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Oop Vir Interpretasie: An Examination of the South African Media's Take-up and Representation of the Music of Fokofpolisiekar

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Research Report submitted to the Graduate School of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters by Coursework and Research Report in Journalism and Media Studies

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ABSTRACT

Popular music is rarely seen as a valid vehicle for public debate anywhere in the world, and especially in South Africa. Popular music is traditionally seen as "low art" – to be reported in the arts and entertainment pages of publications, and nothong more. The music of Afrikaans punk band Fokofpolisiekar, however, has been a catalyst for public debate in both the Afrikaans and English print media, in editorial and opinion pages as well as in the news sections of publications. Drawing on theories of the public sphere, public intellectual life and the media, this research shows that the media's response to the band has brought many discussions around Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa into the public sphere, beyond the arts and entertainment pages of newspapers, and that through the act of cultural consecration by other public intellectual figures, the band has been validated as commentators in the South African public sphere.

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Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts by Coursework and Research Report in the Department of Journalism, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

An Afrikaans rock band from Bellville may, at first, seem like an unlikely subject of study for an investigation of public deliberation and the media in South Africa. But Fokofpolisiekar were the subject of, and catalyst for, a great deal of public debate in South Africa from 2003 to 2007 when the band officially split up (although they still perform the occasional concert and have released an album since then). Their music and lyrics were the subject of discussion in the public domain, in newspaper articles and columns and among academics and media commentators alike, while their news-value was proven in the large numbers of news articles that documented their drunken brawls and punch-ups in small towns across the country.

Music is not unheard of as a trigger for debate in South Africa. In the 1980s Afrikaans rock musicians used music to voice their dissent and dissatisfaction with the apartheid state. Music was a tool of resistance, both for these musicians and for the thousands of South Africans who were in exile or lived outside South Africa during military training by the anti-apartheid movements. South African 'struggle songs" have been exhaustively studied by musicologists, historians and social historians.

More recently two songs that sit at opposite ends of the political spectrum but share the power to galvanise those who hear them have triggered debates. The first is the song "De La Rey" by Afrikaans singer Bok Van Blerk. The song idealises the Boer leader Koos De La Rey, and was appropriated as something of an anthem by many right-wing Afrikaners who claimed that it was a "struggle song" for the Afrikaners of South Africa and contained a 'coded message which contained the details for the beginning of a new Afrikaner rebellion. The controversy generated by this song, and the flying of the old Boer *vierkleur* flag when it was played led to the Department of Arts and Culture issuing a statement to the effect that the government saw the song as "…merely a historical curiosity".

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Another song to generate heated public-sphere debate is "Umshini Wami", a popular Zulu language song used formerly by members of the Umkhonto we Sizwe. Most recently, the song is identified with the persona of Jacob Zuma and his supporters. When it was sung outside the court in which he was being tried for rape, much discussion was generated about the images of masculinity hidden within the song. After his trial, Zuma and his supporters have continued to sing the song, but argue that it is not a call to arms, but an important part of the history of the struggle in South Africa.

Fokofpolisiekar are a thoroughly contemporary band in terms of sound and style – musically they are deeply entrenched in the post-punk sound of the 2000s. But lyrically and in terms of their interaction with the public and the press, they engaged with issues of Afrikaner identity that were arguably first addressed in Afrikaans alternative music by the musicians who were part of the Voelvry movement in the late 1980s. As Andries Bezuidenhout pointed out in his paper *From Voëlvry to Fokofpolisiekar:*

> "Nevertheless, the recent upheaval over a member of Fokofpolisiekar's late-night blasphemy has brought back some of the spirit of Voëlvry. Suddenly the University of Pretoria, the only Afrikaans university where Voëlvry were allowed to play on campus, bans the band from performing. New struggles around censorship emerge. People realise that some of the institutions that upheld a conservative Afrikaner identity in the past – churches, schools, and the white suburbs – are remarkably resilient in a post-apartheid context."

It's thus important to understand the Voëlvry movement, what they stood for and, more importantly, how South African society and the South African media responded to them at the time, if we are to understand the landscape in which Fokofpolisiekar made music.

In pre-1980s South Africa, Afrikaans popular music was "characterised by trite and banal musical constructions which acted as a vehicle for fascist hegemonic ideology" (Jury, 1996: pg 99). Lyrics tended to be escapist and romantic, actively avoiding contemporary

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issues of culture, politics and society. Hanneli van Staden described this escapist function in 1992:

> By singing about beaches, seagulls, puppy love and rugby, society's attention is taken away from socio-political issues – that […]in South Africa are most relevant. In this way, Afrikaans light music artists help to create and promote a false consciousness.
> *Article in Vrye Weekblad, March 1992*

It was against this backdrop that artists like Bernoldus Niemand (aka James Phillips), Koos Kombuis, Johannes Kerkorrel and other started to make music that was the exact antithesis of the oblivious, indifferent status quo. The movement began in the underground bars and clubs of Johannesburg, where young Afrikaans musicians, who sang in English and Afrikaans, performed songs that reflected their political and social dissatisfaction. They used the post-modern techniques of parody and pastiche to convey their messages – appropriating folk songs, and using familiar images like military service in their rock and roll idiom. (Jury, 1996) Because the music of the Voëlvry generation was such a radical rejection of Afrikaner nationalist identity, and was critical in its re-appraisal of what was, until then, a hegemonic Afrikaans culture, Afrikaans alternative popular music came to be seen as the manifestation of the emergence of an Afrikaans counter-culture (Jury, 1996).

The Voëlvry Toer (Voëlvry Tour) in 1989 garnered enormous media attention, both locally and internationally, and as the musicians travelled the country, their popularity spread. Naturally, their radical ideas and irreverent attitudes garnered unwanted attention too – they were banned form performing on various university campuses and were harassed by the South African police and security services.
The impact of the movement was significant. For the first time in South African popular music, Afrikaans musicians were making rock n roll in their mother tongue. Afrikaans alternative music provided both musicians and audiences with a medium in which to manifest their aesthetic and political values, and provided a fulcrum for social change.

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With the end of apartheid, however, came the end of the movement. James Phillips was killed in a car accident in 1995 and Johannes Kerkorrel died in 2002. And while some musicians, like Koos Kombuis, continued to perform and record albums, the protest element of their music became less of a focus.

In the late 1990s, however, there was an explosion of Afrikaans rock music. In a seminar paper presented at Wits University, sociologist Andries Bezuidenhout (himself part of the Afrikaans underground musical movement, and a commentator who has frequently written about Fokofpolisiekar in various newspapers and online forums) describes this new music as being divided into three strands – the nostalgic, the romantic and the cynical. Fokofpolisiekar fall into the cynical category – they are musicians who sing about disillusionment, apathy and social politics. In this regard, they can be seen to be continuing the tradition of the Voëlvry musicians.

Any discussion about either Fokofpolisiekar or the Voëlvry movement will involve the terms "mainstream" and "underground". At this point, it is important to briefly define these terms, as they are categories used to describe and designate not only different kinds of music, but also media sources.

Fred de Vries, a Dutch journalist and commentator who has written extensively about South African culture, defined the term "underground" in the following way: "a term to describe various alternative cultures which either consider themselves different to the mainstream of society and culture, or are considered so by someone. The word underground is used because there is a history of resistance movements under harsh regimes where the term underground was employed to refer to the necessary secrecy of the resisters".[1] This definition is useful because it extends the definition beyond just the musical realm and alludes to the political aspect of the "underground" which often informs the cultural aspect.

[1] This definition formed the basis of discussions at the seminar entitled "The End of the Underground?" hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand on April 19th 2006. (http://www.oulitnet.co.za/seminarroom/underground.asp)

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While the Voëlvry artists, were firmly located in the underground, both in the cultural and political sense, Fokofpolisiekar could be considered to be much more mainstream, in the cultural sense. Their songs are played on the radio (a standard by which many local musicians measure their popularity and success and a means of knowing exactly how many people are listening to their music) and their audience is not limited to a counter-culture. However, the themes they engage with are similar to those that the Voëlvry artists dealt with. This raises the question of what kind of public they imagine they are addressing themselves to, and who responds to them.

Fokofpolisiekar's songs are not overtly political, but they do engage tangentially with issues of race and language that have come up in the Taaldebat that is going on in many Afrikaans academic environments. They raise issues of identity and classification. The band is vehement about where they come from – suburban, middle-class Cape Town, and many of their songs reflect this. So on one level they are simply a rock band, rejecting the establishment and norms that so many rock bands reject. But at the same time, they are far from nihilistic – their lyrics are often poetic, and they ask difficult questions. Some Afrikaans public intellectuals have responded to this. In an article in *Insig* magazine in December 2004, Afrikaans poet Antjie Krog said of the band: 'Hulle vorm 'n unieke kombinasie van intelligente rebellie vanuit tradisionele basisse.' (Van Dyk, 2004) ["They create a unique combination of intelligent rebellion out of traditional bases"]

Early media attention appeared to hail the band as being a new voice, the future of Afrikaans music, and the saviours of a genre drowning in derivative, plastic sounds (Davis, 2004). However, in some media, they were also represented as rock 'n roll hooligans who got into bar brawls. After an incident in 2005 when one member autographed a fan's wallet with the words 'Fok God', the representation of the band in the media appeared to change, and stories became more focused on their personal lives and public behaviour than previously. As a result of this incident and its portrayal in the media, they were banned from performing in some small towns, and church groups threatened to disrupt live performances.

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Their behaviour, and the subsequent reportage of this behaviour in the local media was discussed by panels at arts festivals, on literary websites and in the mainstream press and they were denounced from pulpits and in tabloid newspapers. Some writers saw them as the future of Afrikaans music. Others denounced them as Satanists, and a danger to the youth (Cape Argus, May 10, 2004).

In a country where Afrikaans identity and culture have, historically, been closely tied to both the church and state, their very public rejection of organised religion also stoked public discussion (Bezuidenhout, 2005). The lead singer, Francois Van Coke, was the son of a pastor and the band often used religious iconography in their printed publicity material and in their album artwork – images of Jesus and crucifixes were used in humorous and irreverent ways: they published the lyrics to their first album in a pamphlet similar to the *jeugsangsbundels* (youth song bundles) that are produced by the NG Church and several members of the band were members of charismatic Christian rock bands before Fokofpolisiekar came into being.

Fokofpolisiekar have used other visual references that appear drawn from their inherited identity as white South Africans. The music video for the song 'Hemel Op Die Platteland" is made up of rescued home video footage of white South Africans in the 1980s taking part in activities that are familiar to white South Africans of that era – frolicking on beaches with "Whites Only" signs, taking part in military cadet parades, standing around braais and cheering at drum majorettes.[2] In the video for the song "Tevrede" the band again chose to use images that are close to many Afrikaans South African's heart: footage of rugby. The video shows the band playing a rugby match in the rain, and the footage shifts to slow motion for particularly graphic shots when one of them is kicked or trodden upon. The game deteriorates into a punch up between the band (dressed in black) and their opponents (dressed in white). For South Africans, particularly men, who grew up playing school rugby, the video conjures up familiar images.[3]

[2] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBerGAaL1X8 accessed 14 November 2007
[3] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_ZlyYmVHog accessed 14 November 2007

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In the music video for the song "Brand Suid Afrika" (Burn South Africa), the play on images becomes more hyper-real, and pronounced. The band is playing on what appears to be a deserted campground. They are surrounded by a variety of cars, which form a *laager* around them. Various characters emerge from the cars, including a family, compete with domestic worker, two men who from their dress appear to be stereotypical farmers, and '*tromppoppies*' (cheerleaders or drum majorettes). As the video progresses, the family start to argue, the 'farmers' start to kiss and eventually, it cuts to a shot of the lead singer, Francios Van Coke, speaking at a table into a phalanx of microphones, in an image reminiscent of fascist photo propaganda.[4] These images all draw on icons and even clichés of Afrikaner culture. But they are unsettled and undercut by the sentiments contained in the lyrics of the songs.

1. 1 Aim of Research

This research project aims to examine whether, and in what ways, ideas that are transmitted by a musical form (in this case the music produced by Fokofpolisiekar) enter into public intellectual debate through the media. To achieve this, I analysed the media coverage of the band and their music, categorised this coverage by where in the various publications this writing appeared and examined the kind of coverage the band received, and by whom it was written. Ordinary reportage was logged and counted but not examined as closely as the editorial coverage. I analysed the editorial coverage and compared and contrasted it with debates that were currently playing out in the public sphere and looked for points of intersection with the music produced by the band.

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[4] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNfVCSOKoLA accessed 14 November 2007

1.2 Rationale

In the past, public sphere theory has had little to say about musical forms, focussing more on literary and artistic forms of engagement. This research aimed to discover *how* complex statements about important contemporary issues, which are formulated in cultural products like music, feed into public debate through the media; in this particular case, the debates that take place as a result of the representation and mediatisation of the music of a particular band. In other words, it aimed to examine the media's role as a vehicle for transmitting certain issues into the public sphere, and thus generating discussion. In the past, a secondary question was for the research was whether the mediatisation of Fokofpolisiekar, their actions and their music constituted public sphere discussions of Afrikaner identity, and, if so, in what ways. Fokofpolisiekar are a band that appeal to the relatively small audience of Afrikaans rock fans. Like most music groups, they both want and need attention from the press. Media attention guarantees their public profile, and a public profile means that they can attract audiences to concerts and buyers for their albums. At the same time, those who object to the band also want media attention, as a way of publicising their point of view. The resulting conflict is picked up in the media, using their own standards and news values, which in turn feeds the debates around the band. Understanding this media take-up and the debates that are brought into public intellectual life through the media is the main point of this research.

It is my contention that, in the case of Fokofpolisiekar, the media has responded in two different ways and created two different forms of coverage through which ideas have passed into the public debate. It is these different forms of coverage, which have determined how they are represented in the media.

The first form is the news story. News editors at various publications made the decision to include stories about the band in the news sections of their publications, thus giving the tacit stamp of approval to the band as being "news worthy". The process by which this happened is a relatively straightforward one of media gate-keeping, agenda setting and

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news values, and which I will explore later. The result has been a certain representation and type of coverage, which is in keeping with traditional styles and forms of news.

The second, and in my opinion more interesting process is the one which resulted in the band, their lyrics and representations could be found on the opinion and editorial pages of several large local publications, where they were discussed, interviewed and analysed in some depth by people who are themselves considered to be public intellectuals. This process is a little more complex, including not just the newsman's usual decision about what makes good news, but also a process of public cultural consecration of one group by another as outlined by Pierre Bourdieu. Theories of the public sphere are also an important component of this and both will be explored in the theoretical framework section and the results will be discussed in the analysis of the findings of the research, and will form the basis of the research.

The role of the media in facilitating and feeding public debates is considered vital in the development and maintenance of a democracy (Curran, pg 122; Habermas, 1992). However, the pressures on the media when it comes to selecting what events and issues become parts of the news agenda are considerable, as theories of media production demonstrate (Berkowitz, 1997, Lippmann, 1922). This means that the fulfilment of the normative democratic function of the media is, in practice, not guaranteed. The factors that influence news production and media operations generally have been much studied; the production of debate, its relationship to news and the potential implications for public discussion is generally under researched. This study seeks to add to a small but growing body of research in South Africa on the role of the media in public debate.[5]

Secondly, music, as a cultural product, is not usually seen as being a tributary to public debate and is usually relegated to the Arts and Leisure pages of South African newspapers. Likewise, the media about music is not typically identified as an area for

[5] The research was undertaken within the greater Public Intellectual Life Project at the University of the Witwatersrand. Other research undertaken in this project included examinations of issues discussed in the opinion pages of the Sunday Times and the representation in the media of the proposed "Native Club" – a think tank of black South African intellectuals.

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more general societal deliberation. Through this study I hope to show that, in a changing society like South Africa, a musical form does have more to offer society than being purely entertainment, and that the media that engages with this music serves more than just a reporting function, and acts as a link between the music and current public debates, or facilitates debates in certain ways around the music.

The role of the Afrikaner in post-apartheid, post-1994 South Africa is complicated. Politically and socially, South Africans are still struggling to unite across the previously stratified hierarchies of race, language, culture and class. Afrikaners are often seen as culturally exclusive, backward looking, reluctant to fit in and disaffected. These perceptions have been affirmed in the media by events such as the University of Bloemfontein race rows and regular reports of racism within traditionally Afrikaans institutions like universities and sports teams. In this context, a band that so overtly deals with cultural codes and plays with the stereotypes of Afrikaans culture, both visually and in their lyrics, becomes both a catalyst for and subject of debate in the public sphere.

South Africa is moving from being a society where debate and discussion were subject to political and social constraints, into one where it is a guaranteed freedom. One of the most obvious places for this discussion to take place is in the media, so it is important that we examine the role of the media in the development of these debates

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CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The thesis draws on media theory, theories of the public sphere, theories of the journalistic field, notions of representation and identity and writings on music and representation.

2.1 Media Theory

Any study of the media's representation of a certain subject requires some understanding of media theory, as the space the media creates both for news and debate is necessarily constrained by a variety of factors. Many of these factors are described in various theoretical approaches in the sociology of news, such as theories of gate-keeping and news values, which is concerned mostly with the production of news and information. There has been very little research internationally that is specifically focused on how opinion, analysis and debate is produced and represented. However, a recently established research project at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa around the media and public debate (of which this research report is part) has begun to consider this question, and will also be drawn on.

Another area of media theory that is important to understand for this research is that which explains how the news media structure reality. The media is the filter through which most of us get our information about the world around us. Because most members of society do not have access to the people who actually make news, we rely on the media to convey these events to us. As a result, we use the clues that are given to us by the media to organise the news we consume and decide which stories and issues are the most important (McCombs, 2004 pg 2) and the agenda of the news source becomes, as a result, the agenda of the public. These "clues" that McCombs refers to are presented to us in a series of layers. The first layer is simple: news is what is included and written about and non-news is not. The second layer is more complex that just inclusion or exclusion, and concerns the placement of a story. Newspapers are divided into sections, which are usually well-marked in a publication. News stories are separate from opinion pieces, which are in turn, separate from arts and entertainment news, and these again are

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presented separately from the sports news. This arrangement of different types of news is another clue that is sent from the media to the consumer, and helps the reader to arrange the material content of a single edition of a publication into various hierarchies by importance and areas of interest.

Another process that shapes the way the media mediates the reality of the consumer is that of gatekeeping. Gatekeeping is the term given to the process, in which the countless pieces of information that are available to journalists every day are whittled down and organised into what we recognise as 'news' (Shoemaker, 1991). During this process, journalists, editors and other communicators choose to downplay some stories and give others emphasis, depending on what they feel is more important (*Ibid*). They base these decisions on a range of factors, including news values.

In his essay *Encoding and Decoding* Stuart Hall points out that "…an event must become a *story* before it can become a communicative event…" (1980, p129). An understanding of the principles of news values help to explain how an event becomes a story.

Stuart Hall also points out that "…news values are one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All 'true journalists' are supposed to possess it [an understanding of what makes news]: few can or are willing to identify and define it…we appear to be dealing with a 'deep structure' whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally most know how to operate it" (in Schudson, 2000; pg181).

Media theorists have spent years researching and trying to measure how an event enters into the media as a piece of 'news', and what makes, for example, one murder worthy of front-page status while another will go unreported. This research has, over the years, disproved the conventional wisdom that news production is a simple, straightforward process whereby something happens and the media reports it (Jamison & Campbell, 2001; pg40). In fact, a complex relationship of values, ideals and outside factors influence how an event passes into becoming news.

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In their 1965 article *The Structure of Foreign News*, Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge outlined eight hypotheses that they consider to be factors that influence whether or not an event becomes a story (1965; pg 66-67). These are summarised as follows:

- firstly, does the event have frequency – will it take place in a time-span that is needed for it to unfold and gain meaning, and does this time span intersect with the news media's schedule for transmitting the news?
- Secondly, does the event have amplitude – is it big enough to be news?
- The third hypothesis is concerned with clarity – the less ambiguous the story, the more likely it is to be noticed by the consumers of news.
- Fourth – is the story meaningful. In this sense, 'meaning' is used in a purely descriptive sense; it refers to whether or not the story is interpretable by the people consuming it. Tied to meaning is the notion of cultural proximity – the story must be culturally relevant to the people consuming it if it is to be of consequence.
- The fifth hypothesis deals with consonance – stories that fit with the media's expectations of what constitutes news are more likely to get coverage than those that do not.
- The sixth hypothesis asks whether or not the story meets the expectations of the consumers as to what constitutes news. In many ways this supports the old example of what makes news: 'Dog Bites Man' is not a story, but 'Man Bites Dog' – the unexpected – is a story.
- The seventh hypothesis for constituting news asks whether the story has continuity – can it sustain itself as a story for some time?
- The final hypothesis deals with composition – if journalists are required to provide a balanced selection of stories, then these stories will compete with each other for selection.

These eight hypotheses, say Galtung and Ruge, are fairly "culture-free" (pg 67), in other words, they don't vary that much between cultures around the world. They do, however,

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highlight four culturally specific (and by this they mean specific to the north-western cultural perspective from which they were writing) criteria that also influence news values, and which I consider to be appropriate to our South African context. The first hypothesis deals with the degree to which a story is concerned with elite nations – the more elite, the more newsworthy the story. Likewise, the second criterion states that the more elite the people involved in the story are, the more newsworthy the story is. The third criterion deals with the degree to which a story is personalised – if the events in a story can be attributed to an individual person, the more likely the story is to become news. Lastly, the more negative the story, the more newsworthy it is (pg 68).
Galtung and Ruge go on to explain that in the actual process of selection of what is to become news, these criteria are measured by journalists, and by seeing which have a higher threshold of all twelve, they are able to make a selection of what stories make it into the news and what stories do not. They then go on to explain how the process evolves from selection of the stories to the point it reaches the consumer of the news.

They highlight three vital processes in the production of news (which, we will see, have great similarities to the theories of representation later in this theoretical section). The first is Selection – the more an event satisfies the eight criterion, the more likely it is to be selected by a journalist or editor become news (pg 71). The next step in the process is what they call Distortion – once an item has been selected, those people who are creating the story will accentuate whichever one of the eight criteria that made it newsworthy in the first place. The final stage is Replication – what this means is that both the process of selection and the process of distortion will take place at all steps in the chain as a story flows from event to reader . This means, practically, that reporter sent to cover a an event will make go through the Selection and Distortion processes as they select which parts of the event to include in their coverage, they will follow their processes again as they write the story and their editor will edit the story using those processes for a third time before the piece is published. (Ibid).
Of course, the form of Fokofpolisiekar story goes beyond just being ‘news’ as defined by news values – they have entered the realm of public debate. But since they entered this

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realm through the media, it is important that we are au fait with news values as a first step.

2.2 Agenda Setting Theory

Theories of agenda setting and salience are also germane to this examination, particularly when we look at why Fokofpolisiekar are deemed to be worthy of both news and opinion status, and for how long they have remained on the media agenda. Theories of agenda setting don't only examine how an event or debate become news, they also examine how the event or issue pass into the realm of opinion, which, in an examination of the representation of Fokofpolisiekar in the South African media makes this theory particularly useful.

Agenda-setting theory tells us that 'salience' is what happens when an issue (or event) is perceived to be of sufficient importance to have an effect on the media or public agenda (Dearing & Rogers, 1996). This process is set out by James Dearing and Everett Rogers, in their essay *What is Agenda Setting*. Essentially, the agenda-setting process is a process of ongoing competition between proponents of different issues to get the attention of the media. They do this because the media's agenda has, according to Dearing and Rogers, an effect on the public agenda. The public agenda can, in turn (although not always) influence the political agenda. Since space in the media agenda is a limited resource, proponents of an issue are constantly competing for their issue to be included in this space, at the expense of other issues. This jockeying is important, especially in the context of this research because exposure in the media agenda plays a crucial role in enabling social issues to become public issues. Once an issue has triumphed, and made it onto the media agenda, it has to stay visible and foremost in the public's mind, in order to remain relevant and stay in the news. This is achieved by constantly generating new information about the issue; in order maintain its newsworthiness. Only by remaining newsworthy can an issue hope to maintain a prolonged influence on the public agenda.

By combining a study of the media coverage of Fokofpolisiekar, their music and any public incidents that they have been involved in, using the media theory outlined above, I

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will, hopefully, be able to forge a clearer understanding of the media's attitudes towards Fokofpolisiekar as a news subject.

2.3 Public Sphere Theory

In the past, public sphere theory has had little to say about musical forms, focussing more on literary and artistic forms of engagement. However public sphere theory is relevant to this study, because of its focus on the role of public debate in society, which is considered crucial to the functioning of democracies. Jürgen Habermas, and his writings on what constituted the 'bourgeois public sphere' is the logical starting point for any discussion of the relationship between the media and the public sphere (Habermas 1991 pg 56-84).

Habermas' public sphere was a place where the private world of everyday experience was connected to the political system by a complex communication network of individuals (*Ibid*). This sphere was, he insisted, differentiated, made up of many different, yet organised groups. These groups include, according to Habermas '…a multitude of overlapping international, national, regional and subcultural arenas.'(Curran, 2002, p135-6) The public sphere is a body of individual, private people who gather in a common space (literally or figuratively) to discuss issues of common or public concern and interest. In this public sphere, individuals took part in rational, critical debate around issues that entered into the space through, among other things, the media.

Later theorists, like Nancy Fraser and Michael Warner, have taken Habermas' theories further and described a world of much more complex, and inclusive overlapping, public spheres. As Nancy Fraser points out, Habermas imagined the public sphere as the singular public arena in which discourse takes place. (Fraser 1991, p122). Fraser, in countering this argument, promotes the idea of multiple publics that operate in both stratified and in egalitarian multicultural societies.

Fraser's definition of a stratified society is where the basic "…institutional framework generates unequal social groups in structural relations of dominance and subordination" (Fraser, 1991, p123). In these societies, Fraser argues, a multiplicity of publics allow for

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more discourse, and more space for the development of cultural negotiation and growth. In egalitarian societies, she argues, a multiplicity of publics also better serve society, but for different reasons. In egalitarian, multicultural societies, she argues, multiple publics are needed because they guarantee the continued existence of social equality, cultural diversity and participatory democracy (Ibid, pg128).

As Fraser posits in *Rethinking the Public,* members of "…subordinated public spheres…[find] it advantageous to constitute alternative publics…" (Fraser, 1991 p123), which she calls "subaltern counterpublics". The members of these counterpublics may be united by language, or race or gender. She goes on to say that within these counterpublics, social identities are formed and acted out. This notion is particularly useful when trying to understand and define the public (or possibly the counterpublic) that has developed around the expressions of an Afrikaans rock band.
Michael Warner refines the notion of the "subaltern counterpublic" even further in *Publics and Counterpublics* (Warner, 2002). He insists that subaltern counterpublics are not the same thing as counterpublics, because those who make up a counterpublic are not always "subalterns" (Ibid, p57). He also draws a distinction between subcultures and counterpublics, pointing out that counterpublics allow for a variation in opinions, which have a relationship to the broader public sphere, rather than the narrower demography of a subculture (Ibid p 56).

In his work on South African hip hop, Adam Haupt has used Fraser's theory of subaltern counterpublics to '…make sense of the "noise" produced by hip-hop artists." This concept of "noise" is taken from Dick Hebidge's 1979 study of punk subculture *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* in which he suggests that subcultures:
"…represent 'noise' (as opposed to sound): interference in the orderly sequence which leads from real events and phenomena to their representation in the media. We should therefore not underestimate the signifying power of the spectacular subculture not only as a metaphor for potential anarchy 'out there' but as an actual mechanism for semantic disorder: a kind of blockage in the system of representation" (Hebidge, 1979: 90).

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Haupt sees hip-hop groups, (particularly those based in the Western Cape and in the geographically and politically marginalised Cape Flats) as significant contributors to South African democracy because they create this noise, which in turn constitutes subaltern counterpublics that did not exist before. They are claiming a public space for themselves and their fans, in which they are able to articulate their experiences of post-apartheid South Africa.

Afrikaans punk music, and specifically the music of Fokofpolisiekar have done the same thing. The 'blockage of representation' that is Fokofpolisiekar has forced the South African media to rethink the way they write about the band and their fans, thus creating new platforms across various public spaces (in the media, in live concerts, in the public debate) where the realities of being white, Afrikaans and male are articulated. The end result is that new voices are brought to the public debates, shoring up the democratic discourse.

In *Modernity At Large*, Arjun Appadurai defines 'the imaginary' as '…an understanding of the world and one's place in it with a view to expression of some sort.' He describes a world where '…citizens *imagine* themselves to belong to a national society.' (Appadurai 1996, p161) This nation, according to Appadurai is not defined by facts like language, race or ethnicity but by cultural products or collective imaginations. These publics may not exist in anything more than the imaginations of those who constitute them.

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2.4 Theories of the Journalistic Field

Pierre Bourdieu's theories of the media in a sociological context are essential to this research project, because they combine traditional field theory and media studies in an attempt to understand the modern, media soaked society.

More specifically, I shall be looking at Bourdieu's theories of consecration and legitimacy.

Media consecration, according to Bourdieu, is the process that occurs when the media (and he admits that you cannot look at the media as a unified, homogenous whole, but must rather see it as a composite made up of different journalists, who may be closer or further away from autonomous and heterotonomous poles) is invested with the power to mark their subjects (or events) as being important and worthy of wider consideration. (Benson, *Field Theory in Comparative Context,* 1999 pg469) This process is significant when you look at it across the media landscape; in a democracy, says Bourdieu, there is a vast range of stories that emerge every day, in different media outlets. Very few of them are deemed valuable enough to be picked up by all media, and attract widespread attention. (Ibid) When this does occur, as I will show in the case of Fokofpolisiekar, it is an important indicator of on one hand, the perceived value of the story, and on the other hand, the weight that that the particular medium that picked up on the story has within the journalistic field.

This weight is, in many ways, determined by the legitimacy that is given to the media source by society. This legitimacy is accumulated over the course of history, and is formed out of a balance of two kind of legitimacy – external and internal.[6] Put another way – a publication's legitimacy is attained when the peers of those who are writing deem their work to be of intellectual and cultural value, and when the public give their approval, by buying the publication.
In this research, I hope to show that this process of legitimisation takes place in the media's coverage of Fokofpolisiekar, because they are represented in the media in both an intellectual and a populist light.

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[6] Champagne, P, *The Double Dependency: The Journalistic Field Between Politics and Markets* in Benson and Neveu (eds) *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field* p58

2.5 Theories of Identity and Representation

There are two schools of thought around the ideas of representation and identity that are germane to this study.

The first, which is a more 'naturalist' approach, is the theory that was posited by Edward Said in his book *Culture and Imperialism.* He defined culture, as a concept that included a refining and elevating element (1993; xiii) can be used as a tool for forming a protective identity. According to Said, culture is something that, over time, becomes associated with a nation or state (or, in the case of Fokofpolisiekar, some aspects of the Afrikaans language and Afrikaner culture, which they engage with from within) and can be used as a way of differentiating 'us' from 'them' (*Ibid*). Identity, in this case, is sourced from culture.

Said goes on to argue that the act of representation is usually a violent one, involving some kind of decontextualisation, miniaturisation or disorientation of the subject being represented. In other words, the identity that Fokofpolisiekar have constructed for themselves may not necessarily be the same as the identity presented in the media, because the act of representation fundamentally changes the identity of the subject.

The implication here is that the media misrepresents 'reality' in order to further their own ideologies and values and represent the subject in a way that suits these values. Stereotypes are reinforced, and the 'message' moves further and further away from the 'truth' of the subject being represented. Throughout *Culture and Imperialism* Said refers to works of fiction that portray certain subjects in a way that serves either the political or social ideologies of the time.

If we look at this theory in relation to the hypothesis of news values that is outlined by Galtung and Rouge in the Media Theory section, we're able to create a clearer picture of

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a media system that distorts and misrepresents the 'reality' of a news story, not only to meet a certain social or political ideology, but also to meet its own values of what makes an event newsworthy. The process of distortion that they refer to, whereby the criterion that make a story newsworthy are then amplified by the media appears, at this point, to be similar to the process that Said describes when he talks about the act of representation that decontextualises or disorients its subject.

However Said's theory is problematic, mainly because it assumes that there is one, inalienable truth or real identity that must be represented if any type of representation is to be seen as accurate and correct. This leaves the consumer of the media asking 'can I really see the violence in this representation, or is the subject just being represented how it happens to be?'

A more discursive approach would allow for a multiplicity of different representations of a multiplicity of different identities. This approach was a result of the development of Cultural Studies, and is summarised by Stuart Hall in *Cultural Identity* (Hall & Du Gay 1996). He sees identification (the process of creating an identity) as an ongoing process, a '…construction, a process never completed, always in process…'(Hall, 1996; pg3) These identities are created within discourse (*Ibid*) and are subject to the historical, social, political and institutional subjectivities that are taking place as they are being created. The result is, according to Hall, an identity that is a '…point(s) of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us.' (*Ibid*; pg 6)

Essentially, Hall is stating the opposite to Said's theory – that there is no such thing as the one, inalienable, real truth when it comes to identity, which means that nothing can be misrepresented. In *Encoding/Decoding* (1980) he outlines the theory that society and culture tend to impose classifications on the social and cultural world. New, problematic events, which breach this 'taken-for-granted' knowledge of imposed social structures, have to be assigned to a discursive domain before they can be made sense of (pg 134). These preferred meanings have a social order embedded in them – so in order to clarify a 'misunderstanding', (where the message is not operating within a dominant or preferred

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code) we have to refer *through* codes to orders of social life, ideology economic and political power. So, according to Hall, there is no such thing as a 'perfectly transparent communication' (pg 135). Rather we are confronted with a series of 'systematically distorted communications'. (*Ibid*)

What this alludes to is the possibility that the identity that Fokofpolisiekar have created for themselves, and the identity that is presented in the media are not necessarily the same. As Hall notes in his essay *The Rediscovery of Identity* (in Gurevitch et al, 1982), media describes the world in a way that reflects the social organisation of the media institution itself. They produce meaning that is relevant to them. However, the media, no matter how impartial it likes to think it is, is unable to escape the dominant political and social ideology – no representation takes place in a vacuum, and thus the media will always represent its subject at the very least in relation to the news values outlined earlier, and also in terms of its understanding of society.

At this point it is important to remember that the primary focus of this research is not the gap between what Fokofpolisiekar are saying and how that is represented by the media. It is the actual mediatisation that is the focus of the study, as well as how this mediatisation then feeds into the public debates of the time. Where representation comes into the debate is when we look at the news values section and look at how, if at all, news values influence the mediatisation of Fokofpolisiekar. Are the types of issues that the band raises (that are then brought into the public debate) influenced by news values in the way they are reported? Are some issues given precedence over others by the media, and, if so, does this influence the public debate? These are the types of questions that will guide the application of theory to the research.

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CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The nature and aims of this research required that I use a content analysis as my methodological of approach for examining the media representations of Fokofpolisiekar. Using this system allowed me to examine the vast amount of media material that exists around Fokofpolisiekar, and systematically examine, certain patterns to be identified, and this information to be catalogued and objective inferences to be drawn.

There is also an element of qualitative methodology to the research, since certain specific case studies will be singled out for inclusion in the review of the media that is being examined.

In order to examine the mediatisation of Fokofpolisiekar, the first step was to establish which media I would examine – print, online or broadcast. I decided to focus on the mainstream print media, for several reasons. Firstly, print media, as opposed to broadcasting, provides a space for debate, for arguments to be presented and for responses to these arguments. These debates take place in several locations within newspapers: they are played out on the letters pages where readers write in response to items that have read (and, on occasion, receive responses from editors and journalists). Debates also take place in the opinion sections where columnists reply to each other, over an extended period of time.

Secondly, the commercial print media is a highly segmented industry, with extensive research conducted by newspapers into who their readers are. Demographics, geography and language are all considered, and much of the newspapers' content is presented with those ideal readers in mind. This means that the news is presented in different ways. It also means that matters of culture, with all their attendant nuances and overlapping influences are often presented and discussed in a variety of complex manners, which are not as common in the much more immediate medium of broadcast media in South Africa.

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3.1 Selecting the Media Sources

The first step in this research was to decide which media publications I would look at, in an effort to answer the main question of this thesis, namely, how ideas that are transmitted by a musical form (in this case the music produced by Fokofpolisiekar) enter into public intellectual debate through the media.

The next step was to decide which publications would be included in this research. The South African Advertising Research Foundation provides and audited and widely accepted industry standard list of both mainstream and niche newspapers in South Africa[7].Their annual AMPS survey of newspaper readership numbers was my source list for publications.

Daily Newspapers	**Language of Publication**	**Publishers/owners**	**Region Covered**
Beeld	Afrikaans	Media24	Gauteng
Business Day	English	Johncom	National
Business Report	English	Independent Newspapers	National
Cape Argus	English	Independent Newspapers	Western Cape
Cape Times	English	Independent Newspapers	Western Cape
Citizen	English	Caxton	National
Daily Dispatch	English	Dispatch Media	Eastern Cape
Daily News	English	Independent Newspapers	KwaZulu-Natal

[7] http://www.saarf.co.za/ accessed Sunday 4 February 2006

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Daily Sun	English	Media24	Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North-West
Daily Voice	English	Independent newspapers	Western Cape
Diamond Fields Advertiser	English	Independent Newspapers	Northern Cape
Die Burger	Afrikaans	Media24	Western Cape
Isolezwe	Zulu	Independent Newspapers	KwaZulu-Natal
Pretoria News	English	Independent Newspapers	Pretoria
Sowetan	English	Johnnic	Johannesburg
The Herald	English	Johnnic	Eastern Cape
The Mercury	English	Independent Newspapers	Kwazulu-Natal;
The Star	English	Independent Newspapers	Gauteng
The Witness	English	Media24	Kwa-Zulu-Natal
Volksblad	Afrikaans	Media24	Free State, Northern Cape

Figure 1.1 – Daily Newspapers in South Africa, as listed by South African Advertising Research Foundation.

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Weekly Newspapers	Language	Publisher/Owner	Region Covered
Beeld Naweek*	Afrikaans	Media24	Gauteng
Burger Saturday*	Afrikaans	Media24	Western Cape
Citizen Weekend*	English	Caxton	National
City Press	English	Media24	National
Ilanga Weekend*	Zulu	Independent Newspapers	KwaZulu-Natal
Independent on Saturday	English	Independent Newspapers	KwaZulu-Natal
Mail & Guardian	English	M&G Media	National
Post	English	Independent Newspapers	KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng
Pretoria News Weekend*	English	Independent Newspapers	Pretoria
Rapport	Afrikaans	Media24	National
Saturday Argus*	English	Independent Newspapers	Western Cape
Saturday Dispatch*	English	Dispatch Media	Eastern Cape
Soccer Laduma	English	Soccer Laduma	National
Sunday Argus*	English	Independent Newspapers	Western Cape
Sunday	English	Independent	National

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Independent		Newspapers	
Sunday Sun	English	Media24	National
Sunday Times	English	Johnnic	National
Sunday Tribune	English	Independent Newspapers	KwaZulu-Natal
Sunday World	English	Johnnic	National
The Weekender[8]	English	Johnnic	Gauteng
Volksblad Saturday*	Afrikaans	Media24	Free State, Northern Cape
Weekend Post*	English	Independent Newspapers	KwaZulu-Natal
Witness Saturday*	English	Media24	KwaZulu-Natal

Figure 1.2: Weekly Newspapers in South Africa as listed by South African Advertising Research Foundation.

Titles with an asterisk are the weekend editions of daily publications. Although SAARF counts them as individual publications, I have chosen, in this case, to count the weekend editions as another edition of the daily publications, effectively making them six day a week publications.

Once this list was complete, the next task was to establish a timeline within which to search for material published concerning Fokofpolisiekar. In interviews, the band has said that they first started working together in April 2003[9]. This then provided a start date for

[8] This publication was established during the timeframe used for this research, therefore affecting it's spread of quantitative results.
[9] *Fokofpolisiekar: 'n Dosis Rebelsheid in Afrikaanse Musiek* by Erns Grundling, 2 December 2006. Accessed off LitNet (www.Litenet.co.za) on 26 November 2006.

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the search. Since I wanted to develop a complete picture of the band's trajectory, including major news events in which they had been involved (like the Fok God incident which took place in early 2006) and the media's response to these events, I decided to end the search on December 31 2006.

All of the publications in the SAARF list have online archives, which allowed me to do a keyword search, within the timeframe, and produced thorough results. I also checked myself (and the results) using a Google search for each publication, which consisted of the words 'Fokofpolisiekar' + the name of each publication. Some publications logged hundreds of results, others logged none.

The results of this search were as follows:

Name of Publication	**Number of Items**	**Language**	**Owner/ Publisher**
Beeld	511	Afrikaans	Media24
Business Day	1	English	Johnnic
Cape Argus	12	English	Independent Newspapers
Cape Times	42	English	Independent Newspapers
Daily News	9	English	Independent Newspapers
Die Burger	484	Afrikaans	Media24
Mail & Guardian	17	English	M&G Media
Pretoria News	28	English	Independent Newspapers
Rapport	107	Afrikaans	Media24
Sunday Times	3	English	Johnnic
The Herald	2	English	Johnnic
The Mercury	3	English	Independent Newspapers
The Star	127	English	Independent Newspapers
The Weekender	10	English	Johnnic

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The Witness	2	English	Media24
Volksblad	176	Afrikaans	Media24

Figure 2: Occurrences of Fokofpolisiekar in Daily and Weekly Newspapers

What is immediately evident from these results (even without a detailed profile of each publication) is the range of audiences covered by these publications: English and Afrikaans publications are both included, but the obvious concentration of material is in the Afrikaans publications, even though there are less of them. What the results also show is that while there is such a concentration of material in some publications, like *Beeld* or *Die Burger* others, like *The Citizen*, *City Press*, *The Sowetan* and *The Post*, which, according to the AMPS research cater to predominantly black readers[10], have printed nothing about Fokofpolisiekar. What this implies (and what will be explored in more detail in the analytical chapter of this thesis) is that issues around Afrikaans culture are seen as having little or no significance to the readers of these papers.

3.2 *Newspaper Profiles*

As well as understanding what language a publication is printed in, and what region it covers, it is also important to understand a little more about the publications in question, if we are to fully appreciate and understand their responses to Fokofpolisiekar. Noting circulation figures and the Living Standard Measurement (LSM) of readers can provide some insight into who these publications understand their readers to be. Once again, this information was available on the SAARF website[11]. The audited SAARF figures on readership and LSM are generally accepted as the industry standard for measuring this type of information. SAARF conducts a twice-annual AMPS survey. AMPS is an acronym for the All Media and Products Survey. This survey is a single source survey, which measures the media usage, product consumption and demographics of every

[10] AMPS 2006, as outlined on by South African Advertising Research Foundation – www.saarf.co.za accessed 5 January 2007.
[11] www.saarf.co.za accessed 5 January 2007.

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respondent[12]. The following newspaper profiles are based on the findings of the 2006 SAARF AMPS

Name of Publication	**Readership figures**	**Reader LSM**
Beeld	404 000	7 –10
Business Day	120 000	7 –10
Cape Argus	374 000	7 –10
Cape Times	245 000	7 –10
Daily News	309 000	6 –10
Die Burger	502 000	7 –10
Mail & Guardian	305 000	7 –10
Pretoria News	97 000	3 –10
Rapport	1 609 000	7 –10
Sunday Times	3 292 000	7 – 10
The Herald	195 000	6 -10
The Mercury	219 000	6 –10
The Star	618 000	5 -10
The Weekender		
The Witness	24 561	7 -10
Volksblad	135 000	7 -10

Figure 3. Newspaper profiles

[12] *Ibid*

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3.3 *LSM Descriptors*

The LSM or Living Standards Measure was created by the South African Advertising Research Foundation to measure the living standards of South Africans. By using 29 variables[13], which determine an individual's living standard, they allocate points, which determine where in the 1 –10 LSM categories a person may fit. LSM 10 is the top one, for the most privileged members of society with access to all media and household goods, and LSM 1 is the lowest; rural people with access to little media and few amenities fit into this category.

3.4 *Other Media Sources*

When I was considering this subject as a research topic, before the proposal stage, I discussed the topic with a variety of specialists in the media, music, and Afrikaans counter-culture. One of the details that came out of these discussions was the recurring pointing towards LitNet, an online literary journal, as a source of media and a place where discussion around Fokofpolisiekar was taking place.

It became a starting point for my research, as a source of writing and discussion. LitNet is an online journal, based in Stellenbosch, and edited, at the time of this research, by novelist and academic Etienne van Heerden. It is co-owned by Media 24/Naspers and Ligitprops 3042 BK. Most of the content is in Afrikaans, although the community who use LitNet is mixed, in terms of language. It is a niche publication, concerned with all aspects of culture, and approaches these subjects in a consciously highbrow manner. Antjie Krog, Etienne van Heerden and Andries Bezuidenhout are regular contributors. The LitNet community are also active participant, contributing articles and commenting on the discussion forums, which are open to everyone.

[13] Does the home have: hot running water, a fridge/freezer, a microwave oven, a flush toilet in/outside the house, a domestic worker, a VCR, a vacuum cleaner, one or more cellphones, a washing machine, a PC, an electric stove, a TV set, a tumble dryer, a home telephone, less than 2 radios, a hi-fi, a built-in kitchen sink, a home security service, a deep freezer, water in the home, satellite television, a dishwasher, a sewing machine, a motor vehicle, is it in Gauteng or the Western Cape, is it a traditional hut, is the home rural outside of Gauteng or the Western Cape and does the home have electricity?

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The niche aspect of LitNet's audience excluded it from my surveys, since I chose to focus on mainstream commercial media. However, it's role as a shaper of discussions and maker of debates is important to note, and as such I have used it as a media source.

3.5 *Refining the Search*

My next step in my approach was to narrow the search down to exclude any published stories that might make simply a passing reference to the band, or were listings or gig guides. These two sections are simply a list of performances, usually published on a Friday or in weekend editions. Some publications group their listing and gig guides in one place arranged alphabetically by venue. Others arrange theirs by region, so there will be separate listing for different cities. Others arrange theirs by event, so if a music festival or a large concert is taking place, they will arrange separate listings for each event. Some listings are complied from press releases that are sent to newspapers by the promoters and organisers of concerts and events. Others are complied by journalists who contact venues and obtain lists of events planned for the next week.
What this means it that multiple entries may exist for the same band in one edition of a newspaper. For obvious reasons, these had to be eliminated.

In order to eliminate these sections, I did a twofold search. Firstly, I did a keyword search in each publications archive, using the words 'Fokofpolisiekar',
'gig guide'. Then I did a search using the words 'Fokofpolisiekar' and 'listing'. Once I had eliminated some pieces using this search, I then did a manual search, and checked each remaining article, since it is often the case that gig guides and listings are not titled in that way.

I also removed any articles that contained only a passing reference to the band. This was a relatively delicate search, conducted manually, and for the most part, I had to decide on a case-by-case basis whether to include or exclude and article. For example, interviews with other bands, who referred to Fokofpolisiekar as their favourite musicians were

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eliminated. However, interviews where musicians discussed the music made by Fokofpolisiekar or gave their opinion on how they see Fokofpolisiekar as fitting into the South African music scene, or discussed reactions to the band were included. Articles about music festivals that included a brief review of the band's performance were also excluded, if they made no comment on what the band said or did, or how people responded to them.

The results of this were varied; there was a great decrease in the number of substantive articles in some publications, while there was very little change in others.

Publication	**No. Useful Articles**
Beeld	384
Business Day	1
Cape Times	7
Die Burger	262
Mail & Guardian	1
Pretoria News	2
Rapport	85
The Mercury	1
The Star	7
The Sunday Times	1
The Weekender	1

Figure 4: Number of useful articles per publication

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3.6 *Cataloguing of Articles*

The second step was to categorise the articles by type. Type, in the case of newspaper articles, defines placement in a publication. News articles are placed upfront, while arts and entertainment stories are often placed in the entertainment sections. Columns feature in the opinion pages, and in-depth, lengthy features are often placed in the Lifestyle section.

In the case of magazines, the question was also where in the publication they were placed. Feature articles are usually placed upfront, within the first twenty pages of a magazine, while music features are usually placed within an arts and entertainment category.

The online journal, LitNet, is also divided into sections, which made categorising the articles simpler. Like a newspaper, LitNet has distinct entertainment, opinion and feature sections, and divides its content accordingly.

The simplest way to categorise the articles, I discovered, was to use the publications' own categories and sections. If an article appeared in the main section, within the first few pages, for example, then it could be considered news. If it was in the lifestyle section, then it could be categorised as a feature. By using these categories already supplied by the publications themselves, I was able to avoid having to define for myself, using media theory, the old question of "what makes news" (as opposed to "what makes a feature" or "what makes a column") since the publications had already done it for me. Thus, it was possible to make distinctions between the type of articles I found, and uniformly categorise them as either news stories, which appeared in the main sections of the publications; features, which were placed in the lifestyle and leisure sections and columns, which were found in the opinion pages.

Publication	**News stories**	**Features**	**Column/Commentary**	**Arts & Entertainment**

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Beeld	**51 (13%)**	**41 (10%)**	**30 (7%)**	**262 (68%)**
Cape Times	**2 (28%)**			**5 (71%)**
Die Burger	**54 (20%)**	**14 (5%)**	**24 (9%)**	**170 (62%)**
Mail & Guardian	**0**	**1 (100%)**	**0**	**0**
Rapport	**45 (52%)**	**5 (5%)**	**35 (41%)**	**0**
The Mercury	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1 (100%)**
The Star	**1 (14%)**	**1 (14%)**	**0**	**5 (71%)**
The Sunday Times	**0**	**1 (100%)**	**0**	**0**
The Weekender	**0**	**0**	**1 (100%)**	**0**

Figure 5. Number (and Percentage) of Stories in Each Newspaper Section

By using these categories to group the stories, I was able to map the media's coverage of Fokofpolisiekar by type. I was also able to map the different responses by different media, and see which publications gave more page space per articles (and therefore more in-depth coverage) to the band as opposed to those publications that simply reported on the band as news subjects, with more facts but less analysis and commentary.

What emerged was that, while the spread of material is uneven – with the overwhelming majority of the material coming from Afrikaans publications, the *type* of coverage differs by publication language as well. While they carry significantly fewer items about Fokofpolisiekar, the English publications do devote more page-space per article, to the band than the Afrikaans publications do. The only exception to this is LitNet, where there is little news about the band, and the material that is written about them in LitNet are either lengthy features or columns.

The second category I used in the mapping of the articles was that of the writer. One recurring event that emerged out of the material was that of the journalist who has written

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about Fokofpolisiekar regularly, either as a reporter or as a columnist. These journalists have written extensively about the band, either in news and feature articles or in columns, and have been instrumental in placing the band within the cultural context for their readers. They are familiar not only with the themes and issues that are raised in Fokofpolisiekar's material, but also with the debates and themes that are occurring in the culture-sphere and within the pages of their own newspapers, and through their writing, they locate the band and their music within these debates. This implies that, at some point, these writers (and their editors) have invested Fokofpolisiekar with a degree of cultural importance. In order to examine this process, it was necessary to define the types of writers producing material, and then use these definitions as another layer of categories for arranging the material.

The most obvious distinction was the one between reporters and columnists. In all publications (including the online journal) the bulk of the daily reporting is produced by staff journalists, on either the news or arts and entertainment beats. At times, the work of these reporters will appear in both the news and the arts sections of the publication. Several of these reporters have become regular commentators and write most of the material on Fokofpolisiekar that their papers run. Most notable are Jaco Nel from Beeld (who also writes under the pseudonym Angola Badprop) and Chutney de Ridder from Die Burger. Antjie Krog singled out these two writers in her 2006 N.P.Van Wyk Louw memorial speech as part of the new generation of Afrikaans journalists who are creating a new vocabulary to describe the new generation of young Afrikaners' subversive rock and punk attitudes.[14]

The second type of writer is the columnist. Unlike a reporter, columnists are invited to contribute to a newspaper because of their personalities and opinions. Often they are high profile individuals – academics, writers or civil society commentators. In this research, the columnists I discovered who have used Fokofpolisiekar in their columns,

[14] Antjie Krog "Die Beautiful Woorde van Van Wyk Louw" speech given 20 January 2005, downloaded from www.chrismanbaard.co.za.

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either as subjects or as illustrations for a bigger point they are making, are all firmly located in the Afrikaans counterculture.
Musicians Andries Bezuidenhout and Koos Kombuis both write a regular column in Rapport and have discussed Fokofpolisiekar. Bezuidenhout also writes a column for LitNet in which he has made frequent reference to the band.
In Beeld, poet Danie Marais writes a regular music column in which he has discussed Fokofpolisiekar, and located them in the counterculture, alongside cultural figures like Ingrid Jonker, Koos du Plessis, Gert Vlok Nel and Anton Kannemeyer and Conrad Botes, the creators of *Bitterkomix*.
In Die Burger, Chutney de Ridder, who also writes a regular column, discusses the band frequently.

The last type of writer I looked at is the guest writer. Often, these are people with a certain expertise and knowledge of a subject, who are, to some degree or another 'celebrities' in their field. They are often invited to comment on a certain event or happening that relates to their field of expertise. In this case, most of the celebrity commentators were found on LitNet, and they include cultural commentators like Mike Van Graan, Antjie Krog and Koos Kombuis. These writers, because of their position as cultural commentators, often write pieces that look beyond the simple events surrounding the band, and look at the issues that are raised by these events, such as religion, politics, freedom of expression and language debates.

3.7 *Trajectory*

The third step in arranging information was to create a chronological trajectory of the media coverage of the band. What this allows for is, firstly, a useful map of how the media became of aware of them. Secondly, it allows us to map any shifts in how the band is perceived and represented by the media. Thirdly, and most usefully, it allows us to see any patterns that may exist in the way the band is covered by the press. For example, if there is a glut of coverage around a certain cultural event, or statement by the band, the chronological map allows us to see how the media responded, and what the content of their response was.

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Quite simply, this involved arranging all the source material I categorised as useful by date, as well as by publication. January 1 2003 was the start-date for the original keyword search I did, and it extended up to and including January 1 2007. According to interviews with the band, they formed in April 2003, but the first example I can find of coverage was an article on LitNet in December 2003. Not until March 2004 was anything else written (other than gig guides, which provide not other information) so it is interesting to note how the online space was the first to recognise and accord space to the band.

From there, the media coverage grows steadily. The Mail & Guardian and SL magazine provide early coverage (May 2004) that is in keeping with their attitude of covering stories that are seen as 'alternative' or 'underground' before they are written about in the mainstream press.

Naturally, the majority of the coverage (both in the front news sections, and longer features) comes from early 2006. There was intense scrutiny of the band at this time, after the 'Fok God' incident, particularly since it was during the lead up to the Klein Karoo National Kunstefees. Both news reports, columns and guest columns were written with this incident, the banning of the band from various venues and the response from the church as their subject matter. After a few months, the number of news stories lessened, but the number of features actually increased, which is presumably a result of the intense news coverage and the growing awareness of the band.

It's interesting to note that the treatment, by the media, of the band's name, has changed as their level of media exposure has increased. When they first emerged, Beeld, Rapport and Die Burger printed their name as "**polisiekar", or referred to them as the "Karre". However, the fact that every publication that writes about them now calls them Fokofpolisiekar is a testament to how cemented they have become in the media.

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CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF RESEARCH

What is very obvious, simply from the numbers that are revealed in this, initial counting, is that there are hugely disparate notions within the South African media of what constitutes news, and what events and issues are culturally significant. It is not my place to assume that this is a result of apartheid media divisions, but it is interesting to note that none of the publications with traditionally black or Indian readerships gave Fokofpolisiekar any coverage at all. What this implies is that issues around Afrikaans culture are seen has having little or no significance to the readers of these papers. In the same way, it is possible that issues around kwaito culture, for example, might not be deemed culturally significant to the readers of Beeld or Die Burger.

Where the coverage that does exist is placed in a publication is significant. Afrikaans publications, as is shown in Figure 3. are engaging with the ruminations and behaviour of Fokofpolisiekar in the news and commentary sections. They are responding to the ideas, the statements made by the band and the language that they are using. They can be seen as a first level of commentary, using the details of what the band say and do as material for discussions, in the publications, around religion, language, politics and identity.

The English publications, on the other hand, are commenting, by and large, from one level removed. They are reporting on what is being said about the band by first level commentators. The positioning of the material written in the Arts or Features sections implies that what Fokofpolisiekar is saying and doing does not have immediate importance as a source of news or a subject of debate. Rather, the responses to them are what are of interest to English publications.

If we were to imagine the degrees of coverage as circles, radiating outward, with the band at the centre, I suggest that we would discover the following pattern:

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At the centre is Fokofpolisiekar. They ruminate, make music, say things to journalists and behave in certain (often transgressive) ways. The next circle is the Afrikaans media. They react to the band, write news articles about them, produce columns that deal with the issues that the band has brought up, and invite guest commentators to discuss and debate these issues within their pages, and with their readers.

The third ring is the English media. They comment less on what the band have actually said or done, and comment instead on the Afrikaans media and society's reaction to the band.

The final circle, located as far as possible form Fokofpolisiekar as a source of news, are the media who have no interest in what the band is saying or doing, or in what the response to the band is.

4.1 *A Community of Commentators*

If we examine the responses within the Afrikaans media to Fokofpolisiekar, we are able to see that the response to the band is a mediated one. As the band say and do things in the public sphere, society responds (either positively or negatively). The media picks up on these events and the response to them, and they write about them, as news and commentary. In many cases, readers respond to this writing, in the letters pages of newspapers and the public discussion forums of the online journals. This process of discussion is, however, a mediated one. It is mediated by certain people who have been selected by the media, and we can presume, the people who consume this media, as being consecrated cultural commentators. These commentators, the regular writers, are a closed community – theirs are the voices that emerge again and again, even across different publications. They act, in some ways, as validators. They validate the news value of the band, and essentially, tell their readers that Fokofpolisiekar are newsworthy. Through the act of commenting, they give their approval to the debate that is going on, (and, in some cases, excuse the transgressive behaviour of the band, because the issues that are being debated are seen as being of value).

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This process of mediation affects the dynamics of how discussions about the issues transmitted by the music of Fokofpolisiekar, which take place in newspapers, and the public sphere, take place. Once the media has used a certain commentator's opinions as a frame, these opinions shape the continued discussion. Readers respond to the commentators' opinions. Other commentators refer to them, and certain perspectives become accepted positions. This is how the media manage to transmit and shape the public debate.

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CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

When taken in conjunction with the media, public sphere and journalistic field theories that have been outlined in the Methodology, the results of the quantitative counting reveal a great deal about whether, and in what ways, ideas that are transmitted by a musical form (in this case the music produced by Fokofpolisiekar) enter into public intellectual debate through the media in South Africa.

The numbers of articles, their placement in publications and the type of people who have written show us in media theory terms, that Fokofpolisiekar and the issues they raise in their music and statements has a place in the media agenda in South Africa, for both the Afrikaans and English press. They meet the criterion set by the media for being newsworthy and the sustained coverage over the years shows that they have salience. This salience has sustained their coverage beyond just the news pages of a publication, or the arts and entertainment sections; it has carried the band and the issues they raise into the editorial and opinion pages. It is on these page pages that a second process of representation takes place, which sets the band more firmly within the sphere of public debate.

This second process takes place through, in part, the process of cultural consecration. Many writers, musicians and public intellectuals (who have themselves been consecrated in Afrikaans culture and counterculture by a similar process) have written about Fokofpolisiekar in a way that cements them firmly in that world. This is often in contradiction to what the public reaction to the band has been, to the extent where two or more articles with different angles may run in the same edition of a newspaper. Now, obviously, this is good newspaper practice – conflict is one of the main elements of what make an event newsworthy. When Antjie Krog, a poet and writer who has been invested with significant symbolic power in the literary, media and political fields describes the lyrics of Fokofpolisiekar's song as being an important intervention in public cultural life,

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what we are seeing is the 'consecration' that Bourdieu describes, where a 'very powerful agent in a field can deform all the space, force all the other space to organize around it."[15]

The individuals with whom power to consecrate lies are also interesting in this case because they are, for the most part, Afrikaners who are not just journalists, but cultural practitioners themselves. Antjie Krog, Mike Van Graan, Koos Kombuis and Andries Bezuidenhout are not journalists, they are writers and academics (and, in the case of Bezuidenhout and Kombuis; Afrikaans musicians). Through their use of the mass media as the space in which they discuss Fokofpolisiekar, they are investing them with value, not just in the academic sphere, but also in the public intellectual sphere.

There is a second, related process taking place here – one that is situated firmly in the journalistic field. In his essay in *Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field*, Patrick Champagne describes the two competing principles of legitimacy that constantly inform the decisions made by journalists – political partisanship and the economic-political order. In short, journalists constantly have to balance their political or intellectual integrity and values with the need to remain popular with the public.[16] The intellectual process provides internal legitimacy while the populist one provides external legitimacy. In their coverage of Fokofpolisiekar as both headline news (stories about bar fights and controversy) and the subject of intellectual discussion (in editorials and columns) they have, to Bourdieu's thinking managed to cement their power to consecrate the band, through the dual legitimacy.

A third theme also emerged from the counting and is concerned with the circulation of ideas in the South African media. It would seem, from the research, that the media seems to take its cues on what is worth writing about from other media, and there are different levels at which this happens. Some Afrikaans media first took its cue to write about the band from LitNet. Then, as the band became more visible, and more controversial, they began to report on them independently, from one degree of remove, as it were. The

[15] Bourdieu, *Champ Politique*, 26; in Benson, *Theory and Society* 469.
[16] Champagne, The Double Dependency: The Journalistic Field Between Politics and Markets 58 in Benson & Nevu (eds) Bourdieu and The Journalistic Field.

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English media, however, still seem to take their cue from the Afrikaans media – only once there had been sufficient coverage in the Afrikaans press did the English press summarise and report, setting up a second degree of remove, an "us and them" situation. If however, we impose the framework of Bourdieu's theories of legitimisation onto this process, we can also see that the media is legitimising itself - in this case, the Afrikaans media is legitimised by the English media, who pick up on stories after they are cued by the Afrikaans press. Within the Afrikaans media, the electronic media (like LitNet) seems to be legitimised by the print media – the first stories about Fokofpolisiekar emerged in LitNet, and they were then picked up by the Afrikaans print media in Cape Town and Gauteng.

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CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

If we are to return to my original contention that, in the case of Fokofpolisiekar, the media has responded in two different ways and created two different forms of coverage through which ideas have passed into the public debate and compare it with the evidence collected and the theory used, we can see that ideas originated by Fokofpolisiekar and their music have indeed entered into the public debate via the media.

As a source of news, Fokofpolisiekar have received prolonged, sustained coverage from the South African media, and this coverage, placed as it has been in the news sections of publications, proves that within the framework of media theory, Fokofpolisiekar have salience and are part of the media agenda. Fokofpolisiekar are important enough to the media for them to keep publishing news stories about them, and of enough interest to the public that they are happy to keep reading about them. In this case, the public and media agendas are in agreement with each other.

If we agree that Fokofpolisiekar and their fans constitute a subaltern counterpublic, (in the same way that Adam Haupt sees subaltern counterpublics developing around hip hop) we can then see their articulation of the experiences of young, white Afrikaners being included in the public debate through the second form of mediatisation – the opinion piece and editorial column. The editors, poets, musicians and others who write about the band in the public spaces of newspapers and online journals have pulled the subaltern counterpublics onto the main stage, as it were, and have given their ideas a certain prominence of place. This may not be the first time that the ideas presented in a popular musical form have been transmitted into the public debate via the media in South Africa. But it is one of the first times this process took place in the context of the South African democracy. And, arguably, it was this process that opened the door for debates around Afrikaner identity that were raised after Bok Van Blerk's "De La Rey" controversy, and the discussions around masculinity, violence and race that were sparked by Jacob Zuma's use of 'Umshimi Wami'.

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These debates might not include all South Africans. They may be restricted to certain race, language or gender groups. But the fact that they do happen, in this case, by providing the band and their fans access into the public debate, and allowing them the public platform on which to reinvent their identities and acknowledge the multiplicities within, all within the public gaze and within public debates, the media has made a meaningful contribution towards bolstering democracy in South Africa.

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