

# VUVUZELA

A JOURNALISM AND MEDIA STUDIES PROJECT  
PRODUCED WITH THE SUPPORT OF MEDIA24.

## Oracle fails to reveal our destiny

THE Oracle of Delphi, according to legend, was a prophetess who could tell the worthy who approached her their destiny.

In reality, the "legendary" Oracle was a young woman who was exposed to the toxic, psychotropic gases emitted by the dark cave she was made to live in. The prophecies she gave were merely the stoned ramblings of a teenage girl high as a kite.

By now, after a week of registration under the new Oracle system, Witsies must be wondering what their administrators must be smoking.

Oracle is a very expensive, international data capture system that was launched late last year with the hopes that it would make university data collection more efficient and coherent.

It has not.

Last Thursday, the entire system crashed. In the past week, students have found themselves deprived of their financial aid and unable to gain places at residences. Some graduates have been told that there's no record of their hard-earned degrees.

They've even been told by indifferent and unsympathetic university officials that they have no record on the system and therefore don't exist!

This Tuesday, vuvuzelaonline.com reported that the university has appealed for help from Oracle international. Since it was Oracle's 'help' that led to the crash on Thursday we must remain skeptical. Surely Witsies deserve better than this. One anonymous student who posted his comments on our website, vuvuzelaonline.com, summed it up rather nicely: "We students pay you to run the university smoothly ... If we didn't perform, you'd kick us out. You aren't performing now." This Witsie wasn't very subtle, but they've got a point.

This university expects a great deal from its students in terms of both academics and financing, and students should expect a great deal from Wits in return.

Further, a university that prides itself on being among the best on the continent, and aspires to be among the best in the world, ought to start providing better services to its students.

VUVUZELA is produced by Wits Journalism students and is dedicated to serve the entire campus community with journalism that is independent, accurate and fair.

To access Vuvuzela's Code of Ethics, go to [www.vuvuzelaonline.com](http://www.vuvuzelaonline.com). If you feel the code has been breached, please bring this to the attention of the co-ordinator by emailing [vuvuzelanews@gmail.com](mailto:vuvuzelanews@gmail.com). If the co-ordinator cannot resolve the matter, it may be referred to the Board of Media Trustees for adjudication.

**Co-ordinator:** Archie Henderson

**Design team:** Emily van Rijswijk, Marizanne Kok, Ricky Hunt, Bate Felix.

**Editor:** T Kenichi Serino

**Production Editor:** Bate Felix

**Journalism Practice lecturer:** Jo-Anne Richards

**Contact** Vuvuzela at 011-717-4088/2 or e-mail [vuzelanews@gmail.com](mailto:vuzelanews@gmail.com)

**To advertise in Vuvuzela:** Call James Archibald on (011)499-1497 or 084-600-5069, or bring your classified ad and R20 to Room 506, Richard Ward Building, East Campus.

## FOR THE RECORD

**CORRECTION:** In the February 9 issue of *Vuvuzela*, the caption of a picture accompanying the story, "R200 000 prize for investigative journalism", incorrectly identified the person as Taco Kuiper. The person is Judge Tom Cloete. *Vuvuzela* apologises for the error.

## Check how wild things got at the Freshers Bash...



## TALKBACK

# The X-word is bad, but the R-word is worse

SIX out of 10 South Africans I am introduced to always ask if I deal in drugs as soon as I mention that I am Nigerian.

I find their response interesting and amusing because that would not be my immediate reaction if roles were reversed.

The question is usually presented as a joke, but I can sense the underlying scepticism. After all, every Nigerian must be a drug dealer and a fraudster.

One particular South African lady actually said to me (with authority mind you) that 90% of Nigerians in Nigeria were criminals (her exact words).

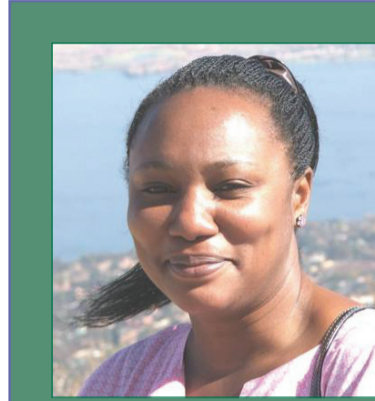
I asked her: "Have you ever been to Nigeria?" When she said no, I asked how she had arrived at her conclusion.

I then asked her: "Are all South Africans HIV positive and rapists?" She was speechless; it had not occurred to her that those of us from the rest of Africa might have negative impressions of "wonderful" South Africa.

I first encountered the word "xenophobia" when I arrived in South Africa in July 2005. It is a word that I had never heard, ever. It has therefore been difficult to comprehend exactly what that word implies and why, 11 years after democracy, South Africans are hostile towards other Africans while accepting "white" foreigners.

I come from West African which is quite big and densely populated. A foreigner, to my understanding, would be a non-African. Even there I am selective because an African-American would not be a "foreigner", he or she would be welcomed as having "come home".

Xenophobia is not what I take issue with, however. For me racism is a much



IJEOMA UCHE-OKEKE

is doing her MA  
in Heritage Studies.

bigger issue.

The ways in which the colour of one's skin determines what they are entitled to in this country.

I have always seen myself as an African first, a citizen of Nigeria second and last a citizen of the world.

Being female and black is just who I am and the way I was created. The first shocking realisation I had of the extent of racial divides at Wits was seeing how each group tended to "congregate" with their own kind. I couldn't believe my eyes.

While I was trying to digest this strange phenomenon, I was dealt another blow when I was informed by my classmate

that black students in a so-called academic institution such as Wits claims to be, can expect to make up a maximum 65%.

I have been a post-graduate student at Wits for one and a half years now, long enough to observe the imbalances that exist, the different rules of engagement that apply for so-called "black" students (Indians and coloureds come under this umbrella) and their "white" counterparts.

I have also experienced the xenophobic tendencies of the university itself with regards to international students. Despite the huge sums of money we pay (which we are mandated to pay upfront), services for international students are still below par.

My question to the management of Wits is: "What exactly is the R2 level which 550 pay?" Second, "What is the role of the International Office and the so-called internationalisation process?"

My aim is not to present a negative picture of my stay at Wits and in South Africa. I wish, however, to be honest about the environment in which I find myself as an international student and a foreigner.

In the West African region we welcome visitors and embrace our diversity. As a Nigerian, from a country with its citizens scattered around the world, we have no choice but to welcome visitors.

As a member of the West African Students Union, I welcome the opportunity to interact with my brothers and sisters from the region. It also provides support as I struggle to understand the complex dynamics of South African society.

## SLICE OF LIFE Flying by the seat of your pants

TAKE the *Amazing Race*, add the car chase from *Bullitt* and an equal measure of an Indiana Jones adventure and you have an airport drop-off with my boyfriend James (better known as the "most disorganised person in the world").

James had to fly out the morning before hosting a workshop in Mumbai. Since he travels business class, we arrived at the airport 45 minutes prior to his departure.

I off-loaded James at the drop-off zone but was immediately hauled back. He had left his passport at his parents home in Germiston. His house keys were 30 minutes in the opposite direction in Rivonia and his parents were away on holiday, so there was no one to let us in. Business as usual!

We were in luck, the following flight out to India was scheduled to leave at 14:00 and would arrive just in time for his 9:00 meeting.



SPEAKING HER MIND: Erica Dreijer

We screamed into the complex, broke into the house using a garden gnome, and neighbours piled out of their homes to see what the racket was all about.

James paid a neighbour to take care of the broken window. Passport in hand we head back to the airport. As we pulled in, the travel agent informed us that British citizens living outside the country now required a visa for India.

Off to the Indian Embassy. They informed us that they would be closing in 15 minutes and that he required passport photos for a visa, though they at least agreed to wait for us! First stop, Rosebank Mall to get photos and finally we reach the embassy!

A visa was issued within 10 minutes - the embassy's official record.

With five minutes to spare, James checks in. Erica checks out.



**OH WHAT A NIGHT:** The crowd was busting and busting, the girls put on a comedy show and SRC members tried to look busy. Check out our gallery on [www.vuvuzelaonline.com](http://www.vuvuzelaonline.com) for more pics from the night.