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Dependency and Journalism Education in Africa: Are There Alternative Models

by Sharon M. Murphy and James F. Scotton

Abstract

This paper critically reviews the history of journalism education in Africa, and the controversies surrounding it. The authors reckon that dependency theorists have argued about the inappropriateness of Western models and professional standards for Third World journalism. However, in spite of this rhetoric, many Third World schools of journalism and practitioners tend to follow the Western approaches. Of these approaches, the American practical orientation seems to appeal most to those who teach, sponsor, or practice journalism in the Third World.

Résumé

L'article ci-après fait une étude critique de l'enseignement du journalisme en Afrique ainsi que des controverses qu'il suscite. Les auteurs reconnaissent que les théoriciens de la dépendance ont dénoncé l'inadéquation des normes professionnelles et des modèles occidentaux au journalisme du Tiers-Monde. Cependant, en dépit de cette rhétorique, beaucoup d'écoles et de praticiens du journalisme dans le Tiers-Monde ont tendance à suivre des approches occidentales. Parmi ces approches, l'orientation pratique américaine semble attirer la plupart de ceux qui enseignent, financent ou pratiquent le journalisme dans le Tiers-Monde.

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Although dependency theorists first drew attention through their criticism of economic dominance of the Third World by the West, they quickly spread their attacks to "social and cultural imperialism." Latin America and later Africa have been the focus of these critics who can now be found in most of the communication research centres in the West as well as in the Third World. Like all maturing theories, dependency theory is attracting its own school of doubters and critics. There is a specific complaint that "Dependencia," as the theory was named by its early Latin America advocates, is so closely based on the social structure of that continent that it does not work well elsewhere in the developing areas or Third World. Nevertheless, it is widely used, particularly in Africa, as the basis of criticism of Western media domination, for example.

This study will focus on Africa, specifically on the education, training and socialization of journalists for the African media. Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, was the area most dominated by the Western World in political, social and even cultural terms for the longest period. Even religious and social customs (e.g., female circumcision, polygamy) were banned or suppressed by Western actions or pressures. African languages themselves have become largely irrelevant in post-independent African countries in the areas of government, education and mass media.

Efforts by Africans and others in the Third World to break away from Western media domination have brought some of the most serious clashes with the West in the past decade. The unified efforts of Third World representatives (with the help of Communist bloc members) have contributed to serious breakdowns in the United Nations, particularly in UNESCO. In this area of communication, Africa's continued inability to break away from controls and patterns established by the colonial powers has brought the support of most of its leaders to the call for a New World Information Order. Even President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya, one of the most staunchly pro-western leaders, frequently attacks the foreign domination of the African mass media.

Despite this strong criticism of the Western media and even its continued influence on Africa's own media, there has been remarkably little effort to change journalism education programs in Africa which are largely patterned directly on those in Europe and the United States. Some of Africa's journalism programs could be moved to the United States, for example, without changing texts, curriculum, or instructors. It is only in recent years that the African Council on Communication Education (ACCE), the only continental organization of journalism educators, has begun to make progress toward making African journalism training relevant to Africa's social and cultural situation. The ACCE is hoping that in the long run this will lead to African values playing the dominant role in African mass media.
African Education: A Western Pattern

As James Coleman, the political analyst, put it a quarter of a century ago, "Western education has been the most revolutionary of all influences operating in sub-Saharan Africa since the imposition of European rule." starting with the missionaries who were interested in spreading the Christian gospel and its middle class European and later American values, Western education attracted the brightest offspring of the most advanced African groups. From the start the colonial powers absorbed the mission-trained Africans into their administrations. Later these same Africans or their children challenge the political leadership of the Europeans and after wrestling power from them took over the political leadership of independent Africa.

Western missionaries did not introduce "education" to sub-Saharan Africa, of course. The UNESCO International Standard Classification of Education defines education as comprising organized and sustained communication designed to bring about learning. Clearly, any group socialization whether it takes place within a school, a family or other group setting fits within this definition. However, as so many Africans have pointed out Western educators consciously set out to destroy an existing educational structure that was established in African societies because it was not seen as appropriate to the new societies the West wanted to establish.

The first generation of independent Africa's leaders, from Senghor in Senegal to Kenyatta in Kenya fiercely attacked this "de-Africanizing" of African education. Ali Mazrui in academic arguments and Ngugi wa Thiong'o in his passionate and controversial novels have argued that under the colonial powers African education changed from an instrument for promoting social stability and continuity to one for promoting and controlling change. Mazrui points out that at the university level the African student is still taught to be critical of almost every value previously learned in the African setting.

The origins of this anomalous situation in African universities are clear. African universities, including their curriculum, instructors and even social amenities were totally imported. (Senior and junior staffs were provided with separate "common rooms" or lounges in the British model). When the University of Dakar in Senegal was inaugurated the rector told his audience that it was to be "a French university to serve Africa." The French had insisted in their 1956 agreement granting self government to their African territories that they retain control of education as well as diplomacy, defence and finance.

In Anglophone Africa the British influence was not legally established after independence but was almost equally strong. In the 1970s at Uganda's Makerere University, a decade after independence, courses in African languages and literature were being taught by British and American lecturers. Texts and curriculum were almost entirely Western and indeed students themselves were so attuned to the existing Western model that they resisted any change. Their examinations were monitored by external examiners brought usually from Britain and
in some programs still are in an effort to preserve educational links with the former colonial institutions on which the African universities are modeled. The goal of British colonialism including colonial education was, in the words of a former colonial governor, to turn the African into “a fair-minded Englishman.” In the views of some Africans, this is still the goal of many African universities in the former British colonies.

**Journalism Education: A New Western Model**

It was only in those areas where there were no clear European academic models that even other Western influences could enter the educational structure even after independence. One of these areas was journalism education. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Eastern Nigeria political leader and editor of the *West African Pilot*, believed the British-model university was too academic to meet Africa’s needs. He was particularly attracted to the vocational orientation of the American land-grant universities. Kwame Nkrumah had already established an American style journalism program at the Ghana Institute of Journalism in 1958, but Azikiwe wanted Nigeria’s first program closely linked with a university. In the early 1960s the land-grant model was imported to the new University of Nigeria at Nsukka. Michigan State University, under contract and with substantial American aid, supplied the structure, staff and much of the curriculum, including a journalism program.

There was considerable resistance among colonial authorities to “American style” education. In 1957, for example, only 44 Kenyan students were enrolled in American universities. The French and British definitely preferred African students to attend universities in the “home” countries of the colonial rulers. In fact, UNESCO statistics reveal that by 1958 there was just 7,000 African students enrolled in the 10 sub-Saharan Universities. At the same time there were 8,500 African students at British and French universities — 6,500 in Britain and 2,000 in France.

The Africans, at times with the assistance of non-colonial countries such as the United States and the Scandinavian countries, sometimes went to extraordinary efforts to break the grip of colonial education authorities. They were most effective in Anglophone Africa and least effective in Francophone Africa where the French policy of “assimilation” lingers on even today. Perhaps the most extraordinary example of the invasion of a new education influence in Africa was the East African “Airlift” of 1959-1962 which took hundreds of African students to American universities. Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia supported a program organized by Tom Mboya with the help of trade union leaders. As one African educator put it, “The passage to America, besides the big number of students involved, carried academic revolution which broke with the British system.”

Nearly half of Kenya’s first post-independence cabinet was composed of American-educated university graduates while in 1986
nearly half the members of Kenya's parliament were among those students airlifted to the American universities in the 1960s.

The American model of journalism training at the university level had gained an even earlier foothold on the African continent. In 1935 journalism training was started at the American University in Cairo. Four years later nearby Cairo University began its own program. UNESCO adopted the same model and its first training courses in Africa for journalists was held at the University of Dakar in 1961. By 1970 there were UNESCO-supported journalism programs on university campuses in Algeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and Zaire, although not all were degree-level courses. All these programs attracted African students from other countries so their influences began to spread throughout the continent.

It was inevitable that mass communications and journalism should have a Western structure in all its facets in Africa. Long before the Europeans arrived African leaders had their own means of reaching large audiences, such as through the chief's "Speakers" in Ghana. These individuals provided a two-way flow of communication, as well, since they had the right to pass along public complaints about the chief and his policies as long as they were indirect and moderate. Still, the techniques of reaching large numbers of individuals scattered over large areas were brought to Africa by the colonial powers. Printed publications and broadcasting were developed in the West and imported by Europeans living in Africa.

Missionaries wanted to use publications in the same way they used control of the schools — to spread their religious messages. Government officials wanted official gazettes, so much a part of the European governmental authority. They trained Africans as printers and soon Africans were producing their own publications. West Africans were far ahead, publishing their own newspapers and pamphlets in the Gold Coast and Nigeria by the mid-19th century. Broadcasting was always government controlled and was simply transferred from colonial government to independent government at independence. These established forms of control over the African mass media are accepted in the journalism training programs in Africa. While journalism programs in Africa can produce student publications, often voicing complaints about government policies, they have consistently been forbidden to establish even campus broadcasting operations.}

**Africanizing the Media**

The effort of Africans to change the formats and settings of their educational systems was not merely a political protest against the colonial regime. The colonial educational systems were simply not capable of providing the trained people for rapid Africanization of public and private institutions. Until independence almost all Africans working in journalism had received their training on the job. A few were enrolled in formal apprenticeship systems such as the one
operated by the Argus Newspapers in South Africa and Rhodesia. Others were
taken on as assistants by European publications, usually to help produce mate-
rial for African audiences. A good many future African political leaders also
learned on the job as they struggled to publish the newspapers and news sheets
that "spread the fire of nationalism." (21)

These programs provided mainly technical skills needed to operate equip-
ment and produce material that could be put in the format of a publication
in readable form. However, the trainees certainly absorbed the professional
attitudes (if not the political views) of their mentors. Some interesting conflicts
developed. At one time in the pre-independence decade the colonial govern-
ment in Kenya established a program to help Africans improve the quality
of the small publications they edited. At the same time some of these editors
were being prosecuted for publishing anti-government material. (22)

At independence Africans suddenly realized they would need large numbers
of trained individuals to take over the communications channels from the Euro-
peans. In addition, the United Nations and other organizations were providing
funds and technical assistance for rapid expansion of facilities, especially in
broadcasting. Communication was considered vital to development and ambici-
tious plans were drafted and more importantly at least partially funded to de-
velop print, broadcasting and film media. Broadcasting was particularly stressed,
seen as a possible "leap over" the illiteracy barrier to speed development. The
United Nations set minimum goals for needs in each mass media area, goals that
could only be approached with large numbers of new media professionals.

The very heavy demand for mass media personnel in the post-independence
decade is suggested by UNESCO's report that sixteen African countries inaugur-
ated broadcasting services between 1950 and 1960. (23) But political pressures
also pushed for mass media expansion. In the 1970s Nigeria broke up the regio-
nal configuration that led to the Biafran conflict into 19 separate states. In
order to get agreement, the federal government promised each state radio and
television facilities and a newspaper. A policy of having a university or higher
polytechnic in each state also contributed to the heavy demand for personnel
in the communications fields. Ghana is making a strong effort to expand its
regional information services in the 1980s and Kenya in 1985 began six rural
newspapers and added to its Information Ministry field staff. Despite the large
number of expanded or new programs to train journalists as well as media
technicians, demand remains high in many African areas, especially if indivi-
duals are willing to work outside the urban centers. (24)

One reason for the high demand is the continual loss of mass media profes-
sionals to other fields. The lack of a strong economic base keeps salaries low
on non-government publications while inflexible civil service rules keep salariés
uniform on government-controlled media and provide little incentive for the
most capable professionals. (25) Economic factors cause constant staffing prob-
lems in communications training programs. The University of Nairobi, for
example, has had five directors of its School of Journalism in seven years.
African Training Programs: Two Debates

By 1972 there were at least 30 training programs in journalism and mass communications in Africa, about two-thirds of them in sub-Saharan Africa excluding South Africa. (26) Arguments soon appeared over 1) the form of this training and 2) the non-African domination of programs at all levels. Nigeria, where large programs had developed with either professional-technical or academic emphasis was at the center of the debate. Prof. Ezenta Eze, then head of the Department of Journalism at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, told a University of Lagos seminar, “Graduates (of universities) invariably perform better.” Replied John Lahey, Director of the professionally-oriented Nigerian Institute of Journalism, “A University degree separates a person from the man on the street and is often therefore a handicap for a journalist.” (27)

There are easy parallels to be drawn here, of course, with attitudes toward journalism education in the United States 40 years ago and existing attitudes in Britain. Great 19th century American editors such as Horace Greeley and Henry Watterson held the same views as Lahey. It was, they said, impractical to have journalists with university degrees and their education tended to separate them from their less educated readers. Such views lasted longer in Britain, where only in 1980 was the late John Dodge appointed at the University of London to the first professorship of Journalism.

A university’s degree, normally in journalism, has become a required entry-level qualification for journalists in the United States. It appears to be becoming the same in Britain. In 1985 all but one of the six apprentice trainees in the Thomson group’s Reading Post had a university degree. In fact, the growing number of university graduates seeking journalism jobs in Britain has made some available for even weeklies in the Thomson group. (28) Meanwhile, several universities in Britain, such as Cardiff and London, have professionally oriented programs in journalism. London has even started an M.A. program in journalism, primarily directed at foreign students. The trend is the same in Africa despite the inevitable resistance of media managers who do not have a university background and view the new graduates as threats. Even in 1975, Prof. Fred Omu’s former director of the Mass Communications program at the University of Lagos, found upper echelon positions in the Africa media were increasingly reserved for university graduates. (29) Sydney Head, who has as much experience in African mass media training programs as anyone, said the eventual requirement that just about all African journalists have a university degree is inevitable. Intelligent and highly motivated individuals are going to get a university degree because they realize it leads to status and high income. If the mass media want intelligent and highly motivated people, they are going to have to recruit these university graduates. (30) Teaching at the University of Nairobi in 1985-86, one author found a university degree almost essential for advancement in at least some of the media.
If the debate over the form and level of journalism education in Africa seems to be settled, the argument over the lack of relevance—that is, the non-African basis—of these programs is growing. In 1975 this was a major force behind the formation of the African Council on Communication Education (ACCE) by a group of African journalism educators. Seth Adagala, the first ACCE coordinator, told his colleagues that mass communications in Africa should have training programs that are designed by Africans to fit the needs of the continent’s societies. “As a matter of urgency,” he said, “a communications center should be established in Africa, with international support, to collect and disseminate information on media development, research, communication training, curriculum design and to produce directories of media institutions and organizations.”

Ten years later, in the mid-1980s, the ACCE is still attempting to establish at least a regional—and hopefully a continental—mass communications center in Africa. The programs established so rapidly after independence are a barrier since each wants to preserve its own status and many would themselves be rivals for any African mass communications center. Meanwhile, their non-African structures, curriculum, materials and faculty backgrounds reinforce Western cultural influences on the African mass media that dependency theorists decry. At the same time, many African leaders are cautious about any changes in existing educational models while admitting their problems.

As one researcher on African education and development pointed out, African leaders have persuaded their people that education is the major hope of development in all areas, adding, Whatever strategy is dominant in nation-building policy, education has been seen as a major instrument for achieving the goals of unity, political stability and equality of opportunity and for circumventing situations which may give rise to conflict.

Others have pointed out that African leaders, in order to achieve these goals in as short a time as possible, chose to accept and preserve existing colonial models. Manpower needs of the new nations took priority over educational reform in most cases. In Kenya reform of the educational curriculum at both the secondary and university levels is scheduled to be in place in 1990, 27 years after independence.

Mazrui suggests that African leaders may have another reason for adopting a Western educational model along with its non-African curriculum particularly in such sensitive areas as journalism. The price of Africanizing the syllabus, especially in the humanities, is to sensitize the syllabus, he points out. Recommending such books as Reporting for the Print Media by American Fred Fedler or The Practice of Journalism by the British John Dodge may well reflect the absence of suitable books by Africans or other Third World authors. It does have the added advantage in the eyes of some political leaders of insuring that questions and topics sensitive to the African societies are not likely to be raised in relation to the African situation.
It is time, Mazrui, says for Africanization of the curriculum and syllabus “if the business of a university was a commitment to understanding some of the most profound problems affecting the societies which the university is supposed to serve.” The effects of not doing this are severe, he points out. African students are literally ripped from their culture with their higher education entirely dependent on Western ideas and even Western examples. The depths of this dependence was illustrated at the University of Lagos when a university official rejected the suggestion of seeking an African external examiner in philosophy with the words: “There are no African philosophers.”

Communications Research: Another Debate

The argument over “Africanizing” the curriculum is in some ways similar to the argument over “professionalizing” the journalism curriculum in American universities. Nationalist critics of African university education contend it is not only too foreign but too removed from the African social and cultural situation. The argument is similar to the one presented by journalism professionals in the United States against the more research-oriented journalism faculty. Mazrui points out that the argument attacks the very ethos of Western higher education. Such education puts special emphasis on the rational and therefore on neutral universalism. To be scholarly in the Western academic tradition is to be scientific and therefore detached from the social causes of the day. A real question is: Can Africa afford this type of education to be the basis of its university programs, especially those which are supposed to contribute to the solution of current social problems?

It is just this scientific detachment that has brought some of the most scathing criticism in the field of communication and journalism from dependency theorists. Beltrans, a powerful and seminal dependency theorist in the communication field in Latin America, says that the entire discipline is out of touch with the social realities of the Third World. However, Beltrans does not link this to the Western ethos of scholarly detachment. He argues that the scientific study of communication is entirely based on American social assumptions. In short, the entire way of thinking about mass communication and its role in society is culture bound to North America. At the level of professional journalism, this is, of course, the argument of those who support a New World Information Order as the only way to break the Western dominance of news and information. Beltrans simply extends the attack into communication education and to the very research that support it.

Beltrans, of course, rejects the claim that research can be culturally neutral. This is not so unusual, but Beltrans goes further. He argues that the entire scientific study of communication is based on American social assumptions and thus very culture bound. He finds the roots of the American communications studies in the U.S. efforts to counter the propaganda threats perceived in World War II. Political persuasion was the focus of psychologists, sociologists and
academic journalists who established the discipline. The science then matured in a stable, satisfied and self-confident post-war America that accepted its social and cultural setting as the model to be exported to the rest of the world. Given the devastated condition of the rest of the world at this time, U.S. mass media took the lead in easily overcoming the competition.(39)

This was a powerful argument for accepting and promoting the status quo, according to Halloran and others.(40) Those who see research as outside the influence of the existing social system from which it springs are mistaken, they say. Beltrans simply carries the argument to its logical, or extreme, conclusion, saying that the very research methods employed are strongly influenced and even dictated by the social setting of those who select them. The sample survey and content analysis, the most widely employed methods of American communications researchers since World War II, in his view, are steeped in Western social assumptions, according to Beltrans. These methods concentrate on the receiver and ignore deeper information structures. This is because American researchers in mass communications do not question their own social structures, Beltrans concludes. They therefore use research methods that take the individual out of his social context.(42)

While not getting into the reasons behind research approaches, an African surveying mass communications research concerning the continent found it to be narrowly based. There is little concern with rural or traditional communication and he questions the use of survey research techniques in the African setting. He agrees with Mazrui that studies focussing on African problems could cause problems for African researchers.(42) Head pointed out that audience research could embarrass African broadcasters by showing small audiences(43) In a 1986 post-graduate course at the University of Nairobi students ran into substantial difficulties when assigned by one of the authors to study a series of social problems such as housing conditions and street crime. Kenyan officials refused to provide information on these topics.

The reasons why researchers choose a specific research method can be debated, of course. A 1985 journalism convention paper did demonstrate convincingly that at least in the field of international news communication research one method was dominant. Kuo-Jen Tsang found that 91 per cent of the empirical studies in this area in the 1970s and 1980s used content analysis.(44)

Others have lent support to dependency theory by spreading the argument to other fields. The general one-way flow of social science research from the United States has made it not only dominant but insulated its own institutions from outside social science researchers. This situation supports a continuation of the acceptability of the status quo.(45)

Most of the foregoing relates to the general structure and philosophy of communication/journalism education in Africa and Third World. Within that structure there are numerous elements that dependency theorists would see at work to tie journalism students and thus the African media to Western philosophers and Western methods. One of the overriding elements is language. English, French
and Portuguese — the colonial languages — were retained in independent Africa because they 1) enabled the elite to communicate in a common language within each society and 2) selecting any African language as a lingua franca would ignite ethnic/linguistic rivalries. The only African language which was seen by most as “ethnically neutral” was East Africa’s Swahili, which has Arab and regional rather than African ethnic roots and has evolved into a widely used lingua franca as well as a mass media language in Kenya and Tanzania.

The European colonial languages may be “ethnically neutral” in the African sense, but they clearly carry their own value systems, of course. Their use in the mass media has been attacked by many Africans, including African leaders who lamented that this solidified the positions of those whose competency in the colonial language gave them positions of influence. Others saw their continued widespread use in the mass media especially broadcasting, as a continued assault on African culture.

Besides neutralizing arguments for individual tribal languages to be adopted as national languages, use of the former colonial languages in the mass media did avoid certain practical problems. After Uganda gained independence in 1964 the Voice of Uganda broadcast in 18 languages including English and Hindustani. The point, of course, was not to be open to charges of favoring or ignoring any language group. Since Uganda radio had only two channels, news reports had to be brief. A 15-minute news program might have to accommodate reports in eight to ten languages. The situation became so ridiculous that Kampala night club comedians imitated them to amuse audiences.

Competency in a European language is a requirement for admission to any mass communication program in Africa, even below university level. Materials are in European languages and teachers universally use those languages with their students except in casual non-class contact. Students themselves, even if they are competent in an African language, are often reluctant to use it professionally. The European-language media are dominant and even most of those who start out working in Swahili broadcasting or on Swahili newspapers which are prominent in East Africa want to move onto English-language media quickly for fear of being barred from advancement. Even in Tanzania, where Swahili is the official national language, the prestige newspaper circulated among the elite is the English-language *Daily News*. Broadcasters in Zimbabwe said the reason why the African-language radio channel is so poor is that none of the government leaders listen to it.

In mass communications courses at both secondary and university level texts written by European or American authors were used for years after independence. Some of them, such as those on reporting and editing produced by the International Press Institute, were directed at African students but differed from materials used in non-African programs largely in the use of African examples. There was no attempt to take an “African” approach.
African Journalism Texts

Two texts developed at least partly by Africans for mass communication training programs have appeared in the past five years. Both are basic reporting-editing texts. The first, written by Ralph Akinfeleye of the Department of Journalism at the University of Lagos, is structured much like an American text but tries to cover everything from reporting to production in only 125 pages. Akinfeleye's book does use African examples and he has a chapter surveying journalism education in Africa and another covering the pitfalls and responsibilities that African journalists should be aware of.

The author emphasizes that it is "not a theory book, rather it is a book on how-to-do-it." Still the author, a University of Missouri Ph.D., quotes "The Journalist's Creed" of a late dean of the Missouri journalism program. This and the use of standard "definitions" of news found in all basic American journalism texts suggests strong dependency on American journalism values. The bibliography is heavily European and American, although some Third World works are cited, and the media models held up as examples of excellence are all American or British. There is also little or nothing on development journalism.

This short review of the book is not to suggest that it is not a needed contribution. What it suggests is that the dependency theorists could use it as an example of how dominant the Western, particularly American, approach is in mass communication in Africa.

The other text, Reporting Africa, was published in 1985 with the support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation of Germany. A basic text, it also tries to cover too many topics in less than 200 pages, including "Women in Journalism," photography, feature writing and business reporting. Of its 14 contributors, 12 are Africans and the others have extensive African journalism experience. However, 10 of the 14 either have American or British degrees or European journalism experience, which again suggests the dependency on Western models and experience in a text produced for African students by predominantly African authors.

The "Foreward" for the text is by the Zimbabwe Minister of Information, N.M. Shamuarira. The Minister does call for an African approach to journalism, and representing a nation officially committed to egalitarianism does provide some rhetoric that would be out of place in a Western journalism text. However, even at his most political, the remarks do not threaten the acceptability of Reporting Africa as a text in a range of African political settings. The Minister calls on African journalists to "be committed to the African revolution," but he does not elaborate and states that both one-party and multi-party states are acceptable on the continent. He does support the New World Information Order but also comes out against censorship, presumably by government.

Since Reporting Africa has contributors who have lived or worked in a dozen African countries and is being promoted and distributed by the African Council on Communication Education (ACCE), it can be considered a fair reflection
of the attitudes of many involved in African mass communications and journalism education. To what extent does it differ, say, from a standard text found in an American journalism program, especially in terms of the professional values it cites?

There is an effort to use African examples although some from the BBC and other non-African sources slip in. Michael Traber, a New York University Ph.D. with long experience in Africa, tries to go beyond the usual basic definitions of news. He calls for awareness of “alternative” news values mentioning “alternative social actors” (non-prominent people often make good news and feature sources), “alternative language” (don’t always use the inverted pyramid style), and “alternative framework for time” (process rather than event-oriented stories). He does suggest there are stories to be found in rural areas, but in general it is the standard approach to “What is News?” He concludes by urging African journalism students to develop “our own forms of journalism” and his bibliography cites some dependency theory references and the UNESCO report on the New World Information Order.

The chapter that would not be found in a standard American reporting or even journalism text is “Covering the District” by Edward Mamutse. That’s because Mamutse is in the Zimbabwean Ministry of Information and he is writing about working as a district information officer in a rural area. The chapter would fit well in a public relations text in an American program except for its African references and its reference to working “in the context of the New World Information Order.” In a critique of Reporting Africa at a September, 1985, workshop for African journalists in Zimbabwe, it was suggested that any new edition should specially point out the difference between Mamutse’s “rural reporter” and a journalist. In short, those at the workshop supported the same distinction between journalist and public relations practitioner which is standard in Western journalism. At least some of the government district information officers in Africa recognize this same distinction and have problems when the two roles conflict. A district information officer in Kenya found the government-operated Kenya News Agency would not make use of a story on a local dispute because it involved a government official. The district information officer published it in the rural newspaper he also edited because, he told one of the authors, it was “news.”

One of Reporting Africa’s contributors also came out in favor of professional journalistic values vs. government’s desire to suppress bad news in his chapter on “News agency reporting.” The author, Paul Fauvet, who works for the Mozambique government news agency, says suppressing bad news is foolish as well as non-professional since it will be reported by other, perhaps less friendly sources anyway. He does believe it is quite acceptable to report government news and to have an editorial policy that supports the government. In the standard statement of the Western journalistic ethic, Fauvet insists that editorial policy and news reporting be strictly separated.

Another contributor to Reporting Africa, Paul Ansah of Ghana, states the
ethic of the journalist independent of government pressure even more forcefully. Even if threatened with jail or detention, says Ansah, an African journalist must not reveal a confidential source. Ansah, who has been jailed himself for journalistic activities, asserts have even a patriotic journalist may find his professional ethics supersede official demands.

**Professional Socialization**

What is suggested by most of the contributors to *Reporting Africa* as well as by Akinfeleye is that there is a common, world-wide professional fraternity of journalists which shares many values and ethics. These values and ethics would therefore be culturally neutral. However, this has been rejected by a number of scholars who argue that inherent in acquiring professional skills is the acquisition of values and attitudes that are considered appropriate. This has been generally accepted for a long time in journalism and the adoption of this argument by dependency theorists is a natural development. The professional ideal assumes that objectivity is, nevertheless, possible in the mass media as well as desirable. This is, of course, fiercely contested even among Western journalists with the entire School of “New Journalists” and their many academic supporters opposing this view.

Golding in particular rejects this notion of the “neutral professional communicator” as not the model of the communicator in traditional societies. “Traditional communication processes... tended in general to be solely wedded to social and political processes that the very act of receiving and transmitting messages called for some display of agreement and acceptance,” he says. Golding believes in inculcating this standard of non-purposive, professional ideology of the fourth estate is particularly out of place in a developing Third World society. The communicator was not neutral or objective. He deliberately shaped the messages and became responsible for making them acceptable. This, says Golding, is committed or development journalism. Imposed on this is the non-purposive, professional ideology of Western “objective” journalism. “Thus,” adds Golding, “a natural inclination to see journalism as socially purposive is given a guilt complex by training in the creed and practice of objective reporting as preached and conducted in European and American media.”

As we noted earlier, this argument is certainly not confined to Third World journalism. The advocacy model was supported by both the 1948 Hutchins Commission and the 1968 Kerner Commission in the United States. Both called for what Golding would term “committed journalism” to help solve the social problems of American society.

Janowitz suggests that those American journalists who support advocacy journalism represent a minority who are either young or have not been socialized by the dominant professional values. The advocacy view, he says, comes from the American university experience of journalism students who were exposed to the traditional campus radicalism. Most switch to the “professional”
or objective view once they are on the job. (57) Gans says American journalists are comfortable with the objective model of journalism. This model, he says, "professionalizes the avoidance of judgements which could upset the powerful." (58)

The same process may well be at work in the Third World. University students there are also among the most radical elements in society while professional journalists are much more often supporters of the status quo or at least of much less radical social ideas. Hachten, for one, claims that a majority of African journalists hold the same professional values as American or other Western journalists. (59)

There are continuing contacts with the Western media for African journalists both as students and professionals. Sending African journalism students overseas for professional training has long been regarded as unrealistic since they will return to work in a totally different environment. (60) However, some African journalism students do go to Europe or North America as part of their program. Third year students at CESTI (Centre for Information Studies) at the University of Dakar spend some time in France or Quebec. The best students at the University of Nairobi tour German media and journalism training programs annually. Costs are paid by the Western governments. Britain, the United States and other countries regularly provide funds to African journalists for study tours of the Western media and journalism schools.

In Africa itself many journalists regularly read Western media. Golding found in 1974 that *Time* and *Newsweek* were the most frequently read publications among Nigerian broadcast journalists. (61) Dare reported in 1986 that the same publications were still the favorites among News Agency of Nigeria journalists. (62) Professional journalists as well as journalism students frequent the British, American and French cultural centers in even the Socialist African countries. These reading rooms are invariably comfortable, well stocked with Western periodicals, and will even provide publications, journals and books as well as reading lists to journalism programs on request. In 1986 alone the U.S. Information Service provided the University of Nairobi School of Journalism with *Editor and Publisher, Broadcasting, Journalism Quarterly* and *World Press Review*. USIS also paid for shipping almost complete sets of *Journalism Quarterly*, *Journalism Educator*, *Journalist Monograph*, and *Public Relations Educator, Journalism Monograph*, and *Public Relations Journal*. *Time, Newsweek, The Economist, Sunday Times of London* and *International Herald Tribune* are also received by the Nairobi program. The only Eastern bloc publication received is the *Democratic Journalist* and the only African publication from outside Kenya is the *Daily News* of Tanzania, which arrives only sporadically.

Tunstall says the Western notion of professionalism is built into the Anglo-American media structure and exposure to these media is clearly exposure to the professional values of their journalists. (63) Hachten agrees. The European-owned newspapers in Africa as well as those flown in from overseas, he argues, "provided important models of what journalism could be." Hachten also belie-
ves some of Africa's best journalists are those who trained on the European owned newspapers and absorbed their professional values.\(^{64}\)

Those debating the advocacy vs. objectivity models of journalism should keep in mind that there was one important difference between those models as they have been found in the United States and the Third World. Advocacy journalism in the American tradition sprang from the Progressive muckrakers and tends still to be attached to causes and unattached to political parties or institutions.\(^ {65}\) In the Third World advocacy journalism means support for development and almost invariably for institutions of government that claim to be leading economic and social development. African journalists may contend that this advocacy model includes the right or duty to expose or at least report development programs that are not working, but in reality this is not often the case. African editors and journalists are regularly fired or otherwise penalized for commenting critically on development or other sensitive local issues. In their attempt to define development journalism in Africa, Domatob and Hall found that "under the banner of development journalism, African politicians in most states control the media for their own political goal."\(^ {66}\)

Still, many African journalists, and especially African journalism students, though trained in a Western model of journalism, reject or at least question the model of the objective journalist and support the advocacy for development model. Frank Barton cited this dilemma in his classes for African journalists sponsored by the International Press Institute.

He found a "clash of loyalties between journalism and what might be called the African ideal."\(^ {67}\) David Barry, Director of the Inter-African Centre of Studies on Rural Radio at Ouagadougou in West Africa, sees this idea in an African communicator who is not a journalist but "a development agent."\(^ {68}\) This is a clear call for an alternative model of journalism training to replace that provided by the West, particularly by the American journalism education model, searching for Alternative Models of Journalism Training.

This alternative model, as presented by Barry in West Africa and M.A. Maganga, Director of the Tanzania School of Journalism in East Africa, is clearly to be within a socialist rather than a capitalist political structure. Barry supports "rational planning and a socially determined media system." Maganga, in his article, "Searching for Journalism Training Alternatives," states the goals of his program. Besides its professional training objectives, the Tanzania School of Journalism desires to "educate the students so as to make them capable of understanding and analyzing the social, political, cultural and economic role of journalism and mass communication in the process of Socialist development."\(^ {9}\) Close ties between government policy and the school's program are assured since Maganga is an appointed member of Tanzania's parliament.

Barry specifically rejects most African journalism training programs based on Western models as irrelevant because they "too often merely reproduced the schemes of schools in Western countries which are designed for different needs and which, by cultivating an elitest attitude, attract few vocations towards
communications for the masses."(70) Maganga has been a member of the African Council of Communication Education (ACCE) and does not specifically reject other journalism training models irrelevant to Africa. However, both make it clear that they expect their African journalism programs to produce graduates different from those turned out by Western-model schools. Maganga wants a graduate who will be "a skillful communicator, an understanding politician and life-long communicator." Barry, placing his argument within the need for more attention to rural communications, outlines his "communicators of a new type" more fully. He says:

"... one might call them rural communicators. ... the rural communicator must favor training, development, sensitization and conscientization over technical perfection — and must accord only a secondary place to pure information. He is a development technician and field agent whose communication techniques form part of the practical tools needed for rural development.

While the Tanzania School of Journalism emphasizes "development journalism," there seems to be only moderate concern with rural communications problems and student attachments are normally to media and other organizations in urban areas, particularly in the metropolitan capital of Dar es Salaam.

Both the Centre for Studies on Rural Radio in Burkina Faso and Tanzania's School of Journalism want more non-technical education in the African journalism curriculum. This is understandable, particularly since both are dealing with students who have had no University education and usually enter the programs with an "O-level" or "Brevet" education certificate, about the equivalent of the American High School diploma. It seems clear, though, that both schools include within their non-technical or general education a good deal of political philosophy. Barry states that the objective of such general courses are to "re-insert" into journalism education in Africa "the perspective of collective action" Tanzania's School of Journalism puts most of its emphasis on the usual professional course work in its two-year program with courses in such subjects as Newswriting, Photography and Broadcasting. Its Socialist emphasis appears clearly in its Development Studies course.

This includes analysis of "the anti-imperialist struggle," "imperialism and underdevelopment" and "the Socialist transformation of society."

The Development Studies course in Tanzania's program not only reviews the Socialist and Capitalist philosophies. It makes it clear, at least in its syllabus, its political point of view. Included are such topics as "Class Struggle," "Development of Bourgeois Democracy and Liberty," "Neo-Colonialism" and "The Collapse of Capitalism." The Tanzania School of Journalism program appears to follow Maganga's 1980 assertion that it is to be a "political institution."

Such direct statements of political values tend to disturb Western journalists and journalism educators. Political values are rarely stated explicitly by Western journalists or in Western journalism programs. For one thing, it is widely held that any indoctrination is out of place at the university level, where most Amer-
ican journalists first learn their professional values. Nevertheless, Gans points out, these values are no less enduring than those explicitly stated in other settings. In an earlier period, of course, American as well as European newspaper publishers were not at all reluctant to express strong political and social preferences in their newspapers. For a variety of reasons, these preferences tend to be stated today in terms of the general social welfare and a cardinal rule of Western journalism is the strict separation of fact and opinion. The Western professional journalist, particularly in the United States, has come to think of himself as a technically proficient and value neutral social scientist rather than a being committed to supporting any social or political view even in the broadest terms. Dependency theorists and others may argue that this is a mythical role existing only in the minds of Western journalists, but it is, a powerful and influential professional value in those minds.

A close look at the Tanzania journalism program suggests that this specific treatment of social goals, may be the chief difference between the so-called Western model of journalism education and the “alternative model”. For one thing, the Tanzania program specifically rejected an effort by the CCM (Chama Cha Mapinduzi – The Revolutionary Party), the nation’s ruling political party, to include political education in the program. The Development Studies program is taught as theory and history and does not advocate any particular political view as appropriate for journalists. Despite CCM pressures, the Tanzania School has won the right to control its curriculum. A strong argument it regularly presents is that it enrolls students from all over Eastern and Southern Africa and thus a political bias would be out of place in its program.

In theory, all Tanzanian students admitted to the journalism program must be recommended by a party branch. This turns out to be a formality. One member of the school’s staff said he had never heard of the party interfering with an applicant and that the school makes its admission decisions on merit, particularly in recent years. Students at the school must join a CCM party cell at the school and “play an active role,” but in recent years these groups have turned into general discussion groups and at times even social clubs, in the opinion of some Tanzanian staff members. One faculty member said the last time he was involved in a discussion of Marxism was when he was an undergraduate at the University of Dar-es Salaam where the class instructor was visiting American professor.

Other staff members report that the argument over objectivity vs. advocacy is a frequent topic of discussion in classes among students. Such Western ideas as the “free marketplace of ideas” competes with the New World Information and Communication Order for student support. Rejected by all is any suggestion that journalists should be constrained from criticizing government policies or projects or perceived failures.

Talks with professionals in the Tanzanian media showed they also felt free to criticize although they admitted that a Socialist system has its own sacred cows.
Three instructors have diplomas in journalism from programs in New Delhi and East Berlin which tend to be anti-Western and, especially anti-American in orientation. In 1985-86 the Tanzania School also had a tutor in photojournalism and current affairs from the German Democratic Republic. On the other hand, two instructors have M.A. degrees from American universities (Maryland and Minnesota) and another has a journalism diploma from the University of Nairobi. The principal, who is an educator and not a journalist by background, is a graduate of programs in The Netherlands and Britain.

There is the usual shortage of texts and periodicals, made more severe by Tanzania’s chronic shortage of foreign exchange. Staff members see the U.S. Information Service as a welcome source of course material because of these shortages. A program of exchange visits with the University of Nairobi School of Journalism, inaugurated in 1986, indicates no severe ideological differences between the two schools. In fact, one Tanzania School of Journalism faculty member said, “You could take a graduate from either school and he or she could work comfortably as a journalist in either Kenya or Tanzania.”

There is evidence that this shift from an emphasis on political ideology to professional preparation is at least a temporary trend elsewhere in Third World journalism programs. Political considerations are no longer major criteria for admission to China’s journalism training programs and greater emphasis is being placed on vocational training. Current Chinese journalism teachers blame the radical leadership of the 1960s and 1970s for the deterioration in writing skills. Teachers at Tanzania’s School of Journalism, where all classes except a Swahili language class are taught in English, also attribute a decline in English ability on past policies which rejected English as another colonial vestige.

Similar change in the rigidly Marxist journalist programs found in some Third World countries is doubtful. Countries which perceive themselves under threat by the West, such as Cuba, are unlikely to accept professional journalistic programs which have clear Western roots and perceived with stern values. However, the African liberation movements regularly use Western programs and Western oriented programs as well as those in Socialist countries for training their public information officers. SWAPO (Southwest Africa People’s Organization) has sent individuals to programs in Britain and both SWAPO and the African National Congress have ties to the African Council on Communication Education and attend their seminars.

Conclusion

The criticism of Western domination of the flow of information to, from and even within Africa and much of the Third World has brought the call for a New World Information Order. It is hardly surprising that the same domination of journalism education has stirred a call for a new model of journalism education. The Director of the Tanzanian News Agency in 1985 said that Anglo-American journalism values dominated even the models of thinking of African journa-
lists. He believed it was vital that Africa establish strong and independent regional programs to break way from this. Sitaram adds that the social science basis of much of the Western communication theory includes the assumption that its communications should change existing cultures that are different from its own. This is a further threat that the Third World perceives and characterizes as “cultural imperialism.”

The Third World is also disturbed by the failure of the mass media to contribute strongly to social and economic development. The earlier view was that exposures to any mass media would further development. When this idea was rejected, efforts were made to shape mass media training programs that would train journalists in the Third World to produce content that would foster development. A UNESCO course director found in 1970 that most African journalists had never had their work related to development ends in any of their training. Ugboajah, along with many others, complained that there was little effort to have the mass media reach the rural area where most Africans live and where development was urgently needed. The media were primarily, almost exclusively, serving the elite and the journalism training programs in Africa were turning out journalists to work on these elite media. McAnany and others kept calling for new patterns of communication in the Third World to cut across social barriers and speed development in rural areas.

What was needed, according to this view, was a new model for training Third World journalists. These new journalists would practice “development journalism” and, ideally, be free of the Western values that so strongly influenced their journalistic values. A major problem here was and is that development journalism remains a vague concept charged with political rhetoric. After the McBride Report on the New World Information Order was issued in 1980, Third World and Socialist country journalists tried to come up with a definition of “professional journalism” that might provide the basis for a concept of development journalism. Unfortunately, their list of “Principles” merely repeats the code words (a call for “social transformation”) that have been used so often in the debate over the New World Information Order. There is no sign that the Third World has found them useful as the basis for a new model of journalism training.

It is the stress on practical training and technical/professional performance that has made American journalism education widely acceptable in Africa and much of the Third World. The professional values of objectivity and freedom from government restraint appeal to journalists in various social settings, perhaps because it provides autonomy at minimum risk. Third World journalists by and large endorse the same values of fairness and balance as do Western journalists. The Western cultural and social values that come along with this professional training are, for whatever reasons, an apparently acceptable price that Third World journalists, at least in Africa, are willing to pay despite complaints from dependency theorists and development advocates. Another, more acceptable model of journalism education has not appeared.
Notes

1. A good deal of this criticism has emerged in studies on the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo. See, for example, John Galtung, "Structural Theory of Imperialism," Journal of Peace Research, 2 (1972), pp. 81-118.


4. An exception, it can be argued, is Swahili. It is an East African lingua franca and is used by some officials especially in Tanzania, where it is the national league. There are several daily Swahili newspapers in the area.


6. "Moi Accuses Politicians," Daily Nation (Nairobi), June 9, 1986, p.1. Interestingly, Kenya has chosen not to take over the two largely foreign-owned newspapers in the country through 25 years of independence. Neighbouring Tanzania nationalized its dominant foreign-owned newspapers in 1970 on the grounds that their foreign ownership was incompatible with an independent Tanzania.


12. Thompson, op. cit., has put the argument succinctly in "Education and Schooling," pp.23-44. Mazrui has been exploring the subject and commenting for more than a decade. See Ali Mazrui, Political Values and the Educated Class in Africa (London: Heinemann, 1978).


20. When one author was at the University of Lagos in 1972 the Nigerian government refused an offer by the Danish government to provide a transmitter for a campus radio station.


24. Ralph Akinfeleye, "Journalism Enrollment Lag Behind Demand In Nigeria," Journalism Educator, 33:2 (1978), pp.31-33. At a meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, a representative of the Malawi Ministry of Information said his ministry was adding 70 information officers in 1986, more than doubling the staff.


28. One Author visited the Thomson Newspapers in Reading and nearby British towns in 1985.


32. Warrityay interview.

33. Thompson, op. cit., p.54.


35. Mazrui, op. cit., p.207.

36. These are included in the "Reading List" by T. Nelson Williams for his chapter on "Interviewing," pp. 32-44 in Don Rowland and Hugh Lewin (Eds.), Reporting Africa (Harare: Naumann Foundation, 1985), p.44. Nelson is a Liberaian with an M.A. degree in Journalism from Indiana University.


41. Beltrans, op. cit., p.120. A survey and critique of the African situation which is not widely available is by Francis W. Ochola, Aspects of Mass Communications Research on Africa (Nairobi: Africa Book Services, 1983).

42. Ochola, op. cit., p.33.


48. One author was at Makerere University in Uganda in the early 1970s and observed this.


51. op. cit.


65. Janowitz, op. cit.


70. Interviews with staff members, Tanzania School of Journalism, June 1986. Unless otherwise noted, information on the Tanzanian program was gathered on this visit. The Barry and Maganga comments are from the two articles cited above.


77. K.S. Sitaram, "A Humanistic Approach to Intercultural Communication" *The Case of Micronesia*.


84. A summary of many of the different points of view in the entire controversy can be found in J. Herbert Altschull, "The Origins of Journalism Education: A Cross-National Perspective."