EDITORIAL

Societies caught up in the escalation of technological progress may find that the rate of technological change exceeds the rate of social adjustment, resulting in a high cost to society in terms of social decline. Fukuyama, a highly renowned sociologist and author of *The Great Disruption: human nature and the reconstitution of social order*, contends that social norms that work for one historical period are disrupted by the advance of technology. In such circumstances, both the economy and society have to catch up in order to re-norm itself under these changed conditions. Technological change that brings about what economist Joseph Schumpeter called the *creative destruction* of the marketplace causes similar disruption in the world of social relationships. While transition into the information society has disrupted social norms, a modern, high technology society cannot function without them, and will face considerable pressure to produce them.

Despite increases in connectivity brought about by the introduction of technology and its advances, society and human communication are under threat. This issue of Communicare considers some of the issues related to technology and its advancements, and examines how these impact on the human condition – from speaking as an act of war to a narcissistic sociocultural 'abyss of self-love' perpetuated by social media.

In his article *To speak is to fight: war as structure of thought in Lyotard's postmodern condition*, Sonderling investigates the functions of war in the thinking of postmodern philosopher J-F Lyotard. Sonderling argues that Lyotard's insight, namely that acts of speaking in society resemble fighting, provides a better understanding of the contemporary postmodern global world, one that resembles a return of the neomedieval condition, which was characterised by perfect communication and warfare.

Olivier examines a dissonance issuing from a feature of the network society, namely what Castells in his book *The rise of the network society* (1996; second edition 2010), refers to as the 'transformation of space and time in the human experience'. Olivier reconstructs Castells's comprehensive vision and points to the relevance of the conflict between these respective notions of space and time for contemporary communication practices. It also engages critically with the social implications of the dominant modes of space and time.

In their article, Mbatha and Lesame seek to shed some light on the types, usage and availability of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in four selected government departments in the KwaZulu-Natal government in South Africa. One of their most important findings points to the need for sufficient and coherent government policies that could regulate the training and utilisation of ICTs by government officials.

Lastly, Zdanow and Wright provide a critical analysis of the potential influence of social media in the development of a widespread narcissistic sociocultural condition. Through the examination of the structural components of the popular social networking site, Facebook, this article highlights the connection between the use of this form of new media and the engenderment of an acutely consumerist and narcissistic subjectivity. The authors investigate the impact of online narcissism on the perpetuation and propagation of capitalist isolation, alienation and insecurity and they propose some remedial measures that co-opt rather than negate such social media.