

Ruth Hopkins

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Profile

- I wrote a book (Misery Merchants) and produced a documentary film (Prison for Profit) based on an eight-year investigation into a privately-run prison in South Africa. Additionally, I set up and run a transnational network of 44 investigative journalists who are investigating a private security provider in 24 different countries.
- As a fulltime investigative journalist at the Wits Justice Project, University of Witwatersrand, I researched and wrote about lengthy remand detention, the unchecked spread of tuberculosis in prisons, police torture, wrongful arrests and convictions and other miscarriages of justice.
- In 2013, I broke an international story on a prison in Bloemfontein, run by British global security firm G4S, in the British Guardian and the South African Mail and Guardian. The story was covered by CNN, Reuters, AP, AFP, Bloomberg and Sky News.
- I won the Webber Wentzel Legal Journalist of the Year Award in 2012 and 2014. In 2016, I earned an honourable mention in the World Justice Project's Anthony Lewis Prize for Exceptional Rule of Law Journalism
- In 2005, I broke the story on Turkish brothers and traffickers Saban and Hasan Baran, who were in control of the infamous red-light district in Amsterdam. Their 'trade' involved hundreds of women and is exposed in my book '*I will never let you go again*'.
- From 2009 to 2011, I wrote an interview feature for magazine *Opzij* (Life Story). In 2009, the editorial board of the magazine identified me as one of the thirteen leading feminists in the Netherlands.
- I have lectured at universities in the Netherlands, UK and South Africa and a media training institute in Iraq, at undergraduate and masters' level.

Key skills and knowledge

- **Research, writing, and editing:** experience in investigative journalism and creative writing, designing and setting up investigations, finding and ensuring protecting of sources, fundraising, structuring investigation and writing longform narrative journalism
- **Lecturing:** experience in designing courses, curriculum, syllabi and teaching seminars, lectures and workshops
- **Audio recording and editing:** experience in producing radio documentaries
- **Project management:** experience in managing projects through their life cycle from initiation, through planning, resourcing and implementation
- **Communication & relationship-building skills:** able to work with and influence colleagues, students, sources and third parties from various backgrounds and nationalities
- **Leadership:** adept at leading and managing with authority whilst using people skills to guide, support and mentor colleagues, students, interns and volunteers
- **Problem solving skills:** able to logically and calmly manage complex problems

- **IT skills:** confident using the MS Office Suite (incl. Word and Excel), encryption software, Audacity and Adobe
- **Cultural awareness:** able to adapt to diverse working environments, including work experience in the US, UK, Netherlands, Iraq, Australia, Pakistan, South Africa, Nigeria and working alongside colleagues, clients, students, interns and volunteers of various nationalities, cultures and backgrounds
- **Languages:** fluent in English and Dutch, basic knowledge of French, German and Spanish and holder of an EU driving license

Career history

Founder and editor of the Private Security Network, Johannesburg

2018 – present

- Setting up, coordinating and fundraising for a transnational investigation into a private security provider in 24 countries

Investigative journalist, Wits University, Johannesburg

2012-2018

- Carrying out investigations into the criminal justice system and producing content (print, audio, video) based on the outcomes

Lecturer human rights, law, investigative journalism and criminology, Journalism, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, Utrecht, Independent Media Centre Kurdistan, Northern Iraq, Erbil, Wits University, Johannesburg

2007– 2011

- Designing and teaching courses and supervision of students

Freelance journalist, various countries

2001 – 2012 and 2018 – present

- Designing and carrying out investigations, writing articles and books, editing, producing radio and video

Legal researcher

2002 – 2006

- Carrying out legal research, writing and editing reports on migration and discrimination issues in the EU context

Education, qualifications and relevant training

December 2019	MA in Creative Writing, Wits University (distinction)
May 2001	Master of Laws (LLM) International Law, University of Amsterdam
Sept 2001	Minor (equivalent to MA) in Journalism, University of Amsterdam
Specialisation:	International Human Rights
Electives:	European protection of human rights, global protection of human rights, human rights and foreign policy, University of Leiden

Interests and hobbies

Boxing, singing, running, gardening

References available on request