

Making sense of the message: An analysis of the editor's letter in three
archetypal South African women's magazines
at the start of the 21st century

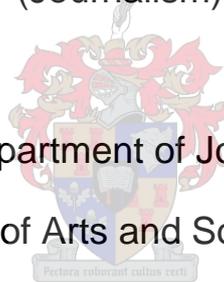
by

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Dissertation presented for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Journalism) at Stellenbosch University

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December 2021

DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third-party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

The notion of a magazine as “social barometer” in a particular era is widely acknowledged. Moreover, it is argued that women’s magazines especially provide essential information about society and cultures, including in the “messages” conveyed in the editors’ letters to their respective audiences. Since South Africa’s democratisation, the political and socio-economic contexts in the country have changed noticeably, and the euphoria associated with the naissance of democracy has dissipated. This study sets out to determine the “message” in the editors’ letter of three archetypal South African women’s magazines during the first 17 years of the 21st century. It is situated within Production-Based Research on women’s magazines, while Critical Political Economy (CPE), advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism were utilised as the theoretical points of departure. These paradigms offer an all-inclusive analysis of the “message” in the editors’ letters in the three “alpha” women’s magazines studied. As such, the study attempts to “make sense of the message” in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* – the selected magazines. Historiography as research method is applied to give context to South African magazine studies. This is followed by Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) – employing ATLAS.ti® as a software package – to determine how the editors’ letters reflect on the political and socio-economic contexts in South Africa. Historiography confirmed the powerful relationship between magazines and societies, and the concept of the magazine as “social barometer”. It corroborated that magazines mirror society, and vice versa. The QCA deduced that the origin and development of the three magazines were set against their specific ideological views and market-driven ideals in response to political and socio-economic contexts. Thus, in “making sense of the message” in these magazines, I infer that these magazines reflect the political and socio-economic issues of a young, democratic society and thereby are “social barometers” of their time. The study confirms the statement by Jane Raphaely, doyenne of South African women’s magazines, that women’s magazines gave “women in South Africa a significant soapbox with a huge sound system that allowed even the softest voice to reverberate as a very loud shout”. It can be concluded that this study proves the importance of media content, and specifically the editor’s letter of a women’s magazine, as a powerful instrument to persuade, inspire and inform the audience, proving that a magazine, through the voice or “message” of the editor, acts as “social barometer” of its time.

OPSOMMING

Die voorstelling van 'n tydskrif as “sosiale barometer” van 'n bepaalde tydperk word wyd erken. Voorts word aangevoer dat veral vrouetydskrifte noodsaaklike inligting oor samelewinge en kulture, met inbegrip van die “boodskappe” soos in die redakteursbrief, aan hul onderskeie gehore bied. Sedert Suid-Afrika se demokratisering het die politieke en sosio-ekonomiese kontekste in die land merkbaar verander, en die euforie van demokrasie verdamp. Die studie stel ten doel om die “boodskap” in die redakteursbrief van drie argetipiese Suid-Afrikaanse vrouetydskrifte tydens die eerste 17 jaar van die 21^{ste} eeu te bepaal. Dit is op die Produksie-Gebaseerde Navorsing oor vrouetydskrifte gegrond, terwyl Kritiese Politieke Ekonomie, wat lei na *Hedendaagse Politieke Ekonomie*, en Feminisme die teoretiese vertrekpunte is. Die studie poog dus om “sin te maak van die boodskap” in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* en *TRUELOVE*, as die geselekteerde tydskrifte. Historiografie word as navorsingsmetode toegepas om aan Suid-Afrikaanse tydskrifstudies betekenis te gee. Dit word gevolg deur Kwalitatiewe Inhoudsontleding en die gebruik van ATLAS.ti® as 'n sagteware pakket om te bepaal hoe die redakteursbriewe in die geselekteerde tydskrifte die politieke en sosio-ekonomiese kontekste in Suid-Afrika weerspieël. Die Historiografie bevestig die kragtige verhouding tussen tydskrifte en samelewinge en die konsep van die tydskrif as “sosiale barometer”. Dit bevestig dat tydskrifte die samelewing weerspieël en andersom. Die Kwalitatiewe Inhoudsontleding lei af dat die oorsprong en ontwikkeling van die drie tydskrifte met hul spesifieke ideologiese sieninge en markgedrewe mikpunte binne heersende politieke en sosio-ekonomiese toestande in Suid-Afrika in verband gebring word. Dus, om “sin te maak van die boodskap” in hierdie tydskrifte voer ek aan dat vrouetydskrifte die politieke en sosio-ekonomiese kwessies van 'n jong demokratiese samelewing weerspieël, en dus “sosiale barometers” van hul tyd is. Die studie bevestig die stelling van Jane Raphaely – doyenne van Suid-Afrikaanse vrouetydskrifte – dat vrouetydskrifte “vroue in Suid-Afrika 'n belangrike seepkis met 'n groot klankstelsel gegee het wat selfs die sagste stem as 'n baie harde kreet laat weerklink”. Die gevolgtrekking is dat hierdie studie die belangrikheid van media-inhoud, en spesifiek die redakteursbrief in 'n vrouetydskrif, as 'n kragtige instrument om die gehoor te oorreed, te inspireer en in te lig, bewys, en onderstreep dat dit deur middel van die stem, of “boodskap” van die redakteur, as 'n “sosiale barometer” van die tydperk dien.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

If each of my words were a drop of water, you would see through them and glimpse what I feel: gratitude, acknowledgement.

Octavio Paz (www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/acknowledgement.html)

I am writing this with the surreal sense that my doctoral journey has come to an end. In the words of Robert J Hastings, I realise that “there is no station, no one place to arrive at once and for all. The true joy of life is the trip” – and for me it was this trip over the past few years.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Professor Lizette Rabe, my supervisor and mentor. This research project profited from her generous mentorship, brilliant guidance and immense wisdom as one of South Africa’s leading media scholars and respected practitioners. Her passion for journalism and keen interest in magazine studies are remarkable. During this journey, she never ceased to encourage me to strive for the best, to go a step further, but also to revel in this special journey.

I am particularly indebted to my late mother, my husband, my children, family, friends and colleagues, who shared the pains and the pleasures of this journey with me. But I would not be able to reach this point without the special friendship and support of Kobus. You have given me inspiration, encouragement, and love. Thank you for keeping me sane, entertained and motivated, and just being there for me in the more than forty years we have been together.

In conclusion, I would like to sincerely thank all those who directly or indirectly played a part in this study. I am truly grateful to each one of you.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABC	Audit Bureau of Circulations
ADA	African Doctoral Academy
AMP	Associated Media Publishers
AMPS	All Media Product Survey
ANC	African National Congress
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CPE	Critical Political Economy
CNIM	Condé Nast Independent Magazines
ELWM	Editors' letter of a women's magazine
IAMCR	International Association for Media and Communication Research
KKNK	Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees
LSM	Living Standards Measurement
MDDA	Media Development and Diversity Agency
MPASA	Magazine Publishers' Association of SA
MRQ	Main research question
NDP	National Development Plan
NLSA	National Library of South Africa
NP	National Party
NWU	North-West University
OCR	Optimal character recognition
OMD	Omnicom Media Group
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
PE	Political Economy
RAU	Rand Afrikaans University
SA	South Africa
SAARF	South African Advertising Research Foundation

SONA	State of the Nation Address
SU	Stellenbosch University
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UJPS	University of Johannesburg Postgraduate School

NOTES

- This dissertation follows South African English spelling. However, citations are in the English of the source. The use of lower and upper case and italics is as in the original. The spelling and typography of magazine titles also reflect as in the citations.
- For the sake of brevity and easier reading, all statements and quotations following a reference are attributed to the last reference/source, even when following in a next paragraph or paragraphs. This stands until the next source is quoted unless the researcher added her own analysis. However, in some cases (such as different page numbers or in the use of citations), the reference is repeated to ensure clear attribution.
- Where citations are originally in Afrikaans, they were translated.
- [*sic*] (*erat criptum*) is used in square brackets after a quoted word that appears odd or erroneous to show that the word is quoted exactly as it stands in the original.

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ADDENDUM L: Developments in the South African women's magazine market at the end of the second decade of the 21st century

ADDENDUM M: Data accessed for sub-questions

ADDENDUM N: Data accessed for main research question (MRQ)

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

*Magazines are the shape-shifters of the media world, as flexible as a Chinese
acrobat, as chromatic as a chameleon and as diverse
as the divine Ms Meryl Streep.*

Jane Raphaely (2012a:26)

1. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The interaction between magazines and society, and the magazine as “social barometer”¹ of that specific society, have long been recognised. “Magazines are born, die, shrink, grow and change their appearances and audiences because of a host of developments within society. As society changes so do magazines,” argue Sammye² Johnson and Patricia Prijatel (2007:89). In fact, since the early 20th century, scholars – starting with the sociologist Max Weber – regarded media content (thus including that of magazines) as a means of monitoring the cultural temperature of society (Macnamara, 2005:1).

Accordingly, this study is significant as it investigates whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the specified study period of 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017 in a young, democratic South Africa (SA) are reflected in the “editors’ letter of a women’s magazine” (ELWM),³ and specifically, the three selected “alpha”⁴ South African women’s magazines,⁵ namely *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

¹ For a review of the concept of the magazine as “social barometer” as an important paradigm in this study, see section 1.7.2.

² When global and local scholars – in magazine studies or related fields relevant to this study – are mentioned for the first time in the text, I refer to their first name in addition to their surname, as I believe this adds to the value and richness of the study. I do the same with role players and industry experts in the global and local magazine publishing industry.

³ For a review of the concept, the “editor’s letter of a women’s magazine” (ELWM), see section 1.7.3. For brevity, I use the abbreviation ELWM in the rest of the study.

⁴ For a review of the concept “alpha”, see section 1.7.4.

⁵ For a review of the concept, “women’s magazines”, see section 1.7.5.

This is also done against the context of the State of the Nation Address (SONA), which acts as political and socio-economic context during the timeframe⁶ of this study.

I argue that this unique research focus has not been explored before and, as such, the study will add to the under-researched field of media and journalism studies and, specifically, magazine studies in SA. It likewise will enhance the understanding of the editors' letters in alpha South African women's magazines as a social barometer of their time.

The aim of this study was to understand the extent to which the messages in the editors' letters of the three selected alpha women's magazines are about the political, social and economic ethos in SA. More specifically, the study aimed to investigate whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the specified timeframe in a young, democratic SA are reflected in the editors' letters of the three magazines.

To achieve the above-mentioned research aim, and in accordance with Anna Gough-Yates (2003:6), this study is situated within the production-based approach of magazine journalism research, which delineates the way the management and organisation of the magazine industry influence the relationships between women's magazines and advertisers and marketers, and how they ultimately shape the character of a magazine.

Mindful of the above aim, I chose to approach this study first from the perspective of Political Economy (PE) and specifically situate the study within the theoretical framework of Critical Political Economy (CPE), before advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*.⁷ The second theoretical framework is Feminism.

The study followed an interpretative research design, namely a case study approach, and the methods of Historiography and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), to determine what messages in the editors' letters of these three South African women's magazines. The three magazines chosen as cases are *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

⁶ At this point, I want to note that the recent developments in the South African magazine industry – and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (since 2020) on the South African magazine industry – fall outside the timeframe of this study. See Addendum L for a summary of the developments at the end of the second decade of the 21st century.

⁷ To clearly distinguish between Critical Political Economy and *Contemporary Political Economy*, I use the abbreviation CPE for Critical Political Economy, and italicise *Contemporary Political Economy* (and write it out in full) in the rest of the study.

The study therefore sought to gain an understanding of the “messages” conveyed by *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, as reflected in the editors’ letters, to understand South African women’s magazines as social barometers in the complex world of magazine publishing and changing markets in the first seventeen years of the 21st century.

I anticipate that this study will contribute to both the theoretical and media historiographical literature of magazine journalism research in SA. The study attempts to contextualise an understanding of messages in the editors’ letters of the selected magazines; expects to shed light on the complexity and diversity of women’s magazines as social barometer at a specific time in SA’s history within the field of production-based magazine studies; and offer a historical record of women’s magazines in SA. In addition, I foresee that the study will be a definitive study in terms of laying a foundation for magazine studies within journalism and media studies in SA, and therefore will be a novel and ground-breaking study in expanding the discipline in this regard.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND FOCUS

As the study investigates the editors’ letters in the three selected alpha South African women’s magazines to reflect on the ELWM as a social barometer of its time, it is important to be cognisant of SA’s history, as well as the political and socio-economic changes since the introduction of democracy on 27 April 1994. The political and socio-economic landscape of SA has changed notably since the end of apartheid and the birth of democracy, when SA changed from an authoritarian state under oligarchic white minority rule to a democracy in a historic, negotiated settlement (Venter & Landsberg, 2011:v).

To focus the study, I considered the South African Government’s programme of action, as implied in the annual SONA as presented by presidents Thabo Mbeki (2001 to 2008), [acting president] Kgalema Motlanthe (2009), and Jacob Zuma (2010 to 2017) (corresponding to the specified timeframe of the study). Drawing on the close reading and QCA of the above-mentioned SONAs, I identified pertinent (according to the South African Government) political and socio-economic themes during the timeframe of the study. I regard the following themes – linked specifically to the first three research sub-questions – as key in the period under investigation:

- transformation and democracy in SA;
- social relations; and
- social values and moral principles within the young, democratic South African society.

In addition, I put forward that these three themes can be regarded as significant indicators of the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as social barometer during the first seventeen years of the 21st century.

1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.2.1 The magazine as social barometer

The powerful relationship between magazines and society, and the concept of the magazine as social barometer, is further emphasised by Johnson and Prijatel (2007:90; see also Querusio, 2014; Rabe, 2019) when they pose the question whether magazines mirror society, or whether society mirrors magazines. They argue that a likely response would be both. However, a more comprehensive answer, according to them, would be to recognise magazines as “active members of a complex society, leading the discussion in many cases, but allowing others in society to take the action that will cause change”.

At the outset of this study, it should be noted that various other magazine scholars, such as Jenny McKay (2000), Gough-Yates (2003), and Martin Conboy (2004), reason that women's magazines (in the category of “consumer magazines”)⁸ offer important information about society, which accordingly assists magazine readers to consider themselves as members participating in a democratic society. In addition, Brita Ytre-Arne (2011:247) rightly argues that women's magazines can be positioned as either having a marginal or an important role in the public domain – depending on how the functions of the popular media in a democracy are understood. As Ytre-Arne points out, research on women's magazines highlights their political relevance as purveyors of beliefs about a woman's role in society, her family and social structures. Likewise, Jeremy Leslie (2013:006) argues that magazines became an instrument for

⁸ For a review of the concept “consumer magazines”, see section 1.7.6.

growing metropolitan populations to learn about modernism and democracy, a notion that I support.

Furthermore, industry experts such as Anna Wintour – editor-in-chief (1988 to 2013) of the international lifestyle magazine *Vogue* – also draw attention to the interplay between political, socio-economic and other global issues and the readers of the magazine. In an editor’s letter dated 2009 (in Rice Lamb, 2015:276), Wintour writes:

There’s no doubt that we live in the toughest and most trying of times: wars ... a global economic recession ... a planet whose health grows more imperilled by the day. Those are the facts, and we are forced to face them whether we like it or not.

In addition, Jane Raphaely (2012a:26) – generally recognised as the most notable and experienced women’s magazine editor and publisher in SA (she is the founding editor of *fairlady*,⁹ one of the cases in this study) – concurs with the above scholars and industry experts and describes magazines as “the shape-shifters of the media world”. Moreover, Raphaely (2012b:9) underlines the important purpose of magazines when she reflects on the banning of magazines – specifically women’s magazines – in SA before democracy: “The best thing they [magazines] had done was to give women in SA a significant soapbox with a huge sound system that allowed even the softest voice to reverberate as a very loud shout.”

Elaborating on the above, Raphaely (2012a:26) refers to how the British magazine *Woman* captured her imagination after World War II (1939–1945). She was convinced that women’s magazines were the medium of change for the better, “the magic mushroom that would change all of us, just like it did for Alice [in Wonderland]”. The role of the magazine as social barometer is further highlighted when Raphaely (1987:14) asserts “magazines [do] not only reflect the society in which they exist; they reflect the economies in which they exist ... magazines are practical to a certain extent; reflective to a far greater extent.”

⁹ When referred to in its historical context, *fairlady* is in lower case italics and spelt as one word, as this was how the masthead was designed and printed on the first cover of the magazine in March 1965 (Raphaely, 2012b:138, 142). In this dissertation, I refer to *FAIRLADY* in capital letters and italics to reflect the spelling and typography of the masthead of the magazine during the timeframe of the study.

Likewise, Johnson and Prijatel (2007:88-127) pinpoint the magazine as an instrument for political interaction and argue that the voice a magazine gives to a political cause may be one of the medium's most important influences.

As illustrated by the scholars and industry experts above, I therefore argue that women's magazines – as with all media – function within the intersecting spheres of political, social and economic influences, and thus agree with Tim Holmes and Liz Nice (2012:19) that these spheres contribute to define the political economy of the magazine industry. However, as various scholars argue that women's magazines remain an important vehicle for the transmission of social values, Jill Greenfield and Chris Reid (1998; see also Holmes & Nice, 2012) suggest that the above must be understood alongside how women's magazines present commercial messages. In fact, as Richard Campbell (2000:304-305) points out, the ever-increasing dependence of contemporary magazines on advertising – especially in the digital age – means content reflecting the public sphere sometimes has difficulty finding its way into print, as more magazines identify their readers as consumers first, and only after that as citizens. In addition, it can be highlighted that “more and more magazines define their readers merely as viewers of displayed products and purchasers of material goods” (Campbell, Martin & Fabos, 2011:309).

Lizette Rabe (2008:31) – appointed in 1994 as the first female editor of the Afrikaans women's magazine *SARIE*¹⁰ (the first magazine title that serves as a case in this study), and the first woman to become an editor of an Afrikaans Naspers¹¹ publication – agrees with Campbell (2000) and asserts:

As custodian of the brand, you must put the interest of the title first. This might mean that you have to downplay your own (for example feminist) take on life, and present instead a softer 'women's rights' face, so as not to intimidate a specific market.

More specifically, as Johnson and Prijatel (2007:195-196; see also Duffy, 2013:122) argue, it is generally accepted that the editor of a women's magazine – as the chief

¹⁰ For historical correctness, it is noted that *SARIE* was first published as *Sarie Marais*. Marais, the “surname” of the magazine, was discarded in 1976 (www.sarie.com). Although the magazine changed its masthead to a single, capital S in August 2015, this dissertation refers to *SARIE* in capital letters and italics.

¹¹ Naspers evolved from De Nationale Koerant en Drukkersmaatschappij Beperkt, which had its founding meeting in December 1914. The name was later shortened to De Nationale Pers Beperkt, and Nasionale Pers, before the name Naspers was registered in 1998 (Rabe, 2015:11). For clarity and consistency, I refer to Naspers in the rest of the study.

editorial figure – is expected to be more than a creative and visionary editorial architect. The editor is not only responsible for producing a magazine that will appeal to its specific audience, but also must “relay the real sales message to the advertisers” (Barrell & Braithwaite in Gough-Yates, 2003:118; see also McKay, 2000; Johnson & Prijatel, 2007; Holmes & Nice, 2012). In addition, Gough-Yates (2003:118) states that “editors therefore need to convey a sense of the ‘atmosphere’ of the magazine to the media buyers” and therefore can be seen as “intermediaries between advertisers and the target reader”. Similarly, Brooke Duffy (2013:33) emphasises the consumerist philosophy of women’s magazines by quoting Tom Harty, a previous president of the American media conglomerate Meredith:

Women are the driving force behind most decision-making as it relates to making purchases for their family, their homes, their health, and their personal wellbeing They are increasingly earning their own money and more All this makes women extremely attractive audience[s] for our advertisers, and it is very important strategically for Meredith.

Moreover, South African magazine industry studies – particularly at the start of the 21st century – add valuable understanding to local women’s magazines as a commercial enterprise. For example, Barbara Cooke (2010:2) – appointed in 1987 by the South African Print Media Association (PMA) to investigate the above – states: “[T]he power of print is to communicate and to persuade on the one hand, and to build intelligence and thinking human beings on the other.”

Taking the above into consideration, I agree with the above scholars’, and particularly Duffy’s (2013:33) acknowledgement, that positioning women in the centre of the consumer economy helps to ground the view that women’s magazines have been fundamental to “the machinations of commodity culture”, which is important, as it relates to the fourth research sub-question in this study.

1.3 RESEARCH CONTEXTS OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 Introduction

As Chapter 2 expands on the research contexts of this study, the following is a brief introduction to women’s magazines in SA, and my motivation for choosing *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* – three alpha South African women’s magazines – as foci. This is followed by a short overview of the political and socio-economic contexts

in SA during the timeframe of this study, an introduction to the SONA, which helped me to formulate the main research question (MRQ) and sub-questions, as well as the motivation for the timeframe set for this study, namely 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017.

1.3.2 South African women's magazines

As mentioned before, the start of the 21st century, with its rapid advancement of technology, as well as societal and market changes because of globalisation, the internet and proliferating digital media forms, brought immense changes to the women's magazine industry. Therefore, I concur with Duffy (2013:xi) when she questions the definition of a contemporary magazine. She argues that magazines must be continuously re-invented, not only to fit a "dizzying array" of digital applications, but because magazine publishers and editors are now, more than ever before, forced to redefine the publishing processes and practices that traditionally guided them in decisions about content, audiences and advertisers.

As such, I hold that South African women's magazines – and particularly the three "home-grown women's magazines"¹² selected as cases for this study, namely *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* – have changed significantly since SA became a democracy in 1994. I (see also Rossouw, 2005:75-76, 2008) assert that the established domestic women's magazine market had to take cognisance, e.g., of the worldwide trend of segmentation or "nichification",¹³ as also established by David Abrahamson (1996), McKay (2000), Jonathan Bignell (2002), Gough-Yates (2003), Hans van Kranenburg and Annelies Hogenbirk (2006), Johnson and Prijatel (2007), and Holmes and Nice (2012). Moreover, as illustrated above, the effects of the global recession in 2008, and globalisation as an all-inclusive occurrence (Williams, 2003:213-223; see also Tomaselli, 2000), clearly influence the sustainability of global, and I therefore would argue local, women's magazines.

To further contextualise this study, it should be noted that, at the end of the study's timeframe (December 2017), SA had just over 350 consumer magazines, most of which have small circulations and are highly niched. It is also noted that the circulation figures of the average titles are declining (OMD, 2017:9). The OMD report highlights that the local women's magazine sector remains under pressure from the large

¹² For a review of the concept "home-grown women's magazines", see section 1.7.7.

¹³ For a review of the concept "nichification", see section 1.7.8.

number of choices available to consumers. It further indicates that most English, seemingly “white”¹⁴, titles show significant, if not dominant, “black” readership.

However, an even more significant trend in the South African media industry is the dramatic decline in print revenue since the middle of the first decade of the 21st century. It is noted that advertising revenue in the print sector dropped from a 40% share in 2007 to just under 30% in 2012, while television and the internet gained advertising market share (OMD, 2014:37). With reference to specifically consumer magazines, research has shown that South African consumer magazines accounted for 9.2% of the total advertising revenue in 2003. A decade later (August 2013 to July 2014), magazine advertising revenue had declined to 4.7% (OMD, 2015:6). Thus, it can be argued that the onset of the global recession in 2008, the slow growth of the South African economy, and its effect on the publishing industry, remain a serious concern for local print media owners such as Media24, whose three alpha women’s magazines are the foci of this study.

The global recession has not been the only issue facing magazines in the 21st century. As mentioned before, magazines are transforming in response to the all-encompassing influence of the internet, as well as shifts in demographic and psychographic preferences (Guidone, 2000; see also Johnson & Prijatel, 2007; Zarwan, 2007; Abrahamson, 2009; Holmes & Nice, 2012; Duffy, 2013). Moreover, as Thomas Lindlof (2009:61; see also Sánchez-Taberner, 2006) demonstrates, the effects of globalisation as a worldwide movement towards economic, financial, trade and communications integration created “an almost endless profusion of hybridized cultures”. Therefore, argues William Kerr (in Johnson & Prijatel, 2007:xiii), one can conclude there is no doubt that women’s magazines that succeed are those that not only focus on readers’ needs and comforts, but also are well written, imaginatively planned and carefully managed. I cannot but agree with Kerr (at the time chair of Meredith) that for a magazine to be successful it must be positioned well to compete in an ever-changing, and often crowded, marketplace.

¹⁴ SA’s historical Population Registration Act of 1950 required people to be identified and registered from birth as belonging to one of four distinct racial groups, White, Coloured, Bantu (Black African), and Other (www.sahistory.org). It can be argued that, before 1991 – when the Act was repealed – race was used for political and socio-economic purposes. Therefore, I note – and concur with scholars such as Spies (1992c), Claassen (1998) and Narunsky-Laden (2011), and industry reports such as OMD Media Facts (2017) – that earlier SA magazines were aimed at specific race groups, e.g. “white” or “black”.

1.3.3 *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as foci

To motivate the choice of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as foci for this study, I argue that these titles can be described as alpha South African women's magazines in each of their (historically defined) target markets, namely the Afrikaans, English and black market. All three titles belong to one of the earliest (magazine) publishing groups, namely Naspers, and are published under its subsidiary Media24.

As further context to the above, it must be noted that Naspers launched *SARIE* in 1949, for the more "sophisticated" Afrikaans-speaking woman (Rabe, 1985:82-86), while *FAIRLADY* was established in 1965 as the group's first commercial magazine enterprise in English (Raphaely, 2012b:133-141). *TRUELOVE* (established by Drum Publications in 1972 as *True Love and Family*, a photo-story magazine aimed at migrant workers on the gold mines in Johannesburg)¹⁵ was bought by Naspers in 1984 and strategically repositioned as a women's magazine aimed at black readers (Narunsky-Laden, 2011:179, see also Rossouw & Rabe, 2014). As such: "Naspers tapped into the growth of the consumer market of black female readers" (Chapman in Narunsky-Laden, 2011:184).

Thus, I argue that consumer magazines in SA traditionally were targeted at – or connected with – different races and language groups. As such, women's magazines would traditionally have a "white" or a "black" content aimed at their distinct target markets, as in fact is shown in this study with *SARIE* – "white" and Afrikaans, *FAIRLADY* – "white" and English, and *TRUELOVE*, "black" and English.

As mentioned above, the three magazine titles selected for this study fall under the umbrella brand of Media24, a subsidiary of Naspers and, at the time of writing (and according to the Media24 website) a company with interests in digital media and services, newspapers, magazines, e-commerce, book publishing, print and distribution. Its magazine division, Media24 Lifestyle, describes itself as the leading magazine publisher in SA and "[uses] the power of magazine brands to create a personal world of information, entertainment and educational excellence that can be accessed anytime, anywhere" (www.media24.com). Chapter 2 expands on the above, and Chapter 6 accounts for the Historiography of the three selected women's magazines.

¹⁵ This dissertation refers to *TRUELOVE* in capital letters and italics to reflect the spelling and typography of the masthead of the magazine during the timeframe of the study.

1.3.4 SA's political and socio-economic contexts: 2001 to 2017

The characteristics of SA's political and socio-economic spheres post-1994 have been described and documented by various political commentators and scholars. Although it is generally accepted that the scale and scope of SA's transformation after the first democratic elections in 1994 are without precedence, it did not take place without a magnitude of challenges. It is further argued that the country's social problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality have intensified since 1994, and that these challenges include political, social and economic transformation at every level of the post-1994 society. In fact, Sean Gossel (2016) and Jane Duncan (2016) say that global trends suggest that SA has a higher chance of regressing to an autocracy than becoming an established democracy (see also Cuthbertson, 2008). The specific characteristics of SA's political and socio-economic dispensation from 2001 to 2017 are explored in section 2.3.

1.3.5 Demarcation of, and motivation for, the timeframe

In the demarcation of and motivation for the study's period of investigation (1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017), I argue that it was only when SA adopted the Bill of Rights in 1996 – on the threshold of the 21st century – that the rights for a democratic transition, especially for the media, became apparent, and that the demise of apartheid has changed the media environment significantly (Media Development and Diversity Agency [MDDA], 2009:33).

In addition, this study reflects on the era following the first democratic parliament of Nelson Mandela, focusing on that of Thabo Mbeki (the second democratic parliament), the third parliament, when Kgalema Motlanthe was acting president, and the fourth parliament, that of Jacob Zuma.

Moreover, as 10 December 2017 marked the 21st anniversary of SA's Constitution, I believe that this offers a timely reason to reflect on the complex changes in the young democracy, particularly regarding this study's focus, namely the editors' letters as a social barometer in three alpha South African women's magazines.

1.4 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1 Introduction

The aim of a literature review can be explained as the contextualisation of a specific place or position for the research study (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). The process of reviewing literature can also be labelled as a mapping exercise (Schostak & Schostak, 2013:33).

Although Chapter 3 expands on and offers a review of global and local studies within the realm of Production-Based Research, I want to mention that my interest in this study, following on my master's research project (Rossouw, 2005), arose from the book, *The magazine from cover to cover* (2007), by Johnson and Prijatel. I prescribed this text in 2008 when I developed the third-year Magazine Journalism module for the BA Journalism degree at the University of Johannesburg. I also recommend the above text as a resource for the applied module of the current Journalism Honours course. I regard my subsequent engagement with the above text, as well as those of McKay (2000), and Gough-Yates (2003), as an initial exploration of the literature review for this study. See section 5.9.4 for further context regarding my interest in this study.

However, at the outset, it is also important to note that scholarly research, particularly since the late 20th century, on how to make sense of, or understand, women's magazines offer different perspectives of how magazines can be investigated. In fact, Gough-Yates (2003:6; see also Holmes & Nice, 2012) lists the three main research streams in the study of women's magazines as

- textual analysis
- audience studies and, the most recent,
- the production-based approach.

As the latter reflects particularly on how practitioners understand, represent and relate to their product, I deem this approach fit for the study, and review global and local literature deemed relevant to Production-Based Research within the field of women's magazines. A brief, chronological overview of the relevant global and local studies follows in the sections below as an introduction. However, these will be presented in greater depth in Chapter 3.

1.4.2 Global overview

In evaluating research from the late 20th century, I was guided by Gough-Yates (2003:13-18), who indicated that Marjorie Ferguson's (1983) study was the first in-depth analysis of women's magazines in terms of Production-Based Research. Furthermore, Gough-Yates argues that the studies by Johnson (1993), Angela McRobbie (1996), Barbara Straus Reed (1996), and Caroline Oates (1999) are significant for Production-Based Research. However, I believe that the earlier study of Cynthia White (1970), as well as the studies of Kathleen Endres and Therese Lueck (1995) and Mary Zuckerman (1998), align with the research aim of this study. Relating to the ELWM as a key concept of this study, I regard the study by Viviane Heberle (1997) of importance. I also deem the study by Greenfield and Reid (1998) as key, as it aligns with the fourth research sub-question of this study.

In evaluating Production-Based Research in the 21st century, I argue that the studies of McKay, Sarah Frederick, and Loubna Skalli's (all in 2000) should be noted. I further assert that Gough-Yates's (2003) examination of women's magazines sets the benchmark for Production-Based Research at the start of the 21st century. Moreover, and as argued before, I deem Johnson and Prijatel's (2007) study as significant, while I believe that Sian Stephenson's (2007) study adds to this study's focus on women's magazines as a social barometer of their time. I also regard Kayt Davies's (2009) study of women's magazines and editors' perceptions of their role as an eminent contribution to this production-based study. Furthermore, the research by Katherine Frith and Yang Feng (2009), Feng and Kavita Karan (2011), and Ytre-Arne (2011) highlights the implicit role of women's magazines in society, which I argue emphasises the premise of this study. I also agree that Duffy's (2013) study – culminating in the book *Remake, remodel* – is one of the most recent and valued contributions to Production-Based Research on women's magazines. In addition, Nadia Siddiqui's (2014) review of women's magazines in Asia and the Middle East, and Mónica Farías's (2015) analysis of women's magazines in Argentina during the socio-economic change (1995 to 2008) can also, in part, be compared with the research aim of this study. Section 3.4 elaborates on the review of the above-mentioned global studies.

1.4.3 Local overview

Nexus searches of the database of the National Research Foundation indicate that this study has a unique research focus and confirms the paucity of academic research

on South African magazine journalism, particularly in terms of Production-Based Research on women's magazines. Hence, the study by Sharon Thompson and Vivian de Klerk (2002), investigating magazine editorials, needs to be highlighted as a first and important contribution to the South African field of Production-Based Research. In addition, Nadia Sanger's (2007) study, illuminating the role of editors as creators of meaning, is also of value to this study; while the study by Christi van der Westhuizen (2013), in which she explores the discourse (among other things) in the editor's letter in *SARIE* is of significance, as I will be able to compare Van der Westhuizen's findings on the editor's letter in 2009 with the concluding findings of this study (see Chapter 8). This, to a certain extent, also applies to Charlea Sieberhagen's (2016) study, in which she analysed the message communicated through the editor's letters in *SARIE* during 2014. In addition to the above, I explore scholarly research that gives specific context to this South African-based study. Rabe's (1985) master's thesis detailing *SARIE* can be regarded as seminal in the study of women's magazines in SA, while Lou-Marie Kruger's (1991) analysis of *Die Boerevrou* [The Farmer's Wife] – the first Afrikaans women's magazine published in 1919 – is of historical importance. In 1992, J.J. Spies (1992a, 1992b, 1992c) chronicled the history of Naspers magazines and submitted an insider's view of the birth and development of the three selected cases. Helen Terre Blanche's (1997) study can also be regarded of historical importance to this study as, in part, she focuses on discourses contained in *SARIE*. Furthermore, George Claassen (1998) maps the origin of magazines, and specifically the development of South African magazines, while Sally-Ann Murray (also in 1998) developed a speculative framework for the reading of local women's magazines.

At the start of the 21st century, Deidre Donnelly (2002) investigates women's magazines as social indicators, and Viwe Ndzamela's (2002) research considers the representation of women – among others – in *TRUELOVE*. In 2003, Sonja Laden¹⁶ explained how the history of magazines (such as *TRUELOVE*) in SA's print media is intertwined with the rise of black consumer culture. In 2005, Stephanie Townsend investigated the repositioning – among others – of *SARIE* and, as mentioned before, I submitted my master's research project on nichification in the South African women's magazine market.

¹⁶ Sonja Narunsky-Laden's earlier work is published under the surname Laden.

I also deem Amelia de Vaal's (2007) analysis of the way in which women's careers are legitimised in – among others – *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, as well as Chanél Boshoff's (2009) investigation of the coverage of political news in, among others, *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY*, as providing an important context for this study. Furthermore, I regard Nicolette Ferreira's (2011) excavation of *Grace* (1964-1966), and *The Townships Housewife* [sic] (1968-1969) as the first South African magazines aimed at black female readers as informing the Historiography of this study. Moreover, Narunsky-Laden's (2007, 2011) assumption that local consumer magazines aimed at black readers function as indicators of and contributions to social change is of value. I also consider Jeanette van Rensburg's (2012) cultural-historical exploration of *Die Boerevrou*, and Isabella Venter's (2014) review of *The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* (1909-1940) – one of the earliest women's magazines in SA – as significant background to this study. Section 3.5 elaborates on the review of the above-mentioned local studies.

1.5 THEORETICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1 Introduction

Theory can be defined as a human account of what something is, how it works, what it produces or causes to happen, and how that something can be changed (Fourie, 2001:231). As communication theories help us to comprehend and explain occurrences in the world around us, "they are the 'nets with which we catch the world' or the ways we make sense of social life" (Miller, 2005:22).

As such, and to provide a basis for analysis and to answer the study's MRQ and sub-questions, I approach this study from the perspective of Political Economy (PE) and ground the study within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, as well as Feminism, on the basis of the realisation that magazines "are lively and engaging societal resources, affecting the world around them, and, in turn, being affected themselves by that world" (Johnson & Prijatelj, 2007:89).

1.5.2 Theoretical points of departure

1.5.2.1 Critical Political Economy (CPE), advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*

To clarify the approach to the study from the perspective of PE, I argue that and agree with Boyd-Barrett (2010:186; see also Graham, 2006:494) that, as an umbrella term, PE investigates “processes of consolidation, diversification, commercialization, the working of the profit motive in the hunt for audiences and/or for advertising and its consequences for media practices and media content”. The philosophy of PE can therefore be explained as one of several theories used in media studies to examine how economic and political relationships, interests and affiliations determine the nature and functioning of social institutions (Fourie, 2007:121-122).

In addition, Phil Graham (2006:494) argues that the political economy of communication is undertaken within a critical research framework and therefore is value laden. However, Graham suggests a contemporary framework to understand the political economies of communication in the 21st century and asserts that political economies have changed to such an extent that an almost total reassessment is required to comprehend the changes.

Thus, I recognise the historical development of PE as a theoretical framework, as well as the focus of CPE, but move with scholars such as Graham (2006) and Nicholas Garnham (2006) to *Contemporary Political Economy* as the first theoretical framework chosen for this study.

The chosen theoretical framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Communication*, may be problematic for some, as it could seem incompatible with the study’s production-based approach within the field of journalism studies. However, I believe strongly, and fully agree with Pieter Fourie (2007:145), that it is challenging to distinguish cogently between the critical, or the positivistic, theoretical traditions, being the “two grand theories from which all mass communication research depart”. As these theoretical approaches borrow from each other and are shaped by each other, I refer to a synthesis, or fusion, of paradigms in this study. This is in accordance with Fourie’s claim that “little positivistic research is done today without critical interpretation”. Section 4.3 expands on the above notion, while section 4.4 motivates the reason for choosing CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, as the first theoretical framework.

1.5.2.2 Feminism

Feminism, as the second and equally important theoretical framework, can be described broadly as the advocacy for women's rights. However, as Lynn Parry and Beschara Karam (2001:383) argue, there is no single definition of Feminism, and Feminism incorporates the struggle for political and legal rights, equal opportunities, sexual autonomy, and the right to self-determination. Although it embraces different perspectives and schools of thoughts, it is highlighted that Feminism essentially is concerned with the advancement and achievement of equal social and political rights for women, and the fight against sexism (Watson & Hill, 2003:104). Section 4.5 expands on Feminism as paradigm and motivates the reason for choosing it as the second theoretical framework.

1.5.3 Research questions

1.5.3.1 Main research question (MRQ)

Against the above background, I endeavoured to investigate as MRQ:

- What are the messages of the editors, as reflected in the respective editors' letters, of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of three alpha South African women's magazines, from within the theoretical framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism, during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to December 2017?

1.5.3.2 Sub-questions

The MRQ helped answer and give clarity to the following sub-questions:

- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about transformation and democracy in SA from 2001 to 2017?
- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about social relations within this period in SA?
- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about social values and moral principles within this period in SA?
- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser within this period in SA?

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

1.6.1 Introduction

The methodological approach of this study was to apply a qualitative research paradigm according to Weber's concept of *verstehen* (De Beer, 2004:11) and "to move with *verstehen* [the German for understanding] towards *erklären* [the German for explaining]" (Henning et al., 2004:9; see also 6 [sic] & Bellamy, 2012:110).

1.6.2 Research design

Qualitative research has long been recognised as a valuable paradigm for exploring and analysing the nature of media organisations and institutional practices. In fact, when magazine and newspaper research began in the 1920s, much of its early existence was qualitative in nature (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:346), an orientation described by Johann Mouton and H.C. Marais (1991:155-156) as one "in which the procedures are not strictly formalised, while the scope is more likely to be undefined, and a more philosophical mode of operation is adopted".

Thus, by following the scientific tradition of inductive and interpretive research, as done by Gertruida du Plooy (2002; see also Rubin, Rubin & Piele, 2005; Priest, 2010), and applying the case study approach as the overall research design and Historiography and QCA as methodologies, I anticipated that I would gain an understanding of the message of three alpha South African women's magazines as presented in the respective editors' letters during the first seventeen years of the 21st century.

1.6.3 Research methodologies

1.6.3.1 Historiography

The first method that I applied was that of Historiography, as Historiography – or historical research on the media – where conclusions and explanations about past communicators resulting from primary documents or artefacts (in this study the ELWM) – is regarded as a customary form of archival or documentary research. This method is explained in section 5.7, and documented in Chapter 6, where the histories and development of the three selected cases are explored, with a particular focus on the period of investigation.

1.6.3.2 Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

The second method employed in this study – as a set of methods for systematically coding and analysing qualitative data (Bernard & Ryan, 2010:287; see also Gunter, 2000:60) – is QCA. I contend that QCA provides a descriptive account of what a media text means – in this case the ELWM. I further argue that QCA is both an analytical tool and a method for data collection. As such, analysing the content of the editors' letters will involve what Harvey Bernard and Gery Ryan (2010:54) describe as five imperative stages:

- to discover the themes and subthemes,
- to describe the core and peripheral elements of the themes,
- to build hierarchies of themes,
- to apply the themes and, lastly,
- to link the themes to theoretical frameworks.

1.6.4 Sampling strategy and procedures

As my sampling decision was based on professional judgement (Treadwell, 2011:108-110, 117), and the choice of a nonprobability sampling method was informed theoretically, I used purposive sampling for this study. This is based on the supposition that the specific media content – in this study the ELWM – will meet the specific criteria of the researcher (Adler & Clark, 2011:123-124; see also Gunter, 2000:91).

Initially, I treated the survey population for this study, i.e. the entire collection of editors' letters (635 in total) published in the three selected women's magazines during the demarcated timeframe, as the sample. However, I soon realised that the saturation of data was problematic. Therefore, I employed extreme sampling to reduce the sample size to a sum of 231 editors' letters across the three selected cases. Section 5.6 expands on the sampling strategy and procedures.

1.6.5 Data analysis

To successfully analyse the data gained from the QCA in this study, I employed ATLAS.ti®, a software tool for qualitative data analysis and knowledge management, to manage, extract, compare, explore and reassemble meaningful pieces from large

amounts of data in “a creative, flexible, yet systematic way” (Muhr & Friese, 2004:2; see also Saldaña, 2009; Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

Thus, using QCA as one of the chosen research methods and applying ATLAS.ti® as a tool for data analysis, this study investigates and describes the messages in the editors’ letters of the three alpha South African women’s magazines to understand them as social barometers of the first seventeen years of the 21st century. Section 5.7 explores the above further.

1.6.6 Trustworthiness of study

It is argued that all social research must be executed with rigour, and that rigour or trustworthiness is crucial for the quintessence of quality in qualitative research. Tobin and Begley (in Rambaree, 2007:7) describe trustworthiness as how the researcher demonstrates integrity and something that proves the legitimacy of the research process. I elaborate on how I considered the academic conventions of validity and reliability, and triangulation, in section 5.9.1. Furthermore, particularly in QCA, the researcher’s own prejudice and preconceived ideas must be noted, as beliefs may hide the substantiation of data. Significantly, Ian Dey (in Henning et al., 2004:129) points out: “The danger lies not in having assumptions but not being aware of them.” Triangulation, therefore, forms an integral part of the study, as it will be informed by the literature review (comprising global and local studies that can be linked to the research aim), the two theoretical approaches, namely CPE advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. The methods of Historiography, and the QCA of the editors’ letters of the three alpha South African women’s magazine titles during the set timeframe of 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017, will add to the triangulation, and ultimately to the trustworthiness, of the study.

1.6.7 Pilot study

To test the research design as a crucial element of a solid study (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001), I embarked on a pilot study – defined by Donald Treadwell (2011:213) as a pre-test prior to the larger study to ensure that the larger study can be executed successfully. The pilot study for this study resulted in a peer-reviewed paper (Rossouw & Rabe, 2014), presented at the International Association for Media and Communication Research Conference (IAMCR) in Hyderabad, India. Section 5.10 discusses the pilot study in more detail.

1.6.8 Ethical considerations

Regarding Stellenbosch University's (SU) policy of ethical clearance, it was not necessary to apply for ethical clearance when this study was registered in 2014, as no interviews had to be conducted to gather data for the purposes of this study. This matter will be dealt with in more detail in section 5.11.

1.7 REVIEW AND DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.7.1 Introduction

As all research involves key concepts around which a study is built, I now offer definitions and the reasons for my choice of definition of the key concepts used in this study. This is in line with Mouton's (2011:123) reasoning that a study's key concepts must be defined as early as possible. For easy reference, I discuss the key concepts in the order in which they are mentioned in the footnotes near the start of this chapter.

1.7.2 Social barometer

In general, the concept "social barometer" defines social norms and gauges of appropriate behaviour in society (Urban Dictionary, n.d.). In addition, a barometer of social change can be equated to anything that shows change or impending change (Collins English Dictionary, n.d.). Pertinent to this study is David Querusio's (2014) argument that "magazines act as ... an agenda setter, enacting cultural change, measuring and observing that very change". This is in line with Johnson and Prijatel's (2007:95-130) exposition of the interaction between a magazine and society, and that the magazine can indeed be called a social barometer as it is a means of monitoring or measuring the cultural temperature of society (see also Macnamara, 2005:1). Therefore, I argue that a woman's magazine – and particularly the ELWM – can be regarded as a "sensitive barometer which register[s] subtle processes of social change before they solidify into fully fledged social forms" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough in Litosseliti & Sunderland, 2002:31).

1.7.3 Editor's letter of a women's magazine (ELWM)

The editor's letter is an opinion piece or editorial, written by the editor and classified under the essay rubric, and usually appears within the first few pages of a magazine. Johnson and Prijatel (2007:246) argue that the editor's letter offers a "splendid way to strengthen ties with readers and is regarded as a powerful instrument for

persuading, inspiring, illuminating, informing and connecting with readers”. The editor’s letter can therefore be an important space and a specific opportunity to communicate directly with the reader and, in doing so, to draw readers/viewers into a relationship not only with the editor, but with the magazine itself (Morrish, 1996:134; see also Duffy, 2013:121-126). In addition, Heberle (1997) argues that editorials in women’s magazines form an integral part of the magazine’s broader master narrative and offer a close intertextual link to the front page and/or other texts in the magazine. She also highlights that editorials are hortatory or persuasive texts that reflect the publishing company’s ideology. Heberle furthermore emphasises the function of editorials as a promotional discourse, or a form of advertising, which points to subsequent pages in the issue where women will find answers to their affective and personal problems. I argue that the latter is important to this study, as it will help to answer the fourth sub-question. I appropriate ELWM as abbreviation in relation to Heberle, who used EWM in her study to describe editorials in women’s magazines. However, I adapt her abbreviation to ELWM, as I believe it is more specific. For brevity’s sake (as explained in footnote 4), I use it as such in the rest of the study.

1.7.4 Alpha

I use the term “alpha” to describe *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as the original – or archetypal – models of traditional women’s magazines of broad general interest in SA (see also Rossouw, 2005:ii). As mentioned before, all three titles belong to Media24 Lifestyle, the magazine subsidiary of Media24. Furthermore, I ascribe the term to these titles as they have proven themselves as leaders in terms of circulation, readership and advertising income in their respective language groups. For example: with the current negative economic growth and the influence of the internet affecting publishers negatively, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* are still regarded as top sellers for Media24 Lifestyle in the fiercely contested local women’s magazine market.

1.7.5 Women’s magazine

Jennifer Nelson (2012:2-3) delineates a women’s magazine as a magazine written purposely for women, about women and because of women, and categorises *The Lady’s Magazine*, and *Repository of Entertaining Knowledge*, published in 1792, as the first publication aimed exclusively at women. As context to this study, the concept and development of women’s magazines is further explored in section 2.2.

1.7.6 Consumer magazines

Magazines are usually classified into three categories: Consumer, customer (also known as contract), and business-to-business (B2B) magazines (Holmes & Nice, 2012:19; also see Johnson & Prijatel, 2007:15-19). Consumer magazines are sold in shops or by subscription and are marketed like any other consumer product. Consumer magazines usually contain advertising, as readers are important to advertisers because of their potential specifically as consumers (Johnson & Prijatel, 2007:15; see also Gough-Yates, 2003; Holmes & Nice, 2012). The three magazines that are studied in this research project are considered consumer magazines.

1.7.7 Home-grown women's magazines

I define "home-grown women's magazines" as magazines originating in SA and aimed at South African readers, and argue that *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* are examples of this. This is the direct opposite of titles that are published under licence in different countries for those specific markets. For example, the lifestyle magazine *Vogue* has 25 country-specific editions that are published under licence from its mother company (www.condenast.com).

1.7.8 Nichification

In my master's research project (Rossouw, 2005), I identify *Rooi Rose* [Red Roses] (1942), *SARIE* (1949), *FAIRLADY* (1965), *TRUELOVE* (1972) and *Femina* (1998-2010) as South African models of traditional women's magazines of general interest, meaning that the magazine provides something of everything for the readers in its target market. In the above-mentioned study, I deliberate on the commencement of special-interest magazines, focusing on specific topics of women's interest – such as décor, fashion, food, gardening, handcrafts, health, etc. – which were originally part of general-interest women's magazines – and label this process as nichification. Subsequently, I use the term nichification to describe the segmentation of the South African women's magazine market during the last decade of the 20th century. In addition, I agree with Amy Beer (2002:165) that the economic structure of the magazine industry encourages reader segmentation and strict control over editorial content.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Following this introductory chapter, the dissertation has the following outline:

Chapter 2: Research contexts: This chapter focuses on the development of women's magazines, the evolution of local women's magazines, introduces *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as cases, and explores the political and socio-economic spheres of SA as a young democracy. It also offers a motivation for the demarcation of the timeframe of the study.

Chapter 3: Literature review: This chapter reviews relevant global and local studies regarding women's magazines within the realm of Production-Based Research in the field of magazine studies.

Chapter 4: Theoretical frameworks: This chapter discusses the two chosen theoretical frameworks, namely CPE advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and second Feminism, in the study's production-based approach. It also includes a synthesis of the critical and positivistic theoretical traditions.

Chapter 5: Research design and methodologies: This chapter deliberates on the research design, namely a case study and the two methodologies, namely Historiography and the QCA of the editors' letters, which was deemed appropriate for the study.

Chapter 6: Presentation of research findings I – Historiography: This chapter analyses the findings drawn from the Historiography of the three selected cases, namely *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* – from their inception to the end of 2017. (The separation of the findings into two chapters was necessary to allow for the presentation of the findings of the Historiography and the QCA.)

Chapter 7: Presentation of research findings II – Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA): This chapter discusses the findings drawn from the QCA of the editors' letters in the respective women's magazines, as well as a comparative analysis of the three individual cases.

Chapter 8: Analyses and discussion: In this chapter, the conclusions drawn from the Historiography and the QCA are discussed in terms of the reviewed literature and chosen theoretical frameworks.

Chapter 9: Conclusions and recommendations: In this final chapter, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made for future research studies. Chapter 9 is followed by the reference list and the addenda.

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter introduced the research topic and gave an overview of the rationale for the study. The research contexts were explained briefly, and the global and local literature pertaining to women's magazines in the realm of Production-Based Research was introduced. In addition, the chapter explained the research aim, clarified the applicable theoretical frameworks, and formulated an MRQ and sub-questions. Thereafter, the research design and methodologies were introduced, followed by a review and definition of the key concepts of the study. Finally, a chapter outline and summary were provided.

The next chapter discusses the specific research contexts of the study.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH CONTEXTS

... [O]ne might think of magazines as what Francis Bacon ... meant when he referred to 'the middle axiom' [M]agazines as a genre do not specialize in abstract generalities; nor, at the other extreme, do they merely present raw, undigested experience. Rather, their comparative advantage is in dealing with the in-between or netherworld – the middle region, inhabited, according to Bacon, by 'the solid and living axioms on which depend the affairs and the fortunes of men.'¹⁷

Evan Cornog and Victor Navasky (2012:viii)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter demarcates the study of South African women's magazines, as well as the political and socio-economic contexts in SA during the specified timeframe (1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017), as the research background against which this study is set.

Within the first research context, I consider the magazine as concept, contextualise the magazine as historical document, and briefly map the global development of women's magazines. This is followed by an introduction to the history and development of South African magazines, including women's magazines, before highlighting the landscape of local women's magazines during the demarcated timeframe. Furthermore, the history, development and status of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, as the three alpha women's magazine titles selected for this study, are detailed.

In the discussion of the second research context, I reflect on media and democracy and underscore the political and socio-economic contexts in SA during the timeframe of the study.

¹⁷ Francis Bacon (1561-1626) clearly meant men when he formulated the above. However, society has become more inclusive, and this study focuses justly on women's magazines, and particularly on the three South African titles, namely *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

Thus, as highlighted in section 1.4, I propose that the discussion of the research contexts serves to emphasise the powerful relationship between magazines and society and highlights the concept of the magazine as social barometer. This is important, as it investigates the main proposition of this study. Furthermore, I propose that the discussion of the research contexts supports not only the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, as documented in Chapter 6, but also the QCA of the ELWM (Chapter 7) in the respective titles to reflect on the magazine as a social barometer of its time.

2.2 RESEARCH CONTEXT I: SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

2.2.1 What is a magazine?

It can be argued that magazines have always played a unique role in history, as they created a “middle ground” between books and newspapers (Cornog & Navasky, 2012:viii; see also Sumner & Rhoades, 2006:129). From the beginning, magazines’ strength was that they could offer more detailed information to more specialised audiences than newspapers. In addition, Ruari McLean (in McKay, 2000:6) underlines the unique positioning of magazines, namely that “[a] magazine is, usually, less ephemeral than a newspaper, less permanent than a book”, while Holmes and Nice (2012:4) draw attention to the magazine historian Frank Luther Mott’s description of the magazine as “a bound pamphlet, issued more or less regularly ... containing a variety of reading matter and ... a strong connotation of entertainment”.

In addition, various magazine scholars observe that the word “magazine” refers to the fact that the first published magazines were organised on the literary model. Claassen (1998:119) cites Joseph Dominick’s (1983) reasoning that magazines “were to be storehouses of various literary material gathered from books, pamphlets and newspapers and bound together under one cover” (see also Abrahamson, 1996; Daly, Henry & Ryder, 1997, 2000; Johnson & Prijatel, 2007). Furthermore, the diverse nature of magazines is illustrated by the fact that the word “magazine” was initially derived from the Arabic *makhazin*, meaning emporium or warehouse of goods (Johnson & Prijatel, 2007:3; see also McKay, 2000; Leslie, 2013).

Despite the above descriptions of a magazine, compiling an operational definition of a magazine, and being able to answer the question “What is a magazine?”, have captivated magazine scholars over time. As McKay (2000:6; see also Johnson & Prijatelj, 2007:4-14; Holmes & Nice, 2012:1-18; Leslie, 2013:007-008) argues:

Whereas everyone knows more or less how to define a newspaper, the definition of magazinehood is much less distinct – so many kinds of journalism are published in magazines, so many kinds of journalists are employed on them.

Therefore, to illustrate the scope of the magazine as medium, and to move towards a definition of a magazine, I highlight specific characteristics of a magazine as suggested by Johnson and Prijatelj (2007:4-14):

- more in-depth coverage than its news counterpart,
- highly specialised in content, and in audience,
- a well-defined magazine community makes a magazine far more comfortable than any other medium in providing opinion and interpretation, and in advocating for the causes of its audience,
- being printed and bound, a magazine is regarded as the most permanent of all media [not including books],
- a consistent format as displayed in the magazine’s format and design, and
- the publishing cycle or frequency of the magazine, which is also a discerning factor.

The above is exemplified by David Sumner and Shirrel Rhoades (2006:8), who argue that these features distinguish magazines from any other medium of delivering information. Relevant to this study is that magazines – particularly in the 21st century, with online publishing and the advancement of technology – adapt content quickly to reflect changing lifestyles and social trends. Moreover, it can be argued that social trends may influence magazine success or failure in unforeseen ways. It is widely acknowledged that the Industrial Revolution – which started in Britain in the 1700s – led to the prevalence of mass-produced publications becoming a conduit for urban populations to learn about new concepts, such as modernism and later democracy.

Therefore, I argue that magazines can be regarded as a social barometer of their time or, in the words of Charles Daly, Patrick Henry and Ellen Ryder (1997:3) “our magazines tell us about ourselves”, which is the main premise of this study, which regards magazines as being “social barometers”.

Pertaining to women’s magazines, the above is underscored by various scholars, such as Ferguson (1983), Gough-Yates (2003), Conboy (2004), Johnson and Prijatel (2007) and Holmes and Nice (2012), who indicate, e.g., that the abolitionist and women’s suffrage movements – equated to the first wave of Feminism – provided editorial direction for numerous women’s magazines in the mid-nineteenth century.

Thus, with the above as context, I find the following definition of magazines to be apt and applicable to this study (Johnson & Prijatel, 2007:14):

Magazines are printed and bound publications offering in-depth coverage of stories often of a timeless nature. Their content may provide opinion and interpretation as well as advocacy. They are geared to a well-defined, specialized audience, and they are published regularly, with a consistent format.

In addition, I agree with Joseph Straubhaar and Robert LaRose (2004:63) that the history of the print media is a repetitive cycle of technological innovation, followed by competition between new forms and uses of media, increased consumer demand, growing literacy, and changes in society shaped by the media. I therefore argue that the 21st century, with its all-encompassing influence from the internet (including the onset of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in 2015), adds a new dimension to the technical innovation of magazines, and that Johnson and Prijatel’s (2007:14) definition must be expanded to include that magazines are not only printed, but also published online.

2.2.2 The magazine as historical document

The first publication resembling a magazine was printed in Germany. Johann Rist, a poet and theologian, published *Erbauliche Monats Unterredungen* [Edifying Monthly Discussions] in 1663 (Sumner & Rhoades, 2006:130). Nearly four decades later, Daniel Defoe (also a poet and author) followed suit in England with *The Review*, which lasted from 1704 to 1713 (Wilson in Claassen, 1998:120; see also Holmes & Nice,

2012). Although *The Review* was more of a protest periodical,¹⁸ it is hailed as a landmark in English journalism, and specifically in magazine journalism.

Nonetheless, the first periodical to call itself a magazine – or attach the concept of magazine to the specific publishing format – is *The Gentleman's Magazine*, first published in 1731 (Leslie, 2013:006; see also McKay, 2000:6). However, Edward Cave, as editor, changed the magazine from the “trusted” format of essays used by publications such *The Tatler* (1709-) and *The Spectator* (1711-1712) and offered his readers more by including a regular section consisting of personal announcements, book lists and a collection of local and international news compiled from different newspapers (Johnson & Prijatel, 2007:58).

It was only a decade later that magazines were launched in America. In 1741, Andrew Bradford's *The American Magazine* (also called *A Monthly View of the Political State*), and Benjamin Franklin's *The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle for All the British Plantations*, appeared almost simultaneously (Claassen, 1998:121; see also Sumner & Rhoades, 2006:130).

Relevant to this study is Johnson and Prijatel's (2007:58-59) line of reasoning that, since its early beginnings, magazine content has reflected changing attitudes – as editorial copy segued from ponderous treatises about government and politics, interspersed with sentimental musings by anonymous authors, to signed, general-interest articles with a muckraking agenda, to an emphasis on fiction and the current domination of non-fiction and service journalism. The above is important, as it highlights the magazine as social barometer.

2.2.3 Development of global women's magazines

The Ladies' Mercury, published in Britain in 1693, is described as the first magazine that was intentionally designed for women, or what Ferguson (1983:15) describes as a “separate periodical for gentlewomen”. It was soon followed by several other British magazines aimed at upper- or middle-class women and in which editors were intent on improving the minds of their readers, i.e. to educate and entertain them with social,

¹⁸ Although the term periodical is synonymous with newspapers and magazines (www.theasaurus.com/browse/periodical), I prefer to use periodical only in its historical context, and when cited by scholars as such. In this study, I follow Mott's (Prior-Miller, 2015:25) example of choosing the word “magazine” as the more popular and meaningful term.

philosophical and political thoughts, as well as to give advice on homemaking and fashion. Ferguson cites Olive Banks remarking that this tradition continued until the mid-nineteenth century, when changes took place in cultural definitions of womanhood and in the social classes selected as target audience. These shifts reflect the economic prosperity and other attributes of Victorian society, e.g. the restricted feminine ideal of women as modest, pure and family bound, and more interested in personal appearances and domestic affairs than in the news of the world.

Although *The Lady's Magazine, and Repository of Entertaining Knowledge* (1792-1793) is regarded as the first women's magazine playing a significant role in the lives of American women, Mary Zuckerman (1998:1-2) claims that *Godey's Lady's Book* (1830-1896) was the prototype of American women's magazines. Thereafter, several titles, e.g. *McCalls* (1873-2002), *Ladies' Home Journal* (1883-2014), and *Good Housekeeping* (1885- [launched in 2011 as a franchise in SA]), emerged. Moreover, and according to Zuckerman (1998:xiii), these magazines, characterised by "low price, high volume, and advertising support reached hundreds of thousands of females across the nation, becoming advertisers favorites [sic] at the same time".

Moreover, it is argued that American women's magazines only prospered after the Civil War (1861-1865). Underlying the expansion of the women's magazine as mass medium was the social movement campaigning for women's rights to vote as part of the first wave of Feminism. Stanley Baran (2008:135) further points out that the early women's magazines were not only filled with content about suffrage, but also with do-it-yourself content for homemakers, and with advertisers eager to appear in these new women's magazines "hawking their brand-name products".

In addition, as Zuckerman (1998:xii) explains, the major difference between the women's magazines of the 18th century and magazines published after the Civil War was that the earlier titles targeted primarily the elite, whereas the latter titles were designed to help middle-class women in their jobs as housewives. Thus, American women's magazines flourished with fiction and features on political, social and economic topics – such as waging campaigns against contaminated food, drugs and venereal disease, and promoting voter education.

However, by the late 19th century, the advocacy component of women's magazines had decreased. The Great Depression (1929-1939) hastened this trend, while

“competition for advertisers and readers bred editorial caution” and the magazines focused on women as homemakers and sex objects, both stressing women’s role as consumers (Zuckerman, 1998:vii).

It is further argued that the above changes in the content of women’s magazines led to Betty Friedan’s writing of *The feminine mystique*, sparking the second wave of Feminism in America. Friedan (1963:19) claims that women’s magazines promote a false image of a woman’s role, her family and her home, and thereby lessens a woman’s expectations of her life and keeps her captivated in patriarchy and consumerism (see also Holmes & Nice, 2012:124, and section 4.5 for a discussion of Feminism as one of the theoretical frameworks of this study).

On the other hand, it is argued that women’s magazines played a significant role, particularly during World War II (1939-1945), in encouraging women to work outside the home, as the 1950s saw a renewed focus on showing women in the public sphere. In addition, as Gary Mersham (1998:209; see also Zuckerman, 1998:xii; Johnson & Prijatelj, 2007) comments, the 1950s led to a crisis in global women’s magazine publishing, as the “golden age” of television between 1952 and 1960 cut into advertising budgets, as well as the market share for readers.

The introduction of television in SA during the 1970s also caused fierce competition for market share and advertising income, and the late 20th century changed the South African women’s magazine industry significantly. As discussed in Chapter 1, my master’s research project (Rossouw, 2005) detailed the diversification in the South African women’s magazine market that happened almost overnight, with a myriad of new and specialised titles emerging to provide for the diverse interests of female readers. As explained in section 1.8.8, I describe this concept as nichification.

Furthermore, and as discussed briefly in section 1.3.1, the effects of the globalisation of commerce and communication, the onset of the global recession in 2008, the influence of the internet, and proliferating digital media forms (Abrahamson, 2015:1) are significantly changing publishing in general, and thus also that of the South African women’s magazine industry at the start of the 21st century, and particularly during the timeframe of this study.

Relevant to one of this study’s theoretical frameworks, namely Feminism, is Gough-Yates’s (2003:7) explanation that the women’s magazine industry at the start of the

21st century is a “monolithic meaning-producer, circulating magazines that contain ‘messages’ and ‘signs’ about the nature of femininity”.

In addition, Conboy (2004:128-129,163) argues that women’s magazines shape a debate around the public and private visualisation of the female – constructing a network of imagined communities for their readers. He further emphasises that magazines constitute an important aspect of the public sphere and deduces that magazines “produce a range of social and cultural knowledge which is not specifically, but implicitly, political”. Therefore, it can be argued that the history and development of women’s magazines are closely related to the histories of contemporary society.

2.2.4 History of South African magazines

The origin of South African magazines is closely connected to the Dutch rule (1652-1795) and the British occupation (1803-1806) of the Cape. During that time, there were no locally produced newspapers or magazines. Publications resembling magazines – containing articles about European political and military matters, art, and finance – informed the people in the Cape about the world. Despite this, C.F.J. Muller (in Claassen, 1998:122; see also Fourie, 2001:34-37, 2007:28-30) argues that the Dutch regime feared that a press at the Cape could be an instrument of revolution. When the British reign replaced the Dutch East India Company in the late 18th century, the destiny of the press did not change significantly, as the British rulers had similar concerns about press freedom.

Interestingly, it was only on 16 August 1800 – 150 years after the initial European occupation – that when the first homegrown newspaper, the bilingual *The Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser/Kaapsche Stads Courant en Afrikaansche Berigter*, was published. Printed on a government-owned press, it was nothing more than a government gazette strongly controlled by Lord Charles Somerset, the British governor, who prohibited the editors from including any critical comments and personal views in the newspaper (Claassen, 1998:122; see also Fourie, 2007:29).

The South African Journal – founded by Thomas Pringle and John Fairbairn in 1824 – is acknowledged as SA’s first magazine. However, Fourie (2001:29-30) notes that *The South African Journal* was likewise a cause of irritation for the British government, as the editorial content related to Somerset’s authoritarian power and the freedom of the press. The launch of *Het Nederduitsch Zuid-Afrikaansch Tijdschrift* [The Dutch

South African Magazine] (also in 1824), a Dutch publication edited by Abraham Faure, reflected Faure's strong Calvinistic background and is regarded as the first South African magazine to concentrate mainly on events echoing Cape politics, religion and society at the time. For example, at the start of the Great Trek (1835-1846), Faure published a regular feature on its progress (Muller in Claassen, 1998:122). I therefore argue that *Het Nederduitsch Zuid-Afrikaansch Tijdschrift* can be regarded as the earliest example of a South African magazine acting as a social barometer of its time.

The early Cape magazines were also typified by their bilingual contents, e.g. *De Zuid-Afrikaan* [The South African] (1830) had a Dutch focus, but also included articles in English, which I contend is also a reflection of its time. Another characteristic of Cape magazines in the early 19th century was content reflecting the strong religious affiliations of the settlers, e.g. *De Gereformeerde Kerkbode* [The Reformed Church Messenger] (1849).¹⁹ Nonetheless, it was only after the acrimonious battle between the Press and the British government – leading to the signing of the Cape Ordinance no. 60 of 30 April 1829²⁰ – that local newspapers and magazines started to prosper.

However, one of the significant developments in the South African magazine industry (relevant to this study, as the three selected cases belong to Naspers's Media24) occurred nearly a century later, when Naspers was founded in December 1914, and the first edition of *De Burger* [The Citizen] newspaper was published in July 1915. The Christmas edition of *De Burger* – bound and illustrated, printed on good-quality paper, with a colour front page and without the hard news of the daily newspaper edition – can therefore be regarded as the first magazine published by Naspers (Muller in Claassen, 1998:125).

However, and as further background to this study, the introduction of *Die Brandwag* [The Sentry] (1910-1922), published by Gustav Preller and W.M.R Malherbe as the first family magazine in the north of SA, accentuated the importance of magazine publishing for Naspers. In 1916, the company followed suit with the publication of *De*

¹⁹ Originating from *De Gereformeerde Kerkbode*, *Die Kerkbode* – the Dutch Reformed Church's official magazine – is regarded as South Africa's oldest surviving magazine.

²⁰ The signing of the above-mentioned decree provided liberty and political rights to the press (Fourie, 2007:29) and is often referred to as the "Magna Carta" of the South African Press (Claassen, 1998:122).

Huisgenoot [The Home Companion].²¹ A year later, the magazine changed its name to *Die Huisgenoot* and, as Muller (in Claassen, 1998:125; see also Rabe, 2016) points out, the name change supported the promotion of the Afrikaans language and Afrikaans literature, the history of the country and Afrikaner art to build an Afrikaans identity – once more an indicator of a magazine as a social barometer of its time.

Another important development during the early years of South African magazine publishing was the introduction of magazines focusing solely on agriculture. Although farming activities often featured in early Cape publications, agricultural magazines only became prevalent when Harm Oost established *De Boer* [The Farmer] in 1906. In 1911, *Farmer's Weekly* was founded in Bloemfontein by the Argus Newspaper Group, while Naspers launched *Landbouweekblad* [Agricultural Weekly] in 1919. Therefore, I agree with Rabe (2019) that magazines, e.g. *Landbouweekblad* – as indicators of agricultural developments over time – can indeed be understood as metaphors for magazines as a social barometer of their time.

I further argue that the above, albeit brief, historical review of the early development of South African magazines is important for this study, as it reflects on the magazine as a social barometer. In the next section, I discuss the development of South African women's magazines, since this study investigates three homegrown alpha women's magazines.

2.2.5 Development of South African women's magazines

Isabella Venter (2014:828) classifies *The Lady's Home Journal* (1909, no relation to the *Ladies' Home Journal* first published in America in 1883) as the “first popular magazine run in the interest of women in SA”. While editing *The Lady's Home Journal*, Katherine Kemp was invited to join Holderness Gale to start a new women's magazine, namely *The South African Lady's Pictorial*. Within months, the two women's magazines merged to form *The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* (1910), aimed at white English-speaking upper-middleclass South African women. The magazine soon gained circulation and, in 1915, claimed to be “the only

²¹ *De Huisgenoot* incorporated *Ons Moedertaal* [Our Mother Tongue] – the mouthpiece of Die Afrikaanse Taalvereniging [The Afrikaans Language Society] – and strongly supported the idea of Afrikaans replacing Dutch as one of the official languages of the Union of South Africa.

national women's magazine with a readership stretching from the Cape to the Congo and from South-West Africa [now Namibia] to Delagoa Bay [now Maputo]".

Nearly a decade after the launch of *The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal*, *De Boerevrou* (later called *Die Boerevrou*) [The Farmer's Wife] (1919-1931) emerged as the first Afrikaans women's magazine. This monthly publication was distributed countrywide and is regarded as the predecessor to *SARIE* (Rabe, 1985:1-18, 2011:45; see also Van Rensburg, 2012). *Die Boerevrou* was followed by the introduction of a weekly Afrikaans women's magazine, *Die Huisvrou* [The Housewife], published from 1922 to 1976.

However, and notwithstanding the existence of the earlier women's magazines, I concur with Rabe (1985:13-14) that the launch of the Afrikaans *Rooi Rose* in 1942 can generally be accepted as the first women's magazine for the contemporary South African woman. I further acknowledge that *Rooi Rose* may fit the description of an alpha South African women's magazine, but argue that, historically, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* generally are accepted as the longest successive group of alpha women's magazines in the South African magazine publishing history aimed at distinctive markets (belonging to one publishing group), which is the focus of this study. Moreover, as Claassen (1998:126, see also Spies, 1992a) contends, the South African market was inundated with magazines after World War II and, with the launch of *SARIE* in 1949, the local consumer women's magazine market started to prosper.

It should also be noted that, from the mid-twentieth century to the early 1990s, Naspers controlled the female magazine market by adding *FAIRLADY* (1965), *Close Up* (1970), *Modern Woman* (1971), *Women's Value* (1980), *TRUELOVE* (acquired in 1984), *Cosmopolitan* (also in 1984, but in partnership with Jane Raphaely and Associates), and *Red* (1989) to their magazine bouquet. Republican Press (later known as Caxton Magazines) competed in the same market, with women's titles such as the previous mentioned *Rooi Rose*, *Bona* (1956), *Living and Loving* (1970), and *Your Family* (1973).

As context, it is important to note that the 1984 launch of the South African edition of *Cosmopolitan* (under licence from Hearst) preceded a vast number of international women's magazines – such as *Essentials* (1995), *Elle* (1996), *Longevity* and *Marie*

Claire (both in 1997) – to be published locally. Raphaely (2011) describes the introduction of *Cosmopolitan* to the South African magazine market as follows:

When we launched *Cosmopolitan* ... it was on the crest of a very particular wave. For the previous 20 years, *FAIRLADY* had nurtured the dreams of South African women who were still trying to decide what they “wanted to be”. By 1984, their daughters wanted to “have it all” – exactly what Helen Gurley Brown was promising them ... They [the readers] were a marketer’s dream, a completely new kind of consumer and a new kind of woman.

Thus, I agree with Raphaely, and scholars such as Donnelly (2002), that the launch of *Cosmopolitan SA* highlighted the importance of the South African magazine market on the brink of democracy.

I also argue that further international trend towards the end of the 20th century – namely the introduction of niche magazines focusing on the lifestyle attitudes, aspirations and preferences of specific groups of readers – spearheaded the growth of South African women’s magazines in the decade before and after the dawn of the 21st century. This is underscored by Stephen Driver and Andrew Gillespie (in Gough-Yates, 2003:48), who say that international publishing companies moved away from the production of mass titles with profits through economies of scale to niche titles zeroing in on specific market segments. As mentioned before, I explored this diversification in the South African women’s magazine market in my master’s research project (Rossouw, 2005) and concluded that the advent of the niche market of women-focused magazines had a major effect on the landscape of the South African women’s magazines.

To clarify the above, it should be noted that the South African Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC)²² categorises consumer magazines into 18 categories. I argue that niche categories, such as health, home, parenting and women’s special interests, not only illustrate the concept of nichification in the local market, but also provide an indication of the number of choices available in the South African women’s magazine

²² The ABC is a non-profit organisation registered in terms of the Section 21 Companies Act and is based on a bipartite agreement between advertisers, advertising agencies and media owners. The primary function of the ABC is to certify and provide accurate and comparable figures for newspapers and magazines. The circulation figures are released quarterly and assist advertisers and/or marketers, and publishers, to buy and sell advertising and promotional material (www.abc.org.za).

sector. For a register of South African women's magazines from its early beginnings in 1909 to the end of this study's period of investigation, in 2017, see Addendum A. This addendum documents *The Lady's Home Journal* – launched in 1909 – as the first women's magazine in South Africa, while *Bella* (launched in 2013) was the last local women's magazine launched during the timeframe of this study. Furthermore, Addendum B offers a list of the ranking of South African women's magazines with a circulation figure of above 20 000 at the end of this study's timeframe. For example, of the 12 titles listed, the circulation of the fortnightly *Kuier* (Media24) was at the top, with a circulation of 94 851, while *TRUELOVE* was in the last position, with a circulation of 31 925 in the fourth quarter (October to December) of 2017.

I therefore argue that the first decade of the 21st century (partly the focus of this study) was characterised by an increasingly crowded space in the women's sector of the South African magazine industry. I agree with Joanne Lillie (2006:36) that the growth of the local consumer market could barely sustain all these titles, and that the new magazines were "just slicing and dicing the [advertising] pie into smaller chunks".

2.2.6 Overview of local women's magazine publishers

At the end of this study's period of investigation (December 2017), there were four important publishers in the South African women's magazine industry, namely Associated Media Publishers (AMP), Caxton Magazines, Condé Nast Independent Magazines (CNIM) and Media24. Media24 had the largest number of titles in their bouquet, followed by Caxton Magazines, AMP and CNIM.

In addition to *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, Media24's bouquet of women's magazines at the time consisted of *Baba en Kleuter*, *Kuier*, *Lose It!*, *Move!*, *SARIE Bruid*, *SARIE Kos*, *Tuis/Home*, *Women's Health*, *Your Baby* and *Your Pregnancy* – 13 titles in total. Caxton Magazines was the second most important role player, with *Essentials*, *Food and Home Entertaining*, *Garden and Home*, *Living and Loving*, *Rooi Rose*, *Vrouekeur*, *Woman and Home* and *Your Family*. AMP occupied the third place, with *Cosmopolitan SA*, *Good Housekeeping/Goeie Huishouding* and *WOW, Women on Wheels*, while CNIM published *Condé Nast House and Garden* and *Glamour SA*.

Relevant to this study, and to highlight the fierce competition for market share and readers in the South African women's magazine industry during the timeframe of this study, is Loyiso Kula's (2014) analysis of the women's magazine titles within Media24.

She highlights the highly fragmented women's magazine market and ascribes it to the changing demographic landscape of the country. Innovative Media24 titles aimed at the emerging black middleclass were successful, e.g. the fortnightly *Kuier*, aimed at Afrikaans-speaking women and striving to give readers "practical, realistic advice about everyday things" (www.media24.com/magazines/kuier/), and *Move!*, a weekly women's magazine reflecting its readers' roots in the community and the importance of religion (www.media24.com/magazines/move/). As mentioned before, *Kuier* occupied the number one slot in the ranking of South African women's-interest magazines, with an ABC figure of 94 851 during the last quarter of 2017, while *Move!* had a circulation of 65 960 during the same time (see Addendum B).

The size of the local consumer magazine industry has shrunken substantially over the past decade, and circulation figures declined even further. In fact, total circulation figures decreased by 4% year on year, with single-copy sales down 4.3% year on year, and subscriptions – long considered the barometer of economic health – by 18% (Audit Bureau of Circulations of South Africa [ABC], 2014). This is in line with international industry reports, such as the FIPP World Magazine Trends 2010/2011 (www.brownsbfs.co.uk) which indicate that, besides the global financial crisis, the magazine industry has been affected by major changes as advertisers, and consumers, are increasingly attracted by online and digital products. The decline in the circulation figures of South African women's magazines from 2004 to the end of this study's timeframe (December 2017) is depicted in Addendum C. The further decline in circulation figures and the effect of the Covid pandemic on the South African magazine industry in 2020 (which is not part of this study) are outlined in Addendum L.

As argued before, the relationship between magazines and readers reveals changing trends and patterns in social behaviour. Magazines create and reflect popular beliefs and tastes, like all commercial mass media. It can be deduced that the success – and the profits – of a magazine depend on how well the magazine can anticipate those tastes and deliver an information package the audience will buy (Whetmore, 1995:86). I argue that the above reasoning is important to further illustrate the magazine as a social barometer.

2.2.7 SARIE, FAIRLADY and TRUELOVE as foci

To reiterate my motivation of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as foci for this study, it is sufficient to say that I regard these titles as alpha women's magazines in each of their markets, namely the Afrikaans, English and black markets. I further contend that these titles are generally accepted as the longest running women's magazines in the local magazine-publishing industry, belonging to one publishing group and serving three distinct consumer markets for women's magazines.

2.3 RESEARCH CONTEXT II: SA, 2001 to 2017

2.3.1 Media and democracy

Although there is a rapidly growing body of literature on the democratisation of Africa, not much of it deals with the role of communication, or the media. Göran Hydén and Michael Leslie (2002:1) argue that, in a political process, democratisation and communication interact in numerous ways. They refer to the causal link between the media and democratisation: "Communications shape democratization ... but the extent to which political actors allow freedom of expression will influence the behaviour of media personnel." In addition, they argue that it is impossible to understand the interface between media and democracy, which is relevant to this study, without considering its political, social and economic contexts.

To understand local political and socio-economic contexts in the 21st century, and the democratisation of the media post-apartheid, it is important to note that, after 342 years of white domination since colonisation, Nelson Mandela was sworn in as SA's first democratically elected black president on 10 May 1994. Thus, and as argued in section 1.4.3, I contend that it was only when SA adopted the Bill of Rights in 1996 – on the threshold of the 21st century – that the rights for a democratic transition, especially for the media, became apparent and that the demise of apartheid changed the media environment significantly. The political and socio-economic landscape of SA has changed remarkably since the end of apartheid. Thus, and in agreement with Fourie (2001:3), I argue that the political, social and economic forces that shape and determine the media are not static, but dynamic, constantly evolving and changing. This is also the case in SA, and particularly since the country became a democracy.

The notion is that the South African media, like all other institutions in the country, face the challenge to adhere to the country's new democratic Constitution, bearing the ethos of racial integration and economic redress for previously disadvantaged communities in mind. Therefore, as argued by William Gumede (2014:7), there is no doubt that the media have a crucial role in strengthening and consolidating SA's relatively young democracy, while at the same time media companies must survive as businesses in increasingly difficult markets.

2.3.2 Political and socio-economic contexts

To reiterate, it is generally accepted that the scale and scope of the transformation after the first democratic elections in 1994 are without precedence. However, it is also argued that it did not take place without a magnitude of challenges, and that the country's socio-economic challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality intensified (Ramphela, 2008; Gossel, 2016). There is consensus that these challenges include political, social, and economic transformation at every level of the post-1994 society.

The specific characteristics of SA's political and socio-economic dispensation post-1994 have likewise been documented. For example, Ramphela (2008:13-27) describes some of the significant transformational issues at the end of the first decade of the 21st century as

- the enormity of socio-economic change,
- the magnitude of conversion taking place within the political, economic and social systems,
- the building of a non-racial, non-sexist and egalitarian society, and
- the improvement of human, intellectual and social capital.

In addition, Ramphela (2008:73-124) refers to racism, sexism and authoritarianism as "stubborn ghosts" within the transformation process. South African scholars and commentators, such as Albert Venter and Chris Landsberg (2011), Leslie Dikeni (2012), Sampie Terreblanche (2012), Max du Preez (2013) and Devan Pillay and Roger Southall (2014) agree with the above.

Moreover, and applicable to the period of investigation, authors such as Colin Bundy (2014) and Maxine Reitzes (2009) single out HIV/AIDS, crime and high levels of unemployment as major issues that undermine development programmes. In addition, Karl von Holdt, Malose Langa, Sepetla Molapo, Nomfundo Mogapi, Kindiza Ngubeni, Jacob Dlamini and Adèle Kirsten (2011) draw attention to the fact that a new wave of conflict consisting of xenophobic violence swept across the country in 2008, and flared up again in 2015 (www.economist.com). Further issues that need to be addressed, according to Du Preez (2013:133-262), are primary and high school education – South-Africa’s “greatest and most depressing failure and the brightest flashing red light”, land ownership, the safeguarding of the Constitution, and the independence of the judicial system, while the topic of nationhood, race and identity still dominate the national discourse twenty years after liberation. In addition, Jan-Jan Joubert (2012:581) equates the period from 2004 to 2011 – partly the focus of this study – to a “democratic puberty” and describes it as that of a teenager in his “rebellious tenth to sixteenth year”, while Pillay and Southall (2014:1) refer to SA’s “fragile” democracy.

As mentioned before, it can be noted that, particularly since 2015, Jacob Zuma’s presidency was marred by what Gossel (2016) describes as “increasing despondency and anger in the face of ongoing patronage and corruption scandals”, with an unprecedented attack on civil society and institutions that protect constitutional rights (see also Malala, 2015; Duncan, 2016). As noted before, Gossel implies that global trends suggest that SA has a higher chance of regressing into an autocracy than becoming an established democracy. In fact, at the end of this study’s timeframe, the term “state capture” was being used to describe the dismal state of democracy in SA. For example, the books of two local investigative journalists (both published in 2017) describe the corruption in the South African government and show how democracy has dissipated since 1994. In *The president’s keepers: Those keeping Zuma in power and out of prison*, Jacques Pauw details the immoral power networks in the government of Zuma, while Pieter-Louis Myburgh’s *The republic of Gupta: A story of state capture*, emphasises the magnitude of state capture in South Africa.²³ Moreover,

²³ In 2019, Myburgh’s *The gangster state: Unravelling Ace Magashule’s web of capture* further explores state capture and analyses Magashule’s rise to power as premier of the Free State (2009-2018), and his influence on both the ANC and the South African government.

the Zondo Commission (officially known as the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture) was launched in January 2018 as a public inquiry to investigate allegations of state capture, corruption and fraud in SA. This inquiry, headed by Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, followed on the recommendations of Advocate Thuli Madonsela (Public Protector from 2009 to 2016) that the government to implement an investigation into state capture.

However, as this study's period of investigation (1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017) concludes with the 21st anniversary of SA's Constitution, the current political and socio-economic turmoil falls outside the study's demarcated period of investigation.

2.3.2.1 The State of the Nation Address (SONA)

As mentioned in section 1.4.4, I consider the South African government's programme of action as implied in the annual SONA as key to the study, namely to identify pertinent political, social and economic matters in the country during the specified timeframe of the study.

The SONA is regarded as the President of SA's annual report to the first joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament – the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces – and usually takes place in February. The President provides an update on the implementation of the Programme of Action based on the National Development Plan (NDP) and responds to the challenges that the country is facing (www.gov.za). The SONA is followed by a debate in the National Assembly and the President's reply to the debate. Chapter 5 elaborates on the close reading, and the QCA of the SONAs from 2001 to 2017.

Relevant to the timeframe of this study, the SONAs, as presented by presidents Thabo Mbeki (2001-2008), [acting president] Kgalema Motlanthe (2009) and Jacob Zuma (2009-2017), are analysed. Thus, drawing on the close reading and the QCA of the above-mentioned SONAs, I identified the following themes, which are linked specifically to the first three sub-questions, as being important in the period under investigation:

- transformation and democracy in SA,
- societal relations, and

- social values and moral principles within SA as young democracy.

I argue that the above themes can be regarded as significant themes in the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as social barometers during the first seventeen years of the 21st century.

Thus, against the above-mentioned research context of women's magazines in SA, as well as the political and socio-economic contexts in the country, the study investigates the editors' letters in the three selected cases of alpha women's magazines as social barometers during the first decade of the 21st century, up to December 2017.

2.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has focused on the research contexts of the study. I first introduced the magazine as a historical document, discussed the development of magazines and particularly women's magazines, emphasised the history and development of South African women's magazines, and explored the landscape of the South African women's magazine market in 2017. I also identified *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as the three alpha South African women's magazines selected for the study. I unpacked the political and socio-economic contexts of SA's young democracy at the beginning of the 21st century and mentioned how a close reading and QCA of the SONAs helped me to formulate the MRQ and the sub-questions.

The next chapter provides a literature review of relevant global and local studies pertaining to the study's focus.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature is a multiplicity of voices. With each voice, agendas emerge. Each text is itself a framing of voices and their agenda, shaped to present a debate slanted towards a conclusion Whilst acts of framing bring and impose order, those very processes of ordering and categorisation select and edit so that some things are chosen to be foregrounded, others to be background and yet others to be excluded.

John Schostak and Jill Schostak (2013:33)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Mindful of Schostak and Schostak's (2013:33) explanation above, the process of reviewing literature can be labelled as a mapping exercise. Accordingly, the aim of this literature review can be explained as the contextualisation to argue a case or identify a specific place or position for the research study (Henning et al., 2004).

Mouton (2011:90-91) lists certain criteria a researcher should strive for when conducting the literature review, e.g. whether it is exhaustive; shows comprehensive reading of the main aspects of the study; if it is topical and reflects the most recent studies and treats authors in a just manner – in other words do not approach the study with a pre-set interpretation. Whilst conducting the literature review for this study, I strove to comply with the above criteria to show the relevance of the findings in relation to the existing body of global and local studies of women's magazines.

Mouton (2011:91-95) furthermore lists several techniques to structure the literature review, e.g. chronologically; by theme or concept; by cases; or by method. I chose to organise the literature review – for both global and local studies – in a chronological order. Although Mouton indicates that the chronological structure may not be favoured particularly in a literature review, it is sometimes the only way of making sense of the literature, especially in exploratory studies where very little has been written, as is the

case here. As highlighted previously, this study focuses on South African women's magazines, a severely under-researched field in journalism, and therefore I argue that a chronological presentation fits this study best. However, I contend that the literature review is refined by using women's magazines and the ELWM as concepts. In addition, the local literature review is enhanced by exploring *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as cases. I also explore the method of Historiography for the relevant cases. Therefore, I argue that the literature review of the study is refined sufficiently by adding the other mentioned techniques of structuring or mapping the review.

3.2 FIRST EXPLORATION OF LITERATURE REVIEW

As mentioned in section 1.5.1, my interest in this study was elicited by Johnson and Prijatelj's (2007) *The magazine from cover to cover*. Furthermore, my subsequent engagement with the above text, plus McKay's (2000) *The magazines handbook* and Gough-Yates's (2003) *Understanding women's magazines: Publishing, markets, and readerships*, was an initial exploration of the literature for this study.

While conducting the preliminary literature review until the study was registered, I concentrated on finding global studies that related unambiguously to the ELWM. To trace these studies, I was assisted by Ronél Smit (until 2019 the Faculty Librarian for Humanities at the University of Johannesburg [UJ], where I am employed) and used Boolean²⁴ operators to string keywords (such as "women's magazine/s", "editors' letter/s" and "editorial/s") together. However, during the preliminary literature search, I did not come across global studies concerning the particular focus of the study, namely an analysis of the ELWM. The closest analyses were those of readers' letters or letters written to the editor of women's magazines, e.g. the studies of Janet Casey (2004), Christy Newman (2007), and Mary Carver (2008).

Nonetheless, as the study progressed, the global searches were refined and repeated every six months. The searches later yielded studies such as the investigation of Heberle (1997) on the textual and contextual parameters of the ELWM, and Davies's

²⁴ Boolean is a type of web search allowing users to combine keywords with operators (or modifiers) such as "AND", "NOT" and "OR" to produce further relevant results (https://www.webopedia.com/TREM/B/Boolean_search.html).

(2009) exploration of the role of women's magazine editors, which relate directly to the ELWM as the specific focus of this study.

Utilising Mouton's (2011:91-95) techniques to structure a literature review, my plan of action to find global and local studies that speak to the focus of this study is described below:

- The original, and follow-up searches, were conducted on various global academic databases. Academic Search Complete,²⁵ EBSCOhost (Africa Wide Information, Communication and Mass Media Complete, Family and Society Studies Worldwide, Humanities Source, Masterfile Premier, SocIndex with Full Text, and Women's Studies International),²⁶ JSTOR,²⁷ Scopus²⁸ and Google Scholar²⁹ proved to be useful.
- In addition, I explored the UJ online catalogue (<http://ujlink.uj.ac.za/>), which provided access to SACat,³⁰ SA ePublications³¹ and WorldCat,³² as well as the online repository of Stellenbosch University (SU; scholar.sun.ac.za), with which Marleen Hendriksz (the designated faculty librarian at SU) assisted me.
- Similarly, articles, conference proceedings, theses and dissertations from the databases Brill Online Books and Journals,³³ Cambridge Journals,³⁴ Gale (Academic OneFile; Communications and Mass Media Collect),³⁵ ISI Web of Science,³⁶ ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global,³⁷ OpenDOAR,³⁸ Oxford Journals Online,³⁹ SAGE Journals Online,⁴⁰ Science

²⁵ <http://0-web.b.ebscohost.com.ujlink.ac.za>

²⁶ <http://0-web.b.ebscohost.com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/ehost/search/basic?vid=1&sid=4834deb5-aa9f-401a-856f-94ace00654ef%40sessionmgr120>

²⁷ <https://0-www-jstor.org.ujlin>

²⁸ <https://0-www-scopus-com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/search/form.uri?display=basic>

²⁹ <http://scholar.google.com>

³⁰ <http://0-reference.sabinet.co.za.ujlink.uj.ac.za/sacat>

³¹ <http://0-journals.co.za.ujlink.uj.ac.za>

³² <http://0-reference.sabinet.co.za.ujlink.uj.ac.za/worldcat>

³³ <http://0-booksandjournals.brillonline.com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/>

³⁴ <http://0-www.cambridge.org.ujlink.uj.ac.za/>

³⁵ http://0-find.galegroup.com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/menu/commonmenu.do?userGroupName=rau_itw

³⁶ <https://0-apps-webofknowledge-com.ujlink.uj.ac.za>

³⁷ <https://0-search-proquest-com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/pqdtglobal/dissertations/fromDatabasesLayer?accountid=13425>

³⁸ <http://www.opendoar.org/search.php>

³⁹ <https://0-academic-oup-com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/journals>

⁴⁰ <http://0-journals.sagepub.com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/>

Direct,⁴¹ Springer Link,⁴² Taylor & Francis Online⁴³ and Wiley Online Library⁴⁴ yielded an overview of global and local research on women's magazines.

- Furthermore, to stay abreast of the latest publications on women's magazines in book form, I regularly consulted websites such as Amazon,⁴⁵ Google Books,⁴⁶ Routledge Communication,⁴⁷ Taylor & Francis Publishing eBookstore⁴⁸ and The Book Depository.⁴⁹

At this point, and as context for the study of women's magazines, I introduce an overview of literature on the origin of women's magazine studies below. I highlight textual analysis and audience studies as two of three main scholarly perspectives of how women's magazines can be studied (as introduced in section 1.5.1) and motivate why this study is placed in the third and more recent production-based approach of studying women's magazines.

3.3 THE STUDY OF WOMEN'S MAGAZINES

3.3.1 Introduction

Hailed as the founder of modern periodical studies, Ezra Loomis Pound (1885-1972) pioneered the study of magazines in the early 19th century. Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman (2010:144) posit that Pound established how to read a single magazine (investigating advertising, editorials and fiction), and how to read a set of magazines, as a way of understanding how society is represented in a magazine. The above was important for this study, as I argue that more than hundred years later, the magazine is still regarded as a social barometer. However, Scholes and Wulfman also contend that, because the study of magazines is a relatively new academic

⁴¹ <https://0-www-sciencedirect-com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/>

⁴² <https://0-link-springer-com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/>

⁴³ <http://0-www-tandfonline-com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/>

⁴⁴ <http://0-onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ujlink.uj.ac.za/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.amazon.com>

⁴⁶ <https://books.google.com>

⁴⁷ <https://www.routledge.com>

⁴⁸ <https://taylorandfrancis.com>

⁴⁹ <https://www.bookdepository.com>

discipline, there is not only one method, or even a best one, to study magazines, but that Pound's pioneering steps do provide a way to enter the field of magazine studies.

3.3.2 Main research approaches

As alluded to in section 1.5.1, Gough-Yates (2003:6) points to three main research streams in the study of magazines. She delineates textual analysis, or the analysis of magazines for their ideological content, as the first, and the focus on audience studies of the way magazines are utilised or consumed by their readers, as the second research approach to analyse magazines.

Likewise, Ytre-Arne (2011:214-215) points out that research on women's magazines has moved from an emphasis on ideology and constructions of femininity, as in the work of scholars such as McRobbie in 1982, Janice Winship (1987) and Ros Ballaster, Margaret Beetham, Elizabeth Frazer and Sandra Hebron (1991), to increased attention being paid to audience studies, as in the work of scholars such as Joke Hermes (1995) and Dawn Currie in 1999.

However, and as mentioned before, Gough-Yates (2003:6) notes that the third and most recent production-based approach – which reflects on how practitioners understand, represent and relate to their product – has gained ground since Ferguson's (1983) seminal study of the Production-Based Research of women's magazines.

At this point, I want to restate (see also section 1.5.1) that I do not dispute that scholarly research on women's magazines offers different perspectives on how they can be studied. However, central to this study is Gough-Yates's (2003:6) assertion, which emphasises Production-Based Research as the way in which the management and organisation of the magazine industry influence the relationships between women's magazines, advertisers and marketers, and how they ultimately shape the character of a magazine. I concur with Gough-Yates (2003) when she contends that the publishing of women's magazines is not only a commercially led, market-orientated industry, but also one that depends on political and socio-economic processes for its effective operation, which is the premise of this study.

To support the above notion, Chapter 2 illustrates not only the context of women's magazines in SA, but also the political and socio-economic contexts in which the three

selected cases are published, as these encompass the research aim of this study. Furthermore, Chapter 6, which presents the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, further emphasises this study's premise.

Thus, mindful of Gough-Yates (2003) delineation of Production-Based Research, the aim of this study, and its ability to answer the research questions I chose to place the study within the realm of Production-Based Research of women's magazines. To highlight the chosen production-based approach to the study of women's magazines, I draw on Carolyn Kitch's (2015:10) argument that "magazines are prescriptive as well as descriptive. They convey messages about not only how society is, but also how it should be, constructing ideals to which readers should aspire." In addition, Kitch (2015:15-16) delineates three distinct models for understanding magazines: as a form of control, as a form of community, and as a form of culture. She contends that her summary of theories on and methods for how to analyse a magazine starts "with the premise that theory is historically grounded, shaped by prevailing beliefs about what matter more or less at any given time". Thus, Kitch questions what topics are worthy of study and includes not only specific magazines or themes, but also the magazine as medium itself. She further points to the fact that institutional histories [of magazines] do not have to be a-theoretical, and refers, among others, to the discerning work of Gough-Yates (2003) as blending "cultural and business history". In addition, she highlights Duffy's (2013) research at a time when technological evolution has meant "the evolution from magazine as object to magazine as brand". Therefore, I agree with Kitch that this latest research approach can propel journalism theory forward, while positioning the magazine as medium at the centre of the discussion, as I aim to prove with this study.

3.4 WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: GLOBAL RESEARCH

3.4.1 Introduction

As introduction to the global literature review, I want to highlight an essay on *Jackie* – the top-selling American teenage girls' magazine of the 1970s – in which McRobbie (in Storey, 1996:82-83) contends that *Jackie* can be analysed as a signifying system and a bearer of a certain ideology. McRobbie proposes that *Jackie* functions to "win

and shape the consent of the readers to a particular set of values” and concludes that the magazine functions “to map and, ultimately, to limit the feminine sphere”.

Thus, relevant to this study, and as explained in Chapter 2, is the notion of elucidating the appeal of the women’s magazine formula and considering its limitations and potential for change (Winship in Storey, 1996:84-85). It can be argued that, since the inception of women’s magazines (in the late 18th century), they have appealed to their readers through a mixture of entertainment and useful advice. Janice Winship (2009) further argues that this appeal is organised around a range of “fictions”. These can be the visual fiction of advertisements; items on fashion, cookery, family or home; actual fiction; or features about the lives of women. Each of the above – in their different ways – attempt to draw the reader into the world of the magazine and, ultimately, into the world of consumption, says Winship. I acknowledge that the studies by McRobbie and Winship fall under textual analysis or analysing magazines for their ideological content, but I do believe these studies add to the final analysis and discussion (Chapter 8) of this study.

This discussion of the global literature review starts with an analysis of global production-based studies that I argue are relevant to the MRQ of this study, namely to determine what are the messages of the editors of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, as reflected in the respective editors’ letters.

For a clear discussion of global Production-Based Research in the field of women’s magazines, I first present studies from the 20th century, and then move to the discussion of studies in the 21st century, as this is the specified timeframe of this study.

3.4.2 Production-Based Research from the 20th century

As mentioned before, Gough-Yates (2003:13-16) indicates that the study of Ferguson is the first in-depth analysis of Production-Based Research on women’s magazines. Ferguson (1983:x-xi), previously employed by a British women’s magazine, set out to understand the wider social role of women’s magazines. She discusses the evolution of women’s magazines in Britain, analyses the messages of women’s magazines after World War II, and focuses on “how those messages have responded to the impact of social, cultural and economic change upon their female readers”.

Furthermore, she investigates “how those messages come about: the interaction between editors, their teams, their organisations and their audiences”.

In her book, *Forever feminine: Women’s magazines and the cult of femininity*, Ferguson (1983:119-148) calls the editors of women’s magazines the “high priestesses to the cult of femininity”. As highlighted by McKay (2000:88-89), she contends that

much of what is going on in women’s magazines is comparable to what happens in religious cults: just as newcomers are initiated into the rites of a religious sect, so women ... learn the rituals associated with the ‘cult of femininity’.

In relation to Ferguson’s (1983) judicious analysis of women’s magazines, Gough-Yates (2003:14) calls her research an “innovative approach” because, rather than focusing on the readership of women’s magazines, she combines a content analysis of specific titles with her inside knowledge of concepts and practices to understand and reflect on the wider social role of women’s magazines. The latter is what I would call an analysis of the women’s magazine as a social barometer within the field of production-based magazine studies.

As mentioned before, Gough-Yates (2003:15-16) emphasises that there is a lack of empirical research on the operational practices within the magazine industry, particularly during the late 20th century. She cites the examination by Johnson (1993, see also 2007) – previously an American magazine editor – of statistical data of women’s shifting roles and ranks within the magazine industry as a second important contribution to Production-Based Research. In addition, Gough-Yates argues that Reed’s (1996) study is noteworthy because she uses a combination of personal interviews and statistical data to track the position of women in the magazine-publishing industry, particularly in Hearst Magazines. For example, Reed (1996:271) asserts that women have successfully forged new career paths in the magazine industry – on both the editorial and business side of magazine publishing. Reed adds that these (women) editors seem to be listening to readers’ views and “if readers are distressed with the content of these magazines ... they will be heard, now perhaps as never before”.

Gough-Yates (2003:16-17) adds that the interrelationship between production and consumption in magazine publishing was further explored by McRobbie. McRobbie applied an ethnographic paradigm, analysed empirical data, and employed textual analysis “informed by a post-modern feminist understanding of gender and subjectivity to understand the complex ways in which the reader operates as a discursive category within the magazine industry”. Moreover, she argues that the aim of magazine analysis should be to “generate a more rigorous account of the complex and multi-layered relation between the production of meaning in the magazine and the diverse ways in which these meanings are consumed by readers”.

In her summary of Production-Based Research, Gough-Yates (2003:13-18) also points to the study by Oates (1997), who utilises interviews with editors and observations from documentary sources to investigate the (at the time) best-selling weekly women’s magazines in the UK, viz. *Bella*, *Best* and *Take a Break*, in the minds and practices of the readers and journalists. Oates’s research supported McRobbie’s assertions about the parity between magazines employees and readers, and she likewise identified “dimensions of tension between editorial staff, advertisers, and readers that were constant and ... played out against a highly competitive environment of rival magazines and fluctuating sales”.

Besides Gough-Yates’s (2003) précis of Production-Based Research in the 20th century, I deem the studies by White (1970), Mary Waller (1987), Endres and Lueck (1995), Zuckerman (1998) and Kazue Sakamoto (1999) as equally important for this study’s focus. For example, White’s (1970:18) study aligns with the research aim of this study, as she analyses women’s magazines – from the origin of the women’s press in 1693 to the status of global women’s magazines in 1968 – against their historical background. White relates the development of the industry to “social, economic and technological change ... showing how these ... factors have affected its structure and evolution and influenced the scope and characteristics of magazine content”.

In addition, Waller (1987:1-6) traces the development of magazines, among other *Ladies Home Journal*, *Women’s Home Companion*, *Good Housekeeping* and *McCall’s* (from 1890 to 1917), with a particular focus on the economics of the women’s magazine industry; the philosophies of the editors; and the relationship between

women's magazines and the development of advertising. Her study also sheds light on how women's magazines were created in the period leading up to World War I (1914 to 1918). Waller notes that "editors influenced the content most powerfully, with readers and advertisers sharing second place. After the war, when the content again contracted, becoming more narrowly focused on the woman's sphere, the advertisers' influence became dominant".

A few years later, Endres and Lueck (1995:Preface) likewise analysed American women's magazines based on the magazines' editorial excellence, historical significance and position within their niche, and reiterated that "women's magazines have mirrored the changing roles, responsibilities, duties, and interests of America's females ever since the early days of the Republic".

Moreover, Zuckerman's (1998) equally wide-ranging study, in which she traces the development of major mass-circulating publications and investigates the creation, production and messages of magazines, is central to this study's premise. For example, Zuckerman (1998:xi-xii) claims that the dynamisms of business and industry form essential mechanisms shaping women's magazines. She explains that editors, readers, advertisers, technology and social forces affect the creation and distribution of women's magazines. She further points out that women's magazines from 1792 to 1995 (the timespan of her study) did not typically try to radically configure women's lives or society, although at times worked to reform and improve both. Zuckerman's notion supports my introductory motivation (see section 1.1) for the magazine as social barometer of its time. Moreover, her additional argument, viz. that magazines are profit-orientated businesses that must satisfy readers and advertisers and are embedded in the consumer culture, is paramount to this study. I maintain that the above are applicable to women's magazines across the globe and the norm in SA.

In addition, Sakamoto's (1999) reading of Japanese teen magazines in the 1970s posits that these magazines reflect the changes in young women, and reinforce those changes by providing knowledge and support for new identities and an imaginary community. It can be concluded that, in this respect, the study breaks with earlier feminist readings of magazines for young women, which focused on their ideological function of reproducing patriarchy.

Moreover, in line with my chronological presentation and in relation to the ELWM as a key concept in this study, I regard the study of Heberle (1997) as of importance, since she investigated the textual and contextual parameters in the editors' letters of a selection of British women's magazines. Her findings (1997:Abstract) suggest that the ELWM (as described in section 1.8.3) qualifies as persuasive communication and advertising discourse. She further argues that the contextual and textual parameters allow for the representation of the woman's world as pertaining to the private sphere of personal and domestic issues. Heberle contends that editors establish a degree of intimacy with the readers as a conversational strategy to win readers' trust so that they will read the magazine. Heberle (1998:5) concludes that, in establishing this degree of intimacy with the readers, editors adapt their conversation to "an ideology of consumption, of advice and of femininity that responds to the current hegemonic social structure", and that the ELWM "contribute[s] to reinforce the belief that women have to learn how to cope with different problems in their lives".

In addition, Greenfield and Reid's (1998) study investigated the relationship between editorial and advertising content, which is the focus of this study's fourth research sub-question. Analysing the British *Woman's Own* in the 1930s, they (1998:172) surmise that the magazine "blurred the distinction between editorials and articles and commercial messages in its drive to engineer consumption". They further found that this indistinct making creates an appealing formula for readers and, in doing so, *Woman's Own* became the model for future women's magazines. However, and in agreement with Oates (1997), they also refer to the tension between readers and advertisers, adding that, despite the formula's success, the

increasing pervasive domestic ideology necessitated subtle changes in the magazine's content ... to reflect the tension between the magazine's modernist middle-class aspirations – or, more properly, those of advertisers – and reader's economic circumstances.

3.4.3 Production-Based Research in the 21st century

For a review of literature in the 21st century – the focus of this study's timeframe – I contend that the comprehensive overview of the business of magazine publishing (as well as the role of the magazine journalist) by McKay (2000) and Frederick (2000), focusing on the central place of women's magazines in the literary and intellectual

production of modern-day Japan, and Skalli's (2000) investigation of the complex ways in which society and media products interact in Morocco, should be noted as contributions to Production-Based Research on women's magazines.

I argue that McKay's (2000:184-203) questioning of the business of magazine publishing underlines the concept of CPE as the first theoretical paradigm of the study. For example, she quotes Mandi Norwood (editor-in-chief of British *Cosmopolitan* from 1995 to 2000): "I'm here to make money. Everything we do has to make money," and juxtaposes it with the stance of Tim Southwell (one of the magazines founders, and editor of the men's magazine *Loaded* in 1994): "There were to be no editorial concessions to commerce, we were going to write about all the stuff we liked and if no one else liked it, then so be it."

However, and as argued before, Gough-Yates's (2003) examination of the transformation in the production, advertising and marketing practices of UK women's magazines set the benchmark for Production-Based Research at the start of the 21st century. In fact (see section 1.5.1), her thorough research led to my initial interest in and broader focus on investigating the editorial production processes and marketing practices of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. I agree with Madeleine Shufeldt's (2007:181; see also Andsager, 2003; Kitch, 2015:16) argument that Gough-Yates's study is a "resounding call for research that is mindful of the mutually constitutive nature of economic imperatives and the production of cultural texts", which I hope to achieve with this study.

In a follow-up study, Gough-Yates (2007) argues that the changing depiction of the working or "new" woman can be understood more clearly when magazines are considered in relation to feminist accounts of commercial culture, and from a closer analysis of commercial practices. She contends that the economic practices of magazine publishing can only be understood when women's magazines are analysed in terms of the societal conditions in which they exist.

As mentioned before, Johnson and Prijatel's (2007) *The magazine from cover to cover* can be regarded as an all-inclusive study focusing on how magazines use information to build relationships with their specific audiences to meet political and socio-economic needs. Their book, based on personal interviews with magazine experts, and a review of the internet, industry seminars and academic conferences,

reflects on the American magazine industry and, I argue, this can be used as a guideline for this South African study.

Also of relevance to this study is Stephenson's (2007:613-620) investigation of the "changing face of women's magazines" in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.⁵⁰ In her analysis of Western titles (such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Good Housekeeping*) in the 1990s, she concludes that a magazine can be regarded as "a snapshot of the tensions in a society going through a period of social and economic transition". She deduces that the study of women's magazines in the early years of the Russian transition indicates that magazines entering new markets for the first time can engage in complex and transformative processes with their readers, which says as much about the society they reflect as the more overtly news-driven agendas of other print media on the newsstands.

Another eminent contribution to production-based studies in the first decade of the 21st century is Davies's (2009) study of contemporary Australian women's magazines. In an ethnographic study, Davies analyses editors' perceptions of their role and function within their workplace and as creators of media products within society itself. Her study (2009:v) supports the premise that the editors of women's magazines do not perceive their role merely as journalism, or in the way that "feminist scholars critical of their cultural influence and morality", see them. She adds that most of the editors say they "were more interested [in] influencing culture than reporting on it" and, when asked which issues they were promoting societal change on, they listed several. However, Davies (2009:294) points out that the editors "expressed surprise when asked about their cultural role ... and the degree they influence culture". Given the potential long-term social influence of editor activism, and the upsurge in advocacy journalism, it concerned Davies that this was so rarely discussed in the magazines she scrutinised. This was especially so because it has long been acknowledged that women's magazines "emotionally engage and socially educate their readers" (see also Ferguson, 1983), which is also the premise of this study.

⁵⁰ Part of Stephenson's findings was published in a compilation of research papers edited in 2008 by Tim Holmes, namely *Mapping the magazine: Comparative studies in magazine journalism*. This book was the outcome of an international magazine conference held at Cardiff University in Wales in September 2006, where I presented a peer-reviewed paper (based on my master's thesis), titled "The onslaught of women-focused magazines: Can the traditional women's magazine survive?" (Rossouw, 2006).

Of further significance to this study is the research by Frith and Feng (2009), who examined the growth of women's magazines in China. They (2009:158-173) state that women's magazines are understood as a socio-economic phenomenon. However, when international women's magazines expand across national borders, the emphasis is not on the liberalisation of women, but rather on women as consumers. Frith and Feng further highlight that this overemphasis on women as consumers may limit the liberalisation of local women. Their findings concur with earlier work by Liesbet van Zoonen (1994), who pointed out that media production is a process of encoding meaning in media texts. In an auxiliary study, Feng and Karan (2011) analyse the influence of global and local forces on the portrayal of women's roles and deduce that women's magazines in China tend to reinforce traditional sex role stereotypes and the commercialisation of gender.

Furthermore, and as mentioned in section 1.2, Ytre-Arne's (2011:247-261; see also Saarenmaa & Ruoho, 2014) exploration of the role of Norwegian women's magazines in the public sphere emphasises the implicit role of these magazines in constructing the world at large. Ytre-Arne contends that women's magazines are generally not associated with the forms of journalism that provide citizens with information of democratic importance. Nevertheless, she argues that research on women's magazines emphasises their [the magazines'] political relevance as sources of beliefs about class, family structures and a woman's role in society – a premise of this study.

I also argue that Duffy's (2013) *Remake, remodel* is a recent contribution to Production-Based Research on women's magazines. She (2013:65) argues that the "changing economies and technologies of cultural production in the early 21st century necessitates a fundamental reconfiguration of media work" and chronicles the transformation of the magazine as object to the magazine as brand. Duffy anchors her research both historically and contextually, explaining that the topics address the unique history of women's magazines (e.g. the intimacy readers feel as part of an imagined community of interest, and the notion of the comfortable relationship between editors and advertisers).

Furthermore, Siddiqui's (2014:29-38) review of research on women's magazines in Asia and the Middle East suggests that the portrayal of women's magazines has been changing, but that the causes of these changes are based on assumptions about

Western influences. She explains that Asian and Middle Eastern societies are evolving from within, and this process of change is visible in women's magazines – once again, a clear indication of the magazine as social barometer. Siddiqui concludes that women's magazines are an effective medium to popularise ideas and beliefs, which is a premise of this study.

In conclusion to this chronological presentation of global Production-Based Research, I refer to Farías's (2015:1-14) analysis of women's magazines during the political and socio-economic change in Argentina from 1995 to 2008. She argues that popular media, such as women's magazines, play an important role in the production and reproduction of hegemonic cultural norms, as well as in the contraction of class and gender identities – once again proof of the women's magazine as social barometer.

3.5 WOMEN'S MAGAZINES: LOCAL RESEARCH

3.5.1 Introduction

As an introduction to the review on South African literature, I first must reiterate that a Nexus search of the database of the National Research Foundation in 2012, repeated in 2015 and in March 2017, indicated that the study had a unique research focus and confirmed the paucity of academic research in South African magazine studies.

The original Nexus search identified the studies of Nicola Furniss (2004) and Irene Lagonikos (2005) as significant for the editorial genre; however, these studies were conducted in the realm of newspapers and not women's magazines. Nevertheless, I regard the studies as background to the aim of this study, and Furniss's study of the editorials in *The Natal Witness* (from December 1850 to June 1851 and August 1983 to November 1983), portraying specific times in the history of SA, as valuable. Furniss (2004:121-125) argues that the editorial genre clearly established itself as playing a fundamental role in the shaping and expression of public opinion, adding that the importance of editorial writing as a genre is often overlooked, while its importance in democratic societies should not be underrated. Her study reiterates the power of editorials to guide and influence reader opinion and actions, and she concludes that

“other outside forces, such as advertising and ownership”, have increasingly influenced editorial content.

It is necessary to mention that it was a challenge to find local research that could fit into the description of clearly defined Production-Based Research in women’s magazines. I argue that this once again confirms the paucity of research on local magazines, and in particular women’s magazines, as a relatively new field of study.

Therefore, I first differentiate a chronological discussion of studies that align with, or show elements of, Production-Based Research, and focus (even partly) on the ELWM as a key concept. Second, I review an extensive record of available research on *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of alpha South African women’s magazines. In addition, I review literature investigating the historical tenets of South African women’s magazines, while section 3.5.5 reflects on other local studies that I argue add to the “thick description” (see section 5.2.4 for a delineation of this concept) of the South African literature review, and therefore makes this literature review comprehensive at the time of writing.

3.5.2 South African Production-Based Research on women’s magazines

As mentioned in section 1.5.3, I regard the study by Thompson and De Klerk (2002) as the first notable contribution to South African Production-Based Research in (partly) the realm of women’s magazines. They investigate the editors’ letters in *Cosmopolitan* (the local franchise of the international fashion magazine, published by AMP), *Financial Mail* (a weekly business magazine published by Tiso Black Star) and *Your Family* (a home/family-orientated magazine published by Caxton Magazines), and highlight the subtle ways in which these magazines convey their messages through language. Approaching the analysis from a linguistic perspective, they (2002:105-118) say that, whilst editorials share some similarities in function and form across the genre, each column [editor’s letter] can manipulate them to suit the purposes of the writer in conveying a particular ideology or topic that is believed to be relevant to the imagined reader. They further surmise that magazines have a deep effect on reading perceptions and form a significant part of the mass media, which constantly reflect and influence beliefs, values and actions in society, often maintaining a system by perpetuating dominant ideologies. Particularly relevant to this study is Thompson and De Klerk’s conclusion that the linguistic choices of editors

[in the editor's letter] put forward their [the editors] ideologies and allow their implicit norms and values to be absorbed, along with the information and entertainment in the magazine.

Sanger's (2007:104-112) study illuminates the role of editors and magazines as creators of meaning and adds to the discussion of local Production-Based Research. She interviewed the editors of five magazines (including *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*) and explored the notions of objectivity and neutrality, as well as "the political" in the view of the editor. She found that editors regard the success of their "magazine-making" as the priority, and that the business prerogative in magazine publishing is far more important to the editors than playing a role as change agents. Interestingly, Sanger's study indicates that most editors do not see their magazines as obliged to play any role in transformation. Instead, most understood social responsibility as a "political" issue, and regarded magazines as both objective and neutral in their contents. She (Sanger, 2007:111) concludes that the editors appeared to believe that it is not the role of magazines to contribute to social change – they aim to produce magazines that fit comfortably into and reflect existing societal norms, rather than challenge social norms. Social responsibility and nation building were believed to be "political" endeavours that were understood to be separate from the magazines' primary objective, viz. to accumulate profits. However, the editors' views in Sanger's study reflect on the content or articles in the magazine, and the study does not analyse the editor's letter as such. Sanger's study therefore can be challenged and investigated, as done in this study.

Partly relevant to Production-Based Research on local women's magazines is the study by Van der Westhuizen (2013). Her doctoral dissertation, which culminated in the book *Sitting pretty* (2017), explores to what extent the post-apartheid democratic space in SA has allowed the emergence of new identities for Afrikaans women. In a three-phased study, Van der Westhuizen employs an analysis of *SARIE* as "an instrument of a culturally sanctioned normative discourse". She (2013:57-58) analyses *SARIE*'s editor's letters in 2009 as the primary site for the official version of the magazine's discourse, arguing that *SARIE*'s 60th anniversary positions "commemorative content on its Afrikaner nationalist history". Van der Westhuizen (2013:203) describes *SARIE* as an "ethnicised gateway to western heterofemininity" and argues that, in the year under review, *SARIE* "reproduced white western

bourgeois femininity mainstays of heteronormativity, beauty and domesticity ...". I shall be able to compare her findings regarding the editor's letters in 2009 with the findings of this study (see Chapter 8).

The above, to a certain extent, also applies to the study of Sieberhagen (2016), in which she analysed the message communicated through, among others, the editor's letter in *SARIE* in 2014. She employed a narrative analysis and found that messages of empowerment are prevalent in *SARIE*, but that women are characterised stereotypically in some features.

Considering the above local studies, I argue that the findings of these studies will add to the thick description in the conclusion (Chapter 8) of this study, as the studies contain analyses of the editor's letter in selected samples of *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* during the timeframe of the current study.

3.5.3 *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*: Exploring case-related research

As argued before, I not only place emphasis on South African women's magazines from within Production-Based Research, but also single out studies with a research focus on any of the three selected cases. I argue that this approach offers an exhaustive and comprehensive overview of the studies that highlight *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and/or *TRUELOVE* as a selected case. I present the South African case-related research in chronological order below:

Rabe (1985) is the first local scholar to research and document the history and development of South African women's magazines. Her master's thesis details *SARIE* as an Afrikaans magazine aimed at the mass market, covering nearly 40 years (1949 to 1985). She describes, among others, the origin of and background to the establishment of the magazine; compares American women's magazines from the 1940s and 1950s with *SARIE*; debates the title's contribution to the development of the Afrikaans-speaking woman and Afrikaans literature; and discusses the magazine's contribution to marriage counselling, sex and health education. Furthermore, her study offers a record of the magazine's editorial staff, circulation figures, achievements and challenges during the study period. I contend that Rabe's historical review forms an important part of the title's Historiography as one of the selected alpha women's magazines, as explored in Chapter 6.

Another significant source for the study of South African women's magazines, and in particular the development of the local magazine market, is the contribution of Spies, who chronicled Naspers magazines from 1948 to 1990. He (Spies, 1992a, 1992b, 1992c) submits an insider's view of the origin and development of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, which adds to the Historiography of the three selected alpha women's magazines in this study (Chapter 6).

In addition, the study of Terre Blanche (1997), comparing the discourses of upper- and middle-class Afrikaner women living in Johannesburg in 1948/1949, and in 1958, can be regarded as of historical importance to this study. In part, she (Terre Blanche, 1997:1) focuses on the discourses or conversations in magazines such as *SARIE*. She argues that the analysis of these conversations is a legitimate historical activity and contributes in a significant way to historical records by uncovering the norms and value systems existing in society at a specific time. For example, Terre Blanche's (1997:31-40; see also Rabe, 1985; Van der Westhuizen, 2013; 2017) analysis of *SARIE* (in its first year) points to women having strong religious and moral beliefs, valuing motherhood, and being hailed as the guardians of society. Terre Blanche (1997:37) also mentions the "rebellious" discourse found in a number of features, going against the grain of the time, which address "women as people capable of political action".

Comparing the construction of ideology in *SARIE* ten years later, Terre Blanche (1997:64-75) finds that the image of "volksmoeder" [the mother of the nation] waned, but that the theme of women as mothers and nurturers remained strong. This included features on childbirth, how to raise children, and advice on the psychological aspects of bringing up children. She indicates that the latter possibly reflected the growth of psychology as social science, but argues that it also "confirms the middle-class status of the Afrikaner, as people undergoing financial hardship could ill afford to ponder psychological problems when economic ones were more pressing". Terre Blanche (1997:82-86) also notes a renewed focus in the editions of 1958 on women and careers, and argues that there was a sense of Afrikaner women developing an identity of their own, as "active beings in their own right". This solidarity as women continues in features on Afrikaans women's organisations, women in politics, and a series on women of different cultures. She surmises that her analysis of *SARIE* showed that the changing circumstances of Afrikaner women indeed were reflected in the

magazine. Terre Blanche's study adds to the final analysis of the editors' letters in *SARIE* in Chapter 8.

In *Mediating contemporary cultures*, Murray (1998:84) draws attention to "some of the ways in which reality and experience are narrativised" in, among others, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of contemporary South African women's magazines. As she engages with critical-intellectual commentaries on the texts in women's magazines *per se*, I argue that her analysis of *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* adds to the Historiography of the above-mentioned women's magazines as two of the selected cases in this study.

At the start of the 21st century, which also was the starting point of this study, Donnelly (2002) investigated whether women's magazines serve as development markers in society, and as strategies of education in the passage from girlhood to womanhood. *TRUELOVE* is one of the cases she analysed. Although the focus of her study is different from that in this study, I do value her content analysis of *TRUELOVE* and deem it important for Chapter 6. Ndzamela's (2002) research focuses on the social construction and cultural representation of women in the above-mentioned magazines. However, she analyses the representation of women in, among others, feature articles and advertisements. Ndzamela (2002:74-76) concludes that, although both magazines portray women as sex objects, and women as independent and in control of their sexuality, these two elements are not represented equally, with the focus more on women as sex objects. However, the feature articles mostly represented women as independent and in control of their own sexuality: "[W]omen are not the puppets that early forms of feminism think they are represented as. They have choices to make about their professional and social lives including their sexual lives."

Moreover, Ndzamela (2002:74-76) adds that women's magazines "disclose some kind of progressive intention conforming to the liberal image of women i.e., how women can stay in control of their lives and strive to achieve their dreams". She adds that the feature writers "touch a cultural nerve that goes beyond the individual reader", and consequently offer greater insights into wider societal aspirations.

Laden's (2003) examination of how the history of magazines in SA's black print media is intertwined with the rise of a South African consumer culture further contextualises

TRUELOVE as one of the selected cases for this study. She (Laden, 2003:212) argues that consumer magazines for black South Africans “inspire new social contracts between themselves and their readers and sets of conditions that enable them continually to reconfigure and refine aspects of the new urban culture they seek to evoke”. Hence, she (see also Narunsky-Laden, 2007, 2011) posits that they [the magazines] function as indicators of, and contributors to, the dynamics of societal change in SA, which is an assumption of this study.

In 2007, De Vaal offered an analysis of the way in which women’s presence in the career world is accepted and legitimised as a standard practice. Her study (2007:iii) of local magazines (including *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*) as “sociocultural journals” reflects on “accounts or collections of the major trains of thought representative of a specific context and time frame”. I agree with her that when magazines’ content is viewed

as the textual distillation of the shared consciousness ... of a particular audience, and discourse as ways of acting and thinking underlying this shared consciousness, magazines ... report on the norms, values, and habits particular to a specific era – yielding information that can be applied in reconstructing images of reality.

Keeping an eye on the latest research of local scholars – and mindful of the specific research methods of this study – the study of Boshoff (2009) comes to the fore, as she discusses the coverage of politics as a news topic in, among others, *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* from 1994 to 2004. Boshoff uses QCA and concludes based on a selection of genres, such as the editors’ letters, the readers’ letters and features, *FAIRLADY* had a high level of political coverage, while *SARIE* had considerably less. Therefore, I argue that the study by Boshoff on the reporting of political news in *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* in the first ten years of democracy adds understanding to this study’s premise.

3.5.4 South African women’s magazines: Studies of historical importance

As mentioned in section 3.5.1, I regard it important to review literature that investigates the historical tenets of local women’s magazines to add to the thick description of this study and reflections on the magazine as social barometer. Therefore, I deem Kruger’s (1991) feminist exploration of the relationship between

Afrikaans women and Afrikaner nationalism in the first Afrikaans magazine, *Die Boerevrou*, as significant. Rather than taking the text from the magazine for granted, or seeing it as a simple reflection of reality, she (Kruger, 1991:Abstract) investigates the text as a construction and argues that the text is “construed as ‘answers’ to certain historical underlying social and historical issues”. The study suggests that the social subjectivities of Afrikaans women (at the time) were not simple or transparent. In her analysis, it becomes clear that, even while being shaped by Afrikaner nationalism, women themselves were active in shaping Afrikaner nationalism. Kruger surmises that, while the readers of *Die Boerevrou* were constituted as subjects in the anti-feminist discourse of Afrikaner nationalism, they “remained mobile within this course: always negotiating, planning, creating and articulating new identities and roles for themselves” (see also Blignaut, 2013). I regard Kruger’s study as clear proof of the interaction between magazines and society, as outlined in section 1.3.1. Twenty years later, Van Rensburg’s (2012) exploration of the above-mentioned magazine confirms Kruger’s findings, and reiterates the significance of *Die Boerevrou* as an authoritative source of cultural history.

Moreover, Claassen’s (1998:119-143) historical overview, and at the time of writing the only published summary of South African magazines, also highlights the role of magazines in society. In *Magazines: Life’s own story*, Claassen maps the early beginnings of magazines and traces the development of South African magazines up to the start of the 21st century. I argue that his text assists in shaping the deliberation of women’s magazines as research context (see Chapter 2), and contributes to the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* (see Chapter 6) in this study.

In addition, Ferreira’s (2011) study of *Grace* and *The Townships Housewife* – the first South African magazines aimed at black female readers – informs the Historiography and QCA of this study, and specifically in relation to *TRUELOVE* as case study. Ferreira (2011:66-67) points out that, while the magazines (published during apartheid) were white-owned, with a philosophy of patronage, and the readers were positioned as consumers, they nonetheless provided a medium in which black women were also the writers of letters, short stories and social commentary and, once again, provide proof of the magazine as social barometer. Ferreira underlines the value of the above magazines with a quote (most probably from the editor’s letter) from *Grace* in 1965:

GRACE ... sparkling name for a Woman's Magazine, has not only come to grace African Journalism and ... bookstores, but to give dignity, erudition, information, life and humor [*sic*] to my countrymen [*sic*] who are in need of and desire something 'NOT' inferior.

In 2014, Venter reviewed *The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* (1909 to 1940) and explored how the reading matter in one of the earliest local women's magazines may have influenced its readers' views of race relations during the first half of the 20th century. She (Venter, 2014:851-852) writes that *The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* can be said to have commented on, and reinforced, different racial views over time. She further cites Fischer, noting that the

chief means of communication with the world beyond one's own town before the First World War remained the periodical Reading these[magazines] brought the world into one's home, and their continuing importance for, and effect on the era cannot be stressed too strongly.

Venter (2014) contends that *The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* indeed acted as a subtle agent of change for English-speaking women's views of race relations in southern Africa and concludes that the political and socio-economic influence of the magazine cannot be underestimated.

3.5.5 Casting the net wider: Other studies of importance

Furthermore, I argue that Gabriël Botma's (2011:233-259) analysis of *Die Burger* newspaper from 2004 to 2005 is also relevant to this study, as it explores the political economy of media transformation in SA by focusing on the oldest newspaper established by Naspers – one of the broader theoretical frameworks of this study. To conclude this section, I add Rabe's (2016:1-128) research on the Afrikaans magazine *Huisgenoot*, the first magazine in the Naspers stable. She uses a media-historical point of departure to record the development of *Huisgenoot* over one hundred years, focusing on its idealistic-ideological ideals as a publication, while also reflecting on its market-driven goals. The study establishes a "critical contextual link between the past and the present" to understand the magazine as a phenomenon of its time by understanding its history. Rabe further cites Lundy, emphasising that the historical review is more than just a collection of data and its final report, but that it can also draw theoretical and holistic conclusions on the historical events and eras. I attempt

to follow suit, not only with the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as will be presented in Chapter 6, but also with the QCA of the editors' letters in the above-mentioned magazines to answer the MRQ.

3.6 GAPS THE STUDY INTENDS TO FILL

As mentioned before, this study has a unique research focus and confirms the paucity of academic research on South African magazine studies. To find Production-Based Research on South African magazines, and particularly women's magazines, was a challenge. Therefore, I anticipate that this study will fill a void in South African studies on magazines, specifically women's magazines, in the sub-field of magazine studies within journalism/media studies. Furthermore, the study offers an analysis of three alpha South African women's magazines belonging to one publisher, and spans the first 17 years of the 21st century, to record a thick description of the messages in the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides an analysis of the global and local studies that support the study. Guided by the study's MRQ, namely to analyse the messages in the editors' letters in three alpha South African women's magazines during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, I explored debates within Production-Based Research on women's magazines and used discussions on the study's chosen theoretical frameworks and methods to guide me.

The next chapter discusses the theoretical frameworks of the study.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Theories help us understand or explain phenomena we observe in the social world. They are the “nets with which we catch the world” or the ways in which we make sense of social life.

Katherine Miller (2005:22)

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers the theoretical foundations of the analysis of the messages in the editors' letters of three alpha South African women's magazines to understand women's magazines as a social barometer in a young, democratic SA.

As noted in section 1.6, I argue that the chosen theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism shed light on the study's research aim, recognising (as mentioned in section 1.3.1) that magazines are “active members of a complex society, leading the discussions in many cases, but allowing others in society to take the action that will cause change” (Johnson & Prijatelj, 2007:90).

This chapter starts by discussing theory as a form of sociological enquiry and argues for the motivation of the fusion of the positivistic approach and the chosen theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. It introduces PE as the overarching paradigm, and discusses CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, as the first theoretical framework and offers a perspective on the political economy of the South African media, and Media24. It also critiques the theoretical framework and proposes an explanation for the first theoretical approach chosen for the study.

Thereafter, the chapter introduces Feminism as the second and equally important theoretical framework and explain Womanism, which is relevant to the analysis of the editor's letter in *TRUELOVE* in this study; it further offers a current perspective of

Feminism in SA, critiques Feminism as theoretical framework, and proposes an explanation of the second chosen theoretical approach to the study. Finally, a summary of the chapter is offered. A brief background to theory as sociological enquiry is provided below.

4.2 THEORY: A FORM OF SOCIOLOGICAL ENQUIRY

Theory can be defined as a human account of what something is, how it works, what it produces or causes to happen, and how that something can be changed (Fourie, 2001:230-231). Moreover, Miller (2005:20-25; see also Williams, 2003:11-12) equates theory to an abstraction of social life and refers to the theoretical framework as the keystone of a research project. In addition, Denis McQuail (2003:40-42) describes the role of theory as a navigational tool to furnish ideas and concepts to understand what is going on, and to express that understanding. Therefore, and in agreement with the above scholars, I argue that theory is a social construction and is an attempt by scholars to make sense of what is happening around us.

It can be argued that the main goal of mass communication theory – the overarching theory in which this study is embedded – is to contribute to the understanding of the structures and practices of the mass media (and, in this study, women’s magazines), and how these structures and practices affect society and social relationships within society, both on the macro- and micro-levels (Fourie, 2007:180-181). Williams (2003:18) emphasises this, and posits that theory is not isolated from everyday life. It may take a few forms and operate at a variety of levels, but it is a fundamental component of our world.

Nonetheless, I acknowledge that there are different theoretical perspectives from which to study the media that cannot all be merged, as they exemplify different philosophical positions and contrasting methodological preferences, as McQuail (2003:40) puts it. I therefore agree with Jim Macnamara (2010:59) that “we all approach the topic [mass media] with a worldview based on philosophies and assumptions that frame our understanding and perceptions”, which is likewise the basic tenet of Miller.

4.3 FUSION OF THEORETICAL PARADIGMS

As stated in section 1.6.2, I recognise that some scholars may find the chosen theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism difficult to reconcile with this study's specific production-based approach in the field of journalism studies, and particularly the study of women's magazines.

Yet, I contend and agree with Fourie (2007:145) that it is key to distinguish clearly between the critical and the positivistic traditions, being the "two grand theories from which all mass communication research depart[s]". Therefore, I argue that these two theories borrow from each other, are shaped by each other, and create a fusion – or synthesis – of paradigms. This is in accordance with Fourie's assertion that "little positivistic research is done today without critical interpretation", and also that "little critical research does not test its assumptions empirically". It is also the point that Rabe (2014) makes when she clarifies this so-called conflict and points out that the positivist approach focuses on the scientific method and empiricism, and the critical approach on ideology and power. In addition, Rabe posits that Historiography – one of the methods used in this study – is in essence a combination of the two approaches, as it employs what is to be found through empirical research and what must be interpreted from those factual findings. Therefore, I concur with the above scholars that this leads to a fusion of paradigms, as positivistic research tends to be supplemented with critical interpretation, while critical researchers often support their assumptions with empirical proof.

4.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK I: CPE, ADVANCING TO *CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ECONOMY*

4.4.1 Definition and paradigm

The overarching paradigm of PE can be highlighted as an approach to the study of communications and the media that emerged as an analytical critique of capitalism in the 18th century (Golding & Williamson, 2014:83-84; see also Mosco, 2009:21-25). Its early theoretical foundations stem from the work of Adam Smith as well as Adam Ferguson, while John Stuart Mill's essay in 1836, on the definition and method of PE

(Precht, 2019:178), is regarded as seminal. Karl Marx's important writings reviewing PE come to the fore later in the 19th century.

According to Garnham (1997:58), the roots of PE in the early writings of Smith and Ferguson lie in the analysis of societies' "modes of subsistence". Garnham posits that the crucial difference between analytical traditions has been – and remains – amongst those who stress social relations as key to defining characteristics of different modes of subsistence and the source of historical change. He adds that the views of Smith and Ferguson are that these modes of existence or production are inevitable, collaborative social forms.

As mentioned above, the development of PE during the 19th century is associated with Marx, where Marxism is précised as a broad philosophy that is critical of the power of the ruling class over the working class. As Alan Albarran (2010:27-28) points out, critical studies dealing with media power, concentration, news and information decisions driven by capitalist concerns rather than by public values are often the product of a Marxist view. As such, PE became the forerunner of an approach to study the media in a period of rapid expansion, both of media corporations and of critical social science in the mid-twentieth century (Golding & Williamson, 2014). Likewise, Graham (2006:493-494) comments that the broad range of studies that fall under the heading of political economy of communication has been growing and diversifying over the past 50 years, much the same way as PE did from the mid-nineteenth century onward. He delineates PE in more detail and contends that it is the study of

- how values of all kinds are produced, distributed, exchanged and consumed (the economic aspect);
- how power is produced, distributed and exercised (the political aspect), and
- how these aspects of the social world are related at any given place and time.

In agreement with scholars such as Robert McChesney (2003), Graham (2006), Mosco (2009) and Peter Golding and Karen Williamson (2014), I argue that PE can be defined as the study of social relations, particularly the power relations that mutually constitute the production, distribution and consumption of resources. In addition, Albarran (2010:27) notes that PE as a tradition is itself broad and diverse,

emerging as a counter to the positivist approaches driving much of the mainstream economic theory. He points out that the mass media and their various media industries became a “natural area of study for political economy researchers, drawing scholars from fields such as political science, sociology, and economics, as well as journalism and communications” – a notion I support.

Therefore, used as an umbrella term, PE generally searches for the answers to the question of power of the media in the analysis of ownership and control (Boyd-Barrett, 2010:186), and how these aspects of the social world are related at any given place and time (Graham, 2006:494; see also Laughey, 2007:122). Eric Louw (2001:2) adds that the method of PE focuses on how meaning is made by people within a production process. This involves exploring the social position people occupy, the relations between them, and struggles over the production of meaning within organisations, which I argue is important for this study.

4.4.1.1 CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*

As argued above, and in agreement with Dan Laughey (2007:134-135), PE indicates a shared concern with the politics and economics of any given institution, including the mass media.

However, in the case of CPE, the primary interest is in the economic factors. This concern with economics can be contrasted with the structural theories of the media, such as Stuart Hall's (in Laughey, 2007) work on ideology and hegemony. Laughey explains that, whereas ideology and hegemony are associated with how the ideas and values of dominant cultures (the ruling elite) are encoded in media texts, CPE argues that this process of ideological reproduction cannot be understood fully without the analysis of the economic context within which it takes place, and of the pressures and determinations which this context exerts.

Therefore, I agree with Laughey (2007:134-135) when he indicates that the concept of political economy implies a shared concern with the politics and economics of any given institution, including the mass media. On the other hand, Laughey alludes to Garnham's delineation that CPE primarily “rests upon ultimate determination by the economic”. In addition, he cites Boyd-Barrett's argument that, because CPE's primary concern is the economic, this theoretical approach is “associated with macro questions of media-ownership and control, interlocking directorships and other factors

that bring together media industries with other media and with other industries". I argue that this theory then offers a position from which media institutions and their contexts (in this case the three selected alpha South African women's magazines) can be analysed, as communication and society are mutually constituted (Mosco, 1996:73).

Janet Wasko, Graham Murdock and Helena Sousa (2011:1-5) agree with the above and claim that the critical tradition had a major influence on the political economy of culture and communications, precisely because the communications industries play a central double role in modern societies, namely first, as industries, and second, as a major site of representation and debate through which the overall system is imagined and argued over.

Of importance for this local study is Duncan's (2009) emphasis that the 1996 call by Mosco pleads for a renewal of CPE in the study of communication. She argues that, in SA, this means drawing on local advances in PE while acknowledging the state of the discipline internationally, and realising that the fate of the media is tied to the state of development of its different groups.

Thus, it can be argued that CPE is driven by concerns regarding media power, the hegemonic activities of dominant firms and social concerns, whereas *Contemporary Political Economy* is usually treated as a separate field of study in traditional media economics research (Albarran, 2010:27-28). Albarran further argues that the many forces affecting media markets in the 21st century challenge us to think in different ways and ultimately to develop new approaches and refine theoretical assumptions.

Graham (2006:493-519) supports Albarran's notion and argues for a contemporary framework to understand the political economies of communication in the 21st century. He adds that political economies have changed to such an extent that an almost total reassessment is required to comprehend the changes. Graham further delineates five main research themes in the review of political economy of communication, namely ownership, monopoly, audiences, access and democracy. I argue that this study's research aim, the political and socio-economic contexts in SA during the timeframe of the study, supported by the methods of Historiography and QCA, will shed light on the *Contemporary Political Economy* of the three selected alpha South African women's magazines.

4.4.2 Political economy of the South African media: Media24 as example

Karin Voltmer (2013:164) argues that the tension between democracy and the mass media permeates organisations and the performance of the media in a fundamental way and sets them apart from any other type of business. She contends that, due to their dual nature as economic enterprises and political institutions, the contradiction between the selfish motivation of making a profit and the civic motivation of serving the public interest characterises mass communication – from the production of messages down to their consumption by audiences. In addition, Voltmer (see also Tomaselli, 2000; Fourie, 2001) surmises that market-based media are regarded as a way of organising public communication that guarantees both the independence of the state and other political interests, and a diversity of voices competing for recognition in what John Stuart Mill called a “marketplace of ideas”. I argue that this is particularly relevant to women’s magazines, not only as commercial enterprises but also as social barometers of their time.

Pertinent to this study – and to illustrate the above in a South African context – is Fourie’s (2001:125-126) example of Naspers. He argues that Naspers (in this study Media24) caters for diverse tastes and cultures among its consumers. Its various products are managed by professional managers and journalists who will resist interference by the owners, as well as interference by advertisers, who in turn will not be prescribed to by media owners. In addition, Media24 must compete with other groups in the same markets and societies with different ideological perspectives on SA’s politics and realities. Moreover, the public has freedom of choice between different media products from different media providers.

In his analysis of the political economy of the Western Cape Afrikaans daily newspaper *Die Burger* – one of the newspapers published by Media24 – Botma (2011:256-257) finds that international trends, such as commercialisation and corporatisation, manifest in the local press and have “serious implications for the organisation of media coverage and content”. I regard his study – focusing on a specific publication and its contents in the development of a critical political economic context – as important background to this study, as it highlights that a political economic perspective contributes significantly to an understanding of the complex contexts of newspaper production in contemporary SA. I intend that this study of the

editor's letter in the three selected alpha South African women's magazines in the Media24 stable will add to the mapping of CPE, and *Contemporary Political Economy*, as one of the chosen theoretical frameworks for this study.

4.4.3 Critique

As with all theoretical paradigms, PE is not above criticism. For example, Fourie (2001:125-126; see also Whitney & Ettema, 2003:157-187) points out that the Marxist underpinning of PE – that production is determined by the dominant or capitalist class; that the output of mass media is ultimately controlled in the interest of that class (the media owners); and that media content serves to legitimise and reproduce media owners' ideologies, interests and power as opposed to those of the subordinate classes – are rejected by liberal pluralists, who argue that such a view is too conspiratorial and tends to oversimplify economic and market realities. However, and in contrast to the above, Fourie cites O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery and Fiske's (1994) argument that the power of ownership is counterbalanced by the plurality of competing interests represented by diverse groups of shareholders and consumers, professional managers and producers, advertisers and trade unions, all of whom are refereed by the state.

Duncan (2009:1) further highlights that some cultural theorists – who criticise the theory of determinism – challenge the relevance of CPE. These scholars argue for a recognition of the relative autonomy of media companies, which also means recognising the social agency of the producers and consumers of media to resist social determination and make their own meaning. She posits that these critiques of CPE have been influential in South African media studies and have been “buoyed by the influence of postmodern arguments ... that ... downplay the relevance of categories of analysis such as class”. She emphasises that, despite of the critique of CPE as discussed above, SA's ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), embraced CPE as the basis for its media policy.

4.4.4 Précis

In sum: CPE is an economic theory that argues that an individual's responsibilities, based on their own critical reasoning, must be balanced along with their rights as citizens within a capitalist economic structure. A global example of this is how the Republican-dominated Fox News Channel provides information to citizens to help

them determine their own feelings about the practices and policies of the current US government (www.yourdictionary.com).

Graham (2006:519) surmises that the political economy of communication is about the production of values at the most fundamental level – the level of consciousness – and the exercise of power on the broadest scale – the totality of human beings, now joined in a globally mediated system of social relations.

Thus, I acknowledge the paradigm of PE and the development of CPE but advance with scholars such as Garnham (2006) and Graham (2006), to *Contemporary Political Economy* as the first theoretical framework for this study, and argue that *Contemporary Political Economy* as theoretical framework is a good fit for this study.

4.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK II: FEMINISM

4.5.1 Definition and paradigm

Feminism is a major branch of theory within sociology that is distinctive in how its creators shift their analytic lens, assumptions and focus away from the male viewpoint and experience. In doing so, Feminism shines light on social problems, trends and issues that are otherwise overlooked or misidentified by the historically dominant male perspective within social theory (Watson & Hill, 2003:104; see also Code, 2000:195-197).

As Feminism can broadly be described as the advocacy of women's rights, Parry and Karam (2001:383) point out that there is no single definition of Feminism, and that Feminism incorporates the struggle for political and legal rights, equal opportunities, sexual autonomy, and the right to self-determination. Moreover, Karam (2008:307-308) uses Carter and Steiner's delineation to describe Feminism as a "political philosophy and social-political movement marked by an emancipatory concern to explain and overcome subordination and oppression of all kinds".

Various scholars – such as Lorraine Code (2000), Parry and Karam (2001), Rosalind Gill (2007), Laughey (2007), Karam (2008) and Jennifer Baumgardner (2011) – argue that to chronicle the history of Feminism would be a protracted and complex project. Therefore, Feminism – up to the start of the 21st century – is divided into three waves or movements:

- First-wave Feminism (from approximately 1840 to 1920) grew out of the (American) movement to abolish slavery. However, the Suffrage Movement refers primarily to the rights of citizenship in a democracy, and particularly the right of women to vote. The suffragists asked for this in July 1848 but, as Baumgardner (2011) points out, this was “to universal ridicule”, and only achieved 72 years later, in 1920. She adds that, “en route to the vote”, these first-wave feminists “changed our culture, shepherding in dress reform, birth control ... granting ... women the right to own property, get divorced, be educated, keep their income and inheritance, and retain custody of their children”.
- Second-wave Feminism (from approximately 1960 to 1988) grew out of the civil rights movement, reaching its peak in the early 1960s. During this time, it was the Women’s Liberation movement that primarily drove second-wave Feminism. Baumgardner (2011) comments that the radical feminists of this era believed in “full-scale revolution for the common good”, while the liberal feminists fought for women to share in the opportunities and responsibilities men had.
- Third-wave Feminism (from approximately 1988 to 2010) grew out of a shift in society. Baumgardner (2011) highlights that, by the late 1980s, women and men who had been raised with the feminist movement were beginning to come of age and were living feminist lives, and that women were “... playing sports and running marathons, taking charge of their sex lives, being educated in greater numbers than men, running for office, and working outside the home”.

Thus, third-wave Feminism rejects the rigid gender politics of second-wave Feminism and is based on Judith Butler’s writings on gender performativity. Butler views “gender identities as less fixed and personally empowering” (Laughey, 2007:101; see also McRobbie, 2009:350-351). Baumgardner (2011) contends that another difference between second- and third-wave Feminism is that third-wave Feminism was “portable – you didn’t have to go to a meeting to be a feminist; you could bring feminism into any room you entered”. Therefore, third-wave Feminism can be described as more individually driven.

In addition to the clearly demarcated first three waves of Feminism, authors such as Baumgardner (2011), Kira Cochrane (2013) and Richard Carrier (2015) argue that the internet enabled a shift from third-wave to fourth-wave Feminism at the start of the 21st century (from approximately 2008). According to Ealasaid Munro (2013:23), the internet has created a “call-out” culture in which sexism or misogyny can be challenged. He notes that the existence of a fourth wave has been challenged by those who maintain that increased usage of the internet is not enough to delineate a new era, but argues that research has clearly shown that the internet has facilitated the creation of a global community of feminists who use the internet both for discussion and activism. Baumgardner comments that the “online universe” offered a space for fourth-wave feminists to create blogs and Twitter campaigns, comment on news, post their most stylish plus-size fashion photos, and tweet that they too had had an abortion. She concludes that fourth-wave Feminism’s utilisation of social media once again transformed politics and Feminism and that, because of media advances and globalisation, waves of mass change are coming faster and faster.

As this study is set in the first seventeen years of the 21st century, I argue that it is important to take note of the fourth wave of Feminism. Therefore, I agree with Baumgardner (2011) when she argues that the waves are all part of the same body politic known as Feminism and combine to become a powerful and distinct force.⁵¹

Furthermore, and as illustrated in Chapter 3, feminist media theories and their critical application offer a variety of ways to expand our knowledge on gender issues. Therefore, it can be argued that feminist theories offer a base from which to question and expand our epistemologies, ideals, values and culture (Govender, Rawjee & Govender, 2014:2280). In addition, feminist media theories place women and their experiences at the centre of the study of communication and the production of theory. For example, one of the goals of feminist media research is to question the way in which gender is encoded in media texts (in this study, the ELWM).

I argue that the above is important because this study aims (as stated in section 1.1) to understand what the messages in the editor’s letter of the three selected alpha women’s magazines are about the political, social and economic ethos in SA. More

⁵¹ Note that the #MeToo movement, which can be regarded as the fifth wave of Feminism, gained momentum post-2017, and therefore falls outside the conceptual analysis of Feminism for this study.

specifically, it wants to understand whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the specified timeframe in a democratic SA are reflected in the editor's letter of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. Also relevant to this study, being as it is situated within the field of the Production-Based Research of magazine journalism, is Van Zoonen's (in Laughey, 2007:100) argument that feminist media theory can be distinguished from other theories of the media, given its categorical focus on "analysing gender as a mechanism that structures material and symbolic worlds and our experiences of them" – again applicable to the analysis of the ELWM of particularly *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* as the first two cases in this study. As mentioned in section 1.4.3 (see also Chapter 6 for the Historiography of the two mentioned titles), Naspers launched *SARIE* in 1949 for the more "sophisticated" Afrikaans-speaking woman (Rabe, 1985:82-86), while *FAIRLADY* was established in 1965 as the group's first commercial magazine enterprise in English.

4.5.1.1 Womanism

For this local study, and particularly the analysis of the editor's letter in *TRUELOVE*, it is also important to consider Womanism as a feminist approach that developed following the realisation that African women have different life experiences than their Western counterparts (Mpofo, 2017:74-78, also see Bosch, 2013). Sibongile Mpofo cites Hudson-Weems's (1993) definition of Womanism as a theory that identifies the ethnicity of the African woman, and her cultural identity relating to her ancestral land base, Africa. She adds Dove's (1998) affirmation that African Womanism emphasises the role of the "African mother as a leader in the struggle to regain, reconstruct and create a cultural integrity". In addition, Gill (2007:26-29) points out that Womanism recognises "that women are survivors in a world that is oppressive on multiple platforms and seeks to celebrate the ways in which women negotiate these oppressions in their individual lives" – again important for the analysis of the editor's letters in *TRUELOVE*. As a theoretical perspective and sub-section of Feminism, Womanism is often used to analyse black women's literature, as it marks the place where race, class, gender and sexuality intersect. Therefore, I argue that Womanism is an important lens for the analysis of *TRUELOVE* as social barometer. As mentioned in section 1.4.3, *TRUELOVE*, originally a photo-story magazine aimed at the migrant workers on the Gold Reef in Johannesburg, was bought by Naspers in 1984 and strategically repositioned as a women's magazine aimed at the black market

(Narunsky-Laden, 2011:179; see also Chapter 6 for the Historiography of *TRUELOVE*).

4.5.2 Feminism: South African perspective

It can be argued that, while feminists were debating the presentation of the feminine ideal in mass media texts, South African feminists were involved in a struggle of their own. Researchers such as AnnMarie Wolpe (1998), Shireen Hassim (2006), Amanda Gouws (2005, 2010, 2019), and Deevia Bhana and Shirley Mthethwa-Sommers (2010) contend that SA's unique political and socio-economic landscape has made Feminism a challenging project. Ronit Frenkel (2008:1; see also Steyn, 1998:42; Fourie, 2001:407; Gouws, 2005:34-36) points out that, because South African women come from different racial and cultural backgrounds, their lives have been shaped by huge differences. This can be attributed largely to labour laws during apartheid that saw black women being marginalised, e.g. white women fell under Roman-Dutch law, while African and Indian women were "subsumed under a greater discredited system of customary law". However, even with cultural differences aside, Albie Sachs (1990:1) posits that patriarchy has been the constant "profoundly non-racial institution[s] in SA", which resulted in a rather unique feminist movement locally.

It can be argued that the feminist movement in SA only gained momentum at the turn of the century when SA became a democracy. Melissa Steyn (in De Villiers, 2008:28) highlights that it was only in 1998 – four years after the first democratic elections – that the feminist movement moved away from its former "largely white upper class intellectual profile of the apartheid era" and South African feminists had the opportunity to shape Feminism from the ground up.

However, sixteen years after SA became a democracy, Gouws (2010:17) comments that the spaces for feminist activism have shrunk dramatically since 1994, when institutional politics replaced activism. She asks whether "we [Feminism] have not lost [its] praxis?" Ten years later, Gouws (2019) says that "little is left of the feminist agenda that swept SA 25 years ago". She argues that, during the "good years", feminists changed the face of gender inequality for the better and created substantive representation, e.g. when laws such as the Choice of Termination of Pregnancy Act (Act 92 of 1996), the Domestic Violence Act (Act 116 of 1998), the Maintenance Act (Act 99 of 1998) and the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act (Act 120 of 1998)

were passed. She further points out that feminist efforts became “diluted” after Thabo Mbeki took over as president, particularly because of his AIDS denialism and lack of action on the arms deal. She writes:

Feminists began to leave the state and career politicians took over to fill the quota In its place ... emerged the ANC Women’s League ... [that] over the last two decades ... became the ventriloquist for men and their factions in the ANC, an example was the “hands off our president Zuma” campaign.

Gouws surmises that the influence of corruption, coupled with the “hollowing out” of the South African state, has played a major part in dismantling what had been built in the early years by weakening institutions. “To be effective feminist intuitionism depends on a constitutional state operating according to formal rules.” The above notion of Gouws’s is important as context, as the timeframe of the study spans the first seventeen years of the 21st century. Tanja Bosch (2013:24) agrees with the above and cites Buiten’s (2009) research that shows that, although there have been numerous advancements in terms of progressive legislation on the African continent, the media continue to reproduce discourses that counter progressive gender transformation. Bosch further contends that the political and economic developments in the African media over the last two decades have led to significant media transformation, “with ... a concurrent dearth of feminist media scholarship”. Pertaining particularly to women’s magazines and, in the words of Bosch, “where the media constitutes social realities, meaning and power, and, in many developing states, are sites of social and political struggle”, this study therefore hopes to add to feminist media scholarship in SA.

4.5.3 Critique

As with all theoretical frameworks, Feminism is not above critique. Mpofu (2017:82-83) says that Feminism is criticised for its failure to provide alternative guidelines and solutions to the issues faced by society. She cites Chambers’ (2006) argument that it is “pessimistic” about taking any political action. She also cites McQuail (2003) as saying that, from this premise,

feminist critical theory offers no remedies to the situation prevailing in any particular context however, feminist critical theory unravels the limitations

of the system(s) begin studied ... and helps to explain how and why ... news media are inclined to support the status quo, whether intentional or not.

Moreover, Liberal Feminism can be critiqued, as it essentially was grounded in its demands for individual autonomy and equality of opportunity as a movement of white and middle-upper class women who felt themselves excluded from the economic rewards the system had to offer, and whose concerns were to get women into the corridors of power and money (Parry & Karam, 2001:386).

Parry and Karam (2001:386) add that other negative aspects of Liberal Feminism are that it does not address the origin of gender difference, and cites Steeves' notion that liberal feminists only recently placed more importance on a gender-neutral humanism instead of on a gender-specific Feminism.

4.5.4 Précis

I recognise that there are different approaches to Feminism and that one can distinguish, amongst others, between Marxist or Social Feminism, Radical Feminism, Liberal Feminism, Psychoanalytical Feminism and Postmodern Feminism (Hines, 2008; see also Parry & Karam, 2001:386; Karam, 2008:307-312).

I chose to analyse this study from a Liberal Feminism perspective that advocates equality between genders and posits that all people are created equal and should not be denied opportunities because of gender. My perspective is highlighted by Davies's (2009) argument that Liberal Feminism is an individualist form of feminist theory, because the theory assumes that the actions and choices that individual women make will contribute to their achievement of equality. This view suggests that the structure of society does not necessarily need to change to promote gender equality. She further argues that a main tenet of Liberal Feminism is "the identification of gender inequalities in all aspects of social and organisational life and the examination of individual, social and organisational factors that perpetuate such inequalities". In addition, Davies explains that emphasis is often placed on processes of socialisation that create different sex/gender roles. Any differences in the behaviours or attitudes of men and women are thought to be due to such sex-role socialisation and orientation, rather than to any innate biological or psychological difference.

The above suggests that people's ideas about gender roles are enhanced by socialisation. It can thus be understood that the media and the ways in which women are portrayed in the media can contribute to this process of socialisation (see also Sieberhagen, 2016:24), a notion I support. In addition, I contend – as discussed in the literature review of this study (Chapter 3) – that women's magazines form part of greater feminist concerns because of the way gender is classified and organised in the messages of the editors' letters. I also argue that gender is an important political and socio-economic indicator in the young, democratic SA, and that gender is important because this study focuses on the message of the ELWM in three selected alpha South African women's magazines.

Therefore, I contend that the theoretical framework of Feminism offers a basis to reflect on the key principle of Feminism, namely the advocacy of women's rights in the editors' letters of the three selected alpha South African women's magazines. I further argue that the study can offer novel perspectives of the representation of women in the ELWM, while proposing insight into the role of women in the political and socio-economic contexts of a young, democratic SA during the timeframe of this study.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter discussed theory as a form of sociological enquiry and motivated the decision to place the study's production-based approach within the theoretical framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. In addition, the two theoretical frameworks were defined, discussed and critiqued. I also introduced the political economy of the South African media, by referring to Media24 as example, and reflected on the praxis of Feminism in SA during the timeframe of this study. The chapter ends with my précis summarising my approach to the study from the two mentioned theoretical frameworks to reflect on the editors' letters of the three selected alpha South African women's magazines as a social barometer of their time.

The next chapter presents the relevant research design and methodologies deemed most applicable to the study.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

We have many different forms of qualitative inquiry today. We have multiple criteria for evaluating our work. It is a new day for our generation. We have drawn our line in the sand, and we may redraw it. But we stand firmly behind the belief that critical qualitative inquiry inspired by the sociological imagination can make the world a better place.

Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (2011:x)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the qualitative research paradigm as the chosen research design used to address the problem statement and the focus of the study. To select the appropriate research design and methodologies, I was guided by my research aim, the MRQ and the sub-questions, which seek to gain an understanding of the message of the three selected alpha South African women's magazines, namely *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as reflected in the editors' letters at a specific time in the history of SA's young democracy.

The chapter starts by asserting the problem statement and focus of the study, followed by the MRQ and the sub-questions that guided the study, whereafter the choice of the qualitative research design is explained. As indicated in Chapter 1 (Introduction) and expanded on in Chapter 2 (Research Contexts), the study follows a case study design to analyse the message in the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as the three selected alpha South African women's magazines. I refer to the ELWM as cultural artefact (introduced in section 1.8.3), the methods of Historiography (introduced in section 1.7, explored as a foundational argument in Chapter 2 and presented as findings in Chapter 6), and QCA (introduced in section 1.7, and presented as findings in Chapter 7). I also discuss the sampling strategy and the use of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) and of ATLAS.ti® as the computer software program to analyse the data.

This is followed by a deliberation on the coding process. The chapter concludes with how I ensured the trustworthiness of the study, refers to the pilot study, explains why there was no need for ethical clearance to guide the study, and a summary.

5.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to understand the extent to which the messages in the editors' letters of the three selected alpha women's magazines are about the political, social and economic ethos in SA. More specifically, the study aimed to investigate whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the specified timeframe in a young, democratic SA are reflected in the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

5.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

5.3.1 Main research question (MRQ)

To achieve the above research aim, the MRQ of the study was:

What are the messages of the editors, as reflected in the respective editors' letters, of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of three alpha South African women's magazines, from within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism, during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017?

5.3.2 Sub-questions

The MRQ helped answer and give clarity to the following four sub-questions:

- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about transformation and democracy in SA from 2001 to 2017?
- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about societal relations within this period in SA?
- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about social values and moral principles within this period in SA?

- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser within this period in SA?

5.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

5.4.1 Introduction

Selecting the appropriate research design is a fundamental process of any research study. Mouton (2011:55-57; see also Potter, 1996:50) posits that a research design is a blueprint for how one intends to conduct the research, and that it differentiates between research design and research methodology as concepts. He argues that research design focuses on the logic of the research and the kind of evidence that is required to address the research question adequately, whereas research methodology focuses on the individual steps in the research process. Elizabeth Henning et al. (2004:30) signify Mouton's design type as the epistemological and therefore the methodological home of the research study.

In following the arguments of the above scholars, I used research design as the overarching concept for the study, as I regard it to encompass the theoretical research approach, including the necessary philosophical reflection on the study.

5.4.2 Qualitative research as orientation

The difference between the quantitative and qualitative research traditions, and the motivation for approaching the study from a qualitative research paradigm, are explained briefly at the outset.

Quantitative studies accentuate the measurement and analysis of unpremeditated relationships between variables and are conducted from within a value-free framework (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:8; see also Brennen, 2013:5). In contrast, the word qualitative implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities, processes and meanings that are not examined experimentally or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Ann Hollifield and Amy Coffey (2006:573) say that qualitative research refers to methods of inquiry that generate and interpret non-numerical data with the goal of developing a detailed, in-depth understanding of the subject of study. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:8) add that qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality – the intimate relationship between the

researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Thus, I agree that qualitative researchers are after meaning, as emphasised by Sharlene Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy (2011:3-4), and seek to find “the social meaning people attribute to their experiences, circumstances or situations, as well as the meanings people embed into texts or other objects”. I further highlight Bonnie Brennen’s (2013:4) notion that qualitative research “does not provide easy answers, simple truths or precise measurements; it can be controversial, contradictory and ambiguous, but qualitative research can also be insightful, enlightening, emancipatory and fascinating”.

Therefore, I argue that a qualitative approach to this study offered a distinctive grounding, as it fosters ways of asking questions and particular ways of thinking through problems (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011:3). As the research design of the study was a qualitative research paradigm according to Weber’s concept of *verstehen*, I therefore concur with Henning et al.’s (2004:9; see also 6 & Bellamy, 2012:110) assertion to “move with *verstehen* towards *erklären*”, as introduced in section 1.7.1.

5.4.3 Significance of qualitative research

At this point, I would like to explain why Weber’s concept of *verstehen* remains significant for media and journalism research – and specifically for an investigation situated within the field of magazine studies as sub-field of journalism studies – even though he conceived the concept more than a century ago. According to Siegfried Weischenberg (2013:237-242), Weber proposed an important contribution to the measurement of the media at the first conference of the German Sociological Society in 1910. Weber offered a detailed description of a survey of the press, but also presented himself as a scientist of reality. Thus, it can be argued that Weber’s professional attachment to academia and scholarship equipped him with the conceptual framework to ask probing questions about his political and social environment. In addition, as a social theorist, he benefited from his practical experiences as a journalist, and was concerned with the meaning, or understanding, of the social function of the press and the characteristics of media professionals, which I believe form an essential part of this study.

In addition to Weber’s concept of *verstehen*, it is argued that, in qualitative research, the researcher makes meaning from the data by seeing the bigger picture and by

converting raw empirical information into what the philosopher Gilbert Ryle first called a thick description (Geertz in Henning et al., 2004:6). Denzin (in Mouton, 2011:188) illuminates thick description as follows:

[I]t does more than record what a person is doing. It goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion Thick description evokes emotionality It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or the sequence of events In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings ... are heard.

Hence, I agree with the above scholars that, in qualitative research, a thick description gives an account of the phenomenon that is coherent; gives more facts and experiential content; construes the information in the light of other empirical information in the same study; and forms the basis of the theoretical frameworks that locate the study.

In addition, and as mentioned in section 1.7.2, qualitative research has long been recognised as a valuable paradigm for exploring and analysing the nature of media organisations and institutional practices. When magazine and newspaper research began in the 1920s, much of its early existence was qualitative in nature (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011:346), an orientation in which the procedures are not strictly formalised, the scope is more likely to be undefined, and a philosophical mode of operation is adopted (Mouton & Marais, 1991:155-156). Thus, I agree with Neil Postman (in Brennen, 2013:6), who suggests that qualitative research draws its relevance and strength from the power of language, the depth of explanations, the relevance of its examples, and the credibility of its theme.

In this study, therefore, I attempt to fulfil the role of a qualitative researcher as a *bricoleur*.⁵² I acknowledge that an interpretative researcher recognises that research is an interactive process shaped by one's personal history, biography, social class, race and ethnicity, as well as those of the people in the setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:4-6). In addition, as argued by Henning et al. (2004:7), I recognise that as researcher I am undeniably the main instrument of the study. I made sense from my involvement with the data, or what I have interpreted to be the connotations of the data, and present these as findings in Chapters 6 and 7 (see also section 5.9.3 for a

⁵² The French for quilt maker.

note on my personal interest in the study). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the voices of the setting are lost (Henning et al., 2004:7; see also Gummesson, 2007:100), and that my bias makes the study mean what I want it to mean. I am fully aware of such threats to interpretative inquiry, aimed to address bias and to present a thick description with empirical evidence and with the rigour required for qualitative research.

I am also cognisant of the limitations of qualitative research, viz. that qualitative research is based on small samples (although this study is not) and, as such, does not produce representative results; and therefore, since qualitative studies are not representative, that the findings cannot be generalised. Furthermore, given the individualist and subjective nature of qualitative research, the replicability of studies is not possible (Pfeifer & Benini in Sarantakos, 2005:45-46). Therefore, I support this study with strong theoretical foundations and arguments based on empirical evidence, as suggested by Henning et al. (2004:7) and, in this case, drawn from a database (the editors' letters) that can be qualified as saturated. (See section 5.9.2 for a further deliberation on the concept of triangulation in this study.)

Thus, by closely following the scientific tradition of interpretative research (Du Plooy, 2002; see also Rubin et al., 2005; Priest, 2010; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011), a case study design and the methods of Historiography and QCA, I examine the ELWM as a cultural artefact, or what Earl Babbie (2002:311) calls a social artefact. This led to the aim of the study, namely to provide a thick description of the editors' letters as a social barometer of a specific time in a young, democratic SA and, in doing so, to gain insight into the message of the editors' letters in the three alpha South African women's magazines from 1 January 2001 to December 2017.

5.4.4 Case study design

It is argued that there are multiple definitions and understandings of a case study design. For example, Donna Zucker (2009:171) cites Bromley's definition of the case study as a "systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events, which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest".

In this study, I employed a case study as part of a qualitative research design because, as Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:255-256) contend, the case study design offers an all-inclusive understanding of a problem, issue or phenomenon within its

social context. In addition, Evert Gummesson (2007:87) delineates case study research as being when one or several cases from real life are used as empirical data for research, especially when knowledge of an area is sparse or missing, and when complex phenomena are studied.

As indicated in Chapter 1, I argue that the above is indeed the case in this study, which is situated within the realm of South African media and journalism research, and specifically magazine studies. I concur with Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011:255-256) by referring to the case study as a research design and not as a method. Moreover, Gummesson (2007:100) argues that the key to qualitative research is comparison, where data is compared with data and cases are compared with each other, and at some stage – as will be the case in the conclusion of the study – the case data is compared with existing literature and theory (see Chapter 8).

Peter Rule and Vaughn John (2011:120) contend that, in the presentation of a comparative case study, the sequenced, thematic and synthesised structure can be utilised as a means of organising the study. My decision to employ a sequenced structure is based on Rule and John's contention that a sequenced structure allows for greater attention to the specifics of the case, including its context and history. Furthermore, they argue that the sequenced structure is more likely to be used in fundamental case studies, where the cases are regarded as important to illuminate a phenomenon, which I argue is the case in this study. Therefore, Chapter 6 (Historiography) employs the sequenced structure of presentation, in which the selected women's magazines are first analysed and discussed in the order of their historic relevance, and then compared as cases. The QCA (Chapter 7) of the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* also follows the sequenced structure of presentation by first focusing on the three distinct document families. The final comparative analysis leads to a summative interpretation of what the editors' letters in the three alpha South African women's magazines say about the MRQ and the sub-questions during the specific timeframe of the study.

5.4.5 Editor's letter of a women's magazine (ELWM) as cultural artefact

At this point, it is also necessary to define the ELWM as a cultural artefact. Gail Dines and Jean Humez (2011:727) point out that the term "cultural artifact" is borrowed from the study of anthropology, where the term refers to any human-created object (see

also Watson & Hill, 2003). When used in relation to media culture, it is argued that cultural artefacts point to tangible and intangible objects. As the ELWM is delineated as an opinion piece, editorial column or viewpoint written or created by the editor (see also section 1.8.3), I argue that the editor's letter is indeed a cultural artefact.

5.5 METHODOLOGIES

5.5.1 Introduction

As mentioned above, Mouton (2011:55-57) contends that methodology sets out a vision of what research is and how it should be conducted. In addition, Babbie and Mouton (in Henning et al., 2004:36) define methodology as the focus on the research process and the kinds of tools and procedures that are used; Henning et al., on the other hand, refer to methodology as a coherent group of methods that complement each other and that have a "goodness of fit" to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research questions and suit the research purpose of the study.

As I agree with the above scholars on what the term methodology means, and to clarify the methodologies used in this study, the sections below first discuss the method of Historiography as entry point to the study, and then QCA as the preferred method for systematically coding and analysing the data (in this study, the editors' letters).

5.5.2 Historiography

Message- or artefact-oriented research is divided into two categories, labelled by Rebecca Rubin et al. (2005:220) as archival or documentary research and textual research. These authors further argue that the focus of archival or documentary research (as employed in this study) is to interpret and examine messages that are created over time and that may tell us about communication during a particular period, which I argue is the aim of this study. Thus, as introduced in section 1.7, Historiography, comprising conclusions about and explanations of past communicators resulting from primary documents or artefacts, is regarded as one of the most common forms of archival or documentary research. Furthermore, Historiography can be demarcated as

the writing of history based on the critical examination of sources, the selection of particulars from authentic materials and the synthesis of particulars into a narrative that will stand the test of critical methods (www.merriam-webster.com).

Kenneth Stunkel (2011:xiv-xvi) concurs with the above, adding that, in Historiography, “techniques have been mastered over centuries that compel the historical record to qualify as useable evidence for knowledge that can be pulled out of shape only so far”.

In addition, Historiography is recognised “as the writing of history, including the meta-level of historical thinking” or, as Rabe (2020:9) suggests, “a study of how history has been written”. Rabe refers to Historiography as an attempt to understand a so-called “past reality”, such as I argue is one of the foci of this study. This is in accordance with what Adam Budd (2009:Preface) writes: “The past will never change, but the ways we think about it have never stopped changing.” Budd further highlights that historians have embraced Historiography “because it leads them to think in new ways what they do ... to consider their literary style, their positions in society, and the changing nature of their tasks as researchers ...”. Rubin et al. (2005:221-223) expand on the above and reason that critical researchers rely on the thorough historical gathering of facts. They further argue that researchers following this approach rely on choosing and applying appropriate criteria to interpret and to evaluate communication events. They add that these events are then understood through a certain lens of observation.

Koos Roelofse (1997:67) points to the above and argues: “Any attempt to write a history of the South African press is bound to lead to criticism.” He adds that

South African historians ... are forced to re-evaluate events present and past ... in an era which constitutes an *intermezzo* between two radically different eras – apartheid ... which started in 1948 with roots going back to 1652 and even further, and the era of democracy which started taking shape on 2 February 1990.

Rabe (2020:8-11) emphasises the above and notes that “no history can ever be complete”, and that the writing of history can simply suggest what the researcher has found, and “this is always determined by a specific point of departure”. In addition,

she refers to the “binary qualities” shared by journalism and history. I concur that the “organising principle of historiography is a record of progress” (Berger in Rabe). Therefore, I argue that the historiographical analysis of the three selected magazines in this study gives context, or a deeper meaning, to South African journalism, and particularly to magazine studies at a certain point in time.

Cynthia Patterson (2015:65) notes that there has been a sudden increase in computer-generated research, treating magazines as historical subject matter during the past two decades. She contends that the best historical magazine research combines methodologies made possible by “newly available, large database searches and careful combing of ... brick and mortar archives”. Patterson also emphasises that this kind of research pays particular attention to the magazine as a significant artefact arising from historical and cultural contexts of production, distribution and consumption, which I argue is an aim of this study.

As I denote Historiography as an entry point to or first method of this study, I propose that the chronological introduction to women’s magazines, and specifically to *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of alpha South African women’s magazines (introduced in Chapter 2 and presented as findings in Chapter 6), highlights the political and socio-economic interaction that takes place between magazines and society and underscores the magazine as a social barometer. This is done by the critical examination, or the “mining” of data narrating the origin and histories of the three titles, of primary sources, e.g. the research discussed in Chapter 3 (Literature Review).

However, the analysis of secondary sources – in this case a large collection of data pertaining to *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, which I have archived since the start of my academic career – proved to be invaluable, as little is documented about the development of local magazines, and particularly women’s magazines, since the start of this study’s timeframe in 2001. The secondary data consists mainly of reviews of the local magazine industry and reports in industry magazines (and associated websites), e.g. *ADvantage*, *The media/online* and *Bizcommunity*, as well as articles from local newspapers. The analysis was supplemented by, for example, Naspers annual reports and industry data, e.g. reports from the ABC and the South African Research Foundation (SAARF).

Reading extensively about the South African magazine industry and collecting industry news about local magazines, and particularly women's magazines, meant that I had built up a personal collection of data when I started my PhD. Over time, I filed these reports or documents according to the timeframe of the study (from 2001 to 2017) and kept an eye open for any relevant information pertaining to the history, or the "business", of the three titles. Thus, when I embarked on the Historiography of the study, it was relatively easy to complement the few available research studies or primary data with industry data or secondary data that I had on file. I also updated the secondary dataset from time to time by accessing relevant databases on the website of the UJ Library, as well as employing internet search engines to find data about the cases (see also section 3.2).

I therefore present the research findings relating to the Historiography (Chapter 6) by first giving a chronologic and comprehensive (albeit brief) review of the histories and development of the three selected titles. The sub-sections focus on the launch and history of each of the titles, the development of the respective title in the 21st century, and a comparative analysis of the Historiography of the three selected titles.

It should be noted that I chose the method of Historiography being cognisant of its strengths and limitations. I concur that, as Historiography attempts to mine accessible sources, report on and analyse events of the past (De Villiers in Rabe, 2020:9-10), it offers the researcher an opportunity to illuminate past events and discover why they happened in a certain way, and why we are still influenced by them in our time. I am cognisant, as argued by Henning et al. (2007:4; see also Rabe, 2020:10-11), of the fact that, as researcher, I am undeniably the main "instrument" of the research project and make sense from my involvement with the data, or what I interpret to be the connotations of the data, and present these as findings (see also section 5.9.3).

I believe that, selecting these particulars from authentic sources, and my ability to synthesise the particulars into a narrative, will stand the test of critical methods.

5.5.3 Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

Klaus Krippendorff and Angela Bock (2009:2, see also Macnamara, 2005:1) contend that Weber's 1910 address on how the content of newspapers had shifted quantitatively during the previous generation was the precursor to content analysis as a concept. Weber not only recognised the advantage of quantifying newsprint, but he

also described qualitative, critical and comparative research questions, foreshadowing the political-economic approach to the content analysis of the print media (see also Weischenberg, 2013).

Thus, it can be argued that content analysis, as an unobtrusive research method, has proven itself as a sound method to study recorded human communications (Babbie, 2002:212; see also Adler & Clark, 2011), and that QCA has become an important method of journalism research as a principal tool for analysing the products of a journalist's activity (Kolmer, 2008:117) – which is relevant to this study.

One of the earliest definitions of content analysis – delineated by Bernard Berelson in 1952 (Sparks, 2006:20; see also Krippendorff, 2012) – describes content analysis as a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. Hence, content analysis is objective in the sense that the method permits several researchers to examine the same content and come to the same conclusions because the method is systematic. Theoretically, any coder who examines the content and classifies it into categories – and who understand the rules and procedures of content analysis – will arrive at the same coding of the message as any other coder. Likewise, Glenn Sparks (2006:21-22) contends that content analysis is concerned with the coding of manifest content rather than latent content, and that latent content may only become apparent after a coder has interpreted, or “read between the lines” of, the message. However, Krippendorff and Bock (2009:3; see also Gunter, 2000:60) assert that making specific inferences from texts to their contexts is now the defining feature of content analysis. Thus, in examining media output, I agree that content analysis can “go beyond simple description”. I therefore employ QCA in the study because, as Barrie Gunter (2000:90) argues, descriptive research questions aim at the discovery and formation of theory. This does not mean that I enter the field without any theoretical notions, or that the illustration of theoretical concepts could not be the research objective. Both may be the case. Newly identified data serves to discover new findings, leading to the fact that, in the end, one knows more than in the beginning, which I aim to prove with this study.

I chose the method of QCA fully cognisant of its strengths and limitations. Two of the major strengths of QCA are its unobtrusive nature (Babbie, 2002:312; see also Adler

& Clark, 2011), as well as its non-reactive nature (Wigston, 2009). I further argue that the writers of documents (in this case, the editors) do not write their documents (in this case, the editors' letters) anticipating that they will be analysed in the future. Hence, it can be argued that data originating from documents is more authentic than that derived from human subjects, who may behave artificially in the presence of a researcher and who might provide information that they think the researcher wants, and not what they really believe (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2005:318). QCA is also cost effective compared to other data collection methods and can cope with large volumes of data (Wigston, 2009), which is relevant to this study, as it spans the first seventeen years of the 21st century, and three magazine titles.

However, David Silverman (2011:66) argues that the above advantages come at a cost, as QCA uses categories designed prior to data analysis, while Paul Atkinson (1992:459) criticises the coding systems, arguing that coding restricts the capturing of other data that does not fit the categories. Atkinson refers to the deductive codes as a "powerful conceptual grid" that is difficult to escape. I acknowledge this limitation, as I applied predetermined codes in the form of key themes in the study. These originated from the MRQ and sub-questions, the literature review, and the theoretical frameworks. However, I argue that I allowed other themes to emerge from the raw data by maintaining flexibility, which, according to Catherine Cassel and Gillian Symon (1994:7), is tantamount to QCA.

Using QCA as the second research method chosen for this study, and applying ATLAS.ti® (as discussed in section 5.7.2) as a tool for data analysis, I then sought to analyse the messages in the editors' letters of the selected South African women's magazines at a certain time in SA's young democracy. In doing so, I expected to provide insight into the messages of the editors' letters – or a thick description of the editors' letters.

5.6 SAMPLING STRATEGY

5.6.1 Introduction

It is argued that a sampling strategy enables the researcher to study a relatively small part of the target population, and yet obtain data that is representative of the whole

(Sarantakos, 2005:152). A sample is therefore regarded as representative of a target population if the study thereof leads to conclusions that are the same as those that would be reached by studying the entire population. In other words, as explained by Krippendorff (2012:113-114), a sampling strategy can also be described as the theory of representation.

5.6.2 Purposive sampling

I employed purposive sampling (also called relevance sampling), as my sampling decision was based on professional judgement (Baxter & Babbie, 2004:135; see also Treadwell, 2011) and the assumption that the specific content or data (the editors' letters) will meet my specific criteria (Gunter, 2000:91; see also Adler & Clark, 2011). This is supported by Susanna Priest's (2010:110) argument that statistical sampling

is not necessarily a significant factor for qualitative media content studies ... the intent is rather to gain a "window" on a particular worldview, whether represented by one or a few human informants or by a limited set of messages selected purposively by the researcher.

I also concur with Patton (1990:169-186) that the logic and power of purposive sampling lies in the selection of information-rich cases to illuminate the study's research questions in an exhaustive way – as done in this study.

Thus, as purposive sampling is described as a type of sampling that is preselected based on knowledge of a population, the purpose of the study and suitability for the study (Sarantakos, 2005; Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2019), I deemed it the appropriate sampling method for this study.

5.6.3 Defining the population

In defining the population of the study, I employed Sitirios Sarantakos's (2005:152) definitions to explain the concept of target population. For brevity, I use only population and survey population – or what I prefer to call the sample for the study.

I argue that, to answer the MRQ and the sub-questions, the (target) population – i.e. the population for which the data is required – is the entire collection of editors' letters published in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* from the naissance of SA's Constitution on 10 December 1996 to 31 December 2017 – the end of the timeframe of the study.

Riffe, Aust and Lacy (2009:54) say that, after the population has been defined, it is important to determine how many subjects or issues (in this study the editors' letters of the three selected women's magazines) to sample. They recommend that the researcher's goal must be to sample enough subjects or issues to achieve an acceptable estimate of the unknown population, while maximising efficiency of time and effort. How I approached the selecting of the sample is explained below.

5.6.4 Selection of sample

As the study follows a case study design, and the QCA of the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* (see Chapter 7) are first studied as individual cases and compared in the final analysis, I envisaged collecting all the editors' letters published in the respective magazines during the timeframe of the study, namely from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017, as the sample. Unfortunately, particular issues of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* could not be traced, despite my best efforts. However, I argue that the 19 editors' letters⁵³ that could not be traced would not distort the data analysis, as this was only 2.9% of the sample size.

Hence, the sample size of editors' letters in the timeframe of the study is 634.⁵⁴ The sample size accounts for

- 215 editors' letters in *SARIE*,
- 223 editors' letters in *FAIRLADY*, and
- 196 editors' letters in *TRUELOVE*.

At this stage, I want to mention that, during the initial coding of the data, I treated the 634 editors' letters as the sample size for the study. I followed what Janice Morse (1995:147) calls the edict of qualitative research: "To collect data until saturation occurs." Nevertheless, I soon realised that saturation – defined by Morse (see also Mason, 2010) as data adequacy – is significant in a study with a sample size of 634. I expand on the notion of saturation, and my decision to employ extreme or deviant sampling as a strategy, to address saturation in section 5.7.4.

⁵³ For a list of the unavailable editors' letters, see Addendum D.

⁵⁴ For a table with details of the sample of editors' letters, see Addendum E.

5.6.5 Collection of the sample

When the proposal was first registered, I set the end date of the study as 31 December 2014. I argued that the year in which the third South African national elections of the 21st century took place was a suitable cut-off time to reflect on women's magazines as social barometers.

To collect this sample, I first visited the Ferdinand Postma Library at the Potchefstroom Campus of North-West University (NWU) to access archived copies of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. As not all the editions of the three selected cases were available at the NWU library, I requested Heila Oosthuizen at the UJ Library to assist me in securing the outstanding copies through Interlibrary Loans. This was also only partly successful. I then visited the National Library of South African (NLSA) in Pretoria, where Elise Retief (Information Access Services: Reference and Official Publications) assisted me to complete the sample. As my study progressed, I extended the end of the timeframe to 31 December 2017. I argued that the fact that the Constitution of SA celebrated its 21st anniversary on 10 December 2017 would add currency and value to the study. To complete the sample for the last three years of the timeframe, I am grateful for the assistance of Julian Padua and Maphuti Mongatane of Media24.

5.7 DATA ANALYSIS: EMPLOYING CAQDAS

5.7.1 Introduction

Even before my proposal was registered, I realised that – as Thomas Lindlof and Bryan Taylor (2011:225-228; see also Rambaree, 2007) argue – the “eager embrace” of data analysis software is one of the most dramatic changes in qualitative research practice.

The first software for computer-assisted qualitative data analysis became available in the mid-1980s. Ten years later, programs that are more sophisticated were developed, impelled by the enhanced power of microcomputers, the need to analyse substantial sets of qualitative data, and the growing popularity of qualitative methods in academia and the industry. In fact, Lindlof and Taylor (2011:228) say the keen interest in CAQDAS has been heightened by the “scientific legitimacy [it seems] to

bestow on qualitative inquiry”, while Komalsingh Rambaree (2007) argues that social scientists realised CAQDAS is “becoming an essential tool”.

For the above reasons, I decided to employ ATLAS.ti® in this study. However, this was not done without trepidation, as I had to master a computer program for data analysis while not losing focus of the conceptual elements in the study. To prepare for this, I attended an introductory session on how to use ATLAS.ti® for QCA (organised by Brigitte Smit at the University of Johannesburg Postgraduate School [UJPS]). I also enrolled for a more focused presentation of ATLAS.ti® (organised by the African Doctoral Academy [ADA] at Stellenbosch University) by Lauren Wildschut. I finally attended Susanne Friese’s (author of *Qualitative data analysis with ATLAS.ti*) advanced workshop (again part of the ADA Winter School at SU) in 2015. These workshops familiarised me with ATLAS.ti®. However, I am grateful to Charmaine Williamson – an independent academic advisor and facilitator for ATLAS.ti® – acting as a sounding board and mentor during the coding process of the study.

I am aware of the ongoing academic debate on the advantages and disadvantages of CAQDAS in qualitative research. Proponents of CAQDAS refer to its ability to save time and effort in data management by extending the researcher’s ability to organise, manage and track data, while opponents criticise the lack of rigour and robustness in the ensuing analyses (Baugh, Hallcom & Harris, 2010:69). It is further argued that these contrasting views tend to be divided by “the personal biography and the philosophical stance of the analyst” (Catterall & Maclaran in Baugh et al., 2010:69), as well as “age, computer literacy, and experience as a qualitative researcher” (Mangerabeira, Lee & Fielding in Baugh et al., 2010:69). I argue that I approached the latter concerns by undergoing training and receiving assistance from scholars rated as experts in the field of qualitative data analysis with ATLAS.ti®.

Thus, I am cognisant of the fact that CAQDAS should be used with care and consideration, and in ways that explicitly demonstrate a fit between the ethos and philosophical perspective(s) underpinning a research study on the one hand, and the means of ordering and manipulating the data with CAQDAS on the other (Atherton & Elsmore in Baugh et al., 2010:70).

5.7.2 ATLAS.ti®: A tool for data analysis

As mentioned in chapter 1.7.5, I employed ATLAS.ti®, and particularly version 7.5.6, to “manage, extract, compare, explore, and reassemble meaningful pieces of large amounts of data in a creative, flexible, yet systematic way” (Muhr & Friese, 2004:2; see also Saldaña, 2009; Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Friese, 2014).

As acknowledged above, I recognise that a special-purpose qualitative database management programme – such as ATLAS.ti® – is only a tool for “handling and asking questions of text”, as Bernard and Ryan (2010:109) put it. The conceptual skill of analysing the data depends on the researcher. However, I argue that a software program like ATLAS.ti® can assist the researcher to:

- find the segments of text that have been coded for the specific theme,
- produce a provisional list of those segments, and
- examine each segment in the provisional list and find the corresponding code.

Thus, by using QCA as research method and applying ATLAS.ti® as a tool for data analysis, the MRQ and sub-questions of the study were investigated.

5.7.3 Preparation of data

During the collection of the sample, I made high-quality photocopies of the pages on which the editors’ letters were published and started a filing process. The filing system referred to the cover date of the respective magazine, the year in which the magazine was published, and the specific page number on which the editor’s letter was published.

To prepare and import the data into the ATLAS.ti® programme, the sample of 634 editors’ letters was scanned on a KONICA MINOLTA Bizhub 283, using Text; 400 x 400 dpi (super fine); Normal PDF Multi Page; and Colour Black as settings. The sample – divided into the three cases – was scanned in a monthly order and for the specific year (ranging from 2001 to 2017), using the title of the magazine as reference.

As the sample was scanned, I became aware that most of the scans were not a true reflection of the photocopied image, as there were distortions in the text and format of the scanned editors’ letters. I needed the data to be in Optimal Character

Recognition (OCR) format to be able to analyse it successfully with ATLAS.ti®. I consulted with experts on how to resolve this, but there was no easy answer. I had to compare and correct the scanned editors' letters one by one to reflect the true photocopied image of the editor's letter. Only after each of the editors' letters was corrected on my computer – and saved in rich text format (RTF) – was the data ready to be imported into ATLAS.ti®. Nevertheless, I regard this correcting process of the sample (which took about 10 to 15 minutes per editor's letter) as the important first close reading of the data, and believe it assisted me when I started with the coding process, as I had become familiar with the data.

Fortunately, ATLAS.ti® is not language sensitive and, as I am fully conversant in Afrikaans and English, there was no need for the editors' letters in the Afrikaans magazine *SARIE* to be translated into English. However, the QCA (Chapter 7) offers English translations of the Afrikaans quotations in *SARIE* to accommodate the reader.

5.7.4 Saturation

As I started the first cycle of data coding, the first year's editors' letters in the three magazines yielded nearly 80 codes linked to code families or key themes (see section 5.8.3), as conceptualised from the MRQ and the sub-questions. I realised that, as Morse (1995:147-149) argues, although qualitative data initially appears to be diverse and disconnected, in the process of saturation the data forms patterns or themes and begins to make sense. This is underscored by Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (in Mason, 2010), who contend that there is

a point of diminishing return to a qualitative sample – as the study goes on more data does not necessarily lead to more information. This is because one occurrence of a piece of data, or a code, is all that is necessary to ensure that it becomes part of the analysis framework.

I realised that the sample size of 634 editors' letters was far too ambitious. In fact, I remember that my supervisor cautioned me about the large sample size when I embarked on the study. However, as part of my research journey I am grateful that I experienced saturation first-hand. I now understand that frequencies are rarely important in qualitative research, as one occurrence of the data is potentially as useful as many in the understanding of the process behind a topic, as Mark Mason (2010) puts it. The above underscores that qualitative research is concerned with meaning,

which is also the research design of the study, and not with making generalised hypothesis statements. I also realised, and agree with Mason, that qualitative research (even with the use of a computer-assisted program such as ATLAS.ti®, as in this study) is very labour intensive and that analysing a large sample can be time consuming and often simply impractical.

For the above reasons, I had to revisit the sample size so as not to be overwhelmed by the data, and to present a more focused analysis. Thus, as suggested by Patton (1990:169-186), I argue that extreme or deviant case sampling as a strategy for purposive sampling addresses concerns about saturation, offers information-rich cases for in-depth analysis, and still serves the evaluation purposes of the study. How I employed extreme sampling is discussed below.

5.7.4.1 Extreme sampling

Using a three-pronged approach, I applied extreme sampling in the following way: First, I decided to include all the editors' letters in the three respective magazines from only 2001 and 2017, as these years indicate the start and the end of the demarcated timeframe and are of value in a longitudinal study such as this. I then included all the editors' letters in the three respective magazine titles from 2004, 2009 and 2014, as these years coincide with the South African national elections in the 21st century and are relevant to the MRQ and the sub-questions. Lastly, I included the editors' letters in the annual birthday editions of the respective magazine titles, published from 2001 to 2017, as I argue that the birthday edition reflects on the history of the magazine and forecast changes in the vision and mission of the magazine.

The extreme sampling process yielded the following sample count for the three cases:

SARIE

- 34 editor's letters in 2001 and 2017,
- 36 editor's letters in 2004, 2009 and 2014, and
- 10 editor's letters in July (the month in which *SARIE* celebrates its birthday), excluding the five years (2001, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2017) already sampled.

FAIRLADY

- 37 editor's letters in 2001 and 2017,
- 35 editor's letters in 2004, 2009 and 2014, and
- 12 editor's letters in March (the month in which *FAIRLADY* celebrates its birthday), excluding the five years (2001, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2017) already sampled.

TRUELOVE

- 23 editor's letters in 2001 and 2017,
- 33 editor's letters in 2004, 2009 and 2014, and
- 11 editor's letters in June (the month in which *TRUELOVE* celebrates its birthday), excluding the five years (2001, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2017) already sampled.

Hence, after extreme sampling, the sample size was reduced from 634 to 231 editors' letters from the respective magazines. This comprised

- 80 editor's letters in *SARIE*,
- 84 editor's letters in *FAIRLADY*, and
- 67 editor's letters in *TRUELOVE*.

To support my notion that extreme sampling, which yielded a sample size of 231 units of analysis (editors' letters), would indeed allow the thick description needed in qualitative research, I consulted with Richard Devey (2017), Director of the Statistical Consultation Service at UJPS. He referred me to the required sample size table (The Research Advisors, 2006), in which a population of 600 suggests 234 as an optimal sample size, with 5.0 as the margin of error and a desired confidence of 95. Although this table reflects a quantitative approach, I argue that the sample size of 231 for a qualitative study of this nature will allow the thick description required by qualitative research. Moreover, I agree with Mason (2010:186) that it is crucial to explain and describe the sampling strategy of a study, so that users and reviewers have the appropriate context to judge the sample and understand the results. I argue that I strove to adhere to the above requirement.

5.8 CODING PROCESS

5.8.1 Introduction

As mentioned before, QCA is defined as a set of methods for systematically coding and analysing qualitative data (Bernard & Ryan, 2010:287; see also Mouton, 1996; Babbie, 2002; Adler & Clark, 2011). It thus can be argued that the fundamental focus of QCA is to provide a descriptive account of what a media text contains (Gunter, 2000:60). However, in examining media output, the QCA can go beyond simple description and I believe that, as such, it will achieve the research aim of the study, as it is able to provide a thick description of the message in the ELWM.

Analysing the content of the editors' letters in the three women's magazines involved what Bernard and Ryan (2010:54) call five imperative steps, namely to

- discover themes and subthemes,
- describe the core and peripheral elements of themes,
- build hierarchies of themes,
- apply themes, and
- link themes to theoretical frameworks.

Lyn Richards (2015:104-106) emphasises that, while quantitative coding reduces data, qualitative coding is about data retention. The goal is to learn from the data and to keep revisiting the data extracts until the researcher can see and understand patterns and explanations. Qualitative coding is not merely a process to label all the parts of the documents on a specific topic, but rather to bring them together so they can be reviewed and the researcher's thinking about the topic can develop. Richards outlines the objectives of qualitative coding as follows:

- To reflect on what the coded segments tell the researcher about the category, and its meanings in the study;
- To ask questions about how the category relates to other ideas from the data, and construct theories about those relations;
- To devise further, finer categories from finding different dimensions in the data gathered by the first coding; and

- To search for blends or combinations of categories, to find patterns in attitudes on the subject, e.g. to compare text in different categories, and seeing the category from a different viewpoint.

I attempted to utilise the above objectives of qualitative coding to guide me in the coding process to unpack the overarching tenets of the two chosen theoretical frameworks (as discussed in section 4.5), and stated in the MRQ. My work plan (below) offers a coding scheme for each of the sub-questions, as I believe this provided a more powerful way of implementing the coding scheme (see section 5.8.3) in the study.

5.8.2 Work plan

To establish a clear work plan, I used Richards's (2015:106-107) categories of descriptive, topic and analytical coding as three different processes for the coding of the qualitative data. As descriptive coding involves the storing of information about the cases being studied, I first coded the data (each of the editor's letters in the three cases) in the following sequence, and as follows:

- an abbreviation of the magazine title, namely
 - SAR for *SARIE*,
 - FL for *FAIRLADY*, and
 - TL for *TRUELOVE*;
- the year of publication, namely
 - the numerals 01 to 17 for 2001 to 2017;
- the month of publication, namely
 - the numerals 1 to 12 for January to December;
- the first three letters of the editor's surname; and
- the page number on which the editor's letter was published.

After I completed the descriptive coding, I moved onto topic coding, or what can be described as the tedious part of qualitative research, namely labelling text according to its subject – putting the data where it belongs with the assistance of ATLAS.ti®. The above, or what can also be called deductive or concept-driven coding, requires

little interpretation. The third concept of analytical coding – or inductive coding – is key to qualitative enquiry, as it leads to the emergence and affirmation of theory (Richards, 2015:110; see also Saldaña, 2009:1-31).

My approach to the use of ATLAS.ti® as an analytic tool was further informed by Friese (2014:12-15). She refers to a computer-assisted NCT analysis and explains the acronym as “noticing things, collecting things, and thinking about things”. She defines the process of “noticing interesting things” by going through the material or data gathered, which in the case of this study is the collection of editors’ letters. Moreover, and as mentioned in section 5.7.3 above, I regarded the preparation of the data as an important first close reading during which I was able to notice some “interesting things” in the data. Secondly, Friese describes the process of collecting things by noting “things that are similar to some you may have noticed before”. The last step in Friese’s NCT model refers to “thinking about things”. She describes “thinking about things” as asking: “How do the various parts of the puzzle fit together?” Or, “How can we integrate the various aspects of the findings to develop a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon studied?”

I also want to highlight that the NCT model of analysis can be described as a cyclical process. In this study, for example, I engaged with the content of the editors’ letters on a continuous basis. The first reading (the preparation of the data) led to the “noticing of things”. I then moved on to the “collecting of things”, which led to the “thinking about things”, during which conclusions were determined on a conceptual level in the final cycle of analytical coding.

Thus, analytical coding (see also Richards, 2015:112) refers to the coding process in which the researcher considers the meaning of the data in context, creates new categories that express new ideas about the data, and offers codes to gather and reflect on all the interrelated data. I agree with Richards that “well-handled analytical coding is a prime way of creating conceptual categories and gathering the data needed to explore them”. It can also be argued that any researcher who strives to become proficient at doing qualitative research must learn to code well, as the merit of the research rests mainly on the integrity of the coding (Strauss in Saldaña, 2009:1). In addition, Victoria Elliott (2018:2850) conceptualises coding as a decision-

making process during which decisions must be made in the context of a particular piece of research – a process that I strove to follow.

5.8.3 Coding scheme

A code can be described as a word or a short phrase that “symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2009:3). However, as Ronald Chenail (2012:266) points out, one of the biggest challenges in conducting qualitative data analysis is deciding what part of the data constitutes a meaningful unit to analyse.

I developed a coding scheme based on code families – or the grouping of several codes – reflecting the aspects of key themes from the sub-questions (see column 1 in Tables 5.1 to 5.4) for each of the four sub-questions. The second column (in Tables 5.1 to 5.4) reflects the codes or basic themes and explains the different features of the code families or key themes. The third column (in Tables 5.1 to 5.4) lists the subthemes and, in doing so, provides more detail on the codes or basic themes, while the fourth column (in Tables 5.1 to 5.4) refers to a description of each subtheme and what guided the coding process. Therefore, the basic themes (representing the narratives in the editors’ letters) and their related subthemes (representing the researcher’s interpretations) constitute a code family.

5.8.3.1 Sub-question 1

As mentioned earlier, my work plan offered a coding scheme for each of the sub-questions, as I believed this was a more powerful way of implementing the coding scheme in the study. In answering the first sub-question, “What does the editor’s letter in the respective magazines say about transformation and democracy in SA from 2001 to 2017?”, the coding process yielded 31 codes across the sample of 231 editors’ letters. With the assistance of ATLAS.ti®, I could highlight these codes in 123 relevant quotations. I then proceeded to group the codes into code families or key themes, namely *achievements*, *challenges*, *democratic icons*, *empowerment*, *representation* and *spirit of the time*, to highlight the broader theme of transformation and democracy, as set out in the first sub-question. The code families or key themes are presented in alphabetical order and are analysed as such in Chapter 7. Thus, Table 5.1 reflects my conceptual thinking on the code families, codes and subthemes for sub-question 1. It also offers a description of the subthemes.

Table 5.1 Coding scheme: Sub-question 1

Code families/key themes	Codes/basic themes	Subthemes	Description
<i>ACHIEVEMENTS</i>	Deliberating democracy	Liberation and activism	Narratives about empowerment, women's advocacy and realising potential since the naissance of SA's democracy, focusing on the 21 st century. Reflecting on the oppression and injustices of apartheid. Narratives and examples of vigorous action to achieve a goal (e.g. activism in the political and socio-economic sphere).
<i>CHALLENGES</i>	Gender roles	Definitions and descriptions of various gender groupings	Narratives about gender as construct and the role of gender in society, specifically discussions on the challenges faced by women by virtue of being women.
	Political economy	Influence of history, culture and customs on the economy of the state	Narratives about SA's challenges in the political and socio-economic environment (e.g. array of political parties, high unemployment figures, poorly performing economy).
	Transformation	Challenges of a young democracy, e.g. forgoing prejudice and relinquishing partiality	Narratives about the slow pace of transformation, e.g. persistent inequality and the failure of service delivery, resulting in pessimism.

Code families/key themes	Codes/basic themes	Subthemes	Description
<i>DEMOCRATIC ICONS</i>	Personification of icons	Depictions of individuals in a new, democratic era	Narratives about the power of Nelson Mandela and other struggle icons – specifically women who fought for equal rights for all. Highlighting icons as celebrities.
<i>EMPOWERMENT</i>	Enablement of women	Personal and societal level	Narratives about enabling women on a personal level (e.g. financial independence, skills learning, networking, being recognised, and speaking their minds). Narratives about enabling others and society in general. Elucidation of how these narratives between individuals and groups can contribute to empowerment.
<i>REPRESENTATION</i>	Information and communication strategies	Awareness and applying of communication skills in personal and social environments	Narratives about knowledge and the realisation of the possibilities of the individual in society. In addition, accounts about what difference knowledge and understanding can bring. Inherent to this code is giving women a space to tell their stories.
	Explanation of strategies to achieve representation	Plans and policies for more representation of women	Narratives about the need to include women in policies and governing bodies to give them true representation.
<i>SPIRIT OF THE TIME</i>	Start of the 21 st century	Anticipating the future	Narratives about the defining spirit of the 21 st century. Juxtaposing an inspirational new dawn with the pain of the past.

5.8.3.2 Sub-question 2

In answering the second sub-question, “What does the editor’s letter in the respective magazines say about social relations within this period in SA?”, the coding process yielded 76 codes across the sample of 231 editors’ letters. With the assistance of ATLAS.ti®, I could highlight these codes in 296 relevant quotations. I then proceeded to group the codes into code families, or key themes, namely *children*, *community*, *education*, *environment*, *family*, *marriage*, *spirituality* and *society at large*, to highlight the broader theme of social relations as set out in the second sub-question. The code families or key themes are presented in alphabetical order and are analysed as such in Chapter 7. Thus, Table 5.2 reflects my conceptual thinking on the code families, codes and subthemes for sub-question 2. It also offers a description of the subthemes.

Table 5.2 Coding scheme: Sub-question 2

Code families/ key themes	Codes/basic themes	Subthemes	Description
<i>CHILDREN</i>	Children and families	The role of mother- and fatherhood and the extended family in the lives of children	Narratives about the importance of motherhood (and fatherhood) and the extended family in raising children. Discussions about the value of family relationships and exploring family dynamics across generations. Discussions about the care and support of children, especially children of working mothers. Analysing the social and legal support structures available to children in society.
<i>COMMUNITY</i>	Community	Value of communal links and bonds; Community activism	Narratives about how being involved in your community can create a better life for all. The focus is on social cohesion, social inclusion and to respect diversity.
<i>EDUCATION</i>	Role of education	Value of education	Narratives about the importance of education, especially basic education. Reflecting on lost opportunities.
<i>ENVIRONMENT</i>	Protecting the planet	Environmental consciousness	Narratives about the role of people, countries and society in protecting the world's ecosystem. Exploring the challenges of protecting Earth.
<i>SOCIETY AT LARGE</i>	Crime and violence	High rate of crime and violence	Narratives about SA's high rate of crime and violence, with

Code families/ key themes	Codes/basic themes	Subthemes	Description
			particular focus on gender-based violence.
	Human rights	Acknowledgement of different sexual orientations	Narratives about different sexual orientations in society, e.g. gay rights.
<i>SPIRITUALITY</i>	Religion and spirituality	Role of religion and spirituality	Narratives about the role that religion and spirituality play within readers' lives.

5.8.3.3 Sub-question 3

In answering the third sub-question, “What does the editor’s letter in the respective magazines say about social values and moral principles within this period in SA?”, the coding process yielded 63 codes across the total sample of 231 editors’ letters. With the assistance of ATLAS.ti®, I could highlight these codes in 277 relevant quotations. I then proceeded to group the codes into code families or key themes, namely *culture*, *friendship*, *humanity* and *self-development*, to highlight the broader theme of social values and moral principles as set out in the third sub-question. The code families or key themes are presented in alphabetical order and are analysed as such in Chapter 7. Thus, Table 5.3 reflects my conceptual thinking around the code families, codes and the subthemes for sub-question 3. It also offers a description of the subthemes.

Table 5.3 Coding scheme: Sub-question 3

Code families/ key theme	Codes/basic themes	Subthemes	Description
<i>CULTURE</i>	Acknowledging the values and morals of different cultural groups	Cultural pride	Narratives about embracing cultural dignity, but also accepting cultural differences. Narratives about appreciating

			the arts, e.g. embracing a literary tradition.
<i>FRIENDSHIP</i>	The role of friends in showcasing social values and moral principles	Bonds between friends and the meaning of friendship	Narratives about the value of friendship.
<i>HUMANITY</i>	Showing compassion to humankind	Cultivation of kindness and compassion	Narratives about attracting qualities of humanity and recognising the vulnerability of people. Narratives about the cycles of life, the joy of birth, and the pain of death.
<i>SELF-DEVELOPMENT</i>	Cultivation of self-development	Awareness of social values and moral principles	Narratives about developing mindfulness of social values and moral principles. Narratives of re-engineering the self.

5.8.3.4 Sub-question 4

In answering the fourth sub-question, “What does the editor’s letter in the respective magazines say about the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser within this period in SA?”, the coding process yielded 18 codes across the total sample of 231 editors’ letters. I then proceeded to group the codes into code families or key themes, namely *editorial philosophy*, *readership* and *strategy*, to highlight the broader theme of the relationships between the magazine and the advertiser as set out in the fourth sub-question. The code families or key themes are presented in alphabetical order and are analysed as such in Chapter 7. Thus, Table 5.4 reflects my conceptual thinking around the code families, codes and subthemes for the sub-question. It also offers a description of the subthemes.

Table 5.4 Coding scheme: Sub-question 4

Code family/key theme	Codes/basic themes	Subthemes	Description
<i>EDITORIAL PHILOSOPHY</i>	Editor's voice	Highlighting of specific topics and ideas in the editor's letter that align with the vision and mission of the magazine; underlining editorial integrity	Narratives about campaigning on and reinforcing of issues important to the magazine.
<i>READERSHIP</i>	Power of readership	Understanding the demo- and psychographics of readers	Acknowledgement of the importance of the reader in cultivating the magazine's future. Narratives about circulation success, e.g. industry awards.
<i>STRATEGY</i>	Business decisions	Analysing the local media in the 21 st century, with particular attention paid to the magazine market; Endorsements and reinforcing of advertising brands	Narratives about business plans to make the magazine profitable and increase market share. Also spelling out the magazine's relationship with advertisers.

5.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

It is argued that all social research must be executed with rigour, and that rigour or trustworthiness is crucial for the quintessence of quality in qualitative research. Tobin and Begley (in Rambaree, 2007:7; see also Tracy, 2010; Braun & Clarke, 2013:338-340) describe trustworthiness as how the researcher demonstrates integrity and competence, and that it proves the legitimacy of the research process. They argue that, “without rigour, there is a danger that research may become fictional journalism, worthless as contributing to [scientific] knowledge”. Thus, by taking the academic conventions of research into consideration, I strove to ensure the trustworthiness of the study, as described below.

5.9.1 Validity and reliability

In general, validity – also referred to as credibility in qualitative research, and the term I prefer to use – refers to the notion that the researcher assessed what she intended to assess in the data analysis (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2012:80-81). In other words, credibility signifies the degree to which the researcher’s statements are approximate to truth, or the degree to which the research conclusions correspond to reality. This is echoed by Parry (in Rambaree, 2007:7), while Sarantakos (2005:86) juxtaposes quantitative and qualitative credibility by arguing that in some cases the quantitative researcher’s question, namely “does the research instrument study what it is supposed to study?”, is replaced by the question, “do [qualitative researchers] see what they think they see?” Qualitative researchers should aim to achieve credibility, since, as LeCompte and Goetz (in Sarantakos, 2005:86) contend: “It frees data from interference and contamination, control or variable manipulation.”

Margrit Schreier (2012:168-175) argues that reliability – also referred to as dependability in qualitative research, and the term I prefer to use – is useful in QCA as it can tell you something about the quality of your coding frame, and it can provide you with information about the acceptability of your analysis. She further contends that dependability translates into consistency and is closely related to the plausibility of the researcher’s interpretation. As mentioned before, and particularly in QCA, the researcher’s own prejudice and preconceived ideas must be noted, as beliefs may hide the substantiation of data.

Thus, by being aware of the importance of credibility and dependability as concepts in qualitative research, I strove to increase the study's rigour and transparency (Guest et al., 2012:101), aiming for a trustworthy research outcome.

5.9.2 Triangulation

Triangulation – or what Greg Guest et al. (2012:202-203) prefer to label integration or concurrent design – forms an integral part of the study. The triangulation of the study will be informed by the literature review (comprising global and local studies, as discussed in Chapter 3); the theoretical frameworks (CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism, as discussed in Chapter 4), and the methods of Historiography and QCA of the editors' letters in the three "alpha" South African women's magazine titles during the demarcated period of study.

5.9.3 Note on personal interest in the study

After completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication, and a year later an honours degree in Communication at the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) – the predecessor of the University of Johannesburg – I joined *Beeld* newspaper in February 1979 as a general reporter. Three years later I was appointed as features' writer for *SARIE*'s satellite office in Johannesburg. Although I resigned six years later to raise a family, magazines – and specifically women's magazines – became part of my DNA. I started a freelance career contributing to local consumer magazines and business-to-business publications. In 1991, I was recruited as supplements' editor for *Rooi Rose*, and was promoted to assistant editor in 1997. At the start of the millennium, I resigned as managing editor of *Rooi Rose* to take a sabbatical. Joining the Department of Communication at RAU later that same year gave me the opportunity to share my expertise and passion for magazine journalism with students. This second career – as a practice-based academic – led to the completion of my MPhil in Journalism (*cum laude*) at SU in 2005.

Although the study stems from my master's research project, meeting Professor Sammye Johnson at the 2nd "Mapping the Magazine" conference at Cardiff University, Wales in 2006 reinforced my interest in magazine studies. I wanted to further explore the "world of [South African] women's magazines", as described by Oliver Whitehorse in his 2010 analysis of the "Cosmo [*Cosmopolitan*] woman". Professor Lizette Rabe

(a former colleague at *SARIE* and at the time the head of the Department of Journalism at SU) was instrumental in my decision to pursue a doctorate.

Thus, as argued by Henning et al. (2004:7), and referred to in section 5.4.3, I acknowledge that as researcher I am undeniably the main “instrument” of the research project and make sense from my involvement with the data, or what I interpret to be the connotation of the data, and present it as findings.

In addition, and as conceptualised by Elizabeth Barratt (2006:48), I “choose to be part of the story” because, as a researcher, I have inside knowledge of the South African magazine industry and know most of the role players. I argue that this study can also be called a “qualitative inquiry from the inside” (Deacon, Pickering, Golding & Murdock in Barratt). Nevertheless, this does not mean that the voices of the setting are lost (Henning et al., 2004:7; see also Gummesson, 2007:100) and that I bias the study to mean what I want it to mean. As researcher, I was fully aware of this threat to interpretative inquiry and aimed to address possible bias and present a thick description with ample empirical evidence and the rigour required for qualitative research (see also Sarantakos, 2005:92).

5.10 PILOT STUDY

Edwin van Teijlingen and Vanora Hundley (2001:n.p.) argue that testing the research design is a crucial element of a solid study design. I embarked on a pilot study,⁵⁵ as defined by Treadwell (2011:213), as a prototype or pre-test in which a small study is conducted prior to the broader study to ensure that the broader study can be executed successfully.

The pilot study analysed the editor’s letter in *TRUELOVE* during 2004, 2009 and 2014, when the first national elections of the 21st century took place in SA. The aim was to understand the messages in the editor’s letter realising that magazines mirror society and society mirrors magazines. It explored whether the editor’s letter in the

⁵⁵ The pilot study (conducted from May to June 2014) resulted in a peer-reviewed paper, titled “Women’s magazines in a 21st century democratic SA: Merely parrot-talk or truly shape-shifters?” (Rossouw & Rabe, 2014), that was delivered at the International Association for Media and Communication Research Conference (IAMCR) in Hyderabad, India.

selected sample of *TRUELOVE* magazines could be described as merely “parrot talk” or truly “shape shifters”.

For the pilot study, I chose to conduct the QCA by hand (and not with the software programme ATLAS.ti® that was applied in the study), as the amount of data was not substantial. Lindlof and Taylor (2011:261) draw attention to the fact that LeCompte and Schensul argue that it is “not worthwhile to use a computer to code fewer than 100 pages of text data because of the time required to do it”. Thus, applying the manual method as a tool for QCA, the pilot study started with a systematic analysis of the data as per the creation of categories and a coding scheme, as suggested by Lindlof and Taylor (2011:246). The coding of the message in the editor’s letter of *TRUELOVE* was guided by the MRQ of the broader study.

The outcome of the pilot study (Rossouw & Rabe, 2014) was that *TRUELOVE*, and specifically the editor’s letter, drives essential information about society and cultures, thus contributing to “helping us think about ourselves as participants in a democratic society”, as phrased by Campbell (2000:270-306).

The pilot study highlighted important political and socio-economic issues in the ELWM, and it was concluded that not only does *TRUELOVE* – as an example of an alpha women’s magazine in a young, democratic SA – act as a social barometer of 21st century society, but that it can indeed be described as a “shape-shifter” in terms of its influence.

I acknowledge and agree with Van Teijlingen and Hundley (2001) that conducting a pilot study does not guarantee success in the main study; however, it does increase the likelihood. Furthermore, as Crosswaite and Curtice (in Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001) assert, contemporary research demands accountability from researchers, meaning there is a need to ensure the best possible use of research results. In addition, Van Teijlingen and Hundley emphasise that researchers should not only be held accountable, but also have an ethical obligation to make the best use of their research experience by reporting issues arising from all parts of a study, including the pilot study. I strove to achieve the above with the pilot study.

5.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

No discussion of a research project can be complete without considering how researchers meet their ethical obligations. As social research takes place within a social context (Babbie, 2002), it is imperative that ethical concerns become an integral part of the research process, right from the implementation to the completion of a study (Du Plooy, 2002:90).

As research involves a series of choices about how to answer research questions and conduct inquiries, I realised that I needed to remain systematic and objective in the many choices made when applying the research methods, analysing the data and reporting results of the study (Rubin et al., 2005:212). This was the only way to meet the non-negotiable ethical requirements for a research study. Thus, in accordance with A.S. de Vos et al. (2005:56-57), I acknowledge the general agreement about what is proper and improper in research. I also subscribe to the responsibility of the discipline of science: to be accurate and honest, not only in the execution of the study, but also in the reporting of the study.

Moreover, as the study employed Historiography and utilised QCA as research methods, and as the data – in this case the editors' letters published in the accompanying editions of the respective women's magazines – was already in the public domain, it could be argued that the study did not require ethical clearance procedures, as prescribed by SU, as it did not pose ethical consequences.

5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, I discussed and justified the qualitative research design and the methodologies used in the study. Key aspects that were discussed include the case study design, the methods of Historiography and QCA, the sampling strategy, and how the data gathered for the QCA was analysed by employing CAQDAS, and specifically ATLAS.ti®. The chapter also offered a work plan, explained the coding process, and argued the trustworthiness of the study. It also referred to my interest in the study, offered a brief description of the pilot study, and explained why the study did not require ethical clearance.

The next chapter presents the findings of the method of Historiography, while the findings of the QCA of the editors' letters are presented in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 6

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS I – HISTORIOGRAPHY

*Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past*

T.S. Eliot (1963:189)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

As introduced in section 1.7.3 and discussed in section 5.5, this study follows two methods of analysis, namely the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, and the QCA of the editors' letters in the respective titles in the demarcated timeframe. Therefore, this chapter presents the findings of the Historiography of the three magazines, and reflects critically on the documentary or archival research on the selected magazines.

As discussed in section 5.2.2, I employed Historiography as the first method in this study, because it is defined as the writing of history based on the critical examination of sources, the selection of particulars from the authentic materials, and the synthesis of particulars into a narrative that will stand the test of critical methods" (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/historiography>). This was done by the judicious examination of sources (in this case, a large collection of data pertaining to *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*), which I had archived since the start of my academic career because of my interest in the magazine industry. I detailed this process in section 5.5.2.

The findings in this chapter are presented as a chronological review of the histories and development of the three selected titles, namely first *SARIE*, followed by *FAIRLADY*, and then *TRUELOVE*. The sub-sections focus on the launch and history of each of the titles and an overview of the development of the respective titles from

2001 to 2017. I also present a comparative summary of the findings of the three selected titles and conclude with a chapter summary.

6.2 REVIEWING *SARIE*

6.2.1 Launch and history

The history and development of *SARIE* as a South African women's magazine is documented in Rabe's (1985) master's thesis on the origin and development of *SARIE* as a mass magazine for the Afrikaans woman. I argue that Rabe's study, chronicling *SARIE* from 1949 to 1985, was the first research project to illustrate the likelihood of a South African magazine as a social barometer. This comes to the fore in her reflection on the significance of the magazine for Afrikaans women – in particular *SARIE*'s contribution to marriage counselling, sex and health matters, and the title's influence on the early growth of Afrikaans literature during the magazine's early years. Rabe (1985:84) details the launch of *SARIE* against the background of early South African women's magazines and, at the time, similar women's magazines in America. She cites Chris Albertyn's (general manager of Naspers at the time) editorial vision for *SARIE*: "We decided that it should be a title for the developed Afrikaans woman and daughter. All facets of the woman's life must be covered, with greater emphasis on the young generation."⁵⁶ Rabe further highlights the above with minutes of board meetings, confirming that not only was *SARIE* an ideal of Naspers as the company's first attempt at entering the South African women's magazine market (see also section 2.2.5), but it was likewise argued that the interests of Afrikaans women had grown to such an extent that a weekly newspaper column [such as in *Die Burger*] was no longer enough: "She must have a weekly⁵⁷ magazine that fulfils her practical needs and at the same time offers stimulating ideas and fiction to get rid of the boredom."

⁵⁶ For brevity, and to assist the reader who does not know Afrikaans, I offer English translations for all the direct quotations that appeared in Afrikaans. However, when a descriptive Afrikaans word is used in the text, I offer an English translation of the word in square brackets to give the necessary context.

⁵⁷ *SARIE* started as a weekly magazine. However, in November 1954 the magazine changed frequency to a fortnightly publication (Spies, 1992a:385).

Moreover, J.J. Spies (1992a:378-387) points out that, in contrast to Naspers's earlier magazines, e.g. *Huisgenoot* and *Landbouweekblad*, it was spelt out from the beginning that *SARIE* had to make a profit to survive. The former two magazines were established for the "upcoming Afrikaner culture", and it was argued that it was "the duty of the Nasionale Pers to establish such magazines". Spies adds that *SARIE*'s launch happened at a more favourable time than when the above titles were launched, as education had developed with rapid strides, Afrikaans had evolved as a language, and there was growing confidence in the company's endeavour to establish an [Afrikaans] reading public. Spies also links the belief about *SARIE* to the success of the National Party (NP) in the national elections of 1948. He writes, "the election was seen as a demonstration of the Afrikaners' power and influence, of which the world, advertisers included, had to take note".

To achieve the above, the content of the magazine consisted of articles ranging from fashion and beauty, cooking, home management and décor, gardening and flower arrangement, childcare and child psychology, as well as articles on health matters (Rabe, 1985:119-120). The first issues were also packed with "light reading" by the best Afrikaans writers, and one or more chapters of a "thrilling serial" were often published.

Thus, launched on 6 July 1949 as *Sarie Marais*, the magazine was decidedly "posh and employed the crème-de-la-crème of Cape Town society" (Wright, 2012:29). From the beginning, *SARIE* was also innovative; the first covers were printed in Italy because the technology to do so did not yet exist in SA (see also Rabe, 1985).

The launch issue exceeded all expectations. The print order of 35 000 copies sold out within 24 hours, and within four weeks the print order increased to 45 400 (Rabe, 1985:66). The weekly circulation figure for the first six months climbed to 67 026, and a year later the circulation figure reached 80 274 (Rabe, 1985:231) – *SARIE* efficaciously more than doubled its first print order. Spies (1992a:379) adds that the high circulation figures can also be attributed to the appointment of Fred le Roux, "a man with good taste", as the editor of *SARIE*. He explains that Le Roux knew that the readership figures would be vital for the success of the title. He adds: "It forces an editor with a cultivated taste almost daily to compromise between what is desirable and what is serviceable."

SARIE's first cover signalled that the magazine was aimed at the forward-thinking Afrikaans woman. Joanna Wright (2012:29) describes the cover as “a stylish, contemporary woman casting the ghostly shadow of a *Voortrekker nooi*” [Pioneer maiden]. Spies (1992a:379) also considers the cover as modern, but not detached from the past. As mentioned above, he argues that *SARIE* was launched in changing times:

The time of the *boervrou* [farmer's wife] has passed. Industrialisation and urbanisation saw to it. Even for the women who remained in the countryside, the cities set the trends for fashion, beauty, homemaking, leisure and entertainment.

More than sixty years later, editor Michéle van Breda⁵⁸ (in Wright, 2012:29) says: “[T]his has not changed ... apart from the crucial distinction of it being for Afrikaans-speaking women ... *SARIE* of today is fast moving, contemporary and stylish.” Spies (1992a:381-383) further highlights that the original *SARIE* could not afford to disappoint its readers, even those who were used to the large and luxury brands such as the American *Ladies' Home Journal*. He makes it clear that, for a women's magazine to be successful [and profitable] in a mass market, required journalists with the ability to explain the intricacies of life, science, technology, philosophy and religion in understandable language to the readers. Moreover, “*SARIE* stood out in the way she achieved this”. Added to this editorial mix was *prikkelende leesstof* [titillating reading matter], e.g. articles about marital relations or with sex as topic. However, at the time, some readers felt that *SARIE* was too modern and worldly wise, and that the magazine did not represent the image of the ideal Afrikaans woman. However, Le Roux was adamant that *SARIE* should cover topics such as women's health, which had previously been neglected. This led to disagreement amongst the magazine and some of its readers, but in the end, the majority of *SARIE*'s readers supported the editorial decision.

As mentioned earlier, by publishing the work of Afrikaans writers (such as Audrey Blignault and Dot Serfontein), *SARIE* gave impetus to the awakening of the Afrikaans literary world. In addition, *SARIE* contributed to the Afrikaans language by creating

⁵⁸ At the time of writing, Michéle van Breda was the editor of *SARIE*. For a list of the editors of *SARIE* from the magazine's inception to 2017, see Addendum F.

new words for English cookery terms, e.g. *plaatkoekies* [flapjacks] and *koekstruif* [trifle] (Spies, 1992a:384-385).

Moreover, and against the paradigm of Feminism, which is one of the theoretical frameworks for this study (introduced in section 1.6.2 and discussed in section 4.5), it is significant that Le Roux (in Spies, 1992a:382) contends that *SARIE* was never in the vanguard of supporters of women's rights. However, he later said that *SARIE* brought the work of women leaders to the fore, without turning it into a crusade.

After nearly twenty years as editor of *SARIE*, Le Roux resigned in 1968, when he was appointed as drama professor at SU. The editor's chair went to Hennie Cronjé, who had been employed by Naspers for more than 21 years. In 1976, Fritz Joubert, an experienced journalist hailing from *Die Burger*, became the new editor of *SARIE*. Interestingly, Wright (2012:29) describes *SARIE* as being "a rather staid read" until Izak de Villiers was appointed editor in 1983. De Villiers – a Dutch Reformed minister, writer, poet and radio personality – brought celebrity covers and a mix of "supersex [*sic*] and scripture" to the magazine, and "sent the readership soaring" (Kruger in Wright, 2012:29). His addition of features about sexual health, intimate matters and marriage problems built on what Le Roux considered important topics in the early years of *SARIE*. However, the *SARIE* of the late 1980s was forthright in its discussions of not only sexual health, but also societal matters, e.g. child abuse (Spies, 1992a:385-387). Under De Villiers's editorship, *SARIE*'s motto became *'n Vriendin vir elke vrou* [A (lady) friend for every woman], and the tone changed to a more informal and comforting chat between friends. Spies also notes that, during De Villiers's editorship, *SARIE*'s readership moved from an exclusive white readership to incorporate women of all races. "She wanted to be a friend for every woman, regardless of race or age." The magazine was incredibly successful in reaching out to its readers and achieved high circulation figures. In 1990, *SARIE*'s fortnightly circulation figure reached 218 000.

A year later, De Villiers resigned from *SARIE* to take up the editorship of the Afrikaans Sunday newspaper, *Rapport*. However, *SARIE*'s success as the biggest women's magazine in the Afrikaans or English market (Spies, 1992a:387) was spurred on by the appointment of André (Bakkies) Rossouw and, in 1994, Lizette Rabe. At the start of the 21st century, Rabe resigned to take up the position of Head of the Department

of Journalism at SU, and Michéle van Breda (at the time employed at *Beeld* newspaper) took up *SARIE*'s editorship.

6.2.2 *SARIE* in the 21st century

One of the biggest changes in the life of *SARIE* happened just after the start of the 21st century. In June 2002, the magazine changed from a fortnightly frequency to a monthly publication. As discussed in Chapter 2, this was due to various factors, including rising printing costs and changes in the South African magazine market (Hattingh, 2002:8; see also Rossouw, 2005). Van Breda welcomed the new frequency, announcing that it was part of a long-term strategy for a new *SARIE*, and that the magazine would add more value with “extra supplements and exciting features”. Graeme Addison (2003) points out that the “dramatic facelift” could not have come any sooner. It was imperative to modernise *SARIE*, or face falling circulation. The publishers conceded that the magazine was losing readers, who were deserting it for English titles, and hence restyled *SARIE* as a “now” magazine.

In 2007, *SARIE* launched its first brand extension, *SARIE Bruid*, a bridal magazine published annually; followed by *SARIE Kreatief* [Creative], published bi-monthly; *SARIE Kos* [Food], also published bi-monthly; and *SARIE Woon* [Living], published annually. The success of *SARIE Kos*, which focused on proudly SA food, led to the publication of an English *SARIE Food* in 2014. Thus, it can be argued that *SARIE Food* is testament to *SARIE*'s clear understanding of modern-day Afrikaans cooking and entertaining. However, the launch of three more brand extensions in 2010 was unsuccessful, and the publication of *SARIE Blokraaisels* [Crossword puzzles], *SARIE Gesond* [Health] and *SARIE Kos vir Mans* [Food for men] soon ceased, although the publishers argued that the brand extensions afforded them the opportunity to indulge readers with an offering entirely dedicated to their liking.

Despite the challenges in the global and local magazine industry, coupled with the steadily declining circulation figures in the 21st century, *SARIE* maintained the number one position amongst SA's women's magazines. Lillie (2006:40) ascribes this to the quality of the editorial, the magazine's relevance, and its resonance with readers.

Van Breda (in Lillie, 2006:40) elaborates: “We ... speak to our readers in a manner that is warm, inviting and energetic – thus picking up on the specific character traits of the *SARIE* consumer.” She adds that the myriad of new titles entering the local

market (see also Rossouw, 2005) gave *SARIE* the opportunity to move to “a slightly more youthful market: one we call the ‘Forever 30’ market”. Furthermore, Van Breda emphasises the *SARIE* reader’s positive outlook and pride in being South African: “She is inspired ... by her family, friends and community.” Lillie adds that, in addition to the above, it was *SARIE*’s “tight” brand positioning and sense of community that connected the reader to the title, and that this “sense of belonging, of being understood and of intimacy is a rare and valuable commodity in the publishing game”. In addition, Van Breda points out that the *SARIE* reader was “well-travelled, well-read and well-heeled”, and called her a “citizen of the world”, while Lillie claimed that *SARIE* had found a “happy balance between intellect and inspiration”.

Van Breda (2009) reiterates the above sense of belonging and close connection to the reader. In her editor’s letter celebrating *SARIE*’s 60th birthday, she writes:

We feel *SARIE*’s story in our bones ... we know her innermost workings. We know her history and her rich heritage ... we write and create, we offer opinion ... we share one another’s pain and disappointments ... together we taste joy and victory ... we tell endearing South African stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary things. We make memories.

Under Van Breda’s editorship, *SARIE* was awarded many industry awards, with SA’s Best General Magazine (2008), the Rossi Trophy for Best Consumer Magazine (2010), and SA Editor of the Year (2010 and 2013) standing out.

Analysing the success of *SARIE*, *The Media Reporter* (2012) suggests that the success of Afrikaans women’s magazines is that they are more inwardly focused than their English counterparts: “Afrikaans titles are aware of the world but bring it back here and don’t try to be like the rest of the world.” The Afrikaans titles [referring to *Rooi Rose* and *SARIE*] also have a much wider age market than the English glossies. “You will have a mother reading it, her daughter and possibly the grandmother as well. And while you know what you are going to get, there is a fresh appeal each month.” Sandra Gordon (in the *Media Reporter*, 2012) concurs with the above and emphasises that “Afrikaans publishers are careful not to dissect their market They haven’t chosen a particular life stage”, which means that the Afrikaans titles can maintain themselves because they cater to more women across all age groups. Moreover, Jodie Hyam (in the *Media Reporter*, 2012) comments that the advertising

in these magazines is “perfect for their market. They aren’t Paris, New York or aspiration. They are achievable and appropriate”. Hyam’s comment on *SARIE*’s advertising strategy coincides with Van Breda (in Nevill, 2013), saying that

she doesn’t think of herself as an editor any longer she is more of a brand director, the person who has a ‘bird’s eye view’ of the ‘brand language’ – the ideals and style and content and direction – of each of the titles under her care.

In addition, and in line with *SARIE*’s early innovations and the technological advances of the 21st century, Van Breda and her team showed that *SARIE* was not reticent about embracing new technology and new media, and was the first to launch a successful e-commerce platform [for fashion]. “We had to take the brand into the future” (Van Breda in Nevill, 2013).

Likewise, I argue that the demographics of *SARIE*’s readers⁵⁹ indicate how the magazine’s focus shifted since its inception, and how it can be regarded as a social barometer of its time. For example, in 2015 – the last year in which SAARF released figures for magazines – *SARIE*’s readership was 24% black, 33% Coloured, and 43% white; 68% of the readers spoke Afrikaans or were bilingual. The average age of the reader was 43, and 74% of readers were women and 26% were men. Furthermore, 40% of the readers worked full-time, 7% worked part-time, while 20% were unemployed.

In ranking the readers’ education status, it was noted that 38% had completed matric, 6% held a university degree, and 11% had a qualification from a technikon. The regional breakdown showed that 41% of the readers lived in metro areas, 21% in cities or large towns, while 38% of the readers lived in small towns and rural areas. In 2015, the readers with the highest household income (48%) fell in the Living Standards Measurement (LSM) of 8 to 10, with an average household income of R17 760 and an average personal income of R7 775.

At the end of this study’s timeframe (2017), Van Breda was the editor of *SARIE*, a position she still holds, making her and Jane Raphaely the longest serving editors of the Media24 women’s magazines. The motto of the magazine is *Ons inspirasie* [Our

⁵⁹ For an infographic of *SARIE*’s readership in 2015, the last time SAARF released figures for magazines, see Addendum G.

inspiration], and the spine reads, “*Ons styl. Ons lewe. Ons inspirasie. Myself*” [Our style. Our life. Our inspiration. Myself].

SARIE describes herself “as the glossy magazine of choice for the Afrikaans-speaking woman with a modern view of the world. We tell typical SA stories that keep her feeling good about herself and her world” (www.media24.com). The magazine’s circulation at the end of 2017 was 61 726. It should be noted that *SARIE*’s circulation and readership figures decreased drastically over the period of investigation, which was congruent with what was happening in the South African consumer market, as explained in section 2.2.5 (see also Addendum B and C).

6.3 REVIEWING *FAIRLADY*

6.3.1 Launch and history

In her autobiography, Raphaely (2012b:135-138) chronicles the history of *FAIRLADY* and notes that, in the mid-1960s, Naspers was pressurised by advertisers to start a glossy English women’s magazine printed on the rotogravure⁶⁰ printing press that was successfully imported for *SARIE*. Raphaely points out that, at the time, the only other local English-language women’s magazine was *Femina* (published by Republican Press), “but it wasn’t glossy and the quality of the printing was poor”. Nevertheless, Raphaely writes that the distinction of being described as SA’s first English female glossy does not belong to *FAIRLADY*, but to *Madame*, self-published by Hetty van Breda in Bloemfontein. However, “the Central News Agency (CNA) killed *Madame* off as they saw it as competition for *Femina* in which they had an interest”. Raphaely also lists *Charme* (1964-1965) and a South African edition of *Vogue* as pioneers in this specific section of the South African magazine market.

Rabe (1985:79-80) gives further insight into the origin of *FAIRLADY*. She notes that the minutes of a Naspers board meeting (22 September 1964) read: “Decided ... to launch an English women’s magazine. Chairman is ... to ... make an offer of ...

⁶⁰ Rotogravure: a photomechanical process by which picture, typeset matter, etc. are printed from an intaglio copper cylinder (www.dictionary.com/browse/rotogravure) offering a high speed of printing and consistent print quality.

R50 000 to the owners of *Madame* ...” A month later, the minutes read that the owner of *Madame* at first did not want to accept the offer, but later, when they proceeded with the plans to publish a new magazine, *Madame* was offered to Naspers. However, at that stage

we were not interested anymore The new magazine will be ... *Fair Lady*, published monthly from March 1965, cost 10c per copy and the initial advertising rate will be R150 per page (black & white) and R400 per page (full colour) based on a print order of 50 000 copies.

Raphaely (2012b:136) further recalls that she was astonished when she, as a female Jewish *rooinek*,⁶¹ was offered the editorship of *FAIRLADY*. At the time she wrote a column for the *Cape Times*, and was commissioned by the assistant editor of *SARIE*, Alba Bouwer, to write two columns for *SARIE* which were translated by Bouwer. She only later realised that Bouwer was married to Hubert Coetzee, who was managing director of Naspers when she was offered the editorship. She remembers asking only one question – on editorial integrity:

I haven't been in SA very long, but I have been here long enough to know that everything is about politics here. Would I have the right, as editor, to have the final say on the content of the magazine?

The answer was: “It is up to you to provide the content that brings in the English-speaking readers that advertisers expect. If you succeed in that, we certainly won't interfere in any way.”

The first editor's letter (in Spies, 1992b:408) encapsulates *FAIRLADY*'s editorial vision:

Like her readers *Fair Lady* is all woman. Curious about the facts of a women's life, cautious in applying them to herself, eager to learn about beauty and baby care, the stars and showbiz, homemaking and health, fashion and food, and everything which keeps her mind busy and stimulated. *Fair Lady* is and will always be a magazine for modern women.

⁶¹ *Rooinek* is the Afrikaans for an English-speaking South African, usually of British decent (www.urbandictionary.com).

For the next 19 years under Raphaely's leadership, *FAIRLADY* pioneered the advancement of black models and writers, advocated sex education for children, and championed women's causes. There can be no doubt that it was Raphaely's clear understanding of the reader and the local women's magazine market that resulted in a flourishing *FAIRLADY*. "In the early 1980s the magazine was selling 216 000 copies [fortnightly] ... and was so stuffed with advertisements that 500-page issues were a regular occurrence" (Raphaely, 2012b:196).

Moreover, and against the paradigm of Feminism (one of the theoretical frameworks for this study, introduced in section 1.6.2 and discussed in section 4.5), it is significant that Raphaely (2012b:159) depicts the editorial stance of *FAIRLADY* as "far from flagrant flaming feminism". Instead, it became a vehicle through which she chose to oppose inequality and prejudice, while appealing to the femininity of millions of readers, comments Gordon (2012:38). Raphaely (2012b:194-195) describes her editorials as "persistently taking positions on political issues, not from a women's viewpoint but from a humanitarian one". These issues included squatter evictions, propaganda, child abuse, press freedom, the recognition of black trade unions, and military secrecy. Raphaely also calls *FAIRLADY* "a very insubordinate magazine as far as women were concerned" but says that the magazine "consistently upheld the importance of the family, whereas Helen Gurley Brown's *Cosmopolitan* had absolutely no hesitation in saying to women: 'No, you come first'" (in Thamm, 2011:44).

When Raphaely resigned as editor⁶² in 1984 to edit and publish the South African edition of *Cosmopolitan*, she was succeeded by Dene Smuts. Murray (1998:93) reflects briefly on the editorship of Smuts by referring to the historical context of apartheid SA in the 1980s, and the influence that an individual editor can exert over the editorial tone. She argues that *FAIRLADY* "might well struck some readers as gushingly matronising in its overtly liberal-leftist political stance, and its insistent injunction to 'uplift the underprivileged'". Murray (see also Knox, 1995:14) comments that Smuts's effort at explicit social conscientising is commendable; however, it led to her falling out of favour with the publishers and advertisers.

⁶² For a complete list of the editors of *FAIRLADY*, from the magazine's inception until 2017, see Addendum H.

Liz Butler succeeded Smuts, and Catherine Knox (1995:14) notes that this “led the retreat into conspicuous consumption”. The circulation dropped even further, partly a symptom of tighter markets and fiercer competition in the local magazine market (Rossouw, 2005; see also Chapter 2), and partly because of the magazine’s failure to engage with the central concerns of the readers. “Shopping and gossip only dull pain and lull fears temporarily. The brand retained an inert power but lost impetus,” according to Knox.

In 1994, when Butler decided to return to New Zealand, Roz Wrottesley “moved into the editor’s chair with no externally visible ripples” (Knox, 1995:14-15). However, with her appointment as editor just after SA’s first democratic elections, Wrottesley called her most pressing task “bringing depth and excitement” to *FAIRLADY*, and the biggest challenge being to achieve “a racially-balanced readership”. Within six weeks, Wrottesley transformed the magazine into “hot property” and, according to Knox, proved that a consumer magazine is a personality-based commodity.

Knox (1995:15) also reflects on the advertising strategy of women’s magazines. She argues, “publications like *FAIRLADY* have often rightly been accused of training their readers to be good little consumers”. Wrottesley (in Knox, 1995:16) responded by saying it was true that women’s magazines had become shop windows over the preceding decade:

[T]his ... was ... prompted by the perception that people didn’t have the time to read ... they wanted visually pleasing pages they can flip through. And ... by economics which pressurised editors to support advertisers at the expense of editorial content.

However, Wrottesley (in Knox, 1995:16) was wary of the “flip-through factor – we need to supply really authoritative information to make *FAIRLADY* worth buying”. She elaborated that the readers would not buy every copy of the magazine unless there was “some food for thought, some real information, some entertainment ... and then, only then, some ideas to buy”.

From the beginning, Wrottesley (in Knox, 1995:16) also realised that she had to “court her publics” and had to take responsibility for her editorial policies where advertising spend was concerned. She summarised her role as

a communicator with the privilege of being able to take a public stance on issues and of filtering and presenting information according to her own reading of events and readers' requirements, she must be prepared to account for herself.

6.3.2 *FAIRLADY* in the 21st century

I argue that the historical review of *FAIRLADY* in the 21st century starts with the appointment of Alice Bell as editor in 1999. She relaunched *FAIRLADY* in October that year, "confidently predicting" a circulation increase from 105 000 to 115 000 within a year, according to Lynne Kloot (2001:9). However, the first few months of her editorship "culminated in the voluntary retrenchment of a slew of senior journalists" and an increased circulation did not materialise. Kloot argues that the magazine's "declining ABC's can't necessarily be blamed on the wrong format", and that "new entrants into the market [such as *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*] deliver death by a thousand cuts to readership". I concur that this is again proof of the fierce competition in the South African women's magazine market since the start of the 21st century.

When Bell requested early retirement, she was succeeded by Ann Donald. Donald was hailed the "ultimate turnaround queen", applauded for her understanding of the target market, and "her eye for a great read and fresh design" (Penstone, 2003:13). Within the first 18 months, Donald managed to grow the magazine's circulation by almost 18%; circulation for the first six months of 2003 touched on 107 000. Donald believed the success was that *FAIRLADY* was not afraid to deal with contentious issues, nor the publishing of articles that were longer than expected. "So many people tell us that women don't have time to read, but ... if they're gaining value from reading something, then they will find the time". Her editorial vision paid off – in November 2003, the Magazine Publishers' Association of South Africa (MPASA) capped *FAIRLADY* as the Best Consumer Magazine.

Nonetheless, Donald's commitment to journalistic standards and balanced reporting led to her resignation after a dispute with management over an article connected to the advertising of anti-cellulite products: "In my opinion this was clearly a story within our readers' interest. I couldn't stand by and not publish. I told them that if I wasn't [sic] allowed to publish it, I would have to leave" (in Penstone, 2003:6).

When Suzy Brokensha took over from Donald in 2005, she believed the correct recipe for *FAIRLADY* was to have a “psychological approach focusing holistically on the mind, body and health” (‘Fairlady’ wil noue band met lesers hê [‘Fairlady’ wants close ties with readers], 2006). She compared her vision for *FAIRLADY* to the American *Psychology Today*, which was later launched by Media24 but closed in 2012.

In keeping with the “360-degree marketing strategy” of Media24, brand extensions of *FAIRLADY* were also launched in the first decade of the 21st century. However, only *FAIRLADY Bride* was still being published at the end of this study’s timeframe.

I argue that the demographics of *FAIRLADY*’s readers⁶³ indicate how the magazine’s focus has shifted since inception, and how it can – along with *SARIE* – be regarded as a social barometer of its time. For example, in 2015, *FAIRLADY*’s readership was 56% black, 20% Coloured, 5% Indian and 19% white; 30% of the readers spoke English, 30% spoke Zulu/Xhosa/Swazi or Ndebele, 20% spoke Sotho/Tswana/Tsonga or Venda, while 19% of the readers were Afrikaans and bilingual. The average age of the reader was 43, and the readership comprised 79% women and 21% men. Furthermore, 41% of the readers worked full-time, 7% worked part-time, 7% were self-employed, while 17% of the readers were unemployed.

In the ranking of readers’ education status, 47% of the readers had completed matric, 10% held a university degree, and 13% had a qualification from a technikon. The regional breakdown showed that 76% of the readers lived in metro areas, 13% in cities or large towns, and 11% in small towns and rural areas. The readers with the highest household income (54%) fell in LSM of 8 to 10, with an average household income of R22 369 and an average personal income of R10 203.

FAIRLADY’s editorial vision and target market under Brokensha remained consistent over the years. In 2007, *FAIRLADY* was described as “a brand firmly and proudly vested in the South African landscape”, yet it kept “an eye on global trends, 100% original: an organic South African brand” (www.fairlady.com). In 2017, its vision statement was: “An original South African brand that connects and supports the most diverse network of contemporary South African women. We celebrate, with

⁶³ For an infographic of *FAIRLADY*’s readership in 2015 – the last time SAARF released figures for magazines – see Addendum I.

them, the best that our country has to offer in a glossy, upmarket package” (www.media24.com).

Brokensha still was the editor of *FAIRLADY* in 2017, the end of this study’s timeframe, and it is a position she still held at the time of writing. The spine of the magazine reads: “The smart read for smart women” (www.media24.com). The magazine’s circulation figure at the end of 2017 was 37 431. However, it should be noted that, as with *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY*’s circulation figures also decreased drastically over the period of investigation, which is congruent with what was happening in the South African consumer market, as explained in section 2.7 (see also Addendum B and C).

6.4 REVIEWING *TRUELOVE*

6.4.1 Launch and history

It is argued that, because of the diversity of SA’s population, various magazines targeted at specific population groups have been established since the mid-twentieth century. Magazines directed at the black market became important after 1945, when several successful publications were introduced. As Shaun Johnson (1991:23; see also Claassen, 1998:127; Ferreira, 2011:60) points out, white ownership with black readers was a common formula in the early history of SA’s print media. He further argues that this can be regarded as an example of the “white hand” tapping into the potentially lucrative African market.

A key example of the above is *Drum*, first published in 1951 by Jim Bailey as *African Drum*. Various authors highlight the significant sociocultural role of *Drum* during the early years of the apartheid era. For example, Coburn and Tserema (in Claassen, 1998:127) reason that *Drum* became an important mouthpiece of the township masses, expressing social and political grievances, while Rachel Johnson (2009:37) describes *Drum* as a political project:

Through asserting an African urban and modern existence that apartheid ideology denied, *Drum* participated in debates over race, class, gender and generation, and their meanings and boundaries in mid-twentieth century SA.

I therefore argue that *Drum*, as the precursor of South African magazines aimed at black consumers, illustrates the concept of the magazine as social barometer and is

an example of the interaction between magazines and society (see also Johnson & Prijatelj, 2007:89-130).

Recognised as the first women's magazine aimed at the black South African female middle-class, *Grace* (1964-1966) presented itself as a magazine "for women by women" and played an important role in the emergence of black women's voices during apartheid (Ferreira, 2011:60). The first editor's letter in *Grace*, by Esther K Nyembezi, is proof of the above notion:

For some time, a number of women have felt the need for a magazine that will help to broaden the scope of African women culturally, socially and economically, a magazine that will focus attention on our needs and problems.

Although magazines such as *Grace* and *The Townships Housewife*, which were aimed at black women during the male-dominated era of the black press under apartheid, fell into oblivion, I argue that these magazines can be regarded as the prototypes for *TRUELOVE* as a women's magazine. In addition, Ferreira (2011:61) points out that general content of *The Townships Housewife* seemed more profit-driven than that of *Grace*, and that the magazine consisted mostly of advertisements.

In 1956, Republican Press launched *Bona* as part of its magazine bouquet aimed at the different South African reading markets. The rapid development of this section of consumer magazines was largely because of the swift urbanisation process and growth in literacy levels among black South Africans, says Claassen (1998:127; see also Fourie, 2007:36-44). Michael Chapman (1989:217) adds that, with the acquiring and repositioning of magazines, Naspers wished to "tap the growth market of black print media readers", while Narunsky-Laden (2011:178) argues that it may also have been a question of Naspers competing with Caxton/CTP Publishers for the lucrative market share of SA's black female readership. For example, *Thandi*, initially published in the late 1970s as a pull-out women's supplement of *Bona* and launched as a separate publication in 1985, can be regarded as direct competition to *TRUELOVE*. Spies (1992c:428-429) acknowledges that Naspers established *Bonanza* in 1978 as a free monthly magazine because of advertising pressure to delve into the black female market. Although *Bonanza* ceased publication three years later, Spies comments that Naspers regarded the establishment of *Bonanza* as a first attempt at gaining a black readership. Thus, it can be argued that, with experience from

publishing *Bonanza*, and with the existing model for *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* as women's titles, it was relatively easy for Naspers to modify *TRUELOVE* to fit the company's profitable mould of women's magazine publishing.

The original *TRUELOVE* – established as *Drum's* sister magazine – targeted Johannesburg's mine workers and was a “soft-porn publication focusing mainly on sex scandal stories for a male readership of migrant labourers” (Narunsky-Laden, 2007:603). However, the magazine struggled to survive and lacked energy. Spies (1992c:434-435) comments that adding picture stories to the editorial mix was also not successful. In 1979, the magazine became more family-focused, and the title changed to *True Love & Family*. This repositioning of the magazine was effective, and circulation reached a high of 132 000 in October 1982, even though most of the readers were men.

Nevertheless, in 1984, when Bailey sold *TRUELOVE* to Naspers, the magazine was repositioned as a women's magazine, following in the footsteps of *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY*. Pearl Mashabela⁶⁴ was appointed as the first black female magazine editor in SA.

However, this repositioning was not without challenges in a pre-democracy SA. Bessie Tugwana (in Narunsky-Laden, 2011:179), who later co-edited *TRUELOVE* with Dorah Sitole (1988 to 1995), observed that

one of the challenges during our time was that many black people had no interest in reading. We made it more pictorial and pitched the magazine at a large market – which was a huge mistake.

Narunsky-Laden (2011:179) speculates whether the above had to do with market conditions at the time, with *TRUELOVE's* upmarket image, or whether the political changes in SA during the early 1990s encouraged Naspers to invest in *TRUELOVE* in the hope of reaping the fruits of the anticipated expansion of a new black middle-class.

⁶⁴ For a list of the editors of *TRUELOVE* from the time it was remolded as a women's magazine in 1984 until 2017, see Addendum J.

In contrast, Khanyi Dhlomo (at the time Dhlomo-Mkhize, in Retief, 2002:17), appointed as editor in 1995 at the age of 22, believed it was not a political decision to position a magazine like *TRUELOVE* specifically at the black market:

The modern black South African woman has a lot in common with her white, Indian or Coloured sisters. But she also has a lot of her own uniqueness with her past, her experiences and her dreams for the future. We created a product, which can accommodate these differences.

Thus, with Dhlomo-Mkhize as editor, and a year after SA's first democratic election, *TRUELOVE* was revamped, once again targeting younger black South African women "determined to make every aspect of their lives a success" (Mahlaba, 2006). The new version of *TRUELOVE* was printed on glossy paper with a modern layout and design. Furthermore, the "& Family" was removed and replaced by the motto on the spine-line: "All a woman needs."

During her time as editor, Dhlomo-Mkhize not only tripled the circulation of the magazine, but also established *TRUELOVE* as the monthly magazine with the most advertisements in the country (Retief, 2002: 17, see also Brand, 2003). She firmly believes that the media have a social responsibility and thinks that, as a society, SA is making progress, but that there still are many problems the government cannot solve. Dhlomo-Mkhize says that as editor she strives to have a positive influence on the lives of [black] South African women:

Apartheid and our history made that we as black people have not really started to get to know ourselves as individuals My readers are at an exciting point in their lives. They are now defining their lifestyle and role in the community – they are not defined by legislation or the society anymore.

6.4.2 *TRUELOVE* in the 21st century

At the start of the 21st century, Dhlomo-Mkhize (in Retief, 2002:17; see also Komane, 2002:3) depicts *TRUELOVE*'s typical reader as 28 years old, holding a diploma and living in the city. "She is modern and westernised, but proud to be black. She is not turning her back on her culture, but rather combine[s] the best of her culture with that of the Western society."

After a period of *TRUELOVE* being one of the fastest growing magazines and the biggest-selling English glossy women's magazine in SA – the readership increased from 500 000 to two million during Dhlomo-Mkhize's editorship – the figures declined drastically after she resigned to pursue new interests. Glynis O'Hara stepped in as acting editor until Busisiwe Mahlaba was appointed in 2004.

As the new editor when SA celebrated its first decade of democracy, Mahlaba (in Ferguson, 2004:12) emphasised that she would keep the empowerment of women on *TRUELOVE*'s agenda. She referred to the fact that there were still ingrained cultural and social perceptions that disadvantaged women, particularly regarding HIV/Aids and the practice of safe sex, and that these perceptions should be changed. "*TRUELOVE* should continue to give her readers information that is relevant, inspiring and entertaining, without being condescending." Mahlaba (2006:n.p.) also emphasises that the demographics of black women changed significantly since 1994: "[O]ur reader has moved assertively into the workplace and is in a much stronger position financially with higher expectations and far more choices as a consumer." She describes *TRUELOVE* as the only magazine that appreciates the fusion of traditional and modern lifestyles and delivers a unique understanding of "Louis Vuitton-meets-lobola" lifestyle. This change in the *TRUELOVE* reader is captured on the magazine's website:

From the political fired-up girls of the late 1970s, who fought on the streets and took the struggle home, to the state of emergency women of the 1980s, who were activists, businesswomen, caregivers and home-makers, to the liberated, newly-empowered women of the 1990s, to the women of 2003 who encompass all these qualities and more, while celebrating their strength, their uniqueness and their options. Today we have more opportunities than ever before to find health, wealth, wisdom and happiness.

As mentioned above, and confirmed by Malindi Sithole (2008), the publication lost direction with the magazine's change in identity and two changes of editors in five years. "The only constant was the target market of black women; even the targeted age group became unclear. The circulation dropped from 140 000 in 2005 to around 95 000 in 2008."

At that time, Sitole (who had co-edited *TRUELOVE* before) was appointed to redirect the magazine, which “ha[d] been slated for depicting a farfetched and one-dimensional image of black women”. *TRUELOVE*’s covers portrayed “light skinned women wearing weaves, glamorous high-living women who tend to look the same”, says Kuthala Nandipha (2008:25). However, under Sitole’s editorship, the magazine tried “to catch up by exploring mature and alternative women on its covers to add to their soapie queens”. Sitole (in Nandipha, 2008:25) knew that “readers evolve and so does the magazine and we have to keep up with them. The trick is to know and understand the readers and give her what she wants.”

Although Sitole’s appointment in 2008 came during the global financial recession – also when South African magazines’ growth became stagnant – she (in Seopa, 2008) was not deterred: “*True Love* is a brand that has gone through a lot over the years yet it has managed to grow into the brand it is today ... my main concern will be to increase our readership.” Thus, it can be argued that Sitole’s editorial experience of more than twenty years, her culturally relevant insight and her genuine representation of the brand hugely benefited the magazine. During her editorship, *TRUELOVE* won the *Sunday Times* Generation Next “Coolest Brand”, she started the *TRUELOVE* test kitchen, and introduced a lifestyle section to the magazine.

In 2010, when Sitole was offered a new opportunity within Naspers, Sbu Mpungose took over. Her short stint as editor ended in December 2011 and Lerato Tshabalala became the editor of *TRUE LOVE*. In 2012, the magazine celebrated its 40th birthday with yet another revitalised look and content mix that responded to the issues affecting SA’s black women, according to Gillian Abrahams (2012). Tshabalala (in Abrahams, 2012) summarises her editorial vision as follows:

I have a deep understanding of who the *True Love* woman is, so when I worked with my team to decide on its future direction, I did it with all my heart and soul. All the changes that we made come from a place of immense love and respect for the magazine, and for the role it has played in the history of so many South African women.

The changes were mainly in the visual presentation of the content of the magazine, to “offer a more relaxed read”, according to Tshabalala. She also introduced more international content, saying that “South African women are part of the global culture,

and they want to know what their favourite celebrities are doing, wearing, and where they are going”.

Two brand extensions of the magazine were launched in the first decade of the 21st century: *TRUELOVE Bride* in 2004, and *TRUELOVE Babe* (2006 to 2008). The latter was a pocket-sized magazine positioned as *TRUELOVE*'s “sassy little sister” and was aimed at the age group of 20 to 24, who are

either at varsity or at entry level in work and intensely inspirational, deeply interested in relationships and their emotional wellbeing. They are optimistic about their future but are under pressure to conform to the fashionable beauty ideals (Matshikiza in Sifile, 2006:14).

Amidst the onset of the global financial recession in 2008 and the Media24 circulation scandal (also affecting other women's magazines in the stable), *TRUELOVE Babe* ceased publication (Moerdyk, 2008). At the end of this study's timeframe, *TRUELOVE Hair* was published bi-annually as a supplement.

At the start of the 21st century, Media24 expanded its publishing businesses (viz. *Drum*, *Move!* and *TRUELOVE*) into Africa. In partnership with Kenyan and Nigerian publishers, the company launched *TRUELOVE East Africa* (2004) and *TRUELOVE West Africa* (2005), writes Fienie Grobler (2007; see also Vosloo, 2018:36-38). However, Media24's involvement in magazines in these regions came to an end in 2010, and the Kenyan writer Carole Mandi – then employed as publisher of *TRUELOVE* – decided to bid for the franchise of the magazine (Mulupi, 2016).

At the end of this study's timeframe, *TRUELOVE*'s vision statement (<http://m24m.co.za>) highlighted its status as icon in the history of local women's magazines:

TRUELOVE is the ... South African fashion, beauty and lifestyle magazine for black women. It challenges its readers with in-depth editorial by focusing on subjects that stimulate debate and discussion, investigative special reports and thought-leading columns, combined with stylish sexy fashion and beauty pages that define South African style. *TRUELOVE* aims to push the reader to where they want to be, challenging and helping them to take the next big steps to get there, changing lives from ordinary to extraordinary.

Likewise, I argue that the demographics of *TRUELOVE*'s readers⁶⁵ indicate how the magazine's focus shifted since its inception, and how it – just like *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* – can be regarded as a social barometer of its time. For example, in 2015, *TRUELOVE*'s readership was 94% black, 4% Coloured, 1% Indian and 1% white; 48% of the readers spoke Zulu/Xhosa/Swazi and/or Ndebele; 42% spoke Sotho/Tswana/Tsonga and/or Venda; while 6% were English speaking. The average age of the readers was 36, and 72% of the magazine's readership was women and 28% was men. Furthermore, 35% of the readers worked full-time, 8% worked part-time, 7% were self-employed, and 32% were unemployed.

In ranking the readers' education status, 45% had completed matric, 7% had a university degree, and 11% had a qualification from a technikon. The regional breakdown showed that 59% of the readers lived in metro areas, 18% in cities or large towns, while 23% of the readers lived in small towns and rural areas. The readers with the highest household income (35%) fell in LSM 8 to 10, with an average household income of R17 655 and an average personal income of R8 197.

At the end of this study's timeframe, in 2017, Dudu Mvimbi Leshabane was the editor of *TRUELOVE*. Mbali Soga succeeded her and, at the time of writing, Makhosazana Zwane-Siguqu was the editor. The magazine's circulation figure at the end of 2017 was 31 925. However, it should also be noted that, as with *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY*, *TRUELOVE*'s circulation figures decreased drastically over the period of investigation, which is congruent with what was happening globally and in the South African consumer market, as explained in section 2.7 (see also Addendum B and C).

6.5 COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

I argue that the above, albeit brief, critical analyses of the histories of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* encapsulate the development of the selected three magazines as archetypal women's magazines in SA. The findings prove how the origin and development of the three alpha women's magazines were set against their

⁶⁵ For an infographic of *TRUELOVE*'s readership in 2015 – the last time SAARF released figures for magazines – see Addendum K.

specific ideological views and market-driven ideals in response to the political and socio-economic contexts of SA during the timeframe of the study.

As stated in section 1.3, there is a strong link between the magazine and its community and the concept of the magazine as a social barometer. A magazine as measuring the state of that society is emphasised by scholars such as Johnson and Prijatel (2007:90), Querusio (2014) and Rabe (2019). I argue that the position of each of the specific women's magazines comes to the fore in this chapter's findings. It can be concluded that the goals the three titles set out for themselves are still being pursued. However, the focus of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* shifted and were adapted continuously to reflect the political and socio-economic realities of a young, democratic SA in the 21st century.

Thus, I concur with Narunsky-Laden (2011:180) that women's magazines such as *TRUELOVE* have contributed significantly to the recasting and repertoire of roles played by women, both at home and in society, in a new, informal public sphere where shifting social responsibilities are renegotiated and gradually institutionalised. This is also the case with *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY*.

6.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the findings of the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as the first research method of the study. These findings were based on a critical reflection on documentary or archival research on the selected women's magazines and, in particular, a large collection of primary and secondary data pertaining to *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. The findings were presented as a chronologic review of the histories and development of the three selected titles. The sub-sections focused on the launch and history of each of the titles, along with an overview of the development of the respective titles during the demarcated timeframe. I concluded this Chapter with a comparative summary of the findings of the three selected titles to illustrate South African women's magazines, and in particular the foci of this study, as social barometers.

The next chapter presents the findings of the second method of analysis, namely the QCA of the editors' letters in the three magazines.

CHAPTER 7

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS II – QCA

Analysis and interpretation is the Achilles heel of all research, be it quantitative or qualitative. Qualitative analysis and interpretation is so multifaceted that it is difficult to offer general and easy-to-follow recommendations. In my view, research in the social sciences is primarily organized common sense.

Evert Gummesson (2007:100)

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an account of the findings of the QCA – employed as the second research method in this study – of the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to December 2017.

As explained in section 5.8.3, the editors' letters were analysed using QCA. By employing ATLAS.ti®, I was able to group the related data into themes, generate relationships between the subthemes, and reflect on the data; this served as the basis for the analysis. Hence, the code families or key themes relevant and connected to the specific sub-question are presented in alphabetical order, as outlined in the coding scheme.

As the sections below focus on the answers to the sub-questions, the analysis of the findings is organised on a case-by-case basis and according to the specific sub-question. At the end of the section detailing the specific sub-question, the discussion leads to a brief comparison of the findings of the cases in relation to the specific sub-question. The findings of the four sub-questions lead to the next chapter, in which the answer to the MRQ will be established.

7.2. SUB-QUESTION 1

To interpret how the narratives in the editors' letters reflect the broader themes of transformation and democracy as set out in sub-question 1, the following key themes (see section 5.8.3.1 for a description of the themes) were conceptualised:

- *Achievements*
- *Challenges*
- *Democratic icons*
- *Empowerment*
- *Representation*
- *Spirit of the time*

Therefore, the analysis below unpacks and expands on – in alphabetical order – the above themes in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. I offer the findings chronologically (starting in 2001 and ending in 2017), as I believe it adds to the research contexts (discussed in Chapter 2), and links to the Historiography of the three cases (presented in Chapter 6). The same applies to sub-questions 2, 3 and 4. Moreover, for easy reference and to substantiate the analysis, the editors' letters from which the citations were taken for the key themes in relation to each of the sub-questions, are listed in Addendum M.

7.2.1 *SARIE* on ...

7.2.1.1 *Achievements*

At the start of the 21st century – also the start of the study's timeframe – *SARIE* (01_02_2_Rab_4)⁶⁶ celebrated SA and delighted in the country as a land of opportunities. In the process of deliberating on democracy, nation building was framed and an appeal was made to focus on the “goedvoel” [feel good] (04_2_Van_4) aspects of SA. In fact, during the first national elections of the 21st century (2004), the magazine appealed to readers to be positive and stated that it would be a source of inspiration to combat negativism. It further argues that SA had made headway in

⁶⁶ The references in this chapter refer to the descriptive coding of the editors' letters as they appear in ATLAS.ti®. How the referencing style for this study was devised is explained in section 5.8.2. However, the abbreviation of the title was stripped to avoid duplication.

various areas since 1994; the country was now a global player, and the innovativeness and enterprise of citizens offered endless opportunities. *SARIE* (09_05_Van_10) also fondly remembered the Springbok rugby team winning the World Cup in 1995, realising the dream of a nation, and how “our beloved Madiba” walked onto the rugby field in the captain’s jersey creating a unified energy.

7.2.1.2 Challenges

SARIE explored the influence of SA’s history, culture and customs on the economy of the state and recognised it as a challenge. For example, industrial action, corruption and violence against women and children were highlighted as political and socio-economic challenges paralysing the country and creating uncertainty about SA’s future (04_2_Van_4). Nevertheless, the constant negativity became too much for her. She ended a friendship because she could not listen to the “heavy-hearted clichés” about the country’s future anymore, especially that “the white SA is nothing more than [a] ‘sitting duck’ waiting for adversity and tragedy”. She pleaded with readers to look around them for positive stories. When the injustice of apartheid was underlined in a profile of Pearl Jansen (crowned in 1970 as Miss Africa South), she (09_02_Van_4) used Jansen’s words, “it’s time to fly”, as a message of “hope for all of us”. As expected from a women’s magazine, *SARIE* did not shy away from discussing challenges faced by women. For example, narratives about sexual categorisation come to the fore in chronicling how Caster Semenya – hours before she won the 800m at the World Athletics Championships in Berlin – was subjected to a gender test (09_10_Van_12). *SARIE* viewed this as “insensitive” and “unacceptable”, and asked how you explain to the young athlete that she had become a “political football” in her own country?

7.2.1.3 Democratic icons

The editor’s letters in *SARIE* are interspersed with the image of Mandela, highlighting his unique approach to life. For example, the magazine (10_07_Van_10) links Mandela’s African Dream to the unexpected success of SA’s national soccer team (Bafana Bafana) at the World Soccer Cup in 2010 and writes that “the beautiful game showed that we can pull together, and wave the South African flag with pride”. Similarly, the personal journey of Zelda la Grange – a naïve Afrikaner “meisietjie” [little

girl] – who was at the side of Mandela as his personal assistant for nearly twenty years, is highlighted as exceptional (14_08_Van_4).

7.2.1.4 Empowerment

The realisation of potential, particularly empowerment, is a constant theme in *SARIE*. For example, it (01_03_1_Rab_8) quotes the German literary figure, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) to illustrate self-rule: “The struggle with yourself is the biggest struggle. To conquer yourself, the greatest victory.” Likewise, it is mentioned (04_4_Van_np) how impressed the magazine is with the determination and tenacity of SA’s women, who turn obstacles into opportunities, who persevere and taste the ultimate success. In writing about frequently being asked to be a guest speaker, the editor (09_12_Van_np) says that she tried to avoid talking about reaching for the stars, “as it is such a cliché”. But she soon realised that these four words capture hope, possibilities and inspiration. “It is the simple realisation that anything and everything is possible.”

7.2.1.5 Representation

SARIE (01_07_2_Van_8) points to inequality in the workplace and the fact that SA women earn 10% less than men in the same positions. She ascribes this to a historical backlog and urges companies to “address the gap without delay”. Moreover, the magazine (09_05_Van_10) underlines the importance of voting to exercise constitutional rights; while the editor remembers how she (09_06_Van_14) cast her vote in Paris in 1994; sat in front of a television screen and shed tears of joy about SA’s first peaceful democratic elections. She ruminates that a lot has changed since 1994, but that it is a privilege to be able to say: “My voice counts!” The concept of *ubuntu* [I am because you are] as a characteristic of democracy is further highlighted.

7.2.1.6 Spirit of the time

SARIE mainly encapsulates the spirit of the time in an inspirational new dawn at the start of the 21st century. She (01_03_2_Rab_np) pledges to inspire each new generation and offer the latest information according to the readers’ needs. Moreover, in framing social change as part of the spirit of transformation, she (01_04_1_Van_6) adds that the magazine “will change, because change is a given, and change brings

new opportunities and new insights”. The magazine as a social barometer is highlighted when *SARIE* welcomes 2009. The editor (09_01_Van_10) writes,

the economy and politics will test our endurance and perseverance, not only in SA but around the world but that we should depend on the closeness of family and friends, and our natural ability to find hope and inspiration in new opportunities.

7.2.2 FAIRLADY on ...

7.2.2.1 Achievements

FAIRLADY (01_08_3_Bel_np) recognises that legal and social support systems have been put in place for women who have been raped and describes trauma counselling and access to antiretroviral drugs as a step in the right direction. However, she juxtaposes this by saying, “for men who’re raped, there is almost nothing”. The negotiation of democracy, coupled with self-governance and equality, is underlined as a positive aspect in *FAIRLADY*. For example: “I’m optimistic ... because we’ve just had our FOURTH democratic election and, whether you like the outcome or not, that’s democracy in action!” (09_06_Bro_14). The editor argues that this is “because of the little heroes (friends, neighbours and colleagues) who are doing their bit to contribute to a society we can be proud of”.

7.2.2.2 Challenges

Six years after the naissance of democracy in SA, *FAIRLADY* (01_01_3_Bel_6) laments the slow pace of transformation: “The insecurities and uncertainties of a country in transition still linger – like the stale smell of cigarettes long after the party celebrations are over.” Similarly, she (01_02_2_Bel_8) underlines the failure of service delivery by referring to Gerry Rantseli (television personality) who found that public health services leave a lot to be desired. After 21 years of democratic rule, *FAIRLADY* (16_12_Bro_6) is even more critical of the political and socio-economic situation in SA. The editor calls 2016 “a total lemon in many respects” and refers to the South African president: “I’m talking about you, Jacob Zuma.” However, she contends that “people are generally kinder and more honourable than we expect them to be”.

7.2.2.3 *Democratic icons*

FAIRLADY illuminates Mandela as the hero of democracy. For example, his dictum, “We must change ourselves first, and then we change our enemy”, is echoed in the editor’s letter (01_12_2_Bel_np). Moreover, Mandela’s passing (5 December 2013) resulted in an “outpour[ing] of love” (14_02_Bro_5) in the following year’s Valentine’s issue:

[E]ven if we have never met him one of the many things that set him apart, [is] that quality that allowed him to belong to all of us while also being so much his own man.

Besides referring to Mandela, *FAIRLADY* created many celebrities, giving them iconic status. For example, Basetsana Makgalemele is described as “the most popular Miss SA ever” (01_01_1_Bel_np), Charlize Theron [South African Oscar-winning actress] as “the hottest property in Hollywood” (01_01_2_Bel_np, see also 04_03_Don_np), and Felicia Mabuza-Suttle (television presenter and entrepreneur) as “the Soweto-born go-getter transforming herself into one of the most recognisable names and faces in modern SA” (01_03_2_Bel_8). The celebrity status of Mabuza-Suttle is further emphasised with: “In this country you can mention [them] by [the] first name only and everyone knows who you mean: Nelson, Winnie and Felicia.” Likewise, *FAIRLADY* (16_10_Bro_4) recognised Thuli Madonsela (SA’s Public Protector from 2009 to 2016) as the “calm, incorruptible eye”, and writes that “we owe her enormous gratitude, and our undying respect”.

7.2.2.4 *Empowerment*

FAIRLADY discussed the liberation of women on a personal and social level. Narratives focus on the success of career women, such as Maria Ramos, director-general of the department of finance (1996 to 2003) (01_04_1_Bel_np); and “pretty impressive women” like Transnet chairperson Louise Tager (1996 to 2001); e.tv’s Mabuza-Suttle; and M-Net’s Rantseli (01_07_1_Bel_np). Likewise, she (03_03_Don_8) points out that

for many of us, most of our personal achievements wouldn’t be possible without some kind of support. In SA that support is most likely to be a domestic

worker, who, by taking care of the cleaning, ironing, cooking and child-minding frees us up to do what we need to do.

Thus, in campaigning for the rights of domestic workers, *FAIRLADY* contends that the subject of “maids and madams” is likely to touch many sensitive nerves. However, she adds that, while many women

have wholeheartedly supported the need to dignify the ... sector with adequate legal protection ... and ... humanity, there is still a long way to go before domestic service is granted a respect that acknowledges the importance it plays in our economy and our lives.

7.2.2.5 Representation

Focusing on the know-how and awareness of her readers, *FAIRLADY* (06_03_Ano_8) stressed that everyone should participate in voting in the municipal elections. In fact, she argued that to vote was the only way to “exert influence and lift municipalities out of the corrupt, inefficient state many are in”. She emphasised:

It’s the level of government that most directly affects our daily lives [N]o matter how amazing the national government’s plans, they are not likely to advance beyond the paper they’re written on unless the lower tiers of government are able to put them into practice.

In addition, *FAIRLADY* (09_04_Bro_14) underlined the importance of the national elections in 2009, and to “have your voice heard”. She pointed out that, given what was happening to the global economy, “we should all be out there – ready to have a say in SA’s future”. Preceding the national elections in 2014, *FAIRLADY* (14_05_Bro_7) again cautioned that the only way to bring change was to accept personal responsibility and vote: “Each one of us needs to take a[n] ... honest look inwards and rectify ... what we think is wrong with us. If each one of us does that ... then there will be a sea change in our society.” Moreover, she added that this “calls for personal sacrifice in ... time of chaos, but from chaos will emerge clarity. Even if we don’t manage to achieve this for ourselves, we will achieve it for our children”.

7.2.2.6 Spirit of the time

In a profile on Cape Town’s tourism chief, Sheryl Ozinsky, who campaigned for the broader acceptance of the “pink rand”, *FAIRLADY* (01_03_2_Bel_8) underlines SA’s

constitutional rights as the first country in the world to prohibit unfair discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. She contends:

Since when has someone's sexuality had anything to do with their worth, either as a person or a ... tourist? South Africa needs all the visitors it can get, and if gay folk ... want to turn the Mother City into a ... holiday destination... let's ... be ... thankful.

In framing her optimism about the country, *FAIRLADY* (09_06_Bro_14) singles out, among others, beaches, biltong, Table Mountain, and the spirit of South Africans, stating that friends overseas say South Africans are “incredibly open and friendly”, and concludes that “we can all have a great future in this country”.

7.2.3 TRUELOVE on ...

7.2.3.1 Achievements

Illustrating the magazine as a social barometer, in the issue celebrating the magazine's 30th birthday, the editor of *TRUELOVE* (02_6_Dhl_22) compares its history by reflecting on the

milestones we've passed, not only as South Africans but also as Africans. Like you, *True Love* has come a long way from the days when the magazine was banned ... for publishing a picture of a white woman giving birth!

In outlining the success of a representative government, ten years since the naissance of democracy, the magazine (04_09_Mah_np) offers her readers an issue overflowing with “soul, music and the spirit of *ubuntu*”; is “bursting with pride to be South African; and believes “SA is da bomb!” At the time of the national elections in 2009, *TRUELOVE* (09_03_Sit_7) claimed that a strong foundation had been laid, and that the readers were standing on the shoulders of giants:

All we wanted was to be free. Our success in life and in business ... depended on our political freedom That determination to succeed is ... why you see so many successful black executives and entrepreneurs.

7.2.3.2 Challenges

Focusing on gender as one of the challenges of transformation and democracy, *TRUELOVE* (01_05_Dhl_np) explored the cultural and social opposition to

homosexuals and investigated whether attempts by the church and medical scientists to change their sexual orientation would prove futile or fruitful. However, she (01_07_Dhl_np) believed, seven years after democracy, South Africans were still coming to terms with the social change and asked how real the transition was when it came to interracial relationships. The editor argued that tangible change would depend largely on the courage of individuals to break the barriers of prejudice. *TRUELOVE* further contended that domestic violence had been shrouded in silence for far too long, and questioned how effective (or otherwise) the Domestic Violence Courts are in protecting the millions of women who live in fear. She believed that making a difference depended largely on making a statement – “one loud enough to reach those with the authority to take action”. In addition, *TRUELOVE* (08_06_Sit_14, see also 02_06_Dhl_22) reflected on the Soweto Youth Uprising of June 1976:

It is now 32 years since the student uprisings of 1976, but the memories are still deeply etched in my mind. I can still feel the stinging tear gas in my eyes and nostrils as if it was yesterday. The trauma that families went through when their beloved children went into exile has left indelible marks and the sadness is still tangible.

However, looking back to “that dark period in our history”, she highlights the story of Dr Thandi Ndlovu (medical practitioner and businesswoman) who came back to the country she loved after years in exile, and says: “How far we’ve come as a country and a nation.”

7.2.3.3 Democratic icons

Narratives about struggle heroes – specifically women – and the positive influence of Mandela are abundant in *TRUELOVE*. For example, highlighting the oppression of apartheid, the editor (10_04_Sit_np) commends

individuals who selflessly sacrificed their lives and family comforts, and fought long and hard for our emancipation families who played pivotal roles in breaking the shackles of apartheid.

She (14_02_Tsh_np) was proud to have lived in the time of Madiba, to have witnessed his greatness and his ability to look beyond his own needs. “For his presence in our lives ... I feel blessed.” She treasured his words: “They’ve already

had me for 27 years ... I had to let it go”, and asks: “Isn’t that the most beautiful thing ever – to cherish your sanity and your living experience so much that you don’t let resentment get in the way of your happiness?”

7.2.3.4 Empowerment

In celebrating emancipation, *TRUELOVE* (01_07_Dhl_np; see also 01_09_Dhl_np) offers advice for working women, and hopes readers will find the inspiration to make their dreams a reality and live life to its fullest potential as truly empowered women. Celebrating Women’s Day, the magazine (01_08_Dhl_np) paid tribute to women from all walks of life, e.g. the ANC politician Ruth Bhengu and her daughter, Nozipho, who chose to disclose Nozipho’s HIV-positive status to Parliament. She argues that discourse around Aids and HIV is deeply needed and applauds the two women for sharing their story of “living, loving and growing with HIV”. Celebrating her 30th birthday, *TRUELOVE* (02_06_Dhl_22) also salutes women making their mark in careers and professions that were out of their reach in 1972, when the magazine was launched. For example, she notes that Foreign Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, newspaper editor Paula Fray, and the financial director of Transnet, Sindi Mabaso, are “just some of the women who have proven that it is ability, and not race or gender that determines one’s destiny”. Thus, emphasising empowerment, *TRUELOVE* (04_08_Mah_np) narrated the stories of women from diverse backgrounds who were trailblazers in their fields – “and doing it with African style and grace”.

7.2.3.5 Representation

In relation to democracy, *TRUELOVE* (09_04_Sit_np) emphasised the importance of voting in the elections and advised that, if her readers were in doubt about whether to vote, they should read Lebo Mashile’s “insightful” column. Looking forward to the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the editor (09_09_Sit_12) highlighted a special report on how far SA had come in preparing for this event and introduced the reader to the “women who are working tirelessly to make this a roaring success”.

7.2.3.6 Spirit of the time

Defining the spirit of the time, *TRUELOVE* (09_09_Sit_12) took its cue from spring as a time of renewal and growth. For example, the editor celebrated the talent and

creativity of Mzansi's [SA] top fashion designers, who showcased their fashion at the Arise Africa Fashion Week in Johannesburg. Furthermore, *TRUELOVE* (09_03_Sit_7) underlined the fact that the readers were blessed by being raised in a democracy, and that the 21st century brought new prospects:

You have embraced the challenging world of technology and became citizens of the global village. With so many opportunities at your disposal, you can only achieve great heights!

Highlighting the spirit of democracy – but also the fear that others may ridicule your aspirations – she [Lerato Tshabalala] (14_03_Tsh_np) remembers how she dreamt of becoming *TRUELOVE*'s editor, and how the “Universe” blessed her and made her wildest dreams come true. She urged readers to take note of the words of Eleanor Roosevelt's, the former first lady of America: “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

7.2.4 Comparative summary of findings on sub-question 1

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* emphasised the broader theme of transformation and democracy in highlighting the deliberation of democracy and nation building as *achievements*, while the injustice of apartheid was underscored. In addition, the theme of *challenges* points (in all three cases) to the slow pace of transformation in SA, and socio-political conditions such as a poorly performing economy, persistent inequality, and the failure of service delivery. In addition, this theme reflects on gender as a construct, and explores narratives about the scourge of gender-based violence and the challenges faced by women by virtue of being women. In all three cases, the theme of *democratic icons* mainly reflects on the power of Nelson Mandela as a hero of the democratic era. The findings in this theme are supported by including the narratives of women who fought for equal rights for all. The theme of *empowerment* – or the enablement of women on a personal and social level – is a common thread in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. Furthermore, the theme of *representation* points mainly to the garnering of information, knowledge and skills to realise individuals' opportunities in a young, democratic SA. All three magazines further highlight the importance of participation in a democracy, e.g. to participate in elections. The *spirit of the time* – the final theme of sub-question 1 – primarily juxtaposes the naissance of democracy with the pain of

apartheid. In addition, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* foresee a positive start to the 21st century, and anticipate that the changes brought about by democracy and technology will enhance the lives of SA's women.

7.3 SUB-QUESTION 2

To interpret how the narratives in the editors' letters reflect on the broader theme of social relations, as set out in sub-question 2, the following key themes (see section 5.8.3.2 for a description of the themes) were conceptualised:

- *Children*
- *Community*
- *Education*
- *Environment*
- *Society at large*
- *Spirituality*.

7.3.1 *SARIE* on ...

7.3.1.1 *Children*

SARIE (01_05_2_Van_8) frames the joy of bearing children and motherhood as tangible. The editor [Mich lle van Breda] did not have children of her own, but she "can see how being a mother adds an extra dimension of wisdom, insight and acceptance to a woman's life". Thus, in outlining family relationships – particularly the selflessness and sacrifice of parenthood – *SARIE* (01_05_2_Van_8) applauds motherhood. "Moms know things. They feel things. They understand things. Moms always know how." She quotes the jewellery designer, Jenna Clifford, on becoming a mother after 40: "Being a wife and mother is the most underrated position in the world. It's a multiple task." In addition, she adds a reader's silent wish: "With a new life growing in me, I can only pray that I can be like my mother was to me. Then I have fulfilled my life purpose." *SARIE* (01_10_1_Van_12) further illustrates the strong bond between parents and children – emphasising it as unconditional – by recalling a conversation with Deirdre Visser, daughter of the late Professor Chris Barnard.

She spoke about his wisdom, his mistakes, his fame, about his love for women. But especially about him just being her father ‘moments of magic’, which they shared ... later years as a father and daughter.

Family bonds and the love and support of grandparents are also highlighted. For example, *SARIE* (04_8_Van_8) refers to a colleague whose little girl was born with the same red patch in her neck as her [grand]mother. And, whenever she sees the red patch, she senses the happiness of her mother – even though she passed away long ago.

7.3.1.2 Community

In framing Afrikaner identity, cultural gatherings and the power of a close-knit community, *SARIE* (01_04_2_Van_8) highlights the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees (KKNK) as “a festival that is not exclusively Afrikaans, but where people with a feeling for the language [Afrikaans] are spoken to”. Furthermore, she (01_10_2_Van_12) reflects on the sense of community created by the “Greek’s café and the small movie house” in Caledon, the village where she grew up: “Today the Good Hope Café and the bioscope no longer exist, but my movie fantasies are still very strong”

7.3.1.3 Education

In reflecting on lost opportunities and how dreams of an education for all can become a reality, *SARIE* (14_03_Van_4) met with master moviemaker Jans Rautenbach (1936-2016), who was perceived as being controversial because of his stance against apartheid, and emphasises the inspiring story of how he established a small school for underprivileged children near De Rust in the Western Cape, and how it became a school of note.

7.3.1.4 Environment

Environmental consciousness is a common thread in *SARIE*. For example, the editorial (09_06_Van_14) highlights Wangari Maathai, the first woman from Africa to win the Nobel Peace Prize (2004), narrating how Maathai started the Green Belt Movement in Kenia by encouraging women to plant a tree for a small fee. Despite being arrested and facing a shortage of money, Maathai persevered and “today 35 million trees have been planted in Kenia ... her voice is heard”. *SARIE*

(14_11_Van_20) also refers to the visual journey around the planet by Brazilian photographer Sebastiao Salgado's, culminating in the Genesis project, and emphasises: "Man and nature are one. The survival of the one depends on the nurturing of the other, but we have to act now." Moreover, *SARIE* reflects on global realities and asks if the "world has gone mad?"

[E]verywhere we look there is disarray the madness in the Middle East, West Africa's Ebola virus, terror in East Africa ... climate change, great wealth in few hands and too many in the stranglehold of poverty. A planet and its people in trouble.

Echoing former American president Barack Obama, she asks: "How did we get it so wrong?"

7.3.1.5 Society at large

SA's high rate of crime and violence is singled out as the "enemy that has our cities, our townships and our farms in its stranglehold", and *SARIE* (01_08_2_Van_4) also narrates the story of mothers on the Cape Flats who are "tired of crying" about losing their children to gang violence.

7.3.1.6 Spirituality

Christianity forms a powerful theme in *SARIE*, especially in the Christmas editions. For example, the editor's letter (04_12_Van_10) remembers with fondness the Christmas play on Caledon's rugby field, and the joyous gathering of the extended family around the Christmas table with "lace, linen and silver" at Hermanus, and hopes that the spirit of Christmas will continue to inspire readers in the new year.

7.3.2 FAIRLADY on ...

7.3.2.1 Children

In her reflection on the article, *Who's going to mind the kids? Who is going to go to work?* *FAIRLADY* (01_01_2_Bel_np) acknowledges a man's decision to become a househusband to support his wife's quest to be a top businesswoman. However, she adds that it reflects negatively on society that "we still have to say that it took guts for Clement to make the call he did". The editor hopes that other families facing the same choices will be as mature and objective about the role of marriage partners as this couple. Furthermore, the importance of society's responsibility to take care of

children, and to take a stand against child abuse, are underlined by referring to Madiba's philosophy of life:

Mandela first changed himself, then moved on to changing the apartheid government Jenny ... changed her life after the ... rape and death of an eight-month-old baby, then embarked on her mission to change the "enemy" – in this case the ... vicious abuse of our babies and children (01_12_2_Bel_np).

In outlining the role of parental guidance and how quickly children grow up, *FAIRLADY* (17_09_Bro_6) reflects on September as the start of spring, but also how matric exams are becoming a reality. "I have no idea how this happened – it feels like just last week we were raising an exhausted glass to the fact that he was finally sleeping through the night."

7.3.2.2 Community

Illustrating community involvement, and linking up with an international social initiative, *FAIRLADY* (01_07_1_Bel_np) searches for the unsung heroines and finds that many women give unselfishly of their time, money and love to the poorest and neediest.

7.3.2.3 Education

FAIRLADY (04_02_Don_6) frames literacy and the value of books as important and the editor writes about her early introduction to the "seduction" of reading. She is a firm believer that "a home without books is a home without a soul". In an annual survey of the top government schools, she (14_06_Bro_5) further underlines the critical role of education, highlighting that "those schools not only gives [sic] parents hope in a system that sometimes feels hopeless, but also applauds [sic] a standard that other schools then try to meet". In addition, she lauds Sue Barnes for creating Subz (a washable sanitary towel) by saying: "Like you, *FAIRLADY* is really passionate about two things: education, and the ability of women to change the world for the better."

7.3.2.4 Environment

Environmental consciousness is a common thread in *FAIRLADY*'s editorials, such as: "The depletion of our sea is almost apocalyptic in its intensity, greed, and seeming lack of any appreciation of our natural world" (01_05_1_Bel_np). She adds that, although government and local environmental groups are tackling the problem as

vigorously as they can, there are ominous signs that they are losing control. She further acknowledges that fishing is an industry, but “when harvesting turns to pillaging, when reaping becomes raping, her stomach turns”.

7.3.2.5 Society at large

FAIRLADY explores the effect of crime and violence in her editorials. For example, the editor (01_08_1_Bel_np) writes that the magazine conducted a poll on whether paedophiles should be named and shamed, and that most readers voted “Yes”. She further emphasises that it has taken a long time to put systems in place for women who have been raped, but for men who are raped “there’s almost nothing”. In highlighting the experiences of a young man in prison, she argues that “we cannot bury our head in the sand about this”. In addition, gender-based violence is accentuated by estimating that between 40% and 60% of South African women in intimate relationships experience domestic violence (04_05_Don_np). *FAIRLADY* begs readers to stop and look around them. “The chances are very high that someone you know is being abused physically, sexually, verbally, psychologically or economically. It might even be you.” The magazine (13_03_Bro_7) strongly condemns the gang rape and killing of Anene Booysen; argues that this incident shows how unsafe women and children are in SA; and says that the abuse, violence and rape perpetrated against women and children cannot be allowed to continue:

Enough is enough. We’ve got to stop saying it’s ... about drugs, ... poverty, or disempowerment It’s about utter disrespect for women Please let’s not stop being shocked.”

7.3.2.6 Spirituality

Always wanting to explore the power of meditation, *FAIRLADY* (17_07_Bro_6) visited a Buddhist Retreat Centre in KwaZulu-Natal and found it “extremely worthwhile and hugely helpful”.

7.3.3 TRUELOVE on ...

7.3.3.1 Children

Focusing on Youth Day, *TRUELOVE* (01_06_Dhl_np) looks at how a growing number of black children born to single parents are left to rediscover their identities and cope with their broken beginnings:

We all know people brought up by a single parent who are not only successful, but also quite content. However, not knowing one's real mother or father or, worse still, being rejected by them after trying to rebuild the relationship can have consequences that are tragic and destructive.

Moreover, *TRUELOVE* (04_01_Oha_np) denotes the pain caused to children by divorce, and offers advice on how "to help your little ones through a rough time". The magazine (04_03_Oha_22) further highlights the support of extended families to help raise children and suggests that South African children often have a far closer relationship with their aunts than children abroad. However, she (09_05_Sit_14) later argues that the social structures of the 21st century have produced isolation from extended families:

Gone are the days when children were raised by relatives or cared for by neighbours. You get married, decide to have children, and you and your partner are literally on your own.

TRUELOVE adds that the traditional roles of parenting are also being challenged, both at home and in the business world. She comments that, from a child's birth, fathers are expected to play a more active role and argues that involved parenting will naturally convey such deep love to children that they will feel happy and secure. Furthermore, *TRUELOVE* celebrates motherhood, and the editor is particularly thrilled with becoming a grandmother:

I ... recommitted myself to being an excellent "mother" once again – although in a different calibre. I still believe in the old-fashioned notion that children are raised by the entire family and look forward to playing an important role in my grandson[']s ... life.

In framing the importance of a child's relationship with her father, *TRUELOVE* (09_06_Sit_16; see also 16_06_Les_12) underscores the suffering of women who have lived through the trauma of their fathers disappearing from their lives. She writes that the common thread is how each of these women longed to have a meaningful relationship with their fathers and is disheartened that this phenomenon has become part of the 21st century lifestyle.

7.3.3.2 Community

In outlining community activism, *TRUELOVE* (04_03_Oha_22) highlights that cover girl Rosie Motene (actress and motivational speaker) gives her time and energy to the cause of abused women, adding that Motene also had the “courage and humanity to address prisoners – not exactly a favoured sector of our society”. Moreover, the magazine (09_03_Sit_7) appealed to the youth to embrace family and community, and the editor writes that she knows the youth are faced with challenges, but because “we believe in you, we strive to empower you through our thought-provoking articles”.

7.3.3.3 Education

TRUELOVE (08_06_Sit_14) revisits the oppression of apartheid by recalling Dr Thandi Ndlovu’s words that the youth of 1976 lived by the terms of Steve Biko: “Fight the system” because “the apartheid laws were getting so ridiculous”, and “the youth had no choice but to fight the system in any way possible”. She trusted that the youth of 2008, their parents and the community at large would take it upon themselves “to fight this anarchy before it cripples our education system”. She pleads: “Let’s change our attitudes by paying more attention to our children, listening to them with our ears and our souls.” *TRUELOVE* (09_01_Sit_np) admits that being a parent in the 21st century is not for “the faint-hearted because children are inundated with technology and fast-paced thinking, while living without the traditional safety of consistency”. Therefore, the magazine believed it was vital to lay a firm foundation for children by making sure they are ready for school – whether primary or secondary school.

7.3.3.4 Environment

TRUELOVE (09_01_Sit_7; 09_02_Sit_9) campaigns for eco-conscious living and supports the Green Revolution. She is also concerned about global warming and urges readers to come to grips with the seriousness of the matter – “to make a concerted effort to be the change that will help save our earth”. She quotes Maathai’s words:

You don’t have to be rich or give up everything to become active. Even simply using both sides of a piece of paper before recycling is conserving the environment. Unless we change course, the coming generations will inherit ...

a hungrier, less fertile, and a more unstable world Protecting the environment is ... a duty.

7.2.3.5 Society at large

Highlighting narratives about SA's high rate of crime and violence, specifically gender-based violence, *TRUELOVE* (10_06_Sit_np) emphasises that men should be protectors and providers, and that "as mothers we [should] raise our sons with the hope that they will live up to these ideals and become men with substance". In this edition, she speaks directly to the roles of men in society, takes a stand against domestic violence, and exclaims: "Enough is enough! Women and children cannot continue to suffer abuse." The magazine highlights its strong stand on gender-based violence by featuring the *Generations* actress, Kagiso Rakosa, on her cover. Moreover, in denoting the global campaign of 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children, *TRUELOVE* (14_11_Les_18) highlights the stories of women who have been ill-treated by their husbands, using the personal experience of the editor's aunt:

Apart from the screaming, she never talked to anybody, choosing to suffer in silence. I prayed that one day she would ... leave him. When she finally did, I knew I was free from keeping the abuse a secret. It tore me apart that I, too, was living their lie.

TRUELOVE implores that "we all should help our loved ones fight this sick disease".

7.3.3.6 Spirituality

The editor of *TRUELOVE* (04_12_Mah_np) illustrates the power of legacy by writing that she will never forget where she came from and urges readers to take the time (Christmas) to reflect on life, "and smile at all the warm and fuzzy memories". She (09_04_Sit_np) recognises Easter as a subdued period to focus on all things spiritual, saying that this is the right time for self-evaluation and introspection, and underlines that life is about balance. "We are physical, mental and spiritual beings. Looking after one and not the others won't do us any good." To illustrate an article about four women's spiritual journeys, she quotes Stephen Covey (American educator and author): "We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey." The role of religion and the power of spirituality are further

emphasised in the words of Dr Maya Angelou (American poet and civil rights activist): “Listen to your inner voice and in that quietude, you may hear the voice of God.” In addition, *TRUELOVE* (14_04_Tsh_np) refers to religion as a resource by arguing that, if you did not get the job you hoped for, you should not despair: “Only God knows what He planned for you. And ladies, His plan is the only one that matters. Things only end because better things are ahead. Trust me on this!”

7.3.4 Comparative summary of findings on sub-question 2

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis, the findings on the broader theme of social relations, as set out in sub-question 2, underline the relationships between *children* – as a key theme, parents and families. The significance of motherhood – and fatherhood – is highlighted, and the value of the support of an extended family in raising children is acknowledged. The value of communal bonds, as well as community activism, is underscored in *community* as a theme. *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* focus on social cohesion, inclusion and respect for diversity. In the theme of *education*, narratives in all three cases point to the importance of education, especially basic education. Moreover, the theme reflects on lost opportunities, and how these can be rectified in the 21st century. There are copious narratives about the *environment* and environmental consciousness in the editors’ letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. Appeals are made to individuals, society and countries to protect the earth. Narratives about SA’s high rates of crime and violence, with particular focus on gender-based violence, indicate that the theme of *society at large* reflects the magazine as social barometer. The acknowledgement of different sexual orientations is also underscored as a basic human right. The findings on the role of religion and *spirituality*, emphasised as an important aspect in the lives of the readers of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, conclude the findings of sub-question 2.

7.4 SUB-QUESTION 3

To interpret how the narratives in the editors’ letters reflect on the broader theme of social values and moral principles, as set out in sub-question 3, the following key themes (see section 5.8.3.3) were conceptualised:

- *Culture*
- *Friendship*
- *Humanity*
- *Self-development.*

7.4.1 SARIE on ...

7.4.1.1 Culture

In framing cultural pride and the representational force of identity, the editor of *SARIE* lists various concerts and events that inspired her, or that she had the privilege to attend. For example, there is news from London about the UKkosie festival, of which the aim is “to show you can still be Afrikaners in another country” (01_04_2_Van_8). Harnessing the symbolic, the magazine’s editor (01_09_2_Van_10) recounts her pride in being a South African when she goes to see David Kramer and Taliep Peterson’s musical *Kat and the Kings* on a London West End stage. At home, she (04_5_Van_8) honours cultural differences, and revels in the performance by Gloria Bosman – the “divine voice of Soweto” – at an Afrikaans concert. She adds that the audience welcomed Bosman with: “Give it to ’em, sista!” Moreover, *SARIE* (14_03_Van_4) delights in how, when the KKNK started in 1994, it was meant to be a “cultural bridge” between people and cultures in SA, and how successful the festival had become twenty years later.

7.4.1.2 Friendship

SARIE (01_12_1_Van_10) values the bonds and meaning of friendship and writes that true friendship should be easy and feel comfortable. For her, genuine friendship is the silent support of a sister; a schoolfriend she can catch up with later after their lives grew apart; and the unconditional acceptance of an ex-colleague. “It is the ear that listens and the eyes that see without judging and without you having to say anything.”

7.4.1.3 Humanity

SARIE (01_09_1_Van_8) highlights a modest and unassuming nature as one of the attractive qualities of humankind and writes that this is why the actor Anna-Mart van der Merwe is such a popular choice for the covers of women’s magazines: “She is

really unpretentious.” The editor (14_02_Van_6) also emphasises that Madiba “made us believe in the kindness of people”, and “that the time is always right to do good”. Furthermore, she (14_08_Van_4) elucidates Sandra Prinsloo’s outlook on life, namely the fact that “you [as an individual] are not really important in the bigger scheme of things”, as something to strive for. This outlook was despite Sandra being awarded the Order of Ikhamanga for her outstanding contribution to the South African arts and culture, and her continued opposition against racism. “She [Sandra] finds security in the simple things around her home in Kalk Bay [near Cape Town].”

7.4.1.4 Self-development

The pursuit of self-development is a constant theme in *SARIE*. For example, she (01_02_2_Rab_4) invites the readers to be inspired by their role models and says, “there’s a need for success stories – and you can make that difference. Do not leave it to others. It’s you and I who must play our part. Every South African can and must make a difference.” In underlining happiness, the magazine (01_03_1_Rab_8) quotes the French philosopher Honoré de Balzac, who said that luck basically consists of courage and hard work: “You can start now, by choosing to be content.” In addition, the editor of *SARIE* (17_02_Van_6) highlights individual agency and writes about the power of one small change, and how she admired Mandela for bringing hope to the country in times of uncertainty. She (17_05_Van_6) further advises that, if life turns into a rollercoaster ride, you must step back and look at what you can do to change things. “[H]ow we react to situations is within our control” – it takes practice to think lucidly in difficult times, but it can be done.

7.4.2 FAIRLADY on ...

7.4.2.1 Culture

FAIRLADY (09_11_Bro_14) describes herself as 100% Afro Optimistic and says that her readers know this:

But that doesn’t mean we wouldn’t publish a story like Marianne Thamm’s thought-provoking ‘Hello, my name is (-----) and I am a racist’ ... in the very same issue that we enclose our 2010 Afro Optimist Diary. We recognise our problems, and we applaud our successes. *FAIRLADY* celebrates the best that South Africa has to offer every month, and next year we hope the diary will

help you join us in celebrating our special country every single day. Because it's the BEST.

7.4.2.2 Friendship

The findings suggest that *FAIRLADY* values friendship in different ways. For example, the editor (09_06_Bro_14) comments that the latest *Summer Fashion & Beauty* supplement “is so beautiful and on-trend that if that’s not enough to get you out of your chair and striding through the streets with a bunch of girlfriends, then nothing will!” She further highlights the supporting role of friends in disease and illness. Framing health, and particularly breast cancer, she (14_10_Bro_11) repeats a cancer patient’s advice: “Allow your friends and family to love, support and feed you. You’ll be stunned by the universe’s infinite capacity to care.” She adds that, even if your life has not been affected by breast cancer, allowing friends and family close to you is in any case worth doing.

7.4.2.3 Humanity

FAIRLADY (01_09_1_Bel_np) acknowledges vulnerability, and writes that life is

all about making mistakes because that’s what makes us grow. The victories and triumphs are sweet, but it is the bitterness of failure that makes us strong. And, more importantly, makes us human.

She (01_09_2_Bel_np) points out that the test of a civilised society is if it can share other people’s happiness and can extend compassion, “even to its most undeserving brothers and sisters”. She underlines that “*Schadenfreude* [malicious joy] may taste sweet at the time. But it all too often leaves a bitter taste.”

7.4.2.3 Self-development

FAIRLADY (01_01_3_Bel_6) emphasises that readers have the power to change their lifestyles and

move from a feeling of lack and deprivation to a feeling of abundance and fulfilment. Money ebbs and flows in our lives. What should remain constant is our realisation that abundance is our spiritual birth right.

In addition, the editor (01_05_2_Bel_np) stated that “success is as much about being prepared to take risks, to push harder, further, faster than anyone else around you,

and about developing a thick skin". *FAIRLADY* (01_12_2_Bel_np) also points to individual agency, and the fact that, in

... turbulent times, it becomes all too easy just to sit back and blame everything on 'them', to expect 'them' to change, to forget to ask ourselves what it is we could change about the way we do or see or think about things.

The power of choice, specifically the choice to be happy, is highlighted (15_03_Bro_9) in a reflection on Paul Dolan's (American scholar of behaviourism) book, *The secret to happiness*:

Dolan believes that society has taught us to focus on the wrong things in our search for happiness – 'we pay attention to what we think makes us happy, ... rather than what actually does' ... In order to be truly happy, ... we need to ... make our decisions based on the everyday reality rather than the idea.

In further emphasising the role of happiness, *FAIRLADY* (17_06_Bro_10) notes that Denmark reclaimed its position as "The World's Happiest Country, snatching it back from Switzerland". And "apparently it's all down to the Danish concept of *hygge* [fun]". Although the editor finds it hard to define *hygge*, for her it seems to "describe a prevailing sense of cosiness and calm. It's about friends and family and hunkering down together with people you love in a relaxed, warm space, away from all the craziness". It is also "more about attitude than circumstance – enjoying simple pleasures as they arise rather than creating the perfect stage set, then sitting back and waiting for 'the feels' (as the teens say) to arrive". Likewise, she lists ten rules to achieve happiness, taken from Meik Wiking's *The little book of hygge*: set the mood, be present, treat yourself, share, be grateful, don't brag, get comfy, ditch drama, build relationships, and create a safe place.

7.4.3 TRUELOVE on ...

7.4.3.1 Culture

TRUELOVE (01_10_Dhl_np) responds to her readers' requests to read more about cultural issues and acknowledges "reconciling our customs and cultural obligations with a modern lifestyle will remain a challenge for many years to come" and argues this is particularly relevant in relation to traditional weddings. The editor addresses

this in *Custom or conflict* and, in giving a platform to diverse opinions, the finding is that *TRUELOVE* clearly acts as social barometer.

7.4.3.2 Friendship

In analysing friendship and exploring the challenges of friendship – particularly in complex relationships – *TRUELOVE* (03_06_Dhl_np) examines “the problem of needy friends who drain us of our emotional resources” and calls it “a sensitive and difficult issue that calls into question the point at which a friend’s need for support becomes unreasonable and selfish”. The editor cautions that, “in today’s world of bonding, sisters need to know where to draw the line”. Despite the above, *TRUELOVE* (14_08_Les_12) describes friendship as the mutual affection and trust between people. “It gets stronger with time when nurtured with tender love, encouraged with words of wisdom and truth, and nourished with gentle kindness.” Referring to her appointment as editor, she [Dudi Mvimbi Leshabane] hopes that “we’ll develop this special friendship and take this brand to greater heights, together”. She also highlights important qualities of friendship:

In the past two months I’ve been with the magazine as acting editor, you’ve applauded me for some of the decisions I’ve made and criticised me for others. For me, that’s what forms a good basis of a great friendship, when criticism is constructive and intended to build. It’s important that we are honest with one another.

7.4.3.3 Humanity

In emphasising a work ethic, which is an important trait of humanity, *TRUELOVE* (04_11_Mah_np) pays homage to nurses as “the extraordinary women who heal the hurt and keep our country’s hospitals going, even in the most desperately inadequate circumstances”.

7.4.3.4 Self-development

In emphasising self-development, *TRUELOVE* (04_09_Mah_np) salutes women who “made it against all odds, at a time when this country didn’t take kindly to black sisters rising up and becoming independent”. The editor adds that these women “refused to let SA’s vicious apartheid laws stand in the way of their success – *amaqhawekazi* [heroines] indeed!” Clarifying positive value systems, the editor (04_12_Mah_np)

emphasises, e.g., the words of a “wise professor” [who] once said: “We should concentrate on our favourite passions – things that if everything else were lost and only they remained, our lives would still be full,” and adds that if you don’t know what’s critical to your happiness, you should make the time to find out”. In addition, she (14_02_Tsh_np) recognises the value of self-esteem, saying she

is not an emotional guru, but I’ll tell you this: stop trying to get people to validate your presence. A divine force chose you to come through into this world – honour it by giving yourself some love.

Sharing life lessons in realising personal fulfilment, the *TRUELOVE* editor (14_03_Tsh_np) also comments that

part of living authentically is realising that you don’t have a confirmed departure date, ... every moment ... is a gift. When you put things off ... before you know it, life has passed you by and it’s too late to fulfil your heart’s desire.

She concludes (see also 14_04_Tsh_np):

Like many of you, I’ve used my responsibilities and financial trappings as an excuse not to feel bad about not doing what my heart desires. What I’m becoming aware of is that I won’t have peace until I pursue my dreams and use everything at my disposal to make them a reality.

Positive thinking also is underlined in *TRUELOVE*. For example, the magazine (17_01_Les_6) points out that “life coaches agree that if you have a positive attitude towards work, you can achieve almost anything”, adding “that a support network is important and can mean a world of difference”. The editor likens this to “the unparalleled backing from you, our reader”, in positioning *TRUELOVE* as the most-read magazine in SA. In an editorial on the book by Somizi Mhlongo (choreographer and media personality), *Dominoes: Unbreakable spirit*, *TRUELOVE* (17_09_Les_8) admires his self-motivation and ability to “keep positive despite the tough environment”. She believes Somizi’s book has a chapter everyone can relate to.

7.4.4 Comparative summary of findings on sub-question 3

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis, the findings on the broader theme of social values and moral principles, as set out in sub-question 3, firstly acknowledge the values and morals of different cultural groups under the key theme of *culture*. The

narratives in this theme speak to accepting cultural diversity, while discussions on culture and arts are embraced. The importance of literacy is further underlined in the above theme. In *friendship* as a key theme, the narratives revolve around the importance of friendship in times of adversity, while showing compassion for humankind is underlined in *humanity* as a key theme. Narratives in the latter theme reflect on the qualities of humanity and recognise the vulnerability of people. Lastly, the key theme, *self-development*, reflects on the re-engineering of the self and showing a mindfulness of social values and moral principles.

7.5 SUB-QUESTION 4

To interpret how the narratives in the editors' letters reflect on the broader theme of the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser, as set out in sub-question 4, the following key themes (see section 5.8.3.4 for a description of the themes) were conceptualised:

- *Editorial philosophy*
- *Readership*
- *Strategy*

7.5.1 SARIE on ...

7.5.1.1 Editorial philosophy

Keeping to the original vision and mission of *SARIE*, the editor (01_03_2_Rab_np) compares the magazine to a trusted friend – the “Spreukevrou” [woman from Proverbs] – and writes that *SARIE* is much more than a magazine; “she is your soulmate, the place where you hang out, and where you find shelter”. With inspiration as motto, *SARIE* (01_07_1_Van_4) wants to motivate her readers, form new friendships, and look at SA and her people with fresh eyes. She hopes to achieve this with a new series titled *Ek en my plek* [Me and my place]. *SARIE*'s role as trusted friend is a common finding in the editors' letters. For example, the magazine (04_7_Van_10) delights in the fact that a reader states she has been part of *SARIE* for a long time, and when asked what she [the editor] thinks is the difference between *SARIE* and other women's magazines, she (14_07_Van_6) pins it down to a strong

emotional connection between herself and the readers: “*SARIE* is much more than a magazine.” Moreover, she (12_07_Van_14) looks back to the earlier issues and finds

a stylish magazine and a stylish reader: a woman with a strong sense of self-worth and a desire to talk about her people, her country and what she cherishes. And to know about things new and different; the stories beyond her boundaries and frame of reference. Positive, forward-thinking, inquisitive, empathetic, proud South African [*sic*], generous.

She highlights that, after more than 60 years, the above still comprise the spirit and unique characteristics of the *SARIE* reader. Celebrating the magazine’s 65th birthday, the editor (14_07_Van_6) comments that many of the earlier articles could still stand proudly in *SARIE*.

7.5.1.2 Readership

Emphasising the influence of her readers, *SARIE* (01_02_2_Rab_4) asks if “you can imagine what a positive effect it would have if every one of the 805 000 readers start each new day by making the world a better place?” The power of readership was underlined when *SARIE* won the Sappi/Pica award in 2001 for the best women’s magazine in SA. The editor (01_11_2_Van_np) contributes this success to her readers: “Because in essence, a magazine is the reflection of her readers and their world.” Seven years later, *SARIE* is again crowned as a leading women’s magazine – this time as the Best SA General Magazine – and the editor (09_01_Van_10) acknowledges her loyal readers’ support in winning the award. Moreover, the devotion of her readers is further underscored when *SARIE Kos* is launched “amidst overwhelming competition” and is welcomed “like a new female friend” (11_07_Van_8) – proof, once again, that *SARIE* understands the demo- and psychographics of the readers and acknowledges them in cultivating the magazine’s success.

7.5.1.3 Strategy

There is no doubt that *SARIE*’s business decisions centre around the role of the magazine as trusted friend. For example, the magazine (04_7_Van_10) started a special section (more than 25 pages per issue) focusing on the “self”, suggesting that this will “enrich our lives” and make the individual feel good about herself. Making

dreams come true – and implementing this as a business decision – was also part of *SARIE*'s strategy as a representational force. The editor (14_10_Van_22) recalls how she visited a media group in Brazil and was inspired by the finalists in a “cover-girl” competition – all readers of the magazine. “I could not wait to get back to SA and offer a competition for every woman and *SARIE* reader who deserves to be a cover face.”

7.5.2 FAIRLADY on ...

7.5.2.1 Editorial philosophy

FAIRLADY (02_03_1_Don_6) emphasises that she publishes articles that inform and make you look at the world in a different way, and that she plans to keep on doing this. She believes: “By sharing our viewpoints, we’ll be closer to understanding one another and the world around us.” The editor (04_11_Don_np) further acknowledges that the magazine is read by different generations; that “many of you first read your mother’s or grandmother’s copies”, and that *FAIRLADY* has always had wide appeal across generations. However, by growing and changing with the times, *FAIRLADY* constantly attracted new and younger readers. Highlighting her winning of the Sappi/Pica award for the best general interest magazine for the second year in a row, the editor (04_12_Don_np) echoes the judges’ comments to describe her editorial philosophy: “A gutsy magazine that delivers good, cutting-edge journalism; breaking the mould; offering more substance than similar magazines and being relevant to the current South African situation.”

7.5.2.2 Readership

Emphasising the characteristics of a successful magazine – and the significance of her readers – *FAIRLADY* (02_03_1_Don_6) took stock of “where the magazine started and where it is now”. The editor commented: “Whichever way we choose to express our inner-selves [sic] outwardly, an understanding of who we are intrinsically, and knowledge of our strong points make a good place to start”. In doing this, *FAIRLADY* identified her strong points and “we have been hard at work to ensure that the way we look reflects who we are”. She does this by refining and updating the look of *FAIRLADY* by using classical and timeless design elements in a way that the magazine hopes will enhance the reading experience. However, she adds that a beautiful image is only truly beautiful if it reflects an inner core of substance and integrity. She hopes this is what the edition reflects, namely:

A magazine that offers a lot to read, with articles of real substance and relevance, and wonderfully inspiring pages filled with useful information, all packaged in an enticing way that will leave you waiting with anticipation for the next issue.

7.5.2.3 Strategy

FAIRLADY joined with a cosmetic company to accentuate the symbolism of both brands. For example, the magazine (01_03_1_bel_np) formed a partnership with Clarins in search of the Most Dynamisante Woman, and tells the moving and inspirational stories of unsung heroines. With the endorsements of brands, consumerism comes to the fore, e.g. when the beauty and fashion editors of *FAIRLADY* “jetted off to the eternally fashionable island of Mauritius” to shoot a fashion and beauty supplement:

The sun shone, the models smiled, the clothes, the bags, the shoes, the beauty products, the make-up – everything was simply the best. And so is the result. Now, back to the pleasurable things in life: sit back, relax, look, lust ... and then go shopping! (01_09_2_Bel_np).

The magazine (04_09_Don_np) also teamed up with Lux beauty products to bring out “the star in one of you”. And “in this covergirl [*sic*] competition, even if you don’t aspire to be on a magazine cover, you could win fabulous prizes”.

7.5.3 TRUELOVE on ...

7.5.3.1 Editorial philosophy

The findings show that the editorial philosophy of *TRUELOVE* has not changed since the relaunch of the magazine in the 1980s. In fact, when celebrating the magazine’s 40th year, the editor (12_06_Tsh_8-10) quotes Dhlomo: “We’ve been inspired and directed by your needs, dreams, aspirations, triumphs and trials”, and says that “these words are as relevant in 2012 as they were in 2002”. She adds:

At the risk of sounding dramatic, I want to remind you that what you have in your hands is a collector’s item of this iconic magazine. Ten years from now, what’s in this issue will reflect where we were mentally as a nation. Owning this magazine makes you a part of history, our history.

The editor of *TRUELOVE* reiterates her commitment to bring the readers her best content and invites feedback:

We would all love to hear from you and receive your valued feedback about our content – what you enjoy about it, or your concerns and suggestions. I hope you will enjoy paging through this issue and sink your teeth into our top-notch content.

In cementing her foundation as an alpha South African women’s magazine, *TRUELOVE* continues to be

inspired by your dreams, needs and aspirations. We would like to salute the heroes of 1976 who paved the way, the fathers who know that only paying maintenance doesn’t make you a dad, and the ordinary women of Mzansi who wake up every day, feed kids, put up with nasty bosses and continue to love their men.

7.5.3.2 Readership

TRUELOVE (01_02_Dhl_np) entered the 21st century with a new look, was grateful for her readers’ positive response, and revelled in the high sale figures as “the best measure of reader satisfaction”. Also: “As this issue [January 2001] is set to break previous sales records, there is no doubt in our minds we’re giving you all a woman needs.” A few months later, *TRUELOVE* (01_07_Dhl_np) celebrated “record sales of 138 000” – again a strong indication that “our readers are finding us a compelling reflection of their concerns and values”. In fact, in September 2001, when *TRUELOVE* (01_11_Dhl_np) broke all previous records, “selling more than 140 000 copies”, the magazine followed this up with

the biggest [edition] ever: 340 pages of all you need as an empowered, fun-loving woman, including a fabulous, free 120-page supplement filled with fashion and beauty ideas for the upcoming summer season.

Emphasising her influence in the South African magazine market, *TRUELOVE* (02_06_Dhl_22) celebrated her 30th birthday with the *ADvantage* Magazine Awards recognising it “as not only the best women’s magazine in SA, but also the best consumer magazine in all categories”. The editor added: “Our biggest ‘thank you’ goes to you, our readers, because everything in TRUE LOVE is about you.” At 38

years of age, *TRUELOVE* (09_09_Sit_12) “ha[d] not lost her touch” and won the *Sunday Times* Generation Next accolade for the “Coolest Female Magazine”. At 40, she (12_06_Tsh_8-10) was rejoicing with “thousands of Twitter followers ... planning the biggest 40th birthday party Joburg has seen in a while, and ... continue [sic] to serve you, our dear loyal reader”.

By inviting the readers to celebrate and dance with her, *TRUELOVE* concluded:

Through the many tragedies our country and we as individuals have been through, the one lesson I hope we’ve all learned is to kick off our shoes, swish our hips and dance to the music of life. Dance to Jozi’s soulful thunderstorms, Durban’s bunny chows, Sundays at Mzoli’s in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth’s bewitching winds and Mpumalanga’s undulating valleys.

7.5.3.3 Strategy

TRUELOVE (01_02_Dhl_np) promised to update her content with new sections reflecting the latest trends. For example, she added a three-page décor section and became “the print media partner of the continent’s leading model search, the M-Net Face of Africa”. In addition, *TRUELOVE* (01_03_Dhl_np) launched *True Vitality*, “our first supplement for 2001 ... free for you to enjoy with this issue”. In addition, “as with all TRUE LOVE supplements, it has loads of ideas to inspire you to look and feel better than ever”. Aligning with her editorial philosophy, the *TRUELOVE* editor (01_08_Dhl_np) pays tribute “to ordinary women who’ve turned obstacles into extraordinary opportunities” with the financial support of Revlon and Old Mutual Unit Trust. Moreover, the magazine (01_10_Dhl_np) is “always proud” to be associated with the Estée Lauder Group’s international breast cancer awareness campaign – “and this year we chose to add our voice to this campaign with a feature on the facts and myths about breast cancer”. In the “thick of winter”, she (03_06_Dhl_np) “found a wonderful way to beat the blues” by establishing the new *TRUELOVE* Cookery School, run by food editor Dorah Sitole in association with Pick n Pay, and offered the readers “fabulous hands-on courses to bring out the perfect hostess in you!”

7.5.4 Comparative summary of findings of sub-question 4

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis, the broader theme of the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser is emphasised in all three cases. In

highlighting the *editorial philosophy* of the magazine as key theme, various topics and ideas were found in the editors' letters that align with the vision and the mission of the magazine. The findings of *readership* as a central theme illustrate a clear understanding of the demo- and psychographics of the readers in each of the cases, and acknowledge the importance of the reader in cultivating the magazine's successful future. In all three of the alpha South African women's magazines selected for this study, the key theme of *strategy* relates to specific business plans to enhance the magazine's success and profitability in an increasingly difficult local market, while the importance of the readers as consumers is highlighted.

7.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the findings from the QCA – employed as the second research method in this study – of the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* were presented. The analysis reflected on the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to December 2017.

The sections above focused on the answers to the sub-questions, and the findings were presented according to their relevance and connectedness to the key themes of the study. In this analysis, the broader question of transformation and democracy was first explored, and the key themes of *achievements*, *challenges*, *democratic icons*, *empowerment*, *representation* and *spirit of the time* were conceptualised. The second question focused on social relations as the broader theme, and explored the findings on *children*, *community*, *education*, *environment*, *society at large* and *spirituality* as key themes. The third sub-question investigated the broader theme of social values and moral principles, and *culture*, *friendship*, *humanity* and *self-development* were discussed as findings in the key themes presented. The fourth, and last, sub-question focused on the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser, with *editorial philosophy*, *readership* and *strategy* being identified as the key themes and presented.

The findings were organised on a case-by-case basis, and according to the specific sub-question. At the end of the section detailing the specific sub-question, the discussion led to a brief comparison of the findings of the cases in relation to the specific sub-question.

The next chapter analyses and discusses the overall findings of this study by taking the two research methods – namely the Historiography of the selected women’s magazines and the QCA of the editors’ letters – into account to establish the answer to the MRQ, namely:

What are the messages of the editors, as reflected in the respective editors’ letters, of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of three alpha South African women’s magazines, from within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism, during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017?

CHAPTER 8

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

*When I write it feels like I'm carving bone.
It feels like I'm creating my own face, my own heart.*

G Anzaldúa, 1999 (in Pelias, 2011:659)

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research findings presented in the previous two chapters (Chapter 6 and Chapter 7) by answering the MRQ.

The aim of this study was to establish whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the specified timeframe in a young, democratic SA are reflected in the editors' letters of three South African magazines. To realise this goal, the study was guided by the following MRQ:

- What are the messages of the editors, as reflected in the respective editors' letters, of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of three alpha South African women's magazines, from within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism, during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017?

The following sub-questions were addressed:

- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about transformation and democracy in SA from 2001 to 2017?
- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about social relations within this period in SA?
- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about social values and moral principles within this period in SA?

- What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser within this period in SA?

In pursuit of the above, I first offered the Historiography (Chapter 6) of the three selected cases. I then presented the findings of the research questions as reflected in the QCA (Chapter 7), during which I searched for meanings in the key themes of the editors' letters in line with the research questions as they related to each case.

Therefore, the discussion of the findings in this chapter is first presented according to the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. The second part of this chapter contains the discussion of the QCA. The Historiography and the QCA are discussed within the context of the literature review and the theoretical paradigms to triangulate the findings. To contextualise the analysis and discussion, a succinct summary of the literature review and the theoretical paradigms is first provided.

8.2 SUMMARY OF GLOBAL STUDIES

To reiterate: Ferguson's (1983) study of the social role of magazines is regarded as the first in-depth analysis of Production-Based Research within the context of women's magazines. Her research is followed by that of Johnson (1993), on women's roles within the magazine industry, and adds to Production-Based Research, while Reed's (1996:271) investigation of women's careers in the magazine industry proves that editors seem to be listening to readers' views and that they [the readers] "will be heard, now perhaps as never before" (Gough-Yates, 2003:15-16). McRobbie (1996) explores the relationship between production and consumption in magazine publishing, and Oates (1997) identified a key point to be "dimensions of tension between editorial staff, advertisers, and readers that were constant and ... played out against a highly competitive environment of rival magazines and fluctuating sales". Moreover, the studies of White (1970), Waller (1987), Endres and Lueck (1995), Heberle (1997), Greenfield and Reid (1998), Zuckerman (1998) and Sakamoto (1999) are of importance. For example, White's analysis of women's magazines relates the development of the industry to socio-economic and technological change and shows how these factors influence the scope and characteristics of magazine content; Waller traces women's magazines to the start of the 20th century and focuses on the

economics of the industry, the philosophies of the editors, and the relationship between women's magazines and the development of advertising; while Endres and Lueck claim that women's magazines have mirrored the changing roles and interests of women since the early days of the American Republic. Likewise, Heberle contends that editors establish a degree of intimacy with the readers as a conversational strategy, and that they adapt their conversation to an ideology of consumption, advice and femininity that responds to the existing hegemonic social structure. In addition, Greenfield and Reid surmise that the distinction between editorials, articles and commercial messages is blurred in its drive to engineer consumption; Zuckerman argues that magazines are profit-orientated and embedded in consumer culture; while Sakamoto posits that magazines reflect changes in women, and reinforce these changes by providing knowledge, support for new identities, and an imaginary community. I further regard McKay's (2000) detailing of the business of magazine publishing, Frederick's (2000) discussion of the central place of women's magazines in the literary and intellectual production of Japan, and Skalli's (2000) research on the way society and media products interact in Morocco, as key.

Importantly, and as discussed in section 3.4.2, I argue that Gough-Yates's (2003) examination of the transformation in the production, advertising and marketing practices of women's magazines sets the benchmark for Production-Based Research at the start of the 21st century. I concur that the economic practices of magazine publishing can only be understood when women's magazines are analysed in terms of the societal conditions in which they exist. Johnson and Prijatelj's (2007) findings, on how magazines use information to build relationships with their specific audiences to meet political and socio-economic needs, as well as Stephenson's (2007:613-620) conclusion that a magazine can be regarded as "a snapshot of the tensions in a society going through a period of social and economic transition", are of further importance. Likewise, Davies (2009a:v) notes that editors "were more interested influencing culture than reporting on it", while Frith and Feng (2009) find that women's magazines are understood as socio-economic phenomena, and Ytre-Arne (2011) underscores the political relevance of women's magazines as sources of beliefs about class, family structures and a woman's role in society. Duffy (2013:65) contends that the "changing economies and technologies of cultural production in the early 21st century necessitates a fundamental reconfiguration of media work"; Siddiqui (2014)

concludes that women's magazines are an effective medium to popularise ideas and beliefs; while Farias (2015) finds that women's magazines play an important role in the production and reproduction of hegemonic cultural norms – once again proof of the women's magazine as social barometer.

8.3 SUMMARY OF LOCAL STUDIES

As highlighted in section 3.5.2, Thompson and De Klerk (2002) state that magazines form a significant part of the mass media and constantly reflect and influence beliefs, values and actions in society. Sanger (2007) further illuminates the role of editors and magazines as creators of meaning and concludes that editors aim to produce magazines that fit comfortably into and reflect existing societal norms, rather than challenge societal norms, while Van der Westhuizen's (2013:57-58) analysis of *SARIE*'s editor's letters in the magazine's 60th anniversary year emphasises the magazine's "commemorative content on its Afrikaner nationalist history". Sieberhagen (2016) concludes that messages of empowerment are prevalent in *SARIE*'s editors' letters.

Moreover, Rabe's (1985) historical review of *SARIE* forms an integral part of the appraisal of case-related research. Spies's (1992a, 1992b, 1992c) detailing of the development of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* further adds to the Historiography of the three selected women's magazines, while Terre Blanche (1997) argues that the analysis of conversations is a legitimate historical activity and contributes in a significant way to historical records by uncovering the norms and value systems existing in society at a specific time. Likewise, Murray (1998:84) draws attention to "some of the ways in which reality and experience are narrativised" in South African women's magazines; Donnelly (2002) investigates women's magazines as development markers in society; while Ndzamela (2002:74-76) finds that the feature writers "touch a cultural nerve that goes beyond the individual reader", and consequently offer greater insights into wider societal aspirations. In addition, Laden (2003; see also Narunsky-Laden, 2007, 2011) posits that women's magazines function as indicators of, and contributors to, the dynamics of societal change in SA. De Vaal's (2007:iii) analysis of magazines as "sociocultural journals" reflects on "accounts or collections of the major trains of thought representative of a specific

context and time frame”, whereas Boshoff’s (2009) study of political news in *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* during the first ten years of democracy adds understanding to this study’s premise.

Other studies of historical importance are Kruger’s (1991) exploration of the relationship between Afrikaans women and Afrikaner nationalism in *Die Boerevrou*; Van Rensburg’s (2012) confirmation of the above women’s magazine as an authoritative source of cultural history; and Claassen’s (1998) emphasis of the role of magazines in society. Moreover, Ferreira (2011) contends that magazines published during apartheid provided a medium for black women, who were also the writers of letters, short stories and social commentary, whereas Venter (2014) argues that the earliest local women’s magazines may have influenced its readers’ views of race relations during the first half of the 20th century. All the above are testament to the fact that the political and socio-economic influences of magazines cannot be underestimated.

Although Botma’s (2011) analysis of *Die Burger* is not a magazine studies-related research project, it is of relevance as it explores the political economy of media transformation by focusing on the oldest newspaper established by Naspers. In conclusion, I argue that Rabe’s (2016) research on *Huisgenoot* establishes a critical contextual link between the past and the present in understanding the magazine as a phenomenon of its time by understanding its history.

8.4 SUMMARY OF CPE, ADVANCING TO CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ECONOMY

As outlined in section 4.4., PE indicates a shared concern with the politics and economics of any given institution, including the mass media. However, Laughey (2007) argues that, in the case of CPE, the primary interest is in the economic. He explains that, whereas ideology and hegemony are associated with how the ideas and values of dominant cultures (the ruling elite) are encoded in media texts, CPE argues that this process of ideological reproduction cannot be fully understood without analysing the economic context within which it takes place, and the pressures and determinations exerted by this context.

Thus, it can be argued that CPE is driven by concerns regarding media power, the hegemonic activities of dominant firms and social concerns, whereas *Contemporary Political Economy* is usually treated as a separate field of study in traditional media economics research (Albarran, 2010:27-28). Albarran also proposes that the many forces affecting media markets in the 21st century challenge researchers to think in different ways and ultimately to develop new approaches and to refine theoretical assumptions. Graham (2006:493-519) supports the above and argues for a contemporary framework to understand the political economies of communication in the 21st century. He adds that political economies have changed to such an extent that an almost total reassessment is required to comprehend the changes.

Thus, as proposed in section 4.4, I argue that CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, offers a position from which media institutions and their contexts (in this case the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*) can be analysed, as communication and society are mutually constituted (Mosco, 1996:73).

8.5 SUMMARY OF FEMINISM

As discussed in section 4.5, Feminism is the advocacy of women's rights and incorporates the struggle for political and legal rights, equal opportunities, sexual autonomy, and the right to self-determination (Parry & Karam, 2001:383). Furthermore, Feminism is delineated, as noted by Carter and Steiner (in Karam, 2008:307-308), as a "political philosophy and social-political movement marked by an emancipatory concern to explain and overcome subordination and oppression of all kinds".

It is further argued that feminist media theories and their critical application offer a variety of ways to expand our knowledge on gender issues. Therefore, and as surmised by Govender et al. (2014:2280), feminist theories offer a base from which to question and expand our epistemologies, ideals and values, and our culture. Moreover, feminist media theories place women and their experiences at the centre of the study of communication and the production of theory. For example, one of the goals of feminist media research is to question the way in which gender is encoded in media texts (in this study, the ELWM).

Also relevant to this study, which is situated within the field of Production-Based Research of magazine journalism, is Van Zoonen's (in Laughey, 2007:100) argument that feminist media theory can be distinguished from other theories of the media, given its categorical focus on "analysing gender as a mechanism that structures material and symbolic worlds and our experiences of them", which is again applicable to the analysis of the ELWM in this study.

Moreover, Womanism – classified as a sub-section of Feminism – is often used to analyse black women's literature, as it marks the place where race, class, gender and sexuality intersect. As Hudson-Weems (in Mpofu, 2017:74) argues: "Womanism is a theory that identifies the ethnicity of the African woman, and her cultural identity relating to her ancestral land base, namely Africa." Thus, as outlined in section 4.5.1.1, and particularly for the discussion of the editors' letters in *TRUELOVE*, I argue that it is imperative to consider Womanism as a feminist approach that developed following the realisation that African women have different life experiences from those of their Western counterparts (Mpofu, 2017; see also Bosch, 2013).

Thus, as proposed in section 4.5, I contend that Feminism is important because the study aims to understand what the messages in the editors' letters of the three selected alpha women's magazines are concerning the political, social and economic ethos in SA and, more specifically, whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the specified timeframe in a young, democratic SA are reflected in the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

8.6 DISCUSSION OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

Historiography is recognised "as the writing of history, including the meta-level of historical thinking", or "a study of how history has been written" (Rabe, 2020:9). Rabe also refers to Historiography as an attempt to understand a so-called "past reality", which I argue is one of the foci of this study.

Thus, as discussed in section 5.2.2, I employed Historiography as the first research method in this study. This was done by examining a large collection of data pertaining to *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* that I archived from the start of my academic career and supplemented during the study. The findings in Chapter 6 were presented

as a chronologic review of the origin and development of the three selected titles; first *SARIE*, then *FAIRLADY*, and then *TRUELOVE*. The sub-sections focused on the launch and history of each of the titles and gave an overview of the development of the respective title from 2001 to 2017 (the timeframe of the study). The analysis and discussion in this chapter follows the same presentation and highlights salient points in the Historiography of each of the cases.

8.6.1 SARIE

I argue that Rabe's (1985) chronicling of *SARIE* from its launch until the 1980s is the first research project to illustrate the likelihood of a South African magazine as a social barometer. The significance of *SARIE* is clearly detailed against the background of early South African women's magazines and, at the time, similar overseas magazines. Furthermore, as noted by Rabe, *SARIE* was not only Naspers's first attempt at entering the local women's magazine market, but it was likewise argued that the interests of Afrikaans women had grown to such an extent that they needed a magazine that fulfilled their practical needs, and at the same time offered stimulating ideas and reading matter. Spies (1992a:378-387) points out that, in contrast to the company's earlier magazines, which were established for the "upcoming Afrikaner culture", it was spelt out that *SARIE* had to make a profit to survive. He also links the launch of *SARIE* with the National Party winning the national elections in 1948: "The election was seen as a demonstration of the Afrikaners' power and influence, of which the world, advertisers included, had to take note of."

As mentioned before, *SARIE*'s launch exceeded all expectations and its circulation figures doubled within a year. It is further argued that the high circulation figures can be linked to the appointment of Le Roux as the editor. According to Spies, Le Roux knew that high readership figures would be vital for the success of the magazine and that, as an editor, one had to compromise between what was desirable and what was serviceable on virtually a daily basis. He further points out that, for a women's magazine to be successful [and profitable] in a mass market called for journalists with the ability to explain the intricacies of life, science, technology, philosophy and religion in understandable language to their readers. By publishing the work of Afrikaans writers, *SARIE* also gave impetus to the Afrikaans literary world, as well as contributed to the Afrikaans language in creating new words for English cookery terms. Sixty

years later, Van Breda (in Wright, 2012:29) emphasises that, apart from the crucial distinction of *SARIE* being for Afrikaans-speaking women, “the magazine is a haven for readers of all colours, and *SARIE* of today is contemporary and stylish”.

Against the paradigm of Feminism as one of the chosen theoretical frameworks for this study, it is significant that Le Roux (in Spies, 1992a) contends that *SARIE* was never in the vanguard of supporters of women’s rights. However, he later said that *SARIE* brought the work of women leaders to the fore, without turning this coverage into a crusade. When De Villiers was appointed editor in 1983, celebrity covers and a mix of “supersex and scripture” (Kruger in Wright, 2012:29) sent the readership soaring. De Villiers’s addition of features about intimate matters and marriage problems built on what Le Roux considered important topics in the early years of *SARIE*. However, the *SARIE* of the late 1980s was forthright in her discussions not only of sexual health, but also in bringing societal matters, e.g. child abuse, to the fore (Spies, 1992a:385-387). Under De Villiers’s editorship, *SARIE*’s motto became *’n Vriendin vir elke vrou*, and the tone changed to that of an informal conversation with a friend. Spies also noted that, during De Villiers’s editorship, *SARIE*’s readership moved from an exclusive white readership to incorporating women of all races. “She wanted to be a friend for every woman, regardless of race or age.”

One of the biggest changes in the life of *SARIE* happened just after the start of the 21st century, when the magazine changed from a fortnightly publication to a monthly publication. As discussed in Chapter 2, this was due to various factors, including rising printing costs and changes in the local magazine market (see also Hattingh, 2002:8; Rossouw, 2005). Van Breda welcomed the new frequency, announcing that it was part of a long-term strategy for a new *SARIE*, and that the magazine would add more value with “extra supplements and exciting features”. Then again, Addison (2003) points out that the “dramatic facelift” could not have come any sooner. It was imperative to modernise *SARIE*, or face falling circulation. The publishers conceded that the magazine was losing readers who were deserting it for English titles, and restyled *SARIE* as a “now” magazine. Thus, in line with *SARIE*’s new strategy, the publishers launched the first brand extension, *SARIE Bruid*, in 2007, followed by *SARIE Kreatief*, *SARIE Kos* and *SARIE Woon*. The success of *SARIE Kos*, focusing on proudly South African food, led to the publication of an English *SARIE Food* in

2014. Thus, it can be argued that *SARIE Food* is testament to *SARIE*'s clear understanding of modern-day Afrikaans cooking and entertaining.

Despite the challenges facing the local magazine industry, coupled with the steadily declining circulation figures in the 21st century, *SARIE* maintained the number one position amongst South African women's magazines. Lillie (2006:40) ascribes this to the quality of the editorial, and the magazine's relevance and resonance with its readers. Van Breda emphasises: "We ... speak to our readers in a manner that is warm, inviting, and energetic – thus picking up on the specific character traits of the *SARIE* consumer." She adds that the myriad of new titles entering the local market gave *SARIE* the opportunity to move to "a slightly more youthful market". Van Breda also highlights the *SARIE* reader's positive outlook and pride in being South African. Lillie further claims that it is *SARIE*'s "tight" brand positioning and the sense of community that connects the reader to the title, and argues that *SARIE* has found a "happy balance between intellect and inspiration". Van Breda (2009) reiterates the above sense of belonging and close connection to the reader: "[W]e share ... pain and disappointments ... we taste joy and victory ... we tell endearing South African stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary things."

Analysing the success of *SARIE*, Angela Richardson (in the Media Reporter, 2012:22-24) suggests that the success of Afrikaans women's magazines is that they are more inwardly focused than their English counterparts: "Afrikaans titles are aware of the world but bring it back here and don't try to be like the rest of the world." Afrikaans titles also have a much wider age market than the English glossies. According to Gordon (in the Media Reporter, 2012), "Afrikaans publishers are careful not to dissect their market They haven't chosen a particular life stage", which means that the Afrikaans titles can maintain themselves because they cater to more women across more age groups. Moreover, Hyam (in the Media Reporter, 2012) comments that the advertising in Afrikaans magazines is "perfect for their market ... achievable and appropriate". This comment about *SARIE*'s advertising strategy coincides with Van Breda (in Nevill, 2013) saying that she does not think of herself as an editor; she is more of a brand director for each of the titles under her care. Moreover, and in line with *SARIE*'s early innovations and the technological advances of the 21st century, Van Breda and her team show that *SARIE* is not reticent about embracing new technology and was the first to launch a successful e-commerce fashion platform:

“We had to take the brand into the future.” Likewise, I argue that the demographics of *SARIE*'s readers indicate how the magazine's focus shifted from its inception, and how the magazine can be regarded as a social barometer of its time. At the end of this study's timeframe (2017), *SARIE* described herself “as the glossy magazine of choice for the Afrikaans-speaking woman with a modern view of the world. We tell typical South African stories that keep her feeling good about herself and her world” (www.media24.com).

8.6.2 FAIRLADY

It is argued that Naspers was pressurised by advertisers to start a glossy English women's magazine, printed on the rotogravure printing press that was imported for *SARIE* (Raphaely, 2012b:135). Rabe (1985:79-80) gives further insight into the origin of *FAIRLADY* by noting that the company first wanted to buy the self-published *Madame*, but later decided to start a new magazine. Subsequently, the first issue of *FAIRLADY* was published in March 1965, with a print order of 50 000 copies.

When Raphaely was appointed editor, she (2012b:136) remembers asking only one question: “Would I have the right, as editor, to have the final say on the content of the magazine?” The answer was: “It is up to you to provide the content that brings in the English-speaking readers that advertisers expect. If you succeed ... we certainly won't interfere”

Raphaely's (in Spies, 1992b:408) first editor's letter encapsulated *FAIRLADY*'s editorial vision: “Like her readers *Fair Lady* is all woman *Fair Lady* is and will always be a magazine for modern women.” Hence, for the next two decades – under Raphaely's leadership – *FAIRLADY* pioneered the advancement of black models and writers, advocated sex education for children, and championed women's causes (www.assocmags.co.za). There can be no doubt that it was Raphaely's clear understanding of the reader and the South African women's magazine market that resulted in a flourishing *FAIRLADY* at the time.

Moreover, and against the paradigm of Feminism chosen as one of the theoretical frameworks for this study, it is significant that Raphaely (2012b:159) depicted the editorial stance of *FAIRLADY* as “far from flagrant flaming feminism”. Instead, it became a vehicle through which she chose to oppose inequality and prejudice, while appealing to the femininity of millions of readers (Gordon, 2012:38). Raphaely

(2012b:194-195) describes her editorials as “persistently taking positions on political issues, not from a women’s viewpoint but from a humanitarian one” – and these included squatter evictions, propaganda, child abuse, press freedom, and the recognition of black trade unions. She also calls *FAIRLADY* “a very insubordinate magazine as far as women were concerned”, but says that the magazine “consistently upheld the importance of the family”.

Raphaely resigned in 1984 and was succeeded by Smuts. Murray (1998:93) reflects on the editorship of Smuts by referring to the historical context of apartheid SA in the 1980s, and the influence that an individual editor could exert over the editorial tone. According to her, *FAIRLADY* “might well struck some readers as gushingly matronising in its overtly liberal-leftist political stance, and its insistent injunction to ‘uplift the underprivileged’”. She concurs with Knox (1995:14) that Smuts’s efforts at explicit social conscientising were commendable; however, it led to her falling out of favour with the publishers and advertisers. Butler succeeded Smuts, and this “led the retreat into conspicuous consumption”. The circulation dropped, partly a symptom of tighter markets and fiercer competition in the local magazine market (as pointed out in section 6.3.2), and partly through the magazine’s failure to engage with the central concerns of its readers.

Wrottesley was appointed editor in 1994, just after SA’s first democratic elections. She calls her most pressing task “bringing depth and excitement” to *FAIRLADY*, and the biggest challenge to achieve “a racially-balanced readership” (Knox, 1995:14-16). Within six weeks, Wrottesley transformed the magazine into “hot property” and, according to Knox, proved that a consumer magazine is a personality-based commodity. Furthermore, Knox argues that publications like *FAIRLADY* “have often rightly been accused of training their readers to be good little consumers”, while Wrottesley acknowledges that “economics ... pressurised editors to support advertisers at the expense of editorial content”. However, Wrottesley also realised that she had to take responsibility for her editorial policies where advertising spend was concerned. She summarised her role as a communicator with the privilege of being able to take a public stance on issues, and of filtering and presenting information according to her own reading of events and readers’ requirements.

Just before the start of the 21st century, Bell relaunched *FAIRLADY*, predicting a circulation increase of 10 000 within a year (Kloot, 2001:9). However, the first few months of Bell's editorship were tarnished by the retrenchment of senior journalists, and the increased circulation did not materialise. Kloot argues that the magazine's "declining ABC's can't necessarily be blamed on the wrong format", and that "new entrants into the market deliver death by a thousand cuts to readership". I concur that this is again proof of the fierce competition in the local women's magazine market since the start of the 21st century. When Bell retired, Donald was hailed as the "ultimate turnaround queen" and applauded for her understanding of the target market (Penstone, 2003:13). Within 18 months, Donald managed to grow the magazine's circulation by almost 18%. She believed the success was that *FAIRLADY* was not afraid to deal with contentious issues, nor the publishing of articles that were longer than expected. "So many people tell us that women don't have time to read, but ... if they're gaining value from reading something, then they will find the time." Donald's editorial vision paid off. In November 2003, *FAIRLADY* was crowned the Best Consumer Magazine. Nonetheless, her commitment to "the highest journalistic standards and a reputation for balanced reporting" (www.media24.com) led to Donald's resignation after a dispute with management over an article connected to the advertising of slimming products:

In my opinion this was clearly a story within our readers' interest. I couldn't stand by and not publish. I told them that if I wasn't [*sic*] allowed to publish it, I would have to leave.

In keeping with the "360-degree marketing strategy" of Media24, brand extensions of *FAIRLADY* were also launched in the first decade of the 21st century. However, only *FAIRLADY Bride* was still published at the end of this study's timeframe.

FAIRLADY's editorial vision and target market under Brokensha (appointed editor in 2007) have remained consistent over the past decade. In 2007, *FAIRLADY* was described as "a brand firmly and proudly vested in the South African landscape", yet she kept "an eye on global trends, [and was] 100 percent original: An organic South African brand" (www.fairlady.com). At the end of this study's timeframe, *FAIRLADY* described herself as "[a]n original South African brand that connects and supports the most diverse network of contemporary South African women. We celebrate, with

them, the best that our country has to offer in a glossy, upmarket package” (www.media24.com).

8.6.3 *TRUELOVE*

Recognised as the first women’s magazine aimed at black South African women, *Grace* (1964-1966) played an important role in the emergence of black women’s voices, contends Ferreira (2011:60). I further argue that *Grace* illustrates the concept of the magazine as social barometer and is an example of the interaction between magazines and society (see also Johnson & Prijatel, 2007:89-30). Although magazines such as *Grace* and *The Townships Housewife* fell into oblivion, I argue that these magazines can be regarded as the prototypes for *TRUELOVE* as a women’s magazine.

According to Claassen (1998), the rapid development of this section of consumer magazines was largely because of the urbanisation process and growth in literacy among black South Africans. However, Chapman (1989:217) posits that Naspers wished to “tap the growth market of black print media readers”. His view is supported by Narunsky-Laden (2011:178), who argues that it may also have been a question of Naspers competing with Caxton/CTP Publishers for the lucrative market share of SA’s black female readership that led to Naspers acquiring *TRUELOVE*. Spies (1992c:428-429) acknowledges that it is because of advertising pressure to delve into the black female market that Naspers regarded the establishment of *Bonanza* as a first attempt at gaining a black readership. Thus, it can be argued that, from the experience of publishing *Bonanza* and with the existing business model for *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* as women’s titles, it was relatively easy for Naspers to modify *TRUELOVE* to fit the company’s profitable mould of women’s magazines. Thus, when Bailey sold *TRUELOVE* to Naspers in 1984, the magazine was repositioned as a women’s magazine. However, this repositioning was not without challenges in a pre-democracy SA. Tugwana (in Narunsky-Laden, 2011:179) observes that “one of the challenges ... was that many black people had no interest in reading. We made it more pictorial and pitched the magazine at a large market – which was a huge mistake”. Narunsky-Laden (2011:179) speculates whether the above had to do with market conditions at the time, with *TRUELOVE*’s upmarket image, or whether the political changes in SA during the early 1990s encouraged Naspers to invest in *TRUELOVE* in the hope of

reaping the fruits of the anticipated expansion of a new black middleclass. In contrast, Dhlomo-Mkhize, appointed editor in 1995, believed that to position a magazine like *TRUELOVE* at the black market was not a political decision:

The modern black South African woman has a lot in common with her white, Indian, or Coloured sisters. But she also has ... her own uniqueness with her past, ... experiences and ... dreams for the future. We created a product, which can accommodate these differences.

A year after SA's first democratic elections, *TRUELOVE* was revamped, targeting younger black South African women "determined to make every aspect of their lives a success" (Dhlomo-Mkhize in Rossouw & Rabe, 2014). The new version of *TRUELOVE* was printed on glossy paper with a modern layout and design, and a spine-line reading, "All a woman needs". During her time as editor, Dhlomo-Mkhize not only tripled the circulation of the magazine, but also established *TRUELOVE* as the monthly magazine with the most advertisements in the country (Retief, 2002:17; see also Brand, 2003). She firmly believed that the media had a social responsibility and argued that, as editor, she strove to have a positive influence on the lives of [black] South African women.

However, after a period of *TRUELOVE* being one of the fastest growing magazines and the biggest-selling English glossy women's magazines in the country, circulation figures declined when Dhlomo-Mkhize resigned. Mahlaba (in Ferguson, 2004:12), who was appointed editor when SA celebrated its first decade of democracy, emphasised that she would keep the empowerment of women on *TRUELOVE*'s agenda and contended that there were still ingrained cultural and social perceptions that disadvantaged women. "*TRUELOVE* should continue to give her readers information that is relevant, inspiring and entertaining, without being condescending." Mahlaba (2006:n.p.) accentuates that the demographics of black women changed after 1994: "[O]ur reader has moved assertively into the workplace and is in a much stronger position financially with higher expectations and far more choices as a consumer." This change in the *TRUELOVE* reader is captured on the magazine's website:

From the political fired-up girls of the late 1970s ... to the state of emergency women of the 1980s ... to the liberated, newly empowered women of the

1990s, to the women of 2003 who encompass all these qualities Today we have more opportunities than ever before to find health, wealth, wisdom, and happiness.

However, during the first decade of the 21st century, *TRUELOVE* lost direction, with a change in identity and two changes of editors in five years. The circulation dropped from 140 000 in 2005 to around 95 000 in 2008 (Sithole, 2008). At that time, Sitole was appointed to redirect the magazine, which had “been slated for depicting a farfetched and one-dimensional image of black women” (Nandipha, 2008:25). Under Sitole’s editorship, the magazine tried “to catch up by exploring mature and alternative women on its covers to add to their soapie queens”. Sitole knew that “readers evolve and so does the magazine and we have to keep up with them”. Although Sitole’s appointment came during the global financial recession, when the growth of South African magazines became stagnant, it can be argued that her editorial experience, culturally relevant insights and genuine representation of the brand benefited the magazine. During her editorship, *TRUELOVE* won the *Sunday Times* Generation Next “Coolest Brand”.

In 2012, the magazine celebrated its 40th birthday with yet another editor, a revitalised look, and a content mix that responded to the issues affecting SA’s black women. Tshabalala (in Abrahams, 2012) asserts:

I have a deep understanding of who the *True Love* woman is, so when I ... [decided] on its future direction, I did it with all my heart and soul [T]he changes ... [came] from a place of immense love and respect for the magazine, and for the role it has played in the history of ... South African women.

These changes were mainly in the visual presentation of the content of the magazine, to “offer a more relaxed read”. Tshabalala also introduced more international content, saying that “South African women are part of the global culture”.

Aligning with the business plan for Media24’s women’s magazines, two brand extensions of *TRUELOVE* were launched in the first decade of the 21st century: *TRUELOVE Bride*, in 2004, and *TRUELOVE Babe* (2006). However, amidst the onset of the global financial recession, *TRUELOVE Babe* ceased publication in 2008. At the end of this study’s timeframe, *TRUELOVE Hair* was published bi-annually as a supplement.

TRUELOVE's vision statement (<http://m24m.co.za>) highlights the magazine's iconic status in the history of South African women's magazines:

TRUELOVE is the ... South African fashion, beauty, and lifestyle magazine for black women. It challenges ... readers with in-depth-editorial[s] ... that stimulate debate and discussion, investigative ... reports, and thought-leading columns, combined with stylish ... fashion and beauty pages that define South African style. TRUELOVE aims to push the reader to where they want to be, challenging and helping them to take the next big steps to get there, changing lives from ordinary to extraordinary.

Likewise, I argue that the demographics of *TRUELOVE*'s readers indicate how the magazine's focus has shifted since its inception, and how it can – as did *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY* – be regarded as a social barometer of its time.

8.6.4 Comparative summary of Historiography

I argue that the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* encapsulates the development of the selected three magazines as archetypal women's magazines in SA. The findings prove how the origin and development of the three alpha women's magazines are set against their specific ideological views and market-driven ideals in response to the political and socio-economic context of SA at the time.

As stated in section 1.3, there is a strong link between the magazine and its community, and the concept of the magazine as a social barometer that measures the state of that society. This is emphasised in the research of various global and local scholars in the study's literature review, as discussed in Chapter 3. I further argue that the position of each of the specific women's magazines comes to the fore in the findings in Chapter 6. I conclude that the goals set out by the three titles for themselves are still being pursued. However, the focus of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* has shifted and adapts continuously to reflect the political and socio-economic realities of a young, democratic SA in the 21st century. Thus, I concur with Narunsky-Laden (2011:180) that women's magazines, for e.g. *TRUELOVE*, have contributed significantly to the recasting and repertoire of roles played by women, both at home and in society, to a new, informal public sphere in which shifting social responsibilities are renegotiated and gradually institutionalised. This is also the case for *SARIE* and *FAIRLADY*.

8.7 DISCUSSION OF QCA

According to Babbie (2002:212; see also Adler & Clark, 2011), content analysis has proven itself to be a sound method to study recorded human communications. Kolmer (2008:117) concurs that QCA has become an important method of journalism research, particularly as a principal tool for analysing the products of a journalist's activity, which is relevant to this study. In addition, Krippendorff and Bock (2009:3; see also Gunter, 2000:60) assert that making specific inferences from texts to their contexts is now the defining feature of content analysis. Thus, in examining media output, I agree that content analysis can "go beyond simple description". Using QCA as the second chosen research method for the study, and applying ATLAS.ti® as a tool for data analysis, this section therefore analyses and discusses the message in the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUE LOVE* from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017. To provide insight into the messages of the editors' letters – or offer a thick description of the editors' letters – I conceptualised key themes for each of the four sub-questions. The analyses and discussions of the sub-questions below lead to the summary of the MRQ.

8.7.1 Sub-question 1

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis, and as pointed out in section 7.2, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUE LOVE* emphasise the broader theme of transformation and democracy in highlighting the deliberation of democracy and nation building as *achievements*. The subthemes of liberation and activism are explored, and the narratives focus on empowerment, women's advocacy and how women have realised their potential since the naissance of SA's democracy. Reflecting on the oppression and injustice of apartheid, narratives in the editors' letters acknowledge activism in the political and socio-economic spheres. In the process of deliberating on democracy, the editors further reflect on the oppression and injustice of apartheid, while narratives on the role of gender in society come to the fore in *challenges* – in particular in the challenges faced by women by virtue of being women. This key theme also highlights the influence of history, culture and customs on the political economy of the country. For example, narratives focus on specific challenges in political and socio-economic environments, such as high unemployment figures and the poorly performing economy. Furthermore, specific transformation challenges in the young

democracy, e.g. the slow pace of transformation, persistent inequality, and the failure of service delivery, led to a sombre mood in the editors' letters. Under the key theme of *democratic icons*, the narratives focus mainly on Nelson Mandela as statesman, leader and human being. Other struggle icons, specifically women who fought for equal rights and who reached great heights despite of apartheid, are also highlighted as idols, while actors, television and radio personalities and models are depicted as celebrities of the new democratic era. In addition, the key theme of *empowerment* or the enablement of women on a personal and societal level clearly comes to the fore in all three cases. For example, the editors' letters elucidate financial independence, the learning of new skills, and the power of networking. The broader theme of transformation and democracy convincingly focus on *representation*. These narratives embrace the need to include women in policies and governing bodies for representation. Furthermore, the editors' letters in all three cases address how the individual can realise her potential by gaining knowledge and applying communication skills in personal and social environments. The *spirit of the time*, as the last key theme of sub-question 1, reflects mainly on the defining spirit of the 21st century in anticipation of the future. All three cases compare the start of the 21st century as an inspirational new dawn to the pain of the past.

8.7.2 Sub-question 2

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis and as pointed out in section 7.3, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* emphasise the broader theme of social relations in highlighting the role of mother- and fatherhood and the extended family in the lives of *children*. Narratives focus on the significance of mothers and fathers in the upbringing of children, while the support of an extended family is emphasised. This theme also revolves around the value of family relationships and explores the dynamics of families across generations. Notably, the social and legal support systems (or the lack thereof) for children are emphasised. The key theme of *community* revolves around the significance of communal links and bonds. Narratives highlight how an individual's participation in a community can create a better life for all. They also focus on social cohesion, social inclusion and respect for diversity. Moreover, the editors' letters stress the role of *education* to enhance society, and focus on the value of education, especially basic education, in the young democratic dispensation. Protecting the planet, and the importance of the conservation of natural resources as subtheme, are

emphasised in the key theme *environment*. Narratives focus on the role of individuals, society and countries in protecting the ecosystem for future generations. In relation to *society at large*, the editors' letters lament the high rate of crime and violence in the country, and call for renewed attention to be paid to the scourge of gender-based violence. Furthermore, human rights form an integral part of this key theme, and narratives plead for the acknowledgement of different sexual orientations and rights. The last key theme, of *spirituality*, highlights the significance of living life with virtue and goodness, and explores the role of religion in readers' lives.

8.7.3 Sub-question 3

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis and as pointed out in section 7.4, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* emphasise the broader theme of social values and moral principles in *culture* as the first key theme. The basic theme focuses on the acknowledgement of the values and morals of all cultures. The narratives explore embracing cultural pride, identity and the acceptance of cultural differences. This theme further highlights appreciating the arts, e.g. embracing a literary tradition. The key theme of *friendship* emphasises the meaning and value of friendship, and the bonds between friends. Overall, this subtheme displays the role of friends in augmenting social values and moral principles. *Humanity* points to showing compassion to humankind and the cultivation of kindness and compassion. The narratives also recognise the vulnerability of people and centres around the cycles of life, e.g. the joy of birth and the pain of death. The final theme, viz. *self-development*, focuses on the re-engineering of the self and developing an awareness of social values and moral principles.

8.7.4 Sub-question 4

Overall, according to the ATLAS.ti® analysis and as pointed out in section 7.5, *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* emphasise the broader theme of the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser. In highlighting the *editorial philosophy* of the magazine as key theme, various topics and ideas are found in the editors' letters that align with the vision and the mission of the magazine. Discussions centre on editorial integrity and campaigning for issues important to the magazine. The analysis of *readership*, as a key theme, illustrates a clear understanding of the demo- and psychographics of the readers in each of the cases. It also acknowledges the

importance of the reader in cultivating a successful future for the magazine. The theme further acknowledges the power of the reader, and narratives include circulation success and industry awards received. Finally, the key theme of *strategy* relates to specific business plans to enhance the magazine's success and profitability in an increasingly difficult local market. While the importance of the readers as consumers is highlighted, the magazines' endorsement and reinforcement of commercial brands also come to the fore.

8.7.5 MRQ

Pertaining to the MRQ, the data in the editors' letters in the three selected cases indicate CPE, advancing to *Critical Political Economy*, and Feminism, as important theoretical paradigms in the analysis of the political and socio-economic issues in the young, democratic South Africa during the timeframe of the study. In fact, with the assistance of ATLAS.ti®, I was able to highlight CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism as theoretical frameworks in the messages of the editors of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, as reflected in the respective editors' letters. The sections below analyse and discuss the theoretical frameworks as set out in the MRQ. Moreover, for easy reference and to substantiate the analysis, the editors' letters from which the citations were taken for the two theoretical frameworks, as stated in the MRQ, are listed in Addendum N.

8.7.5.1 Within CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*

As argued before, PE indicates a shared concern with the politics and economics of any given institution, including the mass media. Furthermore, and according to McChesney (2003), CPE examines the relationships between capitalism, communication and democracy, and centres on the investigation of communication and power. However, as Laughey (2007) explains, CPE's primary interest is in the economic factors, while Albarran (2010:27-28) proposes that the many forces affecting media markets in the 21st century challenge researchers to think in different ways and, ultimately, develop new approaches and refine theoretical assumptions.

Thus, within the first theoretical framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, the findings of the MRQ reveal that the opening of the borders and the globalisation of SA, just after the naissance of democracy, were welcomed by *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. For example, the editor of *SARIE*

(1_09_2_Van_10) writes that she was immensely proud watching a South African Musical on West End, how she wiped away tears and tried to explain to the confused Irishman next to her: “I am a South African!” *FAIRLADY* (01_03_2_Bel_8) focused on Cape Town tourism’s acceptance of gay visitors, and the “hugely successful scalpel safaris that lure foreign tourists and their boodle to our cutting-edge cosmetic surgeons and magnificent game parks” (01_04_2_Bel_np). *TRUELOVE* (09_03_Sit_7) was outspoken about the fact that the readers “have been blessed by being raised in a free South Africa [*sic*] ... and [having become] citizens of the global village”. However, all the titles emphasise SA as a land of contradictions stemming from the country’s historical trajectory. For example, *SARIE* (04_9_Van_10) describes the pain of losing a close family member in an act of violence and implores (09_01_Van_10) her readers to be positive, despite the onset of the global recession. *FAIRLADY* (01_06_2_Bel_np) argues that, in terms of the national budget, more money and resources should be allocated to the overseas marketing of “God’s own country”. The editor (04_02_Don_6) also highlights that illiteracy is one of the key challenges in the country, and “changing this reality will have a spinoff that will go some way to resolving many of the other challenges”. In 2009, *TRUELOVE* (09_07_Sit_14) offered a special report to understand the “financial crisis that seems to be crippling the world, including SA”, but adds that there is very little that individuals can do to shield themselves from such a crisis.

We all have to ... take ... care of our physical and mental health and ... we need to develop a culture of saving so when [the] unforeseen ... [happens] we are not left destitute.

SARIE (01_05_1_Van_8) further highlights the contributions of women to the economy and explores women’s inclusion in core sectors of the economy as an empowering force. This is also a regular theme in *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

One of the tenets of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, namely participatory democracy, comes to the fore in all three cases. For example, *FAIRLADY* (06_03_Anon_8, see also 14_05_Bro_7) accentuates the significance of local government in the deliberation of democracy, and that elections on all levels should be prioritised by readers. Participatory democracy is also highlighted: “So let’s vote ... with the intention that we’ll become more involved, attend community

meetings, know ... our councillors ... challenge them if they stop doing the jobs we pay them to do.” This is echoed by *TRUELOVE* (10_04_Sit_np) in reflecting on the birth of democracy in SA. “[D]espite the atrocities of the past, we also have a lot to be thankful for ... the fact that we, at last, live in a country that respects human rights and equality.” The role of society and the youth as forces within CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and corporate and social responsibility, are also highlighted in this theoretical framework. For example, *FAIRLADY* (09_11_Bro_14) writes, “yes, SA does have problems, and yes, it is a miraculous country, filled with fantastically creative, innovative (and epic!) people. And yes, anything is possible.”

8.7.5.2 Within Feminism

As argued before, Feminism is demarcated as a “political philosophy and social-political movement marked by an emancipatory concern to explain and overcome subordination and oppression of all kinds” (Carter & Steiner in Karam, 2008:307-308). In addition, and as proposed by Govender et al. (2014:2280), feminist media theories place women and their experiences at the centre of the study of communication and the production of theory. I contend that it is important to consider Womanism in the analysis and discussion of *TRUELOVE*'s editor's letter as a feminist approach that developed following the realisation that African women have different life experiences from their Western counterparts (Mpofu, 2017; see also Bosch, 2013).

Thus, within the second theoretical framework of Feminism, the findings of the MRQ emphasise how the tenets of Feminism are grounded – or interpreted and translated – in the ELWM and, in this study, in the editors' letters in the three selected magazines. For example, *SARIE* (01_01_2_Rab_np) refers to how a new year – embodied in the “green” issue – may enhance the reader's personal *eva-lusie* [evolution] ... to emerge, to develop ... [and] contribute your modest share”. In the same year, *FAIRLADY* (01_08_1_Bel_np) writes that celebrating Women's Day “offered us so many opportunities to highlight women that we've decided to tilt the bias of both this and the next issue in female favour (and why not)”. Likewise, *TRUELOVE* (01_07_Dhl_np) notes that “as women, we are aware that making a difference depends largely on making a statement – one loud enough to reach those with the authority to take action”, and highlights “the remarkable women who've opened their homes and their hearts to displaced youngsters”. Moreover, the editor

(01_08_Dhl_np) states that “paying tribute to ordinary women who’ve turned obstacles into extraordinary opportunities is a central part of *TRUE LOVE*’s editorial style”.

The data from the editors’ letters in all three titles further points convincingly to the thick description (as discussed in section 5.4.3) located in the coding and the associated text. Feminism is highlighted as a liberating choice and the empowerment of women is accentuated. *SARIE* (01_05_1_Van_8) highlights that “socioeconomic conditions often force women to become entrepreneurs” and that, although it may be difficult, they do it with great aplomb. *FAIRLADY* (01_08_2_Bel_np) asserts: “We’ve come a long way since our mothers and grandmothers burnt their bras and used the F-word (feminism) in the Sixties and Seventies. But women can’t afford to be complacent.” In the same editorial she shows that she is cognisant of the political and socio-economic contexts in SA: “We may have many more opportunities. But life is no easier. And the divide between educated, affluent, empowered women and their poorer (in every respect) sisters is now wider than ever.” The editor of *FAIRLADY* (09_03_Bro_12) later adds: “Just as it’s important [for women] to win rights ... it’s crucial for women to have the guts to use them.” *TRUELOVE* (04_01_Oha_np) focuses on the working woman, arguing that “it’s possible to be a successful businesswoman, a television personality and a devoted wife or mother, while still looking like a million dollars”, and she (14_06_Ano_14) offers

inspirational articles to help you strive for greatness. Women like Toni Braxton, Carol Tshabalala and ... Thuli Madonsela ... We hope their success stories will encourage you to work harder and be the best at what you do.

In conclusion, I argue that *FAIRLADY* (03_03_Don_8) summarises the thickness of data – illustrating the theoretical framework of Feminism in the selected case studies – with the following:

Then there are those of us who go about our lives with little if any public profile, but who nevertheless can take pride in our achievements, and have a reasonable expectation of respect from society for the role we play in keeping the economy running and in raising our families to be productive members of our communities.

I am also of the view that *TRUELOVE* (14_05_Tsh_np) highlights the crux of Feminism in the editors' letters:

[L]etting go will free you in ways you never thought possible. When you're no longer making decisions based on fear, you find a space where love and peace reside – and usually, it's inside of you. Most of the time, we don't realise that we're blocking our blessings because we're holding onto things that are not meant for us.

8.7.6 Comparative summary of QCA

The QCA of sub-research question 1 reveals that *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* emphasise transformation and democracy. The messages pertaining to the first sub-question illuminate the *achievements* and *challenges* of the country's young democracy during the timeframe of the study. Aligned to this, the editors' letters in all three cases refer to *democratic icons*, *empowerment*, *representation* and the defining *spirit of the time*, whether at the start of the 21st century or the beginning of democracy. Sub-question 2 points to the messages in the editors' letters about the social relations within this period, and particularly highlight the relationships with *children*, *community*, *education*, *environment* and *society at large*, while *spirituality* is also explored. Sub-question 3 discloses messages about *culture*, *friendship*, *humanity* and *self-development* within the broader framework of social values and moral principles. Regarding sub-question 4 – exploring the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser – clear messages are revealed about each of the selected titles' *editorial philosophy*, *readership* and business *strategy*. The analysis of the four sub-questions led to the final analysis of the MRQ to determine whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the study's timeframe are reflected in the editor's letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. The findings reveal unquestionably that the selected women's magazines function within the framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism.

8.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the findings of the study presented in chapters 6 and 7 were analysed and discussed, first according to the Historiography of the three selected cases, and then according to the key themes conceptualised for the broader themes of each of the four sub-questions in the QCA. This led to the analysis and discussion of the MRQ as conceptualised for the QCA. The analysis and discussion of both research methods took place within the frameworks of the literature review and two theoretical perspectives.

Overall, the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* supports the role of the magazine as social barometer. This is summarised in the development of the three selected magazines as archetypal women's magazines in SA. The findings prove how the origin and development of the three alpha women's magazines are set against their specific ideological views and market-driven ideals in response to the political and socio-economic contexts of SA at the time. Thus, the strong link between the magazine and its community, and the concept of the magazine as a social barometer that measures the state of that society, is proven. Furthermore, the analysis of sub-questions led to the final analysis of the MRQ to determine whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the study's timeframe are reflected in the editor's letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. The findings reveal indisputably that *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* function within the framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism.

Thus, it can be concluded that the three alpha South African women's magazines selected for this study indeed reflected the political and socio-economic issues of SA as a young democracy during the timeframe of the study and therefore can be regarded as social barometers.

The next, and final, chapter offers concluding remarks and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whenever we write science, we are telling some kind of a story, or some part of a larger narrative. Some of our stories are more complex, more densely described, and offer greater opportunities as emancipatory documents; others are more abstract, distanced from lived experience, and reinscribe existent hegemonies. Even when we think we are not telling a story, we are, at the very least, embedding our research in a metanarrative, about, for example, how science progresses or how art is accomplished.

Laurel Richardson, 1990 (in Badenhorst, 2007:36)

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This study set out to understand what the messages in the editors' letters of the three selected alpha women's magazines are in relation to the political, social and economic ethos in SA. More specifically, the study aimed to investigate whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the specified timeframe in the young, democratic SA are reflected in the editors' letters of three women's magazines. Thus, the epistemological premise of this study sought to gain an understanding of the message of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as reflected in the editors' letters to understand the selected South African women's magazines as social barometers in the complex world of magazine publishing and changing markets in the first seventeen years of the 21st century.

This last chapter provides a summary of the research project; an overview of the findings; draws conclusions about the Historiography and the QCA; discusses the overall conclusions of the study; and sets out the contribution of the study on the empirical and theoretical levels. Finally, I offer recommendations for future research.

9.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROJECT

In Chapter 1, I introduced the research project by outlining the foundations of and motivations for the study. The research contexts were explained briefly, and the global and local literature pertaining to women's magazines in the realm of Production-Based Research were presented. I proposed CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism as the theoretical frameworks and highlighted Historiography and QCA as the methodologies. This was followed by a review and definition of the key concepts used in the study.

Chapter 2 focused on the research contexts of the study. I introduced the magazine as a historical document, discussed the development of women's magazines in particular; emphasised the history and development of South African women's magazines; and explored the landscape of the South African women's magazine market from 2001 to 2017 in detail. I identified *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as the three alpha South African women's magazines for the study and unpacked the political and socio-economic contexts of SA's young democracy during this study's timeframe. Moreover, I discussed how the close reading and QCA of the SONAs helped me to formulate the MRQ and the sub-questions.

Chapter 3 provided an analysis of the global and local studies that ground the study. The discussion was guided by the study's MRQ, namely to analyse the messages in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as reflected in the respective editor's letters as examples of three alpha South African women's magazines within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. I explored debates on women's magazines from within Production-Based Research and used the discussions of the study's chosen theoretical frameworks and methodologies to guide me.

In Chapter 4, I motivated the decision to place the study's production-based approach within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. The theoretical frameworks were defined, discussed and critiqued. I further introduced the political economy of the South African media and reflected on the praxis of Feminism in SA during the timeframe of this study. The chapter ended with my précis of approaching the study from the two mentioned

theoretical frameworks to reflect on the editors' letters in the three selected South African women's magazines as social barometers of their time.

Chapter 5 discussed and justified the qualitative research design and the methodologies used in the study. Key aspects that were discussed include the case study design, the methods of Historiography and QCA, the sampling strategy, and how the data gathered for the QCA would be analysed by employing CAQDAS, and specifically ATLAS.ti®. Furthermore, the chapter offered a work plan, explained the coding process, and argued for the trustworthiness of the study. I also referred to my personal interest in the study, offered a short summary of the pilot study, and deliberated on why the study does not pose ethical consequences.

In Chapter 6, I presented the findings of the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as the first research method used in the study. These findings were based on a critical reflection on documentary or archival research on the selected women's magazines, and in particular a large collection of primary and secondary data pertaining to *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. The findings were presented as a chronologic review of the histories and development of the three selected titles. The sub-sections focused on the launch and history of each of the titles, followed by an overview of the development of the respective title during the demarcated timeframe. I concluded this chapter with a comparative summary of the findings on the three selected titles to illustrate South African women's magazines as social barometers.

Chapter 7 provided the findings of the QCA, which was employed as the second research method in this study, of the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. The analysis reflected on the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to December 2017. The sections focused on the answers to the sub-questions, and the findings were presented according to their relevance and connectedness to the key themes of the study. The broader question of transformation and democracy was first explored, and the key themes of *achievements*, *challenges*, *democratic icons*, *empowerment*, *representation* and *spirit of the time* were analysed in sub-question 1. The second sub-question focused on social relations as the broader theme, and explored the findings of *children*, *community*, *education*, *environment*, *society at large* and *spirituality* as key themes.

The third sub-question investigated the broader theme of social values and moral principles, and *culture, friendship, humanity* and *self-development* were discussed as findings in the key themes presented. The fourth, and last, sub-question focused on the relationship between the magazine and the advertisers, while *editorial philosophy, readership* and *strategy* were identified as key themes, and presented.

Chapter 8 offered an analysis and discussion of the findings of the study that were presented in chapters 6 and 7; first according to the Historiography of the three selected cases, and then according to the key themes of each of the four sub-questions in the QCA. This led to the analysis and discussion of the MRQ as conceptualised for the QCA. The analysis and discussion of both research methods took place within the frameworks of the literature review and the two theoretical perspectives.

This chapter (Chapter 9) now proceeds with a summary of the overarching findings of the study and offers conclusions in terms of the Historiography and the QCA. Moreover, I state the overall conclusion of the study and reflect on the contribution of the study. Finally, I offer recommendations for further research. This final chapter is followed by a reference list and the addenda.

9.3 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS I: HISTORIOGRAPHY

The Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* proved how the origin and development of the three cases were set against their specific ideological views and market-driven ideals in response to the political and socio-economic contexts of SA at the time. The study encapsulated the development of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as alpha South African women's magazines in each of their (historically defined) target markets, namely the Afrikaans, English and black market. They all belonged to Naspers and were published under its subsidiary, Media24. A synopsis of the findings of the three cases follows below.

9.3.1 SARIE

The historical review of *SARIE* – established in 1949 for the more “sophisticated” Afrikaans-speaking woman (Rabe, 1985:82-86) – found that *SARIE* is the “glossy magazine of choice for the Afrikaans-speaking women with a modern view of the

world” (www.media24.com). The findings substantiate that *SARIE* “tells typical South African stories that keep her feeling good about herself and her world”.

9.3.2 FAIRLADY

The Historiography of *FAIRLADY* – established in 1965 as the group’s first commercial magazine enterprise in English (Raphaely, 2012b:133-141) – corroborates the title’s vision and mission at the end of this study’s timeframe: “[A]n original South African brand that connects and supports the most diverse network of contemporary South African women” (www.media24.com). The study confirms that *FAIRLADY* celebrates the “best that our country has to offer in a glossy, upmarket package”.

9.3.3 TRUELOVE

The analysis of *TRUELOVE* – acquired by Naspers in 1984 and strategically repositioned as a women’s magazine aimed at black readers (Narunsky-Laden, 2011:179; see also Rossouw & Rabe, 2014) – substantiates the magazine’s iconic status as a SA fashion, beauty and lifestyle magazine for black women (www.media24.com). At the end of this study’s timeframe, namely 31 December 2017, the magazine regarded itself as “an indispensable accessory that inspires, entertains and advises modern African women”.

9.3.4 Summary

I contend that the findings of all three cases align with Media24’s maxim to “use the power of magazine brands to create a personal world of information, entertainment and educational excellence that can be accessed anytime, anywhere” (www.media24.com). This comes to the fore clearly in the Historiography (Chapter 6) of the cases. Therefore, I contend that the Historiography of the magazines proves the concept of the magazine as a social barometer, measuring the state of that society, as emphasised by scholars such as Johnson and Prijatel (2007:90), Querusio (2014) and Rabe (2019).

9.4 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS II: QCA

9.4.1 Sub-question 1

The broader theme of transformation and democracy highlighted the deliberation on democracy and nation building as *achievements*, while the injustice of apartheid was accentuated. *Challenges* pointed to the slow pace of transformation in SA, and to socio-political conditions such as a poorly performing economy, persistent inequality, and the failure of service delivery. This theme explored narratives about gender-based violence, and the challenges faced by women by virtue of being women. *Democratic icons*, as a key theme, mainly reflected on Nelson Mandela as a world-class leader and were supported by narratives about women as struggle icons. *Empowerment* was a mutual thread in all three cases, while the theme of *representation* pointed to the importance of gaining knowledge and skills to realise women's opportunities in a young, democratic SA. The importance of participation in democracy as a basic human right was accentuated in all three cases, and the final theme, *spirit of the time*, juxtaposed the freedom of democracy with the pain of apartheid. Moreover, the three titles predicted a positive start to the 21st century and anticipated that changes brought about by democracy and technology would enhance the lives of South African women.

9.4.2 Sub-question 2

The broader theme of social relations, as set out in sub-question 2, underlined the relationships between *children*, parents and families. The worth of parenthood was highlighted, and the support of an extended family in raising children was acknowledged. Communal bonds and activism were underscored in *community* as a theme, and focused on social cohesion, inclusion, and respect for diversity. In the theme *education*, the narratives in all three cases pointed to the importance of education, especially basic learning. The theme further reflected on lost opportunities and how these could be rectified in the 21st century. In addition, there were many narratives about environmental consciousness in the key theme *environment*, and appeals were made to protect the planet. SA's high rate of crime and violence, with particular focus on gender-based violence (indicated in the theme *society at large*), emphasised the lived experience of women and confirmed the magazine as social barometer. Different sexual orientations were also underscored as a basic human

right. Lastly, the findings on the role of religion emphasised *spirituality* as an important aspect in the lives of the readers of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

9.4.3 Sub-question 3

The broader theme of social values and moral principles, as set out in sub-question 3, firstly acknowledged the values and morals of different cultural groups under the key theme of *culture*. The narratives spoke to accepting cultural diversity, while discussions of culture and arts were embraced. The importance of literacy was also underlined in the above theme. In the key theme of *friendship*, narratives revolved around the significance and meaning of friends in times of adversity, while kindness was underlined in *humanity*. Narratives in the latter theme reflected on the qualities of humanity, and on recognising the vulnerability of people. Lastly, *self-development* reflected on the re-engineering of the self, and the ability to develop – and practise – social values and moral principles.

9.4.4 Sub-question 4

The broader theme of the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser was emphasised in all three cases. In the key theme, *editorial philosophy*, various topics and ideas were found in the editors' letters that aligned with the vision and the mission of the magazine. The findings of *readership* as a key theme illustrated a clear understanding of the demo- and psychographics of the readers in each of the cases, and acknowledged the importance of the reader in cultivating a flourishing future for the magazine. Lastly, the key theme of *strategy* related to specific business plans to enhance the magazine's success and profitability in an increasingly difficult local market, while the importance of the readers as consumers was emphasised.

9.4.5 Summary

The findings from the first three sub-questions revealed that *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* regarded *transformation and democracy* as being vital to the development of a truly egalitarian SA. This was emphasised by the importance of building *social relations* in a post-apartheid society, and developing the *social values* and *moral principles* inherent to democracy. Sub-question 4 explored *the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser* and confirmed the role and positioning of the selected titles within the women's magazine industry in SA.

9.5 CONCLUSIONS I: HISTORIOGRAPHY

I conclude that the Historiography of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* encapsulates the development of the selected three magazines as archetypal women's magazines in SA. The findings prove how the origin and development of the three alpha women's magazine are set against their specific ideological views and market-driven ideals in response to the political and socio-economic contexts of SA during the timeframe of the study.

Moreover, I believe that there is a strong link between the magazine and its community, and the concept of the magazine as a social barometer measuring the state of that society. The position of each of the specific women's magazines comes to the fore in the findings in Chapter 6, and it can be concluded that the overarching goals the three titles set for themselves are still being pursued. However, I argue that the focus of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* shift and continuously adapt to reflect the current political and socio-economic realities of the young, democratic SA. In sum: I concur with Narunsky-Laden (2011:180) that women's magazines contribute significantly to the recasting and repertoire of roles played by women – both at home and in society – into a new, informal public sphere in which shifting social responsibilities are re-negotiated and gradually institutionalised. I conclude that this is also the case with *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, particularly during the first seventeen years of the 21st century in the young, democratic SA.

9.6 CONCLUSIONS II: QCA

9.6.1 Conclusions on sub-question 1

What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about the transformation and the democratic dispensation in SA from 2001 to 2017?

The first sub-question reveals that *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* emphasised the virtue of transformation and democracy in South Africa post-1994. The messages pertaining to the first sub-question not only illuminate the *achievements* of an egalitarian society, but also focus on the challenges facing SA's young democracy. The editors' letters further singled out Nelson Mandela as a *democratic icon* and emphasised the role of women as struggle heroes. Moreover, *empowerment* as a

liberating cause was highlighted, and the editors' letters offered advice on how to achieve *representation* in the political and socio-economic spheres. The letters also defined the *spirit of the time* (at the start of the 21st century) as mainly positive. However, nearing the end of the timeframe of the study, the messages in the editors' letters in all three cases pointed to a disenchantment with the government, and a cynicism about the political and socio-economic situation.

9.6.2 Conclusions on sub-question 2

What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about the social relations within this period in SA?

I conclude that sub-question 2 accentuated the value of family relationships; investigated family dynamics across generations; and exposed social and legal support systems available to *children*. Narratives in the editors' letters in all three cases focused on how being involved in your *community* can create a better life for all, while the importance of *education* was highlighted as non-negotiable to create a true democracy. The editors' letters also weighed in on the *environment*, and on the protection of the world's ecosystems. The sub-question highlighted SA's scourge of gender-based violence, focused on the acknowledgement of different sexual orientations, and explored the role of religion and spirituality in the lives of the readers. Overall, I argue that the message in this sub-question contemplated an awareness of – and a sensitivity to – diversity in a democratic SA.

9.6.3 Conclusions on sub-question 3

What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about the social values and moral principles within this period in SA?

Sub-question 3 disclosed messages about *culture*, *friendship*, *humanity* and *self-development* within the broader framework of social values and moral principles. I conclude that this sub-question aligns with sub-question 2 by embracing cultural dignity, but also accepting cultural disparities. Narratives emphasised the value of friendship, and promoted kindness and the ability to recognise vulnerability in people. I conclude that this sub-question appealed to readers to develop a mindfulness of social values and moral principles by re-engineering the self.

9.6.4 Conclusions on sub-question 4

What does the editor's letter in the respective magazines say about the relationship between the magazine and the advertiser within this period in SA?

The answer to sub-question 4 concluded that *editorial philosophy*, *readership* and the *strategy* related to specific business plans enhanced the magazine's success and profitability in an increasingly competitive local magazine market. Narratives in the editors' letters reinforced the vision and mission of the magazine. Furthermore, the power of the readership was acknowledged in cultivating the magazine's future, and strategies to make the magazine profitable and increase market share were spelled out.

The analysis of the four sub-questions led to the final analysis of the MRQ to determine whether political and socio-economic issues spanning the study's timeframe were reflected in the editor's letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism.

9.6.5 Conclusions on MRQ

To answer the MRQ, namely

What are the messages of the editors, as reflected in the respective editors' letters, of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* as examples of three alpha South African women's magazines within the theoretical frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism, during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, namely from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2017?

the conclusions within the two theoretical frameworks are first discussed below, before the overall conclusion for this study is presented.

9.6.5.1 Within CPE, advancing to *Critical Political Economy*

Within the first theoretical framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, I conclude that the opening of the borders and the globalisation of SA since the start of democracy were welcomed by *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*. For example, the editor of *SARIE* (1_09_2_Van_10) – at a South African musical in London – proudly explains: "I am a South African!", while *FAIRLADY*

(01_03_2_Bel_8) focuses, among others, on Cape Town tourism's acceptance of gay visitors and the "hugely successful scalpel safaris that lure foreign tourists" to game parks. *TRUELOVE* (09_03_Sit_7) rejoices that the readers "have been blessed by being raised in a free South Africa ... and became citizens of the global village". However, all the titles emphasise SA as a land of contradictions stemming from the country's historical trajectory. For example, the editor of *SARIE* (04_9_Van_10) describes the pain of losing a brother in an act of violence and pleads (09_01_Van_10) with her readers to be positive during the recession. *FAIRLADY* (04_02_Don_6) highlights that illiteracy is one of the key challenges in the country, while *TRUELOVE* (09_07_Sit_14) offers a special report to understand the financial crisis that is crippling the world and cautions that readers need to develop a culture of saving so that, when the unforeseen happens, they are not left destitute. Moreover, *SARIE* (01_05_1_Van_8) highlights women's contributions to the economy and explores women's inclusion in core sectors of the economy as an empowering force. This is also a regular theme in *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

One of the tenets of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, namely participatory democracy, comes to the fore in all three cases. For example, *FAIRLADY* (06_03_Anon_8; see also 14_05_Bro_7) accentuates the significance of local government in the deliberation of democracy and argues that participation in elections should be prioritised by readers. Participatory democracy is further highlighted with: "So let's vote ... with the intention that we'll become more involved, attend community meetings, know ... our councillors ... [and] challenge them if they stop doing the jobs ... we pay them to do." Reflecting on democracy, *TRUELOVE* (10_04_Sit_np) contends that, "despite the atrocities of the past, we also have a lot to be thankful for ... at last, [we] live in a country that respects human rights and equality". The role of society and the youth are further highlighted in this theoretical framework. For example, *FAIRLADY* (09_11_Bro_14) writes: "[Y]es, SA does have problems, and yes, it is a miraculous country, filled with fantastically creative, innovative (and epic!) people. And yes, anything is possible."

Thus, as argued in section 4.4.1.1, the message in the editors' letters examines the relationships between capitalism, communication and democracy and centres on the investigation of communication and power (McChesney, 2003). Furthermore, Laughey (2007) and Albarran's (2010:27-28) arguments that the many forces

affecting media markets in the 21st century challenge researchers to think in different ways and refine theoretical assumptions are emphasised in this theoretical framework.

9.6.5.2 Within Feminism

Within the framework of Feminism, I conclude that the tenets of Feminism are grounded – or interpreted and translated – in the message of the editors’ letters in the three selected cases. Feminism is highlighted as a liberating choice, and the empowerment of women is accentuated. For example, *SARIE* (01_05_1_Van_8) highlights that socio-economic conditions often force women to become entrepreneurs; *FAIRLADY* (01_08_2_Bel_np) asserts: “We’ve come a long way since ... the Sixties and Seventies,” but women cannot afford to be complacent. The magazine is acutely aware of the influence of the political and socio-economic contexts, especially for women, in SA:

We may have many more opportunities. But life is no easier the divide between educated, affluent, empowered women and their poorer ... sisters is now wider than ever.

The editor (09_03_Bro_12) adds: “Just as it’s important to win rights... it’s crucial for women to have the guts to use them”, while *TRUELOVE* (04_01_Oha_np) focuses on the working woman, arguing that “it’s possible to be a successful businesswoman, a television personality and a devoted wife or mother, while still looking like a million dollars”.

To conclude, I argue that *FAIRLADY* (03_03_Don_8) clearly illustrates Feminism with the following:

Then there are those of us who go about our lives with little if any public profile, but who nevertheless can take pride in our achievements, and have a reasonable expectation of respect from society for the role we play in keeping the economy running and in raising our families to be productive members of our communities.

Moreover, *TRUELOVE* (14_05_Tsh_np) highlights the crux of Feminism (while focusing on Womanism) in the editor’s letter:

[L]etting go will free you in ways you never thought possible. When you're no longer making decisions based on fear, you find a space where love and peace reside – and usually, it's inside of you. Most of the time, we don't realise that we're blocking our blessings because we're holding onto things that are not meant for us.

9.6.6 Summary

The findings of the QCA reveal unquestionably that the selected women's magazines function within the frameworks of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism. I argue that, through the lens of the two chosen theoretical frameworks, the ELWM (to a certain extent) enhances the *participation* and *representation* of the reader of the women's magazines in the political and socio-economic spheres of SA. The message in the ELWM further enables the *empowerment* of the reader, as contextualised in the theoretical frameworks.

9.7 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS OF STUDY

I argue that the Historiography of the three selected magazines in this study gives context – or a deeper meaning – to South African magazine studies at a certain point in time. The historical review of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* confirms the powerful relationship between magazines and society, and the concept of the magazine as social barometer. The findings corroborate that magazines mirror society, and vice versa. This agrees with Johnson and Prijatel's (2007:90) proposition that magazines are “active members of a complex society, leading the discussion in many cases, but allowing others in society to take the action that will cause change”.

The findings of the QCA conclude that the origin and development of the three alpha women's magazines are set against their specific ideological views and market-driven ideals in response to the political and socio-economic contexts of SA at the time. Thus, I attest that I have proven the strong link between the magazine and its community, and the concept of the magazine as a social barometer measuring the state of that society.

The overall findings reveal indisputably that *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* function within the framework of CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*,

and Feminism. It can be concluded that the three alpha South African women's magazines selected for this study indeed reflect the political and socio-economic issues of SA as a young democracy during the timeframe of the study.

This study supports Johnson and Prijatel's (2007:89) claim that "magazines are born, die, shrink, grow and change their appearances and audiences because of a host of developments within society" and, "as society changes so do magazines". Therefore, I concur with scholars such as Weber (in Macnamara, 2005:1), who regards media content (thus including that of magazines) as a means of monitoring the cultural temperature of society.

The study concludes that the message in the ELWM as a communication platform evokes a sense of community that is shared by the audience of the specific women's magazine, and that the women's magazine can truly be regarded as a social barometer.

9.8 CONTRIBUTION

As discussed in section 1.5.3, Nexus searches of the database of the National Research Foundation indicated that this study has a unique research focus and confirmed the paucity of academic research in South African magazine journalism, particularly on Production-Based Research of women's magazines.

Hence, this study, which investigated the ELWM, contributes to Thompson and De Klerk's (2002) study of magazine editorials; that of Sanger (2007), illuminating the role of editors as creators of meaning; and De Vaal's (2007) analysis of magazines as sociocultural journals. It aligns with Van der Westhuizen's (2013) exploration of the discourse in the editor's letters in *SARIE* during 2009; adds to Sieberhagen's (2016) analysis of the message communicated through the editor's letters in *SARIE* during 2014; and confirms Narunsky-Laden's (2007, 2011) assumptions that local consumer magazines (aimed at black readers) function as indicators and contributions to social change. It further emphasises the studies by Van Rensburg (2012) and Venter (2014) – on *Die Boerevrou* and *The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal* respectively – as cultural-historical loci for the study of the selected three alpha South African women's magazines.

As argued in section 3.5.3, I not only placed emphasis on local women's magazines from within Production-Based Research, but also singled out studies with a research focus on one of the three selected cases. Therefore, I argue that this study adds to Rabe's (1985) documentation of South African women's magazines (specifically *SARIE*) after 1985, and updates Spies's (1992a, 1992b, 1992c) chronicles of the development of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* over the last four decades. I further regard this study as a contribution to Claassen's (1998) research on the role of magazines in society, and specifically the development of local women's magazines in the 21st century. I put forward that the study shows that the political and socio-economic influences of magazines cannot be underestimated, and therefore posit that women's magazines function as indicators of, and contributors to, the dynamics of societal change in SA.

Furthermore, I contend that the study contributes to both the theoretical field of magazine studies and the media historiographical literature on magazine journalism research in SA. It contextualises an understanding of messages in the editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*, sheds light on the complexity and diversity of women's magazines as social barometers during the first seventeen years of the 21st century, and offers an all-inclusive record (see also the addenda of this dissertation) of South African women's magazines since the inception of *The Lady's Home Journal* in 1909.

In sum: I respectfully regard this study as definitive in terms of laying a foundation for magazine studies within journalism and media studies in SA, and would like it to be considered as a novel and ground-breaking study in expanding the discipline in this regard.

Finally, as will be shown in the next section, there is a continuing need for further study. In fact, this study has raised questions that have opened possibilities for such studies. First, however, recommendations are made for women's magazines to strengthen their editorial voice or agenda to enhance SA's political and socio-economic contexts for women.

9.9 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.9.1 Recommendations for South African women's magazines

- One of the findings of this study is that the challenges of a young democracy, plus a poorly performing economy – particularly since the global recession in 2008, have not fully empowered SA's women in the 21st century. There is a continuing need for transformation that will direct effect on a positive change for women. I thus recommend that the ELWM takes a stronger position on the challenges facing women, e.g. to promote activism in the political and socio-economic spheres.
- I further propose that the ELWM interrogates aspects that impede society, such as crime and violence, and hamper human rights even more. I believe this can be addressed in the editor's letter and successfully executed in investigative articles combining the voices or narratives of victims, survivors and policy makers.
- In addition, I suggest that women's magazines make full use of the technological advances of the 21st century and use other platforms to support the ELWM, which was originally created for the paper-based copy.

9.9.2 Recommendations for further study

- The epistemological premise of this study was concerned with the analysis of the editors' letters in a selection of South African women's magazines, described as alpha magazines and belonging to one publisher. The study investigated the practice of the editor's letter to challenge dominant discourses and bring women's issues into the public sphere during a specific time in the young South African democracy. Therefore, the study can be expanded to other women's magazines (also to niche publications aimed at specific interests) within the South African magazine market to analyse the message of the editor's letters and to gain insight into matters important for the specific audience, and how they are reported on in the editor's letter.
- Further research could be done by interviewing the editors of South African women's magazines to find out how they approach the process of writing an editor's letter.

- I also recommend an analysis of the readers' letters – in addition to an audience-reception study – to ascertain whether the editors' letters are perceived as positive, neutral or negative. Such analyses would give a holistic picture of the editors' letters and their influences, and whether the strategies employed by the editors of women's magazines are contributing to the engagement of women in the political and socio-economic spheres of a democratic South Africa. An overview of how women's magazines empower their readers can thus be obtained.
- Gender-based violence is the real-life experience of many South African women, and highlights the fact that patriarchy is rife, even in a 21st century democratic SA. I argue that it is essential that a supplementary study is done on the role of the mainstream media, and particularly consumer magazines, in highlighting gender-based violence. The above can also lead to an analysis of online violence against local women journalists and editors, and how it influences the narratives of publications.
- I also suggest that a further study can be done to investigate the empowerment of women in a young, democratic South Africa, focusing on both mainstream and social media platforms.

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We have books, which are windows
into worlds we never even dreamed possible.*

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ADDENDA

People think, 'Oh, well how can 'The Hobbit,' which is one book, become three films?' But you can take one line from an appendice and it turns into a whole sequence.

Andy Serkis (brainyquote.com)

ADDENDUM A

Register of South African women's magazines

The table below is a register of South African women's magazines (including niche titles aimed at specific women's interests) from their early beginnings in 1909 to 2017, the end of this study's period of investigation. I compiled and updated this chronological list from the one presented in my master's thesis (Rossouw, 2005:52-53). As noted in section 1.1 (footnote 7), the recent developments in the South African magazine industry, and in particular the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, fall outside the timeframe of the study. However, to add context and currency to the study during the time of writing, dates after 2017 are indicated, when certain magazines ceased publication. Moreover, the year in which the title ceased publication refers to the last issue of the print edition by the original publishing group. It should be noted that magazines such as *Idees/Ideas*, *Lééf* and *Longevity* now have independent publishers. These magazines are published mainly online, with one or two print copies per year.

TITLE	LAUNCH DATE	CEASED PUBLICATION
<i>The Lady's Home Journal</i>	1909	1910
<i>South African Lady's Pictorial</i>	1909	1910
<i>The South African Lady's Pictorial and Home Journal</i>	1910	1940
<i>De Boerevrou (Die Boerevrou)</i>	1919	1931
<i>Die Huisvrou</i>	1922	1976
<i>Rooi Rose</i>	1942	2020
<i>SARIE</i>	1949	
<i>SA Garden & Home</i>	1950	2020
<i>Charme</i>	1964	1965
<i>Grace</i>	1964	1966
<i>The Townships Housewife</i>	1968	1969
<i>FAIRLADY</i>	1965	2020
<i>Living & Loving</i>	1970	2020
<i>TRUELOVE</i>	1972	
<i>Your Family</i>	1973	2020
<i>Woman's Value</i> ⁶⁷	1980	2001
<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	1984	2020
<i>Thandi</i>	1985	unknown
<i>House & Leisure</i>	1993	2020
<i>Essentials</i>	1995	2020
<i>Elle</i>	1996	2020

⁶⁷ In September 1980, Naspers bought *Checkers Value*, a free magazine for Checkers customers, and changed the name to *Women's Value*. In 2001, the first issue of *dit* – an acronym for die idees tydskrif [an ideas magazine] – was launched, and *Women's Value/dit* became the first SA magazine to publish internationally when it was launched in Hungary. However, because of difficulties with the translation of Afrikaans copy, the contract was not renewed (Le Roux, 2017). It should also be noted that *Tuis/Home* and *Idees/Ideas* developed from the original *Women's Value* magazine and were tweaked to standalone titles by Media24.

TITLE	LAUNCH DATE	CEASED PUBLICATION
<i>Food & Home Entertaining</i>	1996	2020
<i>Longevity</i>	1997	2018
<i>Marie Claire</i>	1997	2019
<i>SA Country Life</i>	1997	2020
<i>SA Gardener</i>	1997	2020
<i>Condé Nast House & Garden</i>	1998	
<i>Elle Decoration</i>	1998	2020
<i>Finesse</i>	1998	
<i>Visi</i> ⁶⁸	1998	
<i>Baba & Kleuter</i>	1999	
<i>Vrouekeur</i> ⁶⁹	1999	2020
<i>Your Baby</i>	1999	2020
<i>Shape</i>	2000	2012
<i>dit</i>	2001	2005
<i>SA Craft and Home</i>	2001	
<i>Baby & Me</i>	2001	2004 ⁷⁰
<i>Woman & Home</i>	2005	2020
<i>O, The Oprah Magazine</i>	2002	2014
<i>Salt Water Girl</i>	2002	2013
<i>Tuis/Home</i>	2004	2016
<i>SA Garden/SA Tuinpaleis</i>	2003	2012
<i>Seventeen</i>	2003	2013

⁶⁸ The Afrikaans version of *Visi* started as a bi-annual magazine, and is now published quarterly, and only in English. However, *Visi* was the first Afrikaans South African lifestyle magazine that offered a summary of the main features in English at the back of the magazine.

⁶⁹ *Vrouekeur* was the result of Caxton Magazines' repositioning of the family magazine *Keur*, dating from 1967.

⁷⁰ Inserted as supplement in *Femina*.

TITLE	LAUNCH DATE	CEASED PUBLICATION
<i>Soul</i>	2003	2013
<i>Glamour SA</i>	2004	2020
<i>Move!</i>	2005	2020
<i>Real</i>	2005	2007
<i>Lééf</i>	2006	2016
<i>TRUELOVE Babe</i>	2006	2008
<i>Cleo</i>	2007	2011
<i>Psychology</i>	2007	2011
<i>Idees/Ideas</i>	2009	2016
<i>Kuier</i>	2009	
<i>Women's Health</i>	2009	2020
<i>Destiny</i>	2014	2019
<i>Grazia</i>	2012	2016
<i>Good Housekeeping/Goeie Huishouding</i>	2011	2020
<i>Essays of Africa</i>	2010	2018
<i>Bella</i>	2013	2019

ADDENDUM B**The ranking of South African women's magazines at the end of 2017**

In the table below, I rank SA women's magazines according to the ABC circulation figures of above 20 000 at the end of the study's timeframe (31 December 2017). The table reads as follows: Number 1 on the list is *Kuier*, published by Media24 in Afrikaans, fortnightly. The magazine's total circulation (consisting of subscriptions and controlled free distribution) at the end of the 4th quarter (Oct to Dec) of 2017 was 94 851 (Manson, 2018; also see Breitenbach, 2018).

POSITION	TITLE	PUBLISHER	LANGUAGE	FREQUENCY	TOTAL CIRCULATION 4 th QUARTER (OCT-DEC) 2017
1	<i>Kuier</i>	Media24	Afrikaans	Fortnightly	94 851
2	<i>Woman & Home</i>	Caxton Magazines	English	Monthly	77 054
3	<i>Rooi Rose</i>	Caxton Magazines	Afrikaans	Monthly	70 546
4	<i>Move!</i>	Media24	Afrikaans	Weekly	65 960
5	<i>SARIE</i>	Media24	Afrikaans	Monthly	61 726
6	<i>Vrouekeur</i>	Caxton Magazines	Afrikaans	Weekly	48 829
7	<i>Glamour</i>	Condé Nast Independent Magazines	English	Monthly	43 483
8	<i>Finesse</i>	Carpe Diem Media/Caxton Magazines	Afrikaans	9xAnnually	39 933
9	<i>Good Housekeeping/ Goeie Huishouding</i>	AMP	English/ Afrikaans	Monthly	37 891
10	<i>FAIRLADY</i>	Media24	English	Monthly	37 431

POSITION	TITLE	PUBLISHER	LANGUAGE	FREQUENCY	TOTAL CIRCULATION 4 th QUARTER (OCT-DEC) 2017
11	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	Media24	English	Monthly	35 763
12	<i>TRUELOVE</i>	Media24	English	Monthly	31 925
13	<i>Your Family</i>	Caxton Magazines	English	Monthly	27 512
14	<i>Destiny Magazine</i>	Ndalo Media	English	Monthly	23 017
15	<i>Elle</i>	Ndalo Media	English	11xAnnually	21 510
16	<i>Essentials</i>	Caxton Magazines	English	Monthly	21 636

ADDENDUM C

South African women's magazines: The decline in circulation figures in the 21st century

The table below compares the ABC figures of South African women's magazines, listed by Rossouw (2005:52-53) based on the top twenty titles in 2004, along with the circulation figures at the end of the study period, namely 31 December 2017. For further context, and to illustrate the downward spiral of the circulation figures of women's magazines at the time of writing, the last column reflects the circulation figures for April to June 2020. The table reads: *SARIE's* monthly circulation figure for the first six months of 2004 was 136 953. In the fourth quarter of 2017 the circulation declined to 68 305, and the circulation for the 2nd quarter of 2020 stood at 53 174.

POSITION	TITLE	CIRCULATION 2004 (JAN-JUN)	CIRCULATION 2017 (OCT-DEC)	CIRCULATION 2020 (APR-JUN)
1	<i>SARIE</i>	136 953	61 726	53 174
2	<i>rooi rose</i>	136 780	70 546	No submission
3	<i>TRUELOVE</i>	128 827	31 925	19 210
4	<i>Glamour</i>	121 591	43 483	No submission
5	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	114 727	35 763	No submission
6	<i>Vrouekeur</i> ⁷¹	102 828	48 829	No submission
7	<i>SA Garden and Home</i>	100 419	43 128	No submission
8	<i>FAIRLADY</i>	94 361	37 431	28 102
9	<i>Essentials</i>	83 975	21 636	No submission
10	<i>Your Family</i>	82 607	27 512	No submission
11	<i>Finesse</i>	79 881	39 933	Unknown
12	<i>dit</i>	79 298	Ceased publication	
13	<i>Woman's Value</i>	72 574	Ceased publication	

⁷¹ All these titles are/were published monthly, except *Vrouekeur*, which was published weekly.

POSITION	TITLE	CIRCULATION 2004 (JAN-JUN)	CIRCULATION 2017 (OCT-DEC)	CIRCULATION 2020 (APR-JUN)
14	<i>O, The Oprah Magazine</i>	69 601	Ceased publication	
15	<i>Shape</i>	52 022	Ceased publication	
16	<i>Condé Nast House & Garden</i>	52 005	30 633	No submission
17	<i>Marie Claire</i>	51 624	18 767	Ceased publication
18	<i>Femina</i>	50 263	Ceased publication	
19	<i>Parents</i>	48 688	Ceased publication	
20	<i>Elle</i>	45 445	21 510	Ceased publication

ADDENDUM D

The following editors' letters were unavailable for analysis (see discussion in section 5.6.4):

- *SARIE*
 - 2001: 3 November & 28 November
 - 2002: July & October
 - 2008: July
 - 2017: July
- *FAIRLADY*
 - 2004: July & December
 - 2005: July
 - 2006: January
 - 2017: August
- *TRUELOVE*
 - 2006: January & November
 - 2009: August & December
 - 2010: September & October
 - 2014: September
 - 2017: July

ADDENDUM E

The details of the survey population (as discussed in section 5.6.4) are reflected in the table below. However, as indicated in section 5.7.4, this was before I employed extreme sampling.

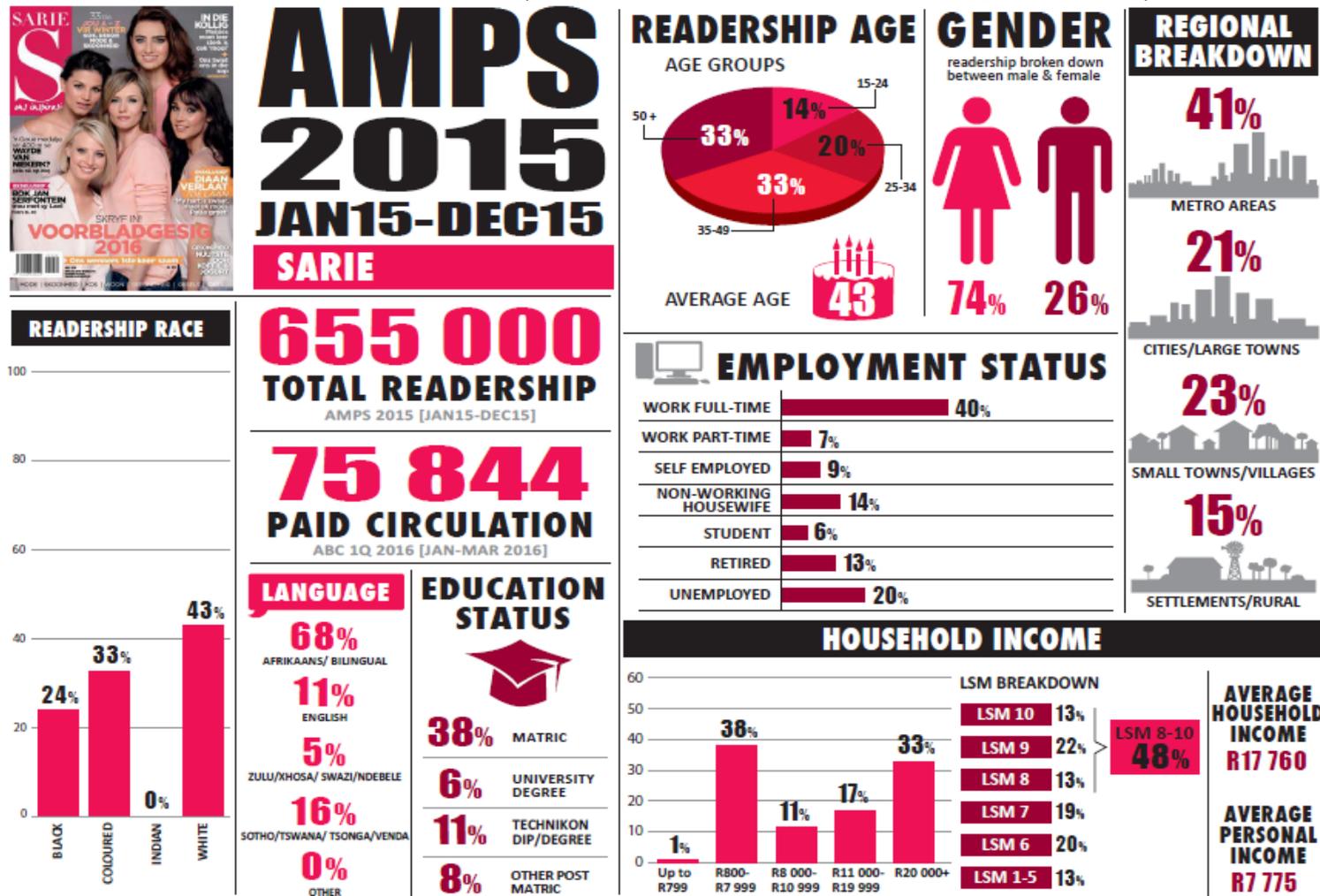
YEAR OF PUBLICATION	Available issues of <i>SARIE</i>	Available issues of <i>FAIRLADY</i>	Available issues of <i>TRUELOVE</i>	Total available issues of <i>SARIE</i>, <i>FAIRLADY</i> and <i>TRUELOVE</i> per year
2001	23	26	12	61
2002	14	22	12	48
2003	12	12	12	36
2004	12	10	12	34
2005	12	11	12	35
2006	12	11	10	33
2007	12	12	12	36
2008	11	12	12	35
2009	12	12	10	34
2010	12	12	10	34
2011	12	12	12	36
2012	12	12	12	36
2013	12	12	12	36
2014	12	12	11	35
2015	12	12	12	36
2016	12	12	12	36
2017	11	11	11	33
Total available editors' letters per title	215	223	196	
SURVEY POPULATION				634

ADDENDUM F**Editors of *SARIE* since its inception**

Fred le Roux	1949
Hennie Cronjé	1968
Fritz Joubert	1976
Izak de Villiers	1983
André (Bakkies) Rossouw	1991
Lizette Rabe	1994
Michéle van Breda	2001-

ADDENDUM G

The infographic below reflects *SARIE*'s readership in 2015 – the last time the SAARF released figures for magazines – as discussed in section 6.2.2. (Source: <http://www.media24.com/magazines/sarie/>)

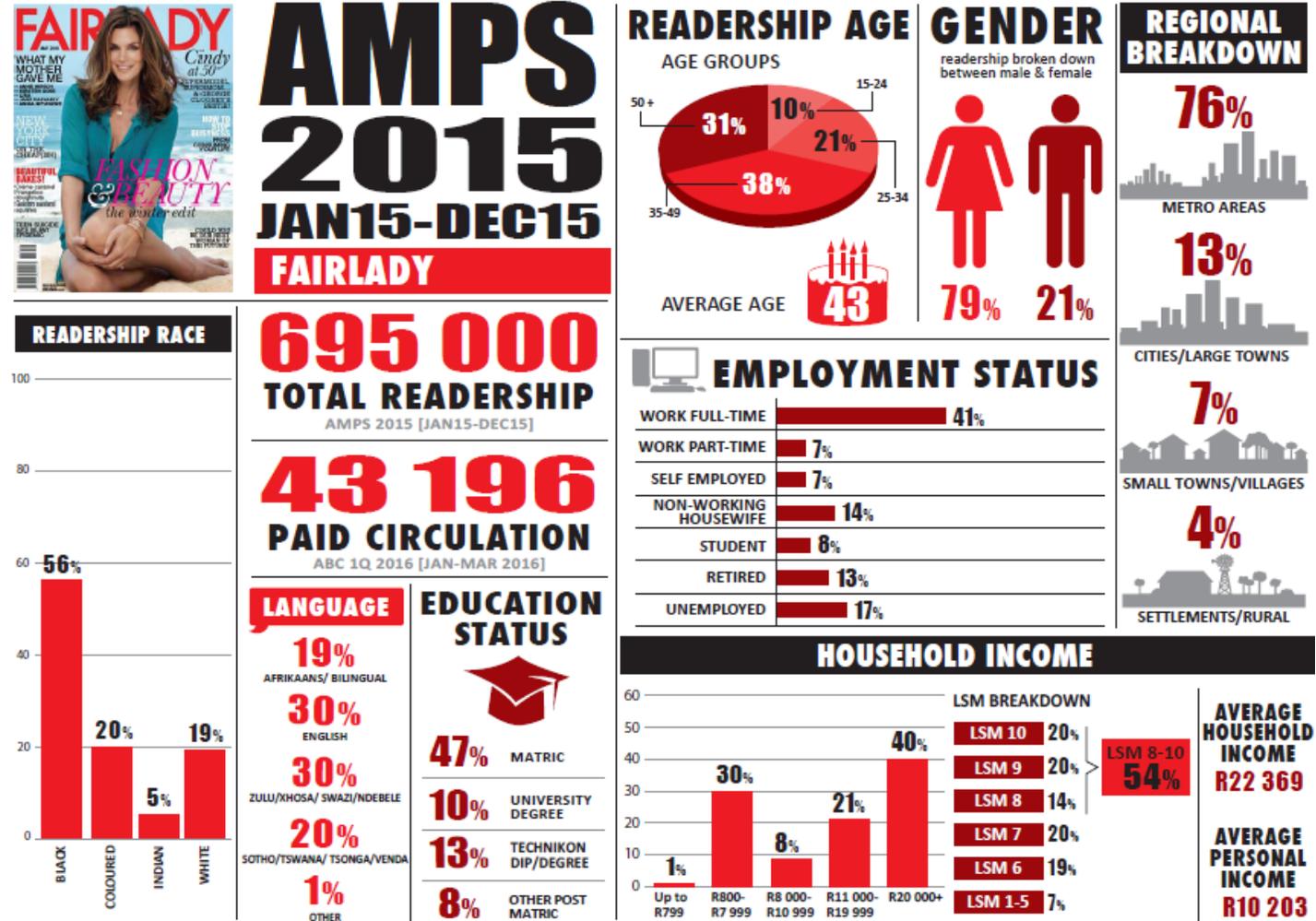


ADDENDUM H**Editors of *FAIRLADY* since its inception**

Jane Raphaely	1965
Dene Smuts	1984
Liz Butler	1987
Roz Wrottesley	1995
Alice Bell	1999
Ann Donald	2002
Suzy Brokensha	2007-

ADDENDUM I

The infographic below reflects *FAIRLADY*'s readership in 2015 – the last time the SAARF released figures for magazines – as discussed in section 6.3.2. (Source: <http://www.media24.com/magazines/fairlady/>)



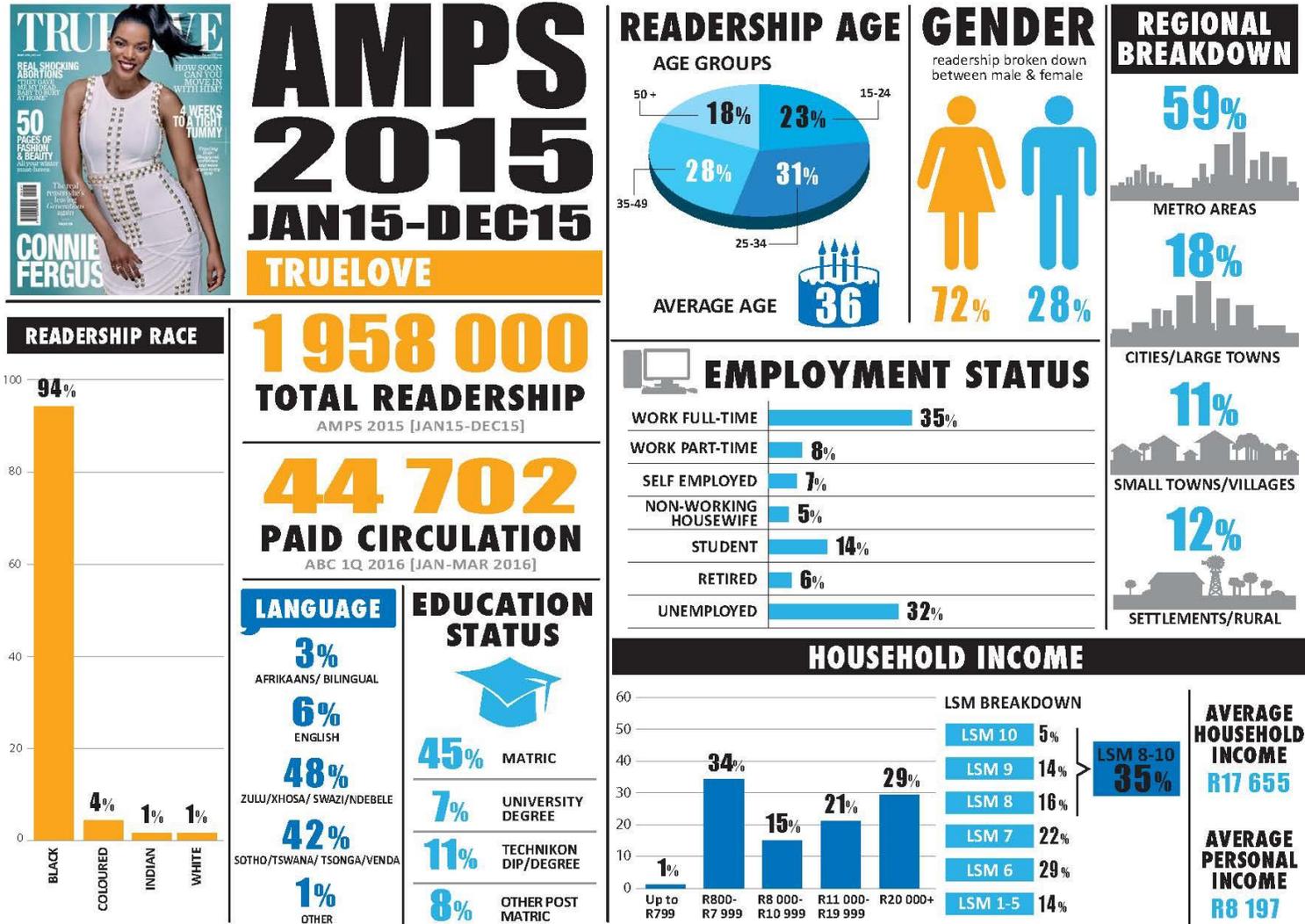
ADDENDUM J**Editors of *TRUE LOVE* since its inception**

Pearl Mashabela	1984
Khanyi Dhlomo-Mkhize	1995
Glynis O'Hara (acting editor)	2003
Busisiwe Mahlaba	2004
Dorah Sitole	2008
Sbu Mpungose	2010
Lerato Tshabalala	2012
Dudu Mvimbi Leshabane ⁷²	2014

⁷² In 2018, Mbali Soga took over from Dudu Mvimbi Leshabane as editor of *TRUELOVE*. In 2020, Makhosazana Zwane-Siguqua was appointed editor, and at the time of writing, she still was the editor of *TRUELOVE*.

ADDENDUM K

The infographic below reflects *TRUELOVE*'s readership in 2015 – the last time SAARF released figures for magazines – as discussed in section 6.4.2. (Source: <http://www.media24.com/magazines/truelove/>)



ADDENDUM L

Developments in the South African women's magazine market at the end of the second decade of the 21st century.

As stated in footnote 6, the recent developments in the South African magazine industry, and the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic (since 2020) on the local magazine industry, fall outside the timeframe of this study.

However, I deem it important to summarise the challenges that faced the local magazine industry after 2017. Due to the poor economic climate in the country, consumer magazines were already struggling to survive and be profitable when the Covid-19 lockdown reduced the sustainability of the magazine industry even further. Rabe (2020:374) writes:

[A] virus got the world in its grip, leading to a tipping point in modern history [and] without a shot being fired, the human and economic costs of a Third World War left all countries exposed.

AMP, the home of iconic magazines like *Cosmopolitan* and *House & Leisure*, was the first local media company to announce the closure (May 2020) of the Raphaely family business and publishing house. Tali Feinberg (2020) writes that this “demonstrated that nothing is immune to the devastating shockwaves” of Covid-19.

But more was to come. In the same month, Caxton & CTP Publishers withdrew from magazine publishing and associated businesses (www.iol.co.za; see also Breitenbach, 2020). The steady and continuous reduction in the overall amount of advertising spend being allocated by advertisers to the magazine sector, as well as the decline in circulation revenues, sum up the reasons for the closure of the magazines and the state of the depressing local magazine industry at the end of the second decade of the 21st century. The Caxton board argued “that the negative impact of the COVID-19 lockdown made this decision unavoidable”. In total, ten titles ceased publication, namely *Bona*, *Country Life*, *Essentials*, *Food & Home*, *Garden & Home*, *People*, *Rooi Rose*, *Vrouekeur*, *Woman & Home* and *Your Family*.

Barely two months later, Media24 followed suit and announced the closure of five magazines: *Move!*, *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Bicycling* and *Runner's World*, while the iconic *Drum* magazine is now published in digital format only. Furthermore,

the frequency of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* was reduced to six issues a year. The editorial production of the three women's magazines was also outsourced. Media24 argued that the benefits of earlier mediations to "offset the structural declines and keep them [the magazines] on the shelf no longer exist and they've run out of options" (<https://businesstech.co.za>; see also Nevill, 2020). Therefore, it can be argued that declining magazine revenue because of the Covid-19 pandemic "exacerbated the steady decline seen in the sector before the crisis hit". Within months, the South African audience lost an array of their favourite consumer magazines.

ADDENDUM M

DATA ACCESSED FOR SUB-QUESTIONS

Below is a list of the data or editors' letters that are cited in Chapter 7. The citations – according to descriptive coding as explained in the work plan (section 5.8.2) – are listed from sub-question 1 to sub-question 4 and arranged according to the key themes, as discussed in the narratives of *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE*.

SUB-QUESTION 1

Achievements

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_02_2_Rab_4)
- (SAR_04_2_Van_4)
- (SAR_09_05_Van_10)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_08_3_Bel_np)
- (FL_09_06_Bro_14)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_02_6_Dhl_22)
- (TL_04_09_Mah_np)
- (TL_09_03_Sit_7)

Challenges

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_04_2_Van_4)
- (SAR_09_02_Van_4)
- (SAR_09_10_Van_12)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_01_3_Bel_6)
- (FL_01_02_2_Bel_8)
- (FL16_12_Bro_6)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_01_05_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_07_Dhl_np)
- (TL_08_06_Sit_14)
- (TL_02_06_Dhl_22)

Democratic icons

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_10_07_Van_10)
- (SAR_14_08_Van_4)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_12_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_14_02_Bro_5)
- (FL_01_01_1_Bel_np)
- (FL_01_01_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_04_03_Don_np)
- (FL_01_03_2_Bel_8)
- (FL_16_10_Bro_4)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_10_04_Sit_np)
- (TL_14_02_Tsh_np)

Empowerment

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_03_1_Rab_8)
- (SAR_04_4_Van_np) & (SAR_09_12_Van_np)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_04_1_Bel_np)
- (FL_01_07_1_Bel_np) & (FL_03_03_Don_8)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_01_07_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_09_Dhl_np)
- (TL_02_06_Dhl_22)
- (TL_04_08_Mah_np)

Representation

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_07_2_Van_8)
- (SAR_09_05_Van_10)
- (SAR_09_06_Van_14)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_06_03_Ano_8)
- (FL_09_04_Bro_14)
- (FL_14_05_Bro_7)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_09_04_Sit_np)
- (TL_09_09_Sit_12)

Spirit of the time

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_03_2_Rab_np)
- (SAR_01_04_1_Van_6)
- (SAR_09_01_Van_10)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_03_2_Bel_8)
- (FL_09_06_Bro_14)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_09_09_Sit_12)
- (TL_9_03_Sit_7) & (TL_14_03_Tsh_np)

SUB-QUESTION 2

Children

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_05_2_Van_8)
- (SAR_01_10_1_Van_12)
- (SAR_04_8_Van_8)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_01_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_01_12_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_17_09_Bro_6)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_01_06_Dhl_np)
- (TL_04_01_Oha_np)

- (TL_04_03_Oha_22)
- (TL_09_05_Sit_14)
- (TL_09_06_Sit_16)
- (TL_16_06_Les_12)

Community

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_04_2_Van_8)
- (SAR_01_10_2_Van_12)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_07_1_Bel_np)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_04_03_Oha_22)
- (TL_09_03_Sit_7)

Education

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_14_03_Van_4)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_04_02_Don_6)
- (FL_14_06_Bro_5)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_08_06_Sit_14)
- (TL_09_01_Sit_np)

Environment

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_09_06_Van_14)
- (SAR_14_11_Van_20)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_05_1_Bel_np)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_09_01_Sit_7)
- (TL_09_02_Sit_9)

Society at large

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_08_2_Van_4)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_08_1_Bel_np)
- (FL_04_05_Don_np)
- (FL_13_03_Bro_7)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_10_06_Sit_np)
- (TL_14_11_Les_18)

Spirituality

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_04_12_Van_10)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_17_07_Bro_6)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_04_12_Mah_np),
- (TL_09_04_Sit_np)
- (TL_14_04_Tsh_np)

SUB-QUESTION 3

Culture

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_04_2_Van_8)
- (SAR_01_09_2_Van_10)
- (SAR_04_5_Van_8)
- (SAR_14_03_Van_4)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_09_11_Bro_14)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_01_10_Dhl_np)

Friendship

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_12_1_Van_10)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_09_06_Bro_14)
- (FL_14_10_Bro_11)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_03_06_Dhl_np)
- (TL_14_08_Les_12)

Humanity

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_09_1_Van_8)
- (SAR_14_02_Van_6)
- (SAR_14_08_Van_4)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_09_1_Bel_np)
- (FL_01_09_2_Bel_np)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_04_11_Mah_np)

Self-development

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_02_2_Rab_4)
- (SAR_01_03_1_Rab_8)
- (SAR_17_02_Van_6)
- (SAR_17_05_Van_6)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_01_3_Bel_6)
- (FL_01_05_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_01_12_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_17_06_Bro_10)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_04_09_Mah_np)
- (TL_04_12_Mah_np)
- (TL_14_02_Tsh_np)

- (TL_14_03_Tsh_np)
- (TL_14_04_Tsh_np)
- (TL_17_01_Les_6)
- (TL17_09_Les_8)

SUB-QUESTION 4

Editorial philosophy

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_03_2_Rab_np)
- (SAR_01_07_1_Van_4)
- (SAR_04_7_Van_10)
- (SAR12_07_Van_14)
- (SAR_14_07_Van_6)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_02_03_1_Don_6)
- (FL_04_11_Don_np)
- (FL_04_12_Don_np)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_12_06_Tsh_8-10)

Readership

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_02_2_Rab_4)
- (SAR_01_11_2_Van_np)
- (SAR_09_01_Van_10)
- (SAR_11_07_Van_8)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_02_03_1_Don_6)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_01_02_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_07_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_11_Dhl_np)
- (TL_02_06_Dhl_22)
- (TL_09_09_Sit_12)
- (TL_12_06_Tsh_8-10)

Strategy

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_04_7_Van_10)
- (SAR_14_10_Van_22)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_03_1_Bel_np)
- (FL_01_09_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_04_09_Don_np)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_01_02_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_03_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_08_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_10_Dhl_np)
- (TL_03_06_Dhl_np)

ADDENDUM N

DATA ACCESSED FOR MRQ

Below is a list of the data or editors' letters in *SARIE*, *FAIRLADY* and *TRUELOVE* that are cited in Chapter 8. The citations, according to descriptive coding as explained in the workplan (section 5.8.2), are listed as discussed within the two theoretical frameworks, namely CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*, and Feminism.

Within CPE, advancing to *Contemporary Political Economy*

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_1_09_2_Van_10)
- (SAR_04_9_Van_10)
- (SAR_09_01_Van_10)
- (SAR_01_05_1_Van_8)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_03_2_Bel_8)
- (FL_01_06_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_04_02_Don_6)
- (FL_06_03_Annon_8)
- (FL_14_05_Bro_7)
- (FL_09_11_Bro_14)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_09_03_Sit_7)
- (TL_09_07_Sit_14)
- (TL_10_04_Sit_np)

Within Feminism

From *SARIE*

- (SAR_01_01_2_Rab_np)
- (SAR01_05_1_Van_8)

From *FAIRLADY*

- (FL_01_08_1_Bel_np)
- (FL_01_08_2_Bel_np)
- (FL_09_03_Bro_12)
- (FL03_03_Don_8)

From *TRUELOVE*

- (TL_01_07_Dhl_np)
- (TL_01_08_Dhl_np)
- (TL_04_01_Oha_np)
- (TL_14_06_Ano_14)
- (TL_14_05_Tsh_np)