

“The Business of Promoting Women in South Africa in Business
Schools and Glossies part 2”

Prepared by Ruvimbo Goredema

Research Assistant for Professor Salazar

Understanding the Rhetorical Arguments made by women's Magazines in Post- Apartheid South Africa

This paper seeks to unpack some of the arguments made by women's magazine that contribute to creating or rather designing an identity for South African women. This report for the most part has been tackling how women are represented, recruited and promoted in business schools through various websites; however it is necessary to look critically at how other media in South Africa promotes women into seeking a better quality of life. Magazines function effectively as media that shows what comprises a better quality of life, through the use of advertisements and feature articles that include personal testimony. This functions rhetorically, because we can then assess how arguments are structured in order to see how persuasive this medium really is for women. Nevertheless, it is also important to take into account the historical background of the magazine industry in South Africa, as it has a key role in influencing today's content, and how women are trying to re-design themselves.

A Little History

During the apartheid era, the South African government implemented laws that limited those as defined as black, coloured and Asian access to mainstream media. This was in terms of ownership, and it also limited their contribution as content producers. They also restricted contributions women could make, and their representation. Consequently, according to a report handed to the TRC in 1997 by the ANC, there was no advancement for the disadvantages races, or for women in all areas of representation, control and ownership in the media.

There are countless examples of the media industry's tardiness in redressing gender imbalances. Little, if any, was done to advance the cause of women media workers. On the contrary, the African National Congress believes that mass media actively restricted the career advancement of women media workers. The African National Congress believes this practice was a deliberate attempt to suppress the rights and advancements of women media workers and to ensure a male hegemony in newsrooms and boardrooms (anc.org.za: 23 November 2007)

Consumers of media content could see how this oppression materialised through biased advertising and censorship the dominant ideologies of racism and gender discrimination. When there was representation, it was often questionable how it portrayed the different groups in a white owned press. After the initial transformation from the apartheid system to the new democracy, the government noted the trends in globalisation, so the government together with industry realised that in order to compete in the global market, and be called a truly democratic nation, the issue of racial segregation and gender oppression in the media had to be redressed.

This led to consumers slowly beginning to see more integration within the content of magazines and television. More content was produced by the previously oppressed and it was accessible to all consumers. Furthermore, more content by the previously marginalised groups made overt headway into the mainstream white media.

In terms of race, trends could be seen in marketing, as adverts started to use models from each racial category to represent a product. Granted, it was somewhat contrived, but the stereotypes of what people had understood each racial group to be like were being more and more satirised to give an overall picture of unity, progression, forgiveness and reconciliation. The contrasts were no longer a blatant “us versus them”, but were more vigilant attempts to avoid racist representation by looking at the threads of commonality. This was the technique used in the beginning of the new democratic media, and it is still in use today. It is also being constantly remodelled to where in 2006 Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) groups and Naspers worked together to encourage black South Africans to have the shares in Multichoice and Media 24 – powerful television and print culture producers in Africa.

For women, particularly in the magazine industry, corporate-based publishing companies like the ones mentioned above introduced international women’s magazines such as *Elle* and *Maire Claire*. These magazines functioned in further opening South African women to international fashion and lifestyle trends, and created competition for locally produced magazines such as *True Love*, *Sarie* and *Rooi Rose* who eventually adopted their methods of business management through imitating form and content of these foreign based publications. On the other hand, the fact that international magazines saw it fit to come into the South African market, worked in reinforcing South African as a global player with a lucrative market.

In summary, through a liberalised economy and an uplifted free press, the international media could use its vast resources to come and set up local versions of their publications which have become resoundingly successful. International women’s magazines in South Africa have for the most part preserved their foreign style and tradition, yet there is still a question of how sincerely they have incorporated local culture and value systems. This question becomes important when trying to explain how South African women now define their femininity and how they see themselves as contributing members of society locally and globally.

The Function of Magazines

Millions of women all over the world read women’s magazines. They are so attractive with their large headlines and bright colours, a true feast for the eyes. Just looking at pictures of pretty people, places, and things can satisfy many of the readers, without them having to truly absorb anything that has been written. The visual rhetoric that magazines produce is most beneficial to marketers who wish to sell their products; this will be discussed further in the paper. But for now we all have had the experience of reading or seeing

others read these magazines in public spaces such as dentists' waiting rooms or hair salons and re-read several times before the next exciting issue. The question of whether a text becomes more persuasive the first time of reading it or after several readings is something that needs to be explored. The text become like reference material that the reader can go back to. For example, looking at recipes, how to apply make up, taking the magazine to the hair salon so that the hairdresser can copy a style that is popular are several ways we can measure how often readers go back to the text they have read.

"It is hard to resist reading them because they deal with women's lives and desires; they show ideal bodies, represent ideal careers and ideal relationships. They also offer advice and hope through many voices, which range from topic specialists to the person like 'you and me' – the 'I' narrator (Caldas-Coultard 1996:251). Women are drawn to them because these magazines are a space about being female and the trouble and joys that come with it. And by the end of reading one, there is no pressure or higher expectation for an intellectual or political challenge, one can just relax, its easy reading pleasure.

George Herbert Mead a sociologist derived a particular notion of the "looking-glass self". He claimed that "our sense of self is derived through interaction or communication with others. We are social creatures, and our sense of identity is derived in part from what others think of us and what they expect us to be" (Priest 1996:56).

From this statement we can begin to analyse how magazines begin to build logos through the repetition of images. The repetitions portray women, different ethnicities, classes and even employments in a particular way. This in turn will "shape both the self conception and the general societal expectations associated with each image. Visually, the images create an argument, of which the end result is that such expectations translate into self-fulfilling prophecies. Priest gives the example that women might learn from the media that they are expected to become "super-moms". They may reflect these expectations in their own lives, measuring their success against a standard that comes in part from the media (Priest 1996:57-9).

For example, let us assess how women can be persuaded to being "super-moms" or to have "super-bodies". A magazine like *Shape*, *Cosmo* or *True Love* has a role in influencing consumers what the ideal woman should look like, what she should eat, how she should run their homes, raise her children and gives them instruction manuals in how to perform sexually. It is a common magazine format that an appealing image is supported by expert voice of psychologist, or a fitness trainer, or a testimony from women whose life has been transformed by taking the advice the magazine dispensed. Together these tools work in re-affirming values and attributes women should follow. However, I maintain that I would not like to remove the role of agency. People have the power to choose what images and ideals they choose to accept or reject from the media. We are not passive absorbers of media text. Yet, at the same time, even the most confident of us becomes envious of what the other has, or doubtful of our own image with the constant

bombardment of media images of what the ideal woman should be and look like. And when an authority on women's image (such as *Shape*, *O Mag*, *True Love* or *Cosmopolitan* magazine) only presents a certain race, hairstyle, body type or class continuously as their dominant ideology, if you as a woman fall outside that ideal what impact does this have on you? It is here that I would like to introduce the paradoxical arguments provided by women's magazines, when and where should women express individuality, when the ideas presented in the text aim for women to be all the same. It is also here that South Africa also adds another dynamic, in that it has a curious history regarding the function of representation and identity formation.

Magazines the site of Deliberation

Magazines, like any other persuasive form require an audience, or in this case the readership to be convinced of ideas. In South Africa there are the All Media Product Surveys (AMPS) that can give us an insight of the composition of the audience for the different magazine titles (see appendices). Glossy magazines in as much as they attract a particular type of audience, it also creates one. However, it cannot be taken for granted that women are the only audience for these magazines. There are men who enjoy the text as much as women do, yet it is not directed towards them. For example the graph below shows the readership for *Shape* magazine in 2004. As you can see there is a staggering difference.

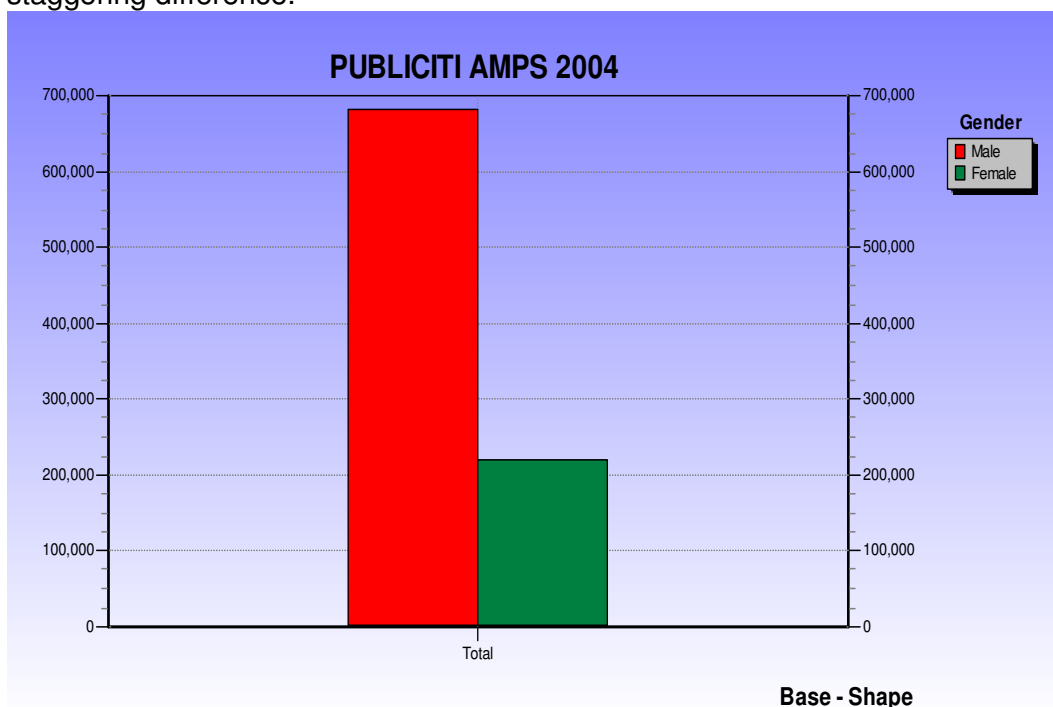


Figure 1 Male and Female Readers of *Shape* magazine 2004

Women's Magazines are targeted towards a particular audience, very obviously women. According to Prof Caldas-Coutlard (1996), in her linguistic analysis of magazines notes that because magazines are target towards

women reflects the conventional division of periodicals along gender lines. It is claimed that journalistic reporting is based on factuality and analytical forms of reporting therefore produces texts basically written for men. Women's magazines are characteristically 'female' because of the emphasis on the ideal and the emotive novelisation of events. Arguably this technique produces a strong ethos within magazines, by reporting on individual experiences women can easily identify with. Narrative mostly fictional is frequently chosen to convey femininity.

Women's magazines also have a tendency of portraying men and all their virtues as the accepted opposite of women. However, some of the feature stories and advice columns shows that there is a tension between the need to validate the centrality and the desirability of men in all women's lives (heterosexual relationships are the only relationships every discussed), and equally the decidedly resolute awareness of men as the root cause of trouble and danger for the fairer sex. Although the two sexes are always struggling they are also quite happy to be in pursuit of each other as well. This is classically illustrated by the fact that many women's glossies have a feature story, or regular column written by a man. In *Cosmo* magazine the column is called "Upfront Man" and in *True Love* it is called "His Turn". This trend has been on the increase in the last 15 years or so. Perhaps it is indicative of how women are trying to redefine their space in society by including men into their pages, as men include them into theirs, such as the work place. It seems that there is a comfortable compromise. On the other hand, by allowing men legitimacy in this forum, are women still not seeking approval and advice from their natural opposite?

The audience is not always apparent within the 'ideal' or 'inscribed reader' categories. This is where the magazine assumes "the reader is female, highly educated, image conscious, young member of a certain nationality, who shares the same moral values..." This audience is usually explicitly explained by the publishers themselves. For example, the Kenyan edition of *Cosmo* sates that their reader has the following attributes.

"She is proud of being African, though she prefers to wear her hair straight. She is just as interested in having a career as a Western woman, though perhaps more coy about sex" (www.mg.co.za :23 November 2007)

Interestingly enough, through this description of the intended audience, the Kenyan version of *Cosmo* also constructs the ideal reader, by stating her virtues. The actual reader may be very different in that she is not at all coy about sex and prefers to have her hair in a different way yet still defines herself as African.

This definition of the target audience is a deliberative argument, because it reinforces the advantages of being included in this group because they have the privilege from benefiting from the text. If they [the audience] read or are seen to be reading this magazine they by extension embody these values.

The irony is that the *Cosmo* Kenyan Edition is 30 pages wrapped inside the South African edition, it is almost like a supplement to the South African edition. The South African edition is not at all coy about sex for example; the October edition of *Cosmo* in 2007 had a captivating headline “48-Page S-Extra! 101 Sex Positions, lets hear it for the pretzel, sideways samba and mermaid” (*Cosmo* October 2007).

However, more pragmatically, magazines are about selling commodities to those who can afford them, they are a commercial vehicle of sorts. Women across many cultures are seen as the main buyers of good, whether it is to maintain the home and the upkeep of the family or to heighten their own appearance, the burden of offloading the wallet has been assigned to women. Magazines seem to exploit this cultural dynamic by reinforcing it through the avalanche of advertisement we see in magazines. “Femininity and sexuality are defined through consumerism” (Caldas-Coultard 1996:254), in that what is the epitome of either is expressed through having certain material goods in your possession. Across different types of magazines, statistical evidence proves that those in the higher LSMs buy more magazines than those in the lower. We are aware that the writers write for a certain audience in mind, women who are in LSM6-10, who are concerned about their health, their careers, looks and their sexuality and can afford to do something about it.

The editors who struggle with dominant hegemony

Croteau and Hoynes argue that the media does not passively reflect the inequalities of society, but rather the dominant hegemony of “white “middle” and upper class men who have historically controlled the media industry and media content have largely reflected their perspectives on the world. Therefore the inequalities in the social world would have affected the social organisation of the media industry that produces media products” (Croteau and Hoynes 2003:194). In essence there is nothing new or radically different about the content of women’s glossies nor has the type of content changed from the historically white, western ideal of a middle class.

There is an interpretation that the media is sexist in its portrayal of women. “There are two dominant explanations of the media’s sexism: women’s position in media organisations, and the socioeconomic organisation of the media.” (Tuchman 1979:533) Both of these statements present weaknesses. The first statement does not have strong evidence. There is pertinent existing evidence is that women are in positions of decision making power in the media, particularly in South Africa, for example Patricia Schotlemeyer is CEO of Media24, a publishing division of Naspers that holds over 65 magazine titles to its name. Added to that, editorial structures of magazines are determined by women. The second statement takes for granted that media products will change fundamentally if there is a presence of women. By the mere physical presence of women in the editorial structures, magazines can appeal to their readers’ ethos and pathos. The assumption that women are a better authority on women’s issues is at play here. However according to works done by Tuchman he points out the following

Studies have revealed that “female editors of women’s pages have virtually the same priorities and preferences as their male counterparts...women seem to have the same stereotypes as men do... Even when women do see a topic differently from men, professionalism limits the possible presentations and defuses radical critiques. More generally, it is difficult for women employees to resist ideas and attitudes associated with success in their profession, even if those ideas disparage women, for sexism, like racism, is best understood as an institutional not a personal phenomenon.” (Tuchman 1979:535)

The quote above expresses quintessentially the dilemmas of the editorial production of the magazine and why the end product is so paradoxical in its end message. Understanding that women’s magazines are a space for women to interact, unpack and consolidate the ideas the world presents to them about who they are, how they should act and what they can look like - and secondly, that magazines offer representations of the social world (usually through dominant western hegemonic ideologies). It becomes the job of the magazine editor becomes important as they are viewed as the guardians of the feminine “cult”. As earlier stated, images have many meanings, yet many of the readers agree with feminist ideologies that seek to debunk the objectification of women. But as we often see on many of the covers that grace the newsstands and magazine racks have been endorsed and constructed with objectification being condoned. Female editors and publishers with like minded ideas about the negative effects of the sexual objectification women still at the end of the day realise that this is the image that creates the biggest revenue.

Gough-Yates, interprets the role of the editor as the one powerful position of decreeing the character of femininity because they write the ‘scripture’ that is the woman’s magazine. In her eyes the magazine readers are willing “disciples, who often show unshakeable faith in particular titles that they adopted as a gospel for everyday life” (Gough-Yates 2003:14). Subscriptions provide the proof that there is a following and how far it extends. For example *Shape* magazine was reported to have the “highest subscription base of all women’s glossies – an incredible 26% of total circulation which calculate to 14 000 paid subscribers.” (touchline.co.za) in 2005. In 2007 the correct circulation figures for January –March are: *InStyle* (16,544), *True Love Babe* (16,184), *Sarie* 9114,229) (Grobler, L 2007:1)

Not all disciples like the message. Not all the preachers believe it.

As humans we are fallible, some may even interpret it as vanity because we like to read and talk about that which most echoes our experiences. One of the points made by Croteau and Hoynes is that “content is a reflection of the producers” (Croteau and Hoynes 2003:198). If we take their illustration that if “creative personnel are disproportionately “thirty somethings,” with children of their own, who draw on their own family lives for story inspiration. The result

is a disproportionate percentage of content feature children.” (Croteau and Hoynes 2003:199).

However, there is more and more pressure for editors and writers to remove themselves from these elements when producing a text. They go and find stories from women who have experienced the sort of issue they are looking for if they have not experienced it themselves. They find forensic proof to illustrate a point. In many of the magazines you will find the stories are largely based on reporting testimonies. This is a persuasive tool because the “use of the first person accounts in media discourse makes pretensions to factuality” (Caldas- Coultard 1996:262). Even so, what is more revealing about who the writers have in mind when putting together a magazine is graphically illustrated in the content.

“Texts cannot be analysed without taking into account the pictures that come with them. Magazines explore the visual interaction as much as possible. If the text is about a celebrity, a photograph is presented. [If a text is about weight loss a photograph is presented.] but the lack of photographs of participants in example sexual confessions or gossipy material or advice columns [even the use of the astrix to highlight that names have been changed] work in an argument that helps evoke the reader into a fantasy world.”

(Caldas-Coultard 1996:264)

To discuss the above quote is to look at the paradoxical function of a magazine that works negatively for the reader. A picture says a thousand words, or so the saying goes. Visually the arguments presented by magazines use pathos to create a sense of envy or to even establish a state of reception for the ideas that are being put forward. A reader of glossies usually takes a look at a magazine to judge whether it is catered for them by looking at the pictorial content which is made up of advertising, and more specifically models that are picked to represent a product or to anchor/caption a story. By interpellation I mean how the media message is “putting us in our place or positioning the addressee in relation to the addressor” (O’Shaughnessy and Stadler 2002:203). For instance, Cosmo magazine interpellates the audience as a women at the most basic level, other characteristics of how the content aspects such as the sexual orientation (only heterosexual in this case), class and even race are highlighted. How much the reader falls into the category of the interpellated depends on what the reader identifies within the content. If they cannot truly identify wit the content, they have the choice of stepping into the realm of fantasy, which can open up to views of prejudice, envy and stereotypes of the other that is represented. It can also inspire the reader to emulate the represented group by changing something in their own life to become part of the included group.

One, for example the November issue of Shape 2005 (without the supplement) is 146 pages this includes the cover and the back cover. Of those 146 pages, 81 pages contain adverts. Of these 81 pages, 45 pages are full page ads with a model of them. Stories including the editor’s letter, letters page, recipe pages and brief information snippets on health issues

amass to a total of 48 pages. Of those 48 pages stories that are anchored or captioned with a model come to 41 pages, very often two or three models a page. The representation of all the races is divided into a grand total of one black model, and three coloured models. My argument simply put is that if one does not see themselves represented in a magazine, one is tempted to think that it is not addressing them.

In a discussion I had with the then sub-editor of *Shape*, she presented an interesting view on how representation is tackled by a reader who does not fill all the expected moulds brought forward by the text.

“Yes, we can agree that there is a rapidly growing black middle class, of which I would consider myself a part. But how is this middle class defined? Through western standards and cultural habits - I am a Muslim woman, that part of me that defines my reality is not reflected here, [Shape magazine content] but my status as defined by my class in the bigger scheme of things is.” (Sameena Aimen Former sub-editor at *Shape* :2005)

If the reader accepts this argument, then two points have to be considered about the society that we live in. The first is that we have all amalgamated into one big capitalist society, where race, creed and religion fall second place to capitalist desires. The second point is that as a result of this amalgamation, we as consumers of content have no right to complain about issues representation. One white model merely acts as a beacon for the “bigger scheme” of our society and our individual needs are not a priority.

This is how we can come to agree that, “glossy magazines do tend to gloss over differences and to impart to their readership the sense that social divisions based on race, colour or ethnic background (which are by nature physically bound and therefore the very stuff of such medias) do not matter. “ (Salazar 2002:108)

The Race for Cover



Fig 2. September 2005



Fig 3. October 2005



Fig 4. November 2005

Covers for *Shape Magazine* September to November 2005

The issue of black cover models on magazines has been a very contentious issue for the last few years.

According to an article done by Nechama Brodie for The Media Online, “*Shape* uses generic, non-celebrity models. Other English titles however face very different challenges; using black or white women on perceived white titles almost always rests in poorer sales. Even international stars like Halle Berry and Iman aren’t able to break the jinx” (www.themedia.co.za).

It can be irrefutably agreed that there is use of a generic model; however, that model is always a white woman. *Shape Magazine* for the first time in its five years of publication used a black model on its birthday issue cover (October 2005 Figure 15), the cover above Greatmore Chatya, an M-net Face of Africa finalist from Zimbabwe.

Even though there are usually more white models in the magazine and on the cover, *Shape* magazine, cannot however be described as a white magazine as explicitly as *True Love* magazine can be described as a black women’s magazine. “With the exception of *Sarie* and *Rooi Rose* (both with around 70% white readership), most of South Africa’s women’s magazines boast a white readership of less than 50% of their total – which means the majority of their readers are actually black, coloured and Indian (even though whites may make up the largest single group)” (Brodie 2004:2). Given these statistics, the question remains as to why it is a notable event when *Shape* finally put a black woman on the cover? Andy Davies sums up why this is so in his article “Why I left SL”. In essence the article summarizes an attitude that is “entrenched in the mindset of media planners, advertisers and the publishing industry as a whole, who perceive South Africa’s youth market [in this case the entire market] as neatly segregated into small top-end white market (LSM

7-10) and a large amorphous black market in (LSM 3-6)" (Davies 2004:34). Simply put, the theory out there is that black models do not create higher sales for magazines that are catered for the higher LSMs.

In discussing why there is a black model on the cover with the editor her response came as follows: *"I think our audience needs to be exposed to something different, I mean if you look at our covers they do look similar month after month it is time for something new. It is a birthday issue and we are trying to celebrate how far we have come...the/.e publishers though are not ready to have a black model to be on the cover by herself, so we reached a compromise. Personally, I would have gone for one model, but as it is a birthday issue I suppose we don't want to change things to radically. But one day we are definitely going to have a black model on her own on the cover"* (Toni Youngusband:2005)

A semiotic analysis illustrates the dilemmas of editorial decisions, feminist ideals and sales in the production of a magazine.

Denotatively all the models on the *Shape* cover models have the same poise and look month after month, this is an example of three months out of a year, (September, October and November 2005). The model must wear a two piece bikini; has a flat stomach, long hair or at least hair that can have some effect with a fan. She must be muscularly toned, but not to such an extent as to be termed a body builder and she must always smile. The model must also gaze directly into the camera.

There is also nothing directly challenging about her look (any one of the models). For the October issue, there is nothing distinctly African looking about her except her skin colour. I am not saying that she is not beautiful, but in terms of facial characteristics there is nothing that is distinguishable from her and the other model. Also extensions have been added to her hair very short hair.

But a lack of distinction even though it is narrowed down here to physical attributes, can be sign of something positive. "The lack of difference in the way whites and blacks are presented may also help break down stereotypes and boundaries and help to end discrimination" (Craig 1991:38). This concept broadly applies itself to advertising as well, that at times is successful in boiling all our needs and desires down to consumption rather than defining our needs and desires along lines of difference. The problem only arrives when the need for identification and uniqueness out does the need for consumption. It is now dependent on the black audience if they accept this image of beauty they have been presented with. In fact it would also be interesting to see is the white audience also accepts this image of beauty of the black woman, or if they feel they are being force fed an idealised image.

Professor Salazar in his book *African Athens*, he further solidifies this train of thought by noting that "glamour print medias often reverse the consensus, play against prejudices, and try to see order where disruption exists [albeit] in order to secure a market share....they create powerful "myths," and why in

rhetorical terms, they form a large sector of public deliberation to help shape and “order” (Salazar 2002:110)

However, Greatmore is not as generic as the usual suspects of the *Shape* cover girl. She is an M-net Face of Africa finalist. The Face of Africa competition is very prestigious, which catapults a girl from mediocrity to fame through this competition. It is a competition that only is seen by people who have access to DSTV, something only available to people in the higher LSMs. Thereby she is already through her background and experiences appealing to a consumer culture of people in the higher echelons of society.

Understanding that we read images differently as a result of our subjective experiences, my interpretations of these covers reveal more about my views about the female body. Messages that are conveyed and implied are that women who are in their best physical *Shape* must look like this, and will confidently be able to wear a bikini. Added to that, as a result of her physical well being she is always smiling, she is attractive and therefore this is how I should define sexiness, as this is what is attractive. Added to that, the AMPS data tells me more men are reading this, so this is the way I must look in order to attract the opposite sex.

The way the models gaze further emphasise this idea of sexiness. In a study of advertisements of women’s magazines, Majorie Ferguson (1980) identified four categories of facial expressions in the cover photos of British women’s magazines, one of I will apply to the *Shape* cover model. The model is a “super-smiler: full face, wide open toothy smile, head thrust forward, or chin thrown back, hair often wind blown. The [projected mood is suggests] aggression, ‘look at me’ demanding, the hard sell, and a ‘big come on approach”. Consequently, she looks like a healthy, vibrant outdoor girl (besides the obvious bikini) who is unrestrained (Chandler 1998). This also acts as a tool of persuasion because it convinces the reader by supplying proof to make what can be illogical deductions logical. Primarily, that if you do what is suggested in the text that you are going to read, the end result is that you will look like this model regardless of you circumstances and disposition.

As earlier stated images have many meanings and as reader of magazines who agrees with some feminist ideologies of not objectifying or reducing women to sexualised objects these covers throw in a conflict because I, with other women who share my ideals were also producers of content.

Of course no one will go out and disagree that being healthy is not important, but when we look at the habits in the office of a health magazine, it becomes interesting in seeing that the producers of the content may not necessarily abide by what they have written down for others to follow. Nonetheless it is this image of fitness and glamour that resonates to what a truly South African woman should look like. This shape and form is not just on this magazine but on all magazine covers. Celebrities have this image and so do ordinary women, who have given testimonies of how much their lives have improved since looking like this. This image is used to sell clothes, jewellery, computers cars, and it also sticks its head in male magazines

The Rhetorical strategies of *True Love*

To begin with, I would like to highlight that for this section I have taken information from transcripts done for a focus group that included young post-graduate black women and what they believe *True Love* magazines represents for them. Also included are answers about *True Love* strategy from the former editor of *True Love* Magazine Khanyi Dhlomo and how she views the success of *True Love* magazine. This is interesting because it highlights how successful the rhetorical strategies that *True Love* puts in place reflect in its target readership.

True Love is a women's magazine established in 1975 that aimed to cater to the needs and aspirations of black women. Today, in 2007, *True Love* is a magazine that is browsed or purchased by a readership that is not necessarily black as shown by AMPS data. The new South Africa "is called a 'rainbow nation', a repertoire that proudly attempts to celebrate South Africa's "unity in diversity" (Laden 2001:5). It is an attempt to unite cultures to create an authentic look of solidarity. Yet, the target market of *True Love* remains exclusively black (This is understood as those of African descendents). Nonetheless, this paper is not going to justify whether this form of targeting is right or wrong in a country that encourages equality among its racially diverse population, but to explore the some of the rhetorical strategies *True Love* uses in representing the needs, wants, aspirations and relevant information for its target market.

It is important to look at the current trends of black educated women as it gives light to changes that will happen and are happening in the economic and social environment of the country. Previously disadvantaged black women are infiltrating the dynamics of what were traditionally regarded as privileged white male arenas of social and economic practices, or even male-dominated industries. This is a largely a result of The Employment Equity Act, Black Economic Empowerment and Affirmative Action. "Black women in South Africa are getting higher educations and entering the upper echelons of the work force in numbers unmatched anywhere else in Africa" (Glenn, Cunningham 2004:21). Added to this, I will maintain that the media, particularly the magazine industry, has also had much to do with motivating black women to seek better qualifications. This is achieved by showing the reader what they can obtain when they are successful. A good education can lead to better jobs and more money. Money, or rather the security and benefits that money brings, is a great motivator to get educated. The status and self-worth that results from getting a higher education is also a big contributor to many black women and a concept that is heavily propagated in articles of female success stories and advertising. However, this educational advancement of the black woman does not work in isolation. What does it mean currently and for the future, in work places, in social spaces, in relationships with men, even relationships with other women and for the for traditional African culture when a black woman is educated? Secondly, as these interactions and dynamics take place and are altered how does the

black woman's magazine satisfy, guide, inform and sustain the interest of this particular group's needs?

According to a report published by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) in 2004, there were increases over the past year of the overall number of graduate output of African and women graduates. Added to that, Statistics South Africa (SSA) in 2003 did a headcount survey and found that the total number of university students came to 463 025 and the total number of students in technikons came to 214 888. Of the enrolment of university students in 2003, a grand total of 251 575 were black, and in technikons 168 313 were black. *Cosmo* and *Elle* are magazines that were considered exclusively white magazines, but in recent years this has changed to "aggressively going after the black reader" (Glenn, Cunningham 2003:26). This is done by having more black products being advertised in the magazines. More black models in the magazine and sometimes on the covers. Their target market is young women who are in LSM 7-9, many whom are also can afford to come to institutions of higher education. Looking at how higher education institutions have so rapidly diversified in the last six to eight years, women are exposed to different cultures, different attitudes and are 'trading', as it were, different cultural icons with each other. The magazine being the most accessible icon and insight into the other's culture, but it is not an even trade simply because some black women are not willing to accept "white" content or models in publications that are meant to target them. The natural opposite for these women is not just men, but also white women. There is an expectation that the text will highlight the opposite explicitly by either the complete omission of other perceived other, or a direct contrast that shows black women as different from anyone else has to be prevalent in the text or images. This attitude was highlighted in an interview with an avid reader of *True Love* magazine I posed a question to my focus group about how they would accept a *True Love* cover model that was not black. The responses were varied. The first participant said she would be disgusted, it would feel as if *True Love* had sold out.

"*True Love* is supposed to be for young black women. They would be putting themselves out of the market. White coloured women have other magazines for themselves. *Rooi Rose*, *Sarie*, *Cosmo* that lot. I would personally see all the editors, and complain. It is nonsense, pure nonsense to even suggest it. I was unhappy when Khanyi left and they had a white editor. There were more white adverts, for example the Nivea Ad. I felt betrayed utterly betrayed."

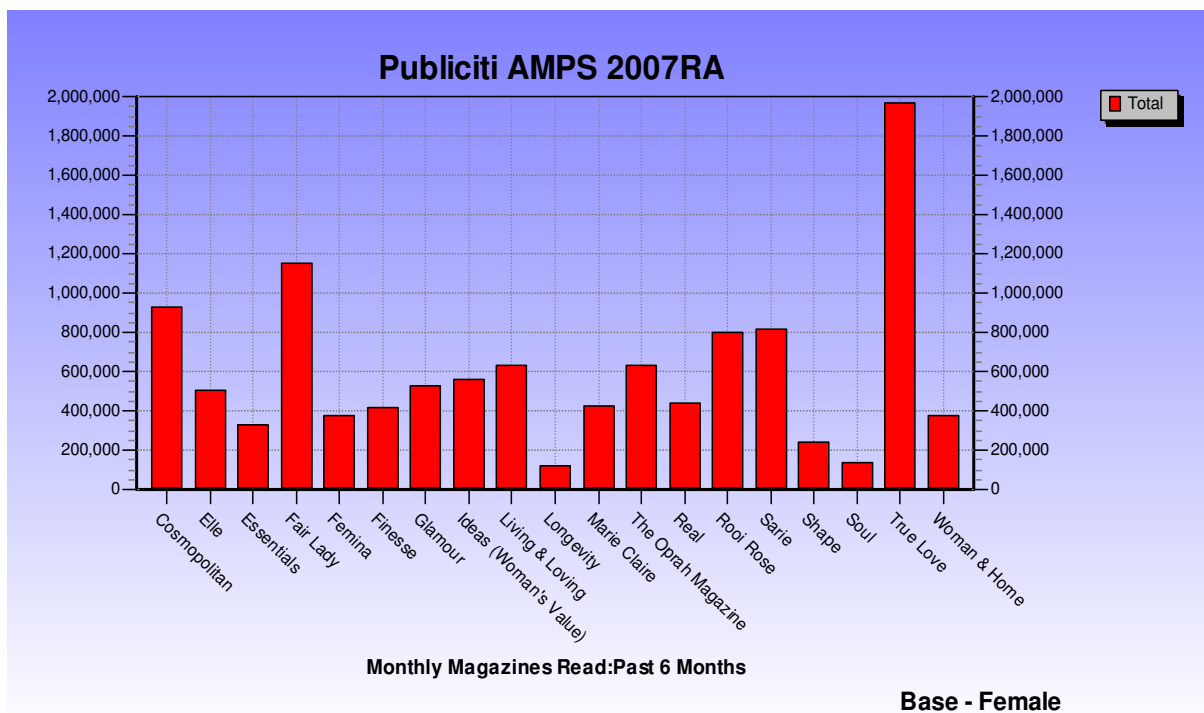
On the other extreme, another participant would not necessarily mind depending on who the woman is. "It would be cool if they put Angelina Jolie on the cover I would buy it."

Here we are seven years into the new millennium and *True Love* magazine maintains its stronghold as the number one in South Africa. Its past has been riddled with changes as it was not originally cast as a women's magazine but "conceived as a soft porn publication targeted at a male readership of migrant labourers" (Laden 2001:13). Through much reworking

and editorial changes, it only became a fully-fledged women's magazine in 1992. The new women's layout for *True Love* was given a lengthened heading *True Love and Family* and the catch phrase given to it was "for the woman who loves life". *True Love* went through another makeover in 1995, seeking to target younger black South African women. "Printed on glossy paper, with chrome plates, high-tech layout, typeset and design and had the '& family removed' to be given the new, still current slogan 'All a woman needs'" (Laden 2001:13). A young 22-year-old, black, new editor at the time Khanyi Dhlomo took *True Love* by the horns and made the magazine not just accessible, but pioneered new ways of marketing it through community based seminars. "The objective was to bring the magazine to life, keep the magazine close to its readers, make a positive contribution towards the development of young black women and provide advertisers with a dynamic tool to communicate with readers of the magazine. (Khanyi Dholmo interview. 2005)

The catch slogan it has "All a woman needs" makes an appeal to the audience that the text they have been provided with encompasses instructions, and advice that will act in the place of other forms of advice the reader might get elsewhere and that it is dependable - thus building ethos. This works together with who the editorial team is comprised of has power in building credibility. There is a collective identity of black femininity that is polarised from any other that is hinged within the content. Any perceived betrayal of that ethos is not only seen cosmetically, but in terms of how the readers are affected by the content, as the next example will illustrate.

The cosmetic alterations a magazine makes such as changing typeface and paper quality also makes an argument about how the readers should view this publication. The better the quality the more valid the information then becomes. It seems like time has been put in to present a product that the target audience should be proud to identify with especially when put in comparison with other publications.



Readership of Women's Magazines Jan to Jun 2007 Fig.5

Many authors, particularly Sonja Laden have argued that consumer magazines function as 'cultural tools'. Magazines are the place where middle-class values are reaffirmed, codified, distributed and for and by South Africans. I argue that *True Love* is the nexus of the black female middle-class South African in urbanised or urbanising society. It is in this space that the role of the editor becomes crucial. As stated before Magazines offer representations of the social world the job of the magazine editor becomes important as they are viewed as the guardians of the feminine "cult" (Gough-Yates 2003). The first irony is that these representations are seen usually through dominant western hegemonic ideologies that have no traditional significance in black South African cultures, or rather a controversial one that alludes to the history of colonialism and gender discrimination. Black women seem to have bore the brunt of all sorts of discrimination, particularly in South Africa's dark apartheid history. Secondly, the role of the editor becomes complex because she has to make sure she addresses the audience, firstly as a person who is intricately aware of black culture, (this is why there is a bias towards black female editors) and also aware of what magazines need to be and have in order for them sell well. This second aspect helps build the ethos of the magazine within the differing black cultures. These factors are driven by advertising and the fact that people are becoming increasingly aware and in need of integration with Western culture. Sometimes these values do not balance out and one system of thinking becomes more dominant.

But, even more than that, how people first identify that a magazine is catered for a black audience is through images they see when they flip through.

Cosmo is associated with white women because of the cover model and the models that are used in the magazine to advertise goods. Images are the magazine reader's first point of reference when they want to see if it is catered for them, followed by the text. The question now is, if the issues and topics in a magazine are mostly western and urban does the use of black models on the cover and in the content make the magazine for black women?

Language Baggage

It is at this point that magazines targeted for a black South Africans begin to show contradictions. Values that are not indigenous to black South Africans are expressed through the vehicle of language, particularly the English language. The English language does not have a register to address people differently as would most African languages. Leisure magazines are for people who are literate in English, and have disposable income, not just to buy the magazine, but some of the products advertised. In 2004 when *True Love* was R14.95, it was cheaper than most of the glossy women's magazines out there and now that it is R17,95, which is still significantly cheaper than a *Cosmo* that costs R29,95, however it still lies outside the majority targeted population's income. It is also printed in English, for a large black South African population whose first language is not English. This should not be interpreted as to say that the black population is not eloquent or aware of English, but to show that *True Love* target market within the black population is far more specific. Everything that constitutes the product of the magazine is something that is attached to a social value. *True Love* is not a magazine for any black female.

It is for the black female who understands both Western and African cultural codes. It is for the black woman who understands different cultural values and has a particular mind set -- that of sophistication. It is a sophistication that is judged by western values. The reader not only has to be able to read English, but must also be aware of the values that come with that language. "...a magazine renders meaningful, without always putting into action a repertoire of everyday experience, lifestyle options and social practices best described from a Western or European background as typically middle class or bourgeois" (Laden 2001:4). It is not a magazine for those whose values are embedded in ancient myth and belief, which is what the majority of African cultural customs have been reduced to within the realm of the urban middle/elite-class. One can question the use of the English language as a tool to relate to a black population, which is diverse in culture and language and for many English is not admittedly their first language. The debate on language is a complicated one with a complicated history. Traditional black South African languages have had to adapt to this multi-ethnic public culture, where languages have not only become fused with other but with English too, for various reasons. Yet, there is still the struggle to maintain elements that define individual languages as distinct and unique. On the other hand, the understanding and the ability to articulate in English, the most global language of communication in media and various other industries are paramount to being successful in industries. The language used to teach many students, is necessary as it is known and understood by a larger market. It is the one

unifying language not just for South Africans who buy *True Love* but also for its international readers in Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and far more recently Nigeria.

This is not to prove that magazines like *True Love* are incomprehensible, or a form of intellectual snobbery. In fact, the value of magazines is that they can present very complex ideas in a very simple form. The photo story for example, (that *Bona* makes great use of) is something that features in many magazines. Looking at pictures in a sequence can tell a story. One only needs basic literacy skills to understand much of the content. Magazines provide “pictorial and visual modes of representation in the form of advertisements, comic strips, word puzzles, educational supplements for adults and sometimes children” (Laden 2001:526). The question is how successful is *True Love* in presenting complex ideas simply to an audience that is not very literate, and have those same ideas stimulate and challenge women who are highly educated, it is a magazine that attracts those who are extremely poor and have little to access to education and those who are rich who have plenty of resources, as can be seen in the graph below, unlike *Cosmo* whose readership is primarily the rich. It is tough to please both crowds, so *True Love*, like many other magazines, opts for the middle ground. This usually comes in the form of a celebrity, a role model who has made it through adversity and problems associated with being poor or illiterate or unfortunate, to being a woman who is powerful in society, owns her own property, and is educated and can demonstrate middle-class, or elite standards of success, by virtue of Western values.

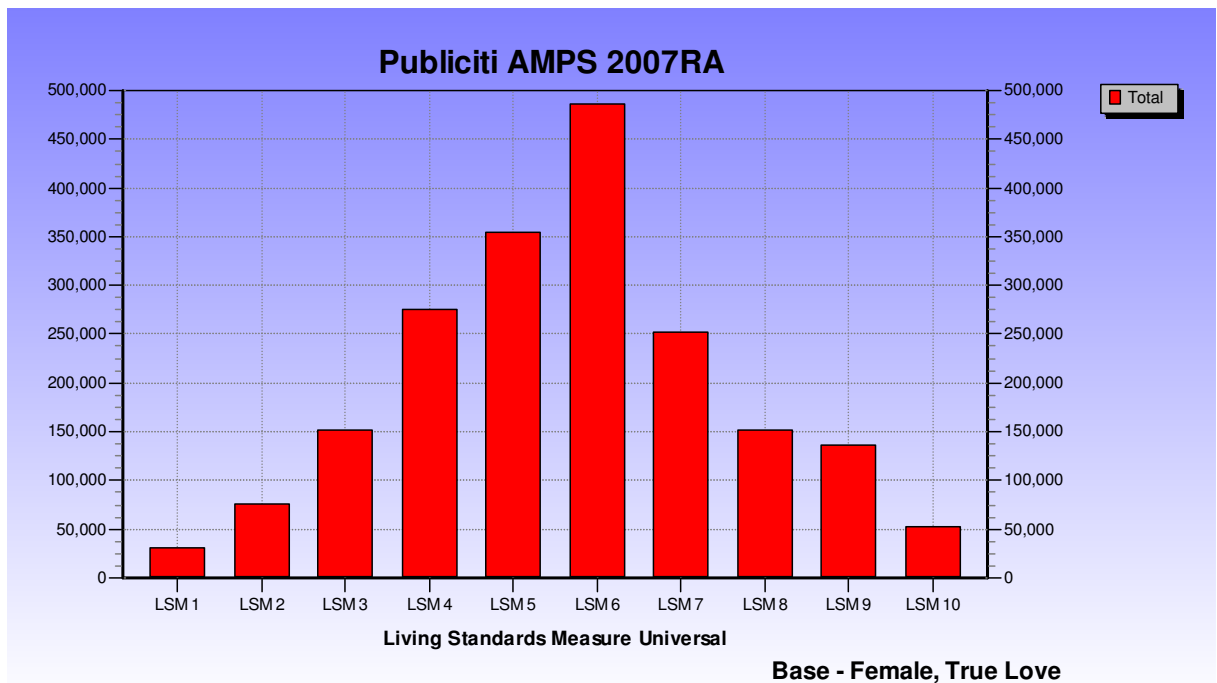


Fig. 6 LSMs of Readers of True Love Magazine as from Jan-Jun 2007

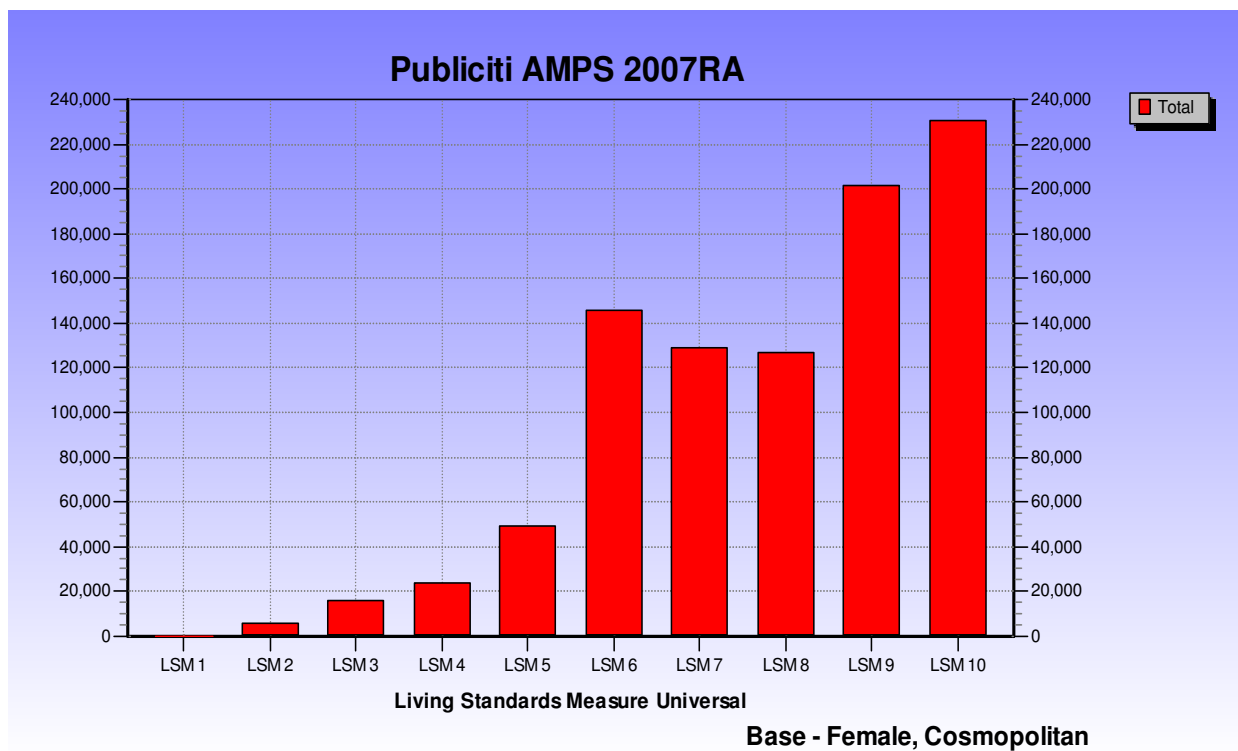


Fig.7 LSMs of Readers of True Love Magazine as from Jan-Jun 2007

True Love's Soap Skills

The bottom line is that a pretty face makes sales. Celebrities, who are usually cast as media personalities, such as those who act in *Generations* or *Isidingo*, are also social celebrities. They are an elite group one needs to aspire to be in or a commodity that helps sell this ideology. They inspire the readership, openly by, "regularly supplying the public with glimpses of their own lifestyle, experiences and personality" of the characters they play, and who they are outside the entertainment world. The idea is to show the public the alluring lifestyle and be role models to the greater public. Covertly, they help advertising in the magazine through sales and by endorsing certain products (Laden 2001:5).

In a focus group I asked seven higher educated black women about the impact these soap stars in the magazine. The overall response was negative, the reasons ranged from believing that *True Love* has more substance than that, to being bored with the repetition of the same characters. This puts *True Love* in an odd position when trying to create celebrity content. On the one hand, there is a large following of *Generations* and *Isidingo* countrywide by the black audience, these actors and actresses are the equivalent of Hollywood and they make for great marketing. However, because there are so few real celebrities, the same people seem to make it in on the cover and in the social scene time and time again.

Society places a very high premium on fame and celebrity. Famous faces sell magazines and in a society where there are few genuinely famous faces (like South Africa) you will find the same “reliable” faces on the covers of magazines. (Interview with Khanyi 2005)

True Love's content faces competition against other material available for a group of young women who are exposed to an ever changing, innovative, fast paced production of new images and new definitions of what or who is “cool” by virtue of different kinds of media. It is also the same group that avidly watches *Generations*, a soapie whose plot lines and characters are constant. Yet, when these same celebrities are continuously put in the magazine, the effect makes the celebrities redundant to these young women. The main plea in the focus discussion is the need for *True Love* to find new faces. As one participant pointed out, “It [the use of soapie personalities] takes away the reality [that many black women experience]. What the hell do I care about some soapie personality? I will never be an actress and I don't ever want to be one. Let's get people with real jobs.”

Culture Slamming

The black magazine is also the arena for the battle between Western values and traditional black African values in terms of the actual content. For example, some issues that are tackled in some black magazines are to do with issues of polygamy or monogamy, bridal wealth, or *lobola* or Christian marriage customs. For very many black middle class women, there is a conversion of culture, not a compromise. An example of this conversion is that it is not uncommon to have traditional healers living in cities as opposed to rural areas. Or even, the practice of paying *lobola* will be done before a church wedding. This has become the new culture, it is not a matter of one way or the other, nor is it a matter of taking a bit from each culture but accepting all the values that each hold. Western values of having a good education, feed into putting a higher bridal price for a well-educated daughter. The dynamics of polygamy can still take place in the middle-class environment. Traditional black culture is in most ways, (through the eyes of western values) is very patriarchal. Men have the opportunity to do what they please with marital relationships, and traditionally, a man with many wives is still seen as a beacon of wealth. He can afford to keep so many wives and have some spare change. This can be interpreted as women being reduced as property. As a counter culture, mothers encourage their daughters to become more educated because education is value that cannot be taken away by a husband. Girls are also encouraged to go to school for longer than boys. The boy is more likely to be pressured to earn a living and prove himself as a man sooner than a girl. There are so many factors that apply in encouraging the black girl child to be educated. This has a knock on effect on the enrolment of black educated women in higher education. This is just one example of many examples that influence how a black woman's magazine is aware of why or how a black woman has sought for higher education. This attitude is cemented by government policy and incentives, personal expectations and career advancement to get higher paid.

True Love and True Beauty

I will now look at whether the relationship that *True Love* has with this particular reader is sustainable, through two categories. The first is the physical image of a successful woman – how is it expressed and reinforced in *True Love*? The second is how to achieve mental and material well being, or what successful women think about?

The society that we live in today can be narrowed down as consumerist. Regardless of how poor and unemployed a person maybe, the desire to buy commodities has never been greater. Magazines are one of the media platforms that producers of goods use to advertise their product. Black women's magazines, especially in South Africa, then serve as a principal means of expression for advertising and fostering a want for consumer goods. This is primarily because the black population is the largest population and there are more women than men. The product can be supported by the content of the magazine. The articles themselves play a large role in expressing many of the ideas, however, more obviously advertising plays the biggest role in expressing what the standard of black beauty should be. This is done through products. To elucidate this statement I will incorporate Bertelsen's argument, which simply states that, there are pieces in the magazine " that establish the female body as a minefield of 'problems': pieces on hair, skin, weight problems, and combating body odours, which undermines and subverts the readers confidence in her own body and her ability to control it. Into this vacuum of confidence, is then introduced a captivating array of products, which promise to correct the imbalance." (Bertelsen 1998:237) Keep in mind however that this does not work in isolation, there are other factors such as what black men think their women's bodies should look like – and this may be in direct contrast to what is advertised in magazines. The magazines then are presenting a battle field of opinions of what true beauty encompasses.

This brings about debate, for example does a successful black woman have hair straightened or curly? What is the ideal body size versus the "Real Woman" sections that are in most instances large (above size 16). Are the other models not real women? Let us look at the topic of hair. Walking around a University campus, one notices the trends in black women's hair. It is either braided, relaxed (chemically altered so as to be straight and not the naturally curly kink it is) or a weave (synthetic or human hair fibres attached to the hair to give the illusion of straightness). There are two main arguments about these hair processes. The first is that black women are trying to look more western or white and neglecting their own uniqueness. However, the other argument is that manageability and time efficiency and the freedom of aesthetic choice are the main contributors to many black women to straighten their hair, as their natural black hair is difficult to manage. Basetsana Makgaleme Miss South Africa (1995) models for Revlon hair straightener (*True Love* 2000:4) and she is the epitome of success and beauty for many South African women. To achieve her success and her beauty you can use

her products. The readers aspire to look and be like the models in the magazine who advertise for hair straightening. No doubt it is a big industry, as two thirds of all the adverts on hair have to do with straightening. Dark and Lovely, Revlon, Black Like Me, Soft 'n' free and Cavil are brand names of hair products that often take full page and double page ads in the magazine, clearly their impact has worked, and is reinforced.

As we progress in the magazine, the model used to anchor the topic "What does it take to be a modern manager" (*True Love* 2004:107) is young, has straightened hair, make up, flawless skin and is wearing a tailored jacket. She looks like the stereotypical corporate image of the woman who is serious about her work. Have black educated women bought into this image? The answer is yes, in interviews I conducted with some black educated women, the main reason why they buy *True Love* is because it helps them with their sense of dress, that in turn gives them confidence to face the everyday world. One participant stated that, "It helped [her] self-esteem; [she] gets positive reinforcement from other people through their (*True Love*) beauty tips."

The body image is a far more complex issue. *True Love* has a section dedicated to the image of the "Real Woman". This woman is regarded as a plus size woman from size 16 onwards; *True Love* is one of the pioneers in presenting that image. However, it is not a constant theme that is supported elsewhere. Models for cosmetics, lingerie, and skin care are models are slender or skinny. Through the research I have done, although educated women understand that there are different body types and beauty is something that is subjective, they believe that there is a body image that allows them to be marketable. As one participant stated, "Look, I know that we are all individual, but I understand that if I am going to make it in the business world, or even get a job I have to look a certain way. That is fit and attractive, I may not want to wear a bikini, but I have to give the illusion that I can look good in one..."

The model helps in the sales of the magazine, the more popular the model, the more likely the sales are going to be good. Although in the interview with Khanyi Dhlomo she did not explicitly state what image sells the magazine, but, she did point out that first and foremost the model has to be physically beautiful. Of course the image of the ultimate *True Love* model can to incorporate certain ethical qualities as pointed out by Khanyi Dhlomo

Through the choices she makes in life she demonstrates the factors defining success, [which are] tenacity, focus, style, compassion, a positive attitude and an ability to succeed against all odds. (Interview Khanyi Dhlomo: 2005)

Unlike many other women's magazines there is heavy advertising for women to be educated. Damelin College and Intec College are higher education institutions that regularly advertise more than once any particular issue of *True Love*. There are also sections in *True Love* that focus on how to manage money and many adverts from the banking sector come in place in this section. Old Mutual and African Bank, these two companies push the

message of receiving an education. For example African Bank has a full page advertisement of black students with their hands up and the caption is – “Free Education Was a Dream until We Made It Real.” It targets mothers who are taking their children to school and shows them financial options and how to apply for a loan. It pushes the idea of making dreams into reality. Education and the power that it brings can now become a reality.

There is also a section in *True Love* that is dedicated to the careers of different South African women who are in different sectors of the economy. The push for women to go and get qualifications beyond Matric is subtly and overtly pushed in this section. There is an article that is titled “Beyond Matric”. The basic emphasis is to encourage matriculant to go and find out about the job sector and be part of the new economy, which involves technology and information systems. More reinforcement on having a career is made by the books that are advertised in this section of the magazine, for example, Winning at Job Interviews, by Igor Popovich. They also interview black women who are having successful careers. For example, Sthu Zungu, unknown to most people, was appointed country manager for Italy and is now based in Milan for SA Tourism (*True Love* 2004:128).

The diversity of *True Love*’s content against other magazines is something that has not been highlighted. However, within the realm of women’s magazines it is usually hard to distinguish the major differences. The main skeleton is the same all round, fashion, health, career, sex. Overlaps are evident “virtually every woman’s interest magazine, from fashion to fitness to motherhood, has an attractive model on the cover, and on opening them the contents that jump out at you have an alarming sameness” (Addison 2003:25). The differences are the emphasis each magazine has on these particular sections. For *True Love* I would argue that career success is its main propeller. But what to read after it has been achieved is where it falls short, so there is a gap in the market. Until recently there were no magazines that catered for this unique audience which is why magazines such as *Destiny* launched in 2007 and *The DEAL* launched in 2006 are business magazines that are catering to a particular business minded market in glossy format.

Even though career development and education are heavily pushed, most of my respondents in my interviews still felt that *True Love* lacks. The areas that seem to be of concern were that of travel, and light heartedness.

I questioned my participants on what they would like to see more or less of in order to make it more relevant for them?

One participant aptly noted that *True Love*, though a provider of knowledge seemed to take itself too seriously, “It’s a bit serious, they could be a little bit funny like *Glamour*, but for who I think it is targeted for, I think it’s fine, young career orientated women seem to have no sense of humour,” stated one participant. Or as another quite humorously said, “magazines are for “Ooooh” “Aaah”. If you want to read the real stuff, buy a novel and a newspaper. It’s cheaper to buy a newspaper, or to go on the Internet for the serious stuff.”

This brings about a challenge to print magazines. It seems that in the process of affirmation and education, black women have lost their humour. It has become a trade mark cliché for black women to talk more about spirituality and serious issues than to laugh at life happenings. The Internet, books and other press like the newspaper is where this seriousness is being sought, these media are direct competition to *True Love*. As a leisure magazine, *True Love* faces a difficult balance in trying to inform, and trying to entertain. Added to that, travel has become more a focus for women who have achieved financial security, and for young black women who are living in upper class and middle class echelons who crave to know about the outside world and how to travel in it. This is because they are now surrounded by a culture that values those who travel. If you look at how many employers look at curriculum vitas, travel experience is something that is valued, for. If magazines do not provide meaningful space for this, they are then seen as lacking.

For now it seems that *True Love* is satisfying the needs of this group of women in higher education institutions, but for how long is unsure as it faces stiff competition from magazines such as *Elle* and *Cosmo* who are now changing their content to attract them. Secondly, content is being challenged as the nature of the young black educated women is changing and is identifying with her counterparts globally. In this light, issues such as travel come to the forefront. It seems that *True Love* has managed to promote career suaveness, but it falls short as to what to provide after the readers have achieved that goal. Rhetorically, it seems that since *True Love* has such a high readership, it seems to have the biggest platform to argue for the pursuit of success and career development, even though factors such as language and the values associated with that language contest for authority on this platform.

APPENDICES

Focus Group work

Graduated BCom Economics, returned for Hons participant 1

1. How long have you been a reader of TL?

I don't read it often read it but I've been reading it for 4 years now.

2. How long have you known about TL?

For four years

3. How was TL introduced to you?

Found it at a friend's place here in South Africa

4. Who do you think TL magazine is targeted at?

20 to 30 year old black women who are interested in developing their careers, professions and relationships and who are ambitious

5. How often do you buy a TL magazine or is it usually passed on to you?

Usually passed on to me, but I buy maybe four or five a year

6. What prompts you to buy an issue of TL? Write 1 for definitely. 2 for most likely. 3 neutral. 4 definitely not.

Model on front cover	Freebee	Headlines
Price		
3	2	1
4		
Reputation of the magazine regardless of content	2	

Because you want a collection 4

Because Most People read this 1

Because of the Advertisements 3

7. What strikes you as TL's main agenda for its readers?

Put 1 for most Likely, 2 for least likely.

Fashion1

Travel1

Career1

Being Married 2

Being a Mother2

Sex 1

Weight loss1

Being Single1

Sexuality (**Heterosexuality** and Homosexuality) 2 (Highlight the most relevant)

International Gossip 2 HIV 2
 Crime in South Africa 2 Business 2
 Politics 2 Food 2
 Local Events 1 Religion 2
 Spirituality 1 Local Gossip 1
 Youth Culture 2 Adult Responsibility 1
 Self-help 1 Beauty 1

8. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to IDENTIFY with? Highlight the relevant

- Some of the content
- All of the content
- Non of the content

in TL

Explain

I don't think there is ever a magazine that will relate to every reader 100%. There are some articles that you just naturally skip as a reader. It doesn't mean the magazine is bad. The true test is how much of the magazine the reader identifies with.

9. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to Desire? Highlight the relevant

- Some of the content
- All of the content
- None of the content

in TL

Explain

The reason for buying the magazine is to desire what I read else I would not have bothered to pick it up (bought or not).

10. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to aspire to? Highlight the relevant

- look like some of the models
- live like some of the models

In TL

Explain

The reason why they are models is because we want to be like them.

11. Do you feel that TL caters to all your needs as a black educated woman?

If so, how so? If not explain?

Yes it does because it inspires women to be the best that they can be. Most of its content is about bettering yourself in every aspect of your life be it in your self-esteem, appearance, career, relationships etc. Its what I like to call a wholesome magazine. If I was not at a stage where I am so career oriented and I had more money I would pick it up regularly. However, now given a choice between TL and Financial Mail I would pick the Financial Mail

12. If TL was to put a white/coloured or Indian Model on the main cover, what would be your reactions and why?

I would be disappointed because it feels like they are selling out. I remember the way we were so disappointed when there was a temporary editor after Khanyi who was white. It seems the content even changed for a bit then and there were white models. This is OUR magazine. They can have Cosmo, Marie Claire, Elle , Femina and all that but at least they should leave us with our own thing. What does a white woman know about a black woman's issues!

13. Do you buy other women's magazines in conjunction with TL? If so, which ones?

I don't buy magazines but I'll pick up a Cosmo for fun

14. Which magazines, in your estimation do you think are True Love's main competition?

Cosmopolitan

15. What is your opinion on the use of soapie characters on the cover of TL one month after another?

Those are the successful black women in the South African society who the local women aspire to be. It does very well for TL's sales

16. As a black educated woman what more or less could TL put in the magazine in order for it to be a more relevant magazine for you?

More spirituality articles, less about 'how to spruce up your sex life ', which they don't do too well and more on career guidance and not just a wee page at the end of the magazine. But then we have to remember that the women

who like that stuff are the people who actually buy the magazine. So I wouldn't advise them to change the content.

Studying Psychology and Sociology participant 2

1. How long have you been a reader of TL?

I am not an avid reader

2. How long have you known about TL?

Forever

3. How was TL introduced to you?

Saw it in the shops

4. Who do you think TL magazine is targeted at?

Black career women, they could be young.

5. How often do you buy a TL magazine or is it usually passed on to you?

Passed on. It's been a long time since I have bought it. Cosmo is more interesting, I am not a serious person TL is serious. It's not for light reading.

6. What prompts you to buy an issue of TL? Write 1 for definitely. 2 for most likely. 3 neutral. 4 definitely not

Model on front cover **2**

Freebee **1**

Headlines **2**

Price **4**

Name of the magazine regardless of content **4**

Because you want a collection **4**

Because Most People read this **4**

Because of the Advertisements **4**

7. What strikes you as TL's main agenda for its readers?

Put 1 for most Likely, 2 for least likely.

Fashion **1** Career **1**

Being a Mother **1** Weight loss **2**

Travel **2** Being Single **1**

Being Married **1** Sex **1**

Sexuality (**Heterosexuality** and Homosexuality) **1** (Highlight the relevant)

International Gossip 2	HIV 2
Crime in South Africa 2	Business 1
Politics 2	Food 1
Local Events 1	Religion 2
Spirituality 2	Local Gossip 1
2 Youth Culture 2	Adult Responsibility 1
Self-help 1	Beauty 1

8. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to IDENTIFY with?
(Highlight the relevant)

- Some of the content
- All of the content
- None of the content

in TL

Explain:

Because It is a diverse magazine it caters for everyone and you can't be everyone

9. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to Desire? (Highlight the relevant)

- Some of the content
- All of the content
- None of the content

in TL

Explain: Some of the content because it makes it more exciting as a reader to want more. Just having the idea of the one thing you can't have, makes a more interesting read.

10. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to aspire to? (Highlight the relevant)

- look some of the models
- live like some of the models

In TL

Explain Because they have nice lifestyles. If I wanted to look like some of the models it would show a psychological problem with me.

11. Do you feel that TL caters to all your needs as a black educated woman? If so, how so? If not explain?

TL needs to have more continuation. So if I do find the business section inspiring at least it should be thorough and take me from the beginning to the end of the process. For example, Cosmo has a section on Movers and shakers and they focus on CEO's for a certain period of months. Then business owners etc..

12. If TL was to put a white/coloured or Indian Model on the main cover, what would be your reactions and why?

Whatever, just getting more customers. Cosmo is getting blacker anyway

13. Do you buy other women's magazines in conjunction with TL? If so, which ones?

Cosmo, Glamour, Marie Claire

14. Which magazines, in your estimation do you think are True Love's main competition?

They ain't got no competition. They cater for their very own market, which no other magazine caters for at least not as successfully. Really Bona and Drum just look cheap it really is not competition.

15. What is your opinion on the use of soapie characters on the cover of TL one month after another?

I think it goes against the seriousness. It puts it into the same boat as all the other gossip magazines. It takes away the reality. What the hell do I care about some soapie personslity? I will never be an actress and I don't ever want to be one. Let's get people with real jobs.

16. As a black educated woman what more or less could TL put in the magazine in order for it to be a more relevant magazine for you?

No comment. Actually stop repeating stories and celebrities. Sometimes you see a celebrity and think I've already read this what can be new? We need new stuff, not regurgitated celebrities or stories.

Studying Economics and Finance participant 3

1. How long have you been a reader of TL?

I don't read it that much

2. How long have you known about TL?

About 4 years

3. How was TL introduced to you?

My cousin reads it

4. Who do you think TL magazine is targeted at?

Black women, teen chicks I don't know

5. How often do you buy a TL magazine or is it usually passed on to you?

Passed on

6. What prompts you to buy an issue of TL? Write 1 for definitely. 2 for most likely. 3 neutral. 4 definitely (If I did buy it)

Model on front cover 1 Freebee 1 Headlines 1
Price 4

Name of the magazine regardless of content 4

Because you want a collection 4

Because Most People read this 4

Because of the Advertisements 2

7. What strikes you as TL's main agenda for its readers?

Put 1 for most Likely, 2 for least likely.

Fashion 1 Career 1

Being a Mother 2 Weight loss (no idea)

Travel 2 Being Single 2

Being Married 2 Sex 1 (aren't all women's magazines about this)

Sexuality (Heterosexuality and Homosexuality) 2 (Highlight the relevant) Black people do not talk about Homosexuality. It is UnAfrican Vim!!

International Gossip 2 HIV 1

Crime in South Africa¹ (Like a rape and stuff I am sure they are heavy on that) Business 1

Politics 2 Food 1

Local Events 1 Religion 1

Spirituality 1 Local Gossip 1

Youth Culture 2 Adult Responsibility 1

Self-help 1 Beauty 1

8. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to **IDENTIFY** with?

Please tick the relevant statement. (Highlight the relevant)

- Some of the content
- All of the content
- None of the content

in TL

Explain: They talk about a lot of things. Some content is enough

9. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to Desire? (Highlight the relevant)

- Some of the content
- All of the content
- None of the content

in TL

Explain The make up the beauty stuff, the food gossip and little stories about women being raped

10. Do you feel that it is necessary as a reader to aspire to? (Highlight the relevant)

- look some of the models
- live like some of the models

In TL

Explain: Both, it's exciting they look glamorous and just looks like fun. God knows what men I will attract I want to be pretty. Who is the 'it' model these days? Whoever...

11. Do you feel that TL caters to all your needs as a black educated woman?

If so, how so? If not explain?

Considering I don't really read it I don't think I cannot comment on that. I don't know what they could do to make me want to read it now. They would have to do something dynamic that I have never seen before. That is going to be hard to achieve.

12. If TL was to put a white/coloured or Indian Model on the main cover, what would be your reactions and why?

I would be pretty unimpressed. White people will see that True Love is making money, they will want a piece of the pie. So yah I would be upset. This is our mag not theirs. Even though I don't read it I will still claim it as my property.

13. Do you buy other women's magazines in conjunction with TL? If so, which ones?

Glamour, Heat I don't like Cosmo.

14. Which magazines, in your estimation do you think are True Love's main competition?

I don't know. Probably Cosmo.

15. What is your opinion on the use of soapie characters on the cover of TL one month after another?

Hey they should find other people. An upstanding whatever, they don't really have to be amazing just different. It gets boring you know. Generations on radio, in magazines, newspapers, I could never even watch a decent show while it was on in residence. It's a cult I tell you. A freaking cult.

16. As a black educated woman what more or less could TL put in the magazine in order for it to be a more relevant magazine for you?

It's a bit serious, they could be a little bit funny like Glamour, but for who I think it is targeted for, I think it's fine, young career orientated women seem to have no sense of humour. They should have more stuff content wise not just ads.

<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/misc/mediasub.html#THE%20MEDIA%20AS%20DISSEMINATOR%20OF%20INFORMATION>

Date Accessed 23 November 2007

The Role of Media under Apartheid
African National Congress Submission on Media to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

September 1997

CONTENTS

Preface

Section 1

The Context

Section 2

The Media as Employer

Section 3

The Media as Disseminators of Information

Section 4

Stratkom and the Media

Section 5

A Few Observations on the Role of the Media

Section 6

The Contribution of the Independent Media

Conclusion

Postscript

PREFACE

The South African media is not a monolithic institution, and any examination of the role of the South African media during apartheid therefore has to distinguish between its various sectors - each of which had particular objectives and characteristics, and each of which played a particular role, during the period under review.

This document examines the role of the media under apartheid by:

looking briefly at the context in which the mass media operated;
examining the role of media institutions as employers;
studying the role of the mass media as disseminators of information (i.e. as publishers or broadcasters);
making observations on the activities of the mass media in bolstering apartheid; and
acknowledging the valuable role played by the alternative/progressive/independent media in reporting a broader truth.

Section 1

THE CONTEXT

The apartheid system - condemned by the United Nations as a crime against humanity - denied all South Africans their basic human rights.

Those working in the media were denied certain rights as workers - they were prevented from collectively organising and mobilising.

They were also affected as citizens - they were denied the right to freedom of association, freedom of movement and so on.

However, they were particularly affected as gatherers and disseminators of information, as apartheid deprived them of a range of basic freedoms.

Heavy censorship was applied to all publications and broadcasts throughout the period under review. The apartheid state imposed a complex web of legislation, designed to protect itself from exposure and control what people read, heard and saw. This legislation affected the activities of the police, the army, the prisons, the courts, parastatals, the public service and many other state institutions. It restricted the publication or broadcast of Information about the liberation movements; it threw a heavy blanket over entire communities and institutions; it prevented people from being quoted in the media; it gagged an entire nation, and subjected them to the views of a minority.

This legislation restricted both access to information, and freedom of expression.

During the states of emergency in the mid-80s, as the apartheid state came under increasing pressure from all sides, the regime stepped up its offensive against the media and imposed a virtual black-out on information.

The impact of this repressive framework cannot be under-estimated. Control of the media was one of the most important tools in the apartheid arsenal, and a battery of censorship legislation undoubtedly played a role in helping to ensure the survival of the regime - in particular, in ensuring ongoing support from its key constituencies by keeping them in the dark.

Individual media workers, and some media institutions, took great risks in their attempts to publish or broadcast the truth. Their untiring commitment to seeing that the truth came out played a vital role in bringing about the downfall of the apartheid system.

Many media workers were jailed or detained in the course of their duties, and others left the country to escape repression. Several died on duty. The African National Congress pays tribute to their efforts, and to the part they played in bringing about democracy in our country.

However, we also believe the South African media played other (broader) roles during the apartheid era, and we believe these roles need to be examined.

This examination is vital if we are to understand our past, to bring about reconciliation, and to broaden our understanding of basic freedoms.

It is also vital if we are to ensure true freedom of expression - including freedom of the media - in our new democracy.

South Africa needs a watchdog media, not a lapdog media. The African National Congress believes the Truth & Reconciliation Commission can play a significant role in helping us to understand the role of the media in the past, which in turn can shape our understanding of the role of the media in the future.

Section 2

THE MEDIA AS EMPLOYER

The South African media operated in a political, commercial and economic environment which favoured the interests of the ruling class, and which helped to entrench the skewed economic development of our country.

Afrikaner and English capital were the primary stakeholders in the commercial media sector, and they profited greatly from the economic injustices which resulted from apartheid. Monopolistic practices (and legislation) ensured that the commercial media was able to conspire against any who threatened its interests. It is fair to say that freedom of the press only applied to those who were rich enough to own one.

Media companies enjoyed the privileges of all other apartheid-era employers, where labour legislation legitimised discriminatory practices and entrenched the disempowerment of workers.

Examples of this include:

Petty apartheid in the workplace Like most, if not all South African employers, the media applied apartheid in the workplace despite (in some cases) its public criticism of these practices. Separate toilets and canteens were the order of the day and black workers were treated as second-class employees.

Workers were, in the process, denied basic human rights such as freedom of movement and freedom of association.

Suppression of workers' rights Workers were subjected to the myriad of apartheid labour laws which discriminated against blacks. Certain jobs were reserved for whites. Worker disputes were dealt with in terms of discriminatory labour legislation, often depriving workers of their rights to organise and mobilise. In addition, media managements recognised (and thereby condoned) racially-exclusive trade unions such as the SA Typographic Union. **Second-class treatment of black media workers** Black media workers were rare during the period under review. Media institutions tended to downplay the contribution of the few who were employed, very few of them were promoted to positions of seniority. Black editors were the exception rather than the rule (even on newspapers or radio stations targeted at black readers or listeners) and they were not given the status of their white counterparts.

No corrective action to redress imbalances Despite their recognition of the inferior quality of bantu education and its impact on the career prospects of black people, media institutions did little to train or develop black staff. Black media workers remained in junior positions because of a lack of training or career development.

Little protection for employees under threat Several black media workers were detained, banned or otherwise restricted under apartheid legislation. Although on some occasions they received protection from their employers, many media workers still recall that they felt neglected or exposed because of a lack of protection by their employers.

No advancement of the disadvantaged: black workers Black workers were discriminated against both in law and in practice. Despite being aware of the situation, the South African mass media did little (if anything) to advance the cause of the disadvantaged.

There is no evidence of initiatives by the mass media to proactively implement programmes of corrective or affirmative action or to develop and advance staff from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a rule, where these programmes have been introduced (post-1994), this has been at the insistence of trade unions rather than as a proactive measure.

No advancement of the disadvantaged: women media workers There are countless examples of the media industry's tardiness in redressing gender imbalances. Little, if anything, was done to advance the cause of women media workers. On the contrary, the African National Congress believes the mass media actively restricted the career advancement of women media workers. The African National Congress believes this practice was a deliberate attempt to suppress the rights and advancement of women media workers, and to ensure a male hegemony in newsrooms and boardrooms.

Punitive action against striking workers The mass media, as most employers in apartheid South Africa, adopted an attitude of dismissing workers who exercised the right to strike. One of the better-known cases is the Media Workers' Association strike in 1983 at what was then the Argus Company, where many workers were fired after striking for better pay. Despite its public criticism of other employers who took a hard line against workers, the Argus

Company did not seem to use apartheid labour legislation to act against its own workforce.

Punitive action against victims of the apartheid state There are many documented examples of media workers losing pay, or even their jobs, after being acted against by the apartheid state's security forces. The African National Congress believes the mass media should have acted in support of its staff when they were victimised or abused, rather than having punished them.

We believe this argument applies particularly to media workers who were detained, harassed or jailed as a result of actions taken in the course of duty.

Conclusion As employers, the South African mass media can therefore be regarded as beneficiaries of apartheid. They generally failed to challenge or defy apartheid legislation. So, while some media institutions were publicly critical of apartheid labour legislation, the owners of these institutions would not hesitate to use this legislation to suppress their own workers' rights.

As far as can be ascertained, the media industry made no attempts to use its economic muscle to bring about change--whether by threatening to withhold tax revenue, by implementing alternative business Practices by promoting workers' interests, by advancing the disadvantaged, or by lobbying as an industry for the abolition of apartheid legislation. Nor is there evidence that the commercial or private sector media lobbied within its broad ownership base (Afrikaner and English capital) for change.

Section 3

THE MEDIA AS DISSEMINATOR OF INFORMATION

3.1 The state-owned media During the period under review, the SOUTH AFRICAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION was the most important weapon in the apartheid state's battle for the hearts and minds of the people.

The SABC's three TV channels and its multitude of radio stations (broadcasting both internally and externally) were the primary source of information for the majority of South Africans.

The state controlled and ran the national broadcaster. Through the SABC board, it regulated the corporation's activities, its budgets and its management. Through the SABC's management--primarily Broederbond appointees--it ensured that the corporation stayed true to its mandate of propping up the apartheid state through spreading disinformation.

There are numerous reported examples of state interference in the SABC's activities, and it is an illusion to imagine that the SABC was anything other than the propaganda machine of the apartheid state during the period under review.

Its actions during this period can be summarised as follows:

The SABC's channels were primarily used to promote only the interests of the ruling party, and to propagate only those views which reinforced the hegemony of the apartheid state.

In addition, the SABC was often a virulent opponent of the liberation movements, and played a primary role in spreading disinformation and lies about the activities of these movements and their leaders.

As a rule, there was no attempt made to apply balance to coverage of news events. Official sources were generally the only sources of information.

Apart from spreading disinformation, the corporation also denied South Africans access to information and opinions. Countless events and developments went unreported, ensuring that millions of South Africans remained unaware of developments in their own country.

The impact of this was that millions of South Africans were subjected to propaganda masquerading as news. In the case of the illiterate, they were subjected to one view without being able to access other views or sources of information. The state broadcaster effectively had a stranglehold on the provision of information to the majority of South Africans.

Management and media workers at the SABC, as a whole, went along with this broad objective. Many senior editorial managers, for example, were either Military Intelligence operatives or in other ways part of the apartheid state.

There are examples of principled media workers and other SABC staff who left the corporation rather than go along with its policies, or waged their own struggle to change the nature of the SABC; the African National Congress pays tribute to their commitment and resolve.

But the general rule (at least until early 1990) seems to have been that the corporation employed media workers, producers, researchers etc. who were broadly supportive of the apartheid state.

The state-owned media had other weapons at its disposal:

The BUREAU FOR INFORMATION (later the South African Communications Service) served a dual function: as a propagator of state information, supplying the mass media and foreign audiences (through embassies) with pro-apartheid information; and as a gatherer of information, with its staff acting as the eyes and ears of the apartheid state in local communities, feeding information to the many security management structures put in place by the regime.

The DEFENCE ESTABLISHMENT'S information machinery, responsible for wide-scale disinformation and cover-ups about the war in Namibia and Angola, cross-border raids etc.

The POLICE INFORMATION MACHINERY, largely responsible for disinformation about local-level conflicts, for covering up the activities of hit squads, etc.

The RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT (such as the Human Sciences Research Council, Central Statistical Services and the Council for Scientific and industrial Research), responsible for manipulating data and supportive information to substantiate the interests of the apartheid state.

These were all primary sources for both the state-owned media and other media institutions, and helped to reinforce the apartheid state's propaganda war. Although discredited in the broad public domain, they remained as "credible" sources for almost all forms of media during the period under review.

3.2 Newspapers owned by Afrikaner capital Newspapers published by Afrikaner capital played a similar role to the SABC during the period under review. In particular, they represented the interests of their owners--Afrikaner capital --and played a part in ensuring the survival and growth of that sector of the economy. It championed the interests of a class who believed its very survival depended on apartheid.

Like the national broadcaster, their agenda was set by the ruling party. Their primary functions was not to publish news and information but to advance the interests of the apartheid state among the core of its supporters--white Afrikaans-speaking people.

Unashamedly pro-National Party, they functioned as party mouthpieces unaffected by notions of objectivity and balance.

Managers and editors were almost exclusively drawn from the ranks of the Broederbond, with many working in close allegiance with senior National Party leaders.

Titles such as Die Burger, Beeld, Rapport and Die Volksblad played a vital role in reinforcing the messages propagated by the SABC, and thereby advancing only the interests of the ruling party: justifying the actions of the, apartheid state (in particular the security establishment) and heatedly opposing the liberation movements.

These newspapers played a major role in building morale among those white Afrikaners who supported apartheid - for example, by glorifying cross-border raids, and downplaying the successes of sanctions campaigns.

These newspapers also assisted in the dangerous "demonisation" of the liberation movements and their leadership, as well as less-effective political formations such as the liberal establishment. This led to increasing polarisation and hatred for people from other race groups.

Apart from spreading disinformation, the newspapers of Afrikaner capital also denied South Africans access to other non-official sources of information and opinions. Large chunks of South African life went unreported in these newspapers, leading to increased ignorance and reinforcing the so-called "laager mentality". This denial of information was one of the most important shortcomings of the Afrikaans-language press.

There are examples of principled media workers who left the Afrikaans press because of dissatisfaction with its approach, or who waged their own struggle for the truth within these institutions; the African National Congress pays tribute to their commitment and resolve.

Although this sector has become a process of self-transformation, and has separated itself somewhat from the interests of the National Party, we believe it still has much to answer for because of the role it played in reinforcing apartheid ideology and in shaping the mindset of Afrikaansspeaking South Africans.

We believe these newspapers should reflect honestly on the role they played during this era, for the sake of themselves and their readers.

3.3 Newspapers owned by English capital Owned and controlled by English capital more specifically by the mining magnates, the English-language press advanced the interests of this sector and championed its commitment to these interests.

To understand this sector, it is worth referring to the recent submission to the TRC by the former Argus Company (now Independent Newspapers), in which the company concedes "shortcomings" in its behaviour during the apartheid era.

It makes several concessions, which the African National Congress believes can also be applied to the rest of the English-language press then owned by the mining companies:

Insufficient effort was made to circumvent restrictions imposed by apartheid and other legislation.

White perceptions monopolised judgements on the newsworthiness of particular information.

The contribution of black editorial staff was not recognised.

A "gradualist" anti-apartheid policy was adopted, leaving the impression that English-language newspapers were colluding with the regime.

In a climate of intensive state propaganda, there was insufficient contact with the liberation movements.

There is no doubt that the English-language press produced editors and media workers of tremendous courage and moral integrity during this period. South Africa owes much to those who lived the truism of "publish or be damned".

This courage was, sadly, often lacking at the level of editorial decisionmakers, where editors chose to suppress good stories or were happy to replicate state propaganda. The ANC believes there are many examples of this which need to be told, and encourages media workers to come forward so that the South African public knows the full extent of news manipulation by the so-called liberal press.

A key issue here is hypocrisy. While the state-run media and the newspapers owned by Afrikaner capital made no bones about their loyalty to the apartheid state, the newspapers owned by English capital trumpeted a liberal commitment to balance and objectivity - while failing to apply these principles in their own columns.

They failed dismally to reflect the feelings of "ordinary" South Africans. They relied heavily on government sources of information, no matter how discredited they were, and made very little effort to obtain information from alternative sources.

In their coverage of the struggle against apartheid, including the armed struggle, the English-language press relied almost exclusively on information from arms of the state. Contacts with the liberation movement were insufficient, and the paradigm remained the "white world view". This served to entrench the polarisation of apartheid, rather than exposing readers to a range of views.

This "white world view" applied not only to the selection of news, but to its treatment. Few can forget the sense of triumph in the Sunday Times' response to the SADF raid into Botswana, in which several civilians were killed (headline: The Guns of Gaborone!).

Not everyone was prepared to accept this mindset: There are examples of principled media workers who left the English-language press because of dissatisfaction with its approach, or bravely waged their own struggle within these institutions. The African National Congress pays tribute to them.

3.4 The privately-owned broadcast media During the apartheid era, privately-owned radio stations (such as Radio 702, Radio Bop and Capital Radio) broadcast from the then-bantustans, operating under licence from bantustan governments.

Despite this, one of the hallmarks of "non-SABC" radio was their quality news coverage, their refusal to rely on "the official story" and their commitment to balance.

Despite their limited resources, they reflected a much broader spectrum of news than that offered by the state broadcaster or the press. They pioneered the concept of debate on radio, as opposed to the dissemination of "his master's Voice". They also enabled victims of violence and apartheid repression to speak.

In doing so, they forced South Africans to hear, and engage with, views different to their own and helped to broaden understanding among various sectors of the population.

This resulted in a better-informed populace - and, in addition, put some pressure on the state broadcaster to improve the quality of its service and to seek additional sources of information.

This sector has grown significantly since the advent of democracy, and its growth is to be welcomed.

3.5 The privately-owned African language press Although small, newspapers in this sector had a noticeable impact in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu/Natal during the period under review.

In the Eastern Cape, *Imvo Zabantsundu* was used by Afrikaner capital to occasionally promote sentiments and institutions which were opposed to the liberation movements. The newspaper had little political credibility because of this, however, and its reach remained limited.

In KwaZulu/Natal, *Ilanga* was owned by the *Argus* Company until it was sold to an Inkatha Freedom Party-owned company in the mid-1980s. The newspaper played a role in promoting the interests of Inkatha during the late 1980s, and understandably took a partisan approach to the conflict which raged in the area.

These newspapers are, significantly, the only two to have had an impact on the attitudes of rural black South Africans.

3.6 The independent press and radio As with privately-owned radio stations, this sector has played a vital role in championing the rights of the oppressed, in exposing South Africans to a diversity of views, and in providing a channel of communication for those ignored by the mainstream.

The contribution of the independent press to exposing the horrors of apartheid, and in probing the activities of state-sanctioned hit-squads in particular, is well documented. These newspapers played a vital role in bringing about the collapse of the security establishment, and in exposing human rights atrocities committed under apartheid. They restored dignity to communities which had been ravaged by apartheid, and helped promote a human rights culture in our country.

Despite their limited resources, they were prepared to take on the state's oppressive censorship machinery and succeeded in creating space for others to publish. Their commitment to freedom of speech, and their creative approach to the challenge of publishing under apartheid, deserve recognition.

However, it would be wrong to ignore the contribution made by smaller, less influential publications such as those produced by pressure groups and literacy groups, as well as those made by communities in Oudtshoorn, on the

Cape Flats, and in townships across the country. These small publications and radio stations, which published and broadcast at great risk, also restored dignity to communities who lived under the yoke of apartheid tyranny.

The African National Congress believes it is a great pity that many of these publications and radio stations have collapsed without receiving recognition for their contribution to human rights.

Section 4

STRATKOM AND THE MEDIA

"Wars are not won on the battlefield but in the minds of men". Andre Beaufre

We refer the Commission to Section 4 7 of the ANC's first submission to the TRC (August 1 1996), in which the bedrock of the apartheid state's approach to the political threats it faced - "counter-revolutionary" tactics - was described in some detail.

We again draw the attention of the Commission to some of the centrally important points made in this submission of particular relevance to this paper on the media.

During the 1980s the State Security Council was served by a Secretariat of around 100 functionaries seconded from various government departments. It had four branches, including a Strategic Communications (Stratkom) branch. It is of critical importance to again point out that the Stratkom committee under the SSC remained in place after 1990, as indicated in the official Manual on the National Co-ordinating Mechanism (which replaced the National Security Management System in 1990).

We have previously urged the Commission to understand the importance of thoroughly investigating the activities of this particular branch of the SSC. We take this opportunity to again urge the Commission to understand the importance of doing so with regard to its investigations into gross human rights violations, including assassinations and other violence against civilians, rather than seeing this branch of the SSC as only being involved in "sort" operations such smear campaigns against selected enemies of the former apartheid regime. Some Stratkom operations involved violence, in fact, violence has been a critically important component of anti-ANC propaganda in our country for many years.

As stated in our first submission to the Commission, the Stratkom branch of the SSC was tasked with working out a total package of strategy alternatives in response to requests from Ministries, government departments, or Joint Management Committees (committees of this nature continued to function into the 1990s as shown in the NCM Manual.) These plans could include

tactics such as assassinations, attacks on neighbouring countries, economic sabotage by spreading negative propaganda about a particular country, campaigns of character defamation, setting up various front companies to engage in operations to influence the media and decision makers -- in general, the entire gamut of what have become known as "dirty tricks" operations.

These operations were not only confined within the borders of South Africa, but extended to a range of fronts in various African and Western countries which attempted to counter the negative attitudes towards the apartheid regime in these countries, and to promote proxy right-wing (and violent) forces such as UNITA, Renamo, and in the latter part of the 1980's and into the 1990's, Inkatha (in terms of the guidelines set out in Operation Marion.).

All these operations needed both Violent and non-violent propaganda components to successfully take the battle to the most crucial arena - perceptions. The establishment of a network of agents in the mass media, and the setting up of a number of specialist fronts tasked with ensuring that perceptions were influenced in a manner considered appropriate by the apartheid regime and its allies, was obviously critical to the success of such plans

The establishment of The Citizen newspaper (to counter the "overly critical" English medium mainstream press) with covert funds provides just one key example of work of this nature in the context of this submission, but there were many other operations, such as the setting up of Dixon Soule Associates to promote the image of Bophutatswana, or the National Students Federation to counter NUSAS, or the International Freedom Foundation to demonise the ANC and promote the image of UNITA, Renamo and similar Forces - in which the mass media - wittingly or unwittingly - played a pivotal role in influencing perceptions.

The Bureau for Information played an important role in the apartheid regime's attempts during the 1980's to influence the perceptions of the public and manipulate the mass media. The Bureau acted both as propagator of information - disseminating disinformation to the mass media - and as a censorship structure during this period.

Besides the SABC, every single government department had a Stratkom component, even those which had no obvious security or intelligence functions. For example, the Department of National Health and Population Development closely co-operated with Military Intelligence operations such as Project Henry, which entailed attempts to promote the image of the "Reverend" Maqina as a counter-force to popular UDF ♦ or ANC - aligned leaders through "counter-revolutionary" violence as well as the distribution of food parcels in an attempt to "win hearts and minds."

During the 1980s AND the 1990s the Department of Military Intelligence had a major Stratkom department in the form of the Directorate: Communication

Operations (DMI/Comops), renamed DMI/ Command Communications (Bevcom) after 1990.

In our first submission to the TRC we drew attention to the fact that FW de Klerk approved the continued operation of around 40 Stratkom operations in 1991, including Operation Marion and several projects which fell under the auspices of Project Ancor (Adult Education Consultants.)

We urge the Commission to call former commanders and key operatives from this sector of Military Intelligence to testify with regard to their activities in the 1980s and 1990s. We also call the attention of the Commission to the considerable amount of information supplied by former communications specialist and Comops employee, Major Nico Basson, on the activities in the propaganda and disinformation field in which the former government was involved in its efforts to manipulate the outcome of the elections in Namibia. These activities did not only involve propaganda, but also operations which resulted in the deaths of a number of people. In the cynical world of those who set out to manipulate perceptions, this is par for the course.

In this regard we draw the attention of the Commission to the range of "fronts" set up by state Stratkom structures in the 1980s and 1990s to act as smokescreens for illegal and violent activities, and to influence the perceptions of decision-makers. It was recently stated by a former SAP official that the "Wit Wolwe" (which "claimed" responsibility for the blowing up of Khotso House before the ANC or UDF was blamed) was "nothing but propaganda." The media has shown no interest whatsoever of following up the far-ranging implications of this statement. We have already drawn the attention of the Commission to another "right-wing" front, the Orde Boerevolk, which came into operation at the time of the Namibian elections, continued operations throughout the negotiations phase, and was strongly implicated in the assassination of Chris Hani. There were several others.

As pointed out in our first submission, Stratkom operations initiated in the 1990s including Project Marion and various Adult Education Consultants fronts continued with the full approval of FW De Klerk throughout the negotiations phase in the 1990s. Literally millions of Rands of taxpayers' money was spent on these covert projects during the 1990s (for example, see responses from the Minister of Defence to questions posed by Llewellyn Landers, MP on the subject of the continued funding of Adult Education Consultant fronts during the 1990s.)

During the negotiations phase, Stratkom operations intensified as the NP used every means at its disposal to gain advantage at the negotiating table, both in terms of influencing domestic and international perceptions of the process, and in terms of destabilising

http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=196891&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news_africa/

Date Accessed 23 November 2007

New Cosmo brings touch of gloss to Kenya

Kenya

05 February 2005 06:12

She is proud of being African, though she prefers to wear her hair straight. She is just as interested in having a career as a Western woman, though perhaps more coy about sex.

That, at least, is how the first Kenyan edition of Cosmopolitan sees its target audience.

In a country where the position of women is in flux -- caught between traditionalist attitudes and a changing society in which women increasingly go out to work and have successful careers -- the launch edition of the women's magazine showcases the transformation taking place.

What is absent from the magazine says as much as its content. There is little of the chauvinistic attitudes often exhibited in Kenyan newspapers, where agony aunts sometimes advise working women to turn their salaries over to their partners to prevent jealousy.

And there is none of Cosmo's trademark sexual frankness. In Kenya, public attitudes to sex remain those ingrained by Victorian missionaries.

But there is an unmistakable sense of pride in being African. The fashion pages feature a Kenyan model wearing designs tailored by a Nairobi fashion house, with beads, wraps and thick metal necklaces much in evidence.

The choice of clothing is important. The government last year launched a new national dress; a robe and wrap known as the "Kenyan cloak".

Kenya has never had a single national dress, and the clothing was intended to inspire unity and wean Kenyans off Western dress.

The new national costume has so far failed to capture the public's imagination. But African-inspired fashion spreads in glossy magazines are vital if a distinctive national style is ever to take off.

Cosmo Kenya features 30 pages of local content wrapped around the South African edition of the magazine, and the contrast between the two sections is striking.

The Kenyan section of the magazine is far "blacker". Unlike in South Africa, where affluent white women are a key part of the audience, the cover model of the Kenyan issue is black.

So are the various women shown bounding through the surf, holding phones to their ears or practising yoga postures in the adverts and features inside.

Sex is far more openly discussed in the South African section, which features a Belle de Jour-inspired "Diary of a prostitute" as well as "Eight quirky signs he's great in bed".

South Africa has long been the most developed country in Africa, the ripest target for a women's glossy, but the launch of this new edition of Cosmopolitan shows that Kenya is catching up.

Features looking at what's hip in Kenya this month illustrate a growing national confidence, as well as the emergence of an assertive middle class.

Elsewhere in the first issue, there are touching vignettes of local life, as in the article on long-distance relationships illustrated by three very Kenyan stories; the boyfriend who moves abroad to study, the expatriate boyfriend, and the British tourist who became a husband.

The lives of Kenyan women vary dramatically. Poorer women typically shoulder a heavy domestic burden. Some communities, such as the Maasai, also practise female circumcision. But there are also successful Kenyan women in all walks of life, and in the shape of environmentalist Wangari Maathai, Kenya even boasts its first Nobel Prize-winner.

It is a small step, but the launch of a local edition of Cosmopolitan may be the latest sign that a new breed of Kenyan woman is emerging. -- Guardian Unlimited © Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

AMPS All Media Products Surveys 2007