CHAPTER 4
Analysis of selected South African televised PSAs

Television's core focus seems to be on social events and activities. The PSA is an ideal television format, in that it is a socially informed message, focussing on specific social dilemmas to be brought to the attention of the general public, for the benefit of non-profit organisations. The fact that television has the ability to carry a convincing sense of the real is of vital importance for this format. This ability, in particular, makes it possible for the constructor to create a PSA of social relevance.[1]

Regarding the nature of the PSA in particular, Radtke (1998:61) notes that social dilemmas such as crime, poverty and substance abuse are at the core of non-profit organisation activities and numerous frames on how these dilemmas should be approached and solved, exist. Certain social problems, such as rape, can occupy the collective conscience for a period of time, gaining precedence over other equally pressing problems because of heightened exposure of these social problems in the media. These foci are bound to change over time, however, placing other socially relevant problems under the spotlight. The non-profit organisation generally has control over certain framing factors, and has a core audience in the form of interest groups and individuals with high levels of issue involvement. Other framing factors, such as the social focus at a specific point in time or the economy that influences the willingness to donate to charities, are beyond the control of the organisation or the PSA constructor.

Knowledge of the television medium can, however, allow the constructor to maximise certain factors that are inherent to the medium, such as its socially orientated nature, its influence on the spaces in which it is found and the effective application of the cinematic style of the television format. More particularly, knowledge of, or an intuitive understanding of the organisation for which the message is created, will lead to the development of a key message built around the core aims of the organisation. In this study, certain key symbolic modes are identified that promote a particular framing of the

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[1] Examples of PSA messages that can become socially embedded include such messages as "Just say no" or "Don't drink and drive". These socially informed messages are entrenched in certain cultural contexts to such a degree that one could argue that their meanings have become ideologically charged.

social issue highlighted. The symbolic modes support the context in which the narrative is placed and the core aims of the organisation. In this study it is argued that, in order for the constructor to successfully apply such guiding symbolic modes, an understanding of the medium is of key importance.

The first PSA analysed, *Tomato Sauce*, was created for the SANBS. A basic premise, namely the fact that blood supplies are running low, is the core message around which the narrative is developed. The narrative in this PSA depends almost entirely on the stylistic conventions of the television medium and a key metaphor based on the aims of the organisation. The frame in which the message is placed simply focuses the narrative content on the emptiness of the blood bank. *Christmas Puppy*, created for the SPCA, is a PSA where very specific elements of the organisation are focussed on to create a powerful message. The general domesticity of the television medium brings the social issue highlighted in this PSA, into the viewer's private space. Similar to the Charlize Theron commercial, the *Christmas Puppy* narrative draws the viewer in, only to finally issue a stern warning. The Arrive Alive PSA, *The Surgeon*, rather than simplifying the social issue it highlights, employs hypperreal techniques and muted symbolic modes to hold the viewer's attention. The message is imbued with a sense of urgency, immediacy and grittiness: elements that arguably make the world of the emergency room surgeon both fascinating and shocking. The final PSA analysed, *Reach Out and Give* (see 5.1), is a personal application of the elements investigated in the existing PSA, in the creation of a message for the Tuks Rag organisation.

4.1 *Tomato Sauce*: SANBS PSA (2000)

In analysing this PSA, the frame in which the message is placed, and the construction of the narrative are investigated. The message is community orientated in its approach, although no clearly defined call to action is made. The message will also be shown to be instructive to the interpretation of the narrative, particularly with reference to the use of colour and sound effects that emphasise the central narrative. Finally, the style is also closely linked to the key symbolic modes applied and the examples of embodied framing.

4.1.1 Intuitive understanding as basis for the narrative pattern

The information on the organisation for which the message is created, is regarded in this study as the starting point from which the constructor can frame possible solutions to the particular dilemma faced by the non-profit organisation. In the case of the SANBS, at the time when the commercial was made, blood reserves were low, and prompted the making of a message where this aspect of the organisation's work was the key focus.

Other focus areas of the organisation include the promotion of blood safety and obtaining blood donations from low risk blood donors (cf. SANBS [sa (a)]). General information regarding the organisation indicates a need not only to identify low risk blood donors, but also to encourage these donors to see blood donation as a vital contribution to the community, thereby promoting multiple donations (cf. SANBS 2002a:sp; SANBS [sa (c)]). This information is general, but forms a basis for the development of a narrative pattern and an umbrella message.

4.1.2 Development of the narrative: the umbrella message

The constructor of this particular PSA chose an interesting analogy to portray the official story, applying a metaphor that is accepted to such an extent that it could be regarded as being part of a formal frame supported by the mediated experience of 'blood' in films and television. Generally, television reframes the public and brings it into the private sphere of the viewer. In this case, however, an everyday domestic pursuit is reframed to make an appeal for community involvement in a public space well suited to this community-orientated nature of the call to action. Three elements of the umbrella message are investigated as it applies to the SANBS in particular:

- *What is the objective of the organisation for which the message is created?*

In this study, the aim of SANBS is identified as the promotion of voluntary blood donation by people who are identified as eligible, because "voluntary non-remunerated blood donors from low-risk populations who give blood regularly are the foundation of a safe and adequate blood supply" (SANBS [sa (a)], emphasis added). The SANBS also

promotes the donation of blood as a "service we owe to the community" (SANBS 2002a:sp).

The mission of the SANBS, therefore, seems to be twofold: the collection of blood from low risk donors and to maintain an sufficient blood supply. Regarding the first objective, the organisation notes that "HIV/AIDS poses a great risk to the safety of the South African blood supply... We do not disclose test results. Please do not donate blood to have an HIV/AIDS test" (SANBS [sa (b)]). The key message in the PSA analysed here is, however, based only on the second objective, namely the maintenance of sufficient blood supplies by means of donations from low-risk donors, and the indirect call to action made in this PSA is made on this basis only.

- *What does this objective mean, or why is the support for this particular social issue important to the viewer?*

Regarding the maintaining of adequate blood supplies, the organisation appeals simply to the donor's sense of community involvement and service. The pamphlet handed out prior to blood donation, states that "people should only give blood because they want to help someone who needs a transfusion ... blood and blood products are used for the treatment of people who have cancer or leukaemia, for accident victims, for people who need surgery, or for a newborn baby" (SANBS [sa (b)]).

It is argued in the analysis of this PSA for the SANBS, that the reasons for blood donation outlined above are generally implicitly understood, particularly by existing donors. Various donors profiled in SANBS information booklets indicate the donation of blood as a way to "serve their community in [a] painless way" (SANBS 2002:sp). The fact that blood donation is understood as a means of community service could also partly be attributed to the fact that blood donation in South Africa is voluntary, and community service is therefore the only "reward" for the donation of blood.

The social understanding of the need for blood donation as a community contribution, is interwoven with the structure of the public service message itself. Interestingly, this PSA was screened in what could be regarded as an alternative commercial space that is

wholly community orientated, namely a petrol filling station forecourt television network. Messages and commercials screened here are often community-specific in content and are shown on a big-screen television that can be viewed by filling station customers. In this way, the space in which this commercial is screened, is firmly based in the community and can be linked to the understanding that blood donation itself is, or must be, regarded as a form of community service.

- *What must be done regarding the organisation's objective, or what is the request the viewer must respond to?*

Simply stating the fact that there is a low supply of blood at the SANBS, as is the case in the PSA analysed in this study, can be a powerful enough request or call to action. In a newsletter honouring a donor donating his 300th unit, donor Brian Robson regards the donating of blood as "a debt of honour" and notes that "if everyone adopted this attitude there would not be any blood shortages" (SANBS 2002b:sp). It is on this basis that the key message of this PSA is constructed. No explanations of a mission statement are given in a message that, at its core, simply indicates the fact that SANBS blood reserves are low. This then becomes a case where the 'official story' or key message is a simplification of the complex issues regarding blood transfusion, particularly in the South African context.

4.1.3 The structure of the 'official story' or key message

In the SANBS PSA, very few units of meaning, either visual or verbal, are employed to construct the message: no voice-over or text accompanies or supports the visual, except for the final text showing the organisation's name and contact details. The reconstruction of the fictionalised reality is entirely based on the framing of tomato sauce as blood.

In the initial stages of this PSA, the actions performed by the actor seems merely to mirror an everyday occurrence of getting the last tomato sauce out of an almost empty bottle (frame 1). Yet, as the emptying of the tomato sauce bottle cannot be a message in itself, a mapping occurs here. Stories, or even simply cues, that belong to the domain of the everyday, here become the material for the domain of the mediated. The tomato

sauce must be understood as a metaphor for blood in order for the meaning of the message to be interpreted. Already in these initial stages of the commercial, certain framing cues are highlighted, while others are ignored. The emptiness of the bottle is of central concern, and this is confirmed by the fact that the hollow sound of the hand striking the bottle is one of the only cues the viewer has for the interpretation of the meaning of the message. This central notion is therefore directly related to the actions shown (frames **2** & **3**). While these actions portray an everyday scenario of having to empty the last tomato sauce from the bottle, rather than emphasising the everyday, domestic nature of these actions, no other units of meaning support the interpretation of this action as domestic in nature. It is not performed in a deliberately domestic manner, such as showing the action performed in a reproduced private space such as the dinner table. This is a packaged 'fictionalised' narrative, guided by a key metaphor that frames the images as falling outside the sphere of the domestic. Stripped of framing cues, this message also falls beyond a particular temporal or time frame. It could be argued that this message can therefore be shown repeatedly over an extended period of time without influencing the way in which the message will be interpreted.

As mentioned previously, the key concern is the effective mapping from tomato sauce as source framing cue, to blood as the target framing cue. All other cues are essentially unnecessary and could hamper the mapping. The minimisation of framing cues allows for the mapping of the cinematic cue of tomato sauce to blood the moment the words "The South African Blood Service" appear on screen. In this way, the fact that the tomato sauce bottle is almost empty should be taken to indicate that blood bank reserves that are running very low. It is argued in this study that the entire message hinges on the dynamic nature of the interpretive frame and allows such transference of meaning to occur.

The metaphor *tomato sauce is blood* strongly supports this transference of meaning, particularly related to the style of the medium.[2] Therefore, the viewer is entirely reliant on the interpretation of the guiding visual metaphor that is employed in the PSA, in order to understand and interpret the meaning of the message. Rather than this being a shortcoming of the PSA, the lack of too many units of meaning could be regarded as advantageous in this specific instance. The lack of units of meaning, restricts the possible meanings that can be read into the text, and contains or limits the inferences that can be made. The central element in this PSA is the symbolic mode employed to frame the narrative, and is the basis for the development of the approach to the narrative and style of the PSA.

The central role of the metaphor *tomato sauce is blood* warrants further investigation. In the following section, this key symbolic mode and its relation to the framing of the message are explored. Supporting cues related to the mapping between tomato sauce and blood, namely colour and movement, are also discussed.

4.1.4 Identification of the key symbolic modes

As mentioned previously, the dominant visual metaphor employed in this PSA can be identified as:

- *Tomato sauce is blood*

The moment the organisation's name appears on the screen (frame **7**), the mapping between the target and source in the metaphor *tomato sauce is blood,* can occur. In this PSA the general everyday action of shaking a tomato sauce bottle to empty its contents, transforms into a message about the state of SANBS resources. The mapping between the source and the target allows a transformation of the visual action of shaking the

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[2] The fact that blood seen on television or in films, is often regarded as 'fake' is here turned on its head. In this sense the medium has established the framing of tomato sauce as 'fake blood'. In this PSA the boundaries blur so that tomato sauce stands for real blood. It is argued that the interpretation of tomato sauce as blood could be regarded as at least partly influenced by established narrative patterns, with reinterpretation taking place based on such a previously established interpretation. It is also an indication of how television can borrow interpretations from other media, such as films, with success.

bottle to incorporate more than one framing of the information, to guide the viewer in the understanding and interpreting of the final message meaning. This metaphor was not chosen at random. It embellishes certain points and leaves out others not relevant to the key message. It also enables a strongly visual or cinematic interpretation, which will be investigated in the following section.

4.1.5 Cinematic style in *Tomato Sauce*

There are various ways in which the constructor of this PSA applied cinematic style effectively. The colour red acts as an obvious cue for the transference of meaning between the cinematic or invented sign (tomato sauce), and the indexical or authentic sign it stands for (blood). As an intense colour, the red of the tomato sauce becomes the dominant element in the image sequence. Red is also successful metonymy, supporting the cueing of tomato sauce to blood.

The white shirt worn by the actor performing the actions ties in with the clinical setting (frames **4** & **6**) that becomes apparent once the mapping occurs. The white, stripped space within which the action is framed, thus leaves the viewer with little option but to consider the possibility of a symbolic frame of reference being employed, rather than a dominantly natural or realistic one, even before the mapping occurs. When the words South African National Blood Service appear on the screen (frames **7** & **8**), the connection between the action, the space in which the action is placed and the message content, becomes apparent. The message is framed to focus on the emptiness of the tomato sauce bottle, and the clinical setting becomes instructive in understanding the meaning of the message: the SANBS is low on blood supplies, which has implications particularly in the medical environment.

Movement in space is another strong unit of meaning in the framing of this PSA, in that establishing that the tomato sauce bottle is practically empty, is one key to the interpretation of the message frame. The tomato sauce bottle is first shown in close-up (frame **1**), as it is shaken, and a special effect blurs the motion throughout the PSA, highlighting movement as a unit of meaning. The bottle is tilted, as if the person shaking the tomato sauce bottle is checking if the attempts at emptying the last drop of

tomato sauce are effective (frame **2**). It is a clear indication that the emptiness of the tomato sauce bottle is of key importance. The movement is then intensified as the bottle is shaken more and more vigorously (frame **3**). Then, in what seems to be a final attempt to release the last drops of tomato sauce, the bottle is turned upside down (frame **4**),[3] and the base of the bottle is tapped, to try and release the last drop of sauce (frames **5 & 6**).

4.1.6 Framing the call to action

The implied call to action in this PSA is a request to donate blood, and the final drop of blood that falls when the contact number appears on the screen, could possibly be an indicator of this call to action. This drop of blood (frame **8**) is functional in many ways. This final movement on the screen keeps the viewer's attention, the placement of the drop right under the contact number seems to underline the contact details and red, as the dominant contrast in these frames, leads the eye to focus on the contact number. It seems to indicate that this is the 'last drop', highlighting the idea that the blood bank is almost empty, and brings to mind formal expressions such as:

- *Down to the last drop of blood* or *Every drop counts.* These formal expressions supports the mapping of

- *The empty tomato sauce bottle equals the empty blood bank*

However, apart from the intentional interpretation of the narrative, there is the danger that a second, negative framing of the message is established with the drop shown as splattered or spilled onto the background showing the organisation's information, with the metonymy:

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[3] The brand name 'Heinz' appears in frame 4. The appearance of a brand name in the PSA is problematical, because it could lead the viewer to regard this as a commercial advertisement for the product shown. This could also be one of the reasons why this PSA is broadcast on petrol station forecourt closed television circuit, and not aired on commercial television channels. This particular PSA is effective without the need for a voice-over or music to convey the message, and would therefore be effective in this public sphere where background noise and distractions would make it difficult to interpret a verbally driven message.

- *Spilling stands for wasting.* Also, the expression:

- *The spilling of blood*

hold associations of violence and unnecessary loss. The way in which the drop splatters as it falls seems to maintain both the notion of loss or wastage, as well as the notion of violence. Moreover, these final drops are no longer the bright red of the tomato sauce in the rest of the PSA, but are darker in colour. Although the drop has functional value, this seems a forced move by the constructor. There seems to have been the fear that the mapping between the source and target might not occur, and that this cue should be added so that there is no mistaking that tomato sauce stands for blood. This seems to be an underestimation of the power of the metaphor employed, and has an opposite effect: rather that strengthening the original metaphor, it could obscure its interpretation. None of the associations mentioned above have a positive impact on the core message, and could discourage potential donors who already hold negative associations with the idea of donating blood (such as fearing getting hurt or a fear of needles).

4.1.7 Identification of embodied framing in the *Tomato Sauce* commercial

The negative associations with spillage of blood mentioned, could be related to embodied framing of the body that is regarded as a three-dimensional 'container'. Taking this approach, a muted symbolic mode emerges in the construction of this narrative, where an analogy between the bottle as container of tomato sauce, and the body as container of blood is created. What is at issue here is the containment of blood as vital fluid within the body. Spillage spells risk to the one who is losing blood. Frame **8** focuses attention on the loss of blood, blood now *outside* the body, whereas the key message, if based on the intuitive understanding of the organisation, should be related to replenishment of blood and not the loss thereof. It is argued that if the spillage of blood in frame **8** were not included in the PSA, these negative associations could be avoided.

Taking embodied framing of meaning into account highlights the danger of possible misframing of the message as the viewer could struggle to isolate the meaning of the message because of the conflicting ideas shown. When so few units of meaning are

employed, and the responsibility of finding the meaning of the message lies so heavily on the participation in interpretation by the viewer, conflicting messages can diminish the impact and success of what would otherwise have been a more single-minded, powerful PSA.

Part of the reason why the next two PSAs analysed in this study make a strong impact, could be attributed to equally single-minded approaches to the messages. The PSA created for the SPCA, *Christmas Puppy*, turns a potentially complex message into a clear-cut call to action. Similarly, in the Arrive Alive PSA, *The Surgeon*, the single-minded approach to the message is what makes it powerful. The use of cinematic devices abound and the narrative structure is complex, but the innovative framing approach to a well-known South African road safety campaign makes this PSA difficult to ignore.

TITLE: TOMATO SAUCE (SANBS)

Frame 1
SFX: Sound of cap being unscrewed and falling to the floor (Note echo)

Frame 2
(No sound effects)

Frame 3
SFX: Sound of hand slapping against the base of the bottle

Frame 4
(No sound effects)

Frame 5
SFX: Sound of hand slapping against the base of the bottle

Frame 6
SFX: Sound of hand slapping against the base of the bottle

Frame 7
SFX: Background tone

Frame 8
SFX: Background tone

4.2 *Christmas Puppy*: SPCA PSA (1993)

The SPCA is concerned with the welfare and protection of all animals, with particular focus on the South African context, yet tries to influence other countries and is supportive of international campaigns for the protection of animals (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals 1997:sp). This is a general and encompassing statement that would be difficult to capture in one PSA alone. In constructing a PSA for this particular organisation, one would have to focus on one or two aspects of the work undertaken by this organisation, as is discussed in the following section.

4.2.1 Intuitive understanding as basis for the narrative pattern

In the PSA analysed in this study, one focus area of the work undertaken by the organisation mentioned above, forms the basis of the narrative pattern. The announcement focuses on the organisation's policy regarding responsible pet ownership, and euthanasia in particular.[1] A stylised packaged narrative, the images of fictionalised reality are here structured and arranged according to strict guidelines. The stylised nature of the PSA supports the method of engaging the reader in the first section of the PSA, and once the attention is established, turning it into a shocking concluding message. It is one way of constructing an announcement that can successfully break through the clutter of television advertising and overcome the problems normally associated with television commercials, such as a general lack of viewer attention. Investigating the umbrella message offers insight into the organisation for which the announcement was created, into the nature of the appeal made, and the possible reasons why the public ought to respond to this particular message.

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[1] The policy statements mentioned above, take specific subsections of the National Council of SPCA policy into account. The National Council of SPCA notes that "the subsections listed in this policy are not exhaustive and do not imply any limitation of the Council's concern in matters not specifically mentioned" and the web page where the information is posted "is an attempt to summarise the activities of [the] organisation whose mission is to prevent cruelty to animals" (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals 1997:sp).

4.2.2 Development of the narrative frame: the umbrella message

In framing the key message orientation, it is useful to investigate the three elements of the umbrella message, namely:

- *What is the objective of the organisation for which the message is created?*

The policy statement of the SPCA includes specific subsections regarding both responsible pet ownership and euthanasia, issues that come under the spotlight in this particular PSA. According to the policy statement on responsible pet ownership, SPCA is opposed to "[p]et animals being offered as gifts and prizes" (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals 1997:sp). Two other aspects could be deemed important for the framing of this PSA. The first is the SPCA policy of opposition against the "keeping of animals by those who do not have the facilities, time, financial means or level of interest necessary to ensure a satisfactory standard of care for their pets" (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals 1997:sp). Secondly, regarding euthanasia, the SPCA policy is opposed to the "euthanasia of fit and healthy animals, but accepts the reality that humane destruction is necessary" (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals 1997:sp).

- *What does this objective mean, or why is the support for this particular social issue important to the viewer?*

Although it could be seen as a harmless gesture by many, this PSA focuses on the fact that animals should not be given as gifts. The message indicates that this is ultimately not in the best interest of the animal. When giving an animal as a pet, the person giving the animal away cannot guarantee the welfare of the animal, or guarantee that interest in the animal will not wane once the animal matures. This could lead to the need for euthanasia of fit and healthy animals. Those who give animals as 'gifts' are indirectly implicated as thoughtless and irresponsible.

- *What must be done regarding the organisation's objectives, or what is the request the viewer must respond to?*

This PSA focuses on very particular aspects of responsible pet ownership, and therefore the request made is also very particular. It is simply that thought must be given to the thousands of unwanted fit and healthy animals that are put to sleep each year, and that the giving of an animal as a gift is one of the direct causes of this problem.

4.2.3 The structure of the 'official story' or key message

The key focus of this PSA is on the unnecessary culling of otherwise fit and healthy animals, due to unthinking and careless behaviour on the part of humans. Giving a pet as Christmas present is careless, as the person giving the gift could be delivering the animal into the hands of an awful fate. Although it may be considered a harmless gesture, the giving of an animal as a gift is therefore strongly discouraged.

This PSA was aired during Christmas time, and begins in a light-hearted tone, showing the engaging images of a playful puppy. The voice-over accompanying the commercial is the well-known song, *Have yourself a merry little Christmas* sung by Frank Sinatra. The PSA is structured in such a way to engage the attention of the viewer by showing a puppy playing with the Christmas wrapping it came in.

Unexpectedly, however, the PSA turns from joyful to shocking, and this swift change of mood could catch the viewer unawares. This could be regarded as a tactic to focus attention on the final request or appeal made in the PSA. Although the change of mood seems to happen suddenly, various elements are carefully constructed into the PSA to bring about this change, and are explored in the following section.

4.2.4 Identification of key symbolic modes

The PSA opens with a sequence showing a puppy playing with the ribbon and present lining, and biting the red bow with which the present was wrapped. Although the unwrapping of a Christmas present is never shown, there are various metonymic

mappings that imply that the puppy was given as a Christmas gift that has just been unwrapped. These include:

- The ribbon and lining stand for unwrapped present

The box in which the puppy is placed alone cannot indicate that the puppy was given to someone as a gift. The ribbon and lining inside the box act as metonymic cues that this is the case. In this way, the key element of the narrative, the fact that the puppy was a present, is foregrounded. Framing interpretations irrelevant to the message are countered, embellishing what is regarded as important to the frame, and hiding what is of less importance. Metonymic cues that this is specifically a Christmas gift, for example, include the soundtrack and the red colour of the ribbon, as opposed to any other colour, so that

- Red stands for Christmas

This colour is readily associated with Christmas decorations and festivities. The fact that this PSA was aired during Christmas time, acts as final confirmation that the puppy was a Christmas gift. This is a key element of the PSA, as Christmas is the time of giving and receiving gifts and a time of great optimism. At the outset of the PSA, the visual imagery combined with the soundtrack, exploits this optimism associated with Christmas time, so that when the narrative turns to the subject of animals meeting an awful fate because of people's thoughtless behaviour, the message is all the more powerful.

4.2.5 Cinematic style in *Christmas Puppy*

The narrative in this PSA unfolds chronologically. The editing pace of the PSA is relatively slow, so that fewer images are shown, giving each shot longer screen time, or duration. Unlike other examples of PSAs examined in this study, the visual images unfold at the pace dictated by the slow soundtrack, instead of a voice-over or sound effects. The PSA shows a single event as it unfolds in chronological order. However, various aspects of the 'story' (*fabula*) are merely implied, such as the fact that the

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animal is put to sleep, and these aspects are condensed in the structuring of the *syuzhet* (plot), mainly by means of symbolism. The cues employed in this PSA therefore emphasise the fact that the narrative can be framed as symbolic in nature, and not merely as a single event unfolding chronologically, as was the case in the *Tomato Sauce* PSA.

In the first section of the PSA, the main action unfolds in midground (frames **1** to **6**), apart from frame **2** where an establishing shot brings the puppy within the personal space range of the viewer. The placement of a second bow in the background throughout the PSA indicates depth of field. The action focuses exclusively on the puppy and the playful nature normally associated with small animals. Within the frame of the commercial narrative, the constructors could be focusing here on just how engaging a young animal's behaviour can be. This is important, particularly in view of the fact that this interest in the animal can quickly decline once the animal matures and no longer displays this youthful behaviour.

Frames **7** and **8** can be regarded as the closing shots of the first section of the PSA, focusing on the entertaining behaviour of the animal, and is positively framed. The puppy moves into the foreground (frame **7**), and the close-up of the puppy in frame **8** brings the viewer within personal distance of the puppy, making the viewer directly involved in the puppy and its antics. Also, "[b]ecause the close-up magnifies the size of an object, it tends to elevate the importance of things, often suggesting a symbolic significance" (Gianetti 1999:11), as is true of the puppy in this example. The words of the soundtrack or text anchor the visual message. In this way, the images and corresponding words could be regarded as directing the positive framing of the first sequence of this PSA.

Frame **9** can be regarded as the first in the second section of the commercial. In this frame, the puppy yawns, indicating on a primary level that the puppy is tired and is about to fall asleep. On the surface, the frames showing the yawning puppy are still amusing and relatively light-hearted. On a symbolic level, however, the words 'next year' imply that the action of falling asleep is not only a current action, but is a forewarning to future events. In this way:

-Yawning stands for falling asleep (primary level) stands for putting the puppy to sleep (symbolic level)

Here, putting the puppy to sleep, refers to the euphemistic term for having a vet put an animal down. This secondary message is still kept relatively obscure, however. In the frames that follow, the secondary message becomes clearer, and a gradual change of mood becomes easy to detect. On the primary level the yawning puppy lying down stands for the puppy going to sleep. Frames **10, 11** and **12** show the actions of the puppy as it lies down and falls asleep. Firstly, this sequence is shown in medium close-up, so that the viewer can even see the puppy slowly closing its eyes. As with the first close-up, the animal is brought within personal and intimate distance of the viewer, and the viewer could be forgiven for almost feeling as if the puppy were a personal or family pet. The close-up sequence seems to indicate both a sense of protective closeness and underlying danger at the same time. However, the tight framing of the puppy removes the red ribbon and Christmas lining out of the visual field. Without the dominant red colour in the frame, the puppy seems suddenly enveloped in ominous darkness (frames **12 & 13**). The dark colour of the puppy's coat further emphasises this fact, indicating that the viewer's closeness to the puppy does not safeguard it from danger.

In frame **13**, apart from the fact that the puppy lies in darkness, there are other cues that serve to confirm that the puppy is in danger. The puppy is shown lying at the edge of the box, and is spatially the furthest removed from the viewer that it has been throughout the PSA. The box in which the puppy lies, becomes a 'frame within a frame'. This is an example of tight framing where "the mise en scene is so carefully balanced and harmonized that [those] photographed have little or no freedom of movement" (Gianetti 1999:519). This is in direct contrast to the freedom of movement the puppy enjoyed in the first section of the PSA. This arrangement makes the puppy seem trapped, confined and vulnerable.

Other cues further reinforce this interpretation. The red bow lies discarded to the left of the box. As noted previously, the red colour is the dominant contrast in the frame, drawing the eyes to the left of the frame first. The bow seems to curl around the back of the puppy, leading the eye from the bow, to the puppy, and then to the empty space in

front of the puppy. This emphasises that the puppy is now isolated and 'out of reach'. The camera looks down on the puppy as it lies, helpless. The words '(all our troubles will be) out of sight' links the suspected danger the puppy is in, in frames **10** to **12**, with the next sequence, where the puppy disappears from the viewer's sight. No longer playful and engaging, the puppy has become one of the troubles that has to be removed.

The sequence indicated in frames **14**, **15** and **16** is framed in such a way as to be interpreted as symbolic in nature. Two key metaphors can be identified as operating in this sequence, namely:

- The shadow of death

The box closes over the puppy from the top of the frame, throwing an ominous shadow over it, which on a symbolic level could be interpreted as being the shadow of death cast over the puppy.

- *The hand of fate*

The strong male hands gripping the edges of the box show the finality of the puppy's fate: it will die (frame **14**).

In frame **15**, *the present box becomes a casket.*

This interpretation is reinforced by the sound effect of a heavy cover slamming closed over the animal. The box that stood for present in the first half of the PSA, in frame **16**, now stands for a casket. While the source of the metaphor is the same whether the box is a present or a casket, the target elements mapped, change. No exterior changes where made to the elements used whatsoever. This quick change from present to casket, from sleeping to death, occurs mentally, and could be an example where the frame of the 'real' and the symbolic blur seamlessly (frame **16**). Finally, a metonymic cueing also occurs in this sequence, in that

- Hands stand for people

This metonymic cue indicates that careless humans have a hand in creating this negative outcome for the puppy. In other words, people's thoughtless actions are to blame for this situation.

4.3.6 Framing the call to action

Titles appear for the first time at this late stage in the PSA (frame **17**, **18** & **19**). The words in the titles are carefully chosen to support the visual metonymies and metaphors employed in the PSA. In frame **17**, the word 'gift' supports the framing of animals as presents, established in the first section of the PSA. The word *silence* is euphemistic for the putting to death of unwanted animals, and corresponds with the falling to sleep standing for the 'putting to sleep' euphemism indicated visually. The statistics quoted (82,000 animals are put to death each year) are shocking enough so that the euphemistic approach does not lessen the impact of the message.

The word 'please' appears on its own in frame **18**, giving the word weight and intensifies the plea made by the organisation, which follows. In frame **19**, the titles remain in keeping with the puppy/Christmas/gift framing of the narrative with the words *give* and *pet*. They also include the direct plea made by the SPCA, which is also its call to action: think about the fate of animals abandoned by owners who do not really want pets received as gifts. In frames **17**, **18** and **19**, the SPCA logo appears for the first time. Enough screen time is allocated to the display of the logo. In this way, the viewer has enough time to make the connection between the narrative, the organisation and why these are linked to the request made in the final frame (frame **19**).

4.3.7 Identification of embodied framing in the *Christmas Puppy*

In keeping with the fact that the puppy is framed as symbolically significant, it is also possible to identify an embodied metaphor in shots **7** and **8**. The embodied orientational metaphor *good is up* (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1980) is applied here, as the upward movements of the puppy show. The lyrics, 'be light', further reinforces the application

of this metaphor. The puppy moves to stand up on the side of the box in frame **7**, and stretches its neck upward in frame **8**.

The use of this positive embodied orientation, and its relative subtlety, are pivotal to the change in mood that occurs in the frames that follow, but go almost unnoticed at first. Understood on a symbolic level, the puppy lying down metonymically indicates the puppy being put down by a vet. Hence, the opposite embodied orientational metaphor *'down is bad'* is employed, and supports the overall negative feeling in the second section of the commercial that by this time becomes evident. It is argued that it is partly because of this embodied framing that the constructor can engage the viewer in the first section, only to refute the viewer's positive expectations of the puppy's fate in the second section of the PSA. The relatively slow pace of the narrative in this PSA still keeps viewer interest because of a deft twist of expectation.

In contrast to the slow pace of the narrative in this PSA, in the Arrive Alive PSA, *The Surgeon*, the narrative unfolds at a fast pace. At first viewing, this fast pace and almost overwhelming use of various cinematic devices could leave the viewer uncertain of the outcome of the narrative. It also serves to recapture the viewer's attention in subsequent viewings, because the pace prevents the viewer from untangling all the visual, aural and verbal cues contained in the message. *The Surgeon* is analysed in the next section.

TITLE: CHRISTMAS PUPPY (SPCA)

Frame 1
Soundtrack: *Have…*

Frame 2
Soundtrack: *yourself…*

Frame 3
Soundtrack: *a merry…*

Frame 4
Soundtrack: *little Christmas…*

Frame 5
Soundtrack: *Let…*

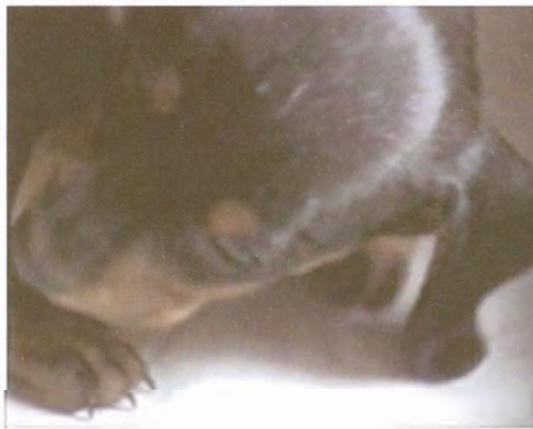**Frame 6**
Soundtrack: *your…*

Frame 7
Soundtrack: *heart…*

Frame 8
Soundtrack: *be light…*

Frame 9
Soundtrack: *Next year…*

Frame 10
Soundtrack: *all…*

Frame 11
Soundtrack: *our troubles…*

Frame 12
Soundtrack: *will be…*
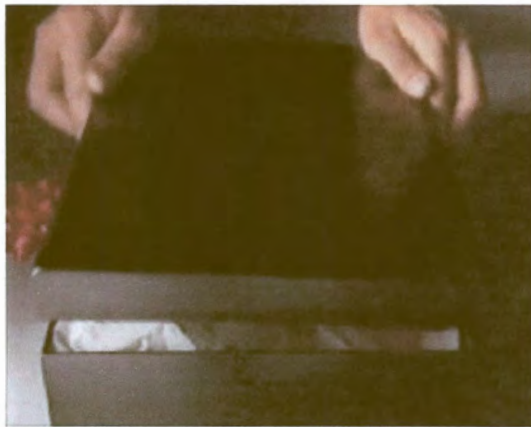
Frame 13
Soundtrack: *out...*

Frame 14
Soundtrack: *of...*

Frame 15
Soundtrack: *sight.*

Frame 16
SFX: Sound of heavy lid closing (echo)

Frame 17
(no soundtrack)

Frame 18
(no soundtrack)

Frame 19
(no soundtrack)

4.3 *The Surgeon*: Arrive Alive PSA (1999)

Although travelling at high speed seems to be a common occurrence on South African roads, the reality of the damage caused by accidents that can result from such speeding, is a reality outside the frame of the everyday. As demonstrated in this study, television is a medium that can successfully bring what is outside the everyday frame of reference, into our private sphere, for us to react and respond to. This PSA aims to do precisely that, arguing that people need to see the damage done by a motor accident in order to realise the consequences of speeding.

4.3.1 Intuitive understanding and the narrative pattern

The road accident statistics supplied by the Department of Transport alone indicate road safety as a pertinent social issue in South Africa. The general public must be made aware of the dangers associated with negligent driving habits such as speeding and drinking and driving. The Arrive Alive initiative is a direct attempt to address these issues and bring the need for safe driving habits to the attention of the general public.

In the PSA entitled *The Surgeon*, created as part of the Arrive Alive campaign for the Department of Transport, the blurred boundary between the real and the mediated is exploited to maximum effect. The amount of damage a motor accident at high speed can cause, referred to in this particular PSA, is certainly 'real', and an everyday reality for a doctor working in a trauma unit, but is not something others generally 'see' every day. Although the reproduction of the reality of working in a hospital's trauma unit is dramatised, it succeeds because it seems to 'mirror a reality' normally hidden from view in the everyday. However, further investigation shows the portrayal as a packaged narrative showing fictionalised, and in fact highly stylised, images of reality.

In this PSA, television cameras allow the viewer entry into a sphere that observers are normally denied access to. The television camera allows the viewer to roam the emergency room hallways, yet even here the precarious boundary between 'real' and 'mediated' experience can be observed. The viewer would be forgiven for likening this PSA to an episode of *ER*, a popular reality-based medical drama. The impact of this

message also lies in the apparent immediacy of the danger it shows: a danger not far removed, but laid out in front of viewers in their domestic space.

According to Crewe (1999:sp), "[d]eath or injury remains a real and present threat to every road user. It's everyone's problem". On an intuitive level, the underlying message can be identified as follows: see the damage a motor accident at high speed can cause and realise that what you see is your problem. You have a responsibility to respond by practising saver driving habits – even if only out of fear of the horrifying consequences of a high-speed collision. The threat here is that the surgeon might also have to struggle to save your life after a road collision.

4.3.2 Development of the narrative: the umbrella message

The answers to the questions posed in establishing the umbrella message give an indication of the reasons why a specific approach was followed for this PSA narrative:

- *What is the objective of the organisation for which the message is created?*

According to the Department of Transport (2001a:sp), the central aims of the Arrive Alive campaign include reduction of the number of traffic accidents, and specifically the number of fatalities, by 5% when compared to the same period the previous year, improved observance of traffic laws, and improved working relationship between traffic authorities at various levels of government.

- *What does this objective mean, in other words, why is support of this particular social issue, important to the viewer?*

According to the Department of Transport (2001a:sp): "The problem of road safety is very simple: between 9,600 and 10,000 people die on our roads every year. Almost 150, 000 people are injured in the approximately 500,000 crashes that occur each year". The Department of Transport (2001a:sp) notes that these shocking figures hold various social implications: "Besides the traumatic emotional cost this has on the fabric of our society, the CSIR estimates that this costs R11,9 billion to the country's economy".

The big killers on South African roads are speed and alcohol, and speed alone is attributable to 75% of all the crashes on South African roads (Department of Transport 2001b:sp).

- *What must be done regarding the organisation's objectives or what is the request the viewer must respond to?*

This PSA is one example where the request made to the viewer is only indirectly expressed. The closest the message comes to a formal request, is the Arrive Alive slogan, appearing as titles in the final frames of the announcement: "Don't fool yourself, speed kills" (frame **50**). Instead, the announcement employs material that acts as visual evidence of the vulnerability of the human body in a motor accident. This shocking visual evidence is a deterrent on two levels: it is a personal threat to people who regularly speed, because it could happen to them. Secondly, if one has seen the damage that can be done to the human body, condoning speeding seems almost criminal.

4.3.3 The structure of the 'official story' or key message

In packaging the narrative as a 'fictionalised' reality, the constructors of this message chose a surgeon as the main character delivering the message. The urgent, distracted delivery of the message promotes the feeling that this message is truly delivered by a doctor who works in a trauma unit, which indeed it is. According to the Department of Transport (2001c:sp):

> In *The Surgeon* we went all out for shock value based on hard realism. We filmed in Grootte Schuur Hospital's trauma unit in order to graphically illustrate the physical effects on the human body of crashing at speed. And we used the controlled emotion of a real surgeon – instead of an actor – to emphasise the human experience of the daily struggle to save the dying and mutilated victims of road crashes.

On a primary level, this PSA shows the reality of work in a trauma unit. A surgeon, identified as Andrew Nichol by a text marker that could be associated with the introduction of an expert in a documentary, explains that many people involved in road accidents will never realise the damage a car accident can cause to themselves or others. He goes on to list general injuries caused by a motor accident (severe head injuries,

permanent brain damage, spinal cord injuries and internal bleeding), while photographs of seriously injured individuals punctuate his words in graphic detail. He ironically notes that although he sees these people 'every day', but many of them will never 'see' him. A hospital-green cover being pulled over an injured face confirms what the doctor is not stating, namely, that many die of these injuries.

Regarding the imagery of the PSA, there is a swift succession of visual images, conveying a feeling of urgency one would associate with a hospital trauma unit. The images show doctors working around an operating table, photographs of injured individuals, and general images and auditory input associated with hospitals such as x-ray plates and a heart monitor. Snatches of urgent exchanges around the operating table are heard. This PSA primarily seems to be mirroring reality.

As mentioned previously, however, closer investigation soon reveals evidence of manipulation of this mediated reality. Certain elements or areas are, figuratively speaking, embellished while others are left out, so that the 'reality of the trauma unit' is made to match the mediated pattern that the PSA narrative demands. Also, the fact that a 'real' trauma unit was filmed, does not change the fact that only part-of-the-whole is shown. One surgeon must stand for the medical profession and its associations with the medical discourse of power and knowledge. A few injured faces must stand for the many who die on South African roads each year.

4.3.4 Identification of key symbolic modes

While the umbrella message guides the identification of the message content, the symbolic modes guide the framing perspective the constructor wishes the viewer to employ. On the metaphoric level, the notion that seeing the real damage that a motor accident can cause, seems to drive the message in its entirety. According to Minister Maharaj (quoted in Department of Transport 1998c:sp, emphasis added): "[f]or all our efforts, we have not yet succeeded in convincing many of our drivers that speed – with or without alcohol – is the main killer on our roads. We need to challenge people's illusions of control and invulnerability and **show them what really happens in a crash**".

The following metaphor is identified in this analysis as the operative metaphor that drives the message in its entirety:

- *Seeing is believing/ knowing*

The statement is open-ended enough to allow the constructors of the message scope for an intuitive approach to the framing of the message. The notion of *seeing* the damage that can be done, is reinforced by the use of an experienced surgeon as spokesperson in the narrative. The doctor is male and a surgeon, and therefore stands for the authority that his status and title grant him. He is entitled to show the viewer the hidden world of a trauma unit, to pull back the curtain for the viewer, who is allowed a quick, horrifying glimpse at a reality many would rather not see. The knife becomes an extension of the surgeon, who, like the symbol of his profession, cuts through the surface to show a hidden reality underneath.

The viewer is almost 'made to look' because of the authority of the figure who insists that the viewer must see. At the same time, much remains unseen. When the camera moves close to the operating table, it seems to tentatively hover there for a brief second, so that only glimpses of the operation in progress can be caught: white gloves holding a bloodied shining instrument, protruding from the person being operated on, for example. Finally, the images of injured individuals seem also to be strictly limited to close-ups of faces. What this strict selectivity shows, is that the 'reality' is subordinate to the narrative, to the mediated message: just show enough 'real' injuries to support the message, no more. "This is the essence of all advertising: components of 'real' life, our life, are used to speak a new language, the advertisement's" (Williamson 1978:23).

The use of cinematic devices is of great importance in this televised PSA, and is a good example of the use of various cinematic techniques to achieve a sense of heightened realism. This is observable in the use of obscure camera angles, textured images and the fast editing pace of many sequences, which will be discussed in the following section.

4.3.5 Cinematic style in *The Surgeon*

Arguably one of the most noteworthy aspects of this public service message, and what keeps the viewer engaged throughout even if the content is brutal, is the complex narrative construction that unfolds not chronologically, but within three different time frames, namely:

- the present, in which the doctor delivers the narrative in the hallway outside the operating room,

- the immediate past, where the same surgeon is shown in the process of trying to save the woman's life who is first wheeled into the operating theatre (frames **2, 4 & 5**) and subsequently operated on, and unfolds as a series of flashbacks

- and the removed past, where still shots of victims form a visual archive of injury and death (frames **6, 25, 26, 31, 43 & 44**). This is an archive of which the dying woman of the immediate past, will become part (frame **48**).

There are key framing cues that indicate the transition from one time frame to the next. Sequences unfolding in the present and the immediate past are saturated in movement, while all archival shots of the removed past are still. The transition between the first two time frames is more difficult to distinguish from one another when viewed normally as televised announcement, as opposed to part of a frame-by-frame analysis. Frames **7** and **8** show Doctor Nichol leaving the operating room through a darkened doorway. He steps into the hallway, and in the process, steps out of the frame of the immediate past, where another road accident victim has just died, into the frame of the present, where the message he is about to deliver, might still have an impact on the living, the viewer. Another clear indicator of the first and second level narration is frame **32**, where the surgeon looks up from the operating table, into the camera, a look that confirms our worst suspicions for the victim under his hands.

Another important factor in this PSA is the density of the image sequence that necessitates the fast succession from one image to the next, so that the narrative unfolds at a swift pace. Few images dominate the screen space for any significant time, and those images that do, are mostly of pivotal importance in the unfolding narrative. The

speed at which the narrative unfolds holds various implications for the image sequence. The message is framed as a story of the reality of a trauma unit, and the speed at which the moving images are shown, corresponds with what could be regarded as a generally held belief that a hospital trauma unit is a space of accelerated action and unpredictability. On a 'plot' level, the speed builds tension into the narrative, giving the delivery of the message a greater sense of urgency. The cinematic style is adapted to suit both these aspects of the narrative with fast-paced camera movement, 'uncontrolled' obscure camera angles and an auditory cue of a high-speed collision, as the visual sequence progresses. Blurred visual effects further contribute to the notion of haste (frames **3, 4, 7, 15, 23, 28 & 36**). The uncontrolled opening speed is reined in by the first shocking still-shot sequence, reinforced by the auditory cue of a high-speed collision (frames **5 & 6**).

Fast pace becomes a pivotal narratological device as the doctors rush a severely injured patient into the trauma unit, and must act quickly to try and save this person's life. The first half of the message is therefore dominated by shots that indicate speed, while the still-shot sequences are less frequent and are edited to have little screen time. Still-shots simply flash before the viewer's eyes, before the pace is picked up again. Gradually, it becomes clear that the doctors are unable to save the person they are so desperately trying to keep alive. Sequences of still-shots become more protracted and their frequency increases as the message comes to a close (frames **48 & 49**). The little movement there is in the final shots, is much subdued. In this way, the unfolding of the story supports the style in which it is presented. The action is necessarily condensed, however. The actual process of trying to save the person is reduced by means of fast motion and cut-aways to and from the operating table, partly because of the time constraints of the televised PSA format (frames **4, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 & 21**).

The framed-in space in which this narrative unfolds, is also dense with visual information. To enhance the 'realism' of the message, the arrangement of objects in fore-, mid- and background seems arbitrary. Foreground objects or shadows often obscure the view of the midground and background (frame **2**), and the speed at which the camera moves often allows visual information to recede into the background so

quickly that it is difficult to assimilate all the information in a first or second viewing (frame **3**).

While the still-shots are all close-ups and appear to be in close proximity of the viewer, this arrangement could be regarded as a shock tactic. While the images are ghastly on paper, where each image can be scrutinised in all its horrifying detail, the most shocking of these are granted very little screen time, so that it has time almost only to convey the general feeling of horror (frames **25, 26 & 43**). In the sequences involving operating, the aspect of intervention seems to be most foregrounded, with protruding instruments and gloved hands being most visible, showing the intervention by the surgeon (frames **12, 17, 21, 27, 28, 36 & 39**). Otherwise, operating in progress is placed in midground, with the camera keeping its distance or moving away (frames **4, 37, 40 & 47**).

Camera movement has been indicated as a key element in the unfolding narrative. The red blood is foregrounded against the mostly green background, and the importance of this *lifeblood* is made pertinent in the frame where it is shown in what appears to be a transfusion bag, in the foreground of the depth plane. Its presence is punctuated by a high-pitched (and therefore foregrounded) blip, which is heard when the blood in the bag pulses. This is one instance where texture is also important, although the textured graininess of authenticity is visible in various other frames.

Auditory cues play a very important role in this PSA by punctuating the action, for example from frames **2, 3, 4, 5,** and **6** onwards the fast-paced camera movement is accompanied by the auditory cues that simulate a speeding car. Auditory cues further reinforce this authenticity, with snatches of rushed 'medical speak' that occupy the figure space above background noises. When the still images interrupt the camera movement, the auditory cue simulates a car coming to a screeching halt. The lighting appears to come mostly from the sources found in the environment, such as the theatre lights or the florescent light in the hallway, although there is another, placed light source dramatically highlighting the surgeon's face in the hallway. The movement of the camera in space is also significant in that it seems to be omnipresent and can move everywhere, but as previously mentioned, sometimes remains removed from the action, regardless of this fact. Sometimes the viewer is taken to where the action is, and is

shown quick close-ups of the doctors working on the patient. At other times, the camera hovers at the edges, unseen by those in authority, who are gathered around the operating table.

4.3.6 Framing the call to action

In general, the movement in space, from one point of action to the next, gives the viewer almost a quick 'virtual tour' of the trauma unit, and captures some of the essence of the space itself. The camera keeps pace with the surgeon who is catching his breath outside the hallway of the theatre (frame **9**), but who nevertheless has no time to stand still. This forms the essence of the implied call to action, as mentioned previously, namely, to see the damage a motor crash can do.

The implied message correlates with the final frames of the PSA, where the woman the doctors were trying to save is shown, eyes closed, and about to be covered with a green sheet, indicating that she has died (frame **48 & 49**). The titles appear as the sheet is pulled over the victim's face with a final text message that is repeatedly used in Arrive Alive campaigns (frame **50**). The font was chosen to complement the gritty, rushed nature of the PSA itself. In the final frame, the familiar Arrive Alive logo appears (frame **51**).

4.3.7 Identification of embodied framing in *The Surgeon*

The constructors allow the images of the doctor to slip out of frame (frames **14**, **18**, **42 & 46**). This is significant on a practical level, in that this framing reinforces the notion that the message is anchored in 'reality', but also on a symbolic level. Embodied framing that is related to this symbolic level of interpretation, is discussed in the following section. A character slipping off-screen often appears vulnerable to danger. The expressive and terse delivery of the narrative by the surgeon, and his face dipping off-screen at times (frame **14**), gives the impression that he is vulnerable to emotion that he is not allowed to show (frames **42**, **46**). The implied danger of slipping out of the frame, could also have its origin in embodied experience that is related to the key orientational metaphor of containment.

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The narrow hallway creates a frame-within-a-frame in which the surgeon is doubly bounded. The threat is therefore compounded by the fact that if the body of the surgeon is shown as vulnerable, the damaged patient whom he must save is even more so. By implication, if the viewer were in a motor accident, what is happening now to someone else, could happen to be him or her. Slipping out of the frame becomes a meta-message for a *life slipping away*, as the life of the woman whom the surgeon has just operated on, has just slipped away. This is central to the message, and finally the viewer is shown why it is better to be excluded from 'the world of the trauma unit'.

The importance of frames **7** and **8** is similarly punctuated by their highly symbolic nature: going through the doorway is an established cinematic cue for a transformation in a character. The fact that the doorway is darkened is significant, however. Those who enter the trauma unit theatre are often *at death's door*, and the surgeon becomes a modern-day Charon, who is forever crossing the black river that separates the living and the dead (Bulfinch 1993:108). Nonetheless, the surgeon is mortal, and cannot bring everyone back to life. Even technology (frame **30**, **38**), acting as the embodied 'master of ceremonies' in these grim proceedings, bathing the operating room in hopeful luminescence,[1] is powerless. The doctors look up to the monitor in despair (frames **29**, **37**), but the system is no longer supporting life (frame **41**). Doctors form a *circle of influence* and entering this space is *out of bounds* for the uninitiated, and a liberty that can only be granted by a *central figure* such as the surgeon. Here, more often than not, those who are initiated into its rituals, including the patients and the practitioners, must *stare death in the face* (frame **32**). It is better for the emergency ward to remain shrouded in mystery of the unknown, rather than it being your body covered by the shroud (frames **48**, **49**, **50**).

A structured approach was followed in the analysis of the three PSAs analysed in this chapter. The framing elements identified, based on the existing hypothetical model, were applied in order to investigate the development of the PSA structure and narrative, as one of the research objectives of this study. Strong key messages based on an intuitive understanding of the organisations for which the messages were created, led to the different approaches to framing of the various messages. In turn, framing the

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[1] Technology is an embodied player in this drama, and the light it emanates is of a physiological origin.

message led to the identification of suitable symbolic modes and cinematic style with which to portray the messages.

In chapter five, it is argued that personal involvement by the author in all the stages of development of the PSA brings a further dimension to the analysis process followed in chapter four. Although the same method is followed for the analysis of this personally created PSA, other factors needed to be taken in to consideration, including certain external factors that have an influence on the PSA development process. It is suggested that these ancillary factors are identifiable particularly because of personal involvement in the PSA creation process.
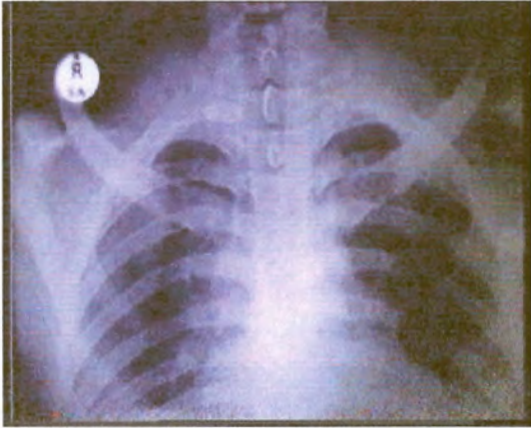
Frame 1
SFX: Suction of ventilator

Frame 2
SFX: Suction of ventilator (continued)

Frame 3
SFX: Door slamming

Frame 4
SFX: Background noise, talking in theatre
Soundtrack: Low tone and pulse throughout

Frame 5
SFX: Car slamming on breaks (monitor pulse)

Frame 6
SFX: Sound of car making impact (monitor pulse)

Frame 7
SFX: Background noise, opening of door

Frame 8
SFX: Background noise, entering room

Frame 9
VO: *In my job...*

Frame 10
VO: *I see a lot of people who...*

Frame 11
VO: *don't seem...*
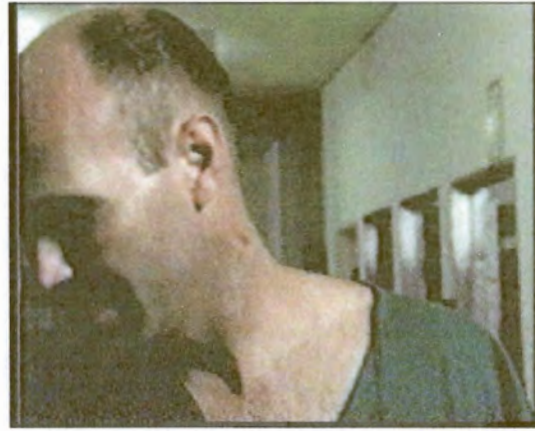

Frame 12
VO: *to...*

Frame 13
VO: *realise...*
SFX: Car slamming on breaks and impact

Frame 14
VO: *the amount of damage...*
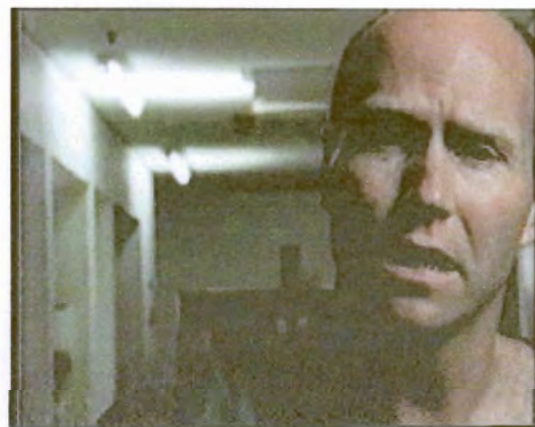
Frame 15
VO: *that a motor crash...*

Frame 16
VO: *at high...*
SFX: Background noise, in theatre

Frame 17
VO: *speed can...*

Frame 18
VO: *cause...*

Frame 19
VO: *I see...*
SFX: background noise, monitor pulse

Frame 20
VO: *patients...*
SFX: monitor pulse

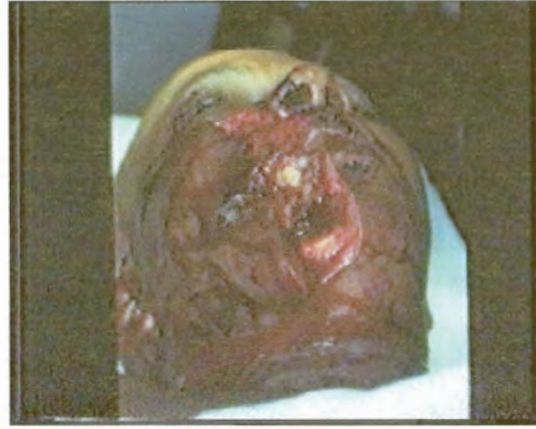**Frame 21**

Frame 22
VO: *who...*

Frame 23
VO: *have...*

Frame 24
VO: *severe...*

Frame 25
VO: *head...*
SFX: Car making impact

Frame 26
VO: *injuries,...*

Frame 27
VO: *permanent brain...*

Frame 28
VO: *damage,...*

Frame 29
VO: *spinal...*

Frame 30
VO: *cord...*
SFX: monitor pulse

Frame 31
VO: *injuries,...*

Frame 32

Frame 33
VO: *and internal bleeding*

Frame 34
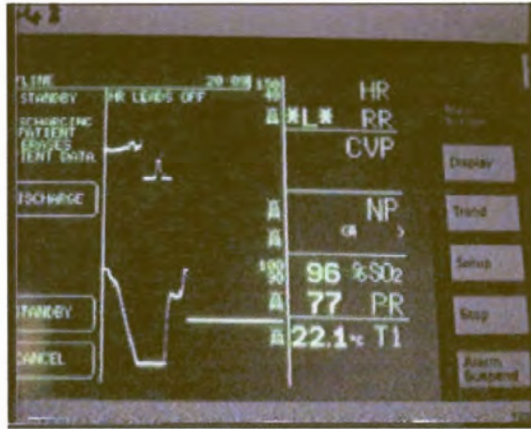**VO:** *as a result of such...*

Frame 35
VO: *collisions...*
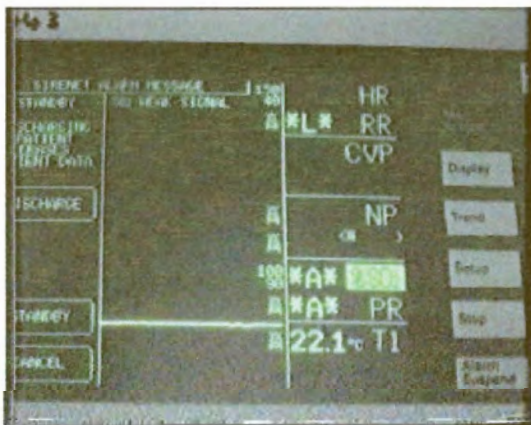

Frame 36
VO: *I...*

Frame 37
VO: *see...*

Frame 38
VO: *these...*
SFX: High-pitched, urgent monitor pulse

Frame 39
VO: *people...*

Frame 40
VO: *every...*

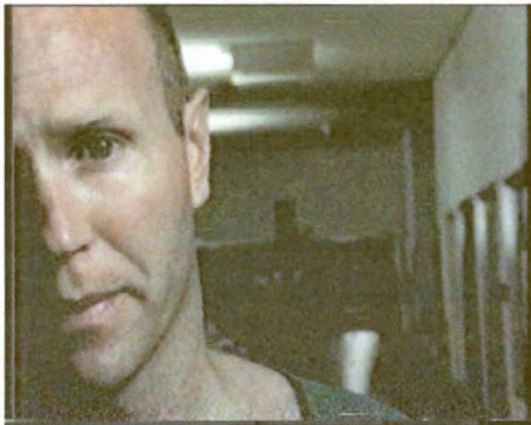
Frame 41
VO: *day,...*

Frame 42
VO: *but a lot of them...*

Frame 43

Frame 44

Frame 46
VO: *will never get to see me.*

Frame 47
SFX: Background noise, in theatre

Frame 48
Soundtrack: dramatic build-up of low tone, (thunder?)

Frame 49
Soundtrack: dramatic build-up of low tone (continued)

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Don't fool yourself
Speed kills.

ARRIVE ALIVE

CO-SPONSORED BY THE ROAD ACCIDENT FUND

Frame 50
Soundtrack: Dramatic soundtrack fade out

Frame 51

CHAPTER 5
Documentation of the construction of a PSA

In the production of the televised PSA, a raw social event is framed as a 'fictionalised' reality and presented in a narrative form. The viewer brings certain expectations to the interpretation of this narrative. At the same time,

> in examining the relation between television and reality, one is by implication investigating human objectivity and bias in relation to the communicator's interpretation of an objective event, its reconstruction as a mediated event and its interpretation by the viewer as a subjectively experienced event (Du Plooy 1989:47).

In this chapter, it is possible to examine the bias in relation to the constructor's mediated interpretation of an objective event. One of the limited ways in which this bias mentioned by du Plooy can be investigated, is by documenting the construction process itself. That is the approach followed in the analysis of the *Reach Out and Give*, a PSA created for Tuks Rag in 1998.

5.1 *Reach out and Give*: Tuks Rag PSA (1998)

Personal involvement by the author in the construction of this particular PSA allowed participation in the development of the narrative, identification of the umbrella message and application of symbolic modes. It also entailed involvement in the production process in its entirety.

In the analysis of the PSAs in chapter 4, conclusions regarding the ways in which the narrative was developed, could only be based on general information available concerning the organisation for which the PSA was made. Symbolic modes and the framing of the call to action could be identified in the PSA, but uncertainty remains regarding the actual intentions of the constructor. It is argued in this study that personal involvement by the author in the creation of a PSA, brought greater insight into this aspect of PSA construction. Involvement in the entire production process also allowed insight into various external factors that have an influence on the development of the public service message. While the narrative construction, style, symbolic modes and framing of the call to action

are analysed in accordance with previous examples, the making of this PSA made possible the added investigation of external influences on the message construction.

In analysing existing PSAs, framing elements can be identified and elaborated on, but the essence of the framing process undertaken by the constructor of the message, can only be guessed at. By documenting the application of these elements as part of the entire construction process, the success of these elements as tools can be better evaluated. Although the same general principles are applied in the analysis of PSAs in chapter 4, each of the elements can here also be evaluated with the intentions of the constructor more precisely determined. The usefulness and applicability of the framing elements to the constructor, can therefore also be evaluated more accurately.

Personal involvement ultimately leads to a better understanding of the process of framing, the application of symbolic modes, and various other aspects that form part of the construction process, which are discussed in the following section. In analysing the PSA created for Tuks Rag, each element of framing of the message is documented, followed by an outline of how these elements were applied by the constructor. The organisation's aims and objectives are also identified, focussing on the elements that aided the initial understanding of the organisation and its work, and also the understanding of why support of this organisation is important.

5.1.1 Intuitive understanding as basis for the narrative pattern

An initial understanding of Tuks Rag as an organisation was based on a literature study, particularly of the material provided in the annual Rag magazines. The publication of these magazines forms the main part of the fundraising drive of the Tuks Rag organisation, with magazines being sold to the public in the first quarter of each year. It is an accepted practice, and the public is aware of the fact that the funds raised from the sale of these magazines will support charitable work undertaken by Tuks Rag. In general, the Rag magazine provides an outline of the various student organisations and activities at the University, with particular emphasis on Rag activities. The magazine can also be seen as an attempt to capture the essence of a fun-loving and spirited approach to student life.

Apart from the literature provided, informal discussions with the chairpersons, staff and interest groups were also a source of information regarding the organisation and its work. With the literature provided, discussions formed the grounds on which general understanding of the organisation was based, and formed the foundation for the development of the narrative. These informal discussions took place within the offices of the organisation, which made it possible to also observe the working environment of the organisation. The staff members are mainly university students. In this case, the development of the umbrella message was not based only on literature study of the organisation's aims and objectives, but on direct contact with the organisation's members. From the direct contact and informal discussions with the members of the organisation, the students working for this organisation were viewed as a tight-knit, vibrant and optimistic group. This intuitive understanding of the organisation helped to shape the development of the umbrella message, and finally the actual narrative content of the televised PSA itself.

Members of the organisation felt it important to ensure that the organisation's mission statement would be clearly reflected in the PSA. It was also necessary to identify the reason for the existence of the organisation, the particular need it fulfils in the community and the reason why the public should support the organisation. Indeed, according to Radtke (1998:67), the umbrella message should also reflect the values of the organisation. The televised message provides the opportunity to display the underlying values of the organisation without literally showing the work undertaken by the organisation in a documentary style. The following section shows the development of the umbrella message that finally allowed for the incorporation of symbolism associated with the organisation and its work.

5.1.2 Development of the narrative: the umbrella message

Based on the narrative pattern, the umbrella message was determined by answering the following questions:

- *What is the objective of the organisation for which the message is created?*

The formal mission statement of Tuks Rag reflects the organisation's key focuses of fundraising, student development and community service, and identifies the organisation's aim as: the advancement of students by channelling their youthful energy and search for fun into fundraising and community service projects (Jasweb 2001:sp). This mission statement can be regarded as a summary of the key objectives and aims of the organisation.

- *What does this objective mean, in other words, why is the attention to, and support of this particular social issue, important to the viewer?*

As a non-profit organisation, Tuks Rag is in the unique position of being able to utilise student volunteer groups in its projects for development, in order to reach the community. Students gain valuable experience that is generally work-related; in this way, psychology or social work students, for example, are exposed to situations that are related to their future professions. The mission statement makes it clear that students are in the position to undertake community projects with youthful enthusiasm and energy. Support for this organisation translates into an investment in community upliftment that benefits both those in need, and awakens a sense of social awareness in the students taking part in upliftment projects.

The community also benefits from Tuks Rag mainly because of the tremendous fundraising ability. In this regard, Tuks Rag is regarded as the biggest Rag organisation in South Africa (Tuks Rag first… 1998:8); for example, R2 million was raised for charity through this organisation in 1999 (Rademeyer 1999:15). These funds are directly reinvested into community development projects. In this way, a vast array of charities and community projects that are identified as being in need of funding or volunteer-lead initiatives, receive funding and/or student volunteer support from the Tuks Rag organisation.

- *What must be done regarding the organisation's objectives or what is the request the viewer must respond to?*

Tuks Rag is a student based non-profit organisation that offers unique and ongoing support in the community. It is dependent on the financial support of the community in order to undertake outreach programmes. Financial support is also required in order to support various projects undertaken by student volunteer groups and to launch study related community work projects in conjunction with the University of Pretoria.

The viewers of this PSA had to be able to recognise Tuks Rag as a powerful vehicle in effecting change and development in the community. Student participation, and the ability of the organisation to channel all funds raised during numerous fundraising events into community projects and charities, makes this organisation unique. The main fundraising event is the annual Rag procession, with floats built by student groups, through the streets of Pretoria, as well as the sale of Rag magazines and tin-can money collections undertaken by students. The PSA narrative aims to positively reinforce support of the organisation's aims, and further encourage viewers who support Tuks Rag fund-raising events or make donations.

Identifying the umbrella message and the ability to answer the questions relevant to it, was found to be a highly effective and structured way to gain insight into the organisation. It enabled the constructor to steer the development of the narrative in a direction that was suitable both to the constructor, from a creative point of view, and to the organisation as a means to determine whether its image would be portrayed correctly. It must be noted, however, that although input from members of the organisation is highly desirable, the fact that the members have a distinct notion of the organisation and its work can also hamper the process of framing the message. Members of the organisation seemed inflexible to accept broad interpretations of the role of the organisation. This leads to the constructor being severely limited in exploring possible framing possibilities for the organisation and its work that did not correlate obviously and directly with the ways in which members perceive it. The constructor is therefore restricted to limited framing approaches.

5.1.3 The structure of the 'official story' or key message

The key message reflects Tuks Rag's need for public support. The message is mostly informative in nature, but also has a secondary aim of creating emotional involvement between the Tuks Rag supporter and the organisation by outlining how supporters' contributions are used. In this way the key message aims to promote a positive image of student involvement in community projects, while also attempting to dispel negative associations with Rag as only being drunken student fun. This is a perception often perpetuated by negative press regarding drunk driving and accidents during Rag week (Momberg 1999:13; Studentepret 1999:8).

In order to show how supporters' contributions are used, it was important to highlight the central functions of Tuks Rag as a unique student driven non-profit organisation that addresses a variety of social problems by means of funding or volunteer work in the community. These functions include:

- The promotion of growth and development in students:

This aspect of the organisation focuses on the personal growth of individuals during their involvement of the work of the Tuks Rag organisation. Student volunteers are framed as a group who grow toward a positive and lasting cohesion through their participation in Tuks Rag projects.

- Tuks Rag creates unique outreach opportunities:

Rag is an acronym for **Reach** [out] **And Give**. Tuks Rag can create outreach opportunities, because of the ready access to willing student volunteers and the funds that make upliftment projects possible.

- Tuks Rag allows the joining of hands between students and the community:

Over and above student development, the Tuks Rag organisation also focuses on community development. Therefore, student involvement in the community is mainly framed as

positive, not only for student development, but also for community upliftment. Students offer energy and positive input in the communities in which projects are undertaken.

It was necessary to identify a metaphor that is flexible enough to incorporate references to all the above functions of the organisation. The functions identified above, served as the basis for the identification of an operative metaphor on which the symbolic modes in the narrative could rest.

In hindsight, a better approach could have been to focus on one particular aspect of the organisation's work, of which *The Christmas Puppy* is a good example. Instead of the message aiming to incorporate all the functions of the SPCA in a broad-based message, this message focussed on one or two particular functions of the organisation. In the *Reach Out and Give* message, an attempt was made to incorporate references to fundraising, student development and community upliftment.

As mentioned previously, personal involvement by the author in the PSA creation process allows for a more accurate evaluation of the success of various framing elements employed in the construction process. It is suggested here that the key message was not identified effectively enough, and the framing of the message can be said to be positive, but that the key message lacks a strong focus.

5.1.4 Identification of key symbolic modes

The central concepts surrounding Tuks Rag were conveyed using symbolic modes. Literally showing how students learn, develop and grow as a result of their participation in the undertakings of this organisation, would arguably be more suitable material for a documentary approach. The following statement was identified as a key metaphor in the PSA:

Tuks Rag is a helping hand

Frame **9** most clearly indicates the Tuks Rag organisation in terms of a helping hand metaphor. The many hands are shown to come together to form a strong bond. It aims to show that the work undertaken by Tuks Rag brings people together. Student volunteers join forces with the community for the purposes of progress and development of the community and the individual. Images of hands are used throughout the PSA, based on the helping hand as key metaphor. In the 'packaging' or framing of the PSA, the use of hands is the thread that links the various (and sometimes diverse) aspects that the message had to focus on.

The general tone of this PSA is one of goodwill and support. The key metaphor emphasises this tone. The metaphor of hands for an organisation is often used. This metaphor, although highly applicable and relevant to the message, could be regarded as a formal framing of the organisation. This metaphor is less emotionally driven and is a more or less stable understanding of the organisation that does not invite further investigation or stimulate interest beyond that generated by the general tone of goodwill in the message. It did, however, support the overall positive framing and application of a very particular cinematic style, which is discussed in the following section.

5.1.5 Cinematic style in *Reach Out and Give*

In this particular PSA, the message is delivered as a voice-over accompanied by supporting visuals. The visual images cannot stand alone, and the cues for the various images are often derived from the verbal message. A male voice-over is used to balance with the light background music. The style of delivery is emphatic and reinforces the visual symbolic message. The voice-over is essential to bring the message across. The visual sequence must keep pace with the voice-over, and prevents the repetition of salient visual information, because the extent of the verbal message does not allow an increased frequency of images that are key to the narrative. This is one particular shortcoming of the Tuks Rag PSA. The amount of information given in the verbal message seems to overshadow the visual presentation.

Images often appear in the sequence corresponding to its verbal cue, as derived from the voice-over (**VO**), so that the text can be regarded as anchoring the visual images. From a semiotic perspective, "the text directs the reader through signifieds of the image, causing him to avoid some and receive others" (Barthes 1977:39). In this way, words of the voice-over and their corresponding images guide the viewer's perception of the images. The voice-over also controls the duration that each image appears on screen, as the visual unfolding of the message must keep pace with the various verbal cues on which the appearance of the image relies.

Various metonymic symbols were also applied in this PSA. The light bulb could be regarded as a formally accepted metonymic sign for knowledge and learning (frame **4**), and does not need verbal reinforcement. Rather, this image is the first in a sequence of images that refer to learning (frame **5**), development and growth (frame **6**). In this way, the image in frame **4** supports the symbols that follow, which are arguably less open to direct interpretation and must be guided by the verbal message to indicate their meaning. The seedpod in the cupped hand becomes a symbol of growth (frame **6**), an interpretation guided by the verbal cue. In this section of the image sequence, frame **5** can be regarded almost as a pivotal image, with the child writing on the blackboard standing for learning, building on the image that implies knowledge that went before it, and the concept of growth that follows. Finally, an example of metonymic movement is shown in frame **7**, relating not only to the direct voice-over accompanying the visual ('in turn they touch the lives of those in need'), but also standing for the key to the message as a whole, directly showing the action of reaching out.

In this PSA, the narrative is presented episodically, with each image acting as a condensed comment on particular elements in the voice-over. The images are highly stylised in nature, and elements within the visual field are mostly arranged in the foreground. All the shots in this PSA fall within the close-up range, focussing mostly on hands, corresponding to the symbol chosen with which to convey the message. The focus on hands also limits movement within the visual field, and it was felt necessary to enhance movement in certain shots by means of special effect blurring (frames **1**, **5** & **6**).

In shots where faces were shown, an attempt was made to make these images emotionally charged, particularly by means of lighting. Lighting is employed throughout this PSA to create a warm ambience that suits the emotive nature of the message content (frames 7, **8** & **11**). In both frames **7** & **8**, however, the individuals' expressions combined with dramatic lighting, is an attempt to make these images strongly emotive. This seems to be the case in the separate captured frames, but it can be argued that the duration of these images on screen in the PSA itself, is too short. It is argued that, to a degree, the emotive nature of these images is lost. Regarding the innovative approach to lighting in frame **4**, where an alternative light source shining directly onto the light bulb creates the impression that the source of the light is from the light bulb itself, creating a visually striking image. Frame **9** can be seen as another striking image, here directly related to the *helping hand* metaphor. It is also an image that most clearly portrays the notion that Tuks Rag is a organisation that supports cultural diversity, an implied aspect of the entire announcement.

Intense, light colours were employed in certain shots. These colours appear dominant in the shot composition, and therefore immediately draw the eyes to these objects (frames **6** & **10**). In frame **10**, the colours of the cut-outs are combined with the movement of the cut-outs unfolding in front of the camera. Audio input apart from the voice-over, include the sound of the shaking tin[1] in the first shot (frame **1**), employed as a means of drawing attention as the PSA begins, and music accompanying the voice-over. A University of Pretoria music student composed the music for the PSA. One of the main reasons for employing a student composer was that using existing music would be costly because of the copyright fees payable. The music is a successful accompaniment to the advertisement. It does not distract the attention, and serves mainly to enhance the overall positive tone of the PSA.

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[1] The can in the first frame represents the can used by the organisation to collect money, especially during the Rag parade in which floats built by students are displayed in a parade through Pretoria. (A new wrap-around was created for the can showing no branding, but displaying the organisation's name optimally). Many onlookers come to see these floats and it is an excellent time to collect money for Tuks Rag, because many of the onlookers are people connected to Tuks Rag in some way, or are interested in student affairs. This, in conjunction with the voice-over repeating the Tuks Rag name should make it clear that the public service announcement is for this organisation specifically. The simulated sound of shaking the can filled with money, is a sensory connection with the collection of money.

5.1.6 Framing the call to action

Whenever titles are shown in the PSA, they reinforce the awareness of Tuks Rag. The organisation's name is displayed in the first shot (frame 1) and also in the closing shot of the commercial, showing the organisation's motto and contact details (frame 11). This particular font was chosen, as it was perceived as unassuming and easy to read. The drop shadow on the letters combined with the white letters creates the impression that the words are lit up by the same light source that lights up the hands. The fact that the titles seem to be placed in the cups of the hands, reinforces the message that Tuks Rag is asking the community to make a contribution to the organisation. The cupped hands could hold negative associations with begging. The main focus in the image is on the opening of the hands, in an attempt to avoid this negative association.

No direct call to action is ever made in this PSA; the public is merely thanked for previous contributions to the organisation. The aim was to imply that further contributions are always necessary in order for the organisation to continue its work as outlined in the rest of the narrative sequence. The display of the organisation's telephone number and e-mail address is regarded by the constructor as reinforcement of the notion that more contributions from the public are welcomed and encouraged. The final frame has little screen time and could be too short for the organisation's details to be taken down on a first viewing. In editing the PSA, this fact was noted, and the screen duration of certain other images was shortened in order to lengthen the screen time duration of the essential final frame. Finally, it was argued that because Tuks Rag does not have an established and easily recognisable logo, the logo would not be displayed in the final frame. The final frames that encapsulate the call to action, are in keeping with the overall positive message content and aim to be uplifting and positive in their approach. As mentioned previously, the font chosen, as well as the lighting of the hands in the final frame by a strong light source, supports this positive framing of the final call to action. In the next section, the elements of embodied framing in this PSA are discussed. These examples are also mostly regarded as positive in nature.

5.1.7 Identification of embodied framing in *Reach Out and Give*

Frame **11** is regarded here as one of the strongest examples of embodied metaphor in this PSA. The titles are enfolded inside the hands, the aim being that this element should carry associations of containment and inclusiveness, first highlighted in the PSA in the direct address to supporters. At the same time the fingers are extended, the rationale being that this element should carry associations of *extending the goodwill and aid to the needy*, which is the main service that the organisation offers to the community. It also serves as a counter image to the image of hands shielding the face in frame **3**. In the construction of these final frames in particular, the constructor was fully aware of the possible embodied implications of the hands opening to display the contact information inside them.

The extension of the fingers was an attempt on the part of the constructor to promote the notion of the spreading of goodwill, and the construction of an image that generally held positive associations, while at the same time discouraging the associations of begging, was actively discussed and implemented. From a personal perspective, it must be noted that while some of the framing process did involve active deliberation on what could be regarded as embodied framing, this was not always the case. Embodied framing, because it can almost be regarded as a natural means of sensemaking and sensegiving, was not always actively deliberated, but rather sub-consciously incorporated. In this particular PSA, the embodied principle of centrality is followed almost throughout, unlike the other PSAs analysed. The images are placed in the centre of the frame to establish the importance and dominance of the elements in the images, for example the light bulb, the seedpod, and the child's face. There is a danger that the continual placement of important visual images in the centre of the frame, can also serve to dilute their significance. According to Gianetti (1999:47):

> Since childhood, we have been taught that a drawing must be balanced, with the middle serving as the focal point. The centre then, is a kind of norm: We expect dominant visual elements to be placed there. Precisely because of this expectation, objects in the center tend to be visually undramatic.

It is argued, however, that the fact that the composition of these images is visually simplistic and striking each on its own terms, helps to overcome this particular problem associated with centrality.

It has been noted previously that personal involvement by the author in the development of the PSA can lead to insight into ancillary aspects to the process, not identified in the existing hypothetical model. The external considerations associated with the construction of a PSA are examined in the following section, and an indication is given of the impact that these considerations had on the construction of the PSA.

5.2 External considerations in the construction of the Tuks Rag PSA

It must be noted that in developing the public service message, practical considerations had an influence on the nature of the narrative. The target audience, the nature of the volunteer work with which the organisation is involved, the purposes and applications of the announcement, as well as the budget, had an influence on the construction of the narrative. The impact of external considerations became apparent only because of the personal involvement in this undertaking, and is often not considered as part of general analysis. A brief overview of these 'external' influences is given here, indicating, where possible, the nature of their impact on the narrative construction.

5.2.1 The target audience

Tuks Rag activities take place mainly in Pretoria and its surrounds. People involved with University of Pretoria, such as staff members, parents of students or other University of Pretoria interest groups, are the first group that come directly into contact with Tuks Rag activities and are in a position to contribute to the organisation. The message had to establish or maintain audience relationships with the organisation. It is argued that, if the contact is frequent the chances of audience response and involvement with the message are improved. The PSA was aimed at these audience members in particular.

The PSA must also make an impact on those who do not have direct contact with the organisation, to increase the likelihood of contributions from those not specifically targeted by the organisation as donors. The Tuks Rag website was displayed in the PSA, giving those with an interest in the organisation an incentive to access more information. Finally, one more aim of the PSA was to make viewers aware of Rag festivities in general, as different universities across the country host their own Rag festivities as a means of student

development, fundraising and community service projects. The PSA had to appeal to various target markets.

5.2.2 The nature of the volunteer work undertaken by the organisation

The showing of faces in the PSA was kept to a minimum. This is mainly owing to the constraint that individuals who are identifiable in the PSA must give their written permission to broadcast the material. Tuks Rag supports a vast amount of charitable causes, with many projects that include working with individuals for whom granting such permission is either difficult or impossible, such as street children or mentally handicapped individuals. In the case of street children, for example, the children are minors and therefore not regarded as competent legal entities. Permission necessary to film and interview these children, can only be granted by their parents or legal guardians.[3] The choice was made that in cases where any doubt could be raised regarding consent to appear in the PSA, the material would not be used. The use of the hands-metaphor was therefore a logical approach on a symbolic as well as a practical level.

University of Pretoria Drama students participated in the making of the commercial on a voluntary basis. A female student volunteer and the pensioner she had visited as a community service project, are shown in frame **8** (although it is not stated in the commercial that this is the case). The child in frame **7,** was accompanied by his mother. It is her hands that come to rest on his shoulders in the image.

5.2.3 The purposes and application of the PSA

This PSA was created as an entry for the Vuka awards in the Newcomer Awards 1999 category. This is a competition for aspirant filmmakers hosted by MultiChoice, service provider of M-Net and DStv (Vuka [sa(a)]:sp). While the cost of producing the PSA rests on the entrant, MultiChoice sponsor the airtime of PSAs entered.

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[3] See Kirby (2001:7) regarding the filming and interviewing of child prostitutes that raises the same ethical issues.

Tuks Rag sponsored the creation of this PSA for entry into the competition, but also required the PSA to be suitable for use as a promotional video clip, apart from the competition. Major firms and brands are involved in sponsoring Tuks Rag activities every year. Members of Tuks Rag expressed a need to use the PSA, which was made available to the organisation in video format, as a possible marketing tool in bids to secure the support of these sponsors. This need expressed by organisation members, showed that the public service narrative had to give a clear indication of the nature and extent of the work undertaken by Tuks Rag.

5.2.4 Budget constraints

This PSA was made on a shoestring budget, something not uncommon for non-profit organisation ventures for which the organisations themselves usually cannot carry the costs. The budget influenced the amount of freedom one had in the use of material for the PSA. The minimum of material was shot on location (most of it was shot in a studio), as studio work is cheaper and does not include travelling with expensive equipment. In addition, the costs involved dictated that the PSA be 30 seconds in length , although 45 and 60 second competition categories also existed.

The people who worked on the PSA did so mainly on a voluntary basis. The making of the commercial depended on the financial support of Tuks Rag. The budget plays an important role in determining the message, as televised advertising is expensive. The Vuka Awards hosted by DStv made the advertising slots (and therefore free airtime) available to the participants. It was only necessary to finance the making of the PSA itself. A full budget is included (see appendix) to show the costs involved in the making of the PSA for Tuks Rag. Costs were kept to a minimum because it was made as an internal project sponsored by Tuks Rag. The fact that it was an internal project made facilities at the University of Pretoria available at a lower rate.

In conclusion, the PSA created for Tuks Rag serves as a general interpretation of the organisation's social involvement. This social involvement is based on three main interwoven elements, also reflected in the mission statement, namely: student participation, community upliftment and fundraising. The Tuks Rag PSA was an attempt to highlight this

essence of the Tuks Rag organisation in a positive, symbolically orientated manner. Devising an umbrella message made a focussed narrative possible.

The elements employed to develop the narrative were useful and successful in the construction of a message that was relevant to the organisation and its work. The fact that the message was used to attract sponsors can be regarded as evidence of this. The message indicated the central aspects of the organisation, and the activities that the organisation is involved in. While the message was an attempt at projecting a sense of goodwill by means of a positively framed message, it is doubtful whether this one message could dispel all negative associations with a student organisation such as Tuks Rag.

The main success of the message lies in the fact that the organisation and its members regarded this message as a good reflection of their work and activities. From the perspective of a constructor, it would perhaps have been useful to investigate more divergent framing options that could have brought a more thought-provoking message to the viewer. If one considers the option of focusing more directly on one key aspect of the organisation's work, a documentary style testimonial from a person whose life was touched by the students and their work, would have been one possible approach. Even a testimonial from a student who worked for the organisation and who benefited from the community involvement such work brings, could have been considered. Such a testimonial from a student could possibly best capture the most striking aspects of this organisation, namely the youthful energy and enthusiasm this group of students displayed in their fundraising and community development work.

TITLE: REACH OUT AND GIVE (TUKS RAG)

Frame 1
VO: *A message to all Tuks Rag supporters...*
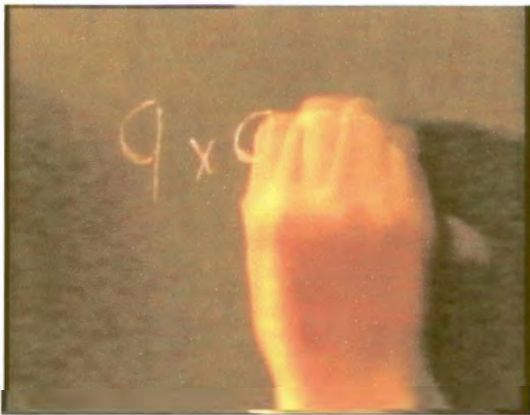**SFX:** Shaking can and soundtrack intro

Frame 2
VO: *your contribution is changing hands this year...* (soundtrack throughout)

Frame 3
VO: *Changing blind ignorance into...*
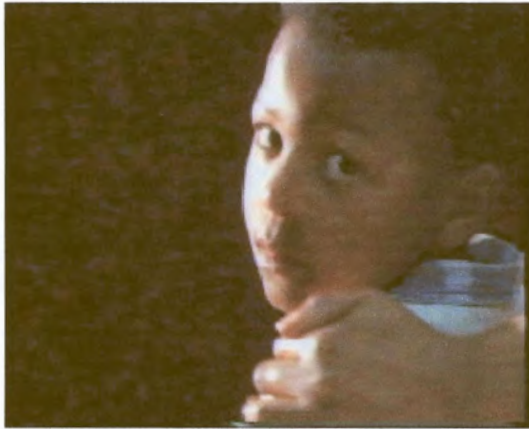(soundtrack throughout)

Frame 4
VO: *opportunities for students...*
(soundtrack throughout)

Frame 5
VO: to *learn*
(soundtrack throughout)

Frame 6
VO: *develop and grow...*
(soundtrack throughout)

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Frame 7
VO: *In turn, they touch the lives...*
(soundtrack throughout)

Frame 8
VO: *of those in need.*
(soundtrack throughout)

Frame 9
VO: *By supporting Tuks Rag, you make it...*
(soundtrack throughout)

Frame 10
VO: *possible for students to join hands with
the community...* (soundtrack throughout)

Frame 11
VO: *Tuks Rag can reach out and give,
because you do.* (Note soundtrack tone as
movement cue)

CHAPTER 6
Conclusion

In this dissertation, selected South African televised PSAs were investigated within the theoretical approach of framing. The aim of the study was to devise and follow a structured approach to the analysis and construction of the PSA message, with framing theory as a vantage point. In order to establish the foundations of such a structured approach, general characteristics of the television medium were investigated in relation to the televised PSA in particular. A hypothetical framing model indicating the linear development of the frame was identified and applied. Certain framing elements were then identified based on the model mentioned. These framing elements were regarded as applicable not only to framing in general, but also to the establishment of a structured framing approach particular to the televised PSA. Based on the framing elements identified, an exploration of narrative development and the application of cinematic devices in the process of developing a PSA, was undertaken.

Symbolic modes as framing elements were investigated in-depth, as being particularly pertinent tools in the overall construction of the PSA. It was argued that the constructor of the message must convey a focussed key message based on an intuitive understanding of the public service organisation and its work. Symbolic modes were shown to be instructive to the constructor, in that complex issues can be presented in simplified form that support the official story or key message. Metaphor and metonymy, as key symbolic modes, were also shown to be effective means of expanding the range of imagery and interpretive associations that could be made with this key message. At the same time, those associations that are less relevant to the key message were shown to be greatly reduced if the message was effectively framed. In this way, metonymy and metaphor were regarded as framing elements that assist the constructor in the delineation of borders within which interpretation is invited. It was argued that a focussed key message allows the constructor to frame the call to action in a way that directly relates the public service organisation's core needs to the viewer. Finally, in order to investigate why traditional cinematic style and symbolic modes can effectively delineate the borders of interpretation for the viewer, the framing of meaning was investigated as possibly being embodied. In following the approach outlined above, the research objectives set out at the start of the study can be regarded as having been met.

A literature study was undertaken in which a general background of the television medium was outlined. Not only was television shown to have the ability to blur boundaries between what is regarded as mediated images and what is regarded as 'authentic' images of reality, but it was also shown to bring these images from the public sphere into the private sphere, and vice versa. It was argued that these characteristics of the television medium, and the ability of the medium to bring public or social issues into the personal sphere of the individual, makes it highly suitable for the broadcasting of messages with the focus on social awareness. It was suggested that television in fact brings with it a heightened sense of social responsibility, even for those events that lie beyond the direct control of the viewer. Characteristics of the medium also indicated the need for an interpretive approach to the construction of its images and narratives that would take the necessity of adaptability of modern media into account. Framing as a theoretical approach was identified as a relevant mode that offered a basis for a structured analytical approach to televised PSAs. A central benefit of this theoretical approach was the fact that it recognises the malleability and adaptability of any interpretative act (whether from the constructor or the viewer's perspective); this is an aspect of the interpretive process that is often left unconsidered in other theoretical approaches.

In order to identify and analyse the presence of framing elements in PSAs, a hypothetical linear framing model was investigated. An attempt was made to delineate a structured approach to the framing of a PSA based on this hypothetical model, while taking the specific cinematic style of the televised PSA into account. The aim of the analysis was an exploration of the process of framing of a televised PSA, particularly from the constructor's perspective. The presence of certain framing elements in the PSAs analysed was regarded as an indication that framing could be applied as a structured approach in the PSA development process. It was argued in this study that the application of a structured framing approach ultimately allows the constructor to manipulate the mediated message. In manipulating the message, the constructor can use the characteristics of the television medium, such as the implied sense of responsibility, to the benefit of the public service organisation for which the message is created.

A detailed analysis of selected South African PSAs brought to light the prevalence with which certain framing elements are applied in socially orientated messages. In each of the three PSAs analysed, a range of framing elements was identified. These framing elements included exploration of the possible intuitive framing of the organisation for which the message was created, the narrative development that stems from this intuitive framing, and the application of a relevant cinematic style. The framing of a particular call to action and symbolic modes applied by the constructor were also investigated. Finally, the process of construction was documented in a fourth PSA. The framing elements identified in the analysis of PSAs were applied in this PSA construction, in which the author was involved throughout the production process. In this case, it was possible to identify not only framing elements that assisted in the construction of the message, but also certain external factors that influence the way in which the PSA is made.

In an attempt to apply a structured approach to the analysis and construction of the televised PSA, framing elements, including symbolic modes, were found to be both identifiable in the analysis of televised PSAs, and applicable to the process of televised PSA construction. The study was significant in that framing as an approach was outlined in detail, while noting certain strengths and weaknesses with regard to related analytical approaches, such as semiotics. Furthermore, televised PSAs were regarded as social messages that warrant in-depth analysis in the same way that various other television formats, such as the television commercial or Reality Television, do. This study was an attempt at an introductory exploration of the multi-faceted nature of PSAs as often overlooked televised messages. In the South African context in particular, PSAs sometimes form part of developmental projects, such as the Vuka awards. It was argued that these projects are aimed at increasing awareness of many social issues with viewpoints particular to the South African context, such as abuse of women, rape, or the high incidence of speeding on South African roads.

The conclusion can be drawn that framing as a theoretical approach can be applied in the establishment of a structured approach to the creation of a televised PSA and its major relevant facets. In the construction of a televised PSA, a number of aspects of the approach followed in this study, proved functional. As was argued in this study, the

approach to framing followed as outlined, allows the constructor to follow clearly set out guidelines and a systematic approach to PSA development. Framing was finally shown to be an effective approach for the analysis and development of socially driven messages in ways that are relevant not only to the constructor, but also to the organisation for which the message is created.

The simplification of the process of televised PSA construction into a set of 'steps' that can be followed, has various restrictions and must be considered as only one of the shortcomings of this study, which will be elaborated on here. Framing elements found in existing televised PSAs could, for example, not guarantee the success of the message in guiding the viewer's interpretation of the narrative, or the success of its call to action to the viewer. This approach lacked the ability to incorporate the external factors that can hamper the constructor in the process of framing, although an attempt was made, in the analysis of the personally constructed message, to indicate the role of such external considerations in the construction of the message.

In the approach followed in this study, it must be noted that the application of framing elements in PSA construction is not always a conscious decision on the part of the constructor. The constructor also brings a subjective understanding to the framing of the socially relevant message, whether the process of creation is a conscious attempt at applying interpretive techniques in the creation of the message, or not. Just as subjectivity is inescapable in the message construction process, so it is also inescapable in the process of analysis. Specific framing elements were identified and applied in order to validate the analysis process followed in this study. The focus of this study was only on the identification and application of framing and framing elements, and this could have led to other pertinent aspects that fell beyond the scope of this analysis, being disregarded.

The 'constructor' was regarded in this study as a hypothetical reference to those involved in the process of framing. While this approach was regarded as relevant to the scope of the study, it could have diminished awareness that the construction of a televised message is a highly collaborative process involving various role players who ultimately have an influence on the final outcome of the message. Du Plooy (1989:38),

for example, refers to the constructor of the message as a television communicator that is part of a person-team institution. Du Plooy (1989:38) states that "television is characterized by a plurality of institutional variables that influence the communicator as an individual, as a member of a team and as a broadcasting organisation". The analysis of the personal PSA did indicate the impact of collaborative input on the message construction to a limited degree, although this was not the main focus of the study.

In this study the 'viewer' was equally regarded as a hypothetical reference to those at whom the message is aimed. No attempt was made to investigate the implications of that which the viewer brings to the process of interpretation. There was therefore no investigation of the correlation between *evidence* of framing elements and the *success* of these elements in guiding viewer interpretation that is regarded as similar to the aims set out by the constructor of the message. This could, however, be regarded as a shortcoming in various approaches to the construction of mediated messages. In following a semiotic approach to message construction, for example, there is no guarantee that the codes and symbols identified by the constructors of the mediated message as pertinent, are also identified and decoded by the viewer in the same way.

In this study, only the televised PSA was investigated, although this is not the only medium that can be employed to create a powerful public service message. Focussing only on the televised announcement, removed the possibility of investigating a social awareness campaign as a whole, as these campaigns are often given coverage not only on television, but in various other media as well. The Arrive Alive commercial, for example, formed part of a comprehensive Arrive Alive campaign that included billboards placed next to highways and intensive campaigning at filling stations across South Africa's most popular travelling routes during peak holiday periods. These are only two examples of other media available to constructors, in which coverage can be gained for the key social awareness message and the symbolism associated with it.

The televised PSA is a multi-faceted format that opens up many avenues for further investigation. Investigation of the construction of the public service announcement as a collaborative effort, as already mentioned, is one such avenue. These messages can be investigated not only in relation to the individual as constructor of the message (as is

one aspect of this study), but also in relation to the team that takes part in the construction of the message and in relation to the broadcasting institution. A study of the broadcasting institution in particular enables for the investigation of corporate structures, decision-makers and policy regarding the broadcasting of public service messages.

As noted in this study, development initiatives such as the Vuka awards hosted by DStv, with a strong focus on community participation by means of the PSA construction, can also be explored. Broadcasting role players such as DStv are creating opportunities for young film makers to become involved in the community through these competitions and similar initiatives. One avenue for further investigation could be to track the origins and development of such initiatives and their relevance in the South African context.

A public service organisation might wish to employ other media to gain exposure for its community work, in order to find an audience that will respond to its call to action. Other media can also be investigated for its relevance in the creation of PSAs. As noted previously, social awareness campaigns, similar to commercial campaigns, often employ various media simultaneously in order to get a public service message across to various audiences. Related to the investigation of the PSAs in media other than television, is the investigation of an entire public service campaign, where a central theme is given coverage in different media at the same time. In conclusion, this study hence outlined a structured approach to the framing of the public service message as an attempt at identification and implementation of elements that could assist the constructor of the public service message.