

TEXT 1**TWITTER: A PUBLIC BATTLEFIELD**

By Sarah Britten

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- 1 Once upon a time, around 18 years ago, a woman faxed me a death threat. Well, not so much a death threat as a handwritten message along the lines of "I hope you get killed", and not so much to me as to the *Sunday Times*, which had published a satirical piece of mine on South African expats; the editor thoughtfully took the printout and posted it to me. But the point is, I had offended her, and she wanted me to know that she hated my guts and that I deserved to die.
- 2 I remind myself of this every time I'm tempted to chalk up the decline of civilisation to the rise of social media. Twitter does not make people horrible; it just takes the effort out of being awful to others. Back when you had to go to the trouble of writing a letter to the editor, there was no instant feedback, and no instant visibility of the views of others. Twitter has made it breathtakingly easy for opinions to be shared, commented on and spread – and in so doing, created a feedback loop of outrage, where the more extreme the response, the better.
- 3 This matters, because Twitter is influential, and probably far more influential than it should be. Twitter is not real life – election results in 2019 made that much clear – but it shapes public discourse more than any other single platform in the world today. Mainstream news outlets regurgitate tweets as news and hashtags feature in headlines. Even those public figures who hate Twitter and dismiss what happens there as fundamentally disconnected from real life, can't seem to stay away.
- 4 In the 10 years and nine months I spent on Twitter before I deactivated my account, I watched it become ever more tribal and primitive. Once the digital public square of our time, Twitter is now our most public battlefield. Woke Twitter are the digital equivalents of the morality police, trawling the streets for the slightest hint of privilege or – phobia.
- 5 Thanks to social media, South Africa is now more of a cultural outpost of the US than it ever was.
- 6 Everyone, and I mean *everyone* – regardless of where they are on the political spectrum – is a snowflake when someone tweets something they don't like about their pet causes. Nobody ever reads what is actually written; everything is viewed through the filter of whatever narrative they cling to for dear life. If I don't agree with you, you are the enemy, you are a terrible person, and *you must be destroyed*.
- 7 To survive Twitter, you must be a pachyderm¹, with the result that only the pachyderms – and the angriest, loudest and most self-righteous – are left. I've watched people who were once centrists² slipping ever further to the extremes, because the extremes are where identity is most certain and the shouts of support loudest. That precious discursive space where we accept that perspectives differ, that compromise and pragmatism are necessary to live together given our history, and that disagreeing without hauling out the metaphorical nuclear arsenal is possible, dwindles into nothingness.

- 8 Can Twitter ever be less terrible? Can it regain something of the intimate, collegial culture that flourished in the early days? Recent developments – limiting who can reply and share – may help. Or they may not. The problem is that it is hard to separate the structural, technical problems from the human ones. If you wanted to engineer a text-based platform designed to amplify the worst aspects of the human character – our gleeful nastiness and our hypocrisy, our laziness and desire for instant gratification, our attention-seeking and narcissism, our biases and longing for certainty at the expense of nuance, our desperate need to be part of a club, for enemies against which we can define ourselves – and, most especially, the assumption that words amount to meaningful action – you could do worse than come up with Twitter.
- 9 Yes, Twitter can be good, and sometimes it is. It can give us a glimpse into the interior lives of people we would otherwise never meet or know, and sometimes it does. For introverts, Twitter still can offer salvation: a chance for the shy kids in the room to be heard and seen without having to walk up to strangers and introduce themselves. On Twitter, brevity is the soul of some of the best wit anywhere, right now. I miss that.
- 10 But for Twitter to be better most of the time, human beings are going to need a fundamental rethink of the way they behave on digital platforms, and most people do not think that they need to be better. If you are convinced that you are right and everyone else is wrong, you are not going to change.
- 11 The problem with Twitter isn't really Twitter – the problem is us.

[Adapted from: <<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2020-01-22-twitter-has-become-our-most-public-battlefield-for-ugly-tribal-and-atavistic-tendencies/>>]

GLOSSARY:

¹pachyderm: a very large mammal with thick skin, especially an elephant, rhinoceros, or hippopotamus.

²centrists: a person who holds moderate political views.

TEXT 2

Job shadowing involves giving students a chance to observe or "shadow" someone at a job in which they think they may be interested. It allows students to explore careers on a first-hand basis. "This will be a great opportunity for our students. It will definitely help them make more informed decisions about their future career paths," said Abby Harris, a guidance counsellor.

A panel of five students, at Harris's school, who participated in job shadowing assignments explained to their peers the idea behind job shadowing. The teens spoke about how such an experience helped them to determine a career plan. Participants then engaged in small-group discussions about the values, barriers, and vision of a structured job shadowing programme. It was noted that the benefits of such a programme extend beyond the student population.

The programme is exciting not only for the students but for the business partners too. By collaborating, we can strengthen the workforce of our country by reinforcing the needed skills to be a successful employee. A job shadow mostly involves listening and observing, but businesses could give you the chance to perform simple job-related duties which could look good on your curriculum vitae.

[Adapted from: <<https://www.mydailysentinel.com/news/44399/job-shadowing-program-to-benefit-business-education-communities>>]

TEXT 3

**"WE CANNOT ALWAYS BUILD THE FUTURE
FOR OUR YOUTH, BUT WE CAN BUILD
OUR YOUTH FOR THE FUTURE."**

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

[Adapted from: <<https://www.quotemaster.org/youth+employment#&gid=1&pid=20>>]

TEXT 4

Apart from learning, effective job shadowing experiences can be used to identify possible careers.

Take one student who job shadowed in 60 jobs. Prior to starting university, he chose to spend his time job shadowing other professionals. His 'summer experiment' – aimed to help him explore other careers apart from life sciences, a field he intended to study in the next academic year.

This experience gave him an incredible advantage over his peers. Whereas other students felt the pressure of having to make a quick decision on a career, he took the time he needed to look into different jobs through this project.

Job shadowing may be your opportunity to try out a profession in which you are interested. Job shadowing isn't just about learning but also equipping yourself with experiences that will stay with you forever.

[Adapted from: <<https://www.careeraddict.com/the-benefits-of-job-shadowing>>]

TEXT 5

To The Pioneers,
The Bold, The Unrestrained
and those who aim for the stars.
It's time go your own way.

be more.
Join the bank that understands the value of hard work. The bank that appreciates your character through success and failure.
So when you're ready for success, open a CBA Youth Account.
commercial bank of africa limited
visit www.cbagroup.com

cba
time for more.

[Source: <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/central_bank_of_africa_pioneers>]

TEXT 6

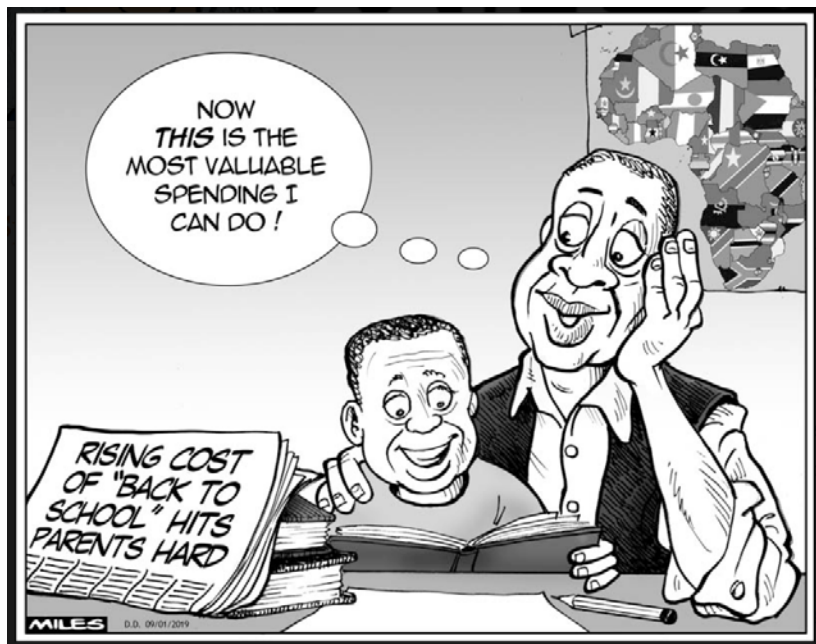
To The Selfless,
The Courageous, The Compassionate
 and those who care to change the world:
It's time, go your own way

be more.
 Join the bank that understands the value of hard work. The bank that appreciates your character through success and failure.
 So when you're ready for success, open a CBA Youth Account.
 commercial bank of africa limited
 visit www.cbagroup.com

cba
 time for more.

[Source: <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/central_bank_of_africa_selfless>]

TEXT 7



[Source: <http://cartoonsbymiles.blogspot.com/2019/01/spend-time-not-money.html>]

TEXT 8

*My career
is the most
important
thing are my
children.*

*For all life's twists and turns:
Flexible financial plans.*


SwissLife

[Source: <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/swiss_life_lifes_turns_in_a_sentence_8>]

TEXT 9



Knowing your rights forms part of your identity.

All South Africans, irrespective of race, gender, creed or sexual orientation, are guaranteed human rights and protection before the law. In our 20th year of freedom, South Africa celebrates its diversity. It is important for South Africans to promote and be proud of their South African culture. All of us have a responsibility to respect each other's human rights. Be proud of your South African identity and know your rights.

Freedom of expression
 Freedom of assembly, demonstration, picket and petition
 Freedom of religion, access to courts, belief and opinion
 Healthcare, food, water and social security
 Education, language and culture
 Children's rights
 Citizenship
 Children's rights

South Africa
 Inspiring new ways

20 YEARS OF FREEDOM

[Source: <<http://www.pierreodendaal.com/mywork-thepoweroften>>]