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African educational film and video: industry, ideology, and the regulation of Sub-Saharan sexuality

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AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO: INDUSTRY, IDEOLOGY, AND
THE REGULATION OF SUB-SAHARAN SEXUALITY

by

Allison Doris McGuffie

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in Film Studies
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

May 2013

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Corey Creekmur

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the industry of non-profit educational filmmaking in Sub-Saharan Africa, from the 1930's to the present, with particular attention on the contemporary period of video production from the late 1980's to approximately 2010. This thesis, first, identifies that there is a consistent industrial infrastructure around non-profit educational filmmaking in Sub-Saharan Africa, which has not previously been articulated. Second, it describes the industry's historical origins and contemporary manifestation, delineating the pathways for funding, systems for production, and avenues of distribution and exhibition, as well as the ideological underpinnings of each. Finally, this thesis proscribes alternative industrial practices for the imagination and execution of non-profit educational videos that alleviate some of the otherwise deeply engrained hierarchical features of the industry by drawing on several examples of recent innovations in the industry.

This thesis claims that the standard procedures by which non-profit educational films and videos in Sub-Saharan Africa come to be are problematic in the way that they maintain colonial hierarchies between Western philanthropic funders, cosmopolitan humanitarian professionals acting as producers, African casts and crews, and audiences that are necessarily objectified in order to be studied quantitatively. This structure has profound effects on content, most recently evident in neoliberal ideas that valorize the privatization of solutions to public health problems and quaint stories designed to encourage audiences to emulate ideal behavior based on Western gender norms as a primary solution to complex social problems, such as HIV/AIDS.

Drawing on examples from recent innovations in the industry, this thesis finally proposes that changes in the balance of decision-making power in the African educational film and video industry – changes such as sourcing audiences for stories addressing HIV/AIDS, integrating with existing media markets, or more loosely providing

international support to existing local initiatives that pinpoint local concerns – are necessary in order to better realize the potential of cinema to effectively address the myriad of social, environmental, political, economic, and medical challenges faced by real and distinct Sub-Saharan audiences.

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Graduate College
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

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To Jon.

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Finally, I thank my family and close friends for their patience and ongoing social support throughout the dissertation process. Engagement with colleagues at the University of Iowa, especially Erica Stein, Jennifer Ambrose, and Nilo Couret, was indispensable in both the planning and revising stages of this dissertation and my Core family provided the precious continuity, distraction, and encouragement that was so essential to the process, especially when I needed it the most. I credit my parents, Alan and Barbara McGuffie, for instilling in me the foundational confidence to initiate, pursue, and follow through on this project, as well as the very ability to imagine myself working at what I love most – teaching and research – due to their simple career advice: Do what makes you happy; the rest will follow. I am also grateful to my “little” brother for his continued belief in my ability to accomplish this dissertation, as well as motivation through a bit of healthy competition in our race to reach our doctorates. Above all, I thank my partner, Jon, for enduring this entire process, the highs and lows, the successes and struggles, from start to finish, in solidarity with me and my goals. For all you have done for me, I thank you.

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INTRODUCTION

Wholesome entertainment

In 1926, Major L. A. Notcutt, manager of several sisal plantations in East Africa, set up an estate cinema to “maintain a contented labour force.”¹ He began experimenting with short film production using African subjects and actors and, after realizing the potential for commercial possibilities among native African audiences, returned to England to study film production and elaborate on his idea for an African cinema. Over the next few years, Notcutt joined with like-minded colonial administrators to develop this idea. By the start of the project known as the Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment (BEKE) in 1935, the group included men and support from the International Missionary Council and the Colonial Education Advisory Committee, Provincial Commissioners and Education Directors in several East African Territories, and especially G. C. Latham, former Director of Native Education in Northern Rhodesia, who was appointed Director of Education for the experiment.²

Early in the organizing process, Notcutt was influenced by British discourse advocating the education of native colonial subjects and the experiment developed as a way to use cinema as a means of education, not profit. This philanthropic goal necessitated the procurement of non-profit funding, which was obtained from British and International Missionary Councils, colonial governments, and grants from copper mines in Northern Rhodesia. The largest source of funds came from a \$55,000 grant from the

¹ L. A. Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema: An Account of the Work of the Bantu Educational Cinema Experiment During the Period March 1935 to May 1937*, edited by G. C. Latham. Published for the International Missionary Council. (London: The Edinburgh House Press, 1937), 24.

² Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*, 22-26; Glenn Reynolds, “The Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment and the Struggle for Hegemony in British East and Central Africa, 1935-1937,” *Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 2009): 61.

Carnegie Corporation.³ Notcutt, who became the BEKE's Field Director, jumped wholeheartedly into the educational mission of the project. When reporting on the successes of the experiment, Notcutt and Latham fully embrace the project's goals:

1. To help the adult African to understand and to adapt himself to the new conditions which are invading and threatening to overwhelm him.
2. To reinforce the ordinary methods of the classroom and lecture hall.
3. To conserve what is best in African traditions and culture by representing these in their proper setting as states in racial development and as an inheritance to be cherished with pride.
4. To provide recreation and entertainment.⁴

These four objectives are deeply infused with imperial concerns, including anxiety about the loss of "primitive" cultures and the process of integrating foreign elements into the British empire, as well as the paternalistic approach to the colonies encapsulated in the ideology of the "white man's burden," that superior, "more advanced" societies are duty-bound to educate and improve lesser societies. In distinguishing the essence of educational cinema in Africa, however, I am particularly interested in goal four, which calls for a recreational element. In their conclusions, Notcutt and Latham go on to assert that the educational potential of cinema is strong, but must be combined with "a fair proportion of entertainment" in order to encourage attendance and maximize the audience's ability to absorb the intended messages of development and personal improvement.⁵ Following from their BEKE experiment, Notcutt and Latham established

³ Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*, 26; Reynolds, "The Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment," 61.

⁴ Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*, 27-28.

⁵ Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*, 105.

the very idea of film production in the African colonies with a uniquely dual nature designed to both educate and entertain, a legacy which has haunted African cinema in the century since.

While the BEKE was one of several, relatively isolated colonial experiments with film as an educational tool, the sentiment of education plus entertainment undergirds similar projects at the time, as well as those that have reemerged across the Sub-Saharan region in the post-Cold War period. African film historian, Glenn Reynolds, encapsulates this attitude when describing the Rhodesian Copperbelt Commission's directive to provide "'wholesome' recreation to black gold miners" through the Mines' Compound Cinema Circuit in 1932.⁶ Borrowing this terminology, I use the phrase "wholesome entertainment" to capture the philosophical underpinnings of what I term the non-profit educational film and video industry in Sub-Saharan Africa, which began with these early colonial experiments and has reemerged in various forms in the subsequent century of filmmaking in Africa. The mostly British films that emerged from this ideological foundation were designed to replace purely commercial movies from the United States and Britain, which were becoming popular in the late 1920s and early 1930s as entrepreneurial exhibitors began setting up cinemas in Southern Africa. Alternative educational productions were meant to (1) provide a sought-after leisure activity for African workers, (2) prevent African viewers from witnessing unwholesome depictions of Western characters on film, such as gangsters, scantily clad white women, or vigilante cowboys, that might interfere with colonial authority,⁷ and (3) model ideal behaviors

⁶ Reynolds, "The Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment," 59.

⁷ Notcutt references what he perceives as the ill effects of Western cinema in the British Indian colony. He claims that the *laissez faire* policy of cinema in India is detrimental because the films leave little respect for Western living as it is depicted in Hollywood films. He refers to arguments that assert that Western entertainment cinema will be detrimental to India's peasant class by providing a poor example of better living. Conversely, Notcutt claims that African cinema culture is so nascent that there is the potential to develop it toward better ends. Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*, 21-22.

through quaint narratives that, if emulated by African audiences, would ensure good colonial citizens and harmonious African colonies in the image of Britain's imperial vision.

Since Notcutt and his contemporaries' call for wholesome entertainment for what they understood to be impressionable African audiences, humanitarian experiments with audio-visual teaching tools have proliferated, albeit at an inconsistent rate over the past century. In the colonial period, British educational films were designed to interpellate native Africans into ideal colonial subjects that would contribute to a finely tuned empire. After the dissolution of official European imperialism south of the Sahara, mostly accomplished by 1960, the global political dynamics of the Cold War period changed these objectives into more direct coercion and population management, especially around Western fears of overpopulation. Since the downfall of the Soviet Union and the subsequent emergence of US-led neoliberal international policy, commensurate with video technology and the rise of AIDS as a motivating force in international aid, educational filmmaking in Africa has shifted yet again. The contemporary industry, which I mark as beginning in 1989 with the film *Consequences* (Olley Maruma, Zimbabwe), and gaining momentum through the 1990s and 2000s, is distinct from the previous two cycles, but draws much of its moral resonance and ideological posturing from the first, European, colonial-driven cycle. The following research, which seeks to delineate the features and significance of contemporary non-profit educational films and videos in Sub-Saharan Africa, therefore attends mostly to the post-1980s period, while grounding recent projects in the legacy of similar colonial efforts, predominantly from the late 1920s to the 1950s, discussed in chapter one.

The objective of this research is threefold: to identify, describe, and proscribe. First, I identify a corpus of films that I claim constitute a coherent industry. This industry does not consolidate around production locations, such as Los Angeles for Hollywood, Mumbai for "Bollywood," or Lagos for "Nollywood." Sites of production are, in fact,

geographically diffuse across Sub-Saharan nations. Instead, the industry gains its coherency in the ideological objectives of non-profit funders with a global presence, as well as at sites of distribution in various teaching collections held by rural and urban organizations across the continent.

Second, the following research describes key features of the industry and its significance. African educational films emerge from and contribute to existing international power relations that are detrimental to African autonomy; the industrial structure and its film products are symptomatic of institutionalized inequalities, which maintain the current global hierarchy that belittles African agency and hampers African communities' efforts to provide higher quality of life for their members, what I understand to be the practical application of autonomy. This structural problematic exists despite each individual project's honestly expressed desire to improve African lives.

Finally, upon consideration of existing institutional structures that constitute the African educational film and video industry, I call for industrial changes that would alleviate the above-mentioned problematics: International funders should support initiatives imagined and proven successful "on the ground" by local innovators, thereby deconstructing the dominant epistemological hierarchy that suppresses African knowledge and the potential for African self-sufficiency, allowing a fuller blossoming of the potential to use cinema for positive social change.

My attention to African cinemas, in general, is similar to Olivier Barlet's attraction to the way African auteurs realize the potential of cinema beyond Hollywood's vision, especially the political and unique culturally specific aspects of African filmmaking, as well as the pressures of economic necessity, from which new possibilities for cinema emerge.⁸ My attention was drawn to non-profit educational films and videos

⁸ Olivier Barlet, *African Cinemas: Decolonizing the Gaze* [1996] (London and New York: Zed Books, 2000.)

when programming an introductory, survey-style course on Sub-Saharan African cinemas. I sought to diversify the selection beyond the usual suspects of Francophone African films, which have deep ties with French cultural production, are successful on the international film festival circuit and related global art film venues, and are the African films most frequently screened in American university classrooms, but are rarely available to audiences in Africa. I included Nigerian and Ghanaian popular videos, but wanted to broaden the scope of the course even further.

I therefore went in search of films produced in Africa for African audiences that fell outside either cosmopolitan or national video film industrial contexts. In my search I repeatedly ran across videos produced by international aid organizations on specific development related topics. I initially disregarded these videos as not “African” enough and more pointedly sought films from production houses only in Sub-Saharan nations. I quickly discovered that many films actually result from a partnership between the two – the videos produced “in house” are overwhelmingly supported with resources from abroad, with money sourced well beyond the confines of the production company or the national boundaries in which it resides. In my search it became apparent that I could not ignore this body of videos and I would need to reevaluate my own assumptions of what designates a film as African, thereby leading to this research. My outsider position, combined with the means to collect these videos from geographically diverse distributors, allows me to generate a corpus not readily available to scholars directly invested in the political maneuverings of African development. It is from this perspective that I am able to identify structural continuities across the industry.

The focus on Anglophone, or English speaking, African nations derives from the specific history of British colonial rule, which is distinct from the legacy of French, Portuguese, or German colonialism, especially in its particular way of integrating colonial subjects into the British empire. Because moving picture technology was introduced in Africa through the European colonial presence, traditions of cinema on the

continent are significantly impacted by the European linguistic history of each region, which overlap and often subsume native delineations of language and culture. I likewise specify Sub-Saharan because, while it is a very large region with distinct national and regional differences, its film history can be written relatively cohesively due to its particular European colonial past. Regional and national differences across the vast space south of the Sahara can be accommodated within such an historical narrative. North African nations, on the other hand, have very different points of origin for their film industries, necessitating a different lineage to understand contemporary industrial structures. Furthermore, because of institutional relationships between African development projects and US schools and usually Christian churches, Sub-Saharan Anglophone videos are more easily obtained.⁹ By focusing on the historical specificity of audio-visual technology and means of production in Anglophone Sub-Saharan Africa, I am able to form at least provisional boundaries for my corpus.

The Industry: Non-Profit Educational Film and Video in Anglophone Sub-Saharan Africa

Educational film projects addressing critical issues for African audiences are conceived, produced, and viewed in relative isolation in cities and villages dispersed across the Sub-Saharan region. The films and videos discussed in the following chapters achieve physical proximity only at sites of distribution, exhibition, and storage and conceptual proximity within major international aid organizations. Videos from projects in South Africa and Nigeria, for instance, can rest alongside each other on a shelf in a rural Tanzanian family planning clinic, while USAID officers in the United States decided to send funds to aid initiatives that result in separate HIV education films in

⁹ The University of Iowa Main Library houses more than 250 videos sourced from educational distributors across the Sub-Saharan region, thanks to Edward Miner, Bibliographer for African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Studies.

Uganda or Namibia. Ukweli Video Productions in Nairobi, Kenya, a communications affiliate of the Catholic Bishops, houses and internationally sells hundreds of videos as teaching tools collected from Ghana, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, among other locations, and colonial film archives in Britain house films remaining from various imperial education experiments, from Tanganyika to Nigeria to Southern Rhodesia. Simultaneously, contemporary videos from non-profits across Sub-Saharan Africa sit together on storage shelves in American university libraries, largely unbeknownst to the individuals and organizations that imagined and produced them with African audiences in mind.

Despite their diffuse sites of production and somewhat coincidental resting places, African educational films are united via a consistent roster of repeat funders, humanitarian objectives, and intended audience. Credits for financial and other material support for these films and videos reliably feature the same major players that form the international aid community, from the Carnegie, Kellogg, and Ford Foundations to US Aid for International Development (USAID) and its international counterparts, such as the British DFID, Canadian CIDA, Swedish SIDA, and German GIZ. Multinational aid groups, such as UNICEF and Family Health International (FHI), public broadcasting and film organizations, such as SBS Australia and the Danish Film Institute, and issue-specific nonprofits, including Johns Hopkins University Center for Communication Programs (JHU/CCP) and the United States Center for Disease Control (CDC), are common contributors to educational film projects in Sub-Saharan nations. International religious organizations, such as American Congregational missionaries and Gospel Communications International also frequently initiate educational films and regularly appear in funding credits.

The structure of international aid for development communication initiatives produces a high level of consistency in priorities and strategies among major philanthropic organizations. Development is largely defined by the givers, not receivers of funding. For instance, preventing the spread of AIDS has been a defining feature of

African development since the 1990s, a focus propelled largely by global organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), and US aid organizations, such as US Aid for International Development (USAID). Furthermore, communication in the international aid community most frequently means the one-way dissemination of information designed to instigate public behavior in the direction of development, as defined by international funders. Because decisions about what counts as development and how development goals are communicated to populations are made by players at the global level, a vast majority of educational films funded for African audiences in the 1990s and early 2000s consistently address a narrow range of issues deemed critical by the international aid community, such as HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa. Historically, topics ranged from farming to banking to syphilis. More recently, malaria and climate change have become “hot” topics in the international aid and films addressing these issues are now receiving funding. The prevalent ideas and concerns that dominate humanitarian priorities at a global scale indirectly unite African production sites scattered across the Sub-Saharan region through ideology and the financial structure of international non-profit, grant-based funding.

Given the material proximity of African educational films and videos at the global level of funding and the local level of storage and exhibition, it is not surprising that the in-between aspects of content and production are similarly consistent across the body of films released from this industry. As the following chapters demonstrate, African educational films represent a dense nexus of ideas, resources, and political entanglements that are unique to the transnational infrastructure that supports the continued production and distribution of films intended to inform and persuade Sub-Saharan audiences on a range of development related topics. Salient features are evident across factors of time and space, which otherwise disperse the various parts that constitute this industry as a whole. Through collecting the resultant motion pictures into the corpus that informs my research and examining the transnational infrastructure from which they arise, I assert

that the core components of any film industry – funding, production, distribution, exhibition, and audience – are coherent in the Sub-Saharan context to such a degree that they constitute a single industry: the industry of African educational film and video.

To date, published research on African instructional film and video is minimal and largely limited to social scientific efficacy studies intended to evaluate the pedagogical success of individual films. Audience research was conducted as part of the earliest educational film experiments, especially around the Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment (BEKE) in Southern Rhodesia. A similarly large research study was conducted on audience responses to a mobile cinema tour in rural Nigeria in 1952 by P. Morton-Williams under the direction of the British Colonial Film Unit (CFU).¹⁰ Other leadership figures in British colonial educational film include William Sellers, J. Merle Davis, and Julian Huxley, who also called for audience research for the projects they oversaw.¹¹ Similar social science studies are often conducted to determine the efficacy of contemporary videos because proof of efficacy is necessary for securing funding for subsequent projects.

While this type of results-focused research is important for the organizations that fund these projects, especially to justify their continued expense, it does little to illuminate the more pervasive ideological significance of the industry that accumulates

¹⁰ L. A. Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*; P. Morton-Williams, *Cinema in Rural Nigeria: A Field Study of the Impact of Fundamental-Education Films on Rural Audiences in Nigeria*. (University College, Ibadan: West African Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1950); George Pearson, "Commentary Hints," *Colonial Cinema*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1954): 29-30; W. Sellers, "Making Films in and for the Colonies," *Journal of the Royal Society of the Arts*, Vol. 101 (1954): 829-837; W. Sellers, "Mobile Cinema Shows in Africa," *Colonial Cinema*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (December 1954): 75-81; "Shorter Notices" [on education], *African Affairs*, Vol. 51, No. 204 (July, 1952): 260-262; *World Directory of Distribution Sources of Educational Audiovisual Materials Relating to Agriculture and Food: Part 1: Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America*, Provisional Edition (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1978).

¹¹ Femi Okiremuete Shaka, *Modernity and the African Cinema: A Study in Colonialist Discourse, Postcoloniality, and Modern African Identities* (Trenton, NJ and Asmara, Eritrea: Africa World Press, Inc., 2004), 160.

across and between individual films. My approach is rooted in the humanities and is more holistic in that I consider not only the films or their measurable effects on audiences, but the industrial structure in which they are embedded, especially political and economic factors. My approach is grounded in a film studies type of textual and contextual analysis that considers the significance of cinematic specificity and its impact on development communications projects. The following dissertation seeks to fill the existing lacuna of knowledge around these texts by articulating a humanities-based analysis of African educational films and the transnational flow of resources and knowledge on which they are founded.

An Interdisciplinary Approach

African film studies is the primary discipline that houses my objects of study and the questions surrounding them. Canonical scholarship published in this field, such as research by Manthia Diawara, N. Frank Ukadike, Olivier Barlet, and Melissa Thackaway, gives only passing mention to the history of film production prior to independence of most Sub-Saharan nations from their European colonizers around 1960, preferring to address the role of cinema in postcolonial nation building.¹² Contemporary educational films garner minimal, if any, attention. Occasionally, an individual educational film is included in the discussion of African cinemas if it happens to have gained attention at international film festivals alongside more common art style African films. African film studies tends to be dominated by an auteur-centered discourse that pays special attention

¹² Manthia Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992); See also Roy Armes, *Black African Cinema* (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1985); Imruh Bakari and Mbye B. Cham, ed. *African Experiences of Cinema* (London: British Film Institute, 1996); K. Martial Frindéthié, *Francophone African Cinema: History, Culture, Politics and Theory* (Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland and Company, Inc. Publishers, 2009); Kenneth W. Harrow, *Postcolonial African Cinema: From Political Engagement to Postmodernism* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007); François Pfaff, editor, *Focus on African Films* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004).

to the artistic signature of individual filmmakers. Some scholarship has also been done on popular video film industries in Nigeria and Ghana, which emerged in the 1980s.¹³ Educational films and videos rarely fit either mold because producers and directors are working not for artistic, popular, or commercial reasons, but for message-oriented and results-driven productions. The very *raison d'être* of educational videos defies the confines of either cosmopolitan or national film and video industries.

Femi Okiremuete Shaka is one of the only scholars of African cinema to include a thorough discussion of colonial instructional film.¹⁴ Shaka intervenes in the history of colonial film by distinguishing between colonial instructional films, which are pedagogically aimed at African audiences, and what he terms colonialist African cinema, or films about Africa for Western audiences and usually commercial interests. As Shaka explains, the seminal texts on African cinema, such as those by Diawara and Ukadike, fail to distinguish between these two cinematic practices in colonial Africa. Colonial and colonialist films, or what I term films *for* Africa and films *about* Africa, represent different sets of assumptions regarding cinematic content, representational strategies, and expectations of the spectator, in addition to divergent political and economic goals. Films about Africa are produced for audiences in the metropolis and use Africa as a symbolic space of primitivism and, as Shaka claims, bestiality and all the Othering connotations associated with the “Dark Continent.” Instructional cinema of the “for Africa” variety, Shaka conversely claims, presents Africans as knowledgeable and active with the potential for embracing the progress exemplified by characters in the films.¹⁵

¹³ Brian Larkin, *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008); Onookome Okome and Jonathan Haynes, *Cinema and Social Change in West Africa* (Jos, Nigeria: Nigerian Film Institute, 1995); Onookome Okome, “The Context of Film Production in Nigeria: The Colonial Heritage,” *Ufahamu*, Vol. 24, No. 2 and 3 (Spring – Fall 1996): 42-62.

¹⁴ Shaka, *Modernity and the African Cinema*, 8-14 and 155-175.

¹⁵ Shaka, *Modernity and the African Cinema*, 174-175.

I take issue with Shaka's overly optimistic argument about instructional films, but build upon Shaka's foundational premise that films wrapped up in colonial projects and imperial ideology demonstrate differing sets of norms based on the audience to which they are targeted, on the continent or abroad. My dissertation attends to the former category, which has been sorely neglected in scholarship on film in Africa. Unlike Shaka's consideration of instructional films, however, I extend the corpus to include post-Cold War examples and alter the categorization of these films via the broader concept of education. Films from the colonial era that Shaka discusses can be considered explicitly instructional more easily than can those of the postcolonial period. Most British instructional films of the 1920s through the 1940s produced for African audiences were documentary in nature with only a rough fictional narrative structure to frame the otherwise direct transmission of information on banks, farming, or syphilis from film to spectator. As is discussed in detail in chapter one, many such films follow a single stereotyped character who serves only as an excuse for experts to lecture on the intended information to the character, and by extension to the film's audience, forsaking a fuller narrative with multiple conflicts and character development. Shaka makes room for these skeletal stories in his definition of documentary – mostly borrowed from Bill Nichols – to include the sub-category “dramatized documentary.” He can then contain these within the concept of instructional film, which otherwise connotes techniques of direct address and a basic “how to” narrative structure.

The didacticism of instructional forms, however, is not sufficient to describe contemporary films that are engaged with various African development programs, especially in the domain of public health communication initiatives. In fact, several production houses explicitly claim that their films are not instructional. In advertising their films, contemporary producers assert that their films are entertaining, do not speak down to audiences, and avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to the messages they seek to impart. They explicitly declare that “how to” films are boring and therefore not as

effective as their own entertaining educational films – sometimes referred to as “edutainment” or “message films” – that appear on the surface to be designed only for audience pleasure, but have serious messages embedded within.¹⁶ Some of the most successful contemporary feature films, such as *Yellow Card* and *Naliaka is Going* in Zimbabwe and Tanzania, are embraced by regional audiences and held up as evidence of a thriving local film culture with little to no acknowledgement of their educational intent in popular discourse.¹⁷ In light of this larger, visionary approach to disseminating development messages to African audiences embraced in the past two decades by humanitarian organizations, Shaka’s modified category of dramatized documentary within the mode of instructional filmmaking is insufficient. While individual examples are clearly dramatized documentaries – many of the stories told in the STEPS for the Future series out of South Africa are cinematically rendered personal experiences and certain moments within feature fiction films are explicitly instructional, such as when a nurse gives step-by-step instructions on how to avoid transmitting HIV through breast milk to a young mother in a larger dramatic narrative of the mother’s life – contemporary examples on the whole are not exclusively instructional. I use the term “educational” instead to make room for a variety of pedagogical methods of narration by which information about, say, using condoms or visiting health clinics, is imparted to a film or video’s intended audience within a larger, more complex story.

My attention to African educational films and videos and the industrial structure in which they are embedded addresses the rather thin relationship between film studies and African film studies. Film studies scholarship involving Africa has previously

¹⁶ STEPS promotional material claims a non-instructional approach to HIV topics. MFDI similarly asserts that its feature films are more accessible to audiences than instructional films would be. “Yellow Card’s Great Leap,” retrieved November 1, 2008, <http://www.yellow-card.org>.” Don Edkins, personal communication, July 16, 2012.

¹⁷ Edkins, personal communication, July 16, 2012. “Africa’s Biggest Box Office,” retrieved November 1, 2008, <http://www.yellow-card.com>. “Yellow Card’s Great Leap.”

focused mostly on cosmopolitan art-style films. While not art films by name, canonical, usually Francophone African feature films circulate within the domain of global art cinema and are often evaluated as such. Greater attention to filmmaking that crosses national borders has come forward in film studies over the past few years, such as in Nataša Đurovičová and Kathleen Newman's *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives* and Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover's *Global Art Cinema*.¹⁸ These collections, however, remain focused on noteworthy films that circulate the globe in a cosmopolitan manner, designed for and exhibited to audiences that can afford to attend international film festivals and independent art theaters in major metropolitan locales. Development cinema, on the other hand, is much less glamorous, but similarly transnational in its production and exhibition infrastructure. By often targeting poor and disenfranchised audiences, however, the films and videos within this transnational industry have habitually slipped under the radar of global film studies.

Film studies scholarship has only recently begun to include Nigerian video films, with even less attention to similar industries in Ghana, Uganda, and Tanzania. Commercial video films do not fit the standards of international art cinema, especially because of their lower production values, gritty, low-budget aesthetics, and overt appeal to mass audiences through the exploitation of standard popular genres, such as crime, romance, and action. There are, however, established models for studying various dimensions of national popular industries. The straight-to-video model opens up interesting new lines of inquiry, but the "African-ness" of these commercial industries is largely unquestionable. While talent is occasionally shared between commercial studios

¹⁸ Nataša Đurovičová and Kathleen Newman, editors, *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010); Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover, editors, *Global Art Cinema: New Theories and Histories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

and non-profit productions, the position of educational films remains much more ambiguous and subject to very different epistemological questions.

Most of the texts in my corpus also fall within the relatively nascent, catch-all category of non-theatrical film, which includes such diverse objects as scientific films, instructional films, surveillance video, and similar categories that defy the foundational distinction between fiction and non-fiction filmmaking common in the field of film studies. The story of non-theatrical film, in the US and globally, is just now being written, especially since increased interest in early film history due to the 1995 centennial anniversary of moving pictures, which propelled many film historians into the archives. Several archives in the United States have recently been mined for their collections of educational films from projects of the inter- and post-war years. Some public access to non-theatrical film of the British Empire is now available, as well, through British Film Institute (BFI) restoration projects that have put several early gems online for general viewing, including three remaining artifacts from the BEKE project. A few African national archives also house early development films, but restoration and access is very limited by funding restrictions and government priorities. I hope that my research contributes to collection of knowledge that is currently building the parameters of the sub-discipline of non-theatrical film studies.

As is reflected in the difficulty of fitting educational films within the categories described above, films populating my corpus present a philosophical problem for film studies, in general. While I draw on the interdisciplinary foundation of film studies, the field has largely been built around questions of aesthetics in both fiction and non-fiction modes. Consideration of aesthetics, however, plays a minor role in the discourse and existential purpose of non-profit educational films and videos, whose primary objective is to change African audiences' behavior. I investigate the relationship between cinema and Sub-Saharan politics, culture, and economics, a relationship which is haunted by a pedagogical imperative arising from colonial history and contemporary conditions of

underdevelopment. My intervention draws attention to fuzzy boundaries of conventional categories and raises questions about what counts as African film within the discipline.

In addition to expanding the field of African film studies, the significance of educational film and video is relevant to a wide range of disciplines. A holistic understanding of these films draws on perspectives from Anthropology, Sociology, Political Science, International Studies, African History, and Film Studies, among others. Most non-social science research has been published within the domains of African history and African colonial history, making use of films and documents housed in national archives in Tanzania and Zimbabwe, for instance. Development films and videos are closely tied to the position of Sub-Saharan nations within the global political economy, especially regarding the uneven distribution of resources geographically, thereby engaging scholarship in political geography and colonial and postcolonial history, as well.

Beyond African history and politics, social sciences have the most direct relationship with educational films in Africa. Anthropologists have been involved with this industry from the beginning. The BEKE's objectives, for instance, emerged from field research by J. Merle Davis in Northern Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo. Acting for the Department of Social and Industrial Research of the International Missionary Council, Davis' 1932 study found that the social fabric of the African tribe was undermined due to contact with western industrial life.¹⁹ In his 1952 study across rural Nigeria, Morton-Williams directly engaged with anthropological and social psychological theory. He explains the historical use of the idea of primitivism and uses his research with African audiences to disprove notions of racial hierarchy. In

¹⁹ J. Merle Davis, "Forward," in Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*, 9.

conversation with anthropologists, such as E. Evans-Pritchard, Morton-Williams includes his audience studies with other research on African cultures.²⁰

Sociological questions are central to motivating and designing media to communicate with diverse African populations. Concerns about changing social relationships and customs explicitly provide the impetus for several projects, as with the BEKE's anxiety about the effect of mining towns on workers' social lives. Colonial authorities were also concerned with the sociological impact of Hollywood films, to which Africans had only recently gained widespread access. Censorship regulations were developed especially in response to the fear that films from abroad would decrease black miners' respect for white colonial authorities.²¹ Historically, anthropologists and sociologists have had some relationship, such as in advisory or research capacities, to educational filmmaking in Sub-Saharan Africa.

As in the example of the BEKE, religious interests have also long been involved in educational film projects. The role of religion in the production of African films and videos, of educational and other purposes, is part of a history of Christian missionary presence in the region. As with the BEKE, early film projects often involved priests.²² Today, many contemporary educational videos are produced by Christian institutions and assert spiritual solutions to public problems. Ukweli Video Productions in Nairobi, Kenya, for instance, is a faith-based media production center, distributing such films as *Clean Hands* (G. M. K. Onguso, no date), which advocates faith in the face of domestic

²⁰ Morton-Williams, *Cinema in Rural Nigeria*, 38-47.

²¹ Rob Skinner, "'Natives are Not Critical of Photographic Quality': Censorship, Education and Films in African Colonies Between the Wars," *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 2 (2001): 1-9; James R. Brennan, "Democratizing Cinema and Censorship in Tanzania, 1920-1980," *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (2005): 481-511.

²² Reynolds, "The Bantu Educational Kinema Experiment," 56-58; Rosaleen Smyth, "The British Colonial Film Unit and Sub-Saharan Africa, 1939-1945," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (1988): 285-298.

violence and HIV. *Starting Over* (Heinz Fussle, Gospel Response to AIDS, 2006) is a production of Gospel Response to AIDS (GRAIDS) that presents a confessional approach to testing HIV positive. The film advocates that a young man publicly admit guilt for sexual promiscuity in order to achieve personal, community, and divine forgiveness. The role of religion in development cinema raises numerous questions that I touch on in the following chapters, but that deserve their own specific inquiry.

Gender-specific elements of the educational film industry expand the significance of my research into the fields of gender and women's studies. Contemporary educational films reflect a strident effort to shift gender relations in order to address Western anxieties about the role of women in African development, a concern which has permeated intervention in developing nations following the influence of second wave feminism. Approaches range from films that suggest women in diverse African societies should be treated more like women in European and American societies or that men should change norms of masculinity, to narratives that represent more culturally specific solutions to topics of women's welfare. Questions within women's and gender studies disciplines are pertinent in the analysis of these films.

My analyses engage recent debates on the role of international humanitarian aid, especially the place of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international governmental organizations (IGOs) in developing nations and their efforts at public health communication. By bringing an interdisciplinary approach to these debates, I combine my analyses of text and context to illustrate the significance of educational films, both in their very existence and in the nuances of their content and pedagogical uses, as they are used by Western-funded humanitarian and development projects in Africa.

I also intend for my research to be valuable to those working "in the field" or "on the ground," on African development communication projects. Humanitarian professionals regularly demonstrate honest concern about how their projects relate to

broader national and global systems and I hope that my research contextualizes their work in ways that are helpful to their efforts. They work in a constantly shifting global political milieu that enables and challenges their efforts in what continues to be an experimental field of film production and development practices. My research is not meant to argue for or against the use of film and video in the dissemination of development information, nor do I mean for my conclusions to advocate certain ways of designing such projects. Efficacy debates already dominate the discussion about educational media. Instead, my research puts these debates in context. Questions of historicity and ideology still need to be asked and it is this area of concern that I address with my research and conclusions.

Chapter Breakdown

In chapter one I identify continuities across time and space that characterize African educational film as an industry. I utilize the archival research done on the history of instructional film experiments under British colonial rule, what I refer to as the first cycle. I detail the similar structure of funding, production, distribution, exhibition, intended audience, and intended result that are replicated in the second, current cycle from the late 1980s to the present. This chapter asks: What is an African educational film or video? What does it look like? And from where and whom does it come? The history presented in this chapter also considers: For whose benefit does the industry exist? What are its ideological foundations and consequences?

In chapter two I address the features of the current cycle that distinguish it from the first: the dramatic proliferation of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa that has captivated the international aid community's attention since the mid-1990s, the availability of video technology beginning in the late 1980s; and post-Cold War international relations defined by transnational flows of power, resources, and ideas, in this case through the international aid community from major funders at the global level

to small non-profits operating on a local scale. In this chapter I engage with debates around the proliferation of NGOs in developing nations, situating video-producing non-profits within this phenomenon, especially regarding effects such as the dearth of national funding for public health issues, as well as educational film producers' relationship with parallel commercial video industries in nations such as Tanzania and Uganda. This chapter outlines the specificity of transnational power relations as they are manifest in Sub-Saharan nations through the unique media of educational film and video.

Chapter three is broadly focused on questions of gender through analysis of two feature educational films, *Yellow Card* (John Riber, Media for Development International, Zimbabwe, 2000) and *Naliaka is Going* (Albert Wandago, Kenya, 2003), starring a young male and young female protagonist, respectively. I discuss the ways in which imperatives of Neoliberalism, which are attached to funding grants, constitute and limit what can be done in and with these educational films. An emphasis on creating change through working with and transforming women and their social position in developing nations has guided the distribution of aid, up to and including the models of change narrated in educational films. I consider the thorny nature of dominant concepts of global human rights and women's rights; competing pressures on African women to both achieve liberation in a Western humanist sense and/or maintain social and familial harmony through valorizing the status quo, such as for the greater good of national solidarity or revaluing "traditional" practices; and competing notions of what counts as women's agency, in this case engaging with debates in transnational feminist scholarship and practice.

Chapter four considers innovations in educational media that, to varying degrees, ameliorate some of the problematics raised in the preceding chapters. This chapter details the nuances of three recent projects – STEPS for the Future documentaries of Cape Town, MFDI's integration with local media markets in Dar es Salaam, and Scenarios

Africa youth-generated videos coming out of Ouagadougou – asking what makes them unique and how they may contribute to increasing, not decreasing African autonomy.

CHAPTER 1: THE STABILITY OF CRISIS

The Cycle of Need and Aid in the African Educational FilmIndustry*African Peasant Farms*

The 1936 short film *African Peasant Farms – The Kingolwira Experiment* (L. A. Notcutt, Tanganyika and Great Britain; 9 minutes) begins with an over the shoulder, low angle medium shot of an unspecified African man looking up at a signpost directing him – and by extension, the audience – to the settlement of Kingolwira.²³ On his brief journey to the government-run demonstration land, where a policy of mixed farming for cash crops was enforced in a tsetse-fly infested region, the unnamed protagonist passes and asks for directions from a pair of travelling musicians playing African instruments. Upon entering the settlement, he is inspected for tsetse flies and the audience is treated to a close-up of a fly on his shoulder, which is netted and removed by the black African inspector. He is shortly thereafter greeted by, first, an African, and then, a European official, who, in a static long-shot points to direct the protagonist to take a look around the settlement. The remainder of the film follows the man as he watches and learns from farmers on the settlement.

Many features evident in *African Peasant Farms* are exemplary of its contemporaries and continue to be used in more recent films: A simple narrative structure provides a basic frame for presenting information to the audience. A primary educational message imparts information and aims to familiarize the audience with new behaviors accordingly. Knowledge from scientific, post-Enlightenment authorities is privileged over pre-modern wisdom. The protagonist is minimally characterized and simply models

²³ *African Peasant Farms* and other BEKE shorts have been restored and digitalized by the British Colonial Film project. The can be found at <http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/production-company/bekefilm>.

ideal behavior and attitudes spectators are expected to learn and emulate. Ethnographic moments capture local culture to share with diverse audiences.

BEKE films were screened via outdoor mobile cinemas in villages across Tanganyika, and during L. A. Notcutt's 1935-1937 tour of rural Nigeria.²⁴ The itinerant and non-profit nature of a travelling film show is repeated today, now enabled by more mobile video technology. Variable soundtracks were and are available. On the surviving print of *African Peasant Farms*, basic narrative information is provided via English intertitles, which would have been superfluous to the mostly illiterate African audiences. Accompanying sound-on-disk soundtracks or live narrations would have provided necessary information in indigenous languages and, with the use of largely extemporaneous narrators, some colorful commentary and extra narrative details were often included, as well.²⁵ Recent technology allows for relatively easy dubbing in multiple languages, both colonial and indigenous, following the tradition established by the first cycle films. MFDI, for example, distributes its major videos in numerous indigenous languages, including Swahili, Shona, Ndebele, Bemba, Nyanja, and Tonga, among others.

Key behind-the-scenes features of *Peasant Farms* are also illustrative of the general structure of the industry in both the first and third cycles. The film was produced by L. A. Notcutt, a white, British producer-director working on an agenda set and financed by overseas philanthropic donors, including the US-based Carnegie Foundation. The cast and crew were primarily black Africans hired locally. The story was developed via collaborative script writing with numerous stake holders including representatives of funding organizations, other humanitarian professionals and NGOs, and "native

²⁴ Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*.

²⁵ James Burns, "Watching Africans Watch Films: Theories of Spectatorship in British Colonial Africa," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (2000): 197-211.

informant” cultural representatives, such as *griot*-style storytellers or travelling theater groups. The film was produced, distributed, and exhibited all on a non-profit economic structure.

A Tale of Two Futures

70 years after *Peasant Farms*, UNICEF Swaziland produced the feature length educational film *A Tale of Two Futures* (Alan Brody, 2006) to complement the IGO’s existing outreach and educational programs around mother-infant health, especially by disseminating information on behaviors that minimize the transmission of HIV from mother to child during pregnancy and through breast milk. The story dramatized in *Two Futures* is remarkably similar to that of *Peasant Farms* and the video’s material history repeats many norms of the industry first seen in *Peasant Farms* and its contemporaries. *A Tale of Two Futures* began as a travelling theater production and an interactive teaching tool known as “The String Game,” which illustrates how HIV spreads across a population. The film was scripted and produced in order to expand the impact of the live teaching format.²⁶

Two Futures narrates the parallel stories of two young Swazi men, their romantic and familial lives, and their disparate approaches to learning about and dealing with HIV/AIDS. The first character, Peter, is a truck driver, who the film quickly establishes as fast and loose with women. The film opens its story with a scene of Peter flirting with a pretty young woman and bragging about his sexual prowess to his friends. After marrying his primary love interest, Thandi, Peter seems to be happy and healthy and poised for a fulfilling future for his family. Peter’s good friend, Solomon, is a taxi van driver, who marries Thandi’s best girl friend, Thuli. The two women are introduced to the

²⁶ Alan Brody, “Pragmatics of Development Planning: Development Support Communication and ‘the DSC Approach’,” lecture, Development Policy and Planning Course, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, October 13, 1999. Personal collection.

audience together, engaging in “girl talk” about the charms of their prospective husbands while they go about their daily activities. This strategy of embedding serious discussion in scenes of everyday activities – domestic chores, like laundry and sweeping the front porch, for the women and around work tasks, such as driving Peter’s truck or picking up passengers in Solomon’s van, for the men – is used throughout the film to normalize conversations that would otherwise be quite private. The inclusion of scenes of daily life is also a carefully constructed technique to encourage greater audience identification with characters on screen that look and act like them. With this exposition, the scene is set for two parallel tales from the lives of average Swazis.

By and by, the two couples marry and the wives become pregnant. This commences several personal discussions about the choices available to African families embedded in a postcolonial society filled with multiple beliefs on health practices. Thandi and Thuli journey to a nearby health clinic to get information about their pregnancies and learn how to ensure that they have healthy children. This first visit to the clinic includes a noteworthy scene of direct instructional content. Addressing a room full of young women, a black clinic nurse explains how the testing will proceed. In a similar scene later in the film, clinic visitors pose questions to the nurses, thereby providing the nurses – and the film – the opportunity to correct common misinformation about HIV transmission. These useful *mise-en-abyme* sequences mark a frequently used strategy for incorporating teaching moments into a film’s overall narrative. These scenes draw attention to educational intent embedded in melodramatic narrative elements of grief and love and death and hopefulness, distinguishing films of this industry from entertainment or art industry products due to their specifically pedagogical content and purpose.

The women take this information back to their husbands, marking the point in the story where the two men’s lives head in different directions leading to vastly different futures. Peter refuses to be tested for HIV, despite Thandi’s request. Thandi goes for testing alone and learns that she is currently HIV negative. She makes an effort to

maintain this status by asking her husband to use condoms during her pregnancy as suggested by the clinic nurse. But Peter refuses and in one violent bedroom scene, forces himself on Thandi. Conversely, Solomon agrees to be tested with his wife and they discover that Thuli is HIV positive. The film takes pains to explain that she contracted HIV from abuse by an older man when she was a child. Together, Solomon and Thuli make visits to the clinic throughout her pregnancy and learn from the staff about a variety of techniques to prevent the spread of the virus to either Solomon or their baby. Solomon and Thuli comply with preventative behaviors by using condoms, giving birth at a hospital with special medications, and boiling breast milk or using formula to feed their newborn son. Several scenes illustrate Thuli executing these preventive measures in detail, in a deliberate manner that audience members could replicate.

While Solomon and Thuli learn and practice new behaviors from the clinic staff, Thandi is instead forced by her husband and vicious mother-in-law to give birth at home. Shortly thereafter, her infant son becomes ill. After many dramatic confrontations between Thandi and Peter and Peter's belligerent mother, Thandi eventually travels to the clinic with her baby only to find out that they both now test positive for HIV. Her efforts to improve the health of her baby are further thwarted when Peter and his mother force her to visit a traditional healer, whose witchcraft is coded as savage and dangerous, such as through filmic techniques like frighteningly canted angles and close-ups of his dirty knife. Eventually, both Peter and the baby die miserable AIDS-related deaths. Even the mother-in-law dies from an otherwise benign illness that could have been cured if only she had allowed Thandi to take her to the clinic. The two parallel stories conclude with Solomon, Thuli, and their son forming a strong, happy family, while they work together to educate their parents against stigmatizing Thuli for her HIV status. Thandi, finally free of the fatal control over her body and actions exercised by her ignorant husband and mother-in-law collects her life and bravely sets off to work as an HIV/AIDS educator in her community.

Research and publicity material for *Two Futures* emphasize that the project is a unique innovation, a groundbreaking method of health communication, key to combating the widespread outbreak of HIV/AIDS in Swaziland and neighboring Lesotho. In response to the burgeoning AIDS epidemic, which was just becoming visible in the early 1990s due to widespread death in the region, UNICEF Swaziland developed this communication approach using story telling as a means of education on health related behaviors to aid the population with whom they did their humanitarian work.²⁷ Building on its existing relationship with a local theater group, the organization sought to expand its efforts to the more mobile medium of video. UNICEF's experiment with education through video for its largely rural and poor target population may have been singular in this specific locality, but is actually one of many similar experiments, like the BEKE that produced *Peasant Farms*, to take this approach at various times in the past century.

The use of narrative film as an educational tool for African audiences began in the 1920s under the rubric and resources of colonial development. The structures and strategies established by early projects, such as BEKE, have since found an enduring legacy in humanitarian films and videos produced and distributed from the late 1980s to the present. Most films of the first cycle were shorts, but more recent videos range from shorts to feature length. Fictionalized narratives are the dominant mode, with only rare examples of documentary and direct address techniques. Exhibition in the early experiments was mostly made possible by mobile cinema vans with small crews and all the necessary projection equipment. The geographic regions targeted were determined by colonial administrators. Britain, France, and, to a smaller extent, Germany and Belgium made use of film in their African colonies, but Britain lead in the employment of film for educational purposes, so this dissertation relies primarily on Anglophone examples.

²⁷ Alan Brody, email communication with author, March 12, 2010.

While important differences distinguish films of the first cycle, those of the 1920s to the 1950s, from educational films of the second, contemporary cycle beginning in the late 1980s (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2), a host of common features are evident across educational media projects otherwise separated by time, space, and the ever-shifting political geography of Sub-Saharan Africa. This chapter delineates major continuities between projects of the first and third cycles of educational films for African audiences. I consider these continuities as they are manifest (1) internally within the narrative and filmic presentation of each film, and (2) externally in the fact of these films and the industrial apparatus from which they arise. This historical comparison argues for understanding African educational filmmaking as a coherent, albeit geographically diffuse film industry, because of the persistent transnational infrastructure on which it is built, the consistent narrative of African crisis elaborated by each film, and shared expectations of and assumptions about African audiences evident in the films and the methods by which they are disseminated.

Internal to Films: Claiming Modernity

What do African educational movies look like? And why?: Educational motion pictures in Sub-Saharan Africa were originally recorded and exhibited on film. Since the advent of video technology, VHS and DVD are the primary formats, allowing for home viewing in addition to exhibition in institutional settings.²⁸ Videos are usually encased in photocopied covers with minimal graphics. Occasional theater screenings in large cities make use of film projection, if available, plus many videos are exhibited on television, and, more recently, can be found online, such as on YouTube, surrounded by the usual attendants of audio-visual noise, such as advertising and recommended videos, therein.

²⁸ Videos that gain popularity in urban markets are discernible by the rough aesthetics of film piracy culture, although the shift to DVD, wherever VHS never took hold, has ameliorated the tell-tale scratchy images of over-copied VHS. Larkin, *Signal and Noise*.

In line with the fact that educational videos are made on small budgets – tiny by Hollywood standards, but large by Sub-Saharan norms – the production values tend to be relatively poor. The few well-funded projects stand out for their higher production values, such as more purposeful lighting and clearer and more balanced sound. More often than not, footage is from location shooting with minimally trained, usually locally sourced African actors, sparsely synched sound, and cinematography notable for its practicality, rather than an expensive artistic vision. The images feature urban and rural landscapes and the narratives depict youth or adult situations, depending on a film's target audience. Editing and cinematography are relatively inconsistent within films, as well as across the industry. Colonial films are full of long shots with static cameras and long takes, accompanied by minimal and brief close-ups. In videos of the third cycle, editing demonstrates more variety, but is rarely invisible as has become the norm due to the dominance of the classical Hollywood model. Continuity of time and space are more often suggested than achieved, although the narratives remain legible despite the absence of sophisticated continuity editing. Production values tend to correlate to the technical education of individual films' directors and producers – some directors were trained in the US, Paris, or Ouagadougou, while others are self-trained, especially with digital equipment – as well as to the technological and experiential resources available in local production studios.

Narrative content is most frequently generated by a committee, comprised of representation from funders, humanitarian experts, and local NGO leaders. Publicity materials often advertise that educational film scripts were written in collaboration with renowned African storytellers. By employing indigenous scriptwriters, for example, these films appeal to the authority that storytellers hold in cultures with a history of orality. This appeal is not unique to the educational communications industry in Africa – Ousmane Sembène, for instance, expressly situated his work as a filmmaker in the

tradition of the *griot*, described below²⁹ – but the claim to authority in this context has uniquely political consequences because it entwines outside players, often white (European, American, or white South African) producers and directors, to individuals and traditions coded as internal and authentic, via cultural forms of storytelling translated to cinema, itself a technological symbol of modern mastery.

The content of educational films for African audiences is dominated by didactic narrative form partially evident in films of the first cycle and even more common in third cycle examples. Historically, the logic behind this approach claims that African audiences are more likely to comprehend a film’s intended message if it is presented in story form.³⁰ Producers in the colonial period asserted that the narratives they generated fit into an existing culture of orality, such as that of the *griot*. In cultures claiming a *griot*, communal knowledge and history resides in and generates life from each community’s designated storyteller, which is often an inherited position. The *griot* is a figure indigenous to many West African societies, but through foreigners’ accounts the concept has become generalized as a metonym for cultural forms not based on writing and reading, a sentiment that has been generally attributed to the entire Sub-Saharan region and its diverse cultures.³¹ All things oral, then, have come to signify authenticity – be it judged noble or primitive – via an appeal to precolonial tradition especially when texts, like educational films, seek to court African sensibilities. Orality, in opposition to written history of Europe, has come to stand in as a marker of African alterity.

Travelling theater troupes present a related phenomenon of collaboration on content between local and global entities. Theater groups provide a readymade source for experienced cast and crew members and are valuable in the project to emphasize African

²⁹ Ukadike *Black African Cinema*.

³⁰ Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*; Sellers, “Mobile Cinema Shows in Africa.”

³¹ Thackaway, *Africa Shoots Back*.

involvement in communication initiatives. Live theater has a long and deep history in many Sub-Saharan cultures. In the past few decades, theater troupes have taken an active role in response to HIV, in particular, and use their existing cultural position to disseminate information to their audiences, especially through travelling performance groups. Several educational film projects build on this existing infrastructure. Some videos are taped theater performances and others are theater plays adapted to film. *Clean Hands*, for example, is a recorded stage production performed theatrically for the camera. Existing theater troupes furthermore provide experienced actors often used in educational films. In a few recent examples, a similar relationship has been forged between educational film funders and popular video industries, such as the video industry in Nigeria. The film *Starting Over* for example, was initiated and funded by Gospel Communications International, who hired an experienced production crew and popular director from Nigeria to execute the filmmaking process, thereby employing local resources as part of its larger, globally focused mission.

In addition to personnel involved in generating content, common narrative forms add continuity between films across the industry. Stories predominantly resemble morality tales – simpler in the first cycle and more melodramatic in the second – akin to Ashanti Anansi stories or Christian biblical parables. The films feature an ideal protagonist with whom the audience is meant to identify. They begin with an African character that is ignorant of certain knowledge or practices the film has been commissioned to disseminate, such as modern farming techniques, how to use a bank, or how to trust information and treatments prescribed by the local health clinic. Over the course of such a film, be it seven minutes or 70, the protagonist gains the knowledge necessary to alleviate his naïve condition and demonstrates how to execute the thoughts and behaviors necessary for modern life as it is defined within the film. This model of education through narrative entertainment – in some cases described as edutainment, message films, or wholesome diversions – intends for the viewer to identify with the

exemplary protagonist and thereafter replicate the behaviors presented therein, as well as reproduce the overall transformation from ignorant to capable in his or her daily life.

The extent to which individual behaviors change among audience members due to any given film is debatable – this is the primary subject of concern in the predominantly social scientific research on these films – but the shared pedagogical approach of using narrative to illustrate the intended message is clear and intentionally deployed by producers across the industry. Notcutt, for example, states that he and his partner, Leslie Latham, used the theme of “progress versus African methods” in many of their films’ narratives.³² Many such stories use a bad figure against which the good is foiled, the “good African versus bad African” narrative trope, which is repeated in many projects both then and now. Good, in this case, is defined as a character that fully embraces “modern” behaviors in line with African colonial or national development, while bad is affiliated with rejection of modern practices and a turn to pre-modern behaviors asserted to be ineffectual. Moreover, there is a recurring effort to school against practices coded as old, primitive, and uniquely African and replace them with actions and attitudes coded as new, modern, and redolent with the appeal of progress inherent in the promise of Western-style development.

In her analysis of health education in colonial Africa, Megan Vaughan describes the early 1940s film *Mr. Wise and Mr. Foolish Go to Town*.³³ This short film was screened throughout Nigeria by the CFU’s mobile cinema units. It situates a free local hospital as the source of a cure for the hapless title characters’ cases of syphilis. After a promiscuous visit “to town” where they both contract syphilis, Mr. Wise visits the

³² Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*; J. M. Burns, *Flickering Shadows: Cinema and Identity in Colonial Zimbabwe* (Athens Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2002), 27.

³³ Megan Vaughan, “‘Seeing is Believing’: Colonial Health Education Films and the Question of Identity.” In *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991, 180-199.

hospital, receives treatment, and is cured. Furthermore, the generous white doctor at this public institution declines payment. Mr. Foolish lives up to his name by willfully refusing the doctor's proffered medication. He instead seeks out a village healer who is portrayed as a quack and charges Mr. Foolish an exorbitant fee for his ineffectual services.

In the context of other health education programs in African colonies, Vaughan concludes that, in colonial health films like *Mr. Wise and Mr. Foolish*, a character's moral worth is measured by his or her willingness to adapt to modern methods and behaviors, as defined by the European colonizers' systems of knowledge. As with *Peasant Farmers* and *Two Futures*, the moral lesson in *Mr. Wise and Mr. Foolish* is illustrated by foiling the example of the "bad" African, who turns to precolonial social relationships for healing, against the "good" African, who accepts aid from a medical professional robed in the signifiers of European authority. Attributing moral correctness to certain behaviors is a common strategy across educational films specifically in Africa. The appeal here is not to intellect and scientific logic. Whereas sex education films in American classrooms focus on stating scientific facts and expect the audience to reach correct conclusions about how to apply that knowledge,³⁴ the films and videos designed to educate Sub-Saharan audiences instead work to produce an affective attachment to social harmony through normalizing desired behaviors and stigmatizing practices the development initiative seeks to eliminate.

There is an important distinction to note between the colonial films' rendering of the clinic scene and the postcolonial version: The professionals endowed with the authority of post-Enlightenment reason shift from being singular white characters in *Peasant Farmers* and *Mr. Wise and Mr. Foolish* to a collection of predominantly black characters in *Two Futures*. Whereas a government worker merely directs the peasant

³⁴ Robert Eberwein, *Sex Ed: Film, Video, and the Framework of Desire* (New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press, 1999), 113.

farmer to the white colonial official for information and Mr. Wise learns of modern syphilis treatment from a white British doctor in a clinic run by the colonial government, Solomon and Thuli's fruitful future begins with the lessons learned from black clinic nurses and doctors. This shift in characters does not, however, alter the attribution of authority to a belief in modernity and its signifiers. The vessels of information differ in respect to postcolonial national sovereignty, but the authority of the clinic site or government office is consistently attributed to knowledge sourced from European – and more recently, American – advancements in science and economics.

Authority is painstakingly constructed through complex technologies of organization essential to the colonial project, in which educational media are imbricated. In order to have authority over what counts as knowledge and, subsequently, how to disseminate that knowledge to others via educational institutions, the West must distinguish itself from all others who do not have, but desperately need, that knowledge. Hierarchical binaries like this are a foundational truth of post-Enlightenment modernity and its imperial manifestations in European colonial history. According to this logic, elaborated and deconstructed by poststructuralist critics, the very existence of an object as discrete depends on the idea that it is *not* all of the other possible objects in the world. One object is differentiated from all others via the linguistic, or more broadly, symbolic, process of naming and categorization.³⁵

More specifically, Europe's defining attribute, modernity, depends on its construction as a binary opposite to precolonial, preindustrial, pre-Enlightenment societies, such as those of medieval Europe or in lands beyond the Mediterranean. Colonies like those in Africa therefore act as the discursive opposite on which Europe's sense of self depends. Postcolonial critics, from Franz Fanon, Aimee Cesaire, and

³⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* [1966] (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

Edward Said, forward, have shown that the discourse of colonialism reveals more about the colonizer than about the colonized, who are visibly present in cultural representations, but invisible in their lived experiences of colonial domination. The colonizer and colonized are constructed in fundamentally entwined ways despite the assertion of exclusive difference and the overwhelming attention paid to African alterity in colonial culture. Simon Gikandi,³⁶ postcolonial scholar of Anglophone African literatures, describes this relationship while parsing through the history that produces “Englishness.” Like his theoretical predecessors, such as Cesaire and Said, Gikandi illustrates how European imaginings of Africa reveal more about Europe than Africa. Using the example of cricket, for instance, Gikandi claims that Englishness is never a singularly “English” practice, but is forged in the relationship between Britain and its colonies.³⁷ As Said explains in *Orientalism*, the symptoms of imperial discourse are evident in cultural products and emerge from discursive practices, as well as colonial institutions – ruling policies and procedures – and their postcolonial descendants.³⁸

Africa holds a special place in the production of European modernity; the history of contact between Europe and Africa has been particularly constitutive of the modernity Europe claims as its own. Signified by its designation as the Dark Continent, Africa is the very antithesis of the illumination provided by the Enlightenment with its trappings of reason, freedom, and emancipatory progress that have modernized Europe since the seventeenth century. British, French, German, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies, in general, play an important role in the construction of imperial Europe as a bastion of progress, but Africa has a particularly fraught history with the “quarrel” about

³⁶ Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

³⁷ Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness*.

³⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* [1978], 25th Anniversary Edition, (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 1-25.

modernity.³⁹ The relationship between Africa – its peoples, social structures, political arrangements, cultural productions, and economic systems – and the equally conflicted concept of modernity is further complicated by competing definitions of modernity. Moreover, manifestations of modernity, such as industrialization and urbanization, in Africa have been in some cases constructive and in many others destructive, incubating a general ambivalence by Africans toward the modernizing project.⁴⁰

The regulatory mechanism of assigning the qualities of civilization to Europe and signifying Africa as savage is strategically significant because it justifies the benevolence of white rule over native peoples. Colonial educational programs, including those that employed audio-visual teaching tools, often depended on representing African subjects as empty vessels to be filled with the reason and knowledge attained in Europe by the Enlightenment, further policing the boundaries of the colonizer's Self as distinct from the colonized Other. This neediness can be understood in a positive way as representing the capacity of African subjects for learning and eagerness to develop their nations, as Femi Shaka argues,⁴¹ or, in a negative light, as further evidence of the patronizing posture of colonizing nations toward their colonies. This is a matter of perspective and political objectives – finding the hope in an otherwise repressive situation has the potential to enable greater agency. Regardless of the judgment, however, the dichotomy depends on marking the difference between Europe and Africa, colonizer and colonized, developed and underdeveloped, or, in the case of educational media, between funder and spectator, provider and benefactor.

³⁹ Stephan Meyer and Thomas Olver, "Alternative Modernities in African Literatures and Cultures," *Journal of Literary Studies* (University of South Africa), Vol. 18, No. 1/2 (June 2002): 1.

⁴⁰ Nigerian film scholar, Shaka, claims, "The peculiar process of Africa's entrance into modernity has produced a feeling of ambivalence towards the whole project of modernity in Africans." Shaka, *Modernity and the African Cinema*, 45.

⁴¹ Shaka, *Modernity and the African Cinema*.

The discursive position of Africa within modernity, then, matters for global political relationships and economic influence, as well as to comprehend the meaning of cultural products produced and circulated in this densely layered and knotty state of affairs. But what exactly is the modernity and how does it position Africa? Some claim modernity is plural.⁴² Plurality is a useful concept in that it allows for a distinction between particulars of Euromodernity or Afromodernity. But my analysis draws more on postcolonial critics that emphasize the internally contradictory nature of modernity; analysis of global political, cultural, and economic relationships gains more nuance through attention to differences and inequalities *within* the modern episteme rather than *between* arbitrarily distinct models.⁴³ Modernity, as a network of power relations and technologies of discipline and control that constitute subjects and is mutually constitutive of the modern nation-state, has real historical effects and resonates deeply in ongoing discourses of development in African nations and questions of nationalism in the post-independence period. I therefore hesitate to merely pluralize modernities as though they can function as discrete ideological systems alongside each other. Instead, I agree with critiques that express the inequalities internal to the project of modernity because this approach maintains the intersectional nature of cultural, political, and economic factors that determine how modernity is manifest in different historical times and in different geographical spaces.

Modernity is composed of relationships that crisscross the globe producing differing effects in different spaces at different times. Euromodernity is a master narrative

⁴² Jan-Georg Deutsch, P. Probst, and H. Schmidt, "Introduction: Cherished Visions and Entangled Meanings," *African Modernities* (London: James Currey 2002), 1-17; Meyer and Olver, "Alternative Modernities in African Literatures and Cultures," 1-23.

⁴³ See Jasbir Puar on the affective turn in cultural studies for further elaboration on difference within versus difference between, a strategy often used to move beyond the political binds of identity politics. Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007).

that seeks to sublimate its own fractured nature. This myth of a singular modernity – made prominent by the material dominance of EuroAmerican ideological and commercial interests – suggests that Enlightenment development was produced exclusively within Europe and was then disseminated abroad through empire building, that empire emerges from modernity, a myth which bolsters imperial interests. Postcolonial scholars have detailed the ways by which modernity was instead constructed through the processes of empire building and has been just as influential on the construction of the metropole and European identities as on the colonies.

Modernity is internally contradictory and forged at the site of contact zones, such as in colonial cities.⁴⁴ The episteme that came to be consolidated under the concept of the modern emerged over time through conflicts across the globe, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Colonial contact has left a lasting legacy on the development of African nation-states and the relationships established between governments and their populations, a history which is integral to African subjectivity and nationalisms. As Gikandi describes, modernity “is a key constituent of African identities.” Responses to modernizing efforts, even reactionary responses, play a central role in how the state creates and institutionalizes a set of meanings that define and discipline its subjects.⁴⁵ Through the history of colonialism and more recent neoliberal forms of development, Africans are forced into the institutional apparatus of modernity, such as through requirements to open markets to multinational corporations in exchange for World Bank aid. Appeals to modernity, while inconsistent and internally

⁴⁴ Simon Gikandi, “Introduction: Africa, Diaspora, and the Discourse of Modernity,” *Research in African Literatures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), Special Issue: The “Black Atlantic,” Vol. 27, No. 4 (Winter 1996): 1-6.

⁴⁵ Achille Mbembe provides a detailed discussion on mechanisms of state power in African nations and socio-historical meaning via the “aesthetics of vulgarity.” See Achille Mbembe, “The Aesthetics of Vulgarity,” *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 102-141.

contradictory, remain strong in ongoing efforts to modernize and build stable postcolonial nations. This results in conflicting allegiances to colonial institutions and anti-colonial sentiments, especially regarding efforts to construct the postcolonial nation. Striving for modern development can lead to, say, electricity being delivered consistently to family homes and the installation of cell phone towers, just as it can lead to ostracizing tenets of precolonial social structures, like tribal healers, as well as political corruption and impoverishment of large swaths of rural populations.

This does not mean that some parts of Sub-Saharan nations are modern and others are not, but rather that modernity is constantly in flux and depends on these types of conflicted colonial contact zones. Likewise, political appeals to modernity are flexible, always morphing, and employed strategically in various projects of nation building, from developing capable urban infrastructures to educating on public health issues to sheltering corrupt public officials. While economic pressures result in greater integration into the global economy, industrialization, and urbanization, Africans remains existentially excluded from the privilege of being modern.⁴⁶ As Bhabha has argued, the modernity of Europe depends on the exclusion of the Other, in this case the African Other, who will forever be “not quite” modern enough.⁴⁷ This paradox is fundamental to the idea of Africa, its place in global relations, and by extension, the contradictions evident within resulting educational media. Inconsistencies in representation in development films are not, therefore, anomalies, but the norm within complex postcolonial states.

⁴⁶ Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness*; Gikandi, “African Literature and Modernity,” in *Tasks and Theories: Versions and Subversions in African Literatures 3*, edited by T. R. Klein, A. Ulrich, and V. Pruschenk (Amsterdam: Ropdopi, 2007), 3-20.

⁴⁷ Homi K. Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man,” *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 85-92.

Inside or Outside?

The Dark Continent serves as the necessary marked Other to Europe's enlightened Self, but is simultaneously internal to the very concept of Europe. This relationship generates the conditions of possibility for the emergence of African educational film, as well as the contradictions inherent within. The content of educational videos reveals a selective use of history to maintain the epistemological hierarchy between funders and audiences, as well as dramatic rendering of African practices as distinctly Other – frightening, irrational, and disposable.

The binaries of Self and Other, metropole and colony, are constructed discursively and through institutional practices of imperialism, both large and small. The hierarchies of knowledge evident in educational films depend on assumptions about what counts as knowledge internal to African history and culture versus knowledge assumed to be external to the discursively constructed idea of the continent. As the internal inconsistencies of the modern episteme illuminate, however, the distinction between what counts as inside or outside Africa is not organic, but is rather produced historically through institutional practices. Because the identifying boundaries between inside and outside Africa are manufactured for imperial interests – just as the boundaries of African nations were arbitrarily determined at the Berlin Conference in 1885 – they must be constantly policed. Cultural representations that distinguish pre-modern from modern Africa, as though they are discrete, circumscribed entities, bolster this ideological project. Dichotomies presented in educational narratives often serve this purpose by emphasizing that there is an inside to Africa and an outside that can change Africa in its image.

Educational films initiated by international funders commonly share the underlying assumption that knowledge and practices sourced from European modernity are more valuable and efficacious than any alternative forms of knowledge or potential solutions, such as indigenous medicine, political change, or community intervention in issues of public concern. Educational films in the colonial era addressed complex

problems made acute by imperial activity, such as ever-shrinking land available to local farmers, the spread of infectious disease due to denser population centers, and pressure to shift to a monetary based global economy. To these problems, British educational films posited European farming methods, post-Enlightenment medicine, and colonial fiscal policy as ideal solutions that African audiences were expected to adopt. The narration of these problems and solutions notably exclude consideration of the role of direct colonial intervention in denying farmers their historic land claims, such as in Rhodesia where white settlers took the best land; in generating environments conducive to population-wide infection, such as in mining camps in Northern and Southern Rhodesia; and in impoverishing local economies by interrupting historic systems of exchange with the introduction of banks and colonial currency, such as in Tanganyika and Nigeria. Rather than telling more complete stories grounded in the history of cultural exchange and unequal economic and political influence in British colonial Africa – which would acknowledge the double-edged or Janus-faced nature of industrial development – colonial educational films instead focus on the practical and moral superiority of imported sensibilities introduced by colonizers to alleviate symptoms of imperial intervention.

Similar symptoms of the ideological foundation of inequality emerges to the surface of films in many ways, including through the use of evocative poetics and familiar symbolic images used to distinguish African from European ways of being and doing, elevating the latter above the former. The wise characters to be emulated in films such as these turn to symbols of Western authority, such as the modern health clinic and government offices, with overwhelming success. The alternative destination for Mr. Foolish, Peter, and their compatriots who seek solutions from precolonial authorities is presented to audiences with a vivid shroud of degeneration, danger, and overall backwardness. Vaughn describes how these techniques are also used to frame Mr.

Foolish's experience at the traditional healer, including a close-up shot of a bloody knife.⁴⁸

A similarly dramatic scene occurs in *Two Futures*. Thandi is forced to bring her sick infant to a village healer. This character is costumed as savage with little clothing and much exposed dirty skin. His hut is dark and crowded. At one point, the healer is framed from Thandi's point of view. As she looks around the corner of a hut, the film quickly cuts from a medium shot to a close-up at a canted angle, accompanied by a loud, abrasive noise on the soundtrack. The healer is further condemned by his association with the mad ravings of the evil mother in law. The atmosphere generated in this scene is dramatically foiled against the calm and congenial environment of the clinic, which is clean and bright. Furthermore, by setting the healer's home and the clinic as diametrically opposed spaces, the film leaves no room for the inclusion of existing medical authorities within a biomedically informed response to HIV in African communities.

Such evocative images condemn traditional healers through stimulating an affective response that is uniquely powerful through the medium of film or video. The camera captures and frames the actions of traditional healers in a negative way. This visual poetic is common, repeatedly performed, and easily recognizable to audiences locally and abroad. The combination of image and sound is designed to make an impact on audiences that cannot be made through words on a pamphlet or lectures in a classroom. Negative portrayals of alternative sources of medicine, such as *Two Futures*'s tribal healer, are strengthened due to their direct filmic opposition to calm and clean impressions of biomedical clinics. The history of economic and political domination is wrapped up in culturally resonant symbols that designate Western sourced knowledge as efficiently modern and its alternatives as markedly not modern. This comparison is rooted in the opinion that European biomedicine is superior to precolonial knowledge, a

⁴⁸ Vaughn, "Seeing is Believing," 181-182.

sentiment that has been repeated to the extent that it has become a kind of truth of modernity.

Scenes such as these reveal the assumption that there is a clear distinction between mystical “beliefs” originating in Africa and scientific “truth” originating in post-Enlightenment Europe and that precolonial ways of being can be simply swiped from African life and replaced by colonial alternatives. The daily realities of postcolonial life suggest otherwise; Africa’s relationship with modernity is not nearly as clearly defined as images like those of frightening witchcraft suggest. The prevailing discourse of a stagnant, ignorant, or backwards Africa and a progressive and enlightened Europe is rooted in the deployment of imperial interests, not the reality of hybrid day-to-day life as it is lived by individuals throughout, say, the British empire. The binary opposition between inside and outside Africa is belied by the internally incoherent nature of each category. But with the fear of miscegenation, “going native,” or other forms of cultural and racial hybridity always threatening to undercut the premises of imperial intervention, colonial discourse strategically emphasizes differences between the colonizer and the colonized and works tirelessly to police those boundaries, both with rhetoric and with bodies.

The construction of the inside and the outside that is policed by dramatic filmic strategies in Sub-Saharan educational films has a very particular precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial history both in systems of poetic representation and the politics that are linked to those representations. But this constructed dichotomy between inside and outside is internally incoherent; the opposition is a fundamentally flawed binary whose oppositional categories are manufactured and unstable. Africa is built on a long history of contact between distinct cultural systems on the continent, as well as contact between the region and other nations around the globe. “Modern” Africa, in fact, encompasses both the clinic with a biomedical doctor cloaked in the mantle of his white lab coat and the village home where a healer employs very different rituals for treating patients.

Educational narratives attempt to tap into a binary logic that distinguishes between the two – modern versus not modern – but largely fail to maintain this myth because colonial contact zones have been producing modernity all along. Films strive to illustrate the introduction of new practices, bringing in new farming, banking, medicine, thereby subscribing to a center-periphery dissemination theory of globalization. But the inconsistencies in representation as well as the context in which educational media emerge instead illustrate that the distinction is false – hybridity is a basic formation of modernity, despite modernity's protestation that it is singular and about distinct, new categories.

Educational films, like contested sites depicted within, are themselves contact zones. Unequal access to the technology of communication media, however, allows players with the most capital, in this case, IGOs and international NGOs, to establish and reaffirm hierarchies that govern the epistemological field within these zones.

Representations in educational films regularly reinforce the hierarchy of knowledge established by economic relations of imperialism, which allow for the production of educational films in the first place, in both colonial and postcolonial contexts. Players with financial and technological resources to produce expensive audio-visual communication tools, from early sound film to digital video, are in the position to define the educational material depicted therein, including what counts as truth and what is disregarded as primitive belief. But the construct of inside versus outside knowledge is much more muddled than many educational films suggest, just as the modern conditions of possibility for the industry are also always in flux, contested, and internally contradictory.

The ideological work performed by educational films and videos is redolent with the internally conflicted nature of modernity and revealed in filmic strategies that fail to uphold the myths of modernity they attempt to impose on their audiences. At each iteration of the categories – African knowledge versus Enlightenment knowledge – and

each assertion of their difference, there is the possibility of slippage that generates the potential to articulate another truth that, in turn, reveals the opportunity for ways of being that distort the regulating function of the binary.⁴⁹ Slippage can happen within the problems of representation in a film, such as missed match-on-action editing, failed point of view eyeline matches, or unattributed point of view shots.

The objective of mainstream film editing is to seamlessly produce a particular spectator subjectivity, which in Hollywood is designed by filmic strategies to suture the spectator into the narrative and generate identification between subjects in the audience and characters or sensibilities on screen.⁵⁰ In African educational films, there seems to be a similar effort, but it is not fully realized, in part because of limited resources for production, and in part because the myths of modernity are unsustainable under contradictory conditions of imperialism, in which inequalities between funder and audience are too strong to hide within even romantic narratives. The categories of opposition that form the hierarchical binary of colonizer versus colonized are inherently unstable and this instability becomes visible in the cracks of representational practice in films situated to mediate the relationship between colonizer and colonized, teacher and filmic pupil. Failed filmic strategies are symptomatic of the hybrid reality of life in a former colony that has integrated precolonial and colonial knowledge and practices long before independence.

Slippage can also happen in the performative moment of the act of watching the films. Archives in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Nigeria, in particular, provide evidence for a diverse array of ideologies and practices that emerged in relation to African audiences

⁴⁹ See Judith Butler's theorization of performativity for detailed discussion of the concept of slippage. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, New York and London: Routledge, 1990.

⁵⁰ Jean Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Cinematographic Apparatus" [1970]. In *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

taking advantage of the cinemas provided by British colonial authorities. Records from Northern and Southern Rhodesian mining camps and colonial correspondences have provided especially interesting and suggestive nuggets of information that, when taken together, begin to paint the image of complex subjectivities resulting from African experiences with cinema, especially in the interwar years.

Drawing on documents from mining companies, historian Charles Ambler claims that African audiences executed a degree of agency first in demanding the types of films they wanted to view.⁵¹ They would heckle films they did not like or simply walk out of the cinemas. Ambler also demonstrates that African audiences developed nuanced social commentary from the films they viewed. For example, mining records indicate that audiences would scoff at images of white men doing any type of manual labor, and Northern Rhodesian audiences grew angry when showed films of Southern (white) Rhodesian plenty; they became angry at images of fat cows in Southern Rhodesia, which they understood to be reserved for the white settlers. Ambler's research shows that urban African audiences were much more receptive to popular films from Hollywood than to the more didactic educational films, despite BEKE, CAFU and CFU efforts to popularize more wholesome entertainment.

P. Morton-Williams, doing reception research in Nigeria in 1951-52, came to similar conclusions regarding the efficacy of educational films.⁵² On commission from Nigerian colonial authorities to determine how they might spend their resources wisely, Morton-Williams, a self-described anthropologist, conducted reception and cultural studies among the Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo groups in Nigeria. He would show educational film programs from mobile cinema units and then, over the course of a month, seek to

⁵¹ Charles Ambler, "Popular Films and Colonial Audiences: The Movies in Northern Rhodesia." *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 106, No. 1 (February 2001): 81-105.

⁵² Morton-Williams, *Cinema in Rural Nigeria*.

discern the effects of viewing these films. Most of his research concludes that there was no evident behavior change resulting from viewing the films. Groups that were afraid of the smallpox vaccine remained so, whereas groups that had already had the vaccine showed no change either. Mothers did not make efforts to puree fruits for their infants after viewing films on the topic. Morton-Williams attributes this lack of behavior change to the fact that some of the material was culturally foreign to different groups – audiences did not recognize the fruit varieties, for example – and asserts that more culturally specific programming could improve the results.

Censorship practices can be connected to anti-colonial sentiment. Even when some racially integrated theaters emerged to include African intellectuals, black spectators were still turned away for films rated “non-native” only. This challenged efforts to generate upper class alignment and may have contributed to anti-colonial sentiment.⁵³ Femi Shaka proposes a less cynical reading of responses to educational films, suggesting that some of the development initiatives were useful in the legitimate development of Nigeria, a perspective derived from his self-identified African positionalit, including his local access to archives and oral histories.⁵⁴

Maurice Vambe, describes how the “peasant option” in agriculture arose in part because of farming techniques learned from British instructional films. Vambe describes that some farmers in Southern Rhodesia who viewed these films, most likely in rural locales, projected from mobile cinema units, implemented the agricultural methods depicted therein, methods usually imported from the US. With these procedures, farmers were therefore able to produce excess crops which could be sold for a small profit, a practice known as the peasant option. Such profits mattered because the Rhodesian land policy took most land for white settlers and crowded African farmers onto small parcels

⁵³ Burns, *Flickering Shadows*.

⁵⁴ Shaka, *Modernity and the African Cinema*.

of land with the worst farming potential. These farmers were then explicitly forbidden to sell crops for profit, thereby allowing white settlers to harness all possible profit. The peasant option challenged this dynamic and reveals a small but remarkable way that African audiences made use of the films available to them in order to resist white rule in Rhodesia.

Viewing contexts also impact how audience reception studies can be interpreted. Ambler recounts how a mining company conducted audience research by having educated Africans mingle with the crowd after cinema programs to discern their reactions. Reports on these observations noted that African audiences often laughed at the “wrong” material, such as when a woman on screen learns of her son’s death, and failed to respond to “appropriate” material. Ambler contextualizes this film viewing practice in the historically specific conditions of censorship. Urban black African audiences would have been accustomed to viewing films that lacked narrative continuity due to the hackneyed approach to censorship commonly employed. Additionally, the films were in American or British English, not necessarily the language spoken by viewers, and the crowds at such cinema shows the bioscope, as it was known, were usually very loud. In other words, urban African audiences would have been accustomed to viewing a series of entertaining images – young boys, for example, latched onto Western iconography and often imitated cowboy’s style of dress, walking and fighting – in an apparatus structured to provide plenty of spectacle, but little plot or character development. Ambler asserts these conditions led to viewing practices that differ from traditional Euro-American attention to narrative. Drawing on Tom Gunning’s theory of early cinema spectacle, in which pleasure is understood to emanate from the cinema apparatus itself, in order to theoretically contextualize this type of alternative viewing practice. According to Ambler, then, laughing at the image of a distraught woman, whose facial expressions might be theatrically exaggerated, would have been entirely logical within the viewing structures that developed in the miners’ normal film viewing practice. This does not represent a

direct challenge to white authority or colonial control, but it does suggest ways that African experiences exceeded the constraints that usually guide viewing practices in traditional Euro-American contexts, for which popular films in the programs would have originally been produced.

As these examples illustrate, actual spectators differ dramatically from the theoretical audiences for which educational film projects are designed. The official objectives and evaluations of most educational film and video projects in Sub-Saharan Africa are inadequate for articulating the meaning of educational films to their audiences. This remains a problem in part because the grant-based funding structure demands particular questions and answers that are not necessarily reflective of how a film is used or received. The potential uses for a film may often exceed the narrow goals for which it was funded in the first place, as examples from the first cycle suggest.

Despite these inconsistencies, each film project must demonstrate its efficacy. IGOs and NGOs catalogue their successes through audience research, sometimes drawing their information from audience surveys, but more often defining success on estimates of how many bodies are exposed to a given communication artifact. Results reporting to determine efficacy is a trait unique to a mission-driven film industry, which is goal oriented and depends on certain assumptions about the direct effect of film on spectators.⁵⁵ The question of how to measure any effect remains highly disputed now, as it was in the first cycle of educational films. A variety of methods have been employed by researchers in their efforts to answer this question and the results paint an interesting, but incomplete picture of audiences.

⁵⁵ Social scientific research often relies on a cognitive approach to the spectator-screen relationship. Cognitive film theory has been largely undermined by the psychoanalytically grounded apparatus theory of the specificity of the cinematic medium. Cognitive theory assumptions about film spectatorship, however, are advantageous in the realm of educational film production and funding because they more simply illustrate a direct line from material onscreen to audience thoughts and behaviors, despite the difficulties in proving such a direct relationship.

Educational films are caught up in a circular system that excludes nuanced understandings of film-spectator relationships. Film in this industry contradictorily aim to educate the viewer, but also work to produce a spectator in need, a spectator that is never educated enough and therefore needs the information from the film in front of him or her. The ideal spectator of African educational cinema needs pedagogical intervention, again, and again, due to the industry's economic necessity to sustain itself. An NGO making such a film must provide reports back to the funding agency to show that its previous project was successful, thereby building a reputation that allows the NGO to secure funds for the next project, which, in turn, must be justified by claiming to address a demonstrated need in the target population. This contradiction inherent to grant-based funding is counterproductive to each film's intended effect.

External to Films: The Crisis of Africa

As cultural products, films and the representations within them are symptomatic of the cultural context in which they emerge.⁵⁶ An exclusive focus on cultural logics, however, tends to obscure the economic underpinnings of imperialism that depend on the expansion of capitalism. Development projects within imperial power relations are just as much about the search for raw materials and markets abroad to bolster economies at home as they are about educating and modernizing life in the colonies. The success of imperial order depends on a relationship of subservience between the colonizer and the colonized, which is achieved in part through economic management, in part through

⁵⁶ The tradition of symptomatic readings of film texts is rooted in psychoanalytic film theory, indebted to Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis and Althusser's trajectory within Marxism, which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s in the continental theory tradition. See the editors of *Cahiers du cinema*, Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni. "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism," *Cahiers du Cinema*, No. 216-217 (October-November 1969). Translated and reprinted in *Screen* vol. 12, no. 1 (Spring 1971): 27-36; The Editors of *Cahiers du Cinema*, "John Ford's *Young Mr. Lincoln*," *Cahiers du Cinema*, No. 223 (1970). Translated and published in *Screen*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Autumn 1972). In *Movies and Methods vol. 1*, edited by Bill Nichols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), 493-529.

direct violent domination, and in part through ideological manipulation to mold colonial subjects into a shape that is most advantageous for the spread of capitalism and the success of the empire. Healthy and relatively content populations in the colonies and postcolonies serve the larger goals of empire, be it British, French, German, or more recently, American.

Consistent across the history of educational media in the Sub-Saharan region is the premise that African audiences are lacking knowledge and in need of assistance through pedagogical intervention by Western authorities on farming, banking, public health, and similar topics integral to managing the everyday life of productive populations. Within this broad concern to alleviate a presumed neediness, the mechanisms for organizing populations to these ends differ depending on the historical specificity of the structures of discipline and control employed by ruling entities at different times and in different geographical spaces. Before independence, African colonies were subject to technologies of direct domination, what Foucault calls the power over death,⁵⁷ such as the threat of military action to suppress anticolonial resistance or to forcibly relocate groups of bodies.⁵⁸

In Europe, the shift from feudal structures and monarchies to enlightenment inspired nation-states was mutually constitutive with the shift from ruling by power over death to maintaining control through power over life. The discursive management of populations common to democratically governed nations, what Foucault terms biopolitics or the power over life,⁵⁹ developed in Europe and North America co-incidental with the

⁵⁷ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* [1976] (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).

⁵⁸ Regarding the German colonial context, Nina Berman explains this transition as the transfer of feudal systems of governance from Europe to the colonies that overlay and manipulated existing boundaries between tribal groups or within African empires. Nina Berman, *Impossible Missions?: German Economic, Military, and Humanitarian Efforts in Africa* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

⁵⁹ Foucault, *History of Sexuality*

rise to the height of European colonialism in the second half of the nineteenth century. Biopower refers to a dense nexus of power relations that combine to organize populations and individual bodies therein.⁶⁰ Biopower operates through techniques that discipline bodies, such as through the deployment of panoptical technologies of surveillance and increased self-policing of the middle class, encouraged and enforced through institutional practices, including those of education, criminalization, and religion.

Biopolitics, as a system for managing populations, is marked by the value of *zoë*, or bare life, at the expense of *bios politikos*, or the right to have rights.⁶¹ Arendt explicates this distinction by drawing on the management of prisoner bodies in the German concentration camps of World War II.⁶² As anticolonial African scholars and artists have illustrated, the horrors of Holocaust brutalities replicate forms of domination and population control exercised in the colonies. Césaire goes so far as to claim that the Holocaust is the logical outcome of European modernity, in the image of how modernity was manifest in colonial Africa. International human rights discourse is deeply embedded in the endorsement of bare life.

Neoliberal political systems evacuate *bios*, under which quality of life would matter just as much or more than the mere existence of life, in favor of the management of populations in which bodies are valued only for being alive.⁶³ Western democracies emerged gradually, albeit unevenly, into their current regimes of governance dominated

⁶⁰ In Foucault's account, populations are organized by and for the state, but in the context of post-Cold War transnational organizations, an understanding of the mechanisms of biopower must expand to accommodate maneuverings by multinational corporations, international governmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations.

⁶¹ Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*; Ousmane Sembène, *Le Camp de Thioyore*. Also see Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989).

⁶² Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* [1950] (San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt, Inc., 1968).

⁶³ Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

by the productive capacities of biopolitics – regulation and the incorporation of acceptable bodies and behaviors has been co-productive with the consolidation of the modern nation-state emerging out of feudalism in Europe and monarch-driven colonialism in North America. Some such techniques were used in the colonies, not exclusively, but alongside direct domination that threatened physical violence and death to undisciplined subjects. Similarly, attributing moral correctness to certain behaviors is constitutive of subjects and their bodies through regulating what counts as viable ways of living, ideology deeply involved in the practices of educational institutions, for example.

Biopolitical mechanisms are also evident in population management in postcolonial African states, especially those that incorporate democratic institutional arrangements and aspirations. But, the unique structure of colonial rule and its legacies in Africa has produced an inconsistent mix of methods for regulating populations in newly independent countries. Control in postcolonial African nations operates through both techniques of suppression and direct domination, as well as more covert disciplinary avenues that work to produce ideal citizen subjects. This often awkward and internally contradictory mix of governance strategies, both productive and suppressive, results in single party “democracies,” military dictatorships, public spheres under constant threat of violence, political corruption, and ethnic favoritism and conflict. Because of this unique history, educational media operates differently within African nations than in more consolidated nation-state democracies of Europe and North America.

The regulatory or disciplinary status of educational films and videos is forged where Western biopolitical regimes intersect with inconsistent mechanisms of population management in young and troubled African political systems. Before independence, this intersection was located in compromises made between colonial governments in, say, British Central Africa or French West Africa and metropolitan governments in imperial capitals, such as London or Paris. Post-independence, this intersection is located where neoliberal economic models, normalized by international donor countries, meet nations

struggling to develop and consolidate amid the contradictions of postcolonial inequalities, often in UN committee rooms, G8 or G20 summits, and various international NGO headquarters and grant review offices. Recently, transnational conglomerates and the enforcement of neoliberal policies (discussed further in Chapter 2) allow for greater expansion of the technologies of population management outside national borders and onto a larger, global scale. The perpetually indebted status of African nations, for instance, allows for intervention through World Bank and IMF policies that open African markets to capitalist expansion, often at the expense of African national autonomy. Intervention has become couched in the rhetoric of human rights accompanying the objective of development, usually defined by industrialization advantageous for global markets, as well as the social mores such development necessitates. Absent direct domination based on the threat of death available to colonial rulers, compliance with imperial interests is encouraged through managing lives.

Discourses justifying intervention due to the presumed extraordinary nature of African neediness have their roots in European colonial policies, which were variously expressed as the British white man's burden, French *mission civilatrice*, and German *fortschritt*, or progress.⁶⁴ Each is distinguished based on characteristics that are nationally specific.⁶⁵ Each of these ideologies depends on the idea that Africa is deeply

⁶⁴ Nina Berman, *Impossible Missions?: German Economic, Military, and Humanitarian Efforts in Africa* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 1-17.

German influence on film in Africa is limited due to the redistribution of German colonies after World War I, before the introduction of educational motion pictures in Africa, but has left lingering effects, such as through German military aid in Somalia and tourism in Tanzania and Kenya. Berman, *Impossible Missions?*, 139 and 175.

⁶⁵ Portugal is not included here because its status as the poor cousin in Europe left a very different history in its African colonies. Little to no film presence is evident in Angola and Mozambique, which are still recovering from decades long civil wars. Basic rebuilding and establishing governance take precedence over developing media industries. Additionally, linguistic affiliation is important in the acquisition of NGO and IGO funding; Anglophone and Francophone global networks dominate the international aid scene, leaving little room for Portuguese appeals for funding for media communication projects, for instance. *Rustov-Luanda* (Abderrahmane Sissako, Angola/France/Germany/Mauritania, 1997) and *These Hands* (Flora

in need of help from the presumed superior external powers and simultaneously sets up Africa's exceptionality as antithetical to European normality.

In British African colonies, communication technology was often used to modernize citizens.⁶⁶ Under Britain's colonial doctrine of "indirect rule," colonial administrators experimented with, researched and further developed policies for controlling what African film audiences could view, both through censorship and targeted film production. By the late 1920s, officials in Central African gold mines were operating open-air, but enclosed, cinemas in mining towns in an effort to provide more "wholesome" entertainment to African workers, instead of the drinking and brawling they feared would occur among African men outside their villages.

British colonial authorities specifically tried to contain the subversive potential of film by highly censoring popular movies, most of which were old Hollywood flicks or "B" westerns in the 1930s-50s. They rated films for either "natives" or "non-natives," and cut out scenes and images they deemed dangerous from those films destined for native audiences. Rhodesian authorities were afraid of both violence and sexuality in films for African audiences. This fear is premised on the assumption that African audiences were as impressionable as children. Rhodesian colonial authorities, in particular, denied any evidence of Africans as intelligent spectators. Consequently, they would cut images of a gun firing or other types of violence. They especially feared any representation of white women as loose, and absolutely censored any images of black on white violence, such as footage of the first African-European boxing match, or of resistance movements, such as newsreel footage of uprisings against Soviet occupation in Eastern Europe.⁶⁷

M'mbugu-Schelling, Mozambique, 1992) are exceptional artifacts of film usage in Portuguese-speaking Africa, but remain relatively isolated.

⁶⁶ Brian Larkin, *Signal and Noise*.

⁶⁷ Brennan, "Democratizing Cinema and Censorship in Tanzania, 1920-1980."

While colonial authorities in Rhodesia, North and South, and in Nigeria allowed the screening of censored popular films, they also began producing films specifically for African audiences in the early 1930s. The BEKE is one of the most researched and discussed such project. With financial backing from the Carnegie Corporation and eventually an advisory board from BFI, the BEKE and its successors, including the Central African Film Unit (CAFU) and the Colonial Film Unit (CFU), initiated in 1940 by William Sellers, produced shorts on topics including malaria eradication, smallpox vaccination, how mothers should feed infants, how to use banks, and European farming methods, among others. Many of these films were documentary in nature, some accompanied by lectures. The narrative educational films often made use of African folktales, employing the didactic rhetorical strategy of the good character versus the bad character to enunciate the film's moral lesson. African actors were used in these films, although the production technicians were predominantly Europeans, and an African narrator was employed to narrate the films' action in local languages. The clear objective of these films was to change behaviors. Despite the research and effort that went into the pedagogical project of British colonial education films, they were usually unable to achieve evident behavior change, and the potentiality of cinema, such as the constitution of certain subjectivities, could not be fully contained in these projects.⁶⁸

The French colonial model differed significantly. Under France's colonial imperative of *mission civilatrice* and its vision of "Greater France" as a culturally united empire, educational initiatives in West and Central Africa were executed by French colonial workers directly, such as through physical demonstrations and travelling hygiene vans, rather than through travelling film units. Educational films for colonized audiences were used in Indo-China, but few were deployed in French West and Central Africa. Film used for research, such as footage of an ill-looking Cameroon patient, was recorded in

⁶⁸ Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*; Burns, *Flickering Shadows*.

Sub-Saharan colonies and then used in educational films distributed throughout the country of France. In this way, French Sub-Saharan colonies were mined for information they could provide, such as regarding malaria and sleeping sickness, but educational film was not frequently used to the benefit of colonized audiences. Instead, France made rather ineffectual efforts to compete with American and French narrative film in West African cinemas.⁶⁹

The history of colonial film in France is dominated by the use of cinema to persuade viewers in the metropole to value French colonial holdings and see them as part of a valuable French empire. This work was often done by the “colonial lobby,” which advocated for colonial interests to both the government and the French populace. Influential figures in this lobby sponsored and encouraged filmmaking expeditions to French West and Central Africa, which would then bring footage back from the colonies, which could then be edited and shown across France proper.⁷⁰ For example, they organized to send filmmakers on pre-arranged expeditions, many of which sought to transverse the African continent in heroic feats of civilized French men conquering *Afrique sauvage*.

The most impressive of these were documented in the Trans-Saharan crossing films, including *La Croisiere Noire*, which documented the Citroën automobile journeys across the continent. As Peter Bloom describes, these races or expeditions mark a

⁶⁹ Peter Bloom, *French Colonial Documentary: Mythologies of Humanitarianism*. (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

Of the research that is published in English, most depends on archives in France and some in Indo-China, which have little to say about the dissemination or reception of films in France’s Sub-Saharan colonies. This marks a strong contrast to the Anglophone research coming out of archives in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Nigeria, for example, where more documentation about cinema practices in British Central Africa is housed.

⁷⁰ Bloom, *French Colonial Documentary* and David Slavin, *Colonial Cinema and Imperial France, 1919-1939: White Blind Spots, Male Fantasies, Settler Myths* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

convergence of transportation development in the colonies with the development of other tourist infrastructures and ideologies. Footage shot on these expeditions were edited into short subjects and feature-length documentaries emphasizing both the heroics of exploration across the elements of the dark continent, despite images of African porters pulling the autos out of the mud and similar conditions. These adventure films also satisfied metropolitan desires for images of the exotic, such as of African women as prostitutes. *La Croisière noire*, according to Peter Bloom, is exemplary of this genre of French non-fiction colonial cinema in the way the transcontinental journey – from both North and West Africa, converging in Madagascar – sought to construct the image of a united and able-to-be-rehabilitated French empire. Films depicting the *Tirailleurs Sénégalais* as sentinels of the empire were also common.⁷¹

In addition to being used as a rather specific tool of the colonial lobby, non-fiction cinema was part of a larger French discourse developing in relation to ideologies of scientific objectivity, a belief in anthropometric and evolutionary models, the place of technological development in hierarchies of race and culture, and a belief in humanitarian ideals. Bloom grounds this pre-cinematic ideology in Rousseau's natural man, positing cinema as an extension of human senses, coupled with a belief in science. This set of mythologies encapsulated a diverse array of cinema and pre-cinema projects from Regnault's chronophotographic movement studies to Albert Kahn's obsessive collection of the modern world in his film archives.⁷²

Patronizing justifications for colonial intervention abounded in the discourse surrounding early instructional films. A short lived but influential theory of African spectatorship claimed that African viewers would be unable to make logical connections

⁷¹ Bloom, *French Colonial Documentary*.

⁷² Bloom, *French Colonial Documentary*; Paula Amad, "Cinema's 'Sanctuary': From Pre-Documentary to Documentary Film in Albert Kahn's *Archives de la Planète* (1908-1931)," *Film History*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2001): 138-159.

between different shot scales. Simultaneously, each colony set up censorship regulations to manage what Africans would view of Western culture. Education initiatives were cloaked in paternalistic rhetoric of civilizing African natives during the colonial period.⁷³ Claims about the exceptional state of need in African nations, such as due to the crisis of HIV, have continued to justify the deployment of education communication to manage populations in the international discourse of Third World development.

Discursive practices around educational films and videos are specific to Sub-Saharan contexts in the construction and deployment of exceptionality – determining what counts as a state of crisis worthy of intervention – in the uneven management of African populations by national and international players. The means by which a particular time and space is labeled as crisis differs in African contexts than in developed nation-states because of the role of international players in the governance of postcolonial African states. The process of defining exceptional situations of need and executing regulatory solutions, such as public health communication programs, is largely controlled by the international groups that then provide money to address the crises, as was the case under colonial rule, as well. In the current structure of globalization, the importance of any given crisis is determined by committee at the United Nations or in multinational corporations' boardrooms, or by influential international NGOs. The resultant techniques to manage a crisis, then, are taken out of the hands of national governments in developing nations and instead debated on an international scale, where dominant players' interests have greater influence.

Contemporary African educational film and video projects are made possible by funding from international sources, both governmental and non-governmental. These funds usually come in the form of competitive grants from major philanthropic organizations, such as the Ford Foundation, or intergovernmental aid institutions, such as

⁷³ Smyth, "The Development of British Colonial Film Policy, 1927-1939."

UNICEF and USAID. Religious organizations, like Gospel Communications International and Ukweli Videos, also initiate and fund media communications projects, often combining topics such as HIV transmission prevention with evangelical subjects. National public broadcasters, such as those in Sweden and Australia also make an appearance in many educational films' credits, exchanging financial support for content. STEPS for the Future films, for instance, were supported by public television stations in Australia, Sweden, and German, among others, who then broadcast the films on their own national stations around World AIDS Day, 2001.

The recipients of granted funds include independent production studios, such as Media for Development International (MFDI) in Tanzania and STEPS for the Future in South Africa, which exist exclusively for media production, mostly of the development variety. Local independent studios that produce media for other purposes can also be commissioned to execute specific educational videos. Other projects are isolated to local chapters of the funding institution and are executed largely by amateur filmmakers. UNICEF Swaziland, for example, produced a single educational video with funds directly from its UNICEF operating budget, whereas MFDI applies for specific grants from USAID and other non-affiliated sources. Larger projects, such as those of MFDI and STEPS, often combine revenue from numerous sources to fund ambitious filming projects, as well as maintain libraries of their own and others' educational productions.

Humanitarian agencies exercise a great deal of control over how international aid is used in various communication projects. Through spearheading certain initiatives over others and through controlling funding streams, IGOs and international NGOs frame the very debates that can be had about African development, under both colonial rule and the current environment pressuring underdeveloped nations to privatize their economies. Each project, then, serves a dual purpose, one to justify the expense of film production and the other to educate audiences in order to better spectators' lives. For example, the BEKE was initiated in response to a perceived crisis in mining towns, where British

observers believed new industrialized and urban living patterns would lead to the disorganization of rural community structures, and instructional films were presented “to provide ‘wholesome’ recreation to black gold miners,” thereby pacifying workers without damaging the image of Europeans.⁷⁴ Likewise, by the Second World War, the CFU was formed to bolster support for the war effort throughout the colonies, while also using films to educate on topics like improved farming methods intended to make farm labor easier for spectators.⁷⁵ More recently, educational films emphasize the ever-present threat of death from AIDS, simultaneously keep African audiences healthy for the spectator’s benefit and the global economy’s benefit. As with the epistemic shift from power over death to power over life that occurred as Europe moved from feudal to nation-state systems of governance, imperial dominance has shifted from that of violence and the threat of death for uncooperative colonial subjects to a biopolitical management of populations, still in the service of expanding capitalism for the benefit of Western imperial powers, but now led by agendas defined by United States and other Western leaders’ interests and those of multinational corporations.

Defining Africa as an object of crisis happens both in and outside of individual films, and is elaborated for the benefit of at least two distinct audiences: those to be educated *in* Africa and those to be educated *about* Africa. In other words, the educational nature of these films and videos targets spectators in African villages, schools, and clinics to whom these films are screened, as well as members of the international aid community for whom these teaching tools serve as evidence of worthwhile humanitarian labor. Despite nuances between individual projects, the consistent message is that Africa is in a state of acute crisis, chronically.

⁷⁴ Reynolds, 2009: 58-59.

⁷⁵ Larkin, 2008: 75-77; Smyth, 1979: 449-450.

Conclusion

The structure of international aid for development communication projects is deeply rooted in colonial history and remains problematic because the industry and the cultural representations it produces result in the following: (1) They define the African situation as exceptional, (2) they normalize structures of inequality within Western nations and between the Global North and South, and (3) they produce Africa as an object to be acted upon, thereby denying African political autonomy.

In his analysis of *Hotel Rwanda*, Kenneth Harrow claims that the film posits the Rwandan genocide as a discrete, exceptional moment of crisis that has a beginning and an end and a constructed, linear historical narrative. This narrative is told instead of admitting that the genocide was just a more visible manifestation of the ongoing social structures of domination initiated under Belgian colonial rule and continued within current normative global discourses, politics, and economic policy.⁷⁶ Similarly, identifying individual problems in Africa for the international aid community to address is a reactionary response to symptoms of global inequality, but fails to account for those larger structures. Defining any particular crisis in Africa as exceptional denies the chronic structural problems that constitute Africa as needy in the first place.

On the global scale, Africa becomes defined by its crises and failures; Africa *is* its crises. Within this global structure, Africa *en masse* has become synonymous with crisis.⁷⁷ Life in African nations is available for manipulation under the pretense of saving lives at danger in the current state of open-ended emergency. For example, the crisis of HIV in Sub-Saharan nations defined the relationship between the United States

⁷⁶ Kenneth Harrow, “‘*Un train peut en cacher un autre*’: Narrating the Rwandan Genocide in *Hotel Rwanda*, *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Winter 2005): 223-232.

⁷⁷ Binyavanga Wainaina, “How to Write About Africa,” *Granata*, Vol. 92, “The View from Africa” (Winter 2005): 91-95.

and Africa throughout the 2000s. In this light, Africa *is* the exception. Such a discourse generates the conditions of possibility in which all types of aid, including educational communication projects, can be imagined. Under the colonial model, educational films sought to fill in the empty savagery of Africa with the trappings of Western civilization. Under the postcolonial situation, educational media seek to alleviate the crisis that is Africa, a neediness explained in humanitarian language of aid for crisis management. The specific language has changed over time, but what remains constant is the assertion that Africa is in crisis and needs aid from the international community. This is essentially an impossible statement because an acute condition is antithetical to a chronic condition, but in the rhetoric about Africa, such as in the educational media realm, the acute condition continues perpetually.

Defining Africa as exceptional in a negative way normalizes its opposite, developed Western nations. Regarding the highly publicized issue of female circumcision, Obioma Nnaemeka claims that such attention is problematic because it displaces all serious issues of gender inequality onto the Other.⁷⁸ This serves a regulatory function to keep women quiet about inequity in, say, the United States by implying that women have it much worse “over there.” It also makes it easier for western women to claim superiority. Likewise, by implying that Africa is numerous crises that the West can control, this discourse presumes the moral superiority of intervention through aid, be it military, financial, medical, or educational, thereby denying the full interrelatedness of the global economy and its overwhelming negative effects on former colonies in Africa. Combined with irresponsible national politics within many African nations, continued exploitation of African resources fuels all these “crises,” which are far

⁷⁸ Obioma Nnaemeka, “African Women, Colonial Discourses, and Imperialist Interventions: Female Circumcision as Impetus,” *Female Circumcision and the Politics of Knowledge: African Women in Imperialist Discourses*, edited by Obioma Nnaemeka (London and Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 27-45.

too numerous to responsibly be considered exceptional. By using the discourse of crisis, aid-based films feed into the myth that the problems going on in Africa are unique and need to be addressed by emergency instances of humanitarian intervention. International aid has been structured as crisis management while not acknowledging that the normative order of the world causes these critical problems in the course of the everyday global circulation of resources. Exceptionality posits that there is an imaginary norm that is just briefly out of order and can be fixed, a myth denied by the circuitous nature of international aid.

Finally, this century long discourse turns Africa into an object to be acted upon and denies African autonomy and African efforts in self-determination. Crises worthy of funding are defined by outsiders who hold the keys to funds, the distribution of which follows global trends in what's hot in humanitarian discourse at the moment, be it miners' loss of community values or living with HIV. Resources are used for honest efforts to "help," which are simultaneous with the desire to soothe the humanitarian impulse and establish the giver as one who *can* help, thereby ordering of the world into helpers and helpees, those who give and those who need. This is a problem because it cements Africa at the bottom of the heap in that it reinforces the pervasive notion that Sub-Saharan nations cannot care for – cannot even educate – their own citizens. This is an historically produced rhetorical strategy that bolsters the epistemological hierarchy of authority that undergirds and reinforces imperial relations of both material and discursive inequality.

Despite the significant differences in context – time, politics, global circulation of resources – I argue that what remains constant is the assumption of acute crisis both internal and external to the films. As my title – the stability of crisis – evokes, there is an inherent impossibility to the perpetual designation of an acute condition of need that is nonetheless chronic. But, as the history of educational film in Africa illustrates, the persistent nature of desperate or exceptional need is precisely the contradictory master

narrative by which the international humanitarian community defines the Sub-Saharan region as an object, as a target for aid.

CHAPTER 2: FINDING AFRICA IN THE TRANSNATIONAL

NGOization and the Political Economy of Contemporary

African Educational Videos

The third cycle of educational filmmaking in Sub-Saharan Africa emerged from a particular set of circumstances unique to the post-Cold War era, including the explosion of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and their influence in developing nations, the advent of video technology, and the realization of HIV as a public health epidemic in the region. No individual factor is singularly determinate of the resulting educational video industry as it is manifest today.⁷⁹ Rather, the connection of these factors depends on the transnational flow of power, money, and ideas that intersect in discrete moments when an educational video project is imagined, realized, or exhibited.

Interwoven threads of power materialize a complex fabric of global relations that constitute the conditions of possibility from which the artifacts of African educational film and video have developed. The following chapter delineates three key factors that, together, gave rise to the third cycle of educational film and video in Sub-Saharan contexts: First, the changing terrain of audio-visual technology – marked by the advent of videotape, then digital video production, post-production, distribution, and exhibition – has opened the domain to a host of players that were previously excluded due to the expense and inaccessibility of older film technology. Second, the rise of HIV/AIDS as a public health epidemic in Sub-Saharan nations and as a topic of concern on a global scale has provided a purpose on which the international aid community has focused its

⁷⁹ Rick Altman persuasively argues against a technologically determined view of film history, which influences the history I seek to narrate in this chapter. Altman, “Crisis Historiography,” *Silent Film Sound* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 15-23.

attention since the early 1990s. And third, absent the vertical integration that marked the first cycle of educational films in Anglophone Africa, in which British governmental agencies had a say in all levels of film conception, production, and distribution, funding for post-independence projects now intersects a myriad of local, state, and international demands that comprise a non-profit system of exchange that is uniquely transnational.

I consider this interplay through the paradigm of the transnational because it acknowledges multiple actors around the globe, as well as seen and unseen actions, while attending to the role of the state in international relationships marked by inequality. Furthermore, other common categories by which cinema beyond national boundaries might be understood – globalization, relations of dependency, or cosmopolitanism – cannot readily accommodate the industry of African educational film and video.

Categorizing films by national designations is a common practice in both popular and academic discourses on cinema. This is an untenable practice especially now that funding, production, and distribution are so easily achieved and coordinated in numerous locations around the world. The idea of international co-productions attempts to recognize this situation, but remains loyal to the circumscribed autonomy of nations. The rival concept of the global, conversely, connotes a homogenizing totality, often regardless of internal divisions. In practice, both national and global paradigms are limited by their tendency to handpick exceptional films that appeal to cosmopolitan sensibilities, none of which have room for less glamorous or sophisticated examples.

Transnational, on the other hand, recognizes significance of distinctions between players, such as by acknowledging the role of nations and states, the unevenness of the playing field, while emphasizing various forms of cooperation between the local and the global. Cinema and translation scholar, Nataša Ďurovičová, defines the transnational as follows:

[T]he intermediate and open term “transnational” acknowledges the persistent agency of the state, in a varying but fundamentally legitimizing relationship to the scale of “the nation.” At the same

time, the prefix “trans-” implies relations of unevenness and mobility. It is especially to the variant *scale* on which relations in film history have occurred that gives this key term its dynamic force, and its utility as a frame for hypotheses about emergent forms.⁸⁰

As with defining modernity in the previous chapter, the transnational is useful here for the ways it can accommodate shifting terrain generated by multiple players with inconsistent objectives and allegiances that deny the rigidity of conventional categorization. The term has been embraced in anthropology and feminist theory and practice, such as to capture the potential of working relationships between distant localities around issues such as women and poverty or family planning education.⁸¹ In addition to positive possibilities associated with transnational collaboration, the term also acknowledges the reality of exploitation and corruption that also crosses borders, such as the transnational trafficking of women and children or the abuse of migrant laborers.⁸²

In their description of the democratizing potential of global collaboration across differences, political economists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri claim that postmodern forms of globalization produce a new global-scale class formation, which they term “multitude,” a configuration defined by its network structure that allows for innovative types of cooperation between disparate individuals, groups, and locales.⁸³ The IGOs and international NGOs I describe here are deeply embedded in this type of transnational collaboration, connecting Euro-American funders and program directors with African media producers and public health educators, who come together to produce and

⁸⁰ Nataša Đurovičová, “Preface,” in *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*, edited by Nataša Đurovičová and Kathleen Newman (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), *x*.

⁸¹ Kathy Davis, *The Making of Our Bodies, Ourselves: How Feminism Travels Across Borders* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007).

⁸² Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Russell Hochschild, editors, *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2002).

⁸³ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), *xiii*.

distribute instructional films that address pressing local problems, such as HIV and teen pregnancy.

While Chapter 1 delineated features of educational film that are congruent between the first and third cycles, this chapter articulates characteristics of the post-1980s cycle that differentiate it from the first: video, HIV/AIDS, and current structures of globalization. This chapter describes the global political and economic conditions that account for these differences, specifically the place of African development within transnational relations as they are structured at the turn of the 21st century. I illustrate how the transnational is manifest in contemporary artifacts of educational film by describing and analyzing the industrial specificity of this mode of production. (Textual analysis will be provided in Chapter 3.) My contextual analysis concludes that the industrial structure of educational film and video has problematic consequences for nascent popular video industries, as well as for truly autonomous governance in Sub-Saharan Anglophone nations. Non-profit funded film production in Sub-Saharan Africa hinders the development of a self-sustaining commercial film industry in non-profit dense nations, such as Tanzania. Furthermore, the presence of international aid in public health communication has become so deeply integrated into developing nations' basic budget structure that even well intended aid is entangled in unequal relationships of interdependency between African recipient and EuroAmerican donor nations that debilitate alternative mechanisms for large-scale change. These film and video film projects arise from an honest desire to help the target audience, but are in their essence part of a structure that hinders African autonomy.

I claim that this situation – firmly entrenched after a half century of technical, but not practical independence – is undesirable based on my assumption of a desire for true sovereignty for African nations, including transparent economies with more equal footing in the global market, which could sustain stable governments that could, in turn, accommodate the address of and communication about public health problems specific to

their own diverse populations. Such an ideal is broad reaching and cannot be achieved with any simple fix, but cinema – in this case, films and video films produced with the intent to educate modern populations – holds the potential to be part of a broader process that works toward more stable and healthier Sub-Saharan nations, rather than contributing to sustaining the highly problematic status quo.⁸⁴

The following analysis of the types of transnational relationships involved in the industrial structure of educational film matters because it describes exactly how the local and global are connected in this instance and illustrates how the transnational is manifest through specific artifacts of films and videos, as well as what that means for the players involved. Such connections have not been previously described, let alone from a perspective grounded in the humanities. The entanglements I tease out of this industrial analysis illustrate that there is no easy distinction between which elements originate in or outside a nation's economy and political landscape – an observation that has particular meaning in postcolonial Africa, where processes of categorization and concepts of “aid” are particularly fraught. Ideological constructs or the structures of meanings about what Africa is and how it should be incorporated into global interactions permeate all levels of these films' material and discursive construction. The films discussed here are a small but detailed part of greater transnational flows of resources and political influence that constitute public health policy in African contexts and thereby connect global level ideas directly to individuals in diverse localities via the specific media of film and video – vessels of communication that allow for simultaneously social and individual pressure on the construction of spectator subjectivity. Furthermore, in the domain of public health communication – sexual health topics dominate contemporary educational films and

⁸⁴ Debates regarding the potential of the cinematic medium are long standing in the history of film studies. This thesis is concerned not only with what films and videos *do*, but with what they *can do*, if their potential is realized. This is, decidedly, not a social scientific question, but rather a philosophically humanist inquiry.

video films in Sub-Saharan Africa – this distribution of information has ramifications that may be intensely personal because of the way these projects seek to influence spectators' most intimate behavior.

Motion Pictures in Africa in the Age of Video

Starting Over (Heinz Fussle, Nigeria, 2002) is an average educational video film in the contemporary corpus. In many ways it is similar to its antecedents of the first cycle. *Starting Over* was initiated by an international non-profit, in this case the faith-based organization, Gospel Communications International (GCI), in response to a crisis. GCI recognized a need and for a Christian response to AIDS in Africa and set about using their media resources to produce the video. The script was written by GCI's African regional director, Paul Nwulu, incorporating HIV/AIDS information with GCI's mission of Christian evangelism. The film narrates the story of Andrew, who contracts HIV from a one night encounter with a friend. The young woman was previously pressured into having sex with her boss and the film implies that the virus was passed from the boss to the friend to Andrew, whose family then disowns him when he becomes sick and his HIV status becomes publicly known. Andrew is nursed back to health by a caring Christian friend. Andrew's father, a Church minister, experiences a change of heart, welcoming Andrew back into the family and preaching against stigma to his congregation.

This example is distinguished from films of the first cycle in several ways. *Starting Over* was produced on video by an experienced Nigerian production team, working in collaboration with GCI. The director has a history of working with GCI on other faith-based films, but the cast and crew come from Nigeria's established video film industry. Their experience is especially evident in the film's cinematic, not theatrical, acting. Aesthetically, the film's editing and production values are relatively seamless, allowing the narrative to dominate the viewing experience. The overtly evangelical nature of Andrew's redemption story is also a feature more frequently seen in third cycle films.

Additionally, distribution on video enables innovations and flexibility in production, mobility of exhibition space, greater potential for distribution, and easier translation into many indigenous languages.

The emergent use of video in Africa builds on more than a century-long relationship between filmmaking and the continent. Educational or political motivations combined with entertainment motivations have long held a constitutive role in the relationship between filmmaking and Africa. Early colonial films, such as travelogues, captured exotic views of African people and places that informed populations back in the metropolises about distant locales within their empires. These early ethnographic films present a certain framework for constructing meaning about the continent, its geography, and its people. As early as 1895, Felix-Louis Regnault recorded West Africans on glass stills as part of his chronophotographic motion studies. In 1896 the Lumière brothers included the short film, “African knife dance,” in their first motion picture programs. Both examples of early motion picture technology captured African bodies framed to emphasize their physical difference from their white counterparts.⁸⁵ This fascination with difference and recording the Other for audiences at home was part of the milieu in which film technology emerged as a viable and desirable new medium at the turn of the twentieth century. Notably, however, neither example depicts African locations; Regnault used subjects already ensconced in living dioramas at the 1895 Paris ethnographic exhibition and the Lumière brothers staged “African knife dance” for their camera during their world travels to record exotic locales for their film programs. While few Africans had access to film technology before independence, Africa as a concept has a firm place in the earliest film history.

⁸⁵ See Fatimah Tobing Rony’s detailed account of Regnault’s chronophotography in Fatimah Tobing Rony, *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996). Also see Alison Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference: Cinema, Anthropology, and Turn-of-the-Century Visual Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

Around the time colonial administrators were considering the effects of film spectatorship on African audiences – this debate led to censorship laws, as well as the production of “wholesome” films specifically for African audiences – motion picture cameras and crews were touring around the continent recording feats of imperial power, such as the Citroen automobile journey from Egypt to Madagascar in *La croisière noire* (Léon Poirier, France, 1926). Feature films, such as the *Tarzan the Ape Man* (W. S. Van Dyke, USA, 1932) and *Pepe le moko* (Julien Duvivier, France, 1936) also used the alien spaces of African jungles and urban landscapes to stage European and American stories. This tradition of exoticizing representations persists within contemporary Hollywood films, such as *Congo* (Frank Marshall, US, 1995), *Tears of the Sun* (Antoine Fuqua, US, 2003), and *Blood Diamond* (Edward Zwick, US/Germany, 2006), which continue to present Africa as an abstract site of adventure, almost a playground for daring white explorers, thereby informally teaching Euro-American popular audiences about the extraordinary and savage nature of “Africa” as it is construed in entertainment cinema.

“African Knife Dance” and *La croisière noire* are two early films showcasing Africa that straddle distinctions between fiction and non-fiction modes of cinematic representation. This blend of forms is repeated in educational cinema. Other films for audiences back in the metropole have been more explicitly documentary in nature. In addition to a long catalogue of ethnographic films by anthropologists about African cultures, Belgium and Germany, for instance, both produced films as records of their achievements in the colonies, generally designed to bolster support for continuing their colonial excursions. Examples of these documentaries can be seen in films from African directors that address the history of representing Africa, such as *Afrique, je te plumerai* (Jean-Marie Teno, Cameroon, 1992).

The genre of documenting Africa for Western audiences has exploded in the video era because it is now easier for adventurers to carry smaller, lighter, and cheaper equipment. Small digital cameras are key to making documentaries that draw attention to

Sub-Saharan humanitarian crises, usually calling for aid from American, Canadian, or European audiences. Any Western would-be filmmaker with a video camera and the proper resources and connections can drop into a conflict zone, capture dramatic images, and carry them out to exhibit for otherwise uniformed Western audiences. *Rocked: Sum 41 in the Congo* (thinkMTV, War Child Canada, DRC/Canada, 2005) and *Invisible Children* (Jason Russell, Uganda/US, 2006) are two such examples. *Rocked* documents the Canadian punk rock band Sum 41 as its members arrive in an isolated village amidst the ongoing violent conflict in the Western region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They are caught in crossfire when a Mayi Mayi-style militia attacks the village and are dramatically airlifted out on a UN helicopter. *Invisible Children* has gained a wide audience among US college students for dramatizing a group of young Americans who land near the Darfur region seeking to record the Sudanese conflict there. But they get lost and end up in Northern Uganda where they record violence against children by the Lord's Resistance Army. A similarly produced film, *What are We Doing Here* (Brandon Klein, et. al., USA, 2008), diverges in content and message – it highlights the problems of current forms of aid to Africa – but also uses the now relatively common narrative strategy of following adventuresome American teenagers on their tour of distressed regions on the continent.

Less well-known uses of film in Sub-Saharan history include films produced by colonial agencies to educate African audiences about the benevolence of imperial rule. These tended to be short documentaries stating information via voiceover narration accompanied with visual illustration. Frequency of these explicitly instructional films increased around World War II, when France and Britain made efforts to woo their African colonies to join the fight against European enemies. The 1950s comic series on the characters Matamata and Pilipili filmed by missionary Albert Van Haelst in the Belgian Congo, whose history is retold in *Matamata and Pilipili* (Tristan Bourland, Belgium, 1997) is a very rare example of film production in Africa, by a colonial figure,

for the entertainment of African audiences. Most filming before independence was either *about* Africa, for European audiences, or *for* Africans, but with explicitly educational objectives.

Post-independence films by select, usually cosmopolitan African directors are also not immune to the educational imperative that haunts the relationship between Africa and cinema. Individual films, first supported by cultural institutions in France and targeted for elite audiences on the international film festival circuit, often make claims based on the educational potential of film. Filmmakers, beginning at least with the “father of African cinema,” Ousmane Sembène, have regularly grounded their work on the moral authority of their consciousness raising efforts, often framed by the need to politically educate both African and international audiences.⁸⁶ Similar rhetoric is sometimes employed by popular video filmmakers in Nigeria, especially when describing their work to Western audiences. In the documentary *This is Nollywood* (Franco Sacchi, Nigeria/USA, 2006) for instance, Nigerian video film director, Bond Emeruwa, claims that until their nation is stable, even entertainment art must be political. He explains that the police drama he is directing – *Nollywood* documents the production of this video film – is not only thrilling for Nigerian audiences, but also raises awareness of corruption in public service jobs.

The argument justifying cinema by its educational potential has historical precedent in the US. Early use of moving pictures for entertainment purposes came under progressive era scrutiny and resulting defensive rhetoric about the possibilities of using film for more wholesome and moral purposes abounded. The educational argument for filmmaking in Africa is not unique to the continent, but is a particularly persuasive justification for funds due to the urgency of issues to be addressed south of the Sahara.

⁸⁶ See Manthia Diawara, *African Cinema* and Thackaway, *Africa Shoots Back* for comprehensive histories of cosmopolitan African filmmaking and its debated purpose.

Because support for film and video production in the region depends on outside funders, the educational imperative for cinematic production continues to thrive, whereas this discourse has dwindled in developed nations with plenty of discretionary money for both entertainment and educational media.

The significance of varied cinematic manifestations across Sub-Saharan history and regions lies in part the ideological motivation to justify filmmaking as an educational tool, but also in exposure to and availability of motion picture technology, greatly expanded by the advent of video. Film equipment was brought to the continent from the time of early still photography and in many instances has been left by colonial investors and utilized by local artists and entrepreneurs. Abderrahmane Sissako's emotive portrait of village life in *Le Vie sur terre* (France/Mali, 1998), for example, illustrates how one small village uses left-over cameras and developing equipment, antiquated by Western standards, but a novelty of communication technology in rural Mali.⁸⁷

Moving picture technology, on the other hand, necessitates a larger investment because it requires a camera, film stock, editing and developing equipment, and an apparatus to project the final product. The colonial presence of film technology, then, has played a large role in what modes of production emerged from different Sub-Saharan nations in the post-independence period. France, with its imperial emphasis on civilizing colonial subjects through cultural assimilation, encouraged cinema as artistic expression from its colonies. Understanding the potential of cinema as witness, France disallowed filming in its African colonies unless approved by government authorities. France maintained relatively tight control of film production even after granting independence to its African colonies, especially by housing post-production technology in Paris so that directors funded by the Cultural Ministry could record their films in Senegal and Mali,

⁸⁷ Isabel Balseiro, "Exile and Longing in Abderrahmane Sissako's *La Vie sur terre*," *Screen*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (Winter 2007): 443-461.

for instance, but then needed to ship the film stock to Paris for editing . Because Paris held the technology, implicit censorship became a condition of funding for filmmakers in Francophone West Africa and allowed a certain measure of control over content by which France could monitor its image abroad.⁸⁸

Britain, on the other hand, had located many more production sites in British African colonies. Anthropologist Brian Larkin contextualizes this colonial policy within Britain's desire to incorporate good colonial subjects into the larger British Empire. Radio and television production were generally acquired by post-independence governments for state-run radio and television programming. But because Britain largely evacuated its colonies after independence, there was little support of cultural production as there was between France and its former colonies. This created a vacuum of locally produced entertainment cinema and provided no outlet for creative energy through the filmic medium. Cinema theaters that were built under British development programs fell into disuse and disrepair in the postcolonial period. Furthermore, it became unsafe for families to walk the streets in cities like Lagos after dark. These difficult circumstances lead to innovative solutions when video technology became widely available in the 1980s. The South Nigerian video film industry, controversially nicknamed Nollywood, emerged in the context of these hardships and developed its own, distinct entrepreneurial mode of production.⁸⁹

As evidenced by the Nigerian example, the advent of video technology held democratizing potential for access to production technology and the resultant capacity for self-representation it enables. More people can buy and use video equipment than the more expensive and cumbersome paraphernalia previously required to capture, edit, and exhibit film. Digital video has enabled even more access to individuals throughout the

⁸⁸ Diawara, *African Cinema*.

⁸⁹ Larkin, *Signal and Noise*.

Sub-Saharan region. Mahamat-Saleh Haroun's film *Bye, Bye Africa* (Chad, 1999) considers this phenomenon in its documentary essay on the filmmaker's mourning for cinema in Chad. In *Bye, Bye Africa*, a young boy follows the filmmaker imitating his use of a tiny handheld digital camera to record intimate scenes in small corners of life across the city.

As with many other technologies African development has not kept up with Western advancements, such as with infrastructure for land line telephones or editing equipment and cinema houses for film. More advanced equipment, on the other hand, is often quickly adopted in what might seem like unlikely scenarios. Mobile phones, for example, saturate African markets due to the ease of infrastructure enabled by cell towers where land lines never took hold. The little boy in *Bye, Bye Africa* would likely never have access to 35mm filming equipment, but it is more possible that he could afford a small camera to pursue his filmmaking dreams. Many nations with emerging video industries, such as Uganda and Tanzania, are modeled on a straight to digital platform and view earlier technology, like VHS established in Nigeria, as behind the times. In many locations, Africans have been able to skip ahead with more advanced communication technologies despite their lack of earlier forms; Nigeria developed a video industry without ever having an established film industry and Tanzania is developing a digital industry without the antiquated video tape version. Economic constraints, however, are not entirely mitigated. Video equipment, despite being cheaper than film, remains expensive relative to most Africans' financial resources. Furthermore, it still costs more money to make higher quality films, which limits the democratizing potential of video.

Increased availability of video recording and exhibition equipment, when combined with a particular set of market conditions, not only enabled popular, commercial industries like Nollywood to thrive, but also opened new avenues for communicating humanitarian messages built on a non-profit economic model. Media for

Development International was one of the earlier non-profit organizations in the third cycle to form under the expressed purpose of producing films that were both entertaining and message oriented. One of MFDI's earliest films, *Consequence* (Olley Maruma, Zimbabwe, 1987) was produced on 16mm film because they had access to the technology, but was distributed on VHS, allowing the video to reach a wider audience than would film projection alone. *Consequences* was estimated to have reached 30 million Africans by 1993, having been viewed on television or in small group settings.⁹⁰

Easier distribution and exhibition are key reasons why educational motion picture media have witnessed a resurgence in the age of video technology, highlighting another reason why the physicality of the artifact matters. Some projects continue to employ mobile cinema vans to reach isolated rural audiences, but the vans carry generators and smaller projection equipment for video exhibition. STEPS for the Future of Cape Town, for example, provides videos to local NGOs in rural Namibia and Zambia, whose trained staff then travel to isolated villages where they project the video film onto the wall of a building, often attracting a whole town for the after dark entertainment followed by a community discussion. This distribution model was employed by Notcutt in the 1930s, but has been expanded to a larger scale because of the easy reproduction and transportation of videos, previously VHS and now digital.

Video tapes or discs can be exhibited outside the limited venues necessary for film projection and therefore have the potential to make contact with audiences beyond the range of individual humanitarian professionals. In rural Uganda, for example, local family planning clinics house a video library, as well as VCRs and televisions, which can be rented to families, who then watch the videos with friends and neighbors.⁹¹ This

⁹⁰ Ann C. Hudock, "The Impact of Social Message Videos in Africa: Results of a Rapid Assessment Evaluation" (Columbia, Maryland: Media for Development International, 1993).

⁹¹ Hudock, "Impact of Social Message Videos."

flexibility of exhibition space is a necessary requirement for distribution in nations with few to no cinema theaters. Other common, non-theatrical exhibition sites include health clinics, prisons, and schools. These small scale viewing conditions often share resources, such as rotating videos and VHS equipment between several clinics in a region or loaning videos and players out to families for short periods. This proliferation of viewing conditions allows for more opportunities to integrate videos into other educational contexts. Many feature films from this industry are distributed on DVDs accompanied by booklets with teaching suggestions so that screenings can be preceded and followed by discussion led by trained facilitators. The STEPS model, for example, calls for its films to only be screened in situations where information for support services, such as HIV testing and counseling, is available to audience members.

But ease of distribution also wrests a certain degree of control from producers and their affiliated humanitarian organizations. VHS and DVD formats can be easily pirated. MFDI films, for instance, can be found in city markets in Harare and Dar es Salaam. Illegal reproductions, however, also ensure that educational video films reach a wider audience and several features have gained popularity through illicit avenues. In fact, one gauge of a video's widespread success is the extent to which it is pirated and resold in street markets, a measure which does not neatly fit into results reports required by funders as proof of a worthy return on philanthropic investment, but anecdotally supports the efficacy of such projects. The film *Neria*, for instance, gained enough popularity through unmonitored video circulation that MFDI staff have come across young girls in Tanzania named after the title character, which is a particularly round-about way of tallying a film's reach and success.⁹²

Unique to the past few decades are the exhibition possibilities of television and the internet. While it is often expensive to broadcast on local television – producers pay

⁹² Deborah Riber, personal communication, July 8, 2010.

to have their content shown on television in most Sub-Saharan nations – many non-profit budgets include this cost, thereby extending a film's potential audience. Major distributors in this industry, including MFDI, also now post much of their material to YouTube. Very occasionally an educational film will screen in traditional movie theaters. MFDI's biggest hit *Yellow Card* (John Riber, Zimbabwe, 2000), discussed in detail in the following chapter, is one such example of a project that secured enough funding to exhibit the film widely through popular avenues, such as in Harare cinema theaters, as well as on television, and was largely received positively as a popular movie with Zimbabwean youth. But *Yellow Card* is an exceptional case in this regard.

Finally, video technology has greatly increased the capacity of producers to distribute their projects in multiple languages. DVDs, in particular, can be easily dubbed with Swahili, English, French, or other colonial and indigenous language soundtracks, thereby expanding the potential reach of the messages to be communicated. MFDI, in fact, provides dubbing services for films by other producers, in addition to distributing them. This practice somewhat resembles the sound on disk option used by Notcutt and Sellers, but allows for much more control of content than did the extemporaneous interpreters used in many of their village screenings. Greater ease of dubbing advances the industry's expressed interest in reaching illiterate audiences, a goal from the very start that has been expanded in the third cycle due to the new technology of video.

HIV/AIDS

Approximately 70 percent of films included in my corpus are concerned with sexual health, well over half of those involving HIV education. This begs the question, Why is it deemed acceptable to intervene so intimately in Africans' sexual proclivities and parade this otherwise private discussion so publicly? As discussed in the previous chapter, the rhetoric of crisis makes way for increased and more visible regulation of individual behavior. The fatal nature of HIV and AIDS fits particularly well with the

biopolitical concern of keeping bodies alive, often with little regard to quality of life issues attached to those bodies. Different historical moments have held a variety of reasons for Western powers to intercede in African affairs, but the explosion of HIV infection that became rapidly evident beginning in the early 1990s has led to a particularly intense amount of involvement. HIV/AIDS captures donors' imagination in ways paralleled only by sudden natural disasters, like earthquakes, floods, and tsunamis.

The particularity of HIV as a sexually transmitted infection makes it stand out in relation to other contemporary concerns, such as malaria, climate change, or malnutrition. This has led to much attention on African sexual behavior in prevention and treatment of HIV and in affiliated public health education programs. In many African cultural contexts, however, frank discussions of condom use, multiple sexual partners, same sex intimacy, transactional sex, and intergenerational sex are forbidden subjects. Innovative and sometimes aggressive initiatives to deal with the HIV epidemic were developed in Uganda, for instance. The Ugandan government struggled against popular opinion, which resisted open discussion about sexuality, and accomplished greater public flexibility on some sexual health topics.

Educational films funded by the international aid community rarely shy away from explicit details about sexual behavior. Approaches administered by Western-lead IGOs and NGOs tend to be quite blunt about sexuality, such as when advocating condom use, using explicit language and sensibilities made popular following second wave feminism and sexual revolution in the US and Europe. This method is unique to the third cycle of African educational film and video. Consider, for instance, the address of syphilis in *Mr. Wise and Mr. Foolish Go to Town*. The focus in this film is on the morality of acquiescing to biomedical authority signified by the space of the health clinic. Contracting syphilis through sexual contact with "town" women is an assumed common denominator shared by both Mr. Wise and Mr. Foolish. Mr. Foolish lives up to his name not because of his promiscuity, but because he refuses care from the clinic doctor. Mr.

Wise maintains his status as the “good” African regardless of his sexual indiscretion because he addresses his case of syphilis in a manner acceptable to the film’s message. *Starting Over*, on the other hand, posits sexual behavior as a determining factor for a character’s moral worth. Andrew’s religious father condemns Andrew for his indiscretion, blaming him for contracting HIV. Andrew asserts morality in admitting sexual sins and turning to religion as part of his healing process.

Concentration on intimacies of sexual behavior is more evident in films and videos strongly connected to Europe and the US relative to media projects whose components are located more in African settings; the degree of isolating sexual behavior in detail corresponds conversely to the degree of direct African involvement in planning and production. *Starting Over*, for example, was conceived primarily by GCI at its Michigan office and disassociates sexual behavior from most other aspects of its characters’ lives. *Yellow Card*, another project initiated by international humanitarian professionals, living in Zimbabwe but with experience from abroad, focuses its narrative around sex related decisions made by hormonal and romantic teenagers while also considering detailed social pressures not just for sex, but also romance and sport. *A Miner’s Tale* (Nic Hofmeyr and Gabriel Mondlane, Mozambique/South Africa, 2001), on the other hand, is part of the STEPS for the Future film series initiated and executed by South Africans. The story was proposed by would-be filmmakers in the region, and then selected by humanitarian professionals. *A Miner’s Tale* considers the sexual relationship between the miner, an immigrant laborer in South Africa, and his rural wife versus his urban wife. He details his efforts to discuss condom use with his rural wife and other villagers, but the interchange is framed within the much broader context of his life; the film is about the challenges of living with HIV, not the morality of contracting or transmitting the disease sexually.

Defining acceptable sexual behavior is not, however, an imported phenomenon. Authorizing certain sexual proclivities over others is a key process in consolidating the

modern nation-state.⁹³ As described in the previous chapter, young African states are occupied with determining who counts as a viable citizen and who is excluded from the rights of citizenship as part of the means by which nations construct and police social boundaries. This is not a uniquely African phenomenon, but has been repeated over the past several centuries as different nations constitute themselves as such. In the African context, Uganda provides a dramatic example. Co-incidental with the containment of HIV is the states aggressive exclusion of homosexual subjects. Uganda authorizes certain heterosexual behavior, such as through governmental and NGO outreach projects to HIV positive parents, whose children evidence their heterosexual behavior. Social boundaries are simultaneously policed by the nation's legislation decreeing same-sex sex as illegal and punishable through state violence. Across the Sub-Saharan region, HIV education has been notably biased toward opposite-sex sexual behavior, exclusive of same-sex sex and other behavioral ways of transmitting the virus, such as through intravenous drug use.

HIV is not essentially a sexual problem. As is illustrated in *A Miner's Tale*, living with HIV is about more than sexual promiscuity; it is part of an individual's full life story. Such details are conspicuously absent from discussions at the highest levels in the international aid community. By dominating the relationship between African nations and Western donor nations, HIV as an issue of concern shadows many other serious situations. Not just humanitarian crisis in Africa, such as preventable deaths from Malaria or lack of sufficient maternal health care, are obscured, but international culpability in African poverty and exploitation of natural and human resources within the global economy are pushed aside when HIV education and treatment occupy so many discussions in philanthropic circles. Furthermore, focusing on problems with African sexual behavior allows donor nations to redirect public concern away from issues of

⁹³ Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*.

gender inequality or sexual exploitation within their own borders. Comparing HIV causes and treatments in Africa to those at home, makes it easier to quell outrage regarding conditions for living with HIV among disenfranchised populations in, say, the United States. This is not to say that HIV and AIDS are not very serious challenges facing African communities and the viability of African governments, but unequal access to defining the trajectory of development support places African nations at the mercy of the international aid community and whatever trends its leaders deem most important.⁹⁴ Many of the largest and most influential international aid organizations have distributed funds under the assumption that HIV/AIDS is the primary, or at least most fundable, issue for intervention in African development.

To function within this economic situation, humanitarian film and video producers are sometimes able to attach related priorities to projects funded specifically for HIV/AIDS education. Raising awareness about the risks of intergenerational sex, transactional sex, and domestic abuse, for instance, are often addressed in tandem with better funded HIV/AIDS initiatives in order to ensure funding for a greater variety of pressing social concerns. For instance, Ukweli's collection houses upwards of 300 videos, at least 80 of which address HIV/AIDS issues, while many other Ukweli videos deal with Christian religious concerns, abortion, contraception, and Church history. MFDI has produced more than 20 of the approximately 100 message films it distributes, many of which address consequences of sexual promiscuity, including, but not limited to contracting HIV, as well as teen pregnancy and exploitation of sexual labor. STEPS for the Future has produced nearly 40 films in its ongoing project about living in a world with HIV/AIDS, but each film targets a different set of related concerns, such as rural versus urban family life, port town prostitution, and education for girls. One particularly innovative project out of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, *Scenarios from Africa*, targets

⁹⁴ George Gathigi, personal communication, April 3, 2010.

HIV issues, but in the context of many other social concerns, such as young women subject to older men's favors and marriage fidelity.

Although HIV issues have enjoyed popularity with international funders, this is a Janus faced system. For nearly the past two decades, HIV related projects in Africa have been relatively better funded than initiatives for educating on other social, medical, or political concerns. More recently, however, African media production companies involved in the educational industry have been subject to a shift in funding priorities toward media communication projects that addresses climate change and malaria, which in turn has led to a slight decrease in HIV/AIDS-related funding.⁹⁵ HIV remains a serious problem in the region, but funding for this topic has been constricted, again at the whim of international aid leadership, which can be fortuitous for some organizations and detrimental to others, but never sure or stable.

Transnational Political Economy of Non-Profit Media

Non-profit educational films are embedded in a cross-border political economy that determines what films are produced, how, why, and by whom. The power dynamics between the players involved is unique to the post-independence and post-Cold War periods and are what ultimately account for significant ideological differences between films of the past two decades and those of the early twentieth century. First cycle educational films in Sub-Saharan Africa were deeply entrenched in colonial relations and dwindled after World War II alongside diminishing European colonialism in Africa. The third cycle emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, notably bracketing the Cold War period which was defined by its own set of political and economic relationships, giving rise to the concept of the Third World and unaligned nations. As described above, the advent of video technology made contemporary production physically available and

⁹⁵ Don Edkins, personal communication, July 16, 2010.

easier to achieve, but this technology did not necessarily determine its use for pedagogical purposes. On the contrary, political and economic conditions in Sub-Saharan nations shifted considerably during and after the Cold War, generating an environment in which new educational media was deemed not only possible, but necessary by global players with the funds to act on their philanthropic convictions. Add to this mix the dramatically visible explosion of death from HIV/AIDS in the region in the early 1990s, plus associated political maneuvering around the resultant humanitarian crisis, and the conditions of possibility were ripe for the reemergence of internationally funded educational film and video, especially around contemporary public health concerns.

In chapter one I claim that African humanitarian crises are not exceptional. Likewise, the interdependence of aid givers and aid receivers in the post-independence period is an ordinary, not extraordinary phenomenon. Entanglements via the affairs of international aid arise from a very particular history that positions African nations on the losing end of global inequality. I emphasize the historical formation of Africa's position within processes of globalization because too often African humanitarian crises are described as ahistorical in Western representations. Rather than explaining the international response to HIV/AIDS and other public health concerns as a direct reaction to only the immediate emergency circumstances, international involvement in African struggles must be contextualized in a diachronic fashion. A synchronic snapshot of the contemporary moment shows individual crises across the region south of the Sahara embedded in overwhelming pressure from multinational corporations, policy dictates from international governmental organizations, and the NGOization of developing nations. Non-profit media communication projects are constructed within this overlapping network of global power relations, but their meaning and significance is evident only relative to the historic placement of African states within a transnational political economy.

Since the late 1980s there has been a push, especially in African studies, away from Latin American-derived theories of dependency that tend to target imperial machinations as a largely unified and singular enemy to Third World development. Likewise, to describe current social, political, economic, and cultural formations, African historians and political scientists have called for a more Afrocentric and less Eurocentric approach. Moving from a post-structuralist conception of identity and nationhood, French political scientist of African states, Jean-François Bayart, claims that developmentalist ways of thinking about Africa – namely, imperialism can be blamed almost exclusively for African underdevelopment – are erroneous because of their methodological error of building from a structuralist precept. The categories used to explain subjection and domination, such as traditional and modern, developed and undeveloped, tribal or ethnic, imperial and indigenous, imply a monolithic and closed system. This functional approach is insufficient for explaining the way social actors straddle multiple categories revealing cultural integration and flexibility that does not fit in a structuralist description of African politics.⁹⁶

Bayart instead describes dependency as more of a process than a structure.⁹⁷ This is a useful starting point for understanding the political significance of non-profit educational media in Sub-Saharan Africa because the theoretical groundwork on which Bayart builds – Norbert Elias’ idea of figuration – accommodates a host of players whose actions are, by definition, interdependent. Drawing on Elias, Bayart describes this understanding of figuration as a card game, in which the game itself exists only as much as it is constituted by players’ actions. As in the metaphor of the card game, the Sub-Saharan educational film and video industry is comprised of numerous players whose

⁹⁶ Jean-François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (London and New York: Longman Group, translated 1993), 11-12. Original French edition: *L’Etat en Afrique. La politique du ventre* (Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1989).

⁹⁷ Bayart, *The State in Africa*, 14.

actions and very existence together constitute the industry and its cultural and political products.

Take, for example, the funding and production structure of Media for Development International (MFDI). Previously located in Harare, Zimbabwe, and now based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, MFDI boasts a two decade history of securing funds and related resources, especially through its relationship with United States Aid for International Development (USAID). USAID is an International Governmental Organization (IGO), whose attachments to the United States government require that it support projects in line with US foreign policy. For much of the first decade of the twenty-first century, under President George W. Bush's administrative policies, funding from US-tied IGOs could not be used to support projects related to abortion services, a fact that is indirectly reflected in MFDI films with little or no mention of abortion options for teen or unmarried pregnant women. Policies set by the US State Department change with the political winds of presidential administrations. In 2008 the ban on funding abortion related services was lifted. The direction of USAID funding has since shifted to include more comprehensive programs for women and girls in developing nations.

While not directly stated, it can be inferred that USAID would likely not accept grant requests for communication projects critical of US aid or foreign policy. Donor agencies must also maintain favor with recipient national governments. An IGO's working relationship with the Tanzanian government, such as through the Ministry of Health, for example, must evoke respect for Tanzanian sovereignty, while simultaneously advancing a US agenda that appeases American legislators. Consequently, recipients of USAID grants, such as MFDI, must demonstrate alignment with nuances of the IGO's agenda, as well as expressed priorities of the Tanzanian government. This is evident in congruity between Tanzanian public health priorities and USAID's funding priorities. Every five years, Tanzania surveys the population and determines the Ministry of Health's primary objectives regarding HIV. Currently, these objectives include educating

about the dangers of intergenerational sex, transactional sex, and mother to infant transmission. The priorities align with USAID's funding priorities to the extent that USAID maintains its ongoing working relationship with Tanzania, including MFDI educational media projects. The resultant physical videos may seem to float independently through health clinics and schools, but they actually represent a dense network of often competing power relations that determine what can be said and what remains absent from the discussion of public health issues in UN meeting rooms and Tanzanian classrooms alike.

Social Transformation and Empowerment Projects (STEPS) for the Future of Cape Town, South Africa provides a related example, although STEPS traverses the terrain of international aid with slightly different strategies. STEPS' projects tend to be more liberal leaning, including the provocative series "Why Democracy?" and "Why Poverty," which is currently in production. To accommodate an ideological inclination that challenges global power relations, STEPS seeks funding from sympathetic organizations and plans their grant requests to multiple organizations accordingly. To organize its funding sources and piece together what funding can be used for which projects, STEPS for the Future's conference room is dominated by a white board on which the organization can visually juggle the stipulations that come with financial support from diverse, globally-dispersed philanthropic entities, all with their own agendas and limitations. STEPS has developed an ongoing working relationship with the Ford Foundation, a major US based NGO that is well-suited to STEPS' needs, as well as Scandinavian public media stations and several liberal-leaning organizations that are open to supporting progressive projects such as STEPS' "Why Democracy?" series.

Funders also earn some say in who comes to the literal table in the early planning stages of a public health educational film. For example, a film project with substantial USAID backing would include some representatives from the local USAID offices, especially individuals involved in outreach projects related to the film's topic, such as

clinic educators. Depending on the relationship an NGO has with the local or national government, health ministry representatives may be part of the initial planning stages. As with colonial era instructional film projects, local talent is regularly used to write scripts with greater cultural applicability. Although many educational film directors and producers hail from the US or Europe, most films include at least one African writer or storyteller in the script writing process. This coalition of various interests generate content by committee, forming a consensus on story that is then turned into a workable script by the film production professionals.

Globalization theorized as Elias's concept of figuration is helpful in the way it illustrates the interdependent nature of the industry via the specific actions of each player. Funders set agendas, but do not run the projects from start to finish. By collecting from diverse donor organizations and ameliorating global dictates with local expertise, recipient organizations are able to perform as active, not passive players in the game. The maneuverings that characterize these interlocking relationships together produce the educational media industry as such. Bayart's use of the Cameroonian concept "politics of the belly" explains how this process works in practice. Further precision is necessary to understand the African version of educational media because African nations are located not on some even terrain, but in a deeply unequal playing field when it comes to resources for population management on a global scale. The African specificity of the fabric generated by the many interwoven threads generated by each action distinguishes this game from others across the globe. By digging deeper into the ways actors maneuver with around each other, Bayart refocuses attention on the active role of the African state in international politics, a role that is often ignored in global scale discussions of how to address African crises. Grants and programs for HIV education, for instance, may be delineated by recipient country in funding reports, but popular rhetoric tends to ignore national distinctions as though they hardly matter. Aid is given to "Africa" and rarely delineated in popular discourse as aid to Tanzania, Zambia, or South Africa, let alone to

Dar es Salaam, rural Kenya, or Harare. In practice, however, specific conditions in each space matter more than is suggested when US legislators debate how much aid to allocate for “Africa.”

As Bayart states, the game exists only so much as the players do, a concept derived from the poststructuralist understanding of subjectivity multiply and contradictorily constituted. It is similarly important to note that nations exist only so much as they are comprised by forces of power that move within and through them. Elias’s figuration and its African manifestations, such as the politics of the belly, emphasize the role of the state in the larger game. But a slightly different perspective is necessary to understand the constitutive role of international aid, such as international aid for public health communication initiatives, in the production of the African state.

Achille Mbembe’s description of “private indirect government”⁹⁸ helps to further explicate the uneven flow along power lines whereby money and other support resources, packaged in philanthropic rhetoric, moves in one direction – from donor to recipient nations on a public plane in the domain of international aid – while African sourced resources, such as raw materials, labor, and new markets are funneled in the other direction on the private plane of capitalist profit for multinational corporations. Mbembe refers to this system as fiscal entanglement, which he claims has been overshadowed by the “fuss over transitions to democracy and multi-partyism in Africa.” This “fuss” is mere surface politics that distract from the deeper, perhaps *longue durée*, of fiscal entanglement that has played an important role in the reordering of African societies. This reordering, according to Mbembe, includes the privatization of public violence, a

⁹⁸Achille Mbembe, “On Private Indirect Government.” Translated from French by A. M. Berret. In *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2001), 66-101.

change in who appropriates the means of livelihood, and a shift in the very way subjects conceive of the self as such.⁹⁹

Privatizing governance has been accomplished over time – unevenly across the continent and across various sectors of the economy – via delinking Africa from formal international markets and integrating African systems of exchange into the parallel, informal international economy, as well as through fragmenting public authority, thereby allowing more private players in the management of Sub-Saharan populations. Especially in postcolonial states, the question of who determines which subjects have the right to exist or not is a matter of contention disputed within the nation and by outside players that situate the postcolony in the global order. In the construction of new African states, since around 1960, transnational actors have had an inordinately large say in how this question is answered. Multinational corporations, international governmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations have effectively situated Africa in the privately run informal international economy. This is a problem because it endangers the efficacy of African states with the threat of internal dissolution and the loss of control over both public and private violence.¹⁰⁰

Most relevant to this discussion is the role of non-profit IGOs and NGOs in defining which bodies have the right to live and in what conditions. Congruency between Tanzania's top five public health priorities and USAID's approved aid agenda portrays how these decisions are rarely managed entirely in house, but are subject to transnational interference in the case of African populations. By making HIV the headline issue affiliated with Africa from the mid-1990s through the early 2000s, the international aid community determined that African bodies have the right to stay alive. This decree necessitates education on preventing the spread of HIV, combined with medical

⁹⁹ Mbembe, "On Private Indirect Government," 66-67.

¹⁰⁰ Mbembe, "On Private Indirect Government," 67-68.

intervention and widespread dissemination of pharmaceuticals to treat individuals already suffering from HIV/AIDS. Quality of life focused programs have tended to be initiated on a smaller, local scale. STEPS for the Future's film series is also unique in addressing life with HIV, thereby shifting the focus from bodies that live to subjects that can live well. Most funding tends to be directed to programs that advocate bare life essentials.

A similar consensus and demand for action among the international aid community has not been asserted regarding the ongoing violent conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) or for drug users on the streets of Dar es Salaam, among a nearly infinite list of other humanitarian concerns across the continent. Because of this selection, the international aid community, in conjunction with state governments that allow organizations to operate within their borders, it has been determined that people at risk for acquiring HIV or living with HIV have more of a right to live than do villagers in eastern DRC or drug users in Tanzania, to name only a few. In other geographical and political contexts, deciding to value certain lives over others has been a duty largely attributed to individual states charged with managing their own populations. The US legislature, for instance, debates which citizens' lives matter by allocating more or less funding for food stamps or more or less restriction on contraception and abortion. These decisions in an established state like the US are made within a global political and economic context, but action is predominantly determined within its own borders.

Young African states, on the other hand, make some decisions in house, but their ability to act is more often mediated by international players' willingness to fund and execute projects that aid and discipline their populations. As with the Tanzanian example, Health Ministry priorities are chronically underfunded, in part because national budget makers can rely on USAID to support many needed programs, such as MFDI's projects to educate Tanzanians on the dangers of *fataki* for young girls or to promote preventative sexual behavior. This collaboration between in-state actors and out-of-state organizations is transnational in the way it connects players and resources across borders while

involving national bureaucracies and requiring much negotiation – including unspoken and unacknowledged responses to each other’s actions – to appease everyone at the table.

Some of this joint governance is quite subtle, such as willingness to both provide and receive aid evident in the congruity between USAID and Tanzanian Ministry of Health policies. Multinational corporations similarly intervene in Third World development by generating market demands conveniently in line with national infrastructure objectives, for instance. Other processes are much more explicit, especially when World Bank and similar IGOs are involved. Aid from these institutions comes with requirements for privatizing markets in the post-Cold War period in which neoliberal democratic assumptions of capitalist economies has come to hegemonically dominate policy decisions on the global scale.¹⁰¹ Neoliberalization of Third World economies and the uneven development it produces have significant effects in all sectors of society.¹⁰² Most relevant to the realm of educational media is the way privatization results in the splintering and decentralization of aid programs and humanitarian initiatives; national governments no longer wield primary control over the means by which its populations are managed, disciplined, or regulated.

Scholars of political economy and geography, including Hardt and Negri, David Harvey, provide extensive critiques of the effects of privatization on developing national economies and governing structures.¹⁰³ Public divestment of national industries is enforced by IGO institutions, such as the World Bank and IMF, as conditions for needed loans and aid money. Without Cold War competition between First and Second World

¹⁰¹ See David Harvey for a summary analysis of the geopolitical effects of enforced privatization under neoliberal political economic structures. David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (London and New York: Verso, 2006).

¹⁰² See *Bamako* (Abderrahmane Sissako, Mali, 2006) for discussion of the effect of neoliberalization on Mali’s capital.

¹⁰³ Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*; Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism*.

superpowers to influence development trajectories in the global South, Third World nations are now pressured to conform almost exclusively to dominant neoliberal directives to open and privatize their economies. Efforts to develop necessary national infrastructure and social support systems, including such domains as public health education, become dependent on investments by foreign governments and private corporations, both commercial and philanthropic. Nonprofit projects, such as media communication initiatives, therefore become significant for funneling large amounts of money – and consequently, increased influence – into developing national economies. This places a lot of power in the humanitarian professionals who funnel funds from abroad into the local economy. The structure leaves many important decisions about how to distribute resources in the community to the discretion of local NGO directors, which can have positive and negative effects, varying by individual. As one aid worker observed, some NGO directors achieve a kind of fiefdom in the areas where they dole out funds to hire certain workers and buy goods. This can be stimulating to the local economy or it can divide and debilitate local populations outside the director's favor. Such discrepancies again highlight the impact of scale on non-profit organizations; the bigger the institution and the more territory it covers around the globe, the less accountable it becomes to the individual locales in which it operates and wields its financial influence.

In *Spaces of Global Capitalism*, political geographer David Harvey explains how NGOs, especially since the 1980s, have contributed to the uneven development of the global economy by stepping “into the vacuum in social provision” that results from restructuring programs that privatize, “dispossess,” and therefore “devalue” already underdeveloped geographical spaces and their associated state institutions.¹⁰⁴ The expressed intentions are to help local populations, but as Hardt and Negri claim, “the vast

¹⁰⁴ Harvey ,52; 68; 90.

majority of such organizations make little or no claim to being representative of the population.”¹⁰⁵ IGOs and international NGOs are instead beholden to their funders and must prove their compatibility to global scale priorities in order to secure future funding. The shift from the national to global level corresponds with an increase in size that undermines previous systems of representation, according to Hardt and Negri. In a more nuanced assessment, Ďurovičová emphasizes the intermediary scale between national and global is more precise in the realm of educational media because the previously discussed structure of spoken and implied negotiations on content and production occupies a distinct space that is neither national nor global, but rather connects local to international players through and around state structures.¹⁰⁶ Reliance on avenues of transnational funding allows organizations to undermine the development of local democratic systems. They solicit income from international philanthropic organizations, which therefore have inordinate influence in setting funding priorities, and effectively bypass local and national markets and governments, representative or otherwise.

Whereas earlier media education projects, such as the BEKE and CFU, were sanctioned, executed, and evaluated in tandem with authorized colonial governing bodies, current initiatives must navigate the varied national configurations that regulate public health and communication policies. The contemporary arrangement, while not officially colonial or even explicitly imperial, reinforces existing relations of uneven economic development because, by being shielded from the difficulties of commercial media markets in Africa, non-profit film producers are not beholden to audience needs, tastes, or desires; there is no incentive to invest in locally sustainable media infrastructure; and the circumvention of national governments bolsters the political influence of western

¹⁰⁵ Hardt and Negri, *Multitude*, 295.

¹⁰⁶ Ďurovičová, “Preface,” in *World Cinemas, Transnational Perspectives*.

governments and organizations while further disenfranchising African efforts for national or community autonomy.

The international structure of non-profits insulates it from other economic realities to the continued detriment of African self-sufficiency. This is particularly evident in the allocation of funding. Producing a public health communication video, for example, requires that the non-profit acquire production materials and talent, which has the potential to positively contribute to the local economy. Some resources granted to African production companies in the form of international humanitarian aid are necessarily spent to purchase goods and services locally. Local casts and crews are almost always hired – and often trained – to shoot educational videos, although these are usually short, temporary positions. MFDI, for example, hires film crews from available filmmakers in Dar es Salaam and has developed ad hoc relationships with cinematographers, lighting crews, and actors, among others. On the other hand, individuals who run such projects and are permanently employed in this industry, however, are predominantly expatriates from the US or Western Europe, sometimes from Australia or South Africa, as well.¹⁰⁷

In the global non-profit sector, money is donated to Third World locations but is often exchanged by First World subjects. In detailing her experience with election observers in Mozambique, anthropologist and UN consultant, Carolyn Nordstrom, notes that large amounts of money is spent to ship staff and supplies to the nation being observed. Then, when the elections are complete, the people and material resources are removed with minimal long-term gains to the local economy.¹⁰⁸ Educational video

¹⁰⁷ South African businesses in this industry tend to have a slightly different profile, with local professionals leading such institutions. However, white South Africans are more likely to lead these institutions and projects, demonstrating continued social and economic stratification from the colonial and apartheid periods.

¹⁰⁸ Nordstrom, Carolyn.

production differs in that more of the equipment and resources remain in the cities where they are used, but organizations tend to remain relatively isolated entities. As the flow of money in this industry shows, the underground financial system described by Mbembe that characterizes African nations' current status within the global economy is comprised of black market commerce in resources ranging from diamonds and coltan to US dollars and pharmaceuticals. The influx of capital through aid-based funding often bypasses the normative constraints of aboveground economic pathways. This produces a parallel media production environment that is significantly distant from local for-profit video production because of the vast disparity in financial resources and the non-profits' freedom to operate independent of market demands or hardships. The transnational funding structure has a direct impact on how an IGO's or international NGO's initiatives are entwined or, more commonly, distanced from local market conditions.

Because the educational film and video industry in Sub-Saharan Africa is part of a relatively insular non-profit arrangement, its pedagogical *raison d'être* determines the systems of exchange in which it operates. Political and economic relations incorporate an agreed upon system of exchange whereby money is traded for anticipated or documented humanitarian results. Resources are donated from abroad with no expectation of direct profit or monetary return. The sale of videos to educators, such as those working in family planning clinics, prisons, schools, or university libraries, contribute only marginally to a producer's operating budget. Nominal prices for videos range from USD 4 to USD 25. Sales are also not based on individual viewers, but rather institutional buyers who screen a single video for unaccounted audiences. Potential revenue is decreased further when successful films are regularly pirated with no recourse to copyright-related profits. Therefore, prices on units sold are minimal relative to production budgets. To put this in perspective, a popular Nigerian straight-to-video feature operates on an average budget of USD 20,000. Educational videos are also unique in that they often come with additional distribution funds. This is directly oppositional to

the for-profit model that depends on a paying distributor, who, in turn, depends on a paying audience. MFDI, for instance, budgeted half of its USD 1.5 million for the distribution of *Yellow Card* so it did not need to rely on ticket sales even where the film was exhibited in theaters.

Instead of profit, donors expect their investments to produce measurable and quantifiable humanitarian results that demonstrate some improvement in the lives or living conditions of target recipients. Pre- and post-production research on audience needs and responses are part of the standard operating budget for both small and large film and video public communication initiatives. Funders require proof of the value of their investments, so organizations do research in advance of production to tailor their messages and after exhibition to measure a film's efficacy in generating desired changes in spectators' attitudes and behaviors. This research has an historical precedent in colonial instructional film practices and can range from an NGO director's personal assessment of local needs to extensive surveys and focus groups before production, as well as researcher observation of screenings, audience surveys, and essay competitions administered after distribution.¹⁰⁹

This type of audience research puts IGO and NGO representatives in direct contact with local populations and collates a plethora of detailed knowledge regarding a community's needs and assets. But, reception studies, such as surveys or direct observation, fail to capture reception sentiment that could be measured by market-based factors like ticket or video sales. Furthermore, this type of research relies on each participant's self-reporting, which tends to be unreliable, and cannot account for behavior after time has passed. These studies are often inconclusive because the connection between spectatorship and future behavior is assumed, not guaranteed, a reality many

¹⁰⁹ Notcutt, *The African and the Cinema*; Sellers, "Making Films in and for the Colonies."

reports acknowledge.¹¹⁰ Finally, research findings must be translated for funders, a process that often entails eliding specific differences in favor of universalized assumptions about the causes of and solutions to public health crises. NGO workers using educational videos struggle to find ways to ameliorate these drawbacks by experimenting with alternative results assessments. STEPS, for example, has moved to a more qualitative method of reporting. This is a more viable option for STEPS than many other NGOs because of their established working relationship with funders like the Ford Foundation. Such flexibility is not usually practical when an NGO's ability to secure funds is more fragile.

Consequences of Transnational Non-Profit Cinema

My strongest critique of the African educational film and video industry is its failure to historicize its objectives, methods, and products, thereby remaining blind to the industry's position within structures of governmentality, and its role as a player in the latticework of global inequality. Each project tends to be isolated, with film and video producers reinventing "the wheel" each time a new NGO sets out make a film addressing its particular humanitarian issue, even though similar projects have been implemented many times over as far back as the 1920s. Every new project, then, is executed as an experiment with little accumulation of knowledge from experience. The exception lies in the few organizations that have been established exclusively for the production of public communication media, such as Ukweli video in Kenya, MDFI in Tanzania, STEPS for the Future in South Africa, and Scenarios from Africa in Ouagadougou, all of which have maintained longer term viability through a series of productions. These organizations have been able to experiment within their production models and build on their previous

¹¹⁰ Hudock's assessment of MDFI films calls for long term research. Hudock, "The Impact of Social Message Videos."

successes and struggles. Even these institutions, however, remain isolated from one another and the experiences they could share.

This lack of contextual understanding allows individual organizations to exist in relative ignorance of their position as a small, but relevant, cog in the larger, dysfunctional wheel of international aid to Africa. It is only with a more holistic perspective that patterns in the industry become visible. As described above, a tripartite formation of critical factors – in the realms of technology, infectious disease, and political-economy – has resulted in important divergences from the colonial period that illustrate how nuanced trajectories of power intersect at the point in space and time when an African spectator views an educational video in the context of postcolonial imperial machinations and how this moment fits into a larger world order of inequality.

In action, these political and economic relations are problematic for several reasons. First, the influence of aid-based funding withholds full autonomy from African nations and has led to IGOs and NGOs being deeply entwined in the day-to-day operations of national governments. The entanglements of the transnational (connecting local and global) means that there is no easy distinction between what is in or outside a nation's economy and political landscape and decisions regarding how and who to educate are often decided outside national borders. The Ministry of Health in Tanzania, for example, leans heavily on funding and expertise from USAID. The government has integrated donated funds into their budget process, leading to a dearth of national funding for public health problems and communication. This turns aid into a normative requirement for the government to function and provide for its citizens, making any withdraw of international funds a serious threat to a nation's ability to care for itself. As under colonialism, this intervention is executed in the spirit of benevolence, but interrupts national sovereignty just the same.

Second, film and video productions remain isolated from the audiences they seek to address because they are beholden to their benefactors more than their constituents.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the educational film and video industry in Africa is that it operates almost entirely free of its audiences' ability or willingness to pay for its products. Distribution and exhibition costs are included in a project's original funding plan and nearly all exhibition contexts are accessible by African audiences free of charge. This allows for educational films to reach target audiences, but also provides unmatched competition for would be filmmakers in the parallel commercial industries that are struggling to emerge.

And third, non-profit funded film production in Sub-Saharan Africa hinders the development of a self-sustaining commercial film industry in NGO-dense locales. In the context of "NGO films,"¹¹¹ a dispossession is generated through establishing a parallel film economy that, because of its non-profit, grants-based funding structure, channels technical and financial resources into almost exclusively educational (and sometimes evangelical) media production,¹¹² thereby making it more difficult for the local economy to generate and support a self-sufficient video infrastructure.¹¹³ While media-producing IGOs and NGOs facilitate some development of local film industry, such as by providing training and access to recording and editing equipment, their non-profit status keeps them largely immune from audience demand or local market conditions that would otherwise fuel an indigenous business model. Furthermore, by acting as funding gatekeepers, transnational organizations directly determine what types of films can be made within the directives of their humanitarian missions and funders' expectations.

¹¹¹ Mona Mwakalinga, personal communication, April 3, 2010.

¹¹² Schulze-Engler, 2007: 21; Gikandi, 2007: 3)

¹¹³ In a nation such as Tanzania, where a popular video industry is just emerging, the parallel NGO film business draws top talent away from less affluent, audience-funded productions (Mona Mwakalinga, personal communication, April 3, 2010; George Gathigi, personal communication, April 3, 2010).

CHAPTER 3: PUBLIC PROBLEMS, PRIVATE SOLUTIONS

Gender, Agency, and Neoliberalism in Sexual Health

Message Films

The publicity poster image of Media for Development International's biggest hit, *Yellow Card* (John Riber, Zimbabwe, 2000), features a young, attractive, male Zimbabwean teenager dressed in a bright yellow football uniform. He has a soccer ball bouncing on his knees and a baby strapped to his back. Tiyane Tumba (Leroy Gopal) stares wide-eyed and slack-jawed back at the poster's spectator. His expression of shock, combined with his charm and obvious skill at managing both a ball and a baby, conveys the simultaneously comedic and serious tone and content of this educational film text. Filled with funny antics, romance, drama, and the thrill of sport, *Yellow Card* employs an engaging narrative and high production values designed to attract a youth audience and communicate its social message of prudent sexual behavior derived from the film's vision of particular gender norms: responsible masculinity and self-actualizing femininity.

Yellow Card tells the story of teenaged Tiyane, an emerging young football star who must deal with an unexpected child following his one-night stand with fellow schoolmate Linda (Ratidzo Mambo). Linda has nowhere to turn. The headmaster kicks her out of school, she fails her attempt to abort the fetus, and her family is ashamed of her. She consequently decides to leave the infant on Tiyane's doorstep. Meanwhile, exacerbating an already tense situation and creating an uncomfortable love triangle, Juliet (Kasamba Mkumba), an upper class, biracial young woman instantly earns Tiyane's adoration, but ultimately breaks off their budding relationship when she learns of his new responsibilities as a young father. Opposite Tiyane is his friend, Skido (Colin Dube), whose womanizing exploits provide comic moments throughout the first half of the film, until he is suddenly and indefinitely hospitalized with AIDS-related pneumonia.

Yellow Card's narrative is neatly tied up in the style of classical Hollywood cinema. Romance dominates the cause and effect forward progression of the story and the conclusion satisfactorily completes each of the film's story lines. Each character's fate seems to be determined by his or her individual decisions. Juliet is free to pursue her own life goals when she drives away from Tiyane's house at the end of the film, leaving his troubles behind. By admitting his indiscretions to his parents, who then agree to care for his infant, Tiyane relieves himself of parenting responsibilities and is able to continue his life as a relatively carefree teenager. Linda finds an older man to care for her. She moves away with him to start fresh in a new town and continue her education. As a direct result of his womanizing behavior, Skido dies.

The moral of the story is to avoid sexual promiscuity to prevent teen pregnancy or contracting HIV and other STIs. *Yellow Card*'s message suggests that young people can thrive or ruin their futures based on the individual decisions they make. A closer inspection of the film, however, reveals the holes in this lesson. The story lines show that a young woman of means has more choices from which to decide her future, whereas a less well to do girl must rely on the benevolence of a man to pull her out of poverty and social isolation. Likewise, a young man in a supportive middle class family has a safety net to mitigate the consequences of his mistakes, but his peer with an absent family dies alone in a bare hospital bed. Such contradictions within what seems to otherwise be a tight and satisfying narrative are symptomatic of the multivalent pressures ensuing from the political-economic structure that produces an educational film or video. These narrative texts and the industry in which they are embedded juggle, like Tiyane, several potentially incongruent objectives. While *Yellow Card* is a somewhat special case – it is one of the best funded and most popularly successful feature-length social message films in the Sub-Saharan region – its challenges are exemplary, showcasing commonly used rhetorical strategies, educational paradigms, and entrenchment in an aid-based financial infrastructure.

Naliaka is Going (Albert Wandago, Kenya, 2003) portrays a very different aesthetic. Produced for approximately USD 28,000, *Naliaka* presents less polished production values and less sophisticated marketing images than those of *Yellow Card*. Naliaka (Benta Ochieng) is a 14 year old girl who relocates from her rural family home to the city, first as a housekeeper to family friends, then on her own when she runs away from her father's (Ouko Otumba) effort to marry her off to an older man. When living and working as housekeeper for a middle class family in the city, Naliaka takes the initiative to acquire skills for urban living, including acquainting herself with modern amenities of electricity and indoor plumbing, as well as improving her English reading and writing and learning to type on the family's typewriter. On the run from an unwanted marriage, however, Naliaka struggles to survive in the city. She is befriended by a corporate executive, Pik (Ken Ambani), who provides food and a room for Naliaka, but then expects sexual favors in return, from which Naliaka again runs. Eventually, Naliaka secures a secretary position and transforms into a successful city woman. Pik, however, is actually responsible for Naliaka being hired by one of his corporate friends. He eventually seeks out Naliaka's affections because he has fallen in love with her, thereby providing the story with its somewhat happy ending.

Paralleling the narrative, *Naliaka's* cinematography, acting, and editing are notably uneven. Both form and content are unsatisfactory by mainstream Hollywood standards and the message meant to be portrayed is inconsistent with more Western style presentations like those in *Yellow Card*. Naliaka's narrative seems to suggest that a young woman can thrive in a major African city on determination alone, but this moral is undermined by the fact that each advancement in her story is facilitated by the whims of a more powerful man – her father, the paternal head of the city family, Pik, and the male supervisor to her office job – to either help or harm her. Unlike *Yellow Card's* relatively consistent message of female empowerment and male responsibility, *Naliaka's* narrative does not conform to expectations regarding women's liberal agency in the Western

dominated international aid community. Naliaka has no such fantastic options. She only makes the most of her position of subjection to men who wield their authority over her, whereas men in the film are free to take advantage of her vulnerability, restrained only by their own sense of right and wrong ways to treat a woman. Despite being entangled in the same non-profit funding structures, *Yellow Card* and *Naliaka* present very different depictions of challenges facing African women and girls and their place in national development.

Taking *Yellow Card* and *Naliaka is Going* as primary examples, this chapter elucidates the ways by which a film's economic context and formal features construct gendered characters and strive to produce similar subjectivities in its spectators. *Yellow Card* reinforces international pressure on individual gendered behavior and sexual morality as the cornerstone of national development. Through the deployment of especially Hollywood filmic strategies, the international aid community works through educational videos like *Yellow Card* to encourage changes in prevailing gender norms and individuals' sexual behavior as the primary solution to public health problems, such as HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy, and child prostitution. *Naliaka is Going*, on the other hand, is a more typical example of a production affiliated with the objectives of humanitarian aid from abroad, but without the full support necessary to realize its goals in the neatly tied up, illusory manner of Hollywood standards. The gaps in *Naliaka's* presentation and its failure to produce ideal, self-determined characters reveal the multiple and intersectional pressures on men and women alike in Third World contexts that make the question of women's agency far more complex than polished depictions, such as *Yellow Card* or international aid objectives, suggest.

There has been a push in recent decades toward an emphasis on women in development and the deployment of this aid is intimately intertwined with perceptions about the need to liberate African women. Projects to establish micro loans or build wells in poor areas in Africa, South Asia, and other developing regions have focused on the

role of women in each society. The assumption is that, by virtue of their responsibility to children and family, women can be depended upon to pay back loans or make the most of donated supplies. This has proven true, such as when women go to great lengths to repay loans with exorbitant interest rates in order to maintain family honor.

Correspondingly, efforts to modernize colonies and postcolonies have long been tied to molding a woman's place in society to suit the needs of those in power. Anticolonial leaders often put pressure on women to assume dramatically non-Western dress and behavior by drawing on an imagined tradition that distinguishes, say, Senegalese culture from French influence. Conversely, the rhetoric of international aid regularly evokes women's visibility and Western-defined notions of freedom as justification for or evidence of Western intervention. This is a dramatically contested in debates around Muslim women being veiled or unveiled in France and in the desirability or dangers of female circumcision in some African cultures. As Chandra Mohanty articulates, Western intervention is regularly framed as white men saving brown women from brown men.¹¹⁴ This strategy of placing the pressure of social change on women's bodies and actions was crucial for colonial rule and remains prominent today, such as in justification for American military action in Afghanistan.

Both uses of women as a symbol of tradition or modernity – both strategically defined to manipulate political relations – are highly problematic for bartering women's bodies as empty signifiers with little regard for their actual well-being or quality of life. Around the particular issue of public health policy, African women are often held responsible for not only her family's honor, but also to consolidate a sense of nationalism and morality for the success of a nation's development. This happens within state boundaries and in the manner states representation themselves abroad. Moving in the

¹¹⁴ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Lawrence Grossberg and Cary Nelson (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313.

opposite direction, international aid programs seek to liberate women in order to assure a developing nation achieves success on a global scale, or, more accurately, its place in the unequal global distribution of resources and labor. US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, summarizes this sentiment when she claims, “Empowering women is the key to unlocking many of the challenges we face around the world.”¹¹⁵ Evoking the rhetoric of Western feminism tends to consolidate support among populations in wealthy donor nations for imperial intervention abroad in the form of international aid.

While drawing attention to the role of women in development has led to many positive changes in how international aid is distributed, this shift in policy, such as within the US State Department, is also part of a problematic trend to placing the weight of national development on women’s shoulders, which are already burdened by many intersecting pressures. The deployment of feminism within imperial discourse has been boldly critiqued by postcolonial scholars concerned with issues of gender. The first impact of postcolonial thought on the desire for feminist solidarity is a rebuttal of any theory of “common oppression.” As cultural studies scholar, bell hooks, asserts, the concept of a common oppression of women, which would theoretically cut across other axes of difference, such as race and class, is a myth which is detrimental to efforts of solidarity. hooks critiques efforts of solidarity which are based on ideas of shared victimization and instead calls for efforts which build from shared strengths and resources among women. As she details, the matter of who sets the agenda is central to developing a different definition of sisterhood.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ US Secretary of State, Letter to Attendees at the International Family Planning Conference, November 29, 2011, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/11/177901.htm>, accessed January 31, 2012.

¹¹⁶ bell hooks, “Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women,” *Feminist Review*, No. 23, Socialist-Feminism: Out of the Blue (Summer, 1986): 125-138.

Also see Pat Parker’s essay, “Revolution: It’s Not Neat or Pretty or Quick,” in *This Bridge Called My Back*, asserts that the feminist agenda should be set by poor, working-class women if it is to achieve real social change.

Categorizing who will be the savior and who needs to be saved is an emotive point of disagreement among those who seek to improve women's lives globally. As Mohanty and Uma Narayan, argue, for instance, the use of the term "Third World woman" is a convenient strategy by which dominant Western feminists are able to shore up their own exceptionalism and extend the narratives and practices of imperialism. Evoking a single concept meant to encompass such a vast range of lived experiences allows Western feminists to claim their own superiority and from that position of judgment, shed light on the effects of patriarchy on Others, while keeping the effects of patriarchy on the Self in the dark. This not only plays on xenophobic stereotypes of foreign cultures, but simultaneously hampers efforts to generate social change at home by turning the agenda and transformative energies outward. In other words, every minute that American women spend fretting about Sudanese women who are forced to or choose to wear the veil is a minute they do not spend addressing other types of oppression experienced by American women, such as women who are forced to or choose to wear high heels. Nnaemeka illustrates this in her critique of Western feminist advocacy regarding female circumcision in Africa, by in turn calling for the elimination of the comparable issue of cosmetic plastic surgery in the US.¹¹⁷

An uncritical grouping of all women in developing nations into a singular category underlies many ineffective aid policies that seek to liberate target populations based only on the single axes of oppression determined by male-female domestic relations. While this may be a strategic move to emphasize commonalities struggles globally, it is problematic in the way it obfuscates the specificity of diverse forms of oppression in the diversity of global locations whose borders cannot be imagined away. The subjugation experienced by a young woman in rural Senegal is distinct from that

¹¹⁷ 117 Obioma Nnaemeka, "African Women, Colonial Discourses, and Imperialist Interventions: Female Circumcision as Impetus."

experienced by an older woman in Cairo, a distinction which needs to be incorporated into development programs designed for each.

Transnational feminist practice works to acknowledge racial, sexual, economic, and national distinctions while finding ways to forge alliance across such borders, such as through strategic coalitions or affective ties.¹¹⁸ Related scholarship has forged a critique of canonized Western feminist expectations in determining what problems women face in non-Western cultures and proposing solutions for the struggles diverse Third World women face, as well as the oft-ignored category of women of color within First World societies. Mohanty claims that global advocacy projects too often rely on narratives that define gender and power with an inadequate focus on male/female domestic relations. These endeavors fail to account for the diverse “cartographies of struggle” experienced by Third World women or women of color that are deeply grounded in material situations, such as conditions resulting from colonialism, racism, and poverty. Mohanty instead asserts that counterhegemonic practices of feminist political contestation “must be grounded in and informed by the material politics of everyday life.”¹¹⁹

In educational media, this would require a narrative to consider the situations it presents in an intersectional manner. If a video film seeks to change a spectator’s behavior, the story within must analyze all the power relations that move through a subject, constituting the spectator’s subjectivity and the types of choices he or she is able to imagine, let alone select. Narrative film and video film are uniquely able to enunciate an intersectional approach to social problems because audiovisual media allows for

¹¹⁸Aimee Carrillo Rowe, *Power Lines: On the Subject of Feminist Alliances* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008); Dawn Rae Davis, “(Love Is) The Ability of Not Knowing: Feminist Experience of the Impossible in Ethical Singularity,” *Hypatia*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Spring 2002): 145-161.

¹¹⁹ Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders*, 53-57.

multiple tracks of information to present simultaneously. Over the course of a feature length video, this information can accumulate to a greater, comprehensive analysis of the human situations it presents. Combined with the one to two hour length – or three in locales accustomed to Hindi cinema, like most cities in Sub-Saharan Africa – that has become socially normalized and the portability of the medium, a VHS or DVD viewing can absorb audiences in a way that focuses attention to the issues depicted within. Most thorough exhibition opportunities for educational videos also include some type of guided discussion before and after screening. The specificity of the medium does not suggest that a video's intended message bores itself directly into a spectator's mind and necessarily changes future behavior. Rather, film and video are media that have the potential to participate in feminist derived political practice that is not singularly focused, such as on domestic male-female relationships, but is multivalent in its approach because the medium and its viewing conditions can accommodate such multiplicity.

Transnational feminist theory and practice strives to develop this viewpoint for improving the ways that women can help women across borders. The paradigms that emerge in anthropology and social advocacy, for instance, hold insights valuable for the analysis of cultural texts that has yet to be realized in humanities disciplines. Moving from transnational feminist insights, the following analysis evaluates specific films and their political-economic contexts, contextualization being a key component in a comprehensive reconsideration of gender specific struggles beyond white, middle class, EuroAmerican feminist needs. Prevailing structures concentrates authority in primarily Euro-American humanitarian institutions through the existing system of grant-based funding in the distribution of development aid. This economic condition is directly connected to dominant lessons of African sexual health films derived from familiar paradigms of a universalized liberal feminism, often at the expense of working through socially specific solutions. Films that posit singular resolutions based on narrowly defined gender norms and ideals of women's liberation, such as *Yellow Card*, neglect the

multiple and contradictory constitutive components of a woman's subjectivity that guides her decisions and behaviors. Educational stories that demonstrate the intersectional nature of a woman's position in her social and economic situation, like *Naliaka is Going*, on the other hand, fall short of providing replicable behaviors that spectators could emulate to improve their own lives. The following chapter illustrates how this incongruous situation surfaces from the neoliberal demands attached to international aid that require private solutions to public problems, specifically public health and women's wellness concerns. I suggest that opening the gates of access to representational media in order to allow more nuanced and intersectional approaches to social issues offers one way to rectify the problems therein. Chapter four then considers several case studies that move in this direction to varying degrees.

Yellow Card: public problems, private solutions

Yellow Card's lead, Tiyane, faces the challenges of a young adult's choices and responsibilities, including pressure to succeed in sport, school, young love and the consequences of sex. When his infant son is placed at his doorstep, 17 year old Tiyane must decide how to deal with his new role as father, as well as how to admit his failures to parents, friends and school officials. This coming of age tale centers on the theme of responsibility, features a light, comic story and is accompanied by an upbeat soundtrack including songs from popular South African artists, among others, in its efforts to engage young African audiences.

Yellow Card was produced by Zimbabwe-based Media for Development Trust¹²⁰ following focus group research on issues of importance to young adults in Zimbabwe. Successful in Southern African cities and abroad, this film was widely

¹²⁰ Media for Development Trust was based in Harare and has since relocated to Dar es Salaam where it is now known as Media for Development International. The relocation was due to political unrest in Zimbabwe and has left MFDI staff with a sense of working in exile. MFDI also maintains a distribution site managed by a couple located in Colorado.

marketed with the intention of attracting a young, popular audience, while simultaneously encouraging peer discussion on critical issues for youth, including teen pregnancy and HIV/AIDS, in addition to concerns about future careers, family, romance and sports. These topics were chosen after extensive pre-production research with focus groups comprised of Zimbabwean teenagers. As MFDI's publicity material details,

From schools, to churches, footy fields to bottle stores, in rural communities, townships and rich suburbs; they talked; to guys on their own, girls on their own, girls and guys together, they talked one-on-one, they talked in English, in Shona, in Ndebele – boy did they talk – and they got the details, the ideals, the fears, the loves, the hates, the confusions and the dreams.¹²¹

Regarding their results, MFDI states,

Almost all the young participants were agreed on a few things. They got most of their ideas about sex from their peers. Discussions among the family were “taboo.” They almost all longed for ideal, open relationships which included greater understanding from their parents. They mostly agreed that they knew a lot about HIV and they were adamant that most of the “information” was boring and dull. They talked about sexuality, for the most part, as “doing it,” having sex, although a few groups were very clear that “relationships” were not just about sex.¹²²

From these insights, MFDI claims to have produced a “fast-paced, funny and touching story of teenage love, lust for life and passion for football” derived from this research.¹²³

Yellow Card is relatively popular compared to other Sub-Saharan educational films. With approximately USD 750,00 for distribution, *Yellow Card* was able to ensure widespread exhibition of the film across targeted countries, including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.¹²⁴ *Yellow Card* is a rare educational film that screened in cinema theaters, especially in Harare, and received good reviews from local

¹²¹ “Before You Can Make a Movie,” www.yellow-card.com.

¹²² “Writing and Research,” www.yellow-card.org.

¹²³ “Before You Can Make a Movie.”

¹²⁴ “Africa’s Biggest Box Office,” www.yellow-card.com.

film critics.¹²⁵ It was also subsequently shown on television and is known to, and often enjoyed by, many Zimbabwean teens. When screened in popular venues, like Harare's movie theaters or subsequently on television, many audiences remained unaware of its non-profit status or pedagogical intent.¹²⁶ Other viewing situations, such as in schools or health clinics, are often accompanied with teaching materials including tips on leading discussions and specific discussion questions.

By engaging with “the material politics of everyday life,” research behind *Yellow Card* suggests that the film project might move beyond one-dimensional assumptions about gendered power relations. Building from its field research, *Yellow Card* has the potential to pinpoint and work through what Mohanty terms “the intersections of the various systemic networks of class, race, (hetero)sexuality, and the nation,” and in some ways it does.¹²⁷ The film touches on diverse factors that constitute sexual behavior, especially the role of wealth and race in the production of romantic desire and the effects of poverty on young women. However, these factors are eclipsed by a thrilling and romantic narrative that situates its beautiful stars as the center of attention and marginalizes deeper structural concerns, such as the negative effects of privatization on social support networks, that might more radically challenge existing global, national, and domestic relations.

Yellow Card tackles several public health and social justice problems that align with the international aid community's priorities, concerns recognized by national governments as critical for their populations, and issues identified as areas of need by local humanitarian research, such as from the focus groups with Zimbabwean teens. The

¹²⁵ “First Reviews,” www.yellow-card.com.

¹²⁶ F. Marazi, personal communication, November 6, 2008; T. Mbudzi, personal communication, November 27, 2008.

¹²⁷ Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders*, 55.

film addresses teen pregnancy, teen sexual activity, romance, the naïveté of youth, social stigma about HIV, the dangers of home abortions, parenting roles for men and women, race and class relations in urban Zimbabwe, and the importance of education for African young people, among others. To these problems, the film posits the following solutions: individual behavior change, especially abstinence and male sexual responsibility; women's agency understood as free will; parents as the ultimate source of help; and a turn away from village life. The film further suggests that abortion is a bloody and ineffective solution, no social support network is viable outside the nuclear family, women from poorer families have few options in life and must therefore take care of themselves, and wealth and beauty assure success. Some ideas are explicitly stated, while others remain unsaid, but inferred. These solutions are presented not just through the narrative, but also through the filmic presentation of the story. Ideological underpinnings are reflected in the film's tight continuity editing featuring many American scale shots and shot-reverse shot sequences to draw attention to the main romantic interest, among other techniques that highlight a character's individuality.

Yellow Card's narrative and screen time are dominated by romance and football. The romantic leads, Tiyane and Juliet, are portrayed as the classical hero and heroine. Juliet, in particular, is clearly marked as the object of Tiyane's, as well as the audience's, desire. To this end, audience identification is encouraged through standard suturing techniques, or the cinematic strategies by which spectators are stitched into the fabric of a film and encouraged to identify with certain – usually male – perspectives.¹²⁸ *Yellow Card* employs foundational elements of classical Hollywood style, such as point-of-view shots from Tiyane's perspective, to position Juliet as the target of his lustful gaze. The first interaction between the two is built entirely on an exchange of looks. Tiyane spots

¹²⁸ Baudry, "Ideological Effects; Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" [1975], *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 198-209.

Juliet dancing at a wedding celebration. Via an eye-line match from Tiyane's perspective, Juliet is framed between other dancers' bodies. She glances up at the camera and smiles when she sees Tiyane looking back at her. This initial glimpse is followed by an extended shot-reverse shot sequence featuring tight close-ups of both Tiyane and Juliet's faces as they stare and grin sheepishly at each other through the crowd. In this introduction to her character, Juliet is filmed using typical techniques of Hollywood glamour, such as soft focus and a glowing back light. Her hair radiates as she looks over her shoulder, directly at the camera, establishing Juliet as an object of beauty to behold. Juliet's status as an upper class young woman is underlined by her costuming in rich, beautiful fabrics and jewelry. Racial signifiers, such as lighter skin and softer hair, are also emphasized through lighting and setting to differentiate her from her co-stars and mark her beauty as particularly desirable, including to a young, rather pudgy white man who monopolizes Juliet on the dance floor when Tiyane first spots her. The cinematic strategies used to introduce Juliet are notable for their alignment with Hollywood film style, which is not the dominant mode employed by other African cinemas.

In contrast, films conventionally included in the category of "African cinema" tend to exhibit cinematic styles distinguished by framing the subject in medium, long, and extreme long shots, as well as long takes, that situate characters within their surrounding social and material environments, as well as within perceptible durations of time, whether for realist or surrealist effects.¹²⁹ More conventionally defined African films and filmmakers of the cosmopolitan cultural elite circulate film festival and university circuits, with minimal showings in African locations due to the lack of necessary infrastructure. While these films, such as those of Ousmane Sembène, Djibril Diop Mambéty, and Abderrahamane Sissako, do not belong to a single style, critics have

¹²⁹ Barlet, *African Cinemas*; Thackway, *Africa Shoots Back*.

noted many formal trends among such films that serve to emphasize relationships between characters and the space around them.

In such different films as Sembène's social realist *Xala* (Senegal, 1975) and Mambéty's *Touki Bouki* (Senegal, 1973), characters are systemically framed in long shots that resist the isolating effects of classical Hollywood-style medium and close-up shots. Even gluttonous con men and women in popular Nigerian gangster videos, for example, are provocatively framed in long shots to show off their accoutrements of wealth, such as big SUVs and lavishly decorated rooms that contribute to what Brian Larkin terms an "aesthetics of outrage."¹³⁰ Romance is more likely to be signified through social channels, such as through children setting up their mother with a would-be suitor in *Faat Kiné* (Ousmane Sembène, Senegal, 2000), through the verbal maneuverings of a griot in *Guimba, the Tyrant* (Cheick Oumar Sissoko, Mali, 1995), or through a prostitute's bartering for a better price in *Glamour Girls* (Kenneth Nnebue, Nigeria, 1994), than through the isolating technique of tight shot-reverse shot sequences that constitute *Yellow Card*'s central love affair. While no formal feature is essentially "American" or "African," the established patterns of these cinematic traditions distinguish classical Hollywood as *Yellow Card*'s primary aesthetic and formal influence, which has a considerable impact on the film's structures of characterization, use of the apparatus for ideological insinuation, and gendering.

Yellow Card mobilizes the possibilities of classical Hollywood's continuity editing to focus tightly on Juliet, singling her out from the crowd, making her an individual. This formal technique reflects the director's training in film production – John Riber graduated from the University of Iowa's film production program – and the influence of Western cinematic expectations at the major planning stages in the film's pre-production process and editing decisions in post-production. *Yellow Card*'s approach

¹³⁰ Brian Larkin, *Signal and Noise*.

to framing its hero and heroine fit the ideological mold of individualism that similarly indicate Hollywood's dominant style, which was developed in the context of American ideals of rugged individualism and capitalist competition under a center-right history of political leadership.

The opposite approach is applied to Linda. Unlike Juliet, who is marked as glamorous, innocent, and desired by the camera, Linda is eroticized only momentarily and shown to be threatening through her gaze at Tiyane's body. Linda is introduced early in the film as she looks indulgently at the protagonist. Framed by the contours of an open car window, with her chin resting on her hands, Linda desires, but is not desired in return. Most images of Linda in the first half of *Yellow Card* are characterized in this manner, featuring her looking at Tiyane, including the pivotal moment when she walks in on him changing out of a rain-soaked football jersey. In this shot, Linda pauses at the door, framed against the dark, wet night behind her, staring at Tiyane in front of her. The object of her desire, Tiyane's half bare body, is positioned closer to and facing the camera, allowing the spectator to gaze for a long moment at Linda looking at Tiyane. The room they occupy is unremarkable, a friend's modest home that could be located anywhere, instead drawing attention to the looks that cut across its space. A similar shot is constructed when Linda, having crossed the threshold and entered the room, changes her shirt in a similar fashion in close, frontal proximity to the camera. Tiyane's surreptitious gaze is similarly constructed so that Linda is positioned between him and the camera in her state of undress. While the tension in this scene resolves in a brief suggestion of intercourse, there is never an exchange of point-of-view shots between Tiyane and Linda; the film never destines them for classical, Hollywood-style romance.

Beyond this brief scene of lustful, but unromantic gazing, Linda is solidly coded as a hapless, lower-middle class schoolgirl. She is pictured most often in her plain school uniform and is defined only by the object of her gaze, Tiyane. After the early sex scene, no other characters in the film look *at* Linda. She is discussed by others, such as the

school headmaster or Tiyane, but thereafter she is largely banished from the screen. All subsequent scenes including Linda obscure her in some way or use the effects of her body as depersonalized spectacle. In one such shot, she is framed as just one in an orderly crowd of many school-aged girls, differentiated only when she faints from morning sickness, falling horizontally against the regimented verticality of students standing to attention, visibly marking her as deviant. In another scene, Linda rolls away from the camera in agony, exposing the repulsive sight of her failed abortion attempt – bloody sheets and a bent hanger. Even in the front yard of her parents' small house, Linda's features are shaded by shadows from a nearby tree. While the film works to individualize and illuminate the romantic couple of Tiyane and Juliet, it works equally hard to position Linda as the “everyday African woman,” subject to the oppression of her social conditions. Linda's body and her story line are used to figure the horrific consequences of Tiyane's initial irresponsibility. When the headmaster expels her from school and her mother banishes her to a village to carry out the pregnancy, Linda is utilized to illustrate the inhumane treatment of young women in her circumstances. She is not differentiated, but is instead treated as an empty vessel on which is written the social problems addressed by *Yellow Card's* instructive message.

Furthermore, despite situating Linda in relatively lower class settings, the film does not directly address any of the multiple factors that impact her situation. In her final confrontation with Tiyane, when he accuses her of being a bad mother for leaving their infant on his doorstep, Linda only protests, “Where were you when I got kicked out of school? Where were you when I had the baby?” The film uses this moment to develop the narrative's romantic drama by emphasizing Linda's hurt feelings at Tiyane's abandonment, not her precarious situation as a young woman with few resources to care for herself or an infant, nor the lack of a support network larger than the young couple to help them. Linda's anger instead suggests that Tiyane could have helped Linda if only he had stayed with her, when what she really needed was a public institution, such as a

women's shelter, to which she could flee when her private support failed. Just as Linda's features are obscured by lighting and framing throughout the film, so too are the multiple axes of power that circumscribe her, eclipsed by the film's greater interest in the largely unrestrained individual agency exhibited by Juliet.

The character of Skido functions in a similar way. He is defined by his womanizing attitudes and serves as the film's comic relief, easily and repeatedly distracted by every attractive woman who happens by. Skido is stereotyped through his exaggerated embodiment of misogynist norms, professing his uninhibited access to women's bodies, often through obscene gestures and explicit comments. This portrayal is used as a foil to Tiyane's model of hesitant responsibility and is also employed to introduce the issue of sexually transmitted infections into the film's narrative. Skido first complains that urinating is painful, which Tiyane attributes to gonorrhea caught from sleeping around. He eventually admits that he is SERA (HIV/AIDS) positive after being hospitalized for pneumonia, a confession that precipitates the most serious moment in the film. Skido drops his comic act and, looking straight at Tiyane, states that he will not be leaving the hospital. The two friends then embrace in tears. While the film does not depict Skido's death, it makes his fate clear. *Yellow Card's* narrative falters only momentarily on this news as Tiyane pauses to state that he is "not the only one who has made mistakes." Focus quickly returns to the central feature of the film, the budding romance between Tiyane and Juliet. While an impending death, even that of a supporting character, might be expected to rupture narrative flow, Skido's demise has little to no effect on Tiyane's romantic or parental problems. Like Linda's absorption into the mass of nondescript young women, Skido's attitude, illness, and subsequent death are used only metonymically to reference the constant threat of HIV. His one dimensional character serves as only a passing reminder of the alternative and devastating consequences of promiscuity. Tiyane's yellow card warning, with which he at least

makes off with his life, which gains greater pedagogical impact when contrasted with the alternative, Skido's lethal red card, his final penalty.

By folding Linda and Skido into the undifferentiated masses of young African men and women losing their futures to the consequences of irresponsible sexual behavior, *Yellow Card* conversely works to hold up Juliet and Tiyane as ideal figures to be emulated. The two lead characters are marked as distinct by their visual and narrative individuation from the surrounding social environment and their consequent ability to act with independent agency. By eventually accepting his parenting role, Tiyane's character works to inscribe new standards of responsible masculinity in the film's spectators with the implied intention of reversing existing norms of philandering, reckless masculinity as represented in the dying Skido.

Similarly, Juliet acts of her own accord, first, in transcending her class position to be with Tiyane and, second, in her decision to leave him and his baby, thereby shaping her own future. The film encourages identification with Juliet's model of autonomous femininity by idolizing her as the object of the camera's gaze and surrounding her with the trappings of success, including beauty, a comfortable home, and even a car, which gives her greater mobility – both literal and social – than the other lead characters. Linda, conversely, is restricted by her poorer social position and is provided with no viable choices after becoming pregnant. *Yellow Card* works to discourage identification with Linda's character by repeatedly portraying her looking, but never privileging her point-of-view, as well as by evacuating her pregnant body entirely from the profilmic tableau. Her only mobile transportation is provided by her older boyfriend near the end of the film when Linda says her final, angry goodbyes to Tiyane: Linda opens the door to her boyfriend's car, slides in, and drives away – out of town and out of the story.

The Unsaid¹³¹

While *Yellow Card* sets up Juliet and Tiyane as self-actualizing and responsible individuals, the film never interrogates *how* they are able to make the model choices they do. This gap in the film's analysis of gendered behavior aligns the text with its neoliberal industrial context and distances its instructional message from the diverse "cartographies of struggle" in which spectators are embedded. The film's construction of ideal femininity and masculinity are particularly illustrative of this problematic. The lesson of responsible masculinity is potentially empowering in some circumstances, especially to female audiences. However, like models of self-actualizing femininity, it relies on factors beyond most women's control; women without wealth have little control over men's behavior.

Juliet's freedom to make positive choices, presumably of her own free will, seems to depend on her wealth and beauty. She lives in a better part of town, has other options for men, including white men, is better educated, and can finally drive away from Tiyane's problems. Conversely, Linda is not afforded the freedoms of wealth and mobility available to Juliet. In the end, Linda looks forward to a more hopeful future, but only because she finds a man who can provide for her. Not only is she disenfranchised in relation to Juliet's greater access to critical resources, but Linda is also isolated from any support network that might help her improve her situation. She is left utterly alone by her largely absent mother, her school, and Tiyane. Even the doctor who is called to stop Linda's bleeding is paid to keep quiet about the event. Significantly, there is no mention whatsoever of public institutions to which Linda could turn in her desperation. No clinics, hospitals with evident female patients, or shelters exist in the film's setting, and the issue of such support services is never raised. All potential solutions to Linda's serious

¹³¹ The unsaid references Foucault's description of discourse including both the said and the unsaid, what is spoken of on the surface and what cannot be imagined or stated based on the power-knowledge relationship that constitutes the discourse.

situation are relegated to private spaces and relationships: her bedroom, where she attempts to abort the pregnancy, Tiyané's family, where her infant finds a safe home; the unseen village, where she presumably gives birth; and in the personal vehicle of the boyfriend who eventually promises provides for her.

By not exploring the conditions that allow Juliet to control her own future, *Yellow Card* leaves female audiences with the same lack of options faced by Linda. Furthermore, by implying if only young women make the proper choices, they will succeed, this model of social transformation, reliant upon individual behavior, does not show young women how they can produce change from the agency already available to them. By failing to fully negotiate the multitude of factors that produce gender norms and sexual behavior, especially in the African postcolonial context, these visions of liberated femininity in conjunction with responsible masculinity do little to help women mobilize their existing power, instead deferring resistant action to an indeterminate and imagined future point.

The marked absence of any public support network also reveals the film's underlying ideological assumptions. This void denotes a change from earlier manifestations of African instructional cinema that often featured public officials and institutions, such as an agriculture minister or a free health clinic. Public institutions were often featured prominently in colonial period instructional films. The 1940's educational short film, *Mr. Wise and Mr. Foolish Go to Town*, for example, situates a free local hospital as the source of a cure for the hapless title characters' cases of syphilis. Mr. Wise lives up to his name when he attends the hospital, receives treatment, and is cured, and the generous doctor at this public institution declines payment.¹³² Utilizing public institutions was a common message in British colonial educational films. Audiences were encouraged to attend not only health clinics, but also utilize national banks and agricultural education centers.

¹³² Vaughan, "Seeing is Believing."

The void created by excluding publicly funded social services in contemporary films and videos indicates a shift toward privatization in the educational content of media initiatives that parallels the industry's contemporary financial structure. Privatizing public health concerns works in tandem with other neoliberal policies that have come to dominant international relations, especially between donor and recipient nations. Neoliberalism refers to economic policies that advocate for free trade and open markets. As David Harvey articulates, neoliberalization incorporates privatization, financialization, managing and manipulating crisis, state redistribution, which together consolidate power and wealth among the upper classes.¹³³ In forced restructuring of developing nations as conditions for loans, neoliberalism means privatization of state institutions and the deregulation of markets. This has become an established principle in states' relationships to each other. Regarding international family planning, for instance, US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, explains the now commonsensical opinion:

For our community is much larger and more diverse than just state actors, it is all of us: NGOs, international organizations, civil society and private sector partners, and dedicated citizens.¹³⁴

It has become a hegemonic imperative that states cede power to private actors. Dominance of the neoliberal model in the post-Cold War global political economy is tied to international aid and its requirements for privatization, such as through the World Bank or IMF loans. As a requirement for receiving aid from the IMF, for example, a nation must privatize certain state owned industries, thereby allowing multinational corporations to take over national oil companies or public utilities. The expectation is that private companies will execute necessary development, such as building cell phone towers or the infrastructure for water supply, but this also means that profits are easily

¹³³ Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism*, 42-50.

¹³⁴ US Secretary of State, Letter to Attendees at the International Family Planning Conference.

channeled back to the corporation's home territory. This type of restructuring shifts responsibility for a population's needs from the state, which is ideally representative and beholden to citizens and their needs, to private enterprise. In Sub-Saharan states it is a particularly complex project to weigh the costs and benefits of any given restructuring project because state-run ventures are far too often subject to corruption, such that neither public nor private governance benefits the average person in the majority of an African state's population.

Parceled with the reorganization of population management is a shift in who maintains responsibility for social harmony and quality of life concerns. Privatization transfers such mechanisms from the community level to that of family and individuals. The emphasis on public health by transnational organizations, both for profit and not for profit organizations, is simultaneously altruistic – the people working on these projects express an honest desire to improve people's lives through education – and part of a larger, exploitative, global system. The prevailing biopolitical discourse that functions to produce subjects who are better, healthier workers, who provide the necessary labor for capitalist accumulation, is a staple component of the neoliberal economic model. In this vein, the solutions posited in *Yellow Card* depend on individual behavior and private support networks, in face of the absence of public support. More comprehensive solutions that would have offered Linda a wider array of choices would depend on state power, which is, in effect, evacuated by the presence of international NGOs and multinational corporations due to neoliberal restructuring policies.

Privatization is a set of institutionally enforced political and economic policies, but is also the associated discourse evident in cultural products. This is not a direct cause and effect relationship, but rather points to the pervasive nature of a discourse made dominant by institutional practices. Humanitarian professional, Alan Brody, expresses his frustration in relation to his aid efforts at this US dominated discourse guiding privatization in his report on the UNICEF Swaziland film, *A Tale of Two Futures*:

The problems we were engaging here in those days have not gone away. Globalization and its associated, quite remarkable economic growth have not reduced poverty in much of the world. The seeds of anger, anomie, violence and instability out there in the “Third World” fields of poverty have not ceased to germinate. America, the nation which benefits the most from the current world system, is at the moment sufficiently dominant within that system, and sufficiently short-sighted, to feel comfortable implicitly blaming those who are poor for their poverty, and explicitly seeing itself as the “can do” example licensed to advise others (including the barefoot) to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps.¹³⁵

Privatization is part of the climate of global aid that has dominated since the end of the Cold War eliminated possibilities for social organization that might be found in alternative public policies, before 1989, in communist alternatives. Institutions that distribute aid to needy nations guide public policy by requiring restructuring toward divestment and privatization, which in turn regulates what subjects can and cannot say and ultimately disciplines bodies to fit existing global economic relationships, namely, uneven development and the exploitation of Third World labor and natural resources.

Funding acquired through IGOs and international NGOs circumvents local and representative public institutions, thereby situating film production in the private, non-profit sector. This is also what contemporary sexual health films do for audiences: they posit predominantly private solutions to public health problems. Combined, ideologies of individualism and a narrow funding focus on sexual health issues result in exceptional pedagogical pressure on the intimate activities of audiences. By individualizing the characters of Tiyane and Juliet, especially through picturing them as a singular couple, separated from larger social forces by strategic framing, *Yellow Card* suggests that all viewers can and should be similarly self-actualizing. As Linda’s and Skido’s fates make clear, however, the undifferentiated masses they represent are not afforded such luxuries.

The ideological paradox of the film is evident at the very heart of its message: *Yellow Card* encourages its audience to identify with Tiyane and Juliet, but does not

¹³⁵ Brody, “Pragmatics of Development Planning.”

interrogate how a young man or woman can acquire this type of autonomy. The film does not show how one might move from Linda's or Skido's position to Juliet's or Tiyane's, other than by gaining wealth or beauty and being lucky enough to have financially solvent and supportive parents. The un-replicable nature of this message is symptomatic of the contradictions on which the humanitarian aid-based instructional film industry is founded within the paradigms of neoliberal models of development. As is illustrated by the case of *Yellow Card*, the ideology of individualism is produced by the formal strategies of classical Hollywood style that distinguish protagonists from their constitutive social milieu and is therefore complicit with economic programs of liberal privatization.

By proposing fantastic solutions to serious problems like teen pregnancy, this approach fails to offer practical models for how spectators can work from within existing social constructs to maximize the various types of agency they already possess. Rather than tackle the difficult terrain of varied freedoms and constraints that constitute an individual's relative maneuverability within a given power structure, the film and its narrative contain such messy details as race and poverty within a conventionally tight plot that situates self-actualizing subjects as the actors of progressive change. By encouraging identification with Tiyane and Juliet, *Yellow Card* suggests that all viewers can and should be similarly self-determinate, a message which is a nice ideal, but impractical for many spectators. If films like *Yellow Card* seek to participate in and encourage practices that resist existing relations of dominance, such as those that abdicate men of extramarital child care, they would need to dig into the complicated details that frame normative representations and practices of gender. *Yellow Card* strives in this direction by bravely seeking to shift expectations for masculine behavior, current norms of which are detrimental to women and girls' well-being. A full overhaul, however, would not mean merely writing better narratives or providing better teaching tools, but would require a different industrial model that is beholden to the specificity of its diverse

audiences, not the universalizing tendencies of the current international funding structures.

Naliaka Is Going

Naliaka is Going was made possible within the same grant-based funding model that produced *Yellow Card*, but with less support. It also differs in that it was produced almost entirely by black Kenyans at Alwan Productions, Inc. located in Nairobi. Alwan Productions, in operation since 1989, is led by filmmaker Albert Wandago, who directs and produces most of the company's video films. Alwan Productions describes itself as a "development media company" and boasts a varied business model that synthesizes grant-based support from the state and international sources with local customers. It functions as an independent production house that not only produces its own development themed video films, but also maintains its viability as a business by renting equipment and expertise to outside projects in video film, television, and radio. *Naliaka is Going* was funded with much support from the United Nation's Development Programme (UNDP)'s Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment Project.

By 2003, when *Naliaka is Going* was produced, Alwan Productions was still working on its own as a pioneer and was relatively isolated from other media production sites. Since then, Kenya has organized a state office, set up in 2005, to support a growing film and video industry. Now there is a single public organization to which media producers can turn for guidance in seeking funding, technical training, and accessing post-production equipment and expertise. Other Sub-Saharan nations have made efforts of varying success in this direction, Burkina Faso being a prime example. Cooperation at the national level depends on a relatively well-functioning state apparatus, which Kenya can claim despite a high level of corruption. But before this institution was formed, Wandago was on his own with only UNDP's funds and little other support. In fact, *Naliaka is Going* is one of Kenya's first all-Kenyan feature productions, recognized

alongside *Saikati 1* and 2. Despite its technical inadequacies, the film was publicized with a good deal of national pride and referred to as a herald of better things to come for Kenya's film industry, both for national productions and as a site for international filming.

Wandago has spoken publicly about the difficulties of executing a poorly funded video film project. With limited funds he could only hire amateur actors and was subject to a very short production schedule with only two weeks allotted to filming.¹³⁶ These working conditions marked the film with the aura of an experiment, not a polished final product. Financial pressure on the production is evident in the staging and cinematography, which is quite flat, making only two dimensional use of the space in front of the camera. Its recording technology of video tape is evident in relatively dull colors and somewhat fuzzy image. Acting is considerably stilted and theatric, which is not surprising considering the actress who plays Naliaka comes from the theater. Pik's character is presented more naturally for the camera, presumably because he is played by a popular television actor. The editing is also considerably rough, such as with jump cuts between shots of different scales, and does not always maintain continuity of time and space within or between scenes. Exceptional images, however, are sprinkled throughout the film with stunning shots of Nairobi, Mombassa beaches, and Rift Valley game parks.

The video film is not only technical poor, but the narrative is also loose and its message is ambiguous. This can be attributed in part to the funding constraints under which it was made, but also reflects the video film's cinematic influences. *Naliaka is Going* demonstrates less affinity for the classical Hollywood style, bearing more of a resemblance to Nigerian and other Sub-Saharan national video film industries, such as what is tentatively becoming known as "Bongowood" on the Swahili East coast of Africa. Productions in these industries tend to be episodic in nature and melodramatic in

¹³⁶ Zachary Ochieng, "Kenyan movie going places," *News from Africa*, newsfromafrica.org (August 2003), http://www.newsfromafrica.org/newsfromafrica/articles/art_1257.html.

genre and often display the audiovisual aesthetics of low budget productions, similar to those in *Naliaka*. Considering the small budget, *Naliaka is Going* features a long list of locations, as well as a large cast and all-local crew.

The purpose of *Naliaka*, as with all development themed films and videos, is guided by its major funder, the UNDP's Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment Project. To this end, *Naliaka* addresses public problems including rural poverty, early marriage arranged for young girls, lack of education available for girls, urban unemployment, and *Fataki*, or what would be known in the US as "sugar daddies." *Naliaka* proposes the following solutions to these concerns: personal initiative, migration from rural villages to urban cities, finding a wealthy husband, and general good luck. These are relatively unsatisfactory answers to very serious questions of social and individual life. The film's unsettling dénouement is congruent with its lack of alignment with Western cinematic norms and feminist expectations. *Naliaka is Going*, however, does address the intractable seriousness of its central conflicts and illustrates what a woman can do to improve her quality of life using only the resources available to her.

The opening credit sequence of *Naliaka is Going* depicts a city man driving to a modest home in a rural village in Western Kenya. The introduction includes scenes of domestic life, such as a husband and wife discussing their plans for gardening and a goat happily grazing outside their hut. The city man visits the rural couple and offers to take their 14 year old daughter, Naliaka, back to the city with him to work in his home as housekeeper and nanny to his children, a common arrangement between village and urban households. Naliaka accepts the job on the condition that she will use her wages to help pay her brother's school fees and that she will visit home and bring sugar for her mother. Naliaka's first days as a house girl are depicted humorously as she learns about the basic amenities of city living, including electric lights and light switches, the gas stove, and Western toilets, as well as life without her familiar family goat or cows.

This first episode is filled with the drama of conflict around domestic help. Naliaka takes the initiative to improve her reading and writing by sitting with her young charges while they work on their school work. While the family is away, she also sits down to their typewriter and learns basic secretarial skills. Naliaka's host family is unsatisfied with her performance as she becomes more invested in training for office work than in her household duties. So Naliaka returns home and asks to attend school, but her father, unhappy with that idea, offers her in marriage to one of his drinking buddies, again, a common arrangement that many young women face. Naliaka runs away before being forced into marriage with the older man.

Naliaka's first few weeks in Nairobi commence the second episode of the film, which addresses a young girl's struggles to survive on the city's streets. At first Naliaka is befriended by two young prostitutes who attempt to force her to join them as they service a client. Hungry and alone, Naliaka encounters Pik, a man in his early thirties, who approaches Naliaka at a bar and offers her a place to stay. He sets her up in a hotel room, which keeps Naliaka off the streets at night, but eventually tries to force the sexual favors he expects in return for his expense. This episode speaks to another major burden on public health: intergenerational sex. A common practice in many East African cities is for older men to prey on the vulnerability of girls with the promise of financial support. These men are known as *fataki* represent one of the major ways HIV is spread from older to younger generations.

When Naliaka realizes Pik's intentions, she again runs away. The video film's third major episode follows Naliaka as she looks for a job in one of Nairobi's major office buildings. She is repeatedly turned down, finally securing the secretary position she seeks. Unbeknownst to Naliaka, she is employed at this particular firm only because Pik, by now falling in love with her from afar, asks his corporate peer to hire her. Naliaka thrives as her life takes a turn for the better. She has a friendly female roommate, a good job, and a healthy social life. She continues to contend with common challenges facing

young women in the city, including resisting the sexual advances of her boss and turning away aggressive men in the night clubs. The film does not actively address the dangers of sexual politics in the work place or social sphere beyond showing Naliaka's growing disenchantment with her typist job, which leaves her ripe for the film's romantic conclusion. Pik eventually approaches Naliaka, now a successful, sophisticated, city-wise young woman. He convinces her of his now gentlemanly intentions and the couple continues happily, as depicted by scenes of Pik and Naliaka sharing dinner at nice restaurants and enjoying the pleasures of city life together.

Naliaka's transformation from a naïve village girl to a sophisticated city woman is depicted most visibly through costuming. In earlier episodes Naliaka dresses in a traditional woman's *kanga*, then in drab dresses during her first efforts in the city. By the film's final episode Naliaka wears business suits to work and shares edgy, modern outfits with her roommate when they go dancing in the city's nightclubs. Pik's behind-the-scenes assistance gives a Pygmalion slant to the story's coming of age narrative, which includes fairy tale traits, especially its romantic, happily ever after, finale.

In part because of *Naliaka's* uneven narrative, and in part because of the story's proximity to the gritty struggles of everyday life, the educational message remains ambiguous. *Naliaka is Going* seems to suggest that a woman, when subject to patriarchal oppression from all sides, domestic and otherwise, should seek out a good man among the bad to provide love and security. Naliaka's story shows that despite a young woman's dogged efforts to improve her station with her own resources, men in positions of authority will continue to exploit her vulnerability due to her lack of money, experience, or job skills. This portrayal does not validate liberal feminist assumptions that independent thinking and effort offer an ideal that can save all women from a singular patriarchal oppression. Instead, Naliaka's epic drama shows how a multitude of factors open up and impinge the choices any given woman can make to change her situation in life.

As in *Yellow Card*, there is no recourse to public sources of help, such as a women's shelter or employment discrimination laws. Tiyane was able to turn to his parents for assistance raising his infant son, demonstrating a private solution that worked in his case. But Naliaka's family is a fundamental part of her predicament; her parents insist she work to fund her brother's schooling and when she does turn to them for support, her father tries to force her into an unwanted marriage. Both films depict only private solutions to serious public problems, but whereas *Yellow Card's* conclusion upholds the myth that such answers can be sufficient, *Naliaka* repeatedly shows inadequacy of the options available to a young, poor woman alone in both rural and urban environments.

As is illustrated in *Naliaka*, not many women can provide for their own safety in conditions of poverty. Prostitution is always a threat, as is the possibility of violence. *Naliaka's* message is honest about how hard it is for a young woman to make decisions about her future when her options are limited by social and economic factors, not just her gender. Furthermore, the film shows that Naliaka's situation is not her fault, but rather the sum of her circumstances and the way others pass around her body. Considering her repeatedly vulnerable positions, Naliaka does the best she can at each given time. She sneaks in learning unbeknownst to her employers, runs away, resists her supervisor's advances, takes food and shelter when Pik offers it, and finally accepts Pik's romance when his intentions suit her needs.

These are circumstantial, not systemic solutions, but they make it possible for Naliaka to survive and continue forward, allowing her to achieve the better quality of life she sought from the start. Furthermore, while Naliaka's actions are not necessarily replicable by audience members – many of the positive changes in her life require a heavy dose of good luck – her story speaks to the experience and struggles of many women in similar situations. As feminist film scholars have claimed about Hollywood melodrama, there is a social and interpersonal value to rallying around shared hardships

depicted on screen that make American “women’s films” popular despite their often depressing narratives. The melodramatic quality pervasive in popular African video films, crossed with police, crime, comedy, romance, or action genres, among others, functions in a similar way. As a familiar mode of video spectatorship, the melodramatic, almost epic approach to storytelling additionally fits into the viewing context of *Naliaka*’s target audience.

Despite the fact that *Naliaka* does not provide a typical liberal example for viewers, like that in *Yellow Card*, it does illustrate ways by which women in developing political and economic contexts can use the resources and options available to them to survive and make the most of their current circumstances. This is potentially a more empowering message than the implausible dream of obtaining Juliet’s wealth, beauty, lighter skin color, and corresponding freedom of choice to reject the demands of men in her life. On the other hand, *Naliaka*’s message does little to advance needed change in the larger structural problems that generate unfavorable circumstances for Naliaka, Linda, and Juliet in the first place. Many representations of women in development show the ways women are trapped by oppressive structures. Changing these structures is essential. However, international aid should also acknowledge and support the ways women work within existing systems to improve their lives, including their sexual health, family planning, parenting, and economic stability.

The distinctions between *Yellow Card* and *Naliaka*’s very different approaches to tackling questions of gender norms reveal the need for more flexible and diverse definitions of what counts as agency in the context of women in development. Just as an intersectional approach is necessary to produce narratives and messages in films that are more intimately related to spectators’ everyday lives, a manifold structure for incorporating different voices at the earliest stages of an educational film or video product holds the potential to shift the conversation about the relationship between

gender and development in Sub-Saharan contexts. The following chapter delves further into this question by considering case studies that make progress in this direction.

CHAPTER 4: INNOVATIONS

New Directions in Sub-Saharan Educational Film and Video

To this point I have been predominantly critical in my assessment, especially because educational film and video projects tend to be symptomatic of the industry in which they are embedded, an industry which maintains the problematic status quo of global power relations that continue to deny transparent African autonomy. Historicizing this situation is an important project, but must also be considered in light of efforts that acknowledge and seek to shift the current system now and moving forward. In this vein, this chapter considers recent innovations that strive to ameliorate disempowering characteristics that plague the industry. Every project seeking to use film and video for educational purposes in Africa has been experimental in one way or another, from the BEKE's early efforts to employ films to teach about farming in *African Peasant Farms*, to Gospel Communications International's synthesis of evangelical goals with HIV awareness in *Starting Over*. Many of these experiments repeat the same features over and over. Recurring problems I have identified include isolating non-profit film production from local commercial industries, a focus on keeping bodies alive regardless of quality of life, disassociation from the multivalent forces at work on a spectator's subjectivity, and definitions of good behavior defined by universalized humanitarian assumptions at the expense of locally specific needs.

Alternative models of conception and production work to alleviate some of the ideological and structural problems described in the previous chapters. One of the main changes that can shift the ideological impact of educational videos is the inclusion of more local knowledge, earlier in the production process. The educational film industry in Sub-Saharan Africa has always incorporated local talent at various stages of production.

As described in chapter one, some of the earliest experiments in colonial British Africa insisted on making films that were culturally specific to their audiences. Scripts have been written in consultation with local storytellers in many films of the first and third cycles. Black African actors have also always been employed, which is noteworthy considering the general exclusion of black African men and women as fully drawn characters on screen throughout much of film history.

Efforts to include African players in the industry, however, have often been rather shallow. Even including representatives from local community based organizations (CBOs) in workshops to generate scripts does not dismiss power differentials at the table. For example, when planning a script for an upcoming production, MFDI participates as one of many players in the initial, sometimes weeks long, workshop that also includes delegates from funders, such as USAID, from the Ministry of Health, experienced script writers, and several NGO and CBO representatives, who bring knowledge of local needs to the table. Relative access to funds and the control to distribute them for certain topics, however, remains firmly in the hands of donor organizations. Decisions regarding which topics will dominate a script are inherently political from the start, determined on a global scale. Players with local knowledge, for the most part, can only steer how the major issues are addressed in the details of a film script. Typical types of inclusion in the pre-production process, be it token or more active, do not solve the ongoing problem of unequal access to the means of representation and determining content.

In recent years, dialogue on this matter has been working its way into global scale discussions of humanitarian aid. At the 2012 International Aids Conference (AIDS 2012), for instance, USAID dedicated a panel to this question. Titled, “Local Organizations in the Driver’s Seat: How Self-Directed Capacity Building Leads to Improved HIV Service Delivery by NGOs,” this group of presentations reported on successful projects executed under the US PEPFAR-sponsored initiative, the New Partners Initiative. New Partners provides grant aid and technical support to pre-existing organizations to help increase

capacity and sustainability in the organizations' ongoing HIV service delivery projects. One South African organization, Mfesane, which has been in existence since 1975, was able to expand its home-based care and HIV education services geographically – expanding to two provinces, provide more comprehensive services, and employ salaried workers to maintain the NGO's increased capacity.¹³⁷ This structure for distributing funds is better able to utilize diverse knowledge and building on existing energies, while responding to needs determined on a local scale.

Such a model that builds knowledge from the bottom to the top – from a small, local scale to the large, often unwieldy global scale – is difficult to achieve in the current structure of international aid, in which funding comes from the top and is filtered down through increasingly smaller organizations until it reaches “ground level” in the form of a home-based care worker or film production, for instance. An altered model would need to combine bottom-up energy with top-down funding in a functional way, as the New Partners Initiative strives to do. The following examples illustrate how different educational film and video organizations recognize and are trying to work within and around current limitations built into the international non-profit funding structure. These organizations demonstrate innovative experimentation with a variety of projects that in some ways resemble educational films of the colonial period. In other ways, however, these projects demonstrate much more nuanced understandings of the limitations generated by their position within global power relations. This self-reflexivity, often developed over time through trial and error, is accompanied by more open modes of conception and production, as well as the flexibility needed to relate communication media with the minutiae of issues they tackle and the specificity of the locations and audiences they address.

¹³⁷ Kenneth Sklaw, *Lessons in Building Local Capacity: Looking Back to Move Forward*, presented at AIDS 2012 Conference, Washington, D.C., July 22, 2012. PowerPoint published at <http://pag.aids2012.org/session.aspx?s=135>, accessed July 30, 2012.

STEPS – *Bios politikos*

Social Transformation and Empowerment Projects (STEPS) is a non-profit organization based in Cape Town, South Africa, with affiliate offices in Denmark, which functions simultaneously as a media production site and as an NGO facilitator for STEPS' and partner organizations' advocacy programs. STEPS' first major project was the STEPS for the Future film series, launched in 2001, that addresses a multitude of issues around living with HIV in Southern Africa, a region comprised of South Africa and its neighbors, including Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia, Namibia, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania. International funders include governmental sources from Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Norway, as well as support from the Danish and Swedish Film Institutes, Norwegian Church Aid, One World Group of Broadcasters, UNESCO, and national broadcasting companies in Australia, Belgium, Holland, Austria, USA, Germany, and South Africa, among others. Through the organization's leadership, including producer Don Edkins of the affiliated Day Zero Productions, STEPS has established connections with numerous funding sources, with which they have developed good working relationships, an organizing strategy common to all of the major Sub-Saharan educational media producers. Multiple sources allows STEPS to cobble together funding that enables high quality film and video productions, as well as an extensive exhibition system.

The model of the STEPS for the Future program is unique in the way it involves local talent at early stages. STEPS solicited proposals, choosing 38 films out of over 200 submitted ideas, for stories from amateur and would-be filmmakers in the region. Investing over USD 200,000 in professional support and training, STEPS paired new filmmakers with experienced documentary filmmakers from around the world, including Jennifer Fox, Nina Kellgren, and Mette Hoffman-Meyer, among others.¹³⁸ These

¹³⁸ "The Films," *STEPS for the Future*, <http://www.stepsforthefuture.co.za/films.php>, accessed June 10, 2010.

professionals came to work with the new directors as mentors for one to five weeks each, a collaboration which resulted in some of the highest quality productions in the industry.

By soliciting original ideas, rather than tailoring general messages, the STEPS model takes advantage of invaluable knowledge available only from people living with HIV or working with HIV positive individuals in the region, thereby incorporating culturally, politically, and geographically specific information into the formation of each film project. This is markedly different from Notcutt's attempts to make BEKE films culturally specific by employing African actors to act out a screen play, the content of which was already determined by a British colonial agenda. Resultant films range from short to feature length and cover HIV-related topics, such as disclosure, stigma, prevention, treatment, mother to child transmission, gender specific concerns, migrant populations, and AIDS orphans. The address of HIV and cultural practices is particularly nuanced in comparison to more conventional educational feature films. *A Miner's Tale* (Nic Hofmeyr and Gabriel Mondlane, Mozambique/South Africa, 2001), for example, follows the central character, Joaquim, a migrant laborer, as he travels between Johannesburg, where he works in the mines, to his natal village in rural Mozambique, where he has left his family for many years, confronting different cultural expectations in each home.

A Miner's Tale opens with scenes of Joaquim working in the mines as he explains, in voice over, that he came to Johannesburg to earn money because he comes from a poor family. He expresses his frustration with working to build a nice city for white South Africans, while barely being able to support himself and his family. The film then travels with Joaquim when he takes a bus packed with other migrant workers to return to Mozambique, bearing gifts, such as clothing, shoes, bras, a boom box, and a mattress for his senior wife, Rosita, all of which were chosen with the help of his junior wife in Johannesburg, Marie. Joaquim is anxious on his journey and struggles with how to disclose his HIV positive status to his senior wife, Rosita, a concern which is justified

when she and the village elders insist that he perform his husbandly duties of providing her with more children, despite his protests. Amidst an emotional reunion with his 18 year old son, whom he barely knows, and Rosita, who is angry at his absence of 13 years, Joaquim tries to explain that he must use a condom with his wife to protect her from contracting HIV and eventually dying from AIDS. In voice over reflection, Joaquim repeatedly states that he wants to die at home in Mozambique, but he does not want his wife to be sick and die with him.

Upon seeking advice from the village elders, Joaquim confronts many misconceptions about HIV/AIDS. The elder claims that couples only use condoms if they do not trust each other and that his wife will not be satisfied with this practice he learned in a Johannesburg health clinic, where he was tested and counseled on living with HIV. Joaquim and Rosita also visit a *sangoma*, who performs a healing ritual over them and claims that if Joaquim kills a goat and bathes in certain herbs, he will be healed. Frustrated, Joaquim eventually leaves Mozambique without performing the husbandly duty expected of him – to provide his wife with more children. Never speaking directly to the camera, Rosita, in voice over, expresses her fear about sickness and AIDS coming into the village, but remains unhappy that her husband left to return to the mines without providing her with more children.

Joaquim returns to Marie in South Africa, where he again struggles with a decision, this time on how to tell this junior wife about his HIV status. Marie, going about domestic duties, like cooking and ironing, expresses to the camera her contentment with her situation living with Joaquim – he provides for her and she keeps him focused on saving money, not spending his wages on alcohol and women, as he did previous to Marie coming to live with him in his small, but comfortable urban home. Joaquim, on the other hand ends the film with a voice over reflection stating his concerns about what will happen when he tells Marie about having HIV. He worries that she will be angry, think he withheld the information all along, and possibly even leave him. Unlike most Sub-

Saharan films addressing HIV issues, *A Miner's Tale* asserts no redemptive morality that would nearly wrap up the characters' stories. The conclusion leaves Joaquim unsettled in his relationship with Marie and knowingly facing a future of more hard labor, followed by AIDS and sickness, with his only goal being to die in Mozambique from whence he came. Living with HIV is a central theme to *A Miner's Tale*, but is contextualized within many other factors that make Joaquim's life a challenge. The film addresses poverty, the exploitation of migrant labor, contradictory social expectations between cultures, and how to incorporate biomedical information with traditional forms of knowledge. The film does not advocate any particular set of behaviors, but rather shows how one individual struggles with the multiple problems he face.

This non-didactic approach to educational filmmaking is made more effective within the context of STEPS' broader outreach program. STEPS for the Future has developed a process called "The Action Learning Cycle," which incorporates a film with other components it deems essential to achieving good results. STEPS films do not circulate in isolation, but are attached to a pedagogical formula that incorporates sharing experiences, working through emotional responses, connecting film content to spectators' everyday lives, and spectators deciding on future action. The Action Learning Circle was designed by Marianne Gysae, a STEPS for the Future founder, in the early 1990s. This model is derived from studies in international communication of the late 1980s that called for a two-way learning process, by which viewers make meaning through individual interpretation. Gysae distinguishes this model from more conventional, unidirectional pedagogy that provides answers, expecting spectators to absorb the information and behave accordingly.¹³⁹ By situating the films within other outreach services, STEPS has the freedom to keep explicit lessons out of film content; facilitators are trained to provide

¹³⁹ Marianne Gysae, personal communication, July 16, 2010.

scientific and social information on HIV during discussion as questions arise, rather than having the film or educator lecture the information at the audience.

This model, however, is time and labor intensive, involving heavy investment in training and coordination with other outreach organizations. STEPS for the Future not only provides videos as teaching tools, but trains facilitators, and facilitator trainers, throughout the Southern Africa region to screen videos in comprehensive educational contexts. Facilitators are taught to use the videos to stimulate discussion, such as by preparing the audience with pre-screening questions, leading conversation at the end of the film, and providing resources for further information and action, such as testing and counseling. STEPS provides a detailed guide with suggested questions to accompany each film. The following discussion questions, for instance, are provided to accompany a screening of *A Miner's Tale*:

What is the film about?

Why does Joaquim want to tell his wife, Rosita, in Mozambique that he is HIV positive?

Why did he want to use condoms with her?

Why did Joaquim's Elder not want him to use condoms with his wife in Mozambique?

What would Rosita think if her husband used condoms when having sex with her?

What are the problems migrant labourers and their families face?

What is the connection between migrant labour and the spread of HIV?

Which of the characters do you sympathise with and why? ¹⁴⁰

When leading what can sometimes be very tense discussions, facilitators are coached to be open and receptive to all participants' views. The guide directs,

¹⁴⁰ Alosha RayRay-Ntsane and Simon Chislet. *STEPS for the Future Facilitator's Guide* (Cape Town: Social Transformation and Empowerment Projects, 2007), 26. Spellings from South African English vocabulary.

Whatever their level of literacy, the viewers' knowledge and experience is extremely valuable. Once viewers understand that their personal life experience is valued, they are much more likely to appreciate not only the different, possibly opposing, opinions of the characters in the films, but also the various views of other group members.¹⁴¹

This approach deconstructs the epistemological hierarchy that features prominently in the majority of African educational films and videos initiated from abroad. This can be a challenge to HIV educators who come into discussions with their own assumptions about what counts as good or bad behavior, sometimes facing thoughtful resistance to condom use or testing, which are commonsensical practices within international HIV humanitarian circles. Facilitators must be well-trained to be open to conflicting perspectives, just as they coach audience members to be open to the experiences depicted in the films.¹⁴²

In addition to framing films in a manner that values spectators' experiences and knowledge and encourages open dialogue, the STEPS mode of production has resulted in film content not based on crisis. This is in part possible because the public health approach to AIDS on a global scale has shifted since the advent of antiretroviral drugs and greater scientific knowledge about the specific mechanisms of HIV transmission. It is also uniquely possible because STEPS for the Future drew its stories from people living with HIV, which moves the conversation from the dichotomy of prevention or death to management and quality of life concerns. Films, such as *A Red Ribbon Around My House* (Portia Rankoane, South Africa, 2001), depict characters who are very much alive and working to live full lives not despite their HIV status, but through and with the disease.

A Red Ribbon depicts a mother, Pinky, and daughter, Ntombi, who live with HIV in very different ways. Pinky is a loud, flamboyant advocate for HIV disclosure. At one dramatic moment in the film, Pinky declares,

¹⁴¹ RayRay-Ntsane and Chislet. *STEPS for the Future Facilitator's Guide*, 9.

¹⁴² Elaine Maane, STEPS for the Future trainer, personal communication, July 19, 2010.

I want a red ribbon around my house the day I die. In the evening people won't see the red ribbon, so on the red ribbon there must be red globes which will go on right through the night and that is going to make people aware of HIV/AIDS.

Ntombi, on the other hand, seeks to live a quiet, normal life, which is difficult considering her mother's openness. Pinky's story is depicted as courageous and held up as a model for audiences because she has been living with HIV for seven years and continues to live positively. STEPS films like *A Red Ribbon* and *A Miner's Tale* avoid the more common all-or-nothing approach to HIV/AIDS in Africa that tends to emphasize managing large scale populations. As a model of education in which advocacy and knowledge emerge from experiences on the ground, STEPS refocuses debates around HIV to questions of how subjects can improve their quality of life.

It must also be noted that South Africa is uniquely positioned to support larger, more numerous, and more varied educational projects, thereby providing support and economic stability that enables innovations such as those demonstrated by STEPS. Following the theater for development tradition that was particularly strong during anti-apartheid activism in South Africa, radio and television continue the use of popular media in national development. One such successful project is the soap opera *Soul City*, broadcasting seasons from 1994 to 1999.¹⁴³ Like educational films from other Sub-Saharan locations, *Soul City* relies on non-profit funding, such as from UNICEF and the Department of Health, as well as transnational for-profit sources, such as Nestlé and British Petroleum. Unlike other film and video films, however, *Soul City* receives significant support from South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), a public media organization affiliated with the state. This is made possible in part because public broadcasters in South Africa have been legislated to be responsible for reflecting "the cultural diversity of South African society" and to "meet development goals which would

¹⁴³ Loren Kruger, "Theater for Development and TV Nation: Notes on an Educational Soap Opera in South Africa," *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 30, No. 4, "Drama and Performance" (Winter 1999): 106-126.

empower the poor, women, children, and youth.”¹⁴⁴ Quotas for local content also open space for such programs to air despite their lack of commercial value.

The serial nature of *Soul City*, as well as its multimedia distribution on television and radio, allows the soap opera to infiltrate viewers’ homes in ways that singular, self-contained films or video films cannot. As Kruger describes, *Soul City* has gained popularity and is avidly followed by audiences from one episode to the next, especially through the cliff hanger technique common to soap operas locally and abroad. Women, in particular, fill the target audience and determine the most popular broadcast times. By maintaining an ongoing presence in spectators’ lives, *Soul City* boasts an improved level of impact. Women viewers, whose social position is at the crux of urbanization, as well as some radio listeners in rural settings, follow the series closely and claim to heed the advice on health and social issues depicted therein.¹⁴⁵ South Africa’s support for public media stands out from other Sub-Saharan nations, but similar projects are being tried experimentally in other locations.

MFDI – Integration with existing media markets

MFDI has been a leading innovator in educational media in Central and East Africa since its founding in Harare in the late 1980s. MFDI experimented with synthesizing education and entertainment in feature films as early as its 1989 production, *Consequences*, and made strides toward popularizing their products, the zenith of which was its 2000 feature film, *Yellow Card*. More recently, and since relocating to Dar es Salaam, MFDI’s projects have been crossing media, especially utilizing radio, which is more pervasive and requires less expensive technology to distribute. In recent years,

¹⁴⁴ Independent Broadcasting Authority, *Report on the Protection and Viability of Public Broadcasting Services, Cross-Media Control, and Local Television Content* (Johannesburg: IBA, 1995), chapter 1. Quoted in Kruger, “Theater for Development,” 107.

¹⁴⁵ Kruger, “Theater for Development,” 108.

MFDI has produced and distributed the radio serial, *Wahapahapa* (roughly translated, “Home Boys.”) This project involves extensive collaboration with locally popular musicians, including recording albums and producing music videos. In making *Wahapahapa*, MFDI’s newest generation of leadership, directed by Jordan Riber, son of MFDI’s founder, John Riber, has made a conscious effort to use local production capacities. MFDI’s recording studios are valuable for this project and local celebrities regularly attend them to record radio public service spots or songs affiliated with *Wahapahapa*. The project also makes use of contracted production companies, such as the expertise of Adam Jumba, a well-known hip hop music video producer.

These efforts generate more economic ties with local markets. They also provide opportunities for video technicians who have been trained by working on MFDI projects. Some crew members are hired with little working knowledge of audiovisual production methods. They receive on-the-job training while working with MFDI, and then take that knowledge with them. In some ways, MFDI functions as a small scale film school. But with no large scale commercial or popular industry, there is little work for video professionals in the area, except when non-profit organizations hire them for other public communication media projects. Because NGOs and IGOs with connections to the mass of funds available through the international aid community can provide better payment for jobs performed, many of the best local cinematographers and other video technicians are monopolized by the non-profit industry, drawing talent and energies away from emerging entrepreneurial, for-profit endeavors.¹⁴⁶ NGO directors recognize that this model does not produce a sustainable industry that could survive a withdrawal of grant-based funds. On the other hand, interaction with specially trained filmmakers, like those who run MFDI’s production sites, helps to bring local filmmaking to a more professional level, in general.

¹⁴⁶ See Mona Mwakalinga’s forthcoming research on the burgeoning popular video film industry in Tanzania. Personal communication, April 3, 2010.

An established non-profit like MFDI remains relatively higher up in the funnel of funds from the global to local scale. With connections outside Tanzania, such an organization has more direct, albeit still very competitive, access to funding institutions. John Riber, for instance, has cultivated relationships with USAID and Strategic Development Communications (STRADCOM) contacts over his many years of development media work. Personal relationships of this kind are invaluable due to the debilitating slowness of Tanzanian bureaucracies,¹⁴⁷ but exclude would-be commercial filmmakers from funding and other resources that might energize an indigenous industry.

In addition to branching out to multimedia platforms, MFDI is also interested in exploring how it might integrate its video distribution with existing local media markets. As a non-profit distributor, MFDI's videos circulate in a different environment than do commercial videos in Tanzania, which are sold in busy market places and viewed in private homes and video clubs. MFDI organizers express a desire to work with local film entrepreneurs, similar to those who established Nigeria's successful industry. While video products within the commercial model exhibit low production values, they evince an excellent distribution system. MFDI is in the early stages of learning more about this, considering seeking funding for feasibility studies on more widespread video distribution and researching the potential audience for such production.¹⁴⁸

Scenarios from Africa – Young ideas

Scenarios from Africa is a video film project based in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso – home of the biennial Panafrican Film and Television Festival – and coordinated by The Global Dialogues Trust (GDT), a UK non-profit charity.¹⁴⁹ Scenarios runs an

¹⁴⁷ Jordan Riber, personal communication, July 8, 2010.

¹⁴⁸ Jordan Riber and Deborah Riber, personal communication, July 8, 2010.

¹⁴⁹ Founded in 1997, Scenarios for Africa's most recent selection of short films is now in production, as of September 2011. See www.globaldialogues.org for organization information

international scriptwriting contest for African youth under the age of 25, which calls for submission of ideas for short film about HIV. More than 150,000 young people have participated in the competition, representing 50 countries. Script ideas are selected by an international, multidisciplinary jury, including specialists in both HIV and film. Winning scripts receive monetary prizes, ranging from USD 125 to USD 2,500, and the young authors have the opportunity to see their ideas turned into films.

Similar to the STEPS for the Future crowd-sourcing model, Scenarios' scriptwriting competition builds on knowledge provided by the target audience – African young people – and is open to the learning experience this can provide. Young participants learn about HIV/AIDS issues as they research and write their ideas and GDT personnel learn what the audience needs and what information is circulating, thereby allowing the organization to tailor the films to the most current and diverse priorities of HIV/AIDS communication media. As Scenarios describes, “In their narratives, young people provide invaluable insights into the ways they perceive HIV/AIDS and related phenomena, including gender norms and human rights.”¹⁵⁰ This approach, which communications researchers have labeled “invitational social change,” allows learning to happen in multiple directions, not just from the global to the local, thereby allowing for a stronger synthesis of audience needs and production possibilities.¹⁵¹ Scenarios simultaneously maintains its authority within the international HIV/AIDS aid community through its selection process, claiming “cutting-edge, scientifically rigorous analysis of content” by medical and media professional judges.

and www.scenariosfilms.com for online access to the complete collection of Scenarios for Africa films.

¹⁵⁰ “About Us,” http://www.globaldialogues.org/english/about_us.php, accessed March 1, 2012.

¹⁵¹ Karen Greiner and Arvind Singhal, “Communication and Invitational Social Change,” *Journal of Development Communication* (2009).

Unique to Scenarios, however, is that the selected ideas are turned into full scripts and produced by experienced African film directors, including Cheick Oumar Sissoko, Fanta Régina Nacro, Idrissa Ouédraogo, Abderrahmane Sissako, Newton I. Aduaka, and Mahamat-Saleh Haroun. This is a rare South-South arrangement that builds on existing Panafrican media resources and makes the Scenarios from Africa project stand out among Sub-Saharan educational film and video projects. Films demonstrate relatively high quality production values and are designed to attract young audiences. They are up to 17 minutes in length, are rooted in young people's everyday experiences, and range from dramatic and moving to uproariously comedic.

Iron Underpants (Burkina Faso, 2001), directed by Fanta Régina Nacro, based on an idea from 18 year old Malick Diop Yade of Senegal, is a particularly hilarious example. This five minute short begins with a group of young men walking down the street. The main character, Moussah, is distracted by a beautiful woman walking past them. His friends, well aware of the dangers of contracting HIV, chide him for his womanizing behavior. Moussah asks what he can possibly do to stay safe when he is surrounded by so many attractive women. His friends explain their method of avoiding HIV, iron underpants. Moussah, eager for this solution, hurries to the local blacksmith and asks him to build a special metalwork design. The joke is revealed when he triumphantly returns to his friends the next day and drops his pants, revealing a solid chastity belt, complete with padlock and no key. After much laughter, Moussah's friends explain that by iron underpants they mean strength of mind, or iron will, to resist sexual temptation.

Another successful example, *The Shop* (Idrissa Ouédraogo, Burkina Faso, 2001), tells the comedic story of Adama, who, at the insistence of his girlfriend, Kady, runs to the nearest convenience store to purchase condoms. In the shop, Adama is too embarrassed to ask for them in front of other patrons, so he instead asks for a package of biscuits. After doing this several times, while other men step up to the counter and ask for

condoms without shame, Adama finally realizes the normalcy of his situation and purchases the condoms, leaving the shop with an armload of cookie packages, as well. Research on this short has found that its widespread popularity across Africa and beyond has led to “biscuits” being used as a code word for condoms.¹⁵²

Other Scenarios short films are deadly serious in their approach to HIV related issues. *The Rape* (Newton I. Aduaka, Nigeria, 2010), for example, depicts a young woman helping her friend, Essie, with decisions in the hours and days after a violent sexual attack. She encourages Essie to go to the doctor before showering, starting antiretroviral medications, emergency contraception, and counseling. The doctor also provides a rape kit to the local police to aid their search for Essie’s attacker. *The Web* (Newton I. Aduaka, Nigeria, 2010) follows three young women who seek men online, but face the dangers of meeting with strangers, including violence and forced prostitution. In *Under Pressure* (Fanta Régina Nacro, Burkina Faso, 2009), Amaka is teased by her high school friends for not having a mobile phone. To obtain one, she considers advances from an older man. Learning from a friend, who contracted HIV from trading sexual favors for gifts from her “walking wallet,” Amaka decides her health is more important than a phone.

In addition to their innovative approach to conceiving topics and generating scripts, Scenarios from Africa is built on a social media distribution model. Rather than providing the films on DVD, all of Scenarios’ products are posted on YouTube and available for anyone to download. Scenarios encourages viewers to burn the films to disk or copy them onto flash drives to share with friends. Widespread dissemination is their primary distribution goal. To this end, many Scenarios films feature dubbed soundtracks, allowing

¹⁵² Kate Winkell and Daniel Enger, “Young Voices Travel Far: A Case Study of Scenarios from Africa,” *Media and Glocal Change: Rethinking Communication for Development*, edited by Oscar Hemer and Tomas Tufte (Göteborg, Sweden: NORDICOM and Buenos Aires, Argentina: CLACSO, 2005), 403-416.

for easy translation into many languages. Some films are available in up to 25 colonial and indigenous languages. Additionally, Scenarios provides discussion guidelines online for anyone who would like to organize a more formal viewing. GDT has also constructed a manual that other institutions can use if they would like to develop a similarly structured communication project.

Scenarios from Africa builds on an epistemological model that differs qualitatively from most other Sub-Saharan educational media project. Scenarios has constructed a unique synthesis of strategies available within existing global relations that challenges systemic hierarchies of knowledge and power. The project maximizes the potential of available resources, including the energy and ideas of young people, as well as the artistic and technical expertise of professional African filmmakers. GDT successfully combines these existing assets with global scale funding sources and the latest media technology, including digital video and online distribution and exhibition.

This creative structure illustrates the expectations Scenarios holds of its target audience. Scenarios films assume intelligent, involved spectators and utilize young Africans to educate their peers. This results in practical messages that are hopeful, but grounded in everyday experience. The films provide practical, not necessarily ideal, models for behavior change. *Iron Will* encourages the audience to laugh at – and dis-identify with – the foolishness of promiscuous men, while normalizing supportive masculine friendships that promote safer sexual behavior. *The Shop* allows men to laugh at their own fears shared embarrassment about buying condoms in public, while also framing a woman’s right to demand protection from her lover as a common, entirely acceptable practice.

By detailing the minute, situationally specific concerns that young Africans face every day, Scenarios for Africa meets Chandra Mohanty’s call for analysis and advocacy that attend to the diverse “cartographies of struggle” that young men and women confront. This intersectional approach is especially possible within the mode of

production facilitated by GDT's organization of Scenarios for Africa. While the industrial structure of Sub-Saharan educational cinema is inclined to reproduce the relations of inequality established to support imperial interests at the expense of African autonomy and self-sufficiency, Scenarios for Africa provides evidence that alternative ways of knowing and relating are possible around and through educational film and video.

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Naliaka is Going (Albert Wandago, Kenya, 2003.)

Iron Underpants (Fanta Régina Nacro, Burkina Faso, 2001; 5 min.)

The Web (Newton I. Aduaka, Nigeria, 2010; 17 min.)

The Rape (Newton I. Aduaka, Nigeria, 2010; 18 min.)

Under Pressure (Fanta Régina Nacro, Burkina Faso, 2009; 6 min.)

Consequence (Olley Maruma, Zimbabwe, 1989; 54 min.)

These Hands (Flora M'mbugu-Schelling, Mozambique, 1992, 52 min.)

Shared Concern (Heinz Fussle, Nigeria, 2002; 58 min.)

La croisière noire (Léon Poirier, France, 1926.)

Tarzan the Ape Man (W. S. Van Dyke, USA, 1932.)

Pepe le moko (Julien Duvivier, France, 1936.)

This is Nollywood (Franco Sacchi, Nigeria/USA, 2006.)

A Miners Tale – Conte d'un mineur (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Mozambique, 2001; 40 min.)

A Mouse's Tale (Australian Catholic Relief Services, Australia, no date; 10 min.)

A Red Ribbon Around My House – Un ruban rouge (STEPS for the Future, South Africa,

2001; 26 min.)

A Tale of Two Futures (Alan Brody, UNICEF Swaziland, 2006.)

Afrique, je te plumerai (Jean-Marie Teno, Cameroon, 1992); 88 min.

AIDS, A Christian Response (Copperbelt Health Education Project, Zambia, no date; 8 min.)

AIDS: An African Perspective (AIDS Now, Zambia, no date; 51 min.)

Baby and U (Mary G. Otuka and Wanjiru Gikonyo, Ukweli Video Productions, Kenya, 2002; 55 min.)

Backlash (Mary Migui, Sisimka Productions, 2005.)

Bambako (Abderrahmane Sissako, Mali, 2006); 115 min.

Borom Sarret (Ousmane Sembène, Senegal, 1963); 21 min.

Bye, Bye Africa (Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, Chad, 1999); 86 min.

Carry Your Burden (Stephen Makau, Worldview-Kenya, Kenya, 1998; 50 min.)

Catholic Evangelization Around the World (Africa) (Kenya Episcopal Conference, Ukweli Video Productions, Kenya, c. 1990; 39 min.)

Ceddo (Ousmane Sembène, Senegal 1977; 112 min.)

Clean Hands (G. M. K. Onguso, no date; 73 min.)

Dakan (Destiny) (Mohamed Camara, Guinea 1997; 90 min.)

Deadly Catch: AIDS in Lake Victoria, Kenya (David Gough, UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs, Integrated Regional Information Networks, Kenya; 2005.)

Dreams of a Good Life – Paroles de Femmes (STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2001; 15 min.)

Everyone's Child (Tsitsi Dangarembga, Zimbabwe 1996; 90 min.)

Faat Kiné (Ousmane Sembène, Senegal, 2001); 121 min.

Family Tears: Bad Intentions (Mtitu G. Game, Game First Quality TZ Ltd., Tanzania, 2008)

Feminism vs Catholicism (Ukweli Video, Kenya, no date; 105 min.)

Femmes aux Yeux Oouverts (Women with Open Eyes) (Anne-Laure Folly, Togo, 1994;

52 min)

Finzan (Cheick Oumar Sissoko, Mali, 1990; 107 min.)

Fontana (The Gifted Wife) (Ally S. Madegwa, Ngabwe Kapico, Kayumba Promotion International Co., Tanzania, 2010; 60 min.)

Fraud and Corruption (Ben Zulu, Media for Development Trust, Zimbabwe Institute of Public Administration and Management, Zimbabwe, 1995; 30 min.)

Girlhood in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth (STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2010; 5 min.)

Harvest the Rain (World Food Program, Kenya, 1991; 16 min.)

Help!: Africa's Dilemma (Robby Bresson, Kenya, 2007; 98 min.)

HIV/AIDS: All You Need to Know, Vol. 2 (Mary G. Otuka, Ukweli Video, Kenya, 2003.)

How to Build a Metal Silo (Association for the Development of the Peoples, Brazil, 1991; 56 min.)

Imiti Ikula (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Zambia, 2001; 26 min.)

Invisible Children: Rough Cut (Bobby Bailey, Lauren Poole, and Jason Russell, Uganda, 2006; 55 min.)

It's My Life (STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2001; 25 min.)

Kachaka against AIDS (Yatsani Studios, WHO, Zambia, 1996; 30 min.)

Karmen Gei (Joseph Gaï Ramaka, Senegal, 2001; 82 min.)

Keitumetse's House in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Botswana, 2010; 7 min.)

Khoko's Story in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth (STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2012; 7 min.)

Kikulacho: The Bite Within (Murad Rayani, Transparency International, Kenya, no date; 54 min.)

Kiwani: The Movie (Henry H. Ssali, Twinex Videos Ltd., Uganda, 2008; 84 min.)

Kwere Kwere in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth (STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2012; 8 min.)

La noire de... (Ousmane Sembène, Senegal, 1953); 62 min.

- La Petite Vendeuse de Soleil (The Little Girl who Sold the Sun)* (Djibril Diop Mambety, Senegal/Switzerland, 1999; 45 min.)
- La Vie Sur Terre (Life on Earth)* (Abderrahmane Sissako, Mali 1999; 60 min.)
- Le Camp de Thiaroye* (Ousmane Sembène, 1987; 152 min.)
- Le Malentendu Colonial (Colonial Misunderstanding)* (Jean-Marie Teno, Cameroon, 2004; 73 min.)
- Let's Talk About Love!* (Bruce Sutherland-Sheeran, The Responsibility Society Research and Education Trust, Britain, 1994; 25 min.)
- Life Must Continue* (Stephen Makau, Worldview-Kenya, Kenya, 2003; 35 min.)
- Life Must Continue* (Stephen Makau, Worldview-Kenya, Kenya, no date; 35 min.)
- Making Choices: Copperbelt Health Education Project Addresses the Issue of AIDS* (Kwaleyela Ikata, Kitwe Little Theatre, Ministry of Health, Zambia, no date; 110 min.)
- Marafiki in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth* (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Zanzibar/Tanzania, 2010; 12 min.)
- Master Positive* (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Namibia, 2001; 8 min.)
- Mwanasikana* (Ben Zulu, Media for Development Trust, Zimbabwe Ministry of Education, Zimbabwe, 1995; 40 min.)
- MXiT in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth* (STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2012; 5 min.)
- Neria: All She Wants is Justice* (Godwin Mawuru, Media for Development Trust, Zimbabwe)
- Never Too Late in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth* (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Malawi, 2010; 8 min.)
- Open Secret* (John Kyamanywa, Television for Development and Strategies for Hope, Uganda, 2000; 36 min.)
- Pieces d'Identites (Pieces of Identity)* (Mweze Ngangura, Congo/Belgium, 1998; 93 min.)
- Promise of Love (Sequel to Tough Choices)* (Anne G. Mungai and Johnny Umukoro, Good News Productions, Kenya, 2000; 57 min.)
- Read the Signs* (Tim Wege, STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2010; 11 min.)

- Rostov-Luanda* (Abderrahmane Sissako, Angola/France/Germany/Mauritania, 1997; 58 min.)
- Sabina's Encounter* (Albert Wandago, Kenya/Belgium, 1991; 32 min.)
- Selbe et Tant d'Autres (Selbe, One Among Many)* (Safi Faye, Senegal, 1983; 30 min.)
- Shared Concern* (Abraham Laryea, Salvation Army, Ghana, no date; 34 min.)
- Sharing the Challenge* (Paul Bakibinga, Living Water Productions, Uganda, 1991; 30 min.)
- Sisters of the Screen: African Women in the Cinema, Selection* (Beti Ellerson, USA, 2002; 73 min)
- Springs of Life: Hope for AIDS in Africa* (Belinda Augustus, MAP International, Kenya, and The Creative Edge, Tanzania, 1994; 28 min.)
- Starting Over* (Heinz Fussle, Gospel Response to AIDS, no date.)
- Taafe Fanga* (Adama Drabo, Mali, 1997); 95 min.
- Tariro in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth* (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Zimbabwe, 2010; 10 min.)
- The Ball* (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Mozambique, 2001; 5 min.)
- The Bushfire* (Stephen Makau, Worldview-Kenya, Kenya, no date; 60 min.)
- The Feelings Struggle: Part 1* (Haji Ashraf Simwogerere, UrbanFilmz, Uganda, no date; 120 min.)
- The Lost Twins* (Mtitu G. Game, Game First Quality TZ Ltd, Tanzania, 2008; 100 min.)
- The Pill and the IUD* (Ukweli Video, Kenya, no date; 18 min.)
- The Pregnant Need Help* (Ukweli Video, Kenya, no date; 18 min.)
- The Stigma: My Journey with AIDS* (Kenya Episcopal Conference, Evangelizing through Images, no date; 72 min.)
- The Village Pastor* (Mtitu G. Game, Game First Quality TZ Ltd., 2009.)
- Thinking About It in Youth Films: By Youth, for Youth* (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Zambia, 2010; 13 min.)
- This is It, Vol. 1 and 2* (Steven Kanumba, Tanzania, 2010.)
- This We Teach and Do: Catholic Church Responding with Love to HIV and AIDS in*

Kenya (Leonard Kitili, Ukweli Video Production and Catholic HIV/AIDS Taskforce, Kenya, 2007; 22 min.)

Tujadiliane (Media for Development International, no date.)

Visage de Femmes (Faces of Women) (Desiré Ecaré, Côte d'Ivoire, 1985; 105 min.)

Wa' N Wina (STEPS for the Future, South Africa, 2001; 52 min.)

Waiting for My Tractor (Theatre Factory, Uganda, no date; 59 min.)

What Are We Doing Here? (Brandon Klein, Nicholas Klein, Daniel Klein, and Tim Klein, USA, 2008; 82 min.)

Why Democracy?, Various Titles (STEPS for the Future, South Africa/Various, 2007.)

Why Don't You Give Me Them a Chance [sic.] (Julius Murachofi Babu, Undugu Society Production, Kenya, 1988; 16 min.)

Xala (Ousmane Sembène, 1974; 123 min.)

Yellow Card (John Riber, Media for Development International, Zimbabwe, 2000.)