1. Portfolio Introduction
2. Media Policy and Regulation

A Government of the people, by the people and for the people is dependent on the people having access to information, information that is free, fair and accurate. In this discussion we look at how democracy is based on freedom of expression and the freedom of the media

* 1. Freedom of Expression, Media and Democracy

The media has always been seen to serve specific functions and roles. The nature of the role of the media is largely dependent on the type of political system it works within. From a Western perspective, the function of the media is largely to support democracy. Broadly speaking, democracy is still defined in the way that Abraham Lincoln phrased it as a ‘Government of the people, by the people and for the people’

There therefore needs to be a constant to and fro of information between the elected leadership and the citizenry. The media therefore provides the platform for this to and fro flow of information. (Fourie, 2008; Pitout, 2007)

The effective flow of information is based on the media’s ability to operate in a condition of freedom of expression.

Denis McQail (2005, pp. 192-193) posits that Freedom of Expression is the basis of all the theories. He points out that Freedom of Expression is a condition rather than a criterion used to measure the performance of the media.

There are differing views on the concept of freedom of expression, and these are largely based on the free market approach and the socialist approach to freedom of expression. The market approach maintains that journalists should be free from all outside controls, the media should not be servile or manipulated by power, and therefore there is no need for a national press policy to ensure freedom of expression. The Socialist approach maintains that the opinions and views of all people are published, and that a free press is necessary to counter opposition. It is therefore important that a national press policy is in place to ensure freedom of expression. (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

* 1. The Fourth Estate

The media has long been seen as a powerful force to be used to support and uphold democracy. It has been seen as such an integral part of democracy that it should be part of the democratic system. Thomas Carlyle, attributed the term to Edmund Burke, who used the term in a parliamentary debate in 1787 saying “There are three estates in Parliament, but in the reporters’ gallery yonder, there sits a fourth estate more important far than they all” (Ranjan, 2014)

Ranjan (2014) maintains that democracy rests on three pillars, that of the legislative, executive and judiciary, he posits that the ability of the media to reach every corner of a state, gives them immense power and that they should be seen as a fourth pillar of democracy.

He says the pivotal role of the media is to mobilise the thinking of the masses as democracy requires informed citizens, to ensure the principle of rule by the people.

The role of the fourth estate is therefore twofold, to inform the citizenry but also to create a feedback loop between the Government and voters.

* 1. Role and Functioning of the South African Media

Various theories have been formulated to explain how the media fulfils these functions in different societies, these include the libertarian approach, the social responsibility approach and the developmental approach. The theories differ on issues such as purpose, usage, control, what is forbidden, and ownership. But in essence, the libertarian theory sees the role of the media as being the watchdog of Government, while as the name of the theory suggests, the social responsibility theory sees the media as playing a role of social responsibility, while developmental theory sees the role of the media to ensure social development (Cilliers, et al., 2008, pp. 20 - 21)

The main theories of the mass media, that of, libertarianism, social responsibility and developmental are prevalent in the South African media, and explains the view of the South African media.

The South African media landscape is vast for it’s population. We look at two media outlets. Their editorial policies outline the roles and functions they wish to fulfill. Remember this is a normative look and is essentially not positive.

For this exercise, we look at the public broadcaster, the *South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)* and the Weekly newspaper, the *Mail and Guardian.*

The *SABC’*s editorial policy clearly states

“To heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. To lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by the law. To improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person. To build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations” (MediaWise, 2011)

This shows a heavy leaning to developmental journalism, a move to achieve what is in the national interest, and to achieve social development.

The policy goes on to say

“The *SABC* is governed by the Charter of the Corporation, which enshrines the journalistic, creative and programming independence of the staff of the corporation, and the constitutionally protected freedom of expression.” (MediaWise, 2011)

This shows a more libertarian approach to media theory, once again, we are not saying that the normative approach, or how things are supposed to be is the same as the positive approach, or how things actually are.

If one looks at the *Mail and Guardian*, their editorial policy states

“Our journalistic duty to inform the public trumps all other considerations, whether they are financial, political, personal or any other non-professional interests. This includes the business interests of the paper itself. We will avoid conflicts of interest as well as the appearance of conflicts of interest.” (Mail & Guardian, 2010)

Here we see again the importance of independence of the media, very much in line with Libertarian theory.

If we look at the slogans of other media outlets, *ENCA’s* ‘No Fear, No Favor’ or *ANN7’s* ‘The truth unfolds’ we see a leaning towards libertarianism, while all the while most media outlets subscribe to the ‘cliché’ to inform, educate and entertain, this is indicative of an approach mainly leaning on libertarianism, but with social responsibility and development at the core.

* 1. The Freedom of Expression Institute

The Freedom of Expression Institute is a non-profit organisation, aimed at fostering the right of self-expression and the freedom of expression, not only through the media, but by individuals themselves. The Organisation was founded in 1994, through a merger of three organisations, The Campaign for Open Media, the Anti-Censorship Action Group and the Media Defence Trust. (FXI, 2016)

* 1. FXI and Freedom of Expression

The FXI has long been involved in establishing a voice for freedom of speech, in the recent past, the organisation has been vocal on the censorship by the SABC of the broadcasting of material showing visuals of property being destroyed. (FXI, 2016)

‘The FXI and FXN view the decision by the SABC not to air visuals of protests it deems violent in its news bulletins as an act of censorship. This action by the SABC effectively denies citizens access to critically important public information. Many South Africans depend on the SABC as their primary source of news. The move further represents a narrowing of editorial independence through increasing managerial interference within the public broadcaster.’ (FXI, 2016)

The FXI has participated in public protests, and through it’s networks has instigated a meeting between the South African National Editors Forum (SANEF), probably the most important media ‘organisation’ in the country and Government. (FXI, 2016)

The FXI does not only work in South Africa, but throughout the African continent, and their work can be felt throughout the sub-continent.

1. Media Management
   1. Media and Communications Market
      1. Introduction
      2. Expansion
      3. Maturity
      4. Stagnation
2. Representation
   1. Representation Defined

“Today abstraction is no longer that of the map, the double, the mirror, or the concept. Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: A hyperreal.” (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

In making this statement Baudrillard was speaking to the four phases of simulacrum, that of a faithful copy, the second stage is a perversion of reality, the third is the masking of a profound reality, and the fourth is pure simulation, with no reality or basis, ergo the hyperreal.

One only has to think of this progression in the case of the former Minister of health in South Africa, Manto Tshabalala Msimang, the first phase was a faithful copy, media houses reported, that she said

“Minister of Health Manto Tshabalala-Msimang used the opportunity of a parliamentary media briefing to urge journalists again to spread her message that Aids sufferers should use olive oil, lemon and garlic to boost their immune systems.” (Nair, 2004)

The perversion of reality followed soon afterward, as is evidenced by an article in *Independent newspapers*

“The consumption of garlic, beetroot and lemon delayed the development of HIV into "Aids-defining conditions", Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang said on Tuesday.” (Roux, 2006)

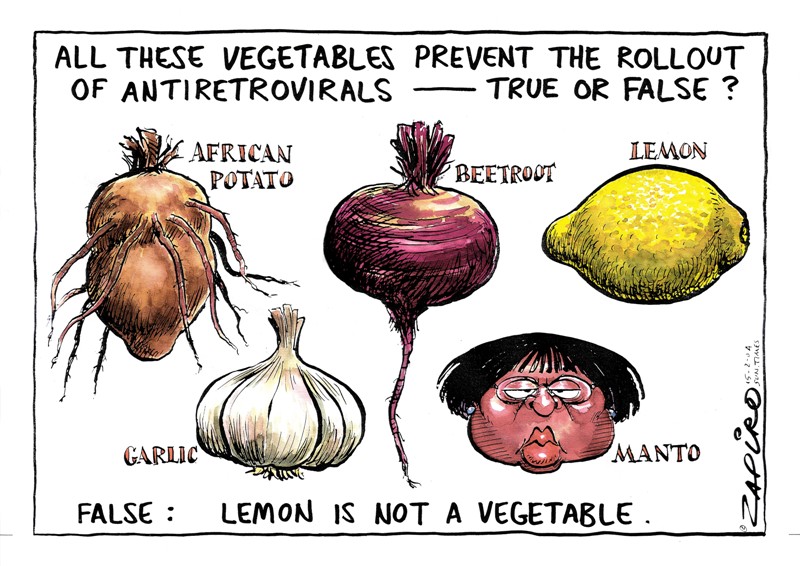
The perversion of reality followed soon afterward, as there was no profound reality, but where the perception became reality, the dailymail in the UK espoused as much

“South African newspapers on yesterday joined the fray, describing the Toronto display as "a salad stand" and demanding President Thabo Mbeki - who is also often accused of mishandling the AIDS crisis - sack his controversial minister.” (Dailymail, 2006)

The fourth stage is pure simulation, none of the good that the person has done is acknowledged, only the perceptions abide, as was in the case with the death of the Minister, as evidenced by the article in the Guardian

“South Africa's former health minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, who gained notoriety for her promotion of lemons, garlic and olive oil to treat Aids, has died. She was 69.

Tshabalala-Msimang died in a Johannesburg hospital today from complications related to a liver transplant in 2007, said the ruling African National Congress (ANC).” (The Guardian, 2009)



*https://pen.org/blog/work-south-african- 1*

It follows that Baudrillard’s four phases follow most news items, or rather that most news items follow Badrillard’s four phases.

* 1. Media and the Construction of Identity
     1. Introduction

Identity, answers the basic question of ‘who am I’, this may seem simple enough, but inherently one can identify as one thing or many things at the same time. For example, one can identify themselves as being male or female, South African or African, skilled or unskilled. The key facets of identity, gender, social class, age, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity play significant roles in determining how we understand and experience the world, as well as shaping the types of opportunities and challenges we face. (Thrope, 2013)

Identity is not something we are born with, it is a socially and historically constructed attribute, controlled by external factors, such as interactions with family, peers, organisations, institutions and the media. Identity can also be looked at as a concept of self, the knowledge of who we are, this combined with a cognitive self awareness, produces an identity of self. (Worsham, 2011)

Combining the two factors, internal and external, therefore produces an identity. While this essay delves into the role of the media in the construction of identity, it should be borne in mind that several of the other factors alluded to above, play a role in the construction of identity. (Worsham, 2011)

To examine the role of the media in the construction of identity, this essay uses the recent ‘#RhodesMustFall’ campaign and looks at two opinion editorial pieces published in local newspapers. The campaign kicked off a debate among students, as to their identity, and while the editorials look into the justification of the actions of the students, this essay focusses on the primary question of identity.

* + 1. Media and Identity

The recent #RhodesMustFall campaign, which kicked off at the University of Cape Town, has highlighted a number of issues within the South African Higher Education system, including the perceptions of a lack of transformation and the inequality seemingly caused by ever increasing university fees. What can not be ignored however is that the campaign and ensuing protest action highlighted a search for identity among tertiary students, much like the Black Consciousness Movement that began in the 1960’s.

This essay looks at two opinion editorials, published in South Africa, from two very different perspectives, one is a piece written by Mike Berger, on politicsweb

* + 1. Conclusion
  1. Gender and the Media
     1. Introduction

In this short essay we look at the issue of stereotyping, and the impact it has had on society. The mass media has often been accused of promulgating stereotypes, in terms of gender, race, culture, religion and many other types. In this essay we will briefly delve into the role of the media in this respect.

* + 1. Gender and Stereotyping

1. Theory of Gender

The basic definition of gender is the physical attributes that culture and society impose on men and women, and not the biological attributes that define men and women. (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

The Theory of Gender is, however, a complex, and much debated theory, as Emily Allen posits (2011)

“this area of study is incredibly complex, perhaps more so than any of the others, given the tendency of such theorists to employ the strategies of other critical schools in their analysis of gender and sex. As a result, sex and gender theorists can be divided into various sub-schools that bring together the insights of disparate approaches”

The study of Gender is roughly divided into two areas, femininity and masculinity. Femininity, is the notion that typically girls are brought up to be feminine, in the clothes they wear, the role they take up in a household, and the occupations they hold. (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

The study of femininity is further divided into the studies of feminism, a movement where women began fighting for equal rights, the right to vote, own property, and to earn a living. (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

Another study is the study of liberal feminism, a fight against poor wages and job opportunities. (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

Marxist feminism borrows from the ideas of Marx and Engels, of the notion of the haves and the have-nots, with men being the haves and women being the have-nots. Socialist feminism takes it a step further, including race, language and culture. (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

Radical feminism is extreme and radical, calling for the total separation of the sexes. (Cilliers, et al., 2008)

Men’s studies grew in response to feminism, believing that men are the victims, not women. Several different types of ‘man’ have emerged, since the beginning of feminism in the 1960’s.

The ‘new man’ played ‘mummy’, but also had a career, and was emotional and unrepressed.

The ‘new-man-as-narcissist’ , men who were well groomed and well attired.

The ‘yuppie’ is a glamorous, high earning man with a number of ‘toys’

Then came the ‘new lad’ this man is not muscular, and is viewed by some as ‘soft’

The ‘metrosexual man’ is a heterosexual man, that has adopted many of the gay traditions, that of beautifying themselves, drinking what is traditionally called softer drinks, and is slightly effeminate.

The ‘übersexual man’ is much like the ‘metrosexual man’ except that he bulks up at the gym as well.

1. Stereotyping has almost become a ‘dirty’ word in the South African lexicon, yet it remains a reality. The Merriam-Webster dictionary describes it as ‘to believe unfairly that all people or things with a particular characteristic are the same’. In terms of gender, the media has offered very basic stereotypes for men and women, with men being portrayed as adrenalin seeking, hard-working, goal-orientated and unemotional, while women are portrayed as beautiful, stay-at-home mothers, who are in tune with their emotions.
2. An advertisement for disposable consumer products company, Bic, appearing in Glitz Magazine in 2016 (Addendum ?)

was indicative of the gender stereotype believed by many to exist. The advert depicts a woman in a business suit, with the tagline “look like a girl, act like a lady, think like a man, work like a boss” The advert played on the stereotype that girls are pretty, and behave like ladies, but to achieve success in the workplace, they have to think like a man, playing on the stereotype, that men are the superior gender in the workplace. after much criticism, particularly on social media, the advertisement was withdrawn, with the company offering an apology “We’re incredibly sorry for offending everybody,” the company [**wrote on its Facebook page**](https://www.facebook.com/BicSA). “That was never our intention, but we completely understand where we’ve gone wrong.” (Glitz Plus Magazine, 2016)

* + 1. Conclusion
  1. Media and the Environment
     1. Article Summary
     2. What is Environmental Journalism
     3. Objective Reporting
     4. Who was consulted
     5. Factors Influencing Contextualisation
  2. Media and Violence
     1. Programme Summary

*Ray Donovan* is an American crime drama created by Ann Biderman for cable network, Showtime. The drama is set in Los Angeles, California. The premise of the story is based on Irish-American, Ray Donovan, played by Liev Schreiber, who, originally from South Boston, works for the powerful law firm Goldman & Drexler, representing the rich and famous. Donovan is a "Fixer": a person who arranges bribes, payoffs, threats, and generally clears up problems that the rich and famous get themselves into. Donovan is portrayed as no common gangster, but a professional person, good at his job and devoted to his family. (Internet Movie Data Base, 2013)

The title character, Ray Donovan, is violent by nature, it is argued that violence has been bred into him, by his father, Mickey, played by Jon Voight. It is also an integral part of his job, as a fixer, he has to seem dangerous, and the only way he can successfully portray that image, is by being violent. In the episode ‘*Yo Soy Captain’* Donovan visits a therapist, who says “Ray, we need to talk about your violence” the creators have still managed to make Donovan a likeable anti-hero, in that the people he hurts, seem to deserve it. UntitledTv.com surmised it as “Ray Donovan fetishizes violence and the threat of it…the show is actively trying to make your brain associate violence with something positive” (Team, 2015)

* + 1. Definition of Violence

Most dictionaries have a synonymous definition for violence, which is the intentional use of force, intended to cause harm to another living being. The World Health Organisation comprehensively defines violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation." (Violence Prevention Alliance, 2016)

Violence in the media is defined as the portrayal of violent behavior or threats of violent behavior. Huesmann(2007) states that “Most researchers define media violence as visual portrayals of acts of physical aggression by one human or human-like character against another.”

This is evident in the depiction of Ray Donovan in the *Showtime* series. While much effort is taken to portray the character as a morally upright person, he is at heart violent, and some may argue that the efforts to depict him as a professional person, with a loyalty to his family, is an attempt to romanticisise the violence in the series.

Andrew Donaldson (2016) sums up the violence of the series, in his review he writes “It's a dangerous world of blackmail, criminal behaviour and, needless to say, a reasonably high body count. This, after all, is the dark side of public relations.”

* + 1. Media Violence and Real World Violence

There has bee much debate and research on the causal relationship between media violence and real world violence. Huesmann (2007) asserts that “Since the early 1960s research evidence has been accumulating that suggests that exposure to violence in television, movies, video games, cell phones, and on the internet increases the risk of violent behavior on the viewer’s part just as growing up in an envienvironment filled with real violence increases the risk of them behaving violently.”

Three theoretical perspectives have been put forward to explain the possible effects of media violence on the audience, Pitout (2007) defines them as the traditional media effects perspective, the cultivation perspective and the active audience perspective.

The traditional media effects perspective was formulated after the success of propoganda campaigns during the second world war. The audience was largely seen as the passive receipients of the information, while the media was seen as all powerful. This perspective assumes a direct causal relationship between media violence and real world violence, or on screen violence and the behaviour of those who view the portrayed violence. (Pitout, 2007)

The cultivation perspective, or the power of culture perspective, looks at the media’s ability to cultivate the perception of violence by the audience. Cultivation theory asserts that high frequency viewers are more susceptible to media messages and the belief that they are real and valid. Heavy viewers are exposed to more violence and are affected by the Mean World Syndrome, a belief that the world is far more dangerous than it is. (Davie, 2010)

“if one stays inside and watch news about crime all day, one might be inclined to believe that the crime rate is far higher than it actually is and they might easily become the victim of a crime. Or in another sense, it can perpetuate stereotypes such as “all Asians are either smart or ninjas” or “every black male is most likely a criminal.” These are ridiculous notions, but possible parts of a paradigm that can be conveyed by heavy exposure to media messages.” (Davie, 2010)

The active audience perspective states that the audience is not merely a passive recipient of the message, but are cognitively and emotionally involved in making sense of the message. This perspective asserts that scholars can not assume that the meaning of the message is fixed before transmission, as the meaning of the message must follow a process of negotiation between the recipient and the message itself. (Oxford University Press, 2016)

In terms of *Ray Donovan,* the active audience perspective should be used. Donovan is portrayed as a complex character, one that is inherently violent, but with a moral justification of his actions. It is therefore up to the audience to interact with the message, that being that violence is the only solution, in order to make the decision either cognitively or emotionally, and oftentimes sub-conciously whether there is a justification of the message or not.

* + 1. Short Term versus Long Term Violence

A number of research studies have been undertaken to ascertain the effects of on screen violence in terms of both long and short term exposure. These include studies by the Kaiser family and research by Eron and Huesmann. The only commonality between the research is that they have all been more or less equally criticised. (Pitout, 2007)

Short term exposure studies have shown an increased heart rate, perspiration and a tendency to inflict pain on others, these experiments have, however, been criticised due to the short term exposure in the laboratory and the artificial environment of the laboratory. The Kaiser family research project found that almost half the parents of children between four and six years old demonstrated aggressive behavior from television. (Pitout, 2007)

Pitout (2007) points out that the majority of children almost ninety percent are more likely to imitate positive behaviour from television programmes like the ‘Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles’

Eron and Huesmann conducted research into long term exposure to on screen violence. Their study found that childen who were exposed to violent television content when they were eight, were more likely to get into trouble with the law in tehir teenage years, when they were visited again at the age of thirty, those who had been exposed were more likely to have criminal records, use violent disciplinary measures to bring up their children and act aggresively towards their spouses. (Pitout, 2007)

This research also received harsh criticism, Rhodes (2013), postulates that the research was sloppy, unscientific and inadequate, as only three of the chidren who commited violent crimes as children were interviewed years later. He also says that exposure to other variables, like violence at home or within a community were not taken into account.

*Ray Donovan,* follows on the same anti-hero genre, exploited over the years from the *Godfather* trilogy, to *The Sopranos,* to *Boardwalk Empire* and countless others. The series can only be looked at in the short term, if only due to the fact of the length of the series. The series does provide short term exposure to violence, but as Rhodes points out, many other factors must be taken into account before a causal realtionship can be established.

* + 1. Conclusion

Violence and aggression may be easy to define, and there may be comprehensive definitions and understanding of media violence, but there is still no clear understanding or agreement on the impact of media violence on real world violence. While it seems that there is a causal link between on screen violence and real world violence, it would be foolish to assume a direct causal relationship between the two. Many other factors, including socio-economic circumstances, family relationships and psychological states must be taken into account when looking at the impact of the portrayal of violence and the behavior of the audience viewing the portrayal.

1. Conclusion
2. Sources Consulted
3. Addendum A