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Between Science, Politics and Human Rights: Media coverage of the blood controversies

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1. Introduction

South Africa has one of the most progressive constitutions in the world[1], and was the first legal *Grundnorm* in the world to express equality on the basis of sexual orientation.[2] However, not every aspect of this constitution has been embraced, and practised, by the enormously diverse population, which is a "complex...society"[3] recently emerged, as the so-called 'Rainbow Nation', from a "turbulent... [and] tumultuous" past. This was a country that prior to the first democratic elections in 1994 was constrained and controlled on many levels – in a legally enforced environment that strove to see the separate 'development' of the various racial groups, and one that precluded a free media – in the most recent instance historically, by the nationalist apartheid police state. Historian Frank Walsh writes:

> More than three hundred years of dissension, wars, debates, clashes – and fusions – between cultures and traditions have produced a complex society often at odds with itself, harbouring mutual resentments sometimes amounting to hatred, an emotion frequently justifiable.[4]

Furthermore, Walsh argues that despite the optimism and euphoria that greeted the final dismantling of the apartheid system and the election as President of Nelson Mandela in April 1994, "South Africa's history, racial mix and recent political upheavals suggest it will not easily free itself from the legacy of its tumultuous past".[5]

As part of its political transformation from a police state to a democracy in 1994, South Africa obtained a new constitution that enshrined the right to sexual orientation, race and gender equality, as well as – crucially – ensuring the "freedom of the press and other media"[6]. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the supreme law of the land, was approved by the Constitutional Court on 4 December 1996 and took effect on 4 February 1997.

Of particular concern as background to this research is Chapter 2 of the Constitution, which concerns the Bill of Rights. In particular, clause 9 of the Bill of Rights is titled "equality", which is defined in the Constitution as the following:

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[1] http://www.info.gov.za/documents/constitution/

[2] Edwin Cameron in the foreword to Pride, Protest and Celebration (De Waal and Manion: 2006, p.5.)

[3] A History of South Africa by Frank Welsh (p xix), Harper Collins, London (2000)

[4] A History of South Africa by Frank Welsh (p xix), Harper Collins, London (2000)

[5] A History of South Africa by Frank Welsh (back cover), Harper Collins, London (2000)

[6] www.info.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/96cons2.htm

> Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law;
>
> Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken;
>
> The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth;
>
> No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds. National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination.[7]

The other clause of particular interest to this research is Clause 16 of the Bill of Rights, which is concerned with the "freedom of expression", and which is defined thus:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes
    a. freedom of the press and other media;
    b. freedom to receive or impart information or ideas;
    c. freedom of artistic creativity; and
    d. academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.
2. The right in subsection (1) does not extend to
    a. propaganda for war;
    b. incitement of imminent violence; or
    c. advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion, and that constitutes incitement to cause harm.[8]

Even though the Constitution of South Africa specifically outlaws discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation[9], this is against the backdrop of active and aggressive discrimination, such as the so-called "corrective rape" of lesbians, and the stigmatisation of gay men as carriers of HIV. And while sexual freedom, particularly as expressed through sexual orientation, undoubtedly remained controversial, this was made even more controversial by the "[Aids-] denialism at the

[7] www.info.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/96cons2.htm

[8] www.info.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/96cons2.htm

[9] Edwin Cameron in the foreword to Pride, Protest and Celebration (De Waal and Manion: 2006, p.6.)

highest level"[10], referring to then President Thabo Mbeki who has been widely criticised, both nationally and internationally, for flirting with dissident views that denied the existence of HIV.

Nicoli Nattras has argued that, when on 1 November 2006 South Africa's Deputy Minister of Health, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, was asked by a member of the audience at a public meeting in Cape Town why the government had resisted the introduction of ARVs for so long, she replied that policy had been hamstrung by 'denialism at the highest level'[11]:

> As [Zackie] Achmat later observed, this was a 'defining moment' for South African AIDS policy. Not only was Madlala-Routledge criticising the State President, Thabo Mbeki, but by endorsing ARVs as the best available treatment, she was undermining the confusing and equivocating policy stance adopted by her immediate boss, the Minister of Health, Manto Tshabala-Msimang[12].

This "denialism at the highest level"[13] had repercussions in the South African media.

Alan Finlay, argues that, despite the media's role as public watchdog, some editors were initially afraid to appear critical of the government in case they were seen to be racist, "and journalists argue that this lent an early credence to the dissident discourse."

> Fuelling this was the apparent haphazard response to the epidemic by government and President Thabo Mbeki's courting of AIDS denialists. Moreover, opponents of government health policy were accused of being racist and of participating in a conspiracy against Africans (Fassin & Schneider, 2003). The media itself was labelled unpatriotic and said to be the cause of the conflict around HIV in the first place[14].

The public and media debates appeared to indicate that the country was (and is still) grappling with issues of sexual orientation and of sexual practices. Various sexual practices have sometimes been seen as part of problematic '"cultural" and social practices in certain communities, thus fuelling HIV transmission. President Mbeki's reaction to this argument was to

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[10] Natrass (2007 p.1)
[11] Natrass (2007: 1)
[12] Mortal Combat, Nicoli Nattrass (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press), 2007
[13] Nattrass (2007:1)
[14] Finlay (2010: 122)

maintain that it stereotyped black men[15].

The result of the denialism around HIV/AIDS was the emergence of civil society activism, which had dramatic and far-reaching repercussions for the nation and its national health agenda. A number of 'social movements', such as the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) emerged in retaliation to the status quo spearheaded by Mbeki, and which became regularly and intensely engaged in questions to do with the state's handling of the HIV/AIDS epidemic (especially the TAC), as well as in the debates around human rights (for example the Lesbian and Gay Equality project and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLA)). It should be noted that social movements were mobilised in this particular situation and thus had an oppositional and conflicting relationship with the state over the handling of HIV/AIDS.

Kristin Palitza and Natalie Ridgard's introduction to 'What is Left Unsaid, Reporting the South African HIV Epidemic' emphasises that because of this unusual situation, the South African media were focused not only on reporting the disease from a health perspective but also on scrutinising government's role in managing the health care system with regard to the epidemic and the resulting strained relationship between government, scientists, health practitioners, AIDS activists and civil society organisations[16].

The University of Witwatersrand's HIV&AIDS and the Media Project, a collaboration between The Anova Health Institute and the Wits Journalism programme, raise the following questions about media coverage of the HIV pandemic[17]:

> Media coverage of the HIV pandemic ranges from news stories and investigative journalism to soap opera storylines and popular blogs. What images are being presented to the public? Are the writers, reporters and scriptwriters informed about the nature of the disease and those that suffer from it? Do they perpetuate stereotypes and myths? Or are they presenting an image sustained by the ideals of journalistic responsibility and a 'healthy' media?

The HIV&AIDS Media Project also maintain that HIV is an extremely technical issue and journalists often lack the skill and knowledge to write accurately about it.

> News sources, along with other media outlets such as television

[15] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3716004.stm and www.thoughtleader.co.za/charlenesmith/2007/11/23/did-you-ever-sleep-with-mbeki/

[16] Introduction to What is Left Unsaid, Reporting the South African HIV Epidemic, p.x.

[17] http://www.journaids.org/index.php/about_us/"

> and radio, frequently misrepresent issues related to HIV, such as men who have sex with men (MSM), multiple and concurrent partnerships (MCPs) and the HIV prevalence in South Africa.

It is against the complexity of this turbulent background that I am examining – through a focus on reported conflict over South Africa's blood transfusion service - how certain debates and controversies around issues of race and sexual orientation arose and played out in the media. In particular, the media and issues around its coverage and its role in this debate, will be explored in-depth.

It is also crucial to make a point about the complexity of reporting on scientific concerns, especially as the South African National Blood Service, and its methods, are central to the two media blood controversies. A posting[18] on the Why Evolution is True blog (which in itself raises the question as to whether this blog can be considered a credible source or not?), highlights some of the challenges of science reporting, which include insufficient training, laziness, improper story vetting, and the fact that journalists don't seek out dissent:

> So my main complaint about science journalists is fourfold. First, they often aren't trained sufficiently to write about science in a meaningful way. It would be nice if the journalist had a degree in the subject described, preferably an advanced degree. A journalist should be able to read the paper under consideration and understand it well.
> Second, lazy science journalists often just reproduce press releases produced by universities instead of reading a paper and dissecting it themselves. Press releases are not journalism, but puffery.
> Third, science journalists are often too lazy to do a proper job of vetting a story (this is related to the preceding beef).
> Fourth, journalists often don't seek out dissent, or make do with a token and meaningless dissent.

The blog also emphasises that science is an ongoing enterprise, and that no study is perfect, and, most important, all scientific truths are provisional. It also notes that a finding can be wrong, or can be revised[19]. All of these are important starting points in understanding the challenge of reporting science in the media.

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[18] http://whyevolutionistrue.wordpress.com/2012/01/19/do-scientists-understand-science-journalism/

[19] http://whyevolutionistrue.wordpress.com/2012/01/19/do-scientists-understand-science-journalism/

2. Aim and context

In December 2004 it came to the attention of the South African Health Ministry that the SANBS was racially profiling blood donations. In a press announcement by the ministry, it was made clear that this practice was both racist and unacceptable. This saw this particular blood controversy reported upon and debated in the media.

The "gay blood war"[20] in January 2006 erupted in the press because the SANBS was severely criticised for excluding sexually active gay men from donating blood by relying upon what was argued to be outdated and irrelevant international data, research and so-called international best practice.

While this research project examines the portrayal of and debate in the selected media around the stigmatisation of gay men as carriers of HIV, this is an issue of rights as opposed to drawing upon "queer theory", a field that emerged in the early 1990s out of the fields of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered studies and women's studies -

> ...[G]ay/lesbian studies focused its inquiries into "natural" and "unnatural" behaviour with respect to homosexual behaviour, queer theory expands its focus to encompass any kind of sexual activity or identity that falls into normative and deviant categories[21]

While two specific strains emerge in my research - around gay human rights issues, as well as around the role of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLA) - my research project does not set up the controversy as a gay controversy, or gay war, per se, but rather notes that it is called a "gay war" by media and various social gay organisations, particularly because of the GLA's attack on the SANBS.

The SANBS, a Section 21 Company[22] that provides an essential service within South Africa in terms of the provision of blood and blood products, is an organisation of voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors, whose mission it is to provide all patients with sufficient, safe, quality blood products and medical services related to blood transfusion, in an equitable, cost effective

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[20] Saturday Star, January 14, 2006, p.1

[21] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queer_theory

[22] SANBS is a Section 21 Company; therefore, ownership of its assets does not vest in its members. In the event that SANBS should stop operating, its assets would have to be transferred to an organisation with similar goals and objectives.

manner[23]. The SANBS is responsible for recruiting and retaining regular, safe blood donors. The SANBS maintains that voluntary, non-remunerated blood donors from low-risk populations who donate regularly are the foundation of a safe and adequate blood supply. This also enables more cost-effective use to be made of limited resources by reducing the volume of donated blood that has to be destroyed because of evidence of infectious disease markers[24].

However, the SANBS proved to be completely out of touch with changes that had taken place within the country post-1994 in relation to sensitivities around racism, homophobia and many forms of stereotyping; this was revealed by the organisation's initial response of surprise, and almost indignation, that the form of profiling the organisation adhered to could be considered racist and offensive to its donors, and a majority of the South African population. The SANBS initially argued that, according to their statistics, black South Africans were more likely to have infected (by HIV) blood than by any other racial group in the country[25].

> ...SANBS medical director Dr Robert Crookes said racial profiling...was necessary and was in line with international practice... Blacks, because of the prevalence of HIV and hepatitis in the African community, fell in the high-risk category.

Initially unbeknown to the SANBS, this incident would play a catalyst role in sparking a media 'war' that appeared to have its roots in the larger and more inflammatory controversy, namely the approach by President Thabo Mbeki and his Health Minister Manto Tshabala-Msimang towards the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its treatment.

The aim of this research is to examine the intensive media coverage of what became known as the blood controversies. These blood controversies comprised the following: the "black blood controversy" that erupted in the media on Friday, 3 December 2004, after the media reported on a South African Health Ministry press announcement on the South African National Blood Service's (SANBS) racial profiling of donors; as well as the "gay blood war"[26], which claimed media headlines thirteen months later, in January 2006, as a result of the same organisation's exclusion of sexually active gay men from donating blood.

The major focus of this research project is to shed light on the complex dynamics of the debate and to consider whether – as the two blood wars unfolded in both the *Star* and the *Citizen* – the

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[23]

[24]

[25] The Star, December 3, 2004, p.5

[26] Saturday Star, January 14, 2006, p.1

print media contributed meaningfully and constructively to the debate or not. The research also considers whether the debate is balanced, by which I mean that it offers a diversity of views, voices and perspectives. Also that all the key aspects crucial to the topic are canvassed. Manning maintains that the media is expected, in healthy, democratic societies, to sustain the discussion and debate vital to democracy[27], as well as to provide fair, accurate and unbiased opinions of events as they unfold[28]. If debate is there for us as a society to engage with problems with the view to potential solutions, then it is important for the topic to be thoroughly contextualised and understood.

In my analysis of the coverage, I also want to investigate "who speaks"; in other words, I examine the way in which dynamics of the debate operated from what I read in the media coverage – this is an examination of what voices appeared, and what interests organisations appeared to be represent. Were all of the voices represented "impartially and objectively"[29], particularly within the understanding that the role of the media in a democratic state is, among others, that of public watchdog and purveyor of objective information, so that the public can make decisions accordingly, and in the best interests of democracy, stimulate healthy debate. In this case, were the often conflicting and different voices and issues of human rights, science (as represented by the Blood Donor Service) and politics represented in as a balanced manner as possible?

In this examination of the media coverage of the blood wars, I also aim to examine the role, and the many varied, contradictory and conflicting voices, of the South African social movements. Because I also want to examine how the social movements represented political and human rights' voices, this research seeks to contribute to an understanding of how social movements influence debates around such issues.

This research also explores what the key voices were that emerged in this coverage, and specifically, what voices were associated with gay blood and HIV/AIDS.

[27] News and News Sources (Manning: 2001, p.x)
[28] library.thinkquest.org/26451/contents/massmedia/journalism.htm
[29] News and News Sources (Manning: 2001, p.14)

3. Rationale

According to the theory of liberal pluralism, the free exchange of ideas is crucial to the health of a democracy[30]. South Africa is not only a new democracy, but it is also one with steep racial, class and gender inequalities. For a new democracy, it is arguable that comprehensive coverage of topics in public debate is an important ideal to uphold, as well as to uphold the principle of unlimited public debate, by which I mean that the diverse voices and positions of all strata of society, during debates, should be given unfettered space. While the media is expected to represent diverse voices and positions in debates, it has been argued that sometimes it is the voices of the elites and the issues of the elites that are represented[31].

> Indeed, there is vigorous debate and dispute over many issues, as Herman and Chomsky readily acknowledge. They contend, however, that debate within the dominant media is limited to "responsible" opinions acceptable to some segment of the elite. On issues where the elite are in general consensus, the media will always toe the line. No dissent will then be countenanced, let alone acknowledged, except, when necessary for ridicule or derision.[32]

In the past, many parts of South African society were marginalized, they were excluded from political life and — in some cases — public life altogether. It is part of the process of transformation to include previously marginalized voices into the public debate, which have often been given a 'voice' by the likes of social organisations and movements.

In addition, despite being in its eighteenth year of democracy, issues of race and rights in South Africa are still exceptionally emotive and politically charged. The controversy around the screening of blood - which included topical issues such as issues of race, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, sexual orientation issues, the politics of a young democracy and the many and varied voices of the social movements - was thus guaranteed to attract debate and media attention. The HIV/AIDS epidemic that continues to grip this country was especially newsworthy at the time of the controversies, considering the contentiousness around how HIV/AIDS intervention in South Africa, and seeing how it was badly managed by Government and negatively fuelled by President Mbeki's attitude, particularly in 2000 (only four years prior to the first blood controversy), which was perceived as an all time low:

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[30] Bennett (1982: p27).

[31] *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (Pantheon, 1988), by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky

[32] 'The Political Economy of the Mass Media', Edward S. Herman interviewed by Robert W. McChesney, Monthly Review, January, 1989

> 2000... was, among other things, the year Mbeki included dissidents in his newly convened AIDS Panel, the year the government released its five-year Strategic Plan on HIV and AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and the year of the 13th International AIDS Conference in Durban, where some 5000 leading scientists and physicians signed the Durban Declaration, criticising Mbeki and the dissident scientists who questioned the causal link between HIV and AIDS (Trengove Jones, 2000)... [p]articularly Mbeki's denialist-like comments about the causal links between HIV and AIDS and his courting of AIDS denialists were criticised.[33]

Furthermore, the significance to society of the fragile freedoms guaranteed by our liberal, ground-breaking constitution – "the first legal *Grundnorm* in the world to accord express equality on the basis of sexual orientation" – held up against "a vastly unequal society… in which prejudice against gays and lesbians is still rife"[34], also the politics of this young democracy, further exacerbated the issues around the blood controversies and increased media attention. Sexual freedom, expressed by sexual orientation, remained controversial, wrote AIDS activist and Constitutional Court Judge Edwin Cameron, because

> […] a society that aspires to respect human rights cannot disrespect people because of sexual orientation. Homosexuality and other non-abusive forms of sexual variance test the fundamental core of human rights philosophy. It is easy to endorse rights like free speech and dignity and socio-economic benefits in the abstract: more difficult to actualise equality and dignity by according marginalised groups like gays and lesbians the full protection and benefit of the law.[35]

What further complicates the issue of sexual freedom as expressed by sexual orientation is the notion that AIDS was both considered a gay disease, as well as a 'black' disease, because of the homophobic and racist perception that gays and blacks were promiscuous, thus they were much more susceptible to contracting and spreading the virus.

In South Africa many perceive there to be a vast chasm existing between the liberal rights enshrined in its constitution versus the prevalent attitudes of the majority of South Africans. Thus given the extremely liberal bill of rights versus homophobia in communities, where exactly does the media coverage on the issues highlighted in the two blood controversies fall? The significance of this research in terms of an examination of the media coverage of these issues should give an indication as to whether the South African media perpetuates stereotypes and myths) - because HIV is an extremely technical issue, perhaps journalists lack the skill and knowledge to write

[33] What is Left Unsaid, Reporting the South African HIV Epidemic (Fanele, 2010) p.130
[34] Pride, Protest and Celebration (De Waal and Manion: 2006, p.5)
[35] Pride, Protest and Celebration (De Waal and Manion: 2006, p.5)

accurately about it, thus frequently misrepresenting issues related to HIV, such as men who have sex with men (MSM), multiple and concurrent partnerships (MCPs) and the HIV prevalence in South Africa - in its coverage of race and sexual orientation, or whether it successfully plays the role of stimulating wide, healthy debate in our relatively new democracy, and whether it gives a voice to those who prior to this country's democracy were voiceless.

Furthermore, Kristin Palitza and Natalie Ridgard's introduction to 'What is Left Unsaid, Reporting the South African HIV Epidemic', underscores the complexity of the media's role in reporting the HIV epidemic in South Africa. This in turn underscores the importance of the role of research projects, like this one, which seek to contribute towards a body of knowledge that, crucially, explores the representation of HIV/Aids, racialism and homophobia in the South African media, especially because "its history [that of HIV/Aids] reflects the political background and long-standing conflict-ridden relationship between government and the media":

To the South African public at large, HIV became a human rights question as much as a health concern, while to the media, it became a story as much about politics and power as it was about health and science[36].

The significance of this research - in terms of media studies - is that it should contribute to our understanding of how media facilitates controversies and debates, and thereby contribute to a growing body of literature that considers the media's handing of controversial issues (see: Finlay, Cowling & Hamilton); that it should make a contribution to a body of research and knowledge about how the media operates as an agenda-setter in society. For example, of interest is how the media will deal with issues that are placed on the national agenda; in other words what and how do issues get on the agenda, and what keeps them there. The research will also focus on the lifecycles (the "issue-attention cycle") of news stories, what fuels them and then what eventually results in their demise, while also focusing on who speaks.

This research also has the potential to add important empirical evidence to current research on public understandings of science (Johnson 2001). The media, in its reporting of science, is considered to oversimplify, extrematise and therefore distort the true nature of scientific research and the content of scientific findings[37].

[36] Introduction to What is Left Unsaid, Reporting the South African HIV Epidemic, p.x.
[37] Nelkin (1995) in Media & Health (Seale: 2002, p.52)

4. Research Questions

This research aims to examine the coverage, in other words all of the published content items that I considered, in the print media of two issues, namely the relationship of race and sexual orientation to the HIV/Aids epidemic. To achieve this objective, I looked at two cases, the black blood controversies and the 'gay blood wars'. The following research questions were set out:

- What were the key issues raised in the coverage of the blood wars in the media and what major arguments and points of view were represented in the debate in the media?

- If the quality of debate in the media is widely understood to relate to the diversity of voices, the 'balanced' representation of all positions, and, as some argue, the need for critical engagement, to what extent did the coverage meet normative requirements and expectations of journalism, for example, balance, fairness, accuracy and diversity of voice?

- How was the issue framed in terms of sensational headlines among others? And how did this affect the representation of the debate?

- What do the above tell us about media practice in the new democracy in terms of the media being a crucial institution ensuring that democracy; does the media provide balanced representation of all the diverse voices, as well as engaging critically with them?

5. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This research is widely interested in the dynamics of the media in producing public debate and representing controversy. It aims to highlight the key issues raised in the media coverage of the blood wars, as well as the major arguments, and points of view, represented in the ensuing media debate. In particular this research will investigate whether the media succeeded in adequately representing these voices. Did the media fulfilled their normative role of providing a platform - in this albeit relatively new democracy - for discussion? Furthermore, was this discussion important for the participants of this democracy?

A healthy democracy in the contemporary late capitalist world must be one in which – ideally - a variety of campaigning groups, if not all citizens, can circulate diverse and critical interpretations of issues and 'news events' through the news media (Manning, 2001, p.1). However, in a world that is not ideal, a number of criteria, on both a conscious and unconscious level, will impact on whether an 'issue' will or will not gain so-called 'airtime' in the limited debate space made available by *the media*. The media needs to ascertain the newsworthiness of an issue, and whether this will realise the often unspoken goal (at least in the public sphere) of increased readership, and consequently drive advertising sales. Would coverage of the controversial blood wars have possibly boosted newspaper sales? This is an opportunity to explore the normative role of the media (that of providing an open forum for discussion and acting as a watchdog while providing balanced information). It is also an opportunity to examine the journalist's sources, and to shed some light on whether the reporting was balanced, fair and objective, or did bias and stereotyping surface. This research also wants to explore whether the media set, or influenced, the agenda, or whether the public influenced it, especially because of the complex context of these media controversies.

In order to answer these questions, my research draws upon four bodies of literature, namely normative theories of the media's role in society; agenda setting; HIV/AIDS coverage, racism, homophobia and sexual orientation; source theory; as well as studies of media and public debate.

Media and public debate

According to the theory of liberal pluralism in media, the free exchange of ideas is crucial to the health of that democracy[38]. South Africa is not only a new democracy but also one with steep

[38] Bennett (1982: p27)

racial, class and gender inequalities. For a new democracy, it is arguable that comprehensive coverage of topics in public debate is an important ideal to uphold that democracy, as well as to uphold the principle of unlimited public debate. While the media is expected to represent diverse voices and positions in debates, it has been argued that sometimes it is the voices of the elites and the issues of the elites that are represented. For this reason, I will analyze who is represented in the coverage of the blood wars so as to explore how the media constructed the debate, and to see what can be said about media practice under democracy. In the past, many parts of South African society were marginalized, they were excluded from political life and—in some cases—public life altogether. It is part of the process of transformation to include previously marginalized voices into the public debate, which have often been given a 'voice' by the likes of social organisations and movements.

Regarding the production of debate in the media, Lesley Cowling and Carolyn Hamilton[39] maintain that the production of opinion, analysis and debate entails a different set of processes from the practices employed in news production.

> Editors and senior journalists understand the facilitation of debate as an important media responsibility, and intervene in the dynamics of debate in order to ensure that the debate meets their ideals of reasoned discussion. We name this conducting of the process 'orchestration', and we argue that the shape that debate takes in the media depends on its 'orchestration'. In particular, for debate to approximate in any way the Enlightenment ideal of informed and measured discussion between citizens on issues of the common good, a high degree of orchestration is needed. Thus the 'impartial' model employed for reporting news, where various opposing protagonists are given voice and the 'right to reply', cannot simply be transposed to opinion and analysis sections without introducing certain potentially problematic features into public debate.

Cowling and Hamilton furthermore maintain that given the importance of the media's role in public discussion, and the complexities of production, "that it is crucial for journalists to make explicit the processes involved in the production of opinion, to examine their practice critically, and to consider the implications for public discussion".

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[39]Lesley Cowling and Carolyn Hamilton in Producing media debate: Journalistic practice and public discussion, in Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies (Volume 32, Issue 3, 2011: Abstract)

Normative theories of the media's role in society

Thus this research is also concerned with examining what persons or groups are privileged or excluded from debate. In the past, many parts of South African society were marginalized, they were excluded from political life and—in some cases—public life altogether. It is part of the process of transformation to include previously marginalized voices into the public debate, which have often been given a 'voice' by the likes of social organisations and movements.

Agenda setting

While the word 'influencing' is a heavily laden one, particularly in any study of the media, it is a particularly relevant word when attempting to untangle the two blood wars. Of course, when examining the two wars through the lens of agenda setting, and trying to understand the dynamics and flow of the influence, one must enquire whether the media set, or influenced the agenda - or did the audience influence it (bearing in mind the constraints of this research, and that it does not include a reader survey), or were their influences other than the audience? - especially bearing in mind its complex context, which was highlighted in the introduction above.
Manning[40] suggests that the significant influence of the news media, and perhaps other media genres too, may not lie in an ability to directly change public attitudes but in a more subtle process, set the agenda for public discussion and alert audiences to particular aspects of an issue. However, in a less subtle way, he also argues that the media can be assertive:
From food scares and environmental risks, to sudden panics about crime, or scandals involving politicians, there is no doubt that the news media can rapidly push particular themes or issues up the hierarchy of public concerns[41].

Brosius and Kepplinger (in Manning), however, argue that the agenda setting process is dynamic and the nature of the associations between media content and public agendas may change over time. They maintain that "a longitudinal perspective is required to take account of change over time and allow for the possibility that directions of causality may vary depending upon the issue and the moment"[42]:

> In other words, public concerns may shape media editorial policy, rather than the reverse, for certain issues at certain times, and longitudinal studies offer the prospect of exploring

[40] Manning (2001, p. 212)
[41] Manning (2001, p.214)
[42] Manning (2001, p.214)

> the time lag between media content and opinion poll changes. They allow researchers to note which comes first, media coverage or a shift in public understanding, and draw inferences about the direction of causality accordingly.

Manning also suggests that the possibility of a complex, multi-directional relationship exists in which media agendas shape public understanding to a degree but, at the same time, public interest also influences the editorial decisions determining media content. This relationship is worth exploring within the context of the blood wars, as the context reveals many clues as to both the media and the audience's 'agenda' at the time, as well as to highlight the issues that were of national interest, even concern, at the time of both blood wars.

An examination of the media's agenda-setting motives would provide clarity about how HIV/AIDS, racism, homophobia and sexual orientation were covered.

HIV/AIDS coverage, racism, homophobia and sexual orientation

In the context of the blood wars, it is clear that issues around the representation of HIV/AIDS in the media - particularly in the light of government's interventions around the epidemic and the emotive issues around race and sexual orientation against the background of the blood wars – must be examined.

HIV/AIDS was undoubtedly a crucial factor in relation to the newsworthiness of the two wars for a number of reasons. These include the inherently different and complex questions of a country in the grips of an epidemic exacerbated by the government's controversial interventions and the real threat of political motivation. In these interventions both superstition and misinformation overrode the facts, which resulted in skewered representations and the threat of the sacrifice of science to politics. Thus the context of HIV cannot be ignored in an examination of the coverage of the blood wars.

> To the South African public at large, HIV became a human rights question as much as a health concern, while to the media, it became a story as much about politics and power as it was about health and science.

This resulted in a strained relationship between government, scientists, health practitioners, AIDS activists and civil society organisations.

> Because of this unusual situation, the media in the country were

> focused not only on reporting the disease from a health perspective but also on scrutinising government's role in managing the health care system with regard to the epidemic and the resulting strained relationship between government, scientists, health practitioners, AIDS activists and civil society organisations[43].

Add to HIV\AIDS the ingredient of racism and immediately the emotiveness and potential controversy of the situation is exacerbated. This in turn increases the likelihood of this turning into a war in the media, especially as issues of race are deeply rooted in this country's history. Because, as Chirimuuta notes, racism and HIV/AIDS have been inextricably linked since the very first signs of the pending epidemic in the early nineteen eighties, the newsworthiness of the story is further exacerbated[44].

Chirimuuta's claim, made relatively early in the history of the disease (in 1989), also pre-empted the AIDS denialism camp that gained ground under President Thabo Mbeki in South Africa. This is most prominently fuelled by Mbeki's stance that claims that HIV is harmless, and that the antiretroviral drugs that curb the growth of the virus cause rather than treat AIDS. This theory emerged as a genuine menace to public health in South Africa. From the perspective of this research, the black blood war provides an interesting intersection – in terms of media coverage and the consequential public debate – of issues relating to race and HIV/AIDS, all of which can be held up against the highly emotive filter of *blood*. The gay blood war, on the other hand, would introduce the issue of sexual orientation to this complex but fascinating intersection.

Furthermore, the Constitution of South Africa specifically outlaws discrimination not only on the basis of race (South Africa's big issue historically) but on the grounds of sexual orientation[45]. I am unable to ignore issues of sexual orientation within the scope of this research project, because the contradictions of this new democracy with its admirable bill of rights, clearly also underpin the intersection of politics, race and sexual freedom (especially as expressed by sexual orientation) as seen through the lens of HIV/AIDS.

Despite these hard won legal victories – "...this process [of enshrining non-discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the SA Constitution] began in the late 1980s, when the African National Congress, this country's largest and oldest liberation movement, was first confronted by

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[43] Palitza, Ridgard, Struthers and Harber (2010, p.x).
[44] Chirimuuta and Chirimuuta (1989, p.1)

[45] De Waal and Manion (2006, p.6)

the issue"[46]. Cameron, in the foreword to Pride, Protest and Celebration[47] still urges readers to reflect on the fact that the [African] continent "largely still treats gays and lesbians as [they] used to be treated under apartheid: as outcasts, criminals and perverts".

And sexual freedom, particularly as expressed by sexual orientation, undoubtedly remains controversial. Cameron sheds light on why sexual freedom is so controversial:

> […] because a society that aspires to respect human rights cannot disrespect people because of sexual orientation. Homosexuality and other non-abusive forms of sexual variance test the fundamental core of human rights philosophy. It is easy to endorse rights like free speech and dignity and socio-economic benefits in the abstract: more difficult to actualise equality and dignity by according marginalised groups like gays and lesbians the full protection and benefit of the law[48].

Nevertheless, it does need to be reiterated that it is the reportage that is under discussion here and not merely the complexity of the nexus of sexual orientation and race, science, politics and human rights.

Source theory

In my analysis of the coverage I want to investigate "who speaks", in other words looking at the way in which dynamics of the debate operated from what I read in the media coverage – an examination of what voices appeared, what interests organisations appeared to be represent. Were all of the voices represented impartially and objectively"[49] particularly within the understanding that the role of the media in a democratic state is, among others, that of public watchdog and purveyor of objective information so that the public can make decisions accordingly, and in the best interests of democracy, stimulate healthy debate. In this case were the often conflicting and different voices and issues of human rights, science (represented by the Blood Donor Service) and politics represented in as a balanced manner as possible.

Despite being in its eighteenth year of democracy, issues of race and rights in South Africa are still exceptionally emotive and politically charged. Thus in the context of the blood wars - which includes in South Africa topical issues such as issues of race, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, sexual

[46] De Waal and Manion (2006, p.7)
[47] De Waal and Manion (2006, p.4)
[48] Cameron (2006, p.5)
[49] Manning (2001, p.14)

orientation issues, the politics of a young democracy and the many and varied voices of the social movements. Thus, sexual freedom – from the perspective of how it was handled by the media, particularly in the gay blood wars, and how it was included in their debates - remains an essential aspect of this research project... as does the role of the social movements.

All of these factors were guaranteed to attract debate and media attention for all of the reasons expanded upon above. Furthermore, what further complicates the issue of sexual freedom as expressed by sexual orientation, is the idea that that AIDS was a gay disease.

6. Research Methodology

This research examines the intensive media coverage in two Johannesburg publications, namely *The Citizen* and *The Star* newspapers (including their weekend editions), of what became referred to variously as "blood wars"[50]. The blood wars were the black blood controversy, which erupted in the media in December 2004 around the SANB's racial profiling of donors; and then the "gay blood war", which also claimed media headlines thirteen months later (January 2006); a result of the same organisation's exclusion of sexually active gay men from donating blood.

The reasons for choosing to focus on these two publications are manifold. Both publications are dailies with a weekend edition, which makes it simpler to follow the debate, as well as discern and examine – in its entirety - the build-up and decline of the coverage of the debacle (which, on both occasions, lasted just over a week and a half) than it would be possible to do by examining a weekly or monthly publication due to the relatively brief life cycles of the 'stories'. Furthermore, both these publications - which are general interest, mainstream, and large circulation newspapers mainly distributed in Gauteng - covered the same issue simultaneously and for the same length of time.

The Star is published in Johannesburg and distributed throughout South Africa, with most sales in Gauteng. Once aimed exclusively at the white market, today over 50% of the Star's readers are black. It is owned by Independent Newspapers. The newspaper's daily sales are 171 542 with a daily readership of 616 000. The Saturday Star's weekly sales are 143 797 with a readership of 447 000[51].

The Citizen is published six days a week and distributed mainly in Gauteng. The newspaper is co-owned by Avusa and CTP/Caxton. Its average daily sales are 90 978 with an estimated readership of 466 000[1.]

This research will analyze the content in two well-defined stages; first, by mapping a chronology of the controversy in some detail and looking at the dynamics of the debate, .i.e. who said what and who responds to whom, the process of which includes an examination of the key messages conveyed in the article; and second, by setting up themes and categories drawn from the questions and from a reading of the articles' manifest content.

Undoubtedly a key element of the methodology of this research (which included both an archival

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[50] Saturday Star, January 14, 2006, p.1

[51] Source: SouthAfrica.info The all-in-one official guide and web portal to South Africa. (http://www.southafrica.info/pls/procs/iac.page?p_t1=690&p_t2=1823&p_t3=3872&p_t4=0&p_dynamic=YP&p_content_id=970427&p_site_id=38)

search at the Johannesburg Library, as well as a database search of keywords – blood, blood war, SANBS, gay, racism, racist blood profiling, homophobic profiling, as well as the names of the various spokespeople of the governmental departments and civil organisations reported in the coverage) relating to the blood controversies, as outlined above, would be to map out the events of the two blood wars as the coverage of them unfolded in these two publications. In terms of the black blood row, the reporting period was between Friday, 3 December and Wednesday, 15 December 2004. The Citizen covered the black blood row in a series of fifteen articles and one cartoon over a period of ten publishing days (which excluded Sundays, when the newspaper is not published). Furthermore, the newspaper also simultaneously published a total of ten letters from readers in response to their coverage during this same period. The Star, on the other hand, covered the black blood row in a series of eight articles over a period of ten publishing days (which excluded Sundays, when the newspaper is not published). The newspaper also simultaneously published only one letter from readers in response to their coverage during this same period.

The reporting period of the gay blood war was between Friday, 13 January and Tuesday, 24 January 2006. The Citizen covered the this row in a series of ten articles over a period of nine publishing days (which excluded Sundays) and, surprisingly, no letters from readers appeared in response to its coverage of this debacle. The Star, meanwhile, extensively covered the gay blood war in a series of eleven articles over a period of eight publishing days (excluding Sundays).

While I will examine what themes that are features of the coverage, I will analyse the coverage via thematic content analysis (TCA). It must be noted that TCA will not be used in pure or classic form, but that rather only certain aspects of it, most appropriate for the purposes of this research, will be used.

TCA is applied so as to identify the key themes, issues and participants in the text. Golding, et al, (1999) describes thematic structure as an overall concept which runs throughout a media text. Themes tie together certain ideas, concepts and statements that are based on social knowledge and beliefs. Themes make media products easier to comprehend, while providing information about the media organisation, as well as revealing general beliefs about certain ideas and notions within a particular media organisation. The meanings contained in messages are not always shared and may convey different things to different people therefore it is important to realise meanings are always relative to the particular individual communicating the message (Krippendorff, 1980).

7. Mapping the blood controversies

The following narrative, which maps the unfolding of the two blood controversies as they were reported in the two publications, provides a summary of each of the articles, editorials, cartoons and some explanation of the letters, while highlighting the key voices and key messages inherent in them. This mapping also highlights the role and predominance of the political, scientific and social movements, as well as the role that they played in the unfolding controversies.

This blood controversy was initially sparked when, in December 2004, it came to the attention of the South African Health Ministry that the SANBS was racially profiling blood donations. In a press announcement by the ministry, they said that this practice was both racist and unacceptable. This saw this particular "black blood controversy" reported upon and debated in the media.

In January 2006 the "gay blood war"[52] erupted in the press because the SANBS was severely criticised for excluding sexually active gay men from donating blood by relying upon what was argued to be outdated and irrelevant international data, research and so-called international best practice.

The black blood controversy

The black blood row was reported between Friday, 3 and Wednesday, 15 December 2004. The Citizen covered the black blood row in a series of fifteen articles and one cartoon over ten publishing days (which excluded Sundays, when the newspaper is not published). The newspaper simultaneously published a total of ten letters from readers in response to their coverage during this same period. The Star on the other hand, covered the black blood row in a series of eight articles over a period of ten publishing days (which excluded Sundays, when the newspaper is not published). The newspaper also simultaneously published only one letter from readers in response to their coverage during this same period.

The Citizen, Friday, 3 December 2004: "*Blood profiling racist – Manto"* The front page headline immediately set the tone for this blood controversy. It referred to the then Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang's response to the admission by the South African National Blood Service (SANBS) that it profiled blood donations racially, and that the Health Department was

[52] Saturday Star, January 14, 2006, p.1

aware of it. Tshabalala-Msimang's outcry was about SANBS stating that HIV was much more prevalent among Africans and therefore the service was not going to take blood from Africans. "It smacked of racism," the Health Minister reacted to a statement by SANBS medical director, Dr. Robert Crookes making it clear that racial profiling was just one of many factors used in assessing risk to recipients. "Other assessment factors included whether the donation was from a first-timer, a regular or a lapsed donor, as well as the donor's geographic area and gender." The article also stated early, in the fifth paragraph – rather suddenly and without apparent warrant - that "the SANBS had also confirmed that it does not accept blood from gay people at all". Thus an immediate link made between blacks and gays in the very first article in this publication, on this matter, which was to pre-empt the gay blood war 13 months later. The so-called "gay blood issue" raised its head a number of times in the news 'life cycle' of the black blood controversy, underscoring that in many ways the two were inextricably linked.

Dr Crookes responded by saying that at least one or two people were infected with HIV/Aids or hepatitis through blood transfusions every year, despite precautions. He also made it clear that "the crux of all [their] problems... was [that] no test available was fail-safe", hence the profiling. "Blacks, because of the prevalence of HIV and hepatitis in the African community, fell in the high-risk "Category 3"," he said, while ""Category 1" is currently all white and Indian, while coloureds and whites as well as Indian first-timers fell into the relatively low-risk "Category 2"". Statistics were quoted about the prevalence of infections for each of the categories, with the prevalence rate for "Category 4" was the highest at 58.97, resulting in "potentially about 470 infections a year". Thus we can see that the SANBS used 'science' as a way to ground their position. At the beginning of this blood controversy "science", as seemingly represented by the SANBS, was still deferred to by the voice of politics, as represented by the Health Minister and, among others, the Gauteng Health Department.

Gauteng Health Department spokesman Popo Maja, who also took a 'science' position, was quoted as saying that "the SANBS had not said anything irresponsible", while National Education, health and Allied Workers' Union spokesman Moloantao Molaba said that "if there was proof that black people were more likely to have HIV/Aids than any other racial group, 'we are speaking science'."

However, even this early in the unfolding of this story, and in the light of the national agenda, as perpetrated by the Health Minister – it was public knowledge that she was closely linked to then President Thabo Mebeki, who has been widely criticised for flirting with dissident views that deny the existence of HIV, which Nicoli Nattrass described as "denialism at the highest level" (Nattrass, p1) while simultaneously emphasising the "confusing and equivocating policy stance adopted

by... the Minister of Health, Manto Tshabala-Msimang[53]" - Molabo then added that "given the sensitivity of race relations, racial profiling should be discouraged". The article ended on a seemingly reasonable note, with SA Medical Association chairman Dr Kgosi Letlape acceding to the voice of 'science': "we would like to hear a scientific rationale for the profiling. [The SANBS] need to find a system of classification that is non-racial".

As the controversy unfolded in the media it became clear that the political voice, as represented by the Department of Health (with the unspoken backing of the Presidency), would quell the voice of the SANBS and science, that it would become clear that even if there was a scientific rationale for racial profile, that it was by no means acceptable.

However, this would not be the pattern in the later gay blood controversy, where the Minister of Health remained silent and the controversy and debate in the media was controversially driven by a pariah gay 'organisation', namely the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLA).

The key messaging inherent in this article was that the profiling of donors by the SANBS is racist, and that given the sensitivity of race relations, racial profiling should be discouraged

The Star, Friday, December 3, 2004: "*Outcry at racial profiling of SA's blood donors"* The same story as in The Citizen broke on page five of The Star, on the same day, and it also focused on the outcry at the racial profiling of SA's blood donors. Both stories, in both publications, were attributed to the newswire service SAPA. According to the report, Tshabala-Msimang said that the profiling of donors by the SA National Blood Service smacked of racism:

> 'She said that she should have been consulted first. "When we wanted to establish the prevalence (of HIV) among the racial groups in this country, we couldn't access blood from the SANBS," she said.'In the absence of such figures, "it smacks of racism" to say HIV was more prevalent among Africans, she said. Her department was seeking an urgent meeting with the SANBS.'

The key messaging inherent in this article was that the profiling of donors by the SANBS is racist, and that given the sensitivity of race relations, racial profiling should be discouraged.

The Citizen, Saturday, 4 December 2004: **P1: "*Blood banks dump racial profiling"* / P2: "*Blood banks to lose race edge"*** In a small front page article – "Blood banks lose racial

[53] Mortal Combat, Nicoli Nattrass (University of KwaZulu-Natal Press), 2007

profiling" – that ran over on to page two, it was reported that the Health Department would urgently review the then current risk-rating model and that other scientific determinants would be identified and integrated to determine risk more accurately. Race would no longer be used to determine blood risk level. Yes, by day two the agenda was already set by Government and racial profiling was no longer an option as the voice of 'politics' had unequivocally won against the voice of 'science'

The article also emphasised that "HIV infection in particular poses a major challenge for blood transfusion services because of the window period when infection cannot be detected.

The article's key message is that the current risk-rating model needs to be urgently reviewed, and that other scientific determinants need to be identified and integrated to determine risk more accurately.

This edition's page 10 included a prominent editorial titled "Lifestyle, not race , is the key", where it was argued that "if there is no valid medical reason the SA National Blood Service "profiles" blood according to the donor's race, the practice is racist":

> Using race as a criterion is a lazy way of avoiding a more thorough screening. It's also an insult to thousands of clean-living, healthy black people who give blood in good faith. Now many of them will be lost to the system because they are offended.

The inherent message of the editorial is that the practice of profiling is racist, and that in South Africa this practice is emotive and will cause political disruption.

Directly next to the editorial is a large, prominent cartoon by Peter Masters featuring a fuming "Manto" with a speech bubble above her head containing these words: "It makes my blood boil". Drawn into the background there is also a Citizen street poster on the wall highlighting "Row over black blood". This is the first time that humour is used to depict the controversy, which then occurs regularly in puns on blood in various headlines, despite this being a serious national issue. The opposite occurs in the gay blood controversy. Another observation is that humorous, sarcastic puns are particularly prevalent in the Citizen's coverage of the black blood controversy; the opposite is again relevant to the newspaper's coverage of the gay blood controversy.

Saturday Star, 4 December 2004: ***Race not a factor in blood donor risk*** An article titled "Race not a factor in blood donor risk", which mirrored the unfolding of the story in The Citizen, was hidden deeply and unobtrusively in page two. The story would have petered out here were it not for the entrance of a powerful agenda setter – the president.

The message here is clear, that race will no longer be used to determine the level of risk in donated blood.

The Citizen, **Monday, 6 December 2004:** ***President Mbeki's blood was rejected - report*** The controversy around racial profiling was ratcheted up a few notches when it was made public that blood President Mbeki had publicly donated in 2001 was discarded because he had declined to complete the routine questionnaire. At the entry of a powerful agenda setter, the president, an entirely new dynamic was brought to this blood controversy. This lengthened the story's life cycle.
The newspaper reported that President Mbeki's blood was destroyed "because he did not complete a mandatory questionnaire and his race placed him in a high-risk category". This was after the president donated blood in 2001, responding to the SANBS's urgent call for donors.
The newspaper also reported that the SANBS had agreed to stop using racial profiling of donors as a blood risk indicator the previous Friday.
The key message is that blood donated by the SA president was destroyed because he did not complete a mandatory questionnaire; that his race placed him a high-risk category.

The Star, Monday 6 December 2004: ***News update: Race rejected as blood donor risk factor*** A brief "news update" was again embedded deep in page two of this publication, suggesting the lessening news value of the story.
However, the article suggested that race will no longer be used to determine the risk in donated blood.

The Star, Tuesday 7 December 2004: ***'Emotive' race issue has some blood boiling over HIV testing*** The story was now picked up by The Star's health and science reporter, Jillian Green, in a page five article . The SANBS stated that racial profiling was just one of the factors they used to profile blood: "Others include geographical area, the gender of the donor, and whether the person is a one-time donor or a lapsed donor."
According to the SANBS, "rigorous testing picked up infected blood in both low-risk and high-risk groups".

> "On average, zero to nine donations per 100 000 tested positive for HIV in the low-risk group, while in the high-risk group, between 200 and 3000 donations per 100 000 tested positive. Problems arise when an infected person is in the window period (the time when the virus is present in the blood but cannot be detected), as there are no tests available that can determine whether blood is infected," Crookes explained.

It is for the reasons above that "to ensure that blood transfused to patients in need was as safe as possible, it was necessary to categorise blood into risk groups". However, even though the

SANBS had risk-management procedures in place to prevent the transmission of HIV through blood transfusion, "there had been cases in which people had become infected through a transfusion".

> "On average, over the last five years, one or two patients have received a transfusion with HIV-positive blood."

This is a remarkably vague statement to be made by the voice of 'science' at a crucial moment in the midst of a blood controversy, and one that was not followed-up by, and unpacked by the media, in a furore over the racial profiling of blood, and in the one country in the world where issues of race could not be more controversial than they already are. Surely the exact number of instances of infected blood, irrespective of the form of blood profiling, would be a key statistic to follow-up?

The article contains the message that while race is not the only criterion used to determine high-risk blood, it is the most emotive; and that no tests are available that can determine whether blood in the window period is infected.

The Citizen, Wednesday 8 December 2004: P1: President to get apology / P2: *Blood service to apologise to Mbeki* A short sidebar piece running over from page one to page two was titled "Blood service to apologise to Mbeki". That the president was due an apology evoked a rather vitriolic response from the publication's then acting editor, Martin Williams, who also condescendingly and offhandedly referred to the president by his first name – "How charming to see Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang rush to the defence of boss Thabo (part-time columnist) [referring to the president's then regular columns on the ANC website] over his right to privacy regarding blood donations." This steered the controversy off in a new direction by focusing on other related issues, like those around "health professional's [...] ethical parameters" and the "need to respect the rights and dignity of [health professionals'] clients (The Citizen: 8 Dec 2004, p. 23). It also focused on the health Minister's alleged double standards. Williams, referring to the Health Minister's statement that "as health professionals, we have ethical parameters within which we have to operate", retaliated thus:

> Now, try transplanting that to the battle for which the Minister is better known. What ethics does she apply to the rights and dignity of people living with HIV or Aids, and their families and loved ones? It's nice to know she's heard about ethics. (Martin Williams in opinion piece entitled, Ethics, bloody ethics: The Citizen: 8 Dec 2004, p. 23.)

Here the newspaper entered the fray with an attack on Tshabalala-Msimang, which related directly to her and then President Mbeki's well known and extensively reported Aids-denialism

stance. Their controversial AIDS-denialism (which had also played a critical role in causing confusion around, and undermining trust in the voice of 'science'), had made many headlines and had drawn strong international criticism for a number of years. Williams' opinion piece was published alongside the letters section, of which two of the fourteen published letters related to the blood saga.

The key message of this front page article is that the SANBS would apologise to the President for discarding his blood.

The Star, **8 December 2004:** ***Blood service to say sorry to Mbeki*** The racial blood controversy is now covered on page one of The Star, and that is understandable because it is featuring a main agenda setter, namely President Mbeki, is well as to see the topic featured within the main editorial on page eighteen: "Blood(y) dilemma".

The key messages conveyed in this page one article are that the SANBS would apologise to the president for discarding his blood because he never met the criteria, as well as that the SANB's racial profiling of blood highly controversial.

The editorial, meanwhile, focuses on what it believes is the "moral dilemma facing the SANBS in determining the safety of donated blood", especially as "[i]ts primary objective is surely to protect to protect those needing blood transfusions from being infected with HIV". The paper emphasises that since it was revealed that the service uses what amounts to racial profiling as a criterion to classify HIV risk among donors, "there has been an emotive row – and some backtracking." As a result the SANBS will investigate its risk model.

> The moral dilemma it faces is now clear: it must provide safe blood, but must also curb perceptions of a racist subtext – that black people are more likely to have the virus.... [b]ut the message or subtext that, by virtue of the fact that one belongs to a race group whose HIV prevalence happens to be high, one is more likely to be a carrier, is deeply unfortunate.

It argues that apartheid and racist prejudice was based on such stereotypes – "that members of a certain race are genetically or otherwise prone to particular behaviour. So any perpetuation of this simply cannot go unchallenged."

The editorial makes it clear that racial profiling is reminiscent of apartheid practice and needs to be challenged.

The Citizen, Thursday 9 December 2004: ***Blood stocks up; Please give blood - ID*** Two indirectly-related stories on page four focus on blood. The first one reports that the SANBS's previous appeal for all regular Group O donors to donate blood had been successful. The second article was an appeal by the Independent Democrat's leader Patricia de Lille for all South Africans "to rise above the current blood transfusion controversy and donate blood". In reference

to “the blood row which had drawn in the presidency and the government,” De Lille said “the colour of all our blood is red”. Then on the letters page of the same issue, four of fourteen letters relate to the blood debate.
Key messages conveyed are that the SANBS’s request for donations has been successful because blood stocks have increased tenfold, and that all South Africans should rise above the current controversy and to donate blood, especially as the “silly season” drew nearer.
Despite skin colour, the colour of everyone’s blood is red.

The Star, Thursday 9 December 2004: ***Gays also hit at ‘offensive’ policy of blood service*** is the page five title for an article by Jillian Green about the call to scrap questions on sex. This also prefigures the gay blood media controversy of thirteen months later.
The article emphasises the message that the SANBS policy of identifying whether donors were engaging in homosexual sex has is under fire.

The Citizen, 10 December 2004: P1: ***Blood bill enrages donor*** **/ P2:** ***Blood bill enrages veteran donor*** A page one article about the high price of blood purchased from the SANBS, in particular for donors - “I have donated my blood free for many years, and now I have to pay for it” - raised issues in the editorial on page ten about the fact that the SANBS “really need to think carefully about how they treat reliable donors. [That w]ithout these valuable volunteers the whole institution would collapse” (The Citizen, 11 December 2004, p. 10). Another two letters to the newspaper were also published.
While the key message of the page one article emphasises that a blood donor vows never to give blood again after an enormous blood bill, the key messages in the editorial centred on the fact that Mbeki was helping promote blood donation when he gave blood, and that personal questionnaires pertaining to the president of any country is a matter of National Security.

The Citizen, **Saturday 11 December 2004:** ***New blood donor risk model on way*** A page 4 article reported that “a revised risk model [that does not take race into account] for the [SANBS would] be ready by the end of [January 2005] the service announced.”
A revised risk model for the SANBS should be ready within a month, was the prevailing message in this article.

Saturday Star, 11 December 2004: ***Blood saga highlights need to keep on battling discrimination - Mbeki*** This was The Star’s penultimate article on the blood row was prominently featured on page two: “Blood saga highlights need to keep on battling discrimination – Mbeki”:

“The SA Blood Transfusion Service’s highly reprehensible practices are a stern warning for South Africans’ need to continue the struggle for non-racism,” President Thabo Mbeki wrote in his ANC online newsletter.

> Mbeki said the controversy had highlighted the racist legacy that continued to blight the country. “Yet there are some in our society who are very determined to ensure that we discuss this particular challenge as little as possible. To suppress this discussion they present many interventions in this regard as ‘playing the race card’ for narrow political purposes,” Mbeki said.

Meanwhile, is his online letter, SA Today, DA leader Tony Leon said that while the country debated the blood service’s use of racial profiling for donated blood, “there was no debate about the ANC’s ‘use of racial profiling for nearly every other purpose under the sun’.”
This article conveyed the message that the SANBS’s practices are highly reprehensible, and that South African’s need to continue the struggle for non-racism.

The Citizen, Monday 13 December 2004: The newspaper carried another blood-related letter on page nineteen, as well as an opinion piece on the same page titled, “Ignorance fuels racial fires in blood debate”, in which Anne Routier makes the point that “people need to understand it has nothing to do with there being more blacks. It has to do with how many people per hundred are infected” and that “it costs R33 000 to fully test a person’s blood. That too must be considered when making ‘risk factor’ decisions.”
The prevailing message was that ignorance fuels racial fires in blood debate.

The Citizen, Tuesday 14 December 2004: The Letters Page (p. 11) carried three letters, and a further two blood-related opinion pieces on the same page. In one the point was made that “anyone sexually active is in danger of a disease, but blacks, being the majority, are mostly infected”, in a letter titled “Black or white, the colour of blood is red”. Meanwhile Andrew Kenny in “Bloody nonsense” accuses senior ANC figures, including President Mbeki, of yet again “making vague slurs without giving facts and accusing others of wrongful practice without saying why it is wrong.” These attacks on Mbeki and ANC in The Citizen are fuelled by previous spats and grievances based on what they perceive to be Government’s double standards, as well as Mbeki’s AIDS-denialism stance:

> The ANC demands racial classification in education and in employment but denounces it where it is necessary for medical practice. How does President Mbeki suggest the blood service classify its blood donations? Or, since he has stated clearly that HIV cannot cause AIDS, does he believe blood containing HIV is safe for blood transfusions?

Senior ANC figures, including the President, are making vague racial prejudice slurs without substantiating them, is the message implied in this article.

The Star, Tuesday 14 December 2004: ***Political correctness does not keep one safe from Aids*** The last say on the black blood controversy in The Star takes the form of a large, prominently and centrally placed letter titled: “Political correctness does not keep one safe from Aids”, which gives a poor black woman’s perspective – “as a woman, it’s hard to be independent if you have no money to feed yourself, let alone your little one” - on the black blood controversy:

> ...with the high unemployment rate and the knowledge that we [black] women have a simple commodity, our bodies, and you have a high risk profile. ... All I have to do is take a walk in my own neighbourhood and I know that for the HIV scourge to be turned around, women must not be the second-class citizens that they still are.

The Citizen, Wednesday 15 December 2004: Then two final letters (“Why ask blacks to donate blood?” and “Timing of blood hype unfortunate”) published on page 27 signals the end of the coverage of this particular blood row in this newspaper. The first letter poses the question that if it is so expensive to have blood tested and you know more black people are HIV-positive why encourage them to donate blood? The second letter highlights that “recipients of blood are the ones likely to feel the effect of the hype. The cost of blood is certain to rise as a result of additional scientific screening measures to be introduced by the SANBS”.
The inherent message in this article is that recipients of blood will be affected by the negative hype, as the price of blood is certain to rise because of additional screening measures.

Thus ended the black blood media controversy as it was portrayed in The Citizen and The Star newspapers at the end of 2004. However, issues of race would rise again in the gay blood media controversy in the same two newspapers thirteen months later.

The Gay Blood Controversy

The gay blood controversy was reported between Friday, 13 January and Tuesday, 24 January 2006. The Citizen covered it in a series of ten articles over a period of nine publishing days (which excluded Sundays) and no letters from readers appeared in response to its coverage, which is in stark contrast to the letters responding to the black blood controversy. The Star, meanwhile, extensively covered the gay blood war in a series of eleven articles over a period of

eight publishing days (excluding Sundays), as well as the publication of a further five letters from their readers.

Friday, 13 January 2006: The Citizen – "*'Imperative' gay men don't donate blood"* and The Star – "***Ban on gays' blood sparks row"*** The story, based on a SANBS-issued press statement – that sexually active gay men had been banned as donors by the SANBS - broke in both newspapers on the same day. It was based on a wire story issued by SAPA (South African Press Association), which both publications acknowledged as their source. Both stories also quoted the SANBS head, Dr. Robert Crookes, as saying that "a man who has had sex with another man within the past five years, whether oral or anal, with or without a condom or other form of protection is not permitted to donate blood and must please not do so[54].

The Star also quoted Durban Lesbian and Gay Community and Health Care Centre spokesperson Nonhlanhla Mkhize as saying "the move was plain discrimination" and that "people should not be excluded on unfounded grounds".

This article implied in its messaging that gay men who have sex with other gay men, even if it is safe sex with a condom, should not be allowed to donate blood; that gay men endanger the lives of patients who need blood transfusions. Furthermore, also implied, was that all gay men are sexually promiscuous and should be excluded from donating blood.

Saturday Star, 14 January 2006: "***GAYS LAUNCH BLOOD WAR" [sic]*** From being a relatively unimportant story on page six of The Star the previous day, the story was propelled to the front page of The Saturday Star the very next, with the dramatic, bold heading that declared that "gays launch blood war". Thus, the story was immediately framed as a "blood war" by the publication. This was followed by a subtitle alleging that "hundreds of homosexuals lied about their sexual orientation"[55]. The story went on to claim that the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLA) "yesterday declared war on the SANBS, as scores of its members turned up to donate blood under false pretences".

> The request [by the GLA to its 100 000 members to donate blood to SANBS centres across the country] is part of an ongoing national campaign to protest the SANBS policy of excluding men who engage in sexual activity with other men from donating blood.

It also alleged that "a shocking 65% of the gay men who donated blood without disclosing their sexual preference" were unsure of their HIV status. They estimated that 300 of the GLA's 100 000 male members donated blood, that furthermore – according to the GLA's media director, David

[54] The Star, 13 January 2006, p.6 and The Citizen, 13 January 2006, p. 3
[55] Saturday Star, 14 January 2006

Baxter – “one of the donors had full-blown Aids”. The story also stated that other organisations representing gay men and lesbians “reacted with outrage about the GLA tactics”. They quoted a spokesperson from “the oldest gay and lesbian service organisation in Africa”, namely the Triangle Project’s clinical manager Glenn de Swardt. Other issues that were raised in the story included the SANB’s new blood screening equipment that its head, Dr. Crookes, admitted was not “completely accurate”. Crookes also admitted - when the GLA accused the SANBS of using out of date information to back up its exclusion policy - that current South Africa statistics were ten years old. Crookes also said that the question about whether a man can donate blood or not does “not have to do with whether or not he is gay. It’s not about the term gay. It’s about whether men having sex with other men and engaging in risky sexual behaviour”.
The article implied in its messaging that gays are militant, that gays lie and operate under false pretences, and also that the GLA is a large 100 000-member strong organisation able to muster its members to action.

The Star’s editorial (p. 14) – entitled “Crossing the line” – was also solely focused on the GLA’s “shocking actions”, that it “had crossed the line of acceptable behaviour”, that is “way beyond civil disobedience or protest – and into the realm of attempted murder or terrorism”.
The opinion piece made it clear that the GLA’s behaviour was unacceptable, despite trying to make a public point about society’s discrimination against gay and lesbian people.

Meanwhile, **The Citizen on 14 January 2006: “*Man with full-blown Aids among donors...”* and “...*and gay organisation bays for SANBS’s blood”*** The Citizen covered the breaking story in two relatively short articles on the bottom of page five, which contained a further five unrelated stories. The first story – titled “Man with full-blown Aids among donors...” focused on the claim of GLA spokesman, David Baxter, who told the SANBS marketing manager Gail Nothard that about 120 of its members had given blood the day before, and that one of these had full-blown Aids, and that 65% of those who had donated blood had engaged in high-risk behaviour. The second article - titled “...and gay organisation bays for SANBS’s blood” - alleged that “gay rights organisations had accused the [SANBS] of victimisation of gay men” (The Citizen, 14 January 2006, p.5). OUT’s Melanie Judge was quoted saying that the SANBS’s statement linking a gay man’s identity with a risky form of sexual behaviour was homophobic: “Heterosexual people might also have more than one partner or have sex without a condom and be just as much at risk.” Crookes on the other hand said the restriction was practised all over the world because it was imposed by the World Health Organisation. The SANBS also claimed that while South Africa was the only country to test blood, “there was no technology that could entirely eliminate the risk of infection”. It was also reported that the GLA was urging gay men to partake in a mass donation that same day.

This messaging in this article implied that the SANBS "honesty cards" are neither exact nor 'scientific'; also that sexually gay men are promiscuous and lie, and that 65% of sexually active gay men engaged in high-risk behaviour.

"Have you had anal sex?" was the opening line of **The Star's page two story of Monday, 16 January 2006: "*Blood service to address 'gay prejudice'"***, and could, as the story suggested, be the new wording on a questionnaire circulated to donors by the SANBS following the outcry by a section of the gay community. Its title clearly stated the "blood service [was] to address 'gay prejudice'", while the subtitle said that "action may be taken against 'protesting' donors who lied about [their] lifestyles". The SANBS was also reported as saying that they would look at the wording on the questionnaire "so that it would not be too gender-insensitive, to reject both hetero- and homosexual couples who practise anal sex". It was also reported that the GLA had called on the Human Rights Commission to investigate the SANBS's policies; that apart from this a lawsuit would be filed against the SANBS; that the GLA had also called on Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang to intervene in order to get the SANBS to change its policies, "as she had done a few months ago, when the service was taken to task for its apparent racial profiling". De Swardt of the Triangle Project was quoted as saying "the standards employed by the blood centres were based on northern hemisphere statistics, where Aids was a homosexually driven pandemic. In Africa it was heterosexually driven". The SANBS would also be meeting later in the week to discuss the handling of the donors who lied when filling out their forms. Nevertheless, the SANBS stated that South Africans should not be concerned, "because its blood was still safe".
One of the key messages of this article was that South Africans should not be concerned, because the SANBS's blood was still safe, that every single unit of blood will be tested. However, it also implied that anal sex is a high risk activity. Also that not all homosexual men engage in anal sex and lots of heterosexuals do. Finally, it also conveyed the message that the standards employed by the SANBS were based on northern hemisphere statistics, where Aids was a homosexually driven pandemic. In Africa, it was heterosexually driven.

The Citizen's page three article of the same day: "*Blood Service slams gays' action"* was a watered down version of the story appearing in The Star, except that there was still a discrepancy between the numbers of gays who were reported to have given blood without revealing their sexual status – The Star reported 300 while The Citizen reported 120. The Triangle Project's de Swardt described the SANBS's ban as homophobic: "The SANBS stance was 'prejudiced and homophobic and contributes to the stigmatisation of the gay community." However, an editorial was published on page 12, titled "a right to safe blood", which emphasised that while South Africa was a world leader in the HIV testing of donated blood, there was "a window period of several weeks... [a]nd no test can be 100% infallible... [that] therefore the SA National Blood Service's

announcement that sexually active gay men should not donate blood is sensible" (The Citizen, 16 January 2006). It also states that this "is not about discrimination or constitutional rights as some gay organisations have claimed, but about realities acknowledged by the World Health Organisation and all over the medical world". The editorial ended by making it clear that "the gay community should be grateful that the blood one of them may need in an emergency is as safe as it can possibly be".

The message here was that South Africa is a world leader in the HIV testing of every pint of donated blood, yet no blood test is infallible. Then, in contrast to the message contained in The Star's article of the same day, the SANBS is sensible in excluding sexually active gay men from donating blood.

The Star article – "Blood protest unethical, gay group admits" – of Tuesday, 17 January 2006 highlighted that the GLA had acknowledged that its campaign was "irresponsible" and "unethical", but that "it had no other option after its request to have a seemingly homophobic question changed from the service's self-exclusion questionnaire fell on deaf ears". The GLA was also reported as claiming that since Friday, 13 January "600 gay and bisexual men ha[d] lied about their lifestyles and donated blood [...] countrywide" and that of that number "11 units of HIV-infected blood had gone into the blood service's system". The article also quoted spokesperson opinions of the Triangle Project, Out, and the Johannesburg Lesbian and Gay Pride Heritage Week, all of whom agreed that the GLA had acted in an irresponsible and unethical manner. This article was backed up by an editorial on page 12 titled "[t]error and prejudice" that emphasised that the protest by the [GLA] had "been roundly condemned by almost every South African...". While this editorial emphasised that the "uproar ha[d] been unprecedented... [v]ery worryingly, it ha[d] provoked some particularly bigoted utterances, appalling in their blind prejudice, about gay South Africans". It also remaindered readers "that the SANBS ha[d] a parlous record of discriminating against groups based on risk assessment methodology that [wa]s a decade out of date and extremely insulting in the process":

> "It is high time that the SANBS began to operate in the spirit of our 10-year-old constitution, cherishing human dignity as much as it cherishes the gift of life."

The key messages in this article were that the GLA's campaign is unethical, that the organisation is shadowy and without legitimacy, also that their actions were likely to increase homophobia. The other key message was that the SANBS's male to male sex questionnaire has no bearing on the South African disease profile because it is based on international standards.

"GAY BLOOD HOAX?" (sic) was the headline on page 1 of **The Citizen on Tuesday, 17 January**, with the following subtitle: "[d]onations claim 'fuels homophobia'" above a story,

continued on page 2, that alleged that, according to “several gay spokesman” the GLA “was little more than a one-man operation with a fax machine” and unpacked this further by claiming this could well have been a hoax, quoting both the SANBS CEO Anton Heyns, as well as “[g]ay and lesbian organisations around South Africa” who claimed that the GLA was an “illegitimate and shadowy pseudo-organisation, apparently consisting of no more than one publicity-hungry man who seemed never to appear in public”. The article also aired opinions that accused the GLA of not only misrepresenting the gay community, but also of fuelling homophobia. The GLA’s David Baxter meanwhile accused the Minister of Health of not standing up for the rights of gay people – “as she had done last year when race was used as a profiling tool to determine the safety of donated blood” - because she was not gay.
The key messages in this piece were that the gay blood scare may have been a hoax, also that the GLA has no credibility, and was known within the gay community as an illegitimate and shadowy pseudo-organisation. That David Baxter is a publicity-hungry man who seemed to never appear in public.

In the second of two articles on the same page dealing with this issue, an anonymous “legal expert” was quoted as saying that “[p]eople who donate blood knowing they are HIV-positive could face charges of attempted murder”. The story was accompanied by the first and last photo (albeit of very poor quality) of the GLA’s media director, David Baxter, an issue proponent and controversial character. Conflict and confrontation fuel this controversy.
The article made it clear that the GLA’s actions have been roundly condemned, that the uproar has been unprecedented, and that the SANBS has a parlous record of discriminating against groups based on risk assessment methodology that is a decade out of date and extremely insulting in the process.

These two articles in The Citizen were followed by a brief “news update” on page 2 of **The Star of Wednesday, January 18 2006** titled: ***“Blood service doubts ‘gay blood’ scare”***. This article focuses on the fact that there had been no increase in new male donors, “despite claims that more than 600 units of ‘gay blood’ ha[d] been donated since the [previous] Friday [by members of the GLA, who had been encouraged to donate blood as part of an ongoing national campaign to protest the SANBS policy of excluding men who engage in sexual activity with other men from donating blood]. While no article relating to the gay blood war was published in The Citizen, a compact editorial was published on the same day, stating that “after all the hype... it [was] time to take stock”. Highlighting that “if any of these protest donations had taken place (which we doubt) the actions would have been criminal and morally reprehensible”. The editorial also ended by stating that there “is enough homophobia without the GLA (whose credentials are dubious) stirring up more hatred”.

The messages inherent here were that the gay blood scare is believed to be a hoax, that the GLA has been isolated by other gay groups, and that Baxter is a charlatan.

While no article on the blood war was published in **The Star on Thursday, 19 January**, a brief article on page 11 of **The Citizen** entitled **"*Move to solve blood crisis*"** emphasised both by its placement deep in the newspaper's news pages that this story was beginning to run out of steam in this particular publication. The story highlighted that the SANBS was set to initiate a consultative process to discuss the organisation's policy of excluding gay men from donating blood. The article also quoted the Department of Health's spokesman, Sibani Mngadi, saying that "donors should donate blood for the right reason".
The message in this article was that the SANBS is to initiate a consultative process to discuss its policy of excluding gay men from donating blood.

While **Friday, 20 January saw no coverage of this 'furore' in The Citizen**, almost an entire full page 8 of **The Star: "*'Singled out even though our blood is perfectly safe'"*** was dedicated to the "gay donations furore" and at first glance appeared, with a large emotive, and close-up photograph of a gay male couple who felt "rejected" by being "depriv[ed ...] of the opportunity to assist someone in need" to be an attempt to strive to give the story from the 'other side'. It had this large, mostly bold heading:

> "Sias Kotze and Rahb Spear have been in a monogamous relationship for the past two years. Both have been tested for HIV and proved negative. So why are they... 'Singled out even though their blood is perfectly safe.'"

While this article begins and ends with allusions to Kotze and Spear's life together, and how as a monogamous, committed couple they are now considered "high-risk" because of their "homosexual relationship", the article mainly centres around the fact that the SANBS has based their ban on "men who have sex with men" on "international best practice and on data in international medical publications", which the gay groups argue "does not fit the HIV disease profile in South Africa, where the majority of those infected with the virus are young women". The article also included the self-exclusion questions that the blood bank wanted donors to answer when donating blood.
In the messaging inherent in this article, the SANBS takes a knock: The SANBS is homophobic, it is also exclusionary on basis of sexual orientation and gay and lesbian organisations want to see offensive lifestyle profiling addressed. Also, gay and lesbian organisations have distanced themselves from the GLA.

Saturday, January 21 2006: "*Blood service reassures public"* is both the last day, and the climax, of this particular story's 'life' in the Independent Group's two newspapers, namely The Star and The Saturday Star. On page 2 is an article titled "[b]lood service reassures public" that centres around the SANBS claiming that "it does not discriminate against gays and is busy reviewing recent research on the gay community in South Africa", as well as that it still considers the GLA's "claim that some of its members donated blood without disclosing their sexual status as a threat".

The key messages are that the SANBS says it does not discriminate against gays and is busy reviewing recent research on the gay community in South Africa. Nevertheless, the SANBS does accept blood from gay men who do not practice sex. The SANBS is clearly obstinately homophobic.

However, on page 15 (and described as a "debate"), an entire page, excluding any advertising or non-related stories, but including a highly emotive (and perhaps unrelated), prominently placed large photograph of a close-up of a hand holding a syringe and needle (with the person's face out of focus behind the hand and the syringe needle). In large bold lettering across the top of the page, the title of the article was the following: "Gay Blood Row: Hate Speech or a Real Threat?" Comprised of an editorial signed "the editor" which justified the newspaper's duty to inform their readers "about what was possibly a serious threat to the integrity of the blood transfusion system", as well as five varied letters that appear to be well-spread across a spectrum of society. These included letters from the head of department of virology at Central Hospital in Durban, the editor of a gay lifestyle website, as well as a gay man who sided with the GLA's actions (because he believed it was justified in the face of the SANBS's "unjustifiable" and "outrageous discrimination"), and a letter from a heterosexual who felt that "gays marginalise themselves". Two of the letters lambasted the Saturday Star's "inflammatory, homophobic reporting".

The messages contained in this full page spread were mixed due to the varying opinions contained in this round up of opinion by the publication: Saturday Star was guilty of hate speech and of endangering gay and lesbian people by fanning homophobia; that there was support of the GLA in some quarters; that the Saturday Star tried, given the constraints of their publication deadline, to provide balance and context; also that there is a risk that the GLA's acts would spark homophobia; and that the SANBS is still uncertain whether the donations by the GLA took place or not.

Then, in the Saturday Star's news and leisure section, 'Lightstrider', Albertus van Dijk in his extensive *CelestialFocus* astrology column dedicated his 'editorial' section to the gay blood war, titled: "Mars, the red planet, and its role in the 'gay blood war', which gave another perspective and ended thus:

> "What can we learn from this explosion of rage? It questions levels of tolerance and the value of truth, and asks us to look into our own souls to confirm what we truly believe before we take sides in an ugly fight."

The key messages in Van Dijk's column were the following: Much of the angry protest was typically homophobic, portraying gays as perverts who would wilfully want to hurt others. The gay community denounced Baxter for spreading false information in an irresponsible way; and that traditional prejudice and negative opinion flared up into a harsh and damaging fight, which also set the public against the media for reporting a sensational allegation without checking sources and facts.

These were to be the last volleys in the coverage in The Star and The Saturday Star of the gay blood war.

Meanwhile, **in The Citizen that same Saturday**, an article with the title **"*Gays 'should be able to give blood'*"**, focused on the South African Human Rights Commission that had "come out supporting the rights of gay men, saying they should not be excluded from donating blood" and that if the SANBS did not rephrase "the offensive questions on their donation forms the Equality Court should be asked to give a declaratory order on this matter":

> "Since this discrimination is on a listed ground in SA's Equality Legislation, the onus will shift to the SANBS to establish the discrimination is not unfair."

Then, in its final article on this controversy, **The Citizen: "*Blood policy 'shortsighted'*" - in a tiny article story on the bottom of its page 3 of Tuesday, 24 January** - highlighted that "the South African Medical Association (SAMA) said the [SANBS] is missing the point if bases the safety of its blood supply on the sexual preferences of its donors":

> "It was an extremely short-sighted approach in a country where the number of HIV-positive heterosexuals outnumbered the number of HIV-positive gays", said SAMA's chairman, Kgosi Letlapa.

Letlapa also said that a "non-discriminatory safety policy that is pragmatic and realistic" was needed.

The key messages in this final article about this controversy in the Citizen were strongly critical of the SANBS: The SANBS is missing the point if it bases the supply of its blood supply on the sexual preferences of donors. The SANBS's approach was extremely short sighted in a country where the number of HIV-positive heterosexuals outnumbered the number of HIV-positive gays.

And that a non-discriminatory safety policy is needed that is pragmatic and realistic. Then, in summation, as if summing up the point of the controversy, the message was that we should stop the paranoia about gay men and advocate every sexually active person in SA goes for testing.

The search and hope expressed for a “non-discriminatory safety policy that is pragmatic and realistic” is how the gay blood media controversy in The Citizen and The Star newspapers ended.

8. QUANTITATIVE DATA RESULTS

The table below analyses the articles, letters and cartoons published in The Star and Citizen around the black and gay blood controversies.

The source of this quantitative data result table, itself a set of tables that provides information about where the articles, letters and cartoons were placed in both publications is to be found in the appendix on p.69. They also categorise the coverage into news, opinion or editorial. They also provide information about the sources in the coverage, and highlight who the issue proponents are. A brief summary of each of the items' manifest content is included.

While the information from the tables in the appendix has been distilled so as to provide the statistics for the quantitative data results below, those tables are also the foundation for discussion that follows in the findings section on p.47.

The quantitative data results below highlight who constitute the major voices of the *political issue proponents*; these are the political high profile people who played an integral role in driving the blood controversy in both publications, who were quoted for their newsworthiness and prominence, and were thus given space in the articles. In the black blood controversy these included President Mbeki; the Health Minister; DA Leader Tony Leon; and the ID Leader Patricia de Lille. These were all major political figures with the ability to extend the story cycle because they have a high news-worthiness on the news agenda.

The tables also highlight the major 'science' issue proponents for both the black and gay blood controversies, which included the Medical Research Council; the National Health Laboratory Service; Statistics SA; and the Actuarial Society (but this excludes SANBS spokespeople or mentions).

In the instance of the gay blood controversy, mentions of the World Health Organisation (WHO); the Centre for Disease Control; and then legal organisations and bodies, such as the Human Rights Commission, are included in the count.

The 'social movements' given a voice, or mention, in the gay blood controversy include the Durban and Lesbian Gay Community and Health Centre; OUT and Triangle Project, but exclude the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (or GLA).

	Black blood controversy: *number of content items*		**Gay blood controversy: *number of content items***	
	Star	**Citizen**	**Star**	**Citizen**
News articles	7	8	6	9
Front page headlines	1	4	1	1
Editorials	1	2	3	2
Opinion pieces	0	4	0	0
Feature (or extended) articles	0	0	3	0
Letters	1	15	5	0
Cartoons	0	1	0	0

Space given in content items to political and scientific voices/issue proponents:

	Black blood controversy: *number of content items*		**Gay blood controversy: *number of content items***	
	Star	**Citizen**	**Star**	**Citizen**
Major political voices *directly quoted* in stories (excluding letters)	6	12	0	0
Major political voices *referred* to in stories, but not *directly quoted* (mentions in letters included)	1	5	0	0
Major science voices *directly quoted* in stories (SANBS excluded;	5	6	Not applicable to this controversy	Not applicable to this controversy

and letters excluded)				
Voices of *authoritative organisations* (including WHO; Centre for Disease Control; Human Rights Commission) and the voices of *social movements* (including Durban and Lesbian Gay Community and Health Centre; OUT; Triangle Project) given space in the coverage (but excluding the GLA)	Not applicable to this controversy	Not applicable to this controversy	16	7 + 4 legal
Gay media (publication or website) referred to, or directly quoted, in articles	Not applicable to this controversy	Not applicable to this controversy	1	1
The voices of unnamed and unspecified sources (e.g. “other experts”, “several gay spokesman”, “blood donors” or ‘gay or lesbian people affected’) given space in the articles	0	1	4	2

8. FINDINGS

My research findings fall into two main categories. The first deals with balance and fairness defined as representing a range of voices, views and positions in the debate. The second category analyzes how the controversies were represented.

Providing a space for varied and dissenting voices

The mapping of the coverage of the two blood controversies (section 7, p.25) suggests that the many and varying voices, as well as the opposing positions (that are at times extremely polarised), are given space in these two publications.

While both newspapers published a wide range, and comprehensive coverage of topics and opinions in this public debate - and in the process importantly upheld the principle of wide and diverse public debate (bearing in mind that the role of the media in a healthy democracy is to represent diverse voices and positions in debates) - it was, however, obvious that the voices, and thus the agendas, of the nation's elite, were the most prominently represented. During the black blood war, Government's voice was the most audible, specifically via the Health Minister, her Department of Health subordinates, and the country's President.

'Science' (as mostly represented by a range of SANBS spokespeople), 'politics' (represented by the Minister of Health, the President, and Department of Health spokespeople), and the 'social movements' (which includes the GLA, as well as various other gay and lesbian organisations), are the main voices provided a platform in the media coverage of the controversies.

Furthermore, 21 letters were also published on behalf of the readers of both publications, allowing them to express their opinions and fears, also to reveal racial fissures and prejudices, as well as confusion around the issues being debated in the two publications. Here follows some examples:

> From your statistics, I gather you were agreeing with the racial method of taking blood. I'm black and HIV negative, that must come as a shock to you.[56]

And

[56] The Citizen, Tuesday, 15 December 2004 (p.27)

> [c]onsidering the Department of Health has been under the total control of a black government for 10 years now, isn't this accusation a bit far-fetched?[57]

And

> [b]lood transfusion, Russian roulette: I am never donating blood again. Please God, may I never need a transfusion.[58]

In response to the 30 articles published for both blood controversies (fifteen for each controversy, across both newspapers), a total of 21 readers' letters were published. The black blood controversy inspired 16 of the 21 letters, of which 15 were published in *The Citizen*, and only 1 in *The Star*. This can possibly be attributed to *The Citizen*'s very opinionated and rather vitriolic approach during the black blood controversy, to both the Minister of Health, and to the President. These they strongly criticised in the light of the then current AIDS-denialism fiasco that was drawing embarrassing international attention to South Africa. *The Star*, on the other hand, did not appear to take much of a stance about the controversy at all, and while certainly raising questions, was not critical of Government. On the other hand, and relating to the gay blood controversy, only 5 readers' letters were published, all of them appearing in *The Star*.

While both publications undoubtedly provided a seemingly neutral platform for the two controversies to play themselves out, including ample input from their readers, both publications – as the editorial position - intervened in a wide range of editorials, opinion pieces, commentaries and 1 cartoon. What is particularly interesting about these *media spaces* that these publications occupied, was the revelation of exactly where, especially in the case of *The Citizen* during the black blood controversy, the newspapers blatantly placed themselves. This blatant positioning is in stark contrast to the much less obvious, even invisible, self-placement that takes place in their selection of news, sources, cartoonists, cartoons, columnists, photos and placements. This is generally the invisible behind-the-scenes, and complex, machinations that inform the publications, of which the following is just one example:

> On another more complex level, we need to acknowledge that journalists select stories that already 'make sense' in terms of their knowledge and experience. In other words, stories are frequently selected because they can be fitted into the 'inferential frameworks' which experienced journalists have already acquired in the course of their work...but at any given moment...influence both the selection of news stories and the

[57] The Citizen, Wednesday, 8 December 2004 (p.23)
[58] The Citizen, Wednesday, 8 December 2004 (p.23)

> way in which the particular news ingredients of the of the story – the bits of information to be included – are assembled[59]

However, it should be noted that the invisible behind-the-scenes, and complex, machinations that inform the publications is not the subject of this research project.

On the other hand, the editorials and opinions in both newspapers suggest something else.

Editorials and opinion pieces

A closer examination of the editorials and opinion pieces of both newspapers during the unfolding of the blood controversies suggests that they were much more than mere platforms for debates to unfold upon, that in fact they quite possibly played a role in manipulating the debates.

The tables do reveal that both newspapers ultimately further unpacked, in their opinion pieces, the complications of the blood controversies, as well the questions that were raised as a result of these controversies:

> But when [the SANBS has] been getting blood free of charge from someone over a long period it's simply unacceptable to charge that person so much...[the SANBS] really need to think about how they treat reliable donors. Without these valuable volunteers the whole institution would collapse[60].

This also provided readers with the opportunity to better understand the newspaper's editorial positioning on the debates around the controversies, as well as to highlight how they were measuring up to their role as facilitator of debate, and as a facilitator for, and protector of the many and varying opinions meant to be held in safekeeping by the media in a healthy, functioning democracy.

However, in their editorialising around the blood controversies, the media – especially The Citizen - is defaulting to old issues with President Mbeki. The Citizen takes an obvious, rigid and condescending stance against the Minister of Health, and also President Thabo Mbeki:

> Yet again senior ANC figures, including President Mbeki, are making vague slurs without giving facts and accusing others of wrongful practice without saying why it is wrong...what on earth

[59] News and News Sources (Manning: 2001, p.61)
[60] The Citizen, 11 December 2004, p.10

> is he talking about? ...Or since he has stated clearly that HIV cannot cause Aids, does he believe blood containing HIV is safe for blood transfusions?[61]

It is exceptionally critical of both, especially in the light of the AIDS denialism debacle that had enveloped the country since early in the first decade of the new millennium. It is also sarcastic, often to the point of, like above, seemingly showing disrespect in its editorials and commentaries.

The Star on the other hand, takes a more neutral and less opinionated approach to both controversies, appearing to mainly report their unfolding and relying heavily upon the wire service SAPA. This begs analysis of who was given space, a voice, in the stories.

The positions that the newspapers take are best illustrated in their editorials and opinion pieces because this is where "the interconnections or power networks involving journalists, political elites and proprietors represent[ing] the...dimension through which power in news production can be traced" is the most transparent"[62]. It is in the editorials and opinion pieces of the newspapers, normally written by prominent, senior journalists on the publication (for example the Citizen's then acting editor, Martin Williams, whose voice was most visibly accompanied by his by-line and photograph, which would not normally be accorded to a junior journalist) that seem to most likely reveal the collective thinking of the senior management, who would drive the news selection process in diary meetings on a daily basis. While both newspapers take the SANBS out of the science mode and into a political mode, The Citizen is the most vociferous and straight forward in terms of this. For example, Williams' choice of words, in brackets below - "part-time virologist" – immediately transforms his column related to the black blood controversy into political mode, because of its inferences to Mbeki's Aids-denialism stance and to previous caricatures of the President as a pseudo-intellectual; it echoes of previous attacks on Mbeki:

> Blood which Mbeki (part-time virologist) publicly donated in 2001 was discarded because he declined to complete the questionnaire.[63]

And in the opening paragraph of its very first editorial on the controversy[64], The Citizen makes its stance clear:

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[61] The Citizen, 14 December 2004, p.11
[62] Manning (2001, p.82)
[63] The Citizen, 8 December 2004, p.23
[64] The Citizen, 4 December 2004, p.10

> If there is no valid medical reason the SA National Blood Service "profiles" blood according to the donor's race, the practice is racist.

"Is there a sound basis for separate treatment", they immediately questioned. And while it maintains that in SA "there will always be acute sensitivities over race" because "blood is...a highly emotive subject", they argue that "yet it should be possible to deal rationally with this subject". They also consistently point out that the SANBS's argument is flawed, that "a variety of conditions, including HIV infection" are not acquired because of skin colour, "but because of lifestyles and living conditions":

> We are pleased to see the SANBS drop race as a criterion. The focus must be on habits and living conditions.

The Citizen's then acting editor, Martin William's tone in an opinion piece titled "Ethics, bloody ethics"[65] is sarcastic and hostile towards both the Health Minister and the President, who he condescendingly calls by his first name in the opening paragraph:

> How charming to see Health Minister Manto Thsbala-Msimang rush to the defence of boss Thabo (part-time columnist) over his right to privacy regarding blood donations.

Besides referring to the President as a "part-time virologist", the last two paragraphs of the same piece reveal the reason for The Citizen's stance:

> What ethics does [the Health Minister] apply to the rights and dignity of people living with HIV or Aids, and their families and loved ones? It's nice to know she's heard about ethics. Will she uphold them for mortals of a lesser ilk than the frequent flyer who is allegedly our full-time President.

The Citizen is obviously taking a hard-line stance against the Mbeki and Thsbala-Msimang for their AIDS-denialism approach, which had marred the country's international reputation, and that had seen many people die for the lack of antiretrovirals.

The history that, in particular, The Citizen harps back to, reveals that it is not as unbiased as perhaps they would like to be portrayed, especially if an unbiased media is a cornerstone of a vibrant, healthy democracy. In fact, The Citizen appears to turn, especially, the black blood controversy into a challenge to the state, rather than stick to the reporting and unpacking of the immediate issues at hand?

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[65] The Citizen, 8 December 2004, p.23

Politicisation of scientific issues

The editorials and opinion pieces also suggest the politicisation of a scientific issue. Science shows that some things are difficult and complicated, but The Citizen personalises it, by taking the debate into a political space, a space which it appears much more comfortable to occupy than the scientific one.

While the Citizen takes its position strongly, in different ways though, in both controversies, The Star meanwhile, takes a much more protracted and reflective approach to the black blood war, which is manifested in their opening paragraph of their first editorial[66], quite the opposite to The Citizen's hard-line stance:

> We need to understand the moral dilemma facing the South African National Blood Service in determining the safety of donated blood. Its primary objective is surely to protect those needing blood transfusions from being infected with HIV,

and,

> [p]erhaps geographic profiling criteria should be explored, as is the case in other countries. Certainly, this would be welcomed as an option as there are, of course, members of all races who should not be allowed to donate blood.

The Star is much less vitriolic, and has a much less "life or death" stance than The Citizen.

Although Nelkin[67], generalising, begins from the perception that media reporting of science tends to oversimplify, extrematise and therefore distort the true nature of scientific research and the content of scientific findings, this is certainly not the case during the blood controversies, and especially the black one. Instead of exploring and unpacking the scientific arguments and theories that the SANBS maintained as their reasoning for their profiling of blood donors, which they came under attack for because of perceived racism and then homophobic practices, The Citizen, in particular, chose to rather politicise the issues and turned it, rather, into a biased attach on Government, especially for its relatively recent Aids-denialism policies and approaches. This, I believe, resulted in the media failing from the perspective of serving their readers with "quality (in

[66] The Star, 8 December 2004, p.18
[67] Seale (2002, p.52)

other words, more accurate, more understandable) scientific information"[68] that could have had a much more powerful effect in shaping the SANBS into a progressive institution aligned with the principles inherent in the country's constitution.

Whose voices were heard?

The table in the quantitative data results reveals the number of sources, in particular those of high profile people, that is those that would be high on the news agenda, were given space. The Health Minister, for example, in the 15 articles pertaining to the black blood controversy, was directly sourced 3 times, while a "Health Ministry "spokesperson" was directly sourced 7 times, versus civil society only once.

However, while although the mapping reveals that the Health Ministry was given a lot of media space, it must be noted that it, along with the Health Minister, it was portrayed in a negative light, and as an aggressive and overbearing organisation apparently under pressure. While the Health Minister's language and comments are aggressive - she was quoted[69] as saying the profiling of donors by the SANBS "smacked of racism", and demanded that "she should have been consulted first", while simultaneously accusing the SANBS of being inaccessible – and "caused a furore", Gauteng Health Department spokesperson Popo Maja "said after speaking to Crookes that the SANBS had not said anything irresponsible"[70]. This highlights the role that issue proponents, like the Health Minister, can have in exacerbating and intensifying a story, as well as possibly overriding the scientific facts in the name of political expediency. This is also most likely due to the AIDS denialism fiasco that was still very real and relevant at the time. It seems that both the Health Department and the SANBS were depicted as almost cowering beneath the authoritarian, even bullying control of the duo of the Health Minister, and President, who are portrayed as controlling:

> But what makes Manto's blood boil is that someone on the SANBS told a newspaper what they'd done with Mbeki's precious offering ... [w]as it wrong of the blood service to answer?[71]

The Health Minister, and President were driving ever increasingly unpopular, both nationally and internationally, AIDS denialism theories that were seen to be costing the lives of hundreds and

[68] Seale (2002, p.52)
[69] The Star, 3 December 2004, p.5
[70] The Star, 3 December 2004, p.5
[71] Martin Williams in The Citizen, Wednesday, 8 December 2004, p.23

thousands of those denied access to antiretrovirals because of the Government's AIDS-denialism stance.

The debate that took place during the unfolding of the black blood war certainly highlighted that the process of transformation, specifically to include the previously marginalized voices of black people into the public debate, had been successful. The letters pages served to emphasise this: the wide range of opinions echoed the demographics of the country, and the majority of those letters were from the country's the black majority.

However, despite having their rights constitutionally guaranteed, the voices of individual lesbians and gays were almost non-existent, except when represented, or given a 'voice' as a group, by the likes of a wide range of social organisations and movements. This serves to emphasise the important role of social movements in terms of representing minority groups and the marginalised in society, and crucially to ensure that they obtain space in the media. This included media space for the controversial and pariah GLA (Gay and Lesbian Alliance), as well for the apparently well-respected, because of its longevity and ability to survive as an organisation, the Cape Town-based Triangle Project.

On the other hand, Government's voice during the gay blood controversy is appears, from the data, to be utterly silent, rather than underrepresented. Interestingly, and showing that it was in no way Government's priority, the exact opposite to the outraged reaction to the racial blood profiling by the SANBS by the Minister of Health is her non-reaction to the SANBS's homophobic blood profiling that grabbed media headlines thirteen months later. This was the scenario despite numerous and publicly made and vociferous calls in the media by various social movements, including the GLA, for the SANBS to end this outdated practice, and also for the Health Minister to take action, or at least a stance, against the SANBS, as she did in the black blood controversy, implying that despite being constitutionally enshrined, gay rights were not a priority of Government, and that they appeared from the coverage to be uncaring regarding this:

> The [GLA] has also called on Health Minister Manto Tshabala-Msimang to intervene in order to get the SANBS to change its policies, as she had done a few months ago, when the service was taken to task for the apparent racial profiling.[72]

Issue proponents: their power, role and voice

[72] The Star, Monday, 16 January 2006

The tables in the appendix also highlight the critical role that issue proponents can play in propelling a story into an extended news cycle. For example the black blood controversy as reported in The Star gained new momentum six days into the story cycle, when President Mbeki's controversial blood donation was incorporated into the series, and immediately resulted in a (first) front page article[73] The tables reveal that while main issue proponents, in the case of the black blood controversy, were as prominent as President Mbeki; the Health Minister; DA leader Tony Leon and ID leader Patricia de Lille. Not only did the Health Minister initiate the black media controversy via a news conference, but all of the aforementioned drove the controversy, extended its lifecycle, and crucially also played an important role in overriding the other voices, like that of the SANBS's science voice. They thus seemed to dictate the news agenda – which helped politicize the issues, rather than the scientific debate.

The so-called voice of 'politics' (particularly in the case of the President and the Health Minister) overrode, and then suppressed in the media, the voice of 'science', as mainly represented by the SANBS, as well as the various health and scientific organisations, including the Medical Research Council; the National Health Laboratory Service; Statistics SA; the HSTC; and the Actuarial Society. Early in the news cycle opinions, like the following, were expressed -

> National Education Health and Allied Workers Union spokesperson Moloantoa Molaba said that if there was proof that black people were more likely to have HIV/AIDS, "we are speaking science". "Some of these things are verifiable – such as racial group, gender group, geographic areas. The hard data is not in itself a problem," Molaba said.[74]

- but these appear to have been stifled from the unfolding debate, which suggests that the media possibly deliberately excluded this perspective in order to facilitate the politicization of the debate. Why? Because politics is high on the news agenda, and it created controversy. This suggests that the role of the media in debate is at times a sensationalist one and that in fact it is not completely the idealist public arena that sustains, equally to all (especially not to "the less powerful and politically marginal") the "discussion and debate vital to democracy"[75], that the access cards (to space in the media) are not dealt equally?

The tables in the appendix also highlight that main issue proponents played a direct role in the stories a total of 5 times during the fifteen stories relating to the black blood controversy. However, they played no role whatsoever in the gay one. They were indirectly quoted and cross

[73] The Star, 8 December 2004, p.1
[74] The Star, Friday, 3 December 2004
[75] Manning (2001, p.x)

referenced to in other contexts (for example, among others, relating to the AIDS-denialism debacle) a total of 21 times in the black blood controversy. Again, in stark contrast, during the gay blood controversy, these same main issue components played no role in the related stories, not even to be even once indirectly quoted and cross referenced to other contexts or similar agendas, such as AIDS-denialism. The complete lack of prominent political and governmental sources quoted in the articles suggests that a racial agenda was a much greater priority to Government than gay rights and gender equality. Not a word was uttered about the gay blood war at the most senior level. This illustrates that even an absent prominent voice has power to influence; that the absence of a powerful and elitist voice has the power to decrease the importance and relevance, and shorten the life cycle, of a national debate in a prominent media space.

Framing

In its very first attempt to cover the gay blood controversy (the second article in the total of 15 relating to the gay blood controversy), the balance and fairness required in good reporting, was relinquished in the Saturday Star. Their front page lead article framed the gay controversy as a "war" in inciting headlines that, in bold capitals on January 14 2006 claimed "GAYS LAUNCH BLOOD WAR". The Saturday Star reported on the gay war with much more explicit sensationalism. This was followed by a prominent sub-header proclaiming that "hundreds of homosexuals lied about their sexual orientation and donated blood". In its opening paragraph the newspaper stated that

> The Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLA) yesterday declared war on the South African National Blood Service (SANBS), as scores of its members turned up to donate blood under false pretences.

In the same edition's page 14 editorial, titled "crossing the line", the newspaper maintained that "'shocking' does not adequately describe the actions...of the GLA", that it had "well and truly crossed the line of acceptable behaviour". However, the newspaper did argue that while it condemned the GLA's actions, which takes it "way beyond civil disobedience or protest – and into the realm of attempted murder or terrorism," they were "not attacking the gay and lesbian community at large".

This sensationalised reporting on the front page of the newspaper had the potential to incite a homophobic retaliation against lesbian and gay community members. A week later (21 January 2006) this was acknowledged by the newspaper in its page 14 editorial. This formed part of an entire page titled "debate" and dedicated to the "GAY BLOOD ROW: HATE SPEECH OR A REAL

THREAT," as opposed to the "war" of the previous week, which may suggest some introspection on the media's behalf. But it also suggests that there appears to be little editorial framework to deal with controversial issues such as homophobia and gay issues.

:

> In breaking the story the Saturday Star attracted a storm of comment – ranging from support for the decision to print to accusations that we were guilty of hate speech and of endangering gay and lesbian people by fanning homophobia.

The editorial proceeds to explain the background to their decision to print, which included the "constraints...[of their] publication deadline", as well as its efforts "to provide balance and context, specifically, prominently quoting the reactions and concerns of the Triangle Project". They nevertheless maintain that they "believe the overwhelming majority of Saturday Star readers would agree [they] did the right thing and that [they] have nothing to apologise for".

In praise of the newspaper aspiring towards, albeit belatedly, achieving balance, they did print the scathing attack upon itself by Luiz DeBarros, editor of the gay website Mambaonline.com, which also summed up the danger inherent in the newspaper's "representational stereotyping of the worst kind":

> The Saturday Star's front page is one of the most shocking examples of hysteria-mongering and hate speech I've come across in the mainstream media. While lesbians and gays have often been misrepresented and maligned in many, usually subtle, ways in the past, the sensationalism of this kind of headline is blatantly offensive, almost certainly inaccurate, and may well endanger lives.

Ironically it was the newspaper's astrology columnist, Albertus van Dijk (known as Lightstrider), in his "Celestial Focus: Mars, the red planet, and its role in the 'gay blood war'" who summed up the controversy by maintain that much of the angry protest was typically homophobic, portraying gays as perverts who would wilfully want to hurt others. He also wrote that the gay community denounced Baxter for spreading false information in an irresponsible way. In his calm, reasonable summation he also criticised his own publication:

> Traditional prejudice and negative opinion flared up into a harsh and damaging fight, which also set the public against the media for reporting a sensational allegation without checking sources and facts.

His comments were, in the end, the most balanced and summed the entire situation up: “the media...reporting a sensational allegation without checking sources and facts”. His, ironically, was the voice of reason, which not even the newspaper’s self righteous editorial came close to achieving. Yet, the newspaper published them, which emphasised the slippage that exists between editorial position (as expressed in editorials), news selection and framing, and the opinion of columnists like Van Dijk.

While these were serious issues, blood puns were made in headlines. The Citizen’s then acting editor, Martin William’s tone in an opinion piece titled “Ethics, bloody ethics”[76] is sarcastic and hostile towards both the Health Minister and the President, who he condescendingly calls by his first name in the opening paragraph. The Star’s first editorial relating to these controversies also takes the opportunity to play on words while editorialising on this serious subject: “Blood(y) dilemma”[77].

In summary, although the initial Saturday Star front page coverage (including bold headlines and sensationalist word choice) appeared biased, and arguably linked irresponsible sexual behaviour to gay people (thus portraying them as promiscuous), this was however rectified through a process of self examination. This entailed a a full-page follow-up to their story containing many and varying opinions from various strata of society, as well as additional, and critical columns like Van Dijk’s, on the subject the subject. I believe that in the end they successfully fulfilled the role of a public debate facilitator.

Key messaging

The majority of content items in the black blood controversy carry the key message that racial profiling is racist, and that it has no place in the post-apartheid society. Much less represented in the debate is the scientific position on testing methodology. One can conclude that political issues overwhelm medical priorities as the controversies are represented in both The Star and The Citizen. I would suggest that the media shows a bias against the government position, as can be seen by the often vitriolic approach of The Citizen.

While the articles relating to the gay blood controversy give extensive voice to the GLA (Gay and Lesbian Alliance), it is done is such a way as to devalue its contribution. Much of the key

[76] The Citizen, 8 December 2004, p.23
[77] The Star, 8 December 2004, p. 18

messaging underscores the prevailing opinion in the media, of the media, towards the GLA, as well as what the social organisations think of the GLA:

> Gay and lesbian organisations around South Africa have strongly challenged the ethics of the GLA, which appears to be a bogus organisation[78].

And:

> Editor of *Gayspeak* Luiz Debarros said the GLA was known within the gay community as an illegitimate and shadowy pseudo-organisation, apparently consisting of no more than one publicity-hungry man who never seemed to appear in public[79].

However, it should be noted that despite harsh criticism of the GLA, the organisation does play a catalyst role, that of drawing national attention via the media, to the blood screening of the SANBS. While this is hinted at within the media coverage, is neither followed-up nor explored by either of the two newspapers.

> But the [GLA] claims it had no other option after its request to have a seemingly homophobic question changed from the service's self-exclusion questionnaire fell on deaf ears[80].

Despite the GLA's 'guerrilla' tactics – which is not necessarily dissimilar to the Treatment Action Campaign's earlier campaign to draw international attention to the South African Government's AIDS-denialism stance that was seeing hundreds of thousands of HIV-positive citizens being refused antiretrovirals - and the criticism they received, the GLA's Baxter did make valid points -

> If the SANBS has the state-of-the-art equipment they claim to have, they should be able to detect HIV. We want all blood to be scrutinised equally[81].

- which were understandably drowned out in the general and vociferous criticism that the organisation received from across the spectrum of organisations for its "irresponsible and unethical"[82] campaign. It should also be noted that the GLA achieved a flood of negative publicity against the homophobic and outdated SANBS that did, in the end, achieve what Baxter had set out to do, even if it was only as "one man with a fax machine", and ironically, that Baxter's detractors (the likes of the gay and lesbian social organisations) were unable to do via their

[78] The Citizen, 17 January, p.1-2
[79] The Citizen, 17 January 2006
[80] The Star, 17 January 2006, p.6
[81] Saturday Star, 14 January 2006, p.1
[82] The Star, 17 January 2006, p.6

traditional approaches – “the Triangle Project had been in discussion with the blood service over the male-to-male sex question”[83] - , especially in the light of their criticism – which “fell on deaf ears” - of the SANBS’s homophobic policies. This again underscores the fact that news values are ruled by controversy, and has the potential to easily slip into sensationalism and even the possible distortion of facts. In the end, an enormously damaging (albeit uncontrollable) guerrilla media campaign against the SANBS presumably achieved Baxter’s goals. However, for Baxter and the GLA (it was never verified in the media whether it was in fact “one man and a fax machine” or not) the cost of achieving his goals was extremely high: the threat of arrest was reported in the media, and this media controversy appears to have been the death knell for its credibility, as well as for the GLA as a social movement.

The ‘cost’ of the gay media controversy also appeared extremely high in terms of negative publicity and credibility in the SANBS, especially because of the short time period within which it took place after the black blood controversy. I believe that the media failed to properly examine the SANBS, especially from the perspective of, one, its mixed and confusing messages (the SANBS’s messaging was inconsistent), and secondly, in terms of its racist and homophobic policies and approaches. There were no stories showing up their incompetency, nor were there any stories that delved beyond their seemingly impenetrable ‘science’ facade. In other words the inexactness of their ‘science’ was never properly questioned, nor had the appropriate holes punched into it. Nowhere was the SANBS forced to unpack and explain their particular science[84]:

> Blood cannot be effectively screened due to a ‘window period’ for the identification of HIV and other viruses,

and

> unless there is a terrible shortage, the red cells of first blood donors would not be used,

and

> although SANBS is the first blood-donation centre in the world to use a new blood-screening system that screens DNA, rather than the old test, which tested the antibodies for the antigen, they are still unsure about the exact time of the window period,

and

> the new test...does not always test completely accurate.

[83] The Star, 17 January 2006, p.6

[84] Saturday Star, 14 January 2006, p.1

Furthermore, the SANBS policy is based on outdated (1983) international data/statistics that are not relevant to South Africa. Why did the media trust and not vehemently question and pursue the outdated, out-of-touch and irrelevant SANBS? The possibility exists that if this had achieved the same amount of attention from political elites as the black blood controversy did, it would have invoked much more of a media and public outcry, and that is what possibly explains that there were only 5 letters (all in The Star) pertaining to this controversy, as opposed to the 16 in the black blood controversy.

Not only, during the black blood controversy, was the SANBS shown to have had a racist profiling system, which served to even further emphasise that they were outdated, out-of-touch and irrelevant, but then 13 months later it was also revealed – through, ironically, the outcry initiated by the actions of the GLA - that the "SANBS is exclusionary on the basis of sexual orientation"[85] - and that its policies were or could be construed as homophobic?

The tables reveal that the key messaging inherent in this particular article, but echoed in another five separate articles published during the controversy, emphasise that while gay and lesbian organisations had distanced themselves from the GLA, they also wanted to see the SANBS's offensive lifestyle profiling addressed. This is exactly what the David Baxter and the GLA wanted to achieve, but felt that they were unable to through normal channels, because the SANBS refused to listen.

> Over the past week, a furore has broken out over the SANBS policy to accept blood from men who have had sex with men – by inference: gay men. Gay and lesbian organisations have decried the policy, calling it "unfair" and "discriminatory" towards both homosexual and bisexual men.[86]

The SANBS was adamant that they were "adhering to 'international best practice' and on data in international medical publications", despite the fact that this further highlighted just how out of touch the organisation was with both the real South African situation, as well as the PR debacle that they found themselves at the epicentre of.

I believe the media failed in this instance for not taking on the SANBS, for not seeing through, and reporting on their poorly thought out, illogical arguments, their confusing and mixed messages, as well as the fact that they were left almost unscathed on a health/science pedestal:

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[85] Saturday Star, 14 January 2006, p. 1

[86] The Star, 20 January 2006, p. 8

> SA gay groups argue that this particular model does not fit the HIV disease profile in SA [which they back up with "the latest South African National HIV Prevalence, HIV Incidence, Behaviour and Communications Survey release last year"].[87]

A possible reason for this was that the GLA's actions were perceived as despicable enough to receive the full attention of the media, and of the social movements, and – fortunately for them – also the SANBS, which was somehow just scraping by as a necessary and very important public service. However, I believe that in terms of the newsroom priority list of news values, controversy, and setting the agenda, controversy was obviously more exciting for readers, that the SANBS policy took a backseat to the unfolding gay war. Three hundred men (the figures reported varied drastically between the two publications), of which 65% were reportedly HIV-positive, apparently hijacking the credibility of the national blood bank by donating blood and ignoring the self exclusion questionnaire, not to mention a shadowy PR man, was undoubtedly extremely controversial, and thus understandably newsworthy.

Challenges of reporting scientific discourse

Science very obviously has its own discourses, and, as Nelkin[88] writes scientists have "considerable disillusion...over the adequacy of media organisations for creating accurate public understanding" of scientific knowledge and procedures. In the reporting of the blood controversies there was a sense that the news wire SAPA and journalists had neither the scientific knowledge, nor the confidence, nor the capacity, to punch holes in science's (the SANBS) arguments; only the social movements took this up, and even they appeared to not want to damage their relationships with the SANBS, since they "had been in talks" about its controversial profiling. Scientist and blogger, Deep-Sea News, writes a humorous but scathing "field guide" to help outsiders understand the "behaviors of journalists and scientists in the wild [which are] two species that inhabit the same ecosystem, but have very different behaviours." Here follows some excerpts:

> "I have spent many years carefully observing both of these species in their natural habitats…Many scientists actively avoid the company of journalists. They or their colleagues may have experienced predatory or parasitic journalistic behavior in the past, or perceive standard journalistic behavior (such as an undue interest in squid) as rather crass.
> …The journalist is a cosmopolitan species, but is under intense threat in many locales due to habitat destruction. The most

[87] The Star, 20 January 2006, p.8
[88] In Seale (2001, p.54)

> intact remaining journalistic habitats are a few major metropolitan areas and the Internet.
> …Scientists wishing to talk to journalists are encouraged to do so, as the survival of much scientific work depends on the public funds.
> ...[Should] journalists should allow scientists to fact check their articles prior to publication[89].... Or do scientists have no more right to do so than, say, politicians previewing the latest criticism of their policies[90].

The SANBS's 'scientific' responses in the media appeared inconsistent and uncoordinated and muddied the waters even further. Even a week into the gay blood controversy, the SANBS was still uncertain whether the donations by the GLA had taken place or not. They were shown up as horribly out of touch:

> The SANBS is missing the point if it bases the supply of its blood supply on the sexual preferences of donors...SANBS's approach was extremely short sighted in a country where the number of HIV-positive heterosexuals outnumbered the number of HIV-positive gays...A non-discriminatory safety policy is needed that is pragmatic and realistic[91].

While in terms of queer theory my research does not set up the controversy as a gay controversy per se - it is called a "gay blood controversy" or "war" by the media and various social gay organisations - I found that 'science', as represented by, among others, the SANBS, was concerned about the gay sexual practice itself, and not about who is gay. 'Science' was far more inclined to focus on what they perceived to be problematic sexual acts, like anal sex.

> SANBS head Dr Robert Crookes said ... "A man who has had sex with another man within the past five years, whether oral or anal sex, with or without a condom or other form of protection, is not permitted to donate blood and must please not do so."[92]

And...

> Crookes confirmed that the South African data is 10 years old, but added that until new research had been done, "we have to presume that international data is similar. We can't assume local prevalence rates are higher or lower[93].

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[89] http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/romenesko/149427/if-journalists-were-a-species-theyd-be-threatened-by-habitat-destruction/

[90] http://blogs.plos.org/takeasdirected/2011/10/12/scientist-copy-checking-point-counterpoint-at-the-guardian/

[91] The Citizen, 24 January 2006

[92] The Citizen, 13 January 2006, p.3

[93] Saturday Star, 14 January 2006, p.1

Science here has emphasised problematic sexual practices in terms of the way the virus is spread (and stigmatised) but completely ignores, and refuses to be drawn into even discussing it throughout the controversy, the fact that the opposite are even more risky, such as black heterosexual women:

> "Heterosexual people might also have more than one partner or have sex without a condom and be just as much at risk. But they are not being excluded," [said OUT's Melanie Judge.][94]

On the other hand, the GLA acts in the stereotypical presupposition as promiscuous gay people would be expected to act. They fully inhabit the stereotype:

> Paul Tilley, of the Johannesburg Lesbian and Gay Pride Heritage Week, said the GLA's actions served only to increase homophobia by creating the impression that all gay men would behave in this irresponsible and unethical manner.[95]

Interestingly, as these findings have revealed, the gay space was polarised and showed two stances of the so-called gay community. This I believe provided an ideal opportunity for the arguments and perspectives of the so-called other side, or the anti-stereotype, of the likes of the social movements like the Triangle Project to be provided valuable media space and just as valuable balance to the unfolding gay controversy.

Perhaps, in retrospect and in the light of the Health Minister's stony silence on the gay controversy or the absence of the Government's voice, as revealed in the data, on the subject, it might seem that the GLA felt it had no other option than the (misguided) one it took. Perhaps the GLA modelled itself on the Treatment Action Campaign's (TAC) approach that saw Government attempt to paint them as pariahs. The GLA possibly believed this would open the debate and see its agenda firmly placed on the table. This suggests that in the face of a silent Health Minister, who had earlier stood up against racism, but would not do the same for gay discrimination and gay rights, perhaps the GLA believed that they had no alternative. It should also be considered, albeit controversially, that in the light of the GLA's approach, perhaps they succeeded in their objectives, not unlike the TAC did when it stood up to the Health Minister and President Mbeki. However, the silence not only emanated from the Health Minister. While prominent personalities, such as the Health Minister, and then later in the coverage President Mbeki and Independent

[94] The Citizen, 14 January 2006, p.5
[95] The Star, 17 January 2006, p.6

Democrat's leader Patricia de Lille, undoubtedly influenced the debate around the black blood controversy, these voices remained silent in the gay blood row thirteen months later.

Overriding the facts

Another critical issue is President Mbeki and Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang's vulnerability to AIDS dissenters. Because it seems possible that political motivations had overridden the facts. Therefore it is crucial that journalists get the realities of the situation across, that the voice of science be heard, also that it be correct and trusted. Undoubtedly biased, political thinking would affect politicians, even gullible journalists perhaps, who could adopt problematic opinions and information. In this context it had the ability to see public confidence in the blood service destabilized.

Because the media has a huge responsibility in the HIV/AIDS arena, it is clear that the discourses of human rights and public interest are closely monitored.

10. CONCLUSION

This research suggests that the editorials and opinion pieces of both newspapers, during the unfolding blood controversies, were more than mere platforms for debates to unfold upon.
While both publications undoubtedly provided a seemingly neutral platform for the two controversies to play themselves out, including ample input from their readers, both publications – as *the editorial position* - intervened in a wide range of editorials, opinion pieces, commentaries and one cartoon. Thus, in fact, they played a powerful role in the manipulation of the debates.
Despite aspirations of balance and objectivity, bias was revealed, as well as inability – I believe - to fully focus on the issues at hand. By often reverting to and focusing on previous political controversies, such as President Mbeki and the Health Minister's Aids-denialism stance (which did, however, provide much-needed context), especially The Citizen (in the black blood controversy), did not grasp the opportunity to properly and comprehensively report on and unpack the controversies at hand.

And while both newspapers published a wide range, and comprehensive coverage of topics and opinions in this public debate - and in the process importantly upheld the principle of unlimited public debate (bearing in mind that the role of the media in a healthy democracy is to represent diverse voices and positions in debates) - it was, however, obvious that the voices, and thus the agendas, of the nation's elite, were the most prominently represented. During the black blood war, Government's voice was the most audible, specifically via the Health Minister, her Department of Health subordinates, and the country's President.

Although the media argued that the SANBS was homophobic and outdated because of its blood screening stance towards gay men, this just did not carry the same amount of weight as that of when it was accused of being racist. This I believe was most likely due to the absence of Government's voice in that particular debate. Without Government and politics weighing in on the debate, the SANBS was more-or-less able to side-step the issue, make empty promises by implying changes would be made, while presumably waiting until the media attention focused elsewhere.

The science of the debate was undoubtedly overwhelmed by the political debate. The media did not pick-up and unpack the inconsistencies in the SANBS's key messages as they were depicted in the reporting, nor the fact that science's methodology was very questionable. Instead of exploring and unpacking the scientific arguments and theories the SANBS maintained as their reasoning for their profiling of blood donors, which they came under attack for being perceived of as racist and then homophobic, The Citizen, in particular, chose to rather politicise the issues and

turned it, rather, into a biased attack on Government, especially for its relatively recent Aids-denialism policies and approaches. I believe the media failed from the perspective of serving their readers, the public, whom they are meant to inform in a balanced and objective way, with "quality (in other words, more accurate, more understandable) scientific information"[96]. This could well have had a much more powerful role of shaping the SANBS into a progressive institution aligned with the principles inherent in the country's constitution.

I believe that the SANBS bowed to political pressure, not to pressure brought to bear on it by the media and its reporting of possible racist and homophobic blood donor profiling. The racist profiling policies were changed with immediate effect because of the political pressure that brought to bear upon it. Yes, the media played a role in communicating that debate through its stories, but I believe that it missed the real story, which is about a critical role player in the country's health and science realm, but one that is hopelessly out of date and unaligned with the constitution, and seemingly unaccountable, except to the then authoritarian Minister of Health.

In the case of the gay blood controversy, because no political pressure was brought to bear upon it, the SANBS's perceived homophobic profiling remained unchanged. I believe the media missed an opportunity here by getting caught up in the undoubtedly newsworthy racism and homophobia stories, but missed the opportunity to unpack the SANBS's blind spot. The SANBS was missing the point if it based the supply of its blood supply on the sexual preferences of donors. In other words the SANBS's approach was extremely short sighted in a country where the number of HIV-positive heterosexuals outnumbered the number of HIV-positive gays. This is the story that went unreported, and thus the SANBS was not pressured and held accountable, unlike in the black blood war, for formulating a non-discriminatory safety policy that was both pragmatic and realistic.[97] I believe this could have been the result, if this controversy has achieved the same amount of political elite attention that the black blood controversy did, it would have invoked much more of a media and public outcry. The media failed in this instance for not taking on the SANBS, for not seeing through, and reporting on their poorly thought out, illogical arguments, their confusing and mixed messages, as well as the fact that they were left relatively unscathed upon the health/science pedestal.

I maintain that my examination of the media coverage of the black and gay blood controversies in The Star and The Citizen newspapers revealed instances of prejudice, sensationalism and unprofessionalism by the South African media in its coverage race and sexual freedom issues,

[96] Seale (2002, p.52)
[97] The Citizen, 24 January 2006

but that overall it successfully stimulated wide, healthy debate in our relatively new democracy, and that it gave a voice to those, like blacks and gays, who prior to this country's democracy were voiceless. But why couldn't the Saturday Star, for example, see how offensive it was to gay men in its initial reporting of the gay blood controversy? This does however cast some light on how debates are articulated in the media; for one there is undoubtedly a lot of freedom given to columnists, and newspapers obviously seek provocative columnists.

Eight years after the first controversy broke in the media, the SANBS Comprehensive Donor Questionnaire[98] (obtained form a mobile blood donation centre in Benmore Shopping Centre, Johannesburg in January 2012) reads as follows, in point 2.5 of section 2 of the form, titled "self-exclusion questionnaire risk behaviour and HIV/AIDS":

> MALE DONORS: In the past 6 months have you had oral or anal sex with another man with or without a condom?

Nowhere else in the self-exclusion questionnaire is gender, race or sexuality emphasised. That despite the fact that South Africa is a country where the number of HIV-positive heterosexuals outnumber the number of HIV-positive gays, "male donors [who] in the past 6 months have had oral or anal sex with another man with or without a condom" - implicitly implying gay men - should self-exclude themselves from donating blood. The dominant voice of politics undoubtedly achieved its objective of firstly, and without much resistance, overriding science's rational blood donor profiling according to race was crucial, but then obliterated the practice, so much so that race is remotely mentioned on the questionnaire. Thus, without the voice of politics weighing in even remotely on the gay blood war, and because the media never took up the real story of the SANBS's inconsistencies and questionable science, especially that the SANBS model did not fit the HIV disease profile in SA, which was backed up with "the latest South African National HIV Prevalence, HIV Incidence, Behaviour and Communications Survey"[99], the SANBS's "self-exclusion questionnaire" regarding "risk behaviour and HIV/AIDS" remains prejudiced against gay men, and unaligned with the principles upheld in the South African constitution.

[98] SANBS Comprehensive Donor Questionnaire reference number: FRM-DCD-016E REV2 (05/08/10)

[99] The Star, 20 January 2006, p.8

10. APPENDIX

Tables

The following tables provide a breakdown of all of the articles, letters and cartoons that were published in The Star and Citizen about both the black and gay blood controversies during the stipulated reporting periods. These provide information about where the articles, letters and cartoons were placed in both publications. They also categorise them (whether news, opinion or editorial), they provide information about their sources, while also highlighting who the issue proponents were. Furthermore they provide a brief summary of each of the items' manifest content.

4.1. The black blood controversy

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Friday, 3 December 2004
Headline:	Blood profiling racist - Manto
Page number:	1, 2
Category:	News
Authors	SAPA
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	**Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang**; SANBS medical director Dr Robert Crookes; Gauteng Health spokesman Popo Maja; Health and Allied Worker's Union spokesman Moloantao Molaba; SA Medical Association chairman Dr Kgosi Letlape
Key message:	Profiling of donors by the SANBS is racist. Given the sensitivity of race relations, racial profiling should be discouraged

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Friday, 3 December 2004
Headline:	Outcry at racial profiling of SA's blood donors
Page number:	5
Category:	News
Authors	Leon Engelbrecht / SAPA
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	**Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang**; SANBS medical director Dr Robert Crookes; Gauteng Health spokesman Popo Maja; Health and Allied Worker's Union spokesman Moloantao Molaba; SA Medical Association chairman Dr Kgosi Letlape
Key message:	The profiling of donors by the SANBS is racist. Given the sensitivity of race relations, racial profiling should be discouraged.

Publication:	The Citizen Weekend Edition
Date:	Saturday, 4 December 2004
Headline:	P1: Blood banks dump racial profiling / P2: Blood banks to lose race edge

Page number:	1, 2
Category:	News
Authors	Staff reporter
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Health Department acting director-general Kamy Chetty; SANBS
Key message:	The current risk-rating model needs to be urgently reviewed. Other scientific determinants need to be identified and integrated to determine risk more accurately.

Publication:	The Citizen Weekend Edition
Date:	Saturday, 4 December 2004
Headline:	Lifestyle, not race, is the key
Page number:	10
Category:	Opinion
Authors	Editorial (i.e. the newspaper's voice)
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Key message:	The practice of profiling is racist. In South Africa this practice is emotive and will cause political disruption.

Publication:	The Citizen Weekend Edition
Date:	Saturday, 4 December 2004
Headline:	It makes my blood boil (Row over black blood)
Page number:	10
Category:	Cartoon
Authors	Peter Master
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	**Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang**
Key message:	Government is angry about racial profiling of blood.

Publication:	Saturday Star
Date:	Saturday, 4 December 2004
Headline:	Race not a factor in blood donor risk
Page number:	2
Category:	News
Authors	Unspecified
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Health Department spokesperson Sibani Mngadi; SANBS
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Health Department spokesperson Sibani Mngadi; **Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang; SANBS**
Key message:	Race will no longer be used to determine the level of risk in donated blood.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Monday, 6 December 2004

Headline:	President Mbeki's blood was rejected - report
Page number:	4
Category:	News
Authors	Reuters
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; Department of Health; Sunday Independent;
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**SA President Thabo Mbeki**; SANBS; Sunday Independent
Key message:	Blood donated by the SA president was destroyed because he did not complete a mandatory questionnaire. His race placed him a high-risk category.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Monday, 6 December 2010
Headline:	News update: Race rejected as blood donor risk factor
Page number:	2
Category:	News
Authors	Staff reporter
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Health Department spokesperson Sibani Mngadi.
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Health Department; SANBS; Health Department acting director-general Kamy Chetty; SANBS chief executive Anthony Heynes
Key message:	Race will no longer be used to determine the risk in donated blood.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Tuesday, 7 December 2004
Headline:	'Emotive' race issue has some blood boiling over HIV testing
Page number:	5
Category:	News
Authors	Jillian Green (Health and Science Reporter)
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Dr Robert Crookes, SANBS medical director;
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; Health and Other Service Personnel Trade Union of SA; Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
Key message:	While race is not the only criterion used to determine high-risk blood, it is the most emotive. No tests are available that can determine whether blood in the window period is infected.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Wednesday, 8 December 2004
Headline:	P1: President to get apology / P2: Blood service to apologise to Mbeki

Page number:	1, 2
Category:	News
Authors	Unspecified
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Thabo Mbeki**; SANBS Board chairman Pender-Smith; Health Department
Key message:	SANBS would apologise to the President for discarding his blood.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Wednesday, 8 December 2004
Headline:	Ethics, bloody ethics
Page number:	23: The letters page
Category:	Opinion
Authors	Martin Williams (acting editor)
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**Health Minister; President Mbeki**; SANBS
Key message:	SANBS did the right thing by throwing away Mbeki's blood because he declined to complete the routine questionnaire.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Wednesday, 8 December 2004
Headline:	Blood transfusion, Russian roulette
Page number:	23: The letters page
Category:	Letter (reader opinion)
Authors	Pamela vd Merwe
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Blood donators
Key message:	Blood transfusions are no longer safe.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Wednesday, 8 December 2004
Headline:	Disease probability has scientific basis
Page number:	23: The letters page
Category:	Letter (reader opinion)
Authors	Jack Lingwood
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Department of Health

Key message:	Racial profiles are statistical measures to reduce the probability of infection. The decision to scrap race categorisation raises more questions.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Wednesday, 8 December 2004
Headline:	Blood service to say sorry to Mbeki
Page number:	1
Category:	News
Authors	Angela Quintal
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Presidential spokesperson Bheki Khumalo; Health spokesperson Sibani Mngadi
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; **Health Minister; President Mbeki**
Key message:	SANBS would apologise to the President for discarding his blood because he never met the criteria. SANB's racial profiling of blood highly controversial.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Wednesday, 8 December 2004
Headline:	Blood(y) dilemma
Page number:	18
Category:	Opinion (editorial)
Authors	Editor
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS
Key message:	Racial profiling is reminiscent of apartheid practice and needs to be challenged.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	Blood stocks up
Page number:	4
Category:	News
Authors	Deborah Graham
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Director of SANBS Donor Services Division, Diane de Coning
Key message:	SANBS's request for donations has been successful because blood stocks have increased tenfold.

Publication:	The Citizen

Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	Please give blood - ID
Page number:	4
Category:	News
Authors	Jameson Maluleke & SAPA
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	**Independent Democrats (ID) leader Patricia de Lille**
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**Independent Democrats (ID) leader Patricia de Lille**; SANBS
Key message:	All South Africans should rise above the current controversy and to donate blood, especially as the "silly season" drew nearer. Despite skin colour, the colour of everyone's blood is red.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	Does Mbeki know blood is not gravy?
Page number:	20: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Les Morgan
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Chairman of the SANBS; **President Mbeki**
Key message:	SANBS to apologise to President Mbeki

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	We should accept Mbeki
Page number:	20: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Nelson Kgwete
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Martin Williams (acting editor, Citizen); **President Mbeki**
Key message:	President Mbeki should be respected, and accepted as President.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	Which blood risk type for Manto?

Page number:	20: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Camel
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**Minister of Health**
Key message:	How would the Minister explain risk categorisation if she needed a transfusion.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	Not bothered with Mbeki's blood
Page number:	20: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Fiona Ingham
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS
Key message:	SANBS should not have to apologise for discarding Mbeki's blood.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	Injudicious gay ruling?
Page number:	20: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Murphy's Law
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Judicial system; homosexuals
Key message:	How can judges find in favour of same-sex marriages when homosexual sex is a major cause of HIV/AIDS, which is rampant in SA.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Thursday, 9 December 2004
Headline:	Gays also hit at "offensive" policy of blood service
Page number:	5
Category:	News
Authors	Jillian Green
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLA); SANBS
Space given to (with	SANBS; GLA; **Health Minister**; SANBS Board; Commission for

major issue proponents in bold):	Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration; Health and Other Personnel Trade Union
Key message:	SANBS policy of identifying whether donors were engaging in homosexual sex under fire.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Friday, 10 December 2004
Headline:	P1: Blood bill enrages donor / P2: Blood bill enrages veteran donor
Page number:	1, 2
Category:	News
Authors	Deborah Graham
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Blood donor; SANBS communication officer Ianthe Exall;
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS
Key message:	Blood donor vows never to give blood again after an enormous blood bill.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Friday, 10 December 2004
Headline:	Blood donation was for publicity
Page number:	23: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Wonderboy Nkambule
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**; SANBS
Key message:	Mbeki was helping promote blood donation when he gave blood. Personal questionnaires pertaining to the president of any country is a matter of National Security.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Friday, 10 December 2004
Headline:	Has Mbeki got a hidden agenda?
Page number:	23: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Ex-pat
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**; the government
Key message:	It was arrogant of the President not to fill in the questionnaire.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Friday, 10 December 2004
Headline:	Must have missed something
Page number:	23: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Lost
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Key message:	Questioning whether classification id supposed to be done by race or by dread disease status.

Publication:	Saturday Star
Date:	Saturday, December 11 2004
Headline:	Blood saga highlights need to keep on battling discrimination - Mbeki
Page number:	2
Category:	News
Authors	Angela Quintal
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; **President Mbeki; DA Leader Tony Leon**
Key message:	The SANBS's practices are highly reprehensible. South African's need to continue the struggle for non-racism.

Publication:	The Citizen Weekend Edition
Date:	Saturday, 11 December 2004
Headline:	New blood donor risk model on way
Page number:	4
Category:	News
Authors	SAPA
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; SANBS CEO Anthony Heyns
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; Health Department; The Medical Research Council; National Health Laboratory Service; "other experts"
Key message:	A revised risk model for the SANBS should be ready within a month.

Publication:	The Citizen Weekend Edition
Date:	Saturday, 11 December 2004
Headline:	Look after blood donors
Page number:	10
Category:	Opinion: editorial
Authors	Editor

Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Blood donors; SANBS
Key message:	It is not right that blood donors of many years have to pay so much for blood.

Publication:	Saturday Star
Date:	Tuesday, 14 December 2004
Headline:	Political correctness does not keep one safe from Aids
Page number:	11: Letters
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Lyndi Nhlapo
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**; SANBS;
Key message:	Political correctness does not keep one safe from Aids.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Monday, 13 December 2004
Headline:	Ignorance fuels racial fires in blood debate
Page number:	19
Category:	Opinion
Authors	Anne Routier
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**; Statistics SA; HSTC; Actuarial Society
Key message:	Ignorance fuels racial fires in blood debate.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Monday, 13 December 2004
Headline:	Mbeki set a poor example
Page number:	19: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Alan Yates
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**; SANBS
Key message:	President Mbeki was irresponsible for not filling in the donor form.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Tuesday, 14 December 2004
Headline:	Bloody nonsense
Page number:	11
Category:	Opinion
Authors	Andrew Kenny
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**; ANC figures
Key message:	Senior ANC figures, including the President, are making vague racial prejudice slurs without substantiating them.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Tuesday, 14 December 2004
Headline:	Black or white, the colour of blood is red
Page number:	11
Category:	Opinion
Authors	Phumla Khanyile
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Anyone sexually active
Key message:	Anyone sexually active is in danger of disease, but blacks, being the majority, are mostly inclined.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Tuesday, 14 December 2004
Headline:	Won't donate but will make a fuss
Page number:	11: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	E De Clerk
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Black people; SANBS; all donors
Key message:	Blood donors should be fully representative.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Tuesday, 14 December 2004
Headline:	Mbeki owes blood apology
Page number:	11: The letters page

Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Bloody minded
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	**President Mbeki**; SANBS
Key message:	Mbeki owes public an apology for not filling in the blood donor form. He put the public at risk by not doing so.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Wednesday, 15 December 2004
Headline:	Timing of blood hype unfortunate
Page number:	27: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Joe Pietersen
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Recipients of blood; SANBS
Key message:	Recipients of blood will be affected by the negative hype. The price of blood is certain to rise because of additional screening measures.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Wednesday, 14 December 2004
Headline:	Why ask blacks to donate blood?
Page number:	27: The letters page
Category:	Reader's opinion
Authors	Thandi Sindane
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Anne Routier (*The Citizen*, December 13)
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Anne Routier; "blacks"
Key message:	If blacks are such high risks, why should they even donate blood in the first place.

4.2. The gay blood controversy

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Friday,13 January 2006
Headline:	'Imperative' gay men don't donate blood
Page number:	3
Category:	News
Authors	Sapa
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS head Dr Robert Crookes
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS
Key message:	Gay men, who have sex with other gay men, even if it is safe sex with a condom, should not be allowed to donate blood. Gay men endanger the lives of patients who need blood transfusions. All gay men are sexually promiscuous and should be excluded from donating blood.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Friday, 13 January 2006
Headline:	Ban on gays' blood sparks row
Page number:	6
Category:	News
Authors	Poloko Tau and Sapa
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS head Dr Robert Crookes; Durban Lesbian and Gay Community and Health Centre (DLGCHC) spokesperson Nonhlanhla Mkhize
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; Durban Lesbian and Gay Community and Health Centre
Key message:	Gay men who have sex with other gay men, even if it is safe sex with a condom, should not be allowed to donate blood as they endanger the lives of patients who need blood transfusions. Gay men are in the same category as people on drugs, and those who have travelled to malaria-infected areas. The SANBS is homophobic. The SANBS's research is archaic. The SANBS is neither an efficient nor an effective communicator.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Saturday, 14 January 2006
Headline:	Man with full-blown Aids among donors...
Page number:	5
Category:	News
Authors	Sapa
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Ianthe Exall of SANBS;
Space given to (with major issue proponents	SANBS, Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GLA) spokesperson David Baxter (via second person); SANBS marketing manager Gail Nothard;

in bold):	
Key message:	SANBS “honesty cards” are neither exact nor ‘scientific’. Sexually gay men are promiscuous and lie. 65% of sexually active gay men engaged in high-risk behaviour.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Saturday, 14 January 2006
Headline:	...and gay organisation bays for SANBS’s blood
Page number:	5
Category:	News
Authors	Deborah Graham
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	OUT’s Melanie Judge; SANBS’s DR Crookes; SANBS’s Ianthe Exall; GLA
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	OUT; SANBS; World Health Organisation (indirectly)
Key message:	Linking a gay man’s identity with a risky form of sexual behaviour is homophobic. Although heterosexual people might also have more than one partner or have sex without a condom and be at just as much risk, but they are not excluded by the SANBS.

Publication:	The Saturday Star
Date:	Saturday, 14 January 2006
Headline:	GAYS LAUNCH BLOOD WAR
Page number:	1
Category:	News
Authors	Christina Gallagher
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA’s David Baxter; SANBS’s publicity director Gail Nothard; Clinical manager Glen de Swardt of the Triangle Project; SANBS director Dr Robert Crookes
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA; SANBS; Centres for Disease Control (indirectly); Triangle Project
Key message:	Gays are militant. Gays lie and operate under false pretences. The GLA is a large 1000-member strong organisation able to muster its members to action.

Publication:	The Saturday Star
Date:	Saturday, 14January 2006
Headline:	Crossing the line
Page number:	14
Category:	Opinion/editorial
Authors	Editor
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA
Space given to (with	GLA

major issue proponents in bold):	
Key message:	GLA's behaviour unacceptable, despite trying to make a public point about society's discrimination against gay and lesbian people.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Monday, 16 January 2006
Headline:	Blood Service slams gays' action
Page number:	3
Category:	News
Authors	AFP
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS spokesman Ianthe Exall; Sunday Independent; Glenn de Swardt of the Triangle Project
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA; SAANBS; Triangle Project
Key message:	Blood donation is not a right, it's a privilege. Blood donors have to meet the right criteria. HIV and Aids infected all people, regardless of their age, race, gender or sexual orientation. SANBS was prejudiced and homophobic and contributes to the stigmatisation of the gay community.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Monday, 16 January 2006
Headline:	A right to safe blood
Page number:	12
Category:	Opinion / editorial
Authors	Editor
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; **WHO**
Key message:	South Africa is a world leader in the HIV testing of every pint of donated blood. No blood test is infallible. The SANBS is sensible in excluding sexually active gay men from donating blood.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Monday, 16 January 2006
Headline:	Blood service to address 'gay prejudice'
Page number:	2
Category:	News
Authors	Lilian Green and Dominique Herman
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS spokesperson Ianthe Exall; Health Minister's spokesperson Sibani Mngadi; Triangle Project's Glenn de Swardt

Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; GLA's David Baxter; Human Rights Commission; the Health Ministry; Triangle Project
Key message:	South Africans should not be concerned, because the SANBS's blood was still safe. Every single unit of blood will be tested. Anal sex is a high risk activity. Not all homosexual men engage in anal sex and lots of heterosexuals do. The standards employed by the SANBS were based on northern hemisphere statistics, where Aids was a homosexually driven pandemic. In Africa, it was heterosexually driven.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Tuesday, 17 January 2006
Headline:	GAY BLOOD HOAX?
Page number:	1/2
Category:	News
Authors	Deborah Graham
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	"Several gay spokesmen"; SANBS CEO Anton Heyns; Gayspeak editor Luiz Debarros; Triangle Project's Dawn Betteridge; OUT; GLA media director David Baxter'
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA; SANBS CEO Anton Heyns
Key message:	The gay blood scare may have been a hoax. The GLA has no credibility, and was known within the gay community as an illegitimate and shadowy pseudo-organisation. David Baxter is a publicity-hungry man who seemed to never appear in public.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Tuesday, 17 January 2006
Headline:	HIV-positive blood donors 'may face murder charge'
Page number:	2
Category:	News
Authors	Citizen reporter
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	"a legal expert"
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA; SANBS
Key message:	HIV-positive people who knowingly donate blood could face attempted murder charges, but this could be very difficult to prove.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Tuesday, 17 January 2006
Headline:	Blood protest unethical, gay group admits
Page number:	6
Category:	News
Authors	Gillian Green (Aids Writer)

Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA; Triangle Project's Glenn de Swardt; Out's director Dawie Nel; Johannesburg Lesbian and Gay Pride Heritage Week's Paul Tilley
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA; SANBS; Triangle Project's Glenn de Swardt; Out's director Dawie Nel; Johannesburg Lesbian and Gay Pride Heritage Week's Paul Tilley
Key message:	GLA's campaign unethical. GLA is shadowy and without legitimacy. GLA's action likely to increase homophobia. SANBS's male to male sex questionnaire has no bearing on the South African disease profile because it is based on international standards.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Tuesday, 17 January 2006
Headline:	Terror and prejudice
Page number:	12
Category:	Opinion / editorial
Authors	Editor
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	GLA; Triangle Project; SANBS
Key message:	The GLA's actions have been roundly condemned. The uproar has been unprecedented. The SANBS has a parlous record of discriminating against groups based on risk assessment methodology that is a decade out of date and extremely insulting in the process.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Wednesday, 18 January 2006
Headline:	Gay blood scare
Page number:	12
Category:	Opinion /editorial
Authors	Editor
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	None
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; GLA
Key message:	There is more than enough homophobia without the GLA stirring up more.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Wednesday, 18January 2006
Headline:	Blood service doubts 'gay blood scare'
Page number:	2
Category:	News
Authors	Staff reporter

Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS spokesperson Ianthe Exall; GLA's media director, David Baxter
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	"other gay and lesbian organisations"; GLA; SANBS
Key message:	Gay blood scare is believed to be a hoax. The GLA has been isolated by other gay groups and Baxter is a charlatan.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Thursday 19 January 2006
Headline:	Move to solve blood crisis
Page number:	11
Category:	News
Authors	Deborah Graham
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; spokesman for the Department of Health, Sibani Mngadi
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS, Department of Health
Key message:	SANBS to initiate a consultative process to discuss its policy of excluding gay men from donating blood.

Publication:	The Star
Date:	Friday, 20 January 2006
Headline:	'Singled out even though our blood is perfectly safe'
Page number:	8
Category:	News
Authors	Jillian Green (Aids Writer)
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Sias Kotze; Rahb Spear; GLA; SANBS spokesperson Ianthe Exall; Triangle Project spokesman Glenn de Swardt
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	Sias Kotze; Rahb Spear; GLA; SANBS [and SANBS self-exclusionary questionnaire]; Triangle Project; Out; Johannesburg Lesbian and Gay Pride Heritage Week
Key message:	SANBS homophobic. SANBS is exclusionary on basis of sexual orientation. Gay and lesbian organisations have distanced themselves from the GLA. Gay and lesbian organisations want to see offensive lifestyle profiling addressed.

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	Saturday, 21 January 2006
Headline:	Gays 'should be able to give blood'
Page number:	5
Category:	News
Authors	Deborah Graham

Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	South African Human Rights Commission's (SAHRC) commissioner Dr Leon Wessels
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SAHRC; SANBS; Medical Research Council; Equality Court; SA's Equality Legislation
Key message:	SANBS opposes SAHRC-suggested epidemiological study to determine whether international standards, in terms of which it has been found that homosexuals are a high risk group, applied in South Africa If the SANBS did not rephrase the offensive questions on their donation forms the Equality Court should be asked to give a declaratory order on this matter.

Publication:	The Saturday Star
Date:	Saturday, 21 January 2006
Headline:	Blood service reassures public
Page number:	2
Category:	News
Authors	Christina Gallagher
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS; SAHRC; GLA's David Baxter
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	SANBS publicity manager Gail Nothard; SAHRC; CSIR; Department of Health
Key message:	The SANBS says it does not discriminate against gays and is busy reviewing recent research on the gay community in South Africa. The SANBS does accept blood from gay men who do not practice sex. The SANBS is obstinately homophobic.

Publication:	The Saturday Star
Date:	Saturday, 21 January 2006
Headline:	Debate: GAY BLOOD ROW: HATE SPEECH OR A REAL THREAT?
Page number:	14
Category:	Debate and opinion (contains an editorial and five letters)
Authors	Editor and letter writers
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Triangle Project ("South Africa's oldest gay and lesbian service organisation")
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	David Baxter of the GLA; Dr Crookes of the SANBS; Triangle Project; Editor; Dr Alan Smith (Chief Specialist / Head of Department of Virology Inkosi Albert Luthuli Central Hospital, Durban); Luiz DeBarros (editor of Mambaonline.com) and three other letter writers
Key message:	Saturday Star was guilty of hate speech and of endangering gay and lesbian people by fanning homophobia. There was support of the GLA in some quarters. The Saturday Star tried, given the constraints of their publication deadline, to provide balance and context. There is a risk that the GLA's acts would spark homophobia. SANBS is still uncertain whether the donations by the GLA took place or not.

Publication:	The Saturday Star
Date:	21 January 2006
Headline:	Celestial Focus: Mars, the red planet, and its role in the ‘gay blood war’
Page number:	
Category:	Opinion / Astrology columnist
Authors	Albertus van Dijk (Lightstrider)
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	Not applicable
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	
Key message:	Gays portrayed as perverts The gay community denounces Baxter Media’s reporting sensational and unprofessional

Publication:	The Citizen
Date:	24 January 2006
Headline:	Blood policy ‘shortsighted’
Page number:	3
Category:	News
Authors	Deborah Graham
Sources (with major issue proponents in bold):	The South African Medical Association’s (SAMA) chairman Kgosi Letlape
Space given to (with major issue proponents in bold):	The South African Medical Association (SAMA); SANBS
Key message:	SANBS bases the supply of its blood supply on the sexual preferences of donors SANBS extremely short sighted HIV-positive heterosexuals outnumber the number of HIV-positive gays A non-discriminatory, pragmatic and realistic safety policy is needed

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