

#OrchidsandOnions - #Done with bollocks

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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Castle Lager, you're safe for now. But Independent Institute of what again ... rethink. Why knock tradition? One expects more from an education ad.



A colleague of mine who owns a company in Europe doesn't believe in sponsorships as an effective way of marketing.

He says there is no evidence that pouring millions into sports teams, or even sports personalities, is a major driver of sales which is, after all, what a company exists for ... to sell. It does not exist to make people feel good about its brands (mind you, that's a debate for another time and place ...)

The problem with sponsorships is that they can backfire spectacularly and cause reputational damage to the sponsor. We've seen plenty of companies dropping mega stars and players like hot potatoes when those people have suddenly become involved in some unsavoury incident.

Another major issue, with sporting teams, is that the sponsor might end up associating itself not with success but, as the saying goes, with a "bunch of losers".

So you have to feel for the people behind Castle Lager's sponsorship of some of our sporting teams, including the Proteas, Bafana Bafana and the Springboks.

They've tried to revive the very successful ads of the past, which appealed to our sporting patriotism and played shamelessly on the "Rainbow Nation" theme.

The latest is the "One Jersey" campaign, where you can get yourself – through various special offers and competitions – a national shirt simply oozing with national pride.

“ Castle has launched a South African supporters jersey to get everyone behind our national teams who are all playing in major tournaments this year. These jerseys feature a unique design, inspired by the country's 6 biggest sporting moments! [#OneNationOneBeer pic.twitter.com/Hat6NJ1v41](#)— Castle Lager SA (@CastleLagerSA) [March 24, 2019](#) ”

“ In an ideal world – no, make that the world of 1995/96 – this would have worked. We were then pretty much on our way to becoming a truly united nation. Today – not so much. As we grapple with issues like a massive poverty gap, the widening gulf between the races and the unfinished business of land, sport is no longer enough to unite us. That's what I think. ”

Add to that the fact that our sports teams are not what they were in those heady post-apartheid days of Nelson Mandela. I don't think that, in real terms, they're any worse than their equivalents a generation ago, but whereas the rest of the world has moved on by leaps and bounds in cricket, football and rugby, we haven't.

Some would even say that in cricket, we've actually gone backwards, not even making it far enough in the world cup to get to a stage where we could choke on possible victory. Ditto with Bafana Bafana who cause worry frowns on fans' faces even when playing minnows like Swaziland and Namibia in various African tournaments.

So, at the moment, the Castle Lager ad's inspiration may have earned it an Orchid, but in reality it has to get an Onion in execution. It's not great when your brand starts to get associated with – to quote the old Castle marketing phrase – the “slightly dry, slightly bitter” taste of defeat.



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Brendan Seery 25 Jul 2017



When I started on newspapers, I was in awe of the old hacks in the newsroom and I soaked up their advice and wisdom like a sponge. I realised that energy I may have had, but I certainly didn't have knowledge and experience. And you need someone who has those to help you to learn.

That doesn't seem to be the attitude with millennials – or the brands which want to target them. But none is more offensive than the rubbish being pushed by the Independent Institute of Education, which is the umbrella brand for a number of private tertiary campuses.



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The TV ad intones: “They say choose tradition hallowed halls and voices. “We say tradition is the enemy of choices. We say legacy belongs in the past. Old and strange. We say old is the enemy of change.”

What utter bollocks.

The best educational institutions in the world – think Harvard, or Oxford universities for a start – are steeped in tradition and centuries of knowledge and experience. That's why people queue up to get into them. And, do you think that this world you live in was crafted solely by 20-somethings?

I would rather send my offspring – as we did – to universities and faculties with that experience and a track record.

But, of course I would say that. I am one of those implacable enemies of change. And perhaps I am not of the #EverythingMustFall generation.

So, Independent Institute of Education you get an Onion for, wittingly, or unwittingly, portraying yourself as shallow. And it's a fresh – or shall we say youthful – one, too.

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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