

Miyeni affair: are the wrong heads rolling?

 By [Chris Vick](#)

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Gonzo journalist Hunter S Thompson was fond of saying: "When the going gets weird, the weird turn pro". So in an era where newspaper columnists are given free range to espouse hate speech, how come it's only the offending columnists who get fired - and not the people who give them the platform in the first place?

Moegsien Williams, executive editor of *The Star*, uses a wonderfully descriptive phrase to describe the dangers of reckless writing. "Once the shit is out of the donkey, you can't put it back in again," he likes to tell young journalists as a way of emphasising the importance of checking facts - and opinions - before they are printed and become public record.

At a time when public scrutiny of the media is at its peak, one wonders how the editorial decision-makers at Avusa feel about providing a platform for three of South Africa's most offensive, projectile-shitting journalistic donkeys in just three years.

The first droppings were when David Bullard was fired in April 2008 after publication of a column "Uncolonised Africa wouldn't know what it was missing"... The second droppings fell two years after Bullard was bulletted, when the *Sunday Times'* step-sister, *Sunday World*, gave a platform for columnist Kuli Roberts [to be offensive about coloured women]... The third droppings hit the dirt this week when, in the midst of Malema mania, along came stressed Eric Miyeni in [Sowetan](#), branding *City Press* editor Ferial Haffajee "a black snake in the grass" and accusing her of "doing it for the white master".

Read the [full opinion piece](#), as well as [Sowetan columnist spiked: Miyeni's attack on Haffajee gets him booted](#), on www.thedailymaverick.co.za.

See also:

- Google News Search: [Eric Miyeni Ferial Haffajee](#)

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ABOUT CHRIS VICK

Chris Vick has spent seven years in the government communications environment. He has never attended a Cabinet meeting, nor has he attended a gathering addressed by Jimmy Manyi. He currently runs Black, a communications consultancy, and is looking forward to writing a regular column on the media and politics for iMaverick, the Daily Maverick's revolutionary new i-newspaper. Follow him on Twitter at [@chrsvick3](#).

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