Environmental Issues in the South African Media: A case study of the *Natal Witness*

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Abstract

Environmental reporting in South Africa has been criticised for its focus on 'green' environmental issues. This criticism is rooted in the traditionally elite nature of both the media and environmentalists. However, both, it has been noted, are undergoing transformation. This paper tests the veracity of this assumption of representativeness in the contemporary South African press through a content analysis of key issues and themes and the race and gender of actors in environmental stories in the Natal Witness.

The research shows that this assertion of representativeness does not accurately describe reporting in the Natal Witness. 'Green' themes are found in almost half (48%) of the stories, as compared to 'brown' themes (17%), ecological disasters (16%), resource use (5%), environmental ethics (6%) and other themes (8%). Sources and actors tend to be white (72.9%) and men (79.9%). It is outside the parameters of the study to determine whether or not this is representative of the 'real world' which is being reported on; the results are intended to be used to raise questions about the perceptions which such stories present to the public.

Introduction

Individuals throughout the world have a growing awareness of environmental problems. Although formal environmental education is increasing, most of this awareness comes from informal sources. The abstract, interrelated and often technical nature of environmental issues, however, makes the association of cause and effect difficult for the lay person. Individuals, therefore, rarely rely solely on their own personal experiences or scientific skills to construct their ideas about environment. They seek external sources to create, extrapolate upon and confirm opinions. The media is one of these external sources, and is a key factor in the formation of individual perceptions about the environment (Kwansah-Aidoo, 2001).

It may be reasonably assumed that, as in countries like Ghana (Kwansah-Aidoo, 2001) and Sweden (Gooch, 1996), South Africans receive much of their environmental information from the media. Material in the media may be considered as either representative of, or a major influence upon, public opinion (Gingras & Carrier, 1996). However, news reports are, arguably, neither impartial nor objective, and the manner in which issues are portrayed is highly subjective (Anderson, 1997). Therefore, the selection of environmental articles and the way in which they are presented is subjective, but influences and is influenced by public opinion.

This research, a description and analysis of environmental reporting in the daily provincial paper *Natal Witness* (*Witness*), is a step towards understanding of environmental messages

portrayed to the South African public through the press. The research illuminates which environmental issues are being placed on the public agenda by the press and which race and gender are most frequently articulated in environmental news. It draws attention to topics which are covered less frequently and to the sources and actors which are not representatively included. Together, these issues describe the picture of the environment as it is represented by the *Witness*.

Critiques of Media Coverage of the Environment in South Africa

The South African environmental movement has been criticised for its elite nature and 'green' focus (Hallowes, 1993). Berger (2002) questions whether or not 'bunny-hugging' environmentalists gain media attention while less attractive issues – which are more relevant to the average South African – are not framed as environmental problems and are not covered by the media. McDonald (1997:329) succinctly poses the problem:

> Unfortunately, mainstream media coverage of the environment in South Africa continues to be dominated by conventional, green issues. Relatively little is said or written about environmental problems in the townships so it comes as little surprise that people who get all of their environmental education from the media would develop similarly narrow perspectives.

However, neither of these academics cites empirical studies to support their suppositions. Although speculations have been made, uncertainty remains as to what is actually put forth in the South African media and how it is interpreted. Further, none of the research found by the authors in the African context or internationally notes the race of the sources and actors in order to test the assumption that environmental issues are portrayed as primarily elite concerns.

The Impact of 'Elite' Coverage

What if these suppositions are true? According to media theorists, the impact is far greater than that only the 'elite' get to cut their articles out of the newspaper. Contemporary research recognises the dual relationship between the media and society, arguing that the media both influences and reflects the priorities of society and that it is often impossible to separate the cause and effect in this relationship (Hansen, 1991; Fairclough, 1995; Thompson, 1996; Anderson, 1997). The agenda-setting model attempts to explain this relationship: the media may not determine *how* people think, but effects *what* they think about (Gooch, 1996). Thus, if only elite environmental perspectives are put forward, this in part represents the primary concerns of the society. But it also has an impact of how a society views environmental issues, and what issues get public attention.

The recent transition to democracy in South Africa has given the public new roles and responsibilities with regards to environmental decision-making. Participation in governance is a critical element of the new constitution, and communities now have a greater responsibility for

influencing decisions which relate to the sustainability of their own environments. Therefore, public opinion should have a critical impact on the future of South African environmental management. Since the media has a significant influence upon public opinion, understanding the messages of the media will help to construct both an understanding of how the public views and values the environment, and an understanding of what messages are being put forward to the public through the media.

International Studies of Environmental Issues in the Media

A range of diverse studies has been conducted on the reporting of environmental issues, however, there remain a number of critical gaps in the research. Key research indicates that in Western countries during the 1960s and 70s, the media typically followed social interest in environmental problems rather than instigating concern (Anderson, 1997). Studies also show that the quantity of environmental stories is cyclical, and tends to be highest when the economy is stable and other major global events, such as wars and political instability, are not occurring (Anderson, 1997). Existing social and news values impact which issues gain coverage. Sensational events, famous names and controversial opinions receive attention, whereas chronic problems are rarely covered unless there is an event around which a story can be structured (Anderson, 1997). Hannigan (1995) composed a list of criteria which led to the construction of environmental problems, including backing by authorities, scientific 'popularisers' and construction of the issue in terms of 'morality plays' with caricatures of 'good' and 'bad' actors.

Despite these findings which indicate a general understanding of how environmental news rose in the global North, there remains a notable deficit of studies both on the details of current coverage and the history and current coverage of environmental issues in the media of the South.

The two studies which offered the most insight into assessing the coverage of environmental issues in the press were undertaken in India and Brazil. Chapman, Kumar, Fraser and Graber (1997) highlight the underlying difference in environmental perspectives between the United Kingdom (UK) and India, and between different media institutions in each country. A critical distinction noted by Chapman et al. (1997) is that between 'green' and 'brown' issues. Although the terms are somewhat imprecise, and many authors note the linkage between the two, they are used commonly in environmental literature. 'Green' issues are generally of a long-term focus, concerned with natural resource conservation, and associated with white and/or elite groups, whereas 'brown' issues are related to short-term impacts, human health, pollution, and the urban environment. Using this distinction, Chapman et al. (1997) found that the debate between environment and development and coverage of 'brown' issues was more prevalent in India, and coverage typically focused on local issues. The emphasis in the UK was on 'green' issues and environmental problems were typically portrayed as occurring in other parts of the world. Interestingly, environmental news stories in the urban English papers in India in many ways resembled such stories in papers from the UK.

Guedes' (2000) research 'Environmental issues in the Brazilian press' offered insights into content analysis and sources. 'International meetings' and 'pollution' were the most common

themes identified, and persons of authority are the sources and actors much more often than workers or those who suffered from environmental problems. Like Northern studies, this shows that environmental issues tend to gain prominence when endorsed by individuals seen as legitimate sources of news. Guedes (2000) also reviews the texts and determined that debates are generally explained in terms of cost-benefit analysis and that scientific, technological solutions are offered without questioning the system in which the problems arose. The typical stance on responsibility for environmental problems is to attribute responsibility to humanity as a whole, rather than corporations or capitalism.

These insights into themes and sources informed the content analysis performed for this study. The authors sought to support these ideas with data regarding the race, gender and role of the sources and actors of the news articles. However, few examples were found on which to base this work. The authors acknowledge that there may have been limitations due to the difficulty of searching for a somewhat obscure topic, however, they were able to source only a single article which briefly discussed the issue of gender representation. Boateng and Akosua (1993) report on a brief examination of the portrayal of women in stories on the environment in Ghana, indicating that women appear infrequently in stories on the environment.

The reasons for this lack of studies are beyond the scope of the study, but likely indicate the need for cooperation between disciplines. Assumptions about the environmental field which need to be tested may not be known by students of the mass media. Many studies which the researchers encountered indicated the position of environmental articles within the newspapers, whether stories are local or foreign, or question abstractly the role of the media (see, for example, various studies in Boafo 1993). While these issues may be important, they indicate a background in media studies rather than a strong awareness of the critical questions facing environmentalists.

Methodology

Newspapers were selected as focus for this study, because they are commonly assumed to cover a greater number of environmental stories, and back issues are easily accessible. The audiences of South African newspapers are highly differentiated by race and class (Steenveld, 2002), and it is likely they also differ by environmental content and discourse. Although using a wider range of papers would have resulted in broadened conclusions, the purpose of this study is better achieved by gaining more precise results through a detailed analysis of a single paper than by studying fewer issues in a wider range of papers.

In order to give a detailed picture of the environmental reporting in the *Witness,* textual analysis was performed based on the methodology of Hansen, Cottle, Negrine and Newbold (1998) and the examples provided by Guedes (2000) and Chapman *et al.* (1997). A one-year period from August 2003 to July 2004 was selected to avoid seasonal variations in coverage. A nine-day cycle was selected so that a reasonable number of newspapers were examined, although every two months an eleven-day time lapse was necessary so that days of the week were equally represented (Hansen *et al.*, 1998). Advertisements and sports pages are not included in the content analysis. Headlines were used to indicate environmental stories, and all potential

stories were skimmed to ensure that environmental articles were not missed. External events such as those highlighted above by Anderson (1997), which may have impacted the quantity of coverage, were not taken into consideration in the analysis. Environmental stories are defined as those mainly concerned with the interaction between biophysical and socio-economic systems, and the values and decisions which determine the nature of this interaction.

Content analysis

The first method employed in the study is a content analysis. Stories were classified by the issues addressed as in Guedes (2000) and then grouped into larger themes as in Chapman *et al.* (1997). Both issue and theme categories were significantly adapted to the South African context. Stories which discussed multiple issues were placed into multiple categories, thus the total number of issues is greater than the number of stories. However, each story was placed into a single theme category. Organising the issues into themes presented significant challenges, particularly when determining a label. The delineation of 'green' and 'brown' environmentalisms is commonly used and accepted, but with varying meanings. For this research, narrow definitions of 'brown' and 'green' were applied; 'green' themes included conservation and wildlife and 'brown' stories included those related to human health and pollution. Other themes were added for issues which do not neatly fall into these groups, as determined by the researchers, since no more appropriate model could be determined from the literature reviewed. The other themes which arose were natural resources (considered as a separate theme to other 'green' stories), ethics, ecological disasters, and 'other'. All labels are noted to be subjective and applied simply because more appropriate terms could not be readily determined.

Classification of race and gender of sources and actors was also performed to show which social groups are portrayed most often. Although recognising that racial classification is a highly sensitive subject and is itself a social construct, the goal of this component of the research is to test the veracity of existing social perceptions, such as those highlighted by Berger (2002) and McDonald (1997) above. The terms used for classification are those most commonly used in South African society: black, white and Indian. Because there is no way of differentiating coloured individuals based solely on a text unless the race is explicitly referenced, this group has not received a unique category. In line with the social constructionist ideology, the important factor is not the *actual* race or gender, but that which would be *assumed* by a 'reasonable' reader.

The data were collected and analysed so as to highlight which gender and races are portrayed most often in particular roles. The term 'disproportionate' is used in the results to indicate that a race or gender is portrayed in a certain role more or less often than if there was statistical equality. The reasons behind this are outside of the scope of the study, although it is acknowledged that it is likely to be partially attributable to disproportional representation in various roles in the 'real world'. Again, the concern of this study is not to determine whether or not the articles represent reality but to draw a picture of environmental concerns as they are presented to the public through the *Witness*.

Interviews

Interviews were also held with Craig Bishop, senior reporter in environment, land and agriculture, and deputy editor Yves van der Haeghen in November 2004. Information from journalists and environmentalists was also obtained at an environmental journalism conference held in Johannesburg in October 2004.

Results

The 158 articles categorised below must be seen as indicative not of the 'real world' but as illuminating the picture created for the audience by the newspaper.

Table 1. Frequency of environmental issues

| Issues	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture/Biotechnology	9	3.5
Apartheid	2	0.8
Climate Change	3	1.2
Consumption	2	0.8
Deforestation	4	1.5
Ecological Disaster	44	17.0
Economic Development	5	1.9
Energy	3	1.2
Equity	5	1.9
Fishing	3	1.2
Gardening	6	2.3
Industry	8	3.1
Legal	6	2.3
Local Community Impacts	5	1.9
Meeting/Declaration	5	1.9
Morals	8	3.1
Natural Resources	2	0.8
Other	16	6.2
Pollution	7	2.7
Protected Areas	20	7.7
Species Protection	20	7.7
Tour/Recreation	22	8.5
Urban Issues	4	1.5
Waste	10	3.9
Wildlife	40	15.4
Total	259	100.0

Issues

A wide range of issues were found in the identified stories, as evident from Table 1 on the previous page. The most frequent issues are ecological disasters, wildlife and tourism/recreation. The most common issue in the stories listed is 'Ecological Disaster', 17.0% of the total number of calculated issues. (This issue is also considered to be a theme, since the stories labelled under this issue were presented as unrelated to other environmental issues.) Most stories in this theme were small in size and of international location. Most local news is about drought, but the range of international disasters includes storms, hurricanes, wild fires and earthquakes.

The second most common issue is Wildlife (15.4%). Wildlife stories predominantly covered birds and charismatic mammals (bears, leopard, monkeys and whales). The next most common issue was 'Tourism and Recreation' (8.5%). The majority of the stories under this theme were provincially focused and rarely written as hard news. 'Species Protection' and 'Protected Areas' tied as the next most common issues (7.7%). Those which reference economic development offer diverse perspectives on the 'environment *versus* development' debate, but are only 1.9% of total issues.

Themes

Stories were then grouped into themes based on the main topic discussed in the article. Key themes identified through the research are: 'Green', 'Brown', Ecological Disaster, Resource Use, Ethics and Other. 'Green' themes are found most frequently in the *Witness* articles (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Theme percentages
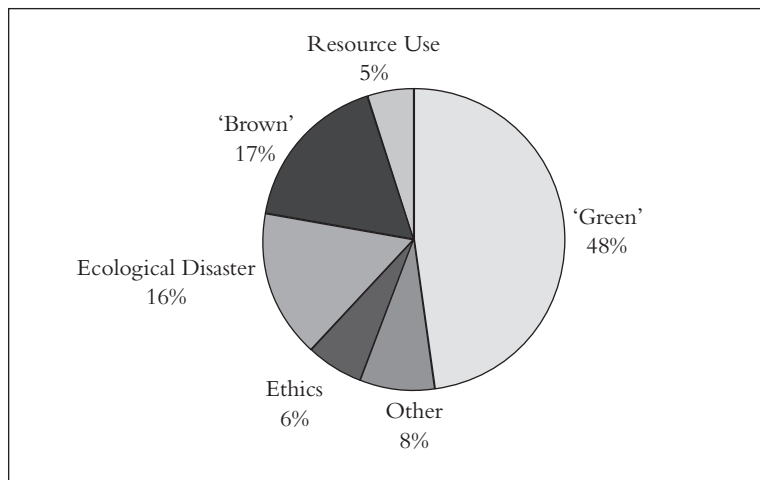
The number of stories with 'Green' themes is 77 out of 158 total stories, or 48% of the total. This far exceeded the next most common themes, 'Brown' and Ecological Disaster, which contained 17% and 16% of the stories respectively. Ethical questions raised in the stories include a wide range of topics, such as financial access to environmental areas, treatment of animals, rights to permits for limited natural resources, and where to place the blame for environmental

problems. Articles were placed in this theme when the ethics of the situation were the focal point, rather than the issue itself. Ethical themes arose through diverse issues, such as air pollution (apartheid planning resulted in some communities being more affected than others) or fishing (permits being unequally distributed).

Race and gender

The majority of individuals were able to be classified by both race and gender. A total of 4.1% were unable to be classified by race. In the single instance in which a photograph indicated a coloured individual, the tally was placed in the 'Other' category. This category otherwise applied to individuals in international stories, such as coverage of events in Brazil and Bengal. Figure 2 shows the percentages of the individuals which were able to be classified according to race. Of the sample, 3.6% were unable to be classified by gender. Of those able to be classified, 79.9% were male, 20.1% female.

Figure 2. Percentage of source and actor races
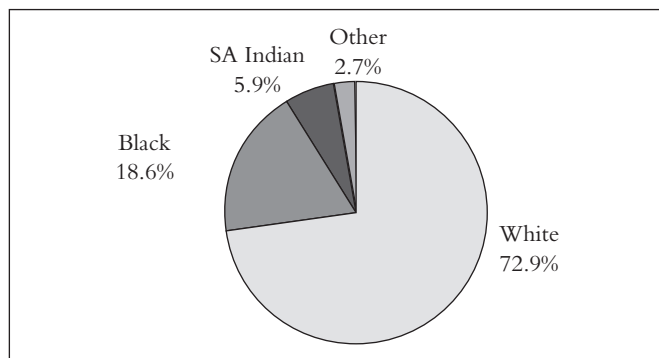
Tables 2 and 3 give further detail, showing the roles in which individuals of different races and genders are most frequently portrayed, and highlighting in which role the percentage of a certain race or gender is most disproportionately represented.

Race: The vast majority of sources and actors were white. The percentage of black individuals was highest in the classification of workers, followed by government representatives. It was lowest in environmental groups, followed by business and industry. The highest percentage of white representation occurred in the 'Scientist/Expert' category, followed by both 'University' and 'Industry/Business'. South African Indians were infrequently referenced. Their percentage representation is highest as 'Government: Environment or Conservation' (however, all four are references to the Indian minister) and in environmental groups (see Table 2).

Table 2. Racial categorisation of sources and actors by role

	Black		White		SA Indian		Other		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Government	12	32.4	21	56.8	3	8.1	1	2.7	37	19.7
Government: Environment or Conservation	6	24.0	14	56.0	4	16.0	1	4.0	25	13.3
Scientist/Expert	2	10.5	17	89.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	19	10.1
University	2	15.4	11	84.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	13	6.9
Environmental Group	1	6.3	13	81.3	2	12.5	0	0.0	16	8.5
Industry/ Business	2	7.7	22	84.6	0	0.0	2	7.7	26	13.8
Public	4	12.1	26	78.8	2	6.1	1	3.0	33	17.6
Worker	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.6
Famous Names	1	20.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	2.7
Other	3	27.3	8	72.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	5.9
Total	35	18.6	137	72.9	11	5.9	5	2.7	188	100.0

Gender: Discounting the category of 'Other', the percentage of men is highest in the roles of 'University' and 'Government: Environment or Conservation'. It is lowest in the category of 'Environmental Groups' and 'Scientist/Expert' (see Table 3).

Table 3. Gender categorisation of sources and actors by role

	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Government	31	83.8	6	16.2	37	19.6
Government: Environment or Conservation	21	95.5	1	4.5	22	11.6
Scientist/Expert	13	68.4	6	31.6	19	10.1
University	11	84.6	2	15.4	13	6.9
Environmental Group	10	58.8	7	41.2	17	9.0
Industry/Business	21	84.0	4	16.0	25	13.2
Public	24	75.0	8	25.0	32	16.9
Worker	4	80.0	1	20.0	5	2.6
Famous Names	4	80.0	1	20.0	5	2.6
Other	12	85.7	2	14.3	14	7.4
Total	151	79.9	38	79.9	189	100.0

Discussion

A range of observations can be made from these results. The results which are discussed in the following section are emphasised because they help to illustrate social concerns rather than media constraints. Contrary to traditional news values, few of the articles show contrasting opinions or discourses. This is particularly evident in 'Green' stories, and least frequent in stories with a 'Brown' theme. Although different opinions are expressed in different articles, there is little comparison or synthesis of these ideas provided by the journalists.

'Green' themes

One of the most noteworthy findings supports both Berger (2002) and McDonald's (1997) suppositions that environmental reporting primarily has 'Green' themes. The number of stories in this group of themes far exceeds others, paralleling the results found by Chapman *et al.* (1997) for the British papers and the Indian papers printed in English. According to the agenda-setting hypothesis (Kwansah-Aidoo, 2001), it is these 'Green' environmental issues which are put onto the public agenda by the media. Most of the stories with 'Green' themes coincide with what Hannigan (1995) terms 'morality plays', characterised by unambiguous 'good' and 'bad' actors. The word 'save', highly evocative and with strong positive moral connotations, is frequently used to describe the actions of the conservationists. Despite Bishop's comment (pers. comm., November 2004) that a classically 'Green' environmental story must include a community voice, none of the stories found include perspectives of individuals from local communities (although occasionally abstractly mentioning tourism benefits to them), and few cite non-environmental opinions. Poachers are unequivocally portrayed as the wrong-doers, and the rationale for their actions is never explicated. One article linking a traditional African church to poachers does quote a churchman who claims it is God's intention for them to use the animals. However, it is not clear whether or not the poachers themselves sought payment from the church or acted on religious motives. Regardless, the churchman's words are woven in the body of the text and the preceding and succeeding paragraphs strongly praise the apprehension of the poachers. This vilification of poachers and the unquestioningly positive portrayal of the benefits communities receive from wildlife and protected areas presents only one simplified and polarised side of what remains a very complex dynamic in South African society. Somewhat contrasting to this, individuals who protect others from threatening animals are portrayed as heroes, whereas the errant animals are themselves outside the realm of morality.

Stories with 'Green' themes as defined in this analysis, arguably, bear little or no direct relevance to the everyday lives of most South Africans. The indirect linkage such as human dependence on natural resources, and on the ecological services provided by protected areas, are rarely mentioned and never a focal point. Further, there is little that an individual South African can do to impact the situation aside from political activism or financial support to a green organisation.

Ecological disaster themes

The second most commonly found theme is 'Ecological Disaster'. Reporting in the *Witness* generally emphasises sensational incidents, often with high death rates or physical damage. These tend to be uncontroversial events, for the direct cause is non-human. Thus, there is little need for attributing blame and no chance for offending corporate entities. A key word used in the majority of articles is 'victim', implying that innocent individuals were hurt by an oppressive external entity. This phrasing implicitly denies human accountability for living in areas known to be prone to flooding, earthquakes, and other naturally occurring ecological disasters. Only one of the articles refers to the fact that natural disasters have a significantly larger impact on the poor, and this reference is indirect.

Most articles report ecological disasters in isolation. Occasionally, events are compared to previous disasters. No reference was made as to whether or not such events were becoming more frequent. Further, despite Bishop noting that a single phone call could likely produce a quote linking anthropogenic climate change to an increase in environmental disasters, none of the articles referred to the possibility that erratic weather patterns might have anthropogenic roots (Bishop, pers. comm., November 2004).

This trend is also evident in the articles which mention climate change. Interestingly, the texts discuss the impacts of climate change without explicitly linking it to anthropogenic industrial activities, and only one notes any possible solution. This can be positively interpreted to indicate acceptance of the phenomena and awareness amongst the audience of its causes. Alternatively, this framing frees the writer from attributing blame or discussing the controversial aspects of solutions or mitigations.

Neither are the climate change articles linked to energy stories. Of the three environmental stories mentioning energy, two were about nuclear power and the third simply mentioned high energy consumption as an urban problem. Despite South Africa being an energy intensive country highly dependent upon coal with strong potential for renewable energy, no local stories discussed the theme of energy.

'Brown' themes

The articles with 'Brown' environmental themes did not follow the patterns noted for 'Green' themes. Rather than unambiguous 'morality plays', both sides of the debates regarding air quality, South Durban industry and plastic bags are given space. Interestingly, only a single text strongly opposed to the Wild Coast development was found. This article was categorised as 'Brown' because it explicitly mentions effects of the road on the 'trucking industry' and 'impoverished people' and makes no reference to ecological impacts. However, despite the wording of this particular text, the issue of the N2 Toll Road is often considered a 'Green' rather than 'Brown' theme.

Gender and race

The results regarding gender and race show that environmental issues are portrayed as predominantly the concern of white individuals and men. However, one of the limitations of this study is that there are no control data to which these statistics can be compared; it may

simply be that white and male individuals are disproportionately represented in all news types. Although formal data collection was outside the scope of this study, the impression gained by the researchers while performing the research was that the racial and gender disproportional representation was more significant in the environmental stories than in other texts.

Two key statistics from the gender data confirm common social perceptions. First, the majority of the 'Government: Environment and Conservation' sources and actors represent conservation, not environmental, concerns. The disproportionate representation of men in this role supports the perception that conservation is predominantly a masculine concern. Further, a large number of the environmental groups are based around proper treatment of animals. Humanitarian non-profit organisations, particularly those emphasising concerns like animal welfare, are often considered to be dominated by women. Although still represented less often, the proportion of women is highest in this category.

The results of the gender study – which show high frequency in the scientist role and low frequency in the university role – are likely due to the fact that individuals were often cited as members of both categories. However, in order to not inaccurately represent the totals, individuals were classified according the organisation with which they were most strongly affiliated in the article. Therefore, it is doubtful that the calculated statistic indicated significant over- and under-representation.

The results of the racial data support the social perception that the environment in South Africa is predominantly a concern of the white population. The presence of black individuals most frequently as workers further supports the perceptions. However, the total number of workers is low, and when mentioned are often nameless entities. Therefore, these results are based on a very low sample size. Nonetheless, the infrequency of worker representation may itself be cause for concern.

Conclusion

This research is intended to raise questions, create debate surrounding the portrayal of environmental news in the South African media, and lay the groundwork for future research in a number of key areas. Similar research for other newspapers, radio and television – as well as research which analyses strategies of environmentalists, the relationship between the quantity/ type of environmental coverage and the audience, and the impact of coverage on public opinion – is critical to fully understanding the media's portrayal of environmental issues, as well as our understanding of public perceptions of the environment.

The lack of racial and gender diversity found in the *Witness* should be highly disconcerting to all South Africans concerned about their environment. Whether or not these statistics are representative of actual differentiation in concerns, *Witness* readers are likely to perceive this dichotomy. The predominance of 'Green' themes, which are portrayed so as to be of remote interest to much of the population, is likely to create a feeling of distance between people and environmental concerns. This alienation is enhanced by the representation of white individuals and men as the most common sources and actors, creating the impression that only such individuals show concern for the environment.

Pressure on the government for increased development has brought into question the merit of environmental regulations. Limited government resources and the high costs of environmental measures have placed environmental management in a precarious position in South Africa. Environmentalists are being called to justify their cause and make it relevant to the nation as a whole. It is the perspective of these authors that presenting the issues through the media as white and male concerns, explicitly or implicitly, only enhances this challenge.

Rather than addressing what should or should not be done differently, this paper recognises enduring controversy over the role of the media and has instead focused on a description of environmental coverage. It is hoped that the description itself will raise the awareness of those in the environmental field, including journalists, environmental educators, activists and academics, of the picture that is being created. Whether or not these concerns should be addressed from within the media industry or through changed practices of environmentalists depends on how one views the role of the media. But if the goal of protecting the environment is to be achieved in a democratic South Africa, it is critical that environmentalism gains broader support. The media can either hinder this through limited portrayal of environmental concerns, or enhance it by making environmental concerns more inclusive.

Notes on the Contributors

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Personal Communication

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