

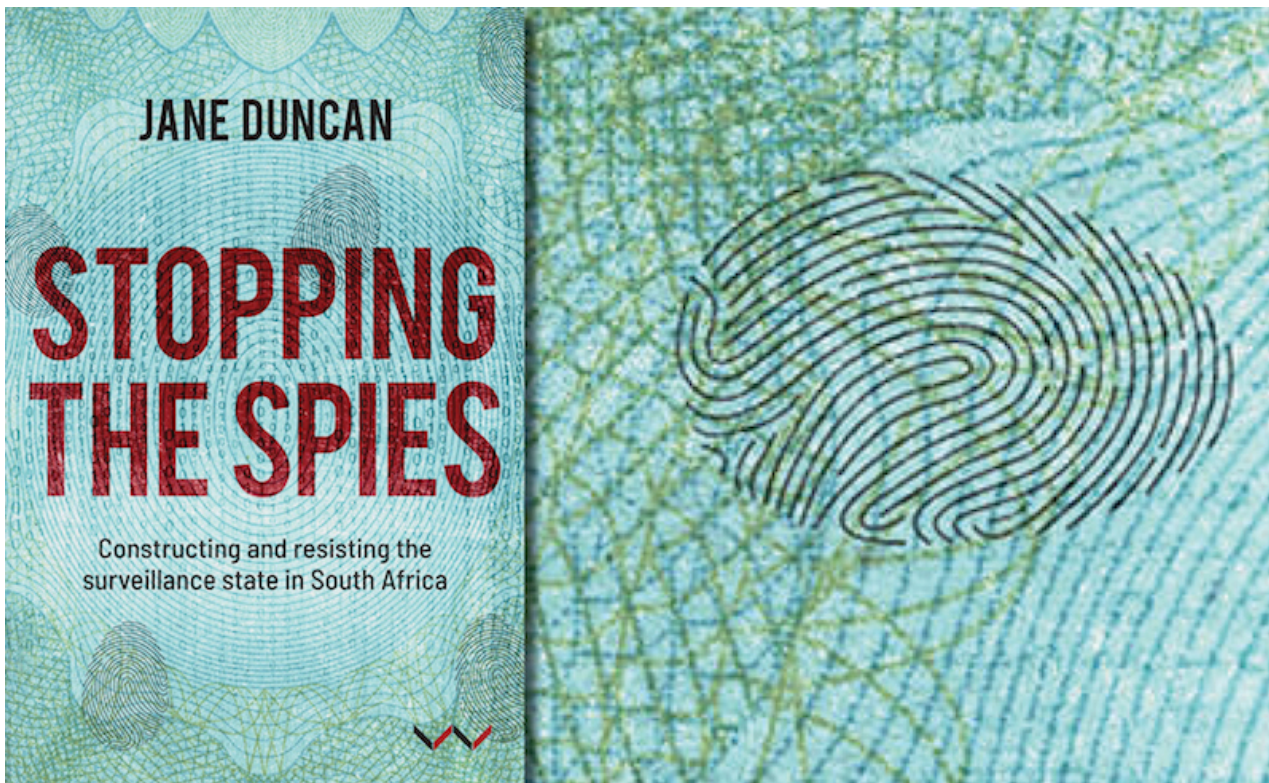
PEN South Africa newsletter / Issue 18, 2018 / An interview with Jane Duncan on state surveillance; our statement calling for an investigation into book price-fixing; new releases, calls for submissions, and more.

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"Eerie Reminders of a Past We Thought We'd Put Behind Us": Jane Duncan on (Her New Book on) State Surveillance in South Africa

Jane Duncan is one of South Africa's foremost experts on freedom of expression and its intersections with civil society and our everyday ways of life. A professor in the Department of Journalism, Film and Television at the University of Johannesburg – and formally Executive Director of the Freedom of Expression Institute – she is now the author of the new book *Stopping the Spies: Constructing and resisting the*

surveillance state in South Africa. In it, she assesses the relevance of Edward Snowden's 2013 revelations about international state surveillance (by bodies like the United States' NSA) for South Africa and South Africans.

In doing so she questions the extent to which South Africa is becoming a surveillance society governed by a surveillance state. Duncan challenges members of civil society to be concerned about and to act on the ever-expanding surveillance capacities of the South African state. Is surveillance used for the democratic purpose of making people safer, or is it being used for the repressive purpose of social control, especially of those considered to be politically threatening to ruling interests? She explores the forms of collective action needed to ensure that unaccountable surveillance does not take place and examines what does and does not work when it comes to developing organised responses.

We sat down with Professor Duncan to discuss the scale and the specifics of the threat of surveillance to our lives, both personal and political – including social media and even e-tolls. You can read the interview [here](#).



PEN SA Welcomes News of Investigation into Alleged Book Price-Fixing by SA Publishers

PEN SA welcomes the news last week that the Competition Commission "has initiated an investigation against the Publishers' Association of South Africa (PASA) and its over 91 members for allegedly fixing the prices of books". PASA is the largest publishing industry body in South Africa.

This comes after the Commissioner "received information pointing to the fact that the association and its members [...] may have been involved in fixing prices of books in contravention of the Competition Act", allegedly agreeing to fix prices and trading conditions for various types of books, most notably pre-school to grade 12 books, teacher's guides and support materials, student textbooks, trade books and ebooks.

It is alleged by the Commission that these price fixing arrangements may date back to the 1980s.

Unlikely as it may be that every member of PASA – which includes organisations that are not publishers and publishers only recently formed – would be involved in such a scheme, it is the PEN SA Board's opinion that these allegations must nevertheless be thoroughly investigated. In a country that is book-poor, due chiefly to the high costs and inaccessibility of books, all publishers, especially those that sell to the educational market, have a heightened responsibility to make sure their books are as accessible as possible. Such practices would go completely against PASA's own stated commitments to "creativity, literacy, the free flow of ideas and encouraging a culture of reading."

This responsibility is twinned with a responsibility to make sure that the selling market for books is open to all publishers, so that books may be selected and bought for the market on the basis of their quality and suitability for learners and students. Anti-competition practices formed the backbone of apartheid business, and do not belong in today's publishing and literary industries.

Any allegations of collusion between publishers to consolidate the educational market for their sole gain must be investigated thoroughly. We will monitor the situation closely.

The Competition Commission's full statement may be downloaded from our website [here](#).

MEMBERS' NEW TITLES

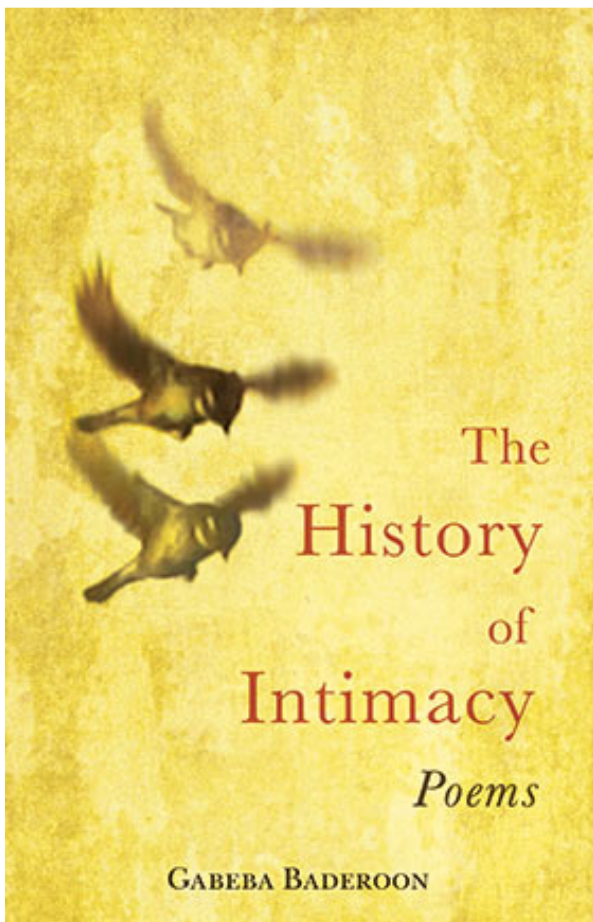
CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

[Enter The 2018 Olive Schreiner Prize for Prose](#) (Deadline 21 September)

[Apply for the 2018 ANFASA Grant Scheme for Authors \(Fiction and Non-Fiction\)](#) (Deadline 30 September)

[Apply for the 2018 Miles Morland Foundation Writing Scholarships for African Writers](#) (Deadline 30 September)

[Africa Centre's Artists In Residency Programme Opens for 2018](#)



[Applications](#) (Deadline 15 October)

[The 2018 Short Story Day Africa Prize, Hotel Africa, is Open for Entries](#)
(Deadline extended to 31 October)

[Click here to view all calls for submissions](#)

New and upcoming releases from PEN SA members include [The History of Intimacy](#) by PEN SA Board Member [Gabeba Baderoon](#).

Please send us your new releases
to newslettereditor@pensouthafrica.co.za.

Send us your news

Had a book published recently? Attended or participated in a festival? Won an award? Achieved a personal milestone of note? We welcome any news of your activities for future issues of the PEN SA newsletter. Please let us know if your email changes so we can update our mailing list.

Please email your contributions
to newslettereditor@pensouthafrica.co.za

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