EDITORIAL

This edition of Communicare takes a broader view of the discipline and explores different meanings, metaphors and fields of practice through a diverse range of articles.

Research on HIV incidence and prevalence rates in South Africa continues to show an upward trend in the infection rate among young people despite the many initiatives put in place to curb the spread of the epidemic. Consequently, the efficacy of these types of campaigns has been called in question. Mulwo, Tomaselli & Dalrymple add to the complexity of this debate through their research findings indicating that individuals' sexual lifestyles are often informed by the meanings that are socially attached to sexual practice.

Meaning is also explored by Koonin & Crystal who analyse the meaning of *Time* magazine's sign representation of visuals of 9/11 from a Baudrillardian perspective. They contend that meaning is represented by the reduction of the dominant themes and subthemes to signs, which results in the signs becoming a representation of reality. Even though the actions that culminated in September 11, 2001 seemed unbelievable, 9/11 did nevertheless happen and therefore imploded into a hyperreality that was globalised through the medium of *Time* magazine. Through use, these signs have subsequently come to represent consumer objects that form part of the code system.

A metaphor of another kind is explored by Mulder. The Fibonacci swirl has been documented to occur in almost all spheres of life (e.g. astrology, mathematics, nature, the human body), but thus far its presence has not been documented in a communication context. Mulder offers a fresh perspective on the concept of integrated communication in her article demonstrating the existence of the Fibonacci swirl in organisations practising integrated communication.

Meintjes, Niemann-Struweg & De Wet provide a professional view of South African corporate communication practices and trends. The study, which was conducted as part of an international benchmarking survey, aims to contribute to a better understanding of corporate communication best practices across the globe.

Practice is also the focus of the last article in which Mbatha reports on the usage, benefits and challenges posed by web-based technologies to civil servants in the Zululand District Municipality. The findings reveal that, despite the constraints and challenges encountered in the application and use of web-based technologies in these government departments, a wide range of web-based technologies has been adopted to facilitate the exchange of information in the sector.

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