

**A comparison of *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the  
2015 #FeesMustFall student protests**

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## DECLARATION

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Linda Fekisi

## DEDICATION

It is said that each person goes through certain experiences that alter their perspectives and leave them with memories that last a lifetime. These experiences are often attached to certain dates and events. My life-changing experience was in October 2015.

I was outside the Parliament of South Africa in Cape Town on the day of the #FeesMustFall national shutdown. I witnessed history unfold right in front of my eyes. I have a love-hate relationship with this memory. On the one hand, I wish I could erase my memories of the mayhem and violence. On the other hand, I appreciate the experience. In a world where fake news is everywhere, a front row seat is the best. Especially when media headlines are in conflict with what one has witnessed.

That day left me with a desire that I could not shake. It was the burning need to tell this story and, in some way, aid in etching it in history.

I dedicate my study to the past and present youth of South Africa, especially the June 16 and #FeesMustFall generations, for leading revolutions.

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## ABSTRACT

In an essay titled *On my philosophy* existentialist philosopher Karl Jaspers (1941: 133) explores reasons that lie behind the relevance of studying any figure or event from history. Jaspers (ibid.) argues that “[o]ur own power of generation lies in the rebirth of what has been handed down to us. If we do not wish to slip back, nothing must be forgotten...”.

This study is based on such a phenomenon in the media and journalism landscape in South Africa.

The first occurred on 16 June 1976 – during the height of apartheid – the Soweto Uprisings. In mid-October 2015, 23 years into South Africa’s democracy, the second event occurred. This was when #FeesMustFall protests broke out. *Drum* magazine covered both events. Started during the heydays of Sophiatown, a suburb that was a well-known black culture hub during the apartheid years, *Drum* rose to prominence over the decades by documenting the many poignant moments in South Africa’s history.

By the time the Soweto Uprisings broke out, *Drum* was already a household name. In democratic South Africa, the magazine still ranks amongst the top-selling magazines in the country, although its focus is less on politics and more on lifestyle and entertainment.

The primary intention of this study was to explore what contemporary journalists can learn from a comparison of *Drum*’s coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests. This study looked at the similarities and differences between the coverage by conducting a frame analysis of articles. The analysis was guided by the Social Constructivist theoretical perspective.

The findings include how both *Drum* magazines were never privately owned, how both were able to capture events which made the Newsmaker of the Year, and how both appear to have a similar target audience: the black community and liberals. When it comes to coverage, responsibility for the protests was attributed to the ruling governments.

Another finding reveals how existing in different eras and political landscapes is not the only difference between the two issues. While the 1976 issue focused on contextual reporting, despite the political unrests, the 2015 issue chose to unpack and merely deliver on-the-surface reporting. The comparison between the two different eras of this magazine is relevant to contemporary journalists, despite their different locations in history.

There are multiple reasons which strengthen the rationale behind exploring the media history of two eras of *Drum* magazine, in particular, for the benefit of contemporary journalists. The first reason is embedded in the words of existentialist philosopher Karl Jaspers (1941).who argues that “If we do not wish to slip back, nothing must be forgotten...”.

The roots of the second rationale arise from John Matshikiza who says that stories from *Drum* are “a bridge between the past and the present, remarkably fresh in style and contemporary in the situations and emotions they convey in spite of the decades of trauma that have intervened since they were written”. Matshikiza (in Chapman, 2000:xii) further makes a connection to what Jaspers argued by saying how these stories “are an invaluable part of our missing store of memories – without which we are destined to have no future”.

In conclusion, this study supports the narrative that *Drum* magazine is indeed different and, despite this...the beat goes on.

**Keywords:** *Soweto Uprising, #FeesMustFall, Drum magazine, Social Constructivism, Framing; journalism*

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## Chapter 1: Opening beat

*“You know the drum was the first instrument besides the human voice” – Billy Higgins*

### 1.1. Introduction

*Déjà vu*. A term coined by the French to describe the feeling one gets when one feels like one is going through an experience for the second time.

This study is based on such a phenomenon in the media and journalism landscape in South Africa. The first occurred on 16 June 1976 – during the height of apartheid – the Soweto Uprisings. In mid-October 2015, 23 years into South Africa’s democracy, the second event occurred. This was when #FeesMustFall protests broke out. *Drum* magazine covered both events.

Even though the protests happened during different eras and within different political contexts, there are similarities to them. The similarities between the two protests have been pointed out in numerous news articles (cf. eNCA, 2015; Evans, 2015; Subramany, 2015).

This comparison between the two events, nearly four decades apart, brings to mind Jaspers’ (1941:136) statement: “Only through being conscious can the contents of the past, transmuted into possibilities, become the fully real contents of the present. The life of truth in the realm of the spirit does not remove man from his world, but makes him effective for serving his historical present.”

*Drum*, a South African magazine aimed at a black readership, covered both events. *Drum* was one of the leading anti-apartheid publications founded in the 1950s (initially as *The African Drum*), by journalist and broadcaster Robert Crisp. It was taken over by

Jim Bailey who, with the assistance of a team of writers and photographers, re-designed and rebranded the magazine.

In 1984, Bailey sold *Drum* to what is today known as Naspers, which continues to publish *Drum* under its Media24 subsidiary. While still focused on providing relevant content for black South Africans, the magazine has become more orientated towards market news, entertainment, and feature articles, with less focus on political issues (SAHO, 2015). According to Naidoo (2011:95), *Drum's* coverage has always been and continues to highlight “serious challenges ... and similar realities in democratic South Africa ...”.

## **1.2. Problem statement and relevance of study**

The primary research question of this study is: What can contemporary journalists learn from a comparison of *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests?

There are multiple reasons for exploring the media history of two eras for the benefit of contemporary journalists. Firstly, as Jaspers (1941:133) argues: “[o]ur own power of generation lies in the rebirth of what has been handed down to us. If we do not wish to slip back, nothing must be forgotten...”.

The second reason is provided by John Matshikiza, who writes in a book about *Drum*, “These stories from ‘*The Drum Decade*’ represent more than nostalgia for a bygone age. They are a bridge between the past and the present, remarkably fresh in style and contemporary in the situations and emotions they convey in spite of the decades of trauma that have intervened since they were written.” Matshikiza (in Chapman, 2000:xii) further makes a connection to what Jaspers previously argued by saying how these stories are “an invaluable part of our missing store of memories – without which we are destined to have no future”.

The political climates between the two student protests vary. In 1976 the wave of student protests which rippled across was against the implementation of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. In 2015, almost four decades later, South Africa witnessed #FeesMustFall. This time around, university students took to the streets against the hike of fees.

Mostert (in Capazorio, Joubert&Ndenze, 22 October 2015), writes how #FeesMustFall, which happened in democratic South Africa, marked the most significant disruption of the country's education system since the 1976 Soweto Uprisings during apartheid. Mostert (2015) also highlights how these two protests rank amongst the most significant protests this country has witnessed to date.

By comparing one publication's coverage of two significant and similar events, the study hopes to provide the contemporary journalist with lessons that could assist in navigating the challenging news environment of a developing society.

### **1.3. Aim of the study**

The main objective of this research was to compare *Drum* magazine's coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests.

Secondary objectives included:

- To explore the history of one of South Africa's oldest publications, *Drum*;
- To identify the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum*'s coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings;
- To identify the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum*'s coverage of the 2015 #FeesMustFall students protests;
- To analyse the frames identified in order to compare and contrast *Drum*'s coverage of the two events.

## 1.4. Theoretical foundations

This study utilised social constructivism as its worldview. Social constructivism is based on the idea that reality is not a set of objective arrangements outside ourselves, but is rather constructed through our interaction with others. Each individual has his/her own view on how to perceive the world, and therefore the labels and understandings associated with objects and ideas differ from one person to the next. This field of study became popular in the 1960s with Berger and Luckman's treatise *The Social Construction of Reality*. According to their argument, all knowledge (even the most basic) is derived from and maintained by communication.

Social constructivism is defined by Secher (2013) as a theory of science derived from the notion that views reality and understanding as elements that are humanly constructed in the minds of individuals. In this approach, reality is a subjective phenomenon. This means that reality exists and is shaped by our recognition of it. Historical and social processes created by people are generally assumed to be the genesis of the emergence and development of social phenomena. With regards to this study, the student protests in 1976 and 2015 are considered some of the most prominent social and historical occurrences in the history of South Africa.

Reality in society is mainly shaped and constructed by the recollection and transcripts of historians. Journalists and communication experts are rarely painted with the same paintbrush. In fact, a long-standing ideal in journalism has been that a journalist should be a detached observer of the event being reported on, and not become a part of it (Pöttker, 2017:169).

However, Mkhize (2016) argues against the notion that journalists are "merely observers". According to her, those who transmit information are inherently writing a historical record and are therefore central to the construction of reality. Based on this argument, one can state that the journalists who wrote for *Drum* in 1976 and 2015 are media players who documented and etched their interpretations and observations of the

Soweto Uprisings and #FeesMustFall into history. This is the rationale which will guide the researcher while conducting this study, which is qualitative and comparative in nature.

### **1.5. Research design and research methodology**

As previously mentioned, a qualitative research methodology – informed by the social constructivist worldview – was followed because of the study’s reliance on the interpretation of meaning from text and image data (Creswell & Clark, n.d.). The specific method utilised was a qualitative news frame analysis. Frame analysis serves four main purposes within the context of media research: to define problems, to diagnose a course, to make value judgments, and to suggest remedies (Entman, 1993 in Linström & Marais, 2012:21). The method is based on Goffman’s (1974 in Linström & Marais, 2012:21) framing theory, which suggests that journalists and media producers use frames to label “schemata of interpretation” that allow people “to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences or events”.

According to the term Frame analysis the manner in which something is presented to the audience, (called “the frame”), influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are therefore concepts that work to organise or structure the meaning of a message. The most general use of frames is in the manner in which a media frame places the information they convey. They are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience.

This study made use of deductive frame analysis. The scope of the study focused on and was limited to news reports on the first days of both the protests. This coverage appeared in the July 1976 issue (Soweto Uprisings) and the 5 November 2015 issue (#FeesMustFall). In 1976, *Drum* was published monthly, while at present it is published weekly.

Morrison (2014) defines Qualitative research as a form of research that is fluid, multi-dimensional field. It is one which forbids any easy single definition or set of definitions. As a result of this nature of the study, it leaves room for ample criticism and key issues of concern when it comes to data collection and, ultimately, the analysis of the data collected (Morrison, 2014:328).

The framing theory is no exception. Cacciatore, Scheufele and Iyengar (2016) state that, despite the popularity of the framing theory, ambiguities surrounding how we conceptualise and therefore operationalise framing have begun to overlap with other media effects models to the point that is dysfunctional. They argue that abundant framing effects downplay the role of cognitive schema in producing framing effects.

Hammersley (1990) suggests that researchers overcome the effects of their personal and cultural assumptions. The author himself is aware of the question of complete objectivity. In a book review on his work, Morrison (2014:13) directly quotes him by writing that: “The researcher and the researched are part of this and bring to it their own biographies, values, and insights. The task is to be sufficiently objective, wherever possible, in considering the validity of conclusions reached.” This is the advice which the researcher heeds in this study.

## **1.6. Chapter overview**

This chapter examines the theoretical foundation of the study. Furthermore, it situates the study in the context of previous research and the work that has been done by other scholars on social constructivism, framing, and the South African media landscape.

The content on the focus and subject matter of this study is covered in in chapter three. When #FeesMustFall broke out in 2015, many in South Africa experienced a feeling of *déjà vu* and thought back to the 1976 Soweto Uprisings. *Drum* magazine covered both these events. Chapter three also provides the history of the magazine,

information on the current *Drum*, and literature on the student protests in order for the reader to understand the context of the study.

This study is a qualitative study, which will make use of framing in order for the researcher to meet the research objectives of this study. Chapter four outlines the research design and methodology.

The aim of this study is to conduct a comparison of *Drum's* coverage of the two student protests. This is done in chapter five.

The literature review is provided in chapter two and chapter three. Chapter four consists of the research design. The findings of this study are presented in chapter five.

Chapter six contains the conclusion of this study. Here the researcher summarises the study, and provides the limitations and the scope for future research.

Each chapter of this study has been given a name that fits with the theme of drums.

## Chapter 2: Sound of the drum

*“When you write, it's making a certain kind of music in your head. There's a rhythm to it, a pulse, and on the whole, I'm writing to that drum rather than the psychological process” – Tom Stoppard*

### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter sets out to deliver the first half of the literature review. It orientates the study in the context of research done by other scholars on the topic.

The researcher will present literature relevant to the themes of this study by outlining theoretical and conceptual frameworks, as well as providing insight on how the study will address the shortcomings of theories (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016:10).

The chapter firstly aims to provide existing research on the theoretical perspective that will be navigating the argument process of this study. It also seeks to explore definitions, unpack terminology, and describe theories used, such as the Social Constructivism Theory and Framing, based on work done by other scholars.

Secondly, the researcher will examine the South African media landscape. This is the area in which the study is based. In order for readers to understand the findings and the analysis, they first need to understand the scope and foundation of the subject matter. This chapter seeks to do so by exploring existing research and data on the identity of the media landscape.

The focus of this thesis, *Drum* magazine, will be dealt with in the second half of the literature review.

## **2.2. Theoretical perspective**

*“Nothing is as practical as a good theory!” – Kurt Lewin*

A theoretical perspective guides the logic of what a scholar will be doing during their research. Simon and Goes (2011:1) split the research process into two parts – theory and observation. According to them, ‘theory’ is what is going on inside the mind of the researcher embarking on the study. They define ‘observation’, on the other hand, as what goes on in the real world where the data for the research is collected. They add that a good theory, or a set of them, guides each and every step of a study – from inception, when the research questions are formulated. It is also there during the analysis of the data findings, all the way to when the conclusions are written.

Theoretical frameworks provide the rationale to conduct the study and enable the reader to understand the perspective of the writer. In addition, a good framework goes as far as assuring the reader that the type of investigation that you proposed is not just based on your personal instincts or guesses as a researcher. A good framework reflects how your arguments are informed by established theory and realistic facts you gather from works done by other scholars (Simon & Goes, 2011:1).

The thought trajectory which this study is informed by is the social constructivism theoretical framework. The study also makes use of framing theory as a focus. Scheufele (1999) states that within the political communication sphere, framing is defined and operationalised on the basis of social constructivism. This is one part of the rationale of the research route.

## **2.3. Social constructivism**

This section seeks to define the approach, outline its main assumptions, and provide arguments why it was selected as the main theoretical approach for this study. Finally,

this section will explore how social constructivism is applicable and relevant to this thesis.

### **2.3.1. Defining social constructivism**

This study is conducted from the perspective of social constructivism. The social constructivism theory attempts to explain how social contexts affect our understanding of reality (Secher, 2013:10).

Secher (2013) describes social constructivism as a theory of science stemming from the notion that views reality and understanding as elements that are humanly constructed in the minds of individuals. In this approach, reality is a subjective phenomenon. This means that reality exists and that, moreover, reality is shaped by our recognition of it. Historical and social processes created by people are generally assumed to be the genesis of the emergence and development of social phenomena. The student protests in 1976 and 2015 are considered to be some of the most prominent social and historical occurrences in the history of South Africa.

Constructivism is defined by Delia (2012) as a theory which seeks to explain “individual differences in people’s ability to communicate skilfully in social situations”. One of its central assumptions is that people make sense of the world through systems of personal constructs (Delia, 2012:98 - 99).

There are four degrees of social constructivism. Secher (2013:10 - 11) explains how these should be seen as different degrees, which affect the manner in which individuals perceive the view and creation of reality and the social processes that occur in our lives. Firstly, social constructivism can be viewed as a critical perspective. This degree stipulates that an individual does not take everything for granted, but is aware that all this can possibly be constructed differently; such as in a cultural context, for instance. The second degree states that social constructivism may be perceived as a social

theory. This degree places the first one in application by explaining how social elements are constructed and how they work by using different theories on social reality.

The third degree of social constructivism is epistemology or theory of knowledge. It builds on the previous two degrees. This means that when social constructivism as a social theory is applied specifically to knowledge, a social institution, it moves on to become an epistemology. This degree refers to when knowledge is examined to clarify what it is and how it is socially constructed through social processes, such as language and culture. Therefore, social processes shape the knowledge that we have and they become our reality (Secher, 2013:11).

Ontology is the fourth and last phase of social constructivism. According to this phase, social constructivism is not only about the social construction of theoretical knowledge, but that all parts of reality, including the physical, are socially constructed.

Keaton and Bodie (2011) state that many versions of social constructivism uphold that objects exist only after they enter the communicative space. This process of defining an object allows it to exist within a social context. In other words, it allows it to have meaning.

Social constructivism is one stage of four that McQuail categorised in the research timeline on the history of media effects. According to McQuail (1999:105), the first stage is from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the late 1930s. This was dominated by strategic propaganda during World War I. This stage led to the growing fear of how media messages could influence attitudes.

The second stage revised the paradigm of strong media effects. It ended in the late 1960s. Summed up, the main argument brought up by this stage is that campaigns do not influence people. It argues that they only reinforce existing attitudes; and, when they eventually do, it is minimal.

The beginning of the 1970s saw the commencement of the third stage. This stage was dominated by the search for new strong media effects. The focus of research moved from attitude change towards the more cognitive effects of mass media (Scheufele, 1999:105).

Social constructivism, the fourth and present stage, began in the 1980s. This stage sees the description of media and recipients combined as elements of both strong and limited effects of mass media. McQuail (1994:331) explains that mass media has a strong impact on society by constructing social reality, or by framing images of reality in a patterned way. Linström and Marais (2012:22) write how the mass media attracts public attention, persuades in matters of opinion and belief, influences behaviour, and informs society speedily and broadly. On the other hand, media effects are limited by the interaction between mass media and recipients.

One cannot mention social constructivism without also touching on interpretativism. Schwandt (1994) notes how constructivism and interpretativism are both systems, used by social philosophers. They merely provide directions for where readers of their scholarly work should look; but do not provide descriptions about what to look at as a researcher.

Interpretativism is similar to constructivism in that they both share the goal of understanding the lived experiences of the world by those who live in it. The goal of this school of thought is to investigate reality and the meaning of it from situation-specific meanings, which are constructed by social actors (Schwandt, 1994:118). The journalists who reported for *Drum* are these social actors and their articles constitute their “meaning” of the reality of the student protests.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, both social constructivism and the framing theory are applicable for the qualitative comparative nature of this study. The next section examines the criticism of this perspective.

### **2.3.2. Criticism of perspective**

This perspective is not limited to scholars in the field of Communication Studies. It is popular across the qualitative field and is rooted in psychology, sociology and education. Because of its popularity, there has been much research on the shortcomings of the theory. Constructivism encompasses a variety of intellectual traditions concerned with the social, subjective, cognitive, technological, and linguistic processes involved in the construction of lay and scientific knowledge.

Anttonen (1999) identifies 'objectivity of knowledge' as a criticism to this perspective. According to her, this raises questions on the reliability of socially constructed knowledge, especially ideological forms of scientific knowledge and historical facts. While this is based on the field of education, the historical aspects of the student protests tie it to this study. Adoni and Mane (1984), in turn, state that it is impossible to fully measure qualitative studies with macro-social elements because of their abstract nature.

Despite these shortcomings, this perspective has qualities which make it best suited for the nature of this study. The next section of this review aims to discuss existing literature from other scholars, which supports this argument.

### **2.3.3. Relevance to study**

Reality in society is mainly shaped and constructed by the recollection and transcripts of historians. Journalists and communication experts are rarely painted with the same paint brush. In fact, a long-lasting ideal in journalism has been that a journalist should be a detached observer of the event being reported and not become a part of it (Pöttker, 2017:169).

Mkhize (2016) is amongst those who are of the view that journalists are "merely observers". According to her, those who transmit information are inherently writing a

historical record and are therefore central to the construction of reality. Based on this argument, one can contend that the journalists who wrote for *Drum* magazine in 1976 and 2015 are media players who documented and etched their interpretations and observations of the Soweto Uprisings and #FeesMustFall into history.

Mda (2018) argues that history does not have an objective existence. Nobody has direct access to the past and our experience of it is through words, storytelling, and chronicles of events and dates (Mda, 2018:57). The works of *Drum* writers to be analysed in this study qualify as memorial recollections of history. This is based on how the journalists constructed the realities of 1976 and 2015.

Mda (2018:57) quotes Shivakumar who wrote:

*Historiography [the history of history, the writing of history], while constructing historical facts, selects certain past aspects and omits others, for ideological reasons. This reflects the fact that a select group is unintentionally denied an official voice by the dominant ideologies. Hence, history is relegated to be monologic, representing the dominant discourse and therefore as Orwell says, 'History is written by winners'.*

According to Secher (2013), journalists construct reality through their articles. Social constructivism looks at how social interactions, which occur between people, affect perspectives and the understanding of reality and specific social phenomena (Secher, 2013:10).

Journalism is inherently observation and a human construction, so it is basically social constructivism. Adoni and Mane (1984) write that the role of mass media (*Drum* magazine, in this instance) is central in the process of society constructing reality. These two scholars also place journalists at the centre of this construction. They do this by expanding the definition of social constructivism by describing it as a “dialectical

process” where human beings act as the creators of reality, on the one hand, and as products of their social world, on the other (Adoni& Mane, 1984:325).

Adoni and Mane (1984:323) further state that two approaches expand on this argument. The first approach on how reality is socially constructed looks at the relationship between culture and society. The second approach, which relates more to this study, argues that the social construction of reality is an effect of the media.

Adoni and Mane (1984) categorise three forms of reality. These are based on how journalists construct reality based on their internalised and subjective experiences. The first is objective social reality. This refers to the reality which takes place outside the individual and which confronts them as facts. Within this study, the factual information of both protests qualifies as the objective reality.

The second form of reality, according to Adoni and Mane (1984), is symbolic social reality. They describe this as consisting of any form of expression attached with any symbolism. Examples of such a reality are art, literature, or media contents. This reality relies on the individual’s ability to perceive different forms of symbolic information. There are multiple symbolic realities which differ from each other. This study looks at how the journalists who wrote for *Drum* shared their realities of the Soweto Uprisings and #FeesMustFall.

The third and last form of reality identified by Adoni and Mane (1984) is subjective reality. This reality is a combination of objective and symbolic realities, which ultimately serve as an input for the manner in which individuals construct their own reality (Adoni& Mane, 1984:326). People who read both *Drum* issues constructed their reality of the events based on how the journalists covered them. Giltin (1980) states that mass media contents reinforce dominating ideologies and in so doing they legitimise the social order and maintain the status quo.

Deuze (2011) argues that key areas of human existence have converged in and through our coexisting and continuous exposure to the media. He adds that the more the media becomes pervasive and ubiquitous, the less society is blind to how it shapes our lives.

The media has become a refuge area for those who are in a search of meaning and belonging. This does not only happen through consumption but also when members of the society by-produce and co-create information (Deuze, 2011). The journalists who reported on the Soweto Uprisings and #FeesMustFall were and are also members of the very communities which they reported on.

The above-mentioned arguments by various scholars form part of the core reasons why social constructivism is relevant to this study as a theoretical perspective. The next section of this literature review will look at how the works of other scholars on the framing theory fit into the puzzle of this study.

## **2.4. Framing**

*“The social world is ... a kaleidoscope of potential realities, any of which can be readily evoked by altering the way in which observations are framed and categorized – MJ Edelman*

The news media, print in particular, serve as valuable sources of information. According to Cissel (2012:67), they are also powerful modes of communication in society. Baylor (1996:241) deems the power of news media in shaping social events as undisputable. His argument dates as far back as the invention of the printing press, when competing groups vied for control and support. The power the news media possess controls the extent to which people understand events which occur in their communities and around the globe on a daily basis. This information is transferred to recipients through various forms of communication. All these modes of communication are ‘framed’ to meet the goals of the providing source. These frames are constructed by elements which individuals rely on to understand events. In the academic field of communication,

framing describes how the coverage of news media can shape public opinion by using specific frameworks to help guide readers to understanding (Cissel, 2012:67).

Framing theory has been selected as the scientific approach for this thesis that will be focusing on a publication belonging to South African print news media, *Drum Magazine*. It seeks to compare the manner in which two different eras of a prominent magazine covered two of the most prominent student protests in South Africa. In addition to the aforementioned relevance of framing, it was chosen because framing as a concept is embedded in the larger context of media effects research (Scheufele, 1999:104).

This next section seeks to present the works of scholars on this approach, specifically looking at news and audience frames, together with frame typologies.

#### **2.4.1. Defining framing**

Goffman (1974:21) describes framing as a schema of interpretation that allows individuals to locate, perceive, identify, and label life experiences. Entman (1993:51) modernises this definition by describing the framing process of communication text as one that promotes certain aspects of a perceived reality.

Framing as a process begins when a communication source presents and defines an issue. This notion has gained momentum in the communication sphere, allowing for research on media content and for studies investigating the relationship between media and public opinion to exist (De Vreese, 2005:51). Zhou and Moy (2007:80) write that the term 'frame' is used interchangeably with related concepts such as 'script', 'schema', 'package' or 'theme'.

The foundation of this theory is that an issue can be viewed from multiple perspectives. In addition, it can be constructed as having implications for various values or considerations (Chong & Druckman, 2007:104).

According to Pan and Kosicki (1993:53), framing is a process which highlights certain parts of an issue; thus, enabling selected elements to become important in influencing the judgement of individuals. These authors (1993) further argue that devices used to frame news discourse may be classified into four cultures, each representing structural dimensions of news discourse:

- Syntactical structure: This is the stable patterns of arranging words or phrases into sentences.
- Script structure: The coverage of most news reports focuses on newsworthy events. News is expected to direct audiences towards a communal environment.
- Thematic structure: This refers to themes which cover one issue or topic at a time over a report on several events.
- Rhetorical structure: This refers to the creative choices that journalists make in relation to their intended effects.

Chong and Druckman (2007:104) reiterate the fact that frames are a process – one in which people develop particular concepts of issues or change the manner in which they view it. As framing is a process, forming part of a communicative process that is not static, it has stages and phases. De Vreese (2005:52) writes that this process involves various stages. The first is a stage of frame building, which looks at how frames appear. The second stage is frame setting, which refers to the interplay between media frames and audience predispositions. The third stage observes the consequences of framing. This stage looks at the manner in which an individual or society alters attitudes based on exposure to frames.

De Vreese (2015) also provides several locations integral to the process of framing as identified by framing theorist Entman. These are the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture.

Reese (2003:11) describes frames as organising principles that are socially shared and persistent over time. They also work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social

world. Linström and Marais (2012:23) unpack the meaning of the above definition by providing the following descriptions:

- Organising: The manner in which framing organises information ranges in how it is done successfully or comprehensively.
- Principles: The frame is based on an abstract principle. These are not the same as the texts which the frames manifest themselves in.
- Shared: In order for a frame to be significant and communicable, it needs to be shared on some level.
- Persistent: The importance of frames lies in their durability, how persistent they are, and their routine use over time.
- Symbolically: Frames are revealed in symbolic forms of expression.
- Structure: Structures enable frames to organise by providing identifiable patterns. These vary in their complexity.

Gitlin (1980:7) refers to frames as persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation and presentation of selection that emphasise and exclude. These are used by symbol handlers to organise discourse. Baylor (1996:241) describes frames as a set of ideas that interpret, define, and give meaning to social phenomenon.

Similarly, Cappella and Jamieson (1997:47) suggest that frames activate knowledge, and stimulate cultural morals and values. They also create contexts. In so doing, frames, according to Entman (1993), define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgements, and ultimately suggest remedies. Scheufele (2000:306) describes frames as central ideas or story lines which provide meaning to a series of unfolding strips of events. Given the context of this research, the strips of events are the two student protests. These frames then serve as working routines for journalists. This enables them to identify, classify, and package information efficiently for their audiences.

Price, Tewksbury and Powers (1997:485) argue that the framing and presentation of events and news can systematically affect how the recipients of this news come to understand the events. Gamson and Modigliani (1987:168) opine that the manner in

which frames are formed can be explained by the interaction of a journalist's norms and practices, together with the influence of interest groups.

Gamson and Modigliani (1989:3) define frames as interpretative packages that give meaning to an issue. They consider a frame to be an organising idea that lies at the core of a larger unit of political discourse. This central idea seeks to make sense of relevant events and then suggests what the issue is.

Framing remains a scattered conceptualisation, despite its omnipresence across social sciences and in the humanities (Entman, 1993:51). Capella and Jamieson (1997:39) state how this research idea of framing has been used in different ways across various disciplines and schools of thought – each arriving at a different outcome.

Frames have to be considered as structures for both presenting and comprehending news. Thus, two concepts of framing can be specified. Kinder and Sanders (1990:74) make a distinction between media frames and individual frames. In the former, frames serve as devices embedded in political discourse. In the latter, they function as internal structures of the mind.

Gamson and Modigliani (1987:143) define media frames as central organising ideas or storylines that give an unfolding strip of events meaning. In essence, a frame suggests what the controversy is about.

To Gitlin (1980:7), media frames function as working routines for journalists. Not only do they allow journalists to quickly identify and classify information, but they also assist in packaging information efficiently in order to relay it to audiences. When journalists 'frame', they make a selection on what to write about, they place emphasis on certain facts. They may have certain intentions while sending this information, but the motives for sending it out can also be unconscious (Gamson, 1989).

In essence, framing can be viewed as a tool that is used by the media to drive salient points across. These would have to direct readers to a desired frame in mind (Cissel, 2012:69).

#### **2.4.2. Functions of frames**

Entman (1993) provides a detailed explanation of how media provides audiences with ways to interpret events. Salience and selection are essential factors for him. He explains that in order to frame, one selects some aspects of a perceived reality and makes them more salient in a communicating text. This is done through the four functions of frames, which are:

- Problem definition or the clarification of key facts related to the problem,
- Causal interpretation – looking at the underlying forces behind the problem,
- Moral evaluation, and
- Treatment recommendations (Entman, 1993:52).

While analysing research on frames in the news, DeVreese (2005:53) found that previous research provides little conceptual ground. Most studies draw on tentative working definitions or operational definitions of frames designed for the purpose of the specific study being conducted. As a result, there is little consensus as to how to identify frames in the news. There are, however, two approaches: inductive and deductive. This study will adopt the former. This approach abstains from analysing news stories with prior definitions of news frames in mind. Frames in this approach emerge from the material during the course of analysis (De Vreese, 2005:53). In this study, these will be the articles on the two student protests, which appeared in two issues of *Drum*. Scholars have however criticised this approach for relying on small samples and for being difficult to replicate.

There are framing devices used to condense information and offer a 'media package' of an issue. These are identified by Gamson and Modigliani (1989:143), Gamson and Lasch (1983), and Tankard (2001) as:

- metaphors,
- exemplars,
- catchphrases,
- depictions,
- visual images,
- consequences, and
- appeals to principles are often used to fulfil the aforementioned functions.

Tankard (2001:101) takes this empirical approach a step further by suggesting a list of 11 focal points for identifying and measuring news frames. They are:

- Headlines
- Subheads
- Photos
- Photo captions
- Leads
- Source selection
- Quotes selection
- Pull quotes
- Logos
- Statistics and charts
- Concluding statements and paragraphs

What is it that scholars within the empirical approach agree upon? That frames are specific textual and visual elements (De Vreese, 2005:54). Scholars are also in agreement that in order to synthesise previous research, a typology of frames needs to exist. These will be discussed in the section below.

### **2.4.3. Typology**

A typology, in layman's terms, is a classification according to general types. So while there are numerous frames employed by newsmakers and journalists in their coverage, scholars have made various groupings. According to De Vreese (2002), there are two main types. These are issue specific, looking at specific topics or events, and generic frames, which relate to different topics (De Vreese, 2005:54).

Linström and Marais (2012:28) write that, according to De Vreese (2005:55), the disadvantage of the issuespecific approach is that it is difficult to generalise. Furthermore, it is difficult to compare and use as empirical evidence for theory building.

Another concept of frames, alongside media frames, is audience frames. Audience frames are clusters of ideas that guide the manner in which individuals process information (Entman, 1993:53). Individual frames, on the other hand, are mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information (Entman, 1993:54).

According to Scheufele (1999) a typology can be structured in a manner that would enable classification of work conducted by other scholars. This classification can be done in three respects. Firstly, it classifies existing research on framing in the manner in which it has conceptualised frames; that, and the relationships between frames and other variables. It allows for a comparison of findings within cells; in other words, the consistency across different studies of essentially the same phenomenon, and between cells; the latter being the compatibility of processes at different levels of framing.

Typology, secondly, is essential because it provides information on how well previous studies have answered questions pertinent to each cell.

Lastly, Scheufele (1999) argues that typology goes beyond hypothesis testing in relatively isolated studies in different disciplines to develop a common understanding of the concept of framing. In this instance then, a four cell typology serves as a tool for theory building by providing a common set of conceptual definitions and theoretical statements about between level and within level relationships.

Several scholars have categorised news frames in numerous ways. Valkenburg *et al* (1999:551-552) identified four frames that are used in the news. They are:

- Conflict frame
- Human interest frame
- Responsibility frame
- Economic consequences frame

Neuman *et al* (1992:74) identified five frames. They are:

- Human impact frame: These frames focus on descriptions given to individuals and groups.
- Powerlessness frame: These are frames looking at the dominance of forces over weak individuals or groups.
- Economic frame: This frame reflects the preoccupation of a story with profit and loss.
- Moral values frame: This frame looks at morality and social prescriptions.
- Conflict frame: This frame analyses the manner in which news media interprets the political world as one where there is constant competition and rivalry.

Linström and Marais (2012:28) present the works of Valkenburg and Semetko (in De Vreese, 2005:56) who take the above-mentioned frames a notch further. They identify conflict, human interest, morality, economic consequences, and attribution of responsibility. Each of the descriptions they assign is similar to the aforementioned, except for the human interest frame. The human interest frame is when the human face or an emotional angle of an event, issue, or problem is presented. Their typology also excludes power relations, replacing it with the attribution of responsibility frame. These frames present an issue or a problem in a manner that attributes responsibility for causing or solving it (Linström & Marais, 2012:28).

#### **2.4.4. Criticism of theory**

Qualitative research is a fluid, multi-dimensional field which forbids any easy single definition or set of definitions. This nature of the study leaves room for ample criticism and key issues of concern when it comes to data collection and, ultimately, analysis of the data collected (Morrison, 2014:328).

The framing theory is no exception. Cacciatore, Scheufele and Iyengar(2016) look at how, despite the popularity of this theory, ambiguities surrounding how we conceptualise and therefore operationalise framing have begun to overlap with other media effects models to a point that is dysfunctional. They argue that abundant framing effects downplay the role of cognitive schema in producing framing effects.

Cacciatore *et al* (2016) advocate for researchers using this theory to refocus their attention on the concept's original theoretical foundations. Furthermore, that the focus should be on the potential empirical contributions that the concept can make to the field and the understanding of media effects.

According to Benford (1997), the framing theory itself suffers from several shortcomings. These are the neglect of systematic empirical studies, descriptive bias, static tendencies, reification, reductionism, elite bias, and monolithic tendencies.

Many studies on framing focus on conceptual development or on the application of framing concepts to specific cases while neglecting systematic empirical studies. Benford (1997) attributes this to the acceptance of this perspective as a legitimate conceptual approach and that frame analytic methods remain underdeveloped. In order to remedy this, he suggests that researchers should devote some attention to operationalisation so that those who are so inclined can begin testing hypotheses derivable from the framing literature (Benford, 1997:413).

Scholars have been more inclined to attend to frames, rather than to framing. Benford (1997) defines this as a “static tendency”. According to him, this is when scholars focus

on frames as “things”, rather than on the dynamic processes associated with their social construction, negotiation, contestation, and transformation.

When it comes to descriptive bias, a major thrust of the research agenda has been to identify the universe of specific frames. According to Benford (1990), this has resulted in a rather long list of types of frames. While there is justification for the identification of each of these types of frames, the overall impact has been a trivialisation of the framing perspective. This tendency has also detracted from more interesting analyses of framing processes and dynamics. To remedy this, Benford proposes that works which look at framing should yield more descriptive heat than shed analytical light (Benford, 1997:415).

This study aims to deal with these shortcomings by making use of the remedies provided by Benford (1997) and the suggestions made by Hammersley (1990) in a study on the evaluative criteria on qualitative research. Hammersley (1990) proposes that researchers assess qualitative research with regard to validity and relevance. This is based on the argument that the purpose of doing research is to produce knowledge that is of public relevance. According to him, validity is how true a description is to what it seeks to represent. This lies in the difference between qualitative and quantitative research. In qualitative research, which is laboratory based, the experimental designs follow one way of evaluation. This means that others can follow the methods of the researcher and come up with the same or similar results. There are numerous reasons why this is problematic in social sciences.

Hammersley (1990) notes that it is impossible to control the behaviour of people in natural settings as it changes constantly. Secondly, qualitative researchers can focus on many different aspects of the same setting. Lastly, settings in social research can change over time (Hammersley, 1990:13).

This does not, however, undermine the validity of social research. Hammersley (1990) argues that no knowledge is certain and that claims of knowledge can be judged reasonably in terms of their truth.

Hammersley (1990) proposes three steps to assess the validity of ethnographic claims. The first step questions if the claims seem plausible based on our existing knowledge. The second asks if it seems likely that the ethnographer's judgement of matters related to his/her claims would be accurate, given the nature of the phenomenon and the circumstances of the research. In the last step of the validity assessment, the researcher is advised to question if there is evidence available to be convinced of the claims of the validity.

These steps are not only applicable in ethnographic studies. They are relevant for other qualitative studies, including this study, which possess qualitative qualities.

The concern of validity being a shortcoming is also brought up by Van Gorp. He (2010) argues that this concern is caused by the difficulty to demonstrate the relationship between the abstract frame and the pattern of elements within a news text that are able to evoke the core frame on the side of the receiver. Furthermore, researchers who do a frame analysis are also individuals for whom it is difficult to withdraw from their own cognitive knowledge (Van Gorp, 2010:94).

When it comes to relevance, Hammersley (1990) poses the question of whether or not the research is important with regard to the issues and areas of public concern. He argues that the interests of researchers are in fact selective and that all descriptions are for certain purposes.

Hammersley (1990) does not suggest that all research should have an immediate and direct application to practice, but that there should be some evidence to suggest that the research will have public and pragmatic relevance at some point. This evaluation of relevance occurs within the context of a community and it is a product of a dialogue

among members. In addition, Hammersley (1990) argues that the relevance of a research study will depend on the audience and the social relevance of the research for the audience.

In this study, the researcher heeds the advice of Hammersley (1990) who advises researchers to overcome the effects of their personal and cultural assumptions. The scholar should be aware of the question of complete objectivity. Morrison (2014:13) writes that: “The researcher and the researched are part of this and bring to it their own biographies, values, and insights. The task is to be sufficiently objective, wherever possible, in considering the validity of conclusions reached.”

## **2.5. South African media landscape**

The background and context for the interpretation of this study is located in the South African media landscape.

This part of the literature review seeks to provide a brief background on the identity and unique features of the press and media in the southern tip of Africa. The rationale for this is to provide background and factors which will contribute to the manner in which data will be analysed at a later stage.

Secondly, this section seeks to locate the subject matter of this study, namely *Drum* magazine, on the broad timeline of the South African media landscape. It will provide the reader with a portrait of the identities of the eras. This will be done in order to contextualise the environment in which both issues of *Drum*, which will be compared in this study, operate/d in. When #FeesMustFall erupted, and democratic systems were questioned, the conversation around the decolonisation of systems, such as the media – which lie at the heart of the manner in which society constructs reality – was rehashed.

The debate regarding what best describes the origins of media and who are the real pioneers of South African journalism is ongoing. Mkhize (2016) states that South African history has been written from a Eurocentric point of view and this is problematic. Mkhize (2016) adds that this history has been steadily decolonising in some sense since the 1970s.

This study seeks to provide a platform for the diverse and sometimes opposing views of scholars on the identity of the South African media landscape.

### **2.5.1. Early days of the press**

The press and the government have always been at loggerheads in South Africa. According to Fourie (2007:28), this strained relationship has resulted in tension brought about by constant threats of restrictive legislation. Several themes are embedded in the country's history. They vary from the conflict between government and the media, divisions in the media based on race and language, the state viewing the media as a threat to peace and unity, and lastly, efforts by journalists to get rid of undemocratic laws.

Roelofse (in Fourie, 2007:28) divides the history of the press in South Africa into four different strands. The first strand is the English press. The Afrikaans press is categorised as the second strand. The third strand is black press, and the last is the alternative press. The focus of this study lies in the last two periods.

Fourie (2007:39) writes that a black press appeared in 1829 shortly after Ordinance No. 60 granted press freedom to the Cape Colony. He then uses the works of Hatchen and Giffard (1984:145) and categorises it according to four periods of development:

- The missionary period: 1830 - 1880
- The independent elitist period: 1880 - 1930
- The white-owned period: 1930 - 1980
- The multiracial period: 1980 - 1995

A white-owned press came about because most black newspapers lacked capital, skilled workers, equipment, and a reliable distribution network. One of the developments of this press was the formation of *African Drum* in 1951 by Jim Bailey, the son of mining mogul Abe Bailey. Bailey began a new trend in journalism by using a sport, sex and crime formula to gain popularity. This enabled the magazine to appeal to the broad mass of literate black South Africans. The magazine later moved from Cape Town to Johannesburg and the name was shortened to *Drum*.

*Drum* made numerous contributions to society. It focused world attention on the country, highlighted the work of world-class black musicians, and restored pride in the black population. Most importantly, however, it fearlessly conducted investigative journalism and addressed the social grievances of black South Africans. This enabled it to be a forerunner of the active alternative press in the final years of apartheid (Roelofse, 1996:83-84 in Fourie, 2007:39).

### **2.5.2. Alternative press**

Alternative media is defined by Eloff (2016) as a form of media which differs from established or dominant types of media in terms of its production, distribution, and content. It has, he argues, taken various shapes and forms. In the context of South Africa, the function has been “to launch different narratives in a time where many feel that their voices are not heard through the clutter of political correctness, transformative rhetoric and the general disregard for objectivity” (Eloff, 2016).

Touwen (2011) says the history of the alternative press in South Africa is as old as the history of the country itself. She adds that the purpose of publications belonging to this press was to give locals a voice or to grant a platform for missionaries to communicate important messages.

According to Fourie (2007:40), an alternative press usually becomes active when political, economic, social, or cultural views of certain social groups are excluded from the popular media market. This argument is verified by Touwen (2011:n.p.) who describes the role and functions of publications belonging to the alternative press. They challenge local governments, local legislation, and serve as a voice of resistance. They take up unique life spans. Touwen (2011:n.p.) goes as far as to say, "The alternative press influenced the course of events that finally lead to the abolition of Apartheid in the early nineties".

Fourie (2007:40) writes how the emergence and development of this press tends to parallel the struggle against apartheid. There are three distinct phases, which he identifies from various scholars. The first phase (1930s to the 1960s) is described as a period of opposition and resistance. The second phase, from the early 1960s to the late 1970s, was a period of rising black consciousness. The last phase, from the 1980s to the mid-1990s, depicts the climax of the alternative press.

Switzer (1997) provides a different timeline to Fourie. The major difference lies mainly in when the emergence of this press began. Switzer describes the alternative press in South Africa as a press which had a unique political, social, and literary archive. According to him, it has the most varied collection of "indigenous serial publications in sub-Saharan Africa". Switzer classifies this press into four phases, namely, the African mission press, the independent protest press, the early resistance press, and the later resistance press (1997:3).

The first phase begins in the 1830s and ends in the early 1880s. This phase represented the pioneer missionary societies. The earliest literature of this phase can be traced to a few mission journals.

The period from the early 1880s to the 1930s marks the emergence of the independent protest press. According to Switzer (1997), this press primarily represented the black petty bourgeoisie. During this phase, African nationalist newspapers were dominant

aspects of news and opinion. The phase was filled with essays, literature, history, poetry, hymns, and other musical compositions devoted to African languages.

Switzer (1997) splits the resistance press into the last two phases of the alternative press. The early resistance press, which stems from the 1930s to the 1960s, makes up the third phase. This phase comprised of a popular, non-racial and more militant alliance with left-wing working. During this phase, traditional protest publications were bought out, closed down, and depoliticised. In addition, they were merged with a new captive black commercial press that was controlled by white entrepreneurs. The old *Drum* was established during this era.

The last phase of the alternative press in South Africa, according to Switzer (1997), began in the 1970s and lasted until the 1980s. This phase primarily represented the Black Consciousness Movement, its press, and the progressive community press. The resistance media changed dramatically during this period. Firstly, it embraced different commercial publications, which were still targeted at racially segregated audiences. Secondly, this press accommodated academic journals and publications from historically white universities. Lastly, literature, music and texts from African townships, informal settlements and historically black universities were now fully engaged in the struggle for South Africa (Switzer, 1997:3).

According to Touwen (2011), most publications belonging to the alternative press lasted only for a few years. In South Africa, most of them did not make it into the democratic era. This was mainly because their cause against apartheid had been won and because they lost to the commercial landscape that had taken over the new society.

While the old version of *Drum* is classified as alternative, the new version is categorised as part of the mainstream media. These two are mostly seen as two different entities.

Harcup (2006) states that journalism practiced within alternative media has typically been understood as being entirely different to, and separate from, journalism practised

within mainstream media. According to him (2006), this is the case because of a rising tendency to look at forms of journalism practised within alternative media in isolation from, or in opposition to, forms of journalism practised in a media space that is mainstream or in commercially dominant media. Harcup (2006) argues that it is so because alternative media projects frequently define themselves as existing in opposition to mainstream media. They exist as “propaganda of the deed, highlighting the faults of the established press on local, national or global scales” (Harcup, 2006:361).

The next section looks at the identity of the media in democratic South Africa.

### **2.5.3. Media in democracy**

South Africa has been a democratic country for just over two decades. Kupe (2014:29 in DoC Media Landscape) states that the pluralistic nature of the South African media system makes it a leader on the continent. He writes that government policy and regulation post-1994 has created a space for new media outlets. Furthermore, the majority of the media systems in this country, in comparison to those on the rest of the African continent, are privately owned and commercially driven. Even the public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), and community broadcasters depend largely on commercial funding. Kupe (2014) adds that this commercial dependence is one of the factors which limits the diversity of programming and editorial independence.

Because of this plurality, the country appears to fit the profile typical of liberal Western democracies, where the defining feature is a market-based system made up of pluralistic media independent from the state but not necessarily from powerful commercial interests and political forces surrounding them. The country does not, however, have the same levels of economic development and social equality as European and North American countries. Other scholars have also noted this phenomenon. Mabote (1998:90), for instance, writes that if he were to be asked to

describe South Africa in relation to its media and communication, he would define it as “first world media, third world economy and a nation characterised by divided loyalty”.

Kupe (2014) describes the country as being comprised of a society marked by growing socio-economic inequality, poverty, high levels of unemployment, and racial inequalities that are a legacy of over 300 years of colonisation and apartheid. It only shares levels of media freedom. One of the major reasons for this is the fact that direct censorship, coupled with regular arrests and imprisonment of journalists, is not a feature of the media landscape.

Despite media freedom, Mabote (1998) is critical of the identity of the media in South Africa. He states that while the political scene is changing and people are replacing reconciliation and nation-building at the top of the national agenda, most of the media remains stuck in the old South Africa. In addition, Mabote argues that the media has done little to heal the divisions in society and that it contributes to the social tensions (1998:91).

Mabote's (1998) dissatisfaction with post-apartheid South African media that resembles Western media does not end there. He believes that they have become so fixated in being watchdogs that they have chosen to ignore the voices of the people. Mabote says that even though the media writes about the country, they are removed. Furthermore, he states that they write in First World language for a Third World audience (Mabote, 1998:92).

One of the reasons for the student protests in democratic South Africa is a lack of economic development. This study will look at how *Drum* magazine, operating in media freedom, reported on the protests.

While the media landscape appears to be pluralistic, the ownership is not. Kupe (2014) writes that most forms of ownership are dominant and they control larger parts of the media system. In addition, they carry influence that is “disproportionate demographically

but congruent with the distribution of power in society” (Kupe, 2014). He adds that the print sector is dominated by a few companies that produce print media products directed at different audiences, but do not have the same levels of quality information. So, on the one hand, quality papers produce informative and analytical articles for informed citizens who are educated, affluent, and belong to urban markets. On the other, the less-educated, who are also the poor, are provided with newspapers with lesser quality information and tabloid journalism. These are filled with a vast amount of sensational information that does nothing to raise the critical faculties of the readers (Kupe, 2014:30).

Most large print media companies in South Africa, until the change of Independent Newspapers to a black-led consortium, are mostly white-owned. One of the most successful of these is News24, formally known as Naspers. It publishes a range of newspapers in Afrikaans and English, including the largest circulation daily, *Daily Sun*, which is targeted at the lower end of the market. News24 is a descendent of Nasionale Pers, which was historically close to the Nationalist apartheid government, supporting the apartheid philosophy and benefiting from its regulatory measures. *Drum* has been part of News24 since its Naspers days back in 1984. It has survived the fate suffered by most black-owned publications, which supported the liberation struggle. According to Kupe (2014), they were casualties of the post-apartheid media landscape in different ways.

Naspers’ support of the apartheid regime, however, hovers like a dark cloud over it in democratic South Africa. In 2015, a few months before the #FeesMustFall protests, the media house offered an apology for its support of apartheid. While some accepted its apology, others, like Tshabalala (2015), questioned its authenticity and deemed it “late”. Tshabalala said that, for example, *Die Burger*, one of Naspers’ oldest daily newspapers, sided with the security police in an editorial three days after the death of anti-apartheid activist, Steve Biko. He laments how Naspers’ publications not only supported the ideology of apartheid, but justified the violence of the apartheid government.

Kupe (2014), however, argues that media ownership does not affect content. According to him, content is what the audience consumes and the audience is often unaware of ownership. Furthermore, audiences do not choose media products because of the demography of ownership. All this despite the fact that ownership is one of the key factors that shape content. Kupe (2014:32) adds that white-owned or black-owned companies do not supply content for their racial and social groups.

## **2.6. Summary**

This chapter looked at the first half of the literature review.

Firstly, it explored existing definitions, terminology, and descriptions of the social constructivism theory and framing. It highlighted the argument made by Mkhize (2016) that journalists are not just observers, but by virtue of being those who transmit information, and inherently writing a historical record, they are central key players in the construction of reality. Furthermore, this chapter outlined criticism on these theories based on arguments presented by other scholars. The rationale behind this was to provide the reader with information that guided the thinking of the researcher while conducting this qualitative comparative study.

The second section of this chapter was on the South African media landscape. This looked at the early days of the press, provided information on the alternative press, and looked at the media in democratic South Africa. All three these periods are vital for this research because of *Drum* magazine. *Drum* has been a part of the South African media landscape since the early 1950s. Its background and identity will be unpacked in the second half of the literature review, which forms the following chapter.



## **Chapter 3: The beat of the *Drums***

*“I think Drum caught all aspects of its age, simply because we had the best writers. It became a natural mirror of society” – Anthony Sampson*

### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter sets out to provide a review of the literature on the subject matter of this study, namely, *Drum* magazine. It aims to fulfil two main purposes.

On the one hand, it seeks to provide the reader with the contextual background of *Drum*. The literature explored will chronologically trace changes and developments in the magazine from its earliest days to its current publication.

On the other hand, due to the comparative nature of this study, a section of the literature will briefly examine the political climate, which led to the student protests in 1976 and 2015. In so doing, the aim is to understand the identity of the *Drum* issues at the time of the Soweto Uprisings and during the wave of #FeesMustFall protests during two different eras.

### **3.2. *Drum***

*“In the teeming Negro and coloured shantytowns of Johannesburg, where newspapers and magazines are a rarity, a truck piled high with magazines rumbled through the unpaved streets last week. Wherever it stopped, hundreds of people swarmed about it, buying the magazine: The African Drum” – TIME magazine, 1952*

The 1950s and 1960s were an exhilarating time across the globe. The world was recovering from World War II, the rivalry between the USA and the Soviet Union gave

birth to the Cold War, and the Civil Rights Movements were on the rise. Africa was also experiencing important events.

In South Africa, a system called apartheid had recently been implemented. Noah (2017) describes this political system as, “a belief state, a system of surveillance and laws designed to keep black people under total control”.

During this time, townships, which can be loosely defined as underdeveloped urban areas, were blooming in major cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town. While the sound of Frank Sinatra was making the headlines in the West, the musical scene in townships was dominated by the penny whistle sounds of Kwela, Marabi and jazz (SAHO, 2009:n.p.). Nikol (1995:ix) describes township South Africa back then as a place of jazz and beauty queens, gangsters, folk heroes and witchdoctors. It was a vibrant, laughing and deadly world. In the world of literature and journalism, a phase that is now known as the “golden era of black journalism” began.

*Drum* was founded in 1951 in Cape Town (Mapine, 2011:n.p.). It was initially known as *The African Drum* and was owned by journalist and broadcaster Robert Crisp. It was taken over in the same year by Jim Bailey who, with the assistance of a team of writers and photographers, redesigned and rebranded the magazine. It became one of the most prominent anti-apartheid publications in South African media history (SAHO, 2015:n.p.).

The early contributors to the magazine were Henry Nxumalo, Todd Matshikiza, Arthur Maimane, Can Themba, Casey Motsisi, Es'kia Mphahlele, Bloke Modisane, Lewis Nkosi, and Nat Nakasa. In 1962, Mphahlele, Themba, Modisane and Matshikiza were banned under the Suppression of Communism Act. This all-star team achieved journalistic fame and literary success both while working for the magazine and after leaving it (Nikol, 1995:7).

Shortly after Bailey took over, and the headquarters of the magazine moved to Johannesburg, his friend Anthony Sampson was appointed editor. In order to ensure that the magazine reflected “Black life”, it established an editorial board. This was made up of leading political and cultural figures of note, such as Joe Rathebe, Dan Twala, Dr Alfred Xuma, and Andy Anderson (SAHO, 2015:n.p.). This provides evidence that *Drum* had a close link to the cultural and political lifestyle of life back then. Chapman (2001:n.p.) describes *Drum* as a symbol of the new African who, in opposition to apartheid, asserted a city identity. He (2001:183) also highlights how the stories in *Drum*, which were mostly a combination of fiction and fact, represented the genesis of black South African short-story writing and how they spoke to the ongoing importance of both cultural and social life. Nikol writes that the magazine captivated readers and helped them rediscover a hidden aspect of the country (1995: xi).

Schadeberg was amongst the first photographers for the magazine. He contributed greatly to an essential component of *Drum* – photography. It served as a reachable means to document protest action and appeal to the illiterate readership of the magazine. The photographic features in the magazine varied from jazz and girls to crime, and appealed to the readers, which assisted in increasing the magazine’s circulation. Newbury (2007:584) describes *Drum* as a picture magazine modelled on Britain’s *Picture Post* magazine and the American magazine, *Life*.

One cannot talk about the history of *Drum* without mentioning its first major story: *Bethal Today*. According to Mapine (2011:n.p.), this story appeared in the magazine in March 1952. *Bethal Today* was an eight page investigative article which exposed the gross abuse experienced by Bethal labourers. This piece was written by Mr Drum, Henry Nxumalo, himself. He had posed as a labourer on a farm in order to find out more about what was happening there. Nxumalo was exposed to gross abuse by boss-boys with whips and to miserable living conditions (SAHO, 2015:n.p.). The early days of *Drum* provided a platform for defiant voices in stories on events such as the Defiance Campaign in 1952, the Sophiatown forced removals, the Treason Trial, and the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960 (SAHO, 2015:n.p.).

Chapman (2001:183) states that the content in the magazine did more than merely tell a story. According to him, *Drum* writers were deeply interested in telling what was happening in the lives of their people.

Former South African cabinet minister Jay Naidoo (2011:95) writes that *Drum's* coverage has always and continues to highlight “serious challenges ... and similar realities in democratic South Africa ... It is the duty of publications such as *Drum* and every citizen to hold government accountable...”.

While *Drum* has received much praise and acclaim throughout the years, it has also been on the receiving end of criticism from within and outside the magazine. In the 1970s, Swift (1991:36) writes that it was said to have “quietism” outside of the struggle and, according to Dodson (1974:319) , it reinforced and seldom challenged the views or values of the oppressor. Chapman (2001:184) also mentions opposing views from the 1950s between one of the writers, Es'kia Mphahlele, and owner, Jim Bailey. Mphahlele regarded the magazine as part of an oppressive socio-economic structure. Bailey, on the other hand, described *Drum* as a great popular educator.

According to SAHO (2015:n.p.), the magazine did not report adequately on the political events of the time. It argues that although the magazine opposed racism and apartheid, it did not feature some important aspects of the liberation struggle. This was because of Bailey's disapproval of the publication showing photos of the Sharpeville Massacre or the horrendous living conditions of migrant workers on the mines. There was speculation regarding the latter being because of Bailey's father's involvement in the gold mining industry. More criticism of the magazine was that it appeared to function as a political instrument and that its commercial nature, at times, failed to provide the impression that it aimed to be the mouthpiece for black experiences and aspirations (Chapman, 2001:186).

### 3.3. *Drum* in the 1970s

Ownership: Jim Bailey

- Readership: Below 50 000 in 1975 to above 180 000 in 1980
- Editor: Stan Motjuwadi

*Drum* journalism improved and developed in the 1970s. Swift (1991:36), who worked for the magazine during the time, states that the magazine was entirely committed to black emancipation and deeply invested in people.

Swift (1991:35) makes a connection between what was happening in the political climate in South Africa and *Drum's* journalism. She makes the observation that while the 1950s and 1960s were pleasant, joyful and happy days at the magazine, this changed in the years that followed. This “puncture in performance”, she explains, was a product of how apartheid had affected the readers – crippling them and turning the magazine into a “silent vigil for the gathering storm”.

The storm was personified in the June 16 Soweto Uprisings in 1976. SAHO (2015) describes this date as one which changed the face of the socio-political landscape in South Africa. According to Swift, as the youth of South Africa stood up and rejected Bantu Education, *Drum* journalists gained a renewed drive and determination to serve their readers. This historic event led to a “renaissance in *Drum* style journalism”, making the years from 1976 up until the 1980s the crème de la crème in the history of the magazine (Swift, 1991:35-36).

Swift (1991:39) asserts that *Drum* offered a different kind of journalism from the kind their competitors were offering. According to her, the magazine got to the heart of it all because they immersed themselves in the human condition, while other publications merely explored it as a mental construct. This approach led to *Drum's* circulation rising from under 50 000 in 1975 to more than 180 000 in 1980 (Swift, 1991:39).

The popularity can also be accredited to the readers, who were an important factor in *Drum* regaining popularity. The readers of the magazine, particularly with the arrival of Black Consciousness in the 1970s, were becoming more politically conscious. They were becoming more sophisticated and determined to be agents of change in the country. *Drum* was able to maintain its loyal readership because it had credibly as it had covered the roots of their struggle in past editions. While the 1950s issues gave a platform for the voices of political leaders such as Luthuli, Mandela, Sobukwe and Sisulu, the 1970s saw the likes of Biko, Tutu and Motlana rising (Swift, 1991:39).

During its heydays, the magazine was viewed as a symbol of the golden era of journalism in South Africa. According to Swift (1991:35), the magazine catered for “detrified township readers”. *Drum* also gained popularity for its reporting on one of the biggest news events in the 1970s – the 1976 Soweto Uprisings.

In the 1970s, 80% of the readership was black African (Swift, 1991:40). Despite this, Swift (1991:40) maintains that the editorial focus of the magazine was without colour.

Another one of *Drum*'s greatest strengths was how it preserved its longstanding tradition of publishing exposés throughout the 1970s. While Henry Nxumalo exposed harsh prison conditions and life on farms, Stan Motjuwadi reported on corruption in Swaziland and the shenanigans of homeland leaders. Swift (1991:40) points out that the magazine also promoted local artists and musicians, while other publications ignored them.

In 1984, Bailey ceased his private ownership of *Drum* when he sold it to Naspers. It continues to be published today under its Media24 subsidiary (SAHO, 2015:n.p.). In 1976, *Drum* was published monthly.

### **3.4. *Drum* in 2015**

- Ownership: Media24

- Readership: 3 196 000
- Editor: ThandiGweba

In 2015, *Drum* operated under the Media24 conglomerate and was the sixth largest consumer magazine on the African continent alongside its sister publications, *Huisgenoot* and *YOU*. All three these publications are central to the South African popular media landscape (SAHO, 2015:n.p.). It seems to have continued rising despite ownership. Despite this, some, like Memela (2013), argue that the beat of the drum has faded.

Memela (2013:n.p.) speaks highly of the early days of *Drum*. According to him, the magazine was the bible of African creative thought and it laid bare the heart and soul of the nation. Memela (2013) adds that *Drum* was the voice of the people and was true to the real identity of the urban African – strong and resilient souls who confronted apartheid in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Memela (2013:n.p.) does not hold back in his criticism of the current *Drum* – from its ownership to its content. *Drum*, he argues, is the “new plastic age”. Memela (2013) further states that while Jim Bailey was a charismatic, visionary and prophetic founder, the Naspers group, which took over ownership of the magazine, are former Afrikaner Broederbond members whose main aim is to penetrate deeper into the African market and mind.

Memela (2013:n.p.) juxtaposes the content between the two eras. He writes that while the *Drum* of Henry Nxumalo, Can Themba and Bloke Modisane had glitz and glamour, it was not delivered at the expense of the truth. According to him, *Drum* today has become a profit-driven institution that reflects a pseudo-reality that fails the country every day. Memela (2013) adds that the reality of prison conditions, bludgeoned youth, poverty, unemployment, abortion and illiteracy are not special focus features in the new *Drum*. Instead, he says, “it glows bright with the glamour and drama of fake glitterati” (Memela, 2013:n.p.).

According to Memela (2013:n.p.), the focus back then was not to sugar coat the hard truths about South Africa to tourists and citizens, but to reflect the truth on the pages of the magazine. He highlights how Adam Small's eulogy to Biko in 1977 was the fastest selling *Drum* issue in history. Sales hovered around 200 000 copies.

Brooks Spector (2011:n.p.) also states that *Drum* is a different beast from its early blooming days under Bailey. He writes that while its photographic archive remains a standalone institution, the magazine has turned into "an African-oriented version of a home and features magazine like *Huisgenoot* and *YOU* rather than the crusading, quirky, phenomenon of its youth".

In 2004, the story of this historical magazine was made it into a Hollywood movie, *Drum*. Its plot captured the story of Henry Nxumalo, and documented the rise of the magazine and life in the township of Sophiatown during the official implementation of apartheid laws in the 1950s (SAHO, 2015:n.p.).

While still focused on providing relevant content for black South Africans, the magazine has become more orientated towards market news, entertainment and feature articles, with less focus on political issues (SAHO, 2015:n.p.). In 2015, *Drum* was published weekly.

### **3.5. Political climate of protests**

This section seeks to provide literature on the political climates in 1976 and 2015. On 16 June 1976, a wave of student protests rippled across apartheid South Africa. Thousands of students from Soweto gathered at their schools to participate in a student-organised protest demonstration. These uprisings, led by high school students, were focused on Bantu Education, in general, and a decision to use Afrikaans as the only medium of instruction in schools, in particular (SAHO, 2015:n.p.).

Nieftagodien (2014:7) describes the uprisings as a turning point in the history of South Africa. According to him, there had been a period of inactivity, dormancy, and invisibility with regards to political activity, which took on the apartheid state since the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960. On that day, which is now celebrated as Human Rights Day, state police opened fire and killed 69 people who had been protesting against pass laws.

Then along came 1976. Again there was a growing dissatisfaction amongst people living in townships with the manner in which the country was being governed. This, however, is not what tipped the scales. Nieftagodien (2014:8) credits the uprisings to the increase in the numbers of African learners in secondary schools, as well as the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). The BCM, developed by Steve Biko and others in tertiary institutions, became a political tool which enabled black students to understand the nature of their oppression and also equipped them to become defiant.

In the day of the protests, chaos broke out following a confrontation between police and students, which resulted in the death of 13 year old Hector Peterson. The eventual death toll was 176 (*Mail & Guardian*, 6 June 2013). The coverage of this historical event in *Drum* lies at the crux of this study. Despite outbursts by students in the 1970s, right up to the dawn of democracy in South Africa, nothing came close to what happened on that sunny June 1976 day in Soweto; that is, until October 2015.

Almost four decades later, in mid-October 2015, South Africa again witnessed large-scale student protests. The focus of the #FeesMustFall protests was on access to higher education, as well as the proposed fee increases at tertiary institutions (Nicolson, 2016). According to Mostert (in Capazorio, Joubert&Ndenze, 22 October 2015), the 2015 wave of student protests marked the most significant disruption of the country's education system since the 1976 Soweto Uprisings. These two protests rank amongst the most significant protests this country has witnessed to date (Mostert, 22 October 2015).

Despite taking place during different eras and in somewhat different contexts, there are similarities to these protests. The comparison between the two protests was pointed out in numerous news articles (cf. eNCA, 24 October 2015: n.p.; Evans, 22 October 2015:n.p.; Subramany, 28 October 2015:n.p.). This comparison between events nearly four decades apart brings to mind Jaspers' (1941: 136) statement, "Only through being conscious can the contents of the past, transmuted into possibilities, become the fully real contents of the present. The life of truth in the realm of the spirit does not remove man from his world, but makes him effective for serving his historical present."

According to Luescher (2016:22), the #MustFall movements took the country by surprise. Their genesis, he argues, was on 9 March 2015 at the University of Cape Town (UCT), when student activism gave rise to the #RhodesMustFall movement. This resulted in the removal of a statue of colonialist Cecil John Rhodes on 9 April 2015. Even though student activism "disappeared from the public gaze" after the statue was removed, it was the stepping stone for what was to come in October 2015 (Luescher, 2016).

While the birth of the 1976 protests was rooted in the BCM and the early 1970s, the roots of #FeesMustFall lie with #RhodesMustFall - movements which have come to be known as the 'Fallism movements'. Luescher (2016:23) makes a distinction between these two movements. He writes that whereas #RhodesMustFall represented black intellectual rage against the ideological superstructure of South African higher education and its whiteness, #FeesMustFall brought matters down to grassroots level by addressing the material conditions of student life and the demand for free education.

But, what ignited this sudden resistance? In September 2015, the Council of the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) announced that there would be a double-digit fee increase in 2016. Protest action erupted at Wits. The weeks that followed saw more fee increase announcements and this resulted in public universities in South Africa being shut down by students nationwide. While mass protests took place sporadically, a national shutdown date was set for 22 October. This saw the country witnessing the first

major mass protest since 1976. Luescher (2016:145) states that no student movement in democratic South Africa has received the amount of attention and immediate high-level government response as this movement did. They resulted in President Jacob Zuma announcing on 23 October 2015 that there would be no fee increases at public universities in 2016 (Luescher, 2016:23).

### **3.6. Summary**

This chapter concluded the literature review for this study. It had two aims to fulfil. Firstly, it aimed to provide the reader with the contextual background on *Drum*. The literature relating to the magazine was tabled chronologically in order to trace the changes and developments within the magazine from its early days to the present day.

In 1976, *Drum* offered a different kind of journalism from what its competitors were offering. The magazine got to the heart of it all because it immersed itself in the human condition, while other publications merely explored it as a mental construct (Swift, 1991:39). SAHO (2015) writes that in 2015, *Drum* was still focused on providing relevant content for black South Africans, but the magazine had become more orientated towards market news, entertainment and feature articles, and less focused on political issues.

The second aim was to briefly provide a review of the literature on the political climate, which led to the student protests in 1976 and 2015.

The next chapter will focus on the research design of this study.

## **Chapter 4: Rhythm of the beat**

*“Drums usually seem to tune themselves” – Levon Helm*

### **4.1. Introduction**

In sticking to the theme of naming chapters after drums, this chapter is titled *Rhythm of the beat*. While the previous two chapters provided the reader with a literature review on work previously done by other scholars, this chapter focuses on the technical aspects of the study. This chapter comprises of the research design. It will provide insight on what structure the study will follow. In other words, it will look at the framework that the researcher will use in the analysis chapter.

This chapter seeks to unpack the research design of the study. It serves as a navigator, which will direct the reader on the route taken by the researcher.

Firstly, the research approach will be identified and connected to the nature of the study. Then, the research questions and objectives will follow.

The third section of this chapter will discuss the methodology. In it, frame analysis as a methodology will be explained. This will be done by describing the sample, study period, unit of analysis, selection of news frames, data collection and data analysis. No study is without hassles. The limitations and ethical considerations concerning this study will also be addressed and discussed.

### **4.2. Research approach**

The study utilised social constructivism as its worldview. As previously mentioned, in chapter two, social constructivism is based on the idea that reality is not a set of objective arrangements outside ourselves, but is constructed through our interaction

with others. Each individual has his/her own view on the world, and therefore the labels and understandings associated with objects and ideas differ from one person to the next.

This line of study became popular in the 1960s with Berger and Luckman's treatise *The Social Construction of Reality*. According to these authors (1960), all knowledge (even the most basic) is derived from and maintained by communication.

Informed by the social constructivist worldview, a qualitative research approach was followed because of the study's reliance on the interpretation of meaning from text and image data (Creswell & Clark, n.d.). Marais (2017) writes that Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al* (2014:230-232; cf. Wilson & MacLean, 2011:191-192) suggest the following characteristics of qualitative research:

- Textual: Qualitative research requires the analysis of texts as something that has been created in order to convey meaning irrespective of the data collection process (interviews, notes, observations, documents). In analysing and interpreting text, the researcher conducts a deep reading of the text.
- Iterative: The analysis and interpretation processes are repeated over and over in a continuous cycle in an attempt to isolate and refine the embedded meanings of the text. This process allows the researcher to identify emerging patterns, and to attain a deep and thorough understanding of the meaning of these patterns.
- Hermeneutic: Qualitative research is interpretive. It follows the hermeneutic cycle, which implies an interpretation from the general to the specific and from the specific to the general. This enables the researcher to consider and describe a bigger and more holistic picture by looking at the interplay between specific details and the broader general context.
- Subjective: The goal of qualitative research is to gain an understanding of the subjective experiences of participants, whether through interviews or other artefacts that provide evidence of these experiences. It rests upon the foundation that there can be no absolute right or wrong answer for human behaviour. The

qualitative researcher assumes there is no absolute, factual truth independent of human interpretation.

- Constructed and symbolic: These characteristics refer to social constructionism and symbolic interactionism. Both the researcher as research instrument and the participant as creator of the text that is analysed interpret phenomena subjectively and express it symbolically. The basic premise is that each individual constructs his or her world based on subjective experience. By viewing reality as constructed and expressed symbolically, the qualitative researcher sets out to deconstruct text.

#### **4.3. Questions and objectives**

The primary research question was as follows: What can contemporary journalists learn from a comparison of *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests?

The main objective of this research was to compare *Drum* magazine's coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests.

The primary research objective was to conduct a frame analysis of *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests.

The study's secondary objectives include:

- exploring the history of one of South Africa's oldest publications, *Drum*;
- identifying the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings;
- identifying the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum's* coverage of the 2015 #FeesMustFall students protests; and
- analysing the frames identified in order to compare and contrast *Drum's* coverage of the two events.

#### **4.4. Methodology**

Frame analysis suggests the way something is presented to the audience (called “the frame”) influences the choices people make about how to process that information. Frames are abstractions that work to organise or structure the meaning of a message. The most common use of frames is in terms of the frame the news or media place on the information they convey. They are thought to influence the perception of the news by the audience.

This study made use of a deductive frame analysis, with the scope of the study focused on and limited to news reports relating to both protests’ first days.

##### **4.4.1. Qualitative frame analysis**

The specific method utilised in the study was qualitative news frame analysis. Frame analysis serves four main purposes within the context of media research: to define problems, to diagnose a course, to make value judgments, and to suggest remedies (Entman, 1993 in Linström& Marais, 2012:21). The method is based on Goffman’s (1974 in Linström& Marais, 2012:21) framing theory, which suggests that journalists and media producers use frames to label “schemata of interpretation” that allow people “to locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences or events”.

Frame analysis takes many forms of methodological approaches. In the context of this study, which compares *Drum’s* coverage on two major protests in South Africa, the approach followed is a text-based interpretative qualitative approach.

This research method is unique, according to Pan and Kosicki (1993:58), because it has the following characteristics:

- Firstly, “instead of conceiving news texts as psychological stimuli with identifiable meanings”, it rather “views news texts as consisting of organised symbolic devices that interact with individual agents’ memory for meaning construction”;

- Secondly, “framing analysis is not constrained within a content-free structuralist approach of news discourse”. Instead, “it accepts both the assumption of the rule-governed nature of text formation and the multi-dimensional conception of news texts that will allow for cognitive shortcuts in news production and consumption”;
- Thirdly, “the validity of framing analysis does not rest on researchers’ resourceful reading of news texts. Rather, it retains the systematic procedures of gathering data of news texts in order to identify the signifying elements that might be used by audience members”; and
- Lastly, “it does not assume the presence of frames in news texts independent of readers of the texts”.

Entman (1993) writes that qualitative framing does not only look at what has been included in frames, but also what has been excluded. Connolly-Ahern and Broadway (2008:369) identify the following as the advantages of qualitative framing analysis:

It examines key words and the narrative of metaphors (for example, in a context as a whole);

It identifies what was left out of the frame as well as what was included;

It recognises that the words repeated most often in a text may not be the most important.

#### **4.4.2. Sample, time frame and data collection**

The sample for this study is made up of cover pages, news articles, and editorials which appeared in *Drum*. The cover page, two news articles, and an editorial were analysed in the 1976 copy of *Drum* magazine. The same analysis was conducted on the 2015 copy of *Drum* magazine – two news articles, an editorial and the cover page. These formed part of the unit of analysis used in this study. Wimmer and Dominick (2006:158) write that the unit of analysis might be a single word or symbol, a theme, or an entire article or story.

All these were chosen to be analysed because they contained material on the 1976 Soweto Uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall protests. The copies of *Drum*, which formed part of the data of this study, were obtained in two ways. The July 1976 edition was obtained from a photographer who contributed to that edition, Mike Mzileni. The 2015 editions were collected from the National Library of South Africa, located in Cape Town.

In order to obtain more information on the study from various search engines and platforms, the researcher used the following keywords: *Drum Magazine*, #FeesMustFall, Soweto Uprisings, June 16, etc. Books, journal articles, and conference presentations were also valuable sources of information.

This comparative study examined *Drum's* coverage of two events: the Soweto Uprisings and the #FeesMustFall student protests. The sample consisted of articles that formed part of the coverage that appeared in the July 1976 issue of *Drum* (the Soweto Uprisings) and an issue published in November 2015 for #FeesMustFall.

In 1976, *Drum* reported on the wave of student protests which rippled across apartheid South Africa. Thousands of students from Soweto gathered at their schools to participate in a student-organised protest demonstration. The Soweto student uprisings, led by high school students, were focused on Bantu Education in general and specifically on a decision to use Afrikaans as the only medium of instruction in schools (SAHO, 2015). Chaos broke out following a confrontation between the police and students, which resulted in the death of a 13 year old, Hector Peterson. The eventual death toll was 176 (*Mail & Guardian*, 2013).

When #FeesMustFall broke out almost four decades later, in mid-October 2015, South Africa again witnessed large-scale student protests. The focus of the #FeesMustFall protests was on access to higher education, as well as proposed fee increases at tertiary institutions (Nicolson, 2016). According to Mostert (in Capazorio,

Joubert&Ndenze, 2015), the 2015 wave of student protests marked the most significant disruption of the country's educational system since the 1976 Soweto student uprisings.

Even though these two protests take place during two dissimilar eras and in somewhat different contexts, there are similarities between these protests. These were pointed out in numerous news articles (cf. eNCA, 2015; Evans, 2015; Subramany, 2015). This comparison between events nearly four decades apart brings to mind Jaspers' (1941:136) statement: "Only through being conscious can the contents of the past, transmuted into possibilities, become the fully real contents of the present. The life of truth in the realm of the spirit does not remove man from his world, but makes him effective for serving his historical present". These two protests rank amongst the most significant this country has witnessed to date (Mostert, 2015).

#### **4.4.3. Selection of news frames**

A typology, in layman's terms, is a classification according to general types. So, while there are numerous frames employed by newsmakers and journalists in their coverage, scholars have made various groupings. According to De Vreese, there are two main types: issue specific, looking at specific topics or events, and generic frames, which relate to different topics (2005:54).

Linström and Marais (2012:28) write that, according to De Vreese (2005:55), the disadvantage of the issue specific approach is that it is difficult to generalise. Further, it is difficult to compare and use as empirical evidence for theory building.

Another concept of frames, alongside media frames, is audience frames. Audience frames are clusters of ideas that guide the manner in which individuals process information (Entman, 1993:53). Individual frames, on the other hand, are mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals' processing of information (Entman, 1993:54).

Scheufele (1999:108) writes that the typology can be constructed in order to classify the work conducted in previous studies. Furthermore, it is valuable in three respects:

- The first is that it classifies existing research on framing in the manner in which it has conceptualised frames; that, and the relationships between frames and other variables. It allows for comparison of findings within cells. In other words, the consistency across different studies of essentially the same phenomenon, and between cells; the latter being the compatibility of processes at different levels of framing.
- Secondly, typology is essential because it provides information on how well previous studies have answered questions pertinent to each cell.
- Thirdly, typology goes beyond hypothesis testing in relatively isolated studies in different disciplines to develop a common understanding of the concept of framing. In this instance then, a four cell typology serves as a tool for theory building by providing a common set of conceptual definitions and theoretical statements about between level and within level relationships (Scheufele, 1999:109).

Several scholars have categorised news frames. Valkenburger *et al* (1999:551-552) identify four frames that are used in the news. They are:

- Conflict frame
- Human interest frame
- Responsibility frame
- Economic consequences frame

Neuman *et al* (1992:74) identify five. They are:

- Human impact frame: this frame focuses on descriptions given to individuals and groups.
- Powerlessness frame: this frame looks at the dominance of forces over weak individuals or groups.
- Economic frame: this frame reflects the preoccupation of a story with profit and loss.

- Moral values frame: this frame looks at morality and social prescriptions.
- Conflict frame: this frame analyses the manner in which news media interprets the political world as one where there is constant competition and rivalry.

Linström and Marais (2012:28) state that in a later study Valkenburg, with colleague Semetko (in De Vreese, 2005:56), takes the abovementioned frames a notch further. They identify conflict, human interest, morality, economic consequences, and attribution of responsibility. Each of the descriptions they assign is similar to the aforementioned, except for the human interest frame. The human interest frame, according to them, is when the human face or an emotional angle of an event, issue, or problem is presented.

Their typology also excludes power relations, replacing it with the attribution of responsibility frame. This frame presents an issue or a problem in a manner that attributes responsibility for causing or solving it (Linström & Marais, 2012:28).

In this study, the researcher confirms that the above-mentioned frames were prevalent in the articles that appeared in the two *Drum* issues. The researcher determined details regarding the news frame analysis using the steps provided by Du Plooy (2009:55 in Linström and Marais, 2012:29-31):

**Step 1:** Choose a medium/topic

**Step 2:** Determine a time frame

**Step 3:** Draw a sample

**Step 4:** Identify a unit of analysis

**Step 5:** Select a frame typology

**Step 6:** Operational definitions

Steps 1 to 6 have been discussed thoroughly in previous chapters and in this chapter. Step 7, which will be unpacked below, began after the groundwork for these other steps had been laid.

**Step 7:** Identifying news frames

The researcher is required to know how to look for frames, as well as what to look for when identifying frames in order to identify them.

The “how to” is covered by Alozie (2005:66), who provides the following suggestions:

- Phase 1: General multiple reading of the articles while taking descriptive notes about the content.
- Phase 2: A second reading to identify certain recurring themes, frames, values and topic categories; and
- Phase 3: In-depth interpretation of the articles.

In identifying the “what”, the researcher followed Gamson and Lasch (1983:399), who say that “the ‘what’ of identifying frames implies that the researcher analyses the text for symbolic devices or signature elements that are located within news stories”.

Several devices are used to frame a specific story or event. The abovementioned research questions guided the researcher in terms of what to look for when using framing devices. There are framing devices used to condense information and offer a ‘media package’ of an issue. In this study, these were divided into two categories: rhetorical devices and technical devices.

### ***Rhetorical devices***

These have been identified by Gamson and Lasch (1983) as:

- Metaphors: These always have two parts – the principal subject that the metaphor is intended to illuminate, and the associated subject that the metaphor invokes to enhance readers’ understanding;
- Exemplars: While metaphors rely on imagined events to frame the principal subject, real events of the past or present are frequently used for the same purpose;
- Catchphrases: Commentators on events frequently try to capture them in a single theme statement, tagline, title or slogan that is intended to suggest a frame.

Catchphrases are attempted summary statements about the principal subject; and

- Depictions: News stories have certain principal subjects that they characterise in a particular fashion. They may do this through metaphors or exemplars or through a string of modifiers.

Gamson and Modigliani (1989:143), together with Tankard (2001), add visual images, consequences and appeals to principles that are often used to fulfil the aforementioned functions.

### ***Technical devices***

Tankard (2001:101) takes this empirical approach a step further by suggesting a list of 11 focal points for identifying and measuring news frames. They are: headlines, subheads, photos, photo captions, leads, source selection, quotes selection, pull quotes, logos, statistics, and charts. One can also add concluding statements and paragraphs.

#### **4.4.4. Data analysis**

The articles in the *Drum* issues were analysed according to the descriptions of frames using qualitative frame analysis as a methodology. These are mentioned earlier in this chapter. The researcher used standard deductive frames and identified to analyse the data.

Using the work of Wimmer and Dominick (2014:125), the deductive analysis rested on frames identified and explained according to their set categories discussed in this chapter.

Frames, using a deductive frame method, were identified, discussed, and then a comparison between the two editions was conducted.

## 4.5. Limitations

The research methodology used in this study is not without criticism. These limitations are for qualitative research and qualitative framing analysis. This section will discuss both limitations for this study.

According to Wilson and MacLean (2011:194 in Marais, 2017), the main critique against qualitative research is also its greatest advantage; that is, namely, the interpretive role played by the researcher. This is a catch-22 situation and describes the tension between rigour and creativity. Wimmer and Dominick (2014:118) argue that the interpretative researcher is a vital part of the process as well as the data. In addition, without the active participation of the researcher, data does not exist. The researcher is then the instrument. As a result, the interpretative researcher assumes that it is difficult, if not impossible, to measure and quantify these experiences and meanings.

### **The following are additional limitations:**

- Questions about achieving acceptable standards of reliability: stability of findings
- Validity: truthfulness of findings (Whittemore *et al*, 2001:523).
- Butler-Kisber (2010:13) argues that reliability does not apply to qualitative research because the researcher is the primary research tool.

### **Qualitative framing analysis**

Angelo and Kuypers (2010:46) highlight reliability and validity as two major problems of qualitative framing analysis. In particular, the manner in which frames are operationally defined poses a threat to validity. These scholars argue that this is so because researchers tend to “reinvent the wheel” when identifying news frames.

Another limitation of this approach is that it makes frame identification a subjective process as researchers may tend to find frames that they are consciously or unconsciously looking for. In addition, defining frames in a stereotypical or conventional manner (Tankard in Reese *et al*, 2001:98)

Klandermans and Staggenborg (2002:62) are of the view that frame analysis poses challenges relating to data collection, analysis, and the final presentation of results. The initial challenge involves definitions and concepts, as distinctions between news frames frequently are indistinct, while the second challenge involves verification and proof. They furthermore suggest that this method confronts the difficult task of describing and presenting evidence.

More criticism comes from D'Angelo and Kuypers (2010:37), who write that a qualitative approach can be challenging when definite categories are not immediately obvious and there is no easy coding scheme evident into which textual units can be sorted. They add that it is time-consuming, especially inductive frame analysis, and needs to be done before a list of frames can be drawn up.

#### **4.6. Ethical considerations**

*“If it is not right do not do it;  
if it is not true do not say it” – Marcus Aurelius*

Stevens (2013:3) writes that ethics can be thought of as the study of good conduct and the grounds for making judgements about what is good conduct. Ethical considerations in qualitative research are more sensitive than in quantitative, mainly because it deals more with participants and the privacy of individuals. In defining ethics in research, Halai (2016:5) writes that sound research is a moral and ethical endeavour and should be concerned with ensuring that the interests of those participating in a study are not harmed as a result of the research being done.

In this study, the researcher worked mainly with texts; meaning that the ethical considerations were not related to human interaction, protection of privacy, consent, or any other human-related ethical considerations.

The researcher had to adhere to the following:

- Research integrity: the researcher is honest about the manner in which this research has been conducted. No personal interest has affected the manner in which the study was conducted. The research findings are truthful.
- No plagiarism: the researcher has not taken the work of other scholars and passed it off as her own. The works of other scholars has been credited.
- Balance: the researcher analysed both editions using the same lens.

The analysis is the product of the interpretation of the researcher who is a 26-year old Xhosa woman, with seven years of experience in journalism. The researcher is aware and understands that there are many possible interpretations that may come up when looking at the two periods of *Drum* magazine. This study reflects her interpretation as a black female South African born before the dawn of democracy in her country

#### **4.7. Summary**

In this study, a qualitative research methodology was followed because of the study's reliance on the interpretation of meaning from text and image data (Creswell & Clark, n.d.). This approach was used to answer the main research question of this study which asks: What can contemporary journalists learn from a comparison of *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto Uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests?

Frame analysis was used as the research methodology to gain answers to the abovementioned question. This methodology serves four main purposes within the context of media research: to define problems, to diagnose a course, to make value judgements, and to suggest remedies (Entman, 1993 in Linström & Marais, 2012:21). In order to do this, two issues of *Drum* were used as the sample. The study period was July 1976 and November 2015. The unit of analysis was the articles which appeared in this time in the magazine.

No study is without its limitations though. The approach used in this study makes frame identification a subjective process as researchers may tend to find frames that they are consciously or unconsciously looking for. Ethical considerations, such as integrity and avoiding plagiarism, were adhered to in order for the findings to be balanced and truthful.

The next chapter will provide a comparative analysis of the two *Drum* issues.

## **Chapter 5: The Djembe vs. the Ghomma: Comparing the sounds of two prominent African drums**

*“Drums all have their own particulars – each drum has a place where they sound the best – where they ring out and resonate the best, and the head surface isn't too loose or too tight, mainly so you get a good rebound off of the head” – Chad Smith*

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter comprises of the data findings and analysis of the study. As stated in chapter four, the analysis will follow the structure of a typical qualitative study. In this instance, the manner in which *Drum* journalists socially constructed reality will be analysed from the perspective of the researcher, who is a black female South African, born before the dawn of democracy in her country.

After laying down the foundation for the comparative study in earlier chapters, this chapter contains the findings of the comparison between the 1976 *Drum* issue and the 2015 *Drum* issue. The analysis will focus on articles published in the two issues. The July 1976 edition of *Drum* magazine is symbolised by the Djembe drum in the title of this chapter. The Ghomma drum symbolises the November 2015 edition of the magazine. There is no significance to the name selection of the drums. The researcher made this decision randomly. In sticking to the theme of music, the sound of these drums, referring to the contents of the articles, will be analysed.

This chapter serves as the cornerstone in meeting the research objectives of this study. Firstly, it seeks to identify the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings. Secondly, it aims to identify the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum's* coverage of the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests. Lastly, it intends to provide a comparison of the July 1976 issue and the November 2015 issue.

In both editions of *Drum*, multiple frames interlink in each of the articles. For this reason, the analysis of the coverage in both editions will be categorised according to the articles. The primary and secondary frames will be identified in each article.

Frames that can be identified as either primary or secondary, according to Neuman *et al* (1992:74), are:

- Human impact frame: this frames focuses on descriptions given to individuals and groups.
- Economic frame: this frame reflects the preoccupation of a story with profit and loss.
- Moral values frame: this frame looks at morality and social prescriptions.
- Conflict frame: this frame analyses the manner in which news media interprets the political world as one where there is constant competition and rivalry.

The last category of frames is the attribution of responsibility frame. This frame presents an issue or a problem in a manner that attributes responsibility for causing or solving it (Linström& Marais, 2012:28).

Once identified, these frames will be coupled with an in-depth analysis of each frame. The articles will be analysed chronologically according to their date and the pages on which they appeared.

The last section of this chapter will provide the reader with a summary of the findings.

## **5.2. *Drum* in 1976**

In 1976, *Drum* was privately owned, one of the leading magazines in Africa, and focused on black emancipation (Swift, 1991:36).

The section below provides an analysis of the content on the Soweto Uprisings, which appeared in the July 1976 issue.

The content of this issue forms part of Appendix 1. The cover page is Appendix 1.1 Article 1 is Appendix 1.2, Article 2 is Appendix 1.3, and Article 3 is Appendix 1.4. These are not numbered. They are placed chronologically after each other at the end.

### **5.2.1. Cover page**

At face value, the *Drum* cover of the July 1976 issue looks like a typical cover from the 1970s. It bears simple retro elements.

There is a black model on the cover. This was not a popular choice at this time. The dress code of the model is modern with a touch of Africa. This combination is reflected in her jewellery. Her necklace seems as if it is made of shells; she is wearing a wig or hair extensions with large round earrings. Her right wrist has a watch on it, while her left wrist is filled with bangles. The dress, showing some cleavage with a long slit in front, was a popular style in Sophiatown.

The tagline “Africa’s leading magazine” is written in capital letters and is an indication of the success of the magazine at the time. *Drum* was not focused on informing, educating, and conducting robust investigations for a singular audience. The price for *Drum* then was 20c in South Africa and 18c in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

The numerous headlines on the cover provide the reader with the enticing prospect of multiple stories inside. These range from an article about world-renowned boxer Muhammad Ali to gossip about a well-known local musician. The cover also promises news from the Transkei, a new Bantustan at the time. “Mdluli: Hawker of terror?” provides intrigue on the cover.

What is a magazine without a competition? There is one advertised in the right-hand corner of the magazine. The photograph features a white couple on a beach.

The background is yellow. All the headings are written in blue and red. That is, all but one – the headline located in the top right-hand corner: “The riots: Why they happened” . This one has a black background with a white font. It draws the attention of the reader. It also acts as an indication of the choice of news angle the section will cover.

In the five Ws and H of journalism, the Why provides in-depth and critical information. Given the wording of the headline, the reader expects to gain an understanding of why the Soweto Uprisings – referred to as riots – took place.

One could easily, however, overlook this headline based on where it is located on the page. The wording and layout placement can be viewed as a strategy by the *Drum* team to hide crucial thought pieces in plain sight. This also explains the section being placed in the middle of the magazine. Media freedom at the time was limited. SAHO (2015) describes the magazine as one which was never shy about voicing resistance. It one of the magazines that were notorious for breaking the rules and publishing what was referred to as “undesirable”.

### **5.2.2. Article 1 from *Drum* 1976**

**Headline:** THE TELEGRAPHED PUNCH

**Journalist:** Stan Motjuwadi

**Photographer:** Mike Mzileni

**Page:** 26

#### **Article summary**

This is the opening article of *The Riots: Why they happened*. It aims to provide context as to what led to June 16. This is evident in the opening sentence of the piece, which

reads: “It all started in 1953...” This quote makes the reader realise that what transpired on 16 June 1976 was not a spur-of-the-moment event.

**Primary frame:** Attribution of responsibility

This article not only seeks to tell the reader why the riots happened, but also provides the names of those who were responsible for the state in which South Africa was at the time. However, it does not base its arguments on finger pointing or racial blame shifting. Attribution of responsibility is shared across all the participants who played a role in the development of the riots.

At the top of the list of stakeholders to blame is “Pretoria”. Pretoria, which is one of the capital cities of South Africa, was a slang word that referred to the governing state at the time. The headquarters of the National Party was based in Pretoria. Motjuwadi argues that the 1976 riots began when “Pretoria decreed that the medium of instruction should be 50-50 Afrikaans-English from standard five to form three”, back in 1953.

Motjuwadi does not only blame the state. He also mentions characters and incidents responsible for the riots. These are:

- In 1975, the African Teacher’s Association of South Africa opened a case against Pretoria and it resulted in a “fruitless appeal”.
- Vorster, Prime Minister of South Africa from 1966 to 1978, who did not heed the advice from Desmond Tutu, Dean of St. Mary’s Cathedral in Johannesburg at the time, who warned him that there would be “bloodshed and violence in South Africa” 46 days before the riots.
- Jimmy Kruger, Minister of Justice at the time, who stated that he “never saw it come”.
- Motjuwadi indirectly attributes the actions of the school children to Pik Botha, South Africa’s Ambassador to the United States at the time. He argues that they were “following government policy”. To back up this courageous attribution, he describes their petition to learn in the medium of their choice as one that was not

“exacting”. This given the fact that “they have Mr Pik Botha’s pledge at UNO to wipe out race discrimination in S.A.”.

Motjuwadi concludes his article by making two bold statements. Firstly, he describes the riots as, “a whole stinking mess-up”, which “should never have been”. Then, as though providing what could have been a remedy for the entire “mess-up”, he writes: “Perhaps it is about time all South Africans gave an ear to Desmond Tutu’s message – ‘A people can only take so much’”.

**Secondary frame:** Human impact

The human impact frame first appears in the second paragraph of this article. Motjuwadi writes: “There was a hue and cry three years ago when Pretoria decreed that the medium of instruction should be 50-50”. This paragraph could evoke the emotions of the readers. It provides evidence that Afrikaans being imposed in schools was something that the entire community tried to fight against.

The lines following up to this: “*Drum* put the case of parents. Why force Afrikaans on our children?” the headline asked. This provides the reader with the sense that the magazine had a mandate rooted in being involved within the community.

Another element of the human impact frame, which is used of in this article, is sympathy and compassion. “Ironically one of the people who had no business to die in the Soweto fracas was Dr Melville Edelstein,” he writes. He then goes on to describe Edelstein’s death as a loss to the community; as if they had lost one of their own - a “darling of the Soweto youth with the West Rand Bantu Administration Board”.

Describing the march of the school children as “peaceful” is a bold editorial stance. It adds to the narrative that the school children were met with violence, despite them not being violent.

**Secondary frame:** Conflict

The conflict theme is immediately obvious in the headline, with the word “punch” being used. A punch, in its literal form and sense, refers to using one's fist to injure and hurt the other. The figurative meaning of the words refers to a phenomenon that has the ability to have a long-lasting impact.

The riots can be perceived, by looking at both these interpretations, as conflict. On the one hand, the riots signify a punch from the students to the government in a figurative manner. On the other hand, the riots signify the physical violence from the government towards the students.

The headline as a whole can be viewed as Motjuwadi's anger towards all those he deemed responsible for the riots. The article itself promises to be a subliminal “telegraphed” message. He does not make only accusations and says, “I blame XYZ for the riots”. Instead, he uses evidence to back up his arguments.

In the same piece, Motjuwadi subtly justifies the violent actions of students by referring to these as a reaction to Afrikaans being imposed on them to “their utter helplessness”. He then describes an incident in 1975 where “schoolboys raided a hideout of thugs who were terrorising schoolgirls and killed one of the thugs”.

In the next paragraph, he shares another depiction of violence, which belongs to the conflict frame. This time around, the “kids” came to the aid of one of their educators when two men attempted to mug her. They “gave a chase, caught up with one of them and killed him”. Community mob justice has been prevalent in South African townships and rural areas for many decades.

“There are more shootings” is an account of the violence that photographer Mike Mzileni witnessed. Motjuwadi's incorporation of this is another form of inclusiveness and a well-rounded report.

**Secondary frame:** Moral values

The undertone of this article is disappointment in the manner in which the June 16 protest was handled by the adults involved. Motjuwadi goes as far as explaining to the reader how these participants fell short when it came to social prescriptions.

Turning a blind eye to appeals is considered a societal ill. According to Motjuwadi, “Pretoria plugged its ears against all pleas and went against all pleas”, and the state was well aware of the potential threat within its education system, but instead decided to turn the other cheek.

Morally it is also deemed socially unacceptable for parents to neglect the well-being of their children. One of the parents interviewed for the article, Mr Leonard Mosala, admitted that as parents they “have let down [their] children”. This admission of guilt may also be as a result of moral self-introspection.

Another parent, Dr Matlhare, who was the president of the Soweto Residents’ Association, echoed Mosala’s sentiments: “When we are dead they will spit on our graves,” he said. The parents appeared to be in agreement that they had let their children down.

In “The Telegraphed Punch”, Motjuwadi describes what happened on June 16 as “just another blot in the history of South Africa”. This was a bold statement to make in a magazine in South Africa, given the political landscape and limited media freedom. This striking comment may not fit into any one frame, but it does provide context for the socio-political space in which June 16 transpired.

### **5.2.3. Article 2 from *Drum* 1976**

**Headline:** THE DAY OUR KIDS LOST FAITH

**Journalist:** Joe Thloloe

**Pages:** 26 – 27

## **Article summary**

Taking the baton from Motjuwadi, who provided the background on the protests, this article provides information on what happened on 16 June 1976. It breaks down who was responsible for what.

### **Primary frame:** Human impact

The main argument for the primary frame of this article is attached to the headline. Firstly, the journalist uses the possessive pronoun “our” to describe the youth of 1976. This attachment indicates a collective communal belonging of the youth. Secondly, he uses “faith” as the noun. In making this reference, he targets that which the reader holds in confidence. Thus, even before reading the article, an appeal to the human and emotional side of the reader is used as a point of departure.

This angle, which appeals to the readers’ emotions, continues in the opening paragraph: “Marching kids, in a mood common to school kids the world over – happy that they were not in class – good naturedly protesting against...”. This serves two purposes. Not only does it introduce the article, it also acts as a caption to the photograph (see Appendix 1.3) taken by Mike Mzileni, which spreads over the two pages. The photograph depicts the mood of the school children. Their broad smiles indicate that they are indeed “happy”, despite the placards that they hold in their hands. The journalist states that their “humour was met with the mailed fist of officialdom”.

One of the most visible placards has a connection to the faith aspect of the headline. It reads: “To Hell with Afrikaans”. The religious connotation of this being that hell is a place where people go to be punished.

Thloloe reports that upon hearing about the protest, one of the teachers stopped a class and told his students to leave the class, “lest they be called sell-outs”. Fighting the system of apartheid was something that was perceived as an act by the community. Failure to do so meant that individuals could be singled out as traitors. . A researcher who looked at the works of black writers from Rabkin (1975) states that urbanisation,

racism and the political struggle of the African national movement against apartheid moulded and fashioned the thinking of those who wrote for the magazine. Rabkin adds that there is a strong unity that persists through the reportage, documentary and protest writing, and creative literature of the era (1975:1).

The journalist's decision to describe how the school children's mannerisms are global and the nature of their protest also added to the list of arguments appealing to the emotional side of the reader. The reader reads this article with the youth of 1976 framed in such a manner that views them as a group whose spirit was lost as a result of an occurrence. What could possibly have led them to lose faith? This is explored in the second prominent frame found in this piece.

**Secondary frame:** Attribution of responsibility

According to Thloloe, a series of actions, or failures to act, by various community stakeholders were responsible for what happened to the youth on 16 June 1976. As a result, the youth lost faith. The attribution of responsibility frame is used in the rest of the article to provide evidence for this argument. "If the police had not tried to wrestle the posters from the children, if they had not tried to arrest any of them, if they had not set dogs on to them, if they had not fired shots – June 16 would not have been seen as a black day for Soweto as it turned out to be". In this paragraph, Thloloe attributes responsibility to the police for what happened on the day.

The attribution of responsibility is not, however, focused on only one part of society or the state. Thloloe adds, "Perhaps if there was still a channel of communication between the children and the Department of Bantu Education", the events could have played out differently. The Board had turned a blind eye to several alerts. Firstly, when the national association of teachers had told the Board that "they did not want Afrikaans as a medium of instruction", and secondly, when "the school boards had said exactly the same thing" to the Board. This had apparently begun the previous year. This implies that what happened in 1976, could have been prevented in 1975.

Instead of dealing with the looming threat, it was avoided. Thloloe writes, “Mr Jerry Mahlangu, of the Orlando Diepkloof School Board, Mr A.A Letlape of the Meadowlands Tswana School Board, and other opponents of Afrikaans were axed. The Meadowlands School Board resigned en bloc”. This led to a breakdown in communication. “The men who took over – approved by Pretoria – were not trusted by the students. Communication was not from Pretoria down to the students and there was none upwards”. What happened on June 16 is an indication of how such top-down approaches almost never succeed. Ultimately, this led to a cycle of distrust amongst the role players involved. “Students did not trust the boards nor were the boards listened to by Pretoria”. The “wound festered”, leading to what is now known as June 16.

The above attributions of responsibility give insight into what led to June 16. They also justify why “the children had lost complete faith”.

### **Secondary frame: Conflict**

There are multiple examples of the conflict frame in this article; the main one being between the learners and the government. Others include the conflict between the school boards and other official structures. Then, of course, the police are those who actually opened fire and clashed with the children.

Posters held up by the school children had “Do not want Afrikaans” and “Afrikaans must be abolished” written on them. These explicitly express the children’s dissatisfaction with Afrikaans. In the photograph by Mzileni, the learners have their fists raised in the air. To an outsider, this gesture bears no meaning or significance. To South Africans at the time, it spoke volumes. It was a gesture commonly made by activists and freedom fighters. It symbolised resistance towards the enforced apartheid laws.

Some of the learners captured in this image are carrying long sticks. Despite this and the “militancy” of their raised fists, all of them are dressed in their school uniforms and have smiles on their innocent faces – in complete contrast to the conflict.

#### 5.2.4. Article 3 from *Drum* 1976

**Headline:** THE WRITING ON THE WALL

**Journalist:** Not mentioned

**Pages:** 28 – 29

##### **Article summary**

This is the last article on the riots feature in the July 1976 issue of *Drum*. It is also the shortest. The writing on the wall is an in-depth analytical opinion piece on what transpired.

##### **Primary frame:** Conflict

This article (Appendix 1.4) has the most images in *The Riots: why they happened* feature section. There are six in total. Unlike the other photograph used in the section, which had an elated mood, most of these photographs depict violence and conflict.

Photojournalism was an important element in *Drum*. Not only did it give life to the investigative stories, it became an opportunity for journalists to expose the ignorance that all was well in South Africa. It portrayed a hidden world. Seeing the photographs in this magazine was a life-changing experience for many readers.

Nicol (1995) states that he was enthralled when he met “the other side of his country in 1986”. This happened when a photographer, Jürgen Schadeberg, showed him mock-ups of two photographic books he had edited for *Drum* (Nicol, 1995:x). As the clichéd saying goes, the photographs told a thousand words.

So, despite the headline, which bears features of a human impact frame, the conflict frame leads as the primary one for this editorial.

##### **Image 1**

Location: Top left-hand corner of page 28

*Caption: It began as a peaceful demonstration by a bunch of schoolkids. Then there was trouble. Rocks were thrown. Shots were fired. And the anti-terrorist squad came onto the scene in their hippos.*

This photograph may be interpreted as a summary, narrating how the events of 16 June 1976 developed. It has been reported that the day began peacefully and ended tragically. The above caption describes the actions of the learners as a “peaceful demonstration”. “Then there was trouble” alludes to the twist in the plot.

The violent exchanges between the learners and the police are depicted in “Rocks were thrown. Shots were fired”. Something else the reader realises is the imbalance of power that day: that rocks were being met with bullets and the presence of an “anti-terrorist squad”. The learners were not mere criminals – they were regarded as terrorists who had performed acts of treason against the state. This kind of treatment by the state police towards black people in apartheid South Africa was considered normal.

What made the 1976 protest unique, as depicted in the image, was the fact that, for the first time, on a large scale, it was children who were angry and rioting. Not their parents. This because one of the conditions of apartheid were so oppressive that there was hardly any legal room to resist the unlawful systems.

What the #FeesMustFall activists had in common with the youth of 1976 was the “shocking” element that the young can be angry and they can be outrageous. There were many contributing factors, but, like in 1976, the education system was at the heart of what happened in 2015.

Noah (2017) explains how the atrocities of apartheid are taught in South Africa post-1994. He writes how the lesson takes on an “apartheid was bad. Nelson Mandela was freed. Let’s move on” narrative formula (Noah, 2017:213).

In democratic South Africa, it is as though the country has amnesia when it comes to what happened during apartheid. Or, as Noah (2017) puts it, focuses on the “let’s move on” aspect. Most critics credit this to the urge for many to shy away from the past. When students revolted during #FeesMustFall, this image of staunch activism, in most cases where vandalism hijacked the cause for free education, was depicted. The kind of activism made many think back to 1976.

Activism against apartheid conditions rose across many professions; each person using his or her craft to paint the imagery of violence and the imbalance of power. “*Rocks were thrown*” as a caption is more than words. It stands as a form of defiance and freedom of expression. In the arts, it was also prominent in a song by the South African jazz musician, Letta Mbulu, called *Jikijela*. The title of this song, which was a hit in the 70s, literally means “throw”. Furthermore, “*sobashayangamatye*” translates into “We will throw them with rocks”. At the time, stones were a weapon for black protestors against the police.

The connection of this song to this study is the déjà vu effect that it bears. It resurfaced in 2016 at the peak of #FeesMustFall. This time, it was afro-pop musician ThandiswaMazwai who brought it to life. In a tweet, Mazwai said, “Jikijela is done in honour of the #FeesMustFall movement and the brave students who continue to fight”. In modern day South Africa, Mulaudzi (2016) writes how rocks are still the only defence students can reach for when tear gas, stun grenades, rubber bullets and water cannons are fired their way. The similarities between these cinematic scenes from two different times in the history of South Africa will be discussed later on in this chapter.

## **Image 2**

Location: Middle right-hand section of page 28, running over onto page 29

Caption: *BLOOD streaming down his face, a plain-clothes cop feels the cold steel as his own handcuffs bite his wrists after being captured by the rioters during the police withdrawal soon after the firing began.*

While the image above is filled with the white men who were part of the state security, this one shows black men. In this image one of them, described as a “cop”, has been injured and was captured using his own handcuffs.

In this photograph, the learners have gone from being described as “school kids” to “rioters”. Rioters who have managed to return the harm inflicted on them and fellow classmates by the state.

What is odd about this policeman is that, unlike his colleague, he is wearing a tie. Given the time in which this occurred, “during the police withdrawal soon after the firing began”, one wonders whether or not his attire was intentional. A possibility is that he was trying to blend in with the community as an *impimpi*. This Nguni word, which means ‘traitor’ or ‘spy’, describes someone who obtains information for the state police while pretending to be an activist or ordinary citizen. This would explain the manner in which the protesting students treated him.

In the caption, however, he is referred to as a plainclothes cop, which probably means that he was a detective. So, in essence, the analysis in the paragraph above is merely an assumption that he could have been an *impimpi*. Detectives during that era wore suits to work.

During apartheid, people who collaborated with the state government, even as employees, were deemed traitors to the liberation struggle. According to Dlamini (in Davis, 2014), in East Africa, an *askari* refers to a soldier or a policeman, but in South Africa, it describes a member of the ANC who changed sides and joined the apartheid government's police force.

Whether or not these men are *askari* is debatable. However, the visible wounds on his face and the blood were often the result of how a community treated one of their own who sold out. Sometimes, *impimpi* were necklaced with tyres and burnt alive. His

injuries reinforce the argument that the leading frame in this article is the conflict frame. This is also one of the most gruesome images in the section of stories on the Soweto riots.

### **Image 6**

Location: Bottom right-hand section of page 29

Caption: *A STONE-LITTERED gutter. A police vehicle. A dustbin. And, next to it, a body. The crowd surges round. Who is he? Why was he killed? Then a car pulls up. The crowd's attention is diverted. The dead man is forgotten. Just as a statistic. But, somewhere, a wife and children wait for him...*

This photograph emphasises how people had become indifferent to violence and conflict in townships. The John Doe scenario portrayed in this photograph is a tragedy, which was common during the time. It was so popular that it found expression in the famous hit song *Lakutshon' ilanga* by jazz musician Mackay Davashe. It was made famous by songstress Miriam Makeba. Khumalo (2006:156) shares the meaning of the lyrics:

*Lakutshon'ilanga – when the sun goes down.*

*When the sun goes down I will be looking for you, scouring the hospital wards, asking after you from the prison authorities.*

*Lakutshon'ilanga – when the sun goes down.*

*When the sun goes down, I'll pound the pavements looking for you, until I find you.*

Davashe put to melody a summary of what John Doe's family and many other people were going through at the time.

The images selected to accompany this article are not the only pieces of evidence that argue in favour of the conflict frame. When one begins to read the article, elements of

warfare and conflict also pop up. The phrase, “South Africa’s enemies”, for one, appears twice in the piece. Another example is the mention of the word “patriot”.

**Secondary frame:** Human impact

This editorial is filled with religious text and references. This ranges from the headline, the first sentence, quoting of scripture in the opening paragraph, and it ends off with an interpretation of a scripture. The headline comes from a popular story in the Old Testament. The particular scripture is found in chapter 5 of the book of Daniel. According to the New Living Translation Bible, he wrote this at a time Jewish people had little hope. They had been living as captives in Babylon, far away from home, with only the promise from God that they would someday return home. This narrative is similar to what black South Africans experienced during apartheid .Using this headline sets the moods for the rest of the piece.

The opening line of the piece, *“The Bible has covered it”*, reinforces the above argument. The remainder of the editorial is guided by the Bible, which is a collection of sacred texts or scriptures that Jews and Christians consider to be a product of divine inspiration.

The third piece of evidence provides us with what the “Bible has covered”. It says: *“Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the truth shall come, and a little child shall lead them”*. The writer uses the words from the book of Psalm 8:2, which was also used by Tutu used in his letter. In it he sent a warning, which fell on deaf ears. As a result, “the children of Soweto have wrought” in the form of protests, which turned violent.

The conclusion of the editorial sums up the argument with biblical evidence. In it, the writer explains: *“The writing on the wall that appeared so many centuries ago in front of King Balthasar of the Chaldeans read Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharism. King Balthasar Vorster of the South Africans, let us translate for you:*

*Mene. Repeated twice, means you may no longer Provaricate. Tekel means, if correctly constructed, Scrap Apartheid and Upharsim means, the Assyrian scholars will assure you...NOW."*

Calling out the government of the day was gutsy, to say the least. Using the Bible and religious text was ironic because many of the oppressive laws of apartheid were founded on a narrow-minded and oppressive interpretation of the Bible.

Giles (2016) states that Reformed theologians, who were learned and seemingly godly, developed a case for apartheid. They were convinced that the Bible endorsed the separation of races. Their main belief was that their policies were pleasing to God. One of the major anchors for these laws was Romans 13:1-7, which reads as follows: "The government has the right to create laws and citizens must obey them".

There is evidence in the editorial which points to the fact that the writer has been aware of the abovementioned for a number of years: "For 25 years DRUM has been saying that if South Africa were to have a revolution of social conscience and recognise the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God, there could be no violence and no threat from foreign powers. For our variety of races and colours is perhaps our greatest asset. In addition to being aware of the narrow-minded abuse of Christianity, *Drum* continues to be defiant towards oppression and racial division. Instead it uses this platform to provide a suggestion of unity in diversity amongst South Africans - a trait which could save the country from the ridicule of having other countries meddle in its affairs."

**Secondary frame:** Moral values

**Image 4**

Location: In the middle of page 29

Caption: *Dean Tutu. He warned Mr Vorster of violence that was coming.*

A quote from an open letter Desmond Tutu wrote to Mr Vorster appears in Article 1, which was written by then *Drum* editor, Stan Motjuwadi. It reads as follows: "I am writing to you, Sir, because I have a growing nightmarish fear that unless something drastic is done very soon, bloodshed and violence are going to happen in South Africa". The letter was written on 6 May 1976. Needless to say, Vorster did not heed Tutu's warning. Violence and bloodshed broke out a mere 46 days later.

Image 4 bears features of the moral values frame. The names of two prominent figures in society are mentioned: Tutu and Vorster. Only one of them appears in the issue of *Drum*. This speaks volumes about the manner in which the magazine viewed power dynamics at the time. Not only that, but also how they were defiant of racial imbalances.

At the time, Dean Desmond Tutu one of the leading voices of black resistance towards apartheid in South Africa. He was a clergyman who stood as a moral pillar within society. A year prior to the Soweto Uprisings he was appointed as the Dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg. The appointment made him the first black to hold that position. This, amongst other things, made him a valuable voice in the black community and deemed his warning of violence valid. He later went on to be the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. His biography on the Nobel Prize website (2014) describes him as an individual who has always had an objective for "a democratic and just society without racial divisions". Furthermore, a common system of education has always been amongst his key priorities.

Unlike the militant and violent image of the two black policemen on the left hand side of the page, the image of Tutu in his clergy gear bears no evidence of conflict. It appears to have been taken while he was voicing an opinion.

And who was Mr Vorster?

J Vorster served as the Prime Minister of South Africa from 1966 to 1978 and as the fourth State President of South Africa from 1978 to 1979. SAHO (2011) states that after the Soweto Uprisings he responded two days later, saying in Parliament, "The

government will not be intimidated. Orders have been given to maintain order at all costs”.

### **Secondary frame: Economic frame**

While most of the images argue in favour of the conflict frame, Image 3 and 5 are different. These two photographs bear evidence of the effect that the riots had on the economy.

### **Image 3**

Location: At the top of page 29

Caption: *A pall of smoke hangs over a Chinese shop just outside Soweto on the Potchefstroom road. This was nothing to do with Afrikaans as a medium. Perhaps it could be something to do with what happens when people are ethnically separated. Whatever the reason the result is misery for the innocent.*

There were casualties during the riots. June 16 did not only affect schools. Other random acts of violence broke out in Soweto as a result of the protest. Despite the caption, dismissing the connection between the riots and what happened at this shop, there is an economic frame depicted here, which is concerned with loss.

While the history of how Chinese people moved to South Africa for economic purposes is largely documented, their presence in Soweto has hardly been explored. Mahlaka (2014) writes how the township was an area where they could settle and set up shop after the passing of the Group Areas Act of 1950. The political activity did not only affect them socially and culturally, but it had an economic impact. In a feature on Chinese shops in Soweto, Mahlaka (2014) profiles how one trader was affected economically by political activity. Here is an excerpt from the interview:

*“During the wave of violence against the repressive apartheid system during the 1970s, Gerard Li, a South African-born Chinese man was working for his father in Soweto. He*

*saw people being shot and necklaced in front of him. Li later started a business delivering meat for supermarkets in the township during the 1980s.*

*“Apartheid was hectic ...You could either live in a black, Indian or coloured area.”*

*“It was hard for me to do deliveries in Soweto. I had to be involved in a lot of community projects to be protected.”*

### **Image 5**

Location: Middle right-hand side of page 29

Caption: *MORE of smoke. This time a police vehicle is the target for anger. The cost of this escalation from peaceful demonstration to violence is going to be high – both in cash and in lives.*

This image adds cinematic effect to the day that was 16 June 1976. It also sums up the events of the day. It also bears features of the economic frame, as it looks at “the cost” of the day, which was “high - both in cash and in lives”. This clearly focuses on profit and loss.

### **5.3. *Drum* in 2015**

In 2015, *Drum* magazine was a part of the Media24 conglomerate. It contained mainly market news, entertainment and feature articles for a black readership.

The section below provides an analysis of the #FeesMustFall content, which appeared in the 5 November 2015 edition. The content of this issue of *Drum* forms part of Appendix 2. The cover page is Appendix 2.1, Article 1 is Appendix 2.2, Article 2 is Appendix 2.3, and Article 3 is Appendix 2.4. These are not numbered. They are placed chronologically after each other at the end.

### 5.3.1. Cover page

The *Drum* cover page of 5 November 2015 is bright, colourful and made up of trending layout elements. These urge and entice the reader to pick it up from the magazine racks and dig in. Prominent colours that are used for the headlines are red, black, white and yellow. They alternate between each other on the background. All these are the traits of a typical modern cover of a supermarket tabloid magazine.

At a closer look, the cover has been systematically divided into five sections of leading stories. “EDUCATION CRISIS: We unpack the #FeesMustFall campaign” is spread horizontally across the top of the cover page. This first section indicates a section dedicated to the protests on tertiary tuition fees, which had spread across South Africa. The usage of words may be unpacked and analysed in various ways. Firstly, the protests are identified as a crisis. Secondly, “we unpack” suggests the nature of the news and editorial pieces. It alerts the reader that the news angle will be based on the ‘What’ question in the 4 Ws and H in journalism. The last word of the headline, “campaign”, is another bold stance taken by *Drum*. When the student protests erupted, many media houses led with a negative frame of the protests. Going as far as calling the students “rascals” who did not wish to study, but were in pursuit of chaos and disruption. Calling the protests a “campaign” is a step away from those narratives. It could indicate a shift towards more objective reporting.

Below that, on the left-hand side, the date, price and name of the magazine is located in its iconic white and red highlighted with “the beat goes on” vertically aligned on the right. In 2015, the market price for *Drum* in South Africa was R19.50 with R2.39 VAT included. The price in other countries was R17.11, excluding VAT.

The remaining headlines follow a uniform layout pattern. There is a headline with a photograph in the background, a blurb, and a teaser linked to a story.

What can be seen as the second and third sections take up most of the space on the page. The one on the right-hand side is titled “LOCAL IS LEKKER”. This is a combination of two official languages in the country, which are English and Afrikaans. The three word combination though belongs to a slang term, known as TsotsiTaal, which basically praises locally created production, content or entertainment. In the context of the headline, the latter is the case. Two images of local musicians, CassperNyovest and Andile, have been mixed. This indicated how two stories have been merged, due to their similarities. The blurb and teasers talk about how these musicians, who fill stadiums with their fans, are making history.

Alongside, on the third section, actress Sonia Mbele smiles radiantly. The title accompanying her image is “SHE’S BACK!” The blurb speaks about how she is heading for gold with a television role, while the teaser sparks the reader’s interest by saying that she “reunites with ‘hubby’ Ngamla”.

The remaining sections on the cover page are located at the bottom of the page. On the left there is a photograph of two women comforting each other. The headline, “RHODS PARK TRAGEDY”, seems to suggest this is true. The mini blurb and teaser provides further evidence by stating how the “Victim’s sister speaks out” about how her brother was badly beaten. This human impact story brings a balance between the entertainment stories and the news pieces located above.

A family portrait headlined “IN THE GENES” makes up the last section on the cover page. It is located in the bottom right-hand section. It is a feature on an actor in his home with his “famous family”.

### **5.3.2. Article 1 from *Drum* 2015**

**Headline:** Ed’s Note

**Journalist:** ThandiGwebu

**Page:** 4

**Article summary:**

The editor's note, located in the opening pages of the magazine, sets the tone for the edition. Her note is filled with commentary on #FeesMustFall. This makes it a precursor for the Education Crisis: We unpack the #FeesMustFall campaign feature. Despite it being short, it contains sections with all the frames that are analysed in this section.

**Primary frame:** Human impact

How do you manage to immediately tug at the heart strings of your readers? You open your piece with a quotation from an individual who ranks amongst one of the most celebrated human beings in the world: Nelson Mandela. The *Drum* editor opens her note with a quote that Madiba delivered at the Education Africa Awards in 1997. It was one of the most riveting speeches as the President of South Africa. He said, "Our own reconstruction and development effort, the renaissance of the entire continent and our successful interaction in the global village, depend largely on the progress we make in educating our populations".

Gwebu's choice of an international icon and the above quote is ingenious given the ongoing debate on her views. They bear a similar view to the disgruntlement felt by the students. This view, unlike many which surfaced around the time, portrays a compassionate image for the students.

Within the quote Madiba makes use of "our" and "we", referring to Africans as a whole. This brings a sense of ubuntu to the education dilemma. Despite the view that this is an issue divorced from the development debate, it remains at the centre of the socio-political problems faced by South Africa as a whole.

The above-mentioned sentiment, which bears a human impact frame, is extended in Gwebu's closing paragraph. "Indeed, until the Government understands that education in South Africa is in serious crisis, and urgent measures must be put in place to fix the mess, there's no victory to celebrate." This also qualifies as a conflict frame because of the winners and losers aspect it bears and brings forth. It is classified here as human

impact because various different frames interlink and are connected within her selection of a quote. They will be discussed below each frame which they represent the most. In this instance, this represents a collective wave of emotion shared by some members of the South African community when it comes to democracy.

**Secondary frame: Economic**

Secondary to the need to reach out to people's hearts, Gwebu's editorial note presents a concern over profit and loss. She questions how it came to be that, 17 years after Nelson Mandela made the speech on education, "our country has made little effort in terms of investing in education and educating the South African population".

Despite not mentioning exact numbers, the editor emphasises the financial element, which was and continues to be at the centre of the #FeesMustFall struggle. She interprets the actions of students as coming from a group which considered how "education was so important to them that they were willing to set their studies aside to secure a zero increase in fees". This led to the ultimate historical moment when the President agreed that fees would not be increased in 2016.

**Secondary frame: Attribution of responsibility**

Who was responsible for #FeesMustFall? Gwebu argues that the South African government was. Her attribution of this responsibility rests on the fact that she says "little effort" which was made "in terms of investing in education". She adds that the education crisis is not only in higher education, but also in basic education. Further, Gwebu argues that this "is happening in a country where the quality of school education is just not good enough".

She backs up her argument by making what seems to be an informed statement that "learners at Government schools can't compete with other students globally because their education is inferior. In most township schools, there are more than 50 children in a class, and primary school learners are battling to master numeracy and literacy skills.

It is even worse when we consider that until last year, the pass mark for non-compulsory subjects in high school was 30% and 40% for compulsory subjects.”

The last feature of the attribution of responsibility frame in this editorial note is also directed towards the government. “Our government is still not prioritising things such as the delivery of books to rural schools, building classrooms and allocating resources to drive science, technology and mathematics in our schools.” This strengthens the argument that students in higher institutions of learning battle with a crisis that goes beyond their financial and academic struggles. #FeesMustFall is just the tip of the iceberg.

**Secondary frame: Conflict**

In essence, Gwebu argued that the solution to the conflict churned up by the #FeesMustFall protests would not end “until government offers free, quality education to every South African”. Despite the announcement made for a zero percent fee increment for 2016, Gwebu opined that “we can’t claim any kind of victory from last week’s protests”.

**Secondary frame: Moral values**

Where are the morals and values in all of this? Gwebu calls out the ANC government, and she frames the manner in which education is not a priority as immoral. This, given the fact that the “Freedom Charter – which our leaders always cite when it suits them and forget about it when it has to be implemented”, implies double standards. The fact that ANC leaders “quote it when they’re trying to coerce South Africans to vote for them” rose as one of the popular narratives at the time of the student protests.

**5.3.3. Article 2 from *Drum* 2015**

**Headline on contents page:** Fee war at universities

**Headline on actual page:** Fighting for an education

**Journalists:** KaizerNgwenya and NomzamoNgcobo

**Article summary**

This is the first news article in the feature on #FeesMustFall in the *Drum* issue of 2015. It appears in the early pages of the magazine under the *Drum* News section. It is a hard news piece which provides background on the protests, investigates the causes of the uprisings, and features vox pops with students.

**Primary frame: Conflict**

The leading frame in this story indicates a conflict frame. Not only does it contain words, which insinuates news media's game interpretation of the political world as an ongoing series of contrasts, but it also depicts conflict between the students and the government.

The reader is introduced to the conflict frame in the headlines. Firstly, on the content page, "Fee war" gives the impression of the nature of the environment in which this story takes place. On the page that the story is published, the first word in the headline, "Fighting for an education" is the second example of the conflict frame. Not only do the journalists alert their readers of the, conflict but they also provide them with a reason for the conflict.

The third piece of evidence of the conflict frame can be seen as a build-up from this argument. It provides context on why the conflict took place. In addition, the journalists explained how the conflict was foreseen by a research paper released in 2003. "This could lead to renewed mass protests, because students were dissatisfied with the limited role they played in addressing the problems affecting them."

Despite only occurring three times, these are key locations in the news article, which are vital in the reader's interpretation of the nature of the story. They also form a foundation for the secondary frame, the human impact frame, which adds the emotional angle to the conflict frame.

### **Secondary frame: Human Impact**

The main photograph utilised in this article shows masses of students at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. In the caption box, located at the top left-hand corner of the page, they are described as “Angry university students” who are in the capital city “to get President Jacob Zuma to hear their pleas regarding the fees hike in 2016”. The caption frames them as an angry group who are seeking to have their petitions heard. Despite the photograph, which captures a few faces without much facial expressions on them, a profile of the students is packed with emotional insights.

More evidence of this frame is found in the second and third paragraphs of the story. These descriptions assist the reader in constructing an opinion of the students. They are a group which “still struggle with the burden of exorbitant university fees”. Their anger, as suggested in the caption, does not seem like something which happened overnight or when the fees hike was proposed. The journalists build up this argument by stating that the protests occurred when “emotions finally reached boiling point”. As stated previously in the introduction of this section, many of the frames interlink, and there are many dual frames. With that being said, what are the factors contributing to this boiling point? The answer could lie in the words of a placard held by a student outside Parliament: “Our parents were SOLD dreams in 1994...”. This is similar to and different to, in the same breath, the 1976 *Drum* when the parents acknowledged that it was also their fault, while here it is the children who blame their parents for believing the dreams that were sold to them in 1994 by the current government. Thus, the anger of the youth outside Parliament was also directed towards the government. This aspect will be discussed in more depth in the comparison section of this chapter.

The above conjures up various emotions, which add to the “anger” frame. The students felt betrayal, frustration and deception. All these emotions were not only central to, but were also catalysts for the protest action with spread across the country. Who led this deception? This will be further explored in the attribution of responsibility frame.

One of the captions used in this article also carries a human impact frame. It describes students taking to the streets “to voice their frustrations over their financial and emotional difficulties”. The use of the words frames the manner in which the reader perceives the images. In one of the images, the students appear to be ducking and they look as if they are about to defend themselves. Secondly, one can hardly see the emotions on their faces. So, the words “frustrations” and “emotional difficulties” added to the caption provides that context.

**Secondary frame:** Economic

Preoccupation with profit and loss lies at the core of the #FeesMustFall protest action. In this article, the journalists include the economic frame in the “unpacking”.

Firstly, they describe tuition fees as “exorbitant”. In so doing, they provide background to the eruption of the protests. After the national shutdown, the protests were successful in President Jacob Zuma prevent his government’s proposal “of a 6% fee increase”. He “announced a freeze on hike” for the following year. This implied that the government had to “find R2.6 billion” to fund the shortfall created by the fees freeze.

Additional evidence for the economic frame in this story lies in the report compiled by Mlungisi Gabriel Cele and Charlton Koen. It warned that “African students faced debt and other issues such as financial and academic exclusions”.

To provide balance to this news article, the views of various individuals are included. A view that expresses financial loss belongs to the General Secretary of Equal Education, Tshepo Motsepe. He questions “why the Government is investing so much money in the nuclear deal with Russia rather than education”. He also acknowledges that free education will not be easy to attain. Furthermore, Motsepe advises that “the first step is that the State must remodel the financial aid scheme to reward students who complete their studies in the prescribed time, by converting their loans into full bursaries”.

**Secondary frame:** Attribution of responsibility

Who is to blame for #FeesMustFall? This article provides evidence that attributes responsibility to the government.

An individual who was at the centre of the #FeesMustFall debate is the man who was the Minister of Higher Education at the time, Blade Nzimande. In the article the journalists provide reasons on how he ended up being at the receiving end of the blame stick. Nzimande had to “explain why” he had been “sitting on a report from 2012 which sets out a realistic plan to introduce free university education for the poor”. In addition to this, the caption next to his photograph states that he “came under fire for his handling of and response to the tense situation”.

Cele and Koen, researchers from the University of the Western Cape, raised a “red flag” as “far back as 2003” which warned that “African students faced debt”. In a paper titled *Students Politics in South Africa* the researchers stated that “if the problems were not solved, in both the short- and long-term, this could lead to renewed mass protests”. The article points out that “despite the warning” by the researchers, “the Government failed to act”. Thus, the article attributes responsibility for the student protests to the government and its inability to react timeously to this warning.

According to a political sociologist from the University of Cape Town, Dr Ruth Chaturvedi, the government of South Africa “has completely lost touch with reality and the country”. Furthermore, she adds that “they’ve not been listening to these issues, especially those around tuition fees that are not new”. In addition to attributing the responsibility of the protests to the government, Chaturvedi adds another element to her discussion. She argues that these issues “were raised in the first decade of democracy, and then again in 2003 in historically black universities.” What was different and unique in 2015, one may wonder. Chaturvedi continues that “now they are again being raised, but this time in historically white universities”. This could insinuate that the government not only turned a blind eye for a long time, but that it is also selective in its response.

**Secondary frame:** Moral values

Despite being less prominent than the other frames, the moral values frame is also significant in this article. Breaking promises is regarded as a dishonest act in society. The moral standards of an individual or organisation which performs this act are often questioned. In extreme cases, their reputation is tainted.

The first lines of this article place the government in that position. “The Government made a promise it could not keep: it stated that once apartheid ended, no student would be denied access to education”. Two decades after democracy and this promise had not been fulfilled. This places the moral values of the government under a microscope.

Mpolase not only argues that the focus of these protests is on “social expectations”, but that they are directed at a “government that cannot deliver” on them either. Dr Chaturvedi, who is mentioned in the discussion on the previous frame, also brings up the moral values frame when she argues that the “fee issue is part of a bigger problem: equality”. In addition, she warns the government “not to continue to ignore the issues”.

#### **5.3.4. Article 3 from *Drum* 2015**

**Headline on contents page:** #FeesMustFall: student stories

**Headline on actual page:** ‘I’ve had to cancel meals...’

**Journalist:** GabisileNgcobo

**Page:** 8 – 9

#### **Article summary**

This is the last article in the feature on #FeesMustFall in the 2015 *Drum* issue. Given the title of the section, it is the last item to be “unpacked”.

The article tells the personal stories of two students, AmogelangManganyi and Tshupo Freddy Masike. Their personal stories are central to what has been argued was the cause of the student protests: a lack of financial resources.

As stated in the introduction of this chapter, the frames within these articles interlink. The headline subliminally gives an indication that the story will delve into the socio-political conditions that students face.

**Primary frame:** Human impact

The headline on the contents page entices readers to expect a deeper and personalised understanding of the students' "stories". The headline of the actual story, which quotes a student sharing a testimony of hardship, strengthens the human impact frame. "I've had to cancel meals..." as the headline immediately frames the story as one which will give the protests a human face; thus, a story with emotional impact.

This sentiment is carried forward in the sub-headline. It talks to how the campaign has "highlighted the plight of poor students who can't afford their tuition fees". As stated in the previous article, the reporting in this feature section on the protests goes against the narrative that students who participate are hooligans who do not want an education. Instead, it sets the tone that it is to tell readers exactly who the students are who are protesting.

"We spoke to some of them" is the last section of the sub-headline. Given the fact that GabisileNgcobo is the sole writer of the article, this implies that "we" refers to *Drum* itself. This sticks to the main theme of the entire section on #FeesMustFall. It could also possibly refer to how the *Drum* journalists are reporting on the campaign as a community. This aspect also falls under the human impact frame.

Despite the economic frame being the most predominant frame in this article, it is not the primary one. What makes the human impact frame dominant is the fact that it acts as a golden thread for the reader. It breaks down the financial hardship experienced by students and it makes the readers see the student as human beings, and not as mere statistics. This feeds into the journalistic mantra that people care about people, people do not care about statistics.

Evidence for the above-mentioned argument is seen in the title of the first student's story, "Not enough money". Further down in this section, the journalist also provides personal background information on Amogelang Manganyi to enable the reader to connect with him. Manganyi "decided to become a doctor in high school when he lost his grandmother to cancer". This human impact frame enables the reader to see the root of his ambition and empathise with his loss.

The economic gravity of #FeesMustFall highlighted the unfortunate circumstances of most students. On page 9, the reader becomes aware that it is Manganyi who has "had to cancel meals for the past two years" in order for him to be able to pay for his registration fees. Direct quotes from Manganyi strengthen the human impact frame. In his final comment he says, "We fall in the gap where your parents on paper are above the poverty line but below the line where they can afford your fees. You're always the last to be considered for scholarships but you're the first to be tied down by debt". This adds value to the entire story because the missing middle narrative he shares is one which resonated with many other students who protested.

The second student profiled is Tshepo Freddy Masike. The journalist also uses the human impact frame in order to share his story. Masike shares how "every day was a struggle", how "the library became his home", and how he "spent hours with the textbooks he couldn't afford to buy". This resulted in him having to go back to Mahikeng with his "broken dreams".

One of the captions on page 9 reads as follows: "Two students' emotional placard". Describing their message as "emotional" also strengthens the human impact frame.

### **Secondary frame: Economic**

While effectively using the human impact frame to add faces to the statistics, the financial statistics are highlighted simultaneously using the economic frame. Through this frame, the journalist emphasises the losses and finances, especially for the students.

Money was central to the #FeesMustFall protests. The lack of it, moreover, strongly fuelled the protests in reaction to the fee increases proposed for 2016. The protest by students “successfully derailed proposed university fee increases – some as high as 12.5 %”. This sentence by the journalist brings this reality into her reporting.

Opposing the increment was, however, not the only demand the students had. Ngcobo writes how students are “insisting that education should be free especially for the country’s poorest students”.

The rest of her article, using both the economic and human impact frame, answers why. This section will expand mainly on the economic frame.

Students were “crippled by loans and the available pool of funds” and the availability of funds was “getting smaller”. Due to this, as seen in the case of Amogelang Manganyi, despite having two scholarships he still “had to take out bank loans to cover his tuition costs”.

In addition, students faced the threat of dropping out with “massive debts to repay and no degrees to show” for it. Manganyi’s parents, for instance, “had to get a loan for [his] upfront fees”.

The sub-heading of Tshepo Freddy Masike’s story is, “No pay, no degree”. This is a play on words which reminds one of the famous saying: No work, no pay. Indeed, the financial system at institutions of higher education work like that. Masike is one of many students “who dropped out of university because of lack of fees”. This also meant that he was “barred from obtaining his results”.

**Secondary frame:** Conflict

Despite not displaying a prominent conflict frame in the text of this story, the images tell a thousand more stories. The caption, which is located on top of page 8, offers insight

on this. “LEFT: Police used tear gas and stun grenades to disperse protesting University of Cape Town students”. This is the main image in the story. In it we see students, who are predominately white, facing the police.

When #FeesMustFall erupted, student activists on campuses (such as UCT) were quick to criticise the manner in which the South African Police Services was racially selective in terms of reacting to students. Despite being aggressive towards all students, numerous cases were pointed out when they acted more harshly towards students of colour. They would be more lenient towards white students. This was a common narrative every time white privilege came up. To combat this, white student activists, who were conscious of their racial privilege, used their bodies to stand on the frontlines. And indeed, despite tear gas and stun grenades aimed at the collective, there would not be any firing of rubber bullets. However, this was not the case across the country and it could also be attributed to different dynamics unique to each institution of higher learning.

The usage of tear gas and stun grenades is visible in this image. Not only is the background red, from what seems like smoke, none of the students have their eyes wide open. In an article investigating what exactly tear gas is, Gander and Dearden (2014) describe it as 2- chlorobenzaldenemalononitrile (CS). According to them, despite the popular name, tear gas is not a gas. It is an aerosol that is solid at room temperature. It gets mixed with liquid or gas dispersal agents when used as a weapon designed to activate pain-sensing nerves. This can be observed in the image as most of the students seem to be having difficulty in opening their eyes.

“RIGHT: Students marched to Parliament and forced their way through the gates.” This image runs over into page 9. It also brings forth one of the truths of #FeesMustFall, which is police brutality versus student activism.

On page 8 one sees students, who are racially diverse, pushing through a gate. On page 9 one sees policemen, dressed in blue, pushing the gate to keep it closed. One of

them is holding a gun. On the far right, a white male is seen holding his cell phone capturing this power shuffle.

This photograph also contains features of the powerlessness frame. The police force, given the arguments above, is a dominant force over the students.

The above imagery, which also signifies them and us, is also seen in the top image which captures scenes from what transpired in Pretoria when “thousands of students gathered at the Union Buildings in Pretoria to call for a 0% fees increase and free education”. In this image, however, the police are in riot response gear, looking more militant, with a fence separating them from the students. By merely looking at these images the reader is given insight into the conflict between the students and the police.

#### **5.4. Comparison between two editions of *Drum***

The primary objective of this study is to compare and contrast *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto Uprisings to the 2015 #FeesMustFall protests. At first glance, looking at these two events seems like looking at apples and pears through the same lens. Comparing them, moreover, is almost an illogical task. A golden thread, however, weaves through both events with the two editions of *Drum* magazine as the cords that combine them. The fibre of this golden thread lies in the two historical media events and the nostalgia of the one awakened by the other.

When #FeesMustFall erupted in 2015 it was as if the country, and the world, experienced a sense of déjà vu relating to the 1976 Soweto Uprisings. Much evidence has been provided earlier on in this study on the importance of studying historical events and the nostalgia element brought about by #FeesMustFall. Revolutionary movements led by students are historically known to have brought about transitions and revolutions. In the South African context, #FeesMustFall is a result of a rise in social inequality and ongoing community protests. This was not seen as the country transitioned into democracy in the early 1990s (Bosch, 2016:73).

The song *Jikijela* by afro-pop musician Thandiswa Mazwai will be used to highlight the latter student protest in this chapter. The 2015 protests brought about a nostalgia of what Letta Mbulu sang of in a similar titled song, *Jikijela*, a few decades ago. This piece of art, reincarnated decades later, still brings up similar points of social activism, which are contrasted in apartheid and democratic South Africa. Although existing in different eras, the song evoked similar activism support for the protest movements during the different periods.

*Drum* magazine, like this song, transcended the boundaries of time that existed in two different eras in South Africa. Thus, this section aims to identify the similarities and differences in the coverage of the two issues of *Drum* in order to achieve one of the secondary objectives of this study.

This comparison section will begin by identifying the similarities between the two issues. These range from the private ownership of the magazine, its exposé identity, its target market, and the portrayal of political leaders. Then, it will contrast the two different issues of one of Africa's oldest magazines. Differences between the two issues range from layout, the environment in which the two operated, media freedom, and the identity of the magazines.

The internal and external similarities and differences between the two issues will be analysed. The coverage of the *Drum* journalists is internal, while the rest of the factors analysed are regarded as external.

#### **5.4.1. Similarities**

Despite almost four decades separating the two *Drum* issues, there are similarities between them. The following section explores the similar beats of the rhythms of the issues.

#### 5.4.1.1. Coverage

The Soweto Uprisings and #FeesMustFall were prominent news events. Both these issues of *Drum* were able to identify this. This is one of the many similarities between the two issues.

Both student protests featured on the covers of the magazines. The features were called “The Riots: why they happened” in 1976, and “Education Crisis: we unpack the #FeesMustFall campaign” in 2015.

Another similarity between the issues is the manner in which both of them attributed responsibility to the government. This is visible in Appendix 2.3, which is Article 2 from *Drum* in 2015. The opening line of the article says: “The Government made a promise it could not keep”. This attribution of responsibility was shared by the students who felt that their parents were “sold dreams in 1994”.

Similarly, in Appendix 1.2, which is Article 1 from the 1976 *Drum*, we see evidence of attribution of responsibility towards the government. The reporter listed all those who were responsible for the riots. At the top of the list of stakeholders to blame was “Pretoria”. The word Pretoria, which is one of the capital cities of South Africa, was slang referring to the governing state at the time. The headquarters of the National Party was based in Pretoria.

Both magazines also made room for photojournalism to explain the stories better. In the 1976 *Drum*, this is shown in Appendix 1.4, and in the 2015 *Drum*, this is visible in Appendix 2.4. The importance of images has always been evident in the storytelling in *Drum*.

Despite mentioning key political figures in both issues, neither one provides interviews with them. They only include quotes from what they had previously said or views on what would happen.

The following section will look into the external similarities between these two issues of *Drum*.

#### **5.4.1.2. Private ownership**

*Drum* magazine has never been state-owned. Founded in 1951 in Cape Town (Mapine, 2011:n.p.), it was initially known as The African Drum and was owned by journalist and broadcaster Robert Crisp. It was taken over by Jim Bailey who, with the assistance of a team of writers and photographers, redesigned and rebranded the magazine. It became one of the most prominent anti-apartheid publications in South African media history (SAHO, 2015:n.p.).

In 1976 Bailey was still in charge of the magazine and basing all his editorial decisions on this private ownership. Eight years later, after 33 years at the helm, he sold his publishing rights to NasionalePers (Naspers). It is South Africa's largest media group, founded in 1915. Its history, however, is drenched in support of apartheid ideologies. Naspers supported the apartheid philosophy, its implementation, and benefited from its regulatory measures.

*Drum* has been part of Media24 since its Naspers days. It has survived the fate suffered by most publications which supported the liberation struggle. According to Kupe (2014), they were casualties of the post-apartheid media landscape in different ways. In 2015, the magazine was published under the Naspers conglomerate, Media24 (SAHO, 2015:n.p.).

#### **5.4.1.3. Investigative identity**

One of the most distinguishable features of *Drum* was its investigative, nail-biting journalism. Its first major investigative story, “Bethal Today”, appeared in the magazine in March 1952. It was an eight page investigative article which exposed gross abuse experienced by Bethal labourers. This piece was written by Mr Drum, Henry Nxumalo, himself. He had posed as a labourer on a farm in order to gain material for the piece. Here he was exposed to gross abuse by boss-boys with whips and miserable living conditions. His article resulted in a sell-out issue (SAHO, 2015:n.p.).

This investigative feature was an element which dominated in the early and formative years of the magazine. Recent years have seen the magazine focus on the commercial rather than the investigative. A section on page 6 of the 2015 edition, however, makes this argument non-conclusive. The blurb of the first story reads as follows: “Countrywide, students have been protesting against an increase in university fees, forcing Government to back down. Will South Africa ever have free education? *Drum* investigates”. This entices the reader to expect a balanced and in-depth piece.

A distinguishable investigative commonality between both issues was evident in how they exposed police brutality during the protests. In the 1976 *Drum*, the police violence was displayed on page 28 and page 29. The captions, utilising the conflict frame (as discussed above), explain the life-threatening situations the unarmed school children faced. Most of the images were captured after the clashes. Other investigative elements can be identified in the manner in which the protest was covered. More analysis was provided earlier on in this chapter.

In the 2015 *Drum*, this investigative element is presented in the form of photographs. On page 8, there are two images which depict students in conflict with other students. The caption, “Police use tear gas and stun grenades to disperse protesting University of Cape Town students”, is located at the top of the page. It tells the story of 1000 words echoed across the country on police brutality.

#### **5.4.1.4. Portrayal of political leaders**

The political narratives of a country are always at the heart of the media discourse. One could even go further and make the argument that news and media reports revolve around what happens in the world of politics. Both issues of *Drum*, which form part of the scope of this study, share this trait.

At the peak of apartheid, during the uprisings, active political leaders were divided between those for and those opposing apartheid. The 1976 July issue of *Drum* contained the names of activists, such as Desmond Tutu, and politicians, such as John Vorster and Pik Botha. None of the student activists were mentioned. This could have been a result of the sensitive political environment at the time.

A few decades into democracy, as the fatigue of the Rainbow Nation set in, the political narrative was bogged down by a deep questioning of promises made before liberation in 1994. In the 2015 November issue of *Drum*, political leaders mentioned are Nelson Mandela, President Jacob Zuma and Minister Blade Nzimande, to mention but a few. This issue makes no mention of leading student activists, despite the Constitution protecting the various political views of citizens. This is another underlying similarity between these issues.

#### **5.4.1.5. Target audience**

*Drum* has always focused on black readers as their target market. Wood (2005) dubbed it the first black lifestyle magazine in Africa. These black readers, however, were not inclusive of the entire black population. *Drum* readers fell into the literate section of the black population. The majority of the black population were unable to read or write, due to their political and economic status.

The writers and journalists themselves were considered amongst the black elite at the time. Choonoo (1997) writes how many Sophiatown writers were intent on breaking

away from their past and creating a new voice for themselves, so as to appear as the “new Africans”. *Drum* writers in the 1970s were mentored by their predecessors, who had established and cultivated a large black readership, and they continued with this culture.

White liberals also formed part of the audience which enjoyed the content of *Drum* (Choonoo, 1997:254). An example of this is Nicol, who states how the magazine became an obsession – not only for him – but for many others (1995:x). The *Drum* writers were, “highly literate, sophisticated men with a love and understanding of the love of English language”.

Back in 1976, 20c bought you a copy of *Drum*. At the time, reading was considered prestigious and 20c was quite a lot to pay.

In democratic South Africa, the target market and readership of the magazine has not changed. *Drum* contains market news, entertainment, and feature articles for a black readership. Despite a completely different political climate, target audience classification remains at Media24. While *Drum* is aimed at black readers, it has two sister publications – *Huisgenoot* and *YOU* – which are aimed at white Afrikaners and Coloured Afrikaans-speaking readers (the former) and demographically diverse English-speaking South Africans of different ethnicities (the latter).

in 2015, the retail price for the magazine was R19.50 including VAT. This made it one of the more expensive magazines in the country. Other magazines, such as *MOVE*, for example, cost almost half the price (R10.50 including VAT).

#### **5.4.2. Differences**

Despite the similarities mentioned above, another beat of the *Drum* goes on – this one making a different sound across Africa. The following section explores the differences in the beat of the rhythm of *Drum*.

#### 5.4.2.1. Coverage

Despite their shared ability to spot the student protests as major news events, the manner in which the two *Drum* issues covered the protests had several differences.

The headline on the cover of *Drum* in 1976 reads: “The Riots: Why they happened”. This combination of words prepares the reader to expect contextual and analysis filled stories. The 1976 issue stuck to answering the *Why* question in the 5 Ws and H of journalism. The content, as seen previously, is packed with emotive analysis and attribution of responsibility from the writers/journalists. The feature forms part of a series of two. Another issue was published in August 1976. This follow-up will be discussed later on in this section.

In contrast to this, *Drum* in 2015 opted to “Unpack the #FeesMustFall campaign.” This switched to a focus on the *What* question in the 5 Ws and H of journalism. This was an indication that the issue had no intention to delve deep into the context or provide any analysis.

Secondly, it suggested to the reader that they could just expect the facts to be “unpacked”. As seen in the analysis, in section 5.3, the only emotive piece from the *Drum* team is in Appendix 2.4, which is the note of the editor, ThandiGweba. This particular approach to the magazine’s writing could be attributed to its identity shift. The magazine’s identity will be discussed later in this section.

In the 2015 *Drum*, there are numerous student voices. Appendix 2.3 includes a student vox pop on how they view the situation and their experiences. It is titled “Students Speak Out”. Appendix 2.4 contains a feature article on how student struggled to pay fees. Both these articles bear the real names of the students. This is not the case in the *Drum* of 1976. No student is interviewed, nor are their real names mentioned by the journalists. Even the follow-up edition mentions student who did not participate in the

riots. This speaks to the political landscape of the two different eras. This undeniable difference will be discussed later in this section. Thus, the youth of 2015 is perceived as being more vocal because of the platform they had to express their views.

While both *Drum* issues made room for photojournalism, their portrayal of the students in terms of the focus differed. The researcher noticed this contrast in two particular photographs from both issues. Both these photographs were the first photographs used in both features. The first photograph appeared in Appendix 1.2 and the other in Appendix 2.3. In Appendix 1.2, the photographer captured a group of learners. As previously stated, some of the learners in this image are carrying long sticks. Despite this and the “militancy” of their raised fists all of them are dressed in their school uniforms with smiles on their innocent faces; in complete contrast to the conflict surrounding them. Their facial expressions do not depict them as potentially violent or militant.

In Appendix 2.3, the photographer took a photograph of a group of students outside the Union Buildings. A few faces are visible, while the rest seem like a pool of bodies. Unlike the 1976 photo, almost none of them stare back at the lens. The expressions on their faces are almost lifeless and in despair. It is as if they are in looking into space. The few visible faces have faces that are masked by shades and caps, and they generally look militant. These images could also be easily confused with a photograph of thieves or a group of people lined up before taking a mug shot. This contrast in portrayal is ironic.

Another noticeable difference is the manner in which the youth of 2015 were expressive on their placards, when compared to the youth of 1976 - especially when it came to the attribution of responsibility and where their anger was directed. In 1976, none of the placards spoke to the parents or their lack of support. In 2015, the youths showed solidarity with their parents against the government by stating that their parents “were sold dreams in 1994”.

The above-mentioned photograph in *Drum* in 1976 also captured a placard with the words “To hell with Afrikaans” written on it. This text is filled with religious, especially Christian, connotations. This, together with the entire concluding article of July 1976, Appendix 1.4, which is titled “The writing on the wall” are examples of where religion was used to express frustration and discontent with the system of Afrikaans as a medium of education. The 2015 edition of *Drum* bore no traces of analysis, let alone one associated with religion - not from the journalists and also not from the placards, which were included in this issue. They were mostly filled with political texts, for example, “Ivory tower takes on the streets”, which is part of Appendix 2.3. Here political discourse was used to express the anger and frustration of the students regarding fees.

The following section will look at the physical differences between these two issues.

#### **5.4.2.2. Magazine layout and identity**

As stated in the introduction of this section, the two *Drum* issues did not only belong to two different eras in the Information Revolution, they also echoed a different sound. The magazine layout and identity were amongst the differences which were highly influenced by time and, to a greater extent, the political landscape in South Africa.

In 1976, print media was amongst the leading forms of media in the Information Revolution. Magazines were the envy of newspapers. Not only were they more sophisticated, they also provided businesses with better layout platforms to place their advertisements.

*Drum* was at the heart of this. It was a picture magazine modelled on the British magazine *Picture Post* and the American magazine, *Life* (Newbury, 2007:584). At face value, the magazine was a magazine like any other. It had models on the cover, competitions from time to time, and headlines promising juicy gossip on celebrities. The July 1976 issue promised content on local and international celebrities with headlines such as “Muhammad Ali and all his girls” and “The three wives of Russel Kuluse”.

Smith (2000) writes that the magazine also was the voice of black unrest, segregated misery, and political aspiration. This speaks to the identity of the magazine.

When the 1976 Soweto Uprisings occurred, during the peak of apartheid, *Drum* was holding onto this identity while at the same time keeping up the façade of being an ordinary magazine. Because news and information did not spread fast during the time, the story was still hot and topical when the magazine came out in July 1976. People were still intrigued with what had happened in Soweto.

Treading hot water, the editorial team placed the feature of the Uprisings in the top right-hand corner of the cover page. The heading, *The Riots: Why they happened*, was almost unnoticeable. As the headline suggested, the content of the featured stories would be filled with contextual content regarding the Uprisings. This was a bold move, given the political landscape. The content lived up to its promising headline and gave the reader answers as to why the events of 16 June 1976 took place.

In 2015, media developments were much more advanced than they were almost 40 years before. Newsrooms had adjusted their set up in such a manner than they moved with the current times.

When the #FeesMustFall story broke, it was big on social media, and Twitter to be exact. Bosch (2016) states that the social media platform was used as a space for national debate at the peak of the protests.

Journalists working for *Drum* did not have the advantage of being the first to break the story. They were in competition with not only rival publications, but also the many students who practiced civil journalism.

The actual issue came out almost two weeks after the national shutdown. It did not seek to inform its readers about what had happened. Instead, the editorial team opted to “unpack” the issues behind the protests.

The headline of the feature, *Education Crisis: We unpack the #FeesMustFall campaign*, was located across the top of the cover page. This location speaks to the political landscape of the time. Constitutional laws in democratic South Africa grant this kind of media freedom. This was not the case during apartheid South Africa. The element of offering contextual analysis on an event that what was named Newsmaker of the Year was, however, missing in this 2015 issue of the magazine. Traces of it, as little as they are, could be found in the editor’s letter.

This could be attributed to the commercial identity which the magazine had adopted after being bought by Media24. The identity of the magazine had become much busier and flashier. Take the cover, for instance. There are numerous headlines, each with images to attract the reader and make him or her purchase it.

The last observable difference to be explored in this study is the tagline of the magazine. In the 1970s, the tagline was: “*Africa’s leading magazine*”. In 2015, the tagline was: “*The beat goes on*”. The name may be the same, but the identity of the magazine has changed.

When *Drum* celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, Memela (2013) touched on this change of identity. He described the buyers as “Afrikaner Broederbond” members who wanted to get into the African market and mind. According to Memela (2013), the work of the magazine was no longer politically conscious and it mostly covered “celebrity parties” and “petty scandals”.

Moreover, Memela (2013) stated that the strategic objective of the magazine had changed from what Jim Bailey had intended for it. This was for it to become a gadfly in the face of evil power. Memela’s critique of the current *Drum* is that it only wants to

please shareholders and gain profit. He further states that *Drum's* agenda is to entertain people by giving them what they want and that it is to “sell what will give people delusions and dreams”.

In recent years, *Drum's* identity had been publicly criticised because of it being part of Media24. Tshabalala (2015) slammed the conglomerate and questioned the sincerity of its apology for the role it played during apartheid. According to Media Monitoring Africa, the many Naspers-owned publications were used as propaganda tools to cover up human rights violations by the state during apartheid. The news reports from these publications were filled with racial prejudice and black South Africans were portrayed as inferior and violent (Tshabalala, 2015:n.p.). Thus, another stark difference between the two *Drum* issues is how the older version was part of the resistance press, while the new version is seen as a vehicle of those who were the oppressors of yesterday.

#### **5.4.2.3. Political landscape**

The most observable difference between the two *Drum* issues is the eras during which they appeared. This difference also speaks to the environment of the political landscape in which they both operated. This study argues that the two landscapes, which are almost like paradoxes, influenced the editorial decisions taken in the issues.

The year 1976 was during the peak of apartheid South Africa. The name *apartheid*, an Afrikaans word, means ‘apartness’. It refers to an era which began in 1948 and was started and led by the National Party government. Apartheid was an ideology which called for the separate development of different racial groups in South Africa. Laws made during this time forced the different racial groups to live separately and develop separately. These laws were grossly unequal and were a violation of human rights.

During apartheid, the information system of South Africa operated under censorship. This system crippled the media at the time. But, the tradition of defiance and the rise of a civil rights movement challenged this censorship. It established a wide-ranging

documentary record of the state of apartheid conditions (Merret, 2001:n.p.). However, this environment was life-threatening for journalists. They were captured and detained, and some of them lost their lives after writing or photographing material which was considered unlawful propaganda.

Apartheid laws were met with resistance by citizens who were activists across all fields. In the field of magazine journalism, *Drum* was at the forefront. The magazine opposed racism and apartheid. SAHO (2016) described the magazine as an important vehicle which voiced resistance for decades. Furthermore, it also served as a means to unite and mobilise for the resistance. This included the Defiance Campaign in the 1950s and the Sharpeville Massacre in the 1960s.

Then the Soweto Uprisings erupted in June 1976, *Drum* had not lost its identity. It reported on the Uprisings fearlessly when it came to the attribution of responsibility. But, it did tread carefully when it came to details, such as specific names.

Firstly, the headline on the cover page was not obvious. The placement of the articles inside the magazine fitted in with this. The stories were located in the middle of the magazine, with advertisements before and after them. A possible reason for this was to hide in plain sight the articles from the authorities who were monitoring content classified as anti-state propaganda.

What also stands out in the July 1976 edition of *Drum* is the absence of interviews conducted with any learners involved in the protests. *The Riots* feature made no mention of names, even aliases, of the school children involved in the protests.

In a world of limited media freedom and victimisation, this could have been a conscious step by the magazine to protect the learners from punishment, victimisation, and arrest by the apartheid government. The photojournalist, Sam Nzima, who took the iconic photograph of Hector Pietersen went into hiding after the Uprisings. Nzima had to do

this because he was being harassed by the security police. Many activists also went through this. The media at the time did not want to aid the state in oppressing others.

Students were only named and interviewed in the articles in the August issue. One of them, Hector Pietersen, had already died. His sister made no incriminating statements towards the state during her interview. The other two learners were in no way implicated in the riots as they were nowhere near the protests. They also had tight alibis. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Apartheid officially ended in 1994 when South Africa became a democratic country. This political shift brought about a shift in the media landscape. Merret (2001) described this time as an era which foreshadowed constitutional rights and liberal legislation.

FeesMustFall broke out two decades into South Africa's new democracy. Operating in an environment of media freedom, the 2015 issue of *Drum* would have been a dream come true for the contributors who were part of the magazine in its earliest years. There is no evidence of victimisation of the photographers or the journalist who worked on this particular issue of the magazine.

It featured multiple interviews with students who were active in and affected by the protests. Their real names are used and their photographs published. *Drum* even went as far as providing background information on some of the students. The effects of the political landscape on reporting and the media are visible. Victimisation, as a result of political difference, is illegal and freedom of expression is a valued feature in democratic South Africa.

Below are some of the views shared by students interviewed by *Drum*:

- “They are depriving us of an education, which is our right and not just a privilege. Everyone must get the education that they deserve.” – Vania Dlamini

- “If our Government raises the fees, where does that leave us as the leaders of the future? It’s about time the Government listened to what we are saying.” – KensaniMbalati
- “Government should play its role. Why doesn’t it subsidise universities so that they will always be free? Protesting is a good idea, but the timing is not good because we are writing exams soon.” – AndileNxumalo

The views shared above would not have been heard in 1976. They would not have been uttered in public by the students, and not published by *Drum*.

Not only was the political landscape different at the time of the two issues, there is media freedom in a democratic South Africa that allows such content to be published. Speaking out against the government was considered illegal during apartheid. Even though the youth of 1976 could have echoed similar views during their meetings and rallies, they would not have dared to in public. It is a freedom which they could only have dreamt of.

#### **5.4.2.4. Follow-up issue**

“*The Riots: Why they happened*” did not only appear in the July 1976 issue of *Drum* magazine. There was a follow-up feature section in the August issue. It contained more insightful stories on the Uprisings. It stuck to the “why” promise of the feature.

Located in the middle of the magazine, it took up three and a half pages. This was the same location as in the July issue. The stories were not very visible for a reader.

The following stories made up the second issue of *The Riots* feature:

- **Aftermath of the riots**

This was a piece dedicated to one of the learners who died on 16 June 1976, Hector Pietersen. In this article, *Drum* spoke to his sister, mother, and grandmother. A

photograph of his mother, eyes filled with grief and staring into space, spreads across most of the page.

The magazine also provided information on how Pietersen, who would have turned 13 in August that year, was “shot down by a handful of black cops who saw him and a number of friends marching to join others”. The Uprising was dubbed “war of the young” by *Drum*.

This piece undoubtedly contains characteristics of the human impact frame.

- **Stan Motjuwadi writes**

In this piece, Motjuwadi provided commentary on what transpired the month before. He made it clear who was responsible: “Every adult South African, black and white should bow their heads in shame”. Motjuwadi also shunned the adults who stood on the sidelines and watched as the children were killed: “Truth is we are a bunch of bastards”.

This opinion piece also contained the economic frame. It described how the continent of Africa has a healthy defence budget: “All of R1 350 million a year”.

As the editor of *Drum*, Motjuwadi adopted a stance on behalf of the magazine and condemned all those who exploited the situation: “Drum holds no brief for looters, killers and vultures who exploit tragedy”.

- **Father Marino’s second escape**

This was a full-page feature on a Catholic priest, Father Marino. It documented his experiences during the riots from the St Michael’s Catholic Church in Zone 2, Meadowlands.

Marino got caught in Soweto for three days during the riots with two boys he had adopted, Sylvester Matonosana and Solomon Kganyago. Kganyago was the third minor to be mentioned by name and the first to be given a voice in the feature on the riots.

This could be because his interview placed him in no danger as he had a strong alibi and he was in no way implicated in the riots.

- **An early warning**

Page 27 contained the most photographs in the feature; five to be exact. These photographs reflected stories gathered from around the country to document the effects of the Uprisings - in some instances, even before the shots were fired in Soweto.

Four of the five photographs were from the University of Zululand. The caption under the main photo read as follows: "Professor John Mare, Rector of the University of Zululand, gazes at the damage done to his university during the riots. The students were ordered off the campus by the police after their demonstrations". The top right image showed other damage done at the institution. The caption read, "Fires have stopped burning". The middle and bottom right photographs showed students carrying their luggage as they left the campus. The caption under the last photograph states, "The damage had been caused in expression of sympathy with Soweto rioters".

A photograph of Chief Justice F.L.H. Rumpff is the last image used on this page. Alongside the photo was a quote from a speech he made at a University of South Africa graduation ceremony in front of white students. "The result will be on certain levels, social equality and mechanisms for self-expression will have to be created. If there are whites who do not like this, they had better go and find what they want elsewhere. In the long run they will not find peace. South Africa has a great future for all of us provided whites are willing to educate, qualify and recognise non-Whites...". This speech was made 56 days before the first shot was fired in the Soweto Uprisings.

- **The final toll**

This was the shortest piece in the entire issue. It was also the last. It was accompanied by a graphic image of a body – a person who was "one of the victims of the riots". It also provided a range of statistics on the riots; from those dead and injured, to the number of buildings damaged.

The last paragraph can only be described as shocking: “Afrikaner millionaire tycoon Anton Rupert donated R20 000 through two white newspapers to assist ‘law-abiding’ people in Soweto who had suffered in the riots”. This is a brave exposure of information, to take on and expose a wealthy Afrikaner, given the political environment in which the riots took place.

The same cannot be said about the 2015 *Drum* edition. There was not a single follow-up story on #FeesMustFall in the issue that followed the one dealing with the student protests.

### **5.5. Summary**

This chapter contained the data and findings of this study. The Djembe drum symbolised the 1976 magazine, while the Ghomma drum symbolised the 2015 magazine. The sounds of these drums, referring to the contents of the articles, were analysed.

The previous pages provided an in-depth analysis of the articles written on the Soweto Uprisings in the July 1976 issue and #FeesMustFall in the November 2015 issue of *Drum*. The two issues are symbolised by two of the most popular drums on the African continent – a fitting comparison given the prominence of the magazine on the African media landscape.

The comparison of the two magazines was arranged chronologically as both appeared in history.

A common thread, or rhythm, came up during the analysis. This was the manner in which the various frames interlinked in the articles. The thread was visible in both editions of *Drum*. No single article had only one focus. There were primary and

secondary frames. The articles contained multiple frames that created the opportunity for the journalists to construct reality through their own interpretation of reality.

The next chapter will provide the reader with the researcher's final thoughts on this study.

## **Chapter 6: Final Beat**

*“The sound of the drum drives out thought; for that very reason it is the most military of instruments” – Joseph Joubert*

### **6.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher aims to provide a summary of the study. This summary touches briefly on what each chapter had to offer the reader and how it met the research objectives of this study. The second aim is to provide the scope for future research. Lastly, this chapter includes the concluding remarks. The concluding remarks contain the researcher’s reflection on the limitations of the study, general statements of observations, and final thoughts on the study.

### **6.2. Summary**

#### **6.2.1. Background**

When #FeesMustFall erupted in mid-October 2015, it sparked a feeling of *déjà vu* and many thought back to the 1976 Soweto Uprisings. This feeling was evoked across all socio-economic walks of life; especially within the media and journalism landscape. Despite the occurrence in two different eras and in different political contexts, there are undeniable similarities between these protests. The comparisons between the two protests were pointed out in several news articles (cf. eNCA, 2015; Evans, 2015; Subramany, 2015). These numerous comparisons inspired this study.

A golden thread that weaves through both timelines is a publication which covered both these historical events: *Drum* magazine. Thus, this magazine was selected for this study.

### 6.2.2. Findings

*Drum*, which was one of the forerunners of the anti-apartheid press back in 1976, was sold to Naspers in 1984. Naspers ultimately became what is now the Media24 media conglomerate. This study has argued in favour of those who maintain that while the magazine is still commercially popular, its identity is different from the one it had in the 1970s.

As mentioned at the beginning of this study, the primary research question was as follows: What can contemporary journalists learn from a comparison of *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests?

The main objective of this research was to compare *Drum* magazine's coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall student protests.

In order for the researcher to do this, secondary objectives had to be fulfilled first. The first was to explore the history of one of South Africa's oldest publications, *Drum*. The second research objective was to identify the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum's* coverage of the 1976 Soweto student uprisings. The third objective was to identify the primary and secondary frames used in *Drum's* coverage of the 2015 #FeesMustFall students protests.

Prior to identifying the frames, however, the researcher had to provide contextual information. This ranged from the theoretical foundations of the study to content on the South African media landscape. This was done by discussing the work of other scholars.

These objectives were finally met in the previous chapter titled The Djembe vs the Ghomma: comparing the sounds of two prominent African drums. The Djembe drum personifies the 1976 magazine, while the Ghomma drum personifies the 2015

magazine. The sounds of these drums, symbolising the content of the articles, were analysed.

These previous pages provided an in-depth analysis of the articles published in the July 1976 and November 2015 issues of the magazine. The two issues are symbolised by two of the most popular drums in Africa – a fitting comparison, given the prominence of the magazine in the media landscape of the African continent at large.

The comparison of the two issues was arranged chronologically, as both appeared in the past.

A common thread, or rhythm, came up during the analysis. This was the manner in which the various frames interlinked in the articles. The thread was visible in both issues of *Drum*. No single story had a single focus. There were primary and secondary frames. The stories contained various frames that created the opportunity for the journalists to construct reality through their interpretations of reality.

### **6.2.3. Limitations of study**

Like many studies before it, this study came with its own limitations. Wilson and MacLean (2011:194 in Marais, 2017) present the argument that the main criticism against qualitative research is also its greatest advantage; that is, the interpretive role played by the researcher. This catch-22 situation describes the tension between rigour and creativity.

The analysis is the product of the interpretation of the researcher who, in the case of this study, is a 26-year old Xhosa woman, with seven years of experience in journalism. The researcher was aware and understands that there are many possible interpretations which may come up when looking at the two periods of *Drum* magazine.

These limitations, however, also formed part of the beat, which resulted in the melody formed by the results. To supplement this, the researcher adhered to ethical considerations, such as research integrity and referencing the works of other scholars.

### **6.3. Suggestions for future research**

This study used qualitative frame analysis to investigate how *Drum* magazine framed the 1976 Soweto Uprisings and the 2015 #FeesMustFall protests. The deductive frames were provided in the previous chapter. There is the possibility of analysing and comparing the inductive frames, which appeared in the articles of both issues.

A similar study to this one, including in-depth interviews with the journalists who contributed to the *Drum* articles, could be done.

A much broader study could look at how news media, categorised as alternative press, are faring in a democratic South Africa.

### **6.4. Concluding remarks**

As Jaspers (1941) states in the introduction of this study: “Only through being conscious can the contents of the past, transmuted into possibilities, become the fully real contents of the present”. By comparing one publication’s coverage of two significant and similar events, the study provided contemporary journalists, and communication practitioners, with insight that could assist in navigating the challenging news environment of a developing society.

So what can a contemporary journalist learn from this comparison? Regardless of them being conscious or unconscious of it, journalists contribute to knowledge creation. In so doing, the frames which they decide to use to depict the facts end up ultimately becoming the reality of the events in years to come.

Another observation to be taken from this study is how stories are packed with multiple frames – each speaking to a different audience. Investigative and contextual storytelling remains a skill, which many contemporary journalists have not acquired. This is the case regardless of the political reality in which they live in. This may potentially have a negative impact on the recollection or gathering of history based on contemporary news articles.

It should also be noted that contemporary magazines generally are a beast of a different kind. This is the case with *Drum* magazine. It has adopted an identity more focused on lighter content, such as entertainment.

Despite these changes, the beat goes on...

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