AFRICA IN THE MEDIA

January 2019

By Johanna Blakley, Adam Amel Rogers,
Erica Watson-Currie and Kristin (Eun Jung) Jung

THE AFRICA NARRATIVE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

THE AFRICA NARRATIVE, WHICH IS BASED AT THE Norman Lear Center at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, was established to create greater public knowledge and understanding of and engagement with Africa through research, creative communications campaigns and collaborations with private, public and non-profit partners.

Recognizing the pivotal role of media and entertainment in shaping perceptions and opinions of Africa and African people, Africa in the Media is the Africa Narrative's inaugural research project. By illuminating how Africa and Africans are depicted in U.S. media and entertainment, it aims to generate a deeper understanding of the media's impact on opinions and attitudes toward Africa, and more broadly, on U.S. engagement with the continent. This research project grew out of a belief that right now we have a great opportunity to engage the entertainment and media industries in telling more diverse stories about Africa's 54 nations.

Not only is there an opportunity, but clearly a need, as was abundantly clear from interviews we conducted among two dozen experts with a deep understanding of Africa's portrayal in the U.S. media and entertainment landscape. The universal consensus is that African media coverage is overwhelmingly focused on negative stories such as Boko Haram, corruption, poverty, electoral crises, migrants and terrorism, while putting far too little emphasis on subjects and stories

that provide a counterpoint showing the success, diversity, opportunity and vibrancy of Africa — its emerging middle class; technology and innovation; solutions-driven culture; growing economies and democracies; and talent in the areas of the arts and entertainment, technology, business and government.

Even when the coverage of Africa was, on its surface, positive, it was described as often glib, simplistic, predictable, and sometimes sensationalist or extreme, at the expense of showcasing regular voices and stories of Africa.

U.S. entertainment was found to succumb to some of the same stereotypes and challenges observed in the news media. For example, Biola Alabi, a Nigerian producer working at the nexus of the U.S. and African entertainment marketplaces, noted how shows like *Law & Order*, *CSI* and *Criminal Intent* invariably depict Africans or an African country that are involved in human slavery, smuggling, drugs or prostitution, an observation pointedly borne out by our research.

Though there is a palpable sense that Hollywood is paying increasing attention to African storytelling and creative talent — something we address at the conclusion of this report — and an acknowledgement that U.S. media coverage has somewhat improved over the past several years, our research suggests that there remains a considerable gap between how Africa is portrayed and how it *is*.

Building on the expert insights of our interviews, the Lear Center's Media Impact Project team (MIP) set out to conduct a rigorous accounting of what kind of media coverage Africa actually receives and what kinds of stories about Africa and Africans are consumed by Americans. At the end of this report, we translate our findings into five clear recommendations for how the American media and entertainment industries can improve depictions of Africa.

To establish a baseline for how often Africa is depicted in U.S. news and entertainment programming, the MIP team monitored the frequency of mentions of "Africa," "African" (excluding African-American), "Africans," and the names of the continent's 54 nations on almost 700,000 hours of U.S. television during the entire month of March 2018.

In order to better understand U.S. public perception of Africa and how it tracks with media coverage, the MIP team also collected over 1.6 million tweets that included the same keywords during the same time period. The Twitter analysis also included the names of all African national capitals and tracked five of the 32 topic categories we used in the TV analysis: Crime/Terrorism, Corruption, Animals, Diaspora and Poverty.

> "[U.S. media portrayal of Africa] is simplistic, but less stereotyped than in the past, because there's a lot more diversity of voices out there, and a little bit more of a consciousness among consumers and news producers that they haven't done a good job in the past.
> —John Tomlinson, Synergos

The choice to focus our initial study on U.S. television was driven by the pervasiveness of this content in the global media landscape and the prominent role it plays in American media consumption: Nielsen reports that the average American adult watches four hours and forty-six minutes of television per day.[1] Most of this premium content is repurposed for further consumption on myriad distribution platforms worldwide.

Moreover, because scripted storytelling can have a powerful impact on viewers' awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behavior, we wanted to take a closer look at depictions of Africa in scripted entertainment. We aimed to find out what stories were being told about Africa, the prominence of these depictions, the sentiment of these depictions, and how often African characters are depicted.

The Lear Center has produced more than 15 years of academic research demonstrating the tremendous impact that entertainment has on audiences, affecting awareness, knowledge levels, attitudes and behavior. Our national survey research has found that 65% of Americans have taken action based on entertainment programming they have seen, ranging from seeking more information about an issue to making a donation to a charity, an act acknowledged by 13% of respondents.[2] One notable study by the Lear Center demonstrated how a storyline on the primetime TV show *Numb3rs* was effective at convincing audience members to register to donate their organs — because a beloved character in the show decided it was the right thing to do.[3]

Decades of communication research has proven that media creates a narrative frame which informs our per-

[1] "The Nielsen Total Audience Report: Q1 2018." (2018, July 31). Retrieved from https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports/2018/q1-2018-total-audience-report.html
[2] Baker, T., & Blakley, J. (2008). "How Americans' Entertainment Habits Track Their Political Values: Results from the Zogby/Lear Center Entertainment & Politics Survey." Retrieved from https://learcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/entertainmentandpolitics.pdf
[3] Morgan, S., Movius, L., & Cody, M. J. (2009). The Power of Narratives: The Effect of Entertainment Television Organ Donation Storylines on the Attitudes, Knowledge and Behaviors of Donors and Nondonors. *Journal of Communication*. 59. 135 - 151. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2008.01408.x

ception of the world. And while most people tend to believe that news coverage is more likely to change someone's opinion than entertainment storytelling, we recently published a study that found exactly the opposite. Entertainment can be far more persuasive and effective at overcoming bigotry than news reports, where people are less likely to suspend disbelief and open themselves to a new way of thinking.[4]

The television research findings in this report illuminate how Africa and its people are currently being cast in the media spotlight, giving us a baseline for measuring changes in those representations moving forward.

In the next phase of the Africa in the Media research project, we plan to conduct opinion research among the general public and opinion leaders, using these findings to determine the impact that media depictions have on awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behavior related to Africa and African people. Of particular interest is the impact on tourism, trade and investment, and policy. With this research and focused roundtables in New York, Washington and Los Angeles, we intend to publish a more extensive set of recommendations on how to create a more balanced and informed portrayal of Africa and, more broadly, better knowledge of, and engagement with the continent among Americans.

---

[4] Gillig, T. K., Rosenthal, E. L., Murphy, S. T., & Folb, K. L. (2017, August) More than a media moment: The influence of televised storylines on viewers' attitudes toward transgender people and policies. *Sex Roles*. 515–527.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

IN ALL OF THE FINDINGS BELOW, "AFRICA" REFERS TO ALL 57 KEYWORDS WE TRACKED, INCLUDING "AFRICAN," "Africans," and the names of all 54 African countries.

TELEVISION FINDINGS

1 Stories about Africa appeared infrequently on U.S. television: a mention appeared once in every five hours of TV programming. Viewers were seven times more likely to see references to Europe. Despite the low frequency of mentions, we know that there were more than 3.6 billion views of these depictions of Africa in the U.S. in March.

2 Five countries — Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Seychelles and "Congo"[5] — accounted for almost half (49%) of all mentions of any African nation, although there is variation by type of content:

TOP FIVE IN NEWS: Seychelles (16%), Egypt (9%), Kenya (9%), South Africa (8%) and Congo (7%) accounted for 50% of all mentions of any African nation in local and national news.[6]

TOP FIVE IN ENTERTAINMENT: South Africa (14%), Kenya (14%), Egypt (10%), Nigeria (10%) and Congo (6%) accounted for 53% of all mentions of any African nation in scripted and unscripted entertainment.[7]

3 Most mentions of Africa (43%) appeared on national or local news, with over 1.5 billion views. Business, technology and economy in Africa accounted for 8% of news coverage while crime accounted for 16%.

4 Viewers saw one out of five references to Africa in unscripted entertainment, including talk shows, game shows and reality programming. Twenty percent of those mentions were on the game show *Jeopardy*. Documentaries (17%) and scripted entertainment (15%) account for almost all the rest of Africa depictions.

---

[5] We found that American media rarely distinguishes Democratic Republic of the Congo from Republic of the Congo, and so "Congo" refers to both countries in this report.
[6] As all percentage values are rounded to the nearest whole number, the total may not equal 100%.
[7] See Appendix A for a listing of the top 5 countries in each TV genre.

5 Several African countries were virtually invisible: Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Cabo Verde, and Sao Tome and Principe were mentioned less than 10 times in almost 700,000 hours of programming.[8]

6 Of 32 topics tracked across all programming, only three had more positive than negative mentions: history, music and sports.

7 In scripted entertainment, we found that 44% of TV shows and movies only mention "Africa," with no reference to a particular country.

8 Out of almost 700,000 hours of programming, there were only 25 major scripted storylines about Africa, of which 14 centered on crime. Overall, viewers were more than twice as likely to see negative depictions of Africa than positive ones in major storylines about Africa.

9 Over one-third (35%) of African mentions in scripted entertainment were about crime. Many of these stories were told on America's most popular shows such as *Law & Order: SVU* and the *NCIS* franchise. We have viewership information on 87% of these depictions: 179 million viewers watched 392 references to Africa in scripted TV shows and movies during this period.

10 Only 13% of entertainment storylines that mentioned Africa included an African character, and 80% of the roles were small. When African characters did appear, 46% spoke 10 words or less.

11 Only 31% of African characters were women.

TWITTER FINDINGS

1 "Africa" by far received the most mentions (27%) — more than any individual country — with South Africa a distant second (10%), followed by Nigeria (7%), Egypt (6%), Kenya (5%) and Seychelles (5%). No other country received more than 3% of mentions.[9]

2 Most tweets about Africa shared or voiced reactions to published news media stories. The volume and topics of tweets closely aligned with the tenor of news coverage of Africa, indicating the influence of news on social media.

3 South Africa and Nigeria were the countries most associated with crime, terrorism and corruption on social media.

4 The highest volume of positive tweets centered on successful efforts to address African poverty. Most of these tweets originated with nonprofits and NGOs working to eradicate poverty in the region.

---

[8] See Appendix B for a ranking of all 54 African nations by number of TV impressions.
[9] See Appendix C for a list of all African nations ranked by number of Twitter mentions.

5 Very few tweets about Africa contained any discernible sentiment, potentially indicating a low level of interest and/or lack of contextual knowledge. We also documented this trend in January 2018, before and after President Trump's widely reported remark about "shithole" African countries.[10]

6 Although Twitter was mostly used to opine or express emotions about an issue in the news, we identified one significant case where social media posts preceded any major news coverage. This occured when a series of negative tweets, often tagged #whitegenocide, decried the murders of white South African farmers. The posts were later reported to have originated from conservative Afrikaner groups' global lobbying campaigns, which were later amplified in President Trump's Twitter feed. The BBC found no evidence to support their claims.
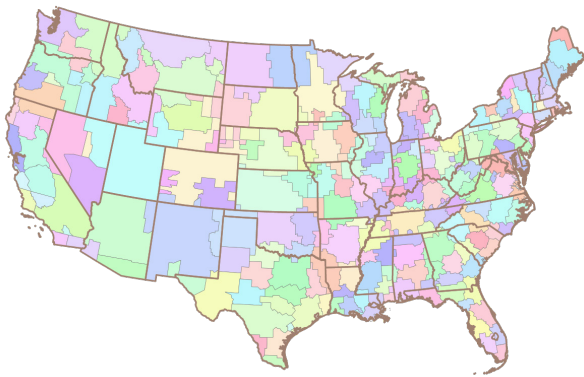
CROSSCUTTING FINDINGS

1 When references to Africa were not neutral, they were more likely to be negative than positive in both Twitter conversations and in entertainment programming.

2 The volume and subject of tweets about Africa tracked with news coverage of the continent.

3 Egypt, South Africa and Kenya received the most attention on Twitter and television. Seychelles and Nigeria were also prominent.

---

[10] Rogers, A. A., Jung, E. J., Watson-Currie, E., Tekaste, R., Blakley, J. & van Gilder, M. (2018, November). "How Trump's Shithole Remark About Africa Affected Public Sentiment." Retrieved from https://learcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/How-Trump%E2%80%99s-Shithole-Remark-About-Africa-Affected-Public-Sentiment.pdf
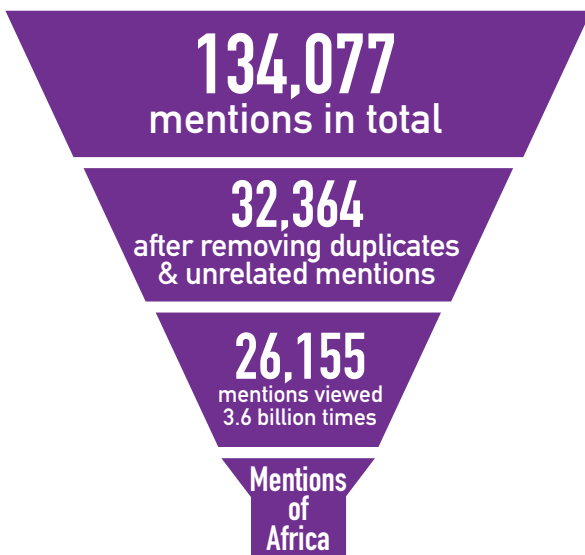
AFRICA ON TELEVISION

**We monitored all national broadcast networks —
916 stations in total.**

134,077
mentions in total

32,364
after removing duplicates
& unrelated mentions

26,155
mentions viewed
3.6 billion times

Mentions
of
Africa

NUMBER OF MENTIONS

To establish a baseline for how often Africa is depicted in U.S. news and entertainment programming, the Lear Center's Media Impact Project team (MIP) monitored the frequency of mentions of "Africa," "African" (excluding "African-American"), "Africans" and the names of the 54 African nations on almost 700,000 hours of U.S. television during the month of March 2018. This included all programming and commercials on all national broadcast networks, every local TV market, and all basic cable TV programming — 916 stations in total. To illustrate how effectively the TVEyes system identified references to Africa, it even captured each time Toto's 1983 hit song "Africa" played in the background.

Overall, these 57 terms appeared 134,077 times on all 916 channels. To provide some perspective, that is 1/7 the number of times that "Europe," "European" and the names of the 50 European nations were mentioned in the same period.

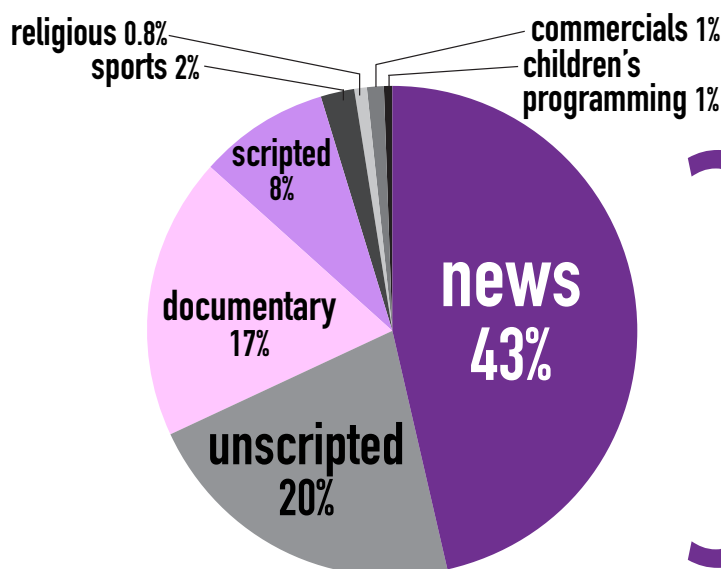MIP organized a large team of human coders to capture, organize and code all references for type, topic and countries mentioned. After the coders eliminated mentions unrelated to Africa (e.g., Guinea pigs, people named "Chad") and duplicates (from programming airing on multiple channels), we identified 32,364 unique mentions of Africa. This translates into one reference to Africa in every five hours of TV programming.

Because of vast variations in viewership of television programming, some references to Africa were seen by hundreds of viewers, while others were seen by audiences reaching almost 20 million. Since our goal is to understand what messages about Africa are delivered to U.S. audiences, this report focuses on the 81% of programs for which we have detailed viewership data.[11] These 26,135 mentions of Africa were seen 3.6 billion times.

TYPES OF MENTIONS

The MIP team tracked 10 genres of programming and 32 topic categories. Americans were most likely to hear about Africa in news programming, where the coverage was dominated by reporting on politics. Accounting for 43% of all mentions, local and national news references to Africa were seen 1.5 billion times in one month.
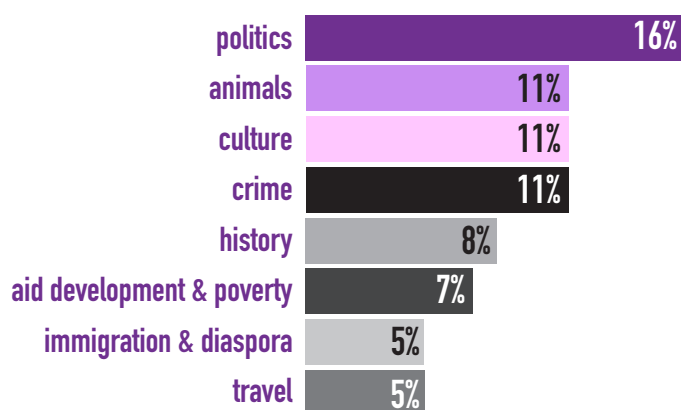
religious 0.8%
sports 2%
scripted 8%
documentary 17%
unscripted 20%
news 43%
commercials 1%
children's programming 1%

News Topics

politics	32%
crime	16%
animals	12%
aid/development & poverty	10%
business & economy	8%
culture	8%

> **We see the largest chunk of travel going to South Africa….but also pretty significant growth in other places like Morocco, Tanzania, Algeria, Kenya, and Nigeria.**
> **— Chris Lehane, Airbnb**

The second biggest source of Africa mentions was unscripted entertainment (20%) — including reality shows, talk shows and games shows — followed by documentaries (17%). The focus of documentaries was primarily on culture and travel. Driven by news coverage, the topic most associated with mentions of Africa in all programming was politics (16%). Animals, culture and crime each accounted for 11% of all mentions. Business, technology and economy combined accounted for a mere 4%.

Topics From All Africa Mentions

politics	16%
animals	11%
culture	11%
crime	11%
history	8%
aid development & poverty	7%
immigration & diaspora	5%
travel	5%

[11] Note that viewership numbers in this report only include U.S. television viewers at the time of airing, not time-shifted viewership or viewership on other platforms or devices.

Because of Robert Mueller's investigation into a secret meeting between Trump's presidential transition team and Putin associates in the Seychelles, Africa's smallest country by population (95,843) was the country that news viewers were most likely to have heard about in March. (See Appendix A) Intense news coverage of the investigation placed Seychelles above Egypt, South Africa and Kenya, which were the countries most covered on television overall and on Twitter. (See Appendix B and C) "Seychelles" was also the most frequently mentioned keyword (37,486 mentions) from all of the tweets about Africa collected on March 8th, in response to the *Washington Post* Seychelles article.[12]

> " I think it's just important to cover countries like you would cover your home country… Does every story out of DRC have to be about some kind of conflict? —Dionne Searcey, West Africa Bureau Chief, New York Times

VIEWERSHIP

MOST EXPOSURE		LEAST EXPOSURE	
Egypt	370 million	Guinea-Bissau	39,604
South Africa	304 million	Comoros	22,382
Kenya	279 million	Sao Tome & Principe	8,192
Seychelles	202 million	Cabo Verde	<300
Congo	190 million		

Africa was rarely discussed in children's programming, with only 13 countries mentioned overall. Children were 50% more likely to see Africa mentioned in commercials than in programming intended for them. Although there were no explicitly negative references to Africa in children's shows, only eight percent of all mentions were positive.

Five countries — Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Seychelles and "Congo" — accounted for almost half (49%) of all mentions of any African nation. Several countries were virtually invisible on U.S. television, with with Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome & Principe, and Cabo Verde mentioned fewer than 10 times in almost 700,000 hours of programming.

[12] Horwitz, S., & Barrett, D. (2018, March 7). "Mueller gathers evidence that 2017 Seychelles meeting was effort to establish back channel to Kremlin." *Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/mueller-gathers-evidence-that-2016-seychelles-meeting-was-effort-to-establish-back-channel-to-kremlin/2018/03/07/b6a5fb8c-224b-11e8-94da-ebf9d112159c_story.html

AFRICA IN SCRIPTED ENTERTAINMENT

BECAUSE STORYTELLING CAN HAVE A POWERFUL impact on viewers' awareness, knowledge, attitudes and behavior, we decided to take a closer look at depictions of Africa in scripted entertainment. We aimed to find out what stories were being told about Africa, the prominence of these depictions, the sentiment of these depictions and how often African characters are represented.

The MIP team separated scripted fictional entertainment depictions into major and minor storylines about Africa. A storyline was minor if there were less than five mentions, at least one minute apart, of any of our 57 African keywords in the TV episode or movie. If there were five or more separate mentions in the same episode or movie, we classified it as a major storyline.

In the month of March, we identified 428 minor mentions and 25 major storylines, for a total of 453 entertainment depictions of Africa. We captured much more than just primetime — including lots of popular shows from the past, which play continuously in syndication on various stations throughout the country. For 87% of these entertainment depictions, we captured detailed viewership data, which helps us understand how much attention each depiction received. All told, 179 million viewers watched 392 references to Africa in scripted TV and movies.

453
scripted mentions of Africa

TYPES OF ENTERTAINMENT DEPICTIONS

Africa as a Country

Africans often express irritation at references to Africa that imply that it's a country instead of a continent composed of 54 nations with distinct languages, cultures and histories. In scripted entertainment, we found that 44% of TV shows and movies only mention "Africa," with no reference to a particular country. Sometimes the omission is glaring: Tina Fey's feature film *Mean Girls* (2004) focuses on the story of Cady Heron, a 16-year-old girl who transfers to an Illinois public

high school after being homeschooled her whole life in Africa. Although she repeatedly refers to her bucolic upbringing in Africa, comparing it favorably to the vicious power dynamics she finds in American public school, no African country is ever named. Similarly, a 2005 multi-episode story on *That 70s Show* about Eric's decision to go to Africa never mentions a specific country.
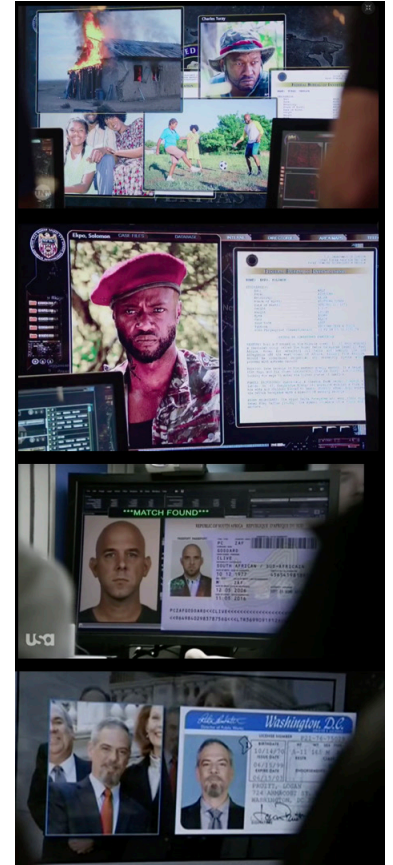
Crime

In entertainment programming, the most dominant theme associated with Africa was crime, comprising 35% of all impressions of Africa-related content. This includes mentions of Africans being portrayed as criminals and African countries being associated with crime. Six out of ten references to Africa in TV dramas were about crime, including terrorism and corruption. Not surprisingly, crime-oriented shows such as *The Blacklist*, *Bones*, *Law & Order: SVU* and *NCIS: New Orleans* were responsible for some of the most visible depictions of African criminality. In crime procedurals, global criminals with "criminal ties in The Congo" or "terrorist connections in Egypt" appeared on computer screens. Other dramas included casual references to African violence and crime, such as the officer on *Chicago P.D.* who reacted to a van full of guns by saying, "did you rob a small African republic?" *Madam Secretary*, *Bones* and *Law & Order: SVU* all referenced the Rwandan genocide, which happened 25 years ago.

> " **About Rwanda, why hasn't the story been told about a country that has figured out a way to move on from genocide? That is a tremendous story about the power of forgiveness, even though there is no forgetting.**
> **—Laura Lane, Vice Chair, President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa**

In addition to brief mentions, 57% of all major storylines about Africa were about crime. *Law & Order: SVU* featured major storylines about modern day slavery and child trafficking from Nigeria as well as honor killings, blood diamonds and gang rape in Sierra Leone and Congo. A major *NCIS* storyline also focused on blood diamonds and LL Cool J's *NCIS: Los Angeles* character went undercover in Sudan to find a Sudanese terrorist for another major storyline.

Viewers of movies that referenced Africa were also by far more likely to see it associated with crime than any other topic. In some movies, Africa served as the background setting for major crime storylines including the violent action sequence in Casablanca in *Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation* and the military gun battle in Eritrea in the 2017 action film *The Shooter*, starring Mark Wahlberg. Action films spiced up the backstories of their heroes and villains by referencing their dangerous exploits in African nations. Sylvester Stallone reminisced about being bloody in a mud pit in Nigeria in his 2010 film *The Expendables*, while another character of the same movie referenced his failed political assassination in Swaziland. Bane, the super villain in *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012), is introduced to viewers as "a mercenary behind a coup in West Africa."

> Look deeper and understand the incredibly diverse continent: There are Muslims, Christians, and Indian and Chinese populations. Understand the difference between the Sahel, the Maghreb, the North and the South. Really look at the diversity and be specific and be fair.
> —Deborah Rayner, SVP, CNN International

Jokes About Africa

Almost one in ten mentions of Africa in scripted entertainment were jokes about Africa (9%). The vast majority of these jokes were seen on comedy television (63%) and unscripted programming (19%). Almost a quarter of the jokes about Africa that Americans saw were about poverty and aid. *Family Guy*, *The Office*, *Mike & Molly* and *When Harry Met Sally* all made jokes about starvation in Africa, while *Modern Family* joked about "kids getting sick bathing in poo river Africa." This will most likely come as a serious disappointment to aid and development organizations that fight poverty, since it is a priority for them to convince wealthy nations like the United States that foreign aid is a long-term effective investment. Conversely, in our analysis of tweets about Africa during the same time period, we found that aid and development organizations were very active in conversations about poverty, and had succeeded in setting a relatively positive tone about the topic. U.S. television may unknowingly undermine this effort. African animals (18%), immigration (17%) and politics (16%) were also targets of derision.

Across all TV programming, animals and politics were the subject of most jokes while Egypt was the country most poked fun at. Trailing far behind were Kenya, Uganda, Angola and the Seychelles. Jokes about Africa and Africans in unscripted programming were predominantly about politics and racism, followed by jokes on President Trump's disparaging comment about "s***hole" African countries. Jokes about Africa appeared in news programming as well, but to a lesser degree.
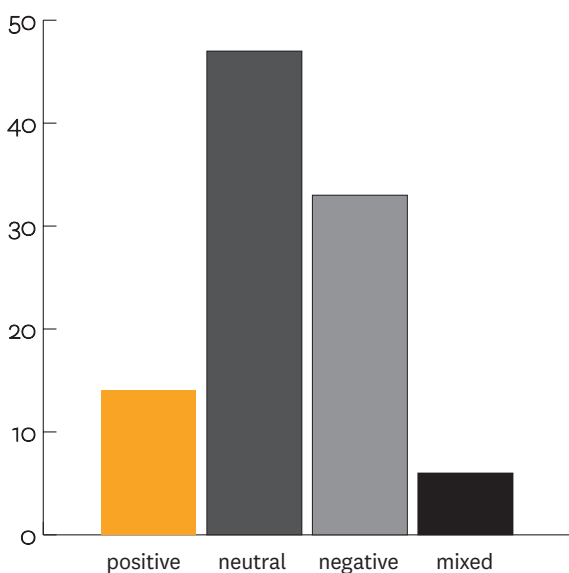
Sentiment Of Africa Depictions

SENTIMENT OF DEPICTIONS

Only 14% of depictions of Africa were determined to be positive in scripted movies and television, and viewers were more than twice as likely to see negative depictions of Africa than positive ones. Almost half of the references were neutral; in these instances, typically nothing substantial was said about Africa.

While it is not surprising that topics like crime would skew negative, only one out of four references to African culture were positive. Most viewers of American TV encountered African culture in unscripted entertainment, followed by news and documentaries. References to aid and development in Africa were also six times more likely to be negative than positive. Most of these stories were seen on local or national news.

What might be particularly frustrating to experts on African business and economy is that references to Africa's economy were more than twice as likely to be cast in a negative light rather than a positive one on U.S. TV, despite Africa's remarkable economic growth momentum in the past 25 years. Since 1960, 46 out Africa's 54 national economies have been growing,[13]

---

[13] African Development Bank Group. (2018). African Economic Outlook 2018, p.35.
Retrieved from https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/African_Economic_Outlook_2018_-_EN.pdf

creating a single market of 1.2 billion people, with over $3 trillion in continental GDP, and a growing middle class.[14] According to the World Bank, six out of the top ten fastest growing countries are in Africa.[15] By 2030, Africa will have more working-age adults than China.[16]

Positive Depictions

Out of the 32 topics tracked, only three were more likely to be positive than negative: history, music and sports references. We were surprised to discover that one of the few substantial depictions of Africa as a place of economic opportunity was in a 1993 episode of *Living Single,* a situation comedy that aired

Living Single

for five seasons on Fox. In it, one of the main characters, Kyle, makes the case for Africa as an emerging market, poised for growth. A panel of three American executives listen to Kyle's pitch, eventually greenlighting his idea to create an Africa fund, much like the one they created for Latin America, which was quite profitable. While the depiction is positive, it is quite simplistic: Kyle references Nelson Mandela and the stability of South Africa as the main reason to invest in the continent as a whole, implying that Africa should be regarded as a country — a typical problem that we addressed above.

> " Everyone looks at China from the standpoint that there's a marketplace, and there's the same amount of potential consumption here. Just since I've been here in Kenya I can tell you, the cars on the street have gone from Toyotas to Porsches and Mercedes and BMWs. It's happening.
> —Jay Ireland, CEO of GE Africa

One of the most glowing depictions of Africa — of Kenya, to be specific — emerged in another surprising place: a 2012 episode titled "Moon Over Kenya" of *Last Man Standing,* a popular situation comedy that was just renewed for a seventh season. Starring the well-known actor and comedian Tim Allen, the show features Mike Baxter, an outspoken politically conservative father with a wife and three daughters, who often disagree with him. Allen's character waxes poetic about a photoshoot he worked on in Kenya: "There's nothing more beautiful than the moon over Kenya. It was the time of my life." When his wife reminds him about his current domestic bliss, he says, "No, I love you baby, but Kenya?" Continuing to muse about fishing in Kenya, he claims it was the "happiest day of my life." Despite playful pushback from his wife, he humorously concludes that his wedding day comes in second, with the birth of his children rounding out the top ten.

Interestingly, Mike Baxter's affinity for Kenya comes somewhat into conflict with a comment he makes about the country on a different episode, which also aired during March. In it, Mike locks horns with his daughter, who wears an Obama/Biden t-shirt and placed an Obama election sign in the front yard. Mike carries the

14 Coulibaly, B. (2018) "Foresight Africa: Top priorities for the continent in 2018." The Brookings Institute: Washington, DC. p.19.
  Retrieved from https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/foresight2018_full_web_final2.pdf?mc_cid=628fd74c1c&mc_eid=f32c014688
15 Adegoke, Y. (2018). "Africa's Economic Outlook is Promising." *Quartz Africa.* Retrieved from
  https://qz.com/africa/1179387/africas-economic-outlook-is-promising-for-2018-but-there-clouds-on-the-horizon/
16 Henry, J., & Pomeroy, J. (2018). "The World in 2030." HSBC Global Research. Retrieved from
  https://enterprise.press/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/HSBC-The-World-in-2030-Report.pdf
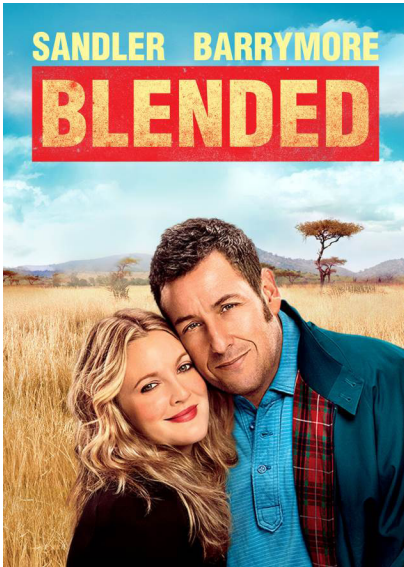
Blended (2014)

sign into the house, pretending it's dog excrement, and chastises her for being the kind of person who would "vote for a guy from Kenya." This comment reveals Mike as a "birther," someone who embraced a conspiracy theory claiming that Barack Obama was born in Kenya and that his U.S. birth certificate was a forgery, making him ineligible to serve as president.

Blended, a 2014 feature film co-starring Drew Barrymore and Adam Sandler, centers around two devoted single parents who fall in love on a life-changing trip to Africa. Two major African characters serve as a kind of Greek chorus, poking fun at the obtuse lovers and guiding them to happiness. The trip is depicted as enchanting for kids as well as parents and couples. While we found that Africa was often associated with raw sexuality in other entertainment content, in this man-friendly romcom it was about romantic love.

While some took issue with aspects of how Africa was portrayed — one *New York Times* critic noted the "quasi-zoological depiction of Africans as servile, dancing, drum-playing simpletons"[17] — our coding team watched this film in the context of 451 other depictions of Africa and determined the portrait was overall positive in valence. Audiences loved the film, giving it an average A- grade on Cinescore, and it went on to make $128 million, more than three times the cost to make it.

Negative & Mixed Depictions

We discovered a fascinating variety of themes emerged as our MIP coders watched all of the scripted entertainment references to Africa. These depictions were rarely positive.

Seinfeld

Africa is Sexy

Even positive references to African culture were often associated with primal sexuality, and frequently mined for laughs. On *Seinfeld*, African music — replete with shrieking monkeys — blares while Kramer dances around in a towel after a romantic interlude. While his girlfriend is in bed in the other room, later prancing out in a sheet, Elaine stumbles onto the scene and reacts with embarrassed horror. Kramer, oblivious, offers her some of the "African food" he's prepared — yambalas and sambusas — which is associated with inappropriate sexuality on *Law & Order: SVU*, as well. In one scene, a young woman explains how an exotic and sensual Ethiopian meal set the stage for a sexual encounter with a much older man.

Another storyline in *Seinfeld* presents a Senegalese woman as an object of bawdy sexual fantasies. Seinfeld entices George with a story about a Senegalese housekeeper he met. He describes her as "wild, wild stuff" even though her attitude and attire appear professional and clean-cut. George is especially taken by the fact that she doesn't speak any English. When George meets her, he verifies that she doesn't understand English and then says, "I would like to dip my bald head in oil and

---

[17] Scott, A. O. (2014, May 23). "When Single Parents Collide on a Safari" *New York Times Film Review*. Retrieved from
https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/23/movies/adam-sandler-and-drew-barrymore-in-blended.html

rub it all over your body." He titters with pleasure as she continues with her work, unaware of his titillation over her exotic otherness.

The Office also invokes sexual associations with Africa in two episodes that aired in March. In one scene, the company's oversexed CEO Robert, played by James Spader, announces to the staff that he will be devoting his life to supporting young, uneducated women in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe — particularly if they are gymnasts. Staff members grimace as they realize that Robert intends to take sexual advantage of the destitute girls that he "discovers."

> **If you look at what's happened in Africa, there are amazing stories and not just stories that can be appreciated and understood by an African audience. Stories are universal. They can cross borders without a problem. —Patrick Zuchowicki, General Manager, Discop Markets**

It is not only male characters who harbored sexual fantasies about Africa. When asked about her wildest fantasy, Haley, the daughter on *American Dad!*, an adult animated sitcom, has some very specific ideas: "I've been kidnapped by three African guys, and while the whole village watches, their most powerful warrior demands that I disrobe." Interestingly, Haley is actually abducted by African rebels when visiting an African refugee camp in another episode that aired in March, but her rape fantasy is not referenced again.

African-Americans and Africa

Before the emergence of the modern day African diaspora narrative in America, blacks in America were for the most part assumed to be directly descended from slaves.[18] In fact there is a long history of separateness and friction between the African diaspora and African-Americans[19] that permeates even the entertainment industry, with African-Americans speaking out against foreign Africans being cast in American roles such as British-Nigerian actor David Kayula in the 2017 hit *Get Out* and Cynthia Orivo, another British-Nigerian, in the role of Harriet Tubman, an iconic African-American hero in a biopic to be released in 2019. And *Black Panther*, a film in which the complex relationship between Africans and African-Americans is front and center, generated widespread conversations about this dynamic.

Martin

We saw many signs of this complex relationship in scripted programming featuring African-Americans. Framing African food, people and culture as hypersexual (and sometimes sexually aberrant) doesn't only occur on predominantly white-cast shows. *Martin*, a successful 1990s situation comedy centered on the comedian Martin Lawrence, was one of several TV shows and movies starring African-Americans that made explicit connections between sexuality and Africa. Martin did it multiple times, including in a 1996 storyline about his purchase of the Nefertiti 2000 headboard made of North African brass and strong enough for Martin's feisty love-making. Once installed Martin says to his girlfriend, "let's ride the new bed back to Africa!" Music begins playing

[18] Forson, T. S. (2018, February 22). "Who is an 'African American'? Definition evolves as USA does." USA TODAY NETWORK. Retrieved from https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/02/21/black-history-african-american-definition/1002344001/

[19] Jackson, J. V., & Cothran, M. E. (2003, May). "Black versus Black." *Journal of Black Studies*. Vol. 33, No. 5, pp. 576-604. Published by: Sage Publications, Inc. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3180977?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents & Iloabugichukwu, A. (2018, July 10). "There is no solution to the divide between Black Americans and Africans." *Madamenoire*. Retrieved from https://madamenoire.com/1030816/repairing-the-black-cultural-divide/

and both of them dance "African style" back into the bedroom. Sex figures in another episode that aired in March when Martin secures his girlfriend a position as a concubine for an African prince, introducing another negative trope of the backward, polygamous African tribal figure.

Perhaps the most outrageous — and complicated — depiction of African hypersexuality was on *Chappelle's Show*. In a 2003 video spoofing a commercial selling *Girls Gone Wild* videos that leaves his studio audience laughing and groaning, young white women lift their shirts — a hallmark of this long-running video series. Their breasts are covered with labels such as "Bad Decision" and "I Hate My Dad." The exuberant voiceover encourages viewers to view breasts "like you've never seen them before: in the wilds of Africa!" A montage of topless dancing African women is accompanied by a pitch to buy "3rd World Girls Gone Wild." Chappelle is famous for his willingness to go where other comics dare not tread, and to make scathing social commentary that spares no one. In this instance, the joke is primarily on the white women who expose their breasts and the guys who pay money

Chappelle's Show

to view them. But the mechanism he uses to satirize this fad — National Geographic-style videos of topless African women — makes even his studio audience uncomfortable. Is he simply re-objectifying these women or is he reminding us how poisonous sexual objectification really is?
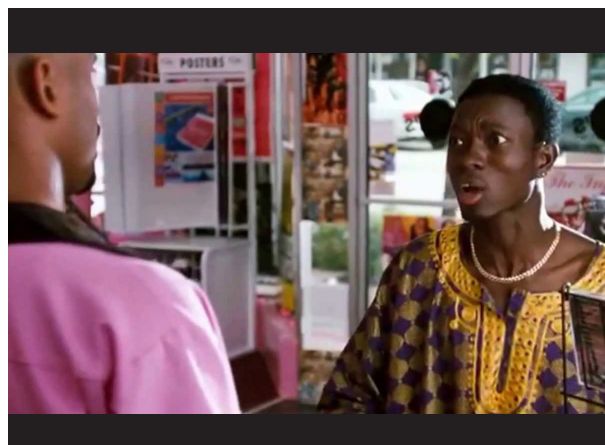
That kind of moral ambiguity is a hallmark of Chappelle's work and it runs through every reference to Africa that he makes in the episodes airing in March. In one notable scene, Dave poses as a "baller" being featured on *MTV Cribs*. After he showcases his African art collection (which the pompous white psychoanalyst Frasier does, as well, on an episode of *Frasier*), Chappelle says, "I don't really f*** with Africa because people are starving to death and that's not baller to me." This complicated comment takes on more dimensions, in retrospect, because Chappelle infamously quit show business at the height of his show's popularity and went to South Africa.

> **The future African market is going to be larger than we can fathom right now....So now is the time for helping brand recognition to take root in the African market so that U.S. firms can have destinations for their exports for decades to come.**
> **—Matthew Rees, Power Africa, USAID**

In *Next Friday*, a 2000 cult classic urban comedy starring Ice Cube, we found another example of African-American creators falling prey to the same kind of African stereotypes that we find in predominantly white-cast entertainment. In one of the film's more iconic scenes, often referenced by fans as the "Angry African" scene, an irate African played by Ghanaian-born actor Michael Blackson, with a thick accent wearing stereotypical African attire, bursts into a record store, insisting that he get

Next Friday **(2000)**

his money back for a CD he purchased. At first frightened by him, the African-American behind the counter grows increasingly hostile and condescending, accusing him of chewing the CD because he doesn't know how to play it. When Ice Cube intervenes and physically threatens the African man, he immediately becomes weak and submissive, and runs away while the employees laugh and high five each other.

There is much to say about the complex role that Africa plays in the 2010 comedy, *Get Him to the Greek*. Russell Brand plays wild rockstar Aldous Snow, whose career is in jeopardy because of the disastrous reception to his album "African Child": the music


***Get Him to the Greek* (2000)**

video for the title song is a shameless piece of African "poverty porn" in which Brand equates his suffering to that of a starving child. He's distressed to learn that "According to *Rolling Stone*, 'African Child' came in third, behind famine and war, as the thing most damaging to African life." Although everyone hates the song, no one is willing to stand up to the star and say so — including the African-Americans in his orbit. When his manager, played by a scene-stealing P. Diddy Sean Combs, is asked whether he likes "African Child," he says, "It's the most racist condescending shit ever made," but he'll tell the world he loves it because business is business. In another notable scene, an African-American musician in Snow's band is asked if he knows the lyrics to "African Child" and he says "no, I just hit the drum and put on my Africa

face" — then he smiles very brightly and bangs his drum. Although the big joke appears to be on Aldous, whose narcissism prevented him from seeing his racist ignorance, the film also comments on the enablers who know very well that they're promoting damaging stereotypes about Africa.

In the critically acclaimed 1992 drama *Boyz in the Hood* we found a tense scene revealing ambivalence about Africa even among children in the African-American community. Trey, a young black student, gives his class a history lesson about Africa, telling them that all humans are from there. One black kid in the class says, "I ain't from Africa, I'm from Crenshaw Mafia!" highlighting the importance of loyalty to his neighborhood and also, even at a young age, a desire to distance himself from Africa. Trey tells him he's from Africa "whether he likes it or not," and the kids proceed to have a physical fight.

***Boyz in the Hood* (1991)**

This ambivalence is mined for comedy in *The Cleveland Show*, an adult animated sitcom and spin-off of Seth MacFarlane's *Family Guy*. In this 2013 storyline, Cleveland, the patriarch of an African-American family, decides to take a trip to Africa to "get his mojo back" and to get in touch with his roots. The entire family decides to go, including his young precocious stepson who says, "it has always been a dream of mine to visit Africa." However, during their layover in Hawaii, Cleve-
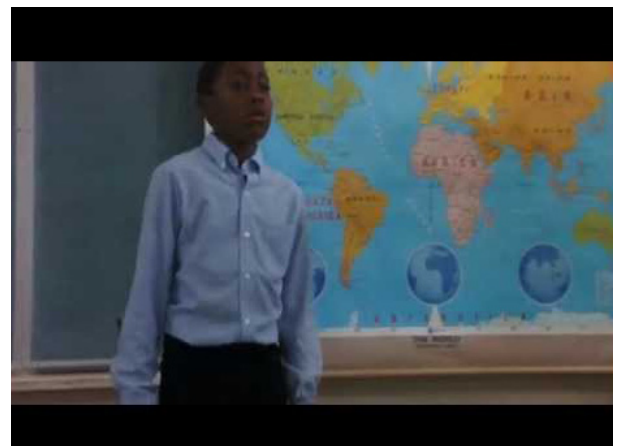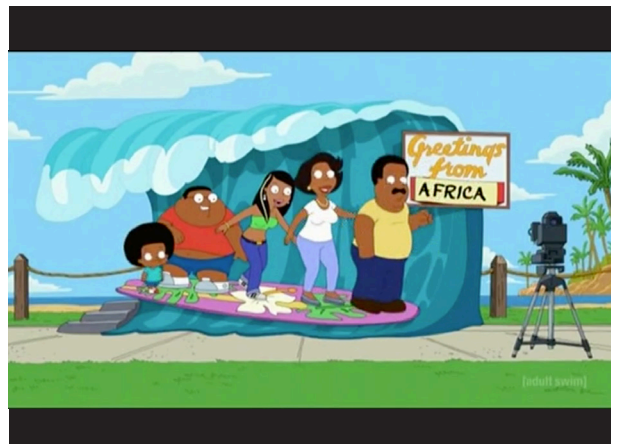
The Cleveland Show

land says, "Screw Africa! Let's just stay here!" Concerned that their young son will be disappointed, the entire family decides to pretend that they are in Africa. As the Toto song "Africa" plays in the background, the family frolics in Hawaii, snorkeling, parasailing and chugging tropical drinks. The entire family enjoys the trip, expressing no regrets about having skipped Africa, which Cleveland announced "isn't going anywhere." Their young son, who was successfully fooled, sighs and says, "I love Africa. I thought there'd be more black people though."

> "Not enough time, effort and resources is placed by U.S. media in really understand- ing what is happening in Africa. It just takes a leader with some kind of vision to understand that this is the last frontier.
> —Zain Verjee, CEO, Akoma Media

The 1980's sitcom *227*, which was considered a de facto spin-off of *The Jeffersons*, offered a striking contrast to the African-American ambivalence about Africa that characterizes the recent TV comedies we analyzed. The series followed the lives of middle-class African-American neighbors in Washington D.C. and starred Marla Gibbs as Mary. In this 1986 episode, "A Matter of Choice," Mary's husband Lester struggles on whether he should pass up a lucrative real estate project because a South African company is funding it. At the time, a global movement advocated for boycotts against South Africa until apartheid was dismantled. Although profits from the project would completely change their lives — allowing them to finally move out of apartment 227 and into a house of their own — he initially decides, with Mary's support, to pass up the project. His African-American colleague, however, argues strongly against the decision, dismissing Lester's boycott as a symbolic gesture and urging him to instead donate some of the profits to the anti-Apartheid cause. While visiting the house that they would love to move into, Lester has a life-changing conversation with an elderly black electrician. When the older man tells Lester how proud he is that his participation in the Civil Rights struggle has made it possible for a black family to finally move into that neighborhood, Lester knows he has to say no to the job.

The episode ends with Mary and Lester fully committed to making personal self-sacrifices to help black South Africans have the same kinds of opportunities that their elders fought for in the U.S.

Royalty

Several TV shows and films made both major and minor references to African royalty, including TV comedies like *Scrubs*, *Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, and *Will & Grace* and films such as *B.A.P.S.* (1997), *Bringing Down the House* (2003), *Wild Wild West* (1999), *Trading Places* (1983) and *The Ten Commandments*. Oc- casionally the references were figurative terms of endearment ("my little African princess"), but often they accompanied darker themes such as polygamy or brutality. Some references to African royalty seg- ue into stories about ignorant Americans who were suckered by email scams, including Moe, the sad-sack bartender on *The Simpsons*. A major 2015 storyline on the *The Simpsons* featured a Nigerian king and his daughter who come to Springfield to make a uranium deal with the villainous Mr. Burns, owner of the local nuclear power plant. The beautiful, multilingual princess is depicted as intelligent and lik- able as she develops a friendship with Moe, who seems to believe that Africa is a country. Although her father appears sophisticated and regal, he is cast in a less flattering light: he is domineering to his daughter and he foolishly accepts goats instead of mon- ey from Mr. Burns. In a striking scene that mocks stereotypes of primitive Africans, Mr. Burns appears to serve the king fresh

The Simpsons

monkey brains upon his arrival. After the king says, "I don't know what you have heard, but I do not eat monkey brains from a skull," Mr. Burns says that they're really for him: he proceeds to slurp and savor the brains continuously during their conversation. The point? The real primitives are rapacious uber-capitalists like Burns, not Africans. As an interesting side note, this episode contained a stark factual inaccuracy that slipped by the writers: the King states the population of Nigeria as 90 million when in fact the continent's most populous country had a population of 181 million when the show aired.

White Saviors

Several Africa references — on TV shows such as *Friends*, *Mom*, and *Castle*, as well as Oliver Stone's 2012 crime thriller *Savages* — were made in the context of storylines illustrating heroic white people providing aid or doing development work in Africa. Occasionally this trope was satirized: in *The Office*, the insufferably self-absorbed Michael is made to look like a fool as he observes himself in the mirror and says, "Michael, because of you, some little kid in the Congo has a belly full of rice this evening." In the 2011 Civil Rights period drama *The Help*, the fundraiser for Africa that is held by white racist women is

Savages (2012)

drenched in irony, revealing the profound hypocrisy of "white saviors" in a racially segregated society.

Africa is Far Away and Unknown

Several TV shows — including *Married With Children*, *Charmed* and *King of Queens* — invoked a distant, remote, "far away" place when referencing Africa. It is a place, for instance, one character wants annoying people to go to (*Living Single*), while another character on *Two and a Half Men* suggests that it is an ideal place to say you're going if you want to dump a girl and make sure she won't follow you.

That 70s Show

References to Africa also surface to signal a character's erudition (or in the case of Sheldon on *The Big Bang Theory*, his infuriating mastery of the trivial). In fact, the *Big Bang* spin off, *Young Sheldon*, features the younger brainiac version of this character, and he too makes a reference to Africa that demonstrates his precociousness. Knowledge of Africa (such as the capital of Benin) signaled remarkable — even inhuman — intelligence. A robot on the educational TV series *Arthur* dazzles the kids because it knows about musical instruments in Mauritania. This notion of Africa being so exotic and so little known — only geniuses and artificial intelligence have any substantive knowledge about it — is further reinforced by its consistent appearance on the trivia game show *Jeopardy*. Almost 20% of references to Africa in unscripted entertainment were viewed on this iconic game show, which might be described as a showcase for the geeks of America. *Jeopardy* is in broad syndication and so its references to Africa garnered 138 million views in March.

Africa is Scary

Perhaps the most pernicious recurring theme that emerged was the association of Africa with frightening and potentially deadly outcomes. Whether venomous spiders on *Law & Order: SVU*, deadly pink beetles on *Married...With Children* or bugs

that burrow into eyes on *That 70's Show*, an African provenance frequently amplifies the danger or fright quotient. On the *Kingsman: Secret Service*, a 2014 action spy comedy, a picture of piles of dead bodies illustrates the effects of a chemical agent that drove people to cannibalism in Uganda. In Steven Soderbergh's medical thriller *Contagion* (2011), a terrifying virus that causes a global pandemic becomes even more frightening when it emerges from Africa, mutating and infecting an HIV/AIDs population identified as the "Durban cluster."

On *That 70s Show*, Eric's plan to go to Africa provides fodder for numerous jokes about the continent's dangers. Eric's mother rants about diseased flies and the likelihood of being eaten by ostriches and lions, while Eric's guidance counselor gives him a pamphlet with "survival tips" for living in Africa, which confirms for his mother that "death is hiding behind every bush."

> **I think 100% that the U.S. media's depiction of Africa impacts business decisions on pursuing the African market. If there's a generalization of the continent that Africa is dictators, thugs, autocrats, broken governmental systems that are for sale, then you're going to have the impression that every single market is equal in its culpability.**
> **— Scott Eisner, President US-Africa Business Center, US Chamber of Commerce**

Primitive images of Africa have long been used to evoke fear in comedies and dramas. In the oldest piece

Grandma's Boy (2006)

of scripted entertainment in our sample, a 1951 episode of the TV comedy *I Love Lucy*, the band maestro Ricky Ricardo terrifies his live audience by holding up an African mask. When Lucy dances on stage to an African tune, a man in a tribal costume makes her shriek with fear, as she scrambles to safety in the orchestra. In a 1971 episode of Rod Serling's horror anthology series *Night Gallery*, an African man exacts revenge upon a sadistic white hunter who fancies himself "king of the jungle" by mounting the man's head on his own trophy wall. He explains that "there are gods, Mr. Pierce. Gods of the bush, of the Congo, of the rainforests. And with them, vengeance is an art." In the CW TV series *Black Lightning*, a show about the first African-American superhero by DC

I Love Lucy

comics that premiered in 2018, Africa is a place where albinos are abducted and their bones are ground into a magic dust. And in the 2006 raunchy stoner comedy film *Grandma's Boy*, an African character in a primitive outfit and frightening mask is brought to Grandma's house from a cockfight. He's arranged to bring a lion to the house and he supplies the stoners with Zimbabwean weed that "will turn you into a deer."

The trope of "evil westerner" lends itself frequently to ominous storylines about Africa. For example, the dramatic series *Taboo*, which premiered in 2017, stars Tom Hardy as a wounded but dangerous soul, recently returned to London of 1814 after ten years in Africa. "Awful and unnatural rumors" circulate about his exploits in Africa, where worms "crawl through your brain." Much like Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*,

James Delaney is feared to have "gone native" and become far more dangerous than the primitive people he lived among. In a chilling scene in *RED 2*, a 2013 action comedy film, the hero Frank Moses, played by Bruce Willis, is tormented by a corrupt U.S. intelligence agent who has abducted his wife.

> I do think the U.S. media is very short-sighted when it comes to the caliber of African content and the position of Africa in the world. I don't feel it takes a sophisticated approach.
> — Zain Verjee, CEO, Akoma Media

He threatens to torture Frank's wife in the same way that Belgian mercenaries in the Congo would "skin people alive to get them to talk," starting at the ankles. Whether the violence is perpetrated by Africans or their colonizers, Africa is still portrayed as the modern-day heart of darkness.

Taboo

The creators of *South Park* riff on this theme as well in a major storyline about Cartman, a racist narcissistic troublemaker, who decides to take a trip to Somalia. Enchanted by the notion of being a lawless pirate, Cartman convinces a few friends to go with him to Mogadishu, which Kyle describes as "the most God-forsaken place on the planet!" The Somali pirates immediately take Cartman and his gang of four children hostage and sell them to the French on a ship nearby. Cartman shames them for their bad pirate skills and takes over the ship with a lightsaber toy. In a musical montage — "We'll kick your ass and rape your lass, Somalian pirates we . . . We'll cut off your cock and feed it to a croc, Somalian pirates we" — Cartman teaches the gullible Somalis how to be Captain Hook-style pirates and they meekly follow his direction. Somalia may be a lawless awful place, but the most dangerous people there are morally compromised white people.

South Park **(Comedy Central)**

AFRICAN CHARACTERS & PERSONALITIES

Only 13% of entertainment storylines that mentioned Africa included an African character, and 80% of the roles were small. When African characters did appear, 46% spoke 10 words or fewer. Reflecting a broader gender inequality problem on U.S. television,[20] only 31% of African characters were women.

Ten movies and 25 TV shows included African-identified characters. 27% of all African characters appeared on TV shows about crime, and crime was by far the most common theme in movies that included African characters.

[20] Lauzen, M. M. (2018, September). "Boxed In 2017-18: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes in Television." Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University. Retrieved from https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2017-18_Boxed_In_Report.pdf

The character that appeared most often was Samuel (Babatunde), a series regular on the Emmy-Award winning *Mike & Molly*, which stars Melissa McCarthy and originally aired from 2010-2016. Ten episodes of the syndicated show contained references to Africa and featured Samuel, an immigrant from Senegal who is struggling to achieve the American Dream. He is played by a first-generation Nigerian-American, Nyambi Nyambi who stated that what "interested me about *Mike & Molly was the* hilarious script and the idea of playing a West African character that was the smartest guy in the room."[21] A complex char-

acter, Samuel is well-educated, multilingual and thoughtful, who often expresses his disappointment at having to work a low-level job in America. Because of his experience as an outsider, he often has a clearer perspective of his friends' trials and tribulations than they do. However, when Samuel mentions Africa or Senegal, it is usually to make a joke about the poverty and violence that he left behind: "I'm

> " I am proud that there are so many first- or second-generation Americans, of African descent who have or are making a significant impact in Hollywood — Issa Rae, Yvonne Orji, Boris Kodjoe and Kofi Siriboe, to name a few — Nicole Amarteifio, Creator, An African City

from Africa. The dogs have guns." In verbal spars, he often gets the best of his American friends with his sarcastic comments, but the joke is often at Africa's expense. When Mike tells Samuel he's on a diet, Samuel says, "May I suggest you move to my country where people are fashionably thin due to lack of food." The main American characters — including Mike, Molly and Carl — have great affection for Samuel, but not for Africa. When they realize that Samuel is receiving money from his family, Mike is confused because he can't

Samuel, *Mike & Molly*

imagine someone "covered with flies" sending Samuel money. His American friends intervene and help him purchase the restaurant where he has been working as a waiter. The restaurant is saddled with debt, but Molly believes they've done the right thing because it's better to be in bankruptcy than to be in Africa.

Samuel was likely the most recognizable African character on American TV during *Mike & Molly*'s six seasons, averaging 8.5-11.5 million viewers for each new episode. However, in March 2018 the African character who was seen by the most viewers was Mina Okafor, a Nigerian surgical resident in the new Fox medical drama series *The Resident*. Mina is performed by Shaunette Renee Wilson, who played one of the Dora Milaje in *Black Panther*. She was born in Guyana and raised in New York. The no-nonsense Mina is proud and reserved and an expert with a new revolutionary technology called "The Hand of God." Confronted with the possibility of losing her medical license, and her visa, Mina sends drugs back to Nigeria anyway, asking, "Am I supposed to look away when people from my community are dying from treatable illnesses?" In a rare moment of openness, Mina describes how her brilliant uncle, who lived in the U.S. but visited her as a child in Nigeria, died from a heart attack there, because there was no func-

Mina Okafor, *The Resident*

tioning defibrillator available in the hospital. Although these two mainstream shows could hardly be more different in terms of format and tone, both *Mike & Molly* and *The Resident* present appealing, multi-dimensional African characters and grim portraits of the African countries they came from.

[21] Williams, K. (2012, May). "Nyambi Dextrous."
Retrieved from https://newsblaze.com/entertainment/interviews/nyambi-nyambi-from-mike-molly-interview-with-kam-williams_26395/

Another notable first-generation Nigerian who appeared in our sample was the stand-up comic Gina Yash-ere. Building much of her stand-up routines around stories about her and her mother's relationship to Africa, Yashere appears regularly on U.S. TV, including on Trevor Noah's *The Daily Show*, and has her own Netflix comedy special. Much like Samuel, Yashere makes fun of Africa for its poverty and violence. She tells stories about her decision to "get back to her African roots" only to discover that her roots were actually in London. "Nigeria Airways sucks," joking that the flight she was on required a push from the passengers, and the only food that was served was from a live buffalo that was brought down the aisle. After arriving, she discovered that "Nigeria was SCARY. I stayed in a hotel with the white people, that's what I did." While she has some grudging respect for people's willingness to hustle for money, she criticizes the country for its incompetent police force: "If you commit a murder in Nigeria, you WILL get away with it." The fact that Yashere has a Nigerian background probably makes it even easier for her live Los Angeles audience to laugh heartily at every joke she makes about Africa and Nigeria.

Gina Yashere

The most prominent African person on U.S. TV is arguably South African comedian and writer Trevor Noah, anchor of *The Daily Show*, an iconic comedy show that satirizes what's in the news and how it's covered. Noah has helmed the show since 2015, and his best-selling autobiography, *Born a Crime*, was released in 2016. Only one episode of *The Daily Show* mentioned Africa during the month of March. In it, Noah comments on the firing that day of Rex Tillerson, the U.S. Secretary of State. Noah finds it amusing that Tillerson happened to be in Africa "meeting with shithole countries," abruptly returning when he was warned that Trump was going to fire him via tweet. Noah proceeds to suggest a hypothetical scenario in which Tillerson is caught

Trevor Noah

in African negotiations when Trump fires off the tweet that sacks him. Noah adopts a heavy accent and impersonates an African diplomat who finds out about Tillerson's firing before he does. As Tillerson tries to tell the African what America requires from them, Noah's diplomat gleefully tells Tillerson, "I require you to suck my dick!" The hypothetical interchange continues in a bawdy vein, highlighting African frustration with the Trump administration. While this joke was primarily at Tillerson's expense, it taps into stereotypes about homosexuality and African sexuality that may have made some audience members bristle. However, like Gina Yashere, Noah's strong ties to Africa provide him with more latitude to make joking remarks like these about Africans, allowing his live New York audience to laugh along without fear of criticism.

AFRICA ON TWITTER

TO ESTABLISH A BASELINE FOR THE FREQUENCY, sentiment and context of conversations about Africa on Twitter, we partnered with BrandsEye, a South African opinion-mining company. Using the same types of keywords, we identified 1,624,571 relevant U.S. Twitter posts during March 2018, the same period as our TV analysis. A representative sample of randomly selected tweets were sent to the BrandsEye Crowd, a team of human coders. Each tweet was assessed for sentiment by at least two coders to assure consensus. Utilizing human coders to rate both the sentiments and key drivers of sentiment yields substantially greater reliability than methodologies reliant solely on algorithms, resulting in a 95% confidence level in the accuracy of these findings.

The Crowd classified relevant data into five categories selected from our TV topics list: Crime/Terrorism,[22] Corruption,[23] Animals,[24] Diaspora[25] and Poverty.[26] Through consultation

Volume Of Tweets By Day (March 1–31)

---
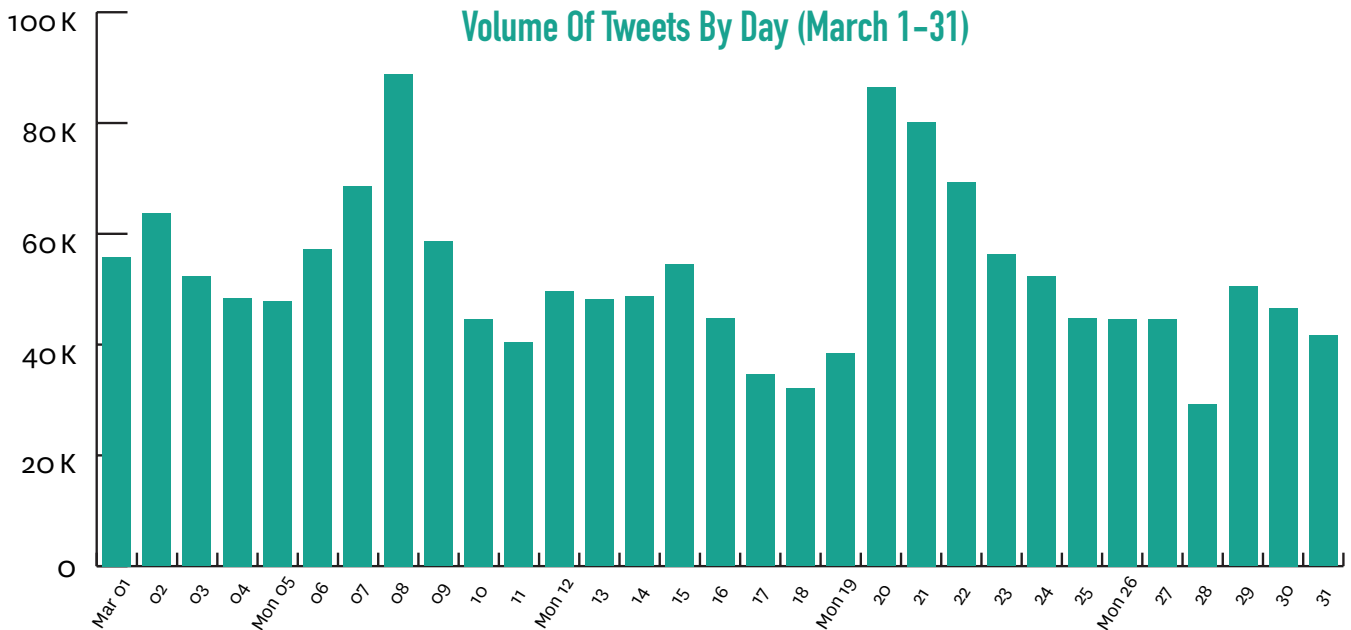
[22] Mentions crime, terrorism or violence in Africa – includes references to terrorist groups (e.g., Boko Haram).

[23] Includes incidents of corruption and accusations of corruption in Africa.

[24] Mentions animals, animal tourism or issues that affect animals/wildlife in Africa. Includes poaching, zoos, and safaris.

[25] Mentions Africans leaving their home countries (past or present) — including refugees, immigrants and the diaspora.

[26] References poverty in Africa or African states. Includes starvation and low income.

with BrandsEye experts, these topics were selected based on their high frequency in sample Twitter datasets and the ability to train coders to consistently apply these tags. It is possible that a different set of keywords (e.g., aid, business, culture, development, finance) might have resulted in more positive sentiment ratings and revealed other important discussions and commentary taking place in the Twittersphere.

VOLUME OF TWEETS

In the month of March 2018, the MIP research team found two peaks in the volume of tweets. The first peak was while Africa was featured in U.S. news coverage of Robert Mueller's investigation of a secret meeting held in the Seychelles.[27] Seychelles was the fifth most mentioned African country during March, with a total of 83,342 tweets.

The significant increase in volume around Seychelles is also reflected in our television research, wherein Seychelles was the most mentioned African country in local and national TV news. "Seychelles" was the most

The "SHITHOLE" Remark

As the Lear Center's Media Impact Project team (MIP) was preparing to conduct this study in January 2018, several lawmakers alleged that President Donald J. Trump responded to a discussion on protecting immigrants from African countries and Haiti by asking, "Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?"

An explosion of news coverage and online conversations erupted in the wake of Trump's reported remark, giving us an unprecedented opportunity to gather data on public sentiments about Africa through a separate analysis. For this study, BrandsEye's Crowd verified the sentiment regarding Africa in over 45,000 U.S.-based tweets the week before and two weeks following Trump's remark.

MIP's analysis of Twitter sentiment in the wake of the Trump

Full Frontal with Samantha Bee

statement reveals a substantial, 66% increase in negative tweets about Trump, and a dramatic increase of more than 3,000% in the volume of mentions of Africa. Tellingly, however, there is no indication of a shift in American sentiment toward Africa or Africans during this period. Rather, the tweets focused predominantly on using the episode as an opportunity for partisan sniping; any substantive discussion about Africa was largely absent. Although the vast majority of tweets attacked Trump for his remark, they very rarely provided counter-arguments or references to the abundant evidence demonstrating Africa's historic economic progress and predictions that its rise will transform global commerce.[28] Our hypothesis, which we intend to explore further in experimental and survey research, is that Americans know so little about Africa that they would find it difficult to make substantive comments — positive or negative — about its 54 nations.[29]

[27] Zargham, M., & Hosenball, M. (2018, March 7). "U.S. special counsel probes Seychelles meeting with Russian: Washington Post." *Reuters*. Retrieved from https://reut.rs/2D94QT5

[28] Brigety, R. (2018, August 28). "A Post-American Africa: Why the U.S. is Losing Influence in Africa." Foreign Affairs. Retrieved from https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/africa/2018-08-28/post-american-africa

[29] Rogers, A. A., Jung, E. J., Watson-Currie, E., Tekaste, R., Blakley, J. & van Gilder, M. (2018, November). "How Trump's Shithole Remark About Africa Affected Public Sentiment." Retrieved from https://learcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/How-Trump%E2%80%99s-Shithole-Remark-About-Africa-Affected-Public-Sentiment.pdf

Congratulations to all the poachers out there. You have got what you wanted. Last male northern white rhino 'Sudan' dies on Kenya reserve. What a shameful day for the human race and a sad day for our planet #rhino #Extinction news.sky.com/story/last-mal …

1:45 AM - 20 Mar 2018

3,286 Retweets 4,389 Likes

frequently mentioned keyword (37,486 mentions) on March 8, a day after the *Washington Post* put "Seychelles" in the headline of their story about Mueller's investigation of the secret meeting.[30]

The second peak in volume of Africa-related tweets occurred between March 20-21, related to the news coverage of animal extinction and poaching in Africa; specifically news of the death of "Sudan," the last male northern white rhino.[31] Thus, the volume and topics of tweets that trended on March 8 and March 20-21 closely aligned with news media coverage of Africa. Among the top 10 most frequently mentioned countries, only Ghana and Morocco received more positive than negative mentions.
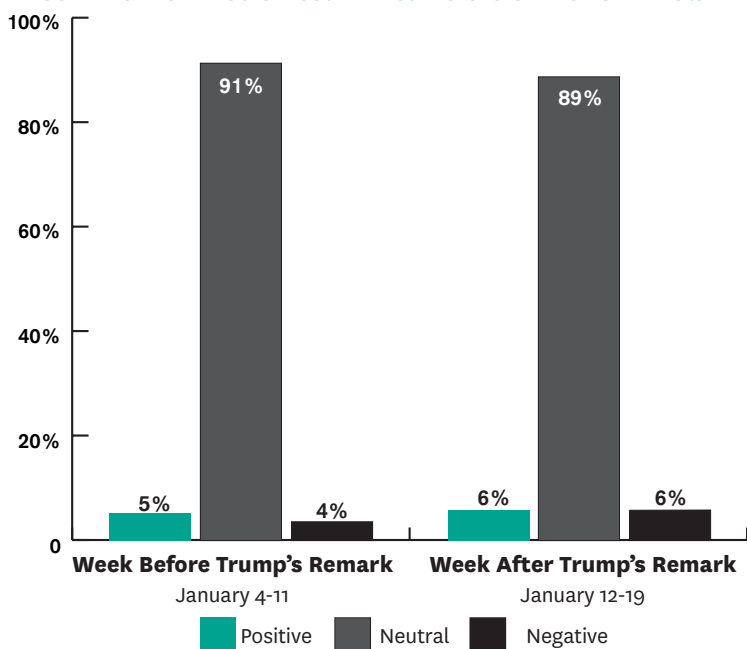
SENTIMENT TOWARD AFRICA

The vast majority of posts about Africa in March were neutral in sentiment (82%). This finding corresponds with our analysis of Twitter sentiment in January 2018, before and after President Trump's reported disparaging remark, when we found a spike in largely neutral mentions (90%), with the ratio of positive to negative comments fairly equal (see sidebar on pg. 27). The tweets collected during March showed a similar pattern of high neutrality, but when sentiment was present references were 2.5 times more likely to be negative than positive. Twitter sentiment about Africa was predominantly neutral in March and before and after Trump's reported remark in January.

The most frequently mentioned African nations on Twitter correlated with the countries covered on television. On Twitter, four of the top five countries overlap with African nations most viewed on television: South Africa, Egypt, Kenya and Seychelles.[32]

Sentiment Toward Countries

Overall sentiment toward Africa was predominantly neutral, but stronger sentiments, mostly negative, were expressed toward individual countries.

Sentiment Of Tweets About Africa Before & After S***Hole

Week Before Trump's Remark — January 4-11: Positive 5%, Neutral 91%, Negative 4%
Week After Trump's Remark — January 12-19: Positive 6%, Neutral 89%, Negative 6%

Positive | Neutral | Negative

March Tweets About Africa

Negative 13%
Neutral 82%
Postive 5%
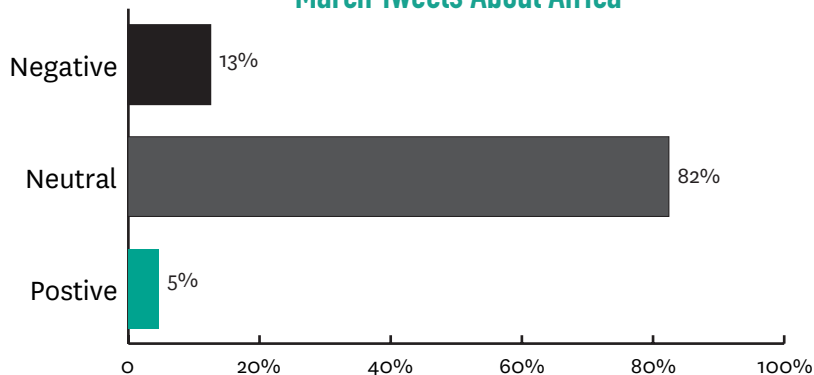
[30] Blake, A. (2018, March 8). "The Latest Whiff of a Cover-Up in the Russia Investigation." *Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2018/03/08/the-seychelles-encounter-provides-the-latest-whiff-of-a-cover-up-in-the-russia-probe/?utm_term=.9ae93fcaba21

[31] Nuwer, R. (2018, March 20). "Sudan, the Last Male Northern White Rhino, Dies in Kenya." *New York Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/20/science/rhino-sudan-extinct.html

[32] Nigeria ranked sixth on the list of African nations mentioned on television based on viewership data.

Top 10 Most Mentioned Countries On Twitter

	% of Tweets
1. South Africa	10%
2. Nigeria	7%
3. Egypt	6%
4. Kenya	5%
5. Seychelles	5%
6. Libya	3%
7. Ghana	3%
8. Congo[33]	3%
9. Morocco	3%
10. Sudan[34]	2%
FOR COMPARISON	
Africa	27%
Any African country (by name)	72%

South Africa

Of the ten most frequently mentioned African nations, South Africa had the highest percentage of negative tweets (36%). Negative sentiment toward South Africa was prevalent in scripted TV shows during March, as well: we found sinister South African characters in some of the most popular crime procedurals — including *The Blacklist*, *Law & Order*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *NCIS* and *NCIS: New Orleans* — as well as Black Panther nemesis Ulysses Klaue in the 2015 Superhero film *Avengers: Age of Ultron*.

A majority of negative references to South Africa on Twitter were classified as Crime or Terrorism (65%) by BrandsEye.[35] Many of these related to conversations about alleged persecution of white South African farmers, who were said to be facing government land seizure and targeted murders. This trend included the hashtag #whitegenocide.

Negative Tweets About South Africa

The Daily Wire
@realDailyWire

SHOCKING: South African Parliament Votes To Seize Land Owned By All White Farmers

THE DAILY WIRE

SHOCKING: South African Parliament Votes To Seize Land Owned By All Whit...
On Tuesday in South Africa, a shocking vote in the National Assembly ruled that white South African farmers will be removed from their land.
dailywire.com

9:32 AM - 26 Feb 2018

763 Retweets 667 Likes

199   763   667

Ron Jones

White South African farmers to be removed from their land; They are put in ghetto villages, beaten and raped by South African security #LawAndOrder

White South African farmers to be removed from their land
South Africa's constitution is now likely to be amended to allow for the confiscation of white-owned land without compensation.
dailymail.co.uk

6:55 AM - 2 Mar 2018

331 Retweets 168 Likes

61   331   168

Irina Hinojosa

URGENT: Please sign this petition, White South Africans are facing genocide. - Immigration Priority to South African Farmers facing Systematic Land Confiscations and Murder.
petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/immig ...

6:57 PM - 7 Mar 2018

203 Retweets 274 Likes

35   203   274

The circulation of such rumors on social media *preceded* the news cycle, and represents a break in the pattern we had previously traced. In fact, articles in major news outlets did not begin to appear until late July 2018, when news outlets began covering this issue after South African President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the decision to amend the constitution to allow for land seizures on July 31. It appears that rumors that trended on social media in March were amplified when Fox News Channel host Tucker Carlson discussed the farm killings on his show on August 22, leading President Donald Trump to tweet that he had instructed Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to "closely study the South Africa land and farm seizure and large scale killing of farmers." According to CNBC,

---

[33] As we discovered in the TV analysis, American media rarely distinguishes Democratic Republic of the Congo from Republic of the Congo. We found this to be the case in tweets, as well. Thus, "Congo" refers to both countries in our Twitter analysis as well.

[34] "Sudan" was the name of the last white male rhino, whose death precipitated a spike in tweets. A keyword search of "Sudan" returns an inaccurately high proportion of mentions not relevant to the country. Therefore, we have estimated the volume of tweets about the country of Sudan based upon the representative sample verified by the BrandsEye Crowd.

[35] Topics will be explored more deeply in ensuing section.

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

I have asked Secretary of State @SecPompeo to closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large scale killing of farmers. "South African Government is now seizing land from white farmers." @TuckerCarlson @FoxNews

7:28 PM - Aug 22, 2018

134K   92.5K people are talking about this

this comment about South Africa marked the first time Trump had used the word "Africa" on the social media platform since becoming president.[36]
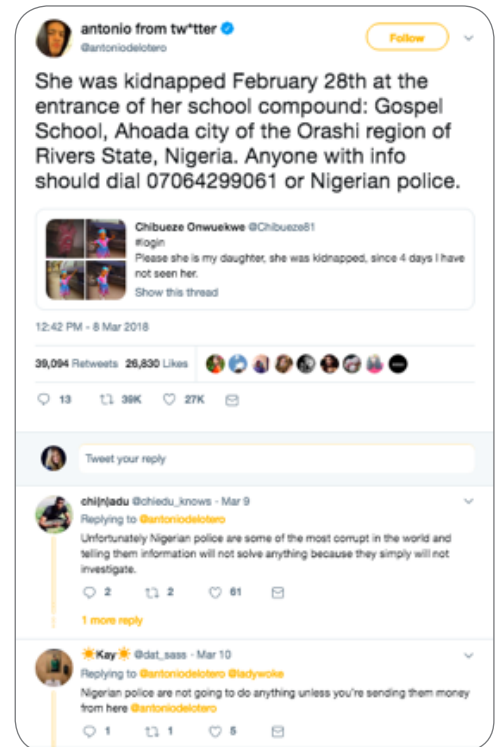
On September 1st, BBC reported the growing influence of South Africa's conservative Afrikaner groups' global lobbying campaign to support their message that the South African government is seizing their land and that white farmers were being targeted and murdered. However, the BBC found no reliable data to suggest farmers were at greater risk of being murdered than the average South African.[37]

Nigeria

Nigeria was the second most mentioned nation, with the third highest proportion of negative tweets (21%). About one fifth of these focused on crimes committed by Boko Haram, such as the high-profile kidnapping of more than 100 schoolgirls, as well as on other incidents of ethnic violence. Another two fifths of Nigeria's negative tweets focused on police corruption surrounding the kidnapping of a young girl by an abductor unassociated with Boko Haram.
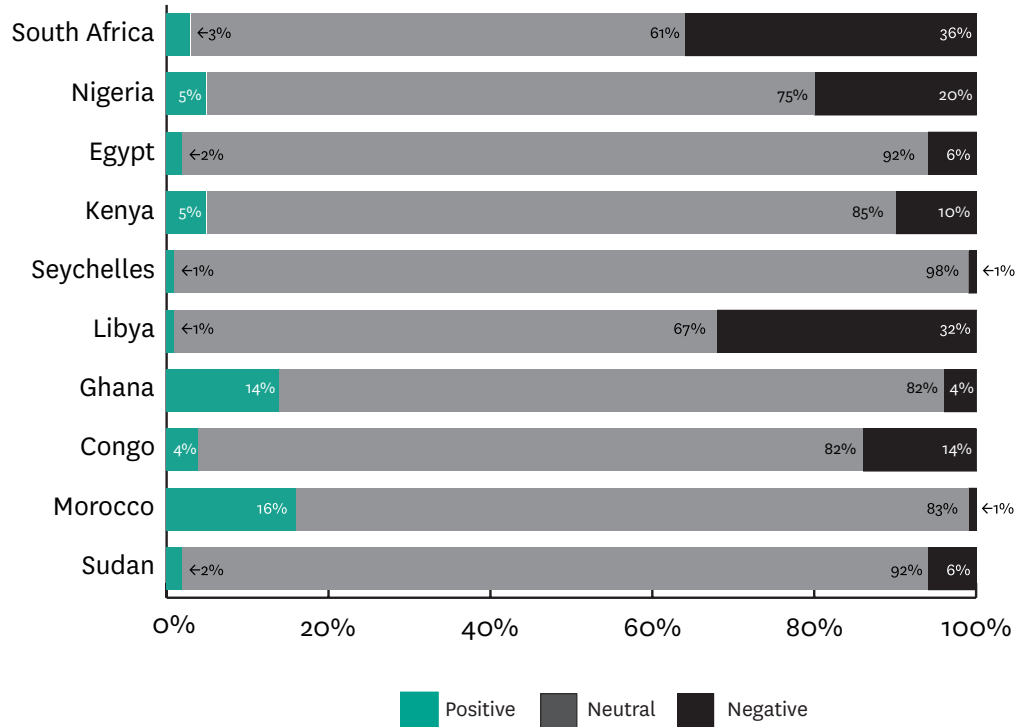
Negative Tweets About Nigeria

Africa Facts Zone @AfricaFactsZone   Follow

Nigeria, which is ranked at no. 148 out of 180 on Transparency International's CPI (Corruption Perceptions Index) 2017 has pledged to help fight corruption in Ghana, which is placed at no. 81 out of 180.

12:40 PM - 6 Mar 2018

3,358 Retweets 1,972 Likes

283   3.4K   2.0K

JJ. Omojuwa @Omojuwa   Follow

Over 80,000 Nigerian Police officers are ghosts? Wow! This is as much a national security issue as it is a corruption issue. Nigeria is a big lie we need to unravel before we even start thinking 'progress' and 'development'

4:42 AM - 26 Mar 2018

1,315 Retweets 1,072 Likes

95   1.3K   1.1K

antonio from tw*tter @antoniodelotero   Follow

She was kidnapped February 28th at the entrance of her school compound: Gospel School, Ahoada city of the Orashi region of Rivers State, Nigeria. Anyone with info should dial 07064299061 or Nigerian police.

Chibueze Onwuekwe @Chibueze81
#login
Please she is my daughter, she was kidnapped, since 4 days I have not seen her.
Show this thread

12:42 PM - 8 Mar 2018

39,094 Retweets 26,830 Likes

13   39K   27K

Tweet your reply

chi|n|adu @chiedu_knows · Mar 9
Replying to @antoniodelotero
Unfortunately Nigerian police are some of the most corrupt in the world and telling them information will not solve anything because they simply will not investigate.

2   2   61

1 more reply

Kay @dat_sass · Mar 10
Replying to @antoniodelotero @ladywoke
Nigerian police are not going to do anything unless you're sending them money from here @antoniodelotero

1   1   5

Reuters TV @ReutersTV   Follow

The kidnapping of more than 100 girls in Nigeria exposes how little progress has been made in eradicating Boko Haram militants:
reut.rs/2Fh9cta

1:03   350 views

7:42 AM - 5 Mar 2018

2 Retweets 2 Likes

Real News Line @RealNewsLine   Follow

Dozens Killed, 300 Cows Stolen in Ethnic #Violence in #Nigeria allafrica.com/view/group/mai … #Nigeria via @allafrica

3:39 AM - 5 Mar 2018

4 Retweets 4 Likes

4   4

[36] Ellyatt, H. (2018, August 22) "Trump is hyping a fringe talking point about South African government 'seizing land from white farmers." *CNBC News*. Retrieved from https://www.cnbc.com/2018/08/23/now-trump-is-having-a-twitter-spat-with-south-africa-over-land-reforms.html

[37] Chothia, F. (2018, September 1). "South Africa: The Groups Playing on the Fears of a 'White Genocide.'" *BBC News: Africa*. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-45336840. See also: https://africacheck.org/reports/are-white-afrikaners-really-being-killed-like-flies/

Libya

Libya received the second highest proportion (32%) of negative mentions. The most popular subjects included a drone strike which hit a suspected al-Qaeda safe house in Libya; the seventh anniversary of a NATO bombing of Libya; the modern-day slave trade in Libya; and mentions of WikiLeaks stories, including its role in the indictment of former French President Sarkozy, and actions attributed to President Barack Obama and Secretary Hillary Clinton, such as the death of Muammar Gaddafi and the attack in Benghazi.

Sentiment of Tweets by Topic

BrandsEye categorized messages into five predetermined topics often associated with Africa: Animals, Corruption, Crime/Terrorism,[38] Diaspora and Poverty. Of these topics, Crime/Terrorism (8% of all tweets) and Animals (7%) were the most frequently mentioned, followed by Diaspora (2%), Poverty (0.5%) and Corruption (0.5%). For the purpose of our analyses in the ensuing section, and to enable comparisons with the television dataset, we have collapsed Crime/Terrorism and Corruption into a single category.

African Diaspora

Unsurprisingly, negative sentiment was far more prevalent than positive

Sentiment Toward African Nations

Nation	Positive	Neutral	Negative
South Africa	←3%	61%	36%
Nigeria	5%	75%	20%
Egypt	←2%	92%	6%
Kenya	5%	85%	10%
Seychelles	←1%	98%	←1%
Libya	←1%	67%	32%
Ghana	14%	82%	4%
Congo	4%	82%	14%
Morocco	16%	83%	←1%
Sudan	←2%	92%	6%

Positive — Neutral — Negative

Sentiment For Each Topic

Topic	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Animals	←4%	91%	5%
Corruption Crime Terrorism	←1%	21%	78%
Diaspora	←4%	59%	37%
Poverty	9%	24%	67%

Positive — Neutral — Negative

[38] Upon the advice of BrandsEye's experts, it was necessary to group Crime and Terrorism posts together, while keeping Corruption posts separate. Tweets are brief and often lack contextual cues. It is a simple task for human coders to label posts "crime" when they mention murder, rape, arson, etc., but determining whether the crimes are incited by terrorism is very difficult. However, it was possible for the crowd to distinguish tweets about corruption due to its association with government and/ or business. Of the verified tweets tagged "Crime/Terrorism" or "Corruption," only 0.3% received both tags, thus supporting BrandsEye's assessment that these were almost always mutually exclusive categories.

Sentiment Of Tweets About The African Diaspora

Negative — 37%
Neutral — 59%
Positive — 4%

Sentiment Of Tweets About Refugees
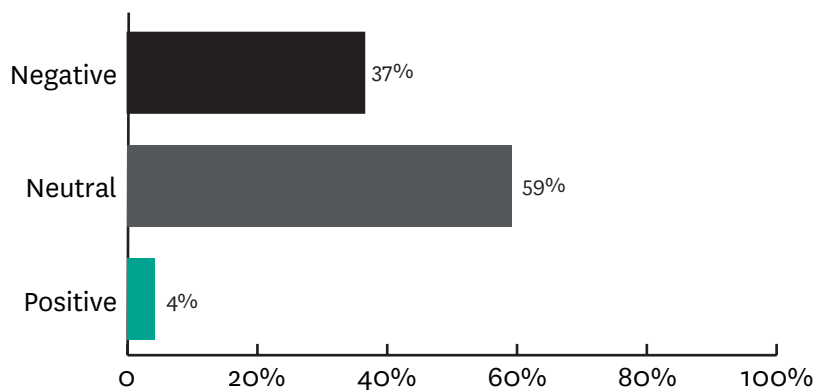
Negative — 44%
Neutral — 52%
Positive — 4%
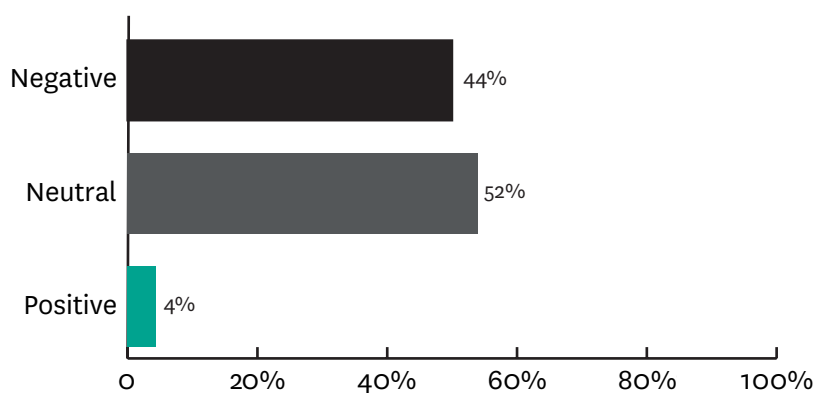
sentiment among tweets associated with Crime/Terrorism/Corruption and Poverty. But it was revealing to see that tweets about the African diaspora were nine times more likely to be negative than positive. Often considered Africa's "secret weapon,"[39] there are nearly 140 million Africans living outside of the continent, and an estimated 30 million Africans have joined the Western Hemisphere in recent years, while maintaining strong ties to their homelands. It is estimated that diaspora Africans are saving up to $53 billion every year and providing substantial financial support to their families at home.[40] However, the conversation about the diaspora on Twitter was dominated by news about refugees. A substantial proportion of the negative tweets about the African diaspora (37%) related to news that Israel would force out all African refugees by April.

As such, "refugee" was the most mentioned keyword associated with tweets about the African diaspora, accounting for 27%. Tweets about refugees were ten times more likely to be negative than positive. Among positive tweets about refugees (4%) were those showing support for African Jews and praising African nations such as Chad and Djibouti for accepting refugees.
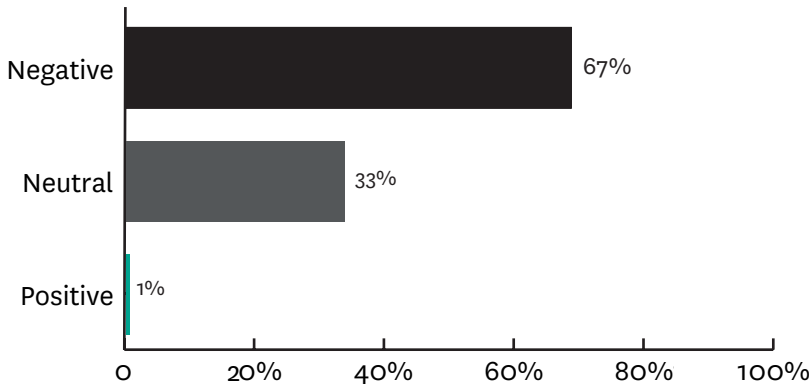
[39] Kajunju, A. (2013, November 1). "Africa's Secret Weapon: The Diaspora." *CNN News*.
Retrieved from https://www.cnn.com/2013/11/01/opinion/africas-secret-weapon-diaspora/index.html

[40] Seliatou, K. A., & Nana, S. G. (2012, December) "Diaspora Bonds: Some Lessons for African Countries." *Africa Development Bank Group Economic Brief*, Volume 3, Issue 13. Specifically: "Remittances are the largest source of net foreign inflows after foreign direct investment (FDI), ranking higher than official development aid (ODA)… but the source of remittances, although relatively diverse, is primarily industrialized nations. Remittances come to SSA from various regions including Europe (41%), United States (28%), Africa (13%), the Gulf Cooperation Council States (9%), and other high-income countries (8%)."
Retrieved from https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Economic_Brief_-_Diaspora_Bonds_Some_Lessons_for_African_Countries.pdf

Sentiment Of Tweets About Corruption

Negative	67%
Neutral	33%
Positive	1%

0   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Crime, Terrorism & Corruption

As described previously, South Africa (33%) and Nigeria (14%) were the countries most associated with crime, terrorism and corruption, followed by Libya (12%), Somalia (3%) and Syria (3%). Libya drew a high proportion of negative tweets associated with terrorism in March due to reports of a high-profile terrorist who was killed by a U.S. drone strike in that country, as well as the seventh anniversary of a NATO bombing.

> "
> There are a dozen mayors in the United States right now in jail for corruption on the local level, so it's not that we are immune to [crime & corruption], it's just that we see it in African markets more than we want to see it in other places.
> — Aubrey Hruby, Co-Founder, Africa Expert Network

Although most of the tweets in this category focused on #whitegenocide rumors, a subset tied to corruption also emerged. Tweets criticized corrupt leaders and police authority in Angola (11%) and Kenya (10%), as well as lax anti-corruption regulations. Nearly half of the tweets mentioning Kenya and corruption were tied to the statement made by Christopher Wylie, known as the Cambridge Analytica whistleblower. He appeared as a witness before a British parliamentary committee on March 27, claiming that his predecessor was poisoned in Kenya in 2012 and the police were bribed not to investigate.[41]

Tweets about corruption peaked on March 16th, when news reports announced the prosecution of former South African president Jacob Zuma on several corruption charges. The MIP team found that tweets about corruption included not only comments on news reports of scandals and criticism about rampant corruption, but also commentary on solutions to eradicate these problems. However, tweets about signs of progress against corruption (which include the prosecution of notorious figures) were also typically coded by the crowd as negative in sentiment, since they were indicative of an overarching problem.[42]

Negative Tweets About Crime & Corruption

[41] Kagera, E. (2018, March 27). "Cambridge Analytica Whistleblower Says Predecessor Was Killed." *Daily Nation*. Retrieved from https://www.nation.co.ke/news/My-predecessor-was-killed—Cambridge-Analytica-whistleblower-/1056-4360474-matqy4z/index.html

[42] Unlike the coding protocol our internal research team utilized for scripted television content, the Twitter coding protocol did not include a "mixed" sentiment option.

Negative Tweets About Crime & Corruption, Continued

Isabel Dos Santos is the daughter of Angola's corrupt dictator who siphons Angolan resources for personal gain while 70% of Angolans live on less than $2 a day & Folorunsho Alakija amassed her wealth through corrupt Nigerian dictator Babingida but YASS BLACK WOMAN BILLIONAIRES!!

BET @BET
What's better than 1 billionaire? How about the 3 richest Black women on earth? #Blackexcellence

1:20

7:57 AM - 5 Mar 2018

3,832 Retweets 4,255 Likes

57   3.8K   4.3K

Donald B Kipkorir
@DonaldBKipkorir

Since Independence, Kenya has been beating drums about corruption: Europe ended it by making any form of corruption (financial & Moral) toxic & any involved didn't wait to be fired ... In China & Rwanda, you lose all including your life. In Kenya, you steal 200m, you get fined 1m

5:26 AM - 28 Feb 2018

BREAKING: Cambridge Analytica whistleblower, Christopher Wylie says he learned that his predecessor, Dan Muresan, was murdered in Kenya and the police were bribed not to investigate.

5:21 AM - 27 Mar 2018

3,375 Retweets 3,896 Likes

148   3.4K   3.9K

Animals

Nine out of ten tweets about animals were neutral in sentiment. When looking at specific themes, we discovered positive tweets included celebrating unique animal species in Africa and sharing a popular rescue story about a pilot who saved a chimp from a poacher. Negative themes included animal extinction in Africa due to poaching, particularly the loss of the last northern white male rhino, who died in Kenya on March 19th.

Amy Siskind
@Amy_Siskind

They have no soul or conscience:

A new advisory board created to help rewrite federal rules for importing the heads and hides of African elephants, lions and rhinos is stacked with trophy hunters, incl some members with direct ties to Trump and his family

AP

Correction: Trump-Trophy Hunting story
WASHINGTON (AP) — In a March 15 story about a new U.S. advisory board created to help rewrite federal rules for importing body parts of certain animals killed in Af...
apnews.com

10:00 AM - 16 Mar 2018

3,597 Retweets 3,661 Likes

286   3.6K   3.7K

Another flurry of postings occurred subsequent to a March 15 AP news report that President Trump had created a new advisory board to help rewrite federal rules in favor of trophy hunters (see example at left), some of whom have direct ties to Trump, which sparked criticism of the President for supporting big game hunting.

Sentiment Of Tweets About Animals

Sentiment	Percentage
Negative	5%
Neutral	91%
Positive	4%
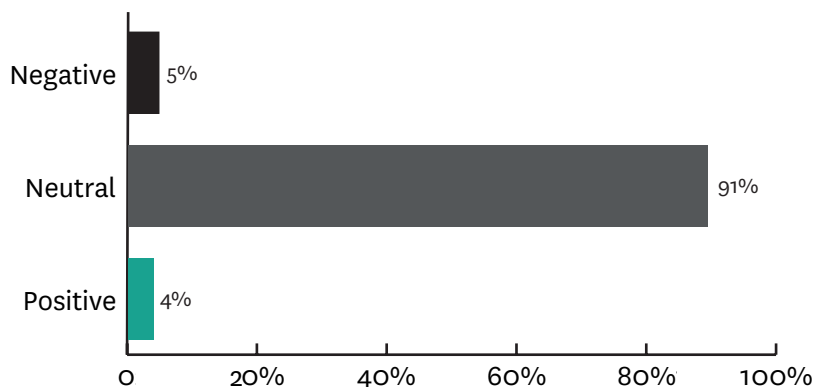
Positive Tweets About Animals

Yashar Ali ✓
@yashar
Follow

Sound On: This made my night. A baby chimp being rescued from poachers in the Congo and being flown to safety. I watched it three times and felt less stressed. The pilot is so kind and gentle.

0:32 4.51M views

5:22 PM - 28 Feb 2018

79,165 Retweets 213,200 Likes

Sara Laughter
Follow

Tanzania—success story—community-based conservation protects natural resources—eco-tourism: primary economic driver—winners include species large and small—wildlife restored after decades of poaching, conflict with farms, mines—@WildNatureInst phy.so/438928744 @physorg_com

Ecological success of community-based wildlife conservation in Tanzania
Good news about the environment is rare these days, but in Tanzania there are signs that local wildlife conservation efforts can effectively protect the natural resources
phys.org

3:49 PM - 3 Mar 2018

19 Retweets 13 Likes

1 19 13

Negative Tweets About Animals

The Economist ✓
@TheEconomist
Follow

Poachers kill around 100 African elephants every day for their tusks. Where does the ivory end up?

TANZANIA
MOZAMBIQUE

2:05 103K views

9:21 PM - 14 Mar 2018

1,113 Retweets 825 Likes

67 1.1K 825

ABC News ✓
@ABC
Follow

A memorial is held for Sudan, the last male northern white rhino. Kenya's tourism minister at the ceremony: "Punitive measures must be taken into punishing people who kill our wildlife... we are pushing for life sentences for people who kill for ivory."
abcn.ws/2JabL2A

THE LAST MALE NORTHERN WHITE RHINO IN THE WORLD.

0:41 33.9K views

11:51 AM - 31 Mar 2018

465 Retweets 1,328 Likes

54 465 1.3K

> Good NGO's don't rely anymore on the pictures of sad, starving kids with bloated stomachs. Instead, [they] try to tell positive stories about how interventions have made a difference.
> — John Norris, Executive Director, Sustainable Security and Peace Building Initiative American Progress

Poverty

The majority of tweets about poverty were negative (67%), but we were surprised to discover that this topic had the highest proportion of positive tweets among all topics we tracked (9%). A substantial number of these were retweets of posts generated by non-profit organizations such as the Gates Foundation, African Development Bank Group, and World Resources Institute as well as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and other social enterprises working to alleviate poverty in the region. This finding indicates that the efforts of these organizations are being positively framed in social media mentions. These organizations showcase their successful efforts, as well as promote stories featuring positive aspects of African economic and social development.

Sentiment Of Tweets About Poverty

- Negative: 67%
- Neutral: 24%
- Positive: 9%
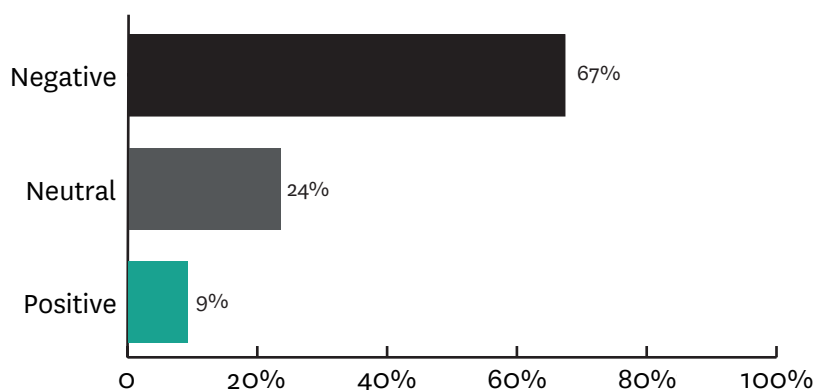
Tweets About Poverty

African Development Bank Group @AfDB_Group

To #endpoverty we must work with what we have. What does #Africa have going for it? #Agriculture! In #Malawi, local economic dev projects - fishing business, dairy farms & chickpea processing center - have expanded trade & businesses + improved livelihoods

Improving lives : A Malawi showcase

7:55 AM - 25 Mar 2018

38 Retweets 45 Likes

Bill Gates @BillGates

Companies in Nigeria are taking a big step to end stunting and malnutrition. This commitment will build healthier and more prosperous communities.

A WELL-NOURISHED NATION HAS A BRIGHT FUTURE.

9:34 AM - 23 Mar 2018

1,645 Retweets 5,970 Likes

507 1.6K 6.0K

HumanProgress.org @HumanProgress

Africa may be the poorest continent, but it is no longer a "hopeless continent," as The Economist called it in 2000.

Africa Is Growing Thanks to the Free Market
Since the new millennium's start, Africa's average per capita income rose by more than 50 percent.
humanprogress.org

12:36 AM - 19 Mar 2018

230 Retweets 657 Likes

17 230 657

BLACK PANTHER ON TV & TWITTER

BLACK PANTHER WAS RELEASED ON FEBRUARY 16, 2018, two weeks before the MIP team started data collection. The film set several records, ultimately earning $700 million in North America alone, making it the third highest grossing film of all time. The movie and the Marvel comics character continued to be the subject of discussions on TV and social media in March. On TV, we did not track every reference to *Black Panther*, but only those that accompanied a keyword related to Africa. Even with that restriction, coverage of *Black Panther* exceeded that of African travel, sports, education, health and environment in all genres of programming. One indicator of its prevalence on U.S. TV is that the *Black Panther*'s fictional African homeland, Wakanda, would have placed fourth behind Egypt, South Africa and Kenya in our rankings of most mentioned countries. Interestingly enough, viewers were equally likely to see Africa-related references to the film as they were to see coverage of Trump's "s***hole" comment about Africa.

One indicator of its prevalence on U.S. TV is that the Black Panther's fictional African homeland, Wakanda, would have placed fourth behind Egypt, South Africa and Kenya in our rankings of most mentioned countries.

Sometimes these two prominent, but fundamentally opposed, narratives about Africa converged. On March 26, NBC re-ran a February episode of *The Tonight Show* featuring an interview with Chadwick Boseman, the star of *Black Panther*. In host Jimmy Fallon's opening monologue, he said this about Wakanda: "You can tell it's a made-up African nation because Trump hasn't insulted it yet."

During the interview with Boseman, Fallon continued to focus on the political ramifications of the film. Describing it as more than just a superhero movie, he asked, "What do you think people are taking politically from this?" Boseman first mentioned the powerful depictions of women in the movie and their relevance to the #metoo movement. He went on to discuss the value of creating mass entertainment that explores the relationship between Africa, Africans and African-Americans:

You see Africans viewing African-Americans in a different way, and African-Americans viewing themselves in Africa in a different way, and everyone else is privy to that conversation. … I think that is a very, very healthy thing for people — to become more specific about their identity, and encouraging it. In most cases, you see people trying to water down things when you talk about diversity, as opposed to embracing what they actually are. So I think that has been … very refreshing, and fulfilling.

> **Through albeit a superhero movie, Black Panther changed some people's perspectives, because it pushed the normal narrative around topics such as poverty, death, disease, peace and security off the table, and it had everyone open up their aperture in a very different way. — C.D. Glin, CEO, US African Development Bank**

Further emphasizing the real-world impact of the film, *The Tonight Show* aired a special five-minute segment in which African-American fans were asked to consider "what Chadwick and the movie mean to you." Fans mentioned the importance of seeing themselves in mainstream movies, and seeing a heroic black character, especially for kids. One mother brought her son on stage and said his life has been defined by Barack Obama and the Black Panther. A young aspiring filmmaker said that the movie made her realize that "our stories need to be told" and that "art can really change the world." Another man said that his father is a scientist from Ghana, and that his sisters are successful African-American career women, and so "everything that represents me was honored in this movie." Unbeknownst to them, Boseman and Fallon were behind the curtain, emerging after each fan made his or her remarks. The reveal was highly emotional, as was Boseman's behind-the-curtain responses to each fan's heartfelt remarks about the tremendous impact that a film, and a character, can have.

We also discovered that conversations about *Black Panther* on Twitter often included explicit references to Africa. The film continuously generated social media conversations around Africa, African people and African nations, particularly Zimbabwe, which is perceived as an inspiration for aspects of Wakanda.[43]

Sentiment Of Tweets About Black Panther

Negative	1%
Neutral	97%
Positive	3%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
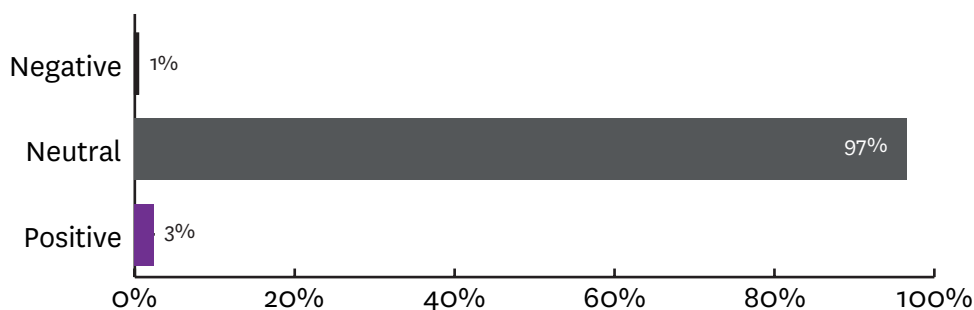
When *Black Panther* was released in February, the transformative impact of the film was front and center on social media. A few prominent examples include the #InWakanda hashtag, which imagined life in the black utopia; the #WhatBlackPantherMeansToMe hashtag provided space for personal stories of the film's impact, and #WakandaTheVote launched a campaign to register voters at *Black Panther* screenings.

The online conversation about the film was still thriving the following month. Over 23,000 tweets in our March dataset mentioned *Black Panther* or Wakanda: in that subset, Wakanda and Zimbabwe were mentioned most frequently (78%), followed by Africa (61%) and African (36%). Although the film generated

---

43 Ito, R. (2016, March 31). "Ta-Nehisi Coates Helps a New Panther Leave Its Print." *New York Times*. Retrieved from https://nyti.ms/1SAqowt
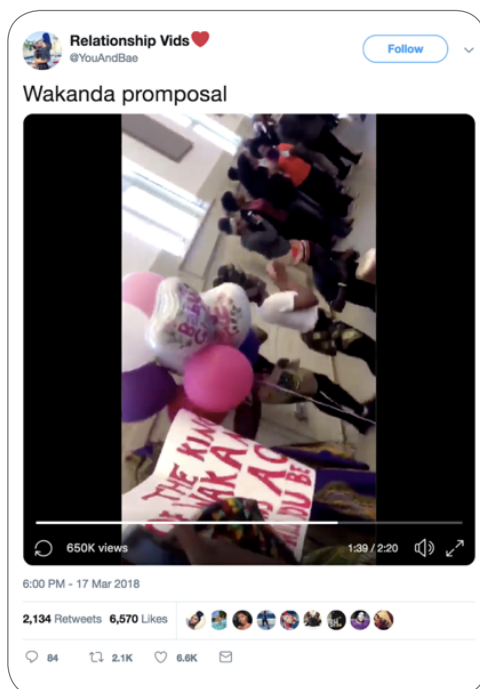
references to Africa, the vast majority of them were neutral in sentiment (97%).

With more than 91 million posts, *Black Panther* and Wakanda were granted a high "Opportunities to See" (OTS) score, which BrandsEye uses to estimate the potential views a piece of content could receive. This score indicates that well-known media personalities were participating in the conversation. Widely-shared tweets included promotion of a TED talk by a Nigerian designer associated with the film, and fan curiosity about African architectural references in Wakanda.

Tweets About Black Panther
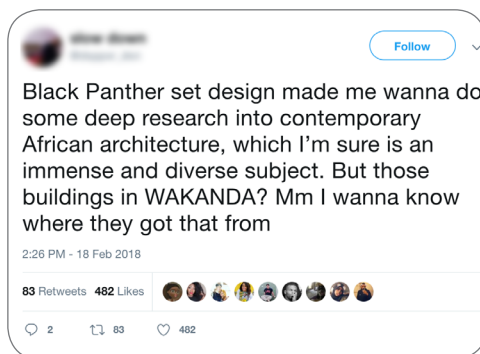
One post that went viral was about children who believed that Wakanda was real; another viral tweet documented an elaborate "Wakanda promposal."
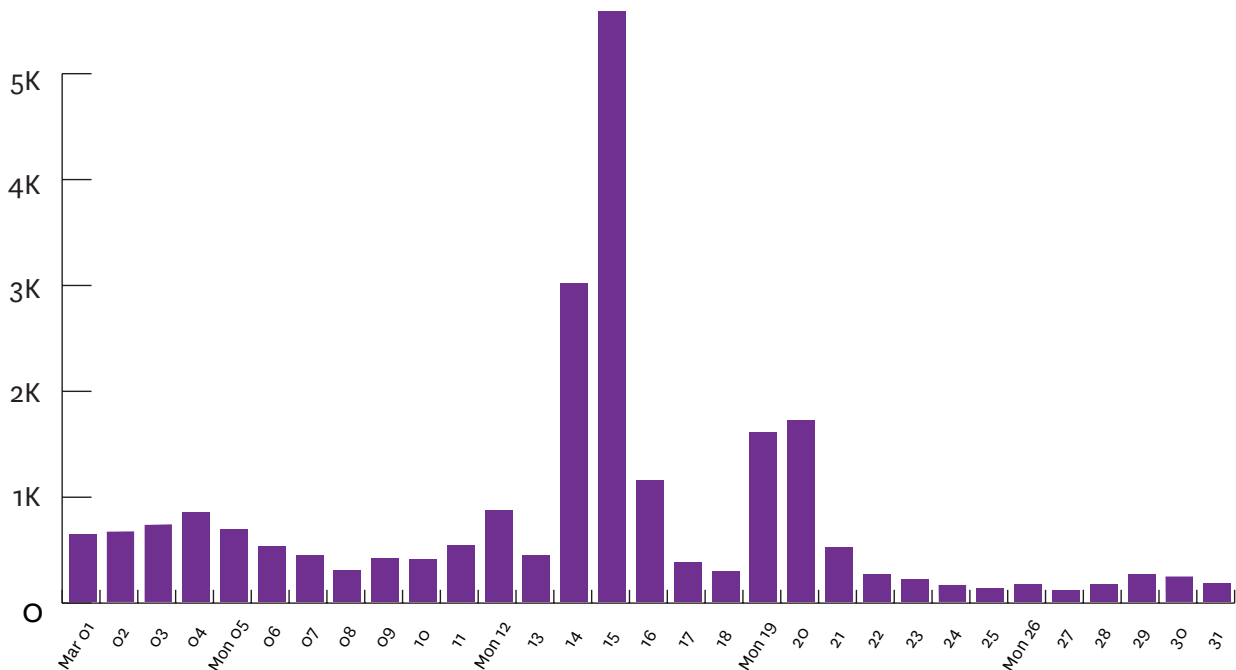
Avengers: Age of Ultron **(2015)**

The 2015 mega-blockbuster *Avengers: Age of Ultron* also aired during March 2018. This Marvel Comics superhero film was the second most expensive film ever made and grossed over $1.4 billion at the international box office. *Black Panther* did not appear in the film, but his nemesis, Ulysses Klaue, did, and many fans regarded his storyline as the teaser for the *Black Panther* film. In *Age of Ultron*, the Avengers discover that Ulysses, a loathsome South African arms dealer, has secured Vibranium, a metal from Wakanda, which is infamous for its advanced technology and resources. Tony Stark, whose alternate identity is Iron Man, marvels at Ulysses' feat: Wakandan metal is the "strongest metal on earth" and fiercely guarded by the Wakandans. Unlike the majority of depictions of real African countries, Wakanda is respected and revered — even among superheroes of the Marvel universe.

However, the film portrays a decidedly mixed image of Africa. A major battle takes place at Ulysses' dreary black market arms shipping center in a salvage yard on the "African coast" (yet another instance of Africa's treatment as a country instead of a continent). *Black Panther* fans paid special attention to this scene and the "Easter egg"[44] in the preceding one, which is regarded as the first official mention of the Panther in the Marvel

Volume Of Black Panther Tweets By Day (March 1–31)

[44] In computer software and media, an Easter egg is an intentional inside joke, hidden message or image, or secret feature.
   Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter_egg_(media)

Cinematic Universe. In it, the camera quickly captures a glimpse of a file on Klaue that provides hints about plot points in the upcoming movie, including the assassination of T'Chaka, the elder *Black Panther*, and his son's pursuit of Klaue. Airing on March 12th, while *Black Panther* was still in theaters and in the headlines, this film was poised to take advantage of the buzz and served to further engage new fans in an alternate universe in which Africa is not only the site of criminal violence, but is also the site of a pantheon of superheroes.

During March, *Black Panther*'s phenomenal performance at the box office and its relevance to passionate cultural debates about race in America continued to generate news headlines, editorials, blogs and conversations on Twitter. The MIP team found spikes in the volume of tweets about *Black Panther* following news reports about the film crossing the $1 billion mark, later beating *Dark Knight Rises*, and then, in mid-March, battling *Tomb Raider* at the weekend box office.

On March 14th, *the Washington Post* featured a story on White Nationalists embracing *Black Panther* in order to promote their arguments in favor of organizing nation-states by race and ethnicity.[45] Alt-right memes featuring images[46] of the *Black Panther* wearing a "Make Wakanda Great Again" hat (see left), a reference to President Trump's red #MAGA campaign hats, portrays *Black Panther* as "anti-immigrant" and "pro-wall."

The Post further quotes Becca Lewis of Data & Society, a New York-based think tank that studied far-right online conversation about the film:

> "…[the episode seemed to mark a turn for white nationalists online. Instead of avoiding a cultural phenomenon that conflicts with their ideology, they have sought to subvert and transform it in hopes of recruiting followers and normalizing their views on white supremacy. The misinformation campaign also shows how such groups are increasingly propagating disinformation, by morphing breaking news and cultural touchstones into staging grounds for hateful ideologies and racist ideas."

Others used the popularity of *Black Panther* to draw attention to real dangers in Africa, such as the threat of Boko Haram in Nigeria. Even though this tweet (see right) is critical of people who focus on entertainment depictions instead of real world problems, it uses the hashtag #blackpanther to leverage the popularity of the film to spread this message to the film's fans, who may be more interested in news from Africa after seeing the film.

---

[45] Timberg, C., Harwell, D., & Zeitchik, S. (2018, March 14). "How White Nationalists Are Trying To Co-opt Black Panther." *Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-switch/wp/2018/03/14/how-white-nationalists-are-trying-to-co-opt-black-panther/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.00b794549bd3
[46] Internet Meme Database. Retrieved from https://knowyourmeme.com/photos/1338390-black-panther

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

WHY THIS RESEARCH MATTERS

NO MATTER HOW INTERESTING A MEDIA RESEARCH STUDY MIGHT BE — AND we found this one particularly fascinating — it is essential that we try to understand the implications of the findings. When we shared a summary of key findings with 30 experts and influencers from Africa and the U.S. at a roundtable discussion in September 2018 at Africa House in Manhattan, it triggered a passionate conversa‑tion and strong emotions. While most experts we talked to were not surprised that Africa receives primarily negative coverage in the U.S., many were uncomfortable watching video clips of the entertainment references, the majority of them from well-known, recently-produced shows. For some, the relentless jokes at African people's expense were difficult to watch and felt like personal attacks. For mem‑bers of the African diaspora who live in the U.S. — especially those who grew up watching U.S. television — these representations are very familiar, attuned as they were to any mention of their (or their parents') homeland in American media. Par‑ticipants in a roundtable discussion cited several reasons why this research matters to the future of Africa and of the developed world:

THE GLOBAL REACH OF AMERICAN MEDIA: Despite the growing power of Bollywood and Nollywood, Hollywood's $723 billion storytelling engine makes its content virtually inescapable in almost every corner of the world.[47] For three of the last four years, CBS' *NCIS* was the most watched TV show in the world and *Modern Family* and *Big Bang Theory* were among the world's most popular comedies.[48] Though African and African diaspora storytellers are harnessing social media platforms and streaming services like Netflix to tell nuanced, authentic stories to niche and mass audiences worldwide, it will take time be‑fore these stories achieve the market-share necessary to disrupt traditional American media narratives about the continent.

[47] DaSilva, A. (2016, October). "Top Markets Report: Media and Entertainment." International Trade Administration. Retrieved from http://trade.gov/topmarkets/pdf/Media_and_Entertainment_Top_Markets_Report.pdf
[48] "Surrette, T. (2017, June 20). "Guess Which Show Is the Biggest in the Entire World?" *TV Guide*. Retrieved from https://www.tvguide.com/news/most-watched-show-in-world-ncis/

Africa in the Media Roundtable

In September, we shared a summary of key findings with 30 experts and influencers from Africa and the U.S. at a roundtable discussion in September 2018 at Africa House in Manhattan.

Zain Verjee, roundtable moderator and CEO of Akoma Media; Aubrey Hruby, Co-Founder, Africa Expert Network; Don Gips, Principal, Albright Stonebridge

Herbert Wigwe, CEO of Access Bank; and Uzo Iweala, CEO, The Africa Center

Hilary Pennington, Vice President, Ford Foundation; Jay Ireland, President and CEO of GE Africa

Left to right: Bience Gawanas, United Nations; Andy Bryant, Segal Family Foundation; Karen Attiah, Washington Post; and add Claudine Moore, C. Moore Media

Bruce Sherman, United States Institute of Peace, with Paul Nwulu of the Ford Foundation

THE LINK BETWEEN MEDIA AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT: No matter how promising the economic outlook might be in any particular place in Africa, that information will be considered within a broader pessimistic narrative about Africa. Since many American business people are exposed to this narrative their entire lives, they grow up with this mindset, which can be incredibly difficult to dislodge. One roundtable participant told a story about how three different businesses called him after seeing a tweet from Donald Trump about attacks on white farmers in South Africa. One tweet, which was based on unverified rumors but was widely reported in news media, was enough to make them seriously consider divesting from South Africa (at least one of the companies did.)

THE IMPACT ON THE AFRICAN DIASPORA: In our interviews with Africa experts, and during this roundtable discussion, several Africans in business, media and advocacy agreed that the key to changing the dominant narrative about Africa is mobilizing the African diaspora. However, relentlessly negative media narratives about Africa can take a psychological toll, making it necessary to defend Africa before it can be promoted. Several experts agreed that the problem is even more severe for first and second generation diaspora members who never lived on the continent and may be tempted to forego the uphill battle and simply cut ties.

What American Media Can Do

We believe that large scale, data-driven media research like this is essential to understanding the role that media plays in shaping and informing audience attitudes toward the world. Many have described media as a kind of mirror held up to the world, but we can never know how distorted that mirror is until we take a cold, hard look at its content. As in fashion, there are discernible trends in media representations, and this study captures the current one for Africa. Its findings are intended to provide insights for American media makers and help inform their consideration of African storytelling.

One could in fact argue that there hasn't been a more opportune time for entertainment stakeholders to consider fresh storytelling centered around Africa. Not only has the mega-success of *Black Panther* upended many preconceived

notions of the continent and of the mainstream appeal of African storytelling, but it comes alongside the emergence of a new generation of influential African entertainment figures who are advancing authentic African stories and African characters into the mainstream. At the writing of this report, four best-selling books by Africans are being developed into film projects:

> **There are so many unique and interesting African stories that also have elements of being a "global story" and have global appeal, like the movie 'Lion.' We need to work with global partners to produce such stories.**
> **—Biola Alabi, Biola Alabi Media**

Trevor Noah's memoir *Born A Crime*, starring and produced by Oscar-winner Lupita Nyong'o; Chimamanda Ngozi Adichi's *Americanah*, also starring Nyong'o; *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba, a Malian boy who taught himself to make a wind turbine and went on to achieve international fame, directed by Oscar-winner Chewitel Ejiofor; and Nigerian-American Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* is being turned into an HBO series.

In 2018 alone, a number of notable projects around African stories were announced, including Tri-Star Pictures' *The Woman King*, a feature film starring Viola Davis (also a producer) and Nyong'o and inspired by true events that took place in the African Kingdom of Dahomey. Madonna is set to direct *Taking Flight*, a film based on a memoir of the life of Michaela DePrince, an orphan from Sierra Leone who went on to become a world-class ballerina. Netflix announced its first original African acquisition, *Lionheart*, by Nigerian actress and director Genevieve Nnaji, a story taking place in Southeast Nigeria centered on a Nigerian woman who is unexpectedly charged with leading her father's company. Nnaji stated: "*Lionheart* is the beginning of a journey to explore and express my creative interpretation of story-telling, particularly African stories. Africa is a possessor of the most compelling stories as yet untold, and we are determined to tell our stories, our way, through our voices, to the world."

Looking to the television landscape, some memorable African characters — typically portrayed by Africans — have emerged and counter many stereotypes seen over the years. These include the erudite Nigerian moral philosopher Chidi on NBC's *The Good Place*; Dayana Mampasi, a Zimbabwean human rights lawyer turned CIA agent played by South African Pearl Thusi in *Quantico*, an ABC series that ran from 2015-18, and Mina Okafor, the brilliant doctor of Fox's *The Resident* and portrayed by Guyanese born Shaunette Renee Wilson. Amidst a media landscape that does enormous disservice to Africa, as our study shows, there are some promising signs of how Africa and Africans are being depicted in U.S. entertainment. This is dovetailing with an emerging movement — often led by African entertainment figures — to bring African stories to American and global audiences. But clearly, there is opportunity for a much broader contribution and participation in expanding African narratives.

Based on the findings in this report, here are five areas where media makers can take steps to change current representations of Africa in American media:

1. Increase the number of stories that mine the rich and diverse cultures and histories of Africa — including in children's programming — and develop more scripted content that doesn't focus on crime.

2. Include more African characters in stories, and give them larger speaking parts.

3. Make one half of African characters female.

4. Expand the focus from Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Congo and Nigeria to the continent's other 49 countries.

5. Collaborate with African, including first and second generation, content creators.

This baseline research enables us to track progress on these five recommendations.
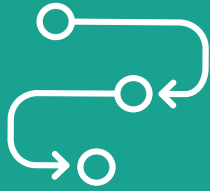
METHODOLOGY

Television Analysis

To establish how often Africa is depicted on U.S. television, the Lear Center's Media Impact Project team used TVEyes, a global TV search engine, to mine data about all programming and commercials, 24/7, on all national broadcast networks, every local TV market, and every basic cable TV station. TVEyes uses television's closed captioning system to create a searchable database: we used the database to monitor the frequency of mentions of "Africa," "African" (excluding African-American), "Africans" and the names of the 54 African nations on 916 American TV stations over the course of the month of March 2018.

These terms appeared on U.S. television 134,077 times in March. PDFs of each mention include the portion of the transcript with the highlighted keyword(s), a visual snapshot of the content, the date, time, station, and media market of each mention. Video of each mention was available for a period of 30 days and an extended transcript with viewership information was available for a 90-day period.

Each mention was assigned a unique ID number and then all 134,077 mentions of Africa were analyzed by one of 11 human coders. Coders evaluated each mention for inclusion in the sample. If the mention was not related to the continent or nations of Africa, it was removed from the dataset. For example, a mention about a person named "Kenya" or a reference to a "guinea pig" instead of the nation of Guinea would not be included in the final sample.

Additionally, coders mined the data for duplicate mentions. If a term appeared on a basic cable station (e.g., Bravo or TBS), it showed up one time in the dataset; however, if the term was used on a broadcast network in more than one media market, it appeared multiple times in the initial dataset. For example, one mention of "Africa" on *The Big Bang Theory*, which airs on CBS in 210 media markets, would show up 210 times in the dataset. Additionally, syndicated content and mentions on PBS affiliates, which air at different times on different stations, generate duplicate mentions as well. Duplicate mentions were removed from the final sample, but not before the total viewership of each mention was calculated. However, repeated mentions needed to be treated differently than duplicate mentions, because they do not occur at the same time: if a commercial mentioning Africa aired several times, or if a sitcom aired a re-run multiple times, or if a mention appeared in a local newscast both at 10 PM and 11 PM, they were treated as individual mentions.

About 75% of the 134,077 mentions in the initial dataset were identified as duplicates or unrelated to Africa. The full context of all 32,364 unique mentions were then re-analyzed and tagged with date, ID, program genre, state, viewership, topics mentioned, African countries mentioned and any African geographic descriptors used, such as "East Africa" or "Sub-Saharan Africa." Additionally, one coder re-reviewed a random sample of 1% of all coded mentions to ensure inter-rater reliability. All data were entered into Qualtrics by

coders and analyzed using Qualtrics and Excel.

Detailed viewership information was available through TVEyes for 26,155 mentions, 81% of all the TV mentions and 87% of the scripted programming. Since our goal is to understand what messages about Africa are delivered to U.S. audiences, this report focuses on the programs for which we have detailed viewership data. A searchable archive of coded content has been generated to accommodate future queries and comparisons to additional datasets.

Scripted Entertainment Analysis

To better understand the nuances of Africa depictions in scripted entertainment, the MIP research team developed an additional codebook that allowed coders to evaluate the tone and the sentiment of references to Africa, as well as the role size, gender, race, age and number of words spoken by all African-identified characters.

We separated scripted entertainment depictions into major and minor storylines. A storyline was minor if there were less than five mentions of any of our 57 African keywords in the TV episode or movie. If there were five or more separate mentions (at least one minute apart) in the same episode or movie, we classified it as a major storyline. We identified 428 minor mentions and 25 major storylines, which were analyzed by MIP's team of four human coders and then verified by two additional supervisory coders to ensure consistency. We identified 428 minor mentions and 25 major storylines, which were analyzed by a team of four human coders and then verified by two additional supervisory coders to ensure consistency.

Social Media Analysis

To establish a baseline for how frequently Africa is mentioned in social media and to understand the context and sentiment of these mentions, we partnered with BrandsEye, an opinion-mining company based in South Africa that shares our interest in public attitudes toward Africa. We identified 1,624,571 relevant Twitter posts during March 2018, the same period as our TV analysis. Selection criteria for mentions encompassed a list of the same keywords as the TV analysis: "Africa," "African" (excluding African-American) and the names of the 54 African nations and their capitals (all search terms are referred to as "Africa").

Of the more than 1.6 million tweets collected, BrandsEye sent a randomly-selected representative sample (n=57,872, or 3.5%) to their Crowd for crowdsourcing. All Crowd contributors are trained and continuously monitored by the BrandsEye proprietary training system and in-house "Crowd Wranglers" for inter-coder reliability. At least two human coders confirmed the relevance of the tweet and then assessed the sentiment of each mention from negative (-1), neutral (0) to positive (+1). Next, they assigned labels for predetermined categories often associated with Africa: Crime/Terrorism, Corruption, Animals, Diaspora, and Poverty. Through consultation with BrandsEye experts, the MIP research team selected these topics based on their high frequency in sample Twitter datasets and the ability to train coders to consistently apply these tags. BrandsEye Crowd coders were provided with the following definitions:

- **CRIME/TERRORISM:** Mentions crime, terrorism or violence in Africa — includes references to terrorist groups (e.g., Boko Haram)
- **CORRUPTION:** Includes incidents of corruption and accusations of corruption in Africa
- **ANIMALS:** Mentions animals, animal tourism or issues that affect animals/wildlife in Africa; includes poaching, zoos and safaris
- **DIASPORA:** Mentions Africans leaving their home countries (past or present) — including refugees, immigrants and the diaspora
- **POVERTY:** References poverty in Africa or African states; includes starvation and low income.

It is possible that a different set of keywords (e.g., aid, business, culture, development, finance) may have resulted in more positive sentiment ratings and revealed other important discussions and commentary taking place in the Twittersphere.

MIP's research team analyzed the data on volume and sentiment of the verified messages by topic in order to draw findings that map to the results from the television data analysis and the entertainment content analysis.

Utilizing human coders to rate the sentiments and key drivers of sentiment yields substantially greater reliability than algorithm-reliant methodologies, resulting in a 95% confidence level in the accuracy of the findings. As tweets were randomly selected for crowd verification, sentiment assessment and topic assignment can be generalized to be true of the overall dataset. BrandsEye's methods drew international attention in 2016, when their social media analyses were among the few to correctly predict both Brexit and Donald Trump's victory.

APPENDIX A

TOP 5 COUNTRIES FOR EACH TV GENRE

NEWS
Seychelles
Egypt
Kenya
South Africa
Congo*

DOCUMENTARY
Egypt
Congo
South Africa
Kenya
Rwanda

COMEDY TV
Nigeria
Egypt
Kenya
Sudan
Uganda

CHILDREN
Egypt
Kenya
Guinea
Madagascar
South Africa

DRAMA TV
South Africa
Egypt
Congo
Nigeria
Sudan

COMMERCIALS
Uganda
Egypt
Botswana
Cameroon
South Africa

MOVIE
Egypt
Ethiopia
Morocco
South Africa
Congo

RELIGIOUS
Egypt
South Africa
Sudan
Angola
Uganda

SPORTS
South Africa
Nigeria
Egypt
Sudan
Cameroon

MUSIC VIDEO
Tanzania
Egypt
Central Africa
South Africa
N/A

* American media rarely distinguishes Democratic Republic of the Congo from Republic of the Congo, and so "Congo" refers to both countries in this report.

APPENDIX B

COUNTRIES RANKED BY OVERALL TV IMPRESSIONS*

1	Egypt	28	South Sudan
2	South Africa	29	Djibouti
3	Kenya	30	Burkina Faso
4	Seychelles	31	Algeria
5	Congo	32	Chad
6	Nigeria	33	Cameroon
7	Tanzania	34	Sierra Leone
8	Ethiopia	35	Mauritius
9	Uganda	36	Mali
10	Morocco	37	Mozambique
11	Libya	38	Eritrea
12	Sudan	39	Gabon
13	Senegal	40	Ivory Coast
14	Rwanda	41	Burundi
15	Malawi	42	Swaziland
16	Liberia	43	Mauritania
17	Ghana	44	Guinea
18	Zimbabwe	45	Benin
19	Angola	46	Equatorial Guinea
20	Botswana	47	Togo
21	Madagascar	48	Gambia
22	Tunisia	49	Lesotho
23	Somalia	50	Guinea–Bissau
24	Zambia	51	Comoros
25	Central Africa	52	Sao Tome and Principe
26	Namibia	53	Cabo Verde
27	Niger		

* Because American media rarely distinguishes Democratic Republic of the Congo from Republic of the Congo, "Congo" represents both countries in this list, resulting in a total of 53 instead of 54 countries.

APPENDIX C

COUNTRIES RANKED BY OVERALL TWITTER MENTIONS*

1	South Africa		28	Senegal
2	Nigeria		29	South Sudan
3	Egypt		30	Burundi
4	Kenya		31	Algeria
5	Seychelles		32	Namibia
6	Libya		33	Botswana
7	Ghana		34	Togo
8	Congo		35	Mozambique
9	Morocco		36	Malawi
10	Sudan		37	Mauritius
11	Zimbabwe		38	Djibouti
12	Ethiopia		39	Ivory Coast
13	Niger		40	Benin
14	Uganda		41	Guinea
15	Somalia		42	Gabon
16	Angola		43	Chad
17	Mali		44	Gambia
18	Tunisia		45	Lesotho
19	Rwanda		46	Central African Republic
20	Tanzania		47	Mauritania
21	Zambia		48	Cabo Verde
22	Cameroon		49	Swaziland
23	Madagascar		50	Equatorial Guinea
24	Liberia		51	Guinea-Bissau
25	Sierra Leone		52	Comoros
26	Burkina Faso		53	Sao Tome and Principe
27	Eritrea			

* Because Americans and American media outlets rarely distinguish Democratic Republic of the Congo from Republic of the Congo, "Congo" represents both countries in this list, resulting in a total of 53 instead of 54 countries.

ABOUT US

USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center
The Norman Lear Center is a nonpartisan research and public policy center that studies the social, political, economic and cultural impact of entertainment on the world. The Lear Center translates its findings into action through testimony, journalism, strategic research and innovative public outreach campaigns. On campus, from its base in the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, the Lear Center builds bridges between schools and disciplines whose faculty study aspects of entertainment, media and culture. Beyond campus, it bridges the gap between the entertainment industry and academia, and between them and the public. Through scholarship and research; through its conferences, public events and publications; and in its attempts to illuminate and repair the world, the Lear Center works to be at the forefront of discussion and practice in the field. Its Founding Director is Marty Kaplan. For more information, please visit: www.learcenter.org.

Media Impact Project
At the Lear Center's Media Impact Project (www.mediaimpactproject.org), we study the impact of news and entertainment on viewers. Our goal is to prove that media matters, and to improve the quality of media to serve the public good. We partner with media makers and funders to create and conduct program evaluation, develop and test research hypotheses, and publish and promote thought leadership on the role of media in social change.

CrisscrossGlobal
CrissCrossGlobal is a communications consultancy singularly focused on developing campaigns and initiatives that strengthen economic, cultural, and social ties between the United States and the rest of the world. We do this by harnessing the collective engagement of institutional and individual game changers around issues and trends shaping an increasingly interconnected world. For more information, visit www.crisscrossglobal.com.

BrandsEye
BrandsEye, the world's leading opinion mining company, combines AI and human intelligence to accurately understand public opinion. Using a proprietary mix of search algorithms, crowd-sourcing and machine learning, BrandsEye successfully mines online conversations for sentiment and the topics driving that sentiment. In 2016, BrandsEye gained international attention for predicting the outcomes of the Brexit referendum and the U.S. presidential election, proving the predictive value of analysing social media data at scale. For more information, visit www.brandseye.com.

The Africa Narrative
The Africa Narrative, which is based at the Lear Center, was established to create greater public knowledge and understanding of and engagement with Africa, through research, creative communications campaigns, and collaborations with private, public and non-profit partners. Recognizing the pivotal role of media and entertainment in shaping perceptions and opinions of Africa, the initiative seeks a deeper understanding of their impact and a richer telling of Africa's story. Combining opinion research and content analysis of news and entertainment programming, Africa in the Media is the Africa Narrative's inaugural research project. It will focus on illuminating how Africa is depicted in media and entertainment, with an aim to generate a deeper understanding of the impact on opinions and attitudes toward Africa, and more broadly, on U.S. engagement with Africa. For more information, visit theafricanarrative.org.