

Elections 2004

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About MMP

The Media Monitoring Project (MMP) is an independent Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that has been monitoring the South African media since 1993.

Mission

MMP aims to promote the development of a free, fair, ethical, and critical media culture in South Africa, and the rest of the continent.

Objectives

The core objectives of the organisation are as follows:

- To be the pre-eminent media “watchdog” in Africa.
- To inform and engage media professionals and other key stakeholders to improve the quality and ethics of news reporting in Africa.
- To influence the development of robust and effective communication legislation and media codes of conduct in Africa.

Activities

The MMP offers a wide range of services to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), media, government and NGOs in South Africa, and other African countries, including:

- Reviewing and analysing the content, selection process and presentation of news reporting, to monitor the quality and ethical practices of broadcast, print and online media.
- Distributing regular reports on research findings and highlighting infringements of media duties and responsibilities.
- Conducting in-depth-research on specific issues (commissioned reports).
- Developing training materials, tools and best practices on ethical and fair media reporting.
- Submitting proposals and other material for the development or amendment of policies and laws.

The MMP applies internationally recognised, state of the art monitoring and research methodologies.

The MMP is the only independent NGO in South Africa that monitors the representation of human rights issues in the media, and the only organisation that conducts in-depth qualitative and comparative research in this field. Its expertise is widely acknowledged by the parties at stake, and the MMP is regularly invited to provide comments and presentations on a diverse range of media issues.

Acknowledgements

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MMP would also like to thank Bronwyn Vreenegoor, Karen Nortje and the team of monitors, who dedicated so much time and hard work to this project.

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Key Findings

MMP monitored the South African national elections in 2004 to determine whether the media fulfilled their obligations to cover the elections in a free, fair, balanced and informative manner. Particular attention was given to special issues, including gender, poverty and HIV/AIDS. The key findings are presented below.

Top 10 Media

The MMP's elections Top Ten.

Position	Medium
1	The Star
2	Beeld
3	SABC 1
4	Kaya FM
5	Mail & Guardian
6	Citizen
7	SAFM
8	This Day
9	Naweek Beeld & Rapport
10	Business Day

Events Management 1999–2004

Just as in 1999, the majority of coverage during the election period was event-based and election coverage agendas appeared to have been determined by the parties not the media.

Social Issues Marginalised

Key social issues like HIV/AIDS, poverty, racism, gender-based violence, unemployment and child abuse proved to be useful electioneering devices, and were paid appropriate lip-service; with some exceptions, stories on these issues lacked analysis and substance.

On the Up

The number of female sources has doubled since the 1999 elections.

No Gender Agenda

In spite of positive gains in the numbers of female sources accessed, gender, gender issues, and women politicians continue to be marginalised and personalised.

Racing for Votes

Race, at 24%, was the second most often raised issue in the 2004 elections however, the issue of racism itself and the related issue of xenophobia received minimal coverage in the media.

Regionally Under-represented

Coverage of three provinces dominated the spread of coverage regionally, with marginal, but positive increases in traditionally under-represented provinces.

Free to be Fair?

The majority of media monitored covered the elections and political parties fairly. The media are to be commended as 91% of all items monitored were fair and political parties were equitably represented.

Decade of Democracy

Extensive and generally positive coverage was afforded to the celebration of South Africa's ten years of democracy.

Party Time

Most political parties complained of SABC TV bias towards the ANC and shallow coverage of election manifestos in general.

1. Introduction

In 2004 South Africa celebrated ten years of democracy. Free and fair elections, essential to a democracy, require a number of elements to be in place to ensure their success. For example, it is essential that all registered voters know where, when and how to vote, and that resources are provided that will ensure that voting takes place in a free and secure climate.

The role of the media during an election period cannot be underestimated. They have a number of different functions and obligations to fulfil. Their power to inform voters enables these functions and obligations to take on even greater significance. Three areas related to the media are critical:

- The media's role as watchdog.
- The need to report the elections in all their diversity.
- The media's responsibility to inform and educate voters. Informing voters does not only mean coverage of critical analyses of political parties' positions and policies, it also means basic voter education, carrying political advertisements and Party Election Broadcasts (PEBs).

The media's coverage must be balanced, equitable, fair, accurate and informative in all of these areas for the elections to be free and fair. No easy task!

To assess whether the media lives up to their responsibilities, MMP, funded by the Open Society Foundation, has been monitoring the elections since 1994. In 1994, the MMP monitored the SABC to ensure that coverage of the first democratic elections was free and fair. MMP's election report was included in the then Independent Media Commission's final report on the elections. It is the legislated task of ICASA (Independent Complaints Authority of South Africa) to monitor broadcast media's coverage of the elections, a task that the regulator, utilising MMP's monitoring methodology, carried out in 1999, and then again, based on the same methodology, in 2000.

ICASA monitored the 2004 elections with the key aim of determining whether coverage was fair. As such, their task in monitoring the elections was based on a largely quantitative assessment of broadcast media coverage to ensure that news, current affairs, political advertisements and PEBs were tracked, and where complaints did arise, to ensure that they were forwarded to the Broadcast Monitoring Complaints Commission (BMCC).

1.1 What makes MMP's monitoring unique?

- MMP monitors within a framework of human rights, which means that the emphasis of monitoring is placed on the quality of information presented.

- In addition to monitoring for balance and fairness, MMP has key focus areas, which deal with the representation of race, gender and HIV/AIDS.
- In assessing the quality of information presented, MMP analysed the representation of key social issues, including HIV/AIDS, poverty, crime and gender. MMP also examined other key issues that the media placed on the elections agenda, including for example, election violence and voter education.
- Unlike ICASA, which only monitored broadcast media, the MMP also monitored print media.

1.2 Aims

The aim of monitoring the 2004 national elections was to determine whether the media fulfilled their obligations to cover the elections in a free, fair, balanced and informative manner, with particular attention given to special issues, including gender, poverty and HIV/AIDS.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the election monitoring project were to:

- Assess the extent to which the media coverage of the 2004 national elections was fair.
- Assess the degree to which media coverage dealt with key issues.
- Reveal the issues, policies and debates which arose during the election period.
- Educate the media about their role in election reporting.
- Inform public bodies about the performance of the media.
- Cultivate a human rights culture within media election reporting.

1.4 Methodology

The project monitored and evaluated the 2004 national elections in four ways:

1. **Daily monitoring and analysis:** Each day of the election period, the various media being monitored were analysed, the information entered into a database, and a daily report issued to stakeholders and the media.
2. **Statistical analysis:** On a weekly basis, the data derived from the monitoring, as well as a critical analysis of media coverage, was compiled into a report, which covered aspects that included party coverage and gender.
3. **Special issues monitoring:** Certain issues related to the elections were monitored, as well as issues central to the development and maintenance of a democratic society, in order to determine the degree to which they were reported on during the election period. Gender was one of the key focus areas of MMP's election monitoring.

4. **An election coverage rating:** MMP, together with the University of the Witwatersrand's DMSA (Data Management and Statistical Analysis Services), developed a media rating system. The data monitored was fed into a system, which enabled the media coverage to be assessed according to four areas: balance of coverage, depth of coverage, gender, and an overall rating. This innovative system is a first for South Africa in rating media election coverage.

1.5 Process

The monitoring was conducted by first language speakers who underwent training from MMP. The monitoring was sent to the MMP office on a daily basis, where it was checked and then captured into MMP's specially designed election database. Queries were then fed into the MMP election rating system, as detailed below. In total, 6080 items were monitored from 24 March 2004 up to and including 24 April 2004.

For television, the headline news bulletins were monitored on SABC1, 2, 3 and on e-tv, as well as at least one current affairs programme per day. For radio, two bulletins were monitored each day, one in the morning and one in the late afternoon, as well as at least one current affairs programme per day. The monitoring times varied from station to station. The following media were monitored:

Media Monitored	
Beeld	Radio Grahamstown
Bush Radio	Radio Pretoria
Business Day	Radio Teemaneng Stereo
Cape Times	RSG
Citizen	SABC 1
City Press	SABC 2
Daily News	SABC 3
Daily Sun	SAFM
Die Burger	Saturday Star
EP Herald	Sunday Independent
e-tv	Sowetan
Ilanga	Sowetan Sunday World
Independent on Saturday & Sunday Tribune	Sunday Sun
Isolezwe	Sunday Times
Kaya FM	The Star
Mail & Guardian	This Day
Motsweding FM	Ukhozi FM
Naweek Beeld & Rapport	Umhlobo Wenene FM
OFM	Weekend Argus
Radio 702	Weekend Post
Radio Algoa	Y-FM

Monitoring teams in Cape Town and Durban monitored regional press and radio at source. Their monitoring was sent to the Johannesburg office on a daily basis. Overall, most of the monitoring was done in Gauteng to facilitate the prompt release of information.

Provincial diversity, although limited, was ensured through the selection of print and radio media in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Western Cape. For community radio, Bush Radio in the Western Cape, Radio Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape, and Radio Teemaneng in the Northern Cape were introduced.

For each election item, the following criteria were captured:

- **Timing:** The date, time and name of the medium in which the item appeared.
- **Election items vs. other items:** The number of election-related items and the number of non-election-related items was captured, which enabled the MMP to determine how much coverage was given to election-related issues in a news bulletin.
- **Type of programming:** The different types of programming, for example, news bulletin, news special, current affairs, panel discussion were also captured.
- **Item number:** Each item was numbered in relation to where it occurred in a bulletin.
- **Summary:** A brief summary of each item was captured.
- **Topic code:** The overall topic, or central subject of each item was captured using a set list to ensure accuracy and reliability.
- **Area:** The geographic area to which the stories applied was captured. For example, an item on the ANC's policy on poverty alleviation would probably be national in focus, whereas an item on a DA rally in Alexandra would be captured as Gauteng-specific.
- **Sources/Party coverage:** The names of all the parties were captured. In addition, further information about the position, sex and (where clear) the person's race, was also captured.
- **Fairness:** A critical function of the monitoring lay in determining the overall fairness of the reporting. One of the most controversial areas for political parties and the media, it is also one of the most difficult to monitor. The MMP's method for monitoring fairness ensured that where there was any doubt it always favoured the broadcaster in terms of fairness. Where items were monitored as biased, the MMP's method ensured that the monitor provided clear reasons for monitoring it as such.

2. Rating the Media

Previous election monitoring highlighted two potential areas for development. The first lay in making the wealth of information gleaned from the monitoring accessible to key media stakeholders quickly and easily during the monitoring period. The second was that discussions with media stakeholders revealed the importance, not only of highlighting weaknesses in coverage, but also strengths.

In order to address both these areas; for the first time in South Africa, MMP, together with the statistical expertise of the University of the Witwatersrand's DMSA (Data Management and Statistical Analysis Services), developed a media rating system.

It must be noted that it is the nature of a rating system to focus on a quantitative interpretation of data. Clearly the reduction of all media coverage to four ratings is no substitute for a qualitative and quantitative analysis. At no stage then, should the ratings be interpreted as providing more than a means for comparison between media of their respective election coverage. The limitations of the rating system are addressed throughout the analysis of coverage that follows.

While the potential limitations of the monitoring have been acknowledged, it must be stressed that the system has been developed to the highest standards to ensure accuracy and fairness. The head of the DMSA, Dr Mark Paiker and the head of the Wits School of Statistics and Actuarial Science, Professor Paul Fatti, as well as MMP's data specialist, worked on the development of the system. In order to ensure that the system would be useful for media, MMP also incorporated key comments and suggestions from Professor Anton Harber (Caxton Professor of Journalism and Media Studies, Wits University).

2.1 How did the rating system work?

The data captured in the database was analysed and run through a series of automated queries. The results, from over 45 queries per medium, were then fed into the rating system, which produced four ratings (see below) for each medium monitored.

Over 40 different criteria made up the ratings. Criteria were weighted and calculated statistically to ensure validity, balance and fairness.

2.2 The four ratings

1. **Overall election coverage:** Together with the information required for the balance of coverage, gender and depth of coverage rating, the overall rating also included an analysis of the overall total of election items, the prominence afforded to election items (i.e. where they appeared in a bulletin or current affairs programme), and if there was any focus on key human rights issues.

2. **Balance of coverage:** This rating provided an overall assessment of how balanced the election coverage was. The rating was determined by analysing the overall percentage of fair items monitored, the spread of political parties covered, as well as the analysis of favourable and unfavourable items monitored.
3. **Coverage of gender:** Given the importance of gender issues, the MMP decided to highlight gender in the election coverage. This rating consisted of:
 - An analysis of items that dealt specifically with gender equality and gender issues.
 - Items that dealt with gender-based violence.
 - A breakdown of male and female sources.
 - Whether sources were identified in a familial relationship (e.g. wives, husbands, sons, daughters etc).
 - Items where a clear focus was given to gender or gender issues.
4. **Depth of coverage:** This rating provided a gauge of the depth of election coverage and was comprised of the following criteria:
 - The number of sources in each item.
 - The type of item (news or analysis or opinion pieces, etc.).
 - The type of information provided (factual, informative, evaluative).
 - whether items were by journalists or agencies.
 - Which topics were covered, both in terms of the diversity and spread.
 - If media chose to focus on a particular issue (e.g. economics).

3. The Final Media Ratings

Media Name	Rating T Scores			
	Overall	Balance	Gender	Depth
Star	1	66.3	116.5	73.3
Beeld	2	66.7	87.5	40.6
SABC 1	3	66.1	65.2	61.4
Kaya FM	4	60.6	64.6	48.7
Mail & Guardian	5	63.9	55.2	56.0
Citizen	6	64.2	52.9	38.5
SAFM	7	43.9	52.8	86.1
This Day	8	58.4	48.9	57.7
Naweek Beeld & Rapport	9	66.3	48.3	44.5
Business Day	10	55.7	48.1	40.9
Sat. Star & Sunday Independent	11	45.5	48.1	68.6
Sowetan	12	48.7	47.7	46.6
Cape Times	13	24.7	53.4	50.8
SABC 2	14	62.2	42.4	60.1
Indep on Sat & Sunday Tribune	15	23.5	52.8	68.1
RSG	16	63.2	41.8	55.5
Sunday Times	17	66.7	42.9	34.5
Y-FM	18	58.6	42.1	57.8
Etv	19	59.8	42.3	51.5
Radio Teemaneng Stereo	20	58.4	42.1	60.9
SABC 3	21	49.9	42.5	56.2
EP Herald	22	37.7	47.1	36.4
Radio 702	23	35.4	47.3	56.2
City Press	24	60.6	41.2	35.7
Umhlobo Wenene	25	54.1	42.1	25.6
Isolezwe	26	52.1	41.9	46.6
Motsweding	27	49.1	41.0	30.6
Ukhozi	28	37.7	41.5	59.2
OFM	29	34.1	45.5	50.7
Daily Sun	30	59.2	41.8	13.2
Die Burger	31	31.1	42.3	64.5
Bush Radio	32	38.1	43.0	33.2
Radio Algoa	33	25.4	45.6	31.8
Daily News	34	12.5	41.6	58.0

3.1 T-scores? What's the score?

Next to the overall rating column is the T-score rating for each medium, which is comprised of balance of coverage, gender and depth of coverage. Once again, media have been ranked against each other's performance to determine these scores. The use of T-scores allows for the media to be placed on the same scale, with a rating of 50 being average.

The following rating guidelines can be used.

Average and below

- +/- 50: Indicates that a medium's rating is very similar to the average.
- 50 – 40: Indicates that a medium has performed below average.
- Below 39: Indicates that a medium has performed well below average.

Average and above

- 50 – 60: Indicates that a medium's rating is above average.
- 61 – 70: Indicates that a medium has performed well above average.
- Above 70: Indicates that a medium has performed exceptionally well above average.

4. General Trends

In assessing the overall media performance during the course of the 2004 national elections, it was useful to judge the media's achievements against the background of the need for the media to engage in reporting that is fair, balanced and varied. Coverage across a diverse range of media should reveal a range of sources, which express diverse views and opinions, stories sourced from a range of locations, which cover a variety of subjects. In addition, the media should be judged according to the extent to which they provide in-depth consideration of the issues raised.

To characterise the overall success of the media in meeting their public service obligations required a consideration of the levels of favourable and/or unfavourable bias exhibited against particular individuals or parties, without the necessary evidence being provided. Coverage should also pay due consideration to challenging erroneous stereotyping, especially in relation to gender and race.

Overall it must be noted that the elections were smoothly and efficiently carried out. In addition the elections period was characterised by peaceful electioneering, no violence and with few exceptions, no dramatic incidents. In short the elections presented the media with an unusually normal news agenda. In so doing they offered a direct challenge to the way the media report in a democratic dispensation. Sadly the events-based nature of much of the coverage suggests most media have a long way to go in finding alternative ways of reporting when there is no violence or chaos accompanying an essential democratic activity like the elections.

4.1 Event-based coverage

It is important for the media to engage in reporting that provides the public with the basic facts. However, the dissemination of rudimentary information is, in most instances, not sufficient to help the public to arrive at their own conclusions on the matter being discussed. The media has the additional responsibility to analyse and critically engage with the information that emanates from political and other sources during the run-up to the elections.

In monitoring the quality of the coverage given to election stories and those items of a socio-political nature across a broad range of media, it was evident that only 20% of all items monitored were considered to have been evaluative in nature, in that they assessed the issues that were presented.

The monitoring also revealed that a fifth of all stories (22%) focused only on the event, without further, in-depth analysis. Such findings confirmed that the coverage tended to be event-based, especially in relation to the coverage of party manifestos and campaigning.

While it is assumed that the different media had strategies that governed the quantity and quality of coverage surrounding the elections, it was difficult to discern

what those strategies were. It was apparent that many media, instead of setting the agenda, merely reported on the events as they occurred in reactive vein, without engaging with the issues raised to requisite levels of analysis and discussion. In 1999, the MMP's research found the media's coverage to be "largely uncritical, descriptive, and lacking in analysis," again, election coverage "centred around events rather than issues" (*So What's News in the Elections? Events Not Issues: An analysis of Media Coverage of the 1999 Elections*, MMP, 1999).

4.2 Lack of educative and informative coverage

Reporting during an election period requires that stories provide explanations that are both educative and informative. However, during the election period, items monitored were neither explanatory, nor educative and informative in nature. Only 7% of the items monitored were deemed to be explanatory, 6% were educative and informative.

4.3. Prominence

The monitoring exercise showed that when election and government-related stories were covered, they tended to receive prominent placement in the media. A total of 54% of all election and broader political stories appeared on the first four pages of print media and in the first four items of broadcast media. Such figures confirm that the media regarded the elections as a newsworthy occurrence.

While there was a tendency for the media to include the majority of election stories close to the front of the newspaper and in the first few items of the bulletin, the monitoring also revealed a spread of election stories across the remaining pages and items, with some coverage provided on the opinion and comment and editorial pages.

In broadcast media the overwhelming majority of election items were reported in the first five news stories.

5. Topic Coverage

The tables below show a breakdown of topic coverage by type of media: print, radio and television. Notably, the top three topic codes covered during the election period were the same across all media: party manifestos and campaigning, the IEC, and South African national politics. Despite the differences in space allotted to election coverage within the different types of media, there was little discrepancy in the prominence of topics across print and broadcast media.

Top 10 Radio Topics (81% of all topics)	%
IEC	22
Party manifestos and campaigning	25
South African National Politics	6
Coalitions and party co-operation	6
Political Violence and Intimidation	6
Provincial and local government	5
Voter education and registration	4
Election fraud	3
Opinion polls	2
HIV/AIDS	2

Top 10 Print Topics (77% of all topics)	%
Party manifestos and campaigning	25
South African national politics	13
IEC	11
Voter education and registration	7
Personalities and profiles	6
Political violence and intimidation	5
Coalitions and party co-operation	4
Arts/Culture/Entertainment/Religion	2
Provincial and local government	2
HIV/AIDS	2

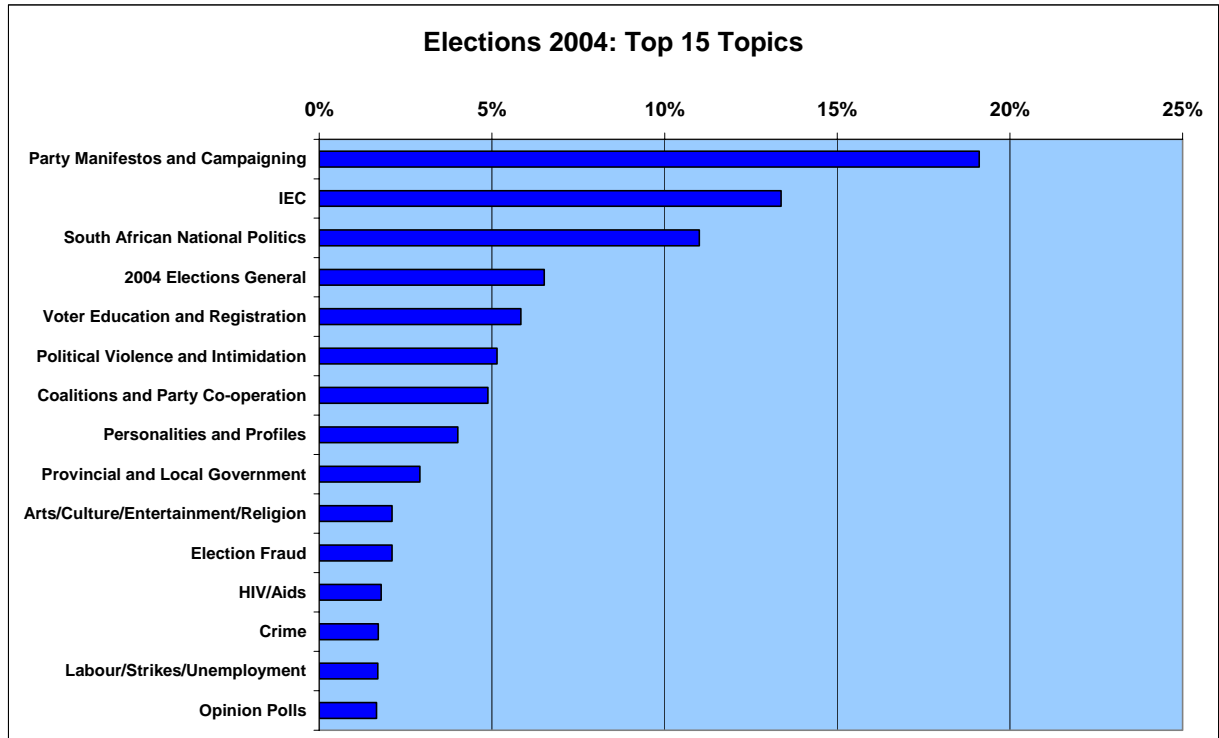
Top 10 TV Topics (78% of all topics)	%
Party manifestos and campaigning	31
IEC	11
South African national politics	10
Political violence and intimidation	6
Coalitions and party co-operation	5
Provincial and local government	4

Arts/Culture/Entertainment/Religion	3
Voter education and registration	3
Labour/Strikes/Unemployment	3
HIV/AIDS	2

In order to determine what issues were covered during the elections, it is important to look at which topics made headlines during the period. Like the election coverage in 1999, coverage of the 2004 campaigns was characterised by reports on politicians attacking each other. Radio broadcasts noted “the NNP leader has attacked the DA’s election manifesto, while addressing a rally in Mitchell’s Plain” (Motswedding FM, 10/4/2004, 18:00) and “in KZN the DA accuses the ANC of using taxpayers’ money for their campaign; calls for investigation” (Ukhozi FM, 3/4/2004, 19:00). The *EP Herald* reported that at a rally held in KZN, Tony Leon and Mangosuthu Buthelezi criticised Thabo Mbeki for being hypocritical (*EP Herald*, 6/4/2004, p. 7). “Gibson hits out at van Schalkwyk” made headlines in the Western Cape (*Cape Times*, 05/04/2004, p. 6) and the SABC reported on the ACDP’s condemnation of the DA and ANC manifestos for not having Christian backgrounds as they support abortion (SABC 1, 6/7/2004, 19:30). While such items could be seen as positive for those parties concerned, in that they received media coverage, the stories themselves offered little or no explanation for citizens.

A list of the topics most likely to be reported on during the elections was drawn up prior to the monitoring period. This list is used by the MMP in most of its research and includes a wide variety of issues of national concern. Topics with a specific focus on the elections were added, for example, voter education. Each article received one topic code.

Graph A



As expected, during the election period, the topic that received the most coverage (19%) was party manifestos and campaigning, as reflected in Graph A above. The code is broad in nature, and was used where items were specifically about political parties' manifestos, campaigning activities, and where no other more specific code (e.g. labour) could be attributed. The reports on the manifestos were based on the proceedings and campaigning organised by the political parties, and were, therefore, mostly event-based. The articles tended to note how much support the political parties received at a particular event, and summarise the central message without analysing it or putting it into context. Some items that made headlines during the period were: "Bullish Mbeki woos Eastern Cape" (*Sowetan*, 2/4/2004, p. 2); "In a hard-hitting address to thousands of African National Congress supporters in Rustenburg, President Thabo Mbeki yesterday told them not to vote for "silly parties" like the New National Party, the Democratic Alliance or the African Christian Democratic Party" (*Sowetan*, 23/3/2004, p. 4); and "Political party leaders visited various places within the country to campaign for next week's elections" (SABC 2, 8/4/2004, 20:30).

These items, and many others, failed to interrogate the messages from the political party leaders. Although the role of the media is to inform the public on events that have taken place, the media also has the responsibility of providing informative news that is not only based on events, but that builds critical thinking among citizens.

5.1 The IEC

The second topic code that received much of the election coverage was the Independent Election Commission (IEC), with 13%. Articles that dealt with the work, policies and the general organisation of the elections were grouped under this category. Another reason that the IEC topic code was the second highest is because the reports on the results of the elections were also grouped under this code. The IEC received fairly positive coverage, mostly due to the successful organisation of the elections (*The Star*, 14/4/2004, p. 12; *Mail & Guardian*, 2/4/2004, p. 9; SAFM, 17/4/2004, 13:00). Many of the media acknowledged the commission's leadership, headed by Brigalia Bam. While the extreme coverage given to the IEC is positive, and may serve to highlight the free and fair nature of the elections, little of this coverage went beyond mere results reporting.

5.2 South African national politics

This topic code received 11% of the coverage during the monitoring period. Articles that were included under this topic code included parliamentary reports, government reports and the general trends of South African politics. These items received a fair amount of coverage from all the media monitored. Reports on other political parties that did not deal specifically with campaigns and manifestos were also grouped under this topic code.

5.3 The Immigration Bill

The proposed immigration bill aimed to increase the number of skilled foreigners permitted to work in South Africa. The controversy developed out of the then Home Affairs Minister, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, publishing the bill in the Government Gazette, allegedly without cabinet – and President Thabo Mbeki's – approval. The court case that later developed out of the issue was often reported in a dramatic manner, where focus tended to be more on the relationship between the president and the minister, rather than the bill itself. SABC1 (5/4/2004, 19:30) reported on how the IFP leader "took on" Mbeki over the immigration bill at a rally in KZN. *The Star* noted, "grandiose Buthelezi-bashing" that occurred as a result of "mistrust" and "ulterior motives" (*The Star*, 31/3/2004, p. 10). The *Business Day* ran an article with the headline "Buthelezi releases secret document to high court," which referred to documents that the minister had put forward during the trial (*Business Day*, 7/4/2004, p. 3). Another quoted Mbeki directly: "Buthelezi, I have always dealt with issues, not the people. I have always played the ball, not the player" (*Independent on Saturday*, 10/4/2004, p. 6). *Die Burger* reported that Mbeki wanted the bill declared invalid, as it was published without his input (4/4/2004, p. 4). Considering the wealth of issues that the bill aimed to address in relation to immigration, the controversy presented a fine opportunity for a host of immigration issues to be raised and discussed, particularly in relation to the various political parties.

5.4 Reviewing the last ten years

Other issues that received prominent coverage under the general trends of South African national politics were analytical and opinion pieces on the challenges and

successes of the government during the past ten years. An editorial, "Why there is no alternative," argued that the ANC was the only way forward for South Africa (*Sowetan*, 13/4/2004, p. 14). The *Weekend Post* cited influential leaders Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and F. W. de Klerk as examples of reconciliation, hope and democracy in South Africa (*Weekend Post*, 10/4/2004, p. 4). *This Day* ran a feature on the past decade of democracy in South Africa, "Ten years after, as seen from the moon," which reflected some of the highs and lows, actions and reactions, economic pitfalls and double standards that have shaped South Africa's transformation from racist, apartheid state to democratic nation (*This Day*, 14/4/2004, p. 9). *This Day* is to be commended for continuing throughout the year to run a series on South Africa's decade of democracy and for seeking alternative views.

Similar articles were predominant after the elections. Items that analysed the performance of different political parties and the election results filled the media during the weeks after 14 April. "Opposition still picking up pieces" was a feature that moved systematically between the various political parties assessing their gains and losses (*The Star*, 19/4/2004, p. 9), while "Getting down to business" was a full-page analysis of the ANC government and its policies. The article proposed that the new ANC government was likely to stick to the social and economic policies that it has put in place since it first came into power, with the only differences being those of emphasis and pace, (*Mail & Guardian*, 16/4/2004, p. 37). Many of the articles that reviewed the last ten years tended to be positive in their analyses and assessment of South Africa's decade of democracy.

5.5 R.I.P. NNP

The demise of the New National Party was covered in the media both before and after election day. The predictions prior to 14 April were proved correct when the final results were announced and the NNP only managed to garner 1.65% of the national vote. "Down and out in the New National Party" noted the "disastrous NNP showing on April 14" (*Mail & Guardian*, 23/4/2004, p. 6) and the *Naweek Beeld* dubbed the NNP a dying party with few options, in whose best interests it would be to disband (*Naweek Beeld*, 18/4/2004, p. 20). Many of the articles were analyses of the party's coalition with the ANC, and how that decision may have influenced their members and supporters. "NNP: from apartheid to survival" traced the development of the political party that "created apartheid" that now, in a deeply ironic twist of fate ... relies on the organisation it banned, bombed and persecuted, for its survival – the African National Congress" (*Business Day*, 19/4/2004, p. 9).

5.6 Other events

Other important events that received extensive coverage were the president's inauguration and the announcement of premiers, which received prominent coverage because of the high number of women who were chosen as premiers. The gender section has more analysis of how these articles were covered.

7% of items were coded as "General Elections." These items included those articles that were relevant to elections but were not decisively about, for example,

manifestos and campaigning. While it may be expected for some items to be general in nature, the relatively high level of items that were coded as general elections items is indicative of the event-based nature of the reporting.

The media's tendency towards event-based reporting continued the trend noted in the monitoring of the 1999 elections. As noted above, in 1999, the MMP's research described the media coverage as "centred around events rather than issues" (*An Analysis of Media Coverage of the 1999 Elections*, MMP, 1999, p. 28). In this respect it would appear that the media has followed similar reporting trends in the last two national elections.

6. Human Rights

Integral to MMP's human rights agenda is the inclusion of human rights issues in the monitoring process. However, only 4% of all the items raised issues of general human rights discourse. Such concern for human rights was largely limited to those events held in commemoration of Human Rights Day on 21 March. Other issues covered included the special voting arrangements on 12 and 13 April, concerns over employers preventing their employees from voting on election day, the granting of the vote to prisoners, and special issues (HIV/AIDS, poverty, crime, and unemployment). A breakdown of some of these stories follows.

6.1 Human Rights Day

Coverage of Human Rights Day celebrations included the visit of DA leader Tony Leon to the Hector Peterson Memorial in Soweto (*Sowetan*, 23/3/2004, p. 5 and *Daily News*, 23/3/2004, p. 3), where he maintained "South Africa's citizens have not yet been liberated, they are not free of poverty despite the country's celebration of 10 years of democracy" (Motswedding FM, 22/3/2004, 18:00, Y-FM, 22/3/2004, 19:00). He also visited Bushbuckridge, where he launched an attack on President Mbeki, maintaining that human rights were not a fundamental issue for the president (*The Star*, 22/3/2004, p. 6), and the Boer War concentration camp in Polokwane, where he made reference to human rights abuses in South African history (SAFM, 22/3/2004, 18:00).

The views of the NNP also received attention. It was mentioned that the "NNP leader told members of Pentecostal church in Mitchell's Plain that South Africa will one day truly celebrate the human rights guaranteed to them by the constitution." During the course of the speech, he singled out women and children as the "most vulnerable" (*The Star*, 22/3/2004, p. 6).

6.2 Special votes

Special arrangements were made to cater for the differently-abled and those unable to vote on voting day due to health concerns. This voting was widely covered across many radio media; Radio 702 noted: "scores of special voters – including pregnant women, physically disabled people and those confined to hospitals – have cast their votes as part of the IEC special voting system (Radio 702, 12/4/2004, 19:00). A KZN-based radio station, Ukhozi FM, reported: "According to the IEC, 90 000 people have applied for special voting that will be conducted today" (Ukhozi FM, 12/4/2004, 07:00).

6.3 To vote or not to vote...

Many of the human rights items that made media coverage focused on the difficulties of some labourers in reaching the poll stations on 14 April. Radio stations reported that Cosatu was going to investigate claims that some employers would not release their employees to vote (Ukhozi FM, 8/4/2004, 18:00 and YFM, 8/4/2004,

19:00). Similarly, the *Sowetan* noted, "Forced evictions from plot 100 in Wildespruit could prevent hundreds of former farm workers from voting (*Sowetan*, 26/3/2004, p. 9).

In an assessment of the performance of the media in achieving their mandate to provide information that is informative and educative, it is pertinent to ascertain whether the media has provided information that goes beyond merely presenting what happened. In addition, at a more in-depth level, it is anticipated that more analytical discussion is required to fully inform and educate the public. Such tertiary information provides answers to what it was like to be involved in the event or incident under discussion, who is accessed for their opinions, and in what way, and what their views and opinions were on the situation.

It is the task of the media, while not unduly and unfairly taking sides and editorialising about the electoral, political and human rights issues being spoken about by the politicians during the course of their campaigning, to employ a range of knowledgeable and independent social, legal and political commentators to provide recommendations in the realm of policy development and to examine and dissect both the performance of the parties during the election and the future of the parties currently represented in the South African parliament.

The monitoring has illustrated that the media still has room for improvement in attaining and approximating such ideals. While there was some inclination to provide more than just the facts, in the form of secondary discussion, there was very little evidence of tertiary information being provided.

7. Key Social Issues

During the monitoring of the elections, it was decided to concentrate on certain issues which, it was thought, would play a central role in the run up to the elections. From a human rights perspective, it was deemed appropriate, in addition to the extensive attention afforded to the issues of race and gender during the analysis, to specifically focus on the areas of poverty, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, children and crime.

These issues may have been raised as part of another topic, such as election manifestos, as shown in Graph A, but as the major focus of items, the special issues themselves received only minimal coverage. Thus, crime and HIV/AIDS each accounted for a minimal 2% of coverage, while poverty, which was not even one of the top 15 topics covered, accounted for only 1% of election stories during this period. While these subjects did not receive significant coverage as topics in their own right, mention of the issues involved in these domains was forthcoming in a number of stories, categorised as falling under more specific topic codes.

7.1 HIV/AIDS

The monitoring illustrated that the coverage given to the issue of HIV/AIDS was largely dependent on events as they played out over the election period. Such coverage was almost exclusively reflective of the government's announcement of the extension of the Anti-Retroviral rollout programme for HIV-positive, pregnant women, and the much publicised HIV test by Independent Democrats leader Patricia de Lille and other members of her party.

The HIV/AIDS test undergone by the leadership of the ID and the start of the "Know your status" campaign was widely covered in a range of media, including Radio 702, SAFM and Motsweding FM (5/4/2004), as well as *The Star*, *Business Day*, *EP Herald* and the *Cape Times* (4-6/4/2004).

Much of the discourse surrounding HIV/AIDS was highly politicised; it tended to focus on the political aspects of the ongoing argument between the ruling and oppositional parties, rather than on the human rights implications of the pandemic. Such politicking tended to obscure the real issues experienced by people living with HIV/AIDS. Again, the event-based nature of the coverage meant that the media largely missed the diversity of issues around HIV/AIDS and political parties' policies on it. There were, however, some exceptions.

7.1.1 Reviewing the past decade

In assessing just how far the country has come in the last ten years, a number of media devoted a fair amount of space and airtime to reviewing political, social and economic progress since the advent of democracy. A number of these included some indication on the state of affairs regarding HIV/AIDS. One such article was a reflection on South Africa's health care system (*Independent on Saturday*,

18/4/2004, p. 11). Another bemoaned the fact that South Africa is still a society of the entitled; it made direct reference to the fact that HIV/AIDS treatment is still out of the reach of the majority of the country's people, who can neither afford nor access adequate health care resources. It was maintained that the rollout of Nevirapine still did not reach beyond the pilot sites, largely situated in the major urban centres, and that the costs involved in an effective treatment regime precluded many HIV-positive people from actually gaining the necessary benefits (*This Day*, 14/4/2004, p. 13).

7.1.2 Previewing the future

In the media coverage immediately following the election results, many of the possible scenarios for the future concerned HIV/AIDS and previews for possible future policy directions for President Mbeki in a variety of fields, including HIV/AIDS (*Daily News*, 21/4/2004, p.12). Future developments were also discussed in an item that maintained that "the more things change, the more they stay the same" (*Daily News*, 21/4/2004, p. 5), and a number of reports (Radio 702, 13/4/2004, Radio Pretoria, 14/4/2004 and *Business Day*, 13/4/2004, p. 1) that revealed the findings of an IDASA study on AIDS and government policies, in which the syndrome was described as a threat to democracy, and something that the government had failed to deal with.

7.1.3 Anti-retroviral treatment

Government's announcement of the expansion of the health department's ARV distribution just before the elections received a significant amount of coverage over the monitoring period. In addition to those items that merely reported on the rollout in an event-based fashion, some coverage focused on the varied reactions of political parties to the announcement. Such attention, particularly when it reflected the views of the DA, the IFP and the ID, was highly critical of the latest policy developments in HIV/AIDS treatment. Of particular interest was Patricia de Lille's dismissal of the timing of the ARV rollout as a political ploy, specifically engineered to coincide with the 2004 elections (*Cape Times*, 2/4/2004, p. 2; Radio Teemaneng, 2/4/2004, 10:00; *Saturday Star*, 27/3/2004, p. 5; *Sowetan*, 16/4/2004, p. 10; *Sowetan*, 20/4/2004, p. 8; *Independent on Saturday*, 18/4/2004, p. 3). Similar sentiments were forthcoming from other political parties such as the PAC leader Motsoko Pheko (*Daily News*, 3/4/2004, p. 7 and Motsweding FM, 8/4/2004, 09:00), and civil society organisations (*Saturday Star*, 4/4/2004, p. 7).

The reaction to the declaration of the new treatment regime, as reported in the media, ranged from the endorsement of the health ministry's programme (*The Star*, 26/3/2004, p. 3), to the dismissal of the strategy as "a mere election strategy, with little of substance to recommend it" (*Cape Times*, 2/4/2004, p. 4).

Many of the media noted the rollout of ARVs as the treatment began in the various provinces: in the Northern Cape (Radio Teemaneng 1/4/2004, 18:00), KwaZulu-Natal (SABC2, 2/4/2004) and Gauteng (*The Star*, 3/4/2004, p. 1).

7.1.4 Campaigning AIDS

Brief mentions of HIV/AIDS were also made within the context of party campaigning, but these were unfortunately not accompanied by the requisite levels of analysis and critical engagement with the diverse aspects of the debate.

It was apparent that the issue of AIDS was utilised by a number of parties in their efforts to garner votes at political rallies, meetings and during the numerous speeches made by the party representatives. It would seem as though the media largely replicated such a simplistic political discourse in reporting on the events, rather than approaching the matter through the lens of sophisticated discussion and analysis. Many media were complicit in merely repeating the anti-government pronouncements of parties in relation to their current views on HIV/AIDS, without explaining the alternatives with the help of commentators and experts in the field; for example, stories that noted IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi's promise to put the issue of HIV/AIDS onto the agenda (*Ilanga*, 22/3/2004, p. 8) and the DA's views that South Africa is no leader in the field of AIDS (*This Day*, 22/3/2004, p. 4). Items such as these presented the views of these political figures in opposition to current government policy, without interrogating the opposite side of the debate: government's perspectives and policies on this issue.

In addition to those items that revealed a stance against government, a handful of editorials and opinion pieces, which personalised the issue by condemning the views of the Minister of Health, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, and/or the attitudes of President Mbeki concerning HIV/AIDS treatment. Items that appeared in *This Day*, "No to Potato Discourse" (21/4/2004, p. 11), and in *Die Burger* (19/4/2004, p. 10) that addressed the failures of the health minister while providing a synopsis of the new cabinet, were indicative of the type of treatment given to the minister, and President Mbeki. In the commentary piece in *This Day*, Mbeki, rather than Dlamini-Zuma, was singled out for criticism for his HIV/AIDS views. The minister was actually represented in positive terms as capable and efficient, but was limited by the standards set by the president.

Criticism of the adherence of President Mbeki to so-called dissident views on HIV/AIDS, and the potential problems foreseen for the future, was the focus of a number of items immediately preceding the elections, as shown in items which reflected criticism of Mbeki and his HIV/AIDS views by ID leader Patricia de Lille (SABC2, 5/4/2004), an opinion piece that characterised Mbeki as still being dissident and calling for an apology by the president to the nation for his views on HIV/AIDS (*Cape Times*, 3/4/2004, p. 12), a sceptical look at the future of South Africa in the wake of Mbeki's views on HIV/AIDS (*Die Burger*, 17/4/2004, p. 13) and an article that referred directly to the need for Mbeki to deal with the issue of AIDS after the elections (*EP Herald*, 15/4/2004, p. 4).

7.1.5 The parties and HIV/AIDS

While HIV/AIDS might have been a significant feature of the manifestos utilised by many parties in contesting the elections, it was rare to find instances where the issue

received explicit and direct attention from the media. It was evident that HIV/AIDS was, for instance, a critical part of the IFP's growth and development plan, a fact clearly articulated in an article in the *Sowetan* (30/3/2004, p. 7).

HIV/AIDS received some mention in the course of coverage of the joint campaigns of the IFP and DA in KwaZulu-Natal (SABC2 and SABC3, 25/3/ 2004, Radio 702, 25/3/2004), in Thembisa (*Sowetan*, 26/3/2004, p. 14, *The Star*, 26/3/2004, p. 3), and in the visits of IFP leader Buthelezi to the Eastern Cape (Ukhozi FM, 6/4/2004 and SABC 1, 10/4/2004).

The DA and the UDM had clear HIV/AIDS policies; however, it appeared that these parties were only provided with minimal opportunities to outline exactly what these policies entailed. *Die Burger* (3/ 4/2004, p. 4) conducted a wide-ranging interview with UDM leader Bantu Holomisa, in which he was able to detail his party's approach to HIV/AIDS. DA leader Tony Leon was able to present his party's ideas on the subject during the Mandela inaugural lecture, which was covered by the *Cape Times* (7/4/2004, p. 5). However, examples such as these were the exception rather than the rule.

An interesting exception in this regard was provided by an opinion piece that appeared in the *Daily News* (25/4/2004, p. 14), which posited the need for the country to move from paper "writes" to equal rights for all the people of South Africa, with particular emphasis on HIV/AIDS. In "Court balances policy and rights," the *Mail & Guardian* highlighted the achievements of the constitutional court in bringing about a new socio-legal regime in South Africa over the past decade (26/3/2004, p.10). Through the utilisation of developments surrounding HIV/AIDS as a case study, the item was able to convey a sense of how the court balances policy and rights.

7.2 Poverty and unemployment

Poverty is a major human rights concern in the South African context. Where poverty alleviation is essentially about satisfying the basic needs of the majority of the South African populace, it could have been expected of the media to critically engage with this crucial issue. A number of parties operating on the South African political stage – both in government and in opposition circles – have previously made clear and direct statements surrounding the necessity of delivering basic services to all the people of South Africa, and pronouncements concerning the need to significantly reduce poverty levels in South Africa. It was thus anticipated that the issue of poverty would have been a central feature of party campaigning in the run-up to the elections.

The media has a crucial role to play in representing the diverse and multifaceted experiences of all segments of South African society. It is especially important for the media to make a valuable contribution to redressing the imbalances of the past, through focusing on the marginalised sectors of the country. In the rights-based socio-political dispensation of contemporary South Africa, the media presents a vital

avenue through which to make the South African populace aware of the rights to which they are entitled, and of the mechanisms available to empower themselves and their communities. The themes of poverty alleviation and employment provision can be viewed as opportunities for the media to engage in such coverage.

It is important for the media to adopt a strategy that both discusses and interrogates government's performance, and which pays similar attention to the views and policies of the other parties contesting the elections. It is also the role of the media to illustrate the fact that poverty is not merely a political issue, but a human issue. The media has the function, in this regard, to give poverty a human face. In light of the seeming prioritisation of events rather than issues, poverty was not dealt with in all of its diversity and complexity.

Poverty was only identified as a central topic in a minimal number (1%) of all items. However, although not the central focus, the issue of poverty did, nonetheless, appear in items that outlined the broader developmental, economic and employment creation policies of the parties contesting for seats in the elections.

7.2.1 The issue of economics

On the whole, these items, which were predominantly contributed by financial and socio-political experts, were highly critical of all the parties' economic policies. Many of these articles were analytical but criticised the ANC for affirmative action policies, nepotism, and the lack of growth and employment creation strategies, while the DA was said to be too idealistic.

Two articles that appeared in the *Mail & Guardian* provided a useful indication of the manner in which the media could have covered poverty. The first, "No jobs, no future" (2/4/2004, p. 40), dealt with the possible problems that South Africa could face in the future, in terms of job creation. The other, "Election policies put poverty on hold" (8/4/2004, p. 37), emanated from the NGO Black Sash and presented a coherent argument that tackled all the parties' economic policies, with the conclusion that not one political party provided a manifesto that aimed at meeting the needs of the poor.

This Day provided a similar perspective in "Back into first gear", which commented on the lack of economic growth and social development under the government's GEAR (Growth, Employment And Redistribution) policy (*This Day*, 29/3/2004, p. 18).

7.2.2 Economic policies

Some opportunity was provided for party representatives to state directly their parties' views on economic matters, which often included some mention of poverty. In such instances, the media tended to refrain from editorialising the points of view expressed, and left the public to come to their own conclusions.

The items that provided such discussions, however, tended to focus on the policy itself, with little attention provided to the human consequences. Moreover, akin to

the manner in which HIV/AIDS was covered, coverage of poverty, within the context of broader economic developments, was often limited to criticism of current ANC and government policies, from the mouths of opposition parties. One example was the launch of the IFP's growth and development strategy. During the launch, Mangosuthu Buthelezi made his disdain of governmental economic policies clear, while briefly outlining his party's own ideas. The event was widely covered across many of the media monitored: SABC3, Kaya FM, RSG, Ukhozi FM and e-tv (29/3/2004) and the *Sowetan* (30/3/2004, p. 5).

Similar sentiments were also forthcoming from the leader of the UDM, Bantu Holomisa, amidst his calls for a second Codesa on the issue of development, employment and poverty reduction. Holomisa blamed the continuing patterns of unemployment and poverty on the policies favoured by the ANC over the past decade (*Beeld*, 29/03/2004, p. 6; *Die Burger*, 29/3/2004, p. 12; Radio 702, 3/4/2004; *City Press*, 28/3/2004, p. 9).

Despite the above examples, the issue of poverty was relegated to the margins, with minimal interrogation of poverty as a human rights issue.

7.2.3 Campaigning poverty

It was noted that the media often merely repeated the views of the party leaders, without necessarily discussing the issues raised. *This Day* (22/3/2004, p. 3) carried a story on NNP leader Marthinus van Schalkwyk's assertion "poverty is the problem". The leader's views were presented as facts, without an accompanying analysis. Similarly, the proposition put forward by AZAPO for the appointment of two new ministries to deal with rural development, alleviate poverty and tackle unemployment was presented without any questioning or analysis of the proposition (Kaya FM, 29/3/2004, 18:00).

However, certain media left it up to the public to come to their own conclusions. Such an approach appeared to be behind e-tv's election soapbox, which was broadcast after their 19:30 news bulletin. The programme slot gave political parties the opportunity to present their manifestos and answer questions posed by the news anchor. Some parties, such as the Freedom Front Plus and SOPA utilised the opportunity to directly state their own opinions on unemployment and poverty, without any interventions from e-tv journalists (e-tv, 23/3/2004 and 27/3/2004).

Despite the criticism levelled at the ANC by other parties, the ANC leadership was represented in the media as recognising the problems posed by poverty. Many of the media carried items that focused on President Mbeki's campaigning in Limpopo, where he vowed to tackle poverty (e-tv, 28/3/2004 and Motswedding FM, 29/3/2004, 07:00) or conceded that unemployment was the biggest problem in South Africa (RSG, 28/3/2004). On 29 March, both Radio Sonder Grense's news bulletins and e-tv's soapbox carried items on the ANC's discussion of job creation, and their commitment to the elimination of poverty and unemployment. These items were the

consequence of uncritical, event-based coverage of the party's election campaign, rather than a conscious effort to favour the party.

A useful exception to event-based coverage of poverty was provided by a double-page feature that appeared in the *Mail & Guardian* (16/4/2004, p. 10) under the headline "I pray to God to take away this poverty." The article provided the case study of a village in the Eastern Cape where poverty is rife and basic services are almost non-existent. By approaching poverty from a humanist perspective, the severe difficulties faced by the members of this community were given a human face. In the discussion of the reasons for the persistence of such patterns of poverty, it was noted that the high levels of poverty in many parts of South Africa were the consequence of a combination of system failure, and the presence of disconnected economies.

Die Burger ran a similar analytical article about how the poor citizens in South Africa are undermined and discriminated against because of the lack of financial power available to them (*Die Burger*, 27/3/2004, p. 17).

The media would do well to follow the example of those journalists and media houses that recognise their role in bringing such issues into the public domain.

7.3 Crime

In addition to the above issues, it was decided to pay special attention to the manner in which crime was dealt with, as both an election and as a broader social issue. Previous monitoring revealed that the media often covers crime in a dramatic fashion, supporting the common perception that the crime situation in South Africa is out of control, and that everyone is susceptible to becoming a victim of criminal activity, but supplying little or no recourse to remedy the situation (*An Analysis of the Media Coverage of the 1999 Elections*, MMP, 1999).

7.3.1 The death penalty

Of particular relevance for the monitoring during the election period was the manner in which arguments for the return of the death penalty were given legitimacy by the media. Debates surrounding crime in the public domain were dominated by calls from opposition parties for the return of the death penalty, and complaints over the failure of government to adequately address the high crime rate in South Africa. However, in many instances, the debate was largely removed from its human rights context.

Media coverage of the issue of the death penalty tended to ignore that in line with international human rights precepts, which condemn execution as cruel and inhuman punishment, the death penalty has been outlawed under the South African constitution. Within the historical context of the death penalty being routinely and systematically utilised as a means of state oppression and repression, the summary denial of the fundamental right to life as advocated by supporters of the death penalty has specific human rights implications. However, despite the fact that the

new socio-political dispensation precludes the possibility of the use of the death penalty as judicial sentence, a number of political parties in South Africa reverted to playing the death penalty card in their efforts at criticising the performance of government, and in garnering support for their own platforms. Human rights considerations necessitate a commitment on the part of the media to consciously and pro-actively challenge such views when covering all aspects and all sides of the issue, in a balanced, fair and in-depth manner.

It could have been expected that the prominence accorded to concerns around crime and the death penalty in the political arena would translate into extensive and analytical coverage in the weeks prior to the election, with many parties expected to focus on the issue, and the media expected to provide analyses of the issues raised. However, during the course of the monitoring it became clear that discussions surrounding crime and the death penalty were not high on the media agenda.

Media discourse appeared to have ignored crime as election issue. Such a lack of emphasis suggests that the political parties themselves were reluctant to prioritise issues of crime during their campaigning. A glance at the parties' manifestos revealed that issues of safety and security were critical elements of their strategies to win votes.

An important exception in the treatment of the serious and complex issues surrounding crime in South Africa was an article that appeared in the *Mail & Guardian* (26/3/2004, p. 34) "Parties scrambling for the crime vote", which included different parties' perspectives on the perceived high crime rate, crime prevention strategies, the need for increased police recruitment and the death penalty.

It would appear as though as an issue, the death penalty received only minimal coverage, principally in relation to the few items that focused on the Pro-Death Penalty Party. However, even in interviews with the party leader, Peter du Toit (YFM, 29/3/2004, SABC 3, 31/3/2004), the issue was insufficiently interrogated.

7.3.2 Parties' criminal efforts

While anti-crime strategies were included in many political party manifestos, the issue did not receive the quality and quantity of coverage expected. It would appear as though the media was reluctant to devote sufficient space to a discussion of the issues raised by the criticism of the ruling party's anti-crime strategy, most especially by the DA and the IFP. When it did mention crime as a political issue, coverage tended merely to present the parties' dismissal of government's efforts at dealing with the phenomenon, without examining the precise tenets of these parties' own policies.

In this regard, coverage was given to the NNP's proclamation that there were not enough police officers deployed in the Free State (OFM, 31/3/2004, 06:00), as well as to AZAPO leader Mosibudi Mangena's comments during an interview on Radio 702

(30/3/2004, 07:00). Mangena's call for the banning of all firearms was presented without much discussion of the practicalities and consequences involved.

Perhaps the story that most exemplified the tendency of the media to merely repeat the anti-government claims from opposition political forces, was the visit of DA leader Tony Leon to a police station in the Western Cape, ostensibly to hand over bullet-proof vests, but which appeared to be aimed at highlighting the DA's views that the ANC government had failed the people through a lack of action over the high crime rate. This event was widely reported throughout the broadcast media on the day (Kaya FM, 13:00, RSG, 8:00, SABC 2, SABC 3, and e-tv, 19:00).

Instead of using independent expert analysts to unpack the true state of affairs with regards to crime and to debate the various views on the subject, it tended to be only the perspectives of political figures, operating within their own agendas, that were provided in the media. More often than not, these opinions were taken from the speeches and rallies given by party leaders on their road shows, rather than a thorough, deliberate sourcing of these party officials. Instead of investigating, examining, even challenging the notions put forward by these party officials, it would appear as though many media took the easy route by merely using the information that was most readily available. When crime did appear as an issue, it tended to be brought up in brief, verbatim, non-analytical form, with little independent investigation and analysis by the journalists who covered the elections. Such trends appear to confirm the overall pattern of coverage noted, where events rather than issues formed the basis of media focus during the election period.

7.4 Children not seen, not heard

As a key focus area for MMP, children and children's issues were monitored during the election period. Children were almost entirely absent from election coverage, except where they were used as props for photographic opportunities with electioneering politicians. There would appear to be an assumption in some quarters that as children are not old enough to vote, their views and their issues do not matter to the elections. Almost the only positive coverage afforded to children during the period was featured in an edition celebrating democracy.

Issues that could have been raised during the period include: education, children affected by HIV/AIDS, poverty, children's rights, child labour, legislation relating to children, children with disabilities, children and crime, children's health and welfare, children in state care, state responsibilities and children, and child abuse. Clearly few, if any, politicians would ever endorse child abuse, so some mention of reducing it was monitored, but the range of issues relating to reducing and dealing with child abuse was absent from the media. The marginalisation and victimisation of children was highlighted in MMP's *Empowering Children and the Media* project (*Empowering Children and the Media*, MMP, 2004). For a range of story ideas, the media are encouraged to refer to the journalists' handbook *All sides of the story: Reporting on Children* (MMP, 2004).

8. Gender in the 2004 Elections

Gender is a key issue for MMP, and for the monitoring of the 2004 elections it was decided to pay particular attention to how, when and where gender and gender issues were raised in the media. For these purposes, the MMP developed specific criteria for the monitoring of gender; such as items that dealt with gender equality, gender-based violence and how often women were accessed as sources. From these criteria, the MMP, using a specially developed rating system, ranked the different media on the basis of their gender coverage. The final gender ratings are given in the table below.

T-score rankings for each media have also been provided. T-scores allow for media to be ranked against each other's performance. Using this statistical measure allows for the media to be placed on the same scale, with a rating of 50 being average.

The following rating guidelines can be used.

Average and below

+/- 50: Indicates that a medium's rating is similar to the average.

50 – 40: Indicates that a medium has performed below the average.

Below 39 Indicates that a medium has performed well below average.

Average and above

50 – 60: Indicates that a medium's rating is above average.

61 – 70: Indicates that a medium has performed well above average.

Above 70: Indicates that a medium has performed exceptionally well above average.

Media Name	Gender Ranking	Gender T-Score
The Star	1	116.5
Beeld	2	87.5
SABC 1	3	65.2
Kaya FM	4	64.6
Mail & Guardian	5	55.2
Cape Times	6	53.4
Citizen	7	52.9
Indep on Sat & Sunday Tribune	8	52.8
SAFM	9	52.8
ThisDay	10	48.9
Naweek Beeld & Rapport	11	48.3
Business Day	12	48.1
Sat. Star & Sunday Independent	13	48.1
Sowetan	14	47.7
Radio 702	15	47.3
EP Herald	16	47.1
Radio Algoa	17	45.6
OFM	18	45.5
Bush Radio	19	43.0
Sunday Times	20	42.9
SABC 3	21	42.5
SABC 2	22	42.4
etv	23	42.3
Die Burger	24	42.3
Y-FM	25	42.1
Radio Teemaneng Stereo	26	42.1
Umhlobo Wenene FM	27	42.1
Isolezwe	28	41.9
Daily Sun	29	41.8
RSG	30	41.8
Daily News	31	41.6
Ukhozi FM	32	41.5
City Press	33	41.2
Motsweding FM	34	41.0

Overall, *The Star* and *Beeld* were consistently rated the best for gender coverage. *Kaya FM* and the *Mail & Guardian* are also to be noted for their efforts during the elections period; however, some examples of items to be commended follow.

In the last national elections in 1999, specific gender-focused programmes on radio and television, as well as thematic focus on gender issues in the media coverage, could be discerned during the monitoring period. In 2004, however, such events were notably absent. One event was an organised platform for political parties to explain why women should vote for them. The debate was organised by the Commission for Gender Equality and Women'sNet, and consisted of representatives from each of the political parties contesting the elections, as well as a panel

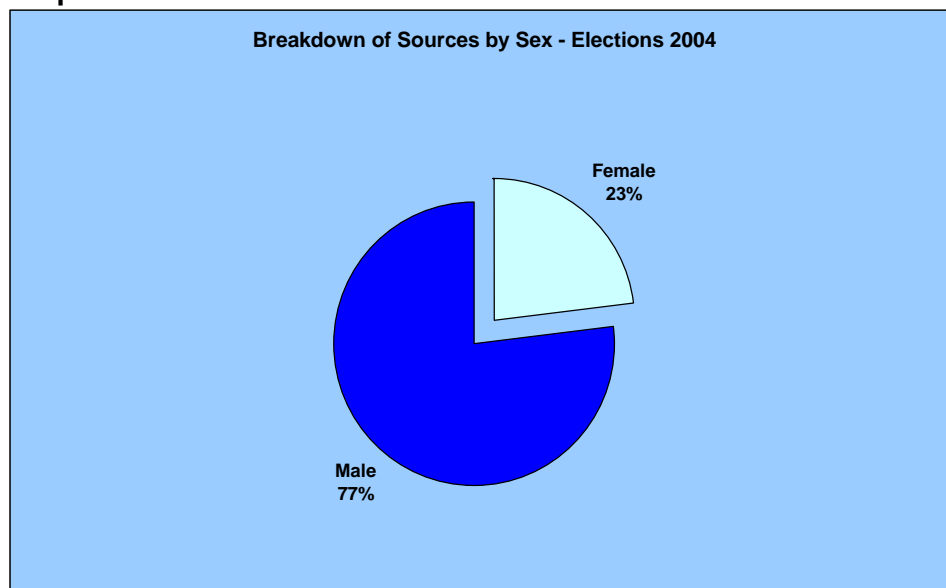
comprised of representatives from POWA, the National Land Committee, the AIDS Consortium and the Anti-Privatisation Forum, various NGOs and the media.

The consensus of the debate was that it was a failure; the *Mail & Guardian* featured "Women's issues drowned out" (8–15/4/2004, p. 41), which noted: "The debate was at best tepid and predictable," the representatives offered "nothing new" that had not been heard before. None of the political parties that were represented at the debate seemed to show any interest in gender equality. *This Day* quoted former CGE commissioner Sheila Meintjies: "Quite frankly, none of them put up any good reasons why women should vote for them" (*This Day*, 14/4/2004, p. 5). Many of the party representatives chose to include gender concerns in discussions around other topical issues of the elections; poverty, HIV/AIDS, unemployment and education. Few were able to find few examples of direct evidence in their manifestos that attested to such support for gender equality, "after reading the manifestos, one is left with a mental picture of politicians wringing their hands proudly simply because they mention 'gender'" (*This Day*, 14/4/2004, p. 5).

8.1 Battle of the sexes

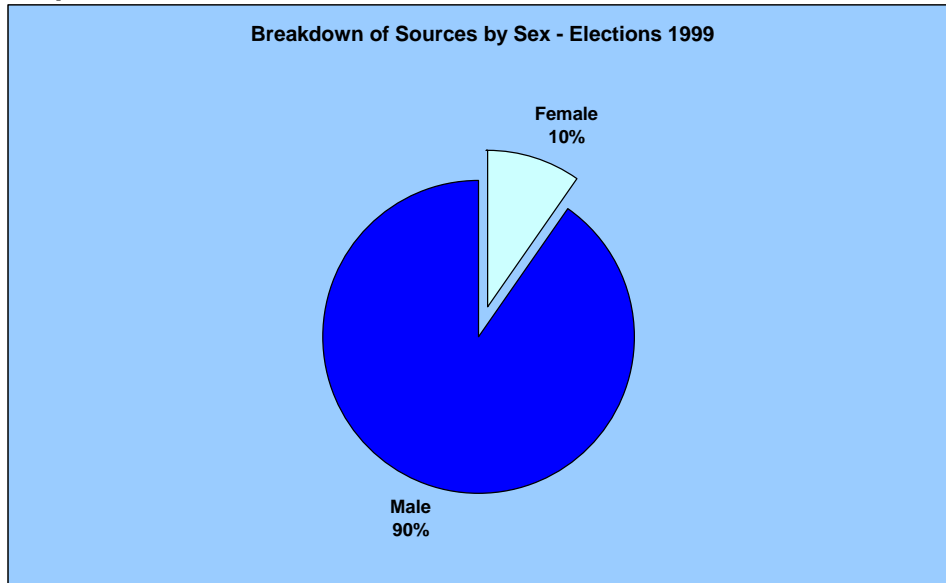
One of the key trends of the MMP's monitoring of gender in the 2004 elections was the lack of coverage afforded to gender as a topic: only 1% of all items monitored focused directly on gender or gender issues. Despite the fact that women comprise the majority of the South African population at 54% of the electorate and that two million more women than men were expected to vote in the 2004 elections (*This Day*, 14/4/2004, p. 5), women only accounted for 23% of all sources accessed by the broad range of print and electronic media monitored (see Graph B below). This was in line with the trends noted in previous national elections monitoring in 1999 and in the local elections of 2000.

Graph B



While this figure may appear low, far less than half, it can be viewed as a substantial improvement from the percentages of female sources captured during the monitoring of the last general elections. In 1999, female sources comprised only 9.8% of all sources (Graph C).

Graph C



This means that over a period of five years, the media has more than doubled their numbers of female sources, which is something for which they should be commended.

8.2 The top 10: sources

Position	Medium	%
1	The Star	34
2	OFM	31
3	Mail & Guardian	28
4	SABC 1	27
5	Bush Radio	26
6	Sunday Times	26
7	Beeld	24
8	This Day	24
9	Saturday Star & Sunday Independent	24
10	Naweek Beeld & Rapport	24

As shown by the table above, the top achiever for the number of female sources accessed during the elections period was *The Star*, with 34% of all sources being female. In contrast, the media scoring the lowest in terms of female sources include

four of the SABC radio broadcasters: Motsweding FM, Ukhozi FM, Umhlobo Wenene FM and SAFM, ranging from 11–17% female sources. One possible explanation for this discrepancy could be that print media has a far greater opportunity to source both men and women, given the amount of space available in newspapers. In contrast, and possibly to their disadvantage, radio news bulletins often only last a few minutes, and are in the form of summarised reports by the news anchor/reader. That the lowest female sources of 11% for Motsweding FM and 15% for Ukhozi FM were recorded from public broadcasting stations is cause for concern for the public service broadcaster.

Other media monitored, including the *Sunday Tribune*, *Ilanga*, *Daily News*, *Cape Times* and the *City Press*, also rated poorly for the number of female sources, but in contrast, the number of items that actually covered the elections was far lower than those of the four SABC stations. Another interesting result that was determined from the analysis was the difference in the percentage of female sources accessed by the Independent Group papers. The *Daily News*, *The Star* and *Isolezwe* are all part of the same media house yet there was a clear discrepancy between the numbers of female sources for each newspaper. The *Daily News* and *Isolezwe* are both KwaZulu-Natal-based media, which accessed 21% female sources during the monitoring period. In comparison, *The Star*, also an Independent Group medium, consistently averaged 34% female sources. It is notable that these different newspapers, with similar news agendas, from the same media house, show substantial differences in the number of women sourced.

8.3 Women in the elections

Despite the positive increase in the number of women sourced in the media, there still remains a glaring imbalance between male and female sources. To complicate this issue, there was also a clear discrepancy in which women actually made up the sources used by media. As shown in the table below, the Top Ten Female Sources comprised 51% of the total number of female sources.

Top 10 Female Sources	%
Patricia de Lille	15
Female Citizen	15
Brigalia Bam	5
Pansy Tlakula	4
African National Congress	3
Independent Electoral Commission	3
Manto Tshabalala-Msimang	2
Carol Johnson	2
Spouse (wife)	1
Frene N. Ginwala	1
Total	51%

8.4 Dominating voices

Who spoke for women? Three individuals, Patricia de Lille, Brigalia Bam and Pansy Tlakula, comprised almost a quarter of the total number of women accessed by the media during the election period. In addition to the numbers for Female Citizen, the four most accessed women under female sources comprised almost 40% of the total number of sources. It was to be expected that Brigalia Bam and Pansy Tlakula, IEC chairperson and chief electoral officer respectively, were accessed, given their prominent positions within the IEC. To a certain extent it is also to be expected that Patricia de Lille be accessed so often in the media, given her position as one of the few – but not only – female leaders of a political party. A full-page feature in the *Beeld* (“Die klein partye,” 7/4/2004, p. 17) brought to light that there were three other political parties – the Independent African Movement, the Black People’s Convention and the Kiss party – running in the national elections, headed by women. None of these female leaders, with the exception of the Kiss party, received any media coverage in the media monitored.

While it is positive that as the most prominent female leader of a political party (the ID garnered 1.73% of the national votes) Patricia de Lille was accessed often by the media, it is cause for concern that she comprised such a large percentage of the overall female sources, especially when the figures for female sources are contrasted with those for male sources.

8.5 Greater diversity in male sources

In comparison, in the Top Ten Male Sources, the numbers are distributed more equitably, and only comprise 44% of all male sources.

Top 10 Male Sources	%
Thabo Mbeki (as president & ANC leader)	12
Tony Leon	5
African National Congress	5
Mangosuthu Buthelezi	5
Marthinus van Schalkwyk	4
Male Citizen	4
Democratic Alliance	3
Independent Electoral Commission	3
Inkatha Freedom Party	2
Other Political Figures	2
Total	44%

In the 2004 Elections, while the most-covered female figure was Patricia de Lille (15% of all female sources), the most-sourced male figure was Thabo Mbeki, at 12%. This 12% was calculated from both Mbeki’s capacity as president and as leader of the ANC. He was followed by party leaders Tony Leon and Mangosuthu Buthelezi, both at 5%.

Further comparison showed that the category for Female Citizen was afforded the same percentage as Patricia de Lille, 15%, whereas Male Citizen only comprised 4% of the total number of male sources. While it can be viewed as positive that the media accessed a large number of "ordinary" women on the street, the fact that these collective women comprise an equal amount of coverage to that afforded to one female political figure, Patricia de Lille, is worrying. The question of who spoke for women during the 2004 elections can be answered by saying that "ordinary," unnamed women and one of the female leaders of a political party comprised 30% of the women's voices during the election period. Unlike the prominence afforded to female citizens, the category of Male Citizen only comprised 4% of the total male sources. The question may be raised as to why the opinions of "ordinary" men on the street are not accessed as often as that of the "ordinary" women? One reason for this could be because more men than women occupy higher, or more senior positions in society. Another may be that there is a difference in the value attributed to female and male sources respectively. The most accessed male sources comprise a range of political leaders, while the most accessed female sources are limited to one leader and unnamed women. These results highlight how the media accessed men and women differently. On one level, the results were representative of South African society, where the reality is that men still dominate. On another level, the results emphasise the value and status of the South African citizen, where political party leaders are accorded equal status to that of female citizens.

8.6 Patricia de Lille

An analysis of how Patricia de Lille was covered during the monitoring period was valuable; in order to determine what exactly made the news, in terms of how and why women were sourced. Pre-election coverage of de Lille focused on the alleged "slapping" incident that took place between members of the ID and the ANC at the Protea Hotel in Uppington, on Monday 22 March (reported from 24/3/2004).

Most of the media that covered the story reported on what had happened, a series of actions that seemed to expand and develop with each telling, but did not critically address the facts of the matter. A significant example of this lack of critical analysis was the coverage of de Lille's public announcement that she had not slapped Joshua Losper, as had been previously reported: "I never touched that man...he is too ugly to touch...I wish I did actually slap him, the bloody fool" (*The Star*, 24/3/2004, p. 2). The comment clarified that de Lille was not directly involved in the physical violence that occurred, as was previously reported ("de Lille had slapped [Losper] on both cheeks," *Citizen*, 24/3/2004, p. 3), but suggested that given the chance, de Lille would have participated. The media that covered the report raised none of these issues, however. De Lille's words endorse physical violence and – albeit to the opposite sex – gender-based violence. This report had a clear gender component and yet it was not analysed or critiqued in this respect by any of the media monitored.

8.6.1 Conflation of political parties and politicians

There appeared to be a clear trend in the media where a blurring of the lines of distinction between the (female) leader of a political party and the political party itself occurs. While President Mbeki may be the leader of the ANC, and while his support of the party is never in doubt, he is not the ANC in itself. Similarly, while Tony Leon is the leader of the DA, he is seldom identified as the DA. The same is true of UDM leader Bantu Holomisa, NNP leader Marthinus van Schalkwyk and ACDP leader Kenneth Meshoe. With the ID however, the role of the leader, the person and the party are often conflated. This trend could be identified in many news items, but perhaps the clearest example was "Seven DA members join de Lille party", an article featured in the *Citizen* newspaper (*Citizen*, 7/4/2004, p. 8). The title of the article dubbed the Independent Democrats the "de Lille party", a conflation in itself, but then went further by neglecting actually to access Patricia de Lille in the body of the article; ID deputy leader Themba Sono was sourced instead.

While de Lille is an active participant in the exposure of her political personality, the implications of conflating this vibrant personality with the ID are far broader. By conflating the political party and its leader, the media risked reducing Patricia de Lille to the status of an inanimate object, while the ID, as a political party became more of a personality than an institution.

8.6.2 Fetishising de Lille

The *Sunday Times* ran an article, accompanied by a cartoon, entitled "Mighty Mouse beats Minnie Mouse" (*Sunday Times*, 4/4/2004, p. 4), which compared the election campaigning techniques of the DA's Tony Leon to the ID's Patricia de Lille. The title suggested that Leon was seen as the "winner" for his "on-the-ground campaigning" in Hermanus, while de Lille was berated for "winning and dining the upper-crust". Although both de Lille and Leon were represented as cartoon characters, an unequal power relationship was suggested because Leon was "Mighty", that is, powerful, while de Lille was the diminutive "Minnie", which can be understood as small, ineffectual. The dubbing of de Lille as "Minnie Mouse", a popular Disney cartoon character, both infantilised and objectified de Lille as an image or mere representation.

Patricia de Lille was again contrasted to the DA in the *Sunday Independent* (4/4/2004, p. 2), which ran an article that quoted Tony Leon's description of the media coverage of de Lille as "fetishisation." Leon's choice of the word "fetishisation" to refer to the media coverage of de Lille was interesting. Women have long been considered fetishised objects in the media, especially on film and television. The body of critical theory (led by Laura Mulvey) on the fetishisation of women on screen argues that women, as imaged in the media, are visual objects of pleasure presented for the enjoyment of a specifically identified male spectator. By describing some of the media coverage of de Lille as "fetishisation", Leon appeared to acknowledge the inherent gender inequality in South African society, where women are frequently represented as objects, with little or no agency. A fetish object is an obsession,

usually with a sexual inference. If some of the media did fetishise de Lille, they both obsessed about her and reduced her status to that of an object.

While it might be argued that the two examples merely cited jealous comments about de Lille's media prominence, they nonetheless highlighted some pertinent issues. Most especially, the articles noted the tendency of some media to access and describe female political figures in personal terms, as well as the inclination to depict prominent female figures in limited roles, as objects. This is a stereotypical position for women, one that is emphasised in the *Sowetan Sunday World's* edition (25/4/2004) as discussed in the decade of democracy section.

8.6.3 Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is a key issue in South Africa, but the monitoring results showed that it was obviously not an election issue. As a topic, gender-based violence received less than 1% coverage. When the issue was raised, it was often merely noted and not addressed or interrogated in its entirety. The "slapping" incident (24/3/2004) that took place between members of the ID and the ANC was one example of how gender-based violence was covered during the elections. Related to the incident of what some media called de Lille's "bar fight" (Radio Pretoria, 23/3/2004), was President Thabo Mbeki's "sister beating joke" (*Citizen*, 23/3/2004, p. 6), which was extensively covered by the media in a similar manner to the de Lille incident. At a rally in Rustenburg, President Mbeki told voters "if his sister were to arrive home and tell him she was in love with Meshoe he would have 'to beat her'" (*This Day*, 23/3/2004, p. 2). There were few instances where the gender-based violence implications of the president's comment were interrogated. An exception in the coverage was *This Day* newspaper, which both reported the incident in a fair, balanced article and then followed it up the next day with an editorial, "The joke's on Mbeki" (*This Day*, 24/3/2004, p. 10). In his editorial, Justice Malala noted the "obligation of the highest office in the land to lead by example" and that "there are no acceptable circumstances that justify joking about violence against women." It is unfortunate that more of the media monitored did not take the same in-depth, critical approach to Mbeki's "joke".

8.7 Pick of the crop

8.7.1 Brigalia Bam: superwoman

Positive coverage was afforded to the top female figures in the IEC: Dr Brigalia Bam and Pansy Tlakula. *The Star* is to be commended for the coverage of Brigalia Bam on 13 April, the day preceding the elections. The article "Superwoman" (p. 1), dubbed Bam "the most powerful person in South Africa, holding its political future in her hands". The article was balanced and fair; it gave relevant background information about Dr Bam, which justified the presentation of her as a strong female leader. Another article in the same medium, "Bam a woman who leads by example" (p. 15), gave a more personal view of Bam as a "women's rights campaigner", who supported rural women in their positions as matriarchal leaders.

8.7.2 The ministers

Another example of positive gender coverage was "Didiza might be on the move", an article featured in *This Day* (19/04/2004, p. 6), which covered the rumoured promotion of Agriculture and Land Affairs Minister, Thoko Didiza, to head the Trade and Industry portfolio, a post second only to that of Finance. The article was distinct from the multitude of other items that focused on possible appointments of female politicians, because the journalist, Stephan Hofstätter, provided valid reasons for Didiza's promotion. Most of the other items, particularly some of the radio broadcasts, which featured possible female cabinet appointments did not outline reasons as to why the women were worthy of promotion, but implied, instead, that the promotion would be merely on account of the candidate's sex.

Both Kaya FM (17/4/2004, 13:00) and SAFM (17/4/2004, 13:00) noted the increase in the number of women in cabinet. Kaya FM quoted the 10% improvement in the number of women in parliament, while SAFM reported "women are said to have greater representation than ever before in South Africa's parliament...a total of 33%." Neither report investigated the suitability of any of the candidates for the positions. Similarly, *This Day* (23/4/2004, p. 1) featured an article: "Mbeki eyes women for new cabinet," which noted "Mbeki's shake-up will extend to parliament, where women will be elevated to top positions." No analysis of why the women in particular were worthy of the promotions was included.

8.7.3 The newcomer

In line with other post-election coverage of women, coverage of Patricia de Lille was fairly positive and in-depth. Many of the media featured comprehensive analyses of Patricia de Lille in her capacity as one of the few senior female politicians to enter parliament, as well as the Independent Democrats' 1.73% victory in the elections. Coverage of de Lille included political cartoons: the *Mail & Guardian* featured a Zapiro cartoon of a stork struggling to carry a victorious "baby" de Lille (*Mail & Guardian*, 16-22/4/2004, p. 39). The stork's speech bubble, "Aren't you a bit huge for a newborn?" is a literalisation of the size and young age of the ID, as represented by de Lille. The second cartoon (*City Press*, 18/4/2004, p. 18), captioned, "Elections 2004 – measuring up" played on the fact that de Lille's relatively new party, the ID, surpassed the established New National Party in votes; the NNP only received 1.65% of the national vote. In the cartoon, President Mbeki is imaged as a large figure complacently smoking a pipe, while a smaller de Lille sports huge biceps and a handbag carrying spinach, Popeye's recipe for strength. Next to de Lille is a pair of shorts with just the tip of a head protruding. "Kortbroek" (party-leader Marthinus van Schalkwyk's nickname) has come up short next to de Lille.

Other coverage (*Sunday Times*, *Saturday Star*, *Sunday Independent* and SAFM) offered greater analyses in their coverage of Patricia de Lille. The key element raised in each item was that while de Lille may have a "feisty and fiery personality" (*Sunday Times*, 18/4/2004, p. 2), there is a need for the policies of the ID to be developed. Patricia de Lille was interviewed on the SAFM Editors programme by Willem Jordaan (*Die Burger's* political correspondent), Denzel Taylor (political editor, SABC Radio

news) and SAFM's Jeremy Maggs. The interview focused on the lack of definable policies in the ID's manifesto. The *Sunday Times* article: "De Lille wins big – despite a lack of policy," (18/4/2004, p. 2) reiterated similar points.

The *Saturday Star* article, "Chalk up one for the women, from a woman" (*Saturday Star*, 17/4/2004, p. 5), gave background information and interesting asides on the choices that de Lille's choices has made as a political leader. Given de Lille's role as a female leader of a political party and her strong personality, the question may be raised as to why she did not use her position to obtain the female vote, promote gender equality issues in the party's manifesto and nominate other female politicians as party representatives. The ID's manifesto was silent on their views on gender equality; they featured no better than the other parties at the WomensNet debate ("Women's issues drowned out" in *Mail & Guardian*, 8–15/4/2004, p. 41). When de Lille announced the ID's provincial representatives (23/3/2004), all were noticeably male, and there was no media coverage that attested to the ID's particular concentration on the majority of eligible voters, women.

The *Saturday Star* article did, however, highlight that when campaigning for the ID, de Lille made the conscious choice not to covet the women's vote, she "somewhat downplayed the critical role women had played during her campaign because she did not want to come across as 'pushing a feminist line'". This is pertinent to de Lille's position as the first female politician in South Africa.

A similar approach was taken by the *Sunday Independent* with a feature article on Patricia de Lille, written by Charlene Smith, the author of a biography of de Lille (*Sunday Independent*, 18/4/2004, p. 9). Smith noted "a failure to develop policies now could see her party implode as each elected official goes his or her own way without a policy map to guide them." Smith also emphasised that de Lille "cannot sustain a political party on those who personally like her" and that "for de Lille to be a real political force, she has to build a stronger support base".

The Star was notable for its attempt to cover other political parties with female leaders. "Crusader wants a chance to Kiss South Africa better" provided extensive background information on Claire Emary, leader of the Kiss – Keep it Straight and Simple – party. The article sourced Claire Emary of the Kiss party, explained the party's manifesto and outlined Emary's expectations for the elections (*The Star*, 5/4/2004, p. 7).

8.8 Missed opportunities

Some of the events that received media coverage during the election period were items that were potentially excellent opportunities for the media to interrogate and analyse gender and gender issues in South African politics. Unfortunately, in most cases, the issues were largely ignored, or merely reported, without any secondary analysis.

The article in *The Star* (5/4/2004, p. 7), "Crusader wants a chance to Kiss SA better" can be viewed as an example of poor gender coverage. While noteworthy in its chosen focus on a different female leader of a political party, Claire Emary, leader of the KISS party, the article provided unnecessary information about Emary's personal life, specifically her marital status: "the 61-year-old mother-of-three was married to a rich man...Ten years on, she is divorced...a housewife." While it can be argued that background information is useful to help build an image of the person behind the party, were the facts given about Emary as a woman necessarily the kind of information that voters required to make informed decisions about the Kiss party?

A glaring example of the trend in the media to feature women in stereotypical roles as sexualised objects was seen in the *Sowetan Sunday World's* decade of democracy edition on 25 April 2004. The newspaper led with "Look out for 10 babes in this special decade of democracy edition" on the front page, which clarified the paper's chosen angle on democracy coverage. 57% of the images of women represented by the *Sowetan Sunday World* in this edition were scantily clad, many in suggestive poses, and the continual reference to women as "babes" contributed to the overall objectification of women in the medium.

An important feature of gendered-focused articles was the lack of depth of coverage of the articles. This was clear in "Women politicians laud narrowing of gender gap" (*This Day*, 20/4/2004, p. 2). The title of the article suggested a positive angle, which was evident to a certain extent in the text of the article. The article highlighted the gradual but steady increase in the number of female politicians in parliament and mentioned positive achievements such as "South Africa ranked 15th in the world for its proportion of female parliamentarians; now it is 11th." While the article could be seen as positive for its focus on the increase in the number of women in government, the article raised additional issues that were not followed up, analysed or explained. The question of token political appointments of women was raised, as was the notion of the ANC's quota system for women, but neither were fleshed out, which left many unanswered questions. Should political parties include a quota for women? Should women be appointed, even if it is only by virtue of their sex? Do female politicians approach their positions differently? Will quality be sacrificed for quantity with female politicians? The medium missed a clear opportunity to analyse and address some of the issues raised in the article, which resulted in the item being shallow and ambiguous.

8.9 Gays and lesbians: do we care?

Gay and lesbian rights were practically absent in the coverage during the election period, both in the political parties' manifestos, and within the media itself. A notable exception in the coverage was a question posed to ACDP leader Kenneth Meshoe by the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper, as part of their "10 Tough Questions" series. This series comprised of ten questions on party manifestos and campaigns that were put to senior representatives of each of the political parties contesting the national elections. One of Meshoe's questions was: "The ACDP describes the homosexual lifestyle as 'immoral, unnatural and sinful.' Would you criminalise homosexuality, or

allow discrimination against gay people, for example, in employment?" which Meshoe answered, "we object to the constitution, which seems to legitimise the gay lifestyle...if someone wants to promote the homosexual lifestyle and influence others, we would object to that" ("Expect a 'shocking' result", *Mail & Guardian*, 01/03/2004). While it may be seen as positive that the issue of gay rights was raised, the question that the *Mail & Guardian* put to Meshoe could have led to further, interesting, debates on the issue.

Another example was "ANC comes out on gays" (*Sowetan Sunday World*, 4/4/2004, p. 2), which reported that "prominent gay socialite and dance star Somizi Mhlongo dared the ANC to come out of the closet with its views on the gay vote". Despite this challenge, the article did not address any of the gender issues – especially the use of stereotypical language ("classy", "antics", "out of the closet" and "marvellously outrageous") – that the opportunity provided. The article would appear to suggest that the manner in which the ANC can be understood to endorse the rights of homosexuals is by frequenting The Rock, "a classy nightclub in Rockville, Soweto" on one occasion. The article quoted Mhlongo/Madam Gigi: "They've not come out because it's politically opportune to do so, but because they believe in and support gay rights." The validity or truthfulness of this comment was not addressed within the article; rather the facts of the event were laid out, without any analysis of the inherent stereotypical approach and doubtful motivation of the politicians. The article also noted that the ANC "has always been pro-gay rights because 'they are humans'" The sheer mention of this seemingly redundant observation called to mind its opposite; that *they* are not humans. This controversial and stereotypical viewpoint was not addressed within the context of the article. While it may be argued that it is not the newspaper's intention to fault every comment made by a politician, in an instance where media coverage of a particular group of the voting population has been scarce, it would have made for a far more interesting and analytical article had some of these issues been raised.

Both the deficiency in coverage that focused on gay and lesbian rights and the few articles such as these, which attempted to foreground alternative election issues, highlighted the lack in emphasis on the various political parties' positions on gay and lesbian rights, and on gender equality itself. There was a clear missed opportunity for the media to question the political parties on their gender, and their gay and lesbian rights policies. Where do the parties stand on these issues? Do they have specific policies devoted to equal rights for women, gays and lesbians?

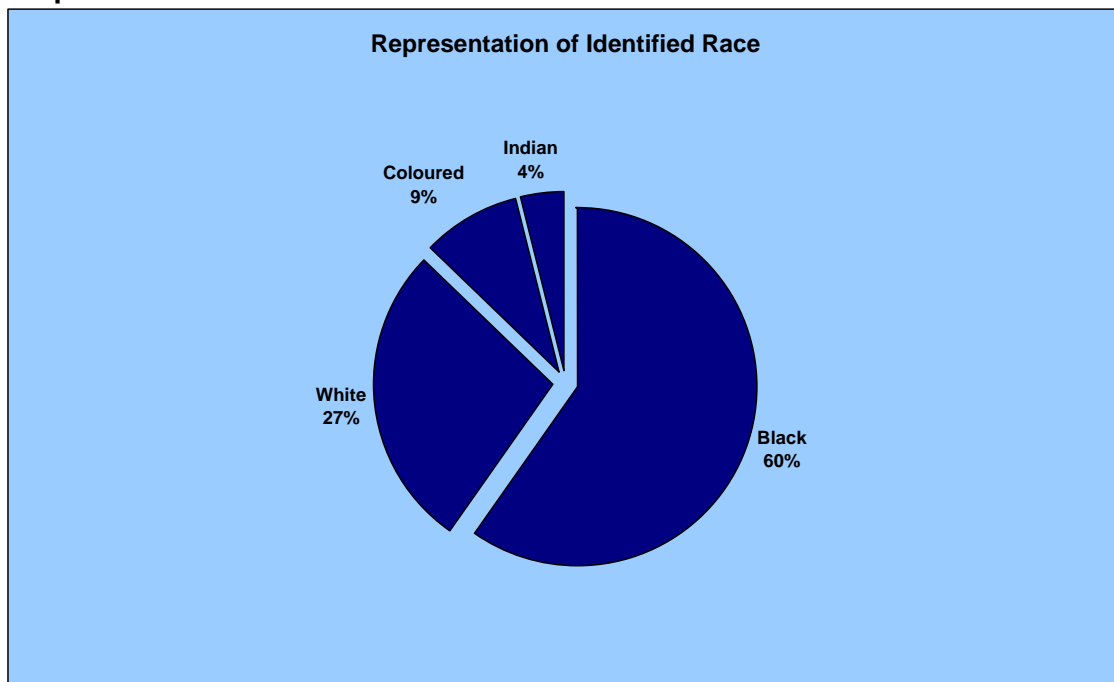
While there is definitely room for improvement in the manner in which the media covered gender during the 2004 elections, it was a great achievement for the media, in just 5 years, to have doubled the numbers of female sources who were accessed.

9. Race

In order to determine whether or not the media played any role in challenging or supporting racial stereotypes, the research that the MMP undertook for the 2004 elections addressed how the media dealt with the representation of race and the classification of people according to their race. Acknowledging the problematic nature of racial classifications, they are, however, useful to highlight trends in coverage. The following terms were used for sources in the media: black, white, coloured, Indian, Asian and other, for people whose race could not be clearly identified. Sources were only classified as a particular race where it was clearly evident, for example, Tony Leon was classified as white. Where a person's race could not be clearly identified, they were classified as "unknown".

People who were accessed, either directly or indirectly, and those who were mentioned and/or photographed in the media were noted as sources. These people were grouped according to their role and political party, if they were affiliated with any particular political party within the article. A breakdown of sources according to race revealed which race was most prominently accessed in the media throughout the elections, as shown in Graph D below. Notably, those people who classified as Asian are not reflected on the graph below, because their representation was less than a third of a percent.

Graph D



With a large black majority, the results in graph D approximate the population demographics of South Africa. What is interesting about these results, however, is

the relatively high number of white sources. In a country where the majority of government officials, political parties and population are black, such a relatively large number of white sources appear to have skewed the results. One possible explanation for the number of white sources is the relatively high media attention afforded to Tony Leon, many of the DA members, other opposition parties (like the NNP) and the (mainly white) academics and experts.

In addition to topic codes, items were also coded in terms of human rights issues raised within the item. In terms of these human rights issues, race at 24%, was the second most often raised issue in the 2004 elections. This is a substantial improvement from the 2000 local government elections. A comparison of the monitoring results of race revealed that in the 2000 local government elections, the media did not fully engage with or attempt to depoliticise race. Race as an issue was "generally poorly dealt with," at 1.9%, there were "few items of explicit racism or items primarily relating to issues of race" (*An Analysis of Media Coverage of the 2000 Local Government Elections*, MMP, 2001).

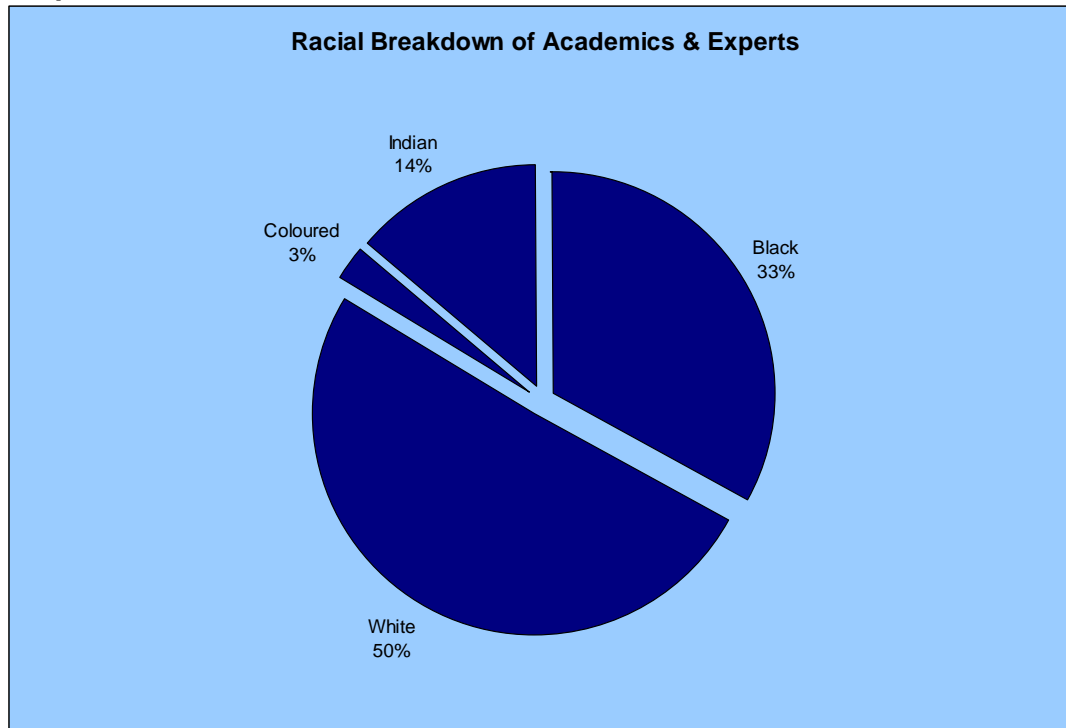
The issue of racism itself and the related issue of xenophobia received minimal coverage in the media. Given the instances of racism and xenophobia that continue to plague South Africa, it is surprising that more was not made of these as election issues.

9.1 The pen and the sword

The results of the political sources revealed that at 78%, more black people than any other race were sourced as government officials and political party members. This figure presents as an appropriate reflection of South Africa's demographics; most government officials are black and the most written about political party is the ANC, which has a black member majority.

Interestingly, black people dominated every category of the sources, save one: academics. Sources who were classified under the academic code include professors, political analysts and experts in various fields (see Graph E below).

Graph E



Where race could be clearly identified, white people comprised 50% of academic sources, with the remaining 50% of academics distributed between coloured (3%), black (33%) and Indian (14%). The results are also in stark contrast to the overall sources. The relatively low levels of black academics suggest that either the media have difficulty in accessing black academics, or that they are far fewer in number.

9.2 Tongue-tied

Despite the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal being identified as the most highly contested provinces, the inhabitants of these provinces (who would ultimately influence the results) were not accessed in the media. Articles about the elections in these two provinces tended to concentrate on the coalitions that were formed between the political parties, rather than what "ordinary" people thought of the political situation in their respective provinces. These ordinary people consisted of a large Indian population in KZN, and a large coloured population in the Western Cape, neither of which appeared to be accessed by the media monitored. The *Daily News*, a KZN print medium, featured: "IFP and DA turn up the heat", an article that focused on the effort by the IFP and the DA to position their coalition for change as an alternative government to the ANC (*Daily News*, 5/4/2004, p. 3). SAFM noted that although the ANC was expected to win, there was a need for the party to form a coalition in order to get majority rule in KZN (SAFM, 23/3/2004, 17:45), while the *Cape Times* noted that the Independent Democrats shunned alliances in all provinces, (*Cape Times*, 16/4/2004, p. 5). The focus of the above articles was on the

politicians and the parties, rather than the coloured and Indian people who live in the two provinces.

9.3 Racial polarisation

The MMP conducted a similar research study during the 1999 national elections, where the findings revealed that the media reported uncritically about the racially polarised campaigning by the different parties. Similar trends were prevalent during the coverage of the 2004 elections, most prominently in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Reports on the turn out of elections in these provinces were often characterised by phrases that specifically referred to different racial groups. *Die Burger* ran an article on the DA, which noted that the party's support amongst "the coloureds" was waning (*Die Burger*, 13/4/2004, p. 4). The *Cape Times* ran a commentary by analysts and community leaders on the reasons why the ANC got "Indian votes" (*Cape Times*, 20/4/2004, p. 5). "Battle for the 'coloured vote' as the ANC, NNP and DA are all going to campaign in the Western Cape" made headlines on e-tv (27/3/2004, 19:00). Similarly, "Exclusive: ANC wins" was an analysis on the odds of the ANC winning the elections, where one of the threats was said to be the "the inroads the DA makes into the black vote" (*Business Day*, 6/4/2004, p. 8).

Other stories that made headlines where race was the issue included two *City Press* articles. One focused on white farmers giving lifts to black people who had to walk long distances to the polling stations. The caption of the story was "Breaking the colour bar in Africa's own Eden" (*City Press*, 18/4/2004, p. 20). The other was a photograph of a white woman who voted at a polling station that was dominated by black people, entitled "the rainbow voters: a scene unthinkable a mere 10 years ago" (*City Press*, 18/4/2004, p. 21).

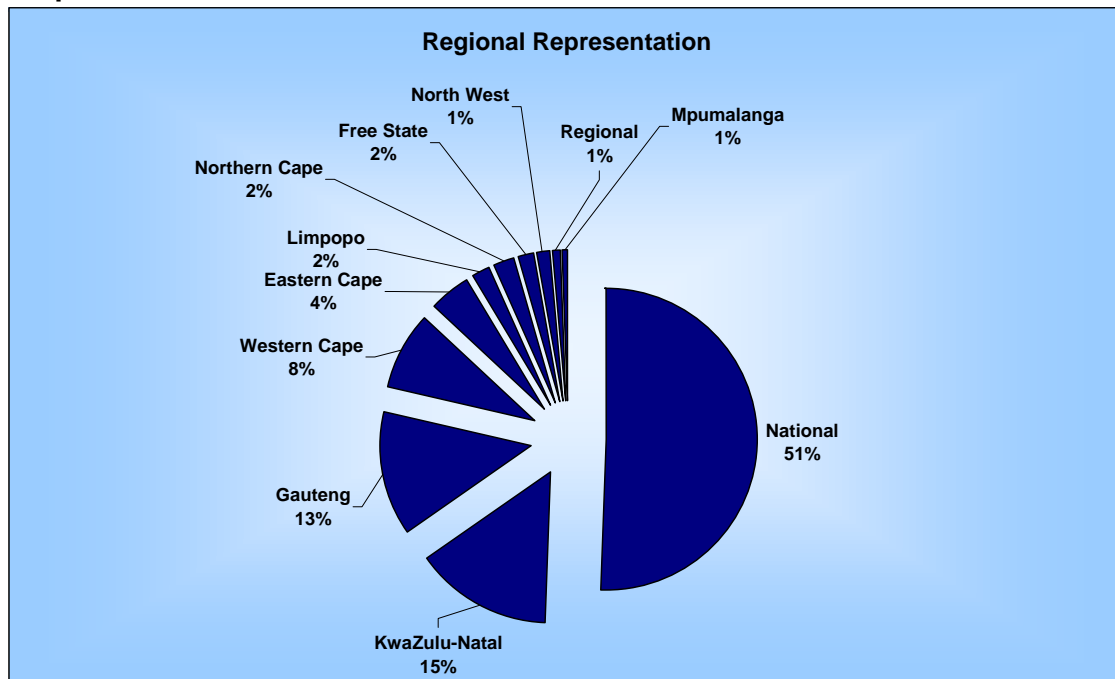
After ten years of democracy, it could be expected that the media would move away from the classification of people according to their race. The responsibility lies with the media to challenge those politicians and political parties who campaign along racial lines, as the media has the capacity to bring about change. It is, therefore, unfortunate that such trends are still to be found in the South African media.

10. Regional Breakdown

In their efforts to cover South Africa in all its diversity, it is imperative that the various media entities engage in coverage that ensures equitable representation across the eleven provinces of South Africa, as well as between the provinces and the country as a whole. It is vital that the media accounts for the marginalised sectors of the country. If such considerations are important throughout the year, they are even more so during national and provincial elections.

During the monitoring of the 2004 elections, there seemed to be an increased effort on behalf of some of the media for greater regional representation, especially with regard to those regions of the country that are often ignored. On a provincial level, it would appear as if, with the exception of Mpumalanga, stories that emanated from the provinces were still unevenly distributed. In the monitoring of the 1999 elections, the MMP research noted that Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal received coverage well in excess of that afforded to the other provinces (*An Analysis of Media Coverage of the 1999 Elections*, MMP, 1999). As far as Mpumalanga was concerned, previous monitoring illustrated a decrease in the amount of media pieces deriving from the province; the 2004 elections were no exception (see Graph F below).

Graph F



As to be expected, those stories that were deemed to be of national relevance accounted for just over half of all stories. As a national election, and with stories emanating from within the halls of national government, this was hardly surprising.

Provincially, KwaZulu-Natal received the most coverage (16%), followed by Gauteng (13%), the Western Cape (8%), the Eastern Cape (4%), Limpopo (2%), the Northern Cape (2%), the Free State (1.8%), North West (1,5%), and Mpumalanga (1%).

While the findings revealed similar patterns to previous MMP research, the 2004 election coverage differed in the extent to which the three major metropolises – Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal – dominated the coverage. In addition, the percentage of stories that originated from the other provinces showed a notable increase, as observed below.

10.1 KwaZulu-Natal

That KwaZulu-Natal should be the province with the highest number of stories was primarily the consequence of this province being regarded as the most hotly contested area of the country as far as the elections were concerned, and due to the previous history of the region. As one of only two provinces not in the hands of the ANC, it was expected that the ruling party would pull out all the stops to gain power in the area. KwaZulu-Natal is also the traditional power base of the IFP. The election battle between these two parties for control of the provincial legislature was expected to be one of the most interesting and most crucial aspects of the elections, something well recognised by the media, comments like “IFP and DA turn up the heat” (*Daily News*, 5/4/2004, p. 3) and “ANC is ready to snatch KZN from the IFP” (*Daily News*, 8/4/2004, p. 3) exemplified this.

Previous media monitoring (as noted in MMP’s monitoring of the national elections in 1994 and 1999, and the local government elections of 1995 and 2000) painted a picture of the province as being rife with political violence and intimidation. Media coverage was infused with similar discourses, albeit on a smaller scale, in the 2004 elections. The event-based nature of much media coverage and the tendency to prioritise the dramatic events as they unfolded in KwaZulu-Natal made for relatively easy, event-based coverage.

10.2 The battle for the provinces

However, in comparison to 1999, there was a marked change in the number of stories that emanated from individual regions. It was noted that the share of stories that originated from the Northern Cape grew from virtually nothing in the last elections to 2%; in the North-West, stories increased by 0,5%; in Limpopo, coverage doubled from 1 to 2%; the Free State accounted for a slight growth of 0,3%; and the number of Gauteng stories improved by 2%. Interestingly, the Western Cape coverage showed a significant dip over the two election periods. Exactly why this was so remained unclear, considering that there was much pre-election consternation as to what the future held for various political parties in the province. Like KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape was regarded as a closely contested race for victory, as the media noted: “The competition for the Western Cape premiership is head to head between van Schalkwyk, Rasool and Theuns Botha” (*Die Burger*, 25/3/2004, p. 1).

It was clear from the monitoring that some media made clear efforts to offer a regional diversity of election items. In particular, the following print media were distinguishable for their regional diversity:

Print Media	Broadcast Media
This Day	Kaya FM
The Star	Motsweding FM
Sowetan	Radio Sonder Grense
Beeld	SAFM
	Ukhozi FM
	SABC 2

This Day and Kaya FM in particular, are to be commended, given that *This Day* is a new print medium and this was their first election, and Kaya FM, for attempting to offer regional diversity even though they are a Gauteng-based medium, with a limited footprint. SABC radio is also to be broadly praised for their efforts to find stories in marginalised provinces.

While the monitoring showed a notable improvement in the amount of coverage afforded to the individual provinces, those provinces that are particularly under resourced, and often those most in need of greater access to information, remained under covered.

11. Party Coverage

With due recognition of the fact that equal coverage of all political parties across the country's media was not only impossible, but also hardly expected, it was the duty of the media once the election period was officially announced, to provide all of the political parties contesting the election with adequate opportunities, to publicise their views and opinions, in an equitable fashion.

With a total of thirty-seven parties contesting the election, thirteen at national level, and fourteen competing in one or a number of provinces, it could have been expected of the media to provide each of these with adequate coverage. While it was expected that the larger parties would receive the largest share of the coverage, the coverage given to these parties should have been in proportion to the other parties.

While ten parties won seats in the election, and a further two parties previously represented in parliament lost their seats, quantitatively, party coverage was largely limited to stories that focused on eight parties (ANC, DA, IFP, ID, NNP, ACDP, UDM, FFP+). It would appear that parties outside the top eight were almost non-entities during election coverage; only the activities of eight parties were deemed to be of sufficient news value to warrant coverage. Interestingly, the media appeared to negate the contributions made by parties such as the PAC, which has played a significant role in the political history of South Africa.

Party	Overall Coverage
ACDP	3%
ANC/Government	39%
DA	15%
FFP+	3%
ID	7%
IFP	13%
NNP	9%
UDM	3%
Other Parties	9%

Such a pattern is clearly evident in the above table. The table also illustrates that the spread of coverage across these eight parties was spread predominantly across the ANC the DA and the IFP. In spite of the ANC's having just under two thirds of the vote prior to the elections, the coverage was clearly not representative of their dominance. In relation to the smaller parties, such patterns could be considered to be reflective of the respective numerical strength of these parties; the figures observed tended to demonstrate the extent to which these parties were prioritised at the expense of the other parties contesting the elections. Thus, it was evident that the media coverage of the NNP, the UDM, the ACDP and the FFP+ was in proportion to the percentage of votes won by these parties in the previous elections.

Interestingly, while the ANC was the party that received the largest proportion of the coverage, the share of this coverage was far lower than the share of the votes won by the party during the elections. However, in consideration of the number of parties that were registered to challenge for parliamentary seats during the elections, in the interests of fair, balanced and equitable coverage, the practice of dedicating 40% of all monitored media coverage to the ruling party could be viewed as questionable.

11.1 Party coverage by medium

In a breakdown of the media coverage per political party, the results demonstrated a degree of uniformity in the patterns and levels of coverage provided to the eight parties, with some exceptions.

A brief analysis of the television media monitored reveals somewhat surprisingly that the ANC/Government received the lowest overall coverage on SABC3. For the most part, the parties were all similarly covered across the channels.

Party	SABC 1	SABC 2	SABC 3	e-tv
ACDP	4%	4%	4%	4%
ANC/Govt.	37%	33%	28%	37%
DA	12%	14%	15%	16%
FFP+	2%	3%	3%	1%
ID	6%	7%	7%	6%
IFP	14%	12%	14%	16%
NNP	7%	7%	8%	8%
UDM	5%	4%	3%	4%
Other Parties	13%	15%	18%	8%

ANC/Government tended to be afforded far greater amounts of coverage than the other parties on radio. Motswedding FM, Umhlobo Wenene FM, Y-FM and SAFM all afforded significant amounts of coverage to parties other than the top eight, which suggests a clear effort to offer diverse political viewpoints. The remainder of coverage tended to be in line with provincial voting trends, with the IFP receiving extensive coverage on Ukhozi FM.

Party	Bush Radio	Radio Pretoria	Radio Teemaneng Stereo	SAFM	Ukhozi FM	Umhlobo Wenene
ACDP	1%	0%	0%	3%	1%	0%
ANC/Govt.	50%	34%	42%	37%	48%	47%
DA	14%	19%	13%	14%	7%	18%
FF+	0%	9%	2%	2%	2%	0%
ID	10%	16%	5%	4%	3%	2%

IFP	14%	13%	17%	18%	24%	14%
NNP	10%	6%	9%	10%	5%	8%
UDM	1%	0%	5%	3%	3%	3%
Other Parties	1%	3%	7%	9%	7%	9%

Party	Motsweding	Radio 702	Y-FM	Kaya FM	OFM	Radio Algoa	RSG
ACDP	4%	1%	2%	2%	5%	3%	1%
ANC/Govt.	40%	42%	36%	41%	45%	50%	38%
DA	12%	15%	9%	17%	14%	15%	18%
FFP+	2%	1%	1%	1%	4%	0%	4%
ID	2%	6%	7%	5%	4%	3%	6%
IFP	13%	17%	22%	19%	11%	11%	16%
NNP	6%	8%	8%	9%	9%	10%	9%
UDM	7%	4%	4%	1%	4%	8%	3%
Other Parties	15%	7%	10%	5%	4%	0%	1%

Print media coverage shows fairly similar trends in political party coverage to radio, with some interesting exceptions. The *Mail & Guardian* demonstrated the greatest diversity in political party coverage, while *Ilanga* and *Isolezwe* demonstrated the most limited representation of political parties across all media. Given the additional capacity of print media to afford the elections more coverage, the overall political party diversity is disappointing.

Party	Star	Sowetan	Citizen	Beeld	This Day	Business Day	Daily Sun	Cape Times	Die Burger	EP Herald	Daily News
ACDP	1%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	6%	1%	3%	1%	3%
ANC/Govt	41%	40%	38%	33%	36%	47%	22%	35%	35%	47%	46%
DA	15%	16%	21%	16%	17%	14%	22%	17%	17%	23%	13%
FFP+	3%	1%	2%	5%	3%	2%	6%	2%	4%	3%	1%
ID	9%	9%	8%	8%	7%	8%	17%	12%	9%	5%	4%
IFP	12%	11%	12%	13%	10%	9%	11%	10%	7%	7%	15%
NNP	6%	9%	7%	11%	11%	10%	6%	12%	14%	5%	6%
UDM	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%	11%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Other Parties	10%	8%	6%	7%	9%	6%	0%	8%	9%	6%	9%

Party	Ilanga	Isolezwe	Sat. Star & Sunday Indep	City Press	Sunday Times	Naweek Beeld & Rapport	M & G	Sowetan Sunday World	Sunday Sun	W/ended Post
ACDP	3%	2%	3%	3%	1%	3%	4%	1%	0%	0%
ANC/Govt.	42%	48%	44%	42%	49%	39%	41%	45%	56%	39%
DA	3%	7%	11%	11%	13%	16%	9%	14%	11%	21%
FFP+	1%	0%	3%	3%	1%	6%	3%	3%	0%	3%
ID	0%	1%	7%	4%	6%	5%	5%	10%	11%	8%
IFP	47%	30%	9%	14%	16%	11%	9%	10%	0%	5%
NNP	2%	1%	9%	8%	7%	14%	10%	5%	11%	18%
UDM	1%	6%	5%	5%	1%	2%	3%	4%	0%	5%
Other Parties	2%	5%	9%	10%	7%	4%	14%	8%	11%	0%

For every medium, with the exception of *Ilanga* (where the IFP received 47% of the coverage), the ANC and government received the highest amounts of coverage, although the precise percentage of the coverage varied according to the medium. Coverage of the ANC/government ranged from accounting for just over a quarter on SABC 3, to comprising well over half the items in the *Sunday Sun*.

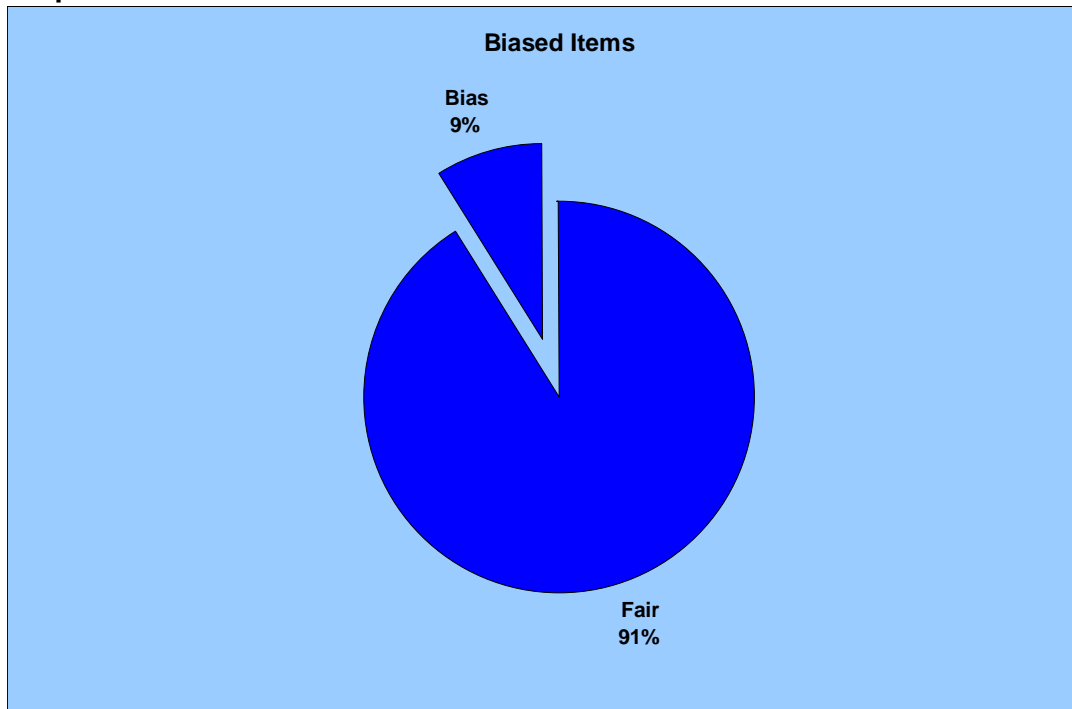
The coverage of the DA in African-language newspapers – *Ilanga* and *Isolezwe* – was surprisingly negligible, considering the levels of support for the party. These media, moreover, appear to have afforded even less coverage to the UDM, the NNP and the ID.

Of further relevance was the extent to which the FFP+ was covered by some of the Afrikaans-language media, in contrast to their treatment by the other media. In comparison to the average of 3% coverage for the party across all media, the monitoring of Radio Pretoria and the *Rapport* showed figures of 18% and 10% respectively for the FFP+. Such numbers revealed a far greater interest in this party by these media, than was the average across other media during the elections.

12. Fairness in the Media

It is important that the media report on parties in a consistent and balanced fashion once an election period has been declared. It is expected of the media not to engage in coverage that unduly favours or opposes any particular party. In assessing the bias exhibited for and/or against any particular party, such bias has been noted only where there is clear and obvious evidence that it actually exists, otherwise items were deemed fair. In the monitoring, 91% of all items were declared fair, whereas only 9% were deemed to have clear bias (see Graph G below).

Graph G



For the purposes of this project, bias has been understood as being present in a number of forms. When bias does occur, it is usually as a result of the language utilised, the deliberate omission of a counter view to that initially put forward, and/or the overall presentation of the item in the context of the newspaper or broadcast media news bulletin. Language bias is most clearly evident when allegation and exaggeration are involved. It is also possible for bias to exist in a single item that favours one or a number of parties, and opposes others. 3% of all items monitored displayed both bias against and bias in favour of a party or parties.

As far as media performance in the 2004 elections was concerned, qualitatively, certain parties tended to receive coverage that was alternatively focused on the positive and the negative, depending on the medium and the context. Such patterns did not necessarily translate into unduly favouring or opposing any particular parties.

Therefore, while those parties deemed by the media to be the most newsworthy – the ANC, DA, IFP, ACDP, and the ID – received coverage that either praised or criticised their performance during the election period, this coverage was not considered as being biased per se.

12.1 Negative vs. positive...

The media presented the DA's accusation of poor delivery levelled against the ANC during DA leader Tony Leon's campaigning in the Eastern Cape (SABC3, 19:00). This report served to present the ANC in a negative light, but was not necessarily biased against the party.

In addition, the items that repeated the DA's claims of proof of improper use of governmental resources for ANC election campaigns (*EP Herald*, 29/3/2004, p. 2), and those that highlighted former Environmental Affairs Minister Valli Moosa's comments that the ANC is the best party for governance in South Africa (p. 9), alternatively presented the ANC in negative and positive light, in the same medium, on the same day.

In fact, most of the coverage afforded to political parties could be categorised as being essentially fair in nature, without any clear bias. 91% of all items were deemed to be fair. Such figures were indicative of the fact that the coverage tended towards event-based, non-analytical reports on party campaigning and events that occurred during the monitoring period, without sufficient interrogation of the issues raised. Nevertheless, such an overwhelming level of fair items indicates a healthy media environment: the media are to be commended in this regard.

12.2 Biased items

When bias was detected, it was predominantly in relation to the ruling party. As the party that received the largest share of the coverage, it was hardly surprising that it was the party that received the most items favouring and opposing it. The monitoring revealed that the ANC had an almost equal chance of receiving coverage that was negatively biased towards the party, as it had of garnering favourably biased coverage. From the monitoring results, it was determined that of those items classified as having a negative bias, 32% were biased against the ANC. Similarly, 38% of items classified as having a positive bias, were biased in favour of the ruling party; the percentages were remarkably similar.

Pro-ANC bias was principally the result of repeating the allegations made by the party, directed at the other parties contesting the elections. Articles such as the one that presented the ANC accusing the ACDP of being "Pharisees" provided evidence of such a stance (*Business Day*, 29/3/2004, p. 4). Such items, while unduly unfavourable to the ACDP, could simultaneously be seen as representing a pro-ANC bias.

On the other hand, items were noted in which the ANC was covered from a one-sided perspective, which emphasised the negatives and downplayed the positives. An

example of this was provided by a column that appeared in *Die Burger* (25/3/2004, p. 22). The columnist took a satirical view of South Africa under ANC rule and ignored any mention of positive changes in South Africa under the ANC government.

Coverage of the DA followed similar patterns to those observed for the ANC, but on a proportional basis. A breakdown of the patterns observed revealed almost identical figures for those items that favoured and those that opposed the DA. Although they received a lower number of biased items than the ANC, the DA still accounted for a notable proportion of items that condemned and excessively supported the party without the necessary evidence. Such attention would seem to be in line with the overall coverage given to the DA. The figures illustrated that 12% of all items biased against a political party, and 19% of all items that favoured a political party, applied to the DA.

Coverage that was unfavourable towards the DA was apparent in an article in which the NNP slated the DA's principles (*This Day*, 24/3/2004, p. 5). During the course of the article, the NNP leader accused the DA of "playing gymnastics with principles" by abandoning principles in the "hope of widening appeal." These precepts were merely presented, without explanation or reason.

A similar position that castigated the DA leader Tony Leon in particular, without sufficient proof, was seen in an opinion piece, which expressed the view that Tony Leon was "enraged by real democracy". It would appear that the author believed that Tony Leon's rage was because he found it hard to appeal to the majority as the ANC does (*City Press*, 28/3/2004, p. 28). While there may be some merit in providing criticism of the party on certain issues, by merely accusing Leon of being anti-democratic, without providing the necessary supporting evidence, such items have been deemed to negatively favour the DA, through the contributor engaging in practices of allegation.

Tony Leon's visit to the Hector Peterson Memorial also received biased coverage. The article provided the views of the Peterson family, which painted Leon in unfavourable light. In the article that appeared in the *Sowetan*, (20/3/2004, p. 7) it was reported that the Peterson family was not impressed by Leon's "sudden compassion." They dismissed his actions as mere campaigning, as a political tactic to secure "the black vote."

12.3 The IFP and the NNP

The most interesting aspect of the analysis into party bias in the media was perhaps in the manner in which the IFP and the NNP were covered. While other parties received fairly equal amounts of positively and negatively biased items, the difference in numbers between biased items for the IFP and the NNP was more dramatic. When the coverage was identified as being biased in nature, it tended most often towards coverage that opposed both parties, although they did receive some favourably biased items.

From the monitoring results, it was discovered that the NNP was three times as likely to receive coverage that was negatively biased towards the party, than it was to receive coverage that favoured it. One example of negative coverage was "NNP left for dead at polls by electorate with different take on democracy" (*Weekend Argus*, 17/4/2004, p. 15). Similarly, negative coverage of the IFP was twice as popular amongst the media, than was coverage that painted an overtly positive picture of Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the party. A typical example of negative bias was: "IFP protest display of anger," which reported how "angry IFP protesters" denounced the IEC for "stealing votes" from the IFP and giving them to the ANC (*Daily News*, 26/3/2004, p. 1).

13. Coverage of SA's Decade of Democracy: Whose Celebration is this?

Many of the print media that the MMP monitored for the election period carried special supplements on and around 25 April, which celebrated South Africa's decade of democracy. Coverage featured in the following media was analysed: *The Sunday Independent*, *Independent Group*, *Sowetan*, *Sowetan Sunday World*, *Beeld* and the *City Press*. From some of the examples of the democracy coverage, it would appear that the roles of women, children and the elderly in a democratic South Africa, have been insignificant. With a few notable exceptions, these groups were absent; rarely sourced or represented in the supplements. This raised the question of how the celebration of South Africa's democracy is represented, and who is celebrated?

The table below represents the results derived from a quantitative analysis of images and authors of each article or image where the person's sex could be clearly identified.

Media Title	Images		Authors/Contributors	
	Male %	Female%	Male %	Female%
Beeld	67	33	53	47
City Press	92	8	100	0
GCIS	62	38	74	26
Independent Group	77	23	88	13
Sowetan/ Sunday World	71	29	100	0
Sunday Independent	55	45	50	50

The analysis showed that the *Sunday Independent's* focus was the most balanced in terms of images of males and females, with 45% females. The analysis of the contributors offers a more stark comparison; both the *City Press* and the *Sowetan Sunday World* did not feature any items written by women. The *Beeld* and the *Sunday Independent* are to be commended for featuring contributions by a balanced number of male and female authors.

An analysis of the different races imaged showed that the supplements were dominated by images of black people. Coloureds and Indians were largely ignored, with whites making up the balance of images. Two exceptions were the *Beeld* and the *Independent Group*, which depicted white people in 67% and 71% respectively of the images.

An expected and extensively covered topic of discussion in the democracy coverage was the pride that South Africa, as a country, had moved from apartheid to a democracy. Contemporary topical issues such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, the South African economy and black economic empowerment, education, a comparison and

discussion of the two presidents who led South Africa during the past decade, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki; sport; the constitution and South Africa's foreign policies comprised much of the coverage.

Issues that received less coverage were the new generation of youth in South Africa, the elderly, gender-based violence and gender equality in the government, the media and the workplace. However, it should be noted that gender-focused issues only comprised a minimum number of articles. Aside from gender-based violence, there was a notable lack in the representation of any other gender-focused issues; gay and lesbian rights, for instance, were completely ignored in the democracy coverage. Dignity and equality are fundamental aspects of the constitution, but when measured against these ideals, the media appears to have fallen short, thereby doing themselves and the public a great disservice through the incorrect representation of South African society.

13.1 City Press

Of the fifteen items in the *City Press's* democracy supplement, none focused on the role of women in the ten years of democracy and there were no contributions by female authors. The only article that raised gender issues was by Professor Tawana Kupe: "Where have all the editors gone?" which highlighted the lack of representation of women in top editorial positions in South African media. Kupe's comment that women were: "woefully under-represented", highlighted the apparent absence of women in the media both as subject matter in articles, and behind the scenes as journalists (*City Press* Supplement, 25/4/2004, p. 9).

13.2 Independent Group

Following a similar trend, the *Independent Group* released a supplement in its various papers (*The Star*, *Pretoria News*, *Cape Argus*, *Daily News*, *Diamond Fields Advertiser* and *Isolezwe*) on Wednesday 21 April 2004; of the eight contributors, only one was a woman, Nobel Prize Laureate Nadine Gordimer.

13.3 Sunday Independent

Following *The Star's* Wednesday supplement (21/4/2004), the *Sunday Independent* covered the decade of democracy in a range of different articles within the body of the paper, including a number of items contributed by women. The front page was notable for its full-colour image of two children smiling, with the headline: "We celebrate 10 years of the world's most vibrant democracy" (*Sunday Independent*, 25/4/2004, p. 1). The image offered a welcome change in its representation of children as happy; the MMP's Empowering Children and the Media research highlighted how children are most often identified in the media as victims (*Empowering Children and the Media*, MMP, 2004).

The medium featured an article by Gender Links: "Paper parity for women must become real rights" (p. 4), which, although it repeated the oft-quoted statistics on the new appointment of women in government, was striking in its address of gender-

based violence. The story reported the murder of CGE (Commission on Gender Equality) complaints officer Hunadi Madidimalo by her husband on Valentine's Day 2004. Madidimalo was identified as a woman "who lived with the daily irony of helping other women apply new laws to make a difference to their lives while going home to an abusive relationship" and noted that "she would never want to be thought of as a victim". This desire is in strong contrast to a common media stereotype of depicting women as victims.

Another item, "Celebrating 10 years of democracy" (p. 5), was an extract from President Thabo Mbeki's weekly online newsletter. The article noted that the developments towards racial equality in South Africa "made it inevitable that we could not speak of the genuine liberation of our people without talking about gender equality and the emancipation of women" and the "progress that has been made towards [creating] a non-sexist society in South Africa." The appointment of women as four out of the nine premiers was an example of the government's commitment to gender equality in the democratic South Africa.

The *Sunday Independent* is to be commended for their effort to feature a balanced number of contributions by both male and female journalists.

13.4 Communicating government

A different approach to the democracy coverage was the GCIS (Government Communications and Information Service) supplement, which was released in the *City Press* (25/4/2004). Largely image-based, the supplement focused on "ordinary people," portraying a range of races, sexes and ages. The government release featured important leaders like Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki as part of the larger display of images of crowds, in contrast to the trend displayed in many of the other media's supplements, where the leaders tended to be the central focus of the articles.

The choice to portray "ordinary" people as those who brought about democracy, instead of focusing on leaders like Nelson Mandela, highlighted how the representation of only a few famous people may be viewed as an inaccurate representation of change. Nelson Mandela is continually noted for his adamant views that he alone did not free South Africa from the oppression of apartheid; change came about because the majority of the people revolted. He is quoted as saying: "It is a mistake to think that a single individual can unite a country" (*In the Words of Nelson Mandela*, p. 42), and "I wanted to tell the people that I was not a messiah, but an ordinary man who had become leader because of extraordinary circumstances" (*Long Walk to Freedom*, p. 676).

The accompanying text in the GCIS supplement was minimal; it included the preamble to the constitution; fragments from speeches and interviews by well-known political figures, as well as by ordinary South Africans; and extracts from the works of a range of South African artists, both male and female. A quotation from former President Nelson Mandela's speech on Freedom Day in 1996, emphasised the focus

of the supplement on the citizens of South Africa and their role in the democratic process: "the people are their own liberators."

This supplement was positive because it highlighted the role of the citizens, not just the leaders, in a democratic South Africa.

13.5 Beeld

The *Beeld's* coverage was exceptional in its attempt to focus on older members of the community for their views on the changes in South Africa (p. 5), and children, who were born into a democratic South Africa, and what the future holds for them (p. 22). Another initiative taken by the medium was the attempt to depict not only how, like the other media, South African sport has been influenced, but also how the arts community was affected by the changes. The medium noted that writers in particular are known for helping to bring about political changes: "Dis dikwels skrywers wat help om veranderinge aan 'n politieke bestel mee te bring" (*Beeld*, 22/4/2004, p. 6). *Beeld* is to be commended for their positive representation of frequently marginalised groups such as the elderly and children.

13.6 Sowetan and the Sowetan Sunday World

Study of the supplement in the *Sowetan Sunday World* (25/4/2004, reissued in the *Sowetan* on 26/4/2004) revealed that most of the articles about the celebration of democracy focused on Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki in their capacity as leaders. Other articles sourced mostly men; only three articles noted the roles that women played in the ten years of democracy in South Africa. Apart from a brief mention of athlete Penny Heyns in "A decade of sports excellence" (p. 32), women were only sourced in their roles as victims of rape, abuse and HIV/AIDS in "Reason to blush in shame" (p. 22) and "Men with a reason to be proud" (p. 23). While it is positive that the medium raised the issue of gender-based violence, it is a pity that their overall representation of women was as victims.

In a similar manner, within the body of the newspaper itself, the *Sowetan Sunday World* took a controversial approach in its coverage of South Africa's celebration of a decade of democracy (*Sowetan Sunday World*, 25/4/2004). The front-page teaser: "Look out for 10 babes in this special decade of democracy edition" typified the paper's chosen angle on democracy coverage. 57% of all images of women depicted by the *Sowetan Sunday World* represented the women as scantily clad, many in suggestive poses. The continual reference to women as "babes" contributed to the overall objectification of women in the newspaper.

One of the most extreme items was "10 Years of Best Boobs: Abreast of the Talent" (p. 12). The article rated a range of female South African celebrities in terms of their breasts: "Whether you just like looking at them or enjoy having your face buried deep between them, no one can dispute that a stunning cleavage will put a smile on your face." The language used in the item was explicit, with phrases like "incredibly inspiring décolletage", "ample bosom" and "sexy mounds". The article reduced the celebrities' talent to their physical attributes, specifically their breasts: "When

[Michelle Botes] is referred to as 'talented', you know it has more to do with her perfect pair." Another caption noted "you can be shy but still adored if you expose just enough flesh", which suggested that women may be admired for their bodies alone, and for placing those bodies on display for the enjoyment of the assumed male viewer. The selection of such material seems at odds with the constitutional values of dignity and equality, especially in an edition that clearly highlighted South Africa's democratic achievements.

14. Manifestos and Campaign Strategies: The Parties and the Media

The following is an analysis of eight political parties' manifestos and election campaign strategies, as reported on in the media. The assumption was that a good manifesto was comprehensive, well explained and addressed the most important issues. The language in a manifesto should be understood by everyone; not just by analysts and intellectuals. Timeframes and goals are also important factors, especially for economy-related policies like development, poverty alleviation, and black empowerment.

14.1 Why these parties?

There were three reasons why the eight parties were chosen: on the basis of their performance in the 2004 elections, performance in previous democratic elections and the parties' contributions to politics in South Africa over the years. The parties discussed are the African National Congress (ANC), the Democratic Alliance (DA), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the United Democratic Movement (UDM), the Independent Democrats (ID), the New National Party (NNP), the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC).

The MMP interviewed party representatives from each of these eight parties to discover what they thought of the media coverage of the 2004 elections. This analysis includes their opinions and impressions about the media's performance in terms of depth of analysis and fair, equitable coverage, of the political parties' manifestos, election campaigns and organised events.

14.2 The African National Congress (ANC)

14.2.1 The "People's Contract"

The ANC manifesto foregrounded citizen participation through its people's contract. The manifesto had both a five and a ten-year plan, where the five-year plan was more relevant to the 2004 elections. The plan outlined the following issues: economic growth, job creation, service delivery, social security, reducing crime and corruption, constitutional rights, governance, and a foreign policy, which focused primarily on Africa.

All of the ANC's economic-related policies displayed concrete plans, clear goals and timeframes. Their other policies were also well detailed, with practical applications that showed how they were going to implement their policies. The only areas that lacked detail were their housing, HIV/AIDS and education policies.

14.2.2 The campaign strategy

The ANC's election campaign strategies were strong and well planned. The party was previously accused of being too distant and withdrawn, hence they had to improve their relationship with the public. First, by launching their manifesto in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), a province in which the ANC has struggled to win a majority, the party

demonstrated that they intended to reach all the people of South Africa. Secondly, the media noticed Mbeki's personality change: "Mbeki puts on a caring, human face for voters" (*Business Day*, 6/4/04, p. 4). This time around he was much friendlier and more engaging with the electorate than in 1999. Thirdly, the tactic of door-to-door campaigning, instead of holding endless rallies, as was the case in 1999, seemed to have worked in their favour. These three strategies espouse the ANC's deliberate attempt to get closer to the public.

The ANC's priority to win in every province and to dominate all provincial legislatures gave them reason to work harder and more creatively to attain this ambitious objective. The Western Cape and KZN, as the two most contested provinces, meant that the ANC had to make additional effort to win in these provinces.

The prevention of election violence was also an important part of the ANC's election strategy for KZN; various attempts were made in association with the Inkatha Freedom Party to resolve the tensions between the two parties. With political tensions resolved, the ANC could campaign in KZN without any limitations imposed by political intimidation and violence.

The Western Cape was the second most hotly contested province and with the ANC planning to win in all provinces, they had to put out a strong campaign to win this province. The ANC formed a partnership with the NNP in the Western Cape: "... for convenience the ANC will be forced to co-operate with the Nats [NNP] to prevent the DA from making inroads in the Western Cape" (*City Press*, 14/03/2004, p. 17).

Lastly, the manner in which the ANC formulated its policies made it virtually impossible for other political parties to provide an alternative to government. The ANC could be found at the centre of the political spectrum on all pertinent policies, especially economic policies: "elections are won and lost on economic issues ... it is almost impossible for any opponent to place a clear and viable economic alternative on the table" (*Business Day*, 6/4/2004, p. 8). This gave the ANC an image of competency over other parties; they appeared to be balanced, not diverting to either extreme of any pertinent issues, hence, the most credible.

14.2.3 On the media...

In an interview with the MMP (July 2004), ANC spokesperson Smuts Ngonyama said that his party was relatively happy with the coverage they received from the media. He thought that there was a fair attempt to try and represent all of the parties. Mr Ngonyama cited two problems with the media coverage of the elections. The first was lack of depth in the explanation of certain policies in the manifestos. Policies, like job creation and the ANC's broad economic policies were not well explained by the media, according to Mr Ngonyama. "Election coverage needs to be more than a compilation of sound bites from different parties. It needs to seek [and] to delve into the issues and manifestos of parties in a critical and detailed manner," Ngonyama said. This finding was in keeping with the MMP's observation that the media coverage was event-based.

Secondly, Mr Ngonyama was not fully convinced that the media provided coverage in an equitable way, taking into account the relative size and significance of a party, "without pre-empting the outcome of the elections, the media is required to determine how to allocate space and time to parties which broadly reflects the extent of their support and influence," he said.

14.3 The Democratic Alliance (DA)

14.3.1 "South Africa Deserves Better"

The DA probably had a more elaborate manifesto than any other party contesting the 2004 elections; their central message was "South Africa deserves better". The DA aimed to prove that they were an alternative to the ANC and retained their position as the official opposition. The DA's manifesto outlined the ANC's failures and showed how the DA planned to rectify these failures.

The manifesto addressed important issues relevant to the elections, such as poverty alleviation, fighting crime, job creation, HIV/AIDS. Their policies were well articulated in terms of reason, practicality and most importantly, a challenge to the status quo. The manifesto was divided into five major areas of concern, addressed in 19 policies, with the focus on creating opportunity, fighting crime, improving living conditions, building and empowering communities and safe-guarding democracy.

The DA manifesto contained realistic goals, which were laid out in feasible timeframes. Like the ANC, the DA also had facts and figures to make their case credible, especially with economic matters. The major critique of the DA's manifesto and campaign is that it was too negative. It was almost impossible to embrace the DA's ideals without demonising the ANC.

14.3.2 The campaign strategy

The DA launched their manifesto in the most unlikely place, Soweto, to prove to South Africa that the DA could move out of its comfort zone to serve the people. The launch was accompanied by popular music, to emphasise that the DA was a people's party: "DA turns to Kwaito to launch manifesto – we offer real change, Leon tells supporters in Soweto" (*The Star*, 23/2/2004, p. 6). This move displayed foresight on the DA's behalf, because they did not expect to win the 2004 elections by making inroads into black communities, rather, the DA planned to become a mass party in the future.

According to Tony Leon, "As the DA, we are involved in a two-phase process. Firstly we need to unite the opposition and take votes away from the ruling ANC. The second phase is to put together a workable alternative to the government and challenge them for power in the next election." (Tony Leon quoted in *The Star*, 1/4/2004, p. 15).

During its election campaign, the DA faced battle from three major parties: the African National Congress, the New National Party and the Independent Democrats. Many media noted the DA's attitude towards these parties was overtly confrontational: "the ANC have failed to deliver on promises...and the NNP is wrong ...they capitulate in the face of pressure" (Tony Leon quoted in the *Citizen*, 20/1/2004, p. 16). "Douglas Gibson, of the DA labelled the ID 'a tiny party hell-bent on being an opposition to the opposition'" (*Business Day*, 07/4/2004, p. 1).

The DA took their position as an alternative government seriously; they intensified their battle against the ANC by provoking a public debate between party leaders Tony Leon and President Thabo Mbeki. The ANC refused the challenge of a debate between "the leaders of the country's two biggest political parties" on the grounds that the DA was trying to raise the public status of its leader, when "any branch member [of the ANC] could tackle Leon in a political debate 'because if he [Leon] were in the ANC, he would not hold any leadership position even within a branch. The ANC does not have leaders of such low calibre'" (ANC spokesperson, Dumisani Makhaye, quoted in the *Sowetan*, 18/2/2004, p. 4).

The DA regarded the NNP and the ID as posing a threat to their potential voters. The DA's strategy to unite the opposition was also compromised by the ID's growing popularity as a newcomer; as a result, Leon personalised attacks on the ID by openly criticising their leader, Patricia de Lille: "I am not a pacifist that will turn the other cheek" (*The Star*, 01/4/2004, p.15). The DA also campaigned against other opposition parties by telling the electorate that voting for the smaller parties was a waste of their vote. This move was not only provocative towards the smaller parties, but also gave the DA an image of arrogance.

14.3.3 On the media...

Mike Moriarty, the DA leader in Johannesburg, spoke to the MMP in July 2004. He said that the media made all efforts to be as fair as possible, but that the SABC seemed to be struggling, "SABC TV had a stance or a slant toward the ANC... SABC English TV news was particularly notorious for being pro-ANC, as opposed to the African languages news [on SABC] that were much fairer in their coverage of the elections." For Mr Moriarty, print and radio were much fairer in the coverage of opposition events and stories, although some of the media "showed a lot of favour towards the ID leader, Patricia de Lille, much more than was due to her," said Mr Moriarty.

The DA admitted that the ANC received more coverage than other parties. Although this was understandable because the ANC is a party as well as the government, the DA is planning to propose rules that will restrict government from promoting their activities and achievements in the media under the banner of the party (ANC) in future elections. Moriarty also said that for the media to improve on its coverage, ICASA had to be more critical of the SABC channels.

Apart from dissatisfaction with the SABC, the DA was content with the way the media handled the elections, in terms of the fair representation of parties. However, the party, like many others, was dissatisfied with the depth and analysis that the media allocated to addressing party manifestos. The DA felt that the media did not communicate their manifesto as the party had intended.

14.4 The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)

14.4.1 "Triple C"

The IFP manifesto comprised a "three Cs" theme for the 2004 elections:

- Caring about how decisions are made.
- Capable of leadership.
- Clean from corruption.

The IFP manifesto had six main policies that the IFP maintained would convince South Africans that they were caring, capable and clean. These were: HIV/AIDS, fighting corruption, job creation, poverty alleviation, fighting crime and foreign policy.

The most outstanding policy in the IFP manifesto was their HIV/AIDS policy. This policy was comprehensive and it outlined practical strategies to handle the epidemic. The IFP boasted the most successful HIV/AIDS program in KwaZulu-Natal, after having distributed Nevirapine against government will.

The IFP's economic-related policies, that is, their 12-point plan for job creation and 10-point plan for poverty alleviation, had sound ideas. The policies appeared to be holistic, well thought-out and comprehensive, but they lacked the relevant statistics and timeframes. As far as other policies were concerned i.e. crime, corruption and foreign policy, there was nothing unique about them, they were reasonable and relevant to the South African context.

The IFP blundered by poorly addressing issues of service delivery, land redistribution, education, black economic empowerment and health. They may have had a sound HIV/AIDS policy, but their manifesto did not contain a health policy. Service delivery, which was a very important issue during the 2004 elections, was almost non-existent in the IFP's manifesto. The IFP black empowerment policy lacked explanation; to merely say that they supported broad-based black empowerment was not enough. The IFP did not articulate much about housing and education, which contradicted their motto of "caring"; they could have been more vigilant in addressing these issues.

14.4.2 The campaign strategy

In terms of the IFP campaign strategy, it was possible to observe four main tactics. Firstly, the IFP criticised the ANC on its HIV/AIDS policy. During the IFP manifesto launch, leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi announced that HIV/AIDS was "the ANC government's biggest policy failure. ...Their [the ANC] 2004 manifesto fails to outline a comprehensive plan with proposals to eradicate HIV/AIDS" (*Sowetan*, 19/01/2004,

p. 4). HIV/AIDS is a sensitive issue, which the ANC seemed to be failing at addressing. The IFP also made progress in KZN, which proved that they cared and were capable of tackling the HIV/AIDS issue, despite political obstacles.

Secondly, the IFP spent much time and effort in securing KZN. Their manifesto may have had a national mandate, but their campaigning was mostly targeted at preventing the ANC from controlling KZN. It is understandable that if the party put forward a strong national campaign, they would suffer tremendous losses in KZN, whereas if they focused only on securing KZN, they would not grow nationally. This leads to the third point; the remedy.

Thirdly, the IFP had to form a coalition with a party that had a strong national mandate: the DA. In most of their policies, the IFP and the DA complemented each other; some policies that were poorly articulated by the IFP were well covered in the DA's manifesto. This coalition gave the IFP an edge over other smaller parties who had better manifestos and were canvassing throughout South Africa.

Lastly, the IFP kept an open door for possible cooperation with the ANC government after the elections. Support for the Government of National Unity (GNU) helped the IFP campaign; they appeared to be more reasonable than the DA, who openly refused alliance with government and the ANC.

14.4.3 On the media...

In an interview with the MMP, the IFP, represented by their national spokesperson; Reverend Keith M. Zondi, voiced dissatisfaction with the coverage supplied by the SABC (July 2004). Rev. Zondi said that the SABC favoured the ANC at the expense of the smaller parties. The IFP was satisfied with the coverage from e-tv and the print media; these, Rev. Zondi said, were very fair. An important critique that Rev. Zondi raised, was that the media should play a part in voter education, "public participation in this political process is very important and the media should dedicate some effort toward voter education."

14.5 The United Democratic Movement (UDM)

14.5.1 Socio-economic freedom

The UDM manifesto was based on improved socio-economic conditions so that political freedom can be realised. The UDM believed that political freedom without socio-economic freedom was a hollow concept; hence, their policies were based on bringing all South Africans to a point where they could enjoy socio-economic freedom.

The manifesto began by criticising government on three issues: floor-crossing legislation, the arms deal, and the lack of commitment to the upgrading of the taxi industry: the re-capitalisation programme. These three issues, though important, could be considered to be of little importance to the daily life of the Eastern Cape voter. Other prominent election issues like poverty and access to health care could

be viewed as having more social impact. The manifesto could have been stronger had these issues received more prominent focus.

Important and relevant issues to the 2004 elections that were outlined in the UDM's manifesto were economic development, job creation, poverty alleviation, HIV/AIDS, health, good governance and education. Other issues that were briefly addressed included service delivery, black economic empowerment and land policy.

The most promising part of the UDM manifesto was its views on good governance, human rights and accountability.

The UDM lacked two important issues: housing and foreign policy. While foreign policy may not have a direct impact on citizens' daily lives, housing, however, is pertinent to the average voter and the UDM's manifesto would have benefited from the inclusion of such a policy as an important issue.

Some of the media noted that the UDM's manifesto offered nothing unique to the electorate: "The core of UDM manifesto was not that different from those of the ANC and the IFP, except that they don't want to see the economy left to the dictates of market forces" (*The Star*, 2/2/2004, p. 2).

14.5.2 The campaign strategy

The UDM was relatively quiet; for the most part, the party remained out of the media spotlight. Their campaign was difficult to single out and appeared, like their manifesto, to contain few surprises. In 1999, the UDM received much media publicity as the newest party; in 2004, the ID filled this role: "similar publicity had greeted the UDM and its leader Bantu Holomisa during the previous election" (*This Day*, 12/4/2004, p. 4).

The UDM did not form coalitions with any of the other political parties. Their campaign strategy consisted of critiquing the ruling party: "Holomisa takes a swipe at ANC" (*City Press*, 22/2/2004, p. 2).

14.5.3 On the media...

When the MMP spoke to party leader Bantu Holomisa, he said that the UDM had three main complaints about media coverage of the 2004 elections (July 2004). Firstly, Mr Holomisa agreed that most of the radio and print media had adhered to their mandate of equal coverage for political parties, however, the UDM found the SABC television channels to be biased towards the ANC. Secondly, the UDM was not convinced that the media did their best to give enough depth of coverage to some party policies and manifestos. "There is a need for more space [and time] to be allocated for manifestos and also space for politicians to explain what their policies are," said Mr Holomisa.

Thirdly, the UDM questioned the manner in which the media judged what was newsworthy. Mr Holomisa claimed that during the election period, when "the ANC

says something it is considered news, but if the UDM (or any other opposition party) said the same thing before, it wouldn't be newsworthy. The media needs to move away from reporting only reactive politics and start giving prominence to the opposition's proactive views."

14.6 The Independent Democrats (ID)

14.6.1 "We Shall Overcome"

The ID, under the leadership of Patricia de Lille, was regarded as the strongest newcomer. Their manifesto was divided into seven parts, and covered almost all of the important issues in an easily accessible manner. The theme of the manifesto was to overcome the range of divides in South Africa: rural/urban, economic inequality, human security, HIV/AIDS, education, digital, global, and the government/people divide.

A few important issues were not properly addressed in comparison to other political parties' manifestos. The ID did not have any housing policy and their service delivery, economic and land policies lacked detail.

The most impressive policies in the ID manifesto were their HIV/AIDS policy, job creation and crime prevention. These policies identified current shortcomings and challenges, as well as solutions. Their stance on good governance and accountability was based on the principles of democracy and human rights.

In their manifesto, the ID addressed unique issues that were not addressed by any of the other major parties. The ID suggested the introduction of a "Common Rape Protocol", where sexually abused women can find help through certain professional procedures. Other unique features of the ID's manifesto were the Animal Rights policy, and the focus on the development of Arts and Culture.

14.6.2 The campaign strategy

For a party of this magnitude, the ID put out an impressive election campaign. They were distinguishable from the other small parties because of their leader Patricia de Lille, who was often reported in the media as being outspoken: "Sharp Shooter – in the double-dealing political debate, one woman is prepared to walk her talk" (*The Star*, 27/3/2004, p. 5). Many of the ID's opponents viewed this personality trait as a weakness and accused the ID of being "a one-person band" (*This Day*, 12/4/2004, p. 4). The DA became notorious for attacking the ID, which in turn, provided the ID "with more column inches and more sound bites" (*This Day*, 12/4/2004, p.4). It could have been expected that the Pan African Congress would have been the ID's biggest rival, because Patricia de Lille defected from the PAC to form her own party, but the DA was. This raised the ID's profile as a serious threat to the official opposition.

Unlike the DA, the ID focused their campaign on being constructive and effective; they aimed to challenge government to make sure that government fulfils its

promises. The ID promised voters that they would cooperate with the ANC where the two parties have common ground, but similarly, that they would challenge the ANC if government falls short. This constructive attitude cannot only be seen as unique and positive, but also as a reasonable stand.

As the name suggests, the Independent Democrats did not resort to any coalitions for political expedience. It can be assumed that if they keep this reputation and gain more support, the ID will be a force to reckon with in future elections.

14.6.3 On the media...

The MMP spoke to the ID's media liaisons, Brent Meersman and Thulani Sithole in August 2004. They said that the ID thought the print media's coverage of the elections was fair and radio coverage was good. Again, the SABC television channels were cited as being unfair in their coverage during the run up to the elections, the opposition parties were neglected; however, the ID was happy with the coverage that the SABC television channels provided on election day. The ID was impressed with e-tv's Soapbox; they thought it was "an excellent idea".

Although the ID found the media to be fair in terms of coverage, they were not convinced that the print media had done enough research to provide good analyses.

14.7 The New National Party (NNP)

14.7.1 "Fair Share for All"

The NNP manifesto was based on cooperation with the ANC in government, a strong emphasis on the Government of National Unity (GNU), crime prevention, and the death penalty. The NNP claimed that they were a voice for all people; they represented the voices of the people in government. Their manifesto stated that they would co-operate with the ANC in order to ensure everyone got their fair share of the opportunities available to all South Africans. The NNP appeared to disregard the issues of HIV/AIDS, poverty, housing and service delivery, as these policies did not include practical – application in terms of implementation plans or timeframes – in the manifesto.

14.7.2 The campaign strategy

In terms of campaign strategies, the NNP, like the IFP, concentrated on winning and governing one of the provinces: the Western Cape. Party leader Marthinus van Schalkwyk even ran for the premiership of the Western Cape. The NNP did not emphasise their campaign on a national level, and their standing nationally was poor in the outcome of the elections.

Part of the NNP campaign strategy was to fight their – and the ANC's – biggest rival: the DA. The NNP accused the DA of being irrelevant to the needs of the majority of the people of South Africa through the practice of the politics of fear to get the minority vote. They also claimed that the DA had become right wing and lost many

of its liberal supporters, who could then “find a political home” in the NNP (*City Press*, 7/3/2004, p. 19).

14.7.3 On the media...

In an interview with the MMP (July 2004), Daryl Swanepoel, secretary-general of the NNP, said the NNP was not satisfied with the way the media had handled various party manifestos. By way of explanation, he said, “The problem was that they [the media] were not in-depth enough to explain the differentiated approaches of the different parties.” He said that the NNP found the media provided only shallow analyses of party messages, hence confusing the electorate about what each party stood for. Mr Swanepoel emphasised the media’s need to let politicians speak directly, via the media, because party messages were being distorted, or not sufficiently explained, “there was presumption of what the party’s message was,” he added.

For Mr Swanepoel, the ANC got the best coverage because they are government and, therefore, set the political agenda.

14.8 The African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP)

14.8.1 Amen!

The ACDP manifesto and campaign strategy was based on the theme of governance through Christian principles and morals.

Apart from basing their policies on Christian precepts, the focus of the ACDP was on the decentralisation of political power from central government to local governments. This “bottom-up” approach highlighted the importance of empowering local governments.

The ACDP addressed the following issues from a local government point of view: housing, service delivery, education, economic development through empowering local communities, reducing tax burdens, technological development, and fighting HIV/AIDS through moral choice of abstinence and marital faithfulness. Most of these policies were well thought through and consistent with the ACDP’s decentralisation stance, although some of the most important policies were hardly engaged with. There was, for example, no health policy and no concrete policy for poverty alleviation. The party could also have improved their economic and black economic empowerment policies. As was the case with many of the smaller parties, the ACDP lacked the relevant figures, timeframes and goals; they relied on principles alone.

Decentralised political systems can be viewed as positive, because there is room for citizen participation in politics, although they take time to develop. There has to be a culture of high citizen participation, which at the present is low, especially when the low turnouts for the elections in 1999 and 2004 are taken into consideration.

The ACDP policies were consistent with and complementary to their bottom-up approach, where the most outstanding policies were housing and service delivery. Ideally, these policies would be best implemented under a decentralised system, where local governments could interact directly with their communities to provide basic services more efficiently.

14.8.2 The campaign strategy

The ACDP's main strategy was based on religious sentiments. Although the ACDP is a Christian party, they did not exclude other religious groups; ethics and morality form the basis of a range of belief systems.

During their campaign, the ACDP aimed to develop into the second largest political party, the *Business Day* featured an article: "ACDP not small fry, says leader," where Kenneth Meshoe was quoted as saying: "we aim to become the official opposition in SA" (*Business Day*, 13/2/2004, p. 3). This ambitious attitude set the standard for the ACDP's tenacious campaign.

14.8.3 On the media...

In an interview with the MMP in July 2004, ACDP media liaison Selby Khumalo noted that media coverage was fair, apart from a few instances where they felt that certain parties influenced the media. Khumalo cited the ANC, the IFP, and the DA as parties "who have ties to the media."

Mr Khumalo had two major complaints about the media coverage of the elections; first was the issue of semi-independent media companies: "Political parties are deploying people loyal to them to different media organisations in order to have a word in their favour. For example, the SABC favoured the ANC, therefore, it will be a good idea to have a multi-party board for the SABC," said Mr Khumalo. Secondly, the ACDP complained that the smaller parties did not receive enough visual coverage – pictures – only stories, so the electorate was not familiar with some of the politicians' faces when they went to the ballot.

The ACDP noted that overall, the media tried to report fairly, but like other parties the ACDP found the SABC/ANC relationship to have benefited the ANC. The ACDP also voiced the opinion that the top three parties (ANC, DA and IFP) were the most favoured in the media coverage.

14.9 The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC)

14.9.1 "Aluta Continua!"

The PAC manifesto was based on socialist principles; the PAC wanted South Africa to become a socialist country. Their central policies were those of an interventionist nature: anti-privatisation, free education and health, more money for pensioners, a regular unemployment allowance, equitable land redistribution, and the subsidisation of African farms and businesses.

The MMP was unable to obtain a complete copy of the PAC manifesto, thus, the MMP relied on the media summaries that were published in some media. The manner in which the manifesto was represented in the media suggested that there were few practical aspects to some of the PAC's policies. Most notably, the PAC's solutions for unemployment and poverty appeared difficult to implement. Unless these elements of the manifesto were greatly expanded on in the complete version, it would appear that the policies are impractical and irreconcilable, as the following summary shows: "The PAC is offering an allowance of at least R500 a month for the unemployed. This will help reduce massive unemployment, poverty, humiliation and crime" (*City Press*, 15/2/2004, p. 18). The PAC raised realistic and genuine concerns in their policies on black economic empowerment, fighting crime and corruption, and equitable land redistribution.

14.9.2 The campaign strategy

In terms of strategy, the PAC was mostly critical of government, especially in terms of military expenditure. The PAC claimed that the state did not have enough money to meet its social obligations because of its privatisation policies. They also criticised GEAR (Growth, Employment And Redistribution), saying that it only enriched a handful of well-connected ANC members.

The 2004 elections were important for the PAC, as the main determinant of the party's political survival. Some media dubbed this "a make-or-break moment" for the party (*City Press*, 15/2/2004, p.18). The party had to campaign hard if they wanted to survive in South African politics. The results, at 0.73% of the electorate, were not that good, although the party reflected an improvement of 0.02% from the 1999 elections.

14.9.3 On the media...

The PAC national organiser, Mr Ntsie Mohloai, said that the PAC found the media to be biased, because "it mostly covered the ANC and the DA as the two most important players in South African politics" (interview with MMP, July 2004). He said that the PAC was not covered fairly in the media; they felt that the media was particularly negative towards their party, especially when some journalists did not take the time to fully investigate stories, which were negative towards them. Mr Mohloai commented that some journalists were not objective in their reporting of election events.

In accordance with many of the other parties, the PAC was not impressed with the SABC's coverage of the elections, especially in terms of how the PAC was depicted. At one point during the election period, the PAC complained to ICASA and almost took the SABC to court for their unfair coverage of the PAC election campaign.

The PAC felt that in the media, "neutrality is relative, most media served the political interest of particular parties because of business interests," said Mr Mohloai. The PAC felt that investigative journalism should be encouraged, to counter the deterioration of journalistic standards in South Africa.

14.10 Conclusion

The ANC and the DA had the most comprehensive manifestos, although the ANC's was undoubtedly the strongest. Notably, the ANC did not resort to the attack of any other political party in their manifesto, but strictly outlined its policies, independent of any other opinion.

It could be argued that the ANC won the 2004 elections not necessarily because of better policies, but because, among other reasons, people voted for the party on the basis of loyalty. This was a key reason why some of the smaller parties did not perform as well. These smaller parties had good manifestos, but lacked a good following.

14.11 On the media...

The general consensus from the parties interviewed was that the media were shallow in their analyses of party manifestos and campaigns; most parties noted the need for greater depth of coverage in these instances. All of the parties highlighted the fact there was not enough space or time in the media for sufficient analyses, hence, the electorate was not adequately informed. One suggestion, from the PAC, was that the media go back to the tradition of investigative journalism.

The ACDP raised an important point about the media neglect of the use of photographs of politicians from the smaller parties when they cover or report on these parties. Images of leaders from the smaller parties were rarely seen in the media, whereas photographs of the members – not only the leaders – of the major parties were prolific in the media during the election period.

It was notable that while the ANC claimed that they did not receive enough coverage from the media in general, and the SABC in particular, almost all of the other parties interviewed complained of the SABC's bias towards the ANC.