The News in Black and White:

An Investigation Into Racial Stereotyping in the Media

Media Monitoring Project
October 1999

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Freedom, Power and Responsibility

In approaching this project our concerns where framed by three distinct but interacting elements: freedom, power and responsibility. As an organisation committed to freedom of expression and all the human rights guaranteed by our constitution we were aware of the perceived threat to freedom of expression which the South African Human Rights Commission's inquiry held for sectors of the media.

Whether these fears were justified or not was not the issue as much as the method used for investigating racism in the media. Notions of "subliminal" media power present considerable problems for media freedom. Aside from the difficulties of defining and identifying "subliminal" racism, the implications are that it is underhanded, that it functions under the guise of freedom of expression to corrupt the minds of readers, viewers and listeners. Certainly international media studies' research on racism makes little use of the notion of "subliminal" racism. However a methodology which examines the content of the media and reveals the stereotypes and prejudicial representations provides less of a threat to the media than a challenge. It also acts to expose to the media the potential harm that these representations can cause.

Debates over the power of the media to corrupt minds, undermine progress or conversely to benefit society, build unity, develop social relationships and improve quality of life are common in our country.

Community radio advocates see community radio as a powerful vehicle for improving communities, developing them, functioning as a resource of information, communication, knowledge and entertainment. Many groups in our society see the media as corrupting; inculcating alien cultures, values and behaviours, encouraging violence and criminality and destroying the social fabric. Advertisers see the media as a vehicle for persuading people to buy products or services and they pour all their efforts into producing media messages which are as persuasive as possible. But media power is more than this:

> "[The] Media are also powerful in that they are unavoidable. Either from direct viewing or reading, or from second-hand reports, media provide the lion's share of our knowledge and beliefs concerning life outside of our direct experience."
>
> (Elliot, 1996: 6)

With the exercise of any power this carries an inevitable responsibility for the use of that power

> "This influence carries moral responsibilities associated with power for media practitioners. These practitioners are responsible for the impact of their work on individuals in the audience even if there is no intention on the part of the

practitioner or the industry to cause harm. Individuals in the audience are necessarily vulnerable to the impact of the media in all of its social functions."

<div align="right">(Elliot, 1996: 6)</div>

But the media's responsibility is not just a moral or ethical one but related to the very freedoms that the media enjoys. In having the freedom to provide news and information without fear or favour, the media are obligated to exercise that freedom in a responsible way – their right has responsibility attached to it. For instance: The media has the responsibility to provide news and information which is fair and accurate.

Working within this framework we sought to implement a methodology which would recognise and satisfy all three elements.

METHODOLOGY

A number of studies of racism in the media have been undertaken internationally and some research has been done on local media depictions of race, ethnicity and racial stereotyping. These studies have used different approaches and methodologies but have been primarily intended for academic discussion and are published in academic journals and books. However common to all of them has been a fundamentally anti-racist stance coupled with the recognition that the media plays a prominent role in our society in influencing attitudes and actions and that the media has a responsibility to avoid, challenge and fight against racism.

Other studies into media coverage of race have relied on a varied combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to their analysis. Several studies conducted in Britain in the 1970's made use of a simple content analysis of print media with a strong quantitative element. These kinds of studies rejected any analysis of the "attitude" towards race and racism which the media may have had and only counted via themed categories the number of print news items devoted to certain race and racism issues (Braham, 1994: 272). While these studies made the valuable point that the media more frequently reported race when related to issues of violence, xenophobia and conflict, they could not distinguish between the attitudes of the various papers' they examined. Further by not acknowledging this they were suggesting that the media's role be limited to:

> " … the way that they create awareness of issues and establish what is on the agenda for public discussion rather than in what they say about these issues or in the degree to which what is said may change opinions"
>
> (Braham, 1994: 272)

This necessarily limits the conclusions that such kinds of studies can make: that the media concentrate on the "manifestations" of racial conflict rather than on the "underlying" social causes. However this underplays both the power of the media and its responsibilities.

Further, these limitations are a problem because they cannot tell us about the values that these representations support and imply. More contemporary studies have attempted to resolve this particular problem by engaging in a discourse analysis approach which, either coupled with a quantitative assessment or on its own, provide a more detailed and informative evaluation.

Duncan (1996), Fair & Astroff (1991), Brooks (1995) and Van Dijk (1991) all make use of discourse analysis to reveal, "the ideological construction of Africa" (Brooks: 1) or the "reproduction of the ideology of racism" (Duncan: 173). Not only does a discourse analysis method provide an analysis of the values and attitude of the media under scrutiny, but it aims to establish the ideological links those attitudes and values have with the ideologies occurring in our society. Finally, discourse analysis allows an understanding of how the framing and treatment of content through the discourse of news impacts on the ideologies being represented:

Put another way, a discourse analysis reveals both the way in which the values that define our society are evident in the media and the media's attitudes towards those values.

In using discourse analysis then, our aim would therefore be to examine how racist ideologies in our society are represented in the media and what the media's relationship with race and racism is:

> "News not only represents race; it also participates in racialisation. That is, it assigns racial explanations …"
>
> (Fair & Astroff, 1991: 72)

All of this of course demands that we define racism. The concept of racism is frequently debated and definitions of it are often complex. Van Dijk (1991) defines racism as:

> "A complex societal system in which peoples of European origin dominate peoples of other origins, especially in Europe, North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand."
>
> (Van Dijk, 1991: 24)

This definition is valuable because it recognises racism at the group rather than the individual level that is particularly appropriate given the heritage of society-wide, state directed racism that our country has endured.

For Van Dijk racism is about "domination" whether political, social or economic. Furthermore this domination functions as a system which is both "structural and ideological." (Ibid: 26) Structural racism is about the structures in our society that are racially dominated and dominating– access to the economy and economic wealth for example is still dominated by whites and consequently they can use this domination to maintain their social position. Structurally too, whites hold more powerful positions in our economy, though the election of a democratic government has seen the insertion of black people into positions of political power. Ideologically, racism is about the reproduction of the existing racial domination of one group over another through the maintenance and support of that system via an array of varying discourses and values that together maintain a racist hegemony. (Van Dijk, 1991: 28)

The separation is revealed in the media through the difference between the content of the media (ideology) and the ownership and management of the media (structure). This project is concerned with the content of the media and the extent to which it is racist and therefore it is concerned with the extent to which the media supports and maintains the ideology of racism.

Returning to the tenets of discourse theory requires linking the ideology of racism that already exists and has existed for so long in our country to its representation in the media. A criticism of contemporary discourse theory is that it often seeks only to find that which confirms its own assumptions: it wants to find evidence of racism in the media so it subjectively interprets the media in such a ways as to demonstrate such "evidence".

This project sought to eliminate this problem in four complimentary ways: firstly we sought not only to examine whether the media supports racist ideologies, but also to seek out where the media <u>actively challenge</u> racism and racist ideology. Secondly as we noted earlier our intention was to provide a constructive critique of the media and therefore our aim was not to allege racism in media content but to demonstrate where race and racial identity was represented in a stereotyped or prejudicial way.

Thirdly we examined the media as an interrelated body of information rather than a set of individual mediums. Our intention was not to highlight any single medium as being racist or otherwise. Finally we set out measurable criteria for achievement beforehand in the form of a list of racial and racist propositions founded upon racist stereotypes which exist within our society.

This list was formulated through a workshop held by the SAHRC and involved the SAHRC in the development of a collection of propositions which were subsequently categorised for ease of use. The identification of propositions is also precedented by the work of Brooks (1995), Duncan (1996) and Van Dijk (1991) although Duncan uses the term "theme" to identify the discursive propositions that he found in his research.

The list of propositions is presented below:

<u>1 - Blacks are criminal</u>
     - W*hites are moral*
     - *Crimes committed by whites require an explanation*

     1A - It is normal for blacks to commit crime
     1B - Black criminals are brutal and inhuman
     1C - Blacks want revenge against innocent whites
     1D - Serious crime occurs primarily in white areas

<u>2 - Blacks are stupid</u>
     - *Whites are superior*
     - *Whites are more talented/intelligent*
     - *Whites are more kind*
     - *Whites work harder*
     - *Whites are victims*

     2A - Blacks lower standards

<u>3 - Blacks are irrational</u>

<u>4 - African society is primitive</u>

     4A - African traditions are barbaric
     4B - Blacks are simple
     4C - Blacks are lazy
     4D - Blacks act on instinct

4E - Black women breed
4F - Blacks need whites to advance
4G - African history is primitive
4H - Africa doesn't contribute to world civilisation
4I - Africa is ridden with disaster, disease and violence
4J - There can be no African renaissance
4k – Blacks are child-like
4L – Only Blacks can be African

5 - Blacks are dirty

5A - Blacks live in squalor
5B - Blacks cause disease
5C - Black men cannot control their sexuality
5D - AIDS is an African disease

6 - Black women are ugly
- W*hite women determine what is beautiful*

7 - Black lives are unimportant
- *White lives are important*
- *White victims are personified*

7A – Blacks are used to being injured or killed
7B – Blacks don't need privacy
7C – Blacks die in large numbers
7D – Black victims wait to be helped

8 - Black foreigners threaten South African society

8A - Black foreigners are criminals
8B - Nigerians are drug dealers
8C - Zimbabweans are gangster
8D - Black foreigners bring disease
8E - Black foreigners steal jobs from South Africans
8F - Illegal immigrants are black

9 - Western society is civilised and modern
European/white/western events are more important

10 - Blacks are incompetent and incapable of running anything by themselves
- *Whites are hardworking*

10A - Black government leads to crime and corruption
10B - Black government leads to anarchy and the breakdown of social order
10C - Black government, like Communism, damages society
10D - Black government fails
10E - Blacks are undemocratic
10F - Blacks are power hungry
10G - Black parliamentarians are inefficient and lazy

11 - Affirmative action promotes undeserving people

       11A - Affirmative action is racial discrimination against whites
       11B - Blacks are racist
       11C - Black empowerment fails

12 - People act according to their ethnic identity
       - Ethnic shorthands explain behaviour

       12A - Jews lie and are manipulative
       12B - Jews control the economy and the media
       12C - Indians are corrupt
       12D - Coloureds are degenerate and gangsters
       12E - Afrikaners are bigot
       12F - White farmers are cruel and exploitative
       12G - Muslims support terrorism.

13 – Item supports a racist worldview
       (Item validates racist differences)

14 – All whites are racists

Unlike other studies where only items that directly related to racism were monitored, our study included monitoring items in which race was explicitly stated and where race was implicit to the content of the story. For example news from other African countries, news about African governance and black empowerment were included. For every item identified in this way the content was analysed to reveal whether the item strongly supported or challenged any of the listed propositions. This was done by examining the language used both in the headline and body of the item, the images that accompanied it (where applicable) and how it was introduced (on radio & TV). If an item raised a proposition but did not either strongly support or challenge it, it was coded as being neutral.

As well as the propositions, other data relating to the date, placement of the items, source (e.g. news agency) type of item (e.g. News item or interview) location of the news story and the subject or topic of the item was captured.

A selection of newspapers, radio stations and television, representative of the South African media was chosen in conjunction with the SAHRC. The list appears below:

The Star	*Citizen*
Business Day	*Sowetan*
Die Burger	*Cape Times*
Daily News	*Sunday Times*
Rapport	*City Press*
Sunday Independent	*Sunday World*

Ilanga
Mail & Guardian

SABC TV News   *E-TV*
(Only the main bulletins were monitored.)

SAfm   *Radio Sonder Grense*
Ukhozi   *702*
*Kaya FM*   *Kfm*
Network Radio News Radio 786
(Radio stations 7am, 1pm and 6pm bulletins as well as selected current affairs
programmes were monitored)

All these media were monitored for a six-week period from Monday 12 July to Friday
20 August. The monitors were all post graduate students and first language speakers
monitored all the languages. Monitoring reports were completed on a daily basis and
all the data captured entered into a computer database from which the results were
drawn. Overall over 1430 items were monitored during the period. The overall results
were analysed and the major trends that emerged in the analysis are now discussed.

GENERAL FINDINGS

The following section deals with the overall results identified in our monitoring. It deals with the topics identified, the location of items, the source of the items as well as the type of item (i.e. comment/analysis/news article/ letter). Finally this section looks at the overall breakdown of the propositions identified.

Topic Code Breakdown

1 Topics
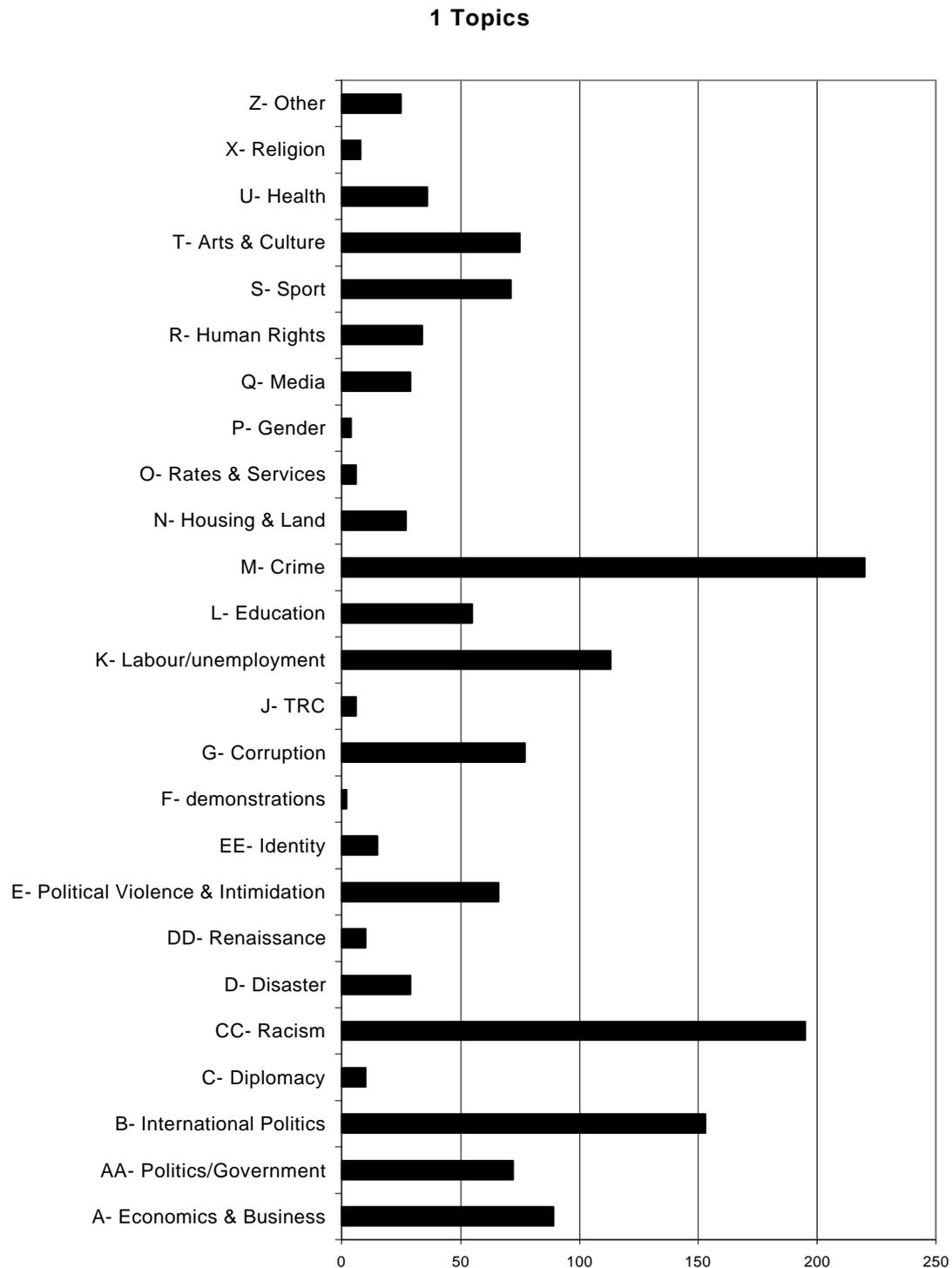
Graph One represents the breakdown by Topic of all the items entered into our database. As mentioned in the methodology each item monitored was located under a topic code, as this would reveal the extent to which general subjects areas were covered.

Items dealing with race issues tended to feature in crime stories, with over 200 items, while items specifically dealing with racism, as the subject, also received extensive coverage with just under 200 items. It is interesting that crime as a subject featured the most; (this is dealt with in detail later on in the report in the section on crime). The high level of crime items can to some degree be understood in light of the crime situation in South Africa and the events, which received wide coverage during the period, monitored. Some of these were: The various items on the proposed Gun Control Bill; a Soweto teacher shooting colleagues; taxi violence in the Western Cape as well as various stories on rape. Because the news media tends to focus on crime it can, statistically, be expected that it would feature prominently in our findings. It must be remembered however that the items monitored were only included if one or more of the propositions dealing with race issues could be clearly identified.

Considering the subjects of political violence and intimidation, labour and unemployment (these were usually items about the various strikes that took place over the period monitored) and corruption, there was a notable tendency for racism and racial stereotypes to occur as 'bad news' stories.

In addition there were numerous stories in the media about racist attacks in rural areas, (including a man who was tortured with a welding machine), stories about racism in the police force, editorial comments and the decision by the government to ratify the convention making apartheid a crime against humanity. Issues of racism and racial stereotyping also featured quite highly in stories about international politics, most often these were items located in Africa. Economics and business received just under 90 stories and these tended to focus on issues of affirmative action and black empowerment. Stories that featured here included items about Tito Mboweni becoming governor of the reserve bank, discussions on black empowerment company Nail and Sun Air's collapse.

The level of arts and culture stories dealing with racism and racial stereotyping can be attributed to a number of items on witchcraft. On a similar level sport's stories received just over 70 mentions, which is largely due to issues of quotas in sporting teams, particularly Rugby.

Perhaps most unusual is the low number of stories that focused on demonstrations, which contained elements of racial stereotyping and/or racism. Also interesting is the low number of gender stories that dealt with race and racial stereotypes. This is interesting considering the position of black women in our society, as doubly oppressed: for being women and for being black. The low number of items doesn't suggest a real advancement in the role of black women in our society, rather it is indicative of the way that gender issues are usually discussed broadly relating to all women, and usually disregards race as an aspect of gender issues.

LOCATION

The graph below represents the geographic location and relevance of the stories monitored that dealt with race, racism and racial stereotypes. Those stories in South Africa (i.e. stories of national importance and those in the provinces) are by far the majority of items were of national importance with 423 stories, and this is followed by stories in Gauteng, the Western Cape and then KZN. The provincial bias does not necessarily indicate any real preference for items dealing with race, racism or racial stereotypes in these provinces, rather it is in keeping with the general provincial bias that is to be found in all the media's coverage.

2 Location
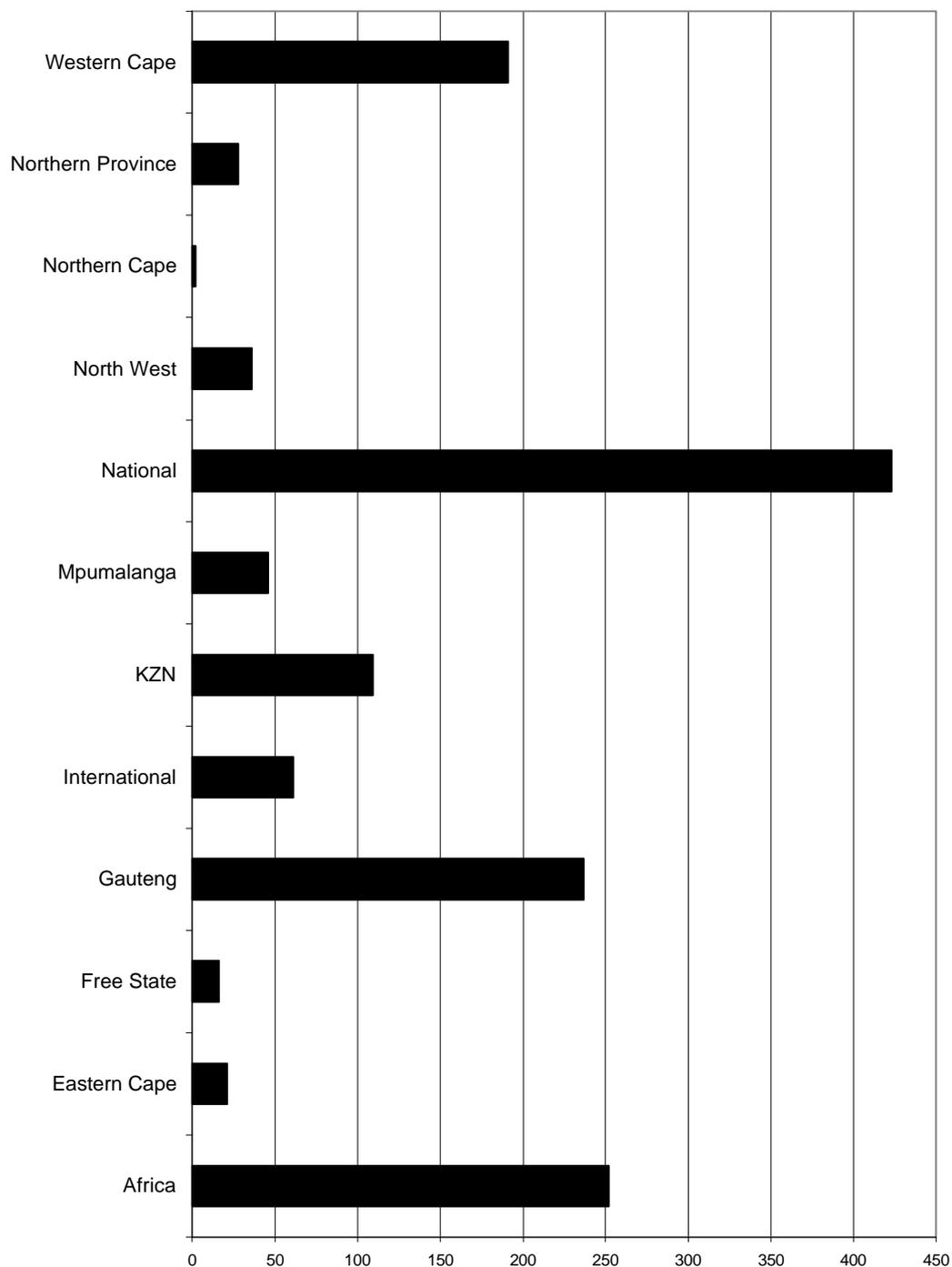
MMP's election coverage found that there was a similar provincial bias in favour of the more urban centres. The high level of items in these provinces may also however be attributed to the fact that the majority of the media monitored in this project was based in Gauteng and the Western Cape. There is still sufficient evidence to suggest a bias in favour of these provinces, and it is important to note because where provincial bias becomes problematic is when it appears that there are less newsworthy items in provinces such as the Northern Cape, Free State and Northern Province. Not only does the lack of items and provincial bias suggest less newsworthy items in these provinces but also to some degree suggests that there is less racism in these provinces.

In this graph there are four times more Africa stories than International ones related to race, racism and racial stereotypes. As will be discussed later in the section on Africa, it is interesting to note just how high the level is of those stories that deal with race and Africa and this suggests possible stereotyping in the media relating to Africa news items.

3 Type of Item
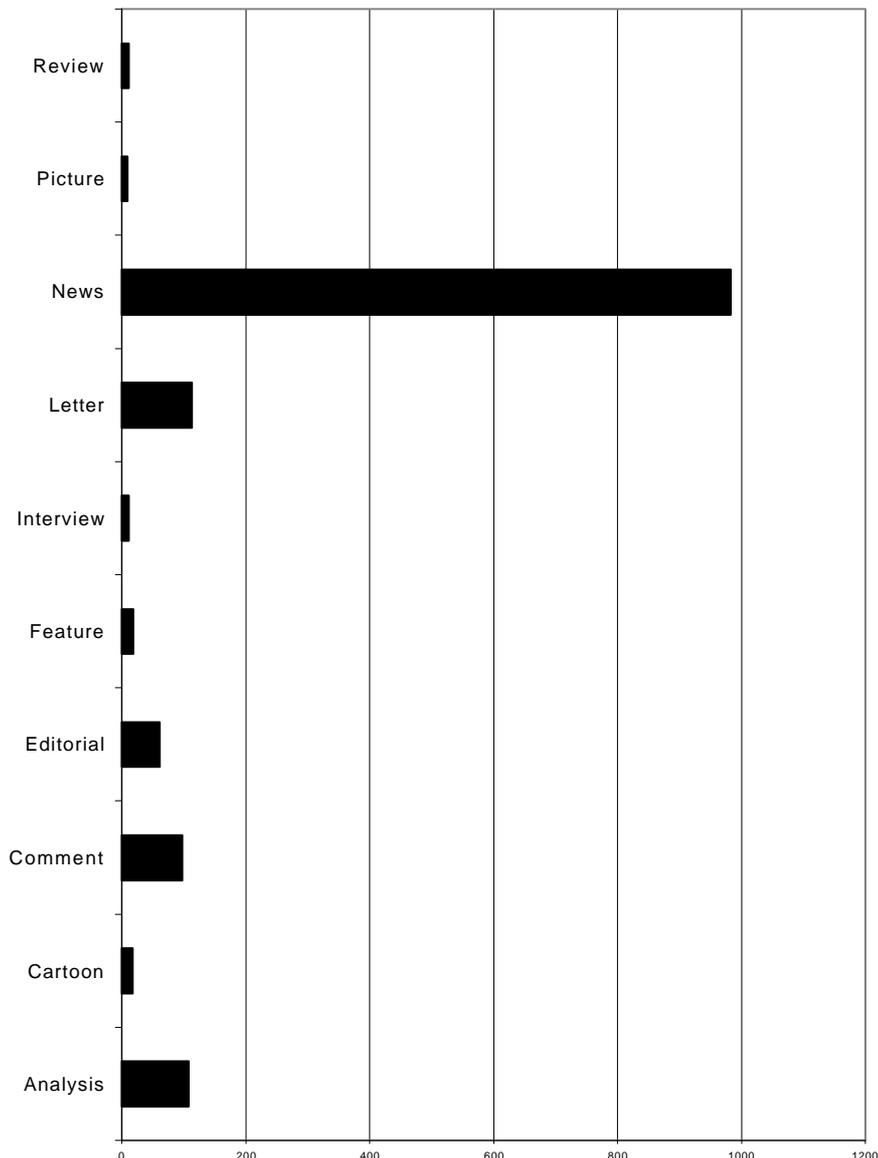
Type of Item

This research aimed to establish not only how and where issues of race were raised but also which news conventions were used in order to deal with them. Analytical feature articles or current affairs programmes allow for more in-depth analysis and understanding of problems, and dealing with race and racism is no exception. News items on the other hand are usually about events and they have little analysis. The recent killings at the Tempe Military base for instance made the news and was dealt with as a race/racism issue with the media focusing on the actual killings. Analytical pieces on the killings focused on other issues such as the context, racism in the military and transformation.

The results of graph 3 indicate that in by far the majority of instances where race, racism and racial stereotypes featured was in news items. Editorials, comments from independent commentators and analytical pieces also featured fairly highly, adding up to 222 items, although far outweighed by the news items being close to a thousand. Also most interesting to note in this graph is the relatively high level of letters. These were letters that dealt with race issues, and these indicate an editorial interest in raising race issues.

4 Sources
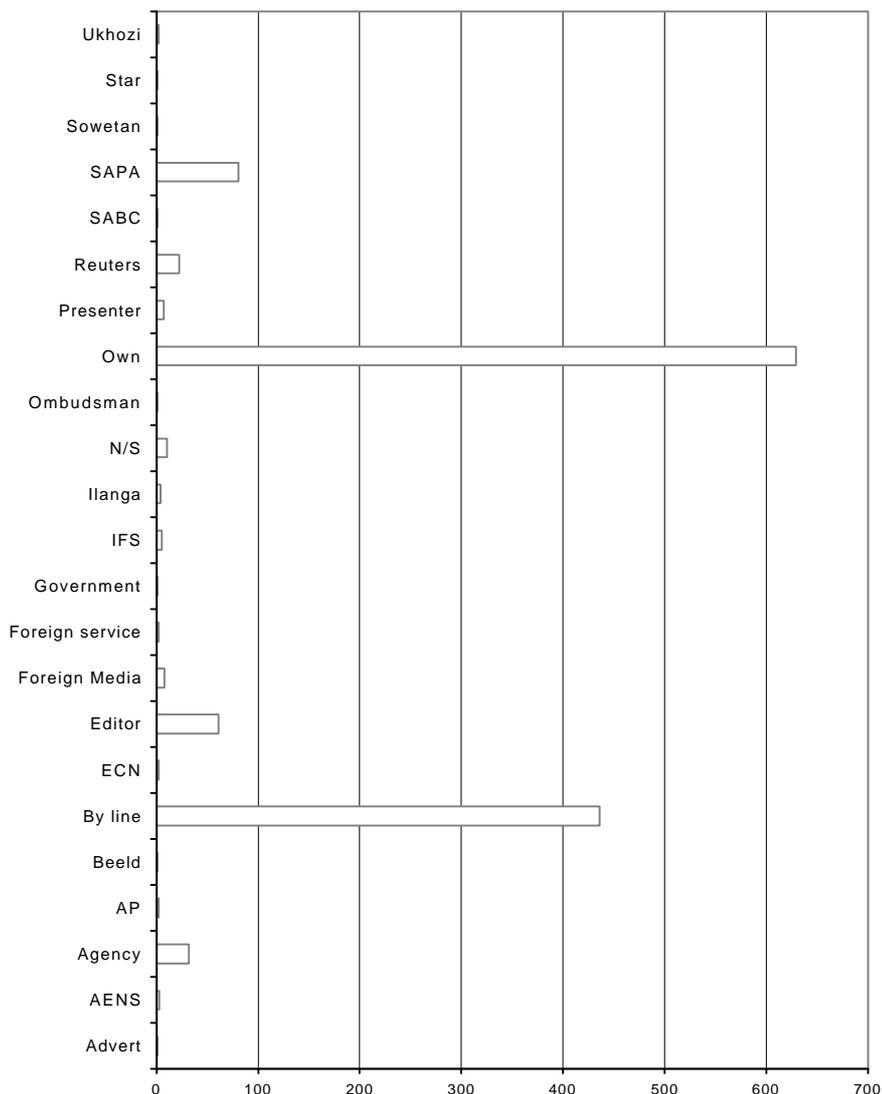
Sources

Part of understanding how race issues are dealt with in the media is an understanding of who produces them. This graph indicates that that own correspondents were clearly the most frequent sources of stories dealing with race issues, they were followed by items where journalist were identified in the by line of the story. Almost all of the other sources were minimal, SAPA (81 items) and editors (61 items) being the only others with over 40 items. It is positive that there was less reliance on the news agencies. This is worth noting because it has been found in previous studies (particularly those relating to studies of Africa news), that where there is a reliance on the agencies for items, they tend to be more descriptive. They offer less diversity of issues, little analysis and a smaller range of topics covered.

Propositions and Effects

Of the 14 propositions monitored, seven series of propositions had more than 50% supporting the racist stereotypes:

Series	Proposition	Percentage Supported
1	Blacks are criminals	75.7%
3	Blacks are irrational	63.6%
12	People act according to their ethnic identity	63.9%
7	Black lives are unimportant	62.7%
14	All whites are racist	56.3%
8	Black foreigners threaten South African society	55.1%
10	Blacks are incompetent & incapable	51.4%

The issue of xenophobia, covered largely by the 8 series of propositions, was surprisingly low in terms of the number of items monitored. The following table gives the breakdown of proposition 8.

Proposition	Total Items	Challenge	Neutral	Support
8- Black Foreigners threaten South African Society	18	6	3	9
8A- Black foreigners are criminals	14	1	4	9
8B- Nigerians are drug dealers	4	2	0	2
8E- Black foreigners steal jobs from South Africans	8	2	2	4
8F- Illegal immigrants are black	5	1	1	3

Proposition 8 (Black foreigners threaten South African society) and 8A (Black foreigners are criminals) received the highest number of items. Interestingly there were a similar number of items that challenged and supported 8.

Some examples, which supported the proposition, were:
"Evil minded Nigerians blamed for violence"
(Star, 10/08/1999: 8)
"Publiek gemaan teen Nigeriese"
(Burger, 28/07/1999: 9)
While others Challenged the proposition:
"Refugee fears for his life"
(Independent on Saturday, 17/07/1999: 2)
"Don't blame Aliens"
(*Sowetan*, 11/08/1999: 8)

Proposition 8A is most concerning as it indicates that where there were items that suggested that black foreigners were criminals, the majority of them supported this stereotype.

Some examples of these were:
"Police uncover one of SA's biggest counterfeit busts yet"
(*SABC TV*, 2/08/1999: 5)
"KwaThemba swoop has criminals in limbo"
(Star, 5/08/1999: 6)

In both these instances the content of the item strongly suggested that black foreigners are criminals. What was interesting to note about the issue of xenophobia is that while there were relatively few items monitored, those items that challenged the propositions tended to be more analytical feature pieces or comments.

In just three series of propositions there were more than 50% of the items that challenged the propositions:

Series	Proposition	Percentage Supported
*6	Blacks women are ugly	100%
13	Item supports a racist worldview	75.2%
9	Western society is civilised and modern	61.9%

* (NB: While this is a positive finding it must be noted that there were only three instances where this proposition was identified.

These findings are more encouraging as not only do they indicate a challenge to racism and racist stereotypes but also a more conscious positive challenge.

The four remaining propositions appear not to be dominated by either challenges or supports as the following table indicates:

Proposition Series	Challenge %	Neutral %	Support %
4 – African society is primitive	34.7	20.4	44.8
11 – Affirmative action promotes undeserving people	38.4	27.1	34.5
2 – Blacks are stupid	48.2	15.2	36.6
5 – Blacks are dirty	23.4	34	42.6

These results are curious in that they suggest a divergence within the proposition series where certain notions were strongly challenged while others were strongly supported.

For example an examination of the breakdown of Proposition 4 reveals the following:

Proposition 4	Total Items	Challenge	Neutral	Support
4- African society is primitive	50	21	11	18
4A – African traditions are barbaric	39	8	6	25
4B – Blacks are simple	24	11	1	12
4C – Blacks are lazy	16	7	3	6
4D – Blacks act on instinct	12	1	4	7
4E – Black women breed	4	1	0	3
4F – Blacks need whites to advance	79	25	21	33
4G – African history is primitive	18	10	3	5
4H – Africa doesn't contribute to civilisation	30	19	4	7

Proposition	Total Items	Challenge	Neutral	Support
4I – Africa is ridden with disaster, disease & violence	135	17	30	88
4J – There can be no African Renaissance	50	32	10	8
4K – Blacks are childlike	18	2	4	12
4L – Only blacks can be African	29	21	6	2

As can be seen from the table above propositions 4G, 4H, 4J and 4L are all clearly dominated by instances where the propositions were challenged. Interestingly these relate to very similar issues. The dominance of challenging items can largely be attributed to various debates in the media surrounding African identity. There was also extensive coverage of the OAU conference, which often included aspects of Mbeki's notions of the African renaissance.

Against these propositions 4A and 4I are dominated by items that strongly supported notions that African traditions are barbaric and that Africa is ridden with disaster, disease and violence. These were largely due to items on witchcraft as well as the emphasis on the conflict in the DRC.

An examination of proposition 11 which deals with affirmative action and black empowerment has some surprising differences as can be seen in the following table.

Proposition	Total Items	Challenge	Neutral	Support
11 – Affirmative action promotes undeserving people	118	62	33	23
11A – Affirmative action is racial discrimination against whites	49	11	12	26
11B – Blacks are racist	43	15	6	22
11C – Black empowerment fails	45	10	18	17

Most striking in this table is the high number of items, which strongly challenged the notion that affirmative action promoted undeserving people. This is largely due to the extensive and positive coverage given to Tito Mboweni on becoming the first black person to be governor of the reserve bank. Also interesting to note for proposition 11, is the high level of neutral items. This was attributable to the case that was brought

against Eskom concerning affirmative action. Eskom lost the case over an affirmative action appointment and it was, in most cases, reported merely as a setback, leading to the high level of neutral items. Interestingly the other propositions in this series were fairly evenly balanced between challenging and supporting the propositions.

Black empowerment was represented in some instances as the failure of black empowerment, e.g. Sun Air's collapse. However, the reorganisation of NAIL and new options available to the directors led to several in-depth analytical articles, which examined problems being faced by black empowerment groups such as NAIL. In addition to this there were several items on sports quota's to ensure that Rugby, in particular, became more representative.

Unlike propositions 4 and 11, an examination of propositions 2 and 5 reveals that there were similar levels of items which both supported and challenged the various propositions. It must be stressed however that equitable levels of items which support and challenge the stereotypes does not equate with the stereotype being dealt with in a balanced manner.

Graph 1 and an overall view of the propositions shows that the most frequently identified series of propositions were series 4, with over 500 items, relating to African society being primitive. 4I in particular accounts for the levels of political violence, disaster and international politics. 4, and 4A account for the relatively high levels of arts and culture.

Proposition 10, as the second most frequently identified series of propositions, relates to blacks being incompetent and incapable of running anything by themselves and this helps explain the levels of labour and unemployment, corruption and politics and government.

Perhaps most positively, proposition 13, which identified whether or not the item challenged or supported a racist world view, accounted for the high level of racism items, and indicates that where racism was raised as an issue by the media it was usually challenged.
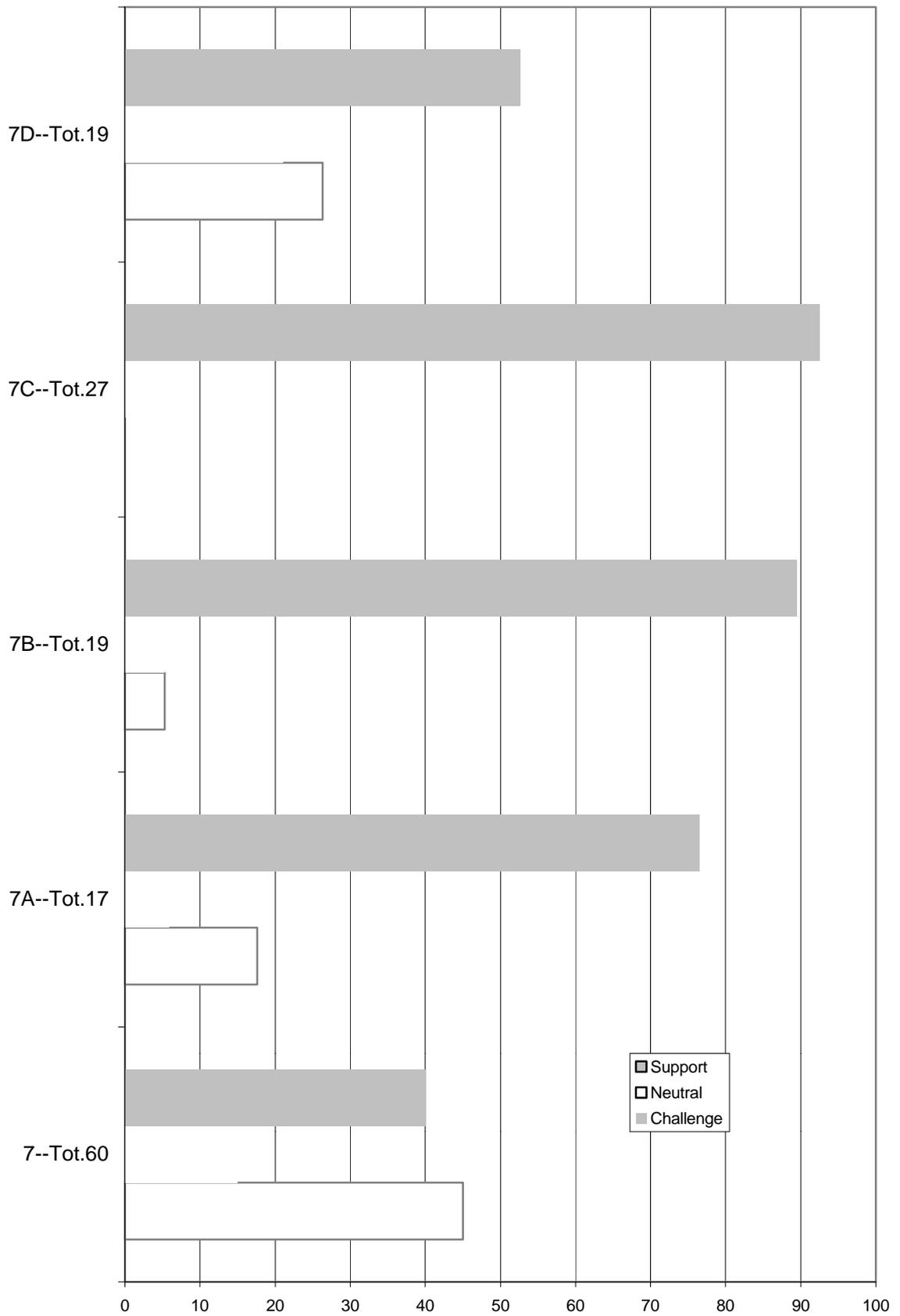
PRIVACY AND DIGNITY BELONGS TO WHITES

Article 10 of South Africa's Bill of Rights states, "Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected."

One of the major pillars of apartheid ideology was to remove black people's dignity in order to ensure their subjugation. Segregation and security laws ensured that blacks were denied basic rights and treated as inferior. During these days the police would routinely raid the homes of black people, especially those suspected of being "terrorists" and "communists". Forced removals accompanied by great suffering and hardship was a common feature of the old apartheid regime. It was common practice for the media (under strictly controlled situations) to accompany the police, filming or taking photographs during these raids and removals. People would be photographed whilst screaming and crying hysterically as members of their family were dragged and assaulted by the police. Some would be filmed as they woke up to see police with dogs shouting at them, and ordering them to wake up and leave.

During the late 80's and early 90's there was a concerted effort by a third force to destabilise the country. Despite the fact that South Africa was moving towards democracy the media continued to show pictures of dead bodies and badly injured people. It is against this background that the dignity of black people in the South African media should be understood.

In our monitoring we found that the practice of not respecting black people's dignity has continued. The following graph, Graph 5, illustrates some of the ways in which lack of respect for black peoples lives manifested itself:

5 Black Lives: Propositions(%)

7D--Tot.19

7C--Tot.27

7B--Tot.19

7A--Tot.17

7--Tot.60

Support
Neutral
Challenge

0   10   20   30   40   50   60   70   80   90   100

Depersonalisation of black deaths

The graph shows that proposition 7C (Blacks die in large numbers) had the highest number of items compared to all the other items related to proposition 7. We found that black people's deaths were depersonalised by some media. Frequently reporting on events where black people had died tended to focus on the numbers of people who had died rather than individual deaths. For example the death of 7 black people in Katlehong was reported as though these people were faceless. The only explanation given was that the killings were politically motivated. The notion of politically motivated killings in the South African media has its history in a similar term, "black-on-black violence"

Fair and Astroff (Fair & Astroff, 1991) examined South Africa in the American media during the late eighties and early nineties, and in particular they focused on violence. They found in their analysis that the term "black-on-black " was used to explain violence in the townships. They observed that the term had originated in the South African government was in fact only a ploy to detract from the real cause of so many black people dying in the townships.

> "The process of assigning racial meaning to acts of violence is part of a larger ideological practice of classification and marginalisation. Racialised ways of seeing and representing the world objectify the racial classification and marginalisation of events or phenomena, removing from events any element of opposing interests and naturalising the actions of people as 'typical' of a particular group."
>
> (Fair & Astroff, 1991: 58)

Fair and Astroff go on to show how the American media slowly adopted the term "black-on-black" violence as a way of explaining the violence in the townships. They highlight the link between the term and the resulting racist understanding of what was going on in the townships. Unfortunately the South African media used the term black-on-black violence with equal simplicity. As South Africa changed so did the term, evolving to become 'political violence'. Political violence although perhaps slightly more politically correct does nevertheless remove all understanding of why events happen. While the term no longer has a direct link to race as the cause of violence, it is used in most instances to explain situations where black people have been killed. So although there may no longer be quite the same political motivation behind the term black-on-black /political violence it certainly shares the common outcome of attributing black deaths to such intensely simplified causes.

The example mentioned earlier of seven black people being killed on the East Rand (20/07/1999) was reported as political violence by several media monitored. *SAfm* was one such station. Generally the only information given to readers/ listeners was that the people killed were ANC members. Readers/listeners were then reminded of the pre-election violence and tensions on the East Rand between the ANC and the UDM. The event was a classic example of how black victims are depersonalised and reduced simply to "ANC members".

What makes this example different is the treatment the event received on *SAfm*. Initially *SAfm* reported the killings as politically motivated and they interviewed both

a UDM spokesperson and an ANC spokesperson. (*SAfm* 20/07/1999) Already their efforts to follow up on the story started to challenge the simple explanation of political killings for in the interview *SAfm* established that there were alternative and more complicated causes. *SAfm* stayed with the story and in their afternoon programme, PM live, on the 20th they challenged all political elements of the killings and suggested that they were instead criminal. The following day *SAfm* continued with their follow-up and reported that two people had been arrested in connection with the killings. *SAfm* is to be commended, not only for their efforts of following up a story but also for interrogating the possible causes. As a result of which the story was given some complexity and the lives of those who were killed were given some value.

The anonymity of black victims was even starker in cases concerning Africa:

 "500 killed in bombing raids in the DRC"
(*Kfm* 5/08/1999)
 "Angolans find 90 dead bodies"
(*786* 20/07/1999)
"60 people killed in ambush in Angola"
(*702* 24/07/1999)
 "60 killed in Nigerian clashes over the weekend"
(*Business Day* 20/07/1999:10)
"30 die as Nigerian festival erupts"
(*Daily News* 19/07/1999: 4)

The accumulative effect of this depersonalisation of black deaths is the perception that blacks die in numbers as the proposition indicates. This consequently strips black people's dignity away from them. A number's game played by The New York Times in evaluating the worth of international news illustrates this devaluation of black people's lives: "One dead fireman in Brooklyn is worth 5 English bobbies, who are worth 50 Arabs, who are worth 500 Africans." (Moeller, 1999: 22)

Invasion of black people's privacy

In our monitoring we also found the invasion of black people's privacy (proposition 7B, that blacks do not need privacy) was the second highest feature of proposition 7. This was more common in relation to funerals and time of grief. There was a tendency, especially on television (both **SABC** and *e-tv*), to film black families in their moments of grief and mourning.

Conventions and traditions in every society surround the mourning process. For example in some African traditions the bereaved sit in a quiet room during the mourning period. Yet there seems to be less respect for this intimate moment. During the period monitored we found that the media went as far as filming the room which the bereaved are in and even take close up shots of the mourners uncontrollably sobbing. This reinforces the stereotype of black people being emotional and out of control.

Funerals were also filmed and close up pictures of emotional people were a common feature of black funerals. An example of this was the filming of the memorial service of the teachers who were gunned down by a colleague at Anchor school in Soweto, the memorial service of musician, Mahlatini Nkabinde. A photographer from *e-tv* took shots of mourners, who were not even aware that they were being filmed, when they realised this, they tried to hide from the camera (*e-tv*-07/08/1999:8).

It was exceptionally rare for the media to film the funeral services of white people, it was even more rare for the media go into the houses of white people and film them whilst in mourning. There were some instances where a picture of the deceased would be shown when they were still alive with family.

Another interesting item was the apprehension of suspects allegedly involved in the Sifiso Nkabinde murder. The *e-tv* news bulletin unjustifiably used file footage of unidentified black women crying hysterically with their hands on their heads (*e-tv*-13/08/1999:2).

Coverage of dead and bloodied bodies

Graph 5 also shows that proposition 7A (blacks are used to being injured) was also relatively high. The use of graphic images of violence and dead bodies was more common in stories that involved black people. An example is the reportage of the Soweto teachers who were gunned down by their colleague at Anchor school. Interestingly the pictures of their dead bodies in a pool of blood were repeatedly used in the media (for example, **SABCTV**, *Sowetan*, and *e-tv*). In an earlier event two women who belonged to the South African Net-ball Association were killed in an allegedly racially motivated incidence, their dead bodies were never shown in the media, except for their pictures in happier days with family members (*e-tv* 20/07/1999).

Another interesting example was the coverage of the memorial service for people who died during the bombing of the American embassy in Kenya, Nairobi. The **SABC** showed old footages of dead burned bodies, bloodied bodies, and injured Kenyans from the blast.

The accumulative effect of the constant use of pictures of black people injured or lying in a pool of blood supports the proposition that blacks are used to being injured and consequently this reduces sympathy for them.

Usage of unidentified dead bodies

The sight of unidentified dead bodies, especially with reference to coverage of African countries was also a common feature. Some of these pictures would often be used mechanically, that is, the same bodies would be used to represent other dead bodies. An example was the coverage of the fighting in the Caprivi Strip, the same footage of the same dead bodies were used in various items even when the reports were about more people who had died, on **SABCTV**. The **Mail & Guardian**'s story titled "African war virus spreads to Caprivi" **Mail & Guardian**-(13/08/1999) also

used pictures of unidentified dead bodies. These examples contributed to the depersonalisation of black deaths and representation of them as just statistics.
Coverage of major disasters

The coverage of major disasters also demonstrated a clear racial bias. During the monitoring period several disasters occurred, the death of 18 miners in Carltonville, the death of Kennedy JR., a Swiss avalanche tragedy, people dying in Nigeria during "ethnic" clashes, 500 people died in India in a train collision. The time and resources given to the Kennedy tragedy and the Swiss avalanche exceeded all the other tragedies. There was extensive information given about those who died in the two tragedies (the Kennedy and the Swiss). The devaluation of black lives was further continued when the lives of 3 Americans and the death of a few British tourists were regarded as more important than the massive "fratricidal" killings in Africa, the death of 500 Indians, and the death of 18 miners in South Africa.

Another interesting element of the coverage of western disasters is that they were usually followed up until explanation or the solution is found, whereas this is rarely done with tragedies involving Africans. As Moeller (1999) supports, it seems as though African problems are just too permanent to yield any solution.

6 Black Lives: Topics
(All 7 series Propositions)
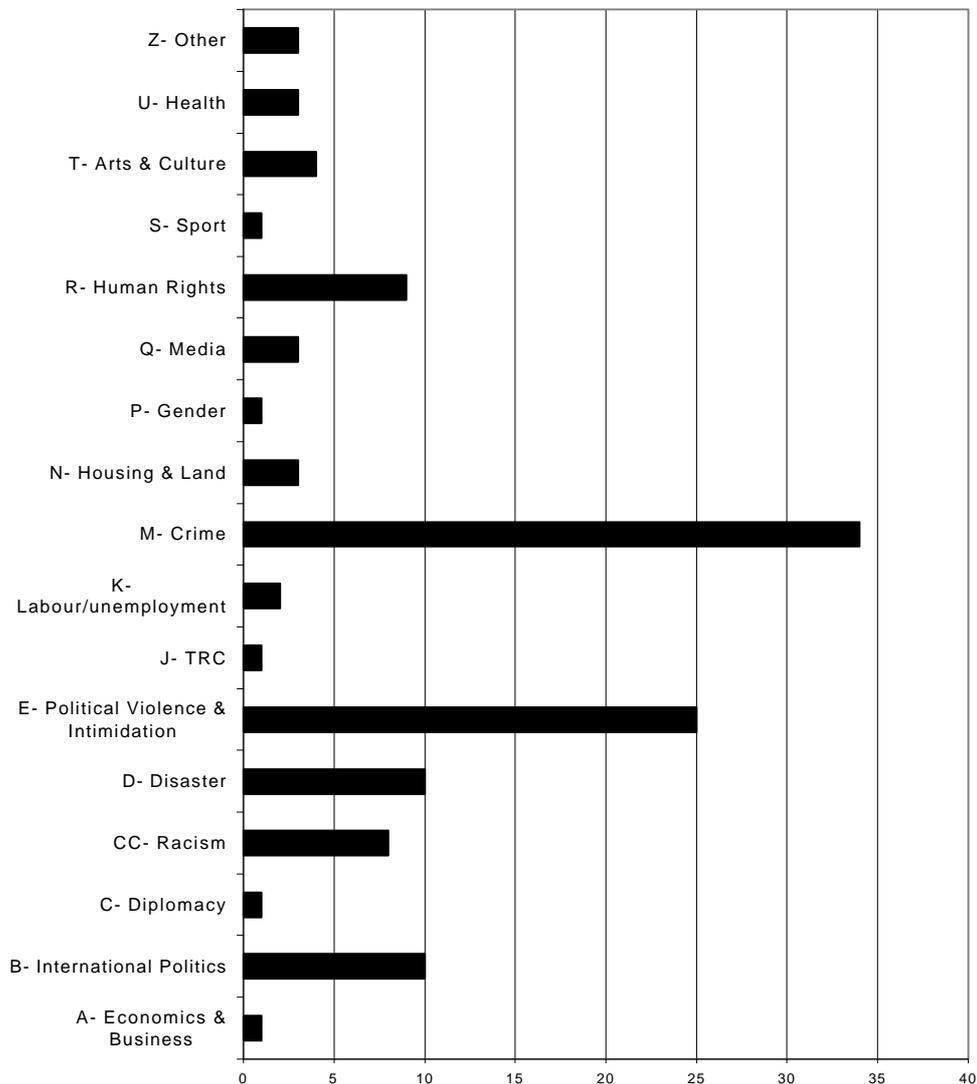
Graph 6 indicates topics that were associated with proposition 7 (Black lives are not important). It is interesting to see that the highest topic code associated with black lives is crime. Stories that fell under this topic code were mostly when people had died or were injured and the media had used close up pictures of them. Interestingly political violence, intimidation and disaster closely follow this topic. Whilst this could be a reflection of general news values it could also be arguably seen as a reflection of a larger picture of news topics associated with black people.

It is interesting to see that topics like economics and business, media, and diplomacy are extremely low whilst conflict related events as mentioned above (crime, political violence and intimidation, and disaster) were high. Whilst these might reflect the reality there are still relatively low numbers of blacks in the field of economics, media, and diplomacy, the only explanation for their invisibility is their race. There is no historical contextualisation of the many years of systematic exclusion of blacks from mainstream life.

Perhaps the most important aspect of covering black dead bodies relates to the near invisibility of white dead bloodied bodies, their absence naturalising and reinforcing white dignity and power.

TELLING AFRICA

Critical to an understanding of race issues in the media is an understanding of how Africa is represented by the media. Historically issues of race and Africa have been inseparable. Colonialism was not simply about the exploitation of the continent for material wealth it was also about the subjugation of the people who lived in Africa. The continent and its people experienced a systematic process of exploitation and discrimination. Apartheid institutionalised racism, reducing all black peoples actions to their race.

An integral part of colonialism and more recently apartheid was the control of the media. A vital aspect of apartheid ideology, and foreign policy (considering South Africa's relations with several of its neighbours) was to make people believe that not only blacks were incapable but that Africa, and Africans were incapable. Apartheid needed everyone in South Africa to fear other African countries and African people, they therefore chose to represent African countries as riddled with disasters, disease, corruption, communism and incompetence. This further served to link peoples' actions, disasters and governments to race and to fear the end of white minority rule.

In 1998 MMP conducted research into the representation of Africa in selected print media, and the following was found:

> " Conventions have developed in news reporting which define Africa and its representation in ways which are mainly negative: as conflict and violence ridden. Conflict when it occurs tends to dominate coverage on Africa, allowing for the further exclusion of other topics."
>
> (MMP Oct 1998: 51)

In an earlier study Brookes, also examined the way in which Africa was represented in the media, but in this instance in the British press. She found that, " Africa is portrayed as a homogenous block in which violence, helplessness, human rights abuse and lack of democracy are seen to be its main characteristics" (Brookes, 1995: 8)

This project found the situation to be very similar, the majority of the coverage on Africa was not only negative but in most instances strongly supported several propositions. 59.4% of all the Africa stories monitored supported the various propositions, while only 18.4% challenged the propositions and stereotypes of Africa. The remaining 22.2% of the Africa items were neutral.

The following is a breakdown of the various propositions monitored most frequently and which were most actively challenged /supported:

Proposition	Challenge %	Neutral %	Support %
4 – African society is primitive (222 items)	19.8	23	57.2

10 – Blacks are incompetent & incapable of running anything by themselves (85 items)	25.9	15.3	58.8
7 – Black lives are unimportant (33 items)	6.1	18.2	75.8

There is a clear imbalance towards those stories that support the propositions. Proposition 7 has the highest level of items supporting the stereotype that black lives are unimportant, with 75.8%. Supporting the notion that black lives are unimportant is an integral part of news conventions that utilise large numbers of black people being killed with little or no explanation. For example a Reuter's story about 60 people being killed in Nigeria was reported by the **Business Day** and the **Cape Times**. There was little explanation:

"60 killed in Weekend Clashes in Nigeria"
(**Business Day** 20/07/1999: 10)
"60 Nigerians Die after Taboo Broken"
(**Cape Times** 20/07/1999: 4)

Other examples lacking explanation and related to Nigeria only and with large numbers of dead people:
"120 Slain in Nigeria"
(**Daily News** 29/07/1999: 4)
"Nigerian Troops kill 300 to Quell Unrest"
(**Business Day** 12/08/1999: 8)

Not only do these examples indicate a lack of value of black lives, but they are typical of the manner in which African stories are reported. Moeller argues that as news budgets are cut and foreign bureau's are closed, the remaining foreign correspondents are forced to cover more and more territory, this, Moeller argues, results in what she terms parachute journalism.

> ".. journalists become parachutists jetting madly to regional crises, jumping into situations cold. … Parachutists are generalists, "trained in crisis not countries," said former foreign editor Johanna Neuman, who should know. … "Nobody hits the ground running like television reporters, said Steven Hess. "These people are brilliant for 72 hours. But tune in a week later and you realise how thin their understanding of the story is" This 'fire-man's'' ability to fast-focus on an erupting crisis has abetted journalists tendencies to lapse into formula, sensationalism and Americanised coverage."
>
> (Moeller, 1999: 26)

While Moeller may have been discussing Americans foreign correspondents, her arguments are applicable in the South African media as well. Again due to lack of

funding and few foreign correspondents the South African media tends to rely heavily on news agencies. An examination of reporting on Nigeria in the period monitored shows that the majority of items on lacked explanation and alternative viewpoints, because the majority of items monitored had been sourced from SAPA and Reuters.

"30 Die as Nigerian Festival Erupts"
(**Daily News**, 19/07/1999: 4) SAPA
"30 die in Nigerian Unrest"
(**Cape Times**, 26/07/199: 5) SAPA
"Ethnic Clashes Kill 50"
(**Daily News**, 4/08/1999: 5) SAPA
"120 Slain in Nigeria"
(**Daily News**, 29/07/1999: 4) Reuters
"Etniese Gevegte in Nigerië"
(Burger, 20/07/1999: 7) Agency

But it is not just because the media relies on agencies that there is formulaic reporting of Africa. It is due to the low number of foreign correspondents; the limited range of news that tends to be selected (selection of news on Africa is discussed later in this section) and because there appears to be certain conventions for reporting "African" news.

For example *e-tv* has a section entitled Around Africa each day about midway through the news bulletin. Usually three or four stories on Africa are briefly reported on. There is little or no context given, there are usually no images, instead viewers are presented with a map of Africa and as each story is read, via a voice over, the relevant country is illuminated on the map.

Some examples of these are:
"Ethnic fighting claims lives in Mali"
"Gunmen destroy Angolan aid convoy"
"Egyptian farmer poisons cows"
(*e-tv*, 20/07/1999: 19:00)

"Hopes of peace in DRC dashed as rebels kill 24"
"Liberia destroys arms and ammunition from seven year civil war"
"Aids ravages Zambia and Rwanda"
(*e-tv*, 27/07/1999: 19:00)

"School children in Tanzania buried alive in Collapsed Pit"
"Security cracks down on 2500 illegal immigrants in Gabon"
"Lesotho Highlands authority charged with fraud."
(*e-tv*, 29/07/1999: 19:00)

The convention of having a separate Africa section is not necessarily negative, because it does highlight issues specifically of relevance to Africa. It must be assumed that this is the desired intention of the media that use this convention. Some radio stations, such as *SAfm* have time allocated to discussing issues around Africa, and newspapers such as the **Business Day** have a page (interestingly usually opposite the International stories page) devoted to Africa stories. However the argument must also

be made that by having a separate Africa section, Africa news is clustered and stereotypical representations quickly become established.

Considering the examples given thus far, not only do they cover similar issues of conflict or violence, but also in the majority of instances the items lacked context and explanation. It would appear then that the media tends to represent Africa as full of disaster, disease and violence. The following examples further support this notion:

"Angola still showing the dark and dangerous side of Africa"
(**City Press**, 25/07/1999: 19)
Referring to Angola an item, "Humanitarian disaster zone"
(**Independent on Saturday**, 7/08/1999: 6)
"Africa war 'virus' spread to Caprivi"
(**Mail & Guardian**, 16/08/1999: 4)
"Mugabe rues his corrupt cabinet"
(**Daily News**, 22/07/1999: 3)
"Aids' top killer in Africa"
(**Cape Times**, 23/07/1999: 1)
"Desperate Angolans live off mice and locusts"
(**Cape Times**, 28/07/1999: 4)

The propositions identified renders interesting results. The breakdown of propositions 4 and 10 (the most often identified series' of propositions) gives a clearer understanding of the stereotypes and their relationships to one another, and also highlights some divergence within them.

Proposition	Total Items	Challenge	Neutral	Support
4- African society is primitive	22	8	5	9
4A- African traditions are barbaric	14	2	2	10
4B- Blacks are simple	6	1	1	4
4D- Blacks act on instinct	4	0	2	2
4E- Black women breed	1	0	0	1
4F- Blacks need whites to advance	18	3	6	9
4G- African history is primitive	5	2	1	2
4H- Africa doesn't contribute to civilisation	14	5	4	5
4I- Africa is ridden with disaster, disease & violence	110	8	25	77
4J- There can be no	24	15	5	4

African renaissance				
4K- Blacks are childlike	4	0	0	4
10Blacks are incompetent and incapable of running anything by themselves	25	12	4	9
10A- Black government leads to crime and corruption	10	1	2	7
10B- Black government leads to anarchy and the breakdown of social order	16	1	2	13
10D-Black government fails	11	3	3	5
10E- Blacks are undemocratic	14	3	0	11
10F- Blacks are power hungry	7	0	2	5
10G- Black parliamentarians are inefficient and lazy.	2	2	0	0

Proposition 4I not only received the greatest number of items but also had the highest instances where the stories supported the notion that Africa is ridden with disaster, disease and violence. Propositions 4A, 10B and 10E all have relatively high levels of items that support the propositions. Considered together (propositions 4A, 4I, 10B & 10E) they can be viewed as complimentary to one another. For to support notions that black government leads to anarchy (10B) supports the notion that Africa is ridden with disaster. Similarly to support notions that African traditions are barbaric also supports and reinforces Africa being full of disaster and disease. The effect of this is that an item on Africa need not contain all of these propositions, by virtue of their 'complimentary' relationship with each other, only one or two propositions need to be found. The repetitive and formulaic manner of reporting the one proposition will by implication support the others.

It must be remembered however, that, ".. suffering, rather than good news, sells. "People being killed is definitely a good objective criteria for whether a story is important," said former Boston Globe foreign correspondent Tom Palmer. "And innocent people being killed is better."

The selective coverage of foreign events is coverage of the deaths of the famous, of famines and plagues and genocide." (Moeller, 1999: 34) It is hardly surprising then to discover that the subjects most frequently mentioned in relation to Africa were:
♦ International politics (this included the various events in the DRC, Zimbabwe and some of the events in the Caprivi Strip);

♦ Political violence and intimidation (this included people being killed in Nigeria, Namibia and the DRC);
♦ Disaster (this included items on the famines in Ethiopia and Somalia) and
♦ Health (which included Aids and aid related items).
However the image is not all doom and gloom.

An examination of the above table shows that there are two clear instances where the propositions are challenged. They relate to Blacks being incompetent and incapable of running anything by themselves (10) and to the African Renaissance (4J). That there is such a divergence with the majority of Africa items is not due to chance, nor is it due to a concerted effort to challenge the stereotypes. These stories tended to be about South Africa's intervention in the DRC, participation in the OAU, the SADC conference and President Mbeki's thoughts on the African Renaissance. [1]

Considering the items that challenge the stereotypes, it could be argued that it is South Africa's involvement that results in the challenge of the stereotypes about Africa. There are some other important aspects that should be considered.

To begin with most of the challenging items were about issues other than conflict and disaster, such as those on the OAU summit and items on the notion of an African Renaissance.

"President calls for new commitment from OAU"
(*Sowetan*, 14/07/1999: 2)
"OAU stance on democracy is lauded"
(*Citizen*, 16/07/1999: 6)
"Heed call by Obasanjo"
(*Star*, 14/07/1999: 12)
"Renaissance urgently needed"
(*Daily News*, 3/08/1999: 12)
"Africans want peace"
(*Cape Times*, 15/07/1999: 5)
"Why Africa is forgotten"
(*SAfm*, 30/07/1999: 1)
"Business trivialising renaissance"
(*Cape Times*, 5/08/1999: 5)

Where they were about conflict such as the DRC they tended to be about finding peaceful means to resolving the conflict through talks and peace agreements.

"Zuma says hopefully all parties will sign peace agreement"
(*SAfm*, 2/08/1999: 2)
"Zuma meets rebels"
(*Ukhozi*, 28/07/1999: 5)
"Talks between Mbeki and key parties to end war in Congo"
(*SABC TV*, 8/08/1999: 1)

The South African president and minister of Foreign Affairs involvement and presence meant that more journalists and correspondents were used instead of relying on news agencies. Although there were items attributed directly to news agencies that

challenged the various propositions such as "Africans want peace", SAPA (*Cape Times*, 15/07/1999: 5) and "Zuma to ensure DRC rebels sign", SAPA (*Sowetan*, 28/07/1999: 4). As a result these items tended to be more in-depth, and more analytical. It is interesting to note that even where there was no South African involvement, items that challenged the propositions were almost always analytical pieces, in the form of feature articles, editorials or comments. For example:

"Mbeki opens SADC conference on local government"
(*SABC TV*, 30/07/1999: 8)
"Facing the real African future"
(*Daily News*, 15/07/1999: 14)

It was not only print and broadcast media that had in depth pieces. *SAfm* in particular is to be commended for their current affairs programmes which almost always dealt with the news affairs of the day in an analytical and usually non-stereotypical manner. In relation to Africa the interview "Why Africa is forgotten?" (*SAfm*, 5/08/1999: 1) is an example.

Based on these factors it would appear that covering alternative subjects (i.e. other than conflict and disaster) with own correspondents or reporters, and giving stories a context and analysis leads to challenging stereotypes of Africa. Also while it may be, as stated earlier, that suffering and conflict makes news, our media has a responsibility to represent our continent in a far more complex and diverse way.

Further when the media choose to report on a disaster they have a responsibility to report on that disaster in a contextualised manner. The death of JF Kennedy is an example where a disaster was covered in such a way that there was context and explanation. Viewers/listeners/readers were told all about the victims, they were informed how the accident occurred (as far as possible) and the disaster was followed up. This story is also particularly interesting in that it received so much media coverage and explanation in the South African media, and as such highlights the substantial differences in news values and resources allocated to International as opposed to Africa stories. South Africa's involvement in Africa should not be an indicator for the media to devote time and resources to Africa items.

It may not be the intention of the media to represent Africa in a stereotypical fashion but the factors determining coverage (as listed below) perpetuate this picture of the continent:
♦ the narrow reporting conventions adopted (such as separate Africa pages and non-analytical formulaic reporting),
♦ the limited resources devoted to African stories (in terms of correspondents and finance) and
♦ limited range of subjects (usually conflict and disaster) deemed 'newsworthy'

Moeller, in highlighting factors of covering conflict, crises and disasters notes the following:

> "The public may not know where Bosnia is, or which group are the aggressors and which group are the victims in Rwanda, but the media has a responsibility

to explain why they ought to know – and a responsibility to explain it in such a fashion as will attract the attention of their audience. The origins of compassion fatigue lie in ignorance. It's easy to run a map indicating where Bosnia is or a graphic clarifying who's who in Rwanda. More difficult, more time consuming, more expensive in terms of both money and energy is for the media to show their readers and viewers why they should care about Bosnia and Rwanda. "The greatest threat today to intelligent coverage of foreign news," said Seymour Topping, the former managing editor of the New York Times, "is not so much a lack of interest as it is a concentration of ownership that is profit-driven and a lack of inclination to meet responsibilities, except that of the bottom line."

(Moeller, 1999: 315)

[1] South Africa's apartheid history was characterised by a defiant and negative attitude to South Africa's neighbours and Africa as a whole. An aspect of the ideology of being a white supremacist stronghold was the notion that South Africa was better than and different to other African countries. This was also reflected in the news on Africa, where Africa was reported as separate and other. As stated earlier when discussing separate Africa sections of news bulletins or papers, and in our earlier research on Africa, "this way of informing people has an effect on how people perceive themselves. It constructs a representation of Africa and Africans and contributes to how people think of them. "Discourse plays a crucial role in the enactment as well as in the reproduction of the system" (van Dijk, 1997: 165). By not challenging the conventions that currently define Africa, the media will perpetuate the notion of Africa as different, separate and as negative." (MMP, 1998: 51). An item in the Independent on Saturday is an example of South Africa being represented as separate to Africa, discussing the African Renaissance, the headline reads, "All that matters is whether SA succeeds" (Independent on Saturday, 7/08/1999). Another example from the *Citizen*, "Minorities: 'take note of Africa's mistakes.'" (*Citizen*, 20/08/1999)

GOVERNMENT

The discursive link between government and racial stereotypes is based on the understanding that government's run, administered and ruled by black people are bound to failure. It was a favourite past time of the apartheid government to remind people just how fortunate South Africa was to be run by whites and not corrupt blacks as was the case with the rest of Africa.

Unfortunately many of these stereotypes are remain. Not only is there is a link made between poor government and black government but also that with blacks in charge South Africa will become like the rest of Africa. As discussed in the Africa section of this report this means that South Africa will slip into poverty, anarchy, disaster, disease and violence and democracy will end. These stereotypes complement each other and support the same discourses of black inferiority. Assuming that black government will be corrupt ties in with the stereotype that all blacks are criminals. Similarly by assuming that black governments are undemocratic and power hungry reinforces notions of Africa and African government s being undemocratic and power hungry. An example which illustrates this was during the run up to the elections where there were concerns surrounding the ANC achieving a two-thirds majority. One of the New National Party's election posters warned: "Mugabe has two thirds".

The above example not only illustrates the link between African governments and the South African government but it also illustrates the racist discourse that a person's race or ethnicity will determine their ability to govern. It is therefore interesting to see just how many items relating to government contained or suggested a link between a race and corruption. Items on the Employment Equity Bill and affirmative action included race as an element to be discussed to promote equality. What is essential to establish is how often racial stereotypes relating to any aspect of government were found and perpetuated by the media.

The following table is a breakdown of the various propositions that were identified in those stories about the government or South African politics.

Proposition	Total Items(>4)	Challenge	Neutral	Support
10-Blacks are incompetent and incapable of running anything by themselves	15	7	2	6
10A- Black government leads to crime and corruption	8	4	2	2
10B- Black government leads to anarchy and the breakdown of social order	4	1	2	1
10C- Black	5	3	1	1

government, like Communism, damages society				
10D- Black government fails	12	6	3	3
10E- Blacks are undemocratic	18	5	3	10
10F- Blacks are power hungry	17	3	1	13
10G- Black parliamentarians are inefficient and lazy	8	6	1	1
11- Affirmative action promotes undeserving people	8	5	1	2
11A- Affirmative action is racial discrimination against whites	5	2	1	2
11B- Blacks are racist	5	1	0	4
13- Does the item support a racist world view	10	6	1	3
14- All whites are racists	4	0	1	3
4F- Blacks need whites to advance	5	1	1	3

From the table the two most frequently identified propositions were 10E (Blacks are undemocratic) and 10F (Blacks are power hungry) and that these also had the most significant number of items that supported the propositions.

These included:

"Government may force language rule"
(***Citizen***, 28/07/1999: 1)
"No cronyism in multi-ethnic society – NNP"
(***Citizen***, 5/08/1999: 8)
"Aftakeling van opposisie die pad na 'n mafia staat"
(***Burger***, 14/07/1999: 12)
"Hanekom's downfall says much about Mbeki's priorities"
 (***Business Day***, 13/07/1999: 2)
"Pinocchio's promotion"
(***Citizen***, 13/08/1999:12)

Against these we see that the majority of items for propositions 10D (Black government fails), 10G (Black parliamentarians are inefficient and lazy), 13 (does the

item challenge or support a racist worldview) and 10A (Black government leads to crime and corruption) challenged the stereotypes. Some examples of these were:

"Mbeki beefs up team"
(*Sowetan*, 12/08/1999: 1)
"Hands on government"
(*Sowetan*, 29/07/1999: 10)
"Malaza's the man for top job in Durban"
(*Sowetan*, 9/08/1999: 3)

An analysis of the breakdown of items monitored on the government reveals that government and political items were most frequently mentioned in *Die Burger* (23 items) and the *Sowetan*. Just over 60% of items in *Die Burger* supported the stereotypes listed in the table above. Considering the types of items, 64.3% of the items that supported the stereotypes were either letters or analysis. What is perhaps surprising is that generally, where the items are analytical they tended to challenge the stereotypes (this was discussed in the Africa section of the report). However in examining *Die Burger* most of the analytical items monitored supported the stereotypes.

The *Sowetan* (which had the second most items on government and politics) had no clear domination of a particular type of item. News items were the highest, but only made up 43.8%, the rest of the items on government in the *Sowetan* were spread across letters, comments and editorials. Also in contrast to several other media, 87.5% of the items in the *Sowetan* on government challenged the stereotypes, which is a commendable finding.

Another interesting aspect of the items on government, were the often racially polarised party political debates. While the various parties themselves are responsible for using and reinforcing racial stereotypes, the media has a responsibility to challenge these and draw them out. There have been instances where the political parties circulated the stereotypes about black government, and there was much debate in the run up to the elections that election posters by various parties were encouraging stereotypes. One such example was the argument over the DP's "fight Back" campaign and the subsequent response from the ANC in the Western Cape with "Don't fight Black" poster.

A topic frequently associated with the government was corruption. 48.7% of all corruption items were related to the government. It is not only reasonable but also essential that the media report on corruption in the government, what is concerning however is the addition of the racial elements, which drew on stereotypes.

"Government pays R5000.00 for a padlock"
(*Sunday World*, 25/07/1999: 1)
"Transport minister defends purchase"
(*Kfm*, 28/07/1999: 4)
"Mbeki's alleged extravagance angers DP"
(*Kfm*, 16/08/1999: 4)

All reinforced stereotypical viewpoints.

One of the issues that received wide coverage involved the Mpumalanga premier, Ndaweni Mahlangu, and his appointment of a person who had allegedly been guilty of corruption. Mahlangu's defence of his appointment was in some instances racialised:

"DP calls on President to fire Mpumalanga premier"
(**Kaya FM**, 15/07/1999: 3)
"Directorate takes over promissory notes probe"
(**Sunday World**, 25/07/1999: 4)
"Pinocchio sal altyd tuis voel in Mpumalanga"
(**Die Burger**, 13/07/1999: 2)
"Mahlangu is topverloorder, skryf Time"
(**Die Burger**, 12/07/1999: 1)

Overall while there were instances where racial stereotypes about black government were challenged, there was still a disturbing trend for the media to reinforce the stereotypes that surround black government.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION & LABOUR

Coverage of affirmative action during the period of monitoring was balanced. The persistent contextualisation of affirmative action could be the reason for this fairness and balance in the reporting. The news framed reports and discussions on affirmative action within the context of "much needed" transformation rather than in racial terms.

9 Affirmative Action (%)
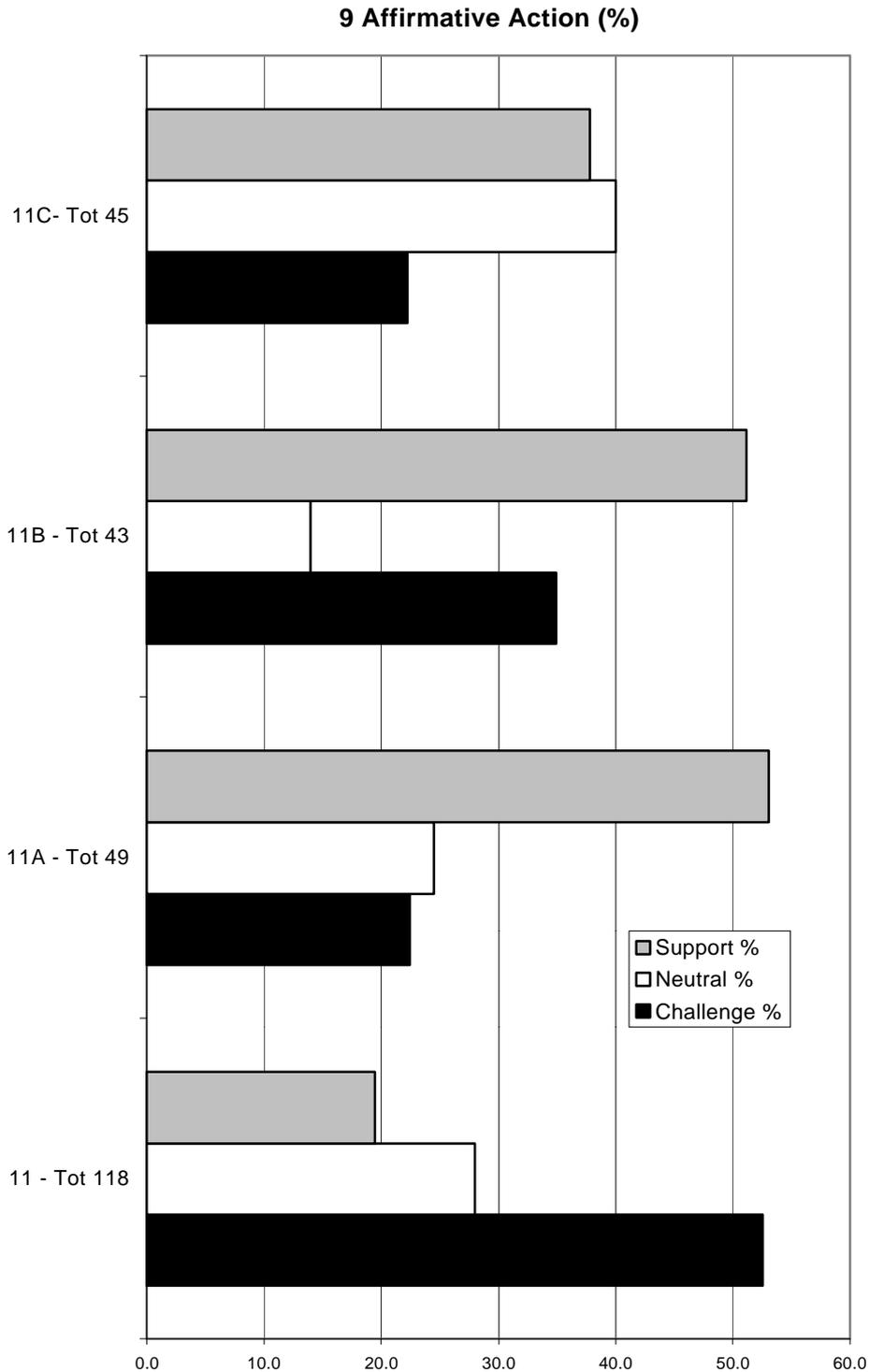
Affirmative action promotes undeserving people

Graph 9 shows that proposition 11 (affirmative action promotes undeserving people) had more news items than any other proposition related to affirmative action. The graph also indicates that there were most of the items challenged the proposition. These stories often framed affirmative action within the context of political transformation rather than blacks and whites in conflict.

"Unaffirmative action" (**Mail & Guardian** 13/08/1999) was a report on the monitored progress of affirmative action, and it challenged tokenism. A spokesperson from the Community Growth Fund was quoted as having expressed concern about the slow progress, "This concern stems from our experience that many black managers are appointed to positions that carry little or no decision making power…." He went on to say "We attribute these disappointing observations to 'knee-jerk' reactions of companies to the new dispensation - in other words they appoint a few blacks in order to get contracts."

Another article that challenged the notion that affirmative action inherently discriminates against whites also carried in the *Mail and Guardian*: "There'll be light at the end of the tunnel" (6/08/1999). This article challenged the racial polarisation of the issue and put it within the context of the inclusion of those previously excluded. The author, in contesting the exclusion of black people in rugby "Where did you white people get the idea that black people cannot play rugby…" cited the fact that in America football started among white college boys and is now dominated by blacks. There were more positive stories on the inclusion of blacks from other media as well: "Top police to reflect the population." (*Business Day*, 29/07/1999), "Future of South African rugby is black." (*e-tv* 4/08/1999), "Mallet must embrace political change."- (*Cape Times*, 23/07/1999), "Training SAPS to fast track affirmative action." (*The Star* 29/07/1999)

Affirmative action discriminates against whites

This positive coverage did not rule out negative stories on affirmative action as reverse racism (it just means positive items out-numbered negative items). For example the graph (graph 9) shows that proposition 11A (Affirmative action is discrimination against whites) had more supporting items. The reporting of the Eskom case clearly demonstrated this: "A white woman wins a ground breaking affirmative action case" (*e-tv* , 13/08/1999), "Kaapse vrou wen saak oor regstel aksie." (*Die Burger* 13/08/1999), "Woman wins race case" (**Independent on Saturday** 14/08/1999) and "Eskom looses affirmative action case." (*SAfm* 13/08/1999).

The case was reported as though it was a clear demonstration that affirmative action promotes undeserving people and it fails. The Judge's decision was not contextualised. The omission of the fact that the white woman won the case because Eskom had no formal affirmative action policy left readers, viewers, and listeners with little option but to see the case as one of reverse racism.

White victimisation

There was also a tendency towards the racial polarisation of cases with whites being victims of blacks who want revenge. The way in which the Helena Dolny case was handled by some media was a clear demonstration of the alleged "new racism" in which white liberals seem to be at the receiving end of the "anti-white" racism: "A new strain of racial prejudice" (**Mail & Guardian** 23/07/1999). There was also a specific article about Derek Hanekom: "Hanekom's downfall says much about Mbeki" (**Business Day** 13/07/1999), which suggested that he had fallen out of Mbeki's favour because he is white.

Black empowerment fails

The concerning aspect of the coverage of black empowerment was that it was covered when it failed or when corruption or scandal was involved. The graph shows that there were more neutral items on black empowerment than supporting or challenging items. These were mainly reports on the liquidation of black empowerment companies or those that needed help. The following are examples of such reports: "Nail ceases to be a black group." (**SABCTV,** 4/08/1999), "Penta receives rescue from government pension" (**SAfm** 11/08/1999), "Nail gou weer in wit behaar" (**Die Burger** (Business) 4/08/1999) and "Sun Air folds its wings forever" (**Cape Times**(Business) 13/08/1999).

Report of the public servants strike

The reports on the Public Sector strikes also included a racial element. During the early stages of the strike SADTU was represented as though it was an unruly, irresponsible organisation. This was done through the constant contrast of pictures of COSATU members or old footages of COSATU members on strike demonstrating with the white teachers teaching in their classrooms (on both **e-tv** and **SABCTV**-23/07/1999, 28/07/1999, 29/07/1999).

White unionists would also be interviewed in their offices and SADTU members would either be interviewed outside the premises of their offices or in the street. The reports would often contrast SADTU with the "disciplined" NAPTOSA and Onderwyser Union.

Another interesting aspect of the reports on these strikes was that "no damages were caused during the march", implying that this was expected (**e-tv**-23/08/1999, **NRS** 23/07/1999). This served to reinforce the perception that unions are unruly. The old convention of giving less coverage to negotiations and more coverage to strike action also reinforced the perception of unions being incapable of negotiating. It created an impression that their only mode of communication was strike action, which was negatively represented. The Unions' right to strike was also often overlooked in these reports.

CRIME & RACE

Historically the media used racial identifiers to distinguish black and white people from each other. Whilst white people were not always racially marked, black people's skin colour was used as an explanation for their behaviour. This supported the apartheid propaganda "swart gevaar", that blacks were dangerous and were a threat to the social order. Whilst South Africa is in a post-apartheid era where racial oppression has been constitutionally removed it was interesting to find that some of these stereotypes about black criminality still existed in the media.

Crime reporting focussed mainly on the crime event, that is, the what and where. Explanation, context and cause of a crime, the why and how was left out. This reinforced the historical perception that race was the cause of crime.

8 Crime: Type
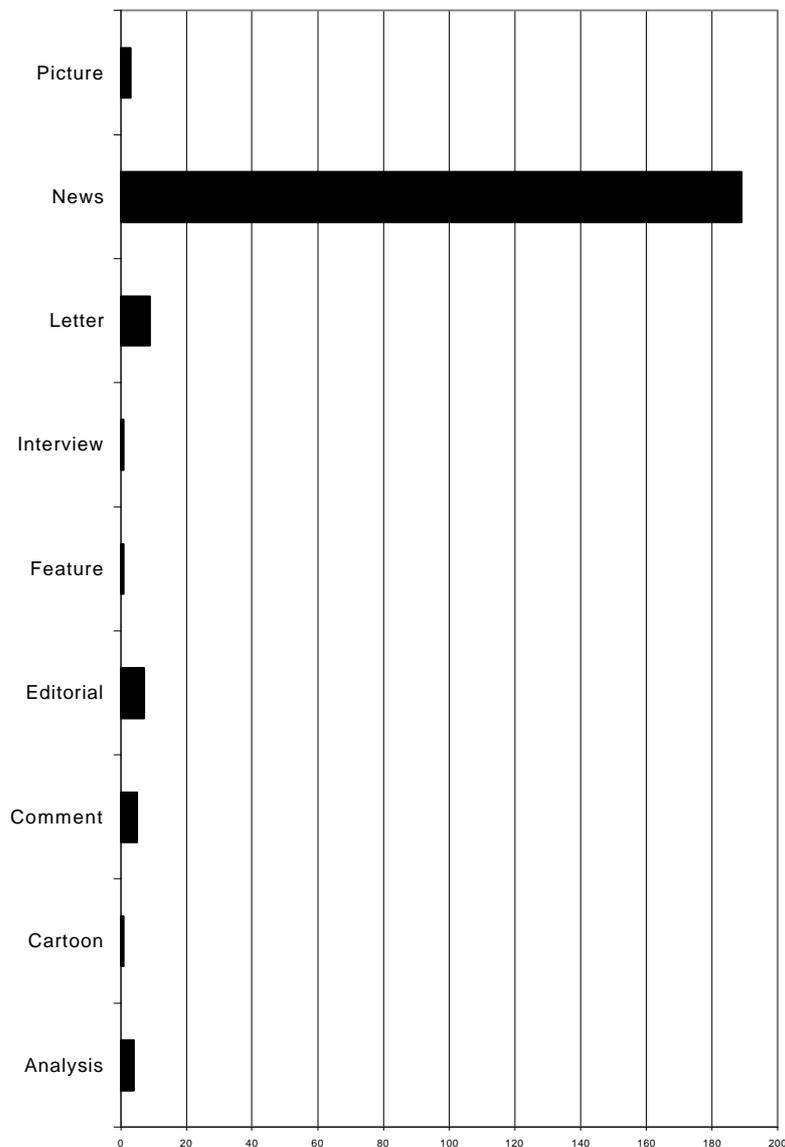
Graph8 shows the type of crime stories that had a racial element either challenging or supporting black criminality. It is quite clear that there were more reports on crime events, rather than explanation through analysis, feature, and comment etc. The second highest were letters. Most letters were blatantly racist and blamed the present government for the current crime situation. Editorial comments also blamed the rise in crime on government's inability to curb crime. It is interesting to see that analysis was less than letters. Following are examples of letters from different newspapers:

"Gravy train riders must disembark"
(*Sunday World* 25/07/1999:11)
"South Africa's Sodom and Gomorrah"
(*Sowetan* 9/08/1999)
"South Africa needs a Margaret Thatcher"
(*Daily News* 10/08/1999:13)
"Government's every move is racist"
(*Business Day* 21/07/1999:10)

The two newspapers that dealt with crime differently were the *Business Day* and *Sowetan*. The *Business Day* frequently carried analytical articles on crime. It mainly reported on crime as a social issue. It provided socio-analysis, explanation, and context for the crimes it reported. In doing this the *Business Day* was able to avoid racial stereotyping.

**The *Sowetan* personalised victims and followed up stories that added a personal and human aspect to the crime event reported. This reporting resulted in the paper avoiding racial stereotyping. These media proved to be the exceptions

The following table gives the breakdown of the propositions identified for the topic of crime.

Proposition	Total Items (>6)	Challenge	Neutral	Support
10- Blacks are incompetent and incapable of running anything by themselves	21	9	1	11
10A- Black government leads to crime and corruption	16	6	1	9
10B- Black government leads to anarchy and the breakdown of social order	14	5	3	6
10D- Black government fails	9	4	1	4
11- Affirmative action promotes undeserving people	10	5	4	1
12D- Coloureds are degenerate and gangsters	12	2	3	7
12E- Afrikaners are bigot	9	0	1	8
12F- White farmers are cruel and exploitative	10	1	1	8
13- Does the item support	9	7	1	1

a racist worldview				
14- All whites are racist	8	0	4	4
1- Blacks are criminal	33	4	6	23
1A- It is normal for blacks to commit crime	20	1	3	16
1B- Black criminals are brutal and inhuman	24	1	4	19
1C- Blacks want revenge against innocent whites	15	2	0	13
1D- Serious crime occurs primarily in white areas	12	4	1	7
3- Blacks are irrational	7	1	3	3
4A- African traditions are barbaric	8	2	2	4
4F- Blacks need whites to advance	8	1	2	5
7- Black lives are unimportant	19	4	3	12
7B- Blacks don't need privacy	9	0	0	9
8- Black foreigners threaten South African society	7	1	2	4
8A- Black foreigners are criminals	13	0	4	9

There is a clear clustering of some of the propositions. Most notably proposition 1, which deals with stereotypes relating to crime. Propositions 1, 1A, 1b 1C and 1D are all dominated by items that supported the propositions. Proposition 1 is also the most mentioned proposition. While each of these propositions is worth highlighting separately they often occur in conjunction with one another, and as discussed later in this section serve to reinforce notions of black people as inherently criminal.

The next cluster that is evident is the 10 series of propositions. Propositions 10, 10A and 10B are also directly linked to the theme of crime. While they are not as heavily dominated by items that support the propositions, they do still outnumber the other items.

The third clear clustering of propositions can be seen in the 12 series of propositions. 12D relates to coloureds being degenerates, and this is linked to notions of coloureds being represented as gangsters. The other 12 series relate to crimes in the rural areas and involve the stereotype of white farmers as being cruel and exploitative and Afrikaners being bigots.

There are also relatively high numbers of propositions 7, 7A and 7B, which as discussed in the section on black lives links not only to the sense of black lives as worth less, but also somehow serves to justify their deaths as a sort of retribution.

Blacks are naturally criminal

Whilst there were instances where the media challenged racist notions there were also various way in which the media across the board, supported racist notions in their way of reporting.

The second highest proposition related to crime found in the monitoring was proposition 1A (It is natural for blacks to commit crime). This occurred in instances where race was the only explanation for committing crime. An example of this was a report on *Kfm* (14/07/1999:1800) which was about the eminent collapse of farms. The report dealt with the escalation of crime as a result of the farm crisis. The chairperson of the Agricultural Union was quoted as having said that the farm crisis will lead blacks to crime. The reporter did not interrogate this and the manner of reporting implied that farmers who are jobless would find other means of surviving however black farmers would resort to crime.

Another similar example was a report on *e-tv* (8/08/1999:19:00) about increasing crime on weekends in the rural areas. The essence of the story was that the police have found that the best way to keep black farm workers (the footages used in this story were the racial indicators) from committing crime was to get them to play football on weekends. The item implied that the moment blacks are left to their own devices they commit crime. There was also an insert of a farm worker who said that now that he played soccer, he did not have time to get into mischief. Apparently then the possible cause of crime in this area is that when workers are bored and do not have work, they commit crime. It is interesting to see that boredom for blacks leads to crime whilst it does not have the same effect on white farmers.

The reporter mentioned that this method has reduced crime statistics, yet there was no information on the kinds of crimes committed. These could have been crimes of Violence Against Women, crimes they commit against each other or against farmers, however with the recent history of farm attacks (which were racialised), one would be led to assume that the crimes committed were against farm owners.

Racial identification of crime suspects

Racial identifiers or racial profiling in crime stories is used for various reasons e.g. when the police are looking for the suspect. When the relevance of racial profiling in a story is not clear, it can lead to stereotyping and generalisation that can cause harm to a racial group.

There were very few instances where criminals were identified by their race however in some instances the ethnicity of the suspect would be mentioned, and its interesting to note that in South Africa ethnicity is sometimes used as a racial marker. An example of this is a report on *NRS*- (15/07/1999:4) which was about the police acting against crime on the Natal Coast. The article used terms like: "gang *preys* (like hyenas)…on *tourists* (which can be read as white)", "Growing crime wave in *Zululand* "(use of a colonial term which refers to an ethnic peace of land rather than a province). The use of these terms clearly marked the race of the perpetrators and the victims of the crimes.

Images were also used to mark the race of the suspect. These included photographs, video footage, and graphics. There was a story in **The Star** (03/08/1999:3) about men dressed in black, who went around robbing malls. The graphic used an example of the kind of uniform they wore and showed a picture of a black man. This was not an identikit picture but a graphic used to illustrate what these men looked like. This served to reinforce the stereotype that blacks are criminals because there was very to be learnt about these men except for their race.

Reporting on Vigilante Groups

The reporting on vigilante groups and "taxi violence" lacked explanation and context. Most of it was event oriented. Vigilantes were depicted as brutal, inhumane, and spontaneous, with very little sense of justice. Whilst this might be a fact the representation of chanting blacks setting cars on fire and beating up people made them appear to be violent and barbaric (This was more the case on television). The explanation for this behaviour was race. Vigilantism was not explained throughout the monitoring period. There were no attempts to look at issues of crowd psychology and the intricate social factors contributing to the formation of these vigilante groups such as the lack of trust in police. Following are a few examples of event oriented reports:

"Cops unable to rescue man held by vigilante"
(**Sowetan** 21/07/1999:3)
"Kangaroo courts deal with criminals"
(**SABCTV** 22/07/1999:1)
"People strip homes and burn contents in Alex"
(**SABCTV** 29/07/1999:2)

Taxi violence events were reported as though they are inevitable. Sometimes there would be no explanation as to how the fight began and what the caused the conflict. The people interviewed about these events were the police, politicians, and/or community members, the people involved in this violence were rarely accessed to tell their side of the story. The following were such reports:

"Taxi owner shot dead"
(**RSG** 05/08/1999:5)
"Police investigating murder of taxi owner"
(**RSG** 15/07/1999:9)
"Taxi wars in Cape Town continue to claim lives"
(**e-tv** 19/07/1999:5)
"Taxi driver escapes death"
(**Ukhozi**(28/07/1999:6)

Reporting on Coloureds

Reports on Coloured people were characterised by gangsterism, rape, and violent crimes. Interestingly an analysis of the break down of the location of crime reveals that most crime stories that had a racial dimension came from the Western Cape. There were rarely any different stories about the Cape Coloureds. Alternatively the

reports would be about vigilante groups threatening to take the law into their own hands.

The lack of explanation on the social factors contributing to the culture of gangsterism and violence in these areas made it seem as though these acts were inevitable in coloured areas. Some reports would detach any human feelings in crimes reported, for example, " Another Western Cape teenager gang-raped" (*NRS* 12/07/1999:2), with no context provided and the crime presented as though it is ordinary.

Reporting on the proposed gun control bill

The reporting on crime in some instances would be linked to government inefficiency and incapability to deal with crime. The link between crime and the present government would be made indirectly, for example, there would be comparisons of the crime situation with past government and how things have got out of hand with this new government. An interesting debate that clearly displayed this "alleged government criminality" was that of the proposed gun control bill.

Reporting on reactions to the Bill was racially polarised. Whites are the legal gun owners that the government wants to disarm and blacks are the illegal owners who use guns to further their criminal activities. There were also indirect links between guns used during the liberation struggle and those that are responsible for criminal activities. The *Citizen* comment "Tightening gun laws" said that most criminals use AK47 from other countries and "some left overs from the liberation struggle". Below the comment there was a short piece on McBrides' clearance over the escort agency case and a mention that he was investigated for alleged gun smuggling for which he was not persecuted, (*Citizen* 13/07/99:12).

Following are some examples of items that were also racially polarised:

"Pro-gun lobbyists campaign against drafting of a tough gun"
(*e-tv* 12/07/1999:3)
"Gun owners march on parliament"
(*Kfm* 15/07/1999:1)

AUDIENCES

Given the historical separation of SA society during apartheid, an analysis of the target-specific mediums' assists in understanding the prevailing racial perceptions within these media and their audiences.

The two audiences analysed here are the black market and the Afrikaans-speaking market. The black target mediums are represented by *Ilanga* and *Ukhozi*, (predominantly KwaZulu- Natal focussed), *Kaya FM* (Gauteng) and *Sowetan*, *City Press* and *Sunday World* (national). *Die Burger* (Western Cape), *Rapport* and *Radio Sonder Grense* (national) represent the mediums targeted at an Afrikaans-speaking audience.

Black Market

Ilanga and *Ukhozi* have a racially and ethnically defined audience. *Ilanga* acts as a community reporter with its main focus on KZN, (83% of all stories), and *Ukhozi* has a more balanced national coverage. Our monitoring shows that they display similar trends in their reporting.

The majority of their items covered, focussed on crime, making up 35% of monitoring for both mediums. Their reporting supported implications that all blacks are criminal, and that they are inhuman and brutal. They also reinforced perceptions that black lives are unimportant and that they die in large numbers. *Ukhozi* did raise the issue of xenophobia, supporting the perceptions that black foreigners are criminal and that illegal immigrants are black. They also generally challenged propositions that relate to black government being incapable and leading to crime and corruption. *Ilanga* reinforced the stereotype of all Indians being corrupt. It is interesting to note that the previous editor of *Ilanga* was forced to resign over racist comments about Indian people.

Ilanga's and *Ukhozi's* coverage of labour issues made up 13% and 11% of stories monitored respectively. They generally reinforced perceptions of blacks being incompetent, stupid and lazy. *Ukhozi* challenged a racist worldview but reinforced stereotype that blacks need whites to advance.

In the period monitored *Ilanga* did not cover Africa at all and *Ukhozi*'s focus was mainly on the ceasefire agreement in the DRC. They supported the idea that Africa was ridden with disease and disaster and violence while acknowledging SA's role in peace talks as positive. Neither medium significantly addressed the issue of affirmative action and black empowerment. Their reporting of politics, government and corruption differed. *Ilanga* supported propositions regarding black government, highlighting their pro-IFP political leaning, while *Ukhozi* generally challenged these perceptions.

Both *Ilanga* and *Ukhozi* significantly reinforced the propositions dealing with black dignity. The impression gained was that black lives are not valued (proposition 7)

The *Sowetan*, *City Press* and *Sunday World* all have a wider geographical target and a more inclusive focus than the KZN based mediums. In the period monitored all three newspapers had a significant focus on racism, 26%, 43% and 30% respectively, of all stories monitored. These stories made up the majority of all topics covered for these three newspapers. *Kaya FM* news covered a wide range of issues and was less topic focussed with crime, international politics and economics and business all getting 16% coverage.

Our monitoring suggests that these three black targeted papers deal with challenging and/or reinforcing racial stereotypes in very similar ways.

The *Sowetan*, *City Press* and *Sunday World* reported crime as a social evil and tended to remove the racial dimension. Where crime had an overt racial component the *Sowetan*, *City Press* and *Kaya FM* generally supported the propositions that blacks are criminals who are brutal and inhuman, and incapable of running anything themselves. They also supported propositions 7 & 7B. The idea that blacks want revenge against innocent whites was also perpetuated. During the monitoring period the *Sunday World's* limited crime stories were challenging to the prevailing stereotypes. There was very little coverage of crimes where whites were victims. This emphasises black lives as important as opposed to other media (whose primary focus is white victims) and fits into these media's market focus.

General coverage of labour issues was dominated by the public servants strike, but these mediums covered the issue without highlighting any racial bias and/or perceptions. Those stories that were covered presented a balance between reinforcing and challenging prevailing stereotypes within the black labour sector. All these mediums generally covered affirmative action and black empowerment stories positively.

Several trends emerged in the coverage of racism. In all four black targeted mediums over 90% of all stories dealing with racism as a social issue challenged a racist worldview. They challenged the notion that blacks need whites to advance and that blacks are racist. There was also a reinforcement of black lives being important and dignified.

Their depiction of whites, however, still overwhelmingly perpetuated the stereotype that all whites are racist. The increase in racially motivated attacks on black people during the monitoring period resulted in the support of perceptions that white farmers are cruel and exploitative and that Afrikaners are bigoted.

Africa was depicted in a relatively positive light although issues of disaster, disease and violence were perpetuated. The idea that there can be no African renaissance and that Africa does not contribute to world civilization were challenged.

Witchcraft, ritual murders and initiation rites were generally portrayed as barbaric traditions and although 'academic' or 'expert' opinion is often quoted there was no challenge of the prevailing attitude towards these issues. Examples: (*Sowetan*: 140/07/1999) "Ritual murders cause fear in Qwa-Qwa villages"; "The evil of body parts for sale" and (*City Press*: 25/07/1999) "It is unafrican to point out a witch"

These mediums' coverage of government largely challenged prevailing stereotypes of incompetent, undemocratic black government, paying close attention to news of efficient and effective government. The *Sowetan* gave extended positive coverage of Minister Steve Tshwete's visits to police stations and announcements for crime fighting measures. Corruption stories mostly reinforced prevailing stereotypes of black government. The issue of the Land Bank MD, Helen Dolny, being accused of racism, corruption and greed was reported as justification of proposition 14. It is interesting to note that Ms Dolny was continuously referred to as Joe Slovo's widow, implying that the charges levelled against her were either impossible or doubly damning.

These mediums generally challenged attitudes that black lives are unimportant. The *Sowetan* particularly, personalised black victims and followed-up crime stories through to the trial and conviction of the perpetrators where this did occur. This trend in the *Sowetan* supports its role as a community paper.

All these black target mediums focused on a black reality without overtly highlighting issues of race. Where racism was prevalent they challenge prevailing stereotypes about black people but their coverage of white people tended to support the idea that all whites are racists. Black run mediums targeted at black audiences does not mean that the perpetuation of racial stereotypes disappears.

Afrikaans

These mediums are all targeted at Afrikaans-speakers. Monitoring revealed that *Die Burger* and *Rapport* are clearly aimed at a white conservative audience while *Radio Sonder Grense* (*RSG*) seemed to highlight community issues that have a direct bearing on its audience.

Die Burger, *Rapport* and *RSG,* through their crime reporting all support the propositions that blacks are inhuman and brutal criminals and that blacks want revenge against innocent whites. They also reinforced the idea that black lives are unimportant. *Die Burger* supported the xenophobic notions that all black foreigners are criminal and threaten SA society.

Labour issues reported by *Die Burger* and *Rapport* supported the perpetuating stereotypes that affirmative action promotes undeserving people and is racial discrimination against whites. *RSG* main coverage in the monitoring period was labour and unemployment: 24% of all stories. They challenged the perceptions about affirmative action but like the other two mediums strongly supported the notion that blacks are irrational. *Die Burger* also supported the notion that blacks lower standards. It is interesting to note that the paper highlights this in its sports coverage.

Die Burger largely supported perceptions that blacks are racist and want revenge against innocent whites, and that blacks need whites to advance. 60% of all propositions raised under the topic of racism supported their assertions. The *Rapport* and *Die Burger* also challenged the idea that Afrikaners are bigots and that white farmers are exploitative and cruel. *RSG* challenged a racist worldview but supported the perception that blacks want revenge against innocent whites.

Coverage of Africa generally supported the idea that the continent is ridden with disease, disaster and violence and that blacks are incompetent. *Die Burger* did however, imply that there could be an African renaissance.

Die Burger's coverage of government and corruption overwhelmingly supported all the propositions that reinforce blacks as incompetent and incapable of running anything by themselves, black government leading to crime and corruption and damaging society. Black government is also reinforced as being undemocratic and power hungry. They supported the perception that affirmative action does not work and that blacks need white to advance. Their coverage also supported a racist world-view. 17% of all *Die Burger* stories monitored dealt with politics and government. During the monitoring period the *Rapport* had limited coverage of these issues and none were reported by *RSG*. Note: these items may have been included in news coverage but did not have any reference to race.

These mediums largely reproduced racial stereotypes. Black lives were generally regarded as unimportant and black people are portrayed as irrational and stupid and lead to a lowering of standards. The worldview they reflect is rooted in prevailing racial stereotypes about black people.

REPORTING RACISM:
REPORTING ON RACISM, RACIAL INCIDENTS AND RACISM IN THE SOCIETY

The table below reveals the type of coverage given to the topic code of racism across the media. Racist incidents in the form of hard news were the highest source of racism coverage. Analysis and comment items were also significant but what is most interesting was the significant number of letters which were published and which chose racism as the subject matter. Letters accounted for 27% of all print media coverage on the subject of racism.

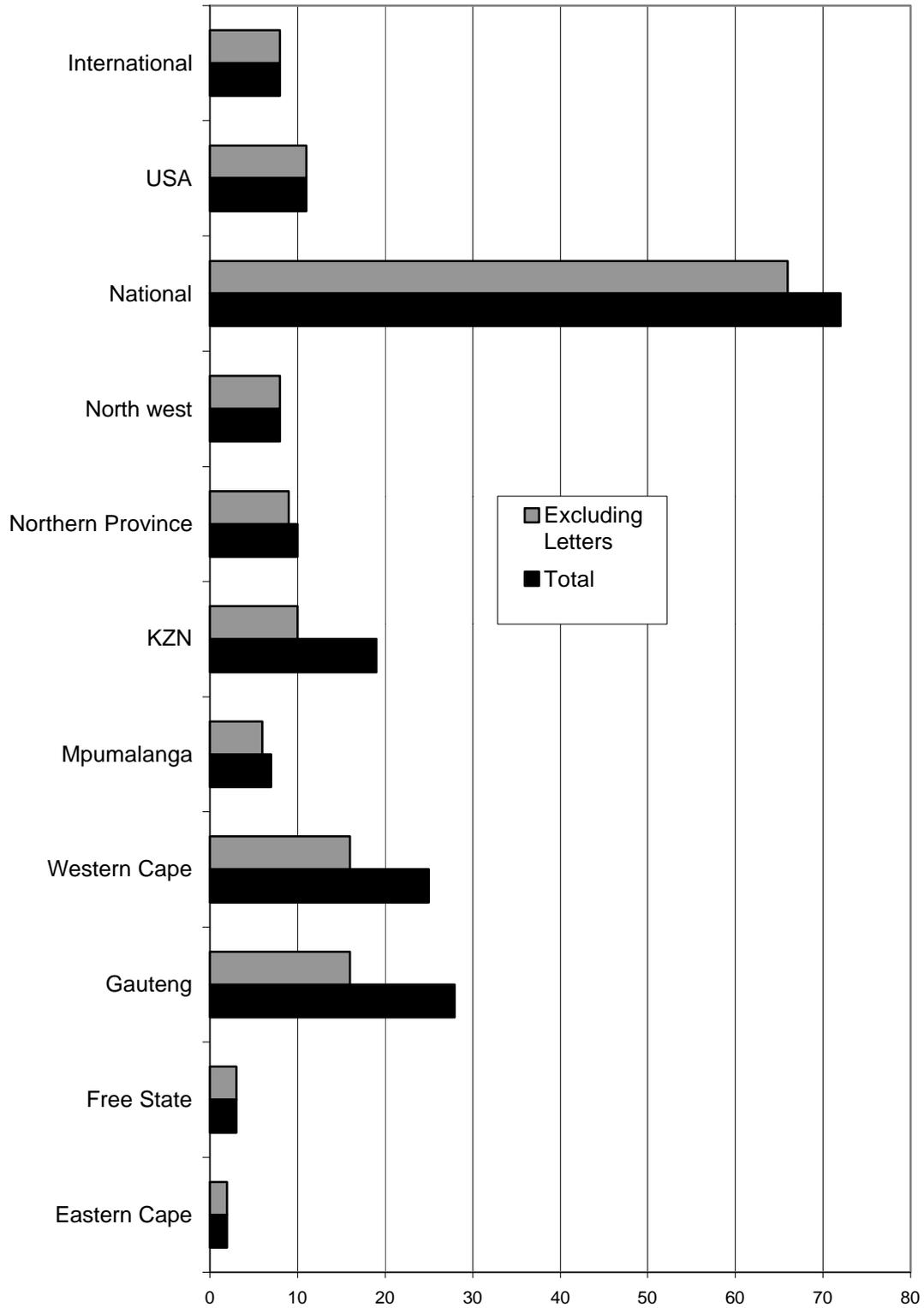| Type	Count
Analysis	24
Cartoon	2
Comment	24
Editorial	5
Interview	2
Letter	39
News	97
Picture	1
Review	1

A number of issues and events comprised the coverage evidenced in this table. These included racially motivated attacks on farm workers, analysis and commentary on the DP's political strategy, racism in the police force and other government structures, racist accusations between columnists, parliaments decision to declare apartheid a crime and commentary on the necessity of challenging racism.

Daily Print	10.6
TV	7.4
Radio	7.6
Weekly Papers	20.9

The table above shows the percentage of reports on racism as a proportion of all items monitored for this project. Predictably the weekly print media showed the highest proportion of coverage. The weekly print media, because of their deadline period, adopt a more issues based and analytical approach to their serious news reporting and hence are more likely to cover racism as an issue than the daily print and broadcast media.

The influence of letters on the spread of coverage by location is worth mentioning. The following graph demonstrates the spread of coverage on the subject of racism and shows that the exclusion of letters impacts most particularly on the coverage of racism in the urban centres of the Western Cape and Gauteng.

10 Location of Racism Topic Code Stories

Chart legend:
- Excluding Letters
- Total

Categories (top to bottom): International, USA, National, North west, Northern Province, KZN, Mpumalanga, Western Cape, Gauteng, Free State, Eastern Cape

X-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80

Proportionally the drop in National coverage is less significant. Excluding letters from the totals reveals a reasonably balanced spread of regional coverage, suggesting that issues of racism are particularly evenly covered. However it also fits into the idea of the peripheral provinces and areas of the country being less "enlightened" and that racism is still significant in these areas. This perception is evident in an article in the *City Press* (25/07/1999):

> "It can only happen in Mpumalanga, where there seems to be seems to be one law for blacks and another for whites."

The article labels the justice system "lopsided" and quotes from other cases where judgements were apparently harsh if the defendant was black. The article aims at depicting the system as racist. Under the headline, "jailed for calling a white girl his 'sweetheart'" the article fails to mention until the 11th paragraph that the "girl" was only 16 and therefore a minor, that the defendant was in fact convicted of indecent assault and that his defence was that he did not know she was still a child because she was "well built". The item clearly ignored the evidence and instead determinedly set out to foster the notion that in Mpumalanga, whites are racists. Even worse, the article relied on the viewpoint of a "source" that witnessed the trial rather than the journalist himself.

Interesting too was the relatively high number of international and USA racism stories. Chief among these was an attack on a Jewish community centre in the USA by a rightwing gunman. The citing of racism in other countries suggested that racism was an international problem and generally served to undermine the incidents and import of racism locally.

The discourses surrounding racism have two seemingly opposed features. On the one hand there is a clear and obvious condemnation of racism in all the media monitored (proposition 13). However in examining some of the propositions which came out in the monitoring it is evident that racial identities and stereotypes are still used and that the notion of "anti white" is often validated through references to black people as wanting revenge against whites and for being racist themselves. For example, "ANC taken over apartheid mantle" (*Business Day*: 13/08/1999), "Government is to punish apartheid" (*Citizen*: 20/07/1999) and "Punishing Apartheid" (*Citizen*: 21/07/1999). In these items the discourse subtly points to a 'reverse racism'. "who will be 'punished' now, that we've had the TRC, and our constitution already forbids discrimination on the basis of race" (*Citizen*: 21/07/1999).

Allegations of racism are denounced as not being useful; systematic racism is denied, sometimes using false logic:

> "We do not believe it is helpful to describe these as 'racist attacks' when so much of the violence that occurs in our society involves people from different race groups. What makes one act racist and another plain criminal?"

> (*Citizen*: 20/07/1999)

Further there is little evidence in the media of any attempts to demystify white people as all being racist. White Farmers were universally depicted as cruel, while Afrikaners

were commonly viewed as bigoted. The table below includes the highest scoring propositions for the topic code Racism.

Type	Total	Challenge	Neutral	Support
11B: letters	4	25%	0	75%
11B	15	33%	27%	40%
1C: letters	4	0	0	100%
1C	14	0	7%	93%
13: letters	16	81%	0	19%
13	76	74%	17%	9%
14:Letters	8	13%	25%	63%
14	40	8%	35%	57%
12E	19	16%	5%	79%
12F	9	0	0	100%

The content of letters suggests that the print media use their letters pages to express conservative and racially stereotyped views. The table compares the percentage spread of letters versus other types of items. The table covers the most significant propositions emerging from the racism topic. The proposition 11B - Blacks are racist, was more vociferously expounded in the letters pages than in the rest of the print media. 75% of letters supported it, while for the rest, it was more even. Related to the discourse of blacks as racists was that of black people wanting revenge against whites. Interestingly, this proposition was commonly supported both in the letters and other items in the print media.

Proposition 13 (challenging or supporting a racist worldview) was equally challenged both in letters and in the other content of the press. However the neutral and supportive content of both letters and other items in the print media for the notion that all whites are racist (Proposition 14) outweighed any challenges to the assumption and seemingly contradicted any rejection of racism being made.

Overall while the media worked to challenge and condemn racism, it maintained and supported stereotypes of black revenge and black racism on the one hand and white racism and bigotry on the other.

Possibly the most disappointing aspect of the coverage of racism was the absence of any substantial coverage of its continuing underlying causes - patterns of ownership, the limited social resources available for poverty alleviation and social development and the continued dehumanisation of the poor in both urban and rural south Africa.

CONCLUSION

The methodology used in this study was deliberately chosen to achieve two main ends: first and foremost to reveal the extent to which racial stereotypes occur in the South African media. But secondly to act as a constructive critique of the media rather than pose a threat to its independence.

The monitoring revealed some interesting results which over the six week period suggested certain significant patterns of reporting. In many cases as with reporting of crime and of Africa, the negativity we have found associated with them seemed obvious and yet the racial element of many of these reports has needed to be recognised so that it can be challenged.

Through this report it has become clear that stereotypical representations of race are unfortunately still common in the media. The monitoring and analysis have suggested that the conventional notions of news, of Africa and the legacy of apartheid era ideologies and discourses all functioned to produce some harmful portrayals of both black and white people.

To reiterate what was said at the outset, this report is not intended to label the media or portions of it as racist and thereby to discredit it, but rather to challenge the media to be aware both of their power and their responsibility. The pressures of the news room, of deadlines and advertising sales all make it extremely difficult for the media to carefully monitor their own performance. So much of the evidence in this report is drawn from patterns of reporting which, although almost invisible on a daily basis, become clear when seen over a period of time and across an array of news and media outlets. Thus the aim of this report has been to provide such an opportunity to assist the media in evaluating themselves.

It is doubtful whether any of the major media are intent on any form of racist brainwashing. However, the values and attitudes common in our society are no strangers to those who staff the news media and it is often only when stereotyping and prejudicial reporting is pointed out that the media become aware of the patterns which they have established.

The media need to recognise their power, their freedom and their responsibility and to explore ways in which they can challenge the damaging effects of racism and fight against the narrow perceptions which are an unfortunate inheritance of colonialism and apartheid.

The media should, both individually and through their collective bodies actively seek ways of ridding their pages, bulletins and programmes of harmful racial stereotypes. Creative ways of challenging racism should be investigated, conventions overturned, habits interrogated and news values questioned. As the world's media becomes more and more global, so the mark of our own media needs to become more evident both so that it is distinguishable and so that it survives.

It is all too easy in the days of satellite and digital technology to view the world through the eyes of CNN, to see a world view from a first world, American

perspective. For our media to replicate that is to add no value to our lives as Citizens and to detract from our perceptions, understanding and value of ourselves. In accepting the challenge the media provide a new agenda and the opportunity for a new set of news values.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Astroff, R., J. & Fair, E., J. (1991). Constructing Race and Violence: US News Coverage and the Signifying Practices of Apartheid. In the Journal of Communication. Autumn 1991 Vol41. No.4 University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia USA

Brookes, H. (1995) "Suit, Tie & a Touch of Juju." The Ideological construction of Africa: A critical Discourse Analysis of News on Africa in the British Press. JHB: University of the Witwatersrand.

Curran, J., & Gurevitch, M. (1996). Mass Media and Society. New York: Arnold.

Duncan, N., (1995). Discourses on public violence and the reproduction of racism. South Africa: University of Western Cape.

Fowler, R. (1991). Language in The News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press. London: Routledge.

Fuller, J. (1996). News Values: Ideas for an Information Age. London: University of Chicago Press.

Gabriel, J. (1998).White Wash: Racialised Politics and the Media. New York: Routledge.

Gans, H. (1980). Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time. New York: Vintage.

Grier, H., W. & Cobbs, P., M. (1992) Black Rage. USA: Basic Books.

Gurevitch, M. et al. (1994). Culture, Society, and the Media. London: Routledge.

hooks, b. (1992). Black Looks: race and representation. New York: Routledge.

hooks, b. (1995). Killing rage: ending racism. New York: Penguin Books.

Lester, P., M. (1996). Images That Injure: Pictorial Stereotypes in the Media. London: PRAEGER.

Lewis, B. (1998). The Historical Roots of Racism. In the American Scholar Vol. 67. No.1 Winter. 1998.

MMP (1998) Africa in the News: Print News Coverage. Media Mask Vol. 3 No 2 October.

Moeller, S., D. (1999) Compassion Fatigue: How The Media Sell Famine, War, And Death. New York: Routledge.

Rutherford, J. (1990). Identity: Community, Culture, Difference. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Said, E., W. (1989). Representing the Colonised: Anthropology's Interlocuters. In Critical Inquiry. Winter 1989 Vol 15 No2 University of Chicago.

Said, E., W. (1985). An Ideology of Difference. In Critical Inquiry. Winter 1985. Vol 12

Said, E., W. (1993). Culture and Imperialism. London: Chatto & Windus.

Shohat, E. & Stam, R. (1994). Unthinking Eurocentrism. London: Routledge.

Van Dijk, T., A. (1991). Racism and the Press: Critical studies in Racism and Migration. London: Routledge.

Van Dijk, T., A. (1997). Discourses as Structure and Process. London: SAGE.

Van Dijk, T., A. (1997). Discourse as Social Interaction. London: SAGE.

West, C. (1994). Race Matters . New York: Vintage Books.

West, C. & Gates, L., R. jr. (1996) The Future of Race. New York: Vintage Books.

Wicomb, Z. (1996). Postcoloniality and Posmodernity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa. Presented at the Association of University English Teachers of South Africa conference. University of Western Cape, 30 June-5July 1996.