

# SIGNALS

EDITION I  
November 2020

UWC Research Magazine



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of freedom** p6

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**Prof Tyrone Pretorius**

*Rector and Vice-Chancellor*

Welcome to the first edition of our new research-focused publication. Throughout the pages that follow, you will meet some of our researchers, the work that they do and the contribution that they are making to the knowledge economy.

The University of the Western Cape has made significant investments in its research project through multi-million-rand investment in infrastructure, equipment and people over the past decade or so, resulting in recognition of our ambition to become a leading a research-intensive institution in South Africa.

To realise this ambition we have systematically set about putting in place systems and support structures for our research community. We have built partnerships that criss-cross the globe and offer us opportunities for research collaborations and student and staff exchanges. We continue evaluating whether our infrastructure provides optimum conditions for research and we have recently invested in two state-of-the-art facilities with the opening of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences in Bellville and the Computational and Mathematical Sciences building on main campus.

Over the span of a decade, we have seen the growth of SARCHI Chairs from one in 2008 to our current 18, along with the establishment of the DST-NRF Flagship on Critical Thought in African Humanities of the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) and the Centre of Excellence in Food Security.

The history of the university is deeply embedded in the modern history of South Africa, therefore the coincidence of the university's 60th anniversary celebrations with the release of the first edition of Signals under the theme, History and memory, could not be more apt.

The cover stories of this first edition are motivated by the need to share research interests on some burning matters that attracted scholars and captivated the minds, actions and affections of those who helped shape our memories and sense of history as a country and as a university.

I trust that the magazine's online presence will increase access and extend our digital reach to inform and inspire.

# Introduction



**Prof José Frantz**

*DVC: Research and Innovation*



**Dr Molapo Qhobela**

*Chief Executive of the National Research Foundation*

Welcome to the first edition of UWC's research magazine, aimed at highlighting our research endeavours.

UWC has made significant strides over the past decade in positioning itself as a research-led institution and this is evident by the considerable investments made in establishing new units and centres, as well as equipment. This focus is underscored in our vision that speaks to us having a substantial place in the knowledge economy.

Through this publication, we would like to offer the campus community and broader public snapshots of the research being done and how we engage with matters of real significance that have an impact.

This edition's central theme focuses on the importance of history and memory, how we must safeguard our archival material in order to draw lessons for the future, with contributions by Professors Premesh Lalu and Patricia Hayes. We also unveil a new partnership with one of South Africa's foremost photographers, Rashid Lombard, who has entrusted UWC with his photographic archives that span several decades of capturing key moments in this country's history.

Other articles include Professor Carolina Odman's feature on the evolving role of science in society, in which she also looks at the role of science at UWC.

Then there is the Centre of Excellence in Food Security's Mologadi Makwela's article on the role of social media in communicating research at a university and how new generations of scholars need to be equipped with competencies to succeed in an increasingly interactive and digital world.

We are delighted to have engaged the services of the award-winning cartoonist and illustrator, Carlos Amato, to provide unique front covers and a cartoon strip with a focus on academia.

Each edition will have content from the various faculties in order to ensure a diversity of voices, opinions and research areas, as well as a core theme for the front section of the magazine.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for future themes and articles. I hope you will enjoy our first edition!

As the CEO of the National Research Foundation (NRF), I am often asked why South Africa should invest public money in science and research when there are so many competing developmental challenges in our society. My response is clear – it is through the societal impact of research that we will be able to overcome our many challenges, respond to our national development priorities, and advance our society.

The impact of research on societal development and economic progress has been shown across the world, and if South Africa is to compete internationally, we need to invest in our science and research sector and put science and research into service for a better society, and a better South Africa for us all. This is the role of the NRF, but we cannot achieve research impact alone. We need to partner with research-led universities with an excellent and transformed cohort of researchers.

Over the past two decades, the NRF has found a valuable partner in the University of the Western Cape where the NRF funds a number of postgraduate students and individual researchers across various research fields ranging from the human and social sciences through to natural and health sciences. The NRF also supports almost twenty South African Research Chairs (SARChI) based at the UWC – a testament to the university's research excellence.

The work of Professor Hayes, the DSI/NRF SARChI Chair in Visual History & Theory, as well as that of Professor Premesh Lalu, the founding director of the Centre for Humanities Research where this SARChI is based, is the theme of this publication. The societal impact of their work can be found in their engagement with communities in understanding and reinterpreting local histories.

We look forward to our continued partnership with the UWC to enhance engaged research with societal benefit across the various fields of science and knowledge. Indeed, the more we learn, the more we know, the more we understand, the more we can contribute to advancing society's ideals and aspirations and to making a positive, meaningful, and lasting impact.

# Fruit of an unlikely alliance

Mun Y. Choi, Ph.D.

*President, University of Missouri System Chancellor, University of Missouri*

## *Forging connections to transform society*

I am honored to write an inaugural piece for the University of Western Cape's new research magazine. I am very proud that the University of Missouri created the University of Missouri South African Education Program (UMSAEP) in 1986 and became the first American university to establish a partnership with a non-white South African university. Together with UWC, we have built the next generation of leaders and scholars who illustrate how global interdependence empowers individuals and communities.

To begin with, some of my personal experience with this partnership. I had the privilege of visiting UWC for the first time in 2019. I was immediately welcomed by the warm hospitality of the Rector and Vice-Chancellor Tyrone Pretorius and the UWC community when I arrived in South Africa. I was then invited to stay at the home of former Constitutional Court judge, Justice Albie Sachs — a happy reunion because Justice Sachs had recently visited the United States to be awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Missouri. Visiting the UWC campus and meeting faculty, students and staff — many of whom had also travelled to Missouri — gave me a greater appreciation for the importance of this partnership.

With 900 faculty exchange visits and hundreds of publications between our two universities just since 2003, our communities benefit greatly from shared knowledge and collaborative growth. Students, staff and faculty members have participated in this partnership across a range of disciplines: chemistry, law, journalism, English, fine art, plant sciences and more.

For example, William Folk, professor of biochemistry at the University of Missouri-Columbia (MU), received \$4.4 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to establish The International Center for Indigenous Phytotherapy Studies. This centre, which grew out of a pilot UMSAEP grant, was a collaborative research effort between MU and the UWC to examine the safety of botanical medicines for treating a number of diseases — from the common cold to AIDS. Another example is Adrienne Hoard, emeritus professor of fine art and Black studies at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Professor Hoard made several UMSAEP-sponsored trips to South Africa over nine years to photograph and interview Ndebele women artists. Her work was subsequently published in several journals and exhibited in both South Africa and the U.S.

Such diverse work reaffirms why our universities first came

together in 1986: to realise a collective vision for global discovery, engagement and education.

Education, and particularly an emphasis on experiential education, has been one of the greatest bonds between UWC and the University of Missouri. During my trip to UWC, I was honored with a reception, where I had the opportunity to experience the unveiling of a new, state-of-the-art robot called Sunbear. Sunbear captures high-resolution images of plant growth with more regularity and accuracy than a person. A version of this robot was originally built on MU's campus in Professor David Mendoza-Cózatl's plant sciences lab. After touring this lab during a visit to Missouri, UWC Professor of Biotechnology Marshall Keyster knew his students in South Africa could benefit from this technology. So two MU graduate students travelled to South Africa and built Sunbear on UWC's campus, highlighting once more the power of our joint mission in tackling global challenges.

As I write this piece during what is perhaps the most challenging moment for higher education in our lifetime, this mission assumes even greater importance. We face a confluence of pandemics in health care, economics and social justice. But like we have for the past 34 years, the University of Missouri and UWC will continue to eliminate barriers in education, scholarship and engagement to overcome these challenges, support our communities and collectively excel.

Back in the 1980s, when apartheid led many universities to divest from South Africa, the University of Missouri took the bold step to invest with a school that was badly under-resourced by the apartheid government but was already making its own history as the intellectual centre of the struggle against apartheid. Now, we take yet another bold step together. At a time when separation is critical to our health and safety, we remain committed to the cross-cultural exchanges — strengthened by a unified mission of social justice and racial equity — that accelerate our success. We are hosting virtual webinars between our universities such as "Biology Without Borders" and co-designing Zoom courses such as "British Literature Revisited". It's a new era of responsibility. And our charge is no less singular, even if the way we collaborate will look different in the months (and perhaps years) ahead.

As I saw firsthand during my 2019 visit, the University of Missouri and the University of the Western Cape are forging connections that transform our global society, bringing greater meaning, greater understanding and greater impact to the world when we need it most.



*University of Missouri students protesting against apartheid and for disinvesting of American companies in South Africa*



*UWC Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Prof Tyrone Pretorius accompanying President Mun Y Choi during his visit to UWC in 2019*



# The enchantment of freedom

## at the University of the Western Cape

Professor Premesh Lalu

*Founding director of the Centre for Humanities Research*

***A vital part of the university's history is its central role in contestation about the public use of critical reason***

The history of the modern university is, first and foremost, the history of the unfolding of complex problematics of a planetary condition through established scientific and humanistic inquiry. Defined as such, the work of the university is not only to advance solutions for those problems that interchangeably favour state and public use of reason but also to discover, in the framing of the problem, the very conditions for constructing perspectives about a future that is radically other. In this sense, the demand placed on the university is always doubled, so that its interpretive, analytical, and critical work cuts into the non-identity of past and future. To this extent, the ideals of higher education mimic the processes of research and define the relationship established between the professoriate, the student body, and the university's allied publics. The scientific revolutions of the nineteenth century that followed the unravelling of the institutions of slavery displayed this tendency through a remaking of method by relinking deductive and inductive modes of reasoning in a single effort that gave birth to modern science. Similarly, the humanistic traditions of thought that gained momentum in the wake of the slave rebellion in Haiti in the 1800s and, to a lesser extent, in the Cape Colony in the same period, would test the full implications of the 1789 French doctrine on the "Rights of Man". In the lacuna between the abolition of slavery and the rise of the industrial revolution, new ideas of race and freedom intersected, sometimes with devastating consequences.

Notwithstanding the expansive archive on the struggles over autonomy, the university has been subject to the vagaries of the ebbs and flows that shaped the discourse of freedom for more than two hundred years. When we point to academic freedom as the foundational principle for the pursuit of university knowledge, we often unwittingly call attention to a more entangled and nuanced controversy entailed in contests about the public use of critical reason. For much of the nineteenth century, when the modern university as we know it was being remade, the concept of freedom rested on a spectrum of attitudes towards slavery.

Despite the affirmative foundations of the university, the birth of the modern university obscures the extent to which its modes of reasoning are founded on the racial remains of the transatlantic system of slavery. The notion of race that permeated the institutional sites of the modern university often operated as a silent referent in the exercise of reason and cultural hegemony.

The response to segregationist and apartheid educational policy drew extensively on the discussion of race and education in the post-slavery United States. The choices facing African-American intellectuals and early African nationalist educators overlapped significantly. In the early 1900s, the African-American scholar W. E. B. Du Bois understood the shadowy presence of race in the discourse of the university in profoundly enduring and suggestive ways. "You may," he argues, "dress a query in a thousand forms and complete with a hundred problems, and yet the simple query stands and will stand: shall you measure men and women according to their [personhood] or according to their race and colour?" In 1935, Du Bois rearticulated this view in his opposition to the programme for post-slavery education espoused by his contemporary, Booker T. Washington. The core of the disagreement, from Du Bois's perspective, was whether the descendants of slavery ought to be subjected to industrial schools at the expense of an education that affirms the intellectual development to the full extent of the student's potential and desire. In his critique of the model of the industrial school, Du Bois wished that the segregated schools established for the descendants of slaves be directed towards different educational goals. Far from approving the practice of separate education, Du Bois held the view that the segregation enforced in the USA in his time was no excuse for a lesser development or expectation of the human potential of students. "Thus," he noted, "instead of our schools simply being separate schools, forced on us by grim necessity, they can become centres of a new and beautiful effort at human education."

***"Instead of our schools simply being separate schools, forced on us by grim necessity, they can become centres of a new and beautiful effort at human education."***



**W. E. B. Du Bois**  
*American activist,  
historian and author*





**Charlotte Maxeke**, South African activist and religious leader

***The enchantment of freedom  
at the University of the Western Cape (continued)***



***Sol Plaatje, South African author and intellectual***

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***Ideas of freedom seamlessly blended  
with idioms of jazz, poetry, literature,  
art, theatre and film.***

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The discussion of race and education was to have very significant consequences for the approaches to similar questions for an early generation of African nationalist intellectuals in South Africa. Charlotte Maxeke, the first black science graduate, who was schooled in the USA, as well as Sol Plaatje, John Langalibalele Dube, and S. M. Molema, were each profoundly shaped by the debate on education between Washington and Du Bois. The post-World War I industrial boom and the intensification of segregationist measures with the passing of the Native Urban Areas Act of 1924 amplified the demand for education among an emerging African intelligentsia. Upon returning to Natal from the Tuskegee Institute, John Langalibalele established a version of the industrial schools in South Africa modelled on those established by Booker T. Washington in the USA. But the pressure to set a more ambitious and speculative expectation for black education also had a fair share of proponents in South Africa. Among a generation of intellectuals who travelled to Europe and the USA to study medicine, science, and the human sciences, it was Du Bois who held out a challenge, under the spell of segregation and racial hatred, that potentially aligned education to the promise of freedom from racial and class servitude. Rather than limiting the knowledge to vocational pursuits, and in addition to an education in modern languages and sciences, the segregationist schools would be required to engage in an aesthetic education that would work as a self-affirming strategy to counteract the consequences of violence on the psychic structure. Saddled with institutions that were the product of segregation, Du Bois believed that “a tremendous psychic history would, with proper encouragement and training, find expression in the drama, in colour and form, and in music” (with a small caveat: that this aesthetic development not be seen as “simple entertainment and bizarre efforts at money raising”). The inheritance of this custodianship of the idea of freedom through education from the author of *Souls of Black Folk* (1903) proved critical for struggles against not only colonialism but also against the cynical reasons behind segregation in South Africa and the American South. It would influence generations of intellectuals who carried the torch of humanism amid the rising tides of war and fascism, colonisation and decolonisation.

The elaboration of this tradition of freedom was unevenly inscribed into the ethos of separate universities after the 1960s in South Africa as they respectively sought to find intellectual justification beyond apartheid’s prescriptions of Bantu Education. Inspired by successive generations of critical discourse on race, intellectuals such as S. M. Molema and Z. K. Matthews found that in South Africa the divisions in the university between the sciences and humanities were producing an untenable justification for the hardening political attitudes on the question of race. Whether in the critique of trusteeship or the apartheid programme of separate education, the traditions of the Black Atlantic proved to be an invaluable resource for challenging the grip of racial domination and for sustaining ideas about freedom. Unfortunately, these ideals of freedom were largely squandered and eventually blunted with the twentieth-century remaking of the Euro-American episteme.

They have been similarly squandered by a post-apartheid political project that frequently, and sometimes unwittingly, sees the terrain of higher education as a mere instrument of a technocratic reorganisation of knowledge. Yet the institutions that were the product of a racial order continue to uphold an ever-receding tradition of humanistic thought that seemed to be waning globally at the institutional site of the university in the aftermath of World War II. Embedded in the struggle for freedom, education for these institutions came to mean an ongoing process of the reinvention of the idea of freedom against the backdrop of altered global conditions. The *raison d’être* of those institutions that continue to bear the scars of apartheid as segregated institutions depends extensively on building and inventing traditions of thought of freedom in the manner of the best examples drawn from the Black Atlantic.

The University of the Western Cape is a product of this very process of the invention of the traditions of thought that aimed to align ideals of freedom and traditions of humanism. This was a process of learning to learn from a great, albeit neglected, scholarly endeavour that emerged in response to the inheritance of slavery, colonialism and apartheid. To this extent, the renaissance of the university in the late 1980s at the height of the struggle against apartheid helped UWC to nurture an idea of freedom that was necessary for, yet irreducible to, either juridical or other prevailing notions of academic freedom at English-speaking liberal universities.

UWC pushed ideas of freedom to the limit as it tried to exceed the constraints that forestalled the birth of a post-apartheid society. That poetics would hold the humanities as a fundamental premise of research across the sciences and the applied disciplines of the social sciences, law, education, dentistry and economics.

Paul Gilroy, the scholar who initially mapped the intellectual and aesthetic traditions of the Black Atlantic, notes that humanism’s re-enchantment often combined with projects of resistance in the postcolonial world. Scholars such as C. L. R. James brought together traditions of humanism and Marxism in the formation of a curriculum for black studies. Elsewhere in Africa, the problem of colonialism was threaded through a Latin American discourse of decolonisation and “development of underdevelopment theory”. In South Africa, an expansive debate that cut across academic and activist divides worked to combine strands of Marxism with the traditions of nationalism, third-wave postcolonial feminism, Black Consciousness, and Pan-Africanism as these brushed up against the pernicious orders of race and ethnicity. More than a site to produce a synthesis of competing worldviews, the invention of a distinctive tradition of freedom served as an enabling condition for animating academic debates at apartheid’s separate institutions.

There, in the midst of institutions that Z. K. Matthews described as being under siege in the 1960s, ideas of freedom seamlessly blended with idioms of jazz, poetry, literature, art, theatre and film.



***The enchantment of freedom  
at the University of the Western Cape (continued)***

Under the leadership of Jakes Gerwel, the institution laid the foundation for a process of research that would contribute to the best but often neglected traditions of freedom in the Black Atlantic while also deepening the intellectual formation of generations of students through an affirmative concept of education. A nurturing education was ultimately aimed at preparing the students and faculty to decipher and flip the conditions of constraint into a concept of freedom. This was an education founded on what UWC educationist and philosopher Wally Morrow called “epistemological access” in the 1980s. “Epistemological access” would facilitate critical and theoretical pathways out of a predicament not of UWC’s own making, while sustaining and inventing a tradition of thought invested in an idea of humanism and democratic criticism.

In the 2000s, after the dawn of democracy, the newly appointed Vice-Chancellors Brian O’Connell and then Tyrone Pretorius enabled research that would encompass questions related to the fledgling democratic public sphere and post-apartheid formations. To attend adequately to the demands of a society in transition, the commitment to the inherited traditions of freedom tended towards what Theodore Adorno would call the elaboration of “emphatic concepts”. Like the concept of the post-apartheid, freedom as an emphatic concept discloses possibilities that are not fully actual because experience negates them. At the same time, the concept emerges from the experience of that which is not freedom. In other words, from the institutional site of UWC, the struggle to grasp the meaning of the post-apartheid was guided by having endured the experience of the institutional mechanisms of apartheid since the inception of the institution in 1960. Research in the 2000s set out to invent emphatic concepts to sustain a desire for the post-apartheid.

The time to draw together the range of research endeavours into an overarching sensibility that made sense of the future of South African higher education from the perspective of an institution such as UWC had arrived. In the process, the institution found itself at the forefront of the invention of community dentistry and community law as well as being a frontrunner in the fields of public health and medical biosciences, renewable energy, astrophysics and ecological sustainability. It became a bastion in the debates about food security and land reform and a beacon for holding out the promise of a post-apartheid future that is at once postcolonial and open to building on the best traditions of humanism in the Black Atlantic. It had also established itself as a critical voice in debates about the making of public institutions, such as community museums and national heritage institutions, often renovating research methodologies while leading the way in the education of a next generation of public intellectuals. Whereas much of this work was widely debated and internationally cited, the institution had yet to articulate fully and comprehensively these interlinked research questions as interventions about making a post-apartheid future. More than preserving the best of what we have learned, the onset of this collective research agenda at UWC strays into the space of a global history of the modern university to reclaim a spirit of education that the world sorely needs if it is to survive the current planetary crisis.

To the extent that institutions are capable of outliving the trauma of apartheid, and to the extent that they work steadfastly to undo the legacies of race and ethnicity that infected every sphere of education under apartheid, UWC’s collective research efforts are interwoven in the long genealogy of a discourse of freedom drawn from the end of slavery to the present. At one level, the responsibility that follows requires that its research agenda be aligned with a notion of the curriculum as the very foundation of the university, constituted primarily through the pedagogic encounter between students and faculty. At another level, for the university to lead the way to an invention of the unprecedented, there is a need to reconstitute the relations across the arts and sciences that will deepen and extend the idea of freedom upon which the viability of a post-apartheid and postcolonial society rests. Most crucially, there is a need to revitalise the debate about the meaning of freedom. There could be no better place than UWC to harness freedom’s potential.

**Most crucially, there is a need to revitalise the debate about the meaning of freedom. There could be no better place than UWC to harness freedom's potential.**

John Herschel, *A Preliminary Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy* (London: A and R Spottiswoode, 1830); Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (London: John Murray, 1859); Thomas Khun, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1962); Steve Fuller, *Thomas Khun: A Philosophical History for our Times* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2000).

Eric Wolff, *Europe and the People Without History*, (California: University of California Press, 1982); Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015); Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (London: Tavistock, 1986); Premesh Lalu, *The Techne of Trickery: Race and its Uncanny Returns* (under review).

W. E. B. Du Bois, *Against Racism: Unpublished Essays, Papers, Addresses, 1887–1961* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1985), 76.

W. E. B. Du Bois, "Does the Negro need Separate Schools," *Journal of Negro Education* 4, no. 3 (1935): 335.

Thozama April, "Theorising Women: The Intellectual Contribution of Charlotte Maxeke to the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa" (PhD diss., University of the Western Cape, 2012).

W. Manning Marable, "Booker T. Washington and African Nationalism," *Phylon* 35, no. 4 (1974): 398–406.

S. M. Molema, *Bantu: Past and Present* (Edinburgh: W. Green, 1920); and Z. K. Matthews, *African Awakening and the Universities* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 1961).

Paul Gilroy, "Humanities and a New Humanism," *Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, Yale University, 21 February 2014.

For an example of how this gave effect to a discussion of a first-year undergraduate course titled *Debates in the Making of the Atlantic World*, see Leslie Witz and Carohn Cornell, "'It is my right to participate in the subject': History 1 at the University of the Western Cape," *Social Dynamics* 20, no. 1 (1994): 49–74; and for a discussion of a first-year undergraduate course titled *Debates in the Making of the Atlantic World*, see Premesh Lalu and Carohn Cornell, "Staging Historical Argument: History 1 at the University of the Western Cape," *South African Historical Journal* 34, no. 1 (1996): 196–210.

Theodor Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*. Translated by E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1966).



According to the historian Arlette Farge, “The archive lays things bare, and in a few crowded lines you can find not only the inaccessible but also the living.” She continues: “Scraps of lives dredged up from the depths wash up on shore before your eyes. Their clarity and credibility are blinding.” What is it about the archives that produces this clarity and credibility? And what is the value of the archive, specifically of those archives we hold at the University of the Western Cape (UWC)? What do they mean for the humanities, both on our campus and far beyond? How does the memory within them burn, as Georges Didi-Huberman puts it?

In 1992, the Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture in South Africa opened at UWC. The nucleus of its collections came from the International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF) in London, documenting political detention and anti-apartheid solidarity work. Soon other activists and organisations entrusted their archives to Mayibuye, which was housed in the lower level of the UWC university library. From 2000 the Mayibuye collections came under joint custodianship of the Robben Island Museum (RIM) and UWC.

What are these riches that lie at our feet? Archives are the place “where history itself acquires form and visibility”. They create the world in miniature. But these are very specific forms, visibilities and miniature worlds: those of the people who participated in the struggle to liberate South Africa from apartheid and the longer history of political, social and economic exclusion based on race. As a consequence they were often banned, detained, and sentenced to imprisonment or exile. The Guide to Collections in the Historical Papers Archive gives a sense of the remarkable range of donations by activists from different political movements to the archives. They comprise various papers, correspondence (sometimes from prison), minutes of meetings, political education classes given in guerrilla training camps, lectures given to international audiences, drafts of autobiographies and other manuscripts. A small sample of donors includes:

**Archives are the place ‘where history itself acquires form and visibility’; they create the world in miniature**

*Dadoo, Dr Yusuf Mohamed. 1930s–1983, 10 boxes.*  
*Asmal, Kader and Louise. 1975–1987, 63 boxes.*  
*Jaffer, Zubeida. 1958–1991, 1 file.*  
*Kasrils, Ronnie. 1980s–1990s, 1 box.*  
*Kathrada, Ahmed. 1960s–1992, 133 boxes.*  
*Mbeki, Govan. 1960s–1992, 2 boxes.*  
*Lalu, Premesh. 1980s–1990s, 15 boxes.*  
*Vasson, Mukesh. 1949–1980s, 3 boxes.*

The archive also holds the lives that the activists sought to bring attention to, or intervene in, as a matter of urgency. They mobilised against forced removals, against police brutality, against capital punishment. Activists were part of existing organisations or formed new organisations to campaign against exploitation, lack of education, gender discrimination, and the isolation and impoverishment caused by the political detention or death of family members. The archive holds materials that are about the extension of care, something very appropriate in these present times of hardship and isolation. Here is a small representative sample:

*Centre for Adult and Continuing Education. 1980s, 402 boxes.*  
*South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union. 1954–1990s, 324 boxes.*  
*Grassroots Publications. 1980–1989, 55 boxes.*  
*International Defence and Aid Fund. 1960s–1990s, 4553 boxes.*  
*United Women’s Congress. 1980s, 5 boxes.*

Many of the donations comprise rare pamphlets of banned movements, the ephemera of meetings and funerals, and an abundance of newspaper cuttings. Activists and their supporters wanted to build and maintain a cohesion, they wanted to prevent the struggle becoming dissipated.



# Memory burns

Professor Patricia Hayes

*DST/NRF SARCHI Chair in Visual History &  
Theory, Centre for Humanities Research*



*Protest with placard  
'This is also ours'.  
RIM-UWC-Mayibuye Archive*

All the materials generated were for campaign purposes and ongoing documentation would feed into the next action. They were not necessarily created with posterity in mind. For this reason, they are even more interesting. Some touch on the most vulnerable lives, like those rendered almost invisible by the Bantustan system. As Farge puts it, they offer “traces by the thousands”. She adds:

The archival document is a tear in the fabric of time, an unplanned glimpse offered into an unexpected event. In it, everything is focused on a few instants in the lives of ordinary people, people who were rarely visited by history, unless they happened to form a crowd and make what would later be called history.

What we call the archive was never compiled as such. Moreover, across different histories, we are dealing with the problem that “The poor did not write, or wrote very little, about their own lives”. When people produced the documents or media that can now be found in the Mayibuye archives, this was not with an eye toward history, but coming from the urgency of their own times. They arise from situations, and from routines. Obvious routines are the minutes taken at regular organisational meetings in different parts of the country, and in countries with anti-apartheid organisations driving specific campaigns and responding to events in South Africa. Another regular routine, for instance, was the weekly meeting of the Afrapix photographic collective to determine which photographs would make their way out of the country from its member photographers, whose identities were often suppressed under the emergency regulations. This means that sometimes the photographs going to IDAF and eventually into the Mayibuye collections cannot be traced to a particular photographer without careful retrospective inquiry.

In this way the archive forces the reader to engage with it in very challenging ways. Farge speaks of being captivated by the archive, of “the sensation of having finally caught hold of the real”, and a “profound feeling of tearing away a veil”. This vivid impression that might carry more intensity than truth requires a response at different levels. It needs interpretive tools and craft to decipher these materials, which is the ground of the humanities disciplines.

### The archive of contact

Among the photograph collections at Mayibuye, especially from IDAF, are numerous contact sheets. The contact sheet was part of the toolkit of the photographer in the time of analogue photography. The contact sheet is an assembly, the vertical layering of horizontal lines of film so that one synoptic glance can show what is represented in a roll of processed negative film that holds 36 frames. If the strips are placed in the correct order, you can see the number of each frame in the right order from one to 36, which represents the sequence in which the photos were taken.

The contact sheets in the Mayibuye collections are different from most others, which would usually show frame by frame how a photographer marks out a sequence of shots at one scene or moves between scenes as they unfold. This usually gives us a linear trajectory of what the photographer took and the order in which he or she did so. As this Mayibuye contact sheet (Figure 2) demonstrates, it is a different kind of frame-by-frame coverage. In the contact sheet some even appear upside-down, and the items jump from frame to frame. Edges of headlines and print from newspapers appear. This is because these are the different items needing to be included in the IDAF collection to be made available for building an argument about apartheid, and for solidarity and support work.

This represents a grouping of the daily international and local journalism about South Africa. Today we would probably scan the newspapers, or simply access them online. But nowhere in today's digital culture do we have this tradition of assembly, the compression of 36 frames (or scans) into one synoptic frame, also revealing which frames were selected for further action. That is what the numbering written by hand on the contact sheet represented: which frames were selected to be printed up and used for further purposes. We can trace the decisions made that might contribute to political action. We can also trace what other photographs can be seen in the collection, and thus we are put in contact with a much wider net of items archived, all through this contact sheet.

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Let's examine this one (Figure 2) for a moment. The contact sheet includes reports of dispossession, as people were forced to move from their homes with the bare essentials. It also has two frames of a newspaper showing police preparing to confront a crowd. This kind of conflict image was very much in use, leading to criticism that such clear black-and-white pictures of resistance and repression tended to throw other issues into the shadow. Many photographers and artists have sought to address this criticism and have done so in very rich ways.

We now need to ask, however, if we have thrown the baby out with the bathwater, whether we have left something behind if we simply pass over such images of conflict. Farge points out that "discord and confrontation lie at the heart" of certain kinds of records, and suggests we should make a virtue of this.

Why not make use of this fact, and create out of rupture and disquiet a grammar with which to read the ways existences were time and again made and unmade? It is not easy to separate the history of men and women from that of social relations and antagonisms. Indeed, certain social groups only came into being through the experience of struggle.

This last point cannot be emphasised too strongly: that certain social groups only come into existence as a result of struggle. In South Africa this is a result of the formation of subjectivities in a time of struggle, however close one is or is not to actual events and organisations. "Conflict is a space of creation, and what comes after it rarely resembles what came before it." These social groups are represented in the huge array of images, film footage and historical documents in the Mayibuye Archives, as are the social groups constituted by the activists who also became the donors of such materials.

## Thinking resistance

The problem is when we see conflict and resistance as a single performance that, as philosopher Howard Caygill says, "fades out and disappears". That performance is often judged in terms of what it achieves, and is often seen as failure. Caygill suggests, however, that resistance is not about this but about the capacity to resist again. Actual resistance should be able to reproduce itself.

Caygill highlights instead a capacity to resist, which manifests but is not confined to "individual events such as demonstrations". This changes how we think about resistance.

Thus "resistance does not have to be the great performative event in the street. It is enough with a small gesture that then develops into another and so on." In this argument, one can see why there is a Black Lives Matter movement today in the United States. Caygill argues that it could only happen because it has the exceptional work of the Black Panthers decades ago to build upon.

Even though they were always armed and skilled at spectacular fighting, they [the Black Panthers] also did things such as handing out free breakfasts and making sure people could visit their families. They were a terrific resistance movement simply because they created an ability to resist in the future.

There are echoes of the work done by IDAF, by the trade unions, by the student movements, by the church organisations, who sought to create a cohesive capacity to unite people in a cause and improve their lives.

How can this archive then assist us in building an ongoing capacity to resist oppression and develop a politics of care in the present and the future? This refers to care in thought and reflection, centred on the university community and extending out into the world. How can we in the university think effectively about resistance today, in environments that are often anti-intellectual and depoliticised?

For scholars of humanities and history, one of the answers lies in the marriage between the close scrutiny of historical materials together with conceptual thought. As Caygill reminds us, this was the method followed by Walter Benjamin:

"You do philosophy by working through a historical material in a very concrete way. The historical material forces you, so to speak, to move ahead in ways that are unobtainable by working only on a conceptual level. Yet at the same time you need the conceptual level to recognize history's systematic character."



# An archive of the future

Professor Premesh Lalu

*Founding director of the  
Centre for Humanities Research*



*The addition of Rashid Lombard's  
photographic collection adds substantially  
to UWC's notable archives*

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) recently entered into a partnership with photographer Rashid Lombard to house his substantial archival collection, which promises to offer expanded perspectives on the everyday cultural and political life of the Cape Flats. Consisting of a vast photographic record of Cape Flats history from the 1960s onwards, as well as an equally vast documentation of the history of jazz in South Africa, the Rashid Lombard Collection brings into view a hitherto repressed and often neglected feature of life under apartheid.

There is much to be said about the confidence expressed by Rashid Lombard in his decision to deposit his collection at UWC. The institution has set in motion the first stages of a project on archival renewal through the establishment of a state-of-the-art archive facility to deepen and enhance its student and faculty research initiatives. Beyond the fact that the Lombard collection provides us with an opportunity to delve into a significant part of the institution's courageous fight against apartheid in higher education, it also opens up new areas of research. This has the potential, for instance, to advance the ongoing collaborations with students and faculty convened by Professor Patricia Hayes, the SARChI Chair in Visual History and Theory in the Centre for Humanities Research, as well as other research initiatives across the university, not to mention the much wider public interest generated by this collection.

The photograph taken by Lombard, of a group seated in the shade of a tree, encapsulates how significant the collection is for UWC and its broader engagements with a fledgling post-apartheid public sphere. This image of Jakes Gerwel and Thabo Mbeki (first and second right) depicts a crucial aspect of the institution's history. According to Lombard, the photograph of the Vice-Chancellor of UWC and the head of the ANC's information department was taken after a private breakfast meeting in Dakar in 1987 that included UWC colleagues André Odendaal, Ampie Coetzee, and Jaap Durand. The photograph tells the story of an enthusiastic discussion, in an otherwise relaxed atmosphere, that culminated in a decision to deposit the collections of the International Defence Aid Fund (IDAF) at the newly established Mayibuye Centre for Culture and History at UWC.

The decision about the IDAF collection coincided with a process of a massive academic reorientation at the university. The institution had secured its independence from the paternalistic oversight required by the apartheid state after a long and exhausting struggle, placing it on the path to its emergence as a fully fledged university in its own right. The institution found itself on the threshold of a leadership change that would see the appointment of Jakes Gerwel as the Vice-Chancellor in 1987. Gerwel's inaugural lecture is a matter of legend, and he is widely credited with taking the university into an abiding commitment to preparing the grounds for a post-apartheid future, even at the very height of apartheid's most aggressive and violent phase. By securing a research collection of the international anti-apartheid struggle and placing it at the very foundation of his plans for UWC, Gerwel made clear his intention for UWC to become a university with a broad research vision directed at thinking ahead, towards a future beyond the dread of apartheid from which the institution struggled to emerge. It is thus fitting that Lombard's collection, as if destined to be located at UWC, should become part of the very legacy inaugurated during that 1987 photograph.

*Former UWC Rector, Prof Jakes Gerwel and a South African delegation travelled to Dakar, Senegal, to meet with the ANC in exile in 1987. Here, they are meeting former president Thabo Mbeki*



*Photograph by Rashid Lombard, Dakar, 1987*

Moving forward, the Rashid Lombard Collection may help to expand the standard national narrative of the struggle against apartheid by drawing attention to the cultural politics and everyday life that enabled millions to negotiate the landscapes of racial segregation in a divided city. It is an archive that provides insight through carefully crafted and curated materials related to the sensory experiences of apartheid that are often neglected and overlooked in research inquiries across a range of fields of study in South African higher education institutions. To the extent that it places us in a proximate relation to the evocative histories of photography and jazz on the Cape Flats, we may begin to hear the strains of freedom buried in the images formed out of the past in an archival collection of national and international significance that comprises about 500 000 photographs, 120 cinematic works, audio recordings, literary works and ephemera.

The Lombard collection represents an act of renewal, both at the levels of the archival commitments of UWC and in the efforts to relink sense and perception in the divided city.

Much excitement is beginning to form around the arrival of the collection at UWC, with the prospect of new research projects that will be initiated through the Centre for Humanities Research, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and more broadly across the university. The collection - to be housed at the university's new archive facility, which will also hold the RIM-UWC-Mayibuye Archive, among others - stands as a valuable resource in rethinking the past and imagining a future that not only serves UWC's public commitments but also revitalises its research projects across a broad spectrum of inquiries, from Land and Agrarian Studies, to Public Health, to Food Security, and to Community Law. The Rashid Lombard Collection has the potential to catalyse new questions and attitudes about the making of a post-apartheid future across these research platforms.

# Looking back:

## UWC and the redefinition of knowledge production in a changing society

### André Odendaal

*Honorary Professor in History and Heritage Studies, UWC  
Founding Director: The Mayibuye Centre (1990-1998)  
and Robben Island Museum (1996-2002)*

Professors Patricia Hayes and Premesh Lalu have in this edition of *Signals* provided useful insight into the importance of theory, history, archives and the humanities in South Africa, and how they can help “assist us in building an ongoing capacity to resist oppression and develop a politics of care in the present and future”. Their reflections on how to develop new ideas for the way forward in a country and “post-truth” world mired in crisis invite us to look back for lessons to the 1980s and 1990s when UWC famously started redefining itself as an “intellectual home of the democratic left”, challenging the traditional roles played by universities in South Africa. UWC questioned the whole system of knowledge production in South Africa and changed its mission to serve primarily excluded and marginalised narratives, seeking in the process to develop “an open and critical alignment ... with the political movements and organisations committed to the struggle for liberation”. “The ideological orientation of a university – the social philosophy which it privileges – is often accepted quite unproblematically, as if it were naturally right,” said new Rector Prof Jakes Gerwel, “but UWC broke decisively from a colonially rooted university system that had privileged either Afrikaner nationalism or liberal capitalism”.

The campus became a laboratory for all types of alternative thinking and peoples’ education experiments, and it started giving meaning to its professed critical engagement with the liberation movements. One significant example of this was how the ANC’s Constitution Committee, which played a seminal role in the making of South Africa’s Constitution, relocated

from exile to UWC after the unbanning of organisations in 1990. Buoyed by the upsurge of resistance inside the country, Oliver Tambo had announced in his annual presidential address on the 74th birthday of the ANC on 8 January 1986 that 1986 would be the “Year Of uMkhonto we Sizwe – the People’s Army”. The message was to make apartheid “ungovernable”. But unknown to many, Tambo had also on that very day set up a secret Constitution Committee in Lusaka, giving it an “Ad Hoc unique exercise” that had “no precedent in history of the movement”. Knowing that all wars end at a negotiating table, he instructed his new think-tank to start preparing a constitutional framework for a liberated, non-racial democratic South Africa, so that when that time came the movement would be prepared and holding the initiative. This writer’s latest book, *“Dear Comrade President”* (the manner in which the Constitution Committee addressed their reports to Tambo) explains how several of its key members – Zola Skweyiya, Albie Sachs, Kader Asmal and Bridget Mabandla – became familiar faces on campus after the return of the exiles. The widely respected Professor Gerwel set up the new custom-designed Community Law Centre in 1990 under Dullah Omar in order for the Committee to proceed in a relatively seamless way in an academically supportive environment with its great task of helping to redefine a country.

In addition, at its first meeting in Lusaka in 1986, the Constitution Committee recommended that the ANC leadership arrange for “a full demographic/political survey of South Africa to be undertaken as soon as possible” so that the organisation could best work out “what kind of electoral and governmental



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*The Centre enjoyed a high public profile and its previously banned material featured ubiquitously in new TV documentaries and history books.*

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systems”would be best suited for the country in future.

This led to two think-tanks being set up surreptitiously via underground channels. SASPRO in Zimbabwe, and a twin inside the country. Once again UWC provided the agency for this to happen. In 1988, I accompanied Prof Gerwel to a meeting at the home of Aziz and Meg Pahad in London where Thabo Mbeki and other ANC figures were present. One of the issues discussed until deep in the night was the urgent need for Gerwel to identify a trusted academic, who could be the “internal” co-ordinator of the new project. It was the age before cellphones or emails, but Mbeki wanted the person to fly out to Harare the next day. UWC historian Randolph Erentzen was quickly summoned and UWC became the national base for the new Centre for Development Studies (CDS). Its purpose: “to research the existing social, political and economic conditions in the country with a view to planning for a future South Africa” - in effect the implementation of the Constitution Committee’s request in 1986, well before the unbannings.

These are two of the many stories of how UWC as an academic institution connected and significantly contributed to the struggle for freedom and democracy in South Africa in the 1980s and 1990s that still need to be fully documented and learned from.

In that time when a country freed and started reinventing itself after three centuries of colonialism and apartheid, I was

fortunate to be involved in another of the transformational experiments on campus. This was the launch of the Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture in South Africa, which emerged as a result of the exploratory projects and the thinking on campus in the years between 1985 and 1990. Started in an empty room in the old library with some overflowing cardboard boxes, Mayibuye itself, in turn, provided a conceptual base for the formation of democratic South Africa’s first official heritage institution, the Robben Island Museum, in late 1996.

The Centre collected a large multimedia archive on apartheid, resistance and social life in South Africa in a very short time. This included an extensive collections of 60 000 photographs, several thousand hours of previously censored audio-visual productions and raw footage, 2 000 oral history tapes and over 200 historical papers collections from individuals and organisations, as well as a valuable art collection, which included the 100-piece Albie Sachs collection of Mozambican art and the valuable the United Nations-sponsored international Art Against Apartheid exhibition created as a “museum in exile” by the French artist Ernest Pignon-Ernest in 1983 to be given to “the first free and democratic government of South Africa” one day . It was hung in Parliament under the direction of Gordon Metz in 1995 as a way of symbolically replacing the old apartheid iconography and then donated to the Mayibuye Centre as the National Gallery was not yet regarded as being sufficiently transformed to be given custody of such a symbolically important struggle collection.

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***Our eyes were opened to the exciting opportunities to work in diverse, multimedia, multi-disciplined ways and brought across to us the massive impact that the technological revolution accompanying economic globalisation would have on traditional academic practices.***



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The bulk of the Mayibuye Centre's multimedia collections came from the London-based International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF), the information nerve centre of the international anti-apartheid movement during the apartheid years. When IDAF closed in 1991, the organisation donated its material to the Centre after a visit to the country to determine the most appropriate base for the archives. However, often ignored in the Centre's foundational narratives, was also the intense community and struggle-based enterprise of materials-collection and activity that Mayibuye engaged in. Students and activists would arrive with plastic shopping bags of material they had secreted and could have been arrested for only a short while before, while Mayibuye also received instant support from a wide variety of community, cultural and political groups, ranging from the Robben Island prisoner archives to the Kathrada and Tutu collections and the archives of the National Women's Coalition, SANROC and dozens of small organisations and individuals. As democracy approached, this project (and similar ones like the District Six Museum) were regarded with a reverence that is difficult to convey today.

Driven by a strong transformation vision, the Mayibuye Centre initiated a wide range of programmes and activities that cut across traditional boundaries between “town and gown” or, in other words, the traditional monastic notion of a university separated from the world around it. They included exhibitions, community-outreach initiatives, art projects, film weeks, workshops, conferences and the 80 books published in the Mayibuye History and Literature Series between 1991 and 1998. The Centre's multimedia activities also extended to the production of a video documentary and what was reputed to be the first CD-ROM with local content to be produced in South Africa. These activities and the public history experience of the 1980s and early 1990s opened our eyes to the exciting opportunities to work in diverse, multimedia, multi-disciplined ways and brought across to us the massive impact that the technological revolution accompanying economic globalisation would have on traditional academic practices.

In the year of the zig-zag queues, 1994, the Centre with its skeleton staff and motivated student assistants and volunteers





was responsible for 14 exhibitions, which travelled to 21 South African cities and towns, as well as abroad. A portfolio of work by Sandra Kriel in its collection, dealing with Ruth First, the Cradock Four and other political assassinations, was chosen to represent South Africa at the Venice Biennale. Through Albie Sachs, Mayibuye brought the renowned Mozambican artist Malangatana to paint a mural in the university library. This was part of a new mural trail that the Centre developed on campus, which saw local artists Tyrone Apollis and Sophie Peters also make colourful interventions on staid walls.

The Centre's exhibitions and workshops were part of an active process of analysing, debating and contesting historical representations in the public sphere (including monuments, museums, tourism, culture and the media) at a time of momentous flux and change.

Given the hunger for relevant history after the tight censorship under apartheid, the Centre enjoyed a high public profile and its previously banned material featured ubiquitously in new TV documentaries and history books. Revelations from the

rapidly expanding archive made newspaper headlines and caused the same kind of interest as the opening of the Stasi files in Germany – like the escape plan to whisk Mandela off Robben Island by helicopter, and the revelations about the three volumes of official material on apartheid dirty-tricks activities stolen from security police headquarters, which former Robben Islander Mac Maharaj donated to the Centre.

Besides its engagement with culture and struggle history, the Mayibuye Centre became actively involved in driving change in museums and shaping new national heritage and cultural strategies for South Africa from 1990 onwards. The Centre co-hosted two national workshops on future heritage scenarios and the Director and Gordon Metz became key members of the ANC's new Commission for Museums, Monuments and Heraldry (later known as CREATE), which engaged the establishment South African Museums Association and successfully neutralised the MUSA policy initiative of the old government with interventions inter alia at the Bloemfontein Conference (1991), Culture and Development Conference

and the SAMA Conference in East London in 1994. They were also appointed after democracy to the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG), tasked by the new Minister with advising on new principles, policies and frameworks for a democratic South Africa, helped write new heritage legislation, acted as the secretariat for the Future of Robben Island Committee, and also sometime as advisers on heritage matters to Deputy Minister Mabandla and the President office.

Just as UWC helped provide support for various think-tanks of the government-in-waiting, this work by the Mayibuye Centre and its staff was a reflection of how the university contributed in the nation-wide spring-clean accompanying democracy. Struggle-linked intellectuals were moving from being radical oppositionists to academics beginning to fulfill the more mundane but necessary role of specialists found in more stable societies.

Even during the transition to power, the Mayibuye Centre project sought to remain a critical intellectual one. During Mayibuye's Celebrating Democracy Festival held in July 1984 when the Director revealed in a paper based on a report smuggled off the island (now in the archives) that tensions had existed among the ANC leadership in the "High Organ" on Robben Island during the 1960s and early 1970s, highlighted by political and personal differences between Nelson Mandela and Govan Mbeki which at times reached "extreme tension and bitterness". Mayibuye was underlining at the very moment of victory the need for openness and for examining ... what everyone knows: that there are complexities, tensions and contradictions in every social movement and set of human relationships. With the rigid censorship of the apartheid era now something of the past, and the victorious liberation movement no longer obliged to maintain the appearance of absolute unity in the face of repression, South Africa has entered a period when the history of the past few decades can (and, indeed, must) start being told in all its rich complexity.

This revelation was a deliberate decision, not appreciated by the Centre's Fellow, Ahmed Kathrada, and others at the time, but it reflected the energy and openness of the Mayibuye's approach.

The Mayibuye Centre director elaborated on the theme of critical debate and thinking at a preparatory conference in relation to the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), when he made the point that "historians must assert the need for openness about the past and the public's right to know".

He said this included the history of the broad liberation movement, including alleged malpractices in the ranks, because "victorious nationalist struggles have a way of producing hagiography". These critical inputs were part of celebrating democracy in line with the way UWC had defined its "intellectual home of the democratic left" engagement and vision.

The work of the Mayibuye Centre reached its apogee with the foundation of the Robben Island Museum in late 1996. As Interim Administrator and then first Director of RIM, the Centre's director was put in operational charge of reimagining, re-purposing and turning into a national cultural institution and UNESCO World Heritage Site this highly symbolic 584-hectare space. After the island had been shut off from the mainland for centuries, the prison doors were symbolically thrown open on a spine-tingling Day One on 1 January 1987. An ex-prisoner (who had once been sent there in chains) and a child turned the key.

Under a partnership agreement with UWC, the Centre itself was effectively taken up into RIM - so that its collections could provide a ready-made collection for the new museum. RIM's official aim, in keeping with the spirit of the newly launched post-liberation struggle democracy, was to "nurture creativity and innovation and contribute to socio-economic development, the transformation of South African society and the enrichment of humanity". Those soaring goals summed up the spirit of the times in South Africa. One of the four core essences - besides maintaining the island's symbolism and heritage, and keeping it sustainable - was to make RIM "a platform for critical debate and lifelong learning". The detailed story of the making of the museum will be told in a forthcoming book called *Rainbow Dreams* (2021). Projecting the living museum template and experience of the Mayibuye Centre on to a bigger, more meaningful stage, RIM initiated a number of creative projects. At the core of these were educational programmes for school children (3,500 of the initial 8,000 visitors per month), cultural activities, including artists and writers in residence, co-operation with community groups, plans for exhibitions and a publishing series, co-operation with local universities, training programmes to fast track a new generation of heritage workers and linkages with relevant international institutions and programmes. This was part of a serious attempt to create a learning institution and new model for museums, in a system that had been deeply racialised, heavily bureaucratic and which was thoroughly stained with colonial and racist representations and stereotypes of South Africa's past. The RIM staff demographics were unrecognisable from a system that as late as 1990 had no black managers (except in the Bantustans). Through the Robben Island Museum Training Programme run in tandem with UCT and UWC's history department (especially Professorss Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz), over 200 heritage workers and graduates gained formal diplomas in heritage management, many going on to take top positions in South African institutions.

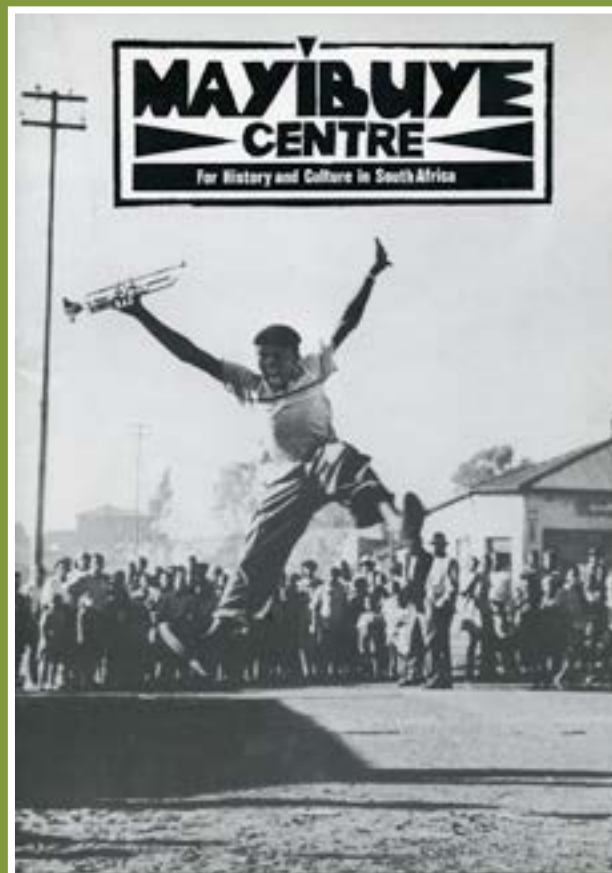
With its exhibitions, debates, books, transformative approach and active "barefoot" collecting, the Mayibuye Centre was totally fresh as an academic and heritage project in South Africa in 1990. The timing of its launch and the scope of its networks in the liberation movement and grassroots social or community movements gave it a niche space at a key moment in South African history.



Driven by liberatory visions and the seemingly unending energies of the moment, the Centre opened up new paths in public heritage and made a noticeable public impact. The whole experience reinforced the notion that to be active beyond the proverbial “ivory tower” does not necessarily mean compromising on academic integrity and critical approaches. On the contrary, as we argued then and still do now, it is essential to any critical intellectual project. This was particularly so in South Africa in the early 1990s. The Centre became an institutional base for what would today be the equivalent of a “decolonisation” project at a time when the universities, museums, cultural institutions and scholarship were overwhelmingly and complacently dominated by colonially rooted if no longer openly apartheid-supporting establishments and ideas.

The Mayibuye Centre brought the notion of public history firmly into the intellectual life of UWC and the vice-rector noted in 1995 that it was now “probably the most public face of the university”. According to Professor Premesh Lalu, the Mayibuye Centre was the institutionalisation of Jakes Gerwel’s university of the democratic left idea and it became ‘central to thinking about what atmosphere might exist at UWC’ at a time when the university was “reimagining itself as an institution that would give meaning and purpose to the idea of post-apartheid South Africa”.

Finally, in this issue, Lalu, Hayes and others show that UWC is undergoing another deep cyclical or generational rethink about the role and place of the university in society in a context very different, globally and at home, from those that pertained in the 1980s and early 1990s. In my opinion, energies, initiatives and reflections like these – adapted to the changing times of unprecedented technological advancements, climate change extinction threats, the current limitations of the democratic state and the intellectual ruptures of the past few years – are needed more than ever if the university is to find the new conceptual tools, imaginations, ideas and languages to ensure it remains relevant to the demands of the time.



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**R**esearch impact is primarily measured by publication in high-ranking journals, the majority of which are in English. This narrow measurement focusing on scientific journals, together with exclusionary language policies, impedes knowledge sharing and raises the question: Do the dominant scholarly communication systems serve the public good?

As important as it is to publish in high-impact, peer-reviewed journals, impactful research should equally be measured by assessing the extent to which researchers connect with or share their knowledge with the public they serve. After all, through taxes, the public's money contributes to funding research conducted at our universities. Therefore, researchers have a public duty to inform, share and foster better understanding of the challenges facing societies.

Recent public health crises have brought into sharp focus the importance of making accurate and timely communication available in a way that is accessible and easy to understand. In 2018, the South African government clambered to respond to public concerns following the listeriosis outbreak. More recently, governments across the world are scrambling to contain the spread of misinformation, as fear and panic set in following the Covid-19 outbreak.

This latest global public health crisis should encourage us all - especially those within the research community - to pause and reflect on the role of researchers in making their work more accessible to the public.

Social media presents one way to do so.

In an increasingly digital world, social media plays a meaningful role in higher education every day. The breakneck diffusion of information made possible by rapid technological advancements means that news can reach more people in record time. Similarly, through digital platforms research can be made accessible to assist governments and communities to better understand the crises they face.

At the same time, the speed with which news is shared and consumed means that misinformation can equally be spread with similar ease. Yet by viewing social media as part of their research dissemination mandate researchers can help combat the spread of misinformation.

Importantly, as vehicles for communication, social media platforms offer useful tools for presenting research in attractive ways to the public - and policy-makers - by packaging it creatively and using language that is simple and easy to understand. Used effectively, social media platforms can help researchers share their knowledge more widely and help promote understanding of science by putting research into the public domain. These platforms can also encourage interaction between researchers and the communities they serve by disrupting the one-directional process of educating the public, and encourage a more dialogue-based engagement.

Beyond the need to inform the public about research outcomes, the scale and complexity of the problems we face today demand that we integrate technical (scientific) knowledge with local knowledge. This requires developing better links between the scientific community and the public. So the immediacy and interactive nature of social media can contribute to strengthening the integration and interaction between scientists and the general public.

As the University of the Western Cape celebrates 60 years of bringing to light the struggle against discrimination to help build an equitable society, it remains our duty to champion the right to knowledge by promoting the dissemination of research for the public good.

# How social media can tell the world about university research

***Journals are the usual way to get academic research known. But social media connects more effectively with the general public***



**Mologadi Makwela**

*PhD Candidate, Centre of Excellence  
in Food Security*



# The evolving role of science in society

Associate Professor Carolina Odman

*Inter-University Institute for Data Intensive Astronomy*

The world is experiencing a traumatic change brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is traumatic because it is sudden and affects everyone around the globe at once. Nothing like this has ever happened so rapidly before, but as the world and the environment grow under pressure from an expanding global village it might also not be the last time that we experience such a dramatic transformation. The University of the Western Cape (UWC), over its 60 years of existence, has seen the world change profoundly and the university has in many ways steered our society through these changes in the past. I propose to take a look at how science at UWC is helping us navigate the brave new world being defined by the coronavirus.

In the context of a very fast-changing world, it is appropriate to ask ourselves what the role of science is in our society. Science has provided us with the medical knowledge that saves thousands of lives every day. Science has driven the development of technologies that keep our communities connected. But what can science do today? Can science contribute at the same pace as the world is changing? And can our newly and virtually graduated BScs, BSc Hons and PhD holders make a difference here and now? As I am writing these words the news has been released that researchers from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) and UWC's South African National Bioinformatics Institute (SANBI) have just sequenced the novel coronavirus found in South Africa, which will help our understanding of the disease and contribute to the search for a vaccine.

Many of our UWC scientists use big data in their research. From genetics and bioinformatics to radio astronomy, which reveals the depths of space, our scientists develop big-data tools and the computer infrastructure to be able to analyse

information and reveal new knowledge on scales that have never before been seen.

UWC is a leader in this big-data landscape through its involvement, for example, in the Inter-University Institute for Data Intensive Astronomy and the ilifu project (a research cloud-computing facility for big data in science used by SANBI) and this benefits students as well, for example through the Data Analytics and Business Intelligence postgraduate diploma.

What is being developed by our researchers becomes the tools of the trade not only in science but also in many industries. Indeed, data analysis and big-data analysis, when available, have become the decision-making tools of choice, enabling businesses and services to be informed by evidence and even to model and predict the evolution of situations to make the best decisions possible at every point. So, when confronted with a problem like the Covid-19 pandemic, the domain expertise found at UWC is already making a significant difference.

This may be where UWC's position is unique. We have a strong, if young, tradition of science. But we are also deeply rooted in the communities we serve, as a result of our six decades of community-oriented spirit.

Our science graduates, many of whom are themselves from very humble backgrounds, have the privilege of an excellent education, and can thus help fellow South Africans navigate this unprecedented situation. The overflow of social media messages to do with the coronavirus pandemic can be overwhelming. Our science graduates can help guide communities, pointing out misinformation and reinforcing scientifically justified guidelines. Those guidelines need to be trusted and our science





## *Work in science at UWC can help society come to grips with crises like the Covid-19 pandemic*

graduates can be those trusted members of the community with the scientific background to explain guidelines if needed. This is a very important skill today because we all rely on communities to adopt behaviours that protect themselves and others around them.

Our science graduates can also see the structural problems that militate against following those guidelines in poorer communities, such as shared resources and limited space, and they can raise those issues within the scientific community, as they keep working on the best solutions to protect everyone from Covid-19.

In fact, during the current pandemic, scientists are suddenly listened to as never before. Decades of warnings about climate change have not given scientists the ear of governments like this pandemic has. Suddenly they find themselves in front of TV cameras and microphones, trusted by the leaders of our country to help guide the public. This is a fantastic opportunity for the science community to reinforce its impact on policy at the highest levels.

Today, our scientists and science graduates are natural role models. Their attitudes towards challenges, as problem solvers and critical thinkers, are important to show to the public. Scientists are on a permanent journey to improve their understanding of the world, and that makes them constant learners. The intellectual humility it takes to be prepared to revise one's knowledge is needed in the face of this pandemic, where so many aspects are yet unknown.

The leadership demonstrated by the South African government in this crisis was and continues to be informed by scientists, and

the response to the pandemic in South Africa is hailed internationally as one of foresight and wisdom.

Bringing these two together - the cutting-edge tools of science and the community-conscious attributes of scientists - is a very powerful combination that makes UWC graduates particularly significant actors in the face of national and global developmental challenges.

We wouldn't be UWC if we weren't looking to the future too, and so we are working on helping our young scientists hone their skills and apply them to the challenges they see in society. We are in the design phase of a Science for Development course, in which our scientists will be able to learn more about sustainable development, become familiar with concepts and practices of community upliftment, and position science in a societal context. Our scientists will understand the meaning of development indicators and be exposed to concepts such as unintended consequences, ethics and indigenous knowledge systems. They will be taught about science communication and engagement and how the science and innovation systems work. Today's situation motivates us more than ever to complement our science students' skills with the ability to contribute at all levels, from communities on the ground to science advice to government.

Today, as our 2020 science graduates go into the world, we watch with pride, for we know that they are building on 60 years of UWC tradition - a tradition that uses the combination of cutting-edge knowledge and community spirit to guide change towards a better South Africa - and we at UWC keep working, researching and teaching, always learning in this brave new world.

# International initiative prepares students for citizenship

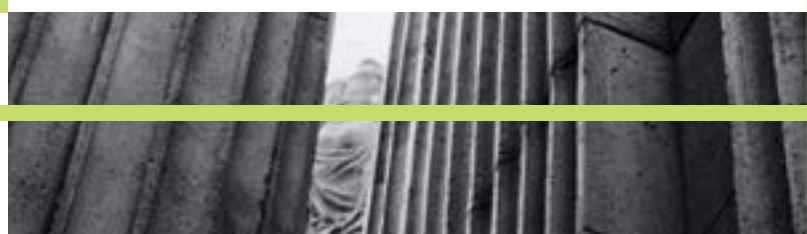
As an indicator of the importance of the collaboration, the Vice-Chancellor of University West, Professor Martin Hellström, headed a delegation visit to UWC in February 2020. During the visit, the leadership of UWC and UW signed renewal of collaboration agreements and held discussions about future prospects for enhancing and extending the international collaboration between the universities. The VC of University West also officially opened a new Zoom Room at the Political Studies department. The Zoom Room is financed by University West, to enhance the future collaboration of the jointly organised Master's Programme, and to improve digitalisation of international education, and thereby promote a sustainable long-term education and research collaboration between the universities.

For the future, we foresee an exciting and expansive international collaboration. We are very proud of the fruitful and productive international collaboration between UWC and UW. Ultimately the intention is to prepare our students for citizenship in a global context by bringing international experience and knowledge to them, as well as equipping them with personal empowerment skills such as organisational ability, leadership and an understanding of their agency.

***A joint project of the University West in Sweden and UWC trains students to be responsible and active citizens***

**Professor Cherrel Africa**  
*Political Studies Department*

**Professor Per Assmo**  
*International Programme for Politics & Economics,  
University West, Sweden*



We live in an era of complexity, uncertainty, grave challenges and global development threats. These include extreme poverty and inequality, identity politics, intolerance, societal polarisation and populist politics that promise quick and simple solutions to complex socio economic problems. In this context it is important for institutions of higher education to take up the challenge of educating students in a way that helps them to be responsible and active citizens able to grapple with the complexity of the times. As the UWC Charter of Graduate Attributes for the 21st Century indicates: “UWC graduates should be engaged, committed and accountable agents of social good. They must aspire to contribute to social justice and care, appreciative of the complexity of historical contexts and societal conditions through their roles as professionals and members of local and global communities.”

In essence they need to become “global citizens”.

To this end, the UWC’s Political Studies department initiated an international collaboration with University West (UW) in Sweden in 2015. Initially, the programme director at UW, Professor Per Assmo, was successfully granted a SIDA-funded Linneaus-Palme staff- and student-exchange programme between UWC/UW. During 2015-2020, the programme has funded exchange study periods in Sweden for more than ten students from the political studies department at UWC. In the same way, Swedish students have been given the chance to study at UWC. Equally important, the programme has also enabled teachers from UWC to lecture and collaborate internationally, which over the years has developed into a more formally established a long-term international education and research collaboration between the universities.

As a direct result of the collaboration, Professor Assmo at UW and Professor Laurence Piper at UWC joined forces and successfully compiled a collaborative application for a project that was granted funds from STINT/NRF. The development of an international collaborative Education & Research programme between UW and UWC is based on an identified need to develop an internationally competitive post graduate and research programme, within the broader field of Work-Integrated Political Studies, which embraces scholarship on new forms of “learning through doing” such as experiential learning, action research and participatory methods.

More specifically, between 2018-2020 academic staff from the Political Studies department have, through a series of workshops held at UWC and UW, worked together with colleagues from University West to establish an international Master’s programme in Work-Integrated Political Studies. In the workshops, the international staff group developed, planned, structured, and organised the fundamental questions regarding the programme. Overall, the workshops have been a great success and managed to establish the entire structure of the proposed programme. In the final preparations for the start of the programme, the academic staff are, during 2020,

finalising the research-work placement components of the Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programme, which will include action-based research, in direct collaboration with key stakeholders.

UW will launch the new, exciting and unique International Master’s Programme in Work-Integrated Political Studies in 2021, and UWC will follow suit later. The programme will contextualise political studies in the field of Work Integrated Learning. This new and unique approach will connect academic studies and research to the realities of working in the public realm, whether in government or civil society, implemented in an international educational environment.

“This programme will connect international academic studies and research to the realities of working in the public realm.” The programme will reinforce research areas broadly linked to the theme of Work-Integrated Learning and Applied Political Studies among, as well as between, the institutions involved. From the South African and UWC perspective, such a programme is a very welcome development. The programme will equip our graduates with important knowledge, skills and learning processes, expose them to international trends in the academy and the increasingly global world of work, and thereby better prepare them for the labour market, and deliver research rooted in the immediate problems of public life.

The need for Work-Integrated Learning is reinforced by the realities of the work environment in South Africa, which is characterised by a high unemployment rate, with it taking many years for some graduates to find work (StatsSA 2018). The Master’s Programme in Work-Integrated Political Studies will connect Political Studies postgraduates with the world of work, with significant potential benefits in terms of academic and personal growth, career skills and social development. By placing students in government and civil society workplaces, the programme will contribute to strengthening the public sector by providing both a pool of potential talented employees, and also assist with the production of practical knowledge needed to govern democratically, to implement policy programmes and to hold the state accountable. This is because the research that students do will be directed towards the needs of the host as well as forming the basis of the student’s dissertation.

The Master’s Programme in Work-Integrated Political Studies allows for a strong international collaboration in terms of module and programme development, and potentially module teaching, thesis supervision and research placements. To this end, Professor Assmo is leading a project entitled “Internationalisation through Digital Education – a digitalisation project to develop an international collaborative educational environment between University West and the University of the Western Cape”, with the explicit goal of developing a long-term sustainable digital education and research collaboration between the partner institutions UW and UWC.



# Scorecard can help monitor children's psycho-social health and wellbeing

Dr Ana Casanueva

*Technology Transfer Director*

**Many learners suffer from psycho-social impairments undermining their education. A new scorecard will help**

Healthy early childhood development is fundamental to success and happiness, not only during childhood but throughout the course of a person's life. This not only includes linguistic and cognitive development but also physical, social and emotional development. This development and the environment surrounding a child could either enhance or hinder optimal development of the individual. Schools are seen as an important environment for the promotion of education, but they could also be crucial for the promotion of health in children, as well as their families and community, through specific health-promotion programmes. The right programmes in a school setting could make a positive contribution to the overall health of the children and society.

In South African schools, there are many learners who have very low levels of literacy despite having attended schooling from Grade 1 to Grade 12. These vulnerable learners have a high dropout rate. Many of these learners suffer from psycho-social impairments that affect their educational development. The possibility therefore exists that if these psycho-social impairments were to be diagnosed early a number of strategies could be implemented to assist the learner, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes.

Currently in South Africa, however, there are no instruments available for teachers to assess the psycho-social health and wellbeing of young learners. The use of such instrument could have a number of advantages for children, their families, teachers and the community.

Dr Karin Daniels from the Faculty of Community Health Sciences has developed a psycho-social health index scorecard for learners in early childhood that can be used by primary school teachers. The scorecard is based on an existing School Health Index (SHI) that has been developed by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and has been optimised for use in the South African context. This psycho-social health and wellbeing scorecard score was

designed following feedback from teachers, health promoters, psychologists, primary caregivers, social workers and experts in early childhood development, internationally and nationally.

The scorecard could be implemented by an education authority, allowing teachers to monitor their classes in a standardised and efficient manner.

Following its design, Dr Daniels engaged with a number of rural schools to receive feedback from teachers and school principals. The scorecard was considered to be user-friendly, as well as a useful tool for assessing the psycho-social health and wellbeing challenges of learners. Prototypes of the scorecard were distributed to seven rural schools in the Western Cape in a pilot programme to assess its ease of use as well as its efficacy in assessing psycho-social issues affecting the young learners. Teachers confirmed the benefits of such a tool, allowing them to identify vulnerable learners.

This is yet another example of community-based innovations emanating from universities through engagement and collaboration with all stakeholders.

The SHI is possibly the first comprehensive tool designed specifically for schools to assess and improve the strengths and weaknesses of their health-promotion policies and programmes. The intention of the implementation of the SHI is to develop action plans to improve the overall health of learners. On the other hand, the proposed School Health Index Score was designed for learners in early childhood development in South African, and is only four pages in length. The scorecard was also developed and designed taking into consideration the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) Policy. Nine key areas of the CSTL programme have been identified for the implementation of the programme, focusing on the immediate needs of communities: nutritional support; health promotion; infrastructure, water and sanitation; social welfare services; psycho-social support; and safety and protection.




# Learning to be a health activist

Dr Ana Casanueva

*Technology Transfer Director*

***A resource kit, designed by learners for learners, encourages engagement with TB, self-esteem and poverty.***



In 2009, Professor Alan Christoffels from the South African National Bioinformatics Institute and Professor Trish Struthers from the School of Public Health decided to join forces on a multidisciplinary project aimed at developing an innovative health intervention for South African school learners from Grades 7 to 9. Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) programme from the United States, a learning resource kit, titled "How to Be a Health Activist", was developed with the aim of engaging and educating teenagers about tuberculosis within the context of HIV, as well as dealing with issues of self-esteem, poverty and helping them make informed decisions about their lives to help mitigate some of the health risks they face. This was, however, not just another learning resource for school learners.

There were a number of innovative factors that contributed to the success of the "How to Be a Health Activist" resource kit:

- The material was designed by the learners for the learners. Workshops were held in Western Cape schools in order to listen to the learners' needs and problems and allow them to describe exactly what they wanted to see in such a resource;
- The content was mapped to the National Basic Education Department's Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) requirements for the Life Orientation subject, covering curriculum-based material on HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis while enhancing the current curriculum and life skills for the learners;
- A multidisciplinary team was involved in the development of the kit, including UWC computational biologists, public health experts, educational specialists, e-learning experts and private curriculum content developers, bringing their expertise to bear on developing a relevant, factual, interactive resource with the human touch;
- The resource was developed in collaboration with the main stakeholder, the Western Cape Education Department, ensuring relevance and uptake within Western Cape public schools.

The resource kit includes a 12-chapter learner's handbook, a teacher's guide and an interactive DVD, as well as links to an interactive website, including an Afrikaans edition for Afrikaans-medium public schools. The handbook allows learners to engage with the topics in an interactive manner and, being excellent source material, can stimulate group discussions on particular topics.

"How to Be a Health Activist" was officially launched on 31 July 2014 by Western Cape Provincial Minister of Education Debbie Schäfer at Vanguard Primary School in Athlone, Cape Town. Since then, the Western Cape Education Department has entered into a copyright licence agreement with UWC and, to date, 209 897 learner books have been distributed to learners, and 600 teacher's guides, with distribution in more than 460 schools.

The "How to Be a Health Activist" learning resource kit is an excellent example of the impact that can be derived from universities' research expertise together with community engagement and government involvement, leading to the positive development of the youth of the country.

Over the past few years, much emphasis at higher education institutions in South Africa has been placed on constructing higher education in a more collaborative manner. The #RhodesMustFall movement followed by #FeesMustFall protests in 2015-16 signalled that transformation at higher education institutions was moving at a very slow pace, and students' voices and engagement were absent. The Fallist movement called for the opening up of the higher education space to involve a more inclusive society. This meant that it was time for universities to redefine the students' relationship with the institution. The shift was from viewing our students as clients to viewing our students as partners in learning, teaching and student success. According to Paul Ramsden (2008), the success of higher education institutions is dependent on meticulous, deliberate and strategic participation of students in partnership with academics to improve teaching and learning and in this way also promote a sense of ownership.

The idea of students as partners was promoted by the South African government's Education White Paper 3 in 1997, which was seen as an important aspect of imagining a democratic relationship between higher education and those it serves. It states:

"The principle of democratisation requires that ... the system of higher education and of individual institutions should be democratic, representative and participatory and characterised by mutual respect, tolerance and the maintenance of a well-ordered and peaceful community life. Structures and procedures should ensure that those affected by decisions have a say in making them, either directly or through elected representatives ..."

With this in mind, therefore, the First-Year Transition Programme (FYTP) formed part of Operation Student Success, as initiated by the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic. The idea was to partner with UWC's senior students in order to ensure the smooth transition of first-year students at our institution.

The FYTP, which forms part of the First-Year Experience, was introduced into all seven faculties at the University of the Western Cape. The first-year transition programme forms part of an intentional, collaborative partnership between the first-year students and the university. The foundation of this programme is the partnerships that are formed between: first-year students and mentors; mentors and FYTOs (First-Year Transition Officers); and FYTOs and staff members.

FYTOs and mentors are senior and postgraduate students who are located in all seven faculties across the university. The use of senior students as partners in co-creating spaces for first-year students to feel a sense of belonging and connectedness to the institution developed out of the institution's online First Year Expectation and Experience Survey. One of the findings from the survey reveals that first-year students feel comfortable seeking support and information from peers and senior students. To alleviate the "I heard it on the grapevine" syndrome, and the danger of first-year students receiving incorrect and unofficial information, the institution decided to build on this notion and capitalise on student partnerships to address issues relating to first-year university transition.

Partnership in this programme is framed as a process of student engagement, by means of which student and staff learn and work together to engage in first-year student transition interventions. The partnerships with the FYTOs and mentors allowed for student voices in planning and implementing the transition programme.

# Partnership for first-year students in innovative programme

**Senior and postgraduate students help first-years develop a sense of belonging and connectedness at the institution**

**Dr Subethra Pather**

*Acting Director: Learning, Teaching and Student Success & Teaching and Learning  
Specialist Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic*



The training workshops held with FYTOs and mentors were crucial to ensure that first-year students receive accurate, reliable and official information. Who would be better placed to know about student challenges and struggles with first-year transition than older students? The FYTOs and mentors took pride in fostering an engaging learning and mentoring relationship based on mutual trust, respect and care of all parties involved.

The focus of the programme was to ensure that all first-year students would be able to navigate their UWC experience successfully with very little stress and anxiety. All first-year students were invited to be part of the transition programme, which includes one-on-one mentoring, mentoring circles, online resources and workshops. Below are some comments with regard to stress from the first-year students that formed part of the transition programme:

*"It [the transition programme] has taught me so much. It affected me positively because whenever I need to offload work stress my mentor is there to guide me academically and socially."*

*"It [the transition programme] has made it easier for me to handle the stress and work load that comes with being at university."*

*"I was able to interact with others. I've learnt to be open and not hide things that are stressing me."*

The FYTP at UWC enhanced first-year students' sense of connectedness and belonging to the institution. Students felt comfortable to seek help, make friends and make use of university services.

Here are some further comments from students:

*"The programme helped me communicate with other students and also I was able to share my ideas, feel comfortable with others including my mentor and who helped me on how to overcome university's challenges."*

*"The mentorship was an asset to my FYE at UWC. I felt comfortable and at ease knowing that there was an experienced person whom I could contact for any type of help I required."*

Student partnerships in the First-Year Transition Programme have certainly created an enabling environment for first-year students to engage socially and academically, with confidence and pride, in the university and the wider university community.

Overall, we have learnt valuable lessons from partnering with our students in a manner that was based on the principles of respect, reciprocity and shared responsibility. The co-creation of knowledge through the student partnership did, at times, create some discomfort because most staff-student partnerships are conducted from the vantage point of staff being in a position of power.

But we would certainly like to involve our students as partners in other learning and teaching areas in the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic's office. We are currently writing up our experiences so that this can contribute towards developing our UWC framework on students as partners in learning, teaching and student success.

# What social innovation and development can do for a university

*Two projects show how UWC has developed infrastructure to nurture and support a culture of social and scientific innovation across faculties*

Invention and innovation are two different concepts. In the case of an invention, an investment of resources financial or otherwise is made, with the outcome being new knowledge. Innovation, on the other hand, is the outcome of utilising the new knowledge that is the outcome of the invention process to address a market or societal need and thereby results in value creation, which may be monetary or other. As articulated in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Report 2010, "Innovation is about creating value from knowledge ... Knowledge is the key input to innovation."

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) has over the past few years invested time and resources in harnessing innovation that is built on the strengths and successes of the university. UWC has created an institutional infrastructure to nurture and support a culture of social and scientific innovation across faculties. This includes the establishment of a Technology Transfer Office, a Business Development Unit, a Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and a number of professional entities to take forward specific innovation and commercialisation ventures. These institutional infrastructures are intended to place UWC as a significant player in the global knowledge economy and an innovation hub.

Thus UWC has developed a number of innovation flagship programmes that aim at building on social innovation and development. Among these programmes is the Future-Innovation Lab and the Zenzeleni Project.

Future-Innovation Lab was launched in March 2020, and is a multi-year partnership between UWC and the multinational company Samsung. Samsung South Africa announced its R280-million Equity Equivalent Investment Programme (EEIP) in South Africa in August 2019. The programme includes the Research and Development (R&D) Academy. The Future-Innovation-Lab at UWC is an anchor project of the R&D Academy. The EEIP initiative is projected to have a measurable impact on job creation and make a contribution of nearly R1-billion to the South African economy at large.

The Future-Innovation Lab provides an opportunity to deserving previously disadvantaged youth (between the ages of 18 and 35) to gain skills in software development and digital

## Subethra Pather

*Head of UWC's First-Year Experience programme, located in the DVC: Academic's Office*

## Wouter Grove

*WesternCape CoLab and PhD student at UWC*

## Dr Leona Craffert

*Former director of the WesternCapeCoLab, currently an adjunct professor at the Wits Graduate School of Business*

## Dr Thabile Sokupa

*Head of Projects, DVC: Research and Innovation*





social innovation by means of a structured six-month programme offered by academic and industry experts.

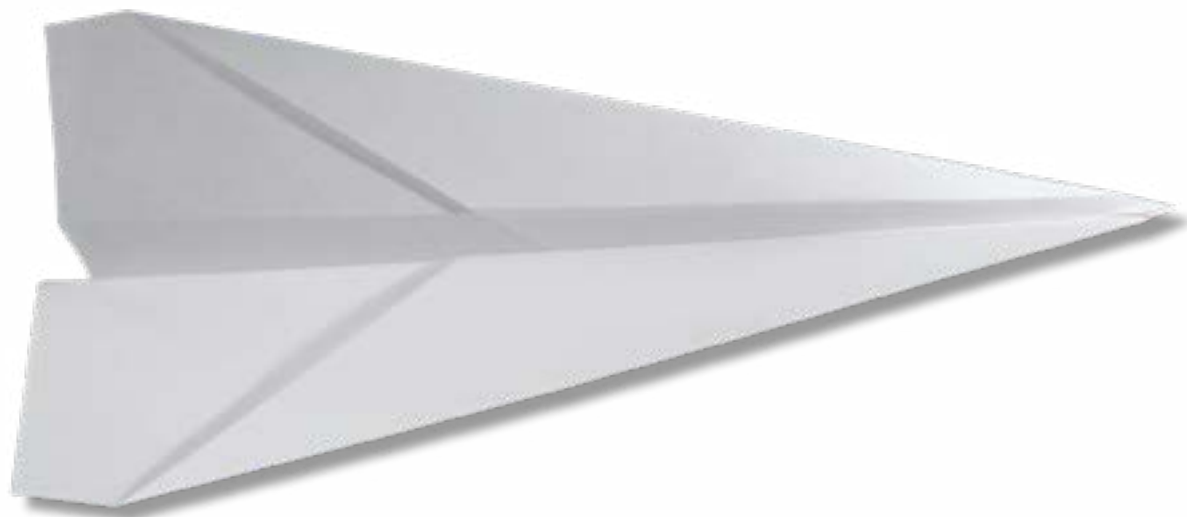
In addition, Samsung and UWC partnered with the Microsoft App Factory to deliver an advanced nine-month software development programme to address the gap in high-demand software skills. The Future-Innovation Lab aims to benefit at least 900 unemployed youth through its programme.

The Zenzeleni Project, by contrast, comprises a partnership between UWC and the community of Mankosi in the Eastern Cape. The project has brought affordable broadband internet access to a community that is largely poverty-stricken. In rural Mankosi, the network covers 30km and is made up of several Wi-Fi access points scattered around “safe” homes in the community. The access points run open-source firmware and software, and the entire system is powered by solar panels installed on the roofs of the host homes. The Zenzeleni Project has empowered local communities and helped a rural community to build South Africa’s first community-owned internet service provider (ISP). It has created income generation through the sale of low-cost

unlimited Wi-Fi connections to the local community.

In order to address local, national and global challenges through innovation, we need a strategy that encourages leadership, innovation and research excellence, growing out of a multi- and interdisciplinary approach. This strategy thus aims to provide direction for solidifying opportunities for UWC’s interdisciplinary research niche strengths, while building a vibrant innovation culture that sustains research excellence by helping to attract and support exceptionally talented students and staff whose insight and creativity is the engine of knowledge creation.

Through the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Innovation, UWC continues to develop strong partnerships (with universities, industry, public agencies, government at various levels and, increasingly, players from the broader society) to support and facilitate the effective development and implementation of new technological and social ideas and products in pursuit of the public good – as exemplified by these two projects.

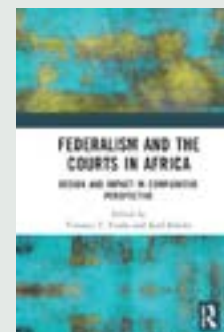
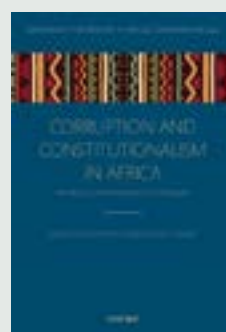
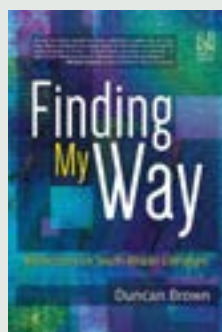
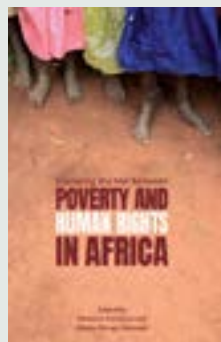


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# 2020 Publications

Notable works produced by UWC academics this year



The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences' Prof Walter Geach co-authored *Taxation: A Transaction-Based Approach*, published by Oxford University Press. The technical editor was Bonita Raymond, acting co-chair in the Department of Accounting, and the foreword was written by Judge Dennis Davis. This is the first taxation book to adopt a transaction-based approach, and it therefore makes a new and unique contribution to the area of taxation.

Professors Ciraj Rassool and Paolo Israel contributed chapters in a book published by the Universidade Federal da Bahia, titled *Lutas pela Memória em África*.

The Faculty of Arts' Dr Koni Benson edited the volume *Crossroads: I Live Where I Like*, a graphic non-fiction history of women-led movements at the forefront of the struggle for land, housing, water, education, and safety in Cape Town. Published by PM Press.

The Former Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Prof Duncan Brown, published *Finding My Way: Reflections on South African Literature*, exploring the changing field of South African literature. It also attempts to find more creative, engaging, and intriguing modes of writing about literature and the humanities more generally. Published by UKZN Press.

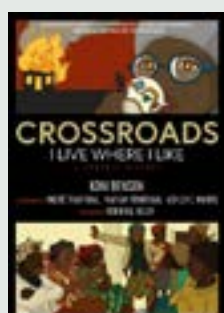
Senior lecturer in Public Law and Jurisprudence Dr Radley Henrico and Unisa's Professor Yvonne Burns co-edited *Administrative Law*, 5th ed. (published by LexisNexis), which follows on the approach of the previous editions: administrative law as a specialised branch of constitutional law.

Dr Ebenezer Durojaye, head of the Socio-economic Rights Project in the Law Faculty, and colleague Gladys Mirugi-Mukundi co-edited *Exploring the Link between Poverty and Human Rights in Africa*, in which poverty, one of Africa's greatest challenges, is addressed in a multi-disciplinary way. Published by PULP.

The Faculty of Law's Prof Yonatan T Fessha and Karl Kössler, a senior researcher at the Institute for Comparative Federalism at Eurac Research Bolzano/Bozen (Italy), co-edited *Federalism and Courts in Africa: Design and Impact in Comparative Perspective* (Routledge, 2020), which examines the design and impact of courts in African federal systems.

Professor Nico Steytler, SARChI Chair in Multi-level Government, Law and Policy, and Professor Charles M Fombad from the University of Pretoria's Centre for Human Rights co-edited *Corruption and Constitutionalism in Africa* (Oxford University Press, 2020), the fourth volume in a series based on the Stellenbosch Annual Seminar on Constitutional Law in Africa (SASCA). The aim is to focus on an issue of critical constitutional importance to Africa in its ongoing development of governance founded on constitutionalism and democracy, in this instance, corruption.

Associate lecturer Dr Windell Nortje and Associate Professor at Bristol University Noëlle Quénivet published *Child Soldiers and the Defence of Duress under International Criminal Law* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), which examines how children can be implicated and defended in international courts.



# Research achievements

**D**r Cornel Hart, who is currently seconded to the Department of Social Work to coordinate the implementation of the Bachelor's Degree in Community Development, was elected to the US-based Community Development Society Board of Directors as Vice Chair of Operations. The achievement bodes well for the new programme, which will be rolled out in the 2021 academic year.

Professor Steward van Wyk of the Departement Afrikaans en Nederlands has been honoured by the Railton Foundation for his contribution and influence in community-related programmes in Swellendam. His profile has been featured in social media by the Foundation. His lifelong work to develop community-based creative writing and to empower the marginalised voices in Afrikaans literature over the years caught the attention of more than 25 000 readers of the article.

Professor Gavin Maneveldt, from the Department of Biodiversity and Conservation Biology, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the International Phycological Society (2020–2022).

Dr Riaan Cedras from the Department of Biodiversity and Conservation Biology has been selected from South Africa to co-lead the Network of Networks working group, within the UN Decade of Ocean Science programme task team, with the University of Hawaii.

The UN Decade of Ocean Science programme runs from 2021 to 2030.

With the support of the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, under the programme “Turning the Tide: Consolidating an Academic Pipeline for Staff to Advance Career Pathways at South African Universities”, the Faculty has awarded scholarships in three categories: i) Junior Faculty Fellowship, ii) Doctoral Fellowship, and iii) Postdoctoral Fellowship, to support candidates towards strengthening capacity for promotion, completion of PhDs and research outputs and development. A total of 15 successful candidates stand to benefit from the Mellon grant from 2020 to 2024, and they will be hosted in various academic departments and centres: Linguistics, Women and Gender Studies, Religion and Theology, History, Xhosa, the Centre for Multilingualism and Diversities Research (CMDR), Foreign Languages, Sociology, Geography and Environmental Studies, English and Anthropology.

Professors Zannie Bock and Christopher Stroud of the Centre for Multilingualism and Diversities Research (CMDR) were awarded an additional year of funding for their project, “Languages and Literacies in Higher Education” as part of the Mellon-funded “Unsettling Paradigms: The Decolonial Turn in the Humanities Curriculum in South Africa”.



*Dr Riaan Cedras, lecturer in Marine Science*



*Prof Gavin Maneveldt, a marine biologist, teaches in the Department of Biodiversity & Conservation Biology*

This year, the Arts Teaching and Learning Award (for emerging lecturer) was jointly awarded to Dr Jonathan Jodamus (Religion and Theology) and Dr Erin Pretorius (Linguistics). The selection subcommittee strongly agreed that both the winning candidates had written excellent portfolios that reflected on and interrogated aspects of their teaching in ways that reflected a high level of commitment, creativity and energy.

UWC Senior Lecturer in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, Dr Michelle Lochner, is the director of a virtual mentoring programme, called the Supernova Foundation, aimed at supporting and promoting undergraduate and postgraduate women in Physics. The Supernova Foundation connects students with senior, established women role models, to help bridge the well-known and severe gender gap in post-graduate Physics. The Foundation's priority is to focus on women Physics students in developing countries and the Foundation currently has nearly 400 members from 53 countries around the world.

The WOZA Women in Law Awards is the first awards programme recognising and celebrating the outstanding accomplishments and achievements of women in Law. This year women from South Africa and the continent were invited to participate in the prestigious awards echoing the WOZA motto: “To nominate is to celebrate”. Ms Acama Brett, an attorney at the Law Clinic, received the WOZA Pro Bono Award for her extra support to indigent and marginalised communities while Ms Demi Johannissen, also an attorney at the Law Clinic, received the WOZA Philanthropist and Pro Bono awards for teaching young people and rendering philanthropic and pro bono assistance to marginalised communities.



# A post-border praxis for the future

Dr Koni Benson, Asher Gamedze and Nashilongweshipwe Mushaandja

**Online exhibit takes up the challenge of imagining a future world without exclusionary walls cutting across it**



*Katutura, Windhoek, Namibia: Photograph by Koni Benson*

“Walls in Times of Pandemic” is an online exhibit that has been prepared with the contributions of many movements across the globe, from the Philippines to Mexico. It gives fragments of reality, traces connections and tells us what inspires these struggles.

Walls are symbols of exclusion, oppression, exploitation, discrimination and dispossession. In times of the Covid-19 pandemic, lockdowns and quarantines, the walls that oppress and exclude have risen higher, become more brutal and more visible. Beyond these walls emerges a network of people and their aspirations to build a world without walls.

The piece on the wall pictured in the image was taken at Jakob Marengo High School in Katutura, Windhoek. The wall’s first paintings, made in 2019, were the culmination of a number of years of organising across various spaces in Southern Africa through art, history and education work, all within the broader project of liberation. Since 2016 we have been building a community to collaborate on projects that attempt to bring together these (usually) separate practices through workshops that try to creatively deepen a radical historical imagination beyond national as well as disciplinary borders.

Experimenting towards a post-border praxis is our response to the histories and contemporary political crises of borders. Through this work of historicising and challenging borders we attempt to participate in and contribute to movements in our own context and elsewhere, imagining liberatory futures and building them.

“Radical Imagination is the Future” was painted on a school wall at the end of a collective mural-making session with art college students, high school students, historians, and activists during a decolonial arts praxis festival called “Owela”. It followed on from a Youth Without Borders study tour across South Africa, Botswana and Namibia the year before, during which the founder of the school, Otilie Abrahams, had shared the history of school in the context of her life history.

Aunt Tilly was involved in feminist and socialist movements from the time she was a teenager and joined underground reading groups in Windhoek and in Cape Town in the 1950s, leading up to the time that was part of initiating Swapo and running their education camps in Tanzania, until her expulsion for challenging corrupt leadership and donation that planted seeds of division.

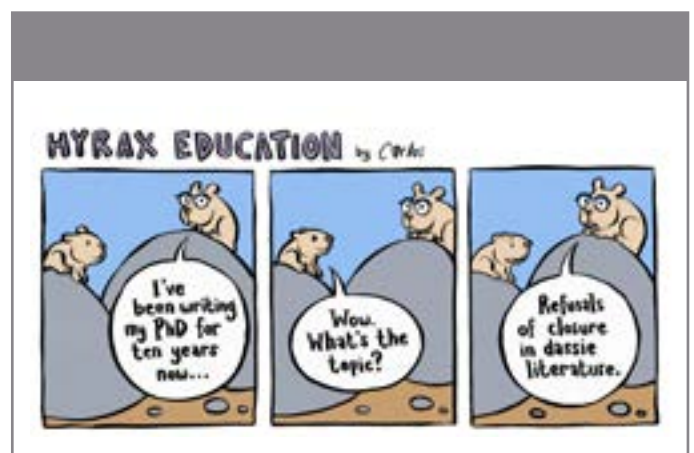
Returning after 16 years in exile with Southern African liberation movements in Zambia, Tanzania, and Sweden, Abrahams founded the Jacob Marengo Tutorial College, a school for liberation run on the principles of participatory democracy, critical thinking and non-sexism.

The school was named after the leader of a Nama and Herero alliance against German colonialists between 1904 and 1908. Jacob Marengo, the school, was initiated in opposition to Bantu Education in Namibia. Namibia was until 1989 ruled by apartheid South Africa as inherited from German colonists after World War I. It was treated as a Bantustan, with the name South West Africa.

Challenging colonial borders and creating worlds without walls was key to the school from the start. Aunt Tilly recalled: “When we started Jacob Marengo, a quarter of our students were from South Africa, where schools were burned down – highly politicised children. And the other group came from northern Namibia, where the secondary schools had to operate under the watchful eyes of the occupying forces. So we saw our job as preparing children for an independent state, for the development of the country.”

From 25 students in 1985, last year the school had more than 1 000 children. About half the students come from Angola, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and struggle to be admitted to “local schools”.

Because the past is not history and the present requires radical imagination to take us forwards into a future without borders.







*Courtesy of the Handspring Puppet Company*

# Little Amal

When South Africa celebrated Heritage Day this year, Boschendal Estate in Franschhoek provided an ideal backdrop for the first steps of Little Amal, a three-metre puppet created by the Handspring Puppet Company from South Africa to represent the plight of a refugee child.

Guided by puppeteers from Ukwanda Puppetry and Design Collective of the Centre for Humanities Research (CHR) at the University of the Western Cape, Little Amal took the first steps of what promises to be a spectacular international event as she will embark on a 8 000 kilometre walk across Europe in 2021.

Little Amal has a special place in UWC's ideals of freedom. By raising awareness about the plight of the refugee child, she animates a longstanding and deeply held

research ethos at UWC.

She also leads us towards a greater appreciation of a decade-long association with Handspring Puppet Company that has guided attention to a worldly shift in the co-evolution of human and technology. Little Amal brings together strands of thinking across the disciplines while asking us to attend to what has shifted in the contemporary configurations of the human condition. For UWC's Greatmore Street Art initiative in the Cape Town CBD, Little Amal serves as an inspiration to enhance mobilities across the rural and urban divides in South Africa. As she sets forth on her journey, she will be in conversation with the CHR's artistic and scientific engagements in documentary film, jazz, and the moving technics of the Laboratory of Kinetic Objects.

– Professor Premesh Lalu

# UWC Press and Book Launch

The notion for a UWC Press had been percolating in recent years with scholars, especially from the human and social sciences, motivating for a university-owned press platform for the production of scholarly and other outputs. Given the costs involved in setting up the infrastructure and appropriate staffing of such a facility, we were not able to accede to the requests. On 5 November, the university launched the establishment of a UWC Press and Imprint that we believe will serve as an important catalyst to build on UWC's tradition of contributing to a public debate on issues that matter. The UWC Press, managed through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with African Sun Media, holds great significance for UWC in terms making scholarly work more visible and allowing us to contribute to the knowledge economy through either printed works or digital formats.

As part of the 60th anniversary celebrations and the establishment of the UWC Press, we launched a tribute volume *From Hope to Action through Knowledge: The Renaissance of the University of the Western Cape, 2001 – 2014*, in celebration of the contributions and achievements under the leadership of

former Rector, Professor Brian O'Connell, edited by former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ramesh Bharuthram and Institutional Planner, Larry Pokpas.

Spanning a considerable contemporary history of the university, the 469-page book with a host of contributors narrates the revival of UWC from near bankruptcy to a leading research-led institution. At the launch, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, was represented by her special advisor, Mr Zane Dangor, who read the Minister's message while several academic contributors spoke about their relationship with Prof O'Connell and the impact he had on their research endeavours.

The book as well as the UWC Press signal an important milestone in UWC's history and we are confident that our academic community will take up the many benefits of us having our own press.







*Every ambitious journey starts with the first step.*

**Start here, choose UWC**

[www.uwc.ac.za](http://www.uwc.ac.za)





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**Cover:** By Carlos Amato

*The tradition of freedom so crucial to UWC's existence  
in the 1980s has since waned and it is time to revitalise  
the debate about the meaning of freedom P6*