

Thesise / Theses 2006

Adele Baleta- Healing The Rift : An Assessment Of A World Health Organisation's Media Communication Programme For Health Scientists

Abstract: Health scientists agree that the media is a crucial conduit for communicating life-saving, preventative and curative health messages to a wider audience. They also concur that they are the gatekeepers, and the responsibility of communicating their findings and health information to the public rests with them. And yet, their relationship with journalists is often unhealthy and in need of attention. Many health scientists lack knowledge and understanding about who the media are, and what they require to do the job of reporting ethically and professionally. They often lack the skills needed to frame simple, succinct messages timeously, especially on controversial issues such as vaccines and drug safety, immunisation and drug treatment for infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. This study argues that health scientists/professionals globally, irrespective of culture, ethnicity, creed, language or media systems, need training on how to communicate with the media in the interests of public health. This is especially so in the modern world with its complex, high-speed communication. The objective of the study was to assess the impact of a WHO media communication training programme for health scientists worldwide. More specifically, the study sought to shed light on whether the training shifted their perceptions and attitudes to the media. And, if so, in what way? It also aimed to find out if the trainees learned any skills on how to deal with reporters. The research methodology was qualitative. A review of the literature, to establish current thinking in the field, was followed by interviews with health professionals. The interviewees are from China, South Africa and Ghana and received the same basic training either in South Africa, China or Sri Lanka. Some were trained in 2005, others in 2004 and others before that. Most had been trained together with participants from other countries. Two focus groups were conducted in China before and after training. Included, is an account of the aims and objectives of each module of the actual training. The study also made use of WHO documents and news and feature articles from newspapers, radio and the internet. Most participants had never had media communication training but had been interviewed by reporters. While some had positive experiences, others felt bruised by their interactions with journalists. After training, however, they registered a shift in attitude toward feeling more positive and less fearful of the media. They felt more confident and better equipped to engage with journalists. Most participants desired more training to consolidate the skills that they had learned. Some had managed to put the training to good use by developing similar programmes in their own country. Others who were trained more recently were enthusiastic about the prospect of sharing ideas with colleagues. Those who were unlikely to deal with the media directly said they felt they could at last contribute to discussions on the media in the workplace. The WHO training, albeit a first step aimed at bridging the gap between health professionals and journalists, goes a long way in addressing the frustrations and the complexities of dealing with the media. Health professionals want to communicate because they need to reach their target population, the ordinary person in the street. Training and facilitation can empower health professionals to deal constructively with the media in getting health messages to the public. This training programme, which imparts

practical skills including how to prepare and manage interviews, could be adapted to meet the needs of scientists from different disciplines.

Opsomming: Gesondheidswetenskaplikes is dit eens dat die media 'n uiters belangrike middel is om lewensreddende, voorkomende en genesende gesondheidsboodskappe aan 'n groter gehoor oor te dra. Hulle stem ook saam dat hulle die hekwagters is en die verantwoordelikheid het om hul bevindinge en gesondheidsinligting aan die publiek oor te dra. Tog is hul verhouding met joernaliste dikwels ongesond en sorgwekkend. Talle gesondheidswetenskaplikes het geen kennis en begrip van wie die media is en wat hulle nodig het om hul taak – verslaggewing – eties en professioneel te verrig nie. Hulle kort dikwels die vaardighede om eenvoudige, saaklike boodskappe betyds te formuleer, veral as dit kom by omstrede aangeleenthede soos veilige entstowwe en medisyne, immunisering en medisyne vir die behandeling van aansteeklike siektes. Hierdie studie voer aan dat wetenskaplikes/gesondheidsberoepslui wêreldwyd – ongeag kultuur, etnisiteit, geloof, taal of mediastelsels – 'n behoefte het aan opleiding om beter met die media te kommunikeer ter wille van openbare gesondheid. Dit is veral belangrik vir die ingewikkelde en snelle kommunikasie van die moderne wêreld. Die doel van die studie was om die uitwerking van 'n wêreldwye opleidingsprogram van die WGO oor kommunikasie met die media te bepaal. Die studie het meer spesifiek probeer lig werp op die vraag of die opleiding hul begrip van en ingesteldheid teenoor die media verander het. En, indien wel, op watter manier? Dit het ook probeer vasstel of deelnemers enige vaardighede aangeleer het oor hoe om met verslaggewers om te gaan. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodiek is gevolg. Bestaande literatuur is bestudeer om huidige denkrigtings op die gebied te bepaal, waarna onderhoude met gesondheidsberoepslui asook 'n TV-gesondheidsverslaggewer van Beijing, China, gevoer is. Die ondervraagdes kom van China, Suid-Afrika en Ghana en het dieselfde basiese opleiding in Suid-Afrika, China of Sri Lanka ondergaan. Sommige is in 2005 opgelei, party in 2004 en ander vroeër. Die meeste is saam met deelnemers van ander lande opgelei. Twee fokusgroepe is voor en ná opleiding in China bestudeer. 'n Verslag oor die oogmerke en doelwitte van elke module van die werklike opleiding is ingesluit. Die studie het ook gebruik gemaak van WGO-dokumente, nuus- en artikels uit nuusblaaie, die radio en die internet. Die meeste deelnemers het nooit opleiding in mediakommunikasie gehad nie, hoewel verslaggewers al onderhoude met hulle gevoer het. Terwyl dit vir sommige 'n aangename ondervinding was, het ander nie goeie herinneringe aan hul interaksie met joernaliste nie. Ná opleiding het hulle egter getuig van 'n positiewer gesindheid teenoor en minder vrees vir die media. Die meerderheid van die deelnemers wou graag verdere opleiding hê om hul pas verworwe vaardighede uit te bou. Party kon selfs soortgelyke programme in hul eie lande ontwikkel. Van die meer onlangse deelnemers was geesdriftig oor die vooruitsig om gedagtes met kollegas te wissel. Diegene wat waarskynlik nie veel met die media te doen sou hê nie, het gesê hulle kon nou minstens by die werk aan gesprekke oor die media deelneem. Hoewel dit maar die eerste tree is om die gaping tussen gesondheidsberoepslui en joernaliste te oorbrug, slaag die WGO se opleiding in 'n groot mate daarin om die frustrasies en verwikkeldhede van omgang met die media te oorkom. Mense in die gesondheidsberoepe wil graag kommunikeer omdat hulle hul teikenbevolking – die gewone mense – moet bereik. Opleiding en tussentrede kan hulle toerus om konstruktief met die media om te gaan ten einde gesondheidsboodskappe aan die publiek oor te dra. Hierdie

opleidingsprogram kan aangepas word om in die behoeftes van wetenskaplikes in verskeie vakgebiede te voorsien.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/17344>

Elizabeth Barratt- *Choosing To Be Part Of The Story : The Participation Of The South African National Editors' Forum In The Democratising Process*

Abstract: This study aims to locate the South African National Editors' Forum (Sanef) within South Africa's transformation from apartheid to a non racial and constitutional democracy. This entails first examining the potential for participation demonstrated by editors' societies at different democratic stages and defining the ideal democratic roles of journalism. The recent political history of journalism in the country is summarised to draw out the particular obstacles to editors' unity and the transformation needs in South Africa's racialised context. Then the forum's history from 1995 to 2000 is reconstructed in detail using documentary sources. This covers the formation and launch periods of Sanef, and the next couple of years of the forum's existence. This study is described as a historical, qualitative inquiry from the inside, observing both the sequence of events and the motives related to the context and to concepts of democratic role. It is unusual in that it is a historical study of a journalism society and it uses journalism theories to guide the research and the analysis. The research shows that despite having to overcome divisive issues from their past, the editors chose to play their part across all democratic roles: liberal, social democratic, neoliberal and participative. Activities were mostly linked to the current democratic stage. Many involved the self-transformation of journalism and journalists, leading to the suggestion of a fifth role for journalism in emerging democracies. However, some Sanef projects were not completed despite their significance for democratic journalism and others had no strategic rationale. This study recommends that Sanef be more strategic in its activities and look to other emerging democracies for appropriate solutions to problems. It is suggested that failing to do so could result in more complex problems for journalism in South Africa in the future. Finally, it is noted that the existence of a stable and prominent forum giving editors, senior journalists and journalism educators a united voice in areas of common interest in itself lends serious weight to their democratic participation.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/2935>

Natasha Bolognesi- *The Media Management Of Nevirapine: Content, Causes And Consequences*

Abstract: This study presents an observation, analysis and effect indication of the media portrayal of the antiretroviral drug nevirapine in Western Cape daily newspapers. The research is aimed at ascertaining the quality and consequences of science reporting on an essential, yet too often politically controversial, AIDS treatment within the South African context. This work

ultimately offers suggestions as to how the media could play a more beneficial role for the South African public when reporting on nevirapine and HIV/AIDS treatment in general.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/2616>

Benescke Botha- *Is Tieners Nuus-kierig? : 'n Studie Om Te Bepaal Of 'n Mark Vir 'n Afrikaanse Jeugnuusbron Bestaan*

Abstract: Do young people have any news interest? Which subjects interest them most and what is their medium of preference? In order to answer these questions, research was done on news reading trends of young people – both nationally and internationally. A questionnaire was completed by 180 grade 11 scholars from the Western Cape, the Free State and Gauteng. The results of the different provinces are compared in this study to monitor newstrends nationally. The child's cognitive development phase has an influence on nurturing healthy (news)reading habits. In this study the correlation is explored by using Jean Piaget's (1896-1980) theory of cognitive development stages. From interviews with the JIP supplement editors (Beeld, Burger and Volksblad), as well as the cell phone companies (MTN, Vodacom en Cell C) the biggest obstacles and possible strategies to draw young readers were identified. In this work the public's need for media, as well as the influence of the media on the society (especially the youth) is discussed by looking at Fourie's (2001) model of short term and long term influences of media on the society. The study showed that the majority of young people see one news bulletin (newspaper, television and/or radio) per week as sufficient. Research results indicated that the medium of preference for news headlines among young people is SMS. Just less than half of the respondents are willing to pay for such a service. The second medium of preference to receive news is noted as youth newspapers. The main news subjects amongst the youth is entertainment, followed by sport and social issues. Political and international news seems to be less popular amongst this group.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/2748>

Gabriel Johannes Botma- *Sinergie As Politiek-ekonomiese Strategie In Die Balansering Van Idealisme En Markgerigtheid By Die Burger Wes-kaap, 2004-2005*

Abstract: The leading South African media groups are subject to many challenges to their political economic interests as part of the international capitalist profit economy. These challenges coincided with the democratization and transformation of South Africa since 1994, which heralded many changes to the national political economic context within which media companies operate.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/1547>

Christine Buchinger- *The South African Media's Coverage Of The Abu Ghraib Prisoner Abuses: An Ethical Case Study Of Two Selected Newspapers*

Abstract: This study analyses the reporting of the Iraqi prisoner abuse issue at Abu Ghraib as reported upon by two South African newspapers from an ethical point of view. The focus falls on the issue of accuracy. Accuracy in war reporting of geographically distant conflicts as exemplified with this case study is a delicate and important matter, the media often being the only window for the public to learn of and about a conflict. In this case study, the two South African newspapers Cape Times and Mail&Guardian will be analysed to show the extent of their adherence to codes of conduct and exemplify the problematic practicalities in ethical reporting on international news. With the main focus of the study being on the ethical issues concerning accuracy, other relevant topics, such as 'objectivity', balance, fairness and truth telling, as well as more practical concerns will also be partially considered. The selected case studies are contextualized within the South African media environment so as to yield a better insight into the choices made on an editorial and/or newsroom level. As case studies, selected articles from the Cape Times and the Mail&Guardian during a three-month time-span are analysed using Day's Situation/Analysis/Decision (SAD) model. Each article will further be analysed from the point of view of the newspaper's own code of conduct and overarching ethical codes such as the South African Press Ombudsman's Code of Conduct as well as in terms of the South African laws relevant to the media industry.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/1897>

Linda De Beer- *Mediakonvergensie As Internasionale Fenomeen – Drie Afrikaanse Dagblaaie En Werknemerspersepsie*

Abstract: The arrival of the Internet and digital technology the past decade has revolutionised the media industry worldwide. Newspapers cannot exist separately from other media forms any longer. Newspaper companies have increasingly started to experiment with the incorporation of the electronic media, such as the Internet, in their newsrooms. The term media convergence originated in an attempt to give meaning to the phenomenon whereby different media forms come together or exist in synergy with each other. The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of media convergence from a newspaper perspective. The focus is firstly on developments on the international media front, whereafter the emphasis is on South Africa. A Research/field study is aimed at determining the knowledge and perceptions of media convergence of the editorial teams of Media24's three Afrikaans sister newspapers – Beeld, Die Burger and Volksblad. Different definitions of media convergence were considered in an effort to formulate an appropriate definition for the purpose of this study. In terms of this definition media convergence entails the coming together or synergy between different media entities within the same company. A technologically advanced environment with digital multimedia content management systems is conducive to successful convergence. The characteristics of the digital and multimedia newsroom are discussed in a separate chapter. A literature study was undertaken to give an overview of international media convergence practices and existing

research on the topic. The focus is not only on how media convergence manifests itself in different parts of the world, but also on the attitudes toward and perceptions of the phenomenon by journalists. The South African media landscape and examples of convergence is discussed, with specific reference to Media24, owner of Beeld, Die Burger and Volksblad. Non-empirical research by means of a survey amongst 60 respondents was conducted to test the knowledge and perceptions of the editorial teams of these three newspapers on media convergence. Multimedia newsrooms operated with the assistance of digital technology is a common phenomenon in many countries. Cooperation across media also exist in the majority of newsrooms in South Africa, but the phenomenon is not as conceptualised locally as in the rest of the world. Differences in the structures of media companies, as well as divergent legislation, have a significant effect on how media convergence manifests itself in a specific country or newsroom.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/2790>

Desiree Christelis- *Country Reputation Management : Identifying The Drivers Of South Africa's Reputation In German Media*

Abstract: Although reputation management has historically been restricted to companies or other organisational entities, countries are also increasingly concerned with their reputation relative to other countries and have started to actively measure and manage that reputation. Over the past years, the Republic of South Africa has begun to professionally streamline its own reputation management activities, specifically by establishing the International Marketing Committee (IMC) in August 2000. South African Tourism, the media division of the South African diplomatic sector and even South African Airways are other reputation management vehicles that have been working toward emanating a comprehensive marketing and communication message from South Africa to other countries. The basis of good reputation management is to first measure such reputation. It is also important to know what aspects are the main drivers of such reputation. Using the content of specific German newspapers as data body, this study determines the drivers of South Africa's media reputation in Germany. In order to accurately set the scene for an analysis of South Africa's reputation, a thorough situation analysis on the country is conducted. This situation analysis forms the backbone for the methodology used further on to investigate the drivers of South Africa's reputation in specific German media. To this end, a large part of the situation analysis looks at South Africa in terms of Germany and a study is conducted on the relationship between Germany and South Africa as well as the potential stakeholders of South Africa's media reputation in Germany. It is also important to know what current efforts in terms of reputation management are. After studying the history of South Africa's reputation management activities, members of today's reputation management vehicles are interviewed and an overview of South Africa's reputation management efforts currently active in Germany is provided. The reputation management activities of other countries are briefly explored and specifically the lessons from other countries' efforts are highlighted. Subsequently, the reputational dimensions that positively or negatively drive South Africa's reputation in specific German media are determined. To this end, a content

analysis is conducted on the seven German national daily newspapers, Börsen- Zeitung, Die Welt, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Frankfurter Rundschau, Financial Times Deutschland, Handelsblatt and Süddeutsche Zeitung over a period of 20 months. The findings made culminate in suggestions for South Africa's future reputation management activities in Germany.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/2384>

Carina Hugo- *Die Kulkuns Van Die Letterdief : 'n Ondersoek Na Plagiaat In Die Suid-afrikaanse Gedrukte Media, Met Spesiale Verwysing Na Drie Onlangse Gevallestudies*

Abstract: Since 2003 various incidents of plagiarism in the South African media were reported. The South African copyright law does not define plagiarism, only copyright infringement. The issue of plagiarism is a complex one, due to the conflicting views within professional, intellectual, social, moral and legal contexts. The advent of the Internet era saw the eradication of the boundaries guarding copyright ownership. Also, the Internet offers infinite access to information which makes it tempting for any journalist to “borrow” quotes, facts, stories and articles freely and under the auspices of a post-modernist approach to knowledge and copyright ownership. Most media companies have ethical codes which cover plagiarism, but there is no working document that can empower media managers and journalists to combat the problem effectively. This document should define the boundary between negligence and plagiarism and offer suggestions on how to approach cases of plagiarism. This study investigates different theories on plagiarism, specifically with regard to the cases of Darrel Bristow-Bovey, Cynthia Vongai and Willem Pretorius. It will also study the ethical codes of media companies and will try to formulate a document which can address the problem of plagiarism.

Opsomming: Talle voorvalle van plagiaat in die Suid-Afrikaanse drukmedia het sedert 2003 plaasgevind. Die Suid-Afrikaanse wet omskryf nie plagiaat nie, slegs outeursregskending en met die talle teenstrydige opvattinge oor plagiaat binne professionele, intellektuele, sosiale, morele en regsringe, word plagiaat moeilik gedefinieer. Met die toeganklikheid van inligting danksy die koms van onder meer die Internet, het die grense van eienaarskap van geskrewe werke begin vervaag. Veral die Internet bied 'n magdom inligting aan. Dit word al hoe makliker vir joernaliste om met gemak aanhalings, feite, stories en artikels te “leen” sonder die nodige erkenning. Die meeste media-instellings beskik oor etiese kodes wat plagiaat dek, maar daar is nie werksdokumente wat bestuurders en joernaliste kan bemaagtig om plagiaat te bekamp nie. Die werksdokument of handleiding behoort die grense tussen nalatigheid en plagiaat te definieer, en om voorstelle te bied oor hoe gevalle van plagiaat hanteer kan word nie. Hierdie studie ondersoek verskillende teorieë oor plagiaat, bespreek die plagiaatgevalle van Darrel Bristow-Bovey, Cynthia Vongai en Willem Pretorius, bestudeer die etiese kodes van media-instellings en poog om 'n werksdokument saam te stel wat plagiaat kan bekamp.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/17448>

Leonis Joubert- *Turning Up The Heat : An Analysis Of The Historic, Scientific And Socio-political Complexities Influencing Climate Change Reporting In The Modern Newsroom*

Abstract: Global climate change is the result of the natural greenhouse effect being enhanced or augmented by human activities such as industrial burning of fossil fuels and large-scale agricultural practices which have increased the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The result – the first truly globalised consequence of pollution – is arguably one of the most pressing matters facing the future of the human species. Journalists reporting on the subject have considerable responsibility to unravel the science and present it accurately and responsibly to the public, so that the latter can make informed decisions about individual energy consumption, informed decisions at the voting poll and go further to put the necessary pressure on policymakers. However climate change is without doubt the most complex story environmental and science reporters have ever encountered, not only because it encompasses so many different fields of natural sciences (oceanography, climatology, biological sciences including flora and fauna, hydrology, horticulture etc.), but because it all too often spills over into the political, economic and social arenas. “Climate change is a difficult story to recreate... (it) is one of the most complicated stories of our time. It involves abstract and probabilistic science, labyrinthine laws, grandstanding politicians, speculative economics and the complex interplay of individuals and societies” (Wilson, 2000: 206). Specialist environmental and science news reporters only have three and a half decades of experience and history, since this is one of the more recent journalistic beats to be assigned to modern newsrooms. Such writers face a particularly challenging job of reporting the complex and growing science of global climate change. Furthermore they must do so in an environment where politicians and environmental activists feed journalists sometimes conflicting information, each with its own agenda. Increasing consumer demand for entertainment in place of information may also complicate the telling of these stories, given the financial imperative to sell newspapers. Furthermore, the “global warming story is also affected by a number of journalistic constraints, such as deadlines, space, one-source stories, complexity and reporter education” (Wilson, 2000: 206). The complexities of news values also shape the stories which finally are released to the news consuming public.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/3385>

Mary (Mary Elizabeth) Mattheyse- *An Analysis Of Health Reporting In Three South African Women's Magazines: Fairlady, Sarie And True Love*

Abstract: Health reporting in South African women’s magazines has not previously been assessed. Therefore, a content analysis of health reporting in three South African monthly women’s magazines, Sarie (S), Fairlady (F), and True Love (T), was carried out from February 2005–January 2006. Total coverage of health issues was analysed, as well as coverage of 11 specific aspects of health, namely: sexual and reproductive (‘Sexual’), men’s, women’s, cardiac

('Heart'), spiritual ('Spirit'), mental and emotional ('Mental'), diet and nutrition ('Diet'), sport and exercise ('Sportex'), health-related items not covered by the other categories ('General'), pseudoscience with regard to health issues ('Pseudo') and parenting and child care ('Parent'). True Love devoted most space to all health items combined (17,7% of total subject material), compared with 13,8% for Sarie and 11,7 % for Fairlady. The top three categories (20,1%, 19,7% and 16,3% of total health coverage) were the 'Mental', 'General' and 'Sexual' categories, respectively. Comparisons of categories among the magazines showed the following trends for the most coverage: 'Sexual' (T); women's (F), 'Spirit' (T), 'Mental' (S); and 'Diet' (F). T was the only magazine to carry articles in the 'Parent' category. However, statistical analyses showed that the only significant differences were in women's (F>T); 'Spirit' (F>S; T>S); 'Mental' (S>F) and 'Diet' (F>S). The reporting in the magazines was not found to be balanced as regards the emphasis given to certain aspects of health. The most striking imbalance was that no information was given regarding prevention of HIV/Aids, now the leading cause of death in South Africa.

Opsomming: Die mate van gesondheidsverslaggewing in Suid-Afrikaanse vrouetydskrifte is nog nie voorheen bepaal nie. Daar is dus 'n inhoudsanalise gedoen van die gesondheidsverslaggewing van drie Suid-Afrikaanse vrouetydskrifte, Sarie (S), Fairlady (F), and True Love (T), wat maandeliks verskyn, vanaf Februarie 2005–Januarie 2006. Die totale dekking van gesondheidskwessies is geanaliseer, sowel as die dekking van 11 spesifieke aspekte van gesondheid, nl.: seksueel en reproduksie ('Seksueel'), mans, vrouens, hart ('Hart'), geestelik ('Geestelik'), emosioneel ('Emosioneel'), dieet en voeding ('Dieet'), sport en oefening ('Sport'), gesondheidsverwante kwessies wat nie deur ander afdelings gedek is nie ('Algemeen'), pseudo-wetenskap met verwysing na gesondheidskwessies ('Pseudo') asook ouerskap en kindersorg ('Ouer'). Gesamentelik het True Love (17,7% van totale onderwerp inhoud) die meeste plek afgestaan aan gesondheidsverwante kwessies, in vergelyking met 13,8% vir Sarie en 11,7 % vir Fairlady. Die top drie afdelings (20,1%, 19,7% en 16,3% van die totale gesondheidsdekking) was 'Geestelik', 'Algemeen' en 'Seksueel' respektiewelik. 'n Vergelyking van die verskillende afdelings tussen die tydskrifte het die volgende tendense vir die meeste dekking getoon: 'Seksueel' (T); vroue (F), 'Geestelik' (T), 'Emosioneel' (S); and 'Dieet' (F). T was die enigste tydskrif wat artikels in die 'Ouer' afdeling gepubliseer het. Statistiese analises het egter getoon dat die enigste insiggewende verskille in die 'vroue' (F>T); 'Geestelik' (F>S; T>S); 'Emosioneel' (S>F) en 'Dieet' (F>S) afdelings voorgekom het. Daar is gevind dat rapportering in die betrokke tydskrifte ongebalanseerd was ten opsigte van sekere aspekte van gesondheid. Die grootste gebrek was dat daar geen inligting oor die voorkoming van MIV/Vigs verskaf is nie, alhoewel dit bekend is dat dit nou die hoof oorsaak van sterftes in Suid-Afrika is.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/17456>

Helene Meissenheimer- *How Much To Say Or Do? : An Exploration From A Public Journalism Perspective On The Community Involvement Of The West Coast Commercial Community Newspaper Weslander*

Abstract: Objectivity, impartiality and neutrality are normative values that South African journalists have been taught to aspire to. The South African media are still strongly grounded in a western liberal view of the press as Fourth estate and watchdog, a role that is associated with the aforementioned values. However, in the last decade some in the media like Thami Mazwai and scholars like Ngairé Blankenberg, Clifford Christians, Herman Wasserman, Arrie de Beer and others have questioned the appropriateness of western ethical values like objectivity for the South African media and suggested that there exists a need to develop an Africanised media theory. Some of the options that have been considered to find a workable alternative media theory for South Africa include the African belief system, ubuntuism, and the American public journalism movement. One of the issues that should come to the fore in these discussions is the appropriateness of community involvement by community media when addressing problematic issues in that community. A review of objectivity as ethical value raises the question on what is the appropriate limits for a newspaper to become involved in addressing and finding solutions for problems in the community. This thesis explores the community involvement of a commercial newspaper, Weslander from a public journalism perspective.

Opsomming: Suid-Afrikaanse joernaliste word geleer om die normatiewe waardes: objektiwiteit, onpartydigheid en neutraliteit na te streef. Die westerse liberale siening van die pers as die vierde stand en waghond vorm steeds die grondslag van die Suid-Afrikaanse media, 'n rol wat vereenselwig word met genoemde normatiewe waardes. Gedurende die afgelope dekade het sommige in die media soos Thami Mazwai en akademici soos Ngairé Blankenberg, Clifford Christians, Herman Wasserman, Arrie de Beer en andere die toepaslikheid van westerse etiese waardes soos objektiwiteit vir die Suid-Afrikaanse media begin bevraagteken en voorgestel dat 'n behoefte aan ge-Afrikaneerde media teorie bestaan. Sommige van die opsies wat vir 'n werkbare alternatiewe media teorie vir Suid-Afrika oorweeg is, sluit in die Afrika geloofsisteam, ubuntuism, en die Amerikaanse publieke joernalistiek beweging. Een van die kwessies wat in hierdie besprekings geopper behoort te word, is die toepaslikheid van gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid deur gemeenskapsmedia wanneer berig word oor probleme in die gemeenskap. Uit 'n hersiening van objektiwiteit as etiese waarde lei tot die vraagstuk oor hoe die toepaslike limiete dan moet lyk indien 'n koerant betrokke raak in die aanspreek en vind van oplossings vir probleme in die gemeenskap. Hierdie tesis ondersoek die gemeenskapsbetrokkenheid van 'n kommersiele koerant, Weslander, vanuit 'n publieke joernalistiek perspektief.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/50611>

Christa Morrison (De Swardt)- *Human Stem Cell Research : Tracking Media Attention In Time From 1998-2005*

Abstract: Moral questions arising from advances in science and technology are proliferating exponentially. Much controversy surrounds the ways in which biotechnology is used to eradicate a vast range of diseases and injuries. Stem cell research is one such way. Throughout the world stem cell research has been met with varying responses that range from opposition and criticism to approval and advocacy. As a result, it has attracted significant attention from the news media. The media have been accused of bias by focusing only on the controversial aspects of the research as opposed to reporting fully and fairly on the remarkable scientific advances. In this study I look at the patterns of media attention paid to stem cell research in the international weekly magazine Time between November 1998 and September 2005 inclusive. Contrary to the results expected on the basis of my literature study which pointed out the notion that the media tend to focus on sensational news more than non-controversial issues, I found that Time did a fair job in reporting on the scientific aspects of stem cell research. The percentage content of articles by year, focusing on scientific information of stem cells, dominated other news frames. The two years following the 2000 and 2004 American presidential elections, are however marked by the dominance of policy frames. This study found that Time covered controversial issues like embryonic stem cell research, public funding debates and political policy development in direct relation to their rise and fall on the political agenda in the United States.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/1043>

Juanita Alida Prinsloo- *Worstel Joernaliste Om Syfers Te Ontsyfer? : 'n Gevallestudie Van 'n Steekproef Suid-afrikaanse Joernaliste Se Syfervaardighede*

Abstract: Most journalists readily acknowledge that they cannot be proud at all of their numeracy. The literature also depicts a rather bleak scenario regarding journalists' use and often misuse of numbers. This matter raises concerns especially in the present century, characterised by a rapid development in the area of science and technology. Numeracy is essential to make sense of those developments that are frequently explained by means of numbers or mathematical and statistical concepts.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/948>

Wyno Simes- *Die Historiese Debat Oor Keasionisme En Evolusie, Met Spesifieke Verwysing Na 'n Seleksie Van Briewe In Die Burger (1999-2002)*

Abstract: The debate about the validity of evolution versus creationism started long ago when Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*. Yet today the debate about this issue still engenders a lot of controversy – not only in South Africa, but also, and especially, in the United States. This study investigates articles and letters to the editor in an Afrikaans daily newspaper, *Die Burger*, over a certain period, and will look at the arguments for and against evolution and creationism. The fact that creationists – despite so much evidence to the contrary – pursue a form of pseudoscience by (sometimes) interpreting the Bible literally, and, amongst other things, deny the real age of the earth. There has never been an in-depth look at the public debate about evolution versus creationism in a South African newspaper. The purpose of this study is to conduct an in-depth investigation into this particular debate in the media, with specific reference to correspondence in the letters pages of *Die Burger*, with regard to the possible influence which the debate about evolution and creationism in an Afrikaans daily newspaper might have on people's consciousness regarding modern science. It will also explore how some individuals, often conservative believers, still cling to ancient viewpoints and which have repeatedly been disproved by science.

Opsomming: Die debat oor die geldigheid van evolusie teenoor kreasionisme het lank gelede begin toe Charles Darwin sy werk *The Origin of Species* gepubliseer het. Tog ontlok die debat hieroor steeds groot kontroversie – nie net in Suid-Afrika nie, maar veral ook in Amerika. Hierdie studie kyk na beriggewing en briefwisseling in *Die Burger* oor 'n bepaalde tydperk en die argumente vir én teen evolusie en kreasionisme. Daar sal veral klem gelê word op die feit dat die kreasioniste – soveel bewyse ten spyt – 'n vorm van pseudowetenskap beoefen deur in sommige gevalle die Bybel letterlik te interpreteer, en onder meer die werklike ouderdom van die aarde ontken. Daar is nog nie voorheen indringend gekyk na die openbare debat oor evolusie versus kreasionisme in 'n koerant in Suid-Afrika nie. Die doel met hierdie studie is om 'n omvattende ondersoek te doen oor die debat in die media, met spesifieke verwysing na briefwisseling in *Die Burger*, ten opsigte van die moontlike invloed wat die debat oor evolusie en kreasionisme in 'n Afrikaanse dagblad op mense se bewussyn oor die moderne wetenskap kan hê. Daar word ook gekyk na hoe sommige mense, dikwels konserwatiewe gelowiges, steeds bly vasklou aan beskouinge wat lank reeds verouderd is en wat herhaaldelik deur die wetenskap verkeerd bewys is.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/17407>

Alexander J. Valentine- *The Media As Watchdog In The Commercialisation Of Science : A Case Study Of 6 Publications*

Abstract: The role of the media as a watchdog for the social institution of science is viewed as part of the media's role to protect society. In this regard, the role of media was studied in reporting the phenomenon of the commercialisation of academic research at universities. The

current study was conducted by analysing articles in 2 scientific journals (Science and Nature) and 4 printed newspapers (The New York Times, London Times, Mail & Gaurdian, Business Day) for the year 2003. The methods of investigation for each publication included the number of articles covering the topic, the percentage coverage, headline analysis, summary of contents and analysis of the themes. The New York Times had more articles on the topic of the “commercialisation of science at universities” than the other publications. However, based on the number of issues per year, Science and Nature had a greater coverage of the topic than The New York Times. Based on the analyses of the articles, it is concluded that The New York Times had the most balanced and informed coverage of all the issues and stakeholders involved in the commercialisation of science at universities. This is attributed to the The New York Times’s position of standing outside the realm of science and its experience in covering broad issues.

Opsomming: Die rol van die media as ‘n waghond vir die sosiale instelling van die wetenskap, word gesien as deel van die media se rol as die beskermer van die samelewing. In hierdie opsig is die media se rol in die verslaglewering van die kommersialisering van die wetenskap by universiteite ondersoek. Hierdie studie is uitgevoer deur artikels in 2 wetenskaplike vaktydskrifte (Science en Nature) en 4 koerante (The New York Times, London Times, Mail & Guardian, Business Day) vir die jaar 2003, te analiseer. Die metodes wat gebruik is om elke artikel te ontleed, het die aantal artikels, die persentasie van artikels in elke publikasie, hoofopskrif analise, opsomming van inhoud en ‘n analise van die artikel se tema, ingesluit. The New York Times het meer artikels omtrent die onderwerp, die “kommersialisering van die wetenskap by universiteite”, as die ander publikasies gehad. Gebaseer op die aantal uitgawes per jaar, het Science en Nature meer aandag geskenk aan die onderwerp as The New York Times. Volgens die analyses van die artikels, word afgeleui dat The New York Times die mees gebalanseerde en ingeligte dekking gehad het oor die betrokke sake en partye in die “kommersialisering van die wetenskap by universiteite”. Dit word toegeskryf aan die The New York Times se posisie as buitestaander in die wetenskap en die koerant se ondervinding om ‘n wye veld te dek.

Link: <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/17410>
