

activate

Independent Student Newspaper at Rhodes University
Edition 11, October 2005

PROUDLY
SOUTH AFRICAN



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soup kitchen



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Dr Motara



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Daring theatre
production



Phase one of the union revamp began last term. Artist impressions show the new oppi dining hall; part of phase two of the revamp due to commence next year ■ Graphics supplied by Estates Division, photos Matthew Middleton

Union revamp well underway

■ **Ciro De Siena**

The Student Union building is intended to become the entertainment focal point of the Rhodes campus in the near future. Phase one of the building's refurbishment, financed and commissioned by the university, has begun.

Disagreement between Rhodes and private operators has led to the Union building's descent into dilapidation over the last few years.

"Private operators have come and gone many times over the last few years. The university had to take action if anything meaningful was to be done," said the director of the university's estates division, Leslie

Reynolds. Rocky Reynolds (no relation to the Estates Division's Reynolds), recently proposed to change the Main Kaif into a Dulcé Café.

But has not materialised. Instances like these, Les Reynolds believes, have delayed the rejuvenation of the building.

The refurbishment is probably best described as an overhaul. Phase one sees the construction of five new 35-seater seminar rooms and 17 new offices, and phase two will involve the building of an Oppidan dining hall and a private fast food outlet catering for everyone. The Student Union Club will remain unchanged, but all

the bathrooms in the building, and the Purple Horse, will be revamped. Phase one is to be completed by December 15, 2005, and phase two should commence next year if finances are available.

Mike Smurthwaite, station manager of Rhodes Music Radio (RMR), has been involved with the building since 1999.

Two years ago, Smurthwaite assisted the then SRC with a document containing revamp recommendations, which was to be brought to the university's attention. It could not be determined whether or not this plan was considered before the current

revamp. "In 1999, the Union buildings were a constant buzz; it was the focal point of student activity and entertainment," Smurthwaite said, adding that the building is now an "empty, archaic shell".

According to Rhodes University's architect, Kevin Wolhuter, the multimillion-rand refurbishment aims to "inject new life into the building. We want to give the students a lively centre of entertainment, just like it used to be."

Wolhuter further detailed the refurbishment: "The level currently occupied by *Activate* and RMR will not change; however, the level above,

where the SRC resides, will be modified into 17 offices, mainly for the SRC." The Main Kaif will become a dining hall in which all staff and students may book a meal.

It is chiefly aimed at catering for the approximately 150 oppidans who currently take meals in residence dining halls. The lease of a privately-owned fast food outlet which will be next to the dining hall has been signed, but no further details about it are available.

The old oppidan lounge and study area is being converted into the five new seminar rooms which will be available for general usage.

SRC elections were inherently flawed – Heideman

■ **Ashleigh Swaile, Delia de Villiers and Tumi Mpete**

Former SRC vice-President Vicky Heideman's resignation from office came amid widespread protest against the student council and the 2006 election process. Heideman herself protested against the SRC's ineffective organisation and mismanagement in an interview with *Activate* this week.

According to Heideman, both the SRC's constitution and the electoral process this year are inherently flawed. The SRC is theoretically responsible for communication between the students and university administration.

"The university needs an SRC," says Heideman. "If there is no SRC, something could be passed by the university senate to the detriment of student interests." The system relies on effective communication between university administration, the SRC and students, yet this communication has largely been hampered by conflict within this year's SRC.

Heideman, as the SRC's chief electoral officer, and Paul Hjul, the SRC's

former Sergeant-at-Arms, formed a new system of voting which was approved by the SRC five weeks before the election. The new system entailed setting up official computer polling stations, which would be monitored by observers to legitimise the votes. But Heideman said that the SRC "all decided to veto what we had decided and go back to the old system, undermining a process which they had in fact passed." According to outgoing president Telana Halley, the decision to revert to the old system was unanimous, but Heideman agreed reluctantly. Riyadh Bismilla, SRC Treasurer and electoral officer added that "Vicky left a lot up to Paul. Communication with [Hjul] is difficult: it's hard to get a hold of him." Halley added "We're not blaming one person. Bear in mind that there are ten people on the SRC and six people work. It's been a tough term due to the lack of hands to help."

Heideman says that she was not consulted when elections were cancelled. In her opinion, the SRC's cred-



Vicky Heideman and Paul Hjul, formerly of the SRC. Hjul's position as Sergeant-at-Arms was nullified, while Heideman resigned in protest from her position as vice-President



■ **Lauren Clifford-Holmes**

ibility was questioned further when a last-minute decision was taken to reopen the elections in an attempt to keep the process legitimate. Meetings about the elections were badly presided over, according to Hjul. He said that there was no SRC Secretary in office during the election process, compounding the problem. Callie

Freeman, a presidential candidate, said there should have been "better advertising and more posters put up by the SRC." The body gave itself only five weeks to organise nominations, campaigns and voting.

Heideman's main frustrations concern the lack of support she received from her colleagues, and the fact

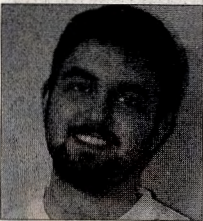
that they committed fraud. The main reason for the SRC's failure to implement a successful election process was a lack of support from council members. According to Heideman, candidates have said that the constitution is a shambles. She added: "More emphasis is placed on looking like we are doing something when we weren't actually achieving anything." Heideman believes that a task force should be instituted to review the constitution's structure and make crucial amendments to SRC policies.

Although the SRC had not accepted her resignation this is irrelevant as the new committee takes office this week.

We Apologise

Activate would like to apologise to Verashni Pillay, the writer of Activate's previous edition's front page story, entitled "Zackie in Grahamstown". The article unfortunately went to print without the byline.

Editorial



■ Peter Barlow

I am going to sound like a bit of a stuck record here but I can't resist talking about the SRC again. We have finally managed to elected a new SRC. It seemed the last lot, to turn a phrase, were "so useless they couldn't even get themselves out of power." I wish I could take credit for saying that but alas I can't.

We have trapped ourselves in our own apathy. Last year we elected, if their performance record is anything to go by, a stupendously useless bunch of individuals to represent us. We made decisions which were not informed and we payed the price. So why didn't we reach quorum the first time? The confidence in the SRC has fallen so much that it was enough to turn you apathetic; why bother voting for people who seemingly only want to add another thing to their CVs? But as I said in my last editorial, the blame can't be placed on the SRC only - we have to look at who voted them in and those people are you and me, friends. The question that arises at this point is: do we need an SRC? Is it an out-dated structure? I don't dispute that we need to be represented but then it must be clear that we are actually being represented. To the newly elected SRC I say: learn from the mistakes of the past, restore confidence and show us that you are actually doing something for us. But that's enough SRC bashing for now.

I feel that one of the jobs journalists have is to demystify leaders, politicians and sometimes even celebrities. To this end we have on page five an interview with the Dean of Students, Dr Moosa Motara.

Dr Motara seems to continually be the bull's eye at the centre of a large admin target. We are very quick to blast admin about any issue we have under the sun and yes, most of the time (I certainly feel) the grievance falls under their sphere of influence so the complaint is justified. Yet admin still remains wrapped in a mystical cloud of public relations and closed door meetings. The interview serves to lift that cloud a little.

As I sit here writing this there is a massive banging going on downstairs, the sound of the Union in the throes of refurbishment. As you may have noticed, our front page story is about just that. I think Mike Smurfwaite sums it up well when he describes the Union as nothing more than an "archaic shell". It has certainly been this way in the two years I have been here and the refurbishment looks to be a very positive step as, to coin a phrase, "if you build it, they will come." But of course that remains to be seen.

This week, African Affairs (page nine) leads with a story on the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) on campus which is situated opposite Smuts. Often I have walked past the sign at the front of the building (mostly after a big night out) and wondered what they actually do in there.

Turn to page 10 to see what we all look like. We are struggling to correct the website issue as we are lacking a webmaster and IT guy, but if you know anyone willing to take the job let me know.

I hope you enjoy reading this week's edition. Look out for our exam edition in two weeks time, bye for now.

SRC election results

General Ballot

Mike Winn (Treasurer) 32.320%
Bryony Green (Media Councillor) 28.445%
Muscles (President) 27.464%
Fatema Norbi (Academic Councillor) 26.140%
Carol Freeman (President) 25.110%
Harvey Malunga (President) 24.522%
Alex (Media Councillor) 23.884%
Mwandile Shongwe (Treasurer) 18.588%
Michael Marabini (President) 17.607%
Bulumko (President) 13.291%
David Abbey (Media Councillor) 12.261%
Blessing Cele (President) 11.967%
Ongama "O'gee" Mitimba (President) 11.770%
Zandi (President) 9.809%

Spoiled Ballot 3.433%

Oppidan Ballot

Blake Friedman 37.500%
Xoliswa 24.719%
Farayi 14.607%

Results available at: <http://src.ru.ac.za>.
They had not been officially confirmed at the time of going to print.

Student attacked behind Great Field

■ Ciro De Siena

A female student was attacked shortly before 8.30pm on Saturday night, October 1. The Rhodes first-year was walking alone down African Street when she was approached by a man. The student was mugged and an attempted rape has been reported.

The student then walked down the middle of the road, just behind the Great Field grandstands, in an attempt to summon assistance. She flagged down two passing vehicles. The first individual to stop was Andre Van Heerden, a first year student at Rhodes. He said that the victim was in tears and distraught. He tried calling the local police by dialling the only number he had: 046 603 9111. He called four times but there was no answer.

A second student, who stopped at the same time as van Heerden, tried to comfort the victim, although, according to van Heerden, "she did not want anyone near her". The second student who arrived at the scene then called CPU, who responded immediately, arriving with a Netcare ambulance.

The victim was taken to the CPU offices where Senior Officer Linda Bottoman handled the incident. After the victim had made a statement, she



CPU has urged students not to walk alone on African Street at night
■ Lauren Clifford-Holmes

was taken to Settlers Hospital.

CPU called the police on 10111, but they failed to arrive at the scene or at CPU headquarters. The victim's handbag was found near to the scene shortly after CPU arrived. Her wallet and cellphone were missing.

African Street is, according to CPU, particularly dangerous to students. The street is flanked by a deep ditch which is overrun by vegetation.

The portion of the street, which runs alongside the Great Field, falls outside of the university's jurisdiction and is thus maintained by Makana

Municipality and not patrolled by CPU. However, according to CPU, the street is patrolled informally as they feel that they have an obligation to do so.

The portion of African Street where the incident occurred is badly lit and infrequently travelled. CPU strongly urges all students to avoid that stretch of the street and to use the secure Blue Route along Prince Alfred Street instead.

CPU also insists that all students, in a situation like this, call CPU before calling the police, on the number which appears on all student cards.

activate
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The soup kitchen, which is aptly named *Masincedane*, Xhosa for 'let us help', opened on Wednesday 28 September 2005

■ Lauren Clifford-Holmes

Student society opens soup kitchen in township

■ Lauren Clifford-Holmes

Rhodes University's Rotaract society has overseen the funding and organisation of a soup kitchen for impoverished children which they hope will become a permanent feature in Joza.

The soup kitchen has opened at a crucial time because the Eastern Cape Education Department has recently cut funding for school feeding schemes. The department will now only provide funding to feed school children on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; instead of five days a week.

Rotaract got the idea to open the soup kitchen earlier this year, when the society came into contact with

Captain Barthwell Masala, a representative of the Salvation Army in Grahamstown. He was extremely concerned about the wellbeing of the children in Tanti.

It had come to Masala's attention that many of the children living in the area came from extremely impoverished homes where some parents wasted much needed money - including child support grants - on drink. Masala approached Rotaract with his idea to open a soup kitchen for the children. He was happy to run the project, but lacked the funding to do so. Rotaract, in turn, was keenly interested in establishing a long-term project. "The main problem with stu-

dent fundraising and outreach is that it is usually a once-off venture, so we really wanted to create a sustainable project to help the needy," says Dominique Schäfer, the Community Relations Officer of Rotaract.

The need for a childrens' soup kitchen became apparent when Rotaract found out that all the other soup kitchens in Grahamstown are for adults only, and are only open in the morning when children are at school. It is generally thought that children are fed at school and so do not need another feeding scheme. But for many children, their school meal "is the only meal they will get all day, which is not enough for a growing child," Schäfer

says. Rotaract hosted a ball to fund the initiative. Which raised a substantial R3 000. Rotaract is concerned about raising more funds to sustain the kitchen on a permanent basis. It is looking to other societies on campus to help it with this. The soup kitchen will cost approximately R400 per month to run, which pays for bags of powdered soup.

"Rotaract is also keen to get other people in the Grahamstown community to help", says Claire Raciborska, the chairperson of Rotaract. The society is also considering approaching Interact, the school version of Rotaract, for funding. Judging by the number of children who attended the successful

opening of the kitchen, it is going to become an important source of nutrition for the children. All the children at the opening received a large cup of soup and a roll. "We are sure once people hear about the kitchen, more and more will come, and the word already seems to be spreading," says Raciborska.

The soup kitchen is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Schäfer says that if Rotaract could get the funding they seek, "this kitchen could run every single day, which would be the ideal, and would go a long way to ensuring the children receive a decent meal each and every day."



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An uncontrolled fire raged just 20 metres from a Nelson Mandela Hall residence on the Rhodes Campus. The fire, the cause of which is still undetermined, mainly threatened Guy Butler, Ruth First and Centenary residences on Saturday October 1. No official orders were given to evacuate any residences. The fire is the second to destroy the adjacent hillside in two years. The previous incident lit trees just 10 meters from Guy Butler house.

■ Lauren Clifford-Holmes

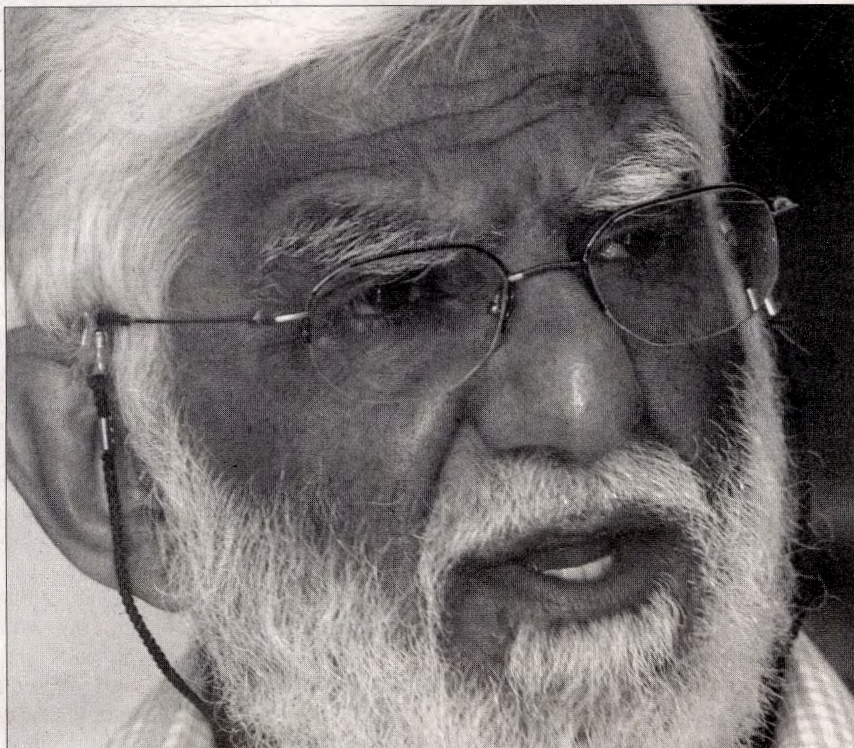


SHARC members visited the Jabez Health Centre in Extension 9 of Joza on September 29 to hand over a cheque for R7400. The money was raised by SHARC in collaboration with Rhodes residences, societies and sports clubs during HIV/Aids Awareness Week. The money will go towards purchasing vital items like food and a fridge for the centre.

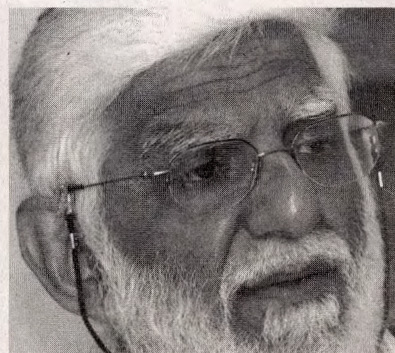
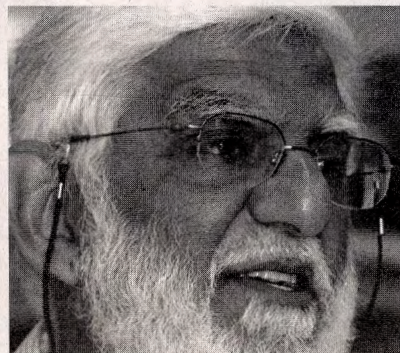
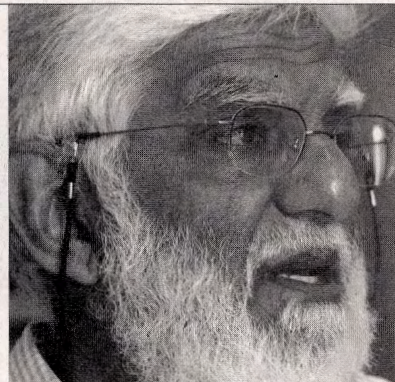
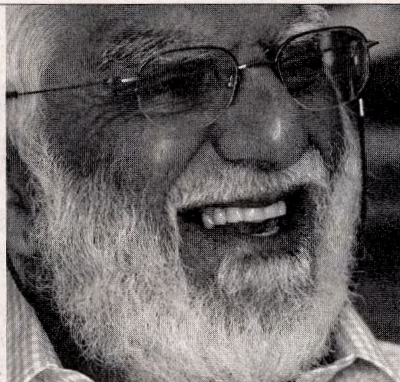
■ Lauren Clifford-Holmes

Exclusive: Q&A with Dr Motara

Many students are unclear as to what the Dean of Students job involves. Activate interviewers **Luke Reid** and **Lionel Faull** asked Dr Motara about himself and his job.



Dr Moosa Motara, Dean of Students, shares his thoughts in a one-on-one interview with Activate.



■ Lauren Clifford-Holmes

Activate: Describe yourself in three words.

Dr Motara: Honest, efficient and empathetic.

A: What brought you to Rhodes as Dean of Students?

DM: The Dean of Students position at Rhodes was a challenge, and I thought it might be worthwhile to try it.

A: What will you do after you leave Rhodes next year?

DM: A lot of things. There's an HIV shelter that I want to get involved in. There's also a kind of a street children project that I would like to help raise funds for. I want to start writing some articles that I have a passion for.

A: The SRC falls under your mandate. What do you think lies at the heart of the perceived failure of the SRC this year?

DM: The problem with this particular SRC is that they were not very united.

A: What aspects do you think Rhodes as an institution can improve on?

DM: To me, the challenge is really HIV/Aids and substance abuse on this campus. I think we are underplaying this part a great deal, especially substance abuse. I hate it and I don't like to see young bodies and young minds go down the drain with drug and alcohol abuse. In my opinion Rhodes has done very well in academics and research, but it has lagged behind in transformation and gender equity. In the past Rhodes has been quite white, but it is changing, although rather slowly.

A: Does transforming Livingstone from a male residence into a female residence next year amount to a shift in university policy on gender equity?

DM: That's not a question of Rhodes' transformation policy. I think it's simply a question of parents out there perceiving Rhodes as a safe

campus and we find that more female students are applying to Rhodes and getting accepted, so we have to accommodate them.

A: How does Rhodes plan to deal with the shortage of student accommodation?

DM: We have looked at the problem based on what the needs are. Cradock Place, which used to be staff housing, is going to be converted into an additional 24 rooms for students; Livingstone is coming on board; and we're looking at one of the places in town. It is a problem, there's no doubt. In the town itself, prices for accommodation are quite high. Petty theft is a problem. We are aware of all that. I think last year 250 to 300 first-year students were turned away from residence. To be honest with you, that may well happen again. We hope not, but it might.

A: You claim to have an open-door policy for students. How does this translate itself in action?

DM: I have never, ever turned a student away. In most of the cases I have dealt with, the students have been very happy with how I have dealt with them, but I have never turned a student away. That's part of my job. I have to be empathetic.

A: What is your mandate as Dean of Students?

DM: The bottom line is that I think that my main job is that, you know, I must keep the students happy. Within reason. What I'm trying to say is I'd like to be thought of as though the students are my main concern. I think I'd like to see that every student who is here has the space and the time to carry out his or her studies free of any intimidation. I think the little things are important: greeting students, making sure that they're happy and so on. That's what they're going to remember you for. Nobody's going to remember

the policies.

A: What have your achievements been as Dean of Students?

DM: Before I took over catering there used to be regular complaints about the quality of food, the amount of food and all that. In terms of housekeeping services, I have gone on a campaign to upgrade the furniture in the [residence] common room[s] and to upgrade the [residence] rooms. We've made sure security is improved on campus. We have made sure that the students should not be intimidated. They should feel free to talk to anybody, to come to me at any time. If they've got a problem then it's got to be dealt with.

A: So what do you enjoy most about your job?

DM: People. I think young people have brilliant ideas. Some are good leaders, some have got ideas.

A: What do you enjoy least about your job?

DM: It's got to be frustration with aspects of the university that run very slowly. For example, I find it very frustrating when a division or another department of the university is supposed to do something and it doesn't get done. I also get impatient with people who lie. I can't take that, and that's maybe a flaw in me because I think I don't lie. I'm a very honest, straight person. There are no ifs and buts about me.

A: There is a lot of anger among Muslim students who say you meddle in their personal affairs. What do you have to say about this?

DM: I don't meddle in their affairs. In fact, I know of Muslim students who are drinking and are going to parties but I don't call them, I don't talk to them. It's not the thing to do. I don't phone any parents. Yes, the parents will tell me: "He's our son or daughter; treat him like your son or daughter," but I clearly tell them that I'm not a spy here for them. And let me tell you one more thing: whether you are a Muslim or a non-Muslim, it doesn't matter who you are, to me you are a

student of Rhodes.

A: Do you have regrets regarding your fifteen years as Dean of Students?

DM: I'm not sure what I could have done. I'm a person who would like to hear from others; I don't like to critique myself. I would like to have made at least one meeting to each house: to go and hear, to just have an open meeting, to tell them about decisions that the university has taken, to ask them what is it that you think we should be doing for you people and so on. I haven't done that – I haven't had the time.

Job Description: Dean of Students

Responsible for: residences, catering, housekeeping, the Student Discipline Code, the Oppidan Board, the SRC and sports administration.

Not responsible for: the Financial Aid Office, the Sanatorium and the Student Adviser service, all of which are administered by the Registrar.

Profile

Dr Moosa Ahmed Motara was born in 1945 near Klerksdorp in the North-West. He is married and has two sons, aged 25 and 26. He is a devout Muslim and speaks English, Afrikaans, Urdu and Gujarati. He received his BSc (Hons) at the University of the Punjab in Pakistan and his MSc and PhD at the University of Notre Dame in the America. As a geneticist, he specialised in entomology, particularly the study of mosquitoes. Between 1978 and 1985, he was a lecturer in the department of Zoology and Entomology at Rhodes. He was a warden of Adamson House and later Jan Smuts Hall. In 1991 he returned to Rhodes to become Dean of Students. He will be retiring in June 2006. He enjoys carpentry, cricket, interfaith discussions, watching sport and surfing the internet.

What you said:

Why did you, or didn't you, vote in the SRC elections?

■ Joni Els and Jacky Smith



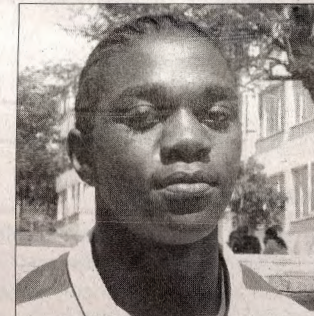
Brenda Magoxo
BCom
2nd year

Yes, I voted this time around. The first time I didn't think that my vote counted, but after hearing that quorum wasn't reached, I realised that my vote was important.



Kim du Plessis
BJourn
1st year

No, but my friend hacked into my email and voted for me!



Mthabisi Ncube
BPharm
1st year

No I didn't. SRC hasn't done anything that's directly related to me or that's affected me in any way, as far as I know. So I'm not all that interested.



Kate Joseph
BA
2nd year

No, but I might...if I get a chance.



Mike Atkinson
1st year
BAcc

Yes, I did the first time and plan to do it again.

The Flip Side

A University degree is potentially a launching pad for career opportunities, recognition and celebrity status. Two Rhodents, Shellique Carby and Kelebetseng Scheppers , debate the pros and cons of fame.



■ Gabrielle Gray

■ Shellique Carby

Imagine yourself in this situation: as you read the morning newspaper, you stumble upon a secret telephone conversation you had with your boyfriend or girlfriend, which has now been published. Or you see yourself on the cover of a magazine. Only this time, it's a photo of you engaged in one of your bad habits you hoped no one knew about. There is a crowd of journalists with cameras outside your home. They all rush over to you, microphones are pushed near your face, and they demand that you explain your actions. Many people idolise the celebrity lifestyle. Much of the media portray them as gods. Not much is written about the consequences of fame. Instead, we are told about their glamorous lifestyle. Have you ever thought about exactly what you would use all that money for? Money will not satisfy you, and the respect you'd get as a celeb would not be genuine. Most people strive after fame for the wrong reasons. A journalist's misinterpretation of your words can give the wrong impression. A reporter from a Grahamstown newspaper interviewed me over the phone about my Pop Idols entry. I discovered she had paraphrased what I'd said and put it as a quotation using her own interpretation. Some of it was clearly not what I'd said. In the second article, they chose a headline that negatively emphasised the fact that I had not been selected for the next round. When the public's eyes are on you, it is not only your victories that are shown, but your failures as well. Your privacy and dignity are taken away. Bad press coverage damages your reputation and many false accusations are made about you. People know your name, but not who you are. You endure a large amount of stress as high expectations are placed on you. You hardly get any spare time and your relation-

ships are affected, especially if you're married. To make it worse, some people you knew long ago have their own agendas, and might try to take revenge on you by releasing information of a mistake you made years ago. Another problem is you are shown to the world when you are simply having a bad day. Think of how many times magazines make nasty comments about celebs pictured in bad clothes. Their love lives are always gossiped about as well. A big irritation is that the press frantically search for their wedding venues, and then take over. As we all know, many celebrities can't go anywhere without a bodyguard, because of the mad crowds and desperate reporters. Also, how would you like it if the press talked about you every time you put on weight or showed signs of Bulimia? What if you were photographed when you were very drunk and it was published? Some celebs speak out against this kind of intrusion, through their songs. A few celebs go to extreme lengths, and snatch the camera from the journalists, or beat them up. The truth is, celebs are just like you and I – humans with weaknesses. Most of them are lonely, hurt, and sometimes angry at the world. Many of them have addictions to help them cope with their stress and personal problems. Some use their career as an escape from reality. Can you blame them? They did not know they would be role models in the public's eye, nor did they want to be. Celebrities do not realise that they are actually leaders. Celebs are really there to show us that we can all make something out of our lives. Going far with your talent is not only reserved for a few of us. Nevertheless, give yourself the opportunity to succeed. Rather not die with emptiness, but with a true sense of accomplishment. You're worth it. Just don't fall into fame's trap.

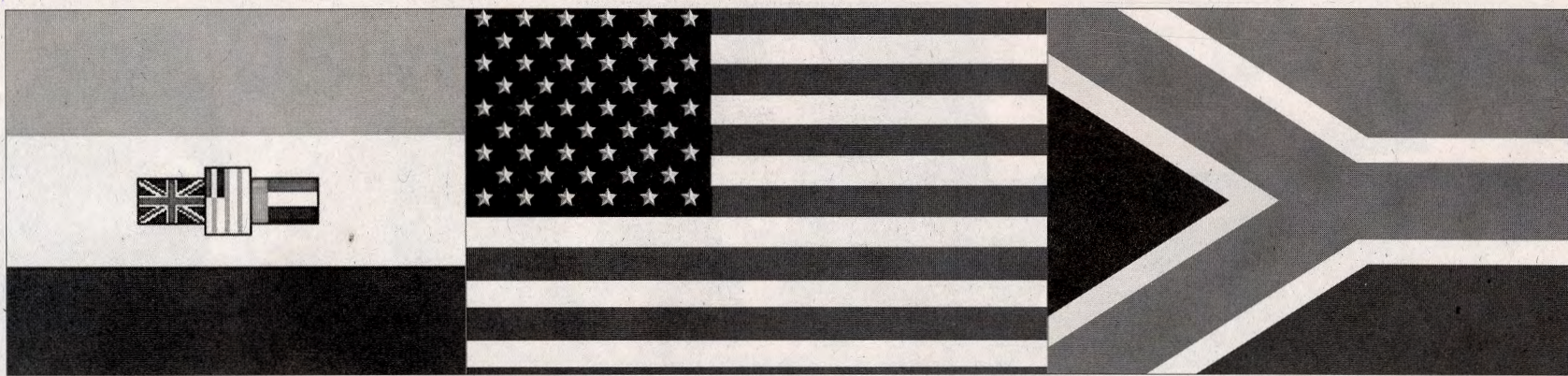


■ Gabrielle Gray

■ Kelebetseng Scheppers

Celebrities remind us of our possibilities. They are our leaders and that is not necessarily a bad thing. Although not all famous people are well-behaved, there is a lot that we can learn from them. One of the most important factors of fame is building a relationship with complete strangers. Erica Jong, an American writer and feminist, said, "Fame means millions of people have the wrong idea of who you are". That's a reality that we all have to face. Even though we know all the ups and downs of Jennifer Lopez's love life, we have no idea who she, as a person, is. And so the tabloids happily step in and fill in the blanks for us. Now we can know all about her cellulite too. But it's not all sex, skin and stroh rum in the world of fame. There are some attributes about celebrities that we can appreciate. For example, their acceptance speeches. We all know the drill but we tend to neglect what the words tell us about the person's values. First, there is faith in a higher being. Then there is family. Of course, one must thank all the people who helped establish one's career. If there is any truth to those speeches, then those who have attained fame have their priorities in check. Hopefully, we can relate to that. That is why we have famous people: because we can relate to them. We have all had struggles that stand in the path of our ultimate goal: to be happy. Socrates believed "Fame is the perfume of heroic deeds." In times of doubt, always know that those who tumble the worst, stand the tallest. Seeing people who have 'made it' inspires us to continue along our path too.

Seeing people who have 'made it' inspires us to continue along our path too. Oprah Winfrey said, "If you come to fame not understanding who you are, it will define who you are." Fame is notorious for making or breaking people. Either way, those people walk away from that experience knowing more about themselves. They are more defined people. Just like us, celebrities are people in process. They are just trying to get along, like the rest of us. They understand that the right to choose their own path is a sacred privilege. They use it. They dwell in their possibility. Is there nothing we can learn from that? We were meant to be. Oprah Winfrey said, "If you come to fame not understanding who you are, it will define who you are." Fame is notorious for making or breaking people. Either way, those people walk away from that experience knowing more about themselves. They are more defined people. Just like us, celebrities are people in process. They are just trying to get along, like the rest of us. They understand that the right to choose their own path is a sacred privilege. They use it. They dwell in their possibility. Is there nothing we can learn from that?



Drinking apartheid sherry and teaching American students

To what extent are a nation's citizens responsible for the criminal actions of their elected government? - wonders **Leonhard Praeg**.

In the aftermath of the near-destruction of New Orleans (and as the war-driven Bush administration scuttled - and floundered spectacularly in the attempt - to keep up the pretence that its social agenda is democratic), I heard two fascinating comments on CNN. The first was a US official who blithely stated that "the United States government will accept all offers for assistance from the international community". Slightly more hysterical was an American citizen who lamented, "Why is it that when anybody else needs help they look to Americans but when Americans need help, no help is forthcoming?"

There is a very complex issue here that I want to get out of the way first. Does one have a right or does it even make sense to discriminate against the citizens of a state who commits crimes against humanity? Can you do this even though those citizens may not support the actions of the state in question? One could dispute this forever but I want to propose a shortcut: let's look at the issue in terms of power, not truth. Let's rewind back into time. It was never true to say that all white South Africans supported apartheid.

Nonetheless, countries the world over sacrificed the truth of whether Piet van der Merwe was a racist or not when they simply banned the importation of Piet's sherry to the UK.

Nobody bothered to ask him as an individual where he stood on the apartheid issue or whether he was perhaps trying to subvert the system from within with his outrageously fair labour practices. This was of course part of a larger sanction logic aimed at bringing the apartheid government to its knees. Whether the end of that dismal project in social engineering was in fact causally related to sanctions is beside the point.

It's the logic I am after, for the logic maintained that to drink apartheid sherry was tantamount to making tea for the boere at Vlakplaas. In this way, every white South African was made complicit in the actions of their state. The cost of denying the truth of their possible innocence was offset against the fact that they would hopefully rage against those who brought the injustice to bear on them. These, sanction logic always

maintains, are never those who impose the sanctions but those who make sanctions necessary: i.e. the government of the citizen in question. This is simply how sanctions work. Not exactly a triumph of subtle

political thinking. However, politics - particularly global politics - never is. After all, the actions of states merely magnify, mostly *ad absurdum*, the childish power games of boys and toys.

It is divine irony that roughly at

the same time that an American official would lamely announce that the US would accept all offers of assistance (suggesting, as only the US dares to, that other states have a moral obligation to do so) that the very same state should effectively urinate on the UN draft proposal for the greatest world summit in history, one driven by a near consensual commitment to alleviate global poverty. This is the same state that walked out of the World Conference Against Racism in Durban, the same state that refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol, the same state... etc. I don't want to engage here the (neo) realist lamentation that it is naïve to confuse politics and morality. Again, let's keep it simple.

It has been said that with Bush's war on Iraq we find ourselves, in a very real and terrifying sense, moving in the direction of a bipolar world order reminiscent of the Cold War era; one in which the increasingly securocratic US is poised against a global civil society. No state can match the military power of the US. But there are other, more effective and, dare I say, civilised ways of countering Bush's primitive politics - as the anti-war protests of February 15 amply illustrated. One such effective, albeit blunt instrument, is sanctions. Now, while most states are in no economic position to mount sanctions against the US, it is nonetheless possi-

ble to maintain some moral dignity.

As a lecturer in a university in a developing country I would fib if I did not acknowledge that I find it increasingly difficult to justify to myself why American students should continue to benefit from a superb educational institution like Rhodes University at a time when their government is effectively engaged in the sinister project of globalising apartheid. I am haunted by the hypocrisy of it all.

Hurrah for sanctions against local dictators (SA, Iraq, Iran, Cuba, take your pick) but please don't challenge us to be even-handed when it comes to global dictators. What, in the end, is the difference between drinking apartheid sherry and teaching American students?

I am not unaware of the pathos inherent in this question. I raised the possibility of imposing sanctions on the academic tourism of US students in a second year class at the time of the war on Iraq. The American students in that class responded with an indignation that mostly assumed

the form of "Don't confuse the citizens with the Empire" or "We will go back and fight the system from within". Yeah, tell that to Piet or the millions of malnourished Iraqis and Cubans.

Nonetheless, being a philosopher, I am always moved by that response because of its demand on my humanism. The humanist in me responded to their indignation and, at the time, kept me from raising the issue in

print. But today, when it is back to square one for all the countries who sacrificed some individual interest for the sake of the greater good - as represented by the UN draft

proposal - I realize that one's commitment to the truth can become the greatest obstacle to justice. I find myself increasingly in a position where my humanism - my capacity for understanding and embracing the humanist project - gets in the way of achieving the political end of global justice.

This is becoming an article of faith: I recognize that my refusal to take a moral stance and to use whatever little power I have effectively keeps empowering one of the most dangerous governments in the world.

Can I not also appropriate (self-consciously, politically, ethically but always for very legitimate political ends) a position that maintains that sometimes the sacrifice of my empathy is necessary if it will amount to greater pressure being placed on a rogue government to be less expediently selective in terms of when it recognises an ethic of interdependence?

Dr Leonard Praeg is a senior lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Studies at Rhodes University.



The true confessions of a fierce invalid

■ **Harry Haddon**

When I found out I was going to be writing a column for the next year I began to do a bit of research. I read every column I could find. I sat for hours in doctors' rooms, dentists' rooms, any waiting room I could find going through magazines and old newspapers trying to get an idea of what's out there. What I found, other than several strange looks from more than one receptionist, is that a lot of columnists start their columns with "Is it just me or...?" I have rejected this way of beginning a column as I think that it probably is just you. I will now take the opportunity, as it is my first column, to pop a pimple of frustration that has been festering for the last year and a half.

I have noticed that the majority of students here seem to have difficulty performing a very simple task. Unless you have an extreme case of A.D.D, Turrets Syndrome, or some other behavioural problem, you should be able to sit through a movie without having to answer your phone or declare your undying love for your partner. Neither do I understand why, when you are watching a movie that is not a slapstick comedy and physical appearance is not being used to get a laugh, the poppie two rows down guffaws at the character on screen because of a funny looking chin or something equally inane.

Maybe this is just a cheap shot as it's my first column, but come on, why go watch a film if you know you have the attention span of a newt? Maybe it is your choice of films that poses the problem. If you are normally an action/comedy kind of person and you wet your pants with delight when you found out Dukes of Hazard would grace our screens, don't go and watch Birth.

It happened to me; these two guys planted themselves down in the third row wearing the usual sports attire and stupid haircut that immediately sends warning signals to my brain, "stay clear". I thought "Hmmm, don't know about them, they just don't look the type for this film", but I told myself not to judge, you know - the whole book by the cover concept, so I withheld criticism. My judgement was correct: not only did they mutter throughout, but as they walked past me as I was enjoying my first cigarette after the movie and pondering over this fascinating film, these two were complaining as though they had just seen a first-year film student's attempt at being deep.

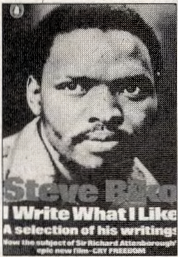
Now I know that in today's post-modern, politically correct world everyone has their opinion, and that's that, but I'm not buying it. If you want to criticise a film, do so in an educated manner. Discuss the way it was shot, the acting, the concept, but don't just say, "Jeez bru that was like crap", and drag your knuckles to the pub.

Please, and I appeal to any modicum of rationality you might have, don't talk during the movie. This is not a difficult notion to understand. You are not the only person in the theatre, so be quiet and enjoy the film, talk afterwards.

As I sit here typing, I start to wonder if it's just me or do all these people wear tight jeans and shirts, at least one item of sporting attire and a stupid tiny gelled Mohican hairdo?

Reviews

Book



Steve Biko - I write what I like

■ Khona Dlamini

Write *What I Like* is a collection of Steve Biko's writing, lectures and trial testimony from 1969 to the months leading up to his death in September 1977. Biko's thoughts, which he penned under the pseudonym Frank Talk, were highly misinterpreted during the apartheid era. The ideas in this book were part of the reasons why he was brutally killed as a young man at the age of 30. With the recent furore on the forums about the possibility of forming a black student interests organisation on campus this book could clear up some misunderstandings about what black consciousness really is.

CD

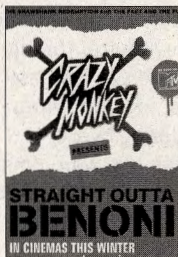


Kwani Experience-The Birth of the Muddaland Funk

■ Siya Ngcobo

Seven-piece band Kwani Experience have exploded from their bohemian open mic roots into a rhythmic mix of afro jazz, eclectic soul, smooth hip-hop, shivering bass guitar and the background beat of the South African drum. Holding your breath, you are hypnotised by the pulsating instruments and the magical fusion of the muddaland funk, as they like to call it. The band boasts rave reviews for uniting the younger masses with traditional sounds and echoing the poetry of young Africans. If you want to fade away into the non-commercial music scene of thinkers then this CD is for you. Memorable tracks are "De Ja Vu" and "Muddaland Funk".

Movie



Crazy Monkey Movie: Straight outta Benoni

■ Siya Ngcobo

Who could have predicted that four guys from Benoni, fooling around with a video camera could have created an international phenomenon? First it was MTV, now the lives of Trevor Clarence, Brendan Jack, Gavin Williams and Brett Goldin are on the big screen. This movie follows the antics of life-long buddies Brendan and Gavin; small-town boys who play in a band and create havoc whenever possible. Everything goes wrong when they lose their new advertising jobs a day before their high school reunion. They have 24 hours to achieve the fame and success they have always dreamt of. The in-house humour and appearances by many of Mzansi's celebs create a fantastic potjie of fun.



Director of Marat/Sade, Brink Scholtz, pictured in the centre, flanked by scenes from the play.

■ Jaqueline Cochrane

Up Close and Personal with Brink Scholtz

■ Ashleigh Nash

It takes someone of incredible talent and ambition to direct a cast of 36 people in a sustained one and a half hour performance. In fact, it is a feat usually reserved for only seasoned and acclaimed directors. Yet MA drama student, Brink Scholtz, has taken up the challenge of staging the provocative play Marat/Sade for her 2005 Masters piece.

When 26-year-old Scholtz was asked why she is studying Drama, she replied, "It has always been a part of me." She remembers staging plays with friends at a young age and, despite going on to complete an Honours degree in Psychology, acting was always something she just did. Scholtz initially preferred performing, with her passion for directing being cemented during a 3-year stay in Scotland, where she directed an amateur group, as well as a group of

mentally disabled actors. This also influenced her decision to choose the tragi-comedy, Marat, where the plot revolves around the staging of a play in a Paris asylum.

Whilst Scholtz makes it clear that Marat is not a light-hearted play, the audience's first response will be laughter. She says the play forces a total onslaught of varying emotions on the audience. They come to realise the true essence of human nature. Scholtz says the play will also compel audiences to engage in matters of political and social relevance. The Marquis de Sade directs his fellow asylum inmates in early 19th century France, a period that resembles contemporary South Africa. Scholtz hopes that Marat will inspire debate amongst audiences and that its theatrical style will appeal to all. In terms of South African theatre,

Scholtz has mixed views. Although she agrees that our country is a fertile ground, she also believes that because of the economic pressures of the small theatre industry, young theatre makers are often pushed in a certain direction. She says that in making theatre accessible, the possibility of cultivating intelligent theatre-goers as well as creating work that will "punch you in the gut" is often ignored. Scholtz is confident, however, that this will be achieved with the staging of Marat.

Whilst audiences of Marat can look forward to a full visceral and gut-wrenching experience, Scholtz looks forward to a sustained career in performance and directing. She says she will do whatever it takes to survive in the industry, the first step hopefully being a job in the Rhodes Drama Department.

Marat/Sade showing details:

VENUE: Rhodes University Box Theatre

DATES & TIMES:
Thursday 6 October 7pm
Friday 7 October 7pm
Saturday 8 October 7pm

TICKET INFORMATION:

Bookings: theatre@ru.ac.za or 046 603 8542.

Sales: Tickets may be purchased from the venue box office 1 hour prior to performance start.

Prices: Standard R 20
Student / Scholar R 15
Block Bookings R 12

Band Focus-The lashings of psychedelic Kwani

■ Siya Ngcobo

Grahamstown has, in recent weeks, been lucky enough to be part of the experience and birth of the "muddaland funk". This is when the revolutionary music minds of the band Kwani Experience graced the town for a performance at The Drill Hall during the September vacation. Kwani is derived from the Zulu term "o kwa nini" which means "of what". The band hit the South African musical scene last year when they won the Standard Bank/Kaya FM Totally Jazzed platform. Now they boast a recording contract with Sheer Sound as well as a new album that's making the airwaves on radio stations around the country.

The eight-piece band, consisting of seven men and one woman, makes for interesting sounds with eclectic

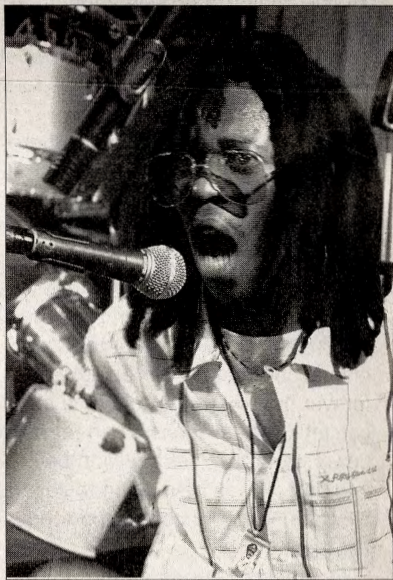
rhythms. They fuse African folk, drum and base, soul, hip-hop, funk, African contemporary and traces of reggae. All band members are multi-skilled instrumentalists who experiment with instruments from enamel cups to pianos. This makes for fascinating viewing as they transform the stage into a magical realm of poetry; pulsating sounds of a wide spectrum of instruments and vocals that are provocative and edgy. The outstanding lyrical quality delivered by Nosisa Ngakane on vocals is probably the band's most alluring factor.

They describe their new album The Birth of the Muddaland Funk as "Something that you have heard before, what you are still to hear, somehow familiar - but yet like nothing you've heard before in these

times." This proves true as their sound penetrates through the one-liners flooding the airwaves these days. Although some of their songs inspire South African youth to embrace their traditional backgrounds and offer words of wisdom, it's not all grim - there are also songs you can get down and party to.

Kwani Experience have enthralled audiences all over the country and received thumbs up from industry heads like Tu Nokwe and Tsepho Tsola, among others.

This band joins the few that bridge the generation gap and drive their music power past the heart, past the mind, and through to the soul. The band promises to jazz up the town again soon, so look out for them in the future.



■ Paul Greenway

Tit Bits: Your guide to happenings in, around, out and about the town.

From Alcoholic coffee to Café Jou Mar

■ Siyavuyisana Makwabe

The interior is decorated with student artwork and in the background the music is a mixture of indie rock, techno, blues, house and trip-hop. Outside, budding new artists are given a platform to showcase their talent. Performances range from acoustic guitar recitals to poetry readings. This is the vibe at The Suite every second Thursday, when a group of students who call themselves RockPaperScissors organise a night of themed entertainment. Last week the theme was Café Jou Mar, an exotic getaway where guests were treated to hubbly-bubbly, sherbert and a drink at the bar. Catch more of this every second Thursday from 8:00pm at The Suite.

Plush Tribute
■ Tracey Daniel

Chas Smit, the lead guitarist and backing vocalist of the South African band Plush, was killed on 18 September when a speeding car hit him outside a Pietermaritzburg nightclub. He had just come from the first leg of the band's SA tour. Smit was



■ Pic Supplied

passionate about his music, and this should encourage all of Plush's fans to live with the same enthusiasm that he did. Plush were due to perform at Taphuis on October 10, but the tour has been cancelled. Smit's band member Rory Elliot has asked that anyone who wants to send messages should log onto the band's website, www.plush.us, and post their messages there.

The Lattimores in PE
■ Claire Keet and Katie Pearson

World-renowned R & B superstars, Kenny Lattimore and his wife, Chante Moore, are lined up to perform at the Vodacom NMMU Indoor Sport Centre in Port Elizabeth. Kenny Lattimore's introspective, soulful music including tracks such as "Never Too Busy" and "For You"

are sure to create a magical atmosphere. Supporting acts will include South African artists Mafikizolo and Ntando. Tickets are available at any Computicket outlet and start at R160 for floor standing.

'Tis the season to be charitable
■ Claire Keet and Katie Pearson

November is the month US stars have set to rock Mzansi and help local charities in the process. Catch Diana Ross with grammy-award winner Christina Aguilera at the Coca-Cola Dome in Johannesburg on November 9, 2005 in the Unite of the Stars concert. For rock fans, Violent Femmes will be playing in Johannesburg from 4-5 November at the LG Extreme Sports Show. The funds raised will be donated to charities: the Topsy Foundation and St Mary's Hospital.

PSAM – actively fighting for your rights

■ Delia de Villiers and Kristin Paremoer

South Africa has implemented one of the world's most liberal constitutions over the past eleven years. At ground level, though, it is essential that government agencies be monitored so that corruption and other forms of mismanagement are exposed and dealt with.

The Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM) is an independent research and monitoring institute at Rhodes. Established in 1999, with Colm Allan, its mission is to strengthen democracy in South Africa by maintaining transparency and accountability in the public sector.

Since its establishment, it has investigated 690 cases of corruption. It has also analysed government reports and budget plans, evaluating them against the original aims proposed by the

departments in question.

Adrienne Carlisle heads the advocacy and communication programme at PSAM. She speaks positively about democracy in South Africa. Previously, when Makhenkesi Stofile was the premier of the Eastern Cape, PSAM often had to resort to the Promotion of Access to Information Act to get the information they were looking for. The information they seek is now given on request. "There is a new spirit of transparency," Carlisle says of the government departments they investigate.

She says, though, that the government still needs to pull up their socks with regards to the implementation of our rights, since they do not meet all their requirements.

PSAM is involved in case monitoring,

performance monitoring, surveys, civic empowerment projects, and advocacy and communication projects. They collect news reports and official documentation from government departments under investigation in a politically impartial fashion. These are then published so that the general public can be made aware of irregularities.

At the moment, PSAM is investigating mainly service delivery departments in the Eastern Cape, such as the education, finance, health, housing, public works and social development departments.

One of PSAM's more notable successes was the arrest of former provincial housing minister Neo Moerane-Mamase and her husband, former agricultural minister Max Mamase. This followed PSAM's persistent

attempts to have the couple suspended on charges of corruption after they allegedly received a house as a kickback from a property deal.

The PSAM website (www.psam.ru.ac.za) is concise and informative. It has several useful sections such as myRights where you can find out about your rights, the responsibilities of public officials and what to do about poor public service. The "Did you know?" section answers questions such as "How much do South African politicians and public officials get paid?"

PSAM's services are not restricted to members of parliament and civil society organisations; they are also accessible to the general public. As PSAM states on its website, "Government accountability is a right, not a favour."



Adrienne Carlisle head of the advocacy and communication programme at PSAM.
■ Kate Pawelczyk

New UDF makes a bit of a splash in the ANC ideological 'bath'

■ Hlawulani Mkhabela

"No one can rule forever." This is what trade unionist Tom Phalamba said in reaction to recent ANC controversy. President Thabo Mbeki booted his deputy, Jacob Zuma, and he is unlikely to take the sacking without a fight. The situation is a complex one, as Cingress of South African Trade Unions, Cosatu chooses this moment of upheaval to strain the confines of the tripartite alliance.

The ANC is inextricably linked to South Africa's swift transition from apartheid tyranny to Mandela's rainbow nation. Since 1994, the ANC has steadily increased in popularity and now holds 70% of parliament. South

Africa may soon have to consider life after the ANC, should there be a split in the tripartite alliance.

It is then relevant to ask what impact the possible waning of the ANC's political domination may have and its consequences for the rehabilitation of South African socialism?

Titi Mthenjane is a member of the ANC and head negotiator for the National Union of Mineworkers, a Cosatu member union. He views the current discontent within the tripartite alliance and the ANC as a sign of healthy discourse, and not an omen of the movement's dissolution. "The ANC is a bath which welcomes

members with varied views," he says, adding that Cosatu is not planning to abandon the superpower, but wants to chastise the president's "machievellian way of dealing with the Zuma issue".

Socialist politician Rhowaida Halim said that "Cosatu effectively has the clout to tell workers who to vote for", and without it, the ANC may find it difficult to grow its support base. Halim, a founding member of The South African People's Organisation, notes that left-wing movements have become disillusioned with the ANC, saying that the ANC won in 1994 because they made grand promises

that they have not kept.

On August 22, The New United Democratic Front (New UDF) was launched. It is supposedly an anti-poverty civic body aiming to encourage faster social development, launched in opposition to what Cosatu claims are Mbeki's harmful open economic policies.

The old UDF was an organisation that fought apartheid while the ANC was banned. Its successor is not currently involved in political activities, but Cosatu did not rule out the possibility that it might be in the future. Its establishment may mark a further move towards socialism in South

African politics. Recent stay-aways may be signs that Cosatu's relationship with the ANC has begun to compromise the union's position with workers.

It may still be too early to say that the ANC-Cosatu love affair has ended. Mthenjane of the ANC said the alliance is still relevant because "apartheid in various forms is still a reality". Cosatu has not yet announced that it is deserting the ANC or turning the New UDF into a political party, but the perceived need to put socialism into practice does give the UDF an opportunity to find its voice.



■ Matthew Ackerman

Namibian land reform walks a delicate line

■ Anele Makhwaza, Cassian Meki and Adrian Nel

A year after the Namibian government speeded up its land reform programme, the 240 000 landless people of Namibia are still frustrated by the slow redistribution of land. In 1994, white farmers owned 94% of all agricultural land; today they still hold 80%. According to Frans Tsheehama, a secretary at Namibia's ministry of lands and resettlement, the government plans to acquire 15 million hectares by 2020.

In Namibia's first constitution, enacted in 1990, reform was made a priority, allowing the government to seize land when this is deemed to be in the national interest, as long as it pays compensation for it. After fifteen years of independence, the government has bought only 150 commercial farms, covering a total of 932 900 hectares, through its willing-seller, willing-buyer approach. Continuing inequalities in Namibia have forced a change of approach: the government has now begun to use its constitutional right to forceful acquisition.

On September 9, the Namibian government quietly expropriated the first of 70 white-owned farms under the terms of its land reform programme. The farms former occupants have

to be off the premises by the end of November. Hilde Wiese, the previous owner of the farm, estimated its worth at R9 million but received compensation of only R3,7 million. This problem could set a bad precedent for future expropriations.

The land and resettlement ministry has faced many problems: a budget of only R50 million for land acquisitions, a lack of farms up for willing sale, and the dissatisfaction of those waiting for land. The prime minister has asked all Namibians to co-operate with government, "to be patient and not engage in unlawful actions during the land reform process". To many Namibians, these statements are a thinly veiled effort to distance the Namibian land reforms from Zimbabwe's methods of land redistribution, which have been followed by economic and political turmoil in that country. People were surprised when South African Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said her country could learn from Zimbabwe concerning the land reform process.

The Zimbabwean land reform disaster shows that it is important to implement sustainable agricultural products on newly redistributed farms,

so that food production continues and the land remains arable. Co-operation between farmers, close government involvement and the provision of loans and equipment are necessary for this to happen. It is in these areas that Namibia and South Africa will seek to avoid the mistakes of Zimbabwe.

"Land reform has become a test case for democratic reforms and the pursuit of social justice in countries such as South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe," said Namibia Emerging Farmers' Association Executive Director Nokukure Tjizera. In this regard, the South African government has conceded that it is at least 30 years behind its initial land reform programme. In Limpopo, land issues are becoming increasingly prominent.

The whole of Southern Africa is changing. Although governments may wish to complete the land reforms in a legal, stable, transparent and peaceful manner, they are coming under mounting pressure. Landless people of the region are growing impatient with bureaucracy.

These factors mean that land reform and its consequences will no doubt play a major part in local politics for some time.

Aid: ya jus' gotta be picky

■ Luke Reid and Adrian Nel

Following the Hurricane Katrina disaster, the US government was forced to appeal to the rest of the world for help. Fortunately they have not yet reached a point where they are forced to accept the aid of just any old Tom, Dick or Castro.

Cuba and Venezuela's offers of food, medical assistance and portable water supplies were never acknowledged, let alone accepted. Of course, not having been made in China, the stuff just didn't make the grade. But then why refuse assistance from China as well? Still, you can't blame the Yanks for passing on those Cuban doctors. You don't know where they've been.

Fortunately, America did not have to worry about ignoring the 1 500 highly trained Cuban specialists. Africa stepped in to make up for the loss with \$200 000 worth of hot chocolate

and lots of canned fish. These heartfelt offerings from Ghana and Namibia were bettered by Tunisia, which sent two plane-loads of blankets, tents and supplies.

Of course that perennial voice of reason, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, had a different approach. He refused to offer aid, carefully explaining that Bush's response to the thousands of displaced people in his country was inadequate. Despite the irony of this, Africa might learn from Bob's steadfast views: if the American government is so fussy about who and how it helps, why shouldn't Africa also be? 'Conditional aid' means that, before you're given aid, you have to put in place measures that will prevent you from getting in trouble in the first place. So, to prevent further American disasters, we should only give America aid if Bush gets the sack.



■ Dimitar Dobrev

Meet the Activate staff for 2005/6



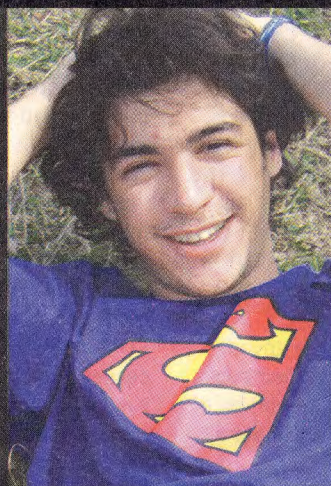
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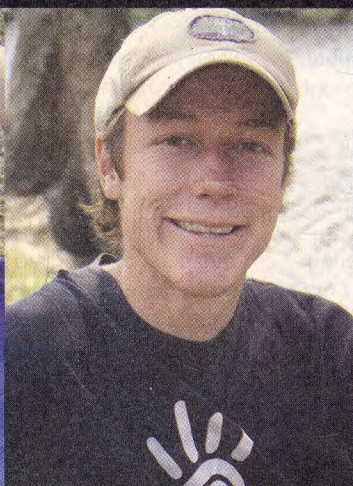
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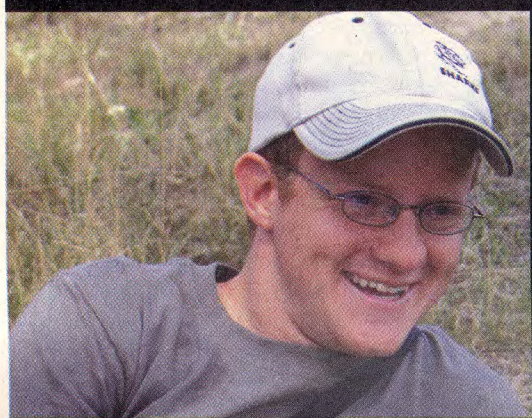
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Just another black and white issue?

■ Candace Whitehead

Within the last year, the South African Student Sports Union (SASSU) has attempted to impose a quota system on the national student rowing squad. This system would enforce the inclusion of players of colour into the national crew travelling to the World University Championships in Lithuania in 2006.

According to Andrew Craig, chairman of the Rhodes University Rowing Club, SASSU National was “very unhappy with the demographics of the team” that travelled to the World University Championships in France in 2004. Out of a national squad of twenty-five, there was only one black female representative. In subsequent meetings with SASSU National, it has been stated that they expect at least three athletes of colour per squad of twenty.

This is unlikely to happen in a squad of that size for next year’s World University Championships. If the squad, selected by SASSU Rowing and subject to the approval of SASSU National, is unable to meet the required quota, it is likely that the squad may be stopped from attending the World Championships.

Mandla Gagayi, a Rhodes University sports officer, indicated that the implementation of quota systems on national student teams is not

restricted to rowing. SASSU is imposing quota systems on many sports at national level in an attempt to encourage transformation, especially among those who do not cooperate with proposed transformation schemes.

Craig agrees that transformation in sport, especially in rowing, is a major issue that needs to be addressed. Rowing is still seen as a traditionally white sport, and as with others seen in this light, a lack of adequate transformation sees some of the national squads being refused permission to tour. According to Craig, when the water polo squad applied to attend their most recent international competition, they were denied leave to travel on the basis of their demographics.

Gagayi, the women’s first team soccer coach, disagrees with this practice of denying teams the permission to tour. He says that if you are stopping a team from touring because of reasons such as poor performance, it is justifiable. The problem arises, however, when a team is stopped because of it being “all white or all black”.

Placing athletes of colour in a squad merely to meet quota expectations leads to many problems within the squad itself, especially in team sports like rowing. “Rowing is the ultimate team sport,” says Craig. “You can’t

just throw someone sub-standard into a crew of people at another level – the whole thing just falls apart.”

Rowing would suffer tremendously under the quota system. It is already difficult to get anyone involved in this relatively unknown sport, and to be more specific, Craig says, will make team selection even more difficult.

From an athlete’s perspective, it is potentially demoralising to know that one made the squad purely because of one’s race. Craig feels this matter to be one of pride, and says, “I’m not sure that I would personally like to be selected for a national side, to get one’s colours, knowing that you’re not actually the best that your country can send.”

The implementation of the quota system in rowing is a fairly recent development, although as far back as 2001 efforts toward transformation were being made. That year crews were rewarded financially for having black rowers at boat races. The thinking behind this, Craig says, is not to reward teams for having black athletes, but rather to aid those that may be previously disadvantaged, and may require financial assistance. Craig feels that this is an artificial way of encouraging transformation. Often, black rowers are those who have been

to private schools where rowing is offered. “It’s not as if the varsity has done anything, or that they actually are struggling” he says.

One of the suggestions that has been made to conform to the quota demands imposed is to send a development crew of solely black athletes to international events. Although these rowers would be selected at a lower level than the rest of the squad, they would gain valuable international experience. Exposure to international events would also hopefully strengthen them as athletes, at the same time fulfilling the expected quota.

Closer to home, Rhodes Rowing has become involved with a Port Alfred-based development programme which began at the end of September. The idea behind this programme is to get children from the townships involved in rowing, and so build up a development side. The NEMATO (Nelson Mandela Township) rowing club is headed by an appointee from Rowing South Africa, and RURC members will be helping where possible with coaching. Instead of implementing a quota system, Rhodes University seeks to encourage transformation within sport. A system was implemented three years ago whereby the various clubs report to the Rhodes University

Sports Council Transformation Committee (RUSCTC) on matters regarding transformation. According to Gagayi, each club has to update the RUSCTC on what they are doing to aid with transformation.

This “transformation” is not purely racial, but is also concerned with gender issues and the like. On their website, the RUSCTC states that they have “recognised that it would be counter-productive to impose transformation on Rhodes sports clubs”. It is a process, Gagayi says, that may yet take years, but he says, “It’s working”.

Through all of this, Rhodes still maintains a high level of commitment to transformation and fair representation in sport. And it shows. Both the women’s teams won their respective races at Boat Race on September 10. The men’s and the women’s ‘A’ crews were invited to race against Oxford and Cambridge in a race in Zambia, proving that Rhodes rowing is a recognisable force in international competition.

We are committed to transformation, says Gagayi, but are we transformed? Although it will be a struggle, in the end, whether it is next year or in 20 years’ time, “We will get there.”

A1 World Cup of Motorsport for South Africa

■ Sameer Naik

The A1 Grand Prix is ready to revolutionise the world of high-performance motor racing with the first season of the World Cup of Motorsport.

South Africa is closely involved in this exciting new competition. The South African team proved themselves worthy competitors in the first race. One of the 12 races in this inaugural season will be held at Kyalami in Johannesburg on January 29, 2006. The South African team have been track-testing their cars at the Gauteng track since July this year.

Formula One has long set the standard for ultimate motor-racing, but it is largely European-based. Many motorsport fans also complain that F1 has in many ways become a battle of finances and technology, not a contest between top drivers competing in equally matched supercars. A1 aims to change all of this, taking world class racing to previously unvisited territories in identical cars.

The A1 Grands Prix are creating a new medium through which national and international brands and organisations can promote themselves on a global scale.

Through the World Cup of Motorsport, they can join forces with their national teams to be part of this unique sporting event. The World Cup of Motorsport draws on people’s natu-

ral patriotism and not only attracts traditional motorsport fans, but anyone who is passionate about their nation’s heritage.

Founder of the A1, His Highness Sheikh Maktoum Hasher Maktoum Al Maktoum said “The support of the A1 Grand Prix Championship shown to us by prominent dignitaries such as Nelson Mandela, President Thabo Mbeki and South Africa’s seat holder, Tokyo Sexwale, shows the levels of interest and backing our Championship now has”.

The first race in the championship took place on September 25 at Brands Hatch, Great Britain. Twenty five A1 race cars thrilled spectators and television viewers worldwide as they took to the historic circuit for the first A1 Grand Prix. In an action-packed race, nations jostled for position, each trying to earn their crucial first points in the World Cup of Motorsport’s opening round. Brazil’s Nelson Piquet Jr won the race, with Australian Will Power coming in second and Mexico’s Salvador Duran claiming the final podium position. South Africa’s driver Stephen Simpson took sixth position.

Organisers are billing the A1 Grand Prix as a true test of driving skills, because all drivers will be equipped with similar cars.



The Alan Webb Adventure was an enormous success. The event, held in the Botanical Gardens, consisted of several activities, including the very popular paint-ball.

■ Matthew Middleton

Rhodes canoeists off to the “Big Fish”

■ Megan Hibbert

The annual Fish River Canoe Marathon, one of South Africa’s three world-class canoeing races, hosted more than 1600 participants on September 30.

Cradock proved itself a worthy location, receiving visits from internationally renowned canoeists. Australian paddler, Ben Mercer, as well as other top European paddlers, in this year’s competition.

The increasingly popular event is ranked among the top five biggest canoe marathons in the world.

Despite the attention this event receives from top canoeists, this two-day event, which covers a total of 82km, does not only cater for canoeists seeking to break records.

According to Brett Craig, a two-time participant in the race and student at Rhodes University, the event fondly nicknamed “Big Fish”, provides a suitable environment for the amateur canoeist if they are capable of qualification and have completed proficiency requirements.

In order to excel in water sports an immense amount of training is required. In addition to this, canoeing requires that one knows the route in order to have the upper hand on your competitors, says Craig.

It is crucial for one to know the whereabouts of holes, gullies and rapids in making vital directional decisions. As this competition is held locally, it would appear that South Africans

finally have the advantage over their European counterparts.

This year, some of Rhodes’ best canoeists took part, including Nicholas Burden, Kelvin Trautman and Rhodes canoeing chairperson Andrew Morpew.

Competing in doubles for Rhodes were Katherine Volbrecht with David Wood, Tom Mapham with Sabrina Chesterman and Michael Baillie with Garyn Rapson.

Kwazulu-Natal canoeist Len Jenkins dominated the men’s race while Abbey Miedema (Western Province) took gold in the women’s race followed closely by race dominator Czechoslovakian Michala Strnadavo.

2005 Rhodes Soccer Internal League Log - Final top eight standings

| Team | P | W | D | L | GF | GA | PTS |
|--------------|----|----|---|---|----|----|-----|
| Black Gold | 15 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 35 | 6 | 37 |
| Stanley Kidd | 15 | 10 | 4 | 1 | 49 | 19 | 34 |
| MSA | 15 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 37 | 19 | 33 |
| Cot | 15 | 10 | 2 | 3 | 42 | 12 | 32 |
| Founders | 15 | 10 | 1 | 4 | 43 | 18 | 31 |
| Cory | 15 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 32 | 15 | 31 |
| Goldfields | 15 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 32 | 16 | 26 |
| Piet Retief | 15 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 34 | 19 | 26 |



Classy cricket has been the order of the day during the fast paced internal cricket matches.

■ Joni Els and Mike Dexter

Internal Cricket League gets Under Way

■ Adam Wakefield

The Kumars at No. 42, All Blacks, United Nations, Team Zissou XI and Discobiscuits. These aren't the names of Fantasy Premier League teams or entries in the dictionary of weird and wonderful names but rather some of the teams taking part in the Rhodes Cricket Club's internal league. The competition got underway on Saturday September 24th.

If the names strike you as somewhat unconventional, then so will the style of play. Most of us have heard about or seen Pro20 cricket, where bowlers are an endangered species and where batsmen perform Lance Klusener-type heroics in the ruthless quest for runs. The Internal League decided to adopt

a similar format, with a few slight adjustments.

The number of overs has been reduced from 20 to 18. Unlike traditional cricket, there are eight players per team as opposed to 11. The fielding team is given 55 minutes to bowl their allotted number of overs, and a 20-run penalty is enforced for every over completed after this time. There are 20 teams in the league which have been divided into four pools of five teams each. After the pool-round games have been completed, the top two teams progress to the quarterfinals. Two points are awarded for a win and one for a no result or tie. If two teams are tied on points at the

end of the pool stage, and the game between those teams did not provide a winner, a coin will be tossed to determine who goes through to the next round.

So far, teams have managed to score anywhere between 70 and 160 runs an innings, with many batsmen going to town in this batsman-friendly environment. Matthew Strouken, wicket keeper for the Adamson team, seems to feel right at home in this form of the game; he consistently scores over 40. Craig Hartley, opening batsman for De Beers, has blasted his way to an innings of over 70 and one of more than 40. Many 6's have already been dispatched onto and

nearly over the Student Union roof. The competition is played in an excellent spirit and the games are competitive and exciting to watch.

The time limits for the innings are short and only five minutes are allowed for the innings change-over, so spectators are seated for just two hours - a little longer than a game of rugby. The attacking nature of these games makes for a spectator-friendly environment. Games take place every Tuesday up until October 23, when the last pool games will be completed and the quarterfinals will be staged.

Games are played on both the Great Field and Prospect Field; beginning at 2pm.

Black Gold: 2005 league champions

■ Mandla Masingi

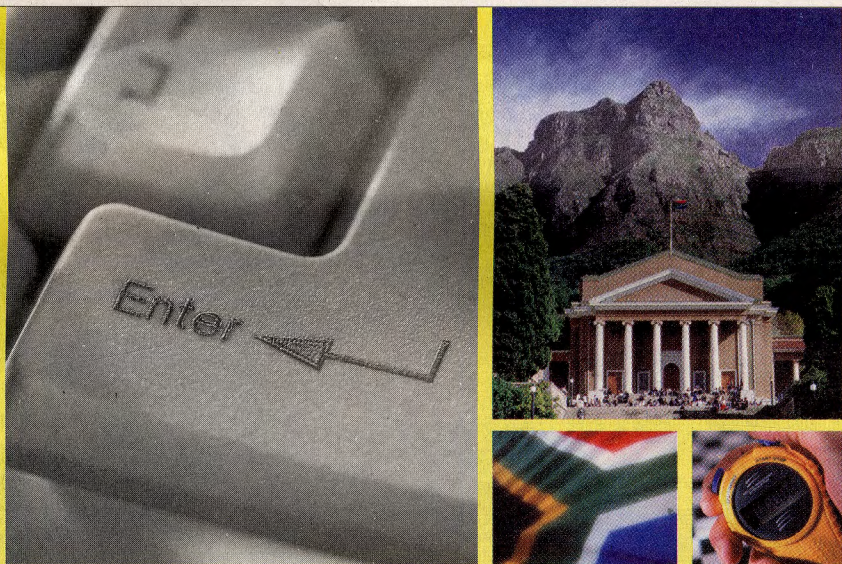
Black Gold have been crowned the 2005 internal soccer league champions for the second time. Fortunes changed for the previously strong Founders and Zimsoc. Michael "Lixlox" Kaliika, the zimsoc captain, said that they had difficulty fielding a full team for their matches. Founders' captain Ayanda "Ace" Ndinise said many of his team's players had a commitment to the Rhodes first team which took precedence over the league games.

He also felt that "in some of the games we were too complacent, especially in the game against Smuts." Founders were further impaired when their goalkeeper quit due to academic commitments. There was a high standard displayed on the field, and the players were also able to enjoy themselves socially.

The popularity of the competition is evidence that the league will continue to be an annual Rhodes event. Organisers of the event were satisfied with the level of competition and were glad that the players enjoyed themselves.

From here the top eight teams from the league will compete in a knock-out tournament. This is a separate competition in which the consistently strong teams are pitted against each other.

see page 11 for log



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