

Thesise / Theses 2003

Name

Subject

Lezél Amoraal

Internet-regulering in Suid-Afrika: Staat of Internasionaal

The Internet has become such an integral part of computer users' daily existence that it seems as if it has always been there. The Internet with its unique borders - or lack of borders - places an enormous burden on geographically based legal systems. Regulation that has specifically been designed for the Internet is a necessity because virtually every aspect of the law is challenged by the Internet and that many legal frameworks are inadequate to deal with the Internet.

The development of the Internet in South Africa took place during a difficult time in the country's history. The apartheid era eventually limited the growth of the Internet. Much of the existing legislation in South Africa has been partially adapted to accommodate the Internet, and in 2002 the Electronic Communication and Transaction Act 25 of 2002 came into operation.

In fact, the physical component of the Internet has already been regulated to a degree by the pure coincidence as a result of its physical presence. This is because the backbone of the Internet had not originally been created by the Internet, but by the telephone. There are a number of legislative Internet-organisations that are, amongst others, responsible for the technical standards of the Internet and dispute resolutions. Various international conventions regulate specific aspects of the Internet such as copyright, intellectual property rights, domain names, trademarks and cyber crime. The international conventions and agreements are an important step in the direction of standardised regulation. However, lack of borders creates problems surrounding jurisdiction of the cyber space.

Tinus de Jager

Die gebruik van klank om nuus op die Internet oor te dra

In this work I explore the use of sound as a means of presenting news to the user through the Internet. I accept that news sound as such, as it is presented on radio, is an effective mass communication medium. From there I ask the question if this sound, with the same underlying principles used in radio, can be effectively used on the Internet. This opposed to real changes made in the gathering, preparation and presentation of sound to be effective on the Information Superhighway. The chapters look at the methods utilized to present sound on the radio and the origins of the Internet and the use of websites to provide news services. One chapter is dedicated to the technological development of the Internet, another compares the way in which three news sites covered the terrorist attack on America and the last one contains a model for the use of multimedia, specifically sound, to convey news information on the Internet.

Barend J Louw

Die oorlewing van 'n Afrikaanse koerant in 'n veeltalige samelewing, met spesifieke verwysing na *Die Burger* (Wes-Kaap)

The purpose of this study is primarily an examination of the effect of multilingualism on Afrikaans newspapers, with specific reference to Die Burger. The study also looks at the origin and development of South Africa's multilingual dispensation, the effect of this on South Africa's press

history, the newspaper market in South Africa, how newspapers position themselves in this multilingual market, an outline of Die Burger's potential and real market in the Western Cape, how Die Burger positions itself in this market, the challenges and effect of multilingualism on die Burger's market, ways in which Die Burger handles this impact, and possible shortcomings in the handling thereof.

This study further examines the effect of multilingualism on the financial and operating management of newspapers, strategies for survival in a multilingual market, the possible shortcomings of these strategies, and suggests possible solutions for these shortcomings.

Thus this study also examines influences on the Afrikaans market such as globalisation, anglicization and the impact of the electronic media on language preference and ability. The study also examines the specific challenges for Die Burger, especially in terms of not losing its current readers, and secondly to survive in a market increasingly under pressure from multilingualism.

The scientific politics of HIV/AIDS: a media perspective

Martha S Malan

When South Africa's President, Thabo Mbeki, began doubting that HIV was the cause of AIDS in the late nineties, the debate he introduced in this country was not new; it had raged in the United States as far back as a decade ago. But, even prior to that, there had been numerous controversies pertaining to the discovery of the HI-virus. This thesis argues that those contentions created such a heated atmosphere that the causal debates that were to follow, however incredible they were, were largely unavoidable.

This thesis examines the development of the politics surrounding the science of AIDS, from the discovery of HIV up until Thabo Mbeki's controversial contentions. To an equal extent, it looks at the news media's coverage of the process, focusing on the approaches to the debate of various media outlets and individual journalists. It also raises ethical issues, particularly in South Africa, that emerged during one of the most widely reported debates in the country's history. It in no way attempts to provide a quantitative analysis of media coverage and, in the case of the US media, draws heavy on analytical studies conducted at the time.

Media Ethics in Financial Journalism

Liesl Peyper

Financial reporting is one of the most vulnerable sectors of journalism for the occurrence of possible unethical conduct. Financial journalists handle news with financial value and have access to privileged market information which confront them with numerous ethical problems, namely the use of press releases, the influence of public relations, the use of financial jargon, reporting on shares and the securities market, journalists' dependence on analysts' opinions and recommendations, the receipt of freebies and insider trading.

This assignment gives an overview of the incidence of unethical conduct in financial reporting in South Africa. Ethical principles relevant for financial reporting, namely accuracy, truth and deception, fairness, objectivity and conflict of interest are analysed, discussed and illustrated with incidences of possible unethical behaviour in financial reporting.

Recommendations include advanced journalism training courses which will enhance journalists' business writing skills and knowledge of basic economics and finance, columns in financial publications which explain financial jargon and a greater emphasis on media ethics.

Norman J Silke

Onbekend maak onbemind: die rol van die Suid-Afrikaanse pers in die destigmatisering van epilepsie

This study project provides an overview of the frequency and quality of reporting on epilepsy in the South African press and the role this plays in destigmatising the condition. It is introduced by a comprehensive background study, after which articles published in the country's leading newspapers during the period 2000 to 2002 are analysed. The perceptions of members of the public and medical doctors are examined by means of interviews and questionnaires, as part of an effort to determine how coverage of epilepsy is currently handled. Suggestions on how the quality of information on epilepsy and the distribution thereof may be improved are also made.

The conclusion is that newspaper coverage of epilepsy in South Africa is largely inadequate. There is a serious lack of investigative reporting. At times reporting was even clearly irresponsible. The press should be an instrument to inform epilepsy patients, their families and their communities, and to guard against stigmatising. Science journalists should report clearly and thoroughly and be fully informed about their chosen subject.

The study indicates a need for greater focus on science in the press. Newspapers should provide training for science journalists and ensure that reporters are aware of the latest developments in the field of science and technology. Epilepsy is far more common than is generally believed, but many epilepsy patients hide their condition for fear of discrimination. As a result, they do not receive the help and support they are entitled to. In poor and disadvantaged communities epilepsy sufferers are still viewed with distrust and suspicion. It is the duty of the press to throw light on the condition and to keep focusing on it, so that fear and ignorance may be replaced with facts and information.

TOO COSY FOR COMFORT? A media ethical investigation into the Press Corps

Lizma van Zyl

Government and the media are in the process of establishing South Africa's first Presidential Press Corps (PPC) based on the White House Press Corps in the United States of America. The need for a body like the PPC has become increasingly evident as the recent relationship between the South African president and this country's press can only be characterised as poor.

The establishment of a PPC potentially presents an ethical dilemma though due to various factors. A journalist can only serve the public with the most comprehensive and accurate news when his or her finger is on the pulse of the events that take place within the decision-making bodies. However, being so close to those in power may seriously threaten journalistic independence. This dilemma would be discussed in detail in this assignment.

The first group of PPC journalists is going where no other has gone before them in this country's history. They are however facing a daunting task, as the arena they are entering is fraught with novelties, challenges, obstacles and temptations. This assignment will examine the media's role in a democracy, the challenges of far closer cooperation between media and government, the ethical dilemma potentially presented by the PPC as well as ways to ensure as far as possible, an ethical and professional relationship between government and the corps's members.