

EDITORIAL

In this issue, we have revived a tradition which I was reminded of when looking through some of *Communicare's* past issues, dating back to the 1980s, now uploaded to the open-access site. In the early days, *Communicare's* very lively 'Last Word' slot invited critical comments on contemporary matters of concern, but for the most part, the journal took a hands-off position and followed conventional publishing practice.

Communicare was repositioned in 2016 by encouraging debate in addition to case studies and inviting comprehensive interventions addressing current questions. The editors now want to actively engage in debates as they might affect new knowledge, state policy and developmental planning.

This issue thus inserts itself into the long-running controversy over the Copyright Amendment Bill (CAB) that is predicted by three authors in this number to potentially damage the South African educational book publishing industry. The Bill aims to weaken protections as far as educational materials are concerned. While the Bill is expected to pass into law in 2023, the lead author in this number, Keyan Tomaselli, has sketched the likely implications of the proposed legislation for the national South African research economy and for academic authors also. Given the fundamental issues highlighted by Tomaselli, and tactically engaged by Sadulla Karkijer, head of the Stellenbosch University Intellectual Property Unit, Brian Wafawarowa, chair of the Publishing Association of South Africa, and human rights law professor Klaus Beiter who examines the issues in some philosophical depth, it is surprising that so little has been published in scholarly journals on the Bill.

These issues have been, however, extensively debated by the Academy of Science of South Africa and the Academic and Non-fictional Authors Association of South Africa. It is our hope that universities will now examine the issues raised by the four authors as they may apply in the contexts of their own university policies. We thus invite further short essays from university administrators and academics to engage the topic. These will be published as and when received in order to keep the issue alive in the search for mutually acceptable outcomes. Commentaries on other issues related to academia and communication as a discipline are also welcome.

In addition to the lively discussion on CAB, we

invite submissions to a special issue: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Strategic Communication in the African Context guest edited by Prof Martin Ndlela of Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences. The call is available in the editorial section and under the announcements tab.

The articles published in this issue cover a variety of topics:

Tomaselli debates the implications of the 2022 Copyright Amendment Bill for the South African universities' research economy.

Adjin-Tettey applies the Technology Acceptance Model to study factors leading to teenagers in Ghana adopting new media technologies. The study has identified gratifications obtained (GO) as a new and important factor in technology adoption.

Engelbrecht & Ferreira's qualitative study seeks to establish the extent to which public relations practitioners in the selected JSE-listed companies are involved in strategy formulation and decision-making at an executive level, as well as the barriers facing communication practitioners to becoming members of the dominant coalition.

Thatelo, using decolonial Afrocentric analysis, investigates the rhetoric of music in political advertisements of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) from 2014 to 2021.

Radebe interrogates the new media imperialism by studying the South African online media coverage of the Ukrainian war.

Sutton, le Roux and Fourie examine the challenges facing internal communication in large South African organisations in the context of the VUCA world.

Kirsten and Joubert investigate the definition of "vulnerability" behind the Stats SA's South African COVID-19 Vulnerability Index (SA CVI)'s data visualisation dashboard, and highlight the underlying systemic, socio-economic, and necropolitical conditions that were exposed by the pandemic.

Shabangu, Meintjes and Ngcwangu explore stakeholder engagement from the perspective of stakeholders participating in collective bargaining by researching the stakeholder perceptions of the South African Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC) approach.

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