



From the Editors... The Many Faces of Racism



Last year South African journalists reluctantly agreed to examine themselves under public spotlight when the Human Right Commission decided to hold hearings into racism in the media. The hearings were prompted by accusations by black lawyers and accountants that the media – still predominantly 'white'-owned – had an agenda in discrediting the new black elite running the economics and the governance of this country.

At the hearings there was one huge point of agreement: there is no single area in South African life that is still not shot through with racism as a result of the legacies of both colonialism and apartheid.

But the issues of disagreement were many: who is to blame for ongoing racism? Who needs to fix it? How? And what is racism anyway in a post-apartheid society? In two sessions of hearings the HRC worked through broadcast and print and took multiple submissions from as many editors to try to find a way through the quagmire. It was a fraught and difficult process, very emotional and very taxing.

Last year, Review (RJR) 19 at <http://journ.ru.ac.za/rjr/index.html> published the first of a two-part series on race. Our intention was to inject into the debate sense and meaning and help. We gave those whom we respect for their intellectual clarity the space to nitpick over the term race and pull apart the issues. We also focused on newsrooms where people with initiative are trying out new ways of working and producing journalism.

This year the discussion over racism comes back to South Africa in global form with the UN conference to be held in Durban from 28 August to 7 September (see report on page 59). This country was chosen as the venue for its remarkable rejection of apartheid and the symbolic value that has for the world, but it's also an interesting venue because it demonstrates the pernicious and lingering traces of racism which the UN wants to grapple with. As the conference website announces 'as racial discrimination and ethnic violence grow in complexity, they become more of a challenge for the international community'.

Racism has many faces and many expressions all over the world, but a critical component is how the media operates to make racism a normal part of everyday life so that we cannot imagine a different kind of world. This second special edition of Review focuses on the multi-faceted representations of race all over the world and seeks again to inject sense, meaning and help so that journalists are equipped to deal with the complexities and have the intellectual stuff to inform these very important debates.

The media and racism project of the Media Peace Centre and Rhodes Journalism Review was designed to contribute constructively to debate and positive change on these issues in South Africa and internationally. Comprising two editions of Review, the Global Narratives of Race conference in Cape Town in December 2000 (see the emerging guidelines for journalists on page 59) and a racism and media website (under development), the project aims to strengthen a global network of journalists and others committed to combating racism and representing people more fairly.

We thank our funders for making this project possible: Heinrich Boll Stiftung (Germany), Open Society Foundation (South Africa), DFID (UK) and the Human Rights Policy Department (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK).

—ANTHEA GORMAN



Racism in the media is everywhere we look. Sometimes it hits us in the face, other times it is much more subtle, and insidious. Much of the media, in fact, helps institutionalise racism in society – by perpetuating racial stereotypes, and by maintaining structural imbalances in media control and access.

One of the biggest challenges in combating racism in the media worldwide is getting enough media to acknowledge its existence. That is one of the aims of this issue, and of our 30 contributors from 14 countries in their own work. Many of them work for media watch organisations, ever-vigilant for signs of discrimination; others work for innovative centres or projects promoting diversity or better representation of marginalised peoples; still others work in the mainstream pursuing better practice in covering race.

If racism is the denigration of another person or group according to 'race', then what is 'race'? 'Race' is a social construct, and must be de-constructed to understand its implications. We start broadly with 'Global Narratives of Race' – looking at how racial difference has been constructed and reproduced by the media, at the overarching narratives that shape our understanding of who we are, and who we are not. With increasing globalisation, these narratives are shaping the worldviews of more and more people. We need to take a hard look at the mega-stories the media are telling us – the stories we as journalists are telling – and what *isn't* being told.

How does racism work, cognitively speaking? That's the question posed in our second section, 'Racism at Work'. We look at psychological analyses of early childhood development, particularly the formation of 'the enemy', and at how racism develops through the projection of our 'split-off selves'. Here we also consider if a racist can be reasonable – and ultimately, can they be reasoned out of their racism? Hopefully the issues raised here will help each of us fathom our own racialistic frameworks.

In Section 3, 'Country by Colour', we look at variations on a theme, the localised versions of racism in the media around the world. We range from a Native American campaign in the US to eliminate the caricaturing of Indian people in sports and the media, to the development of peace journalism to cover Indonesia's warring communities, to progressive media initiatives in Germany to confront the neo-Nazis – and beyond. As Janine Jackson of the New York-based media watch organisation, FAIR, writes: "The right to inclusive, fair media will not be granted. It must be won." Our contributors are all, one way or another, engaged in the struggle.

Definitions of race, and discourses around racism, keep shifting. Much depends on demographics, and on political and economic climates. The racism debate in South Africa, for instance, is hugely different from that in the United States – where it is mostly confined to academia, taken up by society only when a crisis like the LA riots hits. This issue, we hope, reflects those differences.

We also hope that, collectively, these articles inspire deeper understanding of racism and the media's role in both constructing and combating it. We hope that they point towards better ways of representing different people, reflecting the complexity of identities not reduced to 'race' or otherwise diminished.

—MELISSA BAUMANN

Guerrilla Graphics



Chaz Maviyane-Davies, the graphic designer for this issue, has been described by the UK *Design* magazine as "the guerrilla of graphic design". For more than two decades the award-winning, controversial artist's work has taken on issues of consumerism, health, nutrition and human rights. He has studied (MA, the Central School of Art and Design in London) and worked in Britain, Japan, Malaysia, the US and Zimbabwe, his country of origin. From 1983 until recently he ran the renowned design studio in Harare, Zimbabwe, The Maviyane-Project. Due to adverse political conditions in his homeland, Maviyane-Davies earlier this year moved to the US, where he is cur-

rently an Associate Professor of Design at the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston. His work has been exhibited internationally and is included in several permanent collections at various galleries.

For this Review he not only designed the cover graphic, and all the visual material in the first two sections; he also came up with the truly brilliant idea of creating 'mantones' for the 'Country by Colour' section. If we are going to be coloured-obsessed about humans then let's do it thoroughly and take it to the printers! So look closely, the entire section is colour-coded to fit the mantone chart on page 23. His website is www.maviyane.co.zw.