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Africa's first butterfly atlas takes wing

Africa's first butterfly atlas has finally emerged from its chrysalis – a seven-year metamorphosis from concept to hardcover.

The atlas offers a complete, integrated database of butterfly distribution records in Southern Africa, including Swaziland and Lesotho, one of the continent's most bio-diverse butterfly regions. It identifies priority regions and taxa for field surveys, and beefs up awareness of their conservation and role in ecosystems as pollinators and harbingers of climate change.

Red Listing

Butterflies belong to *Lepidoptera*, one of the most diverse and species-rich of the insect orders. Importantly, the atlas offers a detailed conservation assessment and Red Listing of all the sub-continent's butterflies, not only for threatened species but also for those species not currently threatened. As such, it will guide government, municipalities, landowners and others on the steps that need to be taken to conserve the region's butterfly populations. The atlas is a sweep of information on butterflies, both in the wild and from specimens in private, institutional and museum collections, such as those at London's Natural History Museum and the African Butterfly Research Institute in Kenya.

Mapping it

For the first time, grid-referenced distribution maps are presented for all the region's butterflies – 794 species and subspecies in total, including 657 distinct species.

Launched under the umbrella of the Southern African Butterfly Conservation Assessment (SABCA), the atlas is an alliance between UCT's Animal Demography Unit (ADU), where the project management was based; the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), which provided core funding for the project; and the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa (LepSoc), which co-ordinated and sponsored the field surveys and provided much butterfly expertise.

It's the first insect project that SANBI has funded.

The ADU is an old hand at running atlas projects, having produced bird (1997) and frog (2004) and reptile atlases (the latter of which is due to be published later this year).

Project co-ordinator and alumna



On the wing: Dr Silvia Mecenero, project co-ordinator of Africa's first Butterfly Atlas. Launched under the umbrella of the Southern African Butterfly Conservation Assessment, the atlas is a partnership between UCT's Animal Demography Unit, the South African National Biodiversity Institute, and the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa; and offers a complete database of butterfly distributions in Southern Africa, including Swaziland and Lesotho.

Dr Silvia Mecenero, who describes herself as a conservation ecologist, has a long association with the ADU.

While a PhD student in the unit in 2001, she infiltrated three breeding colonies of the Cape fur seal in Namibia. For two years she collected and dissected seal scats; the fishy debris yielded information on seal diet, useful in tracking fish populations for fisheries, and for managing the country's valuable horse mackerel resource. "Sorting out, counting and measuring thousands of little fish ear-bones from the scats was blinding work," Mecenero recalls from the ADU in the new Department of Biological Sciences, the product of a merger between Zoology and Botany in 2012.

Orchestrated effort

One of the project's triumphs was the response from citizen scientists. Butterflies are relatively easy to see and identify, even for non-specialists. At the time, citizen scientists yielded over 17 000 photographic records for the project's online virtual museum.

LepSoc has continued with the virtual museum, and it now hosts over 30 000 photographic records. Also, as part of SABCA, the first Butterfly Census Week was launched, for public monitoring of butterfly populations. (This bi-annual event is now managed by LepSoc, and the 7th census was held a couple of weeks ago.)

"It's been a huge boost to public awareness," says Mecenero.

Conservation threats

While butterflies may seem just the pretty subjects of little girls' dreams, they're also the flagship species for insect conservation. Insects are the most species-rich group of animals, and their vital role in ecosystems – especially those that are insect pollinators – now underpins their conservation status.

Naturally, the atlas has a strong conservation message.

151 species and sub-species – one fifth of Southern Africa's butterflies – are of conservation concern, and 8% are threatened with extinction.

The most threatened are right under our noses in the Cape fynbos – as well as in the KwaZulu-Natal midlands grassland biome.

Fifty per cent of the butterflies listed are endemic, which means they are found only in the atlas region and nowhere else.

Sixty species are threatened with extinction, with 14 considered critically endangered, 27 endangered and 19 vulnerable. Three of the critically endangered species are possibly extinct. Until recently, that number was thought to be four – the Waterberg Copper (*Eriksonia edgei*) of the Waterberg in Limpopo has been considered extinct for more than 20 years. But in March this year it was rediscovered in another locality, by LepSoc's Professor Mark Williams. Researchers are working on a conservation plan for the new locality in a private nature reserve in the Waterberg. Habitat is vital to butterfly

conservation. Many occur in small, limited areas because they are usually associated with specific host plants and host ants that are needed to complete their life cycle. The atlas also comes with useful habitat information that flags conservation concerns. For example, some butterflies, such as the *Lycaenids*, occur only in a tiny area the size of a rugby field.

"If a species occurs in a small area, we flag it for conservation if the area is currently threatened, or in case a threat arises," says Mecenero.

Alien vegetation

Most habitat loss and degradation are due to forestry, agriculture, mining and housing, inappropriate fire regimes, and alien vegetation that is replacing indigenous plants. In the Western Cape, rapid land development poses a significant threat.

"Unless South Africa pays careful attention to the conservation of our butterflies now, we could lose many more of these fascinating creatures – and the important services they provide to our ecosystems," warns Mecenero.

But indirectly, the atlas is also about other creatures bright and beautiful.

"We're identifying butterfly hotspots to see how they overlap with bird areas and nature conservation areas."

The project forms the backbone of Mecenero's postdoctoral fellowship, through the University of Pretoria. With the atlas done and dusted, she's clearly chuffed. Much like a conductor,

Fast facts from the Butterfly Atlas

- South Africa is home to 17% of Africa's 4 000 butterfly species.
- French researchers estimate the yearly value of insect pollinators such as butterflies to be some €153 billion.
- While butterflies may not contribute as much as bees, they perform unique pollination functions. *Aeroptes tulbaghia* is the only known pollinator of several plants with red flowers, such as *Disa uniflora*, the red Disa orchid.
- Some eight per cent of Southern Africa's butterflies are threatened with extinction. The most threatened are right under our noses in the Cape fynbos – and in the KwaZulu-Natal midlands grassland biome.
- 151 species and sub-species – one fifth of Southern Africa's butterflies – are of conservation concern.
- Fifty per cent of the butterflies listed are endemic, found only in the atlas region.
- Sixty species are threatened with extinction, with 14 considered critically endangered, 27 endangered and 19 vulnerable.
- Three critically endangered species are possibly extinct. Until March this year, when the Waterberg Copper (*Eriksonia edgei*) was rediscovered in the Waterberg after more than 20 years, that number was thought to have been four.

she's led a large and variegated ensemble – ecologists, lepidopterists and Joe Public – through numerous rewrites, edits and revisions.

"It's been the best job ever. I've loved it."

Looking ahead, she wants to expand the atlas into sub-Saharan Africa, digitise all the collections, and expand the virtual museum. But this will depend on funding.

There are also gaps in the records, particularly in the Free State, Northern Cape and Lesotho, more out of reach than other areas to citizen scientists and the coterie of butterfly experts and enthusiasts who have brought this valuable work to fruition. ■

(For more information: vmus.adu.org.za; census information on LepSoc website: www.lepsoc.org.za) (Helen.Swinger@uct.ac.za)

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5 Rustenburg Ave, Rondebosch



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Picture: Cape Argus 5



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news in pictures • news in pictures • news in pictures • news in pictures

1 Though AIDS is now a disease one can live with thanks to medical advances, it's still imperative to be tested for HIV, not just once but regularly, Vice-Chancellor Dr Max Price said at the annual Candlelight Memorial Concert on 9 May, organised by UCT's HIV/AIDS Institutional Co-ordination Unit (HAICU). Though the event was curtailed, the theme, Stop Stigma: Connect – Include – Embrace, challenged the campus community to finding new ways of addressing stigma. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Crain Soudien (in picture) said that much progress made on the HIV/AIDS front reflected in what the university taught and researched. But there was another realm of engagement that was equally important in addressing HIV/AIDS and here he applauded the efforts of students who "are out there" and had trained as counsellors. They had opened the way for important discussions on sexuality and the creation of informal spaces from which UCT had been able to learn.

2&3 While visiting speaker and former UCT Vice-Chancellor, Dr Mamphela Ramphele, urged UCT students in the Molly Blackburn Hall on May 2 to "become obsessive about finding the opportunity in the problem", a group of UCT students outside the venue were protesting Ramphele's allegedly 'exploitative' economic policies by staging a placard demonstration. In the main, the placards referred to the fact that during Ramphele's tenure, certain services at the university, including cleaning and estate maintenance, were outsourced. Ramphele, the leader of the recently-launched Agang political platform, had been invited by a cohort of business-oriented student societies to talk about the role of youth in entrepreneurship. She advised students to resist "settling for stable jobs" and to consider forging entrepreneurial careers instead. That evening, Ramphele delivered the annual Smuts Hall lecture, telling her audience that while young women in South Africa had role models, young men did not. She said South Africans needed to pay attention to the love and care that should be given towards its young sons and grandsons. "I believe that this sense of powerlessness by men, and young men in particular, is what lies behind the brutal violence against women and children," she said. She asked how South Africans could make sure that hope was restored, and said Agang wanted to build a new political culture, "a culture that is derived from the values of our constitution". That, she said, included participatory democracy, "not just the ticking of ballot papers, but actual democracy".

4 Music – and its ability to unite cultures – forms a significant focus of celebrating Africa Month. Last week UCT's Faculty of Law held a "Youth in Africa" programme at the Kramer Law Building featuring music and dance performed by students and staff. A competition called Kramer's Got Talent included Sotho dance, gumboot and township jive by UCT School of Dance students, while musical interludes were provided by the UCT Faculty of Law Choir. Various foods from many African countries were also on offer, accompanied by short scholarly presentations on trends in youth culture. This past weekend saw the African Music Student Showcase "Zambezi" at the Baxter Concert Hall. The concert focused on music and dance from countries that the Zambezi River winds through, namely Angola, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique.

5 Speaking at a Worker's Day commemoration at UCT on 3 May, Zwelinzima Vavi, the general-secretary of Cosatu, said the only way for the South African economy to create sustainable jobs, eradicate poverty and build a "more prosperous and equal society" was by means of a "radical restructuring" away from its current reliance on exporting raw materials to one based on "modern manufacturing industry". The leader of South Africa's largest trade-union federation added that a failure to do so would be "disastrous", not only for unemployed young people but for all South Africans, who would be missing out on the potential contributions these young people could make to the country. Vavi and other prominent trade unionists were invited by UCT's Students' Representative Council to share their insights into the conditions of workers in South Africa.

6 A new production at the Baxter Theatre, *Long Street Nights*, celebrates and remembers the rich legacy of South African theatre, in particular the work of playwright and director Barney Simon. Nicky Rebelo directs a cast of six, three of whom are UCT graduates, weaving stories captured by the cast themselves of life on Long Street after midnight. The company includes (clockwise with scarf) Antonio Fisher, Thando Doni, Riana Alfreds, Daneel van der Walt, Nicky Rebelo, Thami Mbongo and Natasha Dryden. In a style made famous by Simon, they spent two weeks exploring Long Street in order to workshop and create the characters. *Long Street Nights* premieres at the Baxter Golden Arrow Studio on 8 May and runs to 1 June. Until 18 May, the Baxter is also running a student special for *Long Street Nights* and another production, *The Miser*. For R45, students get entry to either of the productions, and a free drink and samoosa. (Only on presentation of a valid student card.)

7 While high-profile Zimbabwean politicians debated the procedural concerns around Zimbabwe's readiness for general elections scheduled for 29 June – Virginia Muwanigwa (right) approached the debate from a different angle. Speaking at the second instalment of the "To whom does Africa belong?" series, Muwanigwa, of the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe, noted with concern that the voice of the people, "who are the victims in all of this", remained suppressed. The debate took place at UCT on 26 April and Muwanigwa shared a platform with Professor Brian Raftopoulos of the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition and high-profile representatives of Zimbabwe's major political parties. Selina Mudavanhu, a doctoral student at UCT's Centre for Film and Media Studies, chaired the debate which was jointly organised by UCT's Zimbabwe Students' Society, the university's Students' Representative Council, civil-society movement PASSOP and the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition.

8 As the country commemorates the 20th anniversary of Chris Hani's assassination, the struggle to emancipate South Africa's people from their socio-economic troubles must intensify, said Malusi Gigaba, national Minister of Public Enterprises. Gigaba was speaking at the first of what is to be an annual Chris Hani Memorial Lecture in memory of the slain anti-apartheid leader, held at UCT on 25 April. Gigaba said Hani had espoused the most radical solutions to these challenges, and set an example for the next generation of leaders by immersing himself in "the thick of every element of the struggle". The memorial was organised by UCT's Progressive Youth Alliance, a coalition of student political party organisations.

9 The Building Children's Nursing for Africa conference was hosted by the Child Nurse Practice Development Initiative, in the UCT School of Child and Adolescent Health, last month. This landmark event, held in collaboration with the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, drew over 140 nurses and other health care practitioners from across Africa, as well as representatives from the United Kingdom and Madagascar. Conference presentations, delivered over the course of three full days, focussed on acknowledging and sustaining both existing and future nurse-led research initiatives in Africa to expand the data base on best available evidence for child nursing practice on the continent. Here, Emeritus Professor Marian Jacobs, former Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at UCT, is pictured delivering the opening plenary in which she encouraged nurses' increased involvement in the development of South Africa's National Health Insurance policy in order to advocate for children's health care needs. ■

Booming black middle class weighs in with a whopping R400 billion annual consumer spend

South Africa's black middle class has more than doubled over the past eight years, growing 250%: from 1.7 million South Africans in 2004 to an estimated 4.2 million last year.

This dramatic growth has been revealed by new research conducted by the UCT Unilever Institute of Strategic Marketing. The Unilever Institute's latest study on the black middle class, titled *4 Million and Rising*, has found that the annual spend of the black middle class began pulling ahead of that of their white middle-class counterparts in 2008. It has since skyrocketed to over R400-billion per annum.

"Despite setbacks caused by the recent recession, South Africa's black middle class continues to expand rapidly, and is more influential and powerful than ever before," said the Institute's director, Professor John Simpson. In contrast, the white middle class has remained fairly stagnant over the same period, with its adult population growing

from 2.8 million in 2004 to 3 million in 2012.

Simpson, who led the *4 Million and Rising* study, said it was important for business and industry to understand this market better, in order to facilitate the provision of goods and services to meet its needs.

"That this market continues to grow and prosper is crucial to the health and future of the economy. The black middle class is helping create a vibrant and stable society by increasing South Africa's skills base, deepening employment, and widening the tax net.

"As this market has matured, it has become much more complex than marketers and advertisers have assumed. Marketers are not adjusting fast enough to meet the needs of this rapidly transforming market segment.

This new order demands new strategic thinking from businesses and manufacturers; from how they both create and sell products, to the way they distribute and market," he added.

Simpson said that for marketers,



"South Africa's black middle class continues to expand rapidly, and is more influential and powerful than ever before," said the Unilever Institute's director, Professor John Simpson, at the Cape Town presentation of the *4 Million and Rising* study on 9 May.

one of the most important changes in this target market over the past decade relates to connectivity. An estimated 95% of the black middle class now own cell phones, compared to 64% in 2004. Correspondingly, the advent of smartphones and increased internet access have seen internet

usage quadrupling over this period.

Researchers found radical changes in consumer behaviour over the past eight years, due in part to the intervening recession and the enduring economic downturn. In turn, these factors have affected the job market, and 66% of those surveyed

maintain that getting a job is harder now than it was five years ago.

"All these factors have led to a new financial conservatism, with respondents reporting that it is no longer 'bling' at all costs," said Simpson. In contrast to the Institute's studies on the black middle class in the early 2000s, which revealed rampant spending, the majority of participants in the *4 Million and Rising* study reported curbing their spending and only using credit when something was absolutely essential. Of those surveyed, 80% reported they were now more cautious about spending, while 22% admitted they were struggling to manage their debt.

The recent study also showed significant changes in consumers' relationships with brands. While respondents had reported previously that brands helped to define their identity, this attitude has shifted, with most of those surveyed now viewing brands as extensions of their identity, said Simpson. ■

UCT Libraries celebrates sixty years of special collections

This year, the University Libraries' Special Collections Section celebrates its 60th anniversary. The event – and the official opening of the newly-restored JW Jagger Reading Room, which now houses all the Special Collections under one roof – will be held as part of the university's Africa Month celebrations.

It's thanks to the vision of René Immelman, University Librarian from 1935 to 1970, that UCT's collections of African and rare published materials and manuscripts were begun, said libraries executive director Gwenda Thomas.

"Successive library heads have continued to support the growth of these collections and their development

into the fine research repository that it is today – attracting scholars both nationally and internationally."

The collections that make up Special Collections – the African Studies Collection, Manuscripts & Archives, the Audio-Visual Archive, and the rare books collections – include books, pamphlets, periodicals, photographs and film, archival material, maps and posters, and are renowned for their extent, their depth, and their uniqueness.

A world-class collection deserves a fitting home; and to this end, the JW Jagger building has been painstakingly restored, reflecting an international emphasis on the importance and centrality of special collections in academic libraries.

Designed by JM Solomon, and one of the first buildings erected on the Groote Schuur campus, the JW Jagger Reading Room once again exudes a gracious and scholarly ambience. Since it re-opened its doors in August last year, the many very favourable comments from researchers attest to the success of this vision.

The official opening last week will be followed throughout Africa Month by events that showcase some of the collections. There will be screenings of African films from the extensive audio-visual archive, displays showing examples from some of the 'manuscript, rare book and Africana collections', and a digital and print exhibition of maps of Africa. ■

UCT Libraries will be celebrating Africa Month with a variety of events:

- *Maps of Africa*, a digital and print exhibition, opened on 11 May in the Research Wing Level 4 of the Chancellor Oppenheimer Library. This exhibition showcases a selection of the maps in UCT Libraries' collections, placing them in their historical context.
- Film screenings will be held on the last three Fridays of May in the Ulwazi Training Lab in the Knowledge Commons of the Chancellor Oppenheimer Library, starting at 12h45.
- 17 May: *A Day With The President* (1995) 53 mins
- 24 May: *Mama Goema: The Cape Town Beat In Five Movements* (2011) 56 mins
- 31 May: *Ikon South Africa*: Short documentary showcase
 - o *Native Yard* 13 mins
 - o *Gemaakte Hare* 7 mins
 - o *Biko's Children* 14 mins
 - o *Amina My Daughter* 15 mins
 - o *Pam & Ashraf* 15 mins



ACHAP

Passion for research... care for health

Director Research, Monitoring and Evaluation - Botswana (Southern Africa)

Established in 2005, the African Centre for Health Advancement and Policy (ACHAP) is a country-led, public-private development partnership between the Government of Botswana, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and MEDACOM Company Foundation which has been committed to advancing Botswana's national research agenda. Currently, the research focus of the organization is centered on four main areas of focus: HIV/AIDS Treatment Optimization, TB/HIV Treatment Integration, Safe Medical Waste Circulation, and Knowledge Generation.

Looking towards the future presents new and exciting challenges for ACHAP. Of significance is the goal to expand program reach beyond HIV issues to align with current health care priorities. It is with this context that the Director Research, Monitoring & Evaluation oversees identifying critical research needs, overseeing credible research proposals, high quality research activities, and managing the dissemination of results. While the focus is on limited research you will also provide expertise on

proposed development, evaluation design and methodologies, programme monitoring and outcome measurement.

You will operate in Botswana as a member of an executive team who is excited by the possibilities of change in a time of huge challenges. To be successful in the past you will possess strong research and analytical skills, be familiar with resource mobilization and have a proven results oriented approach. This, together with your strong commitment of monitoring and evaluation issues are key areas. PhD or equivalent qualifications, 10 years of senior research experience and proven success in securing and managing funded research projects qualifies you for the post.

Interested applicants may apply to careers@achap.org quoting reference number ACHAP/2013 in the subject line. Closing date for applications is 15 May 2013. If you have an email or send a hard copy with 40 hours pass card Botswana identity.

HRMC

UCT shines in World University Rankings by Subject

UCT has been ranked among the top 100 universities in the world for eight of its subject areas, according to the QS World University Rankings by Subject released on 8 May. UCT was ranked at 32 for its Education and Training subject area.

The other seven subject areas are: Earth and Marine Sciences, Politics, Psychology, Law and Legal Studies, History and Archaeology, Geography, and English Language and Literature.

Regarded as one of Africa's leading universities, UCT's consistent performance in world ranking systems speaks to the university's commitment to quality research as well as first-rate higher education.

This year UCT features in 19 of the 30 subject areas measured by QS, which ranks the world's top 200 higher education institutions. Three of UCT's subject areas – Agriculture, Civil Engineering and Politics – have also been rated for the first time. For the third edition of the QS World University Rankings by Subject, 2 858



universities have been evaluated, and 678 institutions ranked in total.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Danie Visser said: "The different world rankings of universities each measure different aspects of universities' performance. The methodology of the QS survey relies heavily on a global survey of what academics and employers think of a particular university (50%). One would expect that a university in the global South would not do particularly well in such surveys, since most of the respondents are probably from northern countries. It is therefore most pleasing that UCT's work has registered sufficiently

internationally to be placed in the top 100 in no fewer than eight different areas, and in the top 200 in 19 areas."

The surveys are complemented by three other measures: the citations per faculty, as indicated by SciVerse Scopus (20%), the staff-student ratio (20%), and the degree of internationalisation, measured by the proportion of international students (5%) and the proportion of international faculty (5%).

"Since UCT's research impact is above the world average in many areas, and because we have a very good proportion of international students, these indicators would tend to boost our scores," added Visser. "As always, we are mindful that this is just one view of the cathedral, but we are very pleased about this renewed confirmation of the value of our work." ■

(For more information on the QS World University Rankings by Subject, please visit www.topuniversities.com or www.iu.qs.com.)

National Orders for UCT stalwarts

President Jacob Zuma has bestowed National Orders on UCT wastewater treatment expert Professor George Ekama, of the Faculty of Engineering & the Built Environment, and on former political activist and UCT academic the late Dr Neville Alexander.

Three other UCT alumni – former politician Colin Eglin, opera star Pretty Yende, and Herbert de la Hunt, a key figure in the South African Scout Movement – were also on the honours list.

The orders are conferred yearly on Freedom Day, 27 April, and as Zuma said, they represent peace, unity and the restoration of human dignity for all South Africans.

Ekama was among those to be awarded this, the highest recognition in the land, when Zuma bestowed on him the Order of Mapungubwe, in silver, at a ceremony in Pretoria.

The award was made “for research that has provided innovative solutions to enhancing and improving wastewater treatment and helped South Africa find answers to its water shortage problems”.

Alexander, meanwhile, who died on 27 August 2012, was posthumously awarded the Order of Luthuli, in silver. This honour recognises South African citizens who have contributed to the struggle for democracy, nation-building, human rights, justice and peace, as well as for the resolution of conflict.

It was given to Alexander “for his courageous rejection of injustice and his excellent contribution to the struggle against apartheid in striving to ensure equality for all South Africans”.

An activist, author and academic, Alexander – who spent ten years on Robben Island – was described by the *Cape Times* at the time of his death as “a towering figure in South Africa’s intellectual landscape”.

Initially, Alexander wanted to become a priest, but was advised to register for medicine at the University of Fort Hare in the Eastern Cape, where he grew up. However, he soon found he could not apply, as he lacked the mathematics background required, and he decided to do a Bachelor of Arts at UCT instead, majoring in German and history.

Alexander, best known for his role in the struggle for a democratic and non-racial South Africa, as well as for his scholarly achievements, established the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA) at UCT in 1992.

The *Cape Times* said of him: “Amid the noise which has come to characterise our political debate, his was a quiet voice; reasoned, steadfast and independent.”

He had deep roots in Cape Town, and a long and close association with UCT – which did not stop him from disagreeing with the university on the use of race as a criterion for admission.

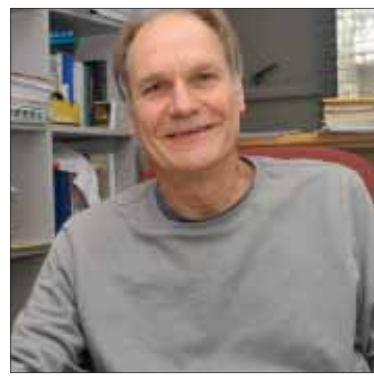
Ekama, meanwhile, is a civil engineer who is interested in lifting the country’s status in the field of wastewater treatment to centre stage in the global community. He lives by a simple research credo: “locally inspired, globally relevant”. He has held a National Research Foundation (NRF) A1-rating for more than 10 years. The rating recognises him as a world leader in his field.

After qualifying from UCT in civil engineering, he started work on a construction site, but his interest in wastewater treatment was sparked when he met former UCT Professor Gerrit van Rooyen Marais, an expert in the field, who later became his PhD supervisor.

He describes his area of research as “fascinating” and says if you are looking for a biological process that needs to take place before treating water, don’t give up: “There are bacteria out there that can do amazing things. You are bound to find one”.

Ekama says he is honoured to have been nominated for the award, and it is to the government’s credit that it granted the award “for such an unglamorous, yet vital area of research”.

Ekama is widely published, with more than 150 papers on wastewater treatment in top international journals, and is also highly cited. He is one of only seven South Africans (and one of only four South African academics) to be listed on www.ISIHighlyCited.com, an international website of the most cited academics globally.



Highest honours in the land: Prof George Ekama, who was awarded the Order of Mapungubwe, in silver, by President Jacob Zuma on 27 April; and Dr Neville Alexander, who was posthumously awarded the Order of Luthuli, in silver, for his contribution towards the struggle against apartheid.



Ekama has remained at the forefront of developments in wastewater treatment since the 1970s, primarily through a strong research group. He says he has always been a team player, working with postgraduate students and remaining focused on the research group’s strengths. In 25 years under NRF review, he has supervised 43 master’s and 24 PhD students.

With his master’s and doctoral students, he has twice won the Water Institute of Southern Africa’s (WISA) Umgeni Award for the most significant paper on water, as well as the WISA Piet Vosloo Memorial prize for the development of

mathematical models for wastewater treatment plant design and operation.

He is a senior fellow of WISA, and a fellow of the Royal Society of South Africa, of UCT and of the South African Academy of Engineers.

Eglin and De la Hunt were awarded the Order of the Baobab which recognises South African citizens who have contributed to community service, business and economy, science, medicine and technological innovation.

Yende was given the Order of Ikhamanga in silver, which recognises South African citizens who have excelled in the fields of arts, culture, literature, music, journalism and sport. ■
(David.Capel@uct.ac.za)

In the heart of the country

It’s a wet day in Cape Town, and Philippi’s sprawling vegetable fields are caterpillar-green under heavy skies. In one small corner along Varkensvlei Road, beyond the farmlands, there’s more activity than usual, with wheelbarrows, trucks and tractors everywhere you look.

A new school building for pre-schoolers is going up, and inside the security gates, small groups of people in hardhats and thick-soled boots wait to be briefed.

“Who’s keen for the heavy machinery?” asks the foreman.

Postgraduate student Salma Kagee’s hand goes up.

“It sounds like a whole lot of fun,” she says, straightening her pink hardhat and kicking the mud off her boots. Her co-workers from the Faculty of Commerce are similarly attired.

Behind her is a sign: “Danger – Open Holes”.

“And dangerous,” she adds.

Forty Dutch students were on site the previous week – and they’ve left their hefty footwear behind. They come every year to build infrastructure where teaching can take root and communities can grow.

From here, UCT – high up against Devil’s Peak – isn’t even visible. It’s one of the reasons Kagee and her colleagues are here. They’re part of a move to build early learning centres for children in poor areas. It’s linked to the R150 million Starting Chance Campaign, initiated by the Southern Africa Sustainable Development Initiative (SASDI). SASDI has put R2.1 million towards this new



Builder Bob: Postgraduate student Salma Kagee slaps plaster on bricks. Kagee was one of the Faculty of Commerce’s volunteers helping to extend the Philippi Children’s Centre. It’s linked to the R150 million Starting Chance Campaign, initiated by the Southern Africa Sustainable Development Initiative.

development, partnering with Granbuild. They also partner with volunteers – like those from the UCT Faculty of Commerce.

“Children need cognitive stimulation from a very young age if they are to become university graduates with good employment prospects,” said Stuart Hendry, director of the faculty’s Development Unit for New Enterprise. Hendry is the main fundraiser for the Starting Chance Campaign, and a SASDI board member.

In 2011, the faculty worked with the City of Cape Town to deliver the

Mfuleni Centre for Early Childhood Development.

In the Philippi playground the children are dogging the *Monday Paper* photographer, Pied-Piper-like, striking exaggerated poses and making gangster signs for the camera.

At the back, Kagee is now slapping plaster on bricks, working her palette up and across. It looks easier than it is.

Behind her, Billy Enderstein of the School of Actuarial Science digs spadeful of white sand and dumps them into a wheelbarrow. She stops to discard a jacket.

Afterwards, she says: “I really wanted to see an NGO on the ground and in action – particularly SASDI. The take-home message is that it is amazing to see what is being done to uplift the lives of others, but being involved takes you out of your comfort zone and into a slice of the reality that others have to live... You don’t get this by donating money, you have to donate yourself; otherwise, it remains theory.”

The goal, says Hendry, is to deliver 30 Early Childhood Development Centres of Excellence in the Cape Metropole over the next five years. SASDI’s integrated approach to developing physical infrastructure and the people who will operate the centres will enable registration under the new regulatory requirements, making it possible for the centres to run as sustainable, community-based social enterprises.

Amid the cement and mud, he looks pleased. During a ‘huddle’ at the start of the build, he said: “It makes me feel incredibly proud to be part of such a big-hearted faculty.”

Dr Justine Burns of the School of Economics invited several of her students along.

“My students amaze me with the creative, innovative community activities they’re involved in. I also saw this build as an opportunity for them to get outside the ivory tower, to do something real and practical on the development front.

“We talk about development issues in class a lot, but that’s ‘head’ knowledge – the build was ‘heart’ knowledge.” ■
(Helen.Swinger@uct.ac.za)

Grant fosters global student networks

UCT’s links with its counterparts across the seas have been given a major fillip by the first-of-its-kind travel grant, sponsored by the European Union (EU).

The European and South African Research Network in Anxiety Disorders (EUSARNAD) research exchange exploits inter-university collaboration to develop a greater understanding of anxiety disorders and develop more effective treatments for patients.

Since 2011 12 UCT psychiatry and mental health students have been able to visit universities in Estonia, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK thanks to the EUSARNAD agreement. It has also seen UCT lecturers mentor students from these countries.

The grant was awarded through the Marie Curie International Research Staff Exchange Scheme.

“What was most pleasing was that many of the awardees developed friendships, so it became a really collaborative and productive network,” reports Professor Dan Stein, head of UCT’s Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health.

David Baldwin, Professor of Psychiatry and Head of Mental Health Group at the University of Southampton, agreed.

“What pleases me is to see the enthusiasm and commitment of the ‘exchangees’, who are developing new ideas for research collaboration together.”

Fear and anxiety in the social brain

Research lead by Professor Jack van Honk (Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health) and Dr Barak Morgan (Department of Human Biology) is revealing new facts about the role of the amygdala, or the 'social brain', in an array of social behaviours – and especially its role in fear and anxiety disorders.

A recent paper in *Translational Psychiatry*, an open-access journal published by the Nature Publishing Group, has described their work on a small group of patients with Urbach-Wiethe Disease, an extremely rare genetic development disorder.

Typically, these patients have bilateral damage (lesions) to the basolateral amygdala, which have been linked to abnormalities in innate fear responses.

The patients – five women – are from a previously described Urbach-Wiethe Disease cohort stemming from a small 'founder' population in Namaqualand. Startlingly, this region is home to 40% of the world's approximately 100 reported cases of Urbach-Wiethe Disease.

Externally, symptoms vary but include a hoarse voice, lesions and scarring on the skin which tends to be wrinkly, and beading of the papules around the eyes. These result from a thickening of the skin and mucous membranes. Internally, there is calcification of brain tissue which can lead to epilepsy and neuropsychiatric disorders. The disease, however, is not life-threatening.

The gene can be traced to German immigrant Jacob Cloete, who arrived in Southern Africa in 1652. He settled in the Northern Cape and married into a Dutch family. Urbach-Wiethe Disease is now found in people of Dutch, German and Khoisan ancestry; and the high frequency is due to the 'founder' effect, when a small number of migrants settle far from home, resulting in a loss of genetic variation.

With colleagues from UCT's Department of Psychiatry and collaborators from the Netherlands, the UCT researchers have been working with the Northern Cape group since 2007. The project is part of UCT's



Ground-breaking neuroscience: Prof Jack van Honk (left) and Dr Barak Morgan's work reveals new facts about the role of the amygdala, or the 'social brain', particularly in fear and anxiety disorders.

Brain Behaviour Initiative (BBI), a UCT Signature Theme, and also part of the Cross-University Brain Behaviour Initiative (CUBBI).

The amygdalae are the almond-shaped groups of nuclei deep in the temporal lobes of the brain and play an important role in the 'social brain'. This affects key psychological processes, for instance processing emotional memories and emotional reactions – such as social threat, empathy and fear conditioning, and even altruism and trust.

Importantly, the amygdalae play a pivotal role in expressing innate fear responses triggered by appropriate stimuli; such as a dog with bared teeth, or a fearful human face.

Using a multimodal research strategy that incorporates structural and functional magnetic resonance imaging, as well as eye-tracking and behavioural assessments, the group showed that the five women are in fact hypervigilant for fearful expressions. In other words, they show exaggerated fear responses. This contrasts with a single case from America who has complete amygdala damage and a profound lack of fear responses to fearful faces.

Their findings have important implications for the understanding of the basolateral amygdala's role in fear and anxiety disorders.

The development comes on the back of recent advances in magnetic

resonance scanning, which allowed Van Honk and his team to study and 'dissect' the amygdala at a sub-regional level, and to map reactions in this part of the brain.

"For the first time we saw the selective damage to the specific sub-region of the basolateral amygdala in the scans," said Van Honk.

What can also be seen is the activation of the other amygdala sub-nuclei during fear responses.

"The pictures we have are unique," he added.

The team will use this work to prepare a model of the brain, showing how the amygdala functions and how it works with other parts of the brain.

It's work that Van Honk – UCT's newest National Research Foundation A-rated scholar – believes has put South Africa on the global human neuroscience map.

"Cultural neuroscience holds promise for South Africa, given the genuine cultural diversity of the population and the modern neuroimaging infrastructure in Cape Town."

The team is part of a study to show how the amygdala functions with other parts of the brain and its role in reward, profit/loss calculations, altruism and trust, and in other neuroeconomic factors that are part of economic decision-making. This work has been published in PNAS. ■ (Helen.Swinger@uct.ac.za)

Ballim feasts on science with Nobel laureates in Japan

It's rare that a researcher gets to ask questions directly of a Nobel laureate.

For UCT's Dr Reyna Ballim, the 5th HOPE meeting in Tokyo, Japan, provided a scientific feast; the meeting hosted seven laureates (from between 1973 and 2008), in chemistry, physics and physiology or medicine. And all were accessible to the 100 or so researchers, a gathering of the top young doctoral students from the developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region. This includes Israel and Egypt – and, for the first time, also South Africa

The HOPE meetings, with the theme 'hope for the future', are organised by the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science. Besides offering networking opportunities, the meetings with Nobel laureates are designed to encourage young scientists to push scientific boundaries. This mentorship role is seen as an important building block in a strong, creative scientific and technological tradition.

Ballim was able to listen to laureates' personal stories and ask questions about their research careers, and about the environments and contexts that turned them into pioneers.

A postdoctoral research fellow in the Department of Human Biology, Ballim was one of only two researchers selected by the National Research Foundation to represent South Africa at the HOPE meeting. And she did the country proud by also winning a poster award for her research.

Ballim works in Associate Professor Sharon Prince's cancer research laboratory, where she's attempting to identify the crystal structure of a protein known to drive cancer.

"We want to develop chemotherapy drugs that target this protein," said Ballim. "But there's very little information available on its crystal structure."

The first part of Ballim's postdoc is to identify the crystal structure of TBX2, to enable chemists to design



Crystal clear: Dr Reyna Ballim, in the laboratory where she works to identify the crystal structure of a cancer-driving protein.

drugs that will target this protein specifically. This will be done using X-ray crystallography. The second part of her project is to find target genes of TBX2 that mediate its oncogenic activity. This is important because to date, very few of TBX2's target genes have been described. This part of her project will be done using ChIP sequencing which analyses protein interactions with DNA and identifies the binding sites of DNA-associated proteins.

The work in Ballim's winning poster was published as part of her PhD which explored a different avenue of research – on the TBX3 protein, a transcription factor that plays an important role in regulating gene expression during development. In a study using both cell lines and mouse models, Ballim investigated the regulation of TBX3 by retinoic acid, and demonstrated that this interaction was relevant during embryogenesis. Retinoic acid plays diverse and critical roles in the process of embryonic development. ■ (Helen.Swinger@uct.ac.za)

Mental health as part of primary health care

Mentally integrated into primary health care to address Africa's social, economic and health priorities. This was the message delivered to members of the Africa-led mental health research project, the Programme for Improving Mental health care (PRIME), at the third annual PRIME meeting in Addis Ababa in April.

The meeting was hosted by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health and Addis Ababa University, and reviewed the implementation of mental health care plans in Ethiopia and the other PRIME countries: India, Nepal, South Africa and Uganda.

UCT's Associate Professor Crick Lund leads this UKAID-funded programme across the five partnering countries. The University of KwaZulu-Natal is leading the South African implementation of PRIME, and was represented at the meeting by Professor Inge Petersen.

Mental health care is critical

in Africa. Research indicates that more than 13% of the global burden of disease is due to mental illness. Although the vast majority of people affected by mental illness live in low-and middle-income countries, most mental health care resources are located in high-income countries. This lack of resources for effective treatment has contributed to a large 'treatment gap'. Up to four out of every five people with mental illness in these countries do not have access to mental health care.

Addressing the meeting, Dr Mustapha Idiki Kaloko, Ethiopia's Commissioner for Social Affairs, said: "The continent's greatest asset, the budding youth and future leaders of tomorrow, are more susceptible to mental ill health than any of the other segments of society. Therefore, if we do not address this problem now, the future of our youth will become bleak and uncertain, and will impact negatively on the continent."

Speakers said a host of issues such as poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, conflict and crime had exacerbated mental illness in their countries.

PRIME consortium members reported back on the peer review of each country's mental healthcare plans. Other sessions included a presentation on maximising the uptake of PRIME's research into policy and practice; gender mainstreaming (the public policy concept of assessing the different implications for women and men of any planned policy action, including legislation and programmes, in all areas and levels); and evaluation design.

Since PRIME's establishment in 2011, the programme has attempted to address human capacity development in mental health care to ensure that communities benefit from mental health research, and that women and vulnerable groups can gain access to mental health care. ■ (Helen.Swinger@uct.ac.za)

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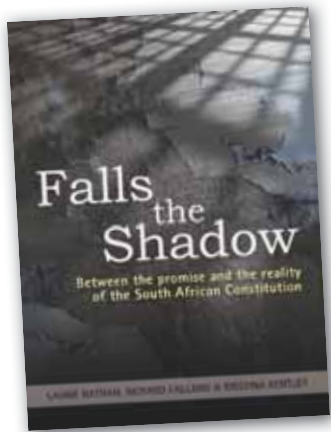
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UCT Press, a division of Juta and Company Ltd, publishes peer-reviewed scholarly books with an African context. Many provide a bridge between the campus and the community. UCT Press has several titles, some authored or edited by UCT academics, which embrace topics as diverse as biotechnology, statistics, politics and gender. With UCT's Africa month in mind, *Monday Paper* took a look at the new titles. (Information courtesy of UCT Press.)



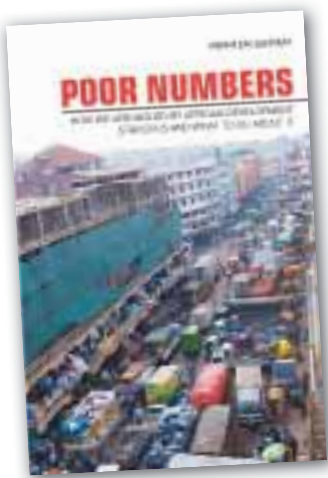
Falls the Shadow: Between the promise and the reality of the South African Constitution.

Editors: Laurie Nathan, Richard Calland, Kristina Bentley (for publication in June 2013)

South Africa supposedly has one of the best constitutions in the world, one which is intended to control and constrain the exercise of power by the state so that it doesn't threaten the liberty and security of citizens. But in reality, does the Constitution contribute more to the security of some groups than others? Does it help to ensure certain types of security, but not others? And does it have greater impact on some institutions than others? The book is based on the assumption that the Constitution has a significant impact on the security of South African citizens and communities – but that this impact is differential.

It is recommended for legal professionals; academics who focus on constitutions, rights and security; students of politics and law; and members of the South African public who have an interest in human rights and their protection under the Constitution.

Nathan is a research fellow at UCT and the London School of Economics (LSE). Calland is an associate professor in public law at UCT. Bentley is a senior research officer with the Democratic Governance and Rights Unit in UCT's Department of Public Law.



Poor Numbers: How we are misled by African development statistics and what to do about it

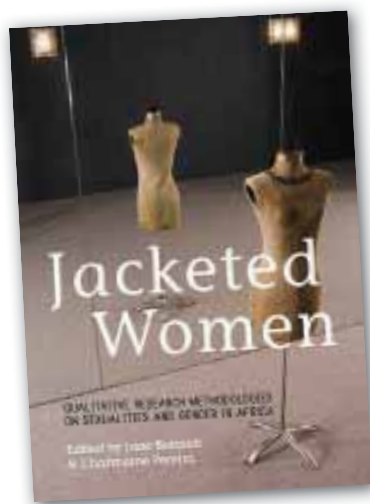
Author: Morten Jerven
Existing data on income and growth in sub-Saharan African countries are unreliable – even seriously misleading. Jerven provides the first systematic analysis of the level, direction and causes of the errors, looking at a range

of African countries from Benin to Zambia, and includes South Africa. He then explains why these errors matter. What seem like dry numbers can actually have a huge impact on the welfare of these developing countries. Economic growth rate estimates and per-capita income statistics are vital for local governments and for economic aid.

Jerven's research suggests that data supplied by national records and statistical offices substantially misstate the actual situation. As a result, scarce economic aid is misapplied, policymakers' attempts to improve their citizens' lives are frustrated, and donors have no accurate sense of the impact of their aid. Jerven explains what can and should be done to improve the guidelines for both the production and use of statistics.

The book is aimed at academics in and students of statistics, economics, and development studies, policymakers, and NGOs.

Jerven, assistant professor of International Studies at Simon Fraser University, Canada, specialises in economic history.



Jacketed women: Qualitative research methodologies on sexualities and gender in Africa. Editors: Jane Bennett and Charmaine Pereira

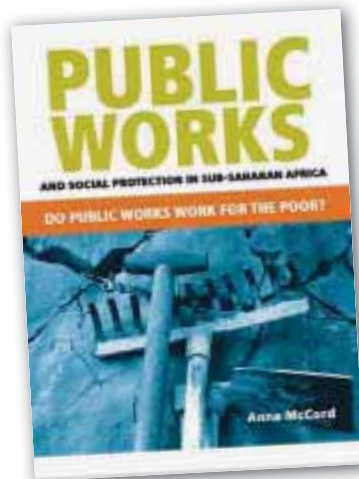
Over the past decade, there has been increasing emphasis in African scholarship and research on the importance of understanding sexuality and the issues around it, such as identity, sexual rights and sexuality, reproductive health and rights, and gender and political democracy. Despite this, Africa has frequently been found by researchers to be predominantly hostile to any discussion of sexual and reproductive rights, conveying dismay at the notion of women's rights to reproductive freedom, disgusted objection to the idea that gay and lesbian people have civic and human rights, and opposition to engagement with issues such as FGM (Kenya), virginity testing (South Africa), and Shar'ia interpretations of appropriate sexuality (Nigeria and Sudan, among others).

In 2004, the African Gender Institute ran a continental research project called *Mapping Sexualities*. Among its objectives was the development of an appropriate research methodology for carrying out in-depth case studies

of the dynamics of gender and contemporary sexual cultures in Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda. The book contains photographs by Zanele Muholi.

The book is recommended for academics and students of gender studies, social anthropology, human rights and public health, and for NGOs working in these sectors.

Bennett is an associate professor, director of the School of African and Gender Studies, Anthropology and Linguistics, and director of the African Gender Institute at UCT.



Public works and social protection in sub-Saharan Africa: Do public works work for the poor? Author: Anna McCord

Public Works Programmes (PWP) are widely implemented throughout Asia, Latin America and Africa, often with funding from major international donor agencies. They are perceived to present a 'win-win' policy option, providing employment to the chronically poor while also creating assets for the state, and in this way offering a welfare transfer that is also a tangible economic investment.

The prevailing view among donors and government agencies with responsibility for social protection is that PWPs are preferable to other measures for assisting unemployed people living in chronic poverty. But is this view in fact correct?

This book critically explores the concept of the Public Works Programme (PWP) and interrogates its social protection performance in the context of chronic poverty. It reviews over 200 PWPs in eastern and southern Africa using original research drawn from extensive field analysis, interviews and survey work, and examines case studies of six international PWPs – in India, Argentina, Ireland, Ethiopia, Indonesia and the US.

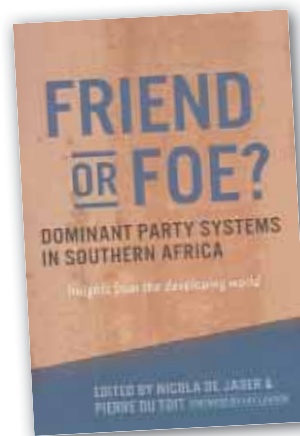
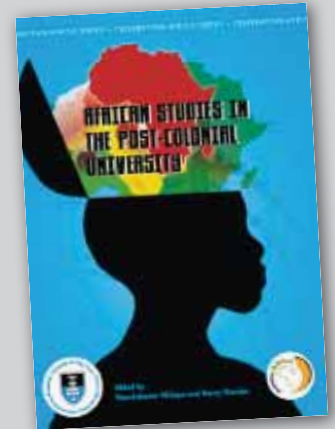
The book is recommended for academics and students in development economics and sociology, policy-makers and -designers, and donor officials such as the World Bank and DFID.

McCord is a Research Fellow in Social Protection at the Overseas Development Institute in London, and was previously research manager at UCT's South African Labour and Development Research Unit.

African Studies in the Post-Colonial University, part of UCT's Celebrating Africa Series.

Editors: Thandabantu Nhlapo and Harry Garuba.

Published by the university in 2012, the book is described as a timely contribution to the debates about the role of the university in post-colonial African society, and to the soul-searching that invariably accompanies the question of the study of Africa in such institutions. It asked pertinent questions such as: Are centres of African studies still relevant in the modern African university? Are they doomed to a permanently marginalised existence by their dubious pedigree, which goes back to the colonial projects in which they first emerged, and their subsequent association with area studies during the Cold War? Is the expectation that a self-respecting African university should have no truck with the adjective 'African' – because everything it does should reflect that perspective anyway – always an honest one? The authors, UCT's Professor Nhlapo, a deputy vice-chancellor, and Garuba, an associate professor in African studies, provide refreshing answers to these and other questions, in the light of UCT's own strategic goal of internationalisation with an Afropolitan niche. Contributors include Lungisile Ntsebeza, Adeboyo Olukoshi, Leonhard Praeg and Mpilo Pearl Sithole.



Friend or foe? Dominant party systems in Southern Africa: Insights from the developing world.

Editors: Nicola de Jager and Pierre du Toit

Within Southern Africa, there has been a steady increase in the number of dominant-party systems – systems in which one party dominates over a prolonged period in an ostensibly democratic system, with regular elections and multiple parties participating. This party system has replaced the one-party system that dominated Africa's political landscape after the first wave of liberations in the 1950s and 1960s.

This book seeks to understand this trend and its implications for Southern Africa's democracies, by comparing such systems in Southern Africa with others in the developing world (such as Mexico, India, South Korea and Taiwan). In particular, the case of Zimbabwe stands out as a worrying example of the direction a dominant party may take: regression into authoritarianism. Mexico, India, South Korea and Taiwan present alternative routes for the dominant-party system.

De Jager is a lecturer in the Department of Political Science at the University of Stellenbosch. Du Toit is a lecturer in political science at the same university.



Food for Africa: The life and work of a scientist in GM crops.

Author: Jennifer Thomson

Retired UCT academic Emeritus Professor Thomson has addressed the world's leaders at the UN, and sat in the hot seat at the World Economic Forum in Davos, persuading economists that genetically modified food is the answer to food security in Africa. She has won the L'Oréal Women in Science award. How did someone who thought she would choose the career of a teacher end up as a microbiologist in a very male-dominated arena, and become one of the world's leading scientific advisors? In *Food for Africa*, Thomson traces – through anecdote and science – the development of a hotly contested area of research, from the dawn of genetic engineering in the US in 1974, through the early stages of its uptake in South Africa, to the current situation, in which approximately 80% of maize in South Africa is genetically modified for drought resistance.

The publication is recommended for the layperson interested in the facts of genetic modification; academics in the field of plant genetics and food security; and policy-makers.

EVENTS

African Climate and Development Initiative: Climate Change Impacts & Adaptation Seminar Series

Speaker: Richard Calland, Democratic Governance and Rights Unit, UCT. Title: "Financing Adaptation". When: 13:00-14:00pm on Wednesday 15 May. Venue: Studio 5 in the EGS Building

Philosophy Society Meeting

Speaker: Dr Elisa Galgut. When: Tuesday 28 May @ 20h00. Title: Can we empathize with fictional characters? Venue: Lecture Theatre 3, Humanities Building

VACANT POSTS

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Professor and Head of Department, Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, Closing date: 30 June 2013

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Ginger tom looking for a good home: Ginger tom, 2 yrs old. Vaccinated, neutered, dewormed, defleed and microchipped. Quite a character, white bib, white paws. Always fights with my 15 year old queen, hence the need for a new home. If interested, please contact: Carolyn Coombe on 650 3105 or 0744469224."

Research assistance: 6 months ad hoc, telephonic screening and scheduling of research participants. Preference psychology & fluent in Xhosa. Contact us @ 021 404 5480

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Alumnus revives trailblazing Xhosa newspaper

Despite having 11 official languages and scores of unofficial ones, South Africa's media landscape is dominated by English and Afrikaans-medium newspapers. Now, the resurrection of a newspaper that was last published more than a century ago aims to shake that market up.

When *Isigidimi SamaXhosa* was published on 1 August 2012, it heralded the revival of a newspaper that was famous in the 1870s for carrying some of the most critical political and cultural pieces by Xhosa writers at the time, says re-founding editor and UCT alumnus Unathi Kondile.

"It was the first Xhosa newspaper to have black editors, with people like John Tengo Jabavu and William Gqoba among them," says Kondile of the paper's heyday between 1871 and 1878. "After the 1877-1879 Frontier War things took a turn for the worse, as [the paper] became a Christian propaganda [tool] and many writers left, disgruntled."

The 21st-century version of *Isigidimi SamaXhosa's* first print run comprised 5 000 copies that were distributed to libraries in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape. After a positive reception, 1 September saw a second 12-page tabloid-size edition published, with circulation doubled.

Once municipalities, schools, bookstores and government departments across the country had started to request copies, Kondile decided to revive the paper officially, printing 10 000 copies per month.

Many people commented on the "new way" the paper wrote isiXhosa, says Kondile, referring to its opinion pieces and critical analysis of events.

"It was a welcome move from the praise poetry and short stories that Xhosa writing has become."

Isigidimi SamaXhosa has 32 volunteer contributors from across the country who assist with all aspects of producing a newspaper. The editor says that the paper won't merely translate news generated by English and Afrikaans media houses into isiXhosa.

"We would like to develop new narrative literary journalism based on what our readers would like to read," explained Kondile. "We are trying to create something bigger than a community newspaper, to create a national Xhosa newspaper – a *Xhosa Mail & Guardian*, so to speak – where we go in-depth with our pieces. We are the only Xhosa newspaper with national ambitions."

Sadly, spiralling costs have temporarily pulled the plug on the print run. Readers can still access the newspaper online, at www.isigidimi.co.za and on the newspaper's Facebook page. Being online has sparked international interest in the paper, but key distribution points were complaining about the lack of print versions, says Kondile.

A cover price of R2.50 has been mentioned as a solution.

Kondile, who holds an MA in media studies from UCT and is a senior technical officer at UCT's Michaelis School of Fine Art, sees language as a key ingredient of "genuine transformation".

"Language is access. Matters of national discourse are set according to what the English and Afrikaans media deem interesting, [so] we don't know what the public interest of the majority is, because we exclude them through language.

"If any academic institution claims to be serious about redress and transformation, I believe language should be at the top of their priorities," Kondile says, adding that the university should make provisions for those whose 'disability' is their language, in the same way that the university is improving physical access to campus for wheelchair-users.

Kondile is acutely aware of the history of failure of similar ventures.

"Many such newspapers fail because they are run like businesses – they focus too much on securing advertising, as well as becoming tabloid-like to attract as many readers as possible," he remarks. "The problem with this is that it does nothing to develop Xhosa



Breaking barriers: Unathi Kondile poses with a copy of the revived *Isigidimi SamaXhosa*.

journalism or new narrative literary journalism techniques."

Eventually, Kondile envisions that *Isigidimi SamaXhosa* will be printed weekly, produced through an academic institution where, he says, it might spark opportunities to train students in isiXhosa journalism. ■ (Yusuf.Omar@uct.ac.za)

AFRICA MONTH EVENTS * AFRICA MONTH EVENTS * AFRICA MONTH EVENTS

Africa Month is packed with highlights. Here are a few examples:

Transforming a continent

"To some, Africa is disappointing as much as it is promising – disappointing in the sense that although it has massive potential, we do not seem to know how best to unlock it."

But, he adds, "Africa is promising in that there are so many avenues that can be explored, thereby transforming the continent into a competitive global knowledge producer".

This is the view of Shadreck Chirikure, senior lecturer in the Department of Archaeology and convener of the May 23 round table discussion on *Afropolitan research opportunities and constraints: creating knowledge for transforming and empowering Africa*. The discussion will be hosted by UCT's Research Office and the International Academic Programmes Office (IAPO). One of the speakers is Professor Ambrose Wonkam, from the Division of Human Genetics in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Developing vaccines for bacterial diseases

Bacterial diseases kill several million children every year, mainly in the developing world, and immunisation against these pathogens is the most effective and cost-efficient means to protect children's lives in that context. "Glycoconjugate vaccines, in which the surface carbohydrate of a microbial pathogen is attached to a carrier protein, now prove to be the best means to generate protective immunity," says Professor Neil Ravenscroft of the Department of Chemistry's Bioanalytical and Vaccine Research unit. On 14 May Ravenscroft will present a seminar on the topic, titled *Cape to Chiron: Developing glycoconjugate vaccine for Africa*. Ravenscroft will discuss progress towards developing afford-

able glycoconjugate vaccines and the crucial role played by physicochemical and immunochemical methods in the development, characterisation and licensure of new vaccines against meningitis, pneumonia and enteric diseases. The seminar starts at 16h00 in LT3 in the PD Hahn Building.

AIDS, race and medical research

Carla Tsampiras's seminar *From 'Dark' Country to 'Dark' Continent: AIDS, 'Race', and Medical Research in the South African Medical Journal, 1980 – 1995*, will be presented on 14 May. The topic is drawn from Tsampiras's recently completed PhD thesis.

"Racist theories have been neither the preserve of one era, nor of one community of people, and they have certainly crossed academic disciplines," said Tsampiras, who hails from Rhodes University's history department. "In research examining the relations between medicine, science, and racism, much has been written about the constructions of Africa as a 'sick continent' and of black bodies as not only 'diseased' but also 'hypersexual'. In the 1980s a new syndrome – eventually called AIDS – would draw on old images and stereotypes to apportion blame to 'high-risk groups', including 'Haitians' and 'Africans'." Tsampiras will focus on the interplay between AIDS narratives, 'race' and science by analysing articles from the *South African Medical Journal*. Her



seminar is from 13h00 to 14h30 on 13 May in the HUMA Seminar Room, 4th floor Humanities Building, upper campus.

Fine Arts

Jenny Parsons exhibition at Irma Stern

Observing Africa Month means celebrating our vast African landscape across different types of media in fine arts. An exhibition launched at the Irma Stern Museum, *Against the Light* by artist Jenny Parsons, features landscape paintings and drawings of the Cape's treasure trove of fynbos. Her work explores the early morning light on the fynbos-covered hillsides of Silvermine Nature Reserve. The exhibition runs until May 25.

Cinema and lectures

The invisible children

Some of the highlights from the Africa Month programme this year are in cinema. Aside from various screenings, the African Cinema Unit in The Centre for Film and Media Studies

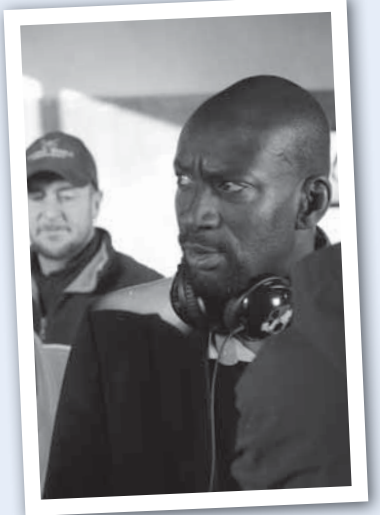
has focused on bringing international scholars and visiting filmmakers to the university. One such scholar is Dr Alexie Tcheuyap (Department of French, University of Toronto) who will participate in seminars and a senior undergraduate lecture on film representation of child soldiers.

On 13 May Dr Alexie Tcheuyap will present a seminar on his book, 'Postnationalist African Cinemas'. 10am at the Arts 209, Upper Campus.

On May 14, the real story behind African child soldiers will come under the spotlight in a 'Film in Africa' lecture by Dr Tcheuyap in Arts 100. Often referred to as the "invisible children," child soldiers are orphaned by AIDS, violence and war. Some are as young as 7, and at least 40 per cent of them are said to be girls.

Examining Xenophobia

UCT alumnus, actor and filmmaker Akin Omotoso's work has been chosen as one of the main screenings for Africa Month. On 15 May, his award-winning film *Man on the Ground* which explores



Akin Omotoso, UCT alumnus and director of *Man on the Ground*, screening at 4:30pm in the Beattie Building Rm 114 on May 15th.

the xenophobic attacks in South Africa, will be screened. The film won five awards at the 4th annual African Audio Visual Awards (TAVAs) held in Lagos, Nigeria. The screening takes place at the Beattie Building 114 at 4:30pm. Omotoso will also conduct a master's class on 18 May in Arts 203.

Stories in motion

How are African stories being told in an era of alternative film distribution and mobile communications technologies?

This controversial subject will come under discussion on May 16, in a panel discussion on *Contemporary Popular Cultures in Africa: 'Stories in Motion'* co-hosted by UCT's African Cinema Unit and the English Department.

The panel will comprise Dr Tcheuyap, Dr Christopher Ouma from the Department of English, and Ms Vuyolwethu Lima from the Durban University of Technology. ■



Pelargonium and Glads by artist Jenny Parson.