deputy head of the school of journalism at Rhodes University, explains that they teach their students to be able to recognise what news is and critique news values.

"They must be able to ask why and be flexible to work in different news rooms," exclaims Garman.

The three qualities that Amos Mananyeto, the news editor of the *Sunday World*, looks for in an intern are an eye and ear for news, an exceptional knowledge of current affairs, and basic writing skills.

"I asked one of my interns recently about their understanding and opinion on the Middle East conflict and the individual was completely flummoxed about the subject. Whilst another intern did not know what the Gautrain is," says Mananyetso.

General knowledge

"General knowledge is taken for granted in these days of social media proliferation and it is more important than any other skill."

Journalists cannot teach, inform or entertain the public about something that they do not have a basic knowledge of, adds Mananyetso.

"From the selection tests for the journalism honours programme we see that students struggle with general knowledge," says Botma.

The general knowledge test is formulated on the basis what the students engage in and what the Stellenbosch journalism department believes the students should know.

According to Botma, the study guide includes a list of books intended to encourage the students to develop a reading culture.

Liesl Pretorius, the editor of *Network24*, says journalism schools cannot produce "ready-made" reporters.

"Some of our journalism schools fare well considering the limitations, including our weak school education system. Plus some things can only be taught through solid on-the-job experience."

Pretorius explains that the best school might not be able to "turn someone into a journalist", and a talented person can excel despite not attending a good school.

One intern echoes Pretorius's view on readiness.

"Nothing can prepare you for the real working world," says Sandra Parmee, an intern at *Fairlady* magazine. Parmee studied a Bachelor of Journalism degree at Rhodes University and graduated in 2013.

"The course prepared me in terms of skills, but there is so much you learn on the job that you cannot learn in a classroom or during two-week work experience stints."

Help is available for the interns but they do not make use of it. Cekete elaborates that the interns are either

shy or scared to ask for help.

"This is because they are new in the newsroom and as a result the production of the publication suffers. Communication is a skill they lack but can easily get once they understand the culture of a newsroom."



Tabloid journalism is shunned by journalism schools as gossip journalism. As a result, universities do not prepare students for this type of writing



The challenge of the industry readiness of interns also lies in what the journalism schools choose not to teach their students.

"Tabloid journalism is shunned by journalism schools as gossip journalism. As a result universities do not prepare students for this type of writing," says Mananyetso.

"What is more painful is that most graduates have a grave lack of understanding of what they need to have in order to practice 'serious' journalism, adds Mananyetso. "For example, all interns I have come across were unable to explain the difference between the NCOP and National Assembly; the difference between Parliament and Executive."

Court reporting

"Court reporting can be daunting," says Khumela. "Unskilled reporters often miss out on the little details they do not know form part of the story."

Khumela studied a Bachelor of Philosophy in Journalism, an equivalent of an honours degree at Stellenbosch, in 2013.

"We did not have an in-depth study of the court system and how to write court stories at varsity."

"At Rhodes we have an undergraduate journalism degree which makes it impossible to take 150 students to the courtroom to give them practical experience," says Garman.

"We do cover media law and the court systems in South Africa in our courses. Plus we give the do's and don'ts and who to talk to."

Mananyetso says crime reporting is the foundation of reporting. However, he has come across interns who were unable to give detailed answers to scenario questions related to crime stories.

Learning on the job

Cekete is a university journalism graduate and says journalism schools focus on theories that do not help with the issues that journalists face on a daily basis.

"I only came face to face with reality when I entered the newsroom. The information you acquire is good for general knowledge, but not for the day-to-day functioning of the newsroom."

Cekete enrolled for the Johnnic Graduate Programme after completing her degree.

"They had to start from scratch teaching me how to gather news in reality, creating sources and a contact base. I also learnt how to write according to the style of the publication and the laws governing media."

Lehlohonolo Tau, a local government reporter at *The Times* newspaper, says his media studies course did not prepare him for the working environment. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in media studies at the University of the Free State in 2010.

"Journalism is about making contacts and you cannot go back to an 'advanced journalism textbook' and refer to a chapter focusing on that aspect."

All about contacts

Tau has been a journalist for four years and says hard work and consistency got him to where he is. He says some of his friends have exchanged their journalism careers to become teachers or social workers.

Gerrit van Rooyen, an intern at *Sake*, the business section of the Afri-

kaans newspapers, of Media24, also believes that the biggest challenge is finding sources. "Our lecturer gave us one class on finding sources. There should be a greater focus on finding new sources, new story ideas and angles." Van Rooyen attended the Stellenbosch School of Journalism in 2013 for a BPhil qualification.

Parmee's experience has been different and she gives credit to the journalism school at which she was enrolled.

"The course prepared me for a very fast pace of working, but a monthly magazine is slightly slower than what I was prepared for. But that is a good thing, because my mentor at *Fairlady* was impressed with the speed at which I could get my work done."

"The course gave me a good understanding of the media environment and the changes that are happening," adds Parmee.

"I think the shift needs to be towards more practical work than theory so that when interns enter the newsroom they don't feel intimidated and lost," says Cekete.

Great expectations

Interns waltz into the industry with preconceived ideas.

Parmee anticipated *Fairlady* to be a very glamorous, prestigious and informative publication. "It is a normal office, a normal group of people, although at times it does feel very exciting to work here. But there is nothing to be intimidated about. Everyone is lovely and kind, talented but humble and hard-working."

Khumela expected to be in a protected environment and to be treated like an intern at the *Sowetan*. In other words, he did not anticipate to 'do hard jobs'. "Everyone who is a reporter is equal at the *Sowetan*. They have free range to do any story unless they are inexperienced with a particular beat.

"I have been exposed to many different beats like sports, crime and entertainment reporting."

Some journalists persevere during the hard times, like Tau, whilst others do not. "Earlier this year two interns did not come back for day two," says Ryk van Niekerk, the editor of *MoneyWeb*. ■

SKELETAL NEWSROOMS STARVE PAPERS OF QUALITY COPY



by Annzra Denita

The battle for print survival rages on. Newspapers have equipped themselves with weapons such as social media, video content and online editions to stay in the game, but is this enough? In a struggling environment, fewer reporters are expected to do more. SMF finds out how this affects the quality of newspaper content.

There is no doubt that the print industry is in survival mode. Circulation is declining, advertisers are leaving and readers are migrating to online platforms. In a bid to fight these various factors, newspapers have ignored one of the biggest culprits – themselves.

Andrew Trench, the editor of *The Witness*, says that newspapers may be assisting their demise by boring their readers to death. If true, the solution should be simple: start writing better stories.

Yet in the current environment in which newsrooms find themselves, this task is near impossible to achieve. Due to financial pressures, newsrooms are smaller. This means there are fewer reporters covering more stories.

In addition, reporters are expected to write stories, take photographs, shoot video and tweet. Junior reporters are pushed into more important roles and senior reporters are forced into general reporting.

Freelance editor and writer Shelagh McLoughlin went from being an assistant editor of *The Witness* newspaper to a general reporter due to a skeletal newsroom.

"It was very demotivating, because I was the feature editor and then I was demoted to below the news

editor. I actually had been an assistant editor at one time, which was above the news editor, so in terms of my career I went backwards, quite a lot. I had never really wanted to do news. I never volunteered to be in news. That was also demotivating, to be forced to do something I never really wanted to do," says McLoughlin.

Despite being discouraged, McLoughlin decided to take on her new role as a challenge and opportunity to develop new skills, but this attitude did nothing to improve the quality of the stories she wrote. This was because of the high-pressured environment reporters face, especially in daily publications.

"When you are on a treadmill, the creativity just goes out the window and I think that's what's happening a lot with newspapers. It is a desperate measure on their part to lump all this stuff on top of a poor reporter.

"As if it's not enough to go out and interview someone and listen to them, you've also got to switch your recorder on and then take a couple of photographs and then shoot some video," says McLoughlin.

"That daily deadline is hectic, and if you give reporters more tasks to do in a shorter space of time, it just seems unrealistic. The quality must suffer."

A waste of skills

Trish Beaver is an award-winning journalist who has been writing for newspapers for 23 years. For her, being made to do junior reporter work due to a small newsroom was a waste of her skills. This made her leave her publication to be a freelance writer.

"I was hired as a senior feature writer. My skills and experience were all about collecting information and writing it in an informative and entertaining manner. I had done court reporting, crime reporting and general reporting twenty years ago – I consider my skills to be wasted on these routine stories. I became extremely resentful of being asked to do petty news stories which should have been done by a junior reporter when I had my own stories I was working on. The newsroom environment deteriorated and most of the senior staff resigned, chose to be retrenched or some hung on for pension.

"Let me clarify – I am not a prima donna and will gladly assist with news when there is a huge news story that requires extra hands, but I (and others) were being asked on a daily basis to attend meetings, court appearances and other sundry matters which were not worthy of our seniority," says Beaver.

Feeling disheartened, overworked and time pressed eventually had an impact on Beaver's writing. Instead of crafting her stories and enjoying her work, she found herself slapping together stories without any focus. This, she feels, is a common problem that affects content across all newspaper titles, but it can be rectified.

"I think newspapers have become so paranoid about the online news threat that they have forgotten who they are. In order to produce good news they need to invest in the newsroom. They need to hire more reporters, expand the range of their reporting beyond corruption and crime, and also pay reporters decent salaries. In the mindless panic to bolster dwindling profits, they have short-changed the reader, who is not stupid," says Beaver.

Combined newsrooms

One strategy implemented by some media companies to save money and counter the problems of small newsrooms, is combining the offices of publications. Prominent Afrikaans titles *Beeld* and *Rapport* recently joined their offices. While it will take time to determine if this strategy works, the preliminary results look promising.

Inge Kühne, news editor of *Rapport*, said that initially combining



the newsrooms of a weekly with a daily was 'like giving birth to triplets'. The publications' work ethics and processes are very different. After a couple of months, the publications worked out a rotation system that gives journalists time to craft good-quality stories.

"We created three teams that rotate every eight weeks. Two teams work on the fast news, and one works on the slower, more in-depth news. Not only does this rotation process allow journalists to gain more skills, it also gives them time to have a break and work on more in-depth stories. Creativity doesn't happen when journalists are tired," says Kühne.

While this system works, Kühne admits that the pressure on journalists to tweet, Facebook, take pictures and shoot video while getting their stories means that there is less time to write good stories.

"If you ask JM Coetzee to write a book, but also to tweet and blog and do all these things while writing it, he is never going to write a good book. Similarly something is lost when journalists have to focus on doing so many things when writing their stories", says Kühne.

Editor of *Rapport*, Waldimar Pelsler, is passionate about good journalism. For him time constraints are no excuse for bad writing.

"It doesn't take more time to apply your mind. It doesn't take more time to think about your questions. It doesn't take more time to get a grip on your material. If you do these things you can produce beautiful copy," Pelsler says.

Pelsler says newspapers have always practiced "churnalism", the drill of carelessly writing copy for the sake of meeting a deadline. He feels that it has worsened in recent years, and the result is terrible quality stories, but it doesn't take much to change this.

"In order to write extraordinary journalism, you must read extraordinary journalism. Know how to engineer a story under pressure and how to apply your mind. If your stories don't affect people, what's the point?" says Pelsler. The *Beeld/Rapport* office merger is not the first of its kind, and it is still very young. Whether this strategy works is still up in the air, but Kühne remains hopeful.

"I love print. I love having a physical paper to read. I think that the future of newspapers is faster, more in-depth copy. We have to produce the best papers in the best possible way. One solution to achieve this is integration. Before we thought that newspapers were going nowhere in the fight for survival. Newspapers are still going nowhere, but at least it feels like we are doing something," says Kühne.

“

That daily deadline is hectic, and if you give reporters more tasks to do in a shorter space of time, it just seems unrealistic. The quality must suffer.

”

An editor's problem

For Trench, the problem of producing quality content lies with editors rather than journalists. For him the way forward is investing the limited resources papers do have in making themselves more distinctive.

"My philosophy is let's do less, but do it better. Try and cut down on the volume and emphasise what makes you distinctive. Invest the limited resources that you've got in

making yourself very distinctive and different and hopefully interesting, that's the key. The only reason people buy newspapers is because they are interesting and engaging and I think we sometime lose sight of that in the rush for another deadline to get a product out on the street, but if you lose the interestingness we are done for."

McLoughlin agrees: "I think newspapers, especially in this country, are in a pretty dire place because they are so boring.

"I look at newspapers and I feel so uninspired by them. They don't know how to put things in a way that make me go 'Oh! That's so interesting!' They are like dogs in a pack. They run after the same story, everyone presents it in the same way and no one comes up with creative ideas of looking at life in this country."

To change this, newspapers have to take a step back and look at how they do things. Good content will sell, but currently the content of newspapers across the board is lacking in quality.

The future of newspapers is up in the air, and whether print can co-exist with online content successfully is uncertain. What is certain is that it will take the collective effort of journalists, editors and media companies to secure this future. ■

CROSSING THE DIVIDE

In a country where conspicuous socioeconomic inequalities in literacy and employment exist, will the media's urgency to migrate to digital platforms create a greater divide between the haves and the have-nots? **SMF** unpacks South Africa's digital migration and those it may leave behind.

DIVIDE



photo: Rego Mamogale



by Rego Mamogale

Two years without a cellphone.

Maggie Luphalule from Kayamandi, a township in Stellenbosch, has been disconnected from

the mobile world for that long.

Her friends tease her, saying that she has not fixed her old cellphone because she does not have a boyfriend that could check up on her from time to time. The reality, however, is that the 37-year-old single mother can only make her R2 000 salary stretch so far.

"I have to put a budget aside, I can't just one day buy the phone," she says.

A cleaner at a senior residence at Stellenbosch University, Luphalule is computer illiterate but would gladly accept the chance to improve her proficiency and effectively connect to the internet.

"Maybe I will buy an easier phone but I would also like to use the internet," she says.

She may only have enough to get by, but Luphalule is one of the relatively fortunate ones.

Unemployment in South Africa has increased since the second quarter of 2014. From the 17th of the July it went up by 87 000, bringing the unemployed population to 5.2 million. Statistics South Africa released these numbers as reported in its Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS).

Glaring social issues such as unemployment make it difficult for the economically disadvantaged to connect to the World Wide Web because other pressing matters such as putting food on the table will take precedence.

How can the marginalised ride the digital wave without draining their already empty pockets?

Project Isizwe was kicked off in collaboration with the South African government in order to try to tackle this issue. The project is aimed at providing free internet to low-income communities across the country. The

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If issues of access are addressed and models that best suit our country are implemented, there is no telling what stories may come from the marginalised.

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subsidised service will make use of the infrastructure that already exists in municipal areas to provide 250 megabytes of data a day.

Visiting Research Associate at Wits University's Journalism Department, Indra de Lanerolle, released a report called *The New Wave: Who connects to the internet and what they do when they connect*, in November 2012.

He found that South Africa is the most connected country on the continent, but even so it is only the sixth fastest growing – Botswana and Uganda are first and second respectively.

He also found that one in three South Africans use the internet. That leaves about 66% of the population digitally disenfranchised.

The two most prominent reasons that came up in De Lanerolle's research are, firstly that, the participants have no computer or a connection to the internet, and secondly that they

do not know how to use the internet.

At the same time the decline in print means that there needs to be more access to digital platforms for the everyday citizen, especially the poor.

According to the South African Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) second-quarter release, which was presented on the 13th of August this year, there has been a decrease in total newspaper and magazine circulation compared to the first quarter.

Newspapers declined by 175 000 units, while magazine circulation has decreased by 63 000 copies.

The gap in the market caused by the drop of print sales is being infiltrated by digital platforms. Newspapers and magazines are interacting with their audiences through their websites, as well as through their Twitter and Facebook accounts.

For instance, Andre Neveling editor of *heat*, is cognisant of this change. "We don't call ourselves *heat Magazine* anymore, but rather just *heat*, because in these times, people identify with a brand and not just a publication."

Barriers to connectivity

Jan van Dijk, a researcher from the University of Twente in Netherlands, believes that the biggest obstacle to a successful interaction with digital platforms is access. He identifies four elements that accompany this obstacle – mental, material, skills and usage access.

Mental access refers to people's lack of interest in or intimidation by the technology.

According to De Lanerolle's research, the eight million South Africans who are not proficient in the English language find it difficult to interact with the web. "English language literacy is possibly the most important predictor of internet use – more significant than age, income, gender or where people live. More than one in five respondents said they could not easily read and write in English. And virtually none of these people (3%) used the internet," he says.

The second element is material access; a concern of this obstacle is people not possessing the relevant

instruments that would warrant their successful connection to the internet. Statistics South Africa's 2012 General Household Survey found that less than a tenth (9,8%) of South African households have access to the internet in their homes.

The survey found that a higher percentage of people access the internet at work (18,9%). And a smaller percentage (5,4%) gain access at school or an institution of higher learning.

Accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers compiled a report called the *South African Media and Entertainment Outlook 2011-2015*, their projection of how the country will possibly engage with the media industry in the years to come, as well as a comparison of how the digital world has changed the boundaries of traditional media from the years before the report was compiled.

The firm projects that, by 2015, 29% of households will have broadband access, which is about five times more than it was in 2010, while 32% of the population will have mobile broadband access, six times the rate in 2010.

But will this really be achieved?

Van Dijk's third obstacle, skills access, is characterised by the population's inability to exploit the infrastructure available to them because they don't have the basic expertise to do so. Traditionally, it would be the capabilities of the personal computer user that would determine the kind of skills needed to access the internet. But a generation of mobile site users (mobi sites) has emerged. Consumers now make use of their cellphones to gather their information. De Lanerolle found that 20% of internet users rely solely on their phones to connect to the internet.

Daily Sun, South Africa's most successful daily newspaper, has recognised the potential in going mobile. Emma O'Shaughnessy, digital content consultant at the newspaper, accepts that digital is the buzzword in media circles, but knows that there is another aspect to it.

"In Africa, the mass digital user is on mobile. So the buzzword in fact, we would argue, is mobile. It would be unrealistic to ignore mobile's potential for distribution, for reaching African audiences and, ultimately, for

bringing in revenue. While access and data costs may have been limiting in the past, the landscape is changing very quickly."

Van Dijk identifies usage access as the final obstacle. This refers to the scarce and sometimes non-existent infrastructure that would help ensure a successful connection to the internet. In the South African context this does not stand alone, as it ties in very closely with questions of cost.

De Lanerolle addresses this. "The most important prices here are the cost per megabyte over mobile wireless networks of pre-paid data, which is what most South African internet users are dependent on. As with many services, the poor are actually paying more per megabyte than the rich, who can get contracts and buy in bulk at lower rates per megabyte."

User-generated content

If issues of access are addressed and models that best suit our country are implemented, there is no telling what stories may come from the marginalised.

"People aren't restricted to sending mails to newsrooms about tips, now they can do it from their own house, from a taxi, even at church. People are interested in what other people go through every day, which is why user-generated content is such a big hit. Human beings are fascinated by the social environments in which we live and cellphones give us access to share with our fellows," says O'Shaughnessy.

Author and journalist Anton Harber believes that the internet will give people more of a voice than they used to have before. "Never before have the marginalised had a better opportunity to tell their stories and engage with the global community. Slow and expensive bandwidth is the most powerful form of censorship in this society," says Harber.

"Under apartheid, the government limited access to education in order to hold on to the knowledge, information and skills that were the tools of power and authority. By controlling access to education, they were able to ensure that the inequalities of apartheid lasted well beyond apart-

heid. The barriers to internet access are the equivalent, keeping the power of information and communication in the hands of the few," he adds.

De Lanerolle agrees. "Traditionally only elites generally had a voice in mass media. The rest were consumers or audiences and story subjects. Digital distribution of media gives anyone with access the ability to also contribute their voice. This doesn't make all voices equal of course – but it offers the possibility of those previously marginalised voices to organise to aggregate their voices and be heard online."

The digital space should not be limited to the privileged. The have-nots could benefit from it just as well, if not more.

"Mao Tse-tung would have put it this way: You can give a man a fish, you can teach him to fish, or you can allow him digital access to international and local fish markets. These days, not everyone wants to fish, but everyone wants to access the fish markets," says Harber. ■

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One in three South Africans use the internet. That leaves about 66% of the population digitally disenfranchised

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PHOTO PAGE

Photos taken by the SMF team in 2014



A ballerina prepares for the night's performance of Swan Lake photo: Ada Wilkens



For local designers, business is more than just snipping pretty fabrics photo: Chelsea Johnstone



The so-called "Pink Flats" on the east side of Worcester are home to gangs and druglords but also families who try to live an honest and God-fearing life. photo: Jaco du Plessis

Three commuters sitting at Cape Town Central, waiting for their train ride home. photo: Anthony Molyneux



photo: Dominique Oosthuizen

A cow in the Transkei makes life look easy.
photo: Nicholas Gianvill



Maties het die 'Middelmei Free Music School' op die plaas Middelmei net buite Stellenbosch gestig waar hulle weekliks gratis musieklesse aan plaaskinders gee.
foto: Roxanne Eastes



A Bokaap woman poses with a smile that reminds us of our grandmothers.
photo: Gretchen Dietz



A young girl waits outside a mosque in the Bokaap for her dad to pick her up.



While the tourists bustle in Cape Town's Green Market Square, the same does not hold for all of the Mother City's inhabitants.
photo: William Horne



TOP 10

NEWS EVENTS
OF 2014

1

South Africans
vote in the general
elections



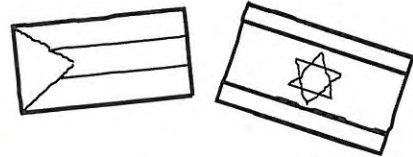
2

Biggest outbreak
of Ebola in history



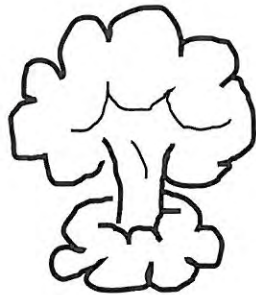
3

Operation Protective
Edge: Israel vs. Hamas



4

Russia
invades
Crimea



5

Released reports on Pres.
Zuma's expenditure on his
homestead in Nkandla



6

Boko Haram
kidnaps about 250
Nigerian school girls



7

Malala Yousafzai
becomes the youngest
Nobel Peace Prize recipient

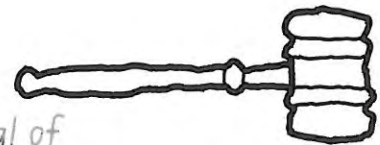
8

Malaysia Airlines
MH370 disappears



9

The trial of
paralympian Oscar Pistorius



10

Germany wins the
FIFA Soccer World Cup





