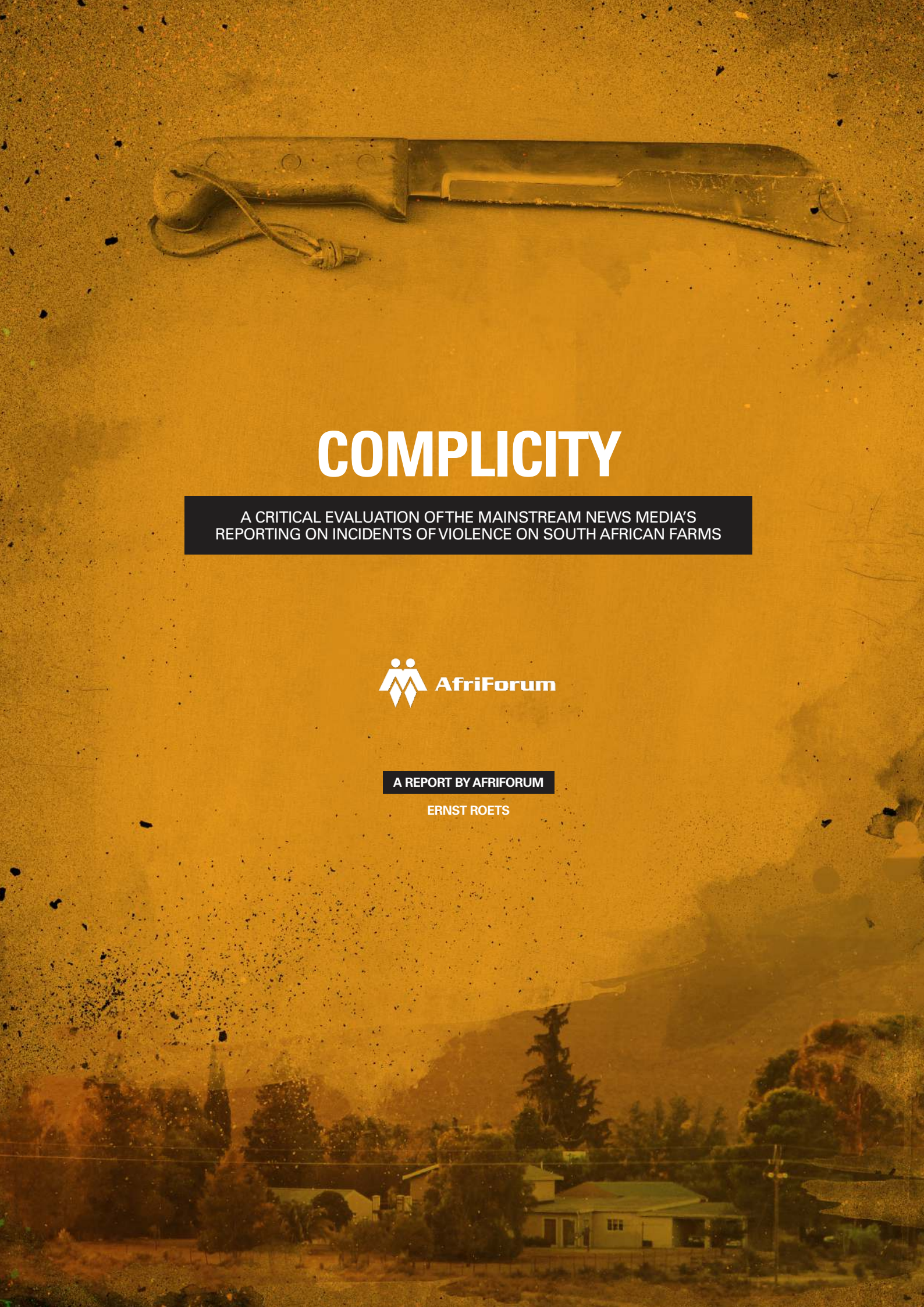


COMPLICITY

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE MAINSTREAM NEWS MEDIA'S REPORTING ON INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE ON SOUTH AFRICAN FARMS

AfriForum

A REPORT BY AFRIFORUM

ERNST ROETS

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INTRODUCTION

Since the start of AfriForum's campaign for the prioritising of farm attacks, the organisation has been concerned about perceived double standards regarding racism in South Africa. These perceived double standards are evident in the way the South African government routinely and publicly condemns incidents of violence where the perpetrators are white and the victims black, while incidents of violence where the perpetrators are black and the victims white are only responded to in exceptional circumstances. This is particularly evident with regard to violence on farms. For some time AfriForum's members have been concerned about the trend to escalate incidents of so-called white-on-black violence to a matter of national debate, while farm murders – with mostly white victims and almost exclusively black perpetrators – are largely ignored.

These perceived double standards are not only seen in the South African government's reaction, but also in the MSM in South Africa. AfriForum's members have been concerned for some time about the double standards of mainstream commentators in the media such as Max du Preez, Adriaan Basson, Eusebius McKaiser, Pierre de Vos, Verashni Pillay, Pieter du Toit and several others. These double standards appear from the sentiment these commentators express in the media on the one hand, and in the way they report on incidents on farms on the other.

AfriForum therefore initiated an investigation into the way in which the MSM reports on incidents of violence on farms. Apart from several comments alluded at the end of this report, a quantitative approach was followed.

The role of the media

AfriForum is principally committed to liberty and the free market. The organisation is thus firmly opposed to government regulation of the media and committed to the notion that independent media institutions have the prerogative to determine their own policy, approach and choice of emphasis.

AfriForum is also a supporter of the notion that no person can truly claim to be objective and consequentially that no media institution can ever claim to be completely neutral. While neutrality and objectivity are goals that the media can strive for, AfriForum believes that it is far better for news institutions to be clear about their own biases, including who their target market is, what their focus is and how they determine which stories to publish and which to ignore.

A crisis, however, arises when media institutions claim to be objective while clearly executing double standards in its reporting. This is even more concerning when those double standards are evident with regard to race. The main problem with this is that it seems the readers, listeners or viewers of that institution only know about those incidents reported on, while they know nothing about those incidents the media institution chose to ignore. This unbalanced media coverage leads to false narratives, negative stereotyping, misdirected public policy and, in extreme cases, justification of violence directed at communities that are targeted.

Reporting on farm murders

During 2016 and 2017 – the time frame which forms the focus of this report – at least 148 farm murders have been committed during at least 737 farm attacks.[1] These figures (which should be treated as the minimum figure) amount to more than one farm attack per day and about 1,4 farm murders per week.

A decision not to report on these attacks due to the vastness thereof, should not coincide with severe condemnation and excessive reporting on isolated incidents where farmers or white people are perpetrators. The former is understandable. The latter is unethical for the reasons provided above and could even contribute to the major crisis that already exists in South Africa.

The objective of this report is to determine how the media reports on farm attacks. This investigation is part of a holistic research project on farm attacks.

This report is a precursor of the book *Kill the Boer* for which the research published in this report was compiled. More information on the book, which will be published in June 2018, is available on **www.killtheboerbook.com**.

1. The numbers provided here are for the incidents that could be verified by AfriForum, in cooperation with the Transvaal Agricultural Union (TAU SA). These figures should thus be regarded as the minimum numbers. It would be fair to conclude that the actual number of farm attacks is much higher, while the amount of farm murders is fairly accurate.

METHODOLOGY

Mainstream media

The term "Mainstream media" (MSM) is used in this report to refer collectively to the various large mass news media that influences many people. The MSM reflects and shapes prevailing currents of thought. Since there is no clear indication for when a news institution should be regarded as part of the MSM, the MSM has been identified for the purpose of this report as the media institutions that have the most visitors on their respective websites. Consequentially, this study was conducted with an exclusive focus on news reports published on the websites of the following media institutions:

1. *The Citizen*
2. *Daily Sun*
3. eNCA
4. EWN
5. *Huffington Post SA*
6. IOL
7. Jacaranda News
8. *Mail & Guardian*
9. Maroela Media
10. Netwerk24
11. News24
12. SABC
13. *Sowetan* LIVE
14. *The New Age*
15. *Times* LIVE

It should be noted that many of these websites feed into a variety of affiliated news institutions. The SABC (the state broadcaster), for example, is linked to several TV channels and a wide variety of radio stations. News24 is affiliated to several newspapers. Netwerk24 serves as the online portal to all the mainstream Afrikaans newspapers, including *Rapport*, *Beeld*, *Die Burger* and *Volksblad*. EWN is linked to Talk Radio 702. IOL is linked to several newspapers of the Independent Group. It is thus our submission that the news institutions chosen should be regarded as a fair indication of the MSM in South Africa.

Afrikaans media

The only Afrikaans media included in this report are Maroela Media and Netwerk24. These are by far the largest Afrikaans media institutions. It should thus be noted that "Afrikaans media" in this report refers to the combined reporting of Maroela Media and Netwerk24.

Obtaining the data

All news reports about incidents of violence on farms that were published between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2017 by the media institutions mentioned above were considered. Keyword searches were conducted using phrases such as "farm murder", "farmer attacked", "farmer killed" and "farm worker killed" as well as information contained in AfriForum's database of farm murders, such as the names of victims. These were run through Google and the websites of media institutions included in this study. Each incident in the data collected was allocated an incident name based on the name of the victim or the location, e.g. "Farm attack – Joubert Conradie".

Only reports related to incidents on farms were included. These incidents include murders, assaults, attacks and any other form of criminality or controversy. In some of the cases, such as the notorious "bakkie incident" where a black woman was given a lift inside a cage on the back of a white man's bakkie,[2] there was no physical violence. The incident was however regarded by some as an act of violence. It was also widely reported on in the media. Consequentially, it was included in this study.

Describing the incidents

Several incidents are mentioned in this report. An incident description is included in an addendum at the end of this report to serve as a reference and to provide context to the incidents that are mentioned.

2. A "bakkie" is a South African term used to refer to a pickup truck.

Data variables

The following variables were sourced from the news reports:

1. Source, for example News24
2. Date reported
3. Time reported
4. Incident date
5. Category (nature of the incident)
6. Incident (description of the incident)
7. Headline
8. Race (of perpetrator and victim)
9. Illustration (of perpetrator or victim included in the report)
10. Names mentioned (of the perpetrator and/or victim)
11. Deaths (number of deaths)
12. Race of perpetrator mentioned
13. Race of victim mentioned
14. Link (to the report)

KEY ASSUMPTIONS

Key assumptions in the drafting of this report included the following:

- Race mentioned in quotes contained in the reports was not counted as "race mentioned".
- Illustrations of the victims' or perpetrators' family members counted as an illustration of the perpetrator or victim.
- If one report mentioned more than one incident, the report was captured the appropriate number of times and the information was related to the different incidents.
- Where reports related to videos, the content of the videos was not included.
- No opinion pieces were taken into account.
- Only reports relating to incidents that occurred and were reported on between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2017 were considered.

Terminology

Black-on-black	Incidents of violence on farms or smallholdings where both the perpetrator and the victim were black
Black-on-white	Incidents of violence on farms or smallholdings where the perpetrator was black or unknown and the victim white
Incident	Every incident with a unique incident identifier
Known incident	An incident that had previously been reported by at least one other news institution
Known name	If the name of either the victim or the perpetrator was mentioned by at least one news institution at least a day before another institution reported on that incident, the name of that victim or perpetrator was considered a 'known name'
Mention	Each time a news report mentioned an incident
News institution	Any news institution that formed part of this study
Verified incident	A farm attack in which the details were verified by AfriForum through correspondence with the victims, SAPS, a local community safety network or credible media sources
Vigilante incident	Incidents of violence where people took the law into their own hands, to avenge a crime, whether that crime be genuine or perceived
White-on-black	Incidents of violence on farms or smallholdings where the perpetrator was white and the victim black
White-on-white	Incidents of violence on farms or smallholdings where both the perpetrator and the victim were white

Table 1: Terminology

The farm attacks mentioned in this report were also verified independently by AfriForum. Many of the news reports included in this report did not reference the race of the perpetrator. However, in the incidents that were verified by AfriForum, the race of the perpetrators in 100% of the farm attacks[3] was confirmed as black. As a result, some incidents were counted in this report as incidents where the perpetrators were black, even though the race of the perpetrator was not evident from media reports.

3. Note that this refers only to incidents that comply with the definition of a farm attack and not all incidents of violence on farms or smallholdings.

EXTENT OF REPORTING

A total of 264 incidents were reported. A total of 2 331 media reports relating to these 264 incidents were published. These incidents were mentioned 2 773 times in the media.

The extent of reporting by categories

The incidents reported can be categorised as follows:

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF INCIDENTS REPORTED
Farm attacks • Attacks • Murders	241 • 136 • 105
Vigilante incidents	11
Animal incidents	3
Worker abuse	2
Crime	5
Domestic violence	1
Other	1
TOTAL	**264**

Table 2: Number of incidents reported, categorised by crime category

It should be noted that this report only indicates incidents reported in the media and not of all incidents that occurred. We do not know how many incidents of worker abuse occurred, for example. We do, however, know how many farm attacks and farm murders have been committed in the specified time frame. If the numbers provided in the introduction to this report (148 farm murders and 737 farm attacks) were to be used as a reference, this would mean that the media reported on only 70,9% of farm murders and 32,7% of farm attacks. Nonetheless, farm attacks made up 91,2% of the total amount of incidents that were reported on in the media, not counting the extent to which these incidents were repeatedly mentioned.

It is however not sufficient to simply count the number of incidents that were covered by the media. The more important question is to what extent media institutions repeatedly mentioned particular incidents, as this indicates the weight that editorial teams attached to the particular incident, the type of information the media tends to emphasise for the public at large to take note of and the possible negative stereotyping that could take place as a result. The goal here is to determine the number of mentions that a particular type of incident tends to receive in the MSM.

CATEGORY	MENTIONS	INCIDENTS	MENTIONS PER INCIDENT
Farm attacks • Attacks • Murders	1 516 • 404 • 1 112	241 • 136 • 105	6 • 3 • 11
Vigilante incidents	1 097	11	100
Animal incidents	82	3	27
Worker abuse	11	2	6
Crime	33	5	7
Domestic violence	6	1	6
Other	28	1	28
TOTAL	**2 773**	**264**	**11**

Table 3: Mentions per incident, categorised by crime category

It is clear that vigilante incidents, such as the so-called "coffin case" or the "Parys killings" (see incident descriptions in the addendum), received substantially broader media coverage than farm attacks or farm murders. Vigilante incidents were covered on average about nine times as many as farm murders.

The extent of reporting by different news institutions

It is evident from the research that certain news institutions tend to report more comprehensively on incidents of violence on farms. There is a clear distinction between reports on these incidents in the Afrikaans and the English media. The Afrikaans media (Netwerk24 and Maroela Media) accounted for 57,2% of all mentions.

NEWS INSTITUTION	MENTIONS	% OF TOTAL MENTIONS
Netwerk24	1 008	36,4%
Maroela Media	576	20,8%
News24	260	9,4%
The Citizen	191	6,9%
EWN	165	6,0%
IOL	133	4,8%
eNCA	87	3,1%
Times LIVE	87	3,1%
Sowetan LIVE	64	2,3%
Jacaranda News	61	2,2%
Daily Sun	55	2,0%
Huffington Post SA	42	1,5%
The New Age	23	0,8%
SABC	15	0,5%
Mail & Guardian	6	0,2%

Table 4: Reporting of incidents, categorised by media institution

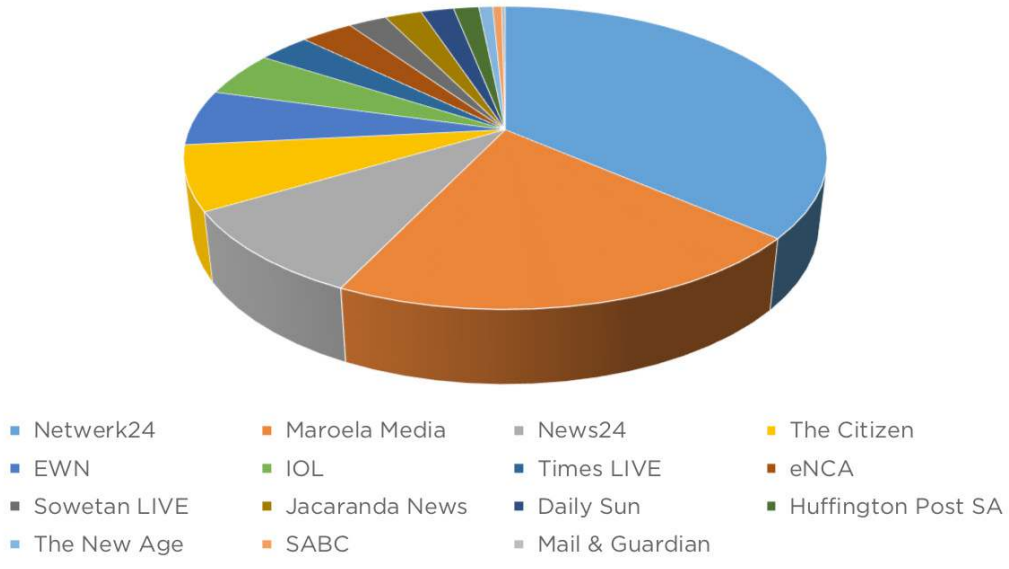


Figure 1: Reporting of incidents, categorised by media institution

The extent of reporting: monthly breakdown

A monthly breakdown of media reports indicated that there was a significant difference in the extent of media reporting on incidents of violence on farms during 2017, compared to 2016. While farm attacks formed the biggest component of incidents that were reported on in the media (91,3%), the major discrepancy in the number of mentions per incident indicated that farm attacks formed only a small minority of the total amount of incidents mentioned in the media.

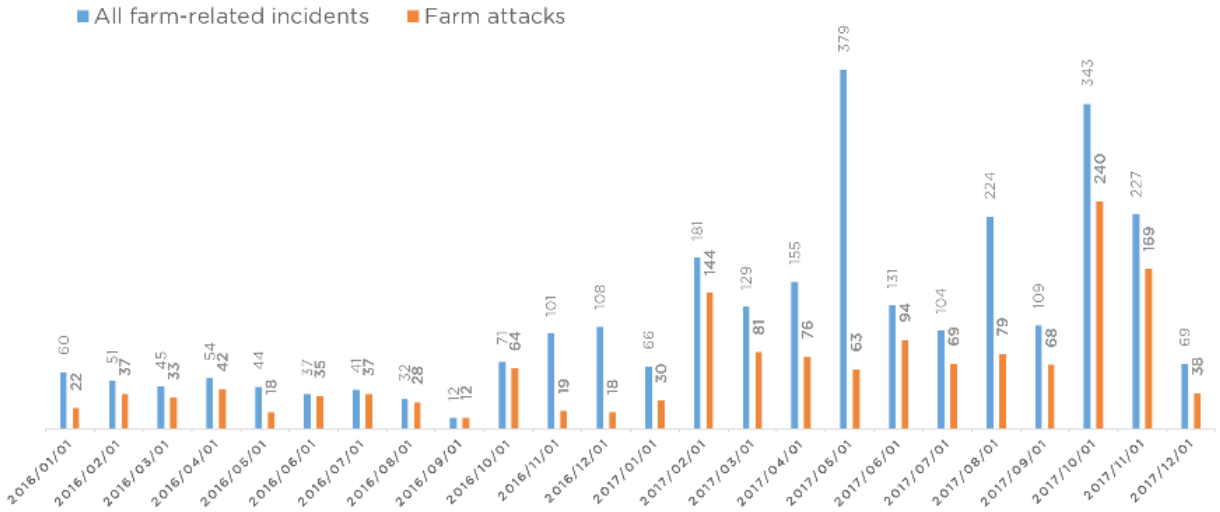


Figure 2: Farm-related incidents mentioned (monthly breakdown)

The increased reporting towards the end of 2017 can mostly be attributed to the so-called Black Monday protests against farm murders. The fact that a large chunk of media institutions reported negatively on these protests is not indicated in this graph.

REPORTING BY RACE

It is evident from the research that the race of the victim or perpetrator tended to be a major factor in determining the extent to which a particular incident was covered by the media. The most important variable appeared to be the race of the perpetrator. Incidents of violence where the perpetrator was white were reported on much more extensively than incidents where the perpetrator was black. There was also a stark difference in the way incidents with black victims were reported on. Incidents where the victim and the perpetrator were both black tended to be largely ignored (six mentions per incident), while incidents where the victim was black and the perpetrator white were reported exponentially more, with 75 mentions per incident on average.

RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS	MENTIONS	INCIDENTS	MENTIONS PER INCIDENT
White-on-black	1 206	16	75
Black-on-white	1 379	206	7
Black-on-black	97	15	6
White-on-white	30	3	10
Other	61	24	3
TOTAL	**2 773**	**264**	**11**

Table 5: Media reporting of incidents, categorised by race – summary of all incidents

It is clear from Table 5 that white-on-black incidents were mentioned on average 11 times as many as black-on-white incidents, 12 times as many as black-on-black incidents and 8 times as many as white-on-white incidents.

When the white-on-black incidents were categorised by the type of incidents, a clearer picture emerged.

CATEGORY	MENTIONS	INCIDENTS	MENTIONS PER INCIDENT
Vigilante incidents	1 089	9	121
Animal incidents	69	2	35
Worker abuse	11	2	6
Other	28	1	28
Crime	9	2	5

Table 6: Media reporting of white-on-black incidents, categorised by the type of incident

Vigilante incidents where the victim was black and the perpetrator white was mentioned in the media 18 times as many as incidents where the victim was white and the perpetrator black.

When reports on racial characteristics of incidents in the Afrikaans and English media were compared, another discrepancy became evident.

RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS	MENTIONS	INCIDENTS	MENTIONS PER INCIDENT
White-on-black	445	15	30
Black-on-white	1 027	197	5
Black-on-black	53	13	4
White-on-white	25	3	8
Other	34	19	2
TOTAL	**1 584**	**247**	**6**

Table 7: Media reporting and race – Afrikaans media

While double standards were still evident in the Afrikaans media, it was clear that the Afrikaans media tends to be much more balanced than the media in general. Incidents where the perpetrators were white and the victims black were mentioned on average six times as many as incidents where the perpetrators were black and the victims white, seven times as many as incidents where both the perpetrators and the victims were black, and about four times as many as incidents where both the perpetrators and victims were white. The double standards regarding race were even more evident when reporting of incidents in the English media was considered. Incidents where the perpetrators were white and the victims black were mentioned on average 14,8 times as many as incidents where the victims were either black or white and the perpetrators black.

RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS	MENTIONS	INCIDENTS	MENTIONS PER INCIDENT
White-on-black	761	13	59
Black-on-white	352	82	4
Black-on-black	44	12	4
White-on-white	5	2	3
Other	27	24	1
TOTAL	**1 189**	**133**	**9**

Table 8: Media reporting and race – English media

Reporting of known incidents by race

When the number of incidents that were known to the media was considered, it was also clear that severe double standards exist. For this report, it was accepted that an incident should be regarded as a "known incident" if it was published by at least one of the media institutions that form part of this study. The question then arose: To what extent were known incidents covered by the media? It became clear that the race of the perpetrator was a major determining factor in whether a known incident would be reported.

Known incidents where the perpetrator was white and the victim black were covered extensively, while known incidents where the perpetrator was black and the victim white often were ignored. Known incidents where both the perpetrator and

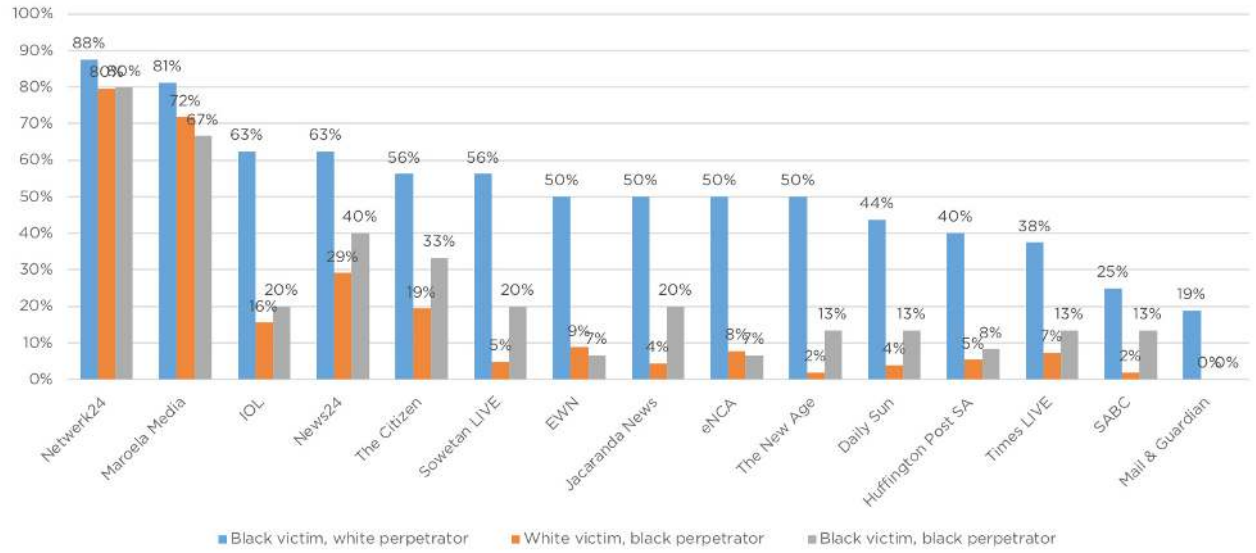


Figure 3: Reporting of known incidents, categorised by race

the victim were black were also not covered by the media. It is thus clear that the race of the perpetrator was the major factor that determined the extent of media coverage an incident would receive. From statistics on this variable, the major discrepancy between the Afrikaans and English media was again evident: the Afrikaans media tends to report on these incidents in a much more balanced way. It is also noteworthy that during the two years which was covered by this study, *Mail & Guardian* did not report on any farm attacks, nor any other incident where the victims were white. It seems that the *Mail & Guardian* have made it a policy not to report on farm attacks unless the perpetrator is a white farmer and the victim is black. This is a reasonable conclusion given the extent of media coverage on farm attacks by the MSM in general, the controversy around farm attacks, the extensive media coverage of Black Monday protests and the fact that *Mail & Guardian* reported on farm attacks before 2016.

Reporting of deaths, categorised by race

There was also a clear discrepancy in the way violent incidents on farms were reported on in the media when considering the number of people who were killed as well as the race of the perpetrator and the victim. To understand this, it is useful to start with the number of known incidents where people were killed, categorised by the number of deaths:

KNOWN INCIDENTS	0 PERSONS KILLED	1 PERSON KILLED	2 PERSONS KILLED	3 PERSONS KILLED	4 PERSONS KILLED
White-on-black	6	9	1	–	–
Black-on-white	110	86	8	–	2
Black-on-black	8	8	–	–	–
White-on-white	–	4	–	–	–
Unknown on unknown	19	2	1	–	–

Table 9: Number of persons killed in known incidents, categorised by race

When considering the reporting of incidents where white people were murdered by black people, the number of mentions per incident tended to increase in the Afrikaans media as the number of deaths increased, while the number of deaths appeared to be mostly irrelevant in the English media.

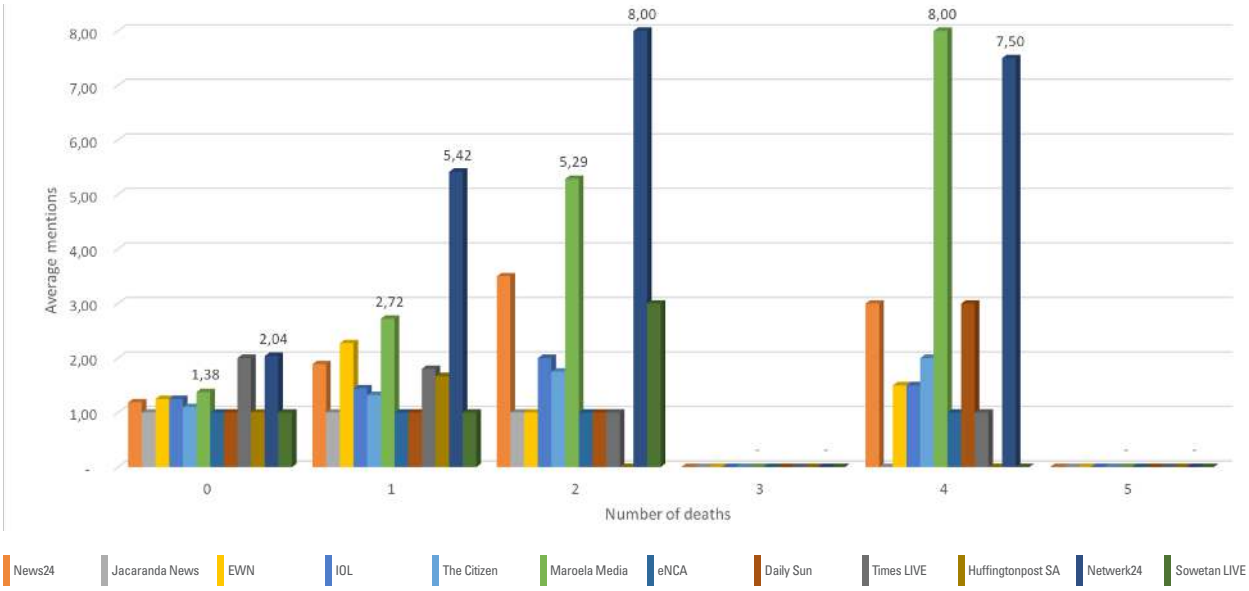


Figure 4: Average mentions by number of deaths (black perpetrators, white victims)

On the other hand, when considering the reporting of incidents where black people were murdered by white people, it was evident that the extent of media reporting was exponentially greater in comparison to black-on-white violence. Other than that, there appeared not to be a pattern in the way the media reported on these crimes, and the number of deaths appeared to be irrelevant.

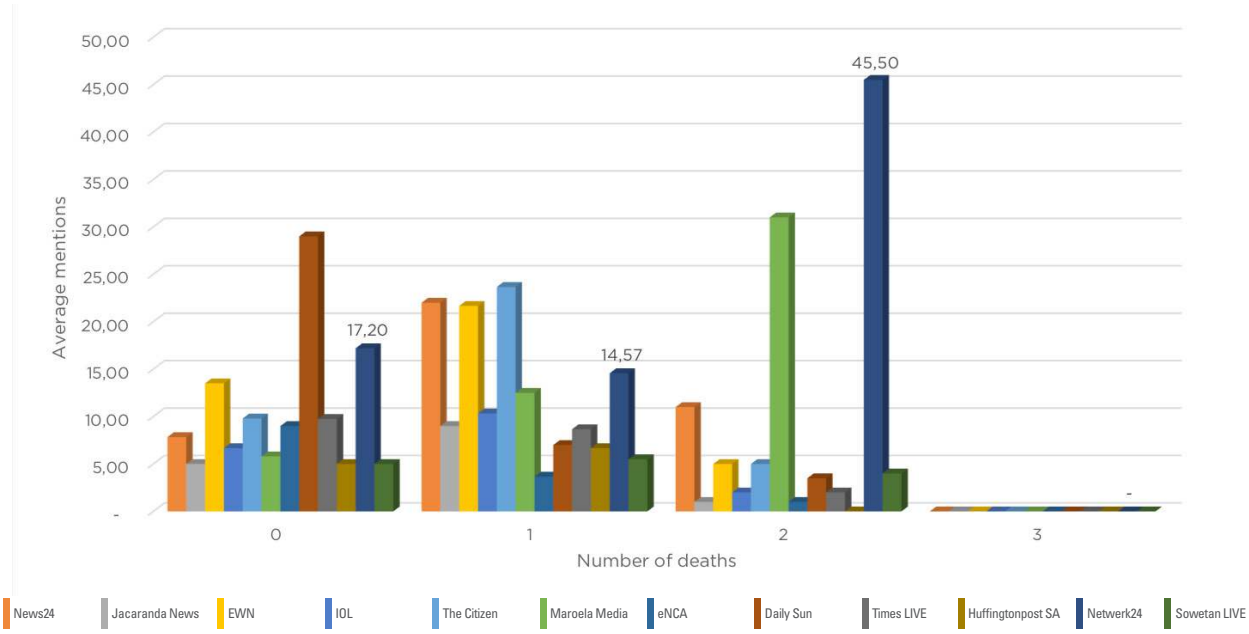


Figure 5: Average mentions by number of deaths (white perpetrators, black victims)

With regard to incidents where both the perpetrators and the victims were black, the number of deaths appeared to be irrelevant to all except Netwerk24. There was very low reporting on this kind of incidents, especially in comparison to incidents where the perpetrators were white and the victims black.

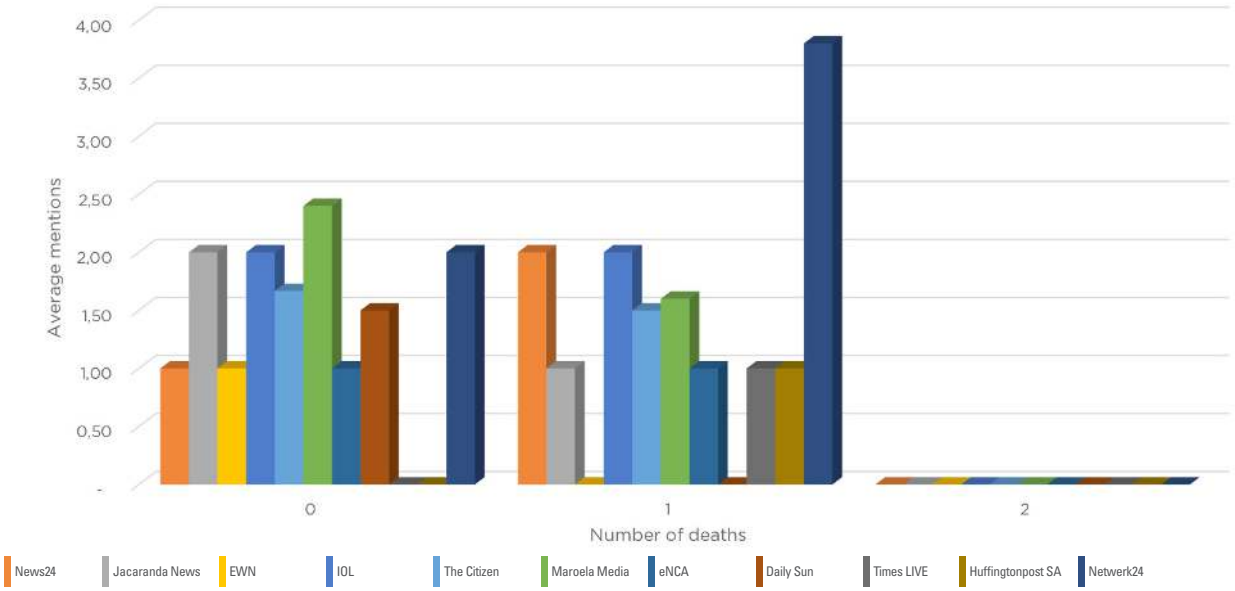


Figure 6: Average mentions by number of deaths (black perpetrators, black victims)

Reporting of racial descriptions

There was also a major discrepancy in the way the MSM dealt with racial descriptions of incidents on farms where the perpetrators and the victims were of different races. In cases where the perpetrators were white and the victims black, the race of either the perpetrator or the victim was frequently pointed out in the article (again with a distinction evident between English and Afrikaans media). On the other hand, where the perpetrator was black and the victim white, the race of either of the two was never pointed out by any of the MSM institutions, except *The Citizen*, which pointed out the race in 2% of the cases. *Mail & Guardian*, *The New Age* and Netwerk24 never indicated race and Maroela Media only did so in 1% of white-on-black incidents.

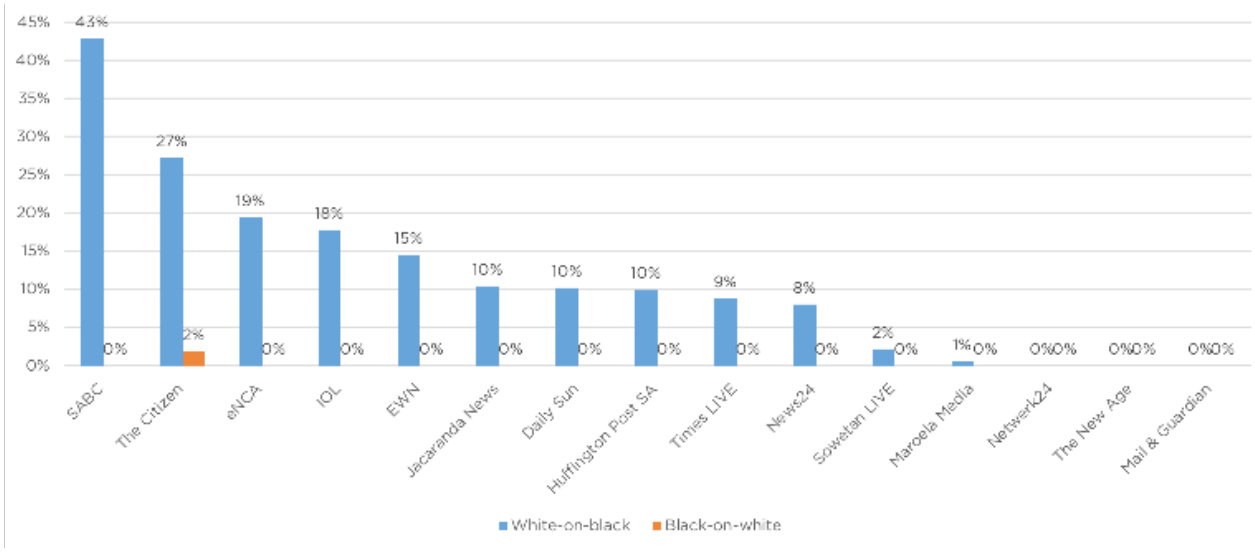


Figure 7: Mention of race, classified by media institution

Reporting of names

There was also a major discrepancy regarding the publishing of names in incidents where the perpetrators were white and the victims black, as opposed to incidents where the perpetrators were black and the victims white. The name of either the victim or the perpetrator was regarded to be known if it was published by at least one of the media institutions that formed part of this study, and if it was published one or more days before any subsequent report by the institution in question. When comparing white perpetrator, black victim incidents to black perpetrator, white victim incidents, it was clear that the MSM tended to publish the names of either the victim or the perpetrator in cases of white-on-black violence, while they tended not to publish any names in cases of black-on-white violence. The following graphic indicates the extent to which the names of either the perpetrator or the victim was not mentioned, even though it was known.

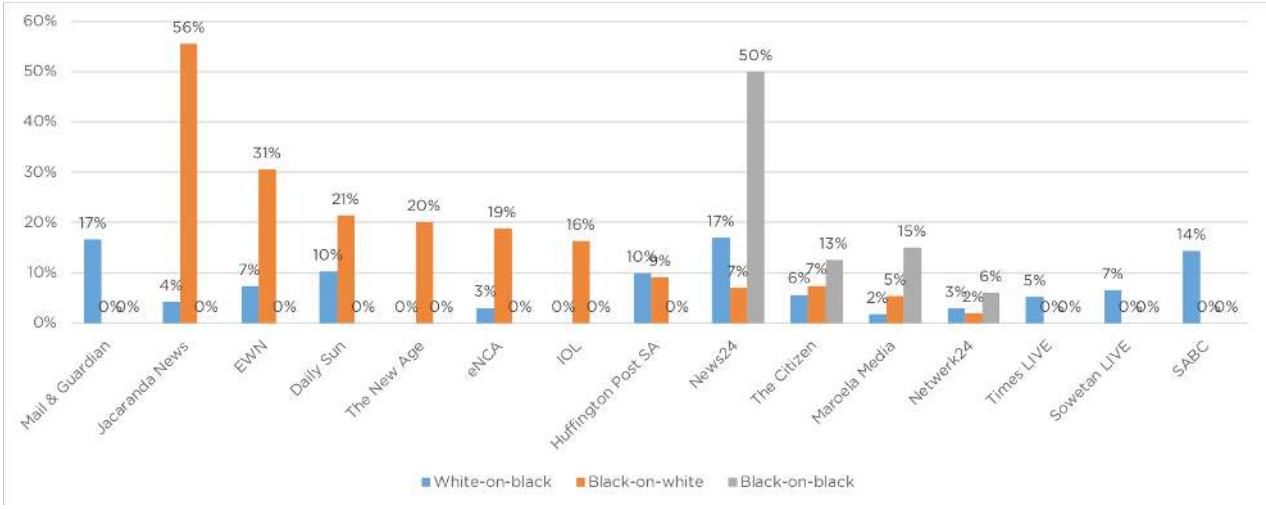


Figure 8: Names not mentioned although known, categorised by race

USING ILLUSTRATIONS

The discrepancy between reporting on white-on-black incidents compared to black-on-white incidents was also evident in the use of illustrations. Illustrations are generally used to boost the visibility of a story or to elevate that story above others. It can also be used to highlight the race of those involved. The use of an illustration in a news report can also be an indication that the editorial team regard that story as more important than those that do not have illustrations.

We found that the Afrikaans media tended to be more balanced than the English media in using illustrations and that incidents of white-on-black violence were accompanied by illustrations substantially more than black-on-white violence.

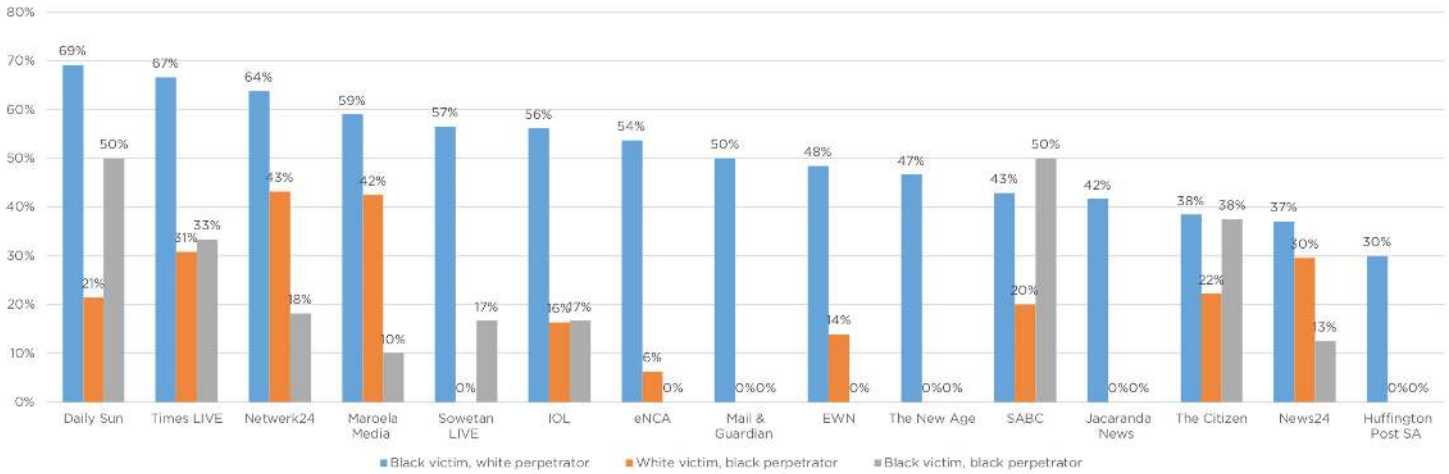


Figure 9: Illustrations of victim or perpetrator, categorised by race

MOST REPORTED INCIDENTS

For this report, the top 10 reported incidents were also categorised by race. The reason for this categorisation is once again that a major discrepancy was evident in the manner and extent to which incidents of violence on farms were reported by the media, where racial dynamics appeared to be the main factor for determining the extent to which the incident in question would be reported. (Note that incident descriptions are included in an addendum at the end of this report.)

Incidents where perpetrators were white and victims black:

INCIDENT	DEATHS	ALL MENTIONS	ENGLISH MENTIONS
Coligny	1	415	302
Coffin case	0	382	289
Parys killings	2	187	40
Majakaneng	1	69	43
Jan Railo	1	50	27
Bakkie incident	0	28	25
Ishmael Mathanene	0	19	10
Zithobeni	0	14	10
Kefeditse Ngobeni	0	9	7
Johannes Baadjies	0	8	5

Table 10: Top 10 mentioned incidents of white-on-black violence

Incidents where perpetrators were black and victims white:

INCIDENT	DEATHS	ALL MENTIONS	ENGLISH MENTIONS
Joubert Conradie	1	138	33
Bennie and Cecilia Cilliers	1	47	2
Roger and Christine Solik	2	36	16
Riaan Scheepers	1	28	3
The McCormacks	4	27	15
Piet and Tilla van Zyl	2	27	6
Sue Howarth and Robert Lynn	1	27	7
BC and Marlette Greyling	1	26	2
Jan Hettema	1	25	10
Van Rooyen and Lombard	2	25	13

Table 11: Top 10 mentioned incidents of black-on-white violence

Incidents where both perpetrators and victims were black:

INCIDENT	DEATHS	ALL MENTIONS	ENGLISH MENTIONS
Zebediela Citrus Estate	0	25	15
Bongumusa Duma	1	13	13
Tsietso Matsabisa	1	13	1
Kgarebe Masangu	0	10	3
Patrick Itumeng	1	9	0
Lenyara Tsotetsi	0	7	4
Mike Mpachika	1	4	2
Tshidiso Kgotlele	1	3	1
Matthew 'Kenya' Gachoki	0	3	1
Michael Molefe	0	3	1

Table 12: Top 10 mentioned incidents of black-on-black violence

Incidents where both perpetrators and victims were white:

Only three incidents of white-on-white violence were reported.

INCIDENT	DEATHS	ALL MENTIONS	ENGLISH MENTIONS
Bertie Cilliers	1	15	4
Steyn Steenekamp	1	8	0
Luke von Johnston	1	7	1

Table 13: Top 3 mentioned incidents of white-on-white violence

Several comments can be made concerning the top 10 alluded incidents.

It is again evident that incidents of white-on-black violence received substantially more media coverage than black-on-white incidents or black-on-black incidents. It is also useful to compare particular incidents to each other. The case of Jan Railo (accidental shooting) is for example comparable in press coverage to the murder of Joubert Conradie. However, it is important to notice that Joubert Conradie's murder received a higher than average media reporting, mainly due to the Black Monday protests that followed shortly afterwards. The case of Bongumusa Duma initially received wide coverage due to the possibility that the perpetrator might have been white. Once it became known that the perpetrator was black, the amount of attention the story received dropped substantially. It is however still erroneously mentioned by some as a case of white-on-black violence.

Extreme overreporting on incidents where white farmers are at fault (or are presumed to be at fault) may lead to the underreporting of crimes against black farmers and black workers as well as white-on-white violence on farms. This may contribute towards the false narratives that white farmers are the only victims of farm attacks, and that white farmers are killing black people in disproportionate numbers on their farms.

Coligny, coffin case and Parys killings compared to all murdered victims of farm attacks

The data indicated that the Coligny incident alone received as many mentions in the English media than all those murdered in farm attacks (302 vs 306) during the two years combined. This finding can be further exaggerated by the fact that there has been extensive reporting on the Coligny and Parys incidents subsequent to this study which relate to ongoing court cases. While the Parys killings incident was not excessively covered in the English media, it was covered to a much higher degree in the Afrikaans media.

SPECIFIC MENTIONS	ALL MENTIONS	AFRIKAANS MENTIONS	ENGLISH MENTIONS
Coligny	415	113	302
Coffin case	383	94	289
Parys killings	187	147	40
Total	**985**	**354**	**631**
148 farm murders (only 105 reported in the media)	1091	793	298

Table 14: Media reporting and race – Coligny, coffin case and Parys killings vs all murdered victims of farm attacks in 2016 and 2017

While 32 times more white than black farmers were murdered, the 97 previously mentioned incidents received fewer mentions than the latter three (Coligny, coffin case and Parys killings) by all except the Afrikaans media and the SABC.

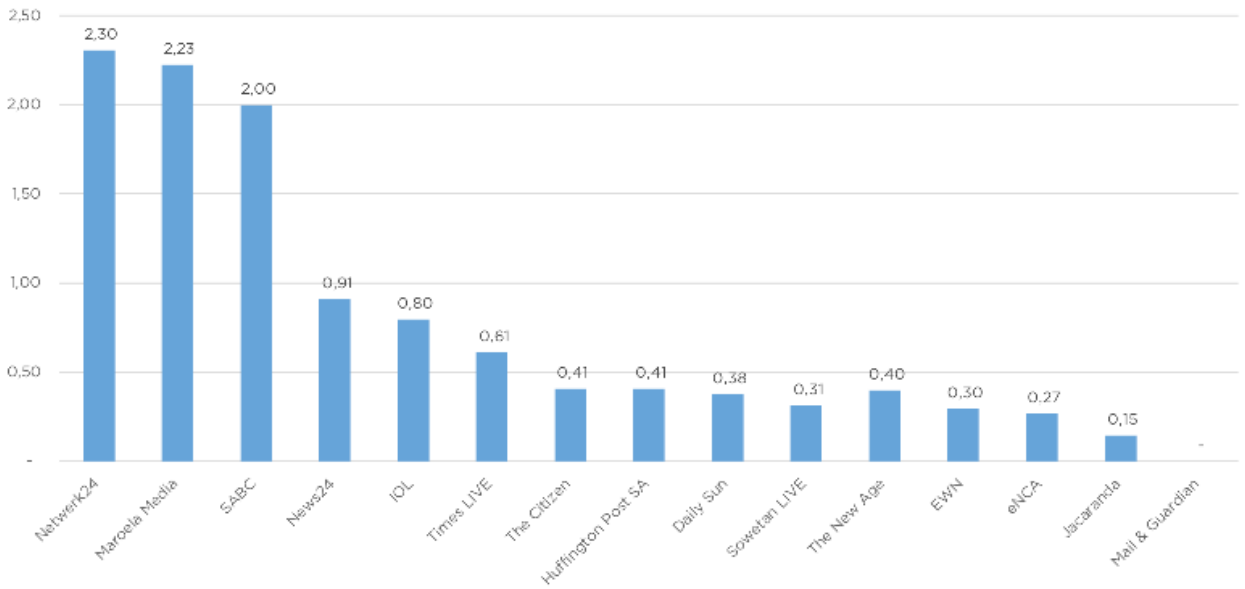


Figure 10: Media reporting and race (ratio of mentions): Coligny, coffin case and Parys killings vs all murdered victims of farm attacks in 2016 and 2017

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA

While the focus of this report is on the MSM in South Africa and not on international or foreign media, brief light can be shed on the reporting by international and foreign media of violent incidents on South African farms. Needless to say, incidents where the victims are foreign nationals were covered more extensively by media of that country. British nationals were murdered in two incidents, namely that of Sue Howarth and the Soliks. Other than that, the notorious 'coffin case' received coverage abroad as well, fuelling the stereotypical narrative that white farmers are racist and violent.

MEDIA INSTITUTION	STORY	MENTIONS
The Telegraph	Coffin case – described as "white farmers" and "black man"	1
	Sue Howarth	2
	Parys killings	1
	Coligny – described as "white farmers" and "black teenager"	1
Mirror	Coffin case – described as "white farmers" and "black man"	4
	Sue Howarth	1
The Sun	Coffin case – described as "white farmers" and "black man"	2
	Sue Howarth	2
BBC	Coffin case – described as "white farmers" and "black man"	3
	Black Monday protests – including Africa Check debate about questionable statistics	2
	Soliks	2
	Sue Howarth	1

Table 15: Mentions in British media

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

Comments can also be made about the way these incidents have been reported:

- EWN described the Coligny teenager as "slain", thus presuming the two farmers had deliberately killed the boy.
- Black communities (about 100) protested against farm attacks after Bennie Cilliers was murdered. This was ignored by the English media (bar *Daily Sun*).
- Black Monday protests against farm murders were largely attacked by the media.
- The singing of "Kill the Boer" by ANC supporters outside the Parys court was ignored by the English media.
- IOL used the AWB flag as an illustration for two Parys articles.
- EWN changed the description of Bokkie Potgieter from "farmer" to "man".
- *Daily Sun* described the white farmer who mistook a man for a warthog and another murdered farmer as a "Mlungu" (English: "white person").
- *The New Age* claimed Ishmael Mathanene, who was mistaken for a monkey, was killed. This is false.
- Jacaranda News failed to report on Laurika Potgieter's murder, even though its Good Morning Angels campaign provided support to her children.
- Several reports on Black Monday protests mentioned the alleged display of the old flag, but did not mention the names of farmers who were killed.
- There was almost no reporting on ANC supporters carrying and hanging white dolls at the coffin case trial.
- Though foreign nationals are seldom perpetrators, the media mentioned nationality where applicable.
- A noticeable observation is that when the media covers farm attacks, particularly farm murders, they tend to report the incident but then not to follow up reporting of subsequent events such as arrests, court hearings and sentencing. A large proportion of the media's reporting of white-on-black incidents relates to these subsequent events.

CONCLUSION

The Nazi propagandist, Joseph Goebbels, famously said that a lie told once remains a lie, but that a lie told a thousand times becomes the truth. There is little dispute over the claim that narratives carry more weight than realities and facts. Consequently, we all carry the responsibility of distinguishing between our own preconceived ideas and reality. This is even more so the responsibility of the media that carries the ability to decisively influence public perceptions, narratives and stereotypes. It is hard to dispute that there is a "white perpetrator/black victim" narrative in South Africa. There are also very particular stereotypes and narratives regarding white South African farmers. White farmers are frequently depicted as thieves and criminals, and they are regularly accused of abusing others (particularly their workers) and of inflicting violence upon black people. This perception also feeds into political claims and policies such as the ANC and EFF's claim of "expropriation without compensation".

While the available evidence clearly indicates that the narrative mentioned above is largely fabricated, it appears that the stereotype is actively promoted by the MSM.

As is evident in this report, we have found that double standards were not merely perception but a stark reality. It is a reality that is not only relevant for academic purposes but one that carries the potential of having a major impact on public sentiment, government policy and even increasing levels of farm attacks. The race of the perpetrators seemed to be the major factor determining how incidents were reported on. The figures provided in this report clearly indicated that there are not only severe double standards in the reporting of incidents but also that these double standards contribute to negative stereotyping of white farmers and a perceived justification of farm murders.

This report clearly indicates that the newsworthiness of an incident on a farm is not linked to the severity of the incident, but rather to the race of the perpetrator and the victim and that more weight is attached to the race of the perpetrator. This is less evident in the Afrikaans media (which serve a small minority of people in South Africa) than in the English media. There was minimal media reporting on incidents on farms where the perpetrator was not white, even when four people were murdered during one incident.

During this study, it became evident that there is a significant difference between the manner in which the Afrikaans and English media report on incidents of violence on farms.

Besides this overarching inconsistency, there are also other ways in which the media discrepantly reports on incidents of violence on farms, depending on who the perpetrator and the victim was. These include the mentioning of the names of the perpetrator and/or victim, mentioning of race and the use of illustrations.

There are clear and consistent double standards within the reporting on incidents of violence on farms, especially with the English media.

There can be no doubt that the skewed reporting of farm incidents is creating and will further fuel misconceptions about farm attacks and negative stereotypes about white farmers in particular. The result is increased vilification of farmers and a diversion away from black victims of farm attacks.

This negative stereotype might even contribute to a political climate in which discrimination against white people in general – but white farmers in particular – is regarded as justified; in which political activists engage in hate speech against white farmers; and in which perpetrators who might be susceptible to committing farm murders might find the justification that they were looking for.

As long as the double standards persist, those who participate in it should be regarded as potentially complicit in the alarming phenomenon of farm attacks and farm murders in South Africa.

Ernst Roets

Addendum: Incident descriptions

NAME OF INCIDENT:	DESCRIPTION:
Coligny	A boy died while being transported to a nearby police station. It is alleged that the farmer threw the victim off the bakkie, while the farmer claims the boy jumped. Police confirmed that the men have a history of delivering thieves to the police station.
Coffin case	Two white farmers caught a black alleged thief on their farm. They placed the man inside a coffin and threatened to bury him, although there was never an attempt to bury him.
Parys	A group of white farmers and family members allegedly assaulted and killed two black men suspected of committing a farm attack on an elderly white farmer.
Majakaneng	A white farmer was accused of killing one of three black men that were stealing oranges on his farm. There is no evidence that the man was killed, however, as no body has been found.
Jan Railo (Warthog)	A white couple, who were hunting, killed a black man. They claim it was an accident.
Bakkie incident	A white farmer offered a pregnant, black woman a lift, but she refused to sit in front and opted to sit on the back of the bakkie in a cage.
Ishmael Mathanene	A white missionary shot a farm worker with a pellet gun while trying to shoot monkeys. The missionary is regarded as a pillar of the community and received cheers and support from black prisoners awaiting trial.
Zithobeni	Two white farmers assaulted and tied up a young black girl after catching her on their farm.
Kefeditse Ngobeni	A white farmer shot a young black girl in the arm for trespassing on his farm. She was collecting firewood.
Johannes Baadjies (Lutzville)	A white farmer allegedly assaulted a black farm worker and then bribed him to keep quiet about it.
Joubert Conradie	A white farmer was shot dead by an unknown number of suspects, who fled empty handed.
Bennie and Cecilia Cilliers	Two black men were sentenced for bludgeoning an elderly white farmer to death and for the attempted murder of his elderly wife.
Roger and Christine Solik	An elderly white couple were beaten and strangled by two black men. The woman ultimately drowned after being thrown into a river.
Riaan Scheepers	An elderly white farmer was beaten to death by a black man.
McCormacks	This attack included a 9-year-old girl who was strangled to death.
Piet and Tilla van Zyl	An elderly white couple was shot dead by eight black suspects.
Sue Howarth and Robert Lynn	An elderly white woman was tortured with a blow torch before being shot dead by black attackers.
BC and Marlette Greyling	An elderly white farmer was shot dead by black attackers, while his wife survived the gunshots.
Jan Hettema	An elderly man was shot dead on his smallholding.
Zebediela Citrus Estate	A black lawyer of Malema shot at black workers during a labour dispute.
Bongumusa Duma	An elderly black farmer shot and killed a young black boy after mistaking him for a baboon.
Tsietso Matsabisa	A black worker and white farm manager were shot dead by black attackers.
Kgarebe Masangu	An elderly black woman was killed by her grandson and another woman.
Patrick Itumeng	A black farmer was shot and killed by black attackers.
Lenyara Tsotetsi	A black worker was stabbed, while a white farm manager was shot in the head by attackers.
Mike Mpachika	A black worker was shot dead by attackers who were posing as SAPS officers.
Tshidiso Kgotlele	A black shepherd was shot dead by stock thieves.
Matthew 'Kenya' Gachoki	A black man had to leave the farm as he wasn't a South African national.
Michael Molefe	A black farm worker and his wife were attacked.
Bertie Cilliers	A white man was killed by another white relative during a burglary.
Steyn Steenekamp	A white man was killed by two young white men who stole his car.
Luke von Johnston	A white man was shot by a white neighbour over a dispute.





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