



# Out in the Media?

## Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of the Media towards Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Issues and Stories

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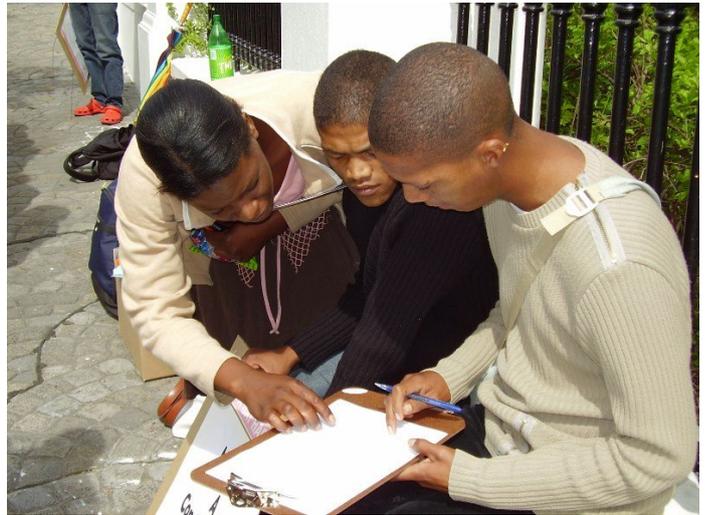
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Photos:  
Top - Cindy Dzanya conducting individual interviews  
Bottom - Focus Group at The Triangle Project.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

1. 0 INTRODUCTION .....	4
2.0 METHODOLOGY.....	6
2.1 QUESTIONNAIRES.....	6
2.2 CLIPPING ANALYSIS.....	6
2.3 FOCUS GROUPS.....	6
2.4 WORKING DEFINITIONS .....	7
3.0 THERE IS LIMITED COVERAGE OF THE LGBTI SECTOR.....	8
3.1 HOW MUCH MEDIA COVERAGE IS THERE ABOUT THE LGBTI SECTOR? .....	8
3.2 WHERE IS THE INFORMATION COMING FROM?.....	8
4.0 RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION OF LGBTI MEDIA COVERAGE.....	9
4.1 COVERAGE FOCUSES ON SCANDALS, NEGATIVE IMAGES, AND STEREOTYPES. ....	9
4.2 SAME SEX MARRIAGE COVERAGE SHOWS SOME IMPROVEMENT.....	10
4.3 CHARACTERS IN ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA GROWING IN NUMBER, BUT NEED REALITY CHECK. ....	11
4.4 PERPETUATING STEREOTYPES.....	11
4.5 PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGES FOCUS ON 'DRAG QUEENS' .....	12
4.6 LGBTI SECTOR AS SOURCES.....	12
4.7 HOMO-PREJUDICE VOICES ARE ALLOWED. ....	13
4.8 LGBTI MEDIA ALSO FOUND TO NOT BE SATISFYING THE NEED. ....	13
4.9 BISEXUALS AND TRANSGENDER COMMUNITIES EVEN MORE HIDDEN. ....	14
5.0 SMALL RANGE OF ISSUES BEING COVERED. ....	15
5.1 WHAT ISSUES ARE BEING COVERED? .....	15
5.2 LGBTI PERSPECTIVE ON THE NEWS WANTED .....	16
6.0 ANNUAL PRIDE COVERAGE .....	17
6.1 THROUGH THE YEARS...PRIDE .....	17
6.2 PRIDE COVERAGE MUCH LIKE THE REST OF THE YEAR.....	17
7.0 GREAT COVERAGE AND WILLING JOURNALISTS ARE AVAILABLE. ....	19
7.1 WHAT MEDIA IS INTERESTED IN LGBTI ISSUES? .....	19
7.2 ARE THERE INTERESTED JOURNALISTS?.....	20
7.3 WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR JOURNALISTS/ MEDIA? .....	20
7.4 NEWSROOM POLICIES .....	20
8.0 LGBTI SECTOR WOULD BENEFIT FROM MORE ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT .....	21
8.1 WHAT MEDIA ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIES ARE BEING USED?.....	21
8.2 SOME ORGANISATIONS VERY SUCCESSFUL WITH MEDIA.....	21
8.3 INDIVIDUALS RARELY ENGAGE.....	22
8. 4 ADVERTISING – NEED FOR THE SECTOR TO USE THEIR ECONOMIC CLOUT.....	22
9.0 CREATING PATHWAYS FOR DIVERSITY.....	23
9.1 MAKING COVERAGE MORE INCLUSIVE? .....	23
9.2 WHAT RESOURCES DO MEDIA NEED?.....	23
9.3 STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE .....	23
9. 4 INDIVIDUALS WERE ASKED TO IDENTIFY WHAT THEY REALLY WANTED FROM MEDIA. ....	25
RECCOMENDATIONS .....	26
10.1 BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.....	26
10.2 DEVELOPING TOOLS FOR BETTER MEDIA COVERAGE .....	26
10.3 INCREASE LGBTI ACCESS TO THE MEDIA.....	26
10.4 ADVOCATING FOR GOOD EDITORIAL POLICIES.....	27
10.5 PRODUCING MEDIA.....	27
10.6 RESEARCH.....	27
11.0 CONCLUSIONS .....	27
Appendix 1 - Media Capacity Building	
Appendix 2 - Publication, journals and newspapers screened by core 2006	
Appendix 3 - Examples of LGBTI Media produced	

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## 1. 0 Introduction

As South Africa's media landscape changes and develops, there is increasing awareness of the need to ensure diversity – of stories covered, voices heard, and of course access to the media. In many respects, the media sector has recognised that it has a role to play in helping to build a healthy society. There is increasing media representation of different races and women, and coverage around complex issues such as HIV/AIDS or gender has benefited from various projects and editorial commitments from the media to develop skills and knowledge, as well as ensure that different experiences are represented. (see Appendix 1 for examples)

Media reflects society, but also plays a part in shaping how society views certain topics or communities. Media is very influential. How media portrays groups such as the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) sector influences what society thinks. Coverage that is negative, stereotypical or non-existent impacts on how these communities are viewed. Media has the ability to increase understanding or the power to re-enforce negative perceptions that contribute to discrimination.

There is still widespread discrimination against LGBTI communities in South Africa. The research was undertaken to identify opportunities of how the LGBTI sector can build its role in media diversity, defined by the MDDA as 'access to the widest range of sources of information and opinion, as well as equitable representation within the media in general.' The document is intended to be the basis for positive engagement between the LGBTI community and the media, and to help create a better working relationship between these two sectors of society.

During this research an important point was raised, questioning what was the aim of this research? Some people questioned whether this was yet another research project to elicit views and inputs, which would not result in change. Others from the community expressed exasperation, knowing that the media is a powerful force, yet frustrated by a history of poor coverage, ineffective relationships, and even hurtful words printed and broadcast. Some journalists seem to feel that credit is often not given when due, and that placing social responsibilities on them was not their job in the first place – rather it is to report the news, and sell it.

This research was undertaken with the specific goal of finding out the issues, gaps and possible solutions related to reporting on LGBTI issues. The aim was to provide some ideas for effective strategies. It is not meant to be a static document, but rather one discussed and built on. It points out gaps, as well as areas of opportunity. Hopefully, it will inspire thought and action on what more can be done.

Can the media do better to cover the sector? Yes. Are there committed journalists out there who are interested in learning more? Absolutely. Does the sector itself have to demand fair representation? Most certainly.

The research points to the need to build on relationships, and to develop strategies that include media, organisations and individuals. Change will not happen as a result of better understanding of the situation achieved through this research. It will also not happen unless there is a concerted effort, mostly demand-driven from the LGBTI sector itself. Concrete tools and strategies similar to those implemented in regard to coverage of race, gender or HIV need to be put in place.

The research was a collaboration between the Gay and Lesbian Archives (GALA) of South Africa, and Community Media for Development/ CMFD Productions.

## 1.1 Media has a role

There is an expectation that media has the power to play a positive or negative role when it comes to human rights issues. The research confirmed that people attach a significant role to media in the shaping of ideas and creating a diverse view of the country. One person from the focus group said if, "people speak more, read about it, (there is) less fear around it"

There was a sense that the media could play a role in helping people get to know LGBTI communities, and that this could help to reduce some of the discrimination and stereotypes.

"It's important that there be consistent and accurate coverage on these issues. There is little information provided or attention given to a reality that many people face, wonder about or categorise as 'abnormal'. Focusing on emotions and experiences, rather than popular "queen" representations could help people identify with a lifestyle they may find strange. - Lezette Engelbrecht, Perdeby, University of Pretoria

It was pointed out that poor coverage has an impact on how people relate to the LGBTI sector. When asked how poor media coverage affected people personally, some individuals indicated that the media had not had an impact on their own 'coming out' identifying themselves publicly as a member of the LGBTI sector, but it could have for some people.

For example, one person indicated that some people would not identify at all with the gay identity portrayed in the media and so may not want to be identified as LGBTI. Another pointed out that success stories and positive role models would certainly help young people to be honest with themselves and their communities. Likewise, media was cited as possibly having a positive impact, when affirming images are portrayed, or when the media provided an opportunity for people to bring up LGBTI issues.

Two students said that poor and inaccurate media coverage affects them personally.

"It strains my relationships with my straight friends and family. Negative media re-enforces negative attitudes within social structures. (As a result) acceptance and understanding is hampered."

"Some of us are proud of our sexuality and life. But homophobic issues or poor coverage of the sector is portrayed, it makes it even harder for us to go and always have a war in terms of re-affirming ourselves."

Media Landscape - The media landscape in South Africa is made up of a number of a number of different types of media. Most often, we think of print, radio, television, and web, which are the main media that people access. Media also includes film, theatre, comic books, etc. This research focused on print media, though comments from interviews often also referred to radio and television. Within most media, there are differences in reach for different media based on language, race, gender, region, and literacy levels.

A great deal of research has been done documenting the national media landscape which we will not reproduce here. For a detailed look at the media in South Africa, please visit:

[http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/media/](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/media/)

[http://www.southafrica.info/ess\\_info/sa\\_glance/media/news.htm](http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/media/news.htm)

For a list of newspapers, radio and television, visit the GCIS website:

<http://www.gcis.gov.za/gcis/directory.jsp?dir=11>

## 2.0 Methodology

This research study was designed to give an overview of media and LGBTI issues. The research adopted a multi-pronged methodology. It explored whether there is understanding of the key issues and basic facts to guide accurate reporting among media personnel, and whether the LGBTI sector has the skills to effectively interact with the media. It focused on:

- Knowledge – is the media generally aware of basic LGBTI issues? Do they know correct terminology? Are they aware of where to access sources for stories?
- Attitudes – Is the media interested in LGBTI issues? Is there a level of homophobia?
- Practices – What is being produced in print? Is it accurate?

The target groups for this research were media practitioners, leaders of LGBTI organisations, and individuals. Finally an analysis of print media was conducted.

The research included:

- Questionnaires administered in person, telephonically and via e-mail. Separate questionnaires were developed for 1) media 2) organisations 3) individual survey.
- A review of newspaper clippings held in the GALA archives.
- 2 Focus groups – Johannesburg and Cape Town
- Informal discussions and literature review

### 2.1 Questionnaires

Field researchers were trained in interview techniques, to ensure that the different interviewers would not influence the research results. Respondents were interviewed on a one-on-one basis, often over the telephone. Ethical principles were practiced by offering respondents the option of withholding their names in the research. Separate questionnaires for the three groups – organisations, journalists and an individual survey – aimed to get a fuller picture of opinions.

15 organisations were interviewed.

15 media representatives/ journalists were interviewed

30 individual surveys were conducted.

### 2.2 Clipping Analysis

Print clippings from South African Media were reviewed for a 3-month period, 1 May 2006 – 31 July 2006. The clippings are collected for the Gay and Lesbian Archives through a clipping service provided by the Co-operative for Research and Education (CORE). 57 clippings were identified from 115 publications screened by CORE, including mainstream, alternative and non-governmental organisations print media. (See Appendix 2 for full list of publications screened by CORE). The clippings were reviewed using a form that noted general information about the article, an analysis of the headline, country of report, sources, issues addressed, language and stereotypes. These were logged in an Excel spreadsheet. The information was analysed, with focus on the articles originating from South Africa. The print media that was found to have clippings available were: Business Day, Cape Times, The Citizen, City Press, East Cape Herald, Economist, Mail and Guardian, Sunday Times, Sowetan, The Star, Sunday Independent, and Sunday Sun.

### 2.3 Focus Groups

The focus groups were used to obtain a more detailed, nuanced, and textured understanding of what individuals felt about the media, particularly young people. Focus group discussions were organised with Activate at The University of the Witwatersrand (8 people) and The Triangle Project in Cape Town (6 people). Participants were asked to brainstorm what they liked, and disliked about the media, and felt the media could do better. This opportunity was also used to clarify findings from the previous interviews and clipping analysis, particularly around the amount of local stories available, and issues being covered.

NB: Questionnaire samples can be found on the GALA website.

## 2.4 Working definitions

The following are definitions for words that help to describe the LGBTI sector and were used as the working definitions for the research project.

- Access - being able to have or enjoy something, i.e access to health care.
- Bisexual/Bisexuality - people who are emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to both men and women.
- Coming out - When we share our identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex(LGBTI) person, usually as part of a process over a period time.
- Discriminate/ Discrimination - Treat differently, usually in unfair way,.
- Gay / Gay men - men who are emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to men, and who identify as gay. Gay is sometimes used broadly to mean gay men and women, although many women prefer to be referred to lesbian.
- Gender - The socialised culturally specific way that we are expected to behave, think and appear as women (femininity) and men (masculinity).
- Gender identity - Our psychological and social sense of who we are as a male or female.
- Hate crimes - When specific groups are targets of crimes involving physical and mental abuse, like rape, assault and name –calling. (defamation).
- Homophobia/ homophobic/ homo-prejudice) - Irrational fear of, hatred against and disgust towards homosexuals or homosexuality.
- Heterosexual - People who are emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex.
- Heterosexism - belief that everyone is heterosexual, or, if not, that they should be.
- Intersex - People born with full or partial genitalia of both sexes, or with underdeveloped or ambiguous genitalia, or with unusual hormone or chemical combination. The existence of intersex people challenges the idea that there are only two biological sexes.
- Lesbian / Lesbian women - Women who are emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to women, and who identify as lesbian.
- Mainstream - Treat as part of everyday life, eg by mainstreaming LGBTI issues, we ensure they are dealt with as part of policies, laws, procedures and service delivery.
- Stereotype – oversimplified and fixed ideas or beliefs about a group of people i.e. because of their race, gender, or sexual orientation.
- Sexual orientation – Whether we are homosexual, (lesbian or gay), bisexual or heterosexual. Our sexual orientation shapes our emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to others.
- Transgender – people who have male and female personalities in the way they express aspects of their gender. Some transgender people are referred to as androgynous when they express their masculine and feminine ‘sides’ equally, or do not identify as male or female.

\* Definitions reprinted with permission from ‘An ABC of LGBTI: A Resource Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people’ Published by the Joint Working Group.

## 2.5 Limitations of the methodology

This study has several limitations. Because of the nature of the study and the limited budget, most of the respondents were urban, a bias that represents a community with generally better access to media. The sampling technique, snowball sampling, meant that respondents within similar circles were accessed. Most respondents had an interest in participating, some were LGBTI or individuals sensitive and supportive of the rights of this sector. Perhaps most importantly, those most affected by poor media coverage, those not open about their sexuality, were for reasons of accessibility not included in this study.

As the clipping review process was done for a three-month period, there are limitations in the conclusion that can be made. For example, the media generated is limited to the issues and events that occurred during this period, which may differ at different times of the year. The clipping service does not review all publications in South Africa, and all of the clippings are English language. Some of the newspapers mentioned in the interviews as having homophobic coverage, i.e. the Daily Sun, are not part of the service and were not reviewed.

The scope of this research project was to provide an overview and identify opportunities for change rather than focus too much on poor coverage. There is no doubt that additional research should be done to gain more in-depth insight into the relationship between the media and the LGBTI sector.

# FINDINGS

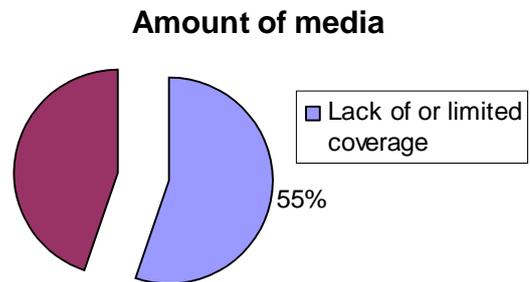
The following section outlines a number of findings from the research.

## 3.0 There is limited coverage of the LGBTI sector

Interviewees indicated that there is a lack of coverage, as well as a lack of depth within coverage of these communities.

### 3.1 How much media coverage is there about the LGBTI sector?

The research indicated that many feel there is not a sufficient coverage generated about the LGBTI sector. When asked to comment generally on coverage, of the journalists and organisations interviewed, over half (55.17%) of the respondents, indicated that there was a lack of or limited amount of coverage.



“Very limited, can increase with good advocacy.” – Gemma Harries, Journalist

“The only time you can really expect homosexuality to be covered, is when annual gay pride comes around, and although these displays are necessary, I feel the media only cover them because of the generally comical and unthreatening way in which homosexuality is explored.” - Christine Davis, Agenda feminist media.

“A complete lack of representation in the media (as a whole.)” - Female journalist

“There’s not very much coverage – only when there is a controversial issue, like the present controversy over same sex marriages. I don’t think the media analyze these issues very well, but focus on the controversy –e.g. ACDP march to Parliament. They like things like the Pride march, because they like to show gay men prancing around in feathers and Speedos, for the paparazzi feel. If gay pride was people in suits, they wouldn’t bother.” - Brett Davidson, Program Manager, IDASA

“I think when it occurs it is not bad, but rather the problem is the lack of coverage.” - Tawana Kupe, Editor/ Prof. Media Studies, University of Witswatersrand

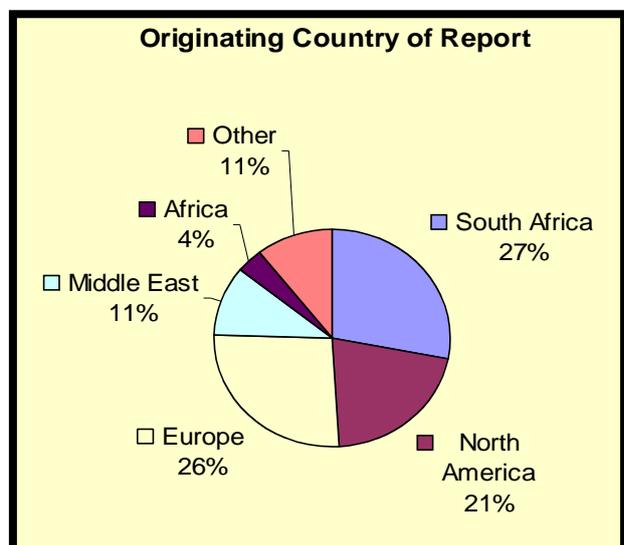
“Sometimes there is a sense of it being incomplete, or that it doesn’t give a full range of what could have come across.” – Zakhele Mbhele, Chairperson, Activate

The 3-month review of news clippings from 116 publications resulted in 56 clippings, only 27 % of these from South Africa. Many of these 56 clippings were also very short news briefs, and not in-depth articles.

### 3.2 Where is the information coming from?

Of the 57 clippings reviewed, just over a quarter of these originated from South Africa, and only 4 more originated from the African continent. This indicates that a great deal of coverage on LGBTI issues in the country relates to stories, news, and experiences outside of Africa.

This is significant as it means that the majority of images of gays and lesbian in the media for the South African LGBTI sector is in fact related to what is happening in other



countries. Though it is important to be informed of international events, it also means that the South African LGBTI sector largely does not see its own unique experiences, stories, and issues being reflected in the media.

Only 31% of coverage is from Africa. Is this important? When asked this question, focus group participants in Johannesburg and Cape Town indicated that yes, it is important to see stories from Africa, about people and issues that they can identify with.

“We are South African and we must hear about our issues or it seems that being gay is a Western thing.”

“What we see should be about us.”

“We still need the international coverage, but the local stories are more relevant to us.”

“Media is supposed to reflect what is really happening.”

The lack of African content is particularly significant given the often-quoted notion of homosexuality as “un-African” a notion that many activists and individuals often find themselves countering.

“Among the many myths created about Africa, the belief that homosexuality is absent in Africa or incidental, is one of the oldest and most enduring. African leaders, historians, anthropologists, clergy, authors, and contemporary Africans alike have denied or overlooked the existence of homosexuality or same-sex relationships and persistently claimed that such patterns were introduced by Europeans.” - excerpted from ‘Is homosexuality really ‘unafican?’ by Jacob Rukweza, Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ)

<http://www.kubatana.net/html/archive/sexual/060323galz.asp?sector=SEXUAL>

The lack of African coverage could be argued to be contributing to the invisibility of this sector. This invisibility could also contribute to the fact that there is still a large amount of discrimination in South Africa

## 4.0 Respondents expressed dissatisfaction of LGBTI media coverage

### 4.1 Coverage focuses on scandals, negative images, and stereotypes.

The overwhelming indication from organisations and journalists is that the media poorly and inaccurately represents the LGBTI sector, tending to highlight sensational from negative angles. Coverage is often mainly about scandals and, negative stereotyping around sex, often creating an impression that the LGBTI sector is outside of normal society. Some feel that some media displays overt homophobia.

“Media tends to sensationalise or demonise homosexuality. Very few reports are celebratory in nature. Specifically, headlines will refer to sexuality in criminal cases.”

– Christine Davis, Agenda

“Many harmful stereotypes exist and individuals are seen as deviant and immoral rather than normal people that happen to have a different sexual preference.” -

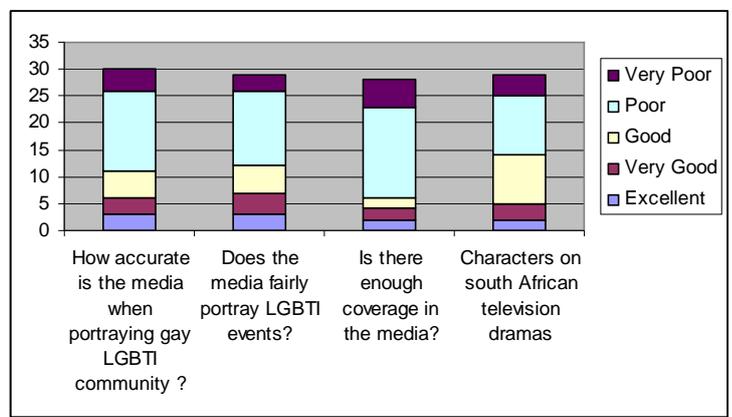
Lezette Engelbrecht, Perdeby, University of Pretoria

“Sensationalised aspects of LGBTI life which are biased, unfair, misrepresentative” - Paul Tilly, Joburg Pride.

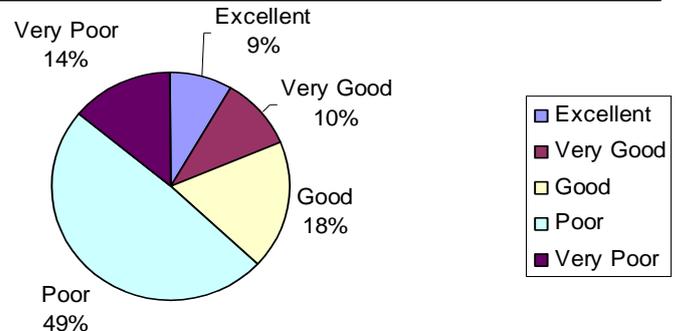
“They should portray real gay and lesbian lives and not only what they think homosexuality is about, because being gay is not all about the same sex having sex with one another but its about feelings, emotions, love faith, and we are also involved with God our creator”- Shaine Griqua, LEGBO Northern Cape

Overall respondents to the individual survey indicated they are not satisfied with media coverage of their community. The survey was based on rating the following four criteria:

- Accuracy of the media in reporting on the community
- Fairness of media portraying LGBTI events
- Is there enough coverage in the media?
- Characters on South African television dramas

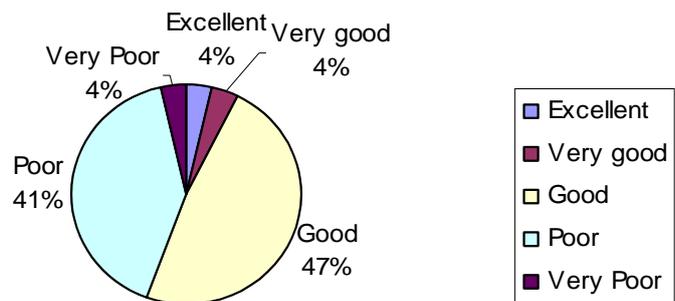


The most dissatisfaction was expressed in relation to the amount of coverage produced, while the least dissatisfaction was expressed regarding characters on television dramas. Overall, 63 % rated media coverage to be poor or very poor.



#### 4.2 Same Sex Marriage coverage shows some improvement

As the research took place during the national debates on the Civil Union Bill and same sex marriage, we included a question on media related to this topic in the individual survey. A cursory review of media during this time shows that there was increased LGBTI related coverage, focusing on the Parliamentary debates. Overall, respondents rated this coverage higher than other coverage.



Respondents to the individual surveys expressed mixed opinions on this coverage, indicating that there was an improvement but they felt there was still some lack of clarity and understating of the issues. Comments included:

- “There are a lot of misconceptions, and the media is not doing enough to create awareness of what is really going on.”
- “I think it would help if reports had better explained the difference between civil and religious marriage and the fact that only civil marriage is implicated in the legal reform and no religion will be forced.”
- “Not enough research on homosexual life re: family life (marriage.)”
- “Too much coverage on contesting views to marriage.”

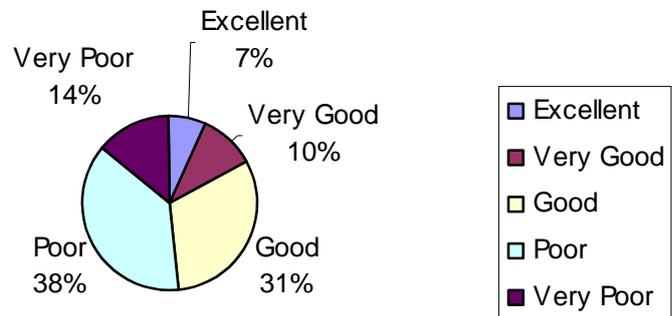
Further, it was indicated some stories and publications were better than others were.

- “Difficult to answer because some journalists and publications have been extremely fair and others not at all”
- “Good in terms that people be aware of it however I think the coverage is based on media bias and strong media homophobia”
- “Typical homophobic comments from the “Christian” and other religious groups. It’s great though that the presenters seem to be either “pro-gay” or at least try not to be biased or stand up to particularly homophobic comments.”

### 4.3 Characters in entertainment media growing in number, but need reality check.

Those interviewed expressed that characters on television dramas often do not reflect the reality of gay people, though it was also recognised that there is an increasing number of gay characters. This is encouraging as it indicates that the entertainment media is beginning to recognise that the LGBTI sector exists. However, entertainment dramas would benefit from increased consultation to make these characters more real. The major criticism is that gay characters are still treated differently than straight characters, often with little affection shown between gay or lesbian couples.

The individual surveys indicated that people rated characters on dramas higher than journalistic coverage.



Interview respondents stated:

"There is basically no representation of gay/lesbian/transgender issues on television, other than the gay couple on Egoli, who are about as affectionate as stunted, platonic friends, and Queer Eye for the Straight Guy, and then lo and behold M-Net graces the gay community with L-word, which is not a bad programme at all, but is quite idealistic and doesn't give South African gay and bisexual women any real local frame of reference." – Female journalist

"Entertainment media are interesting as almost every soap opera on TV now has at least one gay character (far fewer lesbians, by the way). But on the SA soaps, when there are gay couples, they never even touch one another." – Brett Davidson, Programme Manger, Idasa

### 4.4 Perpetuating stereotypes

A number of interviewees indicated that much of the media's coverage of gay life perpetuates stereotypes.

"Stereotypical representations and only negative issues. Hardly any positive day to day role models to help 'normalise' LGBTI issues" – Abi Clark, Rainbow UCT

The light-hearted way of looking at the sector may help to perpetuate stereotypes. Looking at the article originating from South Africa only: (Article titles in parentheses)

- 5 of just 16 articles produced in South Africa related to drag queens and parties. ("Glamour Glitz And Misfits"; "Life's a drag...for some; Knysna turning pink with pride as mardi gras takes over town"; "Boyz and girls come out to play at pink Loerie Parades"; "Fun fashion and flesh to be enjoyed at mardi gras")
- Another two dealt with how TV presenter Jabu Dhlamini lied about being gay to gain more votes. ("Gay Model Bags A TV Presenter"; "Sorry for the lies")
- Two additional articles are very lighthearted look at queer life. One looks at the phenomenon of the 'fag hag', which though not negatively stereotypical of gays, is of women. The second, a satirical look at the gender commission's decision to allow gay only guesthouses. ("Fags need to choose their hags carefully"; "Accentuate the positive")
- Four articles dealt with legal rights of the LGBTI sector, 3 of which were the ruling on gay only guesthouse. ("Gay only Guesthouses get green light"; "Court to weigh "gay" inheritance claim"; "Pink guesthouses get green light from gender commission"; "Exclusive gay B&B ruling praised")
- One was about gay sport ("Out and in the front line")
- One was about gay entrepreneurs("Gaydar Love")
- One was about being transgender ("Gender, A State of Mind")

Perhaps a problem is that the large percentage of articles do nothing to further understanding of the LGBTI sector. Each article on its own does not constitute a huge problem in terms of stereotypes. If these were one of 100 articles printed, they could be seen as a lighter look at the LGBTI sector. In fact, the fun and colour of the festivals and drag shows are a very important part of gay life. However, this also does not reflect the experience of a very large number of the LGBTI sector's experience, those who are not drag queens, celebrities or partygoers. What is not visible in the media is the experiences and perspectives of lesbian mothers, gay executives and media makers, gay teachers, bi-sexual students, etc.

#### 4.5 Homo-prejudice in media does exist

It is also very important to point out that although these particular headlines for his period are not blatantly homophobic, this is largely because of the events that did or did not happen during the three-month period in review. Some of the interview respondents recalled articles that had happened in the past year that were homophobic, such as coverage around the gay community and blood donations. Moreover, many respondents felt that media did display overt homophobia; identified particular media outlets that they consider homophobic.

"The Netflorist advert on radio plays to stereotypes as does the Harpic Advert. Gareth Cliff on 5 FM is extremely offensive." – Abigail Clark, Rainbow UCT.

"Specifically, headlines will refer to sexuality in criminal cases. For example, recently newspapers were full of articles that referred to the lesbian couple who beat the one woman's son to death because he didn't call the new partner "Daddy". This story featured heavily in the YOU magazine and ran with insulting and inflammatory headlines that linked the sexuality of the two woman to their behaviour. The media does not tend to realise that just as there is a difference between racism and racialisation, there is a difference between homophobia and sexuality relevant reporting." – Christine Davis, Agenda Feminist Media

#### 4.5 Photographs and images focus on 'drag queens'

Many people who participated in the research indicated that the only image that the public usually gets about the LGBTI sector is that of the 'drag queens.' It was stated that though Pride is about many things, it is always the most colourful images that find their way into the newspapers. The three-month clipping review confirmed this. Of the 25 images of the LGBTI sector under review, 11 were of 'drag queens. Perhaps even more noteworthy, the photographs of the drag artists and people in costume were significantly larger than other images.

#### 4.6 LGBTI sector as sources

In looking at the print clipping, the coverage of legal resolutions and legislative lobbying, for example, are technically good, but lacks a personal element to the coverage. In most of the SA articles there could be greater diversity of sources within the articles. Some do not have an LGBTI source, while others access a small range of sources. Some journalists indicated during interviews that they are constrained by access to the LGBTI sector, that is people do not want to be quoted. Perhaps this indicates a problem of journalists not knowing where to go, and LGBTI organisations not deftly dealing with the journalists interested in covering stories.

#### 4.7 Homo-prejudice voices are allowed.

Articles, and particularly headlines, that reflect homo-prejudice were found in both the clippings from South African origin and those found in the papers that were provided by international wire services.

There is an argument to be made that since the large majority of LGBTI related articles originate from outside South Africa, it is not the responsibility of the South African media that some of the article provide a negative image, but rather the international media.

##### Headlines:

"Excise cancerous lump of gay friendly churches" - Cape Times, 5 July  
"Africa, the heart of homophobia"  
"London lesbians stay in the closet" - The Citizen, 12 July 2006  
"Rabbis try to ban gay pride" - The Citizen, 12 July 2006  
"Sexual Predator gains asylum as homosexual" - SI, 25 June 2006  
"I am no abomination," says gay bishop  
"Jerusalem no place for gays" - The Star, 5 July 2006  
"Nigeria slam pro-gay church" The Citizen, 5 July 2006  
"Oz vetoes law allowing same-sex marriage"  
"Gays continue to attack Catholic Church"

However, it seems relevant that the vast majority of coverage focuses on negative images around the world. A quick review of headlines shows a number of headlines providing a negative image of the gay community worldwide. Similarly, it can be argued that much of the homo-prejudice that is found in newspapers is because journalists are 'just reporting on what they are finding.'

It can be argued, however, that editors are allowing articles, headlines and voices from South Africa and abroad, that portray a certain kind of image of the LGBTI sector nationally and around the world. Some of the respondents indicated that this would not be acceptable for other instances of prejudice.

"In The Star last year for three months there were homophobic letters in their pages. Would they provide the same platform for other hate speech on race?" - Melanie Judge, OUT LGBT Well-being

"You Magazine hides behind 'we didn't say it, the person we interviewed did,' but they still print it. Argus prints half page stories against the lesbian community written by church structures, without giving Triangle a chance to respond." - Dawn Betteridge, The Triangle Project

#### 4.8 LGBTI Media also found to not be satisfying the need.

Though LGBTI media tries to meet the needs of the community, it is criticised by some in the LGBTI sector for not being representative of diverse members of the sector. Some find LGBTI media to be more representative of white gay men, and state that it neglects the stories of the black gays and lesbians in the townships. Some also feel it stereotypes the community as being all rich and living the party life. Others feel this media does try to provide a platform, but is challenged by market demands.

"I think there is a sad lack of LGBTI media. Exit maybe a couple of magazines. And they are all the same - fashion, clubs, one or two small news articles - and overwhelmingly featuring and aimed at wealthy white gay men. There's almost no coverage of, or photos of black LGBTI's...And nothing really in-depth or more analytical or even controversial" - Brett Davidson, Idasa

"Exit is the only LGBTI magazine that has lasted, it is cheaply produced gossipy and has a little bit on issues. In SA, it's a volume game - how many people can afford the

mag. Also, the boys don't want to see the girls, and the girls don't want to see the boys, so how do you cater for both? – Nodi Murphy, Out in Africa Film Festival Director

Online LGBTI focused media outlets are another medium for coverage.

“We produce media too. We try to give the LGBTI community a platform for their stories, the best stories are by those that experience it”- Thuli Madi, Behind the Mask

“A website like mambaonline.com provides informative and entertaining albeit light coverage for gay readers but doesn't hesitate to publish articles that probe, question or enquire about critical issues.” – Christo Valentyn, Freelance Journalist

4.9 Bisexuals and transgender communities even more hidden.

The transgender community is even further marginalised within media coverage. Though the one article reviewed was a great article, Liesl Theron of Gender Dynamix explained that this resulted from a relationship with the journalist in which there was guidance given to ensure proper terminology was used. Though Gender Dynamix does not attempt to influence journalistic content of a story, they do work with journalists to help ensure that correct terminology related to the transgender community is used.

Within the research, there was very little reference to the transgender community or bisexual community. Theron said that it was generally the case that transgender and bisexual people and issues are not found within media. This points to a need to pay closer attention to these communities when it comes to developing strategies to increase media access of the sector.

## 5.0 Small range of issues being covered.

There was a clear indication that coverage of a greater range of issues would offer a better reflection of the LGBTI sector and the issues that concern them.

### 5.1 What issues are being covered?

The clipping review demonstrates a number of trends in terms of media coverage. The 5 most covered issues are:

**Legal Issues (24.59%)** - legal issues and evolving legislation receives the largest amount of media attention i.e. changes in legislation, such as same sex marriage.

**Stigma/ Discrimination (16.39%)** - the second most covered topic is a general discussion of stigma and discrimination.

**Event (13.1%)** - Events receive the third most coverage, focusing on Pride and other gay led events, such as the Gay games or drag shows.

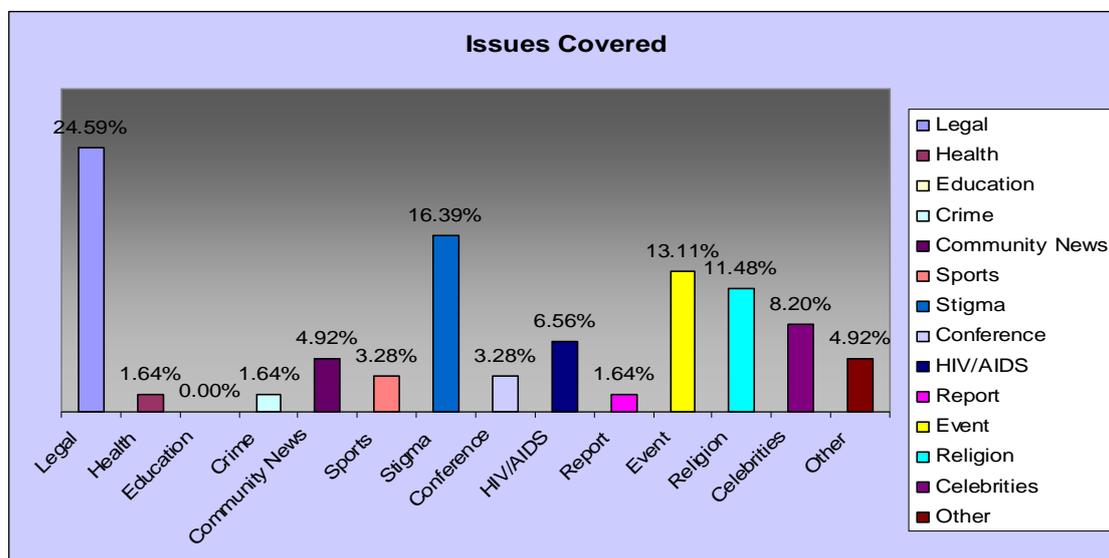
**Religion (11.48%)** - This largely reviewed the ongoing tensions between the church and the LGBTI sector. Unfortunately, there was little coverage of the positive in-roads that some churches have made gay churches or African traditional spiritualism.

**Celebrities (8.20%)** - This included Angelina Jolie's alleged lesbian affairs, as well as SABC presenter Jabu Dhlamini's fabrication of being gay to earn him more votes.

**Other issues** - Other issues such as health, HIV/AIDS, sports, conferences, crime reports, and research reports received trace amounts of coverage from the LGBTI perspective. Just one article was about the transgender community.

What issues does the community say need to be covered?

- Violence against lesbians
- Hate crimes against the LGBTI community - and the fact that they are not taken seriously at police stations.
- Family issues - same sex marriages, adoption, relationships, parenting
- Poor service at police stations and hospitals and the ramifications of this.
- Less parties and sex, more everyday topics
- Acknowledge positive gay role models doing things in their communities, success stories.
- True life stories, biographies, personal interviews
- Discrimination in the education system, youth issues
- Employment
- Religious perspectives, for example gay Muslims, and Christians, positive religious stories, gay Ministers.
- Mental health, depression
- Incorporate LGBTI community in national holiday coverage, i.e. June 16 and recognising Simon Nkoli, or lesbians on National Women's Day
- Greater inclusions of the LGBTI community in HIV/AIDS and rights campaigns i.e. information about prevention is not readily available specifically about the way that gays and lesbians have sex.
- LGBTI entrepreneurs and business



## 5.2 LGBTI perspective on the news wanted

To a certain extent we found that there is a desire to see LGBTI perspectives mainstreamed, with some stating that the sector is affected by the same issues that impact on society as a whole. Some interviewees indicated that issues such as health, HIV and education were not separate issues for the LGBTI sector. However, it was also felt that there are issues that are particular to the community, or that the common issues should be looked at from an LGBTI perspective, either within general coverage or specifically about the LGBTI sector.

The most important aspect is mainstreaming, bringing LGBTI issues into the daylight, have coverage that is fair and does not contribute to the stereotype." – Maciek Mazur, Gays for Equitable Media(GEM)/ Tuesday Night Show

"With regards to STI's and particularly HIV/AIDS there is not enough education on how the LGBTI community should protect themselves from the virus. The media covers HIV/AIDS issues from a heterosexual point of view."- Hila Mkwanazi, Journalist, Vuvuzela, University of the Witwatersrand Campus Newspaper

"Most things in the constitution are not practiced accordingly, and gay people are not aware of their rights."-Sandra Gordon, Publisher of The Media

Focus group participants were asked to comment on this suggestion from the interviews, and give their opinion on mainstreaming.

"To a certain degree our issues are mainstream but there needs to be a branch coverage of our own health issues, as there are issues we have to face."

"Certain issues are the same, but most aren't. I.e. coming Out issues are relevant to LGBTI issues and have individual ramifications with regards to HIV/AIDS, health, etc"

"I think that they are similar, but there are intricacies that need to be dealt with in different areas, i.e. sex education..."

In the same way that we have come to look at a gendered perspective on these issues, we may need to look at these issues from an LGBTI perspective.

## 6.0 Annual Pride Coverage

As part of the research, print media coverage of the annual Parade events was reviewed. From the first Pride March in 1989 until 2005, media coverage from year to year both holds a number of general characteristics, and also changes, in many ways reflecting changes within the community itself. Within the media coverage we see the changing national/legislative as well as identity issues of the LGBTI sector and the Pride March itself, from the early years when the March is largely framed within a larger human rights struggle, through to advocacy around constitutional rights and marriage. One of the reasons why these reflections are so clear is that the media coverage surrounding Pride tends to focus on the national/ legislative issues of the day.

Rarely is Pride used as an opportunity to interact with the LGBTI sector and explore different issues from a more in depth perspective. This could also be related to the choice of each year's themes. We see in early coverage more of a sense of unity, while in later years there is a sense of segmentation, particularly racial as the visible community grows larger. Generally speaking, what is very clear from Pride coverage is the growth and development of the community. The size and reported attendance continually grows and we see a sense of a developing community, particularly in later years as we see discussions around things like gay tourism, the Pink Rand, concern for the status of the LGBTI sector in other African countries, etc, as well as much focus on the party aspect of the event.

### 6.1 Through the years...Pride

For the first year pride 1989 coverage focused largely on the fact that it was the first year it was held. The theme of the first Pride was "Unity in the Community" and it aimed to "bring together different diverse populations and incorporate the gay and lesbian struggle in the mass democratic movement." In this first year coverage places Pride within the greater political struggle, or questions are asked whether it should in fact be placed within this struggle. The focus is on human rights.

In 1991 we start to see questions exploring what the nature of Pride was as party or protest. The theme of Pride in 1991 was "Marching for Equality" and in 1992 "Marching for our Rights," clearly positioning itself advocating for Constitutional rights, which is reflected in the coverage. In 1993 the reported profile of Pride was beginning to change. The theme was "celebrate, act, and be" the organisers said, "for the past three years we have marched for 'equality' and 'our rights'". There is some discussion about the move away from rights based themes as early marches were seen as too close to the anti-apartheid struggle and this was alienating to the white community. This continues into 1996 when coverage expresses that there is some dissatisfaction with lack of racial representation.

In the early 2000s, coverage suggests a deepening split between black and white within the community. There is a greater outlook towards the needs of other African countries, a sense that 'we have what we wanted, now we need to look to other African countries'. We see that the community is coming out as a deepening force, and there is greater discussion around issues like the "pink rand"

### 6.2 Pride coverage much like the rest of the year

In general, the following remain almost constant, to a great extent matching what we have already seen in the current media coverage.

- Issues covered tend to focus on national, legislative or other non-personal focuses. These are issues that journalists and readers deal with in the abstract and not on a personal level.
- Coverage tends to be focused on the sensational. Despite the fact that drag queens make up a small number of the community, each year photographs of drag queens and the most outrageous outfits dominate the photographic coverage. While this is

understandable by the very nature of journalism, which tends to focus on the most interesting/shocking/sensational elements of any story, it is the unbalanced nature of the coverage that is a potential problem. While one would expect to see photo of the sensational, one would also hope that journalists would choose the opportunity to interview people about gay parenting, homophobia, lesbian rape, being gay in the workplace, etc. all different segments of the sector which are also represented during Pride. For example, there are a large number of events that take place, especially in later day Pride festivities, i.e. workshops, seminars, exhibits, yet these are underrepresented during Pride coverage.

- Coverage also tends to focus on the problems within the sector i.e. racial divisions, division over whether Pride should be more serious and less of a party, the coverage of the controversy of whether drag queens should be allowed to march, controversy over where the Pride March is being held, Central Johannesburg vs. Rosebank, etc,
- Very few voices of the LGBTI sector are heard, interviews if at all are held are with activists and spokespeople and rarely is there an effort to discuss issues with the general sector.
- From the initial Pride coverage until today, there is actually a surprising grasp of correct terminology and use of language about the LGBTI sector. However, balanced and thoughtful articles are at times accompanied by an inappropriate headline or caption.
  - a positive, well written article in 1991 was accompanied by a photograph with the caption "weird scenes above the gold mines, two women embrace while the queen of the night looks on."
  - In 1989 a fairly well balanced article is headlined "Dark Undertones at Pride Parade." The dark undertones referred to merely relate to the discontent of the LGBTI sector about the Justice Minister's plan to try to keep the sodomy laws within the Immorality Act, but the tone from the headline suggests something more sinister was happening. (possible explanation is that generally the journalists is not the one who chooses or captions the photos, nor the person who creates the headlines)
  - 1994 – Letter to the editor criticises Metro for using the sole picture of a protester in their coverage of Pride 1994. A responding editor's note said that the placards carried by the gay and lesbian Marchers were too obscene to print. Yet in the photo in question, the protester held a sign reading "Sodomites turn or burn. Jesus Saves", which some may argue is obscene itself.

For an in-depth look at the history of Pride, see GALA's 'Pride: Protest and Celebration' (2006), edited by Shaun de Waal and Anthony Manion.

## 7.0 Great coverage and willing journalists are available.

### 7.1 What media is interested in LGBTI Issues?

Mail and Guardian was noted as the leading newspaper within the interviewed organisations, when it comes to mainstream media outlets that best reflect the LGBTI issues. A number of high quality articles were found citing a variety of sources, touched on an interesting and unusual topic or angle, and provided positive images of the LGBTI sector.

Organisations say that media makers differ in the way they relate to some LGBTI organisations and individuals. Other outlets named as being quite good at coverage included YFM, Metro, Sunday Independent and Cape Argus. Some organisations say journalists call them for information or stories, and also respond to the information they said to them, while others feel media makers tolerate them with mild irritation, and sometimes ignore invitations or information sent to them. (Yet it is also pointed out that individually they seem to respond better to a person than to a group, just as individual journalists seem to respond better than media houses as a whole).

Some individuals also indicated that they had good relations with the media

“Not bad, but there is a surprising level of respect.” – James Mathias, Gay Games bid.

“Excellent – the coverage is presented in an unbiased way with all the facts” (referring to the media their organisation subscribes to: The Witness, Mail & Guardian, Isolweze” – Anthony Waldhausen, PMB Gay and Lesbian Network.

“The Mail and Guardian has been a good role model. There have been attempts by the LGBT sector to place stories but these are mostly not supported.” – Melanie Judge, OUT LGBT Well being.

## Examples of Excellence

### Gender, A State of Mind

By Yolandi Groenwal (Mail & Guardian, 21 July 2006)

The article combines insight into being transgender with personal experience of two transsexuals, one born male the other female. Touching on straight co-workers responses to the sex change, not always easy but being supportive, encourages the reader to have a more open mind. The article explores identity issues and the emotional process, while touching on the practicalities. Good photos of the two transsexuals in the story help to put a human face on the experience. Overall, the article is an insightful look at being transgender that should help the reader unfamiliar with this community to understand a bit better. It also reflects the unique experience of an often unheard of group of South Africans.

### “Out” and in the front line

By Karen Rutter (Mail & Guardian 14 July 2006)

A unique piece that looks at the LGBTI community in sport. A diverse range of sources include a lesbian beach volleyball champion, a male journalist and a former Olympic rower. The article discusses the Gay Games and what this means for the LGBTI community as a safe space. It explores stigma and discrimination within sport, yet provides two very successful lesbian role models. The article helps to provide a different angle on a topic that many people are involved in – sports. The accompanying images show the positive lesbian role model playing beach volleyball.

### Gaydar Love

By Jean Meiring (Sunday Times 11 June, 2006)

Article about two South Africans in the UK who have developed a very successful website for gay people to meet online. The article provides information about the site, how it was started, and who uses it. It relates feedback from men in Cameroon, Egypt, Denmark and South Africa, yet also touches on the criticisms of the site as commodifying interaction between gay men and fueling internet addiction. The couple who started the website is portrayed as a successful, entrepreneurial, committed couple.

### What makes these stand out?

These articles stand out because they are balanced, combine information with personal experiences, and perhaps most importantly show strong individual LGBTI role models, with photos. These articles all show the LGBTI community doing ‘everyday’ things, not only fighting legal battles, having parties, making drag shows, etc. but engaged in sport, business, work.

This is not to say that all of the other very important issues like legislation and religious issues don't need to be covered, but the human interest aspect to gay life also need some attention.

## 7.2 Are there interested journalists?

Despite the assumption that there are few journalists willing to cover LGBTI issues, there were actually a wide range of writers interviewed who have covered and are willing to report on LGBTI issues. The clippings, as well as recent coverage on same sex marriage, also showed that there is a variety of media that are interested in the topic. Almost all journalists interviewed would be interested to receive additional information about LGBTI issues, and many identified real constraints and concerns to writing a story.

## 7.3 What are the challenges for journalists/ media?

Many journalists indicated that they lack easily accessible information. Media makers also feel that the main constraint when producing a story on sexuality is that, people are not willing to talk, they have lost trust in the media as they have been mistreated in the past. Time is also an issue as some journalists work for daily newspapers and cannot spend that much time finding the right sources and doing in-depth interviews. Journalists identified the following challenges.

“...it does seem like there are a lack of obvious resources (expert opinions) to consult when writing an article on these issues.” – Christine Davis, Agenda

“The lack of information, Lack of variety, gay parades are the only events I know of.” - Female journalist

“It is difficult to write earnestly about a subject so many people feel strongly about.” – Lezette Engelbrecht, Perdeby, University of Pretoria

“Self-censorship on the part of journalists, lack of knowledge, stigma.” – Teboho Senthebane, Freelance Journalist and Student

“The journalists’ own prejudices often get in the way.” - Female journalist

“A lot of people don’t want to be on camera, or have their names mentioned, as they have not come out.” - Jeanine Cameron, ETV

Journalists also felt that their editors discourage covering LGBTI issues.

“Editors often want sensation so goes for extreme cases and it becomes tabloid” – Margie Orford – Journalist

## 7.4 Newsroom policies

None of the media representatives interviewed indicated that their media house had a policy on how to cover LGBTI issues. However, some indicated that they did have policies that prohibited discrimination, and that issues were to be looked at from a human rights perspective. This could indicate that a style sheet or suggested terms for journalists would be useful.

## 8.0 LGBTI sector would benefit from more active engagement

While much of the LGBTI sector points to the media for the lack of coverage, it is also fairly evident that the community, both as organisations and as individuals, would benefit from a more pro-active relationships with media.

### 8.1 What media analysis and strategies are being used?

There has been little research done around media monitoring, and the sector would benefit from a larger more comprehensive research project. Organisations have historically been mostly reactive when it comes to working with the media, that is responding to poor coverage. The engagement with the media does appear to be on the increase, especially related to key topical issues, as evidenced by the ongoing media work around the same sex marriage issues.

However, few organisations indicated that they maintain ongoing relationships with journalists, keep media databases, interact with editors' forums or journalism schools. Even fewer are undertaking projects that build the capacity of journalists or the sector to create better media. Doing so would serve to help support good media when key issues arise.

Many organisations indicated that they had ongoing activities to develop media relationships and understanding.

"We have not conducted a formal analysis of the media but we follow the media and undergo informal scan to keep ourselves informed of the discourses around the LGBTI issues." - Melanie Judge, Out LGBT Well-being.

"From time to time we do research, looking at where are LGBTI sector accessing their media in the Western Cape, what kind of articles they are reading." - Dawn Betteridge, The Triangle Project

"We are still developing some strategies, we are working people who deal with media to gain help." - Anthony Waldhausen, Pietermaritzburg Gay and Lesbian Network

"Fridays we meet as an organisation, and discuss topics seen in the media, we pick a few and look at how it was reported the angle pictures, etc. - Nonhlahla Mkhize, Durban Gay and Lesbian Centre.

### 8.2 Some Organisations very successful with media

A few organisations indicated that they had very strong relationships with the media. Others indicated that they often had success with attracting coverage on a specific issue or event. It would seem that the key to this is ongoing relationship building, as well as a positive approach.

"We have a good relationship with mainly "straight" media and all it involved was to in form the media with the correct information, breaking down the stereotypes and having a good relationship with the reporters. It also means to be on hand to answer their questions and be available whenever and support them with the correct information. - Anthony Wauldesen, PMB Gay and Lesbian Network

"We make sure we know who the editors are, and that they get the information. We are as nice as we can be, so we get good coverage. Making people feel happy about being queer and getting that into the media." - Nodi Murphy, Out in Africa Film Festival

### 8.3 Individuals rarely engage

During a conversation with Brett Davidson and Sue Valentine (founder of 'In the Pink' radio programme), it was discussed that the sector itself must take a more pro-active stance in demanding media attention. Valentine explained how 'In the Pink' a long running radio programme on Bush Radio, was born and maintained through the dedication of individuals who came together to create the program. We discussed why "In the Pink," which was a great success for many years, was not replicated across the country. Similarly, we discussed the ousting of the Tuesday Night show from Radio 2000. It appears clear that the sector itself has not been successful at demanding its fair share of media and that lobbying and advocacy for greater media attention is needed.

Similarly, focus group discussions and interviews indicate that individuals (that is not advocacy or media representatives of organisations) rarely interact with the media. Few individuals indicated that they have written letters to the editor, phoned call in shows, or otherwise interacted with the media.

### 8.4 Advertising – need for the sector to use their economic clout

There is also the question of advertising as a determining factor in media houses' commitment to covering LGBTI issues. Respondents felt that advertising would not support media content that could be considered unacceptable. Interviewees and focus group participants mentioned again and again that the sector represents a significant segment of the population, and thus must be considered in the media. Yet, this would then lend itself to enquiring, since the sector is so large, are we using our economic and social clout well? Additional research on the LGBTI sector and advertising may help to answer some of these questions and provide valuable information for moving forward.

### 8.5 LGBTI organisations are producing great media products.

Along with issuing press releases and working with the media to help address some of the gaps, a number of LGBTI organisations are producing great media products of their own. These help to fill the need for multi-media that is designed for the community, and provides a source of expression. These include books, film projects, exhibits, radio documentaries and dramas, community theatre, and the list goes on. Appendix 3 outlines just a few of these projects undertaken by the authoring organisations of this research report. However, numerous others exist. The sector would benefit from a research project that would identify these products and their strategies, which could be compiled into a directory or housed on an online portal so that they can be accessed by the sector as well as educators and trainers.

## 9.0 Creating pathways for diversity

### 9.1 Making coverage more inclusive?

There is an overwhelming indication that despite the dissatisfaction with media coverage, there are many potential opportunities and strategies. There are many journalists interested in covering the issues and potential strategies for the sector to help develop media.

### 9.2 What resources do media need?

Most of the interviewees from media indicated that some form of tools would help to support coverage on LGBTI issues. They were given 5 choices.

- Training workshops for journalists
- Media toolkit/ handbook
- Online portal with resources
- Press conferences
- Press release service

Many of the respondents indicated that all of the tools would be helpful.

- The idea for an online portal scored the highest with 73% of those polled indicating that this would be useful.
- 67% indicated that training workshops for journalists would help support coverage.
- All of the suggestions received approval from at least half of the respondents (53.3 % each)

Interviewed media indicated that they could better cover the sector if the following happened.

"More press releases - let us know what's happening. In the online newsroom we don't have enough staff or resources to go out and actively look for stories. We cover what we're aware of." - Female Journalist

"Gay people speak with one voice." – Sandra Gordon, The Media Magazine

"I think it would be up to editors and journalists to make a concerted effort to cover more sexuality stories, and second to receive the necessary training to help them approach these stories in a balanced way." - Female Journalist

"LGBTI people should get more involved, stop avoiding and closing doors, but rather sit down and learn to trust, and give way to promoting better image of LGBTI people, including experts. Avoiding means journalists go to wrong people for a story." – Pieter Van Zyl, Journalist

"Constant education, organisations' putting their heroes forward, using the Press Ombudsmen for bad stories." - Matthew Krouse , Journalist, Mail and Guardian

### 9.3 Strategies for Change

There are many people in media houses who belong to the LGBTI community that have the knowledge and skills, and would benefit from an environment that provided them with more opportunities to cover these issues. There are also many people, especially young people, who enthusiastically want to be involved in the production of media. Specific suggestions as a way forward focus on training, information sharing, and creating opportunities for the sector itself to access the media and tell their own stories.

## A) Education and training needed for organisations:

Respondents felt that training was needed for LGBTI organisations, including how to create a media strategy, engage media, write press releases and manage media relationships.

" there is a lot to learn about how the system works, in-terms of the journalists, editors how they choose stories how to relate to them and form relationships, understanding the media" - Dawn Betteridge, The Triangle Project

"Yes more training, a lot of people are not trained on LGBT sensitisation but report on such issues, often with their own bias and prejudice.". - Melanie Judge, Out LGBTI Well-being

"Monitoring, to be aware of what is out there, be a watchdog" - Luiz De Barros, GEM

"Through media training, strategies and involving staff and volunteers in the media by way of letter writing, articles, stories etc. Need to provide skills to do these activities"

## B) Education and training needed for media:

Training needs were also identified for media practitioners, to make the more aware and sensitive on sexuality issues.

"I think that journalism students should already be taught how to report on these issues and include them while they are studying so that new generation media practitioners are equipped to tackle these subjects."

"Education and awareness are the key to better coverage just as journalists have learnt to cover issues of race using sensitive terms where necessary, and not revealing a persons race when it is not necessary, hopefully journalists will soon learn to do the same for sexuality issues."

Media should be made aware of their unconscious homophobia. Just as media need gender-sensitivity training, so to do they need sexuality sensitivity training" -Christine Davis, Agenda feminist Media

"Training journalists on these issues" - Teboho Senthebane, Freelance Journalist and Student

"We need publishers who are sensitive to LGBTI issues but are also willing and confident enough to publish such pieces"- Christo Valentyn, Freelance Journalist

## C) Information sharing

Information sharing and cooperation between media and the LGBTI sector was also a theme prominent in the research

"Mainstream media can be more viable and join forces with LGBTI organisations to gain a better insight of the issues."- Mashilo Mnisi, Behind the Mask

"Would be great (to have more information) with things like that it makes it easier to take it to the conference room". - Pieter Van Zyl, Journalist

9. 4 Individuals were asked to identify what they really wanted from media.

The overwhelming indication was that there was a desire to see more people like themselves on television and radio, and in print. This coverage should be more accurate in reflecting the diversity of the community, and also show that there are LGBTI people in all walks of life – as Christians, Muslims, mothers' daughters, co-workers etc.

### What's wanted?

More characters and dramas about LGBTI people

- "More characters on South African Television"
- "One should see more gay TV dramas (like "The L Word")"
- "A gay television drama, similar to Queer as Folk"

Characters that reflect real LGBTI people

- "Real LGBTI characters who express their affection"
- "More representation of people like myself and in ways that does not misrepresent our lived reality"
- "To see more LGBTI people being accurately portrayed and their voices heard"
- "More accurate representation of the LGBTI community, whether television dramas or serious issues."

Media that shows that gay people are just like everyone else.

- "Shows/ music around gay/lesbians life portrayed as everyday stuff, because it is. The normal does not have to be hetero."
- "gay people, who actually have lives"
- "In ads different kinds of gays, the flaming homo is so passé"

Greater diversity reflecting the LGBTI community

- "Variety of so called representatives in terms of race, gender, class etc"
- Gay Christians; gay Muslims. Gay families"
- "True love stories to reveal to the society that LGBTI relationships can last"

More coverage

- "Coverage of gay events in society columns, as good news stories, etc"
- "a little more coverage of LGBTI events"
- "More gay topics on Radio and Television"
- "More in depth articles etc"
- "More news coverage on gay events"
- "Create coverage around local issues"
- "Open and affirming coverage"
- "Positive coverage of games-events etc"
- "More LGBTI media and reporting"

More LGBTI voices and stories

- "Biographies on famous gay personalities"
- "More personal interviews – creating an awareness of issues in a personal content."

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## 10.0 Multi-stakeholder approach

Based on the research, it is recommended that a multi-pronged approach be developed that would help to build on skills, increase access, and reduce poor coverage. At the same time additional research would help to create more understanding of this sector, and increased advocacy would help to build the position of the community to make demands of media. The strategy must involve all of the relevant stakeholders involved.

There is a need to build the quantity and quality of the way that media in South Africa reflect the LGBTI sector. This will help build a culture and society of human rights, as well as cater to a significantly large segment of the population. It is important that this media be developed locally, and that a diversity of voices are heard.

## 10.1 Building knowledge and skills

The LGBTI sector, organisations and individuals, can take a more pro-active approach to media. This will mean engaging the media about bad coverage, writing and producing stories, and creating media that is specifically for the community. The training program would build the capacity of various stakeholders involved. Ideally it would bring together representatives from the different sectors for mutual learning, thereby helping to develop relationships at the same time. This could include collaborative projects that would bring media and LGBTI sectors together.

- On an individual level, people could gain skills in how to effectively engage with the media i.e. writing commentary pieces, letters to editors and producers, calling radio talk shows, lodging complaints, etc.
- For organisations – it is important to improve skills in how to build media relations, identifying and packaging newsworthy topics, press releases, and other information, using new technologies such as digital stories and blogs.
- Media would gain from – sensitivity workshops to build knowledge of the issues, training in journalism schools, development of courses on reporting on the LGBTI community.

## 10.2 Developing tools for better media coverage

There is a need to assist members of the media who are interested and committed to reporting on LGBTI issues, and much can be done to providing them with the tools needed. This can include creating an environment, i.e. advocating for newsroom policies on writing and producing on LGBTI issues, to making available information that can be brought to editors. It also means creating real tools that make expert opinions and the many people from the sector who are open to being interviewed by the media, much more readily available.

Information sharing can be facilitated by:

- Developing tools for journalists – toolkit, manual/ guide, list of experts.
- Create an online portal similar to what has been developed to help journalists report on HIV, gender and the environment to facilitate good reporting.
- LGBTI news service that develops writers and supplies copy to newspapers
- Ensuring info about opportunities also gets to LGBTI sector members – calls for script ideas, article, article submission requests, photography contests.

## 10.3 Increase LGBTI access to the media

The research found that the sector would benefit from greater access – this means a great ability to interact with, produce, and engage with media. This could mean increased programmes to actually create media – print articles, radio stories, films, and new media. It would also mean having the opportunities to participate in media activities, such as talk shows, or media around national holidays.

This could include:

- A fellowship program to develop journalistic interest on the topic.
- Internships for LGBTI youth to build skills in media production.

#### 10.4 Advocating for good editorial policies

Media should be aware of the affect that sensationalism has on the sector. It is also necessary to recognise that some media house may not be aware of the problems that this can course the sector as whole. In this case, the media should be guided by ethical principles to protect the subjects of there stories and promote human rights.

- Development of editorial guidelines and a style sheet around LGBTI reporting.
- Rewarding good practice through an annual award.

#### 10.5 Producing Media

To satisfy this need, it will be necessary both to help create understanding among the media, as well as create opportunities for the sector to be actively involved in media. This may involve creating LGBTI focused radio, print and television, or working with existing 'mainstream' programs.

- Develop projects that create access either to mainstream media, or result in new LGBTI media - LGBTI radio magazine programme/ radio drama, comic books, life stories, etc.
- Collection of digital stories
- Increased publications

#### 10.6 Research

There is a need to much better understand the media and the LGBTI sector.

- Market research to understand the advertising power of the sector
- Comprehensive media monitoring project.
- Research to uncover the gender and race dimensions of media coverage, as well as explore how even writing the LGBTI sector certain communities are less visible in the media.
- Literature review of gay media being produced and compiling this information.

### 11.0 Conclusions

It is clear from the research that work needs to be done in building the quantity and quality of the LGBTI presence in the South African Media,

What is also clear is that opportunities do exist. There are outlets and journalists who are creating good media. It is evident that organisation's have successfully engaged with some journalists, and that there is a significant number of journalists who are interested in LGBTI issues. Some lack the knowledge and skills to cover the issues effectively.

This provides for a very interesting opening for the LGBTI sector, as it shows that there is the possibility to develop strategies to help journalists in their work and for the two groups to interact in a mutually beneficial way. It has become necessary to not only focus on what media is doing wrong, but also to building in-roads.

Of course, there is some media that will be difficult to reach. The strategy to address this will be to create advocacy campaigns that seek to make homo-prejudiced coverage as unacceptable as say racist coverage. It will mean mobilising the sector to speak out strongly against such coverage.

As outlined in the recommendations, a multi-faceted approach, one that involves a wide range of stakeholders in a wide range of activities, is key. It is hoped that this research will contribute to ongoing programmes and will also be part of continuing work to build good media on LGBTI issues.

## Appendix 1 - Media Capacity Building

A number of projects and programmes have been developed to build the capacity of media to cover issues that they generally may not be familiar with, and that may require sensitisation. For example, coverage about women, HIV/AIDS or people living with HIV. Some of these same strategies can be used to develop good coverage of LGBTI issues. Following are just a few examples that can be looked to when developing strategies.

- Journ-AIDS is South African web portal developed to help journalists report on HIV/AIDS issues. The website is maintained by the HIV/AIDS and the Media Project at the University of the Witwatersrand. It includes fact sheets, reporting tips and a contact database.
- Internews - Local Voices Project – launched in 2002 in Nigeria and Kenya to train and support local radio journalists, talk show hosts and DJs to improve their reporting and programming on issues related to HIV/ AIDS. In 2005-06, the project expanded to Ethiopia and Cote d'Ivoire and included support for print journalists. Internews has also conducted support activities for improved HIV/AIDS coverage in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. In addition to supporting journalists, Internews has convened media managers in Russia, India, and Local Voices project sites to increase and improve media programming on HIV/AIDS. As a result, media outlets have increased air time and print space to the issue and have begun to use more accurate and less stigmatising language on HIV/AIDS.
- Association of Journalists Against AIDS in Tanzania (AJAAT) – an association formed by journalists concerned by the spread of HIV/AIDS in the country. The association supports efforts of journalists who seek to deepen their journalistic expertise and knowledge on HIV/AIDS and the social, economical and political factors that affect it. The association's objectives are to: promote writing (Newspapers/Newsletter) and speaking (Radio, TV programmes) about the already existing campaign for people to abstain from and unsafe sex; play a networking role to bring together journalists aspiring to join the worldwide campaign against HIV/AIDS; and. promote professional debate on matters related to HIV/AIDS pandemic.
- Journalists for Human Rights (JHR) - a Canadian Charitable Organisation dedicated to providing African media with the necessary tools to foster increased awareness of human rights issues in Africa. JHR's aim is to improve both the quality and quantity of human rights reporting through programmes, training seminars, and online information that facilitate accurate and concrete reporting of human rights issues.
- The African Network of Environmental Journalists (ANEJ) - an organisation that seeks to promote public understanding of environmental issues in Africa by improving the quality, accuracy, and intensity of environmental reporting. The organisation aims to increase the coverage of environmental issues in the media in Africa and to enhance the capacity of African journalists to report on environmental issues through workshops, networking, information sharing and institutional development.
- Gender Links - is committed to a Southern Africa in which women and men are able to realise their full potential and participate equally in all aspects of public and private life. GL works to achieve this vision through promoting gender equality in and through the media as well as in all areas of governance. Activities to improve media coverage of gender issues have including developing manual and publication, training, and an opinion and commentary service that places articles in media houses across Southern Africa.

Appendix 2 - Publication, journals and newspapers screened by core 2006

Abacas-Abacas	Harvard business Review- HBR	Recovery-Recovery
AFRA News-AFRA News	Focus Helen Suzman	Review of African Political
Africa Insight-AI	Foundation –Focus	Economy-RAPE
African Recovery-AR	Human science Research	SA Human Rights
Agenda-Agenda	council-HSRC	Commission-SAHRC
Alliance-Alliance	IDASA-IDASA	SA Labour Bulletin-SALB
Bargaining Monitor-BM	IDS-IDS	SA Reserve Bank –SARB
Bellagio Newsletters- Bellagio	IFES-IFES	SA Tourism Update-SATU
Botswana Guardian-BG	Inns Labour Brief-ILB	Saturday Star-S/Star
Business Day-BD	Institute for Dev.	Scientific American-SA
Business week-BW	Research-IDR	Social Development
Cape Argus-CA	Institute for Security	Review-SDR
Cape Times-CT	Studies-ISS	South African Institute of
Centre for Development	IDRC-IDRC	International affairs –SAIIA
and enterprise-CDE	Jewish Report-JR	South African Institute of
Center for Economic	Journal of Democracy- JOD	race Relations (Fast
Policy Research-CEPR	Labour Notes-LN	Facts)-FF
Center for Policy studies- CPS	Labour Research-LR	Southern African
Challenge- Challenge	Leading Edge-Leading	Economist –SAE
Child and Youth Care- CYC	Edge	Sowetan-Sowetan
Citizen-Citizen	London Review Of Books- LRB	Star Business Report-SBR
City Press-CP	Mail and Guardian- M and G	Sunday Independent-SI
CIVICUS-CIVICUS	Medical Research	Sunday Times-ST
Civil Society Watch-CSW	Council-MRC	The Star –Star
Common Path-C/Path	Mining Weekly-MW	The Spectator- Spectator
Contemporary Labour	Monday developments- MD	Third World Network-TWN
Law-CLL	Multinational Monitor-MM	Time-Time
Daily News –DN	MWENGO-MWENGO	Track Two-TRAC
Democracy watch-DW	Namibian –Namibian	Transformation- Transformation
Development Policy	National Geographic-NG	Transparency
Review-DPR	New African-NA	international-TI
Development Southern	New Internationalist-NI	Umsebenzi Online – Umsebenzi
Africa-DSA	New Statesman- Statesman	Umtapo Centre- Umtapo
East cape Herald- Herald	New Yorker-NY	UNICEF-UNICEF
Economist-Economist	New York Review Of	UN Non Governmental
ECPAT Newsletter-ECPA	Books-NYRB	Liaison Service-NGLS
Electoral Institute of	News and Letters-NL	UNRISD News –UNRISD
Southern Africa-EISA	Newsweek-Newsweek	Workers International
Employment Law-EL	One World action-OWA	Vanguard League-WIVL
Engineering News-EN	Overseas Development	Voluntas-Voluntas
Enterprise-Enterprise	Council-ODC	Yes!-Yes
Farmers Weekly-FW	Overseas Development	Youth Development
Finance Weekly-FW	Institute-ODI	Journal-YDJ.
Financial Mail-FM	Parliamentary Monitoring	
Foreign Affairs-FA	Group-PMG	
Fortune-Fortune	Pathways-Pathways	
Frontline-Frontline	Postal Telephone and	
Gender and	Telegraph International- PTTI	
development-GD		
Getaway-Getaway		
Go between/NGLS-NGLS		

### Appendix 3 - Examples of LGBTI Media produced

In order to raise public awareness and to fulfill its role as a community archive, GALA has implemented an outreach strategy that uses theatre and film productions as well as an innovative tour called "Queer Johannesburg". This is complemented by more traditional methods, such as exhibits. Community Media for Development/ CMFD Productions using participatory communication to develop media product for and by marginalised communities. Following are just a few examples of media produced.

Pride: Protest and Celebration' (2006), edited by Shaun de Waal and Anthony Manion – a colorfully produced by GALA that looks back on the history of Pride in South Africa.

Coming Out Again: A multi-media project produced by GALA and managed by CMFD Productions incorporating a wide number of collaborative partners. The play uses the real-life stories of the actors, each a young member of the LGBTI community, three being HIV positive, others as coping with positive family members, losing loved ones, and trying to stay negative, the play aims to raise awareness and reduce stigma towards people living with HIV. The live theatre was adapted for radio.

Eyes wide open - A comic book produced as part of the Coming Out Again project, about people from different sexualities sharing their experiences and breaking the silence around issues of STI's, HIV and disclosure.

Are your rights respected? - A comic book produced as part of COA that looks at issues of sexual violence, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), HIV and different sexualities in the Deaf community.

Documentary films - GALA has been involved in producing a number of documentary films including: Property of the State: Gay Men in the Apartheid Military (2003); Everything Must Come To Light (2002); and Simon and I (2002 - part of the Steps for the Future project)

Balancing Act: South African Gay and Lesbian Youth Speak Out – by Joanne Bloch and Karen Martin. Book and traveling exhibition produced by GALA that shares the experiences of LGBTI youth in South Africa.

Outside the Lines - A pilot radio drama recorded and Produced by CMFD Productions based on the Eyes Wide Open storyline. This drama looks at the experiences of black LGBTI youth in the townships.

LGBTI radio Magazine – pilot magazine program written and produced by CMFD productions that combines, reports, interviews and insight into LGBTI life in South Africa.

For more information about GALA communication/ media, please visit <http://www.gala.wits.ac.za/index.htm>

For more information about Community Media for Development/ CMFD Productions communication/ media, please visit: <Http://www.cmfd.org>