

The Constitution

of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

We, the people of South Africa,

Recognise the injustices of our past;

Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;

Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and

Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to --

Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;

Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;

Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and

Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

May God protect our people.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.

God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.

Mudzimu thajutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.



One law for One nation

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COVER IMAGE:

BOOK - MILNERTON
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TOWN: from the series 'Life
under Democracy' - Dale
Yudelman

Negotiating our democracy



Perhaps the most profound truths about the 20th anniversary of democracy in South Africa are evoked by the photographs we carry in this edition. Paul Weinberg's powerful black and white images collected over a long time and shot mostly under apartheid, speak of hardship then and now, of forgotten rural lives,

of small efforts to make a living. We're also indebted to him for the beautiful pictures of Mandela - now lost to us, but always in spirit just behind our shoulders urging us to be the best we can be. Juxtaposed with those are photographs from Dale Yudelman's Life under Democracy project. These speak of urban spaces, of struggles that have a hardened edge as enfranchised South Africans struggle still to make lives with dignity. And then Masixole Feni allowed us to use his toilet photos from the Western Cape - could there be a more powerful symbol of democracy gone wrong than pictures of the sanitation situations that have provoked some of the most intense reactions to being governed? As journalists located here, as media educators and editors and owners we think and talk and negotiate our location, our duties, our commitments, our positions and oppositions in this 20th year of democracy as our wealth of thoughtful stories in this section attest.

The digital is ever-present as a new defining

regime that demands our attention and ingenuity and threatens our old ways of doing things as well as our media formations and our livelihoods. Many of the readers of this publication will be at the 18th edition of the Highway Africa conference and educators attending are invited to join us for a focused discussion on "Digital disruption and the future of journalism education". I've been so exercised by this issue this year that I've compiled some of the thoughts and ideas I've been exposed to for this edition of Review and for that event (see page 2).

The Rhodes Journalism and Media Studies relationship with the School of Journalism at Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique has continued this year with much to-ing and fro-ing between Grahamstown and Maputo. Again we carry articles written by our colleagues there and welcome them to the endless debate that is journalism education.

The financial crisis that has come with digital disruption has not left Review untouched, we only just got this edition to the printer at the very last hour and I want to thank my colleagues at the School of Journalism and Media Studies and in the leadership of Rhodes University for strength and support in the year when I thought the print edition of this publication had finally died.

What next year holds I don't yet know, but I want to remind you that on our website (rjr.ru.ac.za) you will find RJR Alive, our digital magazine with special focused issues (Radio, Mandela, Twitter and upcoming Investigative Journalism and what's going on with the SABC).

Anthea Garman, Editor.

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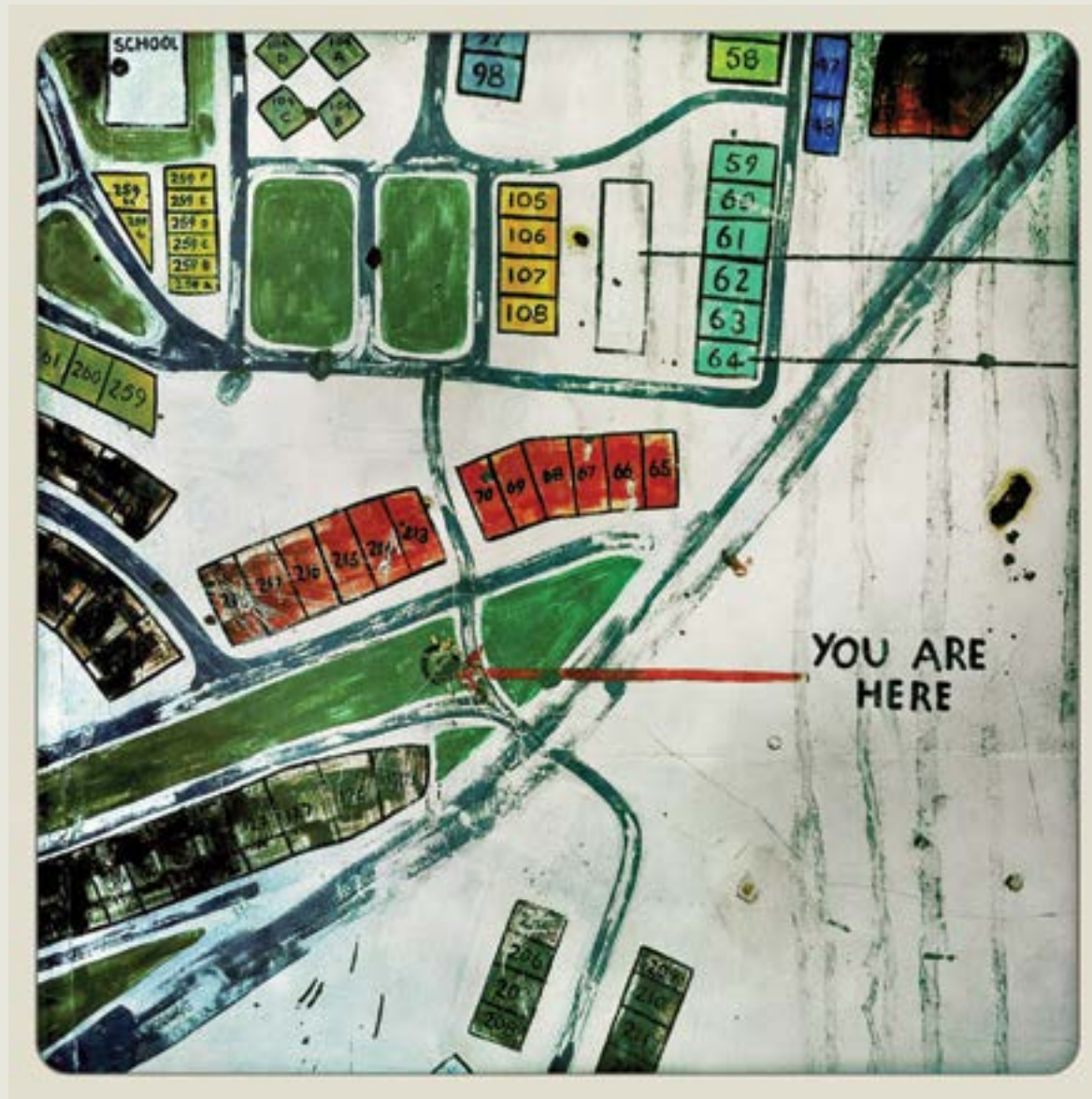
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Digital disruption

SOME INSTAGRAMS



SIGN - KRUGERSDORP: from the series Life under Democracy - Dale Yudelman

By Anthea Garman

I'm going to shamelessly pinch someone else's language to think about the changes and challenges of this media moment we are living through and take the theme for the Mennel Media Exchange (MMX14), organised by Laurie Bley of Duke University and Patrick Conroy of eNCA and held in Johannesburg in July.

"Digital disruption" doesn't fall into the neat pessimism or optimism so emblematic of our times but does say forcefully that we are all on uncertain ground and need to reconfigure our ways of doing and being in media making, media managing and in education.

this year has been an interesting one for me, I returned from academic leave in which I concentrated on research to come back to teaching and have been really lucky in being exposed to a number of people who've shifted my thinking about how to approach the rapidly oncoming future. So some shapshots (or instaggrams) of this year so far:

No longer constrained by ink, paper, time

Let's start with Bill Adair, a contributing Editor for Politifact (<http://www.politifact.com/>) who was the keynote speaker at the Mennel Media Exchange (see <http://menellmediaexchange.com/>). Politifact is an interesting reinvention of the extreme attention to factual detail which giant computerised power makes possible. This makes verification into a new concentrated form of journalism which is not just a significant tool for accountability but also has its humorous and satirical possibilities (see the rating "pants on fire" attributed to those who manipulate information with the highest degree of subterfuge and/or stupidity).

Adair started by reeling off those stats which plunge us all into deep gloom because the financial model that upheld print is collapsing and the new configuration that will capture digital audiences has not yet been worked out. But then he took a turn and focused on the "upside of disruption" by saying "this is a transformational moment in human communication" and that it comes "via the phones in our pockets".

"This is a transformation on the level of the Gutenberg Press. We are no longer constrained by ink, paper and time. The best is available to everyone and these new devices and formats allow us to develop new forms of journalism. So let's reinvent journalism."

Adair used the example of the Apple Macintosh "pirates" who were set aside from others in the company and from the usual routines and the "culture of the ordinary" to reinvent their computer business. His advice to managers and owners was to "make sure you're solving a problem people really have" and to "go narrow, go deep: do one thing really well".

Also at MMX14 was *Business Day* editor Songezo Zibi who took a more considered approach. He spoke about how car manufacturers have to think of a product that fits the now but will last for the life of a vehicle. The product must respond to present and future needs. He sees this consideration as really important to take into account for



NELSON MANDELA'S PRISON CELL - ROBBER ISLAND: from the series Life under Democracy - Dale Yudelman

media. He also reminded everyone: "we are not the drivers of the change" and that the internet companies, the phone companies and the computers are the drivers. He said the important principle was to have a "transformatory attitude".

Adrian Basson, editor of *Beeld*, takes a gung ho approach - "never let a good crisis go to waste". He had some strong points to make:

1. Take down the Chinese wall (between editorial and advertising) and get more creative about what to offer advertisers.
2. Go digital first: "it's about the deadline stupid!"
3. Beats are still important, so are the right people with the right skills.
4. Journalists must be able to (in addition to reporting and writing) edit video, edit audio, have a blog and (controversially to much disagreement from students and educators) offer their services for free.
5. Journalists need each other now so they should talk about their relationships with each other.

In the session "Doing less with less" editors talked about how institutions like the JSE are contributing to the shrinking economic base of mags like the *Financial Mail* by withdrawing all the paid-for information that was crucial to both readers and media companies.

Tim Cohen FM's editor, Mapi Mhlanga news editor of eNCA, and Pheladi Gwangwa, station manager of 702, all agreed that to cut back on investment in actual journalism and journalists was very shortsighted.

Styli Charalambous of the only all-digital publication *Daily Maverick* said "for us it has always been less, we have never had more; it has been guerrilla warfare from day one". The *Maverick* gets about 400 000 visitors but needs up to three million to break even. Nevertheless, he said, "we invest everything

in editorial", but, "it's tough waiting for the digital tide to come in."

A very interesting side issue for me as a journalism educator was the references to "slow" and "fast" journalism - the new markers of distinction and routine creation. Almost everybody agreed that to distinguish between the facility of social media and the web (and of course radio) as carriers of the fast, new and breaking allowed one also to place emphasis on the slow, developing, important, investigative and time-consuming but also very valuable information. Useful resources like Steve Buttry's Unbolt the Newsroom project (<http://stevebuttry.wordpress.com/2014/01/30/how-an-unbolted-newsroom-works/>) were shared around.

In addition to all the talking there were workshops at MMX14 and one of the most helpful was Gus Silber's one on using Instagram (out of which the now financially successful Humans of New York project came). Silber's principles for riding the digital disruption are shareable:

1. Embrace the technologies
2. Think and work across media
3. Be your own newsroom
4. Be social
5. Share
6. Learn to be a hacker - find out things and solutions
7. Be nimble (don't let a story brew)
8. Learn to work within and around limitations
9. Be connected and wired
10. Carry a notebook and pen (the technology does fail!)

Everything is already digital

I first encountered Mindy McAdams via her hyperlinked masters thesis on the internet when I moved to Rhodes to teach and had to start thinking about the digital (that was the same year as the first Highway Africa conference, 1997). This year McAdams (see <http://mindymcadams.com/tojou/>) who teaches digital journalism at the University of Florida came and spent about four months with us helping us to think deeply about what we're teaching and how and why.

McAdams thinks the upheaval we've been living through started in 1995. It's a transition without end and she thinks we're still in the "adolescence of the internet". Its hallmarks are:

1. Variety: more sources, less monopoly, nobody has a captive audience.
2. Time: it's 24/7 - there is no waiting.
3. Place: wherever you want it.
4. Trust - there's a great deal of uncertainty about sources of news and a casual

attitude to “the news”.

5. The media business model is in terminal decline.
6. Authority – shifting from traditional sources of information to start-ups like the *Huffington Post*.

So what does this mean for those of us who teach future journalists? McAdams’ mantra is “everything is already digital”. She looks at what skills are in demand now and then thinks about how education incorporates those into curricula:

1. Collaboration and participation with audiences – this she says is a very big part of the challenge of change. This is not the same as vox pops, or citizen journalism, or user-generated content, or the old sourcing models. It is encouraging the audience to interact not only with the site, content or journalists but also with each other.
2. Aggregation and curation have become really important forms of doing journalism and student journalists have to be trained how to do these properly.
3. Data graphics and data analysis are key. But as in all shifts in technology the trick is to learn to train oneself and to teach students to train themselves in the tools. Data is not just a thing for its own sake. The use of data tools should be linked to answering the real and important questions audiences have; and the mining of public sources is really important.
4. Photos and video are important. Students must have photo-editing skills and short video documentary ability. Neither of these require full immersion in the technology, but a small suite of key skills.
5. Social media for sharing and mining for sources and new voices. But the key here is that it should be used in a professional manner.
6. Apps and digital-only products require familiarity and use.
7. Audience research is vital – especially analysis of what people are doing with your content.
8. Fact-checking and sourcing is imperative, as is “evidence tracking”. It also lifts the professional journalist into a realm many amateurs can’t sustain. Understanding copyright and plagiarism is essential.

McAdams pointed to the site <http://advancingthestory.wordpress.com/> as a particularly helpful one to keep the focus on telling good and useful stories rather than getting wound up in the technological proficiency. She also said: “There is not a model everybody can follow and we are all

burdened by the legacy structures.”

Learning though modelling

Just as McAdams was preparing to leave us, Janet Kolodzy (Emerson College in Boston and author of *Practising Convergence Journalism: An Introduction to Cross-Media Storytelling*) arrived, giving us no chance to forget what we’d started or to slack off.

Kolodzy urged us as teachers to “lead by example” and model what we want to see our students learn and do. She took us through a recent report done by the Poynter Institute into core skills for journalists (http://www.newsu.org/course_files/CoreSkills_FutureofJournalism2014v5.pdf) in which they first came up with about a hundred! They then narrowed these down to 37. In powerful contrast to the many words proliferating about this situation, Kolodzy is refreshingly brief and focused. She has her own list and it consists of just four essential skills:

1. Thinking
2. Reporting
3. Writing
4. Producing

This short list is positioned against another list which constitutes “convergence thinking” which is:

- Audience-centric
- Story-driven (both narrative and non-narrative)
- Tool neutral
- Professional – disciplined and consistent (the hallmarks of journalists not amateurs).

Kolodzy sees journalists working on a spectrum of news which ranges from:

Short
Fast
Now
News
Which serves

To:

Deep
Interactive
Contextual
Which gets saved.

Her response to choices about whether to teach certain skills deeply and intensely (such as photography and intimate knowledge of photoshop) or whether to go the Jack of all trades route, is to think “interdisciplinary not multidisciplinary”. Know something deeply and well, know some things about other skills, work with those who have skills you don’t – seems to be the most sensible approach.

And she warns: “Make your curriculum

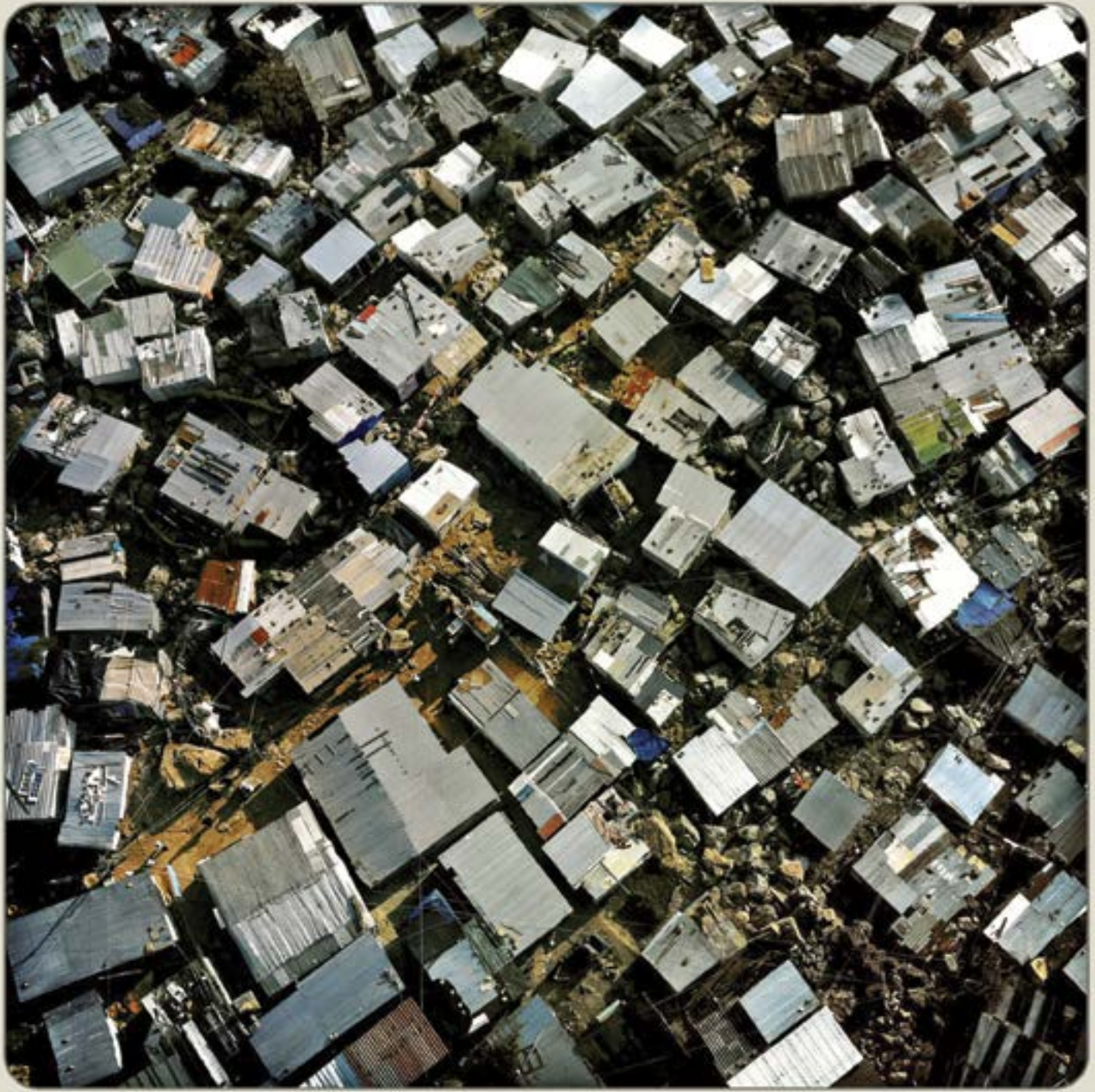
flexible, more change is coming, you have to believe in journalism as a self-correcting system.” The mantra here is “sustainable adaptation”.

Down and dirty

Both McAdams and Kolodzy use blogs as a central vehicle for the journalism they teach because the technology is simple and doesn’t require coding knowledge (unless you want to “get under the hood and make it purr” – Kolodzy) and the form allows for video, audio, photography, writing, curating, organisation and engagements with audiences via connected social media. Setting up a blog means that a purpose, an audience, a mission must all be decided by students themselves. Categories and navigation are key to underlining the purpose and mission of the journalism. The crucial elements are:

- A blog name which has meaning and purpose.
- An about section which sets the purpose and mission and says who is behind the site.
- Categories and navigation.
- The home page must be big and bold and visual.
- Speak directly to the reader and engage them directly in what the site will do for them (adopt a more personal tone which comes with this form of media).
- Play with it and change it (the technology allows you to avoid setting your choices in stone).
- Use rich elements: photographs, video and audio – short clips are best.
- Liveness is in the look, the tone of the writing, the personal approach and the conversations generated.
- Make connections in stories – give more than just information.
- Be professional – accuracy, contacts, ethics
- Use social media in conjunction with the blog.
- Fiddle with the possibilities of the technology, pick and choose the widget options.
- Links, give the reader more!
- Get other voices in, make the blog a platform for the audience and important members of your community (which may not be geographical).





IMIZAMO YETHU - HOUT BAY, CAPE TOWN: from the series Life under Democracy - Dale Yudelman

The beauty of the **unfolding nation**

... **ONE** cannot but be struck by the deep despair many South Africans express about the fortunes of our 20-year-old democracy, leading us to revisit the question asked at the beginning of our study: has there been a 'regression of the liberating ideas' that were dominant in the years of struggle? In looking at the prospects of the South African nation through the hopes and aspirations of its people we have to distinguish between the national mood of this moment (part of which may reflect the pace of progress rather than the lack of progress as such) and the protracted process to attain national formation and social cohesion. Faced with a myriad difficulties – problems in governance, economic development and demographic changes – the tendency must be to focus on the negative of the national mood instead of the beauty of the unfolding nation formation process.

But the reality is that national identity does not fill the leaks in the roof, the potholes in the road; nor does it fill empty stomachs. It may fill us with pride if our national team performs well, but such is the nature of the South African nation that it all depends on who is the 'us' and which national team we are talking about. There is no doubt that even among the elite, one part would rather watch football while others would be more energetic about the national cricket or rugby teams.

The study confirms the persistence of the historical patterns of exclusion of the majority of the population. This disturbing aspect of post-apartheid South Africa calls for further reflection on the *nature* of nation formation and the question of national identity in the context of South Africa's cultural diversity. Further, this reflection must take into consideration the objective of the national liberation project – to overlay racial and ethnic identity categories with an inclusive South African national identity. This objective is meant to render the designations 'blacks' and 'whites' irrelevant in favour of an inclusive national identity while acknowledging diversity. How attainable is this, given the race-obsessed ethnic engineering of the past and the cautious transition to democracy?

... a number of areas call for co-ordinated attention...

Vision and its pursuit

Though the Constitution enshrines socio-economic and other generations of rights, these have yet to be attained for the majority... it is therefore critical to ensure that South Africans embrace and act out a common socio-economic vision, which many would argue is contained in the National

The Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (Mistra) was launched as a think tank in March 2011 and was founded by a group of South Africans with experience in research, academia, policy-making and governance. Mistra applies itself to issues such as economics, sociology, governance, history, arts and culture and the natural sciences. *Nation Formation and Social Cohesion: an inquiry into the hopes and aspirations of South Africans* came out of a research project to examine different interpretations and meanings attached to nation formation. Ethnographic studies were undertaken in four provinces (Western Cape, Gauteng, Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal), to understand how very ordinary South Africans understand their place in this country. The contributors to the book were Andries Oliphant, Yacoob Abba Omar, Joel Netshitenzhe, Leslie Dikeni, Shepi Mati, Vincent Williams, Robert Gallagher and Feizel Mamdoo. This is an excerpt from the conclusion.

Development Plan.

Pursuing a common vision requires new forms of civic-mindedness and enhanced citizen activism. At the generic level leaders of various sectors of society and their constituencies should be prepared to contribute to, and to sacrifice for, the realisation of the common interest. At a micro-level this can take different forms such as a conscious effort by all to take the initiative in endeavouring to better their conditions.

Decent standard of living

A genuine sense of belonging – which is fundamental to both nation formation and social cohesion – is, to a large extent, dependent on whether the material conditions of all South Africans, especially the poor, are in fact improving. While it can be argued that poverty does not determine the existence or otherwise of national unity and social cohesion, a variety of research material does illustrate that 'relative poverty' or inequality is a critical inhibitor to unity and cohesion.

Building a common humanity

Eliminating spatial and physical barriers on which racial segregation was founded is also critical to promoting nation formation and social cohesion... in order to facilitate racial, ethnic, class and immigrant interaction a systematic and orderly dismantling and reconstruction of South Africa's living spaces

is required.

Building relations across racial and ethnic lines should also include the promotion of multi-lingualism, which must incorporate understanding of cultures and the encouragement of friendships outside the classroom and workplace.

It is subject to debate whether the current provincial dispensation – with some of the provinces carved virtually along 'neat' ethnic lines – is appropriate for nation formation. Are there other ways in which geocultural integration can be promoted?

Value system

Human self-worth, respect for others and empathy for the most vulnerable in society are the core values that should define relations in society.

There should be targeted campaigns and programmes the combat the habit of (negatively) 'othering' those who are not South African.

Combating the manifestations and tendencies towards corruption in the public and private domains and discouraging approaches to self-advancement that are inspired by a 'dog-eat-dog' mindset would contribute not only to the promotion of the legitimacy and authority of the State, but also to the sustainability of the whole political and economic edifice of the South African nation state.

All of these proposals should co-articulate in the long journey towards genuine South African nationhood and social cohesion.

"My identity is South African. I'm not sure whether I am Khoisan; I'm not sure but I'm still searching; I'm still searching for my true identity from the African soil. I know that I have British ancestry; I'm proud of it but somewhere along the line I did not reconnect with the Khoisan and all those other people. I'm now researching my life all over again to belong in this new South Africa. I know there is a place for me in this place. I want to belong to South Africa.

I'm alienated from the European lifestyle. I am proud of being a human being in the townships."

Interviewee Des Jones from Eldorado Park

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1994



Make your mark next to the party you choose.
Etša leshwao pela mekgatlo oo o o kgethang.
Yenza luphawu eceleni kwelcembu lokikhetzako.
Endla mfungho othelo ka vando leni u n hlambulaka.
Baya leshwao go letagana le leleko la gago.
Yenza uphawu lakho eduze nahlangano oyikhetzako.

Place a mark next to the party you choose.
Dix leshwao la gago go letana le phatle yoo o o kgethago.
Kha vha ite lunywe phanda ha drangano lwe vha shetha.
Yenza uphawu lakho eceleni kwelcembu olo olkhetzako.
Dweba uphawu esikhateni esiseduze kwenhlangano
oyikhetzako.

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AFRICAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY		ACDP		
AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT		ADM		
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS		ANC		
DEMOCRATIC PARTY - DEMOKRATIESE PARTY		DP		
MERIT PARTY - MERIETE PARTY		MP		
NATIONAL PARTY - NASIONALE PARTY		NP		

E.CAPE

BALLOT PAPER: from the series Life under Democracy – Dale Yudelman

South Africa's media and the STRENGTHENING OF DEMOCRACY

Before one can assess the role of the media in consolidating South Africa's infant democracy, one has to define what role the media *should* be playing in South Africa's particular brand of democracy. South Africa is a constitutional democracy, which is both representative and participatory, not just an electoral democracy where voters only have power during elections every five years

By William Gumede

South Africa's media, like all other institutions in the country faces the challenge to 'transform', to adapt to the country's new democratic constitution, racial integration ethos and the economic redress for previously disadvantaged communities.

But the media also has a crucial role in strengthening and consolidating the country's infant democracy, while at the same time media companies have to survive as businesses in increasingly difficult markets. Journalism as a profession is itself undergoing a transformation as a result of political, economic and technological changes.

News is now widely and instantly available from an explosion of new sources of information, such as social media, blogging and mobile devices. Combined, these dramatic structural and market changes have made many 'old' media, such as newspapers redundant.

It is in the media that South Africa's transformation debates are being waged and fought. It is also in the media where "democracy most concretely manifests, because that arena both represents and constitutes the independent political institution wherein citizens can engage in the discussion of matters of the commonweal".¹ The media is also the forum where communities and groups are portrayed, both by themselves and by others and to themselves and to others.²

Before one can assess the role of the media in consolidating South Africa's infant democracy, one has to define what role the media *should* be playing in South Africa's particular brand of democracy. South Africa is a constitutional democracy, which is both representative and participatory, not just an electoral democracy where voters only have power during elections every five years.³

The very obvious role of the media is to provide information to citizens, not only specialised reporting, but also just informing people on what's happening, so that they can make informed decisions. But the media also provides the platform for criticism, questioning and for pressure to be put on leaders to be responsive and accountable to the wishes of citizens.

The idea of the media as watchdog, as guardian of the public interest, and as a conduit between the government and the governed is rather compelling. Amartya Sen,⁴ the Indian economics Nobel Prize laureate, for example, sees the media's role not only as a watchdog against the abuse of power, but also against natural disasters. The media is also an early warning and a force to pressure government into action, against coming social, political and economic disasters and upheavals, warning office bearers of citizen anger, dissatisfaction and outrage.

The media has a protective function in a democracy, by giving voice to the vulnerable, and on disadvantaged and neglected issues. Conventionally the debate has been on strategies to secure media coverage for poverty-related issues, but the extent to which the perspectives of the poor are reflected in the media is equally important. “(T)he poor cannot assert their rights if they don’t know what these are. If they are unaware of the laws and procedures for availing themselves of their entitlements or the mechanisms they can use to remedy their deprivations, they will always remain poor. Democracy cannot take root if the poor and powerless are kept out of the public sphere.”⁵

South Africa is one of the world’s most unequal societies,⁶ which obviously has political effects. The less equal tend to be less visible,⁷ more ignored and less likely to attract politicians to help them, unless opportunistically ahead of elections. The voiceless can only be heard if the media are accessible to them.

Unlike the powerful, which the media should hold accountable, the voiceless depend on the media to not only find them, but to bring them into the civic conversation, so important to democracy.⁸ The pressure to remain profitable can result in increasingly urban, consumer-focused media, with a declining concern for the voiceless – who cannot pay.

But the media could also play a constructive role in reconciliation, multiculturalism and nation-building. For example, the Philippine investigative journalist, Sheila Coronel,⁹ argues, when the media brings in outsiders, whether marginalised because of race, gender or class, it helps to contribute to a social consensus that the injustices against them must be redressed.

But reporting on the lives of those who were previously marginalised, the media plays an important role in validating histories and memories of the formerly oppressed, which were dismissed during apartheid.

To generate a common feeling for nation-building, the media must give diverse coverage to all communities. But they can only do so if their staff are diverse. Daniel Lerner argued that the media can help develop empathy¹⁰ towards others and different cultures. “It is only when individuals in the society began to open themselves up to the experiences of others outside of their own culture”¹¹ that they can transform.

It is important that the post-apartheid media move away from apartheid-era stereotypes of black people in their everyday reporting. For example, it would be crucial that the post-apartheid media in its coverage refrain from cementing in the “public mind a link” between criminality, violence or gangs and particularly communities¹².

In new democracies the media are often required to go beyond the traditional role of just informing, but contributing to public education and enlightenment. By showing quality, diverse cultural, political and social and news programmes to a nation where large swathes never had access to decent education, the media offers opportunities to many to broaden their minds, outlooks and social advancement.

A crucial part of the consolidation of transformation is in inculcating new values, norms and behaviours, as

To generate a common feeling for nation-building, the media must give diverse coverage to all communities. But it can only do so if their staff are diverse.

set out in the democratic constitution.

The media can help with forming – and accepting – new democratic social values, especially in societies undergoing systemic transformation where the social changes can be perplexing.

Some ANC leaders have what former Chief Justice Pius Langa calls a “minimalist approach” to the values of the constitution and democracy. It appears they only obey those democratic precepts which favour them. Others have not fully embraced the idea of democracy at all. Sections of the ANC leadership elite think they are above the country’s laws.

However, to play a democratic role, the media must be independent, politically and financially. Growing concentration of media ownership – whether politically or financial – is a threat to media independence.

Many democratic institutions are increasingly experienced by ordinary citizens as not responsive, unaccountable or sometimes not even relevant anymore. Clearly, for people to take to the streets, often violently, indicates they have long given up on approaching democratic institutions such as Parliament, or democratic watchdog organisations, such as the South African Human Rights Commission, viewing these institutions as mostly lame-duck, ineffective and subservient.

In South Africa, because of the high levels of inequality and unequal access to key public forums, important opinions are easily shut out because those holding such opinions are too poor to influence party leaders or access institutions such as the media or Parliament. Ignored, the impoverished bottle-up frustrations spill into violence.

Twenty years since the founding of South Africa’s democracy, the country’s existing parties, including both the ANC and the main opposition DA, appear not to be responsive, beyond during elections, to the majority of voters. Given this particular weakness in South Africa’s politics it has often appeared that the media plays the role of ‘opposition’ by emphasising its oversight role, given the glaringly poor oversight role being played by many opposition parties.

South African media has by-and-large played an extraordinarily crucial oversight role, to consolidate the country’s democracy, not least by holding elected officials accountable. The media’s role has been important in exposing official wrong-doing, such as President Jacob Zuma’s spending of R280 million of public money on his personal compound at Nkandla, which would have otherwise gone unchecked.

The continued pressure by civil society groups and persistent reporting of the irregularities around the arms deal – even when media and civil society activists were frequently vilified by politicians and government officials, finally led to the successful prosecution of Schabir Shaik and has kept the pressure on Zuma to stand trial for his alleged involvement in corruption.

It is important that the media doggedly cover corruption, especially to establish a culture that corruption, self-enrichment at the expense of taxpayers, and abuse of public resources are wrong, shameful and unacceptable. By doing this it gives a disincentive to public servants and politicians to partake in corruption. By giving voice to whistle-blowers, the media encourages a political culture of exposing wrong-doing.



Paul Weinberg

Most South African business is deeply embedded in the extreme Anglo-American kind of capitalism. There is an instinctive suspicion of worker rights or of social security for society's most vulnerable; taxation is seen as confiscation and distorting business decisions; and welfare for the vulnerable is scoffed at. South Africa's mainstream media mirror this view.

In contrast, the West European stream of capitalism and its accompanying social model emphasising capitalism with a human face, was at the heart of the construction of the European welfare state, both by the parties of the left and the right – and by labour, business and civil society¹³. Clearly, the version of capitalism underpinning South Africa's business press cannot be sustainable.

Although South Africa's private media is highly concentrated – which is always bad for democracy – most of the newspapers now have black editors and sometimes owners (often black economic empowerment tycoons close to the ANC). In 1994, the new ANC government lost a great opportunity to diversify ownership of the media when the Argus group of newspapers came up for sale. The ANC opted to support Irish magnate Tony O'Reilly's bid to buy the Argus newspaper group. A more prudent idea would have been to break-up the newspaper group – and sell off individual newspapers.

In 2013, the black economic empowerment group, Sekunjalo Independent Media Consortium acquired Independent News Media South Africa, the country's largest English newspaper group. The state-owned Public Investment Corporation (PIC) invested in the deal on behalf of the Government Employees Pension Fund. Yet, again, the government lost an opportunity

to secure diversity by not encouraging the newspaper group to be broken up – and sold into separate stand alone newspapers.

Many of the big newspaper houses, such as Times Media, have majority black shareholding. The then Avusa Media had for a long time had Tokyo Sexwale and Cyril Ramaphosa as prominent shareholders. Like the rest of the economy, most of the transformation in the media since 1994 has been focusing on appointing black editors or personnel. Black owners, boards or staffs do not automatically translate into transformed values. Although many newspapers have black editors and owners it does not necessarily mean they will cover issues from a diverse perspective. For example, the issues of the advantaged – whether black or white – still get the lion's share of media coverage, while the poor in the townships and rural areas are out of sight.

South Africa's private print media, have a reach of two million readers, often mostly urban based, in a country of 50 million. The public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) – which is reached by the majority of South Africans – is beset with corruption, mismanagement and uncritical 'sunshine' journalism, yet very little is done by government to clean up the rot. Government appear little interested in genuinely transforming the SABC into a better run organisation.

The phenomenon whereby former African liberation and independence movements, once in power, re-enact or devise similar secrecy and anti-media laws that were used against them by colonial governments or white-minority regimes when they were in opposition is now repeated by the ANC. This often happens the moment these African liberation movements are under genuine

The lack of state support for community media – community radio, newspapers and television – is one weakness of the democracy.

pressure from their own supporters, impatient about their disappointing records in government.

The ANC government has proposed two measures that are reminiscent of the apartheid government's curtailing of the media. First, the Protection of State Information Bill, which will give the government broad powers to classify almost any information involving an agency of the state as top secret, not to be reported on, or divulged, in the interest of national security. The public's right to access government documents will also be restricted.

The ANC government of Jacob Zuma has also been mulling over establishing a Media Appeals Tribunal, which would have the power to sanction journalists for 'misconduct'. Clearly, these measures have little to do with protecting the national interest. If that was the case President Zuma and many ANC leaders are bigger threats to the national interests because of their wrong behaviour from alleged corruption to allowing friends to land airplanes at national key points. Furthermore, they have also little to do with allowing for media diversity and racial diversity in coverage or giving the poor voice in the media.

The truth is that some ANC leaders do not want their shenanigans to be publicly exposed – lest their supporters discover they are being duped. Governing honestly and effectively is the best antidote to criticism. Looking at what's happening at the SABC which is 'regulated' by the state, self-regulation of the media is the most prudent way forward for South Africa's media.

Off course, multitudes of South Africans still do not have access to the media. The best course for South Africa would be to have a range of newspapers

and broadcasters that covers the country's political, community and economic diversity.

Instead of government spending money on running the state-owned Bua news agency, or a news agency run by the Department of International Relations and Co-operation (DIRCO) the money would be better spent on supporting community newspapers, radio and television, not controlled by the government, but by local communities.

The lack of state support for community media – community radio, newspapers and television – is one weakness of the democracy. Local media is important to deepen democracy, foster development and diversity and to hold local leaders accountable. This is particularly important because local government is universally seen in South Africa as the weakest tier of the democracy system with high levels of corruption, lack of accountability by officials and slow service delivery.

South Africa can explore the Scandinavian model where funds are made available to independent newspapers to ensure that one newspaper group does not dominate the entire provincial or city media is currently the case in South Africa.

South Africa's media may err occasionally in not giving voice to all the voiceless or to alternative and independent voices. Sometimes it may be used in the factional battles of the ANC to destroy critics, and even on other occasions put profit above investing in quality reporting. However, in spite all of this, an independent media which is flawed is still infinitely better than one controlled and dictated to by government, political and business leaders.



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THE BIG FOUR

Shaping the South African media landscape, and beyond.

The nationalism surrounding the repurchase of one of South Africa's biggest media groups is all the more surprising for the fact of the foreign ownership of the Independent Newspaper Group surfaced for two decades.

By Reg Rumney

In February 2014 President Jacob Zuma at a special function in Cape Town spoke of the “return of the largest media group to South African ownership” as a milestone of the first 20 years of freedom and democracy. Why President Jacob Zuma considered a R2-billion disinvestment from South Africa an achievement was explained further in his speech, when he noted the disinvestment would contribute “... to that important national task of promoting the diversity of ownership, content, management and staffing of our media industry”.

During his speech, the President also noted without comment that the new owners of Independent News and Media South Africa (INMSA) included investors from the People's Republic of China. Restoring South African ownership, then, was not as important in itself as the implied commitment of the new owners to certain racial changes in the group.

For some, the purchase of INMSA from the Irish owners by a consortium headed by black empowerment company Sekunjalo Investment Holdings (Pty) Ltd was indeed cause for celebration for a different reason. For instance, the trade union Media Workers Association of South Africa, to crudely summarise its submission to the National Treasury in 2013, accused the Dublin-based INM of simply exploiting its wholly-owned subsidiary as a cash cow without any thought of reinvesting profits. It could be held out as an example of the failure of foreign direct investment to contribute to South African media development.

Yet when the investment in the Argus came to light in 1994, few thought to question the sale of control of one of South Africa's largest print media

groups to foreign interests. By contrast, as *Who Owns Whom* founder Robin McGregor noted at the time, foreigners could not own more than 20% of a South African radio station.

It is notable that the sale of a large stake in the Argus was one of the first new foreign direct investments in South Africa after apartheid, preceding the sale of a 30% stake in monopoly fixed-line telecoms provider Telkom by three years. Yet it was not the only foreign direct investment in South Africa by a foreign media company. The Guardian group of London bought 10% of the *Weekly Mail*, a small, independent former alternative newspaper in the early 1990s and gradually raised that stake. The Pearson group, owner of the *Financial Times*, re-established an old connection with South Africa by buying from Times Media Ltd (now the Times Media Group) 50% of *Business Day* and the *Financial Mail*, to form joint venture BDFM in 1996.

Indeed, a close look at the media industry in the first 20 years of democracy shows that foreign direct investment has been instrumental in ownership transformation, though perhaps not in the explicitly racial manner that transformation is most often viewed. It has been more important than black economic empowerment, in both its initial voluntary form and its legislated form of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment.

The biggest and possibly the most impressive challenge to the dominance of the newspaper products of the Big 4 media groups, INMSA, Times Media Group, Media24 (owned by Naspers) and Caxton-CTP came in the form of *This Day*, an upmarket newspaper started in Johannesburg in 2003 by Nigerian newspaper

Foreign investment has been an important and under-rated factor in reshaping South Africa's media in the first 20 years of democracy – but not only inward investment. Outward investment by South African companies in the continent in general has been a significant source of revenue, as well as geographical risk spreading.

magnate Nduka Obaigbena. *This Day* failed after one year, possibly for business reasons un-associated with the newspaper, since the owner had invested unwisely in unprofitable retail outlets. It represented the first major investment in South Africa by a country in which South Africa was heavily invested, via telecommunications operate MTN.

The *New Age* newspaper, launched in December 2010 with an emphasis on covering “positive news”, is owned by the Gupta family, which is of Indian origins, and said to have close ties to the President. Whether the money used to launch the *New Age* is foreign or not is unknown, but it has been reported that the *Times of India* has a stake in the newspaper. A pro-ANC newspaper could deflect criticism that the mainstream media has an anti-ANC bias, an idea which even Nelson Mandela expressed.

It is not only inward investment that has been important for South African media, however.

In 2014, the Times Media Group announced acquisitions that signalled a shift in the strategy of the South African media group. In 2013 TMG bought a 32% interest in Ghana's Multimedia Group and in 2014 acquired a 49% Interest in Radio Africa Limited in Kenya. It also invested in two radio stations in South Africa, signalling that it sees itself as a media group, not only a newspaper group and not only a South African operation.

With one significant exception, South African media groups have in the first 20 years of democracy been focused internally rather than on investing abroad. That one exception, Naspers, formerly the Afrikaans Press group Nasionale Pers, now dwarfs its competitors in the media sector of the JSE. At the beginning of July 2014, Naspers market capitalisation was R555-billion, compared to TMG's around R2,5-billion and Caxton-CTP's around R6-billion. Michael Moritz, chairman of Silicon Valley venture capital firm Sequoia Capital, has compared *The New York Times*' strategy to cope with a changing media environment unfavourably with Naspers, observing

that Naspers decided to swim with the tide, embracing first TV and then online publishing; *The New York Times* took the low road, and tried to fight the tide. As a result, he wrote a May 2014, Naspers' market value is around 100 times what it was worth in 1994 at \$44-billion, while shares of *The New York Times* traded for about the same nominal value as in the mid 1980s, and had a market value of around \$2 billion.

Naspers is now a media group in the widest sense of the word, with significant revenue from media platforms, such as its digital satellite TV service DSTV, and from internet service provision, notably through Chinese operation Tencent, rather than content-generation. It dominates the print media through its subsidiary Media24, but that is a smaller part of its revenue than its TV and online businesses. Its involvement in the original South African satellite TV service, the single channel M-Net, offering mainly films, was the springboard. Here it was originally part of a consortium with three other print groups, all of whom managed not to stay on the satellite TV bandwagon.

DSTV first invested steadily in Africa, as well as in other emerging markets, with its digital satellite TV offerings, when other groups were still mainly focused on South Africa.

Foreign investment has been an important and under-rated factor in reshaping South Africa's media in the first 20 years of democracy – but not only inward investment. Outward investment by South African companies in the continent in general has been a significant source of revenue, as well as geographical risk spreading. Only Naspers has so far aggressively expanded on the continent and beyond through its television interests. That may now change, and other companies may now follow, if political pressures in African countries do not prevent this.

Foreign direct investment will be vital in reshaping the media landscape in other African countries, whose nascent media companies need capital to provide new voices and new competition.

<http://www.ceja.co.za/>



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We often forget the strides that have been made in the media industry in South Africa since the end of apartheid and the repressive conditions under which the media industry operated prior to 1994. In the current context of complaints by the ANC about the lack of transformation in the industry and the poor reporting by the mainstream commercial media, the gains in ownership changes and the massive growth of the community media sector in South Africa are sometimes overshadowed. Despite a positive early relationship between the media and the ANC government, things have become progressively more difficult between these two institutions and the criticism from the ANC more vociferous in recent years.

Tracing the ANC's criticism of South African media

By Vanessa Malila

20 YEARS OF
DEMOCRACY

The commercialisation of the print media is blamed by the ANC for the fact that content reflects the upper elites in society as a result of commercial interests and advertisers' demands.

The arguments by the ANC have not only led to a tension between the media and the government, but also resulted in a number of institutional changes. Parliamentary discussions have resulted in the investigation by the Print and Digital Media Transformation Task Team (PDMTTT). In addition, the Press Freedom Commission was established by Print Media SA and the South African National Editors Forum as a result of questions around the self-regulatory structure of the print industry. What are some of the arguments made by the ANC to prompt such a close investigation of the media industry, and how have these changed over the past few years? While there are many different aspects of the media's conduct that have been referred to by the ANC in their analysis over the years, three key areas will be examined in this article: content transformation, ownership transformation, and freedom of expression.

Content transformation

One of the biggest arguments, made consistently in the documents analysed, was that the media were adopting an anti-transformation, anti-developmental and anti-ANC stance. Often these three separate issues were considered to be interrelated so that the ANC argued in being anti-developmental and anti-transformational the media were being anti-ANC; and similarly by reporting in what the ANC considered to be anti-ANC tones, the media were being anti-transformational and anti-developmental. In its 51st National Conference Resolutions, the ANC notes that "media and communications are contested terrains and therefore not neutral, but reflect the ideological battles and power relations based on race, class and gender in our society and that some sections of the media continue to adopt an anti-transformation, anti-ANC stance and are not accountable to the general public."²

A particular aspect of content diversity highlighted by the ANC in their criticism of the media is the type of content being produced by the sector. The ANC argues in its 51st Conference Resolutions that there is a need for content that caters to the gender, cultural, racial, language, geographic, and age diversity of citizens. Public broadcasting in particular should be "mainly local...and sensitive to gender, culture and the well-being of children"³. The commercialisation of the print media is blamed by the ANC for the fact that content reflects the upper elites in society as a result of commercial interests and advertisers' demands. In its discussion document on the transformation of the media⁴, the ANC notes the tensions between editorial content and business imperatives by arguing that "it stands to reason that media institutions will tend to reflect the preoccupations, values and world view of this small group of society. Even where management may adopt a hands-off approach to editorial matters, they would certainly step in to prevent their title from adopting an editorial stance that may antagonise their target market or alienate advertisers"⁵.

Even the public broadcaster has not escaped some criticism and although it is praised for the fact that its content is more diverse than that of the commercial broadcasting and print sector, a lack of funding is blamed for the fact that the SABC in some cases has to compromise on its public service mandate (ANC, 2007: <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2404>). While the SABC is regarded as having made some gains in terms of language diversity, the ANC argues that English is still the dominant language and not enough effort has been made by the media to ensure that citizens are able to consume media in all official languages. "Our government should ensure that every citizen has access to diverse range of sources of information and media in languages of their choices (in particular indigenous languages)" (ANC, 2010: <http://www.anc.org.za/docs/discus/2010/mediad.pdf>). The commercial broadcasting sector is strongly criticised for containing too much foreign content and as such lacking diversity.

Ownership and control

Ownership concentration is perhaps the issue most consistently criticised within the ANC documentation as the key factor maintaining a lack of transformation in the media industry. The fact that the South African print media is concentrated in the hands of 'the Big Four', Media 24, Caxton, Independent Newspapers, and Times Media Group, is regarded as impacting not only the political economic functions of the media such as competition amongst owners and impact on pricing, but also cultural and wider societal relations as a result of the impact of ownership on content, access to media, representation, and newsroom demographics.

The tone of the ANC's criticism towards the lack of transformation in ownership

and control of the print media grows increasingly stronger between 2002 and 2012. While the ANC acknowledged some advances in the plurality of ownership in the conference resolutions of the 51st National Conference held in December 2002, in 2007, the ANC's strong emphasis on ownership as a key means of transformation is undeniable. While there is acknowledgement from the ANC that the number of newspapers and those aimed at black readers has increased, the print sector is still regarded as highly concentrated, and as such problematic in its inability to promote transformation. In an effort to address this concentration, the ANC calls on the Competition Commission to investigate the sector's anti-competitive behavior as a result of a lack of diversity in ownership (ANC, 2010: no 110).

Ownership is thought to be strongly impacting on the ability of the media to provide a "free flow of information and a culture of open debate"⁶ within South African society. The ANC argues in its discussions on the 'battle of ideas' that print media content is highly homogenised and commercialised as a result of the sector's anti-competitive environment. Ownership transformation is regarded as central to the transformation of the media as a whole because of the impact of ownership on printing, distribution, content, employment and advertising. One way to overcome the lack of ownership diversity first suggested by the ANC in 2007 was a media sector specific Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) charter. The introduction of a media specific transformation charter is thought by the ANC to be essential in getting newsrooms more racially and gender diverse and in doing so ensuring the spread of information and a diversity of views to media audiences. The ANC argues in its discussion document on transformation of the media that, despite some changes in ownership, the lack of diversity of views in the media is the result of "sluggish change in the composition (whether by race, class or gender) of the managerial and senior editorial staff of some of these institutions" (ANC, 2007: <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2374>). It further argues that "despite changes that have taken place since 1994, regrettably the facts are that the average black ownership in South African mainstream print media to date is 14% and women participation at board and management levels is at the diminutive 4.44%" (ANC, 2013: 20). Beyond ownership transformation through a media charter, the ANC also called for the strategic implementation of the Employment Equity Act to

ensure that newsrooms reflect the demographics of South Africa (ANC, 2002: <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2495>).

Freedom of expression

Early documents reviewed regard freedom of expression as essential to South Africa's young democracy, and diverse views as necessary for a diverse citizenry. The ANC criticises the commercial and monopolised nature of the media for limiting freedom of expression through their lack of transformation. "The right of expression has little meaning if the means do not exist for the free expression of views. If control of the media – and access to the media – is concentrated in the hands of a few, then the capacity for the masses to receive and impart information is severely curtailed" (ANC, 2007: <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2374>). However, only a few months later, the quest for freedom of expression is sidelined, and the media are accused of taking this too far and in doing so hampering the rights of other citizens. As a result, that self-regulation of the print industry is argued by the ANC to no longer be "adequate" to ensure the rights of citizens are protected (ANC, 2007: <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2536>). This is also when the ANC introduced the possibility of the Media Appeals Tribunal (MAT), which it regards as essential to balancing the need for freedom of expression of with other human rights. The call for a Media Appeals Tribunal came out of the ANC's argument that the self-regulatory system was biased toward the media and resulted in content that infringed on other democratic rights.

Conclusion

Significant changes to the media industry have taken place since 1994. Despite considerable gains in fulfilling a watchdog function needed, or perhaps as a result of this watchdog performance, the media has recently been strongly criticised by the ruling party. Their criticism has resulted in a number of changes to the institutional character of the industry, changes in regulation and perhaps a more reflective self-awareness that was absent before the PDMTTT report. Perhaps indeed, as the criticism has grown louder, so too the levels of self-censorship and paranoid self-awareness have also grown. What is clear is that the relationship between the media and ANC will continue in a fractured and confrontational way as long as the ideologies of the two institutions on the role of the media in South Africa are irreconcilable.



Vanessa Malila is a postdoctoral research fellow in the Mellon Media and Citizenship project based in the School of Journalism and Media Studies, Rhodes University. Her research examines the manner in which the youth in South Africa are represented in the media and how this informs and influences their construction of citizenship.

Endnotes

1. This article comes from research conducted by the author for the Media Policy and Democracy Project (<http://www.mediaand-democracy.com/>) as part of a collaboration between the Department of Communication Science at the University of South Africa and the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University which aims to promote participatory media and communications policymaking in the public interest in South Africa. The full report will be published later in 2014.
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3. <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2495>
4. <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2374>
5. <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=2374>
6. This is an extract from the Media Charter adopted by the ANC in 1992 (Oosthuizen 2002: 92).



The state of JOURNALISM TRAINING today

While depressed conditions have adversely affected newsroom conditions over the past few years, in 2013 an enormous amount, about R70-million, was invested in training journalists'. And, in some cases, even more will be invested in 2014. But many trainers observe that newsrooms are under-staffed and under-resourced, the lack of formal mentorships these days is a worrying trend, and there are no 'train the trainer' programmes anymore.

By Glenda Daniels

Training and skills development for journalists has received enormous attention in the public domain in recent years, especially in the light of the continuing criticism of the print media.¹ In recent reports, it has been stated that there should be a more proactive approach to raising standards while investment in training – irrespective of the global recession and scaling down of staff numbers – must take place.²

This article, through interviews with trainers and media companies, examines what kind of training took place in the newsroom between 2012 and 2013, and what journalists want.

Some media companies provided comprehensive details for the research: Media24, Times Media Group (TMG), Independent Newspapers and SABC. Caxton and the *Mail & Guardian (M&G)* did not respond to requests for information on their spending on training.³ Wide-ranging discussions were also held with trainers, both past and present, from the above-mentioned companies, but also the *M&G* and Eyewitness News. Finally, Wits Journalism undertook a survey into journalists' training needs. It must also be noted that other media and journalism training exists beyond what is outlined in this research. For instance, *The New Age* newspaper provides training, universities and other institutions such as the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ) offer degrees and short courses, as do technical colleges.

Ten years ago: Sanef's 2002 skills audit and what journalists want today

One of the key findings of the Sanef 2002 Skills Audit was that if reporters were trainers, they would focus on newsgathering, writing and accuracy.⁴ The audit noted that limited resources prevented media institutions from taking junior reporters through a (traditional) process of mentoring, guidance through which they could learn the "tricks of the trade" from their senior counterparts. It listed a variety of skills that were inadequate or lacking: conceptual skills; analytical skills; creativity; critical thinking skills; enquiry skills;

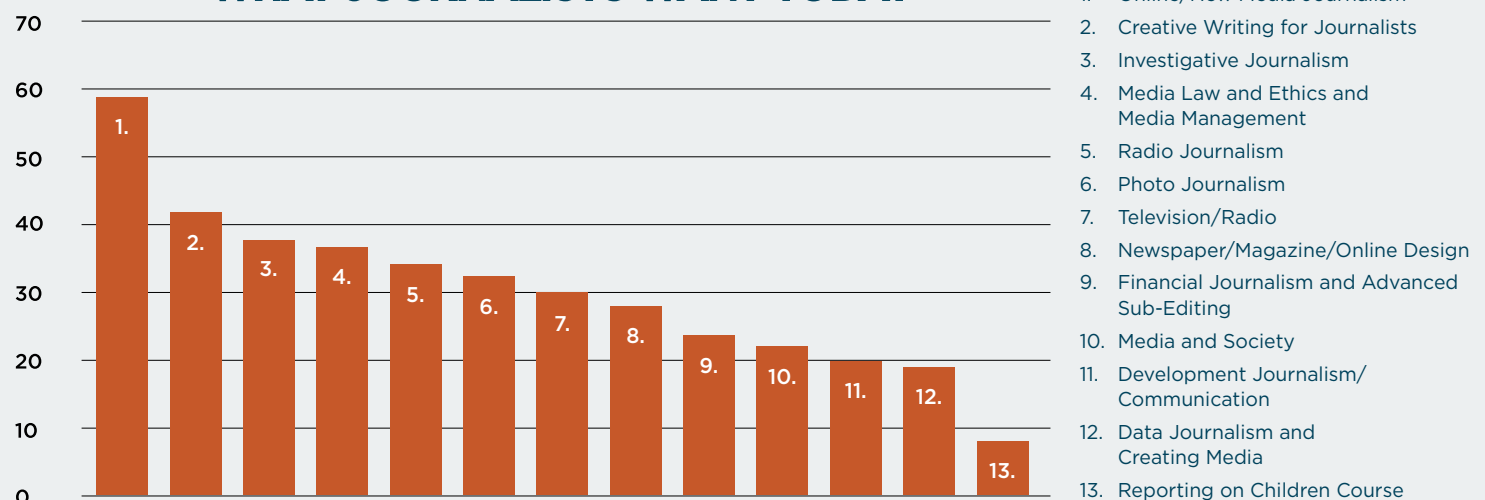
general knowledge; narrative skills; knowledge of media systems; critical reading skills; social awareness; social responsibility; and language skills. The audit also noted that strong leadership in newsrooms was needed, budgets for training were insufficient and there was a lack of general knowledge among reporters. Journalists needed skills to cultivate their own story ideas, and stories needed to be seen in a broader context. Lastly, there was not much interaction between juniors and seniors in newsrooms.

Wits Journalism recently conducted research about what kinds of training journalists wanted: the Survey of Working Journalists, 2012. From the responses there were major differences from the 2002 audit but also some similarities. The survey by Eleanor Momberg was 'dipstick' research in that it was a test of temperature, was suggestive rather than an exhaustive study. A total of 131 journalists from Gauteng and the Western Cape participated. The majority, over 70% of the respondents, had more than 10 years of experience; most had a tertiary qualification, and some with post graduate qualifications. The journalists came from a wide range of South Africa's media organisations: Media24, Sapa, Jacaranda FM, Independent Newspapers, *The Citizen*, *Sunday Times*, *The Times*, Eyewitness News/Primedia, *Business Day*, BDLive, YFM, eNews/eNCA and the Southern African Freelancers' Association. The biggest finding was that most journalists interviewed were interested in online/new media journalism training. Other big interests were creative writing, investigative reporting and then media law and ethics. The graph below captures the training interests of journalists today.

There is a clear desire for new media skills. Many of those interviewed offered suggestions to help with skills development in the industry: students should be encouraged to freelance while still studying, and something should be done to close the gap between university programmes and real newsrooms. Also vital, they noted, was that journalists needed to be taught more extensive writing skills. This echoed the findings of the 2002 skills audit. Bearing these findings in mind,

The biggest finding was that most journalists interviewed were interested in online/new media journalism training.

WHAT JOURNALISTS WANT TODAY



we see in the following section whether the training on offer today tallies with and encompasses these needs.

Training investment, programmes and teaching methods

Four of the major media groups spent a total of R69.65 million on training in 2012 (to April 2013). Media24 spent R35.75 million, SABC R23 million, TMG R7.4 million and Independent between R3-m and R4-m. If one takes into account amounts spent at Caxton, Primedia, Kagiso, eNCA, M&G and *The New Age* and other institutions such as universities, technikons and training institutions such as the IAJ, this figure would increase substantially.

1. Media24

Media24 spent a total of R35.75-million on training for the year ending March 2013, according to head of talent, Jasmine Adam, who oversees training for the media house. The company trains about 40 journalists a year. Twenty are bursary holders who attend university courses and then spend their holiday periods getting work experience under mentors in the company's different divisions, and the other 20 are graduates (interns) who attend the Media24 Academy. They spend three months' training and at the end of this period, a select few are offered a further opportunity to receive on-the-job experience in various publications.

Media24 also runs internships independently of the Media24 Academy. At 24.com, for example, the company may take on an extra 10 students. Some of the training funds went towards bursary schemes for journalists and towards a graduate programme for a range of degrees, not just in journalism.

The main Media24 training project in the past year was called the "Army of 200". This was the company's drive to equip everyone from sub-editors and photographers to reporters and editors with multi-media skills. This was a Seta-approved programme, run by the IAJ in consultation with the Poynter Institute. The training was specifically geared towards repurposing and managing newspaper content for online and mobile platforms.

The Media24 Academy ran a month-by-month programme. Applicants to the Media24 training programme had to submit a curriculum vitae and an essay. Between 20 and 25 people were shortlisted from these applications. This group was then brought to Media24 headquarters in Johannesburg for a day of further testing. The company paid for their transport so that people from distant places were not disadvantaged. The short-listed group was then given a range of tests: multiple choice, general knowledge, news sense, logic and grammar tests. The company recruited interns in two areas: journalists who were offered a post graduate bursary for fulltime study at university, and graduates who got the opportunity to study at the Media24 Academy.⁵ The then head of training Latoya Mokotto noted that journalism interns were, on the successful completion of their course, awarded a one-year internship on a Media24 publication. They did six weeks of intensive training and, from 20 interns, the best 10

were chosen to stay on for a year. A fair bit of on-the-job training takes place but newsrooms often face capacity constraints in this regard: the senior people who have the skills to train are either on the job themselves and snowed under, or absorbed in news management and put on the desk, according to Waldimar Pelser, an editor in the group. "Throwing journos in the deep end still has merit though. With proper briefing and debriefing, even a junior reporter can swim – and will learn fast," he said.

2. Times Media Group

While the company spent about R4.6-million on training under its training programme during 2012-2013, the company's HR department also made available an extra R2.8-million for staff editorial development, said head of training Paddi Clay. And future training spend, from July 2013 to June 2014, will more than double for editorial – up to R10.2-million.

Over the years Clay trained groups of between eight and 15 interns a year, with an average of between 10 to 12 interns. For 2013, Clay had a group of 10 interns, including one from the Discovery Health journalism programme. The training budget covered the funding of specialist-beat mentors and reporting/writing coaches, as well as "reputational" training for all staff. Courses on media law, the press code and so on were usually run in-house, with individual training needs supplemented by short courses. The development of senior staff leadership skills could include foreign secondments.

Clay brought in different experts to address the interns on a variety of themes: court reporting; getting organised as a reporter; generating story ideas; how to make stories work; writing intros; news; news values; and reporting on elections, for instance. A different theme was selected each year. It could be science or environment reporting. The internships last a year, from January to December. Some interns are kept on and some are not. In a few cases, she has had to ask interns if they might not be suited to something other than journalism as the aptitude was not there.

To get into the TMG training programme, applicants were required to write a general knowledge test and an essay. They then went through an interview process and were further assessed in a one-on-one interview. Clay said a lot of funds are invested in skills training. The training programme was for all the titles in the group such as *The Herald*, *Daily Dispatch*, *Business Day*, *The Times*. She did, however, add that it would "be wonderful to have more writing coaches at hand. It is difficult for interns to learn without having people available to them all the time. They are quite demanding. They have difficulties with fact gathering and contacts."

Clay regretted that one-on-one formal mentorships did not exist anymore. "We don't have enough people in the newsroom to mentor. They mainly get taken care of through the news desk". In her day, she noted, the copy got flung backwards and forwards "until you learnt how to write an intro. Today, there isn't the time; the news desk just rewrites it."

The main Media24 training project in the past year was called the "Army of 200". This was the company's drive to equip everyone from sub-editors and photographers to reporters and editors with multi-media skills.



Paul Weinberg

3. *Independent Newspapers*

Independent Newspapers spent between R3-4million on training in the last financial year, on about 30 interns, according to CEO Tony Howard's office.

For media trainer Jonathan Ancer, training was contingent on a variety of factors: "Generally speaking [training is taken seriously] although people in various positions and in different newsrooms have different attitudes to training at different times. I think it depends on what training is being offered and when and who is doing the training."⁶ In Ancer's experience most people in the editorial chain valued training. Editors and news editors were in favour of training because it helped reporters do their job better, which meant better newspapers, which meant increased circulation and so forth, he noted. "Reporters themselves are also keen on self-development. More skills equal better career prospects." However, he qualified this. "What I have found, and I'm sure that this is true across the industry, is that newsrooms are stretched so there is reluctance by news editors for reporters to be taken out of production to attend workshops, conferences and seminars. This is very frustrating especially when the journalist is pulled from the training at the last minute." News editors, Ancer added, "tend not to send their best reporters for training (because they want to keep them working) and training is then seen as a punishment rather than a reward". A culture of learning in media houses would enhance training, he felt. This

could be promoted through regular short, sharp sessions such as newsroom discussions on topical press issues, post-mortem sessions, writing, and media law and ethics workshops, in Ancer's view. Such sessions would not take reporters out of production and could be used to address skills gaps that have been identified and that were in line with the particular title's editorial philosophy, he felt.

"I also believe that one-on-one feedback, coaching and mentoring are the most valuable training interventions." Ancer felt it was unfortunate there were no formal mentorships in the company anymore. "We have tried to put formal mentoring in place but this doesn't take hold. However, informal mentoring between colleagues does take place." At Independent Newspapers, although capacity was limited, news editors tended to mentor young reporters, interns and cadets in a sort of informal training, which was taken seriously.

While the economic climate was putting a strain on media companies, Ancer felt that media companies recognised that training was crucial to their survival. He pointed to the relaunch of the cadet school at Independent Newspapers and Media24's Academy. "It's a healthy sign that most of the big media houses have employed editorial people (as opposed to HR people) to oversee training in their newsrooms."

Independent Newspapers had re-launched its cadet school, based in Cape Town. Each year nine cadets, all graduates, were recruited from KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the

Western Cape to join the journalism training programme. The cadets spend an initial three months in extensive fulltime training in Cape Town, after which they return to their regions and they work in the various newsrooms, receiving individual mentoring and monitoring. According to Ancer, there was buy-in from news editors and editors. The cadets' "before and after publication" work was recorded in portfolios and at the end of their training, cadet graduates received an in-house certificate and every effort was made to place them within the company.

In addition to the cadet school, Independent Newspapers also trained more than 20 interns in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Cape Town. These were mainly third-year journalism students in Durban, second-year journalism students in Cape Town and graduates in Gauteng. The interns were monitored and their training institutions received feedback on their progress for purposes of their work-place experience requirements.

Training, Ancer felt, should be a combination of external and in-house programmes. External workshops were valuable for continuing training and it was "important for reporters to meet colleagues from other newsrooms and share ideas". However, it was critical that "journalists who go on these courses are able to apply their new skills when they return to the newsroom". Editors and news editors needed to understand what skills the reporter would bring back from the course – and then make

sure that their new skills were used. “I think this would enhance training. It’s frustrating for reporters who come back all fired up from a course and who then go back to the same-old style of reporting.”

The training programmes run by Independent Newspapers were determined by a skills audit/needs analysis done at the beginning of each year. Depending on the outcomes, training programmes were identified. These consisted of a combination of in-house and external courses.

In-house training included writing workshops, induction courses, ethics sessions and monthly sub-editor training workshops. Regular weekly training takes place on the following subjects: objectivity; finding stories; diary planning; fact checking; building contacts; investigative journalism interview exercises; style; time and organisation skills; creativity; copy editing; writing intros; numeracy; pictures and caption writing; preparing copy to size; feature writing; legal and court reporting; asserting yourself; planning; sourcing stories; story structure; developing a news sense; phone skills; logic; grammar; authoritative writing; keeping abreast of the news; research; powerful writing; business writing; climate change; consumer writing; finding focus; preparing briefs; social media; data journalism and shorthand.

4. SABC

The total for training expenditure during 2012-2013 was R23-million, according to the SABC’s Tami Mashau, manager of skills development: projects and planning. The then SABC’s news-training manager Kieran Maree outlined how and what training happened at the biggest media employer in the country. Up to 60 interns were trained each year. Internships were offered to graduates under the age of 25 in a variety of areas including: finance, procurement, human resources, legal services; IT, radio production, marketing intelligence, graphic design, TV operations, media libraries, radio programming, journalism; film and TV production; and film and media studies.

Workplace skills plans were submitted annually along with an annual training report, Maree said. In addition, training was a “critical investment in the future of staff, the organisation and the country”. The SABC, he added, had “decentralised training

wings” attached to its divisions and a substantial dedicated training budget.

The broadcaster had numerous training partnerships with institutions and organisations such as Rhodes University, Wits Journalism, the IAJ, and Media Monitoring Africa, as well as other external providers and foreign-based trainers. Because the SABC did not have enough internal trainers, it often enlisted the help of external service providers. South Africa, he said, had a shortage of broadcasting trainers. The broadcaster trained about 60 interns a year. Training was diverse: news for radio, TV and new media; digital operations; on-air presentation; operator training; ethics; video journalism; contracting; studio play-out; and support service training in finance and human resources.

Enhancing training: Other trainers’ views

Trainers were asked whether training was taken seriously in newsrooms, how training could be enhanced and whether there was sufficient investment.

Benita Levin, the Johannesburg editor at Eyewitness News (EWN) and also head of training, said her organisation “threw their students and interns in the deep end” but also guided them. Mentors were appointed to help interns learn the ropes.

Freelance training consultant Barbara Ludman, however, said in her experience, training was not a serious business in newsrooms today. “When money is tight, the first to go, it seems, are training projects.”

Gwen Ansell, who trained at all the media houses except Caxton, felt that training in the country was taken seriously, generally: “I always find the climate towards training hospitable and receptive, so long as the training is demonstrably relevant and meets needs.” She did, however, qualify this. Newsrooms were “under-resourced and understaffed” and funds for training that had been granted to staff members were sometimes withdrawn simply because they were too busy to attend training courses. Ansell felt strongly that “what has declined is interest in training of in-newsroom trainers”.

Most trainers found it unfortunate that formal mentorships no longer existed in newsrooms anymore. Informal mentorships, however, were commonplace but none of the trainers could vouch for them. EWN was the only newsroom surveyed which had formal mentorships in place. Levin said that they were “working really well”. Ten years ago new reporters had to learn the ropes simply by asking questions. “Now, young reporters are assigned a senior reporter. They get to shadow them and learn on the job. The more mentorship training, the better,” Levin said. The process gave the new reporter a regular “go-to” person.

Ansell questioned the effectiveness of the informal mentorships present today, while Clay pointed out that senior people in the newsroom were often too busy to mentor younger journalists. Ansell noted that mentoring could play a vital role in enhancing the quality of work produced today. However, media houses would have to proactively embrace this. “Where I could run three or four Training the Trainer programmes a year, 10 years back, there is now no demand for these at all. It’s falsely assumed mentoring is a natural skill and anybody can do it.”

Clearly, while investment in funds for training was pouring in, in the millions, there are some areas such as mentorships, and adequate staffing and resources in newsrooms, that need some urgent attention.

This is an edited version of a chapter from State of the Newsroom South Africa 2013: Disruptions and Transitions report by Wits Journalism.

Endnotes

1. See ANC conference resolutions on the media at Polokwane 2007 and Mangaung 2012.
2. The Press Freedom Commission’s report, April 2012 (pages 61-65), lists some of the problems in journalism today.
3. In addition, Primedia did not respond to requests for information about their training budget figures.
4. Steyn, E and De Beer, A. 2002. Sanef’s 2002 South African national journalism skills audit. *Ecquid Novi* 23(1).
5. Mokotto, L. 2012. Email Interview 30 May 2012 Johannesburg.
6. Ancer, J. 2012. Email Interview 8 June 2012 Johannesburg.

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The slippery question of media ownership

Twenty years after the dawn of democracy media ownership in this country is still a hot issue but when the ruling party slams the media sector for lack of transformation, it actually means the print industry.

By Gill Moodie

If you look at ownership across the platforms – print, online and broadcasting – ownership is largely in black hands. Consider, for example, that the Public Investment Corporation (PIC) has significant stakes in both Sekunjalo's Independent Newspapers, the largest group of English newspapers, and Times Media Group, owners of the influential *Sunday Times* and *Business Day*. The Mineworkers Investment Corporation is one of the biggest shareholders in Primedia, the largest collection of radio stations outside the SABC, while the public broadcaster – with its four TV stations and 18 radio stations – is owned by the state.

There are also many new and significant kids on the block – some born from the opening up of the airwaves since 1994:

- e.tv is owned by Sabido, which in turn is owned by Marcel Golding's Hosken Consolidated Investments – the major shareholder is the South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union – and Remgro;
- Kagiso, that grew out of the Kagiso Trust, owns radio stations such as East Coast Radio, Jacaranda FM and various online outfits; and
- Given Mkhari's consortium owns two radio stations (Power FM in Gauteng and Capricorn FM in Limpopo) and there are two more on the way: FM stations for the Free State and the Eastern Cape.

Meanwhile, AM licences granted this year by the regulator include the Sekunjalo-backed Magic AM in Cape Town and the Jomo Sono-backed TalkSport in Gauteng.

The media wants to survive and grow – and to do that, in an age of shrinking newsrooms, it must serve target markets that seldom include the rural poor.



In the print sector, the Gupta family has started the government-friendly *The New Age* while the *Mail & Guardian* is owned by Trevor Ncube but this is not counted in BEE tallies because he is Zimbabwean.

So what gives here? Why are there still cries that transformation in the media is too slow and what have the changes over the past two decades meant for journalism? Crucially, what is the actual state of play when it comes to current media ownership in this country?

The last time a comprehensive study was done on ownership was in 2009 – by the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) – and that found:

- Historically Disadvantaged Individuals – or HDI – were well represented in broadcasting ownership chiefly due to the policy and regulatory framework of the regulator, ICASA. “HDI owns an average of 64.4% of Private Commercial television stations and 58.3% of all Private Commercial and Secondary Market radio stations,” the report found.
- “In post 1994 South Africa the print media landscape has not transformed much in terms of ownership and control and is still majority owned and controlled by white shareholders.” The report found that both online and print – as well as printing presses and distribution channels – were dominated by the “Big Four” companies (Media24; Independent Newspapers; Avusa, now called Times Media Group (TMG); and Caxton), and that this made it difficult for new entrants to the market.

Since 2009 we have had two significant changes in the Big Four: firstly, the sale of Independent from an Irish firm to Dr Iqbal Survé’s Sekunjalo consortium that includes the PIC, and secondly, TMG passing to Andrew Bonamour’s Blackstar private equity firm. We can expect TMG to be sold again in the next few years as Blackstar realises the value of its reorganisation of the firm.

There is no doubt that media in this country has been transformed from a highly concentrated one 20 years ago to one that is more diverse in terms ownership, editorships, newsrooms and content. However, a few important oddities continue to exist: Media24, Caxton and TMG appear to remain largely under white control.

As recently as 2012, an industry task team – the Print and Digital Media Transformation Task Team (PDMTTT) – was set up to look into calls for a Media Charter after Parliament’s communication

portfolio committee had found that lack of race transformation in print ownership was not the only burning issue. The parliamentary committee had also criticised the print sector for not reflecting a diversity of voices – of marginalising the rural and the poor – and of cartel-like behaviour where community media were smothered through anti-competitive behaviour.

In 2013 the task team rejected a charter but found that the industry had failed to transform itself in direct areas of ownership, management and control. It made various recommendations including that digital media (particularly mobile) be seized upon as a game changer for transformation and to bring communities previously excluded into the national discourse and, more specifically, companies should commit to having 50% of black board membership and 50% female within three years.

The image of an untransformed print industry is at odds with an appraisal of the quality of journalism being put out today. A look at the various annual journalism awards – from the very little MDDA-Sanlam Local Media Awards to the very big Standard Bank Sikuvile Journalism Awards and the prestigious Taco Kuiper Award for Investigative Journalism – tells you that there is range and depth in our news and investigative content. There is some really excellent journalism going on despite economic pressures on print in particular.

Interestingly, in submissions to the PDMTTT, the Big Four showed that they were complying with affirmative action law in some aspects and not in others, according to Wits University’s 2013 *State of the Newsroom* report.

In its BEE scorecard, Media24 had high scores for ownership (20 out of 20), management control (8.5 out of 10), preferential procurement (18 out of 20), enterprise development (15 out of 15) and socioeconomic development (5 out of 5). It had low scores for employment equity (2.19 out of 15) and skills development (about 3 out of 15).

TMG said in its submission that its total score for employment equity in 2012 was 65.28 (out of a 100), which was a decrease from 2010 and 2011 (77.15 and 77.3 out of 100 respectively).

Caxton scored nothing on ownership (0.00) and its scores were low for employment equity (2.46 out of 15). However, its scores were high for management control (8.44 out of 10), skills development (11.43 out of 15) and preferential employment (15.61 out of 20).

Independent’s submission was made

under the previous ownership so is no longer relevant.

It is clear that media ownership – and its transformation – is a very complex issue, especially when you have ownership by public companies where shares are traded on the open market and you have the likes of Media24 owned by Naspers, the Afrikaans company that was once the friend of the apartheid regime but is today a massive multinational with interests in China, India, Russia and Eastern Europe.

Further, there are important media companies – such as Independent and Primedia – that are private and, therefore, only share the information they wish.

It is also clear, however, that board membership of media companies is viewed as an important, do-able tool for change – and, in fact, the PIC has lobbied unsuccessfully for representation on the TMG board.

The big question is whether transformation of media ownership spells a more diverse, richer, more textured journalistic prism through which South Africans can filter their hopes and aspirations, fears and concerns. I think the answer lies in the fact that the media and the government want different things of media transformation.

The government wants all South Africans to be able to express their voices in the media and wants less criticism of itself and a more developmental stance. In essence, the ANC government wants the media to pull in its direction to help it build a new, more equal society.

The media wants to survive and grow – and to do that, in an age of shrinking newsrooms, it must serve target markets that seldom include the rural poor. The media also wants to reflect the voice of the people but to do this, it must hold the government to account and speak truth to power.

The PDMTTT said in its 2013 report back “...transformation is a process of repositioning print and digital media from being a minority white controlled sector to a truly South African industry that not only resonates with the aspirations of the country but also jealously guards and protects the freedom won at a price beyond measure”.

Black ownership does not necessarily spell that “black concerns” will get greater prominence in the content mix – especially with high LSM products that serve the educated middle class and which no longer look at their audiences demographically but “psychographically” (i.e. at the values of the audience rather than their race, gender and so on).

It is true a board will appoint an editor who reflect its world view and will take its aims forward but, once appointed, many editors are bloody-minded and within their rights to exert editorial independence.

Much has been made of the *Cape Times* and the infamous sacking of editor Alide Dasnois the day after Nelson Mandela's death – and whether Survé's extraordinary intervention marked the start of a slant in content towards the government and an undermining of newsroom independence.

Wadim Schreiner, MD of Media Tenor, wrote in the April 2014 issue of *The Media* magazine that data from his media content-analysis research organisation showed there was no visible change in tone in the content of Independent Newspapers since the Sekunjalo takeover. “Quantitatively speaking, the *Cape Times* in particular remained as ‘critical’ of government as before,” Schreiner said. “Some opinion pieces perhaps changed, with new op-eds expressing a different, perhaps even positive opinion. But overall, much of the same...” It is worth noting, however, that Schreiner also wrote that his “gut” told him otherwise.

I, like Schreiner, am conflicted on where the new ownership is taking Independent Newspapers but what this puzzle suggests is that – in the bigger scheme of things – ownership does not equal close control of content, and that the media and its multiple little engines ticking away across the country – the newsrooms – are more slippery, more robust and more engaged in their communities than either the owners or the government will ever know or understand.



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THE ROLE AND RISE of community radio in the development of democracy in South Africa

Community radio is the first tier of broadcasting (commercial broadcasting and public service broadcasting comprise the other two) that has “opened the airwaves” in South Africa. The shackles of the apartheid-manipulated broadcasting dispensation were unlocked through various structured measures and by several insightful interventions.

By Robin Sewlal



Masixole Feni

Recognized largely as the initial impetus for a free broadcasting terrain in the country was the Jabulani! Freedom of the Airwaves conference held in August 1991 in Doorn, Netherlands. In its recommendations, the conference called for the establishment of community broadcasting and stated that the “active development of this sector is a priority”. This sector should not be tainted and trumped by commercial and public broadcasting – its independence is vital. Moreover, “national community broadcasting should be participatory; it should be owned and controlled by the community itself, and the broadcasting content of the station should be determined by the needs of the community as perceived by that community”.

Meanwhile back in South Africa, civil society was by now sufficiently organised and mobilised to ensure the agenda set outside the country was pursued with vigour and rigour. The Campaign for Open Media (COM) was a media policy forum that lobbied for an independent body to regulate broadcasting. Soon thereafter, the Campaign for Independent Broadcasting (CIB) added its voice in no small measure to the groundswell of support for the liberalisation of the airwaves, a public resource that was in ‘illegitimate’ hands since the Broadcasting Act of 1936. The CIB was a coalition of approximately 40 interest groups which were proactive through workshops, debates, telephone and facsimile (fax) transmissions, and protests throughout South Africa. The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) was the over-arching forum that paved the way for the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act. It was signed into law in October 1993.

Over-zealousness on the part of activists resulted in two stations in the Western Cape commencing broadcasts without a licence. They were Bush Radio (“mother of community radio in Africa”) which targeted the Cape Flats and an isiXhosa station broadcasting from an old container truck in Khayelitsha called Radio Zibonele (“see for yourself”). The promoters of Bush Radio faced charges which were later withdrawn. The other notable illegal broadcaster in Gauteng was Radio Pretoria which was determined to uphold Afrikaner interests. The three community radio stations were later licensed.

Prior to communities acquiring four-year licences, stations were allowed to be on-air for a temporary period of a year. A one-month ‘special event’ licence was also accommodated. The province of KwaZulu-Natal has the privilege of being the home of the first licensed community radio station in the country. The regulator, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), now known as the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) issued the first licence to Radio Maritzburg. By August 1995, 82 community radio stations could be heard in the country. Over the next two decades, the regulator was to grant well in the excess of a hundred community radio licences to stations dotted throughout South Africa. Licences were either premised on the basis of ‘community of interests’ or were ‘geographically-located’. As it turned out, stations became the pride of the respective communities

especially those which broadcast in a mother-tongue language. An example is Radio Hindvani based in Kharwastan, south of Durban, and whose primary target audience is the Hindi community. The station has been a powerful tool in enhancing the quality of life for the Hindi listener through the airing of lessons, scriptures, religious milestones, news, music and entertainment. Christian (Highway Radio) and Muslim (Radio 786) stations add to diversity on the dial. The vibrancy of this tier of broadcasting is enhanced by Chinese (Arrowline) and Greek (Hellenic Radio) stations over and above those catering for audiences in the 11 official languages.

The constitutional democracy sought in the early 1990s has enjoyed prominence within the ambit of the community radio industry. Citizens in the country have taken ownership of the stations, and rightfully so with their needs, hopes as well as aspirations being realised. Conversations in the community take place through and on the airwaves of the station. Local issues are given exposure through discussions, deliberations and at times, debates – freedom of expression is not only a theoretical concept but is also practically applied with a fair sprinkling of gusto. Community radio has quickly become an important facilitator for nation-building and provides space for democracy to flourish. It unravels complexities for listeners and serves as a catalyst for change, communication and co-operation. This tier of radio is nicely positioned to give meaning and purpose to the development plans for the country and its people. Moutse Community Radio Station (MCRS) in Limpopo is a prime example of upliftment. The station was founded by the Rural Women’s Movement (RWM) to address issues affecting women in the area. Not only have the on-air programmes inspired communities but the activities of stations in the respective community itself (like on Madiba Day) have made a tangible difference. The spirit of *ubuntu* is a prevailing theme for this branch of broadcasting. The attraction and appeal of community radio has generated sizeable audiences for stations. It is estimated that 8.5 million tune into community radio nationwide. Radio Khwezi is but one of the stations which enjoys a strong and loyal following. It is based in Kranskop in KwaZulu-Natal and broadcasts in IsiZulu, English, Afrikaans and German. Since inception, the station has received a multitude of top awards in the various competitions in South Africa. In several instances, the station triumphed over its public service and commercial counterparts.

However, the community radio sector has endured difficulties – not all of its own doing. The lack of adequate funding, insufficient numbers of trained personnel and the demonstration of poor leadership are but some of the factors which have stunted a greater level of growth of community radio. By and large, stations are staffed by volunteers – this practice comes with its own plethora of problems. Stations are forced to inculcate a spirit of volunteerism in those who donate their time and talent to the station. Inasmuch as the stations do so, volunteers are often distracted by other priorities in their lives. Moreover, the turnover rate of volunteers at some stations in the country is frighteningly high. The meagre funds of the station

The lack of adequate funding, insufficient numbers of trained personnel and the demonstration of poor leadership are but some of the factors which have stunted a greater level of growth of community radio.

The station is not an island – it has to involve all key players in decision-making. They include volunteers, listeners, funders and advertisers. Inclusivity is the buzzword.

have to be channelled to areas that ensure it stays 'on-air'. Operating expenses like rent, water, light, telephone, transmission and maintenance gnaw heavily into the funding that trickles into the station. Community radio through the years has been dependent on grants, donations, sponsorships and advertisements. However, as economic conditions in the country slide so does the health of the sector. In a sad turn of events, Karabo FM in the Free State was recently burnt by a group, an act that can only be described as downright thuggery. This case of criminality is a hammer blow for freedom of expression.

The National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) has made valiant attempts over the years to assist stations but capacity has proved to be a major stumbling block. Some community radio stations are members of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) and the Department of Communications (DoC) have provided support to a string of stations by virtue of equipment grants. This assistance has contributed in keeping the affected stations on-air. Even the signal distributor Sentech has of late reduced costs of transmission so as to afford struggling stations an opportunity to direct funds saved to other key performance areas. Stations have experienced severe hardship by the shortage of people with skills in areas such as management, programming, finance, sales, marketing and technical. The goodwill displayed by organisations and individuals in assisting stations has reaped rewards but it's far too little. Training has become somewhat of a thorny issue for community radio stations. International and local bodies have trained hundreds of individuals in various aspects relating to broadcasting. The risk attached to properly-trained employees is that they are easily lured and poached by either the commercial

industry or the public service broadcaster. Unfortunately, there have been stations which have suffered by falling under the unrelenting pressure and spell of unsuitable leaders. Such individuals have done more harm than good and, in some instances, brought stations as well as the community radio sector as a whole into disrepute. Board members are known to have, inter alia, interfered in operational matters and have used stations as their fiefdom.

Notwithstanding these low points, this sector of broadcasting holds huge hope for the health of the nation. Community radio has a big role to play in areas such as small business development, gender equity, consumerism, minor sport, youth, local music, and climate change. Further, it is soon to be invigorated by the recently-released Corporate Governance Toolkit which is to be activated through and under the auspices of the MDDA. The toolkit provides a wonderful opportunity for all stakeholders to help re-shape the sector and raise it to greater heights through sound principles of corporate governance. Stations which embrace and engage the toolkit will enhance its effectiveness and efficiency thereby entrenching freedom and democracy for at least another couple of decades in South Africa.

Six strands can be identified to sustain stations and propel them to prosperity. They are strategy, systems, surrounding, stakeholders, service providers and software (i.e. programming). It is imperative that a station plans ahead and should at all times remind itself of its vision, mission and values. Being a community radio player, it cannot be a top-down approach. It has to engage with all concerned parties. Protocols, procedures, rules and regulations must be clearly and unambiguously documented. To this end, the station should have Codes of Practices that provide for corrective action in sticky situations. Community radio cannot

survive without scanning the environment and constantly involving the community it broadcasts for. Bottom-up communication must be continually encouraged to stay 'in touch'. The station is not an island – it has to involve all key players in decision-making. They include volunteers, listeners, funders and advertisers. Inclusivity is the buzzword. Stakeholder relations cannot be downplayed. The station ought to develop and maintain cordial interaction with those who provide essential services. The risk of not doing so is one of 'dead-air'. A good rapport with the likes of the signal distributor, supplier of equipment, municipality and the telecommunications company is also pivotal. Digital migration takes place in June 2015. The sector must position itself to take maximum advantage of the benefits offered by the new format. One advantage would be the accessibility and availability of at least one radio station in each and every community in South Africa.

Community radio has arguably played a massive role over the past twenty years in shaping the democratic pathway of the country. It's little doubt that the sector has much more to offer. Shown the right direction and accompanied by adequate, ongoing support, this tier of broadcasting will be sure to empower and enrich the lives of millions more.

Freedom and democracy in the country cannot be taken for granted. It is incumbent on all citizens to protect, defend, nurture and promote these trademark ideals. Community radio is a worthy and wonderful platform to play such an enabling role. Accordingly, being an engine for growth and development in South Africa, the community radio sector has to craft a roadmap for its journey, jump into the driver's seat, engage top gear and accelerate on a pothole-free highway at full speed. Anything less will be profoundly perfunctory!

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Association of Independent Publishers

Empowering communities through **EMPOWERED GRASSROOTS MEDIA**

The growth of the independent print media sector in South Africa marks a milestone achievement 20 years into our democracy. With 224 independent publications across the country; it can be argued that the print media sector is working towards media transformation. This article will demonstrate how the independent grassroots press is contributing towards media transformation and diversity. It will highlight the important role the sector is playing in giving previously marginalised citizens a platform to voice their opinions. The media transition illustrated here would not have been possible under the apartheid government. However, there are still existing challenges and possibilities for the grassroots press; these will also be mentioned.

By Bongzi Bozo

20 YEARS OF
DEMOCRACY

Freedom of expression and the right to information was not a basic human right during the apartheid era. South Africa as a democratic state now guarantees the right to freedom of expression and freedom of speech. This right allows everyone to speak and write openly without any government interference. It also acknowledges that everyone's voice is essential in building a sustainable country.

However, the right to freedom of expression cannot exist without access to information. In order for citizens to voice their concerns and opinions, they need to be informed. All citizens, irrespective of class, race, religion and language have a right to information and should be given a voice.

The print media in South Africa has always been owned by the "Big Four" namely Caxton, Times Media (previously Avusa), Independent Media Group (now Sekunjalo) and Naspers Group. Ownership was in the hands of the elite and thus predominantly represented their interests. This meant that voices portrayed in print media excluded the majority of black South Africans; not all citizens' voices and opinions could be heard. This begs the questions: What is the right to freedom of expression? What is democracy in a state when the majority of South Africans do not have a media that represent them?

According to the Windhoek Declaration endorsed by UNESCO member states in 1994, media diversity and pluralism is a necessity for any democratic state. Independent grassroots publishers have massively contributed in the promotion of media diversity and the transformation of the print media sector.

Independent grassroots press in South Africa

A total of 224 available publications across the country are making a difference in communities. These publications disseminate information which enable citizens to voice their opinions and hold the government to account. They are semi urban or rural publications owned by both white and black citizens who are determined to represent the voices of the people in their communities.

The publications are small commercial newspapers or magazines, community based publications or community of interest publications. For instance, *Thisability Newspaper* is a publication targeting the disabled community. Another example is a publication titled *Muslim Views* which is a "community of interest" newspaper for the Muslim community and distributed

nationally. This is a very successful newspaper that has been in existence for 54 years. It is a monthly publication with a circulation of 35 000 copies.

Inner City Gazette is a small commercial newspaper which serves the community in the Johannesburg city centre. The paper is distributed in places such as Hillbrow, Yeoville, Berea and Braamfontein. These are areas where people, both foreign internationals and South African citizens who come to seek employment in the country's economic hub, will stay. The *Inner City Gazette* was started by a young social activist in his youth:

Moses Moyo volunteered as the chairperson for the Friends of Inner City, an organisation established in 2006 to protect the rights of the owners of sectional title property. He observed service delivery protests while acting at the same time as mediator between government and the community. Moyo realised that the underlining issue that led to the protests was lack of information amongst the citizens. "The protests were the only way that the residents could reach out to local government." Moyo established Inner City Gazette in 2009. "The newspaper was created as a platform to bridge the lack of communication between council and residents," says Moyo. Moyo is not a journalist but an activist and the social activist in him reflects in his newspaper.

Enabling environment post 1994

The Association of Independent Publishers (AIP), established in 2004, has witnessed the growth of the independent print sector over the years. The AIP started with between 90 and 100 publications in 2004. The membership has increased to 224 publications in 2014. This growth in the sector can be seen as a result of openness of the space which encourages citizens to take advantage of opportunities, the untightening of oppression laws, freedom of the press and a growing awareness of the need for media diversity.

More black people have started opening black owned small commercial community newspapers in most rural communities and in communities that have been disadvantaged because of oppression and lack of opportunities. In most cases, these are ordinary people not journalists. They venture into media as entrepreneurs who see a communication gap and recognise the power of having informed citizens. They practise their role of journalism in the communities they live in and operate at a grassroots level. For example, some AIP members operate from a shack in

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One successful story is of a determined and passionate publisher Mashile Phalane. He established a small commercial community newspaper in his hometown, Tzaneen in Limpopo titled The Eye News. Without any funding support, Phalane was determined to make a difference in his community. Each month, he would collect his newspaper from the printers in Johannesburg because adding distribution costs to that of the printers would have been expensive for him. Phalane did not own a car and so he would book two seats in a bus from Johannesburg to Tzaneen, one seat for the copies of his newspaper.

Despite these challenges, he has played a crucial role in his community. He became the “eye” and the “ears” of his community and has exposed corrupt activities in his community. The newspaper has been issued with lawsuits more than once with charges amounting to millions of rands. However, The Eye News is still growing stronger and continues to defend its community against irregularities through its reporting. The publication now gets funding from the Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA).

The establishment of the MDDA more than a decade ago has been influential in the growth of the sector. The new dispensation recognised a need for media transformation to enable diversity and pluralism in the country. In their efforts to promote media diversity and pluralism; the government decided to institute a media subsidy scheme. The funding scheme has been institutionalised for small independent community media to promote access to information by marginalised groups and enhanced media diversity (GCIS, 2001:17).

About 50 independent publications affiliated to the AIP were funded through the MDDA scheme on their inception. These are efforts celebrated in the media sector and in any democratic state where press freedom is present.

Media transformation and diversity

The independent grassroots print sector represents the diversity of the sector. It is more diverse in terms of class, gender and ownership than the mainstream print media. A report on the PDMSA Transformation of Print and Digital Transformation Task Team (PDMTTT) confirms that ownership in the grassroots print sector is diverse and transformed. Although, there are some “old white independent publications that have been operating for years, there are many thriving black owned publications” (Report on PDMTTT, 2013: 18).

The AIP master database, developed and maintained over the years, indicates that of the 224 independent grassroots publications available, a 192 of those are black owned. It also shows that 20% of these publications are owned by women.

Media diversity is not only attributed to ownership and the quantity of available material, but also refers to the sector that reflects different cultures, religions, politics, gender, class and languages. 97% of small grassroots press publish in indigenous languages. This ensures that everyone can enjoy their right to freedom of expression and right to information by presenting information and expressing people’s opinions in a language that defines the community a newspaper serves.

Challenges and possibilities

With about 8 million monthly circulation at a very conservative readership of two readers per paper; the grassroots press is doing commendable work in ensuring voices excluded by mainstream media are given a platform. Almost 16 million South Africans regardless of class, religion, race or language are given a right to information. The small commercial community newspapers in different areas allow citizens to voice their concerns and opinions. It is essential in any democratic state for media to work closely with communities to build a sustainable state. However, independent publishers face a number of challenges which become barriers in their ability to provide information to their communities.

Firstly, independent publishers struggle to get advertising. Advertising is an important component for any media company to generate revenue. Without advertising grassroots press are unable to serve their communities. Most advertising still comes from government adverts “if you are lucky”, small businesses such as local butcheries, some retail and spaza shops. However, it is difficult to attract big



Association of Independent Publishers

Ownership Analysis: Independent Grassroots Print Media Sector				
Province	Black	White	%Black	Total
Eastern Cape	19	17	52.8%	36
Northern Cape	2	5	28.6%	7
Free State	13	6	68.4%	19
Mpumalanga	11	8	57.9%	19
Limpopo	11	9	55.0%	20
North West	7	4	63.6%	11
Gauteng	29	13	69.0%	42
Western Cape	6	20	23.1%	26
KZN	31	13	70.5%	44
TOTALS	129	95	57.6%	224

Ownership patterns across provinces in the independent grassroots print media sector.
Source: AIP database analysis

Language	Number of titles
IsiXhosa	30
IsiZulu	26
Setswana	10
Sesotho	8
Xitsonga	8
isiSwati	5
Sepedi	4
Tshivenda	4
IsiNdebele	2
TOTAL	97

The number of publications available for each official language. Source: AIP database analysis

The independent grassroots sector has grown massively and is transforming the print media in South Africa. This is only as a result of living in a democratic state and 20 years of press freedom.

retail companies to advertise with these publications. Even though the small commercial print media carters for their target market. Organisations such as the AIP have not stopped lobbying and advocating for advertisers to pay attention to this sector. It has been much easier for the AIP to take on government as they have a responsibility to inform all citizens. Most of the government departments are starting to recognise the sector. The 30% government advertising ad-spend to go towards community media will make a difference in the market. The AIP is still struggling to convince big retail companies about the sector.

Secondly, the publications are usually a one-man business with the owner, journalist, sales person and distributor all one in the same person. In most cases, people who venture into publishing are not experienced in the field. Organisations such as the MDDA make it possible for most start-up publications to get off the ground. However, most of them cease to exist once the funding dries out as they discover what it takes to sustain the business. This often leads to some start-ups collapsing after two years on the market. This indicates a greater need for impact monitoring of all MDDA projects. Also, emphasis should be put on proper mentoring for start-ups in order to prepare them to function once the funding has dried out.

The MDDA will be reviewed for the first time in 2014. This will assist in addressing some of the above mentioned challenges. The AIP as an industry and a lobbying body is currently finalising research on “*State support for independent media in other African countries, South America and Scandinavia*” to be published in June. This study will assist by making recommendations in the review of the MDDA.

With the digital revolution in the media environment, digital might be an answer to make sure that there is always a flow of information for grassroots citizens. The AIP is working on a proposal on how the grassroots press can use mobi media to the advantage of their communities and to develop economic sustainability. The organisation is also looking to a media syndication platform which will assist in disseminating information nationally.

Despite the challenges within the media sector, the independent grassroots print media is playing a crucial role in communities. The sector is closer to ensuring that all citizens from different branches in society are represented. This demonstrates a democratic country where diverse voices and opinions are essential in developing the state.

Today, 68-year-old men like my father are able to enjoy the freedom of reading in isiXhosa. A community leader, community builder and an activist who spends his retired time at the offices of the ward council or at the branch office of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) in Port Elizabeth. He says the paper articulates the daily issues that he deals with in his voluntarily work. Zithethele community newspaper comes in our language which means that even the illiterate can access information. The newspaper comes free of charge and the journalists are accessible to us. “Zithethele, yhani liphepha labantu (is really a publication for the people)”. This demonstrates a media in a democratic society that is working collaboratively with citizens to build a sustainable country.

Twenty years ago this would not have been possible; today the previously marginalised groups can also embrace their right to freedom. They can access information and enjoy the right to freedom of expression by voicing their concerns and thus participating fully in all democratic processes. However, there is still more to be done as Louise Vale, executive director of AIP, would say “each community, each township, each suburb, city and region should be having its own publication.”

With media convergence and with free broadband a possibility in the future, every community might be able to access information. Media convergence also means that anyone can practise journalism; people can rightfully exercise their freedom of expression by publishing online. This can open more platforms for more independent online publications for the grassroots communities.

As described in this paper, the independent grassroots sector has grown massively and is transforming the print media in South Africa. This is only as a result of living in a democratic state and 20 years of press freedom. However, if the Media Appeals Tribunal adopted by the government in 2010 gets passed it may be difficult for independent grassroots press to venture into the market. No-one has answers as to what the Media Appeals Tribunal will mean but it will definitely influence and affect the face of media in South Africa. It remains to be seen whether this influence will work for the good or detriment of the press.

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PHOTOGRAPHERS' PERSPECTIVES

on the life and times of the South African
image and where it's taking us



Members of the press congregate to photograph Nelson Mandela shortly after his release from prison in 1990. Photo: Paul Weinberg

Photography has a fascinating back-story in Southern Africa. In the late 19th century Thomas Baines, a British artist, and James Chapman, an explorer, hunter, trader and photographer, made for the Victoria Falls – Baines to paint it, and Chapman to photograph it. The pair aimed to be the first people in the world to document this wonder, which had just been discovered by Sir David Livingstone. As it turned out, Chapman's camera malfunctioned at the operative moment, and so the first images of Victoria Falls were immortalised by the artist. The photographer lost the scoop of a lifetime.

By Nick van der Leek

Photojournalism formed itself in those early days through a process of documenting history. War artists were precursors to war photojournalists. Landscape artists and streets artists once sat on site with their pencils and paints, as some courtroom artists still do today. In 1914, my great grandfather, Tinus de Jongh, painted Dam Square at the behest of the HM Queen Wilhelmina, which today forms part of Beeldbank Stadsarchief (an archive of urban images) in Amsterdam. When de Jongh came to South Africa, he built a caravan and headed from his home in Kenilworth, Cape Town to document the Victoria Falls.

At the same time de Jongh was roaming South Africa's landscape, an American, Arthur Elliot, using a quarter-plate camera, captured the Cape's domestic architecture (and some of its early inhabitants). Besides the beauty of these extraordinary images, their historical value is unquestionable. The Elliot Collection is one of the most remarkable photographic collections in the world. They can be viewed today at the Cape Archives, or in the book *A Cape Camera*.

From terrestrial photography to celestial technology

If the art world saw revolutionary change in the years approaching and just beyond the turn of the 20th century, photography has seen even more radical change in the last 20. In fact, it's fair to say that the symbiosis of photographic images and digital dissemination has turned photography, especially the documenting of news and politics, into a form of activism. A photograph by its very nature seems to carry a political message and, compared to a painting, can do the job at lightning speed. The power of a photographic image is further leveraged by the speed of transmission through the printed medium, first by mail, then by fax, and then massively enhanced by the advent of computer code, land and satellite based networks and, now, smartphones. Today pictures are transmitted around the world at the click of a mouse or a fingertip on a personal, handheld device.

It's entirely reasonable to suggest that a single photo changed South Africa's political landscape. The first that comes to mind is a dying 13-year-old, gunned down by security police, and carried by a fellow student whilst his sister ran alongside. The image of Hector Pieterse (who was dead upon arrival at a nearby clinic) was photographed by Sam Nzima in the winter of 1976. Interestingly, Nzima has recently re-acquired copyright for his iconic image.

Sandy Matham-Bayley, a lecturer at the Cape Town School of Photography, believes that Peter Magubane's images from the Soweto uprising collectively remain the most poignant apartheid era photographs to this day. "I also think that the earlier images from the Women's March in 1956 started the pressure for reform – an unforgettable sight of women standing peacefully shoulder to shoulder. We have such a rich visual history that it almost seems unfair that we default to one iconic image. But," Matham-Bayley adds, "it just goes to show the power of the single image."

Contemporary photography in South Africa

Matham-Bayley, once an 80s activist, also lectures in visual literacy and holds a Masters in documentary photography. Although she says Nzima's image transcends the events of Sharpeville and "now symbolises our global struggle for human rights" she emphasises "to the younger generation that's the start and end of it, sadly." Jumping to the present, Matham-Bayley notes a sea of changes gripping the modern industry, some forces buffeting the trade whilst others are literally tearing it apart.

Since 1994, both the way media is produced and how it is consumed has seen cosmic shifts. "We live in a visually rich, albeit cluttered world...and it's getting more cluttered by the nano-second. My sense," she adds, "is that we are sitting at an interesting juncture of how we use images to educate, and the challenge this holds as the clutter explodes for both educators and practitioners. Our history has been richly captured by photographers through the years yet the same images are perpetuated in textbooks. Scholars are not taught to interrogate images or to be curious about the 'messages' (through no fault of their own but perhaps because educators themselves have not been taught visual literacy skills), images are simply used as references to events. A similar challenge faces photographers: how do we make images that cut through the clutter? If our world is becoming byte sized (a picture and a few hashtagged words) then never has the need to be visually literate been more important than it is today."

Along with the meteoric rise and acquisition of social media, is the rise of freelancing. Not merely freelance photography and photojournalism, but the rise of the independent contractor. A free agent means individuated sentient citizens, adaptable, diversified, serving multiple clients, and broadcasting their own media and branding into the social media ether. This potentially makes activists of us all, as we've seen in the Arab Spring. For some time now there has been talk of a South African Spring, especially around the ongoing unrest along the Platinum Belt post Marikana.

The future of South Africa's image

When you Google 'iconic Apartheid photos' the two that stand out are Hector Pieterse and Nelson Mandela with Francois Pienaar. Of course the one ushers in the ghastliness of Apartheid, and all its ghosts. The dying child is painful, filling one with despair and outrage. The other is affirming; it inspires and uplifts. Mandela symbolises the triumph of hope and altruism in an unjust world, and the possibilities for freedom and grace in an unfair society.

Invictus is arguably the best (and only) mainstream vehicle that captures this positive South African narrative. Directed by Clint Eastwood, Morgan Freeman plays the great man, and Matt Damon does his best as Francois Pienaar, the Springbok rugby captain circa 1995. The movie is based on a book by John Carlin. Carlin was bureau chief for South Africa's *The Independent* newspaper from 1989-1995. In 1993, Carlin wrote and presented a BBC documentary on the South African Third Force, his first television work.

Carlin's response, when asked to contribute to this article, was – like *Invictus* – similarly affirmative. "Overall I think there is a lot to celebrate about the SA media over the last 20 years. I see the fearless and principled way a number of the newspapers, in particular, have stood up to power and I feel proud to be a journalist. As for my personal journey on the 95 World Cup story, I am not sure how it fits into your general picture here. But I guess what it did was reinforce my sense of how utterly pivotal the figure of the leader can be in a country's evolution. Mbeki and Zuma shared the principles and strategies of Mandela but had either of them been ANC leader and then president at that very delicate time of transition it is entirely possible that South Africa's history would have taken a radically different course, that instead of peace you'd have had chaos. Mandela's capacity to put himself in his enemy's shoes and his understanding of the power of respect, charm and symbolism to win hearts and minds was as unique as – back then – it was essential. The rugby World Cup of 1995 was the most visible expression of his political genius and the consummate moment of a life dedicated to bringing the best out of his compatriots."

The photograph of South Africa's first democratically elected president wearing the Springbok jersey, says Carlin, "summed it up quite beautifully." It is photographer's who must do this summing up. It's their job to tell the stories, but to do so, they have to be in the story (and thus, part of the story). Paul Weinberg, senior curator of the Visual Archives at UCT, did just that. "When Madiba voted for the first time in his life at Ohlange High School, Inanda, Durban, 1994, I was there, as the official photographer for the Independent Electoral Commission. I had thought I was the only photographer in the room," Weinberg enthuses, "but two photographs have subsequently emerged. One from the side by an international observer and another from above, where the SABC camera was positioned. This was my five seconds of fame. Countless people told me they had seen me on TV as Nelson Mandela voted and I crouched below him to take this image."

Greg Marinovich, one of four photographers of the famous 'Bang Bang Club' says, "The issue of democracy has shifted from a very clearly defined goal of universal franchise, and an end to the discrimination and violent implementation of apartheid, to a less easy to define goal of correcting massive economic inequality that has shades of race yet is not based on race. Human rights are still routinely ignored by both the state and big capital, subservient to profit before justice."



Nelson Mandela votes for the first time in his life, Ohlange school, Inanada. Photo: Paul Weinberg



President Nelson Mandela at the launch of the land redistribution pilot programme. Photo: Paul Weinberg

Nick van der Leek is a freelance photojournalist with an unconventional background. Instead of journalism he studied law, economics and brand management. His writing career started online, as a blogger in South Korea and a citizen journalist for Seoul-based Ohmynews International. After cutting his teeth at Avusa (now Times Media), he became a full-time writer and photographer, and today publishes in titles such as GQ, Country Life, Fitness and Finweek magazines. He is currently working on a futuristic dystopian novel set in Scotland.



THE COURAGE OF LEADERSHIP

What makes South Africa's democratisation process interesting is that we keep reverting to our past, both distant and recent, to draw necessary lessons to help us navigate the rapids found in the present era. One such lesson that has seen South Africa survive the worst that could have happened is the key issue of social dialogue.

by Kgalema Motlanthe

While we are seeking to change society from the noxious past to a refreshing present marked by human rights, justice and prosperity, the economic system we are living through is also changing us.

Social dialogue has been the bedrock upon which consensus was and is built to crack the most difficult socio-political situations. Conflicts of all sorts are endemic to all democratising societies; South Africa is no exception.

The shape of present day South Africa has been wrought by this doctrine to social conflicts. Once again political thinkers provide us with a useful theoretical framework to comprehend the value of consensus for South Africans struggling with the reality of post-apartheid challenges.

South Africa's democratic consolidation holds because it is based on consensus within the political community. In this regard I wish to break down consensus into two component parts, all of which contribute to South African stability'.

Firstly, South Africa has consensus over 'ultimate values'. While ultimate values are normally not seen as possible in a society that is heavily internally fissured along racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic lines, especially when such a society has just emerged from autocracy, South Africa is arguably holding its own on this front.

For this South Africa can thank the 'Mandela phenomenon'. Epitomising the essential goodness of the struggle in the classical sense, the epic figure of Nelson Mandela radiated values that have not only transcended the barriers mentioned above but also, bound most South Africans together. These values could be said to offer South Africans something to live for; they point to a shared, indivisible future in which all South Africans have a stake. In a way they have morphed into a

legitimising philosophy for our democratic state.

The strategic vision of the liberation struggle was defined by the key goal of the achievement of a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and just society. Throughout his life Nelson Mandela was shaped by this very vision, of which he subsequently became a distinctive embodiment in words and in deed.

Inspired by this vision, most South Africans, across race, class and political affiliation are alive to both the nature and scope of responsibility with which we are faced at this point in history. Differentiated as they may be by a polarising history, most South Africans are nevertheless bonded by a deep conviction in the achievability of the dream of a prosperous nation, united in diversity. This climate of positive thinking about our future throws up ideal conditions for the consolidation of ascendant values that bind our nascent nation together.

In this connection the demise of Nelson Mandela left us a legacy which shines an eternal light to our aspired future.

The second type of consensus that defines our current state of democratic consolidation is 'rules of procedure', which refers to minimising disloyalty by binding all players to obtaining rules by dint of fairness and equality for all. Of course the challenge here is that we should always strive to maintain highest standards of fairness, for once some participants start perceiving unfairness or that rules of procedure are loaded against them, the process will wobble and probably collapse.

With the legitimacy of the rules of procedure intact, no one player can just walk away from the process of



engagement, making it easy for all us to employ the same vehicle to resolve our differences.

The benefit we hope to derive from this dimension of consensus is that the institutions that underpin democracy, namely, the rules of procedure, assume a life of their own, becoming not only impersonal but self-perpetuating, often in a virtuous cycle.

Thus rooted in societal culture, it becomes second nature to all members of society that no one is above the law in all facets of society, including the constitution, the police, courts, labour bargaining councils and all other institutions that either govern lives or serve as arbiters or interpreters of the law.

I would be insincere if I did not reflect on the political state of South Africa today, given the importance of the present conditions on the evolving contours of the future of our democracy.

As you are aware, South Africa was conceived in racial iniquity. Our socio-historical self-consciousness was cast in impermeable racial moulds from the very beginning of our nation. This is an important dimension to bear in mind as we look at the twenty years of democracy in terms of transitioning from the apartheid state and attempting to understand the process of consolidating democracy.

The legacy of the past racist economic policies remains the dominant reality on current socio-economic landscape. Essentially apartheid was about racially skewed production, distribution and consumption of resources. Despite all our successes from the moment we entered into a transitional period to a post-apartheid political system, we are convinced

that democracy cannot be consolidated on the basis of history alone.

This is an all-important point to note, for as long as the majority of South Africans languish in hunger, homelessness, illiteracy and diseases, among other social ills, for so long will our system of democracy hang on a thread. Put differently, our system of democracy cannot survive long in social conditions that hold out nothing for the majority of the population.

The real challenge for us has been to forge an economic programme which allows us to overcome the inherited economic structure by steadily moving to an economic approach which will liberate the productive forces and lead to a better society.

In this regard, we have since 1994 tried out a few economic programmes, including, recently, the National Development Plan (NDP), to address these accumulated disabilities of our history. The NDP has been generally acceptable as the road map to the attainment of growth and development. The NDP has laid out the parameters within which each social partner can make a contribution towards the achievement of our shared vision. This shared vision entails the reduction of poverty, stimulating economic growth, effecting economic transformation and creating employment. Ineluctably, the achievement of these goals is partly predicated on the role of an engaged private sector. This role has to be seen within the context of a broad and continued social dialogue comprising government, the private sector, labour unions and civil society as primary players.

It is also notable that we are seeking to bring about

More than 50 000 households in the Western Cape have no toilets at all and almost 60 000 households use the bucket system, according to the 2011 Census. In areas such as Khayelitsha in Cape Town, thousands of people are forced to relieve themselves in extremely awkward conditions.

Photo: Masixole Feni

comprehensive socio-economic changes within an unchanged socio-economic formation, which, in turn, is imposing limitations on what the democratic state can do. We have to succeed in our objectives in the context of an accelerated process of globalisation, leading to a greater integration of the nations of the world, the limitation of the sovereignty of states and the growing disparities between the rich and the poor.

The struggle to transform the South African society and emancipate ourselves takes place within a concrete and ever-changing national and international environment. This environment calls upon all of us whose sights are set on democratic transformation to pursue our objective always mindful of the changes as well as the subjective and the objective factors which characterise this environment.

Yet an observer cannot miss the point that the exercise of state power throws up its own challenges in all societies. Indeed post-colonial history is choking on such cases, South Africa included. This is shown by the appetite for the dishonest means of wealth accumulation that has emerged over the twenty years of our exercise of state power.

While we are seeking to change society from the noxious past to a refreshing present marked by human rights, justice and prosperity, the economic system we are living through is also changing us. This is the challenge that faces the ANC in power today. We have designated this phenomenon 'the sins of incumbency'. By this I am not suggesting a mechanical view that says we are trapped in a rotten post-apartheid life about which we cannot do anything. Indeed change is possible!

It takes the courage of leadership to come to terms with this malady, in ways that help the organisation cleanse itself of these conditions. It cannot be a matter of wishful thinking; steps have to be taken to bring up a generation of committed cadres with a singular purpose to help move society forward.

One of our biggest challenges is state capacity to deliver services to society. Oftentimes government has found itself between a rock and a hard place. Government has had to rely on the bureaucratic machinery to implement its programme of social transformation. However, this has not always been easy.

In his book, *Beyond the Miracle*, veteran journalist, political analyst and author, Allister Sparks, observes that: '...apartheid's legacy of poor education for the majority of the population and the way the job reservation laws favouring whites truncated the skills base



In April this year the Africa Studies Centre at the University of Oxford hosted the 20 Years of Democracy in South Africa Conference. The event included speakers from around the world who shared their thoughts, research and experiences of the last 20 years in the South African political, economic and social landscapes. This article is an edited excerpt from the keynote address by then Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe.

Further information about the 20 Years of Democracy in South Africa Conference can be found at the African Studies Centre website:
<http://www.africanstudies.ox.ac.uk/1994-2014-20-years-south-african-democracy>

of our working class.²³ Former senior public servant Barry Gilder makes the point more lucidly when he explains that:

*"Many of us drawn into the public sector had little or no experience of governing, of managing large organisations and budgets, of the complex and incomprehensible processes and procedures we were suddenly expected to follow, of myriad law and regulations we had to comply with, of the requirement upon us. And we were charged, by history and our own beliefs, with providing health, education, employment, welfare services – and Freedom – to the four fifths of the population previously neglected by apartheid."*²⁴

Many of the current social protests witnessed in South Africa's urban landscape can be ascribed to these discontents of history.

Moving on, we have to address all these deficiencies as a matter of urgency. On the strength of social dialogue, we have the possibility to draw on the talents in society to address these challenges within the framework of a developmental state.

I would like to conclude by reasserting that despite all odds South Africans are determined to make the process of democratisation irreversible.

We have made a historic transition from a system condemned by the United Nations as a 'crime against humanity', to a democratic society. Transitioning from apartheid to democracy saw the emergence of mainstream society bound together by the vision of a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and just society.

Social dialogue played a key role in this regard, helping us to build broad consensus that saw the whole spectrum of political community drawn into the multi-party, dialogic process.

We have since been wrestling with the intricacies of strengthening democracy in the face of some testing challenges. We have embarked on a process to address these key deficiencies. As we do that, we are also confronting the spectre of corruption, a weak state and some of the discontents of history. Similarly, we have launched a frontal attack on these maladies.

It would not be fair to look at our state of democracy as if it is coeval with matured democracies, which, despite their deep historical roots, would still not adequately satisfy some of the five points of democratic consolidation mentioned above.

Democracy is a process. More importantly, democracy is embedded in social conditions, and its thriving presupposes social justice and expanding floor of human comfort. I am confident in the creative spirit of South Africans to elevate our democratic experience to the level where democratic practice becomes second nature.

Despite all odds there will be a way. In this I am inspired by the penetrating wisdom of the novelist Bernard Malamud (1914-1986) that: 'There comes a time in a man's life when to get where he has to – if there are no doors or windows – he walks through a wall.'

Endnotes

1. Valenzuela, J Samuel. 1990. Democratic consolidation in post-transitional settings: notion, process, and facilitating conditions. Working Paper 150, December.
2. Sparks, Allister. 2009. *Beyond the miracle*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
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OVERCOMING THE LEGACY OF ECONOMIC EXCLUSION

The main challenge for South Africa in its first 20 years of democracy was to dismantle the vicious legacy of apartheid. In 1994, the majority of black households lived in poverty. Access to basic services in townships was inadequate, and even more so in the former homelands.

By Trudi Makhaya

These were the outcomes of centuries of dispossession and, more recently, apartheid. In this economic regime, black people were excluded from meaningful participation in the economy; relegated to serve as low-skilled labour. Investments in human capital were deliberately curtailed, with Verwoerd articulating this in his famous pronouncements on the education of black people, whom he deemed unworthy of technical and advanced education.

The past 20 years has seen a succession of policies that sought to develop a new kind of economy, in line with constitutional democracy and its commitment to develop the capabilities of all citizens, irrespective of race or gender. The first policy framework, the Reconstruction and Development Programme, was soon overshadowed by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution policy (GEAR). By 2006, another policy framework, Asgi-SA was put forward, to be followed by the National Growth Plan in 2010. An overarching plan, the National Development Plan, which includes a series of reforms and policy proposals on economic growth and socio-economic development, was introduced in 2012.

Debates have raged over the policy stance of the democratic government, with those on the left arguing that the new government had fallen into the throes of a neo-liberal agenda driven by the demands of international capital, whilst those on the right have criticised the same government for not implementing the investor-friendly reforms that are deemed to be growth-enhancing. In its attempts to balance the competing needs of various segments of society, including reversing the legacy of apartheid, post-1994 governments have attempted to pursue a fairly centrist policy package that attracts criticism from all sides.

Progress has been made. According to StatsSA, the percentage of the population living below a poverty line of R620 a month per person stood at 46% in 2011, down from 57% in 2006. Measures of the depth of poverty also show that on average poor households are not too far down from the poverty line, suggesting that it would be easier to cross it. The government's Twenty Year Review highlights many other achievements of the past 20 years. After inheriting poor government finances and high inflation, macroeconomic stability has been achieved. An inclusive social safety net catering to the whole population has been put in place.

However, one of the most damaging features of the economy, its concentrated and exclusionary nature, remains a challenge. The work of the competition authorities is testament to this. The post-apartheid competition authorities were created to implement measures to ensure that the economic playing field is level; that competition is fair and efficient. The Competition Commission, the investigating body, is empowered to investigate instances of behaviour by firms that offend competition law, and to impose appropriate penalties and remedies. In line with international practice, the Commission also reviews mergers between businesses to ensure that they do not lead to a substantial lessening of competition. The Commission refers cases to the Competition Tribunal, which is the adjudicative body. Its rulings can be challenged at the Competition Appeal Court.

Over the past 15 years of their existence, the authorities have uncovered and penalised numerous cartels, notably in the bread and construction sectors. Cartels, engaged in practices such as price-fixing, market allocation and bid-rigging, increase the cost of doing business for firms that rely on their inputs and also raise household expenditure.

The concerns and needs of the unemployed and of entrepreneurs need to come to the fore in the quest for an inclusive economy. These two social groups are intertwined, because data shows us that it is new and small businesses that create new jobs.

The competition authorities have also challenged practices that are outlawed because they entail the abuse of a dominant position within a market, such as excessive pricing, discriminatory pricing, exclusionary practices and others as outlined in the legislation. Relatively few abuse of dominance cases have been prosecuted to date. These cases are difficult to investigate and the legal tests that have to be met to establish an offence are quite rigorous.

Three of the cases that have been prosecuted illustrate the harm that the practices of dominant firms can cause to the ability of new or small firms to thrive in the economy. Significant fines have been levied on South African Airways (2005), Telkom (2012 and 2013) and most recently, Sasol (June 2014). In the first case, the state-owned dominant airline was found to have induced travel agents to sell its tickets to the detriment of competitors' sales. Thus competing airlines were cut off from an important sales channel (travel agents were main influencers of travellers' decisions at the time) and consumers denied choice. In this case, the victims were not only air travellers, but also small rival airlines such as Nationwide and Comair, which were trying to compete in aviation.

A competitive and dynamic telecommunications sector is crucial to economic growth. Yet the emergence of managed network service providers and internet service providers in the early 2000s was retarded by Telkom's practices when dealing with these new rivals. After a long-running case, Telkom eventually paid significant penalties but also agreed to a set of behavioural commitments that would ensure that it provides value-added service providers fair access to the core infrastructure that it owns. In other words, that such independent service providers would enjoy the same terms of access as Telkom's own value-added services subsidiaries. When telecommunications markets are opened up to competition, it is expected that the incumbent operator will sell access to this infrastructure to value-added service providers on fair terms. It would be inefficient for a new player to attempt to replicate Telkom's network in its entirety. Access to it enables the entrants to offer innovative services over that backbone. This did not happen in the early days of telecommunications liberalisation in South Africa. Once again, new businesses and end consumers suffered from high prices and lack of choice.

The decline of manufacturing in South Africa has led to job losses and falling exports. In the most recent fine levied against Sasol's subsidiary (Sasol Chemical Industries), which the company may still appeal, the Competition Tribunal found that it had charged excessive prices for chemical inputs into the manufacturing of plastic products. Based on the

evidence before it, the Tribunal has argued that this practise meant that local manufacturers of plastics were unable to gain competitively priced inputs, which in turn meant that they could not compete against imports coming into the country from countries such as China. This, in spite of Sasol having achieved its dominance, in part, due to government subsidies and support during the apartheid era.

The cases cited above demonstrate the harms that arise in heavily concentrated sectors where market power goes unchecked. Though the competition authorities can steadily challenge anti-competitive behaviour, government policy as a whole will need to be brought to bear for the attainment of inclusive growth. The low rates of new business formation in the country also reflect deficits in education, access to skills and finance and regulatory measures that raise barriers to entry.

The next 20 years thus present policymakers and stakeholders with an important question: how to build an economy that is not based on exclusion but serves the majority of South Africans? Ideological debates about the role of the state and property rights are not helpful in this regard. It is clear that there is a role for the public sector in building capabilities in the economy to create the conditions for sustained development and growth. This is not about creating a government-dependent class or displacing the private sector from the economy, but about remedying historical deficits and building a base for future economic growth and development. These necessary interventions from the public sector will need to be evidence-based and to be executed in a clean, transparent and efficient manner.

The concerns and needs of the unemployed and of entrepreneurs need to come to the fore in the quest for an inclusive economy. These two social groups are intertwined, because data show us that it is new and small businesses that create new jobs. As discussed above, the practices of dominant corporates often frustrate the attempts of these businesses to enter markets and to expand within them. The policy environment as a whole also needs to be examined and reformed accordingly to support a broader base of entrepreneurial activity within the economy. The challenges that the unemployed face in accessing jobs, for example due to transport costs, poor internet access or lack of employment readiness, need to be tackled aggressively. The success of the next 20 years will be judged by the transformation of our society from a pyramid, with a small elite at the top and the masses at the base, into a diamond, with the majority of the population in the middle of the income scale. This will take concerted focus on expanding access to economic opportunities and upward mobility.



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Local government at the heart of POOR SERVICE DELIVERY

By Edward Thabani Mdlongwa

South Africa enters a new dawn and post-Mandela era after 20 years of democracy and citizens are eagerly anticipating a better life going forward.

The national elections were held recently with the African National Congress (ANC) retaining power and President Jacob Zuma returning as President of the country for a final five-year term. Despite the ANC returning to power, service delivery remains one of the biggest challenges that the government faces. In the 20 years of democracy one has seen some strides made in certain key sectors of the economy like education and health, however, at a local government level the quality and efficient delivery of basic services to people like water, sanitation, housing and electricity remains a huge challenge. In recent years one has witnessed an escalation in the number of violent service delivery protests across the country with people frustrated at the slow pace of delivery and also at corrupt practices that have become endemic in some municipalities. It is important to look at some of the challenges within local government in order to understand how they hamper service delivery.

Key challenges hampering service delivery

Some of the key challenges within local government that are hampering service delivery include the following:

- Human resource challenges with regards to skills and capacity in municipalities. Many municipalities across South Africa just do not have the people with the requisite technical skills and in cases where they do there is sometimes a shortage of skilled personnel who can assist the municipality in rendering quality services to the people.
- Corruption and maladministration. In many municipalities corruption and maladministration has become endemic and the lack of accountability or transparency in rendering services to the people is a cause for concern.
- Financial challenges. Across South Africa a number of local municipalities are either bankrupt, or on the brink of bankruptcy which affects their ability to provide quality service delivery to the people.
- Lack of awareness and lack of knowledge by communities with regards to their rights. This hampers service delivery as communities do not know how or who to approach when they face challenges regarding service delivery in their communities. This allows some municipal officials to act with impunity knowing that the community will not challenge this as they are not aware of their rights or the channels to follow when these rights have been abused.
- Slow rollout of services. When local municipalities do get their act together and render services to the people often this is a slow and tedious process which hampers the quality and efficiency of service delivery.

One can see that they are quite a number of challenges within local government that hamper service delivery. In order for South Africa to truly forge forward in this post-Mandela era it is of paramount importance that the government pays particular attention to the quality and efficient delivery of basic services. Some of the key ways to address these challenges are discussed below.

Ways to address Service Delivery Challenges in Local Government

- Increased awareness and education programmes to be carried out by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in communities to educate them on their rights, how to participate in municipal affairs and to make them understand key aspects of legislation like the Municipal System Act of 2000 and the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) of 2003 and how it impacts on them.
- Corrupt officials must be investigated and dismissed timeously if found guilty of committing criminal offence in order to ensure the integrity of municipality and for the community to have confidence in the municipality that corrupt officials will be dealt with under law and corruption will not be tolerated.
- Municipalities must make clear efforts through improved modes of communication to encourage public participation in key municipal processes like the public consultations for the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). The use of various modes of communication like posters, memos and community radio stations which are more accessible to ordinary community members must be used to communicate rather than websites or newspapers which may not be accessible to ordinary members of the community.
- Municipalities must learn to adhere to the laws of the Country starting with the South African Constitution which provides for the basic rights of all people and the key legislative laws which govern and regulate municipal workers and issues like the MFMA and the MSA. By municipalities adhering to the laws of the country this will ensure better service delivery.

South Africa is now in what one could describe as a watershed time in its democracy and as the nation goes forward it is imperative that government is able to provide quality and efficient service delivery to all the citizens. In 2016 the local government elections take place and coupled with the national elections that have taken place citizens would have made their voice known by exercising their right to vote and are looking for a better life after 20 years of democracy. It is now time that these elected officials deliver on this mandate as South Africa forges ahead in ensuring a better life for all.

Edward Thabani Mdlongwa is a Writer/Researcher and Analyst with 5 years' research experience and currently works as the Local Government Researcher at the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM).



Thinking about passports and travelling as a **human right**



NELSON MANDELA SQUARE - DAY OF RECONCILIATION - SANDTON CITY,
JOHANNESBURG: from the series Life under Democracy - Dale Yudelman

On 19 February 1990, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela at the age of 72 years was issued with his first passport after being incarcerated in Robben Island for 27 years.

By Mzukona Mantshontsho

A passport is a document issued by a national government, which certifies, for the purpose of international travel, the identity and nationality of its holder. The elements of identity are name, date of birth, sex, and place of birth.

A passport allows one to see the world, learn about other nations, their cultures and the way they do things. Hopefully a passport also allows one to gain knowledge and expand one's horizons and remove stereotypes one might have about other nations and people groups.

Lillian Ngoyi was known as "the mother of the black resistance" in South Africa. She served as President of the Women's league of the African National Congress (ANC). The South African government declared her a "banned person" in the mid-1960s. This meant that her movements and contacts were restricted and she could not be quoted in the press. Ngoyi lived under the banning order for 16 years.

In the 1970s Professor Julia Wells, a historian at Rhodes University in South Africa, interviewed Ngoyi about when she was invited to Europe to attend an international women's conference in 1955, but because of apartheid law, she battled to get a passport to attend.

"Being unable to get a passport seriously jeopardised her chances. So she and the ANC leaders tried to overcome this by every means possible. She finally travelled on an airplane, using a very official-looking document produced by Oliver Tambo's legal offices in lieu of a passport," recounted Wells.

"Amazingly, this took her everywhere including the Soviet Union, China, England, and Germany. This journey was the highlight of her life as she often made reference to the things that she had learnt and seen from it. When she arrived back in South Africa, she rolled her tummy on the ground in sheer joy to be back home. This gives an indication of how much a passport, or the denial of it, might have meant in those days. Without it, African people were literally prisoners within the country. With it, the whole world opened to them and they could hear first-hand information of what conditions were like in South Africa. So I have no doubt it was quite an emotional moment for Nelson Mandela to get his passport".

The Bill of Rights (Chapter 2, section 21) states clearly that freedom of movement and association is a right of everyone in South Africa: "Everyone has the right to freedom of movement. Everyone has the right to leave the Republic. Every citizen has the right to enter, to remain in and to reside anywhere in, the Republic. Every citizen has the right to a passport".

To me this is one of the fundamental basic human rights and should be respected and upheld at all times without fear, favour, discrimination and or prejudice. Otherwise human beings will be prisoners in their own countries.

Ronald Kwenda, a Zimbabwean national living in South Africa for four years, recalls how at first it was so difficult for him to even open a bank account as he did not have 'proper identity'. He had to be paid in cash every month. With the help of a letter from his employer stating that he was a permanent staff member, he was able to eventually get a work permit and an official passport to travel freely in and out of South Africa.

"All I had prior to coming to South Africa was a visa document that expired every six months, requiring me to go back home (Zimbabwe) and justify my intentions to stay in South Africa, and these visas took days and months to get. I am happy to say that I do not have trouble traveling now and staying in the country (South Africa) and working hard for my family and child. I absolutely have no trouble now renewing my passport and visa documentation to stay in the country. I can safely say now that having proper documentation to stay in a particular country is extremely vital. I can also encourage other Zimbabwean nationals in South Africa to follow in my example to approach their places of employment and be honest about the troubles they face and how they can be solved, so that they can work effectively without worries of lack of 'proper documentation,'" said Kwenda.

Noliza Ndabandaba, who is originally from Cofimvaba in the Eastern Cape, stayed in Swaziland from the early 1960s into the 1990s with her exiled parents from the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). As a family, they used a temporary residence permit that covered the parents and all minor children and needed to be renewed every three years, at a price.

Perhaps all Africans who can, ought to apply for passports and visit other African countries and the rest of the world and see the conditions in those countries as a way of understanding some of the challenges in the rest of the world, so that we could avoid some of the Xenophobic abuses and name calling. This could go a long way in helping us have a unified African continent, and the world.

"I could not have access to a passport then as I was regarded as being 'state-less' as we were in Swaziland as political asylum seekers, regardless of our children being born there [Swaziland]. The fact that our parents were asylum seekers was enough to exclude us as children to get any travel documents."

"All of this became very painful when I needed to go overseas to do my Master's degree in Education in Canada in the year 1988. Through rigorous negotiations between the government of Swaziland, the PAC representatives and the United Nations (UN) office in Swaziland, I was given a UN document, that could allow me to go and study for the two-year period and return to Swaziland immediately after that. This UN document was boldly written that I was indeed state-less. As much as I accepted the document, I broke down and cried because I was called state-less, that was extremely painful." The experience back then, did and still does remind of the effects of apartheid and the displacement of people from their countries and being treated as 'non-human'," says Ndabandaba.

Perhaps all Africans who can, ought to apply for passports and visit other African countries and the rest of the world and see the conditions in those countries as a way of understanding some of the challenges in the rest of the world, so that we could avoid some of the xenophobic abuses and name calling. This could go a long way in helping us have a unified African continent, and the world.

I got my first passport at the age of 16 with no trouble. I went into Home Affairs with the necessary documentation, filled in the relevant application forms and paid the fee and exactly six weeks later, was back at Home Affairs to collect. I have been to four countries in Southern Africa to play sport, visiting friends and just having fun. I am hoping to use it to do my MBA in the United Kingdom in 2015.

The freedom to travel that was given to Nelson Mandela in February 1990, should be given to all individuals and communities on the African continent.

Mzukona Mantshontsho is an online Journalist at TransformSA, a quarterly journal that focuses on issues relating to socio-economic transformation within the private and the public sectors. Mantshontsho did his Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism at Rhodes University in 2007.





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THE CHALLENGING MEDIA SPACE

EDITORS REFLECT ON THE STATE OF JOURNALISM

Academics have often regarded the work that the media in South Africa does in opposition to the perception of their role by the government. Since the end of apartheid in 1994, the government has adopted a view that the media should fulfil a developmental role in supporting the work that the government does and promoting the national agenda in an effort to first establish and then sustain the 'rainbow nation'. Journalists, scarred by the memories of having to work in the restrictive apartheid environment, strongly support a liberal perspective which allows them to act as watchdogs of society with the freedom to question and criticise governments and political parties.

Academics have theorised about what works best, what roles should be taken on, and what roles are currently at play. But journalists and editors speak very differently about their own work and the role they see themselves fulfilling. Their perceptions do not always fit neatly into a normative box, and they also use different words and language to speak about their work. What is perhaps most striking is that journalists that we spoke to noted significant changes not only in the newsrooms and broader media environment, but also in the way that they thought about the work that they do and the role that they play in broader South African society.

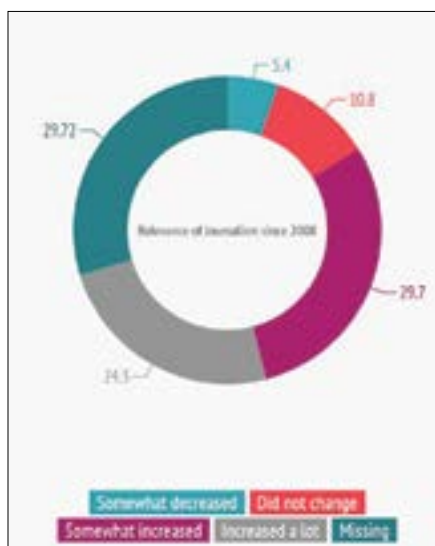
When we surveyed journalists from the Eastern Cape¹, 77.9% felt that it was extremely or very important to monitor and act as a watchdog of political leaders. This traditional liberal model of media contradicts the developmental model which emerged from the survey results showing that 81% of the respondents felt that it was very or extremely important for them as journalists to support national development. This developmental approach to their practice was further identified by the fact that 78.3% of respondents felt it was very or extremely important for them to advocate for social change in their role as journalists. Interestingly though, only 16.2% of the respondents surveyed felt that it was very or extremely important in their role as journalists to support government policy. This could be explained by the fact that while the journalists felt that they had a role to play in the broader development of society and the national agenda, it was not through the support of the government that this would be achieved. There was in fact, a strongly negative perception towards supporting government and politics in general from the respondents. When asked if they thought it was part of their role as journalists to portray a positive image of political leaders, only 16.2% of respondents thought it was very or extremely important, while 54% thought it was unimportant or of little importance to them professionally.

It would seem in fact that the contradictory nature of the results are in fact not contradictory, as the journalists often equate the support of national development with the monitoring of government and informing citizens of the work of public institutions – i.e. fulfilling their watchdog role. Their notion of development journalism is far closer to that of the traditional liberal model which supports the watchdog role of journalists than initially expected, and that often these two roles are not in conflict with each other, but are a balance of the need to ensure government and public institutions are accountable, and in doing so support the development of the country.

These insights into the way that journalists think about the role they play in society in South Africa today are interesting. More pertinent to this article is the perception of how things have changed for journalists in the last five years. 54% of journalists surveyed felt that profit making pressures have strengthened somewhat or a lot over the last five

Trying to understand how journalists and editors in the South African media landscape think about the work they do and the environment in which they work is not easy. However, while many of us speculate about why things are reported on in one way or another, this article gets to the heart of the issue – or the mouth – by speaking to journalists and editors about the work they do and how things have changed in the last few years within this complex institution we call the media.

Compiled by Vanessa Malila



years, while only 5.4% said it had weakened. While audiences sometimes lament the sensationalisation of news, almost 30% of journalists surveyed felt that the pressure to produce sensational news over the past five years had not changed, but 35.1% said it has grown somewhat or a lot. The use of technology, social media and user-generated content has, as expected, increased for the vast majority of the journalists surveyed. Despite the use of technology in the newsrooms, 32.4% of those surveyed felt that the time they had to research stories had decreased a lot or somewhat over the last five years, while the average working hours of journalists was said to have increased a lot or somewhat by 51.3% of those surveyed.

Beyond these changes in newsroom processes and influences, the majority of journalists surveyed were positive about the way they think society regards their practice. 37.8% said they felt that the credibility of journalism had increased somewhat or a lot over the last five years, while only 21.6% felt it had decreased somewhat. Perhaps related to the journalists' perceptions about their role as watchdogs of society, there has been a significant increase in the relevance of journalism for society by those surveyed. 54% of those surveyed thought that journalism was somewhat or a lot more relevant in society today than it was five years ago.

For this special reflective edition of *Rhodes Journalism Review* we invited editors from different newspapers across the country to reflect on some of the changes they have perceived over the past 20 years. Many of them touch on the same issues which emerged from the WJS research including the rise of technology in journalism processes, the challenges of reporting on corruption and the changes in newsroom management.

What has been the biggest positive change in the press over the past 20 years?

GASANT ABARDER: The advent of digital publishing has allowed newspapers to extend their platforms and break news digitally, while saving the best for print. But it has been a tough convergence since digital isn't easily monetised.

These days, anyone with a cellphone can publish news so it allows established and credible news brands to be the discerning voice among the noise. The onset of digital and online media has made the world a smaller place and has changed the behaviour and demographic of target markets.

JEREMY GORDIN: I started work in 1976 on the *Rand Daily Mail*. With that as background, I'd say the biggest positive change is that I/

we are no longer working all the time under the dark shadow of the security police and the courts – in short, we are very much able to print whatever we wish to print (provided we honour the Press Code) without being muzzled or fined or jailed. That's pretty amazing.

SAZI HADEBE: For me the biggest thing is the widening of space for people and various organisations to launch whatever newspapers they want to. But more personally was to see the birth of my newspaper *Isolezwe* in 2002. This was history in the making because before then there was no Zulu daily newspaper in the country and it is still the one and only that publishes seven days of the week in a vernacular language.

That meant a lot to me about the restoration of this rich language and it it a lot of pride to over 10-million people of KwaZulu-Natal and elsewhere who speak the language. This venture meant a lot to journalists like myself, who are well versed in the language, in that it widened the space in which we could seek employment.

Other than that, it has been a good 20 years for South Africa in that there has been a huge success in entrenching the freedom of the press despite the attempts by some in the government to curtail what could be reported.

The media in SA is very free and it is a vital tool in restoring the people's pride in their country in the institutions of government. Without a vibrant media that reports without fear or favour we don't know where our country could be today.

The country was also very lucky to have a president like Mandela in 1994 because he believed very much in the freedom of the press. That put a lot of pressure on his successors to have respect of the media which is a good thing for any democracy.

CHRIS ROPER: Undoubtedly, the growth of citizen journalism, and how access to, and production of, news is being removed from the hands of elites.

What has been the biggest negative change in the press over the past 20 years?

GASANT ABARDER: The juniorisation of newsroom remains a problem. There has been a move to developing multimedia practitioners and not enough emphasis has been placed on the "grey beards" in newsrooms – the specialists who have institutional memory and history. But many media houses have realised that in order to nurture quality news coverage and analysis they need to invest in newsroom and investigative capacity. The game has changed and it is the media houses that can create the best content that will succeed.

JEREMY GORDIN: The efficacy and influence

The country was also very lucky to have a president like Mandela in 1994 because he believed very much in the freedom of the press. That put a lot of pressure on his successors to have respect of the media which is a good thing for any democracy.

– Sazi Hadebe

The notion or
idea of public
interest has
changed.

– Gasant Abarder



PRESCELLA MOLOKE – SECRECY BILL MARCH ON PARLIAMENT – CAPE TOWN:
from the series *Life under Democracy* – Dale Yudelman

of the press seems – ironically (given its new-found freedom) – to have diminished. Ironically (as I said), because the new government's power base flows from people who do not care THAT much about the press – either because they cannot afford it, or do not have access to it, or do not trust it – the incumbent government can afford to pay less attention to the press and, though they still pay a great deal of lip service, as each general election passes by and it becomes clearer that it doesn't matter very much what the press says about electoral matters or serious corruption issues (eg Nkandla), well, its influence is attenuated...

SAZI HADEBE: The circulation of the print media going down. This has been the biggest sore point for mainly the English commercial media over the past two decades. The only positive is that most of the commercial newspapers, despite the decline in terms of

circulation, in revenue terms they are still doing well. If they were not, we would have seen a great deal of closing down of the reputable commercial titles but we haven't.

A lot of newspaper people, whether they are journalists or press minders, have lost jobs during this time, which is not good at all. Also during this period we have seen a lot of juniorisation of the newsroom as senior guys either leave the profession or get promoted to senior positions. This has led to poor quality in terms of content in many newspapers which is one factor contributing to the decline of circulation.

CHRIS ROPER: The Secrecy Bill. It's our biggest threat to the freedom of the press.

In your opinion, how has the notion 'public interest' changed in South Africa over the past 20 years?

GASANT ABARDER: The notion of public interest has changed. The insatiable appetite the public have for the Oscar Pistorius trial is a case in point. An editor like me would like to believe that the elections would be far bigger in terms of public interest – and there certainly was greater public interest in the days immediately before and after the voting. But entertainment is definitely playing a role; DSTV set up a pop-up TV channel to focus on the trial when they could easily have set up an election channel too. But they were smart to capture the astonishing interest in the trial and are likely getting a handsome return on their investment.

JEREMY GORDIN: According to the Random House dictionary, public interest is "1. the welfare or well-being of the general public; commonwealth. 2. appeal or relevance to the general populace: a news story of public interest."

I think the role of editors has changed considerably over the last 20 years – but not necessarily in tandem with what has been happening in the country over the last 20 years. – *Jeremy Gordin*

I guess the major change during the last 20 years is that previously the state's interest/s were placed before anything else – so that if you previously placed real public interest before the state's, you were immediately renegade – whereas now the major interest is really, genuinely public interest per se – an interest that includes all people regardless of colour, creed or whatever.

SAZI HADEBE: There has been a couple of cases where the public interest term has been abused by the media and some have got into trouble because of this. There have been stories that have been published before all tracks of litigation were covered. In most cases it is desperation on the part of those doing that. This desperation is fuelled by commercial gains that the organisation or editors are after.

I think there is a need to go back to the drawing board and look at our Code of Ethics and stick to them no matter what.

CHRIS ROPER: It's starting to be defined by the actual public, as opposed to people purporting to speak for the public.

Which South African president over the past 20 years has had the biggest influence on journalism in South Africa, and why?

GASANT ABARDER: Without a doubt, Nelson Mandela. Mr Mandela set the tone for the relationship between the media, the government and other spheres of society. He understood that in order to have a strong democracy, a free, robust and outspoken media was necessary. He successfully laid the foundation for an interface with the media that in the past was characterised by suspicion, banning and control by the apartheid state apparatus.

JEREMY GORDIN: Mandela had the biggest positive influence – he genuinely seemed devoted to freedom of speech and press and insisted that they be exercised – but probably Zuma, in terms of influence generally or negatively – in terms of press coverage, curiosity, friction with the media, the generation of stories etc – might have had a bigger influence (if you count the column inches, as we old-timers would say).

SAZI HADEBE: I think all three of our presidents have had a huge influence on our journalism because they were different characters who challenged reporting about them in different ways. In the Nelson Mandela era there was a lot of positivity and



ARTHUR MZINGISI – NEWSPAPER HOUSE – CAPE TOWN:
from the series *Life under Democracy* – Dale Yudelman

reconciliation reflected in the media because of his influence. He also showed a lot of character in terms of respecting our chapter nine institutions and their role in the society.

The Thabo Mbeki era was more global and more African. He opened people's eyes about the task ahead in terms of levelling the fields economically. He also put South Africa on the global map and the country was very much aware of what was happening elsewhere.

The Jacob Zuma era was a mixture of both Mandela and Mbeki era but the issue of corruption in government got more prominence in the media in relation to Zuma in the way he got to be number one.

So all of them in my opinion have had an influence on the media.

CHRIS ROPER: Jacob Zuma. He's kicked us out of the honeymoon period, and sharpened the focus of journalists.

If you could choose one news story that has

left the biggest impression on you personally over the past 20 years, which would it be and why?

GASANT ABARDER: Without a doubt, the September 11 attacks on the US. *The Cape Times* captured the moment in a front page headline on top of a picture of the burning Twin Towers that read: "Moment the world changed".

I worked as a TV news reporter for eNews on the day of the attacks and I remember vividly how the story broke on US TV networks. Jimi Matthews, our head of news at the time, had no hesitation to carry the 24-hour news feed live from the moment the story broke and continued with the live coverage for a few days after.

The story had so many facets, locally and abroad and it gave me great insight into how to cover big, breaking news – wall-to-wall,

with great depth. It is what the tabloids in the UK call “earthquake journalism”; covering the big stories comprehensively.

JEREMY GORDIN: I suppose – given that I was involved in generating it – the news story that most impressed me was the revelation that a judge (Jeremiah Shongwe) had to recuse himself from Zuma’s rape trial because Zuma had had a child with Shongwe’s sister.

SAZI HADEBE: Nelson Mandela. His name has put South Africa on the global limelight. We gained a lot because of his influence and presence. We’ve been able to host sporting World Cup in rugby, cricket and soccer, mainly because of his influence. His coverage in the media of the past two decades can never be compared and even after his death last year not much has changed.

Everything pertaining to his life, public or private has been well documented.

CHRIS ROPER: Nkandla. It’s the story that has laid bare the fault lines in how South Africans perceive democracy.

How do you think the role of editors has changed over the past 20 years in South Africa?

GASANT ABARDER: Editors can no longer be detached from the business of newspapers. My view is that editors need to embrace their entrepreneurial spirit and become the CEOs of all they can have an influence on – from editorial, circulation, advertising, marketing and digital brand extensive – with a view to making their publications sustainable in the face of growing threats to its viability.

At the same time, editors need to – far

more than ever – defend the integrity of their publications against legislative threats and creeping censorship. It doesn’t have to be adversarial; I believe that a lot can be achieved through negotiation and engagement.

JEREMY GORDIN: I think the role of editors has changed considerably over the past 20 years – but not necessarily in tandem with what has been happening in the country over the past 20 years. I think editors have lost considerable power and prestige – and are no longer the respected people of gravitas and wisdom that they used to be. Or maybe I am simply 20 years older.

SAZI HADEBE: It has changed a lot. Before editors used to be not so hands-on in terms of content because they had people employed to take of that. Today’s editors have to know each and every story in the paper because of limited budgets to hire people to do that task. This has resulted in editors not fulfilling their roles in terms of being the face of their titles.

CHRIS ROPER: Thanks to squeezing of resources, and massive new competition from digital, editors are now much more business minded, which translates to showing much more respect for their readers.

What do you think is the biggest influence over the way journalists and editors conduct themselves today? How was that different 20 years ago, or when you entered the industry?

GASANT ABARDER: One of them is social media and how it has forced journalists and editors to bring depth and analysis in everything they do. When I entered the industry, it was very much a case of

newspapers playing the role of “newspaper of record” in breaking the stories of the day. These days, it is impossible to beat Twitter and other forms of instant media to the punch so we are forced to do things differently.

Twenty years ago, too, I remember newsrooms had massive resources and editorial teams. These days, we are having to do more with a lot less and this has forced editors to be a lot more hands-on in their approach to editing newspapers.

JEREMY GORDIN: I think my answer to (1) has reference here.

SAZI HADEBE: Journalists of today have had to adapt to new media and the challenge this poses to their profession. The principles are still the same in terms of applying ethics and codes of conduct.

CHRIS ROPER: Without a doubt, it’s social media and digital. Journalists are now in constant communication with their readers. This makes them do better journalism.

Endnotes

1. The data comes from a project headed by Prof Arrie de Beer and Prof Herman Wasserman as part of the Worlds of Journalism Study (WJS). The WJS provides a tool to understand how journalists in South Africa (SA) regard their role in the current environment. Results discussed here are from a pilot study involving a quantitative survey (N=37) and qualitative interviews (N=10) done with journalists across the Eastern Cape.



Gasant Abarder is the editor of the Cape Times and before that he worked as a news journalist for about four years at e.tv and later as an elections specialist at SABC news. He was also a member of the team that launched the Daily Voice, eventually becoming its deputy editor. From there he moved to the Cape Argus.

Sazi Hadebe is a ML Sultan Technikon (now DUT) journalism graduate. He started his journalism as an intern at the The Witness in Pietermaritzburg in 1997. After that he spent two years as a soccer writer at the Sunday Times (2003-2005). He was the sports reporter when Isolezwe was launched in 2002 and in 2005 was appointed sports editor, in 2011 Deputy Editor and in 2012 was appointed to his current position as Editor.



Jeremy Gordin started in journalism in 1976. He worked on the Rand Daily Mail, Sunday Express and Cape Times. He has been business editor of the Financial Mail, editor of Playboy SA (the first sortie), news and managing editor of Sunday Independent, and acting editor of, and special group writer at, the Independent News Network. He was 2007 Mondi Shanduka SA Journalist of the Year. He is the publisher of the Daily Sun and Sunday Sun.

Chris Roper is the editor-in-chief of the Mail&Guardian. He is the first editor-in-chief of a major South African newspaper to come from a digital background, and he works agnostically across several media platforms. He was founding portal manager of Vodacom World Online, portal manager for MWEB, South Africa’s largest ISP, Editor-in-Chief at 24.com, South Africa’s largest online publisher, and editor of the Mail&Guardian Online.





KUHLE - IMIZAMO YETHU - HOUT BAY, CAPE TOWN: from the series Life under Democracy - Dale Yudelman

Journalism EDUCATION

STILL THINKING ABOUT **journalists'** **thinking**

Since the discourse about journalism education in South Africa in *Rhodes Journalism Review* in 2005, and after 20 years of democracy, little has changed. South African politicians, economists, educators, journalists and the media are more boisterous than ever about democracy, yet our politics, economy, society and education have deteriorated.

By Pieter Fourie

This is probably because South Africans tend to think of democracy mainly in terms of having and wanting rights and not so much in terms of what to do with and how to use the rights and the advantages of democracy to improve human living.

In the case of journalism educators, this human living includes improving the quality of journalism as man's dominant symbolic form of public communication and to increase the role of journalism in democracy. It also includes the democratic right not to be dictated to by the so-called needs and skills of the industry, but to focus on journalism as a *communication phenomenon*; on the fact that a phenomenon (such as journalism) precedes skills and that only through a sound knowledge and understanding of a phenomenon can a phenomenon be improved.

There are more journalism programmes (often dubious) and more private and public institutions (often dubious institutions) offering journalism programmes than there were in the already overcrowded market of 2005. The emphasis continues to be on journalism skills training, the industry continues to complain about the lack of skilled graduates, there are less employment opportunities, and most of all, the quality of journalism continues to be questioned and mistrusted by the public.

It was in this context and it continues to be in such a context that I argued and continue to argue that the skills-theory debate among educators and between industry and educators does not contribute to a better quality of journalism and the esteem of journalism as an academic discipline¹. The possibilities of digitalisation and an increased focus on journalists' (and would-be journalists') digital and multimedia skills, and for the industry to grasp going online as a magic wand for solving the profession's problems, have not restored journalism's trustworthiness².

Without thinking about the skills and without theoretically interrogating journalism skills towards a better understanding of and an improving of journalism as a communication phenomenon, the problems will not go away. I am thus back at what I argued in 2005, namely that the criticism of Kierkegaard, Mill, Tocqueville, and Ortega in the 18th and 19th centuries can be applied to today's journalism. They, among others, argued that the secularity, mundaneness, triviality, the ephemeral nature of journalism, and journalism's lack of intellectual depth, contributed to the decline of 19th century society. Bad journalism contributed to the rise of the tyranny of the masses and the creation of a public sphere conducive to risk-free anonymity and idle curiosity. It undermined a responsible and committed public, destroyed qualitative distinctions (also between people), and contributed to a nihilistic "so-what" life and worldview. Today, critics add that the internet creates a space in which it is difficult to distinguish between relevancy and irrelevancy, fact and fakery, the authenticity of identity and the authenticity of community.

Ongoing political, economic and sociological analyses of journalism reveal a concern with the misuse of journalism for economic, political and social gains. This happens to the detriment of journalism serving its purpose to inform

Bad journalism contributed to the rise of the tyranny of the masses and the creation of a public sphere conducive to risk-free anonymity and idle curiosity.

objectively, understand, interpret and guide. There is a serious concern about the shallowness of journalism ethics. Ethical decisions and behaviour are often justified and based on a professional code which is not rooted in (a) moral philosophy. The professional codes are elevated to the level of journalistic ideology, which has become an ideology in and for itself. There is also concern about journalism practices and professional codes being accepted as “the only way of how we (journalists) do things” and of such practices being accepted as unquestionable and unchangeable. All this contributes to what is being expressed as *the journalism malaise* and a general mistrust of journalism as an authentic representation of an objective truth.

As far as journalism and democracy is concerned, it is often argued that journalism is inadequately giving a public voice to civil society; is not expanding the scope of public awareness of voices outside of the agendas of the elites; and, is not counteracting power inequalities found in other spheres of the social order. It seems as if the democratic failure of journalism lies in its lack of emphasising equality. Such emphasis should begin with equality on community level up to the highest forms of democracy and democratic rights in a society.

In previous work³ I dealt with the impact of the new information and communication technologies on journalism and the consequences of multimedia, multimedia approaches and the convergence of public communication media on the ways in which journalism is practised today. In general it has brought about a kind of McDonaldisation of journalism, sound bite, image bite, titbit, celebrity, and tabloid journalism to the detriment of in-depth interpretative journalism. Although new digital skills are important, teaching seldom addresses how the new information and communication technology has almost redefined key

constructs in journalism such as time, space, objectivity, factuality and authenticity. The danger is that we (also as educators) have grown so accustomed to the new kind of glitzy, sassy, so-called “to the point journalism” that we seldom question the value and quality of it. That is why such questioning should be an important part of the curriculum.

Where does the above criticism leave journalism educators? I conclude with what I have previously written, namely that a theoretical and philosophical education rather than an emphasis on journalism skills should be the foundation of South African journalism education. With “theoretical” and “philosophical” I mean a focus on the nature of journalism as a semiotic construct. With “semiotic construct” I mean journalism seen and experienced primarily as an instrument for the production and dissemination of meaning.

This entails that, apart from teaching skills, educators will equip students with a sound knowledge of journalism as a discourse and as a dialogue (understanding how discourse(s) and dialogue(s) work), journalism as rhetoric (understanding the power of journalism to influence people’s opinions, perceptions and behaviour), journalism as a powerful linguistic and visual way of giving meaning to something and someone with significant (or meaningless) consequences for something and someone, and journalism as representation (journalism as an agency and journalism as a mirror of the world, a society, organisations, people and their behaviours).

Discourse, dialogue, rhetoric, meaning production and representation should form the meta-theories and epistemological and ontological foundations of journalism education. Such an approach could (hopefully) contribute to a more responsible and intellectually satisfactory kind of journalism.



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Endnotes

1. Fourie, PJ. 2005. Journalism studies: thinking about journalists’ thinking. *Ecquid Novi* 26(2): 142-159.
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BUNGEE - ORLANDO TOWERS, SOWETO: from the series *Life under Democracy* - Dale Yudelman

CRITICAL REALISM

in journalism's **future tense**

By Marc Caldwell

Media theory has a long pedigree in academia, though its status as “a fast-growing field within the communication discipline” (Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch 2009: 4) may be due to its institutional linkage with journalism training programmes. Journalism education has had a hard time in becoming academically respectable.

“Academics have long whispered that journalism programmes are too professional: just trade school. Journalists have long grumbled that some of them are too academic – filled with useless ‘theory’” (Stephens 2000: 63).

One usually interprets these views in terms of the much-mentioned theory/practice divide in journalism education and training, where ‘theory’ is seen to consist of an anti-realist, relativist ontology and postmodern, interpretive and constructionist epistemology, whereas ‘practice’ embraces a realist ontology and possibly a correspondence theory of knowledge. By ‘theory’ what is usually meant is cultural theory, or cultural studies; but there is no shortage of alternative perspectives with well-researched applications in journalism. For instance, it is well worth following Hirst’s applications of political economy (Hirst and Harrison 2007). Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus is used by a number of scholars (Hirst 2010; Hummel et al 2012; Schultz 2007). But what should be done with constructionism?

More than a decade has passed since the Australian historian Keith Windschuttle led a campaign in the late 1990s against the dominance of postmodern cultural theory in departments of journalism studies in that country. The contagion was dubbed the “Media Wars”, and in many respects that metaphor was apt. Zelizer’s (2009: 34) description of “journalism educators separated from journalism scholars, humanistic journalism scholars separated from scholars trained in the social sciences” alludes to a mutual distrust between practitioners and theorists in the field.

Journalism’s dominant theory and its practice seem not to mix. As Wright (2011: 156) puts it: “Journalism studies lacks a meta-theoretical structure which would enable those working in the field to embrace the critical advantages of constructivism [sic] – the dominant ontology in much theoretical work about journalism – and the commitment to realism inherent in most practical work about journalism.” However, there is an emergent paradigm in the philosophy of science that does just the job – critical realism – and a few scholars argue that it promises a better fit between journalism theory and its practice (Lau 2004; Wright 2011).

Practice in search of theory

How to balance theory and practice in journalism education and training has been an issue for the subject since defeated Confederate General Robert E. Lee proposed including it in Washington College’s calendar in 1868. “Believing an intelligent press played an instrumental role in contributing to an informed, responsible citizenry” (Sloan 1990: 3), Lee, as president

of the college, proposed a scholarship for students wanting a career in journalism. Lee’s experiment was intended “to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life” (Dickson 2009: 4). The programme was tried for a decade, but was discontinued on grounds that it was unpopular with both students and industry. Newspaper editors considered the course “inherently absurd ... [for] practical journalists, who had worked their own way upward by diligent application, knew the impossibility of learning the lessons of journalism within the walls of a collegiate institution” (Sloan 1990: 3).

“Journalism education begins, for all practical purposes, when Joseph Pulitzer pressed many dollars into the somewhat reluctant hands of Columbia University” (Carey 1978: 848). The university accepted his two-million dollar endowment in 1892, but only opened the journalism school in 1912. Up until the 1920s, it was commonly believed the most reporters needed was a basic liberal arts degree. Now, basic courses in news reporting were being established in some American colleges, “to regain some of the lost prestige suffered during the era of yellow journalism” (Dickson 2009: 9). Of journalism research, this was generally limited to law and press history, but branched into positivist social theory in the 1940s.

None of this means journalism had acquired respectability in the academy. One reformer in American education, Abraham Flexner, said journalism education was “on a par with university faculties of cookery and clothing” (Dickson 2009: 26). Carey describes the field’s standing in Columbia in 1957 as an illegitimate waif living a cap-in-hand existence of one not having been properly introduced.

“Such a program of study was held, self-righteously and without much justification, in low regard on the campus. Those rare occasions when one gathered with colleagues from the rest of the campus, particularly with those from English and other humanities, were encounters of withering, palpable contempt” (Carey 2000: 13).

What was taught until about the mid-1960s was an unsystematic transmission of the accumulated folk wisdom of a rough-hewn craft clinging to Siebert *et al.* (1956) and barely more than news writing manuals. Journalism’s subject matter was considered not academic enough unless it was authorised by any of the traditional disciplines; thus the field’s discomfort “in the overstuffed chairs of the faculty commons upholstered for professors of the liberal arts and the traditional disciplines of theology, law and medicine” (Carey 2000: 16). Journalism was not treated “as a textual system in

Journalism’s subject matter was considered not academic enough unless it was authorised by any of the traditional disciplines



its own right,” but as a “*terra nullius* of epistemology, deemed by anyone who wanders by to be an uninhabited territory of knowledge, fit to be colonized by anyone who’s interested” (Hartley 1996: 39).

Practice against theory

This colonisation of journalism studies underlay what appeared to be a revolt of practitioners against their theorist overlords in departments of journalism in Australian universities in the late 1990s. The complaint was that a disproportionate number of senior academic posts went to cultural studies scholars despite few of these having had any actual journalism experience (Windschuttle 1997: 3-4; 1998a: 9-10; 1998b: 72-73). Hartley had noted earlier that “(m)edia production itself is still downplayed as it always has been, on the wrong side of the ... divide between ‘academic’ and ‘practical’ subjects, suited to vocational students and unpublished tutors” (Hartley 1992: 24).

But therein lay the gist of the matter. A daylong ‘Media Wars’ seminar held at the Queensland University of Technology in 1998 heard Windschuttle complain that the relativist epistemology of cultural studies made it an inappropriate foundation for journalism education. He repeated his claim that the empirical methods and realist values of journalism “are undermined, contradicted and frequently regarded as naive by the proponents of media theory ... the body of theory that accompanies the academic domain called ‘cultural studies’” (Windschuttle 1997: 5).

“It is important to understand that the popularity of media studies with students owes nothing to cultural studies.... a largely incomprehensible and odious gauntlet they must run in order to be allowed to do what they really came to the institution for, to study media practice” (Windschuttle 1997: 15-16). Windschuttle called for journalism training to be severed from cultural studies, and to “return to what is believed to be the ‘Holy Trinity’ of journalism education: an empirical method and

‘realist’ worldview; an ethical orientation to audiences and the ‘public interest’; and a commitment to clear writing” (Flew and Sternberg 1999: 9). He describes the fundamental differences between the two fields this way:

“(i) [J]ournalism has an empirical methodology and has a realist view of the world, whereas cultural studies is a form of linguistic idealism whose principal methodology is textual analysis; (ii) journalists respect their audiences, whereas cultural studies is contemptuous of media audiences; and (iii) journalism is committed to clear writing and concrete prose style, whereas cultural studies is notable for its arcane abstractions and willful obscurantism” (Windschuttle 1999: 12).

A pillar of Windschuttle’s argument is his claim that journalism is committed to a *realist* worldview by “reporting the truth about what occurs in the world” (Windschuttle 1997: 4; 1998a: 61).

“Journalists go out into society, make observations about what is done and what is said, and report them as accurately as they can. They have to provide evidence to verify and corroborate their claims and they have to attribute their sources. Journalism, in other words, upholds a realist view of the world and an empirical methodology” (Windschuttle 1998a: 61).

On the other hand, any practice has its inherent understanding; just as 'doing theory' in an academic setting is itself a site of practice.

Critical realism

Were Windschuttle's accusations completely unfounded he would have found neither an audience nor a following. Even one of Windschuttle's harshest critics found himself admitting at the time:

"It is with faint damnation that I find myself praising Windschuttle. While I acknowledge that some media theory is good for journalism students, I question the usefulness and validity of much that the postmodernists believe in" (Hirst 1998: 84).

The risk of simply hiving off the culturalist portion of journalism studies ran the risk of sending the field back to its historical impoverishment; but keeping the status quo meant living with a paradox between relativism and realism. Critical realism, which draws famously on Bhaskar's work among others (Archer et al 1998), offers a way out of this dilemma. It assumes a realist ontology and an eclectic realist and interpretivist epistemology. That is, critical realism assumes an "independent objective reality" while at the same time "asserting the constructedness of human knowledge about the nature of that reality" (Wright 2011: 159). A key feature is the reflexive interplay between human agency and structure; and as such, its resemblance to Giddens' structuration theory is well-noted (Archer 1998; Jessop 2005).

Research exploring the relevance of critical realism to journalism practices and institutions remains in its infancy (Lau 2004), yet reference to just three of eight key assumptions in Sayer (1992: 5) ought to indicate how both constructionist and realist elements in journalism education may cohere, and give journalism graduates a rigorous enough framework in which to think about their practice.

The world exists independently of our knowledge of it.

[...]

Our knowledge of the world is fallible and theory-laden. Concepts of truth and falsity fail to provide a coherent view of the relationship between knowledge and its object. Nevertheless knowledge is not immune to empirical check and its effectiveness in informing and explaining successful material practice is not mere accident.

[...]

Social science must be critical of its object. In order to be able to explain and understand social phenomena we have to evaluate them critically

Kant's well-known adage holds that practice without theory is blind, whereas theory without practice is sterile. This may apply to journalism practice's historical aversion to 'useless theory'. On the other hand, any practice has its inherent understanding; just as 'doing theory' in an academic setting is itself a site of practice. Critical realism promises to enhance journalism's theoretical and practical components in ways that make them more mutually coherent.

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South Africa is frequently referred to as an “emerging democracy” and it is often argued that the media have a critical role to play in fostering this anticipated democracy.



YAZEED ADAMS - LOOP STREET, CAPE TOWN:
from the series *Life under Democracy* - Dale Yudelman

Teaching FUTURE NEWSMAKERS

By Nicola Jones

In a higher education context, journalism is located at the nexus where the twin imperatives of intellectual knowledge relevant to the field and vocational training meet – demands that are frequently reduced to a crude dichotomy of theory versus practice (Prinsloo, 2010).

Because these fields of study generally seek to be both vocational as well as socially relevant, a new journalism education discourse appears to be emerging – one which is defining a new academic identity for journalism education, and in some senses “extricating itself from dependency on Western orientated models of journalism education and training” (Banda et al, 2007).

But some of the major challenges and issues in this regard include the introduction of curricula that are far more concerned with providing market-related skills for future journalists than with challenging their preconceptions and broadening their horizons; in other words, institutions can more easily “sell” vocational skills aimed at a specific career. What we are failing to do at South African universities in general and in journalism courses in particular, is to educate young minds broadly in critical thinking, ethics, values, reasoning, appreciation, problem solving, argumentation and logic. “Locked into single-discipline thinking, our young people fail to learn that the most complex social and human problems cannot be solved except through interdisciplinary thinking that crosses these disciplinary boundaries” (Jansen, 2010).

This is aggravated by the fact that as more people turn to the internet for news and information, the importance of training future journalists in online and mobile journalism grows increasingly important, as otherwise graduates are simply not equipped to operate competitively in a 21st century newsroom.

Changes in both the state and media landscape in South Africa after apartheid have impacted on the discourses about journalism education, with two discourses being influential in this regard: transformation, and private-public partnerships (Banda et al, 2007). Consequently since 1994, there has been a marked shift in the way that journalism education has taken place. “Professional education has largely become driven by industrial and commercial imperatives, rather than the more civic-minded and critical approach of a university-based education, resulting in a functionalist approach to learning – as ‘training’” (Banda et al, 2007: 165). Two contextual issues are important here, the first

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being that although there have been important shifts in media ownership since 1994, these changes together with globalisation and the concentration of media have not necessarily led to social changes in content. In other words, the question remains: are journalists being taught to engage critically with the stories they produce? Secondly, the current relationship between the ANC government and the media is adversarial to say the least, following the exposure by journalists of corruption and abuse of power by political figures, and this has led to renewed threats against media freedoms in the country. It is of some concern that although these pressing contextual concerns are apparent, little has been done to address these concerns through the education of future journalists.

South Africa is understood to house the longest running journalism education programmes in Africa, beginning in 1959 at Potchestroom University (now University of the North-West), and then followed in the 1970s by the introduction of programmes at Rhodes University, the University of South Africa (UNISA), Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg), and the University of the Orange Free State (now University of the Free State); as well as significant programmes at previously black-only universities such as Fort Hare, the University of Zululand and Bophuthatswana (now University of the North-West) (de Beer and Tomaselli, 2000; Banda et al, 2007). The following three decades saw the introduction of journalism streams at most of the country's leading universities and former technikons, with some (predominantly former English-speaking universities) emphasising a more cultural and/or media studies approach, than a strictly skills-based or communication science approach.

However, in recent years a more functionalist approach has become especially evident in the plethora of private institutions which offer a number of diplomas and short certificate courses concentrating on journalism practice and training, such as the Independent Institute of Education, College Campus, Damelin, Birnam Business School, Intec College, Boston City Campus and City Varsity to name a few. Such vocational schools adopt a more functionalist approach in their material and equip students with skills that facilitate practical market and journalism techniques. They deviate from the neo-Marxist approach, adopted by many universities, which aim to consider the socio-political aspects of journalism which identify how “historical materialism and semiotics [offer] a route to understanding how meaning is generated in specific historical contexts” (de Beer and Tomaselli, 2000).

This decided contrast could be considered as one of the greatest dilemmas faced by South African journalism education. Universities, on the one hand, tend to create an environment that teaches both vocational and critical skills, often incorporating aspects of other disciplines to ensure that students acquire a broad understanding of the socio-political environment within which journalism and media studies is situated. Private colleges, on the other hand, are less concerned with this approach and concentrate on teaching

students only the necessary skills required to achieve in a professional newsroom. In addition, they tend to offer more desirable services to students, such as small classes and a constant tutored environment – made possible by the concomitant higher fees and quicker throughput of students.

What is encouraging in the South African context is that in spite of the perceived “theory versus practice” divide, there is lively and continuing debate on the issue, and signs of a new journalism education discourse emerging. There is fairly broad agreement, for example, on the need for journalism education to include the cultivation of an informed and critical mindset as well as the honing of skills at universities. Although the market-driven imperatives of corporate media remain, some media and cultural studies educators continue to problematise journalism education curricula's relationship to the market; there is awareness of the impact of problematic political systems and an over-reliance on Western influence on journalism education in the region; and there is also awareness of the impact of lack of resources, capacity and infrastructure on journalism education.

The latter is most apparent in the acknowledgement that in order for journalism education to continue to demonstrate its contemporary relevance in both its profile and practice, it needs to ensure continuous innovation in the world of new media. There is wide agreement, for example, that South African future newsmakers need to be conversant with new technologies in information gathering, processing and distribution, and to understand the ethical implications of using these technologies (Banda et al, 2007). Although this can be problematic in terms of resources and access to new media, most journalism schools are aware that they need to broaden their range of training topics – and, perhaps, their range of students, by offering not only undergraduate and postgraduate courses, but also courses aimed at professional journalists seeking to upgrade their qualifications and obtain new skills, as well as topical courses for citizen journalists, and perhaps even news or information literacy courses for the general public.

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THE FUTURE IS BUILT ON THE PAST: A call to include journalism history in journalism curricula

A recent article in a weekly newspaper asked whether a shared South African history is a fallacy (Burrows and Fazel 2014: 8). One might conclude that in a country with so many contested histories, a “shared” history will remain a pipe dream. But to ensure the South African citizenry embraces a certain South Africanism – instead of dividing -isms such as tribalisms and nationalisms – the media can and should take the lead to support a specific South Africanism with reportage sprouting from such a world view.

By Lizette Rabe

Journalism
EDUCATION

This can be done by teaching a new generation of journalists – irrespective of which platform they will eventually work on and what they will call their type of news dissemination – to write from a layered understanding of our country's history in order to deepen democracy, in what can only be described as a still struggling, post-colonial, post-apartheid democratic dispensation.

This is especially important in the disruptive digital economy, where reporting is becoming shallower because of various factors. To counteract this, a new generation of journalists should at least begin their career with an understanding of our layered, contested past, and that they need to be cognisant of innumerable complexities.

This might sound an insurmountable challenge, especially in light of the “here and now” needs of the newsroom where “doing” journalists are more valued than “thinking” journalists. It seems a journalist who can push all the right buttons, in other words a technically-skilled journalist, is more preferable than a thinking journalist, in other words a conceptually-skilled journalist. The answer of course is that information operations (previously known as the media) need both higher order and lower order skills in journalists.

Therefore, journalism curricula should as a necessity include a module based on cultural literacy in order for journalists to have an understanding of time, space, civilisations, etc. This article further argues that within such a module an important sub-module specifically focusing on journalism/media history is a necessity. The contents of such a sub-module can be described as a “shorthand” understanding of our country's history, as our media history is an exact reflection of certain stages and eras in our history.

Just two examples: a journalism history curriculum can begin with the development of media in what later became South Africa by focusing on the despotic Charles Somerset, in an era with no press freedom and thus no freedom of expression. That period, in other words, also highlights colonialism and what that -ism was all about. Another focus can highlight the period under the Afrikaner Nationalist apartheid government, where a multitude of laws restricted media freedom – simultaneously explaining what that -ism was all about.

At a superficial glance this might seem simplistic, but a thorough, well-conceptualised media history module will not only give beginner-journalists an understanding of the development of their own profession, but they will gain, as bonus, an understanding of the development of the different eras and stages in our country's history *and* build their analytical skills.

This will facilitate a layered understanding of the past as it presents itself as the present, and the ability to think inclusively by facing inward and outward at the same time. By including such a sub-module in curricula, it will serve as a conceptual or higher-order tool to enable journalists to report with insight on political, social, cultural and economic realities for their various audiences, taking into account continuous interactions

between politics, economics, culture and technology.

One can argue that this is especially crucial in one-party-dominated “democracies”. In such fragile democracies, contested histories are significant factors having an impact on daily narratives. Understaffed newsrooms further hinder comprehensive reportage in fragile post-colonial democracies – such as is the case in South Africa. Hence the need for journalists to have an understanding of their own profession and its role in past and present realities.

It is accepted that in young democracies the important role of a free and independent media can never be overemphasised. In many cases, media freedom is the only guarantee for individual freedom, as the other sectors of an unstable democratic environment, namely the legislative, executive and judiciary powers, can all be influenced, at best, and corrupted, at worst, by a political party that has a massive majority. Therefore, to prepare journalists for their difficult task of being independent and informed citizens of the Fourth Estate, they not only need to be prepared with the expected practical and conceptual skills for their profession, but journalism curricula also need to go one level deeper in terms of higher-order conceptual skills that might not be regarded as a priority at first glance in the light of other pressing skills. As said, this important element is media history.

One can argue that Weber's notion of “*verstehen*” will be supported by such a curriculum component, as journalists will only be able to “understand” by understanding the contexts of current events in terms of a media historiographical understanding. To strengthen the argument, one can say that with the media industry currently experiencing a crisis because as a ‘profit-making machine [it] has broken down’ (Conboy 2010: 411), it also follows that curricula urgently need to revisit their function and content. A number of reports have already been published on journalism schools/curricula, amongst others the recent report by Folkerts, Hamilton and Lemann (2013).

A revision of j-curricula is imperative, not only to strengthen the technical education and training that may seem to be the priority requirement, but *especially* to produce *conceptually* fit beginner-journalists. It is under these conditions, with an almost monocular focus on technical abilities and the “here and now needs” of newsrooms, that media history as an important component of curricula is overlooked.

With a revisiting of the necessary elements in curricula, this author argues that we now have the opportunity to include media history as a sub-module in such curricula. In order for students to gain more from such a module, it should preferably be as part of a fourth year or honours level (NQF8) programme.

In what can be called a technologically driven news era, with media companies struggling to maintain profitability as the traditional print media (or “non-digital” media) try to transform themselves into digital media, it is easy to dispel the need to incorporate such a sub-focus in curricula that already are stressed to embrace all other basic, and necessary, practical and conceptual skills. Tucher, for example, describes the

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course of the Columbia Journalism School as an already “jam-packed one-year curriculum” (2012: 531). The same can be said of the one-year postgraduate vocational programme at Stellenbosch University.

Still, one can argue that history as a “past reality” (De Villiers 2012: 198), or a “present past” (Verbeeck 2000: 387), is of utmost importance in a South Africa in which the effects of a colonial-apartheid past are a daily, lived reality for many. An historical understanding of a profession as specific and crucial as the media, especially in their role as “Fourth Estate”, is then especially obligatory.

One can say that particularly in such contexts, “historians, like other people, are shaped by fashion” (Brown 2003: 1), as it is also accepted that history is (re)written by the conqueror or victor. Or, phrased less politically-punitively, because “views of and theories about people and society continually keep changing, historical interpretations of any given subject also keep changing” (Berger 2011: 156).

This is supported by what can be called “refractions”, and that, “consciously or unconsciously”, history “reflects our own position in time, and forms part of our answer to the broader question [about] what view we take of the society in which we live” (Carr 1961: 2). In effect, facts “never come to us ‘pure’ since they do not and cannot exist in a pure form” (Carr 1961:16). Facts, in essence, are “always refracted through the mind of the recorder” – all the more reason why journalists should have an understanding of their own profession’s “refracted” “past reality” to be able to function fully as competent professionals.

Foci in a media history course

In South Africa (and probably in the majority of developing countries) journalism/media history remains a relatively understudied sub-discipline within journalism and media studies (Wigston 2007: 4-5). Thus, as a fairly recent phenomenon in media research it is not regarded as a vital component



of j-curricula. Yet in the political North, journalism history is emerging as one of “its most fertile subfields” (Conboy 2012: 506). This article therefore argues for developing a syllabus and course material that will help develop a vital higher-order skill to give young professionals in the political South an equal understanding of the layered contexts with which they have to deal. Indeed, media history can have a two-way use, namely in the way journalism makes use of history, and the usage of its own history in preparing journalists for their profession (Conboy 2012: 507).

A typical university syllabus, especially on NQF level 8, should encase two main foci: firstly, theoretical points of departure and relevant methodologies to understand the “present past” on a meta-level, and secondly, both should be applied as tools to study aspects of the “present past”. In terms of the former, various applicable theories could be included in order for students to have the necessary meta-level grasp on what they will uncover when researching aspects of history in their coursework assignments (the second component).

In terms of situating media history as a field, one can begin with a foundational point of departure in the classics – even though this can be criticised as (typically) Eurocentric. However, in a globalised environment, to make a decision based on Afro-centrism instead of a holistic view, is short sighted. Unquestionably, the departure point would still be that South Africa’s past of colonialism, unionism, apartheid and a democratic dispensation from 1994 demands the recognition that history up to the 1990s, including media history, was mostly recorded according to a Western, colonial point of departure. This necessarily resulted in specific Eurocentric constructs in terms of socio-political, cultural and economic issues, implying a paternalistic, racialised colonialist history up to a certain point, which naturally calls for a “new historicism” and should be addressed in the curriculum.

The number of theoretical foundations to be included will depend on the time allocated to the sub-module. These are points of departure: The four notions of history, consisting of technology studies, organisation studies, cultural studies and political studies (Nord 1989: 310), which include the

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It is hoped that more curriculum developers will understand the importance of the media sector's own history, and develop courses for their specific needs, so as to deepen democracy through a new generation of well-prepared journalists – as, indeed, the future is built on the past.

different views about the nature and aim of historical research and distinguish between two main approaches, namely a humanist/positivist (or idiographic [particularising]) and a scientific/idealist (or nomothetic [generalising]) approach. The humanist historian (and approach to communication history) is concerned with the study “of unique events or sequences” in order to understand an event by understanding its context in a particular space and time, whereas the social science historian is interested in “general processes” and hopes to construct generalisations and theories “to explain classes of events without regard to space or time” (Nord 1989: 293–294). This can spark a discussion of how journalism studies includes, *per se*, the binary qualities of the humanities and social sciences.

It can also lead to in-depth understanding of positivistic and critical approaches in communication research as the “two grand theories from which all mass communication research depart[ed]” (Fourie 2007: 145). According to Fourie the positivist approach focuses on the scientific method and empiricism, and the critical approach on ideology and power, “aiming to expose the misuse of the media by a power elite”. Historiography is in essence a combination of the two approaches, as it uses what is to be found through empirical research and what must be interpreted from those factual findings. This leads to a fusion of paradigms, as positivistic research “tends to be supplemented with critical interpretation and evaluation, while critical researchers often back up their assumptions with empirical proof”.

Other approaches which can be followed include history as record of progress (Berger 2011: 167), the media evolution theory (Stöber 2004) or the continuous variables approach (Nord 1989: 293). Although the broad historical research method, as a qualitative method, is usually the methodology of choice, one could design, for example, a study specifically around what Dahl calls ‘deep-drilling’ as opposed to ‘episodic’ approaches (as cited in Wigston 2007: 5).

The above should merely function as a foundation for the second part of such a media history course, as the real focus should be on empirical research projects, in which the student uses theory and method to research various aspects of journalism history, be it censorship/media freedom, the development of “black” media, or community journalism, or any of the myriad foci waiting to be researched.

Conclusion

To deepen democracy, professionals within the realm of the Fourth Estate should be armed with knowledge of their own profession's history in order to interrogate the events of the day with more insight and “verstehen”, and thus to serve their publics better in every respect

of modern society. It is hoped that more curriculum developers will understand the importance of the media sector's own history, and develop courses for their specific needs, so as to deepen democracy through a new generation of well-prepared journalists – as, indeed, the future is built on the past.

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THE TRANSFORMERS

Universities are strange places. People come in as one kind of being, and leave quite different. They are places of transformation. One way in which they effect this transformation is to challenge our preconceived notions of the world, and our relationship to it. However, at the same time, universities are also places of privilege and so can be conservative – in the sense of conserving and fostering particular interests in their favour.

By Priscilla Boshoff

Journalism
EDUCATION

So, when we think about journalism education at university, we need to think about it in both these ways: it is a means of transforming the student into the kind of journalist or media worker we as educators desire and this transformation takes place within a space in which conservative forces are at play.

At the Rhodes University School of Journalism and Media Studies this transformation has a very particular flavour, infused by our vision statement. Here we articulate the kind of revolution that we desire to take place – the young people who we teach must leave us as “self-reflexive, critical, analytical graduates and media workers, whose practice is probing, imaginative, civic minded and outspoken”. However, these are not merely a set of personal and specialised skills. Through a critical praxis we seek to inculcate the attributes, values and practices that we deem necessary for journalists and media workers to engage with our specific South African context, a context mired in inequalities and injustices. In other words, they are a set of relational, intellectual and professional tools designed to equip students to participate in “heal[ing] the divisions of the past and establish[ing] a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights; [and] lay the foundations for a democratic and open society...”. In other words, the transformation that we seek to engender is a political one.

But how does such a transformation occur? And can we assume that the transformation is permanent? These questions are partially answered by examining the other side of the equation introduced earlier, that universities are not just places of transformation, but also of privilege. This privilege is primarily economic – Rhodes is increasingly compromised by withdrawal of state support and as a result it is an expensive university. The majority of students who come here must have access to resources that enable them to afford the fees. In addition, students come to study expecting to graduate into jobs that will enable them to retain or better the lifestyles they have enjoyed before. Inevitably, this privilege comes together with worldviews and values aligned to those aspirations. Here, the connection to the media becomes crucial.

Media are not neutral. Quoting again from our vision statement, where media do not deliberately set out to challenge social injustices, mediations can “contribute to the production and reproduction of the dominant relations of inequality that structure social life, and are implicated in questions of gender, class, culture, race, geography, [and] sexuality”. Ultimately, then, our transformation agenda extends to the transformation of the media, including journalism. In effect, we use our graduates as agents to drive social change within and by the media industries.

But here the argument comes full circle and we need to ask a few questions. One is: “If students come to university, a privileged space, wanting to retain or gain privileges, privileges supported by the media (after all, mainstream media are hardly revolutionary and at most promote change within the limits of the status quo), then how will they respond to the transformations we demand?” Another is: “How do we count the cost of these demands both for ourselves and our students – who pays the price of transformation?”

Challenged by these questions, I conducted a four year longitudinal study in which I tracked students’ perceptions of our curriculum and how their ideas about themselves as journalists or media workers changed over time through their encounter with our programme. The questionnaires and interviews indicated that most students come to Rhodes to study journalism because of the reputation of the school. They assume that the status of this desirable degree, together with the skills that it will endow, will provide an easy entry into the field of journalism or media more generally. For some, in addition, journalism is a means to achieve personal growth through creative writing. Remarks like Daniel’s⁵ are not uncommon: “I think I was quite good at English at school and so I thought about writing and then ... I just thought journalism could be quite cool, going around the world, reporting.”

Despite gradually warming to the ideals of such journalism practice, and becoming more aware of the range of journalisms possible, students do not forget the mainstream media with all its glamour and excitement.

To students' dismay these aspirations clash unexpectedly with our curriculum. They discover – some to their horror – that we require them to reflect on their place and role within a developing democracy. As part of this, rather than writing idyllic articles for *Getaway*, we demand that they practice their journalism within Grahamstown and the wider Eastern Cape, a context marked by drastic inequalities. They are required to reflect critically about the relationship between journalism and democracy in this space, and to develop a habitual reflexivity about their practice in this regard.

For many students the growing realisation of the complexities of journalism and the responsibilities it entails lead to crises of one kind or another. In particular, they confront the personal fears that arise from being faced for the first time with extreme poverty within the unfamiliar environment of the township, as Cedric describes: “They’re like, ‘No, my car’s gonna get stolen,’ or something ridiculous like that... People don’t like it. They don’t want to know. They know that it’s there but they don’t want to be involved; we don’t want to be involved in that side of town.”

The “Journalism Development and Democracy” course designed by Rod Amner which Cedric is referring to above requires students to do quite old-fashioned journalistic work. Instead of sitting safely behind a desk, pc and telephone, they go frequently to the township and talk to people. They use these encounters to produce journalism that speaks to and for people usually excluded from mainstream journalism. Students are wrenched out their comfort zones and into new relationships both with themselves and others.

Despite gradually warming to the ideals of such journalism practice, and becoming more aware of the range of journalisms possible, students do not forget the mainstream media with all its glamour and excitement. Indeed, graduating students admit to secretly harbouring the desires that brought them to Rhodes School of Journalism and Media Studies in the first place – they haven’t been replaced, merely driven underground, as Tamara describes: “Everyone’s asking me, ‘What are you gonna do?’ I’m not too sure, I’m very torn ‘cause I know I always get the feeling that the journalism department doesn’t want you to become a commercial

photographer taking for ads and pretty photo spreads in fashion magazines and stuff like that. But they’re just so much fun, they really are! (laughs). They are so much fun and they’re very creative.”

At the same time students are keenly aware of the challenges that face them as they enter a highly competitive field. They are realistic about their ability to “change the world” or indeed find any work at all as Anele describes: “I’ve kind of now resigned [myself] to the fact that it might not be TV that I want to do, or I’m just at the point where I’m like, ‘Just employ me, somebody!’”

These opinions alert us as educators to the cost of our virtuous curriculum. Amidst the host of institutional and technological challenges that face our students as they enter the workforce, we must ask ourselves if we send them out perhaps less well-equipped than they should be for the hard practicalities of journalism. Is the intellectual autonomy and critical reflexivity that we prize enough? And, more importantly, is it durable? Can it survive outside the safety of this space in which a very specific set of values and attributes are fostered and rewarded? To what extent is the intervention we attempt here able to impact on the state of journalism in South Africa? Only future research will be able to give some indication.

For myself, I end on a positive note, drawing inspiration from Bourdieu, a French sociologist who prized university education, even as he critiqued the ways it participated in maintaining social inequalities. He argued that the university is a relatively autonomous space, free from overt influence from the field of economics. For this reason, it is able to inculcate what he termed the “scholastic point of view”, a perspective from which students become aware of the structures of power that shape their and others’ choices. Although these insights arise in a context of relative privilege, they are empowering to everyone who gains access to them. So, while our students leave with this point of view, and enter into a world that is “over determined” (to use another phrase from Bourdieu) by the economic field, they go equipped, at least, with insights and experiences that allow them to take up the challenge these pose when they are ready. The cost of the alternative – not to burden them with such capacities – does not bear calculating.



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Endnotes

1. All names are pseudonyms

Without a doubt journalism around the world has undergone tremendous changes in the last 20 years. Just to think that 20 years ago most of us did not have computers at home, let alone internet access. If connected, connections were slow, information, although available, often posted on rather crude looking webpages (later websites) if we even dare to compare with today's sophisticated interactive platforms. These changes are almost incomprehensible, or at least difficult to capture in a few lines. In South Africa of course, these changes are coupled with the social, political, economic and cultural change that the country as a whole has undergone since the first democratic elections in 1994. Few other disciplines (and nations) have undergone such tremendous changes in the last 20 years.

The South African news media has certainly leap-frogged in terms of technology adoption and development. Media24 is a global brand and a definite leader in the country and on the continent in terms of their around-the-clock news ventures with a clear focus on developing the business on new media platforms and many other media houses have followed. However, new business models for traditional news media ventures are yet to be developed. The news media has also come under severe scrutiny in later years, and criticism has ranged from the lack of basic skills among journalists, to failing ethical standards and the loss of experienced journalists and the juniorisation of the newsroom. Critique has also come from government focusing mainly on the news media's seeming unwillingness to transform and meet the demands of the nascent democracy and a changing audience.

Ideas around transformation have penetrated much of the debates about the news media in the last 20 years and issues have ranged from how to make the journalistic corps and news producers in general more equitable in terms of race, to the transformation of news content itself amidst criticism of racism and too narrow a focus on issues concerning only a small wealthy urban elite. As in many parts of the world, debates around the apparent dumbing down and trivialisation of news content are ever present. In our context this debate has been countered, however, by ideas of transformation and the opening up the news media to groups in society previously neglected and cut off from many mainstream news media outlets.

Transformation in the news media, no matter how contested and no matter how it is defined, has undisputedly come a long way since the days of apartheid. Gone are the days of overt racism exercised against black journalists in the newsroom, and gone are overt racist conceptualisations of the audience as reflected through "black editions" of newspapers and native or Bantustan news, and newspapers overtly carrying an agenda of particular racist ideologies and beliefs. However,

Some reflections on the challenges of teaching journalism at the University of Johannesburg

By Ylva Rodny-Gumede



As much as journalists need technical skills linked to specific media platforms as well as sound language, writing and editing skills, equally there is a need for journalists with solid analytical abilities and research skills, knowledge of ethics and an understanding of the world that goes beyond mere reporting of events and that dares to pose the hard and difficult questions to both local and global actors.

it is still true that the news media in South Africa is fragmented and audiences divided by language and socio-economic factors that dictate access and ideas around what is considered news.

These rapid shifts in technology development impacting on production and dissemination of content as well as the underlying ethos of the news media have been echoed through journalism curricula at learning institutions around the country. The BA Journalism degree and other journalism course offerings at the University of Johannesburg (UJ) are no different in this regard. UJ itself has undergone tremendous change, from being an exclusive white Afrikaans-speaking university to a multi-cultural essentially English-speaking university with a strong focus on serving students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and so-called first generation university students (ie students who come from families where no one else holds an academic degree).

UJ came into being after the university merger in 2005 when the Department of Communication at the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) merged with the Department of Public Relations Management at the Technikon Witwatersrand (TWR). In 2009 the Department was reconstituted as the School of Communication comprising three distinct but complementary departments: the Department of Strategic Communication, the Department of Communication Studies and the Department of Journalism, Film and Television. In 2014, the typical UJ journalism student is a young black woman graduating with a three year BA degree with anything from politics, sociology, economics or a language as an additional subject.

The Department of Journalism, Film and Television currently offers two distinct degree programmes in Journalism and Film and Television Studies respectively. Each of these programmes is run from an undergraduate BA degree through to PhD level. The Journalism and Film and Television studies degrees have always had an applied component to them, with students receiving theoretical as well as vocational and applied training as part of the major subject in each degree. To further consolidate the professionalisation of the

degrees within an academic set up, as of 2013, the applied and theoretical components have been split into two separate subjects. Students registering for a BA degree in either Journalism or Film and Television Studies now have two compulsory majors – one theoretical and one applied. Students are also required to do Communication Studies for at least two years of their degree and as previously mentioned an additional subject from within the broader field of the humanities and social sciences.

The university and its lecture staff are acutely aware of the need for support and bridging courses, especially for students with English as a second language. For the BA journalism degree the need for bridging gaps in basic writing and comprehension skills with regards to both academic and journalistic texts are particularly pronounced. In an effort to deal with some of the criticism coming from industry as well as from within the university itself with regards to basic writing and editing skills, the BA journalism degree dedicates the first semester of the applied journalism course to academic writing followed by two semesters of news writing in the first and second years. This is further enhanced in the third year where students do an additional semester of advanced news writing.

Writing skills aside, in the light of retrenchments and low recruitment figures within the industry in South Africa as well as elsewhere in the world, the question that is being asked is how relevant journalism courses are (university courses in particular) to aspiring journalists and what these courses really prepare students for once graduated and working in the newsroom? How can the gap between industry's demand for practical content/skills and academy's emphasis on theory be bridged?

As much as journalists need technical skills linked to specific media platforms as well as sound language, writing and editing skills, equally there is a need for journalists with solid analytical abilities and research skills, knowledge of ethics and an understanding of the world that goes beyond mere reporting of events and that dares to pose the hard and difficult questions to both local and global actors. We need intellectual editors,

journalists, writers and commentators. Our discipline cuts to the heart of democratic values and the realisation of a qualitative, deliberative and participatory democracy.

Throughout our courses film, television and journalism are considered within a variety of national, global and industrial contexts with a view to train graduates with both practical production skills talking to the contemporary media landscape as well as theoretical knowledge to interpret and critically analyse and examine the field of journalism, film and television and intersections hereof, including wider areas of public dissemination of information.

Ultimately, it is industry and the audience that provide quality assurance and evaluation of the quality and relevance of the degree, that said universities are well placed to continuously evaluate and monitor the quality of their degrees and courses through rigorous peer review mechanisms established over extended periods of time. Of course, journalism degrees at universities, like many news media outlets, will have to learn to adapt to constant change and flux. Media outlets and platforms that journalists work for are changing rapidly, the way in which journalism is produced no less so and the way in which audiences consume news is definitely changing in leaps and bounds. However, the fundamentals of journalism in terms of providing, contextualising and interpreting information (particular information that someone wants to keep out of the public realm) has not changed and is needed more than ever with the complexity of modern society, social organisation and information dissemination.



Ylva Rodny-Gumede is the head of the Department of Journalism, Film and Television at the University of Johannesburg.



SIYABONGA MTHEMBU – GRAAFF-REINET: from the series Life under Democracy – Dale Yudelman

Nearly 10 years ago, I presented a conference paper at Rhodes on what UCT was and wasn't doing in journalism education and this was subsequently published in *Ecquid Novi*. I re-read the piece to prepare an update and was struck both by how perceptive and on the money it was but also by how much had changed.

By Ian Glenn

ON (not) TEACHING JOURNALISM

Part 2

To repeat the major point: we decided strategically not to go into journalism as we saw print journalism as an over-traded market, opting rather to give students a hybrid of media studies and journalism, hoping to make them strategically astute media practitioners. When we did (do) journalism, we insist, as in our re-shaped second year course, more on multi-media journalism, and more on feature writing and creative non-fiction than hard news.

But before launching into Advertisements for Ourselves, part 2, perhaps it would be good to say what we have got and probably still get wrong or what we might have done differently. First, hires. Had the Centre for Film and Media Studies hired differently, it could be argued we would have had a different, perhaps much better, more effective department. We have turned down, for a mix of reasons, some of the best journalists, media critics and public intellectuals in the country. I don't want to 'out' people as unsuccessful candidates but to wonder whether UCT (and these were very much agonised-over and committee decisions in all cases) got it wrong. In particular, have we been or become too academic, losing distinguished creative people and practitioners (for a mix of reasons) like Emma van der Vliet, Andre Wiesner, Mary Watson and Meg Rickards? Could we have hired people who were more in the public fray, people without PhDs and the normal academic track records?

Should we have pushed harder for adjunct professors or lecturers as many North American universities have – people from industry who bring their expertise and get acknowledged for their creative output and role as public intellectuals and perhaps even as journalists? The pressure from faculty, to which I think we bowed, for strategic and other reasons, was to hire people who fit the conventional academic mould, who publish accredited journal articles, are easier to judge in conventional ways for tenure and promotion. In Weberian terms, the charisma of our early days, with the heady mix of external practitioners and endless innovation, with students complaining they were guinea pigs, has given, and gives way to academic rationality and bureaucracy. Which has its good points, of course. Almost everybody on the media side has been promoted, our publication rates are very healthy, and we have a flourishing number of honours, master and PhD students. And that's not all...

Since I wrote the first article, the department has become far more diverse. There is a current joke that goes: "An Irishman, a South African, a Zimbabwean and an Englishman go into a bar. Oh, that's not a joke, that's the England cricket team." Here, we could say, "An American, a Frenchman, an Egyptian, a Zimbabwean, a

woman married to a Kenyan and some South Africans are in a room. Oh, that's the CFMS staff meeting..."

Since the first article, Philippe Salazar and the Centre for Rhetoric Studies have become part of the Centre for Film and Media Studies. Thanks to Philippe's offerings in Rhetoric, we have developed an interdisciplinary Hons and MA programme in Political Communication, which includes modules in Rhetoric, in Political Studies, with Bob Mattes the major contributor, and courses from within our department, with other contributors such as Ibrahim Saleh, Wallace Chuma and Musa Ndlovu. Among the graduates from this and closely related programmes were three of the candidates on the top 20 of the DA list for Parliament – and now only one since Lindiwe Mazibuko has decided to go to Harvard and Tim Harris to join the City of Cape Town finance team.

Going to Harvard seems to be a rite of passage for CFMS staff. When Wallace Chuma goes as the Mandela fellow in 2015, he will be the fourth member of the department to receive this exciting mid-career opportunity – there are advantages to academic rationality. Another advantage is the growing presence of CFMS in international forums and organisations like IAMCR, where Ibrahim Saleh has been an important presence. He is also co-editor of *Journal of Applied Journalism and Media Studies*.

One of the strengths of UCT, as the previous article noted, was being in good company of other creative and critical departments. The Drama Department plays a key role in our honours in television drama, while our new MA in documentary arts draws on the expertise of history and anthropology. This new, highly successful development, owes a lot to the presence of Paul Weinberg, maven and networker of note, who from his position in the Visual Archive in the UCT Library, has attracted many mid-career and distinguished practitioners who have turned out award-winning films and arranged photographic exhibitions.

But the documentary arts has also stimulated the development of masters level non-fiction courses, such as the creative non-fiction course. Here we are able to draw on the expertise of top local practitioners such as Justin Fox, Antony Albekker and Andre Wiesner.

As I was writing this article, Martha Evans, who has taken over the main responsibility for teaching print journalism, was purring with pleasure at the excellent honours projects her narrative literary journalism students had produced. The problem she and the budding journalists face is that there seem to be very few outlets for serious, longer pieces of 'deep' or investigative journalism.

And yet, surely, like the character in the Philip Larkin poem *Church Going* who "will

forever be surprising / A hunger in himself to be more serious", South Africans need more than Pistorius and sport and celebrity gossip and righteous anger about Nkandla. Why did the very well paid and trained managers and HR people get Marikana and mining strikes so catastrophically wrong? What did AIDS do to the psyche of a generation? Why are there so many more women than men in tertiary education? Where and why did the ANC lose the plot? Why did the DA think it could get 30% of the vote? Who are the brains in the EFF? How does it feel to be a *tendpreneur*? Why is our schooling not yielding a decent return on investment? Yes, these are worthy academic topics, but good journalists with time and resources could start opening the country to important conversations with itself.

Perhaps we need a university-based online magazine that would try to be the local *Atlantic* or *New Yorker* or *New Republic* and strengthen other local initiatives like *The Daily Maverick* and *mamapoer.co.za*. As newspapers like the *Cape Times* slip desperately towards tabloidism, with bigger and more sensational headlines and front page pictures (yesterday, half the front page a picture of a mugger staring into the GoPro camera of the cyclist he has attacked), it seems clear that much of the mainstream English press has failed and that the takeover of the Independent Group will not be the salvation of local journalism. They will parasitise any smart journalism from elsewhere but they aren't going to produce or pay for it.



Ian Glenn is professor of Media Studies at UCT. He retires at the end of 2014 to pursue a hoped for new career as upmarket lifestyle journalist, birdwatcher and agoniser in chief for the Proteas.

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THE MEDIA AND ELECTIONS IN AFRICA

A troubled relationship

The relationship between the media and politics has long been debated, theorised and criticised. No more so than during elections, when the role of the media becomes that more important to citizens, politicians and society in general. In this article the authors explore some of the debates presented at the recent Media and Elections in Africa Conference held at the Africa Media Centre at the University of Westminster. The conference was hosted in partnership with Moi University in Kenya, and in association with the UK-Africa Media and Democracy Research Network.

By Sarah-Jane Bradfield and Vivien Marsh

AFRICANTRENDS

Democratic principles and policies have only recently begun to emerge in many African states, believes Kwame Karikari, founder and former executive director of the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) and professor in the School of Communication Studies at the University of Ghana. In his presentation “Media and elections in Africa: the story so far”, Karikari unpacked key trends and observations relating to the state of democracy in Africa and the complex and contested role of the news media in this regard.

Challenging the credibility of elections

In 2014 alone 19 African states will hold presidential, parliamentary, provincial and local elections and yet a complex interplay of legitimacy and trust issues are challenging the legitimacy and relevance of democratic elections in Africa. Multi-party political systems and media pluralism have shared the same fate in many African states, Karikari explained, in that they generally suffer a degree of repression after civilian governments are supplanted by military dictatorships. Examples include Côte d'Ivoire's first president Felix Houphouët-Boigny, former Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah and Kenya's first president Jomo Kenyatta who all took similar measures to dispense with media pluralism under an effective dictatorship. As such, the practice of free journalism and multi-party political conditions are only now beginning to flourish in certain states, and any assessment of the media and elections in Africa must consider this, he said.

In considering the role of the media in African elections, Karikari believes the interaction between media and elections is centred on the relationship between politics and the media. If elections comprise a formally endorsed set of (democratic) principles intentionally adopted by governments, in the case of the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance and the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance adopted by the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) in 2001, then there must be voluntary consensus among African governments as to the legitimacy of the election process. Yet challenges to the credibility of elections and performance of the media are becoming increasingly commonplace and much of this has to do with the history of liberation and the semi-autocratic regimes which followed.

Describing a group of post-liberation political parties which assumed office after liberation as reincarnations of former nationalist or previously banned parties, Karikari said several new parties also entered the fray but the wave of parties did not seem to represent the wide variety of views and orientations of the time. The collapse of the Soviet system in 1991 and the communist model of China repudiated those models as attractive, accompanied by a decline in radicalism as previously Marxist or socialist parties became 'new liberal', precipitating the emergence of Western liberalism. This new model emphasised constitutionalism and democracy as key conditions for applications for financial aid to struggling African states. Allegedly even ballot boxes during Ghana's

presidential election in 1992 were provided by foreign aid. The effects of these trends added to the clamour for establishing democratic governments, while human rights and corruption-related issues prevailed.

The dawn of the 1990s marked a dramatic change in the media landscape with a boom in media activity and a proliferation of newspapers, radio and television stations. There are exceptions, however, and these include Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa's media which had managed to subsist through the decades despite pressure from the state. However, for the majority of African states the 1990s saw a wave of media activity. Côte d'Ivoire saw an increase from four (state-owned) newspapers to more than 170, and within a few months of liberation in Gabon 200 newspapers were registered. As such, for many countries this was their first introduction to mass journalism and even the first generation of the culture of media and journalism. These events have had significant impact on elections themselves, as political forces have more scope in reaching wider sections of the electorate and voters have increased access to campaign messages and spaces for interaction with political officials. Given that the free media environment is young in Africa, albeit a contested realm, it is still largely in the process of growth and development.

Ownership plays an important role in shaping the media environment, Karikari believes, and the media suffers from the wide-ranging financial challenges faced by many African countries. State-owned media still represent the majority of organisations and only a small group of states have successfully transformed state broadcasters to public service broadcasting organisations, suggesting the reluctance of many governments to relinquish their control of the media. The political elite also still have a dominant influence over many media houses as they are increasingly becoming involved in media ownership. While state-owned media is controlled by government, the commercial sector is owned by a combination of operators, politicians and community broadcasters. Most privately owned media houses do not have the resources to cover nationwide election campaigns and are forced to rely on the goodwill of political parties. In the absence of any substantial data on the relations between voters and the media during elections in Africa, Karikari believes the changes in ownership are having important effects on the industry and will be a factor in future discussions about the media and elections in Africa.

Election coverage and the challenges faced by journalists

Beyond ownership, journalists themselves face many challenges in reporting during election periods in many African countries. African media specialist Marie-Soleil Frère of the Université Libre de Bruxelles in Belgium, author of *Elections and the Media in post-conflict Africa: Votes and Voices for Peace?*, argues that a failure to meaningfully analyse the socio-political environment has perpetuated simplistic, short-sighted projects which retain a short-term focus. Most of the

The political elite also still have a dominant influence over many media houses as they are increasingly becoming involved in media ownership.



original challenges remain. Violence against journalists, impunity and limited access to information are at the forefront of the challenges faced by the majority of media organisations in the selected African countries today. Frère suggests that while there have been success stories, such as in the case of Senegal's 2000 presidential elections and the joint coverage of Chad and the CAR's 2001 and 2005 elections, the majority of media support programmes have built on the myth of the media as a benevolent authority to little effect.

In her presentation entitled "Media and elections: continuing challenges and prospects", Frère shared her analysis of local media performance in six central African countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Chad, the Republic of Congo and Central African Republic which share similar political processes having adopted political pluralism in the 1990s, followed by civil war and post-conflict elections after peace agreements. The countries share similarities in their media landscape as well with the sectors undergoing liberalisation in the 1990s, at least four having cases of hate radio after the wars followed by major programmes of media support implemented by international non-governmental organisations and donors. Tasked with the role of ensuring the elections were free and fair, the local media faced an array of challenges ultimately hampering attempts at fulfilling their mandates.

Poor salaries for journalists who are seldom able to leave the newsroom and a heavy reliance on foreign aid have crippled the majority of media organisations which remain weak and fragile. Precarious links between media organisations and political parties perpetuate the fragility of the profession in the selected countries, with politically-supported media now openly emerging in the DRC and Burundi as a result. Little progress has been made on the extension of media coverage in many

of these countries as most media outlets are only able to broadcast in a 50- to 100-kilometre radius, perpetuating unequal access. Increasing accounts of press freedom violations, with escalating incidents of violence against journalists are being reported alongside a trend of growing self-censorship. During the DRC's post-conflict election 125 attacks on the press were reported with this number escalating to 160 in 2011 and 175 in 2012. Heightened levels of bias are further compromising efforts and in most cases media regulatory authorities are believed to have been more biased during their respective country's second election than during their first. Limited access to information underpins the aforementioned dynamics, as most journalists had adopted postwar modes of communication, premised on the belief that most information was classified as a state secret. Following times of conflict public institutions were not familiar with sharing information and a highly propagandist communications sector has prohibited meaningful progress on legal frameworks, which remain inept. Information communication technologies (ICTs) have greatly improved the flow of information and helped journalists' daily work. In Burundi, media "synergies" have developed which involve journalists pooling their coverage to reach different areas, and all radios broadcast the same news bulletin at the same time. However, widespread confusion between information and communication and funding of journalists by political parties to report on their campaign promises contributes to a lack of quality journalism.

It is noteworthy that while the six countries analysed in her book share certain similarities, many countries involve a great diversity of tradition, culture and media and perhaps it would be helpful to move away from the conception of African media toward an understanding of media in Africa, she said.



Sarah-Jane Bradfield is a freelance researcher, writer and editor with an interest in conflict (sensitive) journalism in Africa and the potential for healing through communication.



Vivien Marsh is an MPhil/ PhD candidate at the University of Westminster. Before returning to academia, Vivien worked for more than two decades as a BBC news journalist, mostly with World Service radio.

MOBILE MEDIA

as a space for political deliberation in Sub-Saharan Africa

Although Africa may have the lowest infrastructural investment in the world, it is clear that the last two decades have been marked by an explosive growth of mobile telephony, connecting communities that were once perceived as inaccessible to the supposed information economy. The rapid increase has also seen the development of mobile-broadband networks to facilitate high-speed connections and to allow for the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting services as initially proposed by the International Telecommunication Union.

By Philip Onguny

AFRICANTRENDS

While it is true that the development of mobile technologies has also taken Africa by storm, the experience has been quite different. In Kenya, Safaricom's M-Pesa¹ has grown to become a leading real-time e-banking platform allowing users to deposit, withdraw, transfer, purchase airtime, and access micro-loans using their mobile phones. Indeed, it is estimated that 43% of Kenya's current GDP flows through M-Pesa. In addition to cutting down transaction costs and extending banking services to all, through M-Pesa services, Safaricom has developed various features allowing for the sharing of pre-paid airtime between mobile subscribers.

Through the Please Call Me feature, South Africa's Vodacom also provides its subscribers with a platform to send up to 10 free text messages daily, to request a callback from users within South African networks². The feature has provided subscribers with the means to keep in touch with family members or relatives without costs, particularly in emergency situations, and significantly reduced the number of prematurely disconnected calls or flashing³.

In this article, I discuss the feasibility of mobile media as a tool to increase civic participation in the context of deliberative democracy. The article will focus on how Ushahidi, a mobile-based digital platform, can be best integrated into civic and journalistic practices to strengthen democratic principles in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although there is a widespread interest in the study of mobile appropriation in Africa, most of this focuses on socio-economic realities discussed above. There is little literature on the potentials of mobile media as a tool to address the challenges of democracy, yet this is a region often riddled by conflicting perceptions over election credibility, patronage politics, and power legitimacy. This article is a modest contribution to this end. The central overarching question addressed is whether mobile media platforms such as Ushahidi provide subscribers with significant forms of direct democracy or they, instead, create new forms of oppression that continue to "enslave" users in the context of digital democracy.

Ushahidi as a democratising and peace-oriented mobile platform

Ushahidi, a Swahili word for testimony, is a localized mobile media platform using the concept of crowd-sourcing to blend citizen journalism, geopolitical information, and social activism. Created as a website

to map out and enable eyewitness reporting in Kenya following the 2007-08 conflicts, Ushahidi has since become a global mobile platform providing users with various features. It offers a dynamic timeline to help track events as they happen and where they occur; provides multiple data streams to easily collect information via emails, text messages, Youtube videos, and twitter; and facilitates an interactive mapping feature to visualise activities on a map. Ushahidi is also a free and open-source platform for all its users, facilitating virtual group formation and collaborative content generation⁴.

One can argue that the fundamental idea behind Ushahidi is not opposition; rather, a demand for open-source governance, as it strives to extend the idea of public sphere to all members of a population in order to stimulate rational dialogue on democratic activities. In this regard, Ushahidi can be considered as a space for political deliberation in Sub-Saharan Africa, marred by conflicting perceptions over freedom of speech, electoral processes, and the pursuit of justice. Several aspects of Ushahidi support its potential use as a discursive political space.

First, by facilitating the creation of common knowledge through collective content generation, Ushahidi somewhat supports consensus decision-making on issues such as power legitimacy and accountability, central aspects of any form of democracy. Thus, journalists can tap into the crowd-sourced database while tracking events as they happen. Ordinary citizens can also contribute directly to the development of this online database, making it difficult for governments to suppress information and smother dissents. As a result, the collective database can serve to document and gauge governments' performance on various issues such as political transparency and accountability.

Second, through its election-monitoring tool called Uchaguzi (Swahili word for election), Ushahidi has the potential to address the complex challenge of good governance in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. The real-time sharing of geo-located information about ongoing elections may translate into the adoption of populist or deliberative public opinion with regard to election results. In this case, "cooked results" may be dismissed and trials may be conducted, where applicable, to hold election offers accountable. The monitoring feature thus casts Ushahidi as a space for deliberative democracy, as it increases the scale of

One can argue that the fundamental idea behind Ushahidi is not opposition; rather, a demand for open-source governance, as it strives to extend the idea of public sphere to all members of a population in order to stimulate rational dialogue on democratic activities.

public participation in overseeing the operation of political systems. Participants take an active role in creating informed, engaged, and reflective public opinions⁵.

Finally, the interactive map provided by Ushahidi can facilitate crisis response by guiding journalists and rescue teams to the most pressing areas, help various actors track cases of human rights abuses and coordinate post-conflict recovery, and assist in the protection of civilians by keeping communities aware of the dangerous zones. With the growing political uncertainty in Sub-Saharan Africa, inter-group conflicts have remained protracted. Establishing humanitarian corridors has thus become a major challenge. The real-time map may, in this case, provide journalists, governments, civil society, NGOs, and other players involved in the conflict, with the means to quickly identify and address the situation before it proliferates.

Challenges of digital democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa

Although it has become commonplace to suggest that mobile media somewhat extends power to the people, the practicability of such tools to create structures for active civic engagement casts scepticism on the idea of digital political deliberation. Connecting communities that are offline remains a very pressing problem. Thus, even though journalists, activists, and the general public can now use mobile media to inspire hope for social change and to draw people to the streets, such technologies have not yet become as prolific a tool in Sub-Saharan Africa as for example the radio.

One of the common problems witnessed is the prevalence of a digital divide, emphasising the disparity in technological access, use, and appropriation between populations. Bridging this gap in a continent most affected by poverty is daunting, despite the fact that several economic indicators position technology as a central aspect of material wealth and knowledge production⁶. With sluggish economic growth, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient knowledge to make good use of already available web-based platforms, it will be difficult for the majority of Africans to acquire proper technological devices and improve their connectivity, all of which are necessary to support any form of digital political engagement.

Given the explosion of citizen journalism in the last two decades and the development of big data, finding viable information for enlightenment can equally be challenging for the vast majority of Africans who have limited access to web-based technologies. In fact, platforms such as Ushahidi have introduced features such as the SwiftRiver to filter large amounts of information in order to increase authenticity and relevance. In other words, mobile media can be a liability on one hand (since it contributes to the stocks of unverified truths about a given occurrence), and an asset on the other hand (given the diversity of opinions generated and shared online). Creating a culture of online content sharing also means consuming the available information with great caution if rational decisions are to be made about democratic processes.



The interactive map provided by Ushahidi can facilitate crisis response by guiding journalists and rescue teams to the most pressing areas, help various actors track cases of human rights abuses and co-ordinate post-conflict recovery, and assist in the protection of civilians by keeping communities aware of the dangerous zones.

Following the concerns over information security and vulnerability of government databases, we have also seen states investing in big data infrastructural surveillance programs to maintain social control. In Sub-Saharan Africa where funds for such initiatives are limited, the fear over the circulation of uncontrolled information has been at the centre of rigid development of ICT policies. Even in well-established democracies such as the US, online surveillance appears to have become an integral part of intelligence collection. The recent cases involving the former systems administrator for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Edward Snowden, and WikiLeaks' Julian Assange illustrate the growing concern over information security.

For reasons relative to these cases, authoritarian regimes such as the Iranian government have gone to the extent of implanting "fake activists" on popular networks such as Facebook and Twitter to identify and disband opposition networks by slamming their masterminds with hefty fines, including prosecutions⁷. For African journalists and media professionals, navigating through such traps would be the main challenge to reporting on governments' malpractices. For many years, freedom of speech, public security, and the breach of public privacy have been key areas of contention between governments, civilians, journalists, and activists. This may explain why Africa's political elites prefer funnelling political information to the public through television and radio because they have the ability to control the airwaves. Thus, if digital technologies such as Ushahidi are to have any significant impact on the direction that deliberative democracy would take in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is imperative to convince this powerful elite group that such technologies would not clip their wings. This would discourage them from crafting policies that may eventually limit how civil society uses mobile media.

Reinforcing digital democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa

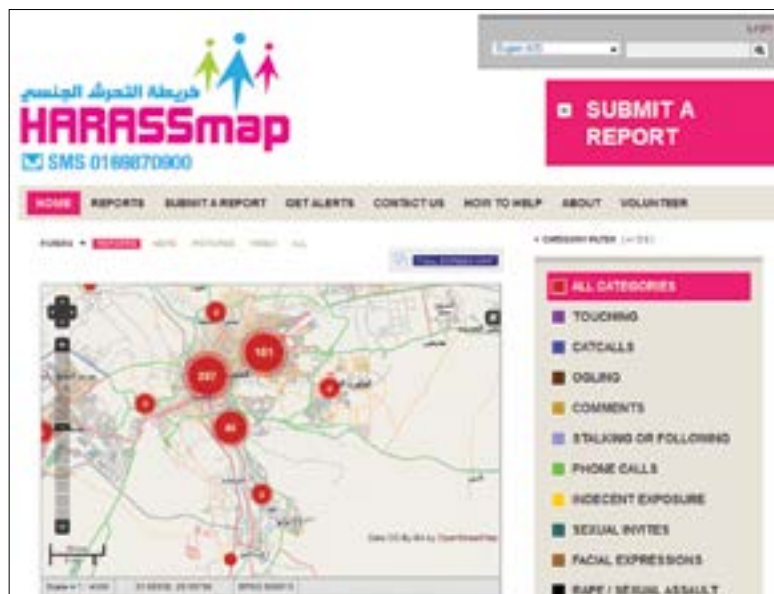
Despite the flourishing growth of mobile technologies in Africa, the vast majority of people do not have internet access. This limits mobile subscribers from maximising the potentials of such web-based technologies. The key question is how to create the conditions that facilitate technological expansion in Africa, specifically for mobile media. Three broad policy recommendations can be drawn from the foregoing discussions.

First, by creating conditions for internet accessibility and affordability, the majority of mobile phone subscribers would be able to enjoy the potentials that these technologies have to offer. This would extend the public sphere, a key aspect of rational discussion, to the ordinary people who, until now, seem to rely on radio broadcast for political information. This can be achieved by working with both technological and manufacturing companies to make sure they produce devices that are not only affordable, but also able to support interactive digital platforms. Cost and quality would, in this case, serve as control variables used to measure the value and impact of policy in this direction.

Second, related to the first, involves technological infrastructure. Setting basic standards for internet operation and supporting them with relevant policy tools would facilitate the development of broadband spectrum that enable mobile subscribers to create and share different forms of content efficiently. This is because mobile media necessitates reliable internet connections. In terms of policy, negotiating the use and license over television white spaces and radio spectrum would be an area to explore. This would allow mobile media operators to tap into the frequencies that have already been allocated but remain unused.

Third, embracing localized platforms such as Ushahidi may be a step forward in ensuring that the appropriation of technology is aligned with Africa's contextual and socio-cultural realities, one of which is the challenge of good governance. While mainstream platforms such as Youtube, Facebook, and Twitter have been used as virtual spaces to generate democratic discussions, they were not created as democratizing tools. This is not the case of mobile media platforms such as Ushahidi and Egypt's HarassMap, whose primary objective is to reinforce transparency and accountability in transitional democracies.

Lastly, it is imperative that such digital technologies attract the right people to enable the generation of content that is aligned with the platform's democratic objectives. A balance is needed between open-data and open-innovation platforms so they do not "overshadow the importance of the accuracy, completeness, and



relevance of what they communicate"⁸. This would allow such technologies to become more reliable.

While there is a steady growth of digital technologies in Sub-Saharan Africa allowing civilians and journalists to gather and share information through these sources, it is not exaggerated to say that users already connected, or rich in information resources are the ones that are likely to explore the potentials of mobile media as a space for political deliberation. Wiring peripheral and/or poorer groups that have not fully embraced the basics of web-based technologies remain the key impediment to the widespread use of interactive mobile media in the context of digital democracy. Unlike radio, these technologies have not

become standard tools.

Thus, it is necessary to create conditions that facilitate the prevalence of mobile media. This may increase connectivity for ordinary citizens and shift dialogic spaces that are characteristic of civic political engagement. Overall, Africa's best hope of strengthening democratic culture through technology partially hinges on the appropriation of localised platforms such as Ushahidi. This is because such platforms were specifically created to address the challenges of local circumstances such as the abuse of political power. Therefore, there is need for increased awareness and adaptation processes to aggregate, support, and harness both the growth and resilience of such localised platforms.

Endnotes

1. M-Pesa is a short form for mobile money in Swahili.
2. See <http://www.vodacom.co.za/personal/services/stayintouch/pleasecallme>
3. "Flashing" has become a common term in East and South Africa describing prematurely disconnected calls. Often, those who "flash" do not have enough airtime to place a call, hence the premature disconnection to signal a missed call.
4. For more information on Ushahidi products and services see <http://Ushahidi.com/>.
5. For more information regarding deliberative public opinions, see Fishkin, JS, Luskin, RC, and Jowell, R. 2000. Deliberative polling and public consultation. *Parliamentary Affairs* 53(4): 657-666.
6. See Fuchs, C and Horak, E. 2008. Africa and the digital divide. *Telematics and Informatics* 25: 99-116.
7. See Howard, P. 2011. *The digital origins of dictatorship and democracy: information technology and political Islam*. UK: Oxford University Press.
8. See Yonazi, E et al. 2012. *The transformational use of information and communication technologies in Africa*. eTransform Africa.

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Exploring Grocott's Mail's DIGITAL FUTURE

By Kayla Roux

This year, one of the biggest changes in the history of South Africa's oldest independent newspaper took place: *Grocott's Mail* packed up its 144-year-old editorial outfit and moved into the Rhodes University School of Journalism and Media Studies building.

Grocott's Mail is a weekly English-language community newspaper based in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape that has been under the ownership of Rhodes University for the past decade. The newspaper has been printing for more than 140 years, making it the oldest independent newspaper in South Africa.

The newspaper ran into financial difficulties in the 1990s, and it was bought by Rhodes University in 2003 to set up the David Rabkin Project for Experiential Journalism (DRPEJ) training. Now, the newspaper serves as an experiential learning platform for students to receive hands-on experience in a real live newsroom, working in rotation with a small permanent editorial body of production staff and reporters.

But to provide students with the kind of training they will need in the media landscape of the near future, *Grocott's Mail* is also faced with the challenge of incorporating new media and digital journalism and publishing into its daily news practices. Many of its audiences are moving online and its advertising revenues are declining, but above all, the DRPEJ teaching mandate necessitates a programme that will adequately prepare journalism students for work in digital newsrooms. Despite the small size of the newspaper staff and circulation and the number of people in Grahamstown without regular access to the internet, *Grocott's* needs to make strides into the digital era if it is to serve as an effective and useful experiential learning platform.

This is the unique and challenging position *Grocott's Mail* finds itself in today. Its dual mandate of serving the Grahamstown community and fulfilling its role as an experiential learning platform presents a number of challenges – all of this while trying to move successfully into the digital era.

A difficult courtship

Finding a way to incorporate experiential, real-world learning into the journalism curriculum at the School has proven a complicated process, with academic and editorial staff struggling to bring the demands of their respective projects in line with each other.

While the experiential learning process requires time, patient training, collaboration and communication, the demands of putting out a

weekly newspaper do not always allow for this kind of engagement – although it is ideal. In 2010, lecturer Anthea Garman described the first steps the school made towards incorporating the newsroom into their curriculum:

“In 2004 Rhodes teachers put their first batch of students into the *Grocott's* newsroom for ‘experiential journalism’ and discovered just how complicated an exercise it was to take over a newspaper with its ‘centuries’ of tradition and marry that to the educational desire to provide an excellent and nurturing space for apprentice journalists.” (Garman, 2010: 1)

Ex-editor Jonathan Ancer echoed her description of the problems of introducing students to the newsroom, pointing to the lack of continuity and follow-through in an interview I had with him last year: “We had two or three permanent reporters but we also had groups of students floating in and out the newsroom. We spent a lot of time introducing the students to the paper, explaining the vision and mission – and as soon as they ‘got it’ they would leave and the next crop of students would be coming in and we’d have to start the process all over again.”

The students who moved through the newsroom had varying degrees of engagement with digital technology and convergent practices on an individual basis. While some approached me to work with them on multimedia projects like audio slideshows or online videos and made an effort to promote their stories on social media platforms, others chose not to. Ex-editor Steven Lang gave the experiential learning process that took place up to 2013 a mixed review: while it was stimulating to have fresh, enthusiastic students moving through the newsroom and many produced fantastic stories and pictures, individual initiative still ruled engagement and those who did not want to work did very little.

Toward a digital future

Audiences – including those in Grahamstown – have evolved along with the technologies they use. They demand more from their media: they want it to be exciting, immediate, interactive and – most of all – free. They want it tailored to their interests, and they want it from the comfort of their own homes. It’s a fact that newspapers have felt acutely, many (if not all of them) struggling to come up with viable business models as advertising often lags behind in the digital migration – or finds its own way. Social media and free, easily programmable internet domains have allowed businesses to market themselves and do business at little or no cost.

While *Grocott's Mail* has been slow on the digital

Audiences – including those in Grahamstown – have evolved along with the technologies they use. They demand more from their media: they want it to be exciting, immediate, interactive, and most of all – free.

uptake, a number of changes have indeed been implemented, and revisiting them can show us just how far the paper has come – and how far it still needs to go.

Moving the newspaper's editorial activities to the School of Journalism and Media Studies opens up the opportunity for much-needed institutional change in two ways: firstly, in terms of the practical experience students gain by putting together real media products and interacting with real audiences, and secondly, a move towards a more integrated new media education. The former is quite straight forward, and had already taken place for a number of years to some degree with small groups of students spending a term or semester working in the newsroom at 40 High Street. Now, students and academic staff from different specialisations or mediums (such as television, photojournalism, radio and new media) are working towards teaching and learning using *Grocott's Mail* as an experiential platform that is integrated into their curriculums – and their building.

But training multi-skilled, multi-platform journalists – while pedagogically assessing and engaging with their outputs – will require changes in *Grocott's Mail's* current newsroom structure, editorial practices and digital publishing processes.

The print editing process has clearly been streamlined since lecturer Brian Garman took the newsroom's temperature in 2006, when a file explorer-based Windows folder system ruled a chaotic newsroom workflow. Wrong versions of stories were often picked up or edited twice because all the revisions were kept in the same undifferentiated folders. A new content management system called Nika was implemented in 2007, which orders stories in what has turned into a comprehensive story database for the Makana region dating back seven years. Nika allows writers, editors, and designers access to stories at different times, and it lets journalists attach pictures with captions to their stories. At the end of the line, it pushes content through to a moderation queue for publication on the internet. Compiled pages are now saved onto the server, creating an easily accessible digital archive (Garman 2006: 102). Some of the problems Garman identified in the print and digital processes are still proving challenging today, while others have been tackled with great success.

As Lang explained, "Nika was robust and reasonably quick. But then, the developers stopped working on the program [due to a lack of funding] and it became impossible to change anything anymore. On the downside, it is clumsy with photographs: you can't search for pictures, [format text], and it doesn't accommodate videos or sound. It's just clunky: not very elegant and sophisticated at all."

Many of the organisational problems Garman identified in the print process are echoed in the relatively young digital publishing work flow and have yet to be smoothed over. In 2006, the *Grocott's Mail Online* website was not even functional. It contained a number of broken links, and there was no agreed policy on its use – let alone social media platforms. Today, the website has undergone two complete

Web publishing forms a small part of the daily diary meeting, and reporters are required to produce web-first and web-only content for specific kinds of news like breaking stories or content that will have passed its sell-by date by publication day.

overhauls. The current website has many more interactive aspects and far fewer broken links. The newspaper even "used the latest [device-responsive] technology so the site adapts to whatever device you're reading on. Perfect for desktop. Fantastic for tablet. And brilliant for cellphone" (*Grocott's Mail*, 2013: 1b).

When the newspaper started publishing only once a week instead of bi-weekly, *Grocott's Mail* staff used the opportunity to start using its website more proactively in keeping its audiences informed about breaking news and cross-promoting digital and print content. Shifting attention online has proved to be even more beneficial than this: social media interactions keep the audience engaged and these very people often inform the newspaper about stories and add value to the reporting with eyewitness accounts, tip-offs, pictures and stories.

Now, web publishing forms a small part of the daily diary meeting, and reporters are required to produce web-first and web-only content for specific kinds of news like breaking stories or content that will have passed its sell-by date by publication day. Although this symbolises an important shift in the editorial mindset, the clearest problems hindering convergence in the *Grocott's Mail* newsroom is the lack of dedicated, web-oriented staff working on the organisation's digital operations, and a lack of engagement on the part of the tiny, already over-stretched staff body.

This means the newspaper has not been able to explore the digital configurations available to it in terms of different newsrooms, different content, different platforms and different audiences.

In order to tackle this seemingly gargantuan task, a critical reflection on *Grocott's Mail's* short digital history, its current practices and what needs to be done to survive and thrive as an education media organisation is needed. What is needed is the development of a multi-skilled, dynamic editorial group with the interests of all platforms in mind, who are responsible for providing the same information and multimedia content in different forms to different channels.

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Paul Weinberg

20 YEARS OF INTERNET **IN ZAMBIA**

How has journalism been impacted?

2014 is an important year for Zambia. This year the relatively small Southern African country joins the list of countries on the continent that have marked 50 years of independence. On 24 October the colours of the Zambian flag will fly high as the country not only celebrates, but also reflects on its successes and failures in the past half century.

By Elastus Mambwe

As part of its achievements, Zambia has often been hailed as having successfully transitioned into multiparty politics and liberalism without bloodshed, and having effected various policy shifts that have helped the country develop to what it is today. Two of the areas that have undergone this change are the media and the telecommunications sectors.

The relationship between the two sectors cannot be ignored. Increased investment, development and application of new communication networks and services in Zambia, as is the case in other African countries over the past 25 years, have led to a rise in the uptake of technological platforms provided by these networks in areas such as education, health, banking and very soon, government. For the media, operations are increasingly becoming dependent on the availability of these technologies, of which the internet is perhaps of primary significance.

The development of the internet in Zambia

While 2014 is Zambia's 50th jubilee, this year also marks 20 years of access to the internet for the country. Full access to the internet began in November 1994, making Zambia the fifth in Africa to do so, and only the second in sub-Saharan Africa, behind South Africa. This feat followed three years of development of an electronic mail network whose purpose was to serve non-commercial interests at the University of Zambia (UNZA) for the country (Robinson 1996: 191).

Robinson (1996) records that UNZA was provided a link to the internet via thrice-daily, computer-to-computer telephone calls, an arrangement that went on from 1991 to 1994 when full access was achieved (ibid. 194) under a special agreement with Rhodes University in South Africa. In 1993, a proposal was made to various international funding institutions to enable UNZA have direct link to the internet. The university set up a private company, Zamnet Communication Systems Limited, to spearhead this goal for connection and service provision early in 1994. That year, the ZAMNET project obtained 80% funding from the World Bank.

With Zamnet fully established and operational, the company set out to achieve its aim of distributing internet services to users throughout Zambia. It had two main objectives at the time; the first was to construct the hardware and technical support essential for the provision of a reliable full Internet service, and the second was to create a market for the internet service as well as engage necessary administrative staff and procedures, in order to make the company wholly self-sustaining a year after operation, and after the World Bank's seed money had been exhausted (ibid. 196 – 197).

With Zamnet as the first internet service provider

(ISP), Zambia was able to successfully connect to the internet in November 1994, marking the dawn of the internet age in Zambia. Today there are about 23 ISPs offering connection via Optic Fibre, VSAT, ADSL, Wi-fi Broadband, as well as mobile 3G, and 4G, and other technologies (ZICTA 2009).

The sector is today aligned within the framework of the National Information Communications Technology (ICT) Policy of 2006 that seeks to harmonise the contribution of ICTs to national development through creation of an innovative market and responsive competitive ICT sector (GRZ 2002: 1). Additionally, the Information and Communication Technologies Act of 2009 provides for the regulation of the entire ICT sector. The presence of these regulatory facilities has significantly helped increase the internet penetration, even though it is still low. Internet subscriptions have increased from 8 248 in 2001 to 92 642 at the end of 2012, (ZICTA 2009). Today, there are about 2.6 million internet subscribers, out of a population of 14 million, and 98% of these use mobile devices.¹

Internet and the media in Zambia

The internet is a technology that has brought about a lot of change in everyday life. Everyday processes in the work cycle have changed. For journalists, the use of the internet in their work is seen to have numerous benefits relating to news gathering, production and dissemination. Changes in practices are the most prominent. Journalists have had to adapt to this new digital age where there are many more tools available for them to get or tell a story, more interactivity with audiences and the almost non-existent restrictions on time and space.

Several writers have come to generally agree that ICTs such as the internet are supposed to be able to increase the efficacy of media practice (Heinonen 1999). This best describes the use of the internet by journalists in Zambia, where evidence suggests that in its 20 year history in the country, the internet has had a positive impact on the practice of journalism.

In a study on the use of ICTs, particularly the internet and cell phones, in a selected number of newsrooms in nine Southern African countries, the results from Zambia showed that journalists in general use and understand the importance of the internet in their day-to-day work (Mukendi 2005: 55).

The same study also showed that there are some hindrances that journalists encountered in their use of ICTs. For instance, limited access to internet facilities and resistance by their managers to adapt to new technologies were listed as some of the constraints. The study concluded that there was need to generally improve the use of ICT tools such as the internet in newsrooms, and

For journalists, the use of the internet in their work is seen to have numerous benefits relating to news gathering, production and dissemination. Changes in practices are the most prominent.

that the lack of ICT policies in newsrooms was a big challenge that needed to be addressed.

Additional proof of the impact of the internet on the work of journalists can be derived from a 2012 to 2013 study by this author to investigate the level of use, scope and impact of the internet on journalism. The study not only concluded that the internet has had a positive impact on journalism, but also that it has influenced journalists to engage more with news consumers, a factor that has helped give the media new credibility in the eyes of the public; the media now are seen as a part of the society rather than bystanders or observers in the quest to achieve objectivity (Mambwe 2013).

However, the study also revealed that further favourable impact is affected by factors such as: the high cost of having access to the internet and other communication technologies; and very low levels or no internet infrastructure in some parts of the country. In the study that involved 10 news managers or editors, representing 10 media houses, and 50 journalists, it was further observed that there still exists a serious need for improved internet skills for journalists if the internet's potential benefit is to be fully exploited.

Before the year 2000, very few media houses and journalists had internet connections. Significant changes become noticeable at the dawn of the millennium. By 2004, more journalists had begun using the internet than ever before (Mambwe 2013) and this increase has continued to the present day. As this has happened, certain important trends have arisen that are key to this reflection on the internet and the media. These are:

- a. *Mobile internet*: increased mobile telephony has brought about new ways of accessing the internet. Zambia's three mobile cellular providers are now major ISPs and journalists are benefiting from these facilities that are also relatively cheaper.
- b. *Online media*: these have emerged and are offering alternative voices to the traditional media. They often allow readers to comment, discuss and share content, making them very popular. Examples of online media include: *Lusaka Times*, *The Zambian Watchdog*, *Zambia 24*, *Lusaka Voice*, *Kitwe Times*, *Tumfweko* and *The Zambian*.
- c. *Social media*: social media have emerged as tools that many journalists are using in their work. The various available tools have created an environment of interaction and debate for the journalists and news consumers. Additionally, journalists are also using social media to monitor public debate, contribute as citizens to these debates without the requirement of being objective as would be required in their media houses, and obtain story ideas. Most media houses have developed a strong social presence, especially the private media. Some such as Muvi TV (@AskMuvi) use content from these platforms as part of their programming.
- d. *Citizen journalism*: as a result of the internet, more and more ordinary Zambians are practising citizen journalism particularly on social media platforms. Stories obtained from citizen posts and tip-offs are increasingly finding themselves in the traditional media.
- e. *Zambian blogosphere*: owing to increased connectivity and access, the blogging community has emerged and continues to grow. Journalists now also have personal blogs where they can report beyond what is in their official media outlets.

The future of internet technology and the media

As the internet in Zambia clocks 20 years, it is clear that a lot has been achieved in this period, even though there still remains a lot to be done, especially when one considers that the country was one of the earliest in Africa to have this facility. It is clear that there are



still a number of challenges that need to be addressed if internet penetration and development is to be improved.

Generally, there are a number of other issues that may be points of focus for the country relating to the internet. These include: the urgent need to achieve universal access to ICTs for all, including the differently abled; improving on the country's cyber security infrastructure; and significantly reducing the cost associated with accessing the internet or to investing in the sector. Besides these, there is need to find means of ensuring child online protection and safety, and perhaps more importantly and urgently, is the need to initiate and complete the process of harmonising the policy, regulatory and legal framework that governs the internet sector so as to make it efficient and progressive.

For the media, one of the major concerns going forward will be whether or not internet regulation will affect freedom of the press. There have been statements,

The future of the internet in Zambia is that of potential, not only for the media, but in all aspects of life. However, for this potential to be realised, positive shifts will have to be made by stakeholders responsible for the development of the sector.



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though few, from government officials hinting that the state may want to have more control on the internet due to increased criticism and opposing political activity. The government has raised several concerns over the seemingly reduced adherence to ethical guidelines particularly with the online media, and media outlets such as *The Zambian Watchdog* have had their websites blocked from time to time. This issue is a major point of contention with the media and how it will be dealt with will be interesting to observe.

As a projection, it is expected that several policy decisions will have to be made to deal with some of these areas of interest with the media. Whether these will be progressive or retrogressive, only time will tell. Also, while internet penetration is poised to increase year by year, the use of online media platforms, including social media platforms, will also increase, a move that will see more interaction between journalists, newsmakers, and audiences. This will lead to further revision of the role of the journalist.

The future of the internet in Zambia is that of potential, not only for the media, but in all aspects of life. However, for this potential to be realised, positive shifts will have to be made by stakeholders responsible for the development of the sector. Twenty years have gone by leaving us with the feeling that maybe we could have done better. The approach for the next decade or two should be one that is focused on transforming the nation to meet its goal of becoming an information and knowledge based society. And so as the 50th independence commemorations and national reflections take centre stage this year, the achievements, failures and future of internet technology in Zambia should not be forgotten. After all, it's also the sector's birthday.

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WHY CARE ABOUT SHARING?

Shared phones and shared networks in rural areas



NOSICELO FODI - HOUT BAY: from the series Life under Democracy - Dale Yudelman

By Lorenzo Dalvit

Tomi Ahonen, credited with introducing the concept of mobile as the seventh mass media, notes that the arrival of the mobile phone was a God-send for advertisers, as it is the only mass medium where the audience can be accurately identified¹. Conversely, the pervasiveness of location-aware, multi-sensor, permanently on and constantly connected devices raised privacy concerns about carrying “little brother” in your pocket at all times². One of the distinctive characteristics of mobile phones, setting them apart from all previous media, is the fact that they are personal devices: 60% of married users would not let their spouse access their mobile phone and, not surprisingly, teenagers are even less inclined to let their family members have a look at their device. Things have not always been so. In South Africa, research conducted among university students³ revealed that for many a hand-me-down phone the size of a brick and shared with siblings was their first mobile device.

Phone sharing in various parts of Africa is well documented. Whether because of cultural reasons or financial constraints, sharing extends access far beyond official statistics⁴. As noted by Sey⁵ commercial forms of sharing such as space-to-space phones in Ghana are often cited as an example of small-scale entrepreneurship. However, she further notes that these represent transitory activities, quick to mushroom and quick to disappear in a volatile and fast-evolving mobile market. The key assumption is that, as soon as people can afford their own mobile phone, they ditch the expensive, inconvenient and not-exactly-private experience of making a call from the side of the street. For internet navigation the relatively expensive and insecure mobile internet seems even less suitable for commercial sharing.

Non-commercial mobile phone sharing in Africa has been widely researched and it appears to be more common in rural than in urban areas^{5, 6}. As in most things sharing, family comes first⁴. Involuntary sharing is common and takes the form of phone inspections by jealous partners or protective parents, to the extreme case of husbands acting as gatekeepers for their wives⁶. A mobile phone can be displayed and shared also as a sign of one's status. Particularly for young people from a relatively low socio-economic background, pulling out a new and expensive mobile phone is a sure way to impress friends and potential partners.

Surveys on mobile phone use in two rural areas in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa^{7, 8} suggest an almost universal access to mobile phones – either one's own or someone else's – among young people. The percentage of those who use someone else's phone did not change much over the period of one year, while the frequency of both daily and weekly use increased 12% and 15% respectively. The surveys also suggest a relatively

fast phone turnover, with 20% to 30% of respondents having acquired their current phone within the last year. Although this alone does not tell us much about the capability of the new phones, it is reasonable to assume that more recent phones would have better features.

Most research on mobile phone sharing focuses primarily on traditional communication activities such as making calls and sending or receiving SMS. However, people across the socio-economic spectrum are increasingly engaging in a wide range of other activities. In the two areas mentioned above, approximately 60% of the youth used a mobile phone to take pictures, listen to music or make/watch videos. This percentage increased by 20%-25% over a one-year period⁷. An additional 20% of the respondents lived in a household where at least one member had a multimedia phone⁸. Producing, sharing and consuming photos, music and videos are social activities and often entail passing around one's phone. Multimedia content copied or downloaded on one's phone can be enjoyed by a whole household or circle of friends.

Networked activities such as instant messaging, browsing the web and social networking seem to follow similar trends but, since they require more advanced phones, lag behind in terms of percentage of people doing them. In the two communities under consideration, between 30% and 50% of young people claim to instant message, social network or browse the web on a mobile phone. The mobile internet is very different from the desktop one in terms of cost and privacy concerns⁹, and people in rural areas appear to be more and more savvy regarding both. The monthly average of R160 per household spent on airtime limits sharing as far as networked activities are concerned. As data becomes more affordable, people will share content rather than devices.



MTN Chair of Media and Mobile Communications

An interesting strategy to save on mobile costs is “SIM jockeying”, the sharing of the same phone on different networks by changing the SIM card. Although this phenomenon is noted all over Africa, relatively little research exists¹⁰. In South Africa, where there are more active SIM cards than mobile phone users, the mobile termination rates charged by mobile operators to connect to a different network have recently been the topic of public debate¹¹. The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) implemented regulations intended to increase competition by favouring smaller operators. However, network coverage in rural areas is mainly provided by the two large mobile companies (Vodacom and MTN) who have invested heavily in infrastructure. In one of the two rural areas mentioned above, a single operator accounts for three out of four SIM cards⁸. Yet, even in a condition of quasi-monopoly, one in 10 people uses multiple SIM cards.

SIM jockeying has implications for media and other types of organisations planning to use mobile phones to reach young people in a rural area. Bulk SMS notifications may reach the same person twice. System logs of a website may consider the same mobile user connecting with two different SIM cards as two separate unique visitors. Negotiating reduced connection charges with the main mobile operator may prove difficult, considering that this does not guarantee loyalty to that network. For journalists covering stories in rural areas, having to try a series of different phone numbers to contact a source may add to all the other difficulties already related to the context.

Although it has received comparatively little attention thus far, SIM-jockeying is potentially more disruptive and longer lasting than phone sharing. For the time

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MTN Chair of Media and Mobile Communications

being, there are three points to consider for journalists, advertisers and media practitioners:

1. Things are changing fast. Even in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape young people are getting better and better mobile phones and doing more and more with them. Whether one sees rural communities as a relatively untapped market or an underserved portion of the population, intervention strategies need to plan for a multimedia content sharing future rather than a “please call me on my sister’s phone” past.
2. It takes one phone to connect a household. There is no way of telling how far or how many people content can reach once it is copied or downloaded onto someone’s phone.
3. Unique visitors might not be that unique. Whether contacting a source, sending out SMS notifications or covering a story, the assumption “one man, one phone” is no longer true (if it ever was).

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ROBOJOURNALISM

Journalists may be quaking in their boots just a little more than usual with the phasing in of robojournalism and innovations like QuakeBot, a computer programme that can collect data on an earthquake that's just happened, pull it together into a story and publish it online within seconds.

By Michael Salzwedel

As the world races onwards into an increasingly dizzying cacophony of content, news publishers are having to fight harder than ever for relevancy and their slice of the shrinking revenue pie. They have to churn out more news in less time, dangling content bait in a fishing frenzy for clicks and eyeballs.

Newsrooms are generally pretty dire places to be right now. Staff are being let go, sales and standards are dropping and salaries are under strain. Publishers are looking everywhere for new ways to do more with less. Newsrooms need journalists, but journalists cost money, take lunch breaks (if they're lucky) and mostly take hours to write stories. Computers cost less money, don't need lunch breaks and can write stories in seconds. Yep, computers are now writing and publishing stories, how about that?

So what exactly is robojournalism?

No, it's not the Iron Giant, Gort and Evil Maria wandering around danger zones doing risky interviews, snapping InstaPulitzers and live tweeting. Robojournalism, still very much in its infancy, involves computers compiling data into story templates, based on pre-programmed algorithms, and then publishing them to the web, without requiring any human involvement in the process.

Not too long ago, morning newspapers and evening TV news bulletins were the flagship products of newshouses. Now, to wait is to wither. Immediacy is the name of the game. You've got to be quick as a fox – or a bot. If you're an online news publisher and you've got a robot that can spit out a sensible story quicker than a human can write a headline, you've got a headstart on your competitors.

Probably the most talked-about example of robojournalism is a short piece about an earthquake, which was published by the *LA Times* in March this year, three minutes after the earthquake occurred. Journalist and programmer Ken Schwencke designed an algorithm – QuakeBot – that draws on trusted data sources, such as the US Geological Survey, to gather factual data as soon as it becomes available and insert it into a pre-written

template.

The *LA Times* also uses another algorithm that compiles stories about crime, and other news organisations are experimenting with robojournalism for stats-heavy beats like sport and economics. No-one appears to be experimenting with robojournalism in South Africa just yet – any bets on who will be first?

Companies that provide robo-reports are starting to spring up around the world. In the US, Narrative Science supplies Forbes.com with financial reports. In Germany, Aexea focuses on sport reports, with an additional layer of context beyond the hard numbers. In a basketball game, for example, Aexea's 'news machine' could factor in results and stats from previous games. "It could look at whether the top scorer had disappointed," says prototype designer Frank Feulner.

Yes, but...

While a computer may be able to spit out formulaic fact-laden news faster than any human, the formulas used are restricted to hard data. Perhaps robo-reporters like QuakeBot are, for now, little more than dehumanised interns or assistants, doing the straightforward fact-gathering work for stories that fit neatly into a template. But what about in a few years' time?

Bob Marley would tell you that "everything's gonna be alright", and it would be great to agree with him in this case, but journalists need to acknowledge that while bots can obviously be beneficial to their work, as they get smarter and tell better stories they could also become a threat to the profession, at a time when we really don't need yet another.

For now, there's one big reason that disillusioned journalists shouldn't be looking around for the nearest high-rise building just yet: robots can't think like humans (yet). Journalists and editors are paid to think, to discern, to make decisions about which data to use to produce specific information to tell specific stories and place them in specific contexts. Robots just aren't quite there yet. Artificial intelligence is getting more impressive by the day, but we're still some way from having a robot being able to make intelligent decisions

CAUTION!

ROBOJOURNALIST AT WORK

*This is the article generated by
the LA Times algorithm:*

A shallow magnitude 4.7 earthquake was reported Monday morning five miles from Westwood, California, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The temblor occurred at 6:25 a.m. Pacific time at a depth of 5.0 miles.

According to the USGS, the epicenter was six miles from Beverly Hills, California, seven miles from Universal City, California, seven miles from Santa Monica, California and 348 miles from Sacramento, California. In the past ten days, there have been no earthquakes magnitude 3.0 and greater centered nearby.

This information comes from the USGS Earthquake Notification Service and this post was created by an algorithm written by the author.

While robojournalism already is a form of data journalism, in that it uses data as the building blocks of stories, the next frontier for robojournalism will be robo-visualisations: auto-generated stories that include interactive visual elements that convey the key aspects of a story.

about when, how and why certain pieces of information should be crafted into a story.

Robo-journalists are great for creating simple stories in seconds, but they can't pick an angle, investigate inconsistencies or controversies, provide analysis or a nuanced sense of context, and they have none of the swag of Hunter S Thompson.

Robo-editing

Not only can computers write stories, they can also play the role of an editor by determining content mix and placement. Computers are learning more and more about our news consumption behaviours, patterns and preferences. The Google News homepage and category pages (which aggregate stories from many news websites) are robo-edited according to what Google thinks is most important and/or will be of most interest to you, based on your location and data trail (the same data trail Google uses to select which ads to show you). Unlike most news websites, Google News doesn't have a team of humans behind the scenes deciding which stories to put where.

Google and others are doing an okay job of automatically determining what it is you might be most interested in, but it's still humans who are writing (most of) the stories, and human editors are still better able to use their knowledge of their audiences to determine the relevance of stories and how and where to insert them into the content mix at any point in time.

As members of the journalism profession, we're faced with a few hard-to-answer questions. Are robo-editors threatening human editors more or less than robo-reporters are threatening human reporters? When will these robo-roles start to have a tangible effect on newsroom staffing, and to what extent? Will robojournalism ever match human journalism for quality and relevancy?

Robo-visualisations

A big buzzword being bandied about these days is data journalism. This is the science (and art) of finding, refining and analysing data to find patterns and trends, and then visualising the findings with (often interactive) charts and maps in a way that maximises the meaning of the story for the audience.

While robojournalism already is a form of data journalism, in that it uses data as the building blocks of stories, the next frontier for robojournalism will be robo-visualisations: auto-generated stories that include interactive visual elements that convey the key aspects of a story. It's going to take some impressive work to get robots to the point where they can determine which kind of visualisation is best suited to the data and story at hand, but that's where it's heading, and publishers who get that right will be smiling.

Robo-research

It's not just news that's being pushed out by bots. More and more (completely farcical) robot-produced research papers are being accepted at academic conferences. In 2005, three curious MIT students wrote a programme to spew out nonsense academic papers, and submitted one under their names, which was accepted at a science conference.

Now, the creators have made the programme – SCIGen (<http://pdos.csail.mit.edu/scigen/>) – available as a free download. Within seconds, it will spew out random computer science research papers, including graphics including graphs, figures, and citations. “Our aim here is to maximise amusement, rather than coherence. One useful purpose for such a program is to auto-generate submissions to conferences that you suspect might have very low submission standards,” the creators state on the website.

In February this year, French researcher Cyril Labbé revealed in *Nature* that 16 nonsense papers created by SCIGen had been used by German academic publisher Springer. Similarly worrying is the fact that more than 100 other fake SCIGen papers were published by the US Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers.



FLYERS - HILLBROW, JOHANNESBURG: from the series Life under Democracy - Dale Yudelman

If computer-generated 'research papers' are slipping through as the real deal in academic circles, in which standards are supposed to be high, there's not much prevent dishonest publishers spitting out never-ending slews of cunningly-constructed, computer-generated fake news (as opposed to human-generated satire), all in the name of making a quick advertising buck from the gullible masses they attract.

At the time of writing, very few – if any at all – South African news publishers are publically experimenting with robojournalism. It's hardly a secret that when it comes to technological innovation in news media, we tend to lag behind our more modern counterparts.

There, robo-journalism is only just starting to peek its head out from the future and into the present, so it will likely still be a number of years before it begins to be factored into business models in this corner of the world. Here, it's often a case of "let's see what works elsewhere in the world, and then jump on that bandwagon". For now, the robo-journalism bandwagon

is still being built, but when it starts picking up speed, we may be in for an interesting ride.

In a June 2012 Daily Maverick piece (*Robojournalism: How afraid should we be?*), Hein Marais points out that large volumes of news are already being churned out by "harried, dynamic but befuddled drones", and that "the line separating algorithmic news from the current state of things is fuzzier than we realise." Where does that leave us? Perhaps we are the befuddled ones – more so than we realise.

Journalism has many guises, but its bare essential – telling stories – remains the same. Journalists have gathered facts and told stories since before the first crackle of radio and they will gather facts and tell stories until Google controls our planet (which may not be too far off). Technological innovations like robots will make it easier for us to tell more and better stories, and in less time, but they could leave junior journos out of jobs in the not too distant future.



Michael Salzwedel is a digital media specialist at SABC News, working to implement tighter integration between the public broadcaster's TV, radio and online news platforms. He is a Rhodes alumnus (BJourn – New Media) and was the online editor at Grocott's Mail – South Africa's oldest independent newspaper – from 2009 to 2012.

Nigerian newspapers and survival in the digital age

The history of newspapers in Nigeria dates back to 1859 when an Anglican Priest Rev Henry Townsend established the first newspaper – *Iwe Irohin fun awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba*, translated to mean “Newspaper for the Egba-speaking people and Yorubas” (Sunday, 2008). The newspaper was set up to help in the spreading of the gospel and literacy among local people. It combined cultural, political, social and religious commentaries in an effort to reach its readers. The advent of *Iwe Irohin* was followed by other publications which later were used as a tool by the nationalists to oppose colonial rule.

By Solomon Tommy

The demise of *Iwe Iroyin* later resulted in the emergence of other newspapers like *Anglo-African*, *Lagos Time and Gold Coast Advertiser*, *Lagos Observer*, *The Eagle and Lagos Critic*, *The Mirror*, *The Nigerian Chronicle*, *The Lagos Standard*, *Lagos Weekly Record*, *African Messenger*, *The West African Pilot*, *Nigerian Tribune* among others, which Sunday (2008) describes as the second phase of newspaper development in the country as it represented a break from religious newspapers (or more aptly, newspapers that had religious groups as their proprietors). The era not only resulted in the emergence of secular newspapers in Nigeria but also gave birth to articulate and vibrant nationalist newspapers established by journalists turned politicians, who made judicious use of this institution to fight colonialism. This led to Nigeria's independence in 1960 which has cemented their place in the annals of Nigeria's political history and development since then. Corroborating this, Kukah (1999) states that journalism was the major vehicle through which the anti-colonial struggle in Nigeria was carried out.

Newspapers served as platforms for mobilising the people, spreading nationalist awareness and for opposing the worst manifestations of colonial subjugation. Fred Omu (1978) in Ismail (2011) says the early Nigerian press availed the reader of the most distinguished intellectual forum in Nigeria history, one in which the high standard of debate, discussion, the quality of thought and expression did not fail to fascinate the modern reader.

The current generation of newspapers in Nigeria have their roots in the 1980s and after, with the exception of *Tribune*, which has continued publishing since it was established. Newspapers like *Guardian*, the *Punch*, *Concord*, *Comet* (which is the forebear of the current *The Nation* newspaper), *Vanguard*, *Sun*, *This Day*, and others were established within this period, but they have served to give the Nigerian newspaper industry the complexion it has today.

There is little doubt that the operations of newspapers have undergone a transformation as a result of technology. From Gutenberg's printing press to the automated printing process technology has been at the core of every revolution that has characterised the newspaper industry. Even though there are positions such as those held by Obijiofor and Green (2001) and Okoro and Diri (2013) that the future of newspapers is bright because there are inherent qualities that traditional



newspapers possess which enable them to withstand the internet news revolution, in truth, there are also reasons to worry, especially since the internet is encroaching into newspapers' audiences and their advertising revenue, not to mention the proliferation of news sources on the internet.

Ownership as a concern in Nigeria media environment is well documented. Ukonu (2005) points out the first, and perhaps most pressing concern: ethical practices. He argues that ownership usually influences the news selection and dissemination process, which may dilute objectivity and impair balance, thus rubbishing the sanctity of news. Government-owned media are converted to government stooges, while privately-owned media find that they are forced to pander to the wishes of their proprietors, especially in an environment like Nigeria where political parallelism is the dominant trend in media ownership (Ohaja 2005; Okoye 2002). This is also the same in countries that share similar political traits. For instance, Okech (2008) found that in Kenya, objectivity though practised in some instances, was widely affected by the editorial line. The editorial line was largely pegged to ownership influences in most cases. More so, according to Bagdikian (2004), ownership influence can be associated with three major sources of bias. First, media content reflects the owner's "highly conservative political and economic values". Second, the reliance on advertising makes the media averse to offending other firms. Third, and most relevant to this article, conflicts of interest can bias reporting on the firm's other interests.

Beyond that, it can be argued that professionalism might also suffer on account of ownership influence. Political economy is a key consideration at this point, because as Zubascu (2013) alludes to, the relationship between journalists, owners, politicians (who own or are interested in using these newspapers to promote their political agenda) and advertisers (who use newspapers to promote their economic interest in exchange for funding them through advertising revenue) is one that is blurred and

From Gutenberg's printing press to the automated printing process available in newspapers today, technology has been at the core of every revolution that has characterised the newspaper industry to date.

results in conflict of interests, which as Norris and Odugbemi (2009) recognise, impedes the media's ability to play their roles (especially as watchdog) effectively. Beyond conditions of service, which in Nigeria is appalling in some cases (Uwosomah 2010), journalists are left to handle government high handedness, human rights abuses, physical assaults, death threats, for which they do not enjoy adequate cover from the owners of the organisations they work for. This also affects the objectivity of their major product – news – and could impact on how attractive they would be to prospective advertisers.

Current trends in Nigerian newsrooms

Interviews with eight top and middle management staff from four newspapers (*The Guardian*, *Sun Newspapers*, *Vanguard*, and *Tribune*) were conducted for this

article. These are the trends which emerged from the discussions with the interviewees:

1. The dominant form of newspaper management structure in the newspapers studied is the three-stage management structure involving the owner/publisher, an editor-in-chief, and a general editor (along with business executives on the same level in the hierarchy to manage the business aspect and report to the editor-in-chief).
2. Technological innovations, including online and social media platforms, are both a blessing and a curse to newspaper organisations almost at the same time, both enhancing their functions but impacting negatively on their long-term survival and relevance.
3. The cost of production is the biggest environmental factor that caused concern for newspaper management.
4. There is a dominant perspective that owners wield considerable influence on how the newspapers are run.
5. The primary strategy to tackle the environmental problems faced was to find a way to cut costs, which is the most pressing concern. There are also references to taking advantage of the potentials of online/new media as a solution to the biting problems of dwindling readership.

Recommendations

1. To checkmate the challenge, newspaper organisations should, at all times package good and contemporary editorial, feature articles, and other genres that the online newspapers may not treat in great detail.
2. Newspaper organisations should build relationships with their customers through events sponsorship, marketing promotions, public relations, advertising etc. Relationship building essentially involves delivering the goods and services that customers want and need, getting products (in this case newspapers) to them at the right time, in the right place and at a price they are willing to pay.
3. Newspaper organisations should conduct periodic research to discover the interests of readers, the brand's position in the market and to meet those needs promptly. Successful business planning requires information about potential target markets, the competition, individual customers, and their reaction to products. Periodic research should include the following: business research, operations research, product research, sales and marketing research.
4. Government should provide subsidies, especially for the importation of raw materials and machinery until such a time as local capacity is built to cater to the needs of the Nigerian newspaper industry.
5. Newspapers must endeavour to leverage new media platforms to increase their reach and relevance in a cost-efficient manner.

Newspapers have played a key role in different revolutions since the Renaissance period, and their social relevance is still key in our world today. It is clear that technology is changing how we consume media products, and if television (which was the biggest threat to newspapers before) was not spared from the huge impact of the internet, then it is unlikely that newspapers will escape. But the argument is then made, that focus these days is not on the media form, but on the content. There is therefore the need for those in the newspaper business in Nigeria to still have some hope; but this hope can only be sustained if efforts are made to ensure that the content is revolutionary and will be captivating. It cannot be business as usual for newspapers anymore, and only those owners/managers who know this and adapt accordingly will survive.

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Reporting Kenya's elections from extreme to extreme

The unprecedented eruption of post-election violence following Kenya's 2007/2008 election, in which incumbent Mwai Kibaki of the Party of National Unity was named the winner amid wide-spread allegations of malpractice and vote rigging, threw up serious challenges for Kenyan journalists, the likes of which had not been experienced before in this relatively stable democracy.

By Sarah-Jane Bradfield and Vivien Marsh

Five years later, the country held its fourth democratic election since the introduction of multi-party politics in 1991. Although somewhat more peaceful than 2007/2008, the latest elections had challenges of their own and pressed journalists and media professionals to further question their role in reporting on elections and violence, and to what extent they are justified in being agents of peace.

The disputed and hotly contested 2007 elections were marred by eruptions of violence which saw 1 300 people lose their lives and a further 600 000 displaced, followed by an International Criminal Court indictment of political leaders – and a journalist – for fuelling the violence. Young journalists with little training were reporting on the violence, the nature of which is as yet not fully understood, although it is thought to have taken on an ethnic dimension.

A series of Nairobi Round Table events in co-operation with the Editors' Guild of Kenya and the Kenyan Union of Journalists was organised by Article 19, the International Federation of Journalists, International Media Support and the International News Safety Institute with the support of the World Association of Newspapers and the International Press Institute. The round tables aimed to provide a space for reflection for academics, members of civil society organisations and Kenyan journalists. Many of these were the same journalists who found themselves covering a conflict within their own borders for the first time in their lives with little idea of how to report on conflict and violence. Various recommendations were made based on the challenges identified, including trauma counselling for affected journalists, increased logistical support and safety training, advocacy efforts to sensitise the public on the role of the media, strengthening self-regulatory mechanisms within media organisations, establishment of a corruption monitoring mechanism, training on ethics and balance, and the implementation of widespread conflict-sensitive journalism training programmes.

Reflecting on their experience of being part of broader efforts to empower local media in Kenya in the wake of the violence, Callie Long and Daniel Bruce of Internews, an international non-profit media development organisation aimed at empowering local media worldwide, shared findings from their research into the effects of widespread efforts to train journalists in conflict-sensitive reporting and what effect, if any, this had on journalists' coverage of the country's 2013 general election.

Formed in 1982, Internews has worked in more than 75 countries and has offices in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and North America. Internews ran a rapid response programme in Kenya

Was Kofi Annan's praise for the Kenyan media in their coverage of the 2013 election premature? There was little evidence of the hate speech or inflammatory reporting that characterised the 2007/2008 election coverage but had the media really exercised good judgement and promoted peace, and what had gone wrong in 2007/2008?



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Before returning to academia, Vivien worked for more than two decades as a BBC news journalist, mostly with World Service radio.

following the post-election violence aimed at training the media in conflict-sensitive journalism approaches. These include Mission Possible (2008), Reporting for Peace (2008-2009), Land and Conflict Sensitive Journalism (2010-2013), Free and Fair Media (2011-2013), and Talk Check (2013), during which 750 journalists were trained and more than 5 500 stories on the peace, reconciliation and reform process were published.

During June 2013 for the research of *When words were weapons: how Kenya's media turned the tide on hate speech and conflict from the 2007 election to the 2013 election*¹, Long interviewed more than 30 Kenyan journalists, news editors and media experts to gauge opinion on the media's role in the 2007/2008 crisis and whether perspectives had shifted in the last five years. Her main observation was that the Kenyan media were not merely observing democratic change but were an integral part of it, for better or worse. Given the widespread allegations in 2008 that the media had fuelled existing tensions it was worth exploring what changes, if any, had occurred in the last five years and in the build-up to the country's 2013 election. But was Kofi Annan's praise for the Kenyan media in their coverage of the 2013 election premature? There was little evidence of the hate speech or inflammatory reporting that characterised the 2007/2008 election coverage but had the media really exercised good judgement and promoted peace, and what had gone wrong in 2007/2008?

According to Long, the pendulum has swung from the propagation of hate speech in 2007/2008 to what some critics consider to be another extreme, "peace activism", with the media adopting the role of peacemaker rather than mediator. Whether or not this approach complies with the mandate for the news media during political elections remains contested, as allegations of increasing self-censorship in 2013 accompanied strategic editorial decisions not to report violence in the fear that it would fuel conflict. Such a case includes the unanimous decision by editors not to report the killing of 12 people, including several police officers, in Mombasa County on 3 March 2013. Mombasa Republican Council secessionists were suspected, yet the incident did not make the headlines because of its potential to inflame tensions.

Considering the extent to which self-censorship featured in the 2013 coverage as a result of the 2007/2008 violence, Georgina Page and Angela Muriithi's *The Kenyan election 2013: the role of the factual discussion programme Sema Kenya (Kenya Speaks)* explored the extent to which the national TV and radio programme *Sema Kenya*, part of the BBC's Media Action governance work in Kenya, supported accountability, peace and inclusion during the 2013 election. Drawing on feedback from a panel of 17 media and governance experts, a broad cross-section of *Sema Kenya*'s TV and radio audience and 3 000 adult Kenyans, the research reinforces Long's finding that following the allegations of their compliance in 2007/2008 the Kenyan media swung to the other extreme of self-censorship to avoid instigating violence. In this environment *Sema Kenya* arguably provided a space for public engagement and detailed information, more so than any other media source. According to Page and Muriithi's findings, the programme encouraged government accountability as citizens were provided with a platform for dialogue and debate and encouraged to question their leaders.

Nicholas Benequista, PhD candidate with the London School of Economics and Political Science, shared research findings from his collaboration with networkednews.org which interviewed a group of senior journalists and editors about their views on the 2013 election coverage and the nature of any changes in their approaches since 2007/2008. According to Benequista, these media professionals were predominantly concerned with issues related to raising their standard of reporting rather than outright censorship and were highly critical of their coverage, in line with the gatekeeper and watchdog roles.

Although relatively more peaceful, the reporting of the 2013 election marked the emergence of a new journalistic era in Kenya, different and perhaps more complex than that of 2007/2008.

Endnotes

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Televisão Digital

Actual Debate de Mudança no Cenário Mediático Moçambicano

A presente reflexão sobre a Televisão Digital gira em torno do actual processo de transição da televisão analógica para o digital em. O que antes era transmitido com fraca qualidade sonora e imagénica, sobretudo com interferências, hoje Moçambique debate a questão da mudança do modelo de transmissão da rádio e televisão do analógico para o digital.

Por Celestino Joanguete

In this article Joanguete outlines the challenges currently being faced by the Mocambiquan broadcasting landscape in the change from analogue to digital broadcasting. He also makes recommendations on how to ensure a process which allows for broadcasting which is available to all citizens, can be used as a public space and opens the airwaves for public debate.

AFRICANTRENDS

O artigo, ainda que seja empírico, opta por um caminho de discernimento acerca de desequilíbrios, tensões e contradições em torno da televisão digital. Mais que mapear os contornos do problema, o artigo propõe algumas linhas de soluções para uma transição pacífica para o modelo digital, de modo que até ao fim do processo o cidadão Moçambicano tenham o sinal digital de qualidade.

A abordagem é apresentada em dois tempos:

- O primeiro discute a questão da regulação do mercado e identificar alguns aspectos críticos da mesma que pode afectar o funcionamento da economia do digital.
- O segundo tempo discute a questão de alfabetização mediática, na qual destaca a educação do cidadão no domínio crítico dos conteúdos mediáticos e acesso à informação útil.

A abordagem da digitalização dos media tem origem nas sucessivas conferências organizadas pela União Internacional das Telecomunicações (UIT) observou-se que as tecnologias estavam avançar a passos acelerados e que a rádio e a televisão deviam-se modernizar para acompanhar o desenvolvimento tecnológico. Assim, a UIT tomou-se a decisão, em conjunto com os membros subscritores das declarações finais dos encontros, de migração da radiodifusão televisiva do analógico para o digital até Junho de 2015 (@Verdade, 2011).

A nível da África, em Novembro de 2010, a Comunidade dos Países da África Austral ; SADC, aprovou recomendação para que os seus 14 membros adoptassem o sistema Europeu de transmissão, depois de várias discussões dos modelos ideais e vantajosos.

O Conselho de Ministros de Moçambique, reunido na 44 sessão Ordinária, no dia 7 de Dezembro de 2010, adoptou o padrão tecnológico Europeu designado *Digital Video Broadcast Terrestrial*, DVB-T, e, em seguida criou a Comissão Nacional de Migração Digital, COMID, uma comissão técnica intersectorial para assessorar o governo na elaboração da Estratégia de Migração da radiodifusão Analógica para o Digital. Deste modo inicia o debate público em torno da digitalização.

Regulação do mercado

A rádio e televisão digital implica um trabalho acelerado de elaboração de uma nova regulação adaptada ao novo meio, em função do prazo do *switch-off*. Um regulamento que tenha em conta vários aspectos de funcionamento do mercado digital como: o concurso de atribuição de licença para as companhias operadoras e exploradoras da plataforma de televisão digital, especificações técnicas para o serviço de radiodifusão digital, concorrência, criação de um mercado dinâmico com competição equilibrada, acções de monitoramento e controlo de qualidade do sinal digital, etc.

Tal como apresenta o quadro, a estratégia orienta-se nos aspectos técnicos e relega para a extemporaneidade seis esferas de matérias de conteúdos que devem ser contempladas no processo regulatório: garantia de acesso universal às diversas plataformas; a manutenção da diversidade cultural e do pluralismo mediático; a salvaguarda dos interesses dos cidadãos e proteção de menores e dos interesses dos consumidores.

Face a problemática de transição para digital, a COMID (Comissão de Implementação da Migração da Radiodifusão Analógica para a Digital) criada pelo Conselho de Ministros no dia 7 de Dezembro de 2010, tem por diante enormes desafios de consulta quer aos actores e produtores de conteúdos quer a sociedade como beneficiária final de modo a produzir documentos sustentáveis de aconselhamento ao



Paul Weinberg

governo e de preparação da sociedade para um novo modelo de comunicação.

A estratégia de trabalho da COMID deve aprofundar-se mais nos aspectos políticos, económicos, sociais e culturais da realidade Moçambicana, sobretudo do acesso aos serviços de telecomunicações, da Internet de Banda Larga, dos provedores de serviços da Internet, serviço de televisão por subscrição, dos conteúdos radiofónicos e televisivos, enfim, um estudo exaustivo que não perca de vista a inclusão dos 70% da população moçambicana que vive nas zonas rurais.

Nos outros países que já transitaram para o sistema digital da rádio e televisão, a migração é realizada por etapas como o caso da Índia e Reino Unido, excepto a Holanda que desligou todos os serviços analógicos num único dia. A transição gradual tem a vantagem de permitir a correcção de erros, antes de se avançar para a faz seguinte (Attayde, 2012).

Na Conferência sobre a Convergência dos Media, organizada pelo Ministério dos Transportes e Comunicações em parceria com o Ministério da Ciência e Tecnologia e o Instituto Nacional das Comunicações de Moçambique (INCM e as subsequentes discussões da COMID com a Sociedade Civil) os debates giram em torno da migração da rádio e televisão digital colocando tónica no aspecto técnico.

Assim, percebe-se que a digitalização é algo simples para o qual basta uma escolha no modelo de transmissão e o resto se reduz a mobilização social para aceitação do sistema de comunicação.

A agenda pública de debates e discussões sobre a transição dos media para o sistema digital deve ir além de aspectos técnicos, pois a regulação, o acesso à Banda Larga da Internet pelo cidadão, multiprogramação, concorrência, propriedade intelectual, participação social das comunidades marginalizadas, incentivo à produção de conteúdos nacionais, acesso aos conteúdos culturais e educativos, qualidade de conteúdos, mudanças do perfil profissional e a questão fundamental da reforma do currículo do ensino do jornalismo orientado para as mudanças tecnológicas devem fazer parte dessas discussões públicas (UNESCO, 2002; Belda, 2010).

Se a COMID organizar debates nestes eixos temáticos pode responder à qualidade compatível com o padrão escolhido, dos desafios dos centros de produção de conteúdos, bem como das necessidades de produtos e serviços televisivos requeridos pelo cidadão.

Pretende-se também uma regulação dos media digitais focalizada na alfabetização mediática, pois ela inscreve-se na política de inclusão e participação democrática e mediática, na qual o cidadão assume o papel activo e com acesso à informação, de modo a se informar, estudar e investigar os fenómenos sociais ou organizacionais. Ele deve encontrar a informação necessária para entender um assunto em particular, e ser capazes de ligar factos e desvendar fenómenos empíricos.

Alfabetização Mediática

A alfabetização mediática tem por objectivo conferir competências, conhecimento e compreensão que permitem ao cidadão utilizar os media de forma eficaz e segura. A educação para os media torna as pessoas capazes de fazer escolhas informadas, compreender a natureza dos conteúdos e serviços e tirar partido de toda a gama de oportunidades oferecidas pelas novas tecnologias das comunicações. Estão mais aptas a protegerem-se e a protegerem as suas famílias contra material nocivo ou atentatório.

A política de alfabetização mediática não é da responsabilidade exclusiva do governo. Ela é um acto que envolve outros actores sociais como organizações não governamentais, empresas ligadas à comunicação e tecnologias, universidades, centros de investigação, professores e pesquisadores, cujo objectivo é fortificar o cidadão no consumo e análise crítica dos conteúdos mediáticos.

A alfabetização mediática torna o fenómeno da digitalização da televisão mais esclarecedor e educa o cidadão para que saiba usar as novas tecnologias, pesquisa de informação precisa, no emaranhado de oferta de conteúdos, e que saiba avaliar criticamente o teor das mensagens produzidas pelos novos meios de comunicação. Para isso, é preciso implementar um modelo especial de educação, que, internacionalmente, é designada de literacia mediática.

Uma sociedade com um bom nível de literacia nas questões dos media será simultaneamente um estímulo e uma pré-condição para o pluralismo e a independência dos meios de comunicação social. A expressão de opiniões e ideias diversas, em diferentes línguas nacionais, representando diferentes grupos numa sociedade, contribui para o reforço de valores como a diversidade, a tolerância, a transparência, a equidade e o diálogo.

No que toca às parcerias, é evidente que nenhuma organização consegue alcançar todos os sectores da sociedade. Por isso uma diversidade de parcerias pode ser mais efetiva na condução das necessidades de aprendizagem das pessoas. Neste ponto, os serviços públicos da radiodifusão devem desempenhar o papel fundamental na promoção da literacia mediática.

As parcerias com diversas instituições como universidades, organizações da sociedade civil, autoridades locais, canais de rádio e televisões comunitárias etc. focando nas questões relativas a criação de dispositivo para filtrar e controlar o acesso a conteúdos pela televisão e pela internet, que seja gratuito e fácil de usar; com provedores

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de internet, empresas produtoras de games, canais de rádio e televisão; melhorar o sistema de oferta de informações sobre conteúdos midiáticos, para auxiliar os espectadores na tomada de decisões sobre o que ver, ouvir ou acessar; promover acções educativas focadas no publico, mapear as necessidades de aprendizagem sobre os media em crianças.

Para que a transição seja pacífica, algumas barreiras precisam ser vencidas:

- o público precisa perceber os benefícios da digitalização;
- as habilidades e conhecimentos sobre os media digitais devem ser massificados;
- é preciso garantir que as pessoas tenham capacidade de avaliação crítica;
- é preciso disseminar educação sobre os media;
- é preciso ter garantia de serviços, segurança e privacidade online;
- os serviços devem ser possíveis de serem comprados e mantidos, mesmo por pessoas com baixa renda;
- é preciso promover uso ético da mídia;
- é preciso garantir a inclusão de pessoas com deficiência no acesso à informação.

As infraestruturas de transmissão tal como são projectadas pelo governo revela uma parceria entre Telecomunicações de Moçambique, TDM, uma instituição pública e a Movitel, uma companhia de telefonia móvel de capital privado. Em termos de cobertura, as infraestruturas revelam uma fraa penetração para as regiões rurais de Moçambique, onde aglomera o grosso número da população moçambicana.

Conclusão

A Estratégico de Migração da Radiodifusão Analógica para o Digital em Moçambique apresenta poucas definições e omite medidas fundamentais a serem tomadas para os três vectores essenciais para a migração: o regulatória, o do radiodifusor, e o do consumidor. A actual abordagem de migração evidencia a manutenção do discurso centrado nos aspectos técnicos e na regulação.

A rádio e televisão digital constitui uma esfera central para a economia, a vida democrática, a cultura, o lazer, e a educação. A implementação de tal política deve ser clara quanto aos aspectos necessários para direccionar os media aos propósitos da sociedade que o país pretende construir, e a forma como o sistema regulador irá cumprir com os objectivos e as metas estabelecidas.

A migração para o sistema digital esbarra-se com dificuldades. Vários desafios precisam ser superados, uma vez que a implantação da televisão

digital, o governo ainda não definiu quatro questões fundamentais para o funcionamento do modelo digital:

1. o custo dos aparelhos conversores;
2. a literacia mediática
3. a produção de conteúdos digitais
4. a regulação do mercado digital.

Estes problemas não acontecem pelo atraso de implementação de todos os programas para uma transição pacífica, mas tem a ver com o nível de disseminação de informação, o que se expressa pelo desconhecimento absoluto do funcionamento da televisão digital, mesmo nas pessoas mais instruídas.

Esta é apenas uma das inúmeras vertentes que o assunto pode tomar, uma vez que tanto o debate quanto os problemas provenientes do processo lento de implantação do sistema digital ainda se encontram distantes de uma conclusão, embora o governo já tenha tomado sua decisão e estabelecido o ano de 2015 para o *switch-off*, isto é, o encerramento das transmissões analógicas.

E por fim, deve se acautelar do perigo do monopólio do negócio digital por certos grupos de interesse. Nesta discussão, o relevante não é a existência ou não de concorrentes potencialmente capaz de entrar no mercado, mas é o problema da legalidade e de conflitos de interesse no acesso ao sector da economia que se pretende explorar. Neste caso, é importante analisar se o governo faz jogos de imposição ou de coerção sistemática por vias das suas autoridades reguladoras, tráfico de influência, ministérios, burocracias e decretos que impedem uma concorrência salutar.

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A fotografia de imprensa, em Moçambique, na era digital

Por Jorge Barata

Os fundamentos da imagem fotográfica mudaram como consequência da evolução dos meios informáticos. O processo pelo qual passa a fotografia analógica, com o advento da fotografia digital, entre o final do século XX e o princípio deste século, é o mesmo pela qual as artes pictóricas passaram com o surgimento da fotografia, no século XIX, no qual anulou a intervenção humana expôs as limitações da visão do homem no processo de captação e interpretação da realidade.

A fotografia digital, por sua natureza matemática e propensão ao instantâneo, acompanhada dispositivos para digitalização, programas para manipulação e armazenamento de imagens sempre muito populares e de fácil obtenção, continua expondo as limitações da visão humana com suas imagens hiper-realistas.

Neste processo da era digital, do qual ainda estamos a num processo de reconhecimento, para melhor compreendê-lo, e perante todas as questões levantadas em relação ao estágio atual da fotografia, ela continua a ser uma peça fundamental para a compreensão da notícia na imprensa.

O fotojornalismo, no sentido restrito, segundo, é uma atividade que pode visar informar, contextualizar, oferecer conhecimento, formar, esclarecer ou marcar pontos de vista (“opinar”) através da fotografia de acontecimentos e da cobertura de assuntos de interesse jornalístico. Este interesse pode variar de um para outro órgão de comunicação social e não tem necessariamente a ver com os critérios de noticiabilidade dominantes.

Os fundamentos da fotografia mudaram desde a sua criação. Do surgimento da fotografia à cores até a fotografia digital, eles evoluem acompanhando técnica da mesma. Os fundamentos relacionados à linguagem fotográfica (composição e enquadramento da imagem, velocidade de obturação e luz) ainda são a base técnica da fotografia na era digital. Porque apesar de toda a tecnologia envolvida na produção e operação de câmaras digitais, as técnicas para a obtenção de fotografias de qualidade são aplicáveis em qualquer tipo de câmara fotográfica.

Uma simples fotografia de um acontecimento gera interpretações diferentes. O fotojornalismo alterou essa relação com os factos testemunhados ao introduzir nela a perspectiva humana. É essa perspectiva que liga o autor ao acontecimento, a perspectiva técnica liga o autor a câmara fotográfica que se exprime no enquadramento, no contraste, na escolha do momento perfeito e da ocasião magnífica.

A qualidade editorial dos jornais moçambicanos são o único foco das discussões em seminários e palestras sobre o jornalismo nacional. O fotojornalismo, parte importante do jornalismo impresso, é relegado ao esquecimento. Mesmo sabendo-se que o fotojornalismo é uma linguagem universal que até um analfabeto é capaz de entender a mensagem. Esse distanciamento em relação ao fotojornalismo está alinhado com o pensamento de alguns meios académicos da área de comunicação que consideram que o fotojornalismo não é jornalismo,

Barata argues that photojournalism in Mozambique is in decline since independence, and despite – or perhaps because of – digital photography the scope for creative, and technically excellent photojournalism is getting smaller. He outlines some of the challenges faced by photojournalists in Mozambique today including the commercialisation of the newspaper industry which means photographs are simply used to fill space, the ease with which photographs can be digitally manipulated, and a lack of investment by newspapers on digital photography.

defendendo-se com o principal argumento de que o fotojornalista não produz notícia.

Esse esquecimento acontece num período em que parte do material fotográfico publicado pelos jornais moçambicanos não atende aos padrões técnicos e de qualidade fotojornalísticos mesmo com o uso de câmaras digitais que facilitam a captura e manipulação da imagem sem o esforço técnico necessário da fotografia analógica. Atualmente, identificam-se algumas marcas de ausência de profissionalismo e desleixo generalizado de alguns jornais principalmente os que surgiram, na década de 2000, alavancados pela tecnologia digital.

Olhando o material publicado, denota-se uma fraca habilidade técnica e domínio da linguagem fotográfica no momento da execução, e que sugere que uma parte dos fotojornalistas moçambicanos carecem de conhecimentos técnicos.

Essa falta de domínio técnico percebe-se no material fotográfico publicado onde os objetos estão mal enquadrados e distribuídos, demonstrando um desconhecimento de regras de enquadramento e composição de uma imagem criando uma poluição visual e descaracterizando o seu papel informativo. Essas falhas levam a dispersão do olhar e consequentemente a perda de interesse de entender a fotografia. Às essas falhas se acrescente o mau uso que faz da distribuição da luz na imagem, e uso de câmaras fotográficas amadoras no exercício da profissão.



Paul Weinberg

No material fotográfico publicado, que é comum a intenção do fotojornalista registrar a situação do que propriamente quer usar o material para ilustrar uma notícia, pois, muitas tomadas são feitas sem critério algum. Pela qualidade do material fotográfico publicado e sua disposição nas páginas do jornal, denota-se, também, a falta de uma editoração fotográfica ou desconhecimento, também técnico, de quem exerce essa função, pois, não existem critérios para a publicação de material fotográfico. Devido a esse problema, a fotografia de imprensa passou a ser um apetrecho gráfico para ocupar os espaços vazios, nas páginas dos jornais, em consequência dos textos curtos do que cumprir a sua função informativa.

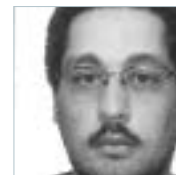
Fazendo uma comparação da qualidade do material fotográfico publicado na imprensa, nos primeiros 15 anos, após a independência de Moçambique com o de hoje, é positivo dizer que apesar do uso da tecnologia digital o fotojornalismo moçambicano, atual, está em franco declínio.

Esse declínio é causado pelo comodismo aparente que fotografia digital trouxe: fácil captação e manipulação de imagens. Com o mínimo esforço pode-se fazer uma fotografia sem se ter conhecimentos técnicos e domínio do aparelho fotográfico, abri-la num computador editá-la. Esse comodismo aparente da

fotografia digital faz com que muitos profissionais de imprensa não busquem o incremento e solidificação do seu nível técnico assim como conhecimento tecnológico do material que usam para tirar um melhor proveito do mesmo. Esse comodismo também é desculpa para muitos jornais não investirem em tecnologia adequada as exigências da profissão, e para a contratação de profissionais de baixo nível técnico.

A fotografia digital, pelas suas características eletrônicas, levou a perda da fotografia como evidência, mas, mesmo assim, nesta era, ela continua a cumprir o seu papel informativo na imprensa sob o rigor de políticas editoriais para evitar a manipulação e proteger a credibilidade do que é publicado.

Os jornais moçambicanos precisam, ainda, de criar políticas para a contratação de profissionais da imagem, incluindo editoração; normas técnicas para a veiculação de material fotográfico. Se esse passo não for dado para enfrentar e se adequar a esta nova era, fica a sentença de que a fotografia de imprensa, em Moçambique, perderá o seu valor informativo.



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FIT NOT FAT

A NEW APPROACH TO OBESITY FOR HEALTH JOURNALISM

Health journalism is a complicated beat. The science is easy to get wrong, and the tone and tenor of the reporting needs careful attention. Coverage of obesity is even more fraught. Early insights from an on-going research project by the Discovery Centre for Health Journalism suggests that not only is most journalism about obesity not helping – some reporting may inadvertently be making the situation worse. This needs to change. There is too much at stake for journalism about food, fat and fitness to be anything less than impactful and effective.

By Harry Dugmore

HEALTH
JOURNALISM

At issue is that more and more people are putting on weight each year, in South Africa and globally, and that the media is deeply implicated in the rise in national average weights.¹ The consequences of obesity at an epidemiological level – across national and global populations – are severe: steep raises in rates of heart diseases, and a new epidemic of diabetes². Cancers influenced by excess weight are rising quickly. South Africans over 50 years of age, according to the *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 'have the highest rates of high blood pressure for any country, at any time in history³ and the rates of strokes are going up.

What obesity is, in medical terms, is of course a controversial issue. As human rights and fat activists correctly point out, we risk pathologising a 'normal' range of human sizes and shapes, as well as running roughshod over cultural mores and differences. Critics suggest journalists are contributing to the ridicule and stigma that people who don't conform to the medical body mass index (BMI) weight range standards are often subjected to.

These are real concerns. At the same time, media audiences are clamouring for information and knowledge, giving local sports scientist Tim Noakes rock star status and sending his high fat, low carbs Banting diet to the top of the South African best seller lists. There is clearly a demand for good journalism and there is clearly, too, a genuine epidemic of danger especially for the very obese (those whose BMIs are over 35). How can this be done with less 'othering' of fat people in every day social spaces, and in the media? How can journalism make a difference?

Is journalism part of the problem?

Drawing initially on articles that appeared in the five top-selling magazines in SA between 2011 and 2013, a key critique emerging out of our research is that journalism on obesity mostly encourages a culture of dieting. Few articles promote weight loss approaches that are not diet-centric.

Why is this important? First, there is good evidence that dieting just doesn't work⁴. Out of every 100 people who actually lose weight from dieting (and disregarding many who do not) a staggering 90 to 95 of those put all the lost weight back on within five years. Indeed most people regain their lost weight after two years.

The consequences of this are not benign. Regaining lost weight and weight fluctuations are strongly correlated with poorer lifetime health. And, worse, most people don't just put on the lost weight: they put on more kilograms than they lost. Human physiology, honed over millions of years of evolution, has powerful mechanisms to reverse weight loss and, fearing future famines, helps us add an extra protective layer almost every time we regain lost weight. Dieting, ironically and tragically, is a major cause of lifetime weight gain.

But much of the local media is locked into stories about rapid weight loss and diet. "Lose 12kgs by Christmas" is always going to attract more attention than a piece of journalism that implies a long, and frankly difficult, lifestyle adjustment. Editors often don't want these kinds of 'downer' stories, and readers are often looking for the most convenient solutions. But these quick fixes are usually no fix at all – for far too many people, dieting is just a cycle of weight



GRILLO'S ROADHOUSE - BENONI: from the series Life under Democracy – Dale Yudelman

loss, weight gain, often coupled with some anxiety and depression, as the weight returns with interest.

Ultimately a focus on dieting in the media may help contribute to ill health. And it is certainly not helping people who want to lose weight in a sustainable way.

It is worth noting that beyond journalism, the media more generally is also deeply implicated in the problems of rising obesity rates. Big food and drink companies like Coke and MacDonald's have some of the largest advertising budgets of any companies in the world. Cigarette ads used to provide newspaper, TV and radio and especially magazines with a big portion of their profits, but the media industry survived their banning in SA and in many countries around the world. But any restriction on fast food or sugary drinks advertising – the reduction of consumption of which would have *as big an impact* on national health as the ban on smoking – would probably send most of the current media into a financial tailspin.

Such bans are not going to happen soon.

So if we can't do much to counter the massive resources that go into promoting unhealthy eating and drinking in the media, can journalists not at least try a

different approach? One that doesn't focus on dieting and quick fixes, and the diet *du jour*?

What would such journalism look like? How can journalists do a better job of 'doing no harm' as the Hippocratic oaths implores medical professionals – and by extension – health journalists, to do?

The solution, our research is suggesting, is for journalists to spend a great deal more time focusing on fitness and far less time focusing on fat. Indeed, this is probably the only ethical way forward for journalists writing about human weight/obesity/health. Doing careful journalism highlighting the frequent new studies about the benefits of *even a little bit of exercise* has the potential to help people lead far healthier lives.

Globally, there is a strong argument that health communicators, health journalists, and public health campaigns should all start moving away from a focus on weight loss, primarily because a focus on fitness is much more likely to lead to sustainable weight loss than our current diet-centric journalism.

For many, this might not seem like such a big shift. But it is. At a basic level it is a question of sequencing and emphasis – focus on getting fit first, and let changes

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Shifting the focus from 'lose weight' to 'get fit' is a prescription for public health systems in general, and should be the core of future public health awareness campaigns.

in nutritional intake follow. But it does more than that. As journalists, we need to start avoiding stories that foreground body image and weight as *the* issue, or even as a key issue. If we do this, and if our journalism inspires action (it often doesn't, but that is another set of problems) there is powerful evidence that as people get fitter, they are more amenable to the idea of modifying their food choices away from sugar and refined foods and towards healthier options.

Fitness is a gateway to more sustainable lifestyle changes that can include some focus on weight loss. We now know that as little as 20 to 30 minutes of additional moderate exercise such as walking, four or five days a week, even if it is accumulated in short bursts, reduces health risks. Getting even fitter – doing 45 minutes to an hour a day of moderate exercise, at any weight and age, will (on average) add years to your life⁵.

The new science on short bursts of exercise being equal to one long stretch has surprised many, but made it possible for people of all sizes to do a bit here and there – and have it all accumulate physiologically. There are dozen of angles for journalists as this science and the science of fitness advances rapidly.

For example, new research shows the best predictor of lowering your risk for heart disease, is how long it takes you to run a mile (1.6km)⁶. Yes, waistline size is also a good indicator of longevity at most ages, but fitness is the best way to modify the body's basic physiology and kick start broader lifestyle changes that actually add years to life (and some would say, life to years!)

There is no doubt that these modifications should, over time, for most people, also include some dietary modification, but when this happens as an organic part of a fitness programme, rather than on its own, all the evidence suggest people get more sustainable results. And sustainability is the absolute key to long-term health.

In a brilliant new book *The First 20 minutes – the surprising science of how we can exercise better, train smarter and live longer* (Icon Books, 2013) that synthesises

hundreds of recent research articles, Gretchen Reynolds concludes “a growing body of science suggests that aerobic (ie cardiovascular) fitness may be the single most important determinant of how long you live, trumping whether you smoke or are obese”.

The book also explodes decades-held myths about exercise, and shows how a good combination of cardio and strength exercise (including high intensity interval training) can allow everyone to significantly reduce their lifetime health risks.

Every health journalist should read Reynolds' book (it is also a master class in science writing). And so should anyone who wants to improve his or her health through an exercise-centric regime.

Shifting the focus from “lose weight” to “get fit” is a prescription for public health systems in general, and should be the core of future public health awareness campaigns. These campaigns are pitifully scarce in South Africa – through their absence, journalists and the media have become the *de facto* public space for any discussion about healthy lifestyles. While journalists should not be expected to be health campaigners, when no one else is doing anything significant about weight loss, that is what we become.

If we could shift the locus of our stories to promoting movement, by describing for example the joy of a long walk, the fun of restarting competitive sports in adulthood (over 50s soccer leagues, Tai Chi and yoga groups for 70 plus are breaking out all over the world but are slower to get off the ground in Africa), our journalism is more likely to do some good. The time has come for those of us in the media and journalism education to acknowledge that the fat-centric articles, with their diets-are-the-answer approach has failed. Focusing on fitness instead will allow journalists to do much less harm. If we could stop making people feel bad about their bodies, their body image, and their weight, and get intrigued about inexpensive and accessible exercise, like walking more, we can be part of a longer-term solution to the global obesity epidemic.



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Endnotes

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