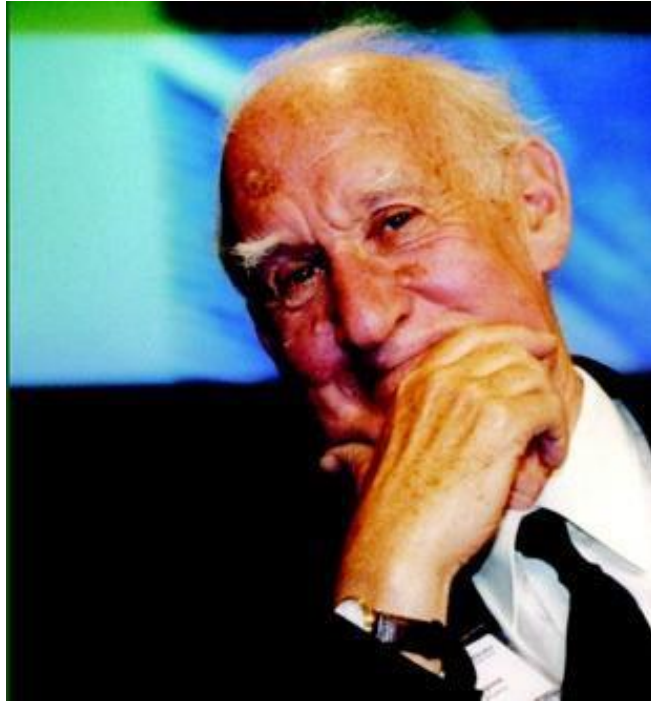


***Drum : The Making of a Magazine* by Anthony Sampson**



Anthony Sampson from the cover of his autobiography *The Anatomist* (2004)

It was 1951. The Nationalist Party under D F Malan had won the elections three years previously and apartheid was rapidly becoming entrenched in South Africa. Anthony Sampson had been sent a telegram by his friend Jim Bailey begging him to become editor of the ailing magazine *African Drum* he had launched earlier that year. Its circulation was only 20 000 and Bailey was losing £2 000 a month. Young (25 years of age) and adventurous, Anthony Sampson left England for South Africa to spend 3½ years as editor of “the crusading black magazine of the fifties” *Drum*.

Anthony Terrell Seward Sampson (3 August 1926 – 18 December 2004), writer and journalist, is probably best known for his biography of Nelson Mandela (*Mandela: The Authorised Biography* - 1992) for which he won the Alan Paton prize and his series of five analytical books on power in Britain, starting with *Anatomy of Britain* (1962) and ending with *Essential Anatomy of Britain: Democracy in Crisis* (1992)

Anthony Sampson attended Westminster School from 1941. He served in the post-World War II Royal Navy from 1944 – 1947. It was while reading English at Christ Church, Oxford University that he met Jim Bailey. He was editor of *Drum* 1951 – 1955. He was on the staff of the Observer from 1955 – 1966, editing *The Observer Colour Magazine* from 1965 – 1966. During this time he was regularly sent as a correspondent to report on events in South Africa, including the Rivonia trial in 1964. In 1965 he married Sally Bentliff. He was appointed as an associate professor at the

University of Vincennes, Indiana, USA in 1968. From 1973 – 1974 he was the chief American correspondent for the Observer. From 1977 until his death in 2004 he was a contributing editor to Newsweek. From the time he left *Drum* in 1955 until his death he wrote many books on South Africa and on power in both the political and corporate world.

Anthony Sampson is known for his astute analysis. This characteristic is already present in his first book *Drum: a venture into the new Africa* (1956) (republished in 2005, unchanged except for a new Foreword and Afterword, as *Drum: the making of a magazine*). It is an account of his time as editor of *Drum*. In the book we meet the people not only of *Drum* but also of South Africa. As he says in his foreword to the 2005 edition, he felt that he had “left the characters to speak for themselves with their authentic dialogue and voices”. While we see the people Sampson meets through his eyes, those of a young Englishman, he does, to a large extent, stand back and allow them to speak to the reader directly.



“The overcrowded *Drum* office in Johannesburg housed most of its journalists and photographers. Jürgen Schadeberg took this picture in 1954, while [Anthony Sampson] directed it, showing (from left to right) Henry Nxumalo, Casey Motsisi, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Can Temba, Jerry Ntsipe, Arthur Maimane (with hat) , Kenneth Mtetwa (on floor), Victor Xashimba, Dan Chocho (with hat), Benson Dyanti (with stick), Robert Gosani. Todd Matshikiza was away.”

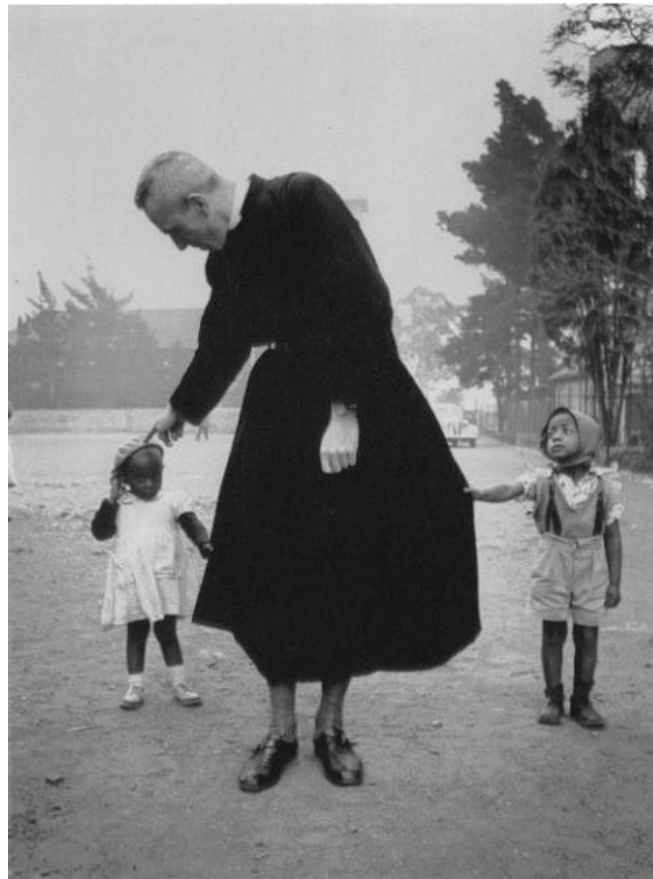
Photographer: Jürgen Schadeberg

The reader meets the journalists with whom Sampson and Bailey work, a talented group of young black men whom owner and editor wisely allow to dictate the direction of *Drum* as they know what the black citizens of Johannesburg want to read about. They are the doyens of black journalism and writing: Henry Nxumalo, Can Temba, Casey Motsisi, Ezekiel Mphahlele, Arthur Maimane and Todd Matshikiza among others. It was allowing them to write about what they felt passionately, that, through many ups and downs, eventually propelled the magazine to new heights. They covered such topics as poor conditions on farms and in prisons, the latest jazz groups to hit the music scene, the lives of gangsters and the South African favourite: sport. And the articles were "devoured" by its readers.



“The three „Jazzolomos“ were stars of the early fifties, much featured by *Drum’s* writer on music Todd Matshikiza. Performing in 1953 are (from left to right) Jacob „Mzala“ Lepers (double bass), Sol „Beegeepie“ Klaaste (piano) and Ben „Gwigwi“ Mrwebi (alto sax).” Photographer: Jürgen Schadeberg

Through the book the reader meets famous people, such as Nelson Mandela and Trevor Huddleston, infamous gangsters, shebeen queens, musicians and ordinary people. Each is seen through the keen eyes of Anthony Sampson. We see the effects of apartheid and discrimination on the black, coloured and white people of Johannesburg and we see the failed attempt by the ANC to prevent the removal of people from Sophiatown to Meadowlands.



“Father Trevor Huddleston, a monk from the Community of the Resurrection, was a close friend of *Drum*. He was a prominent figure in Sophiatown and superintendent of St Peter’s School in Johannesburg, which educated many of the most talented *Drum* writers, and was later closed down under the Bantu Education Act.”

Photographer: Jürgen Schadeberg



“The apartheid government in 1954 was determined to demolish Sophiatown, the multiracial suburb of Johannesburg where many of the *Drum* writers lived. The ANC, encouraged by Mandela, campaigned vigorously to resist, with much publicity from *Drum*.”

Photographer: Jürgen Schadeberg

For a fresh and perceptive account of a magazine, a city and its people at the beginning of the apartheid era, *Drum: the making of a magazine* is a book well worth reading.



“This cover picture from 1954 showed a model being measured for her vital statistics by *Drum* writers including Ezekiel Mphahlele (kneeling on left) and Bloke Modisane (standing on right).” Photographer: Jürgen Schadeberg

If you would like to learn more about *Drum* you might find the following books, articles and documentaries interesting:

Note: * The University of Johannesburg has these books

- *Defiant Images: Photography and Apartheid South Africa*, Darren Newbury, University of South Africa (UNISA) Press, 2009, (see Chapter 2. 'A fine thing': The African Drum, and Chapter 3. 'Johannesburg lunch-hour': photographic humanism and the social vision of Drum)*
- *The Drum decade : stories from the 1950s /* edited by Michael Chapman, University of Natal Press, 2001*
- *Drum : an index to Africa's leading magazine, 1951-1965*, Dorothy C. Woodson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, African Studies Programme, 1988
- *The Beat of Drum : the story of a magazine that documented the rise of Africa as told by Drum's publisher, editors, contributors, and photographers*, Heyns, Jacky, Ravan Press, 1982-1984
- *The Beat of Drum. Vol. 4, The Bedside book : Africa's leading magazine*, editor in chief J.R.A. Bailey, editor H. Lunn, James R.A. Bailey, 1984
- *Drum : South Africa's Black picture magazine*, Creative Camera, 1984
- *Good-looking Corpse: World of Drum - Jazz and Gangsters, Hope and Defiance in the Townships of South Africa*, Mike Nicol, Secker & Warburg, 1991*
- *Who killed Mr Drum?*, Sylvester Stein ; with a foreword by Anthony Sampson, Mayibuye Books, 1999**

- *Come Back, Africa*. Lionel Rogosin & Peter Davis, TE Publishers *
- [1952 Time magazine article – South African Drumbeats](#) [1959 Time magazine article - Drum Beat in Africa](#)
- *Drum*, a film about *Drum* and one of its journalists Henry Nxumalo
- *Come Back, Africa*, a film shot in Sophiatown in the 1950s with writing credits by Lionel Rogosin, Bloke Modisane and Lewis Nkosi
- *Have you seen Drum recently?*, a film by Jürgen Schadeberg using photographs drawn from the Drum archives

You might also like to read other books by Anthony Sampson:

- *Drum: A Venture Into The New Africa* (1956)*
- *The Treason Cage: The Opposition On Trial In South Africa* (1958)*
- *Commonsense About Africa* (1960)
- *South Africa: Two Views Of Separate Development* (1960)*
- *Anatomy of Britain* (1962)*
- *Anatomy of Britain today* (1965)*
- *The New Europeans* (1966)
- *Macmillan, a Study in Ambiguity* (1967)*
- *The New Anatomy of Britain* (1971)*
- *Arms Bazaar* (1977)*
- *Changing Anatomy of Britain* (1982)
- *The Essential Anatomy of Britain: Democracy in Crisis* (1992)
- *The New Europeans* (1968)*
- *The Sovereign State of ITT* (1973)*
- *Seven Sisters* (a study of the international oil industry) (1975)*
- *The Arms Bazaar* (a study of the international arms trade) (1977)
- *The Money Lenders* (a study of international banking) (1981)
- *Black Gold* (about the crumbling of apartheid and the business/financial picture in South Africa) (1987)*
- *The Midas Touch : Understanding the Dynamic New Money Societies around Us* (1989)*
- *Company Man* (a study of corporate life) (1995)*
- *Mandela: The Authorised Biography* (1999), winner of the Alan Paton Award
- *Who Runs This Place?: The Anatomy of Britain in the 21st Century* (2004)
- *The Anatomist* (2004)*
- *Drum : The Making of a Magazine* (2005)*

Biographical information on Anthony Sampson was obtained from the following websites:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2004/dec/21/pressandpublishing.booksobituaries>

www.sahistory.org.za/pages/people/bios/sampson_a.htm

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/anthony-sampson-754481.html>