

TH  
B851

A COMPARISON OF CONTENT  
OF THE AFRICAN CHALLENGE AND OUR AFRICA MAGAZINES

by

Edward A. Buchanan  
BA Rutgers University

A PROJECT  
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Biblical Seminary  
New York, New York

1962

BIBLICAL SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY LIBRARY  
HATFIELD, PA.

18388

BIBLICAL SCHOOL OF  
THEOLOGY LIBRARY  
HATFIELD, PA.

18388

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH AND CHRISTIANITY.....	1
A. Need for Research.....	1
B. Scope and Nature of Present Study.....	3
C. Method of Procedure.....	4
II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON AFRICAN CHALLENGE AND OUR AFRICA.....	5
A. African Challenge Magazine.....	5
1. Origin and Early History.....	5
2. Growth and Outreach.....	7
3. Feedback.....	9
B. Our Africa Magazine.....	10
1. Origin and Early History.....	11
III. READABILITY ANALYSIS.....	14
A. Characteristics of Readability.....	14
B. Measurement of Readability.....	18
C. Types of Formulas.....	19
1. Flesch Formula.....	19
2. Gunning Formula.....	22
3. Dale-Chall Formula.....	22
4. Cloze Procedure.....	23
D. Application to Magazines.....	24
IV. CONTENT ANALYSIS.....	29
A. Definition of Content Analysis.....	29
B. Method of Content Analysis.....	30
1. Subject Matter Classification.....	31
2. Theme Analysis.....	32
3. Symbol Coding.....	32
C. Results of Content Analysis.....	34
1. Format.....	34
2. Article Type.....	35
3. Content Type.....	35
4. Subject Matter.....	36
V. COMPARISON OF FINDINGS.....	38
A. Ownership and Control.....	38
B. Readability.....	38
C. Format.....	39
D. Subject Matter.....	41

6/4

1-2553

April, 1962

VI. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CONTENT.....	45
A. Propaganda.....	47
B. Standard.....	48
C. Procedure.....	51
VII. GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	55
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	57
APPENDIX I - Readability Analysis Sheet.....	59
APPENDIX II - Content Analysis Sheet.....	60

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to present a picture of the content of the two magazines, the African Challenge and Our Africa.

It was decided that a picture of the background of the magazines should be presented first. Following this, there should be consideration given to the study of readability. Content Analysis and a comparison of the findings would give an adequate panorama of the content.

In the final section, a study of the religious content will be conducted.

I.  
COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH  
AND  
CHRISTIANITY

A. Need for Research

"The art of printing, which was one of the providential preparations for the Reformation, became the mightiest lever of Protestantism and modern culture,"<sup>1</sup> stated the Church historian, Philip Schaff. This is no less true today. In fact, with the tremendous flood of propaganda and publicity of the twentieth century, the Church has within its grasp a mightier lever than the reformers had available. With the life-giving message of the Gospel, the Church is charged with the responsibility of communicating by the most effective means. "It is the difficult task of the Church both to employ the implements and techniques of public relations and publicity in doing its missionary work--and, as a part of its mission in the world, to stand in judgment upon these implements and techniques."<sup>2</sup> But the problem is that the

---

1 Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, VII. Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1953, p. 560.

2 Malcolm Boyd, Crisis in Communication. Garden City, Doubleday & Co., 1957, p. 21.

Church has failed to exploit the methods developed by the secular mass communicators. This failure may not and certainly does not prevent the Christian communicators from affecting their audience and achieving desired results. The question, however, arises as to the efficiency of this communication and its overall effectiveness. Is the media, whether radio, television, or print, choosing for itself an audience removed from the main stream of life; if the intent is to evangelize? How do the illustrations and language affect the ability to achieve desired results? Is the publication or broadcast sustaining itself, in terms of results to warrant continued expenditure of time and monies? These are some of the questions that an objective analysis of the content and effects can yield.

There is at present, however, a trend in this direction, as the project of the Broadcasting and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches,<sup>3</sup> studying the effects of religious radio broadcasts in the New Haven Connecticut area indicates. Other such studies, oriented specifically toward missions, have been conducted by such organizations as Evangelical Literature Overseas and, to a lesser extent, Christian Literature Crusade. For the large bulk of Christian Protestant publishing and broadcasting little or nothing has been done in the research field. This does not naively suggest that these studies will solve all problems

---

<sup>3</sup> Everett Parker, et. al., *The Television-Radio Audience and Religion*. New York, Harper & Bros., 1955.

of communicating the Gospel; they act rather to aid more effective communication.

#### B. Scope and Nature of Present Study

The present paper will confine itself to the study of two African missionary magazines, The African Challenge, publication of the Sudan Interior Mission, and Our Africa, publication of the South Africa General Mission. The purpose is to present a picture of the readability and content of the magazines and to focus particular attention upon the religious content.

African literature was selected because today that continent is receiving more than its share of propaganda in the struggle to captivate the minds of the men of the emerging nations. In Nigeria alone, there are a multiplicity of publications such as the Soviet Union, Catholic Life, and the Muslim Truth, not to mention the host of cultic literature.<sup>4</sup> The former of these magazines was the pioneer in this field, beginning a little over ten years ago. The latter is more recent and developed as a result of the former but with an entirely different format.

For the study, the issues of October and November, 1961, were selected for detailed analysis. The work sheets

---

<sup>4</sup> Raymond J. Davis, "Fierce Battle," Sudan Witness, XXXVII (Fall, 1961), 3.

which appear in the Appendix, with noted emendations, provide the reader with an understanding of the process used and will therefore help him to interpret the results.

### C. Method of Procedure

For the first section an understanding of the backgrounds will be afforded. Such knowledge will aid in determining what to note in the analysis.

Secondly, there will be a presentation of readability, as determined by the Dale-Chall, Flesch, and Gunning formulas. This is intended to determine the age level, educationally, toward which the magazines are aimed.

Thirdly, the content itself will be studied and compared, along with a comparison of the readability findings.

Finally, consideration will be given to the specifically religious content and the implications for Christian education.

## II.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON AFRICAN CHALLENGE AND OUR AFRICA

#### A. African Challenge Magazine

##### 1. Origin and Early History

The African Challenge Magazine originated in Lagos, Nigeria on July 1, 1951, under the auspices of the Sudan Interior Mission. It had been preceded by a small "churchy" magazine, which was unable to accomplish the intended evangelistic purpose in challenging "Africa's young literates."<sup>1</sup> Hence, the plan for a "popular-style" journal evolved and the Challenge resulted. The editors planned the magazine to include a number of features, among which the Gospel was presented. In addition to the Gospel, the Challenge provides Christians with instruction in the Christian life. Because of the nature of the people and their new-found literacy, problems of the Christian life, such as immorality, can be presented more openly than in many other countries.<sup>2</sup> On this subject, one student wrote, "The African Challenge has been a literal preacher to me. It frankly condemns immorality--the most common sin among young men in Africa today. Because of this, the Challenge is the most valuable paper to me." <sup>3</sup> It was an immediate success and competed with the

---

1 Rae B. B. Gourley, "Ten Years of Challenging Africa," A Monthly Letter About Evangelism, VI (June 1961), 2.

2 Ibid., p. 2.

3 Ibid., p. 2.

secular magazines available on display on the newsstands.

From such humble beginnings, the magazine has grown to a circulation of 200,000 each month. Financially, it is supported and subsidized by the Sudan Interior Mission at the cost of \$2,500 each issue.<sup>5</sup> The subsidies are in addition to the subscription revenues and advertising revenues. Editing and typesetting are done at Niger-Challenge Press in the Mission headquarters in Jos, Nigeria. The final processing is done in England by the Sun Printers Ltd., London.<sup>6</sup>

Relations with the government of Nigeria have been excellent over the ten years of its existence. The educational features and excellent standard of English have created a demand for the magazine in the schools, in spite of its religious content. On one of the entrance examinations for a teacher-training college, one of the qualifying questions asked the applicant to "Write a precis on any article from African Challenge."<sup>7</sup> Care taken by the magazine not to involve itself in the affairs of state which do not concern it, has no doubt aided in the commendations received from such as the Governor of Eastern Nigeria, Sir Francis Ibiham,

---

4 Rae B. B. Gourlay, "Strategic Decade in Africa," Floodtide, (Winter, 1961), 13.

5 Davis, op. cit., p. 3.

6 Harold Fuller, ed., African Challenge, XI (October, 1961), 16.

7 Gourlay, "Ten Years of Challenging Africa," A Monthly Letter About Evangelism, VI (June 1961), 2.

"The African Challenge has truly challenged our minds and hearts."<sup>8</sup> Articles as the interview with Nigeria's Governor-General, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, in the November issue have also assisted in maintaining friendly relations with the government.

## 2. Growth and Outreach

In 1953, the magazine was afforded a new opportunity in increasing its effectiveness in strengthening Christians in the faith. A letter, describing the use of the magazine in a Bible class for men, was received from a national pastor. "We call ourselves," he remarked, "an African Challenge reading unit."<sup>9</sup> The editors published the letter and response was immediate. Letters were received asking the way in which they could establish similar reading units. From this stimulus, the editors suggested that the groups meet each month and work through the magazine and together study the material. As a result, there are 300 such groups established on the continent at this time.<sup>10</sup>

The magazine had not been in existence for five years, when they were shipping 11,000 copies to the Caribbean

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

area.<sup>11</sup> Since their local color was missing, the Nationals requested that the Christian Literature Crusade start a magazine on the order of the African Challenge which would be of local interest to the people of the West Indies. As a result, on the first of the year 1956, the Caribbean Challenge came into being. The two magazines work together closely and even exchange material for publication.<sup>12</sup>

For the future, the magazine editors face the problem of financing the expanding market for the magazine. Either they must subsidize it to a greater degree, or increase the price and risk the loss of a portion of the circulation.<sup>13</sup> In addition to this problem, the editors are continuing to use nationals in the production and editing of the magazine. At present there are fifty-seven Nigerians being trained in all phases of Christian journalism. This is one of the major undertakings of the mission as it seeks to train and develop native talent. Literature workshops have been conducted for this purpose in four parts of Nigeria.<sup>14</sup> Development of this talent is necessary to exploit the privilege of a free press, not to be found in any other part of Africa

---

11 Gourley, "Strategic Decade in Africa," Floodtide (Winter, 1961), 13.

12 Ibid., p. 13.

13 Davis, op. cit., p. 3.

14 Gourley, "Strategic Decade in Africa," Floodtide (Winter, 1961), 13.

where the countries have obtained independence.<sup>15</sup>

### 3. Feedback<sup>16</sup>

In every issue of the magazine, there is an enquiry slip that may be filled out and mailed by the reader. This is in addition to the normal correspondence that is received. It is estimated that from two to three thousand letters are received each month.<sup>17</sup> To handle this amount of mail, there are a full-time counsellor and two assistants. The first letter explains the way of salvation by repentance, confession and faith, and this letter concludes with a challenge to make a definite committal to faith.<sup>18</sup> Of those who write in to the magazine professing faith in Christ, about 200 each month write a second time to confirm their decision.<sup>19</sup> To these who again write, there is further correspondence advising them to join with a local fellowship of believers and further instruction in prayer and Bible reading.

Many examples of letters received are available. One decision slip from Ghana, received last year, had been cut

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> Feedback is the flow of ideas from the decoder (reader) of the magazine to the encoder (editor). See Nelson B. Henry, ed., *Mass Media and Education*, Chicago; The University of Chicago Press, 1954, p. 128, 160f.

<sup>17</sup> Gourlay, "Strategic Decade in Africa," *Floodtide* (Winter, 1961), p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

from a 1953 issue of the magazine.<sup>20</sup> Another letter from a Czechoslovakian Jew requested a subscription to the magazine as he had found an old 1957 copy of it. He said that he was very poor and could not pay for it but "Some nice Israeli stamps can be sent to you, also some colored picture post-cards of the new Jerusalem."<sup>21</sup> A Ghanian wrote his letter had not been published and he wondered if it were, as his friends said, that they only published letters of Nigerians. "If that is true," he added, "please turn your face to the Ghanians who are having a great interest in the Challenge."<sup>22</sup> This latter criticism, if it may be considered adverse, was the only such that was present in the August to December, 1961 issues. It is difficult to believe that this is the only such criticism received in five months.

### B. Our Africa Magazine

#### 1. Origin and Early History

Our Africa began publication in September, 1958 in the press headquarters at Roodepoort, Transvaal, of the South Africa General Mission.<sup>23</sup> It grew out of a desire on the part of the Mission to give the growing educated class of South

---

<sup>20</sup> Gourlay, "Strategic Decade in Africa," Floodtide (Winter, 1961), p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>22</sup> "What Do You Say?", African Challenge, XI (August 1961), 12.

<sup>23</sup> Interview with the Rev. E. A. Shank, Home Director for the United States, South Africa General Mission.

Africans literature that would accomplish two major purposes: "(1) to win the lost to Christ, and (2) to instruct believers in righteousness.<sup>24</sup> A third, lesser motive for the magazine is to provide a positive front against the encroachments of Communism. The magazine was conceived in the minds of the Mission directors several years prior to its publication and the year immediately preceding the first issue was spent in gathering material for files and training an adequate staff.

## 2. Growth and Outreach

Unlike the African Challenge, Our Africa is still in its infancy but has already been widely acclaimed for its closeness to the heart of the people, for it "lives with them on their level."<sup>25</sup> Recently, there have been added additional issues containing a few pages in the Zulu and Chinyanjanzi languages. Circulation is over 34,000 per month and is partially subsidized by the mission. This is temporary as the magazine is to be put on a self-sustaining basis in the near future--from the sales volume and the advertising revenues. Like the Challenge, Our Africa is in a position of favor with the government of South Africa. It has, on occasion, been purchased in large quantity by the

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

government for use in the schools because of its education content, especially in the field of music.<sup>26</sup>

### 3. Feedback

There are usually at least two coupons in every issue for those interested in becoming Christians. Recent reports indicate that approximately 125 persons per month confess to have "found Christ through the magazine's ministry."<sup>27</sup> Most of these persons are seeking help for which the Mission has set up an elaborate follow-up program. New converts receive a letter similar to that sent from the Challenge. If they lack a Bible, one may be procured from the Mission. If they continue in the faith, they may choose to take the correspondence course, and, if they are able, to go to the Bible Institute in Johannesburg. But the unconverted are not the only ones seeking help, for the believers also write for help with their problems and counsel on living the deeper Christian life.<sup>28</sup>

Our Africa publishes more letters than the Challenge.

The following are some examples:

I would like to tell you that my testimony headed "Freedom in Prison" which appeared in the July issue has converted three of my fellow inmates. After reading it they received the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour. They are now praising the Name of the Lord with me in the prison here. Praise the Lord!

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

The R4.00 you sent me helped a great deal. I bought my newly converted friends Bibles and paid for Bible studies after enrolling with a Bible correspondence school.

J. H. S. Sewe  
Her Majesty's Prison,  
Kenya.<sup>29</sup>

Another example:

...The stories published in OUR AFRICA have helped me cultivate good habits and faith in God. As a result, I have grown mentally and spiritually. I can therefore say that this magazine is God's.<sup>30</sup>

Again, the only criticism is that the letters presented only present the "good side" of the magazine.

---

29 "Your Letters," Our Africa, IV (December, 1961), 32.

30 "Your Letters," Our Africa, III (August, 1961), 33.

## III.

## READABILITY ANALYSIS

## A. Characteristics of Readability

Readable writing has three identifying hallmarks: (1) Understandable words for the grade level readership toward which the writing is aiming. (2) Its sentences are not usually over fifteen words in length. (3) Expressions embodied in the writing are concrete and easily grasped rather than abstract and difficult to understand.<sup>1</sup> Illustrations are also a factor in the understandability of a body of writing. Their timeliness, simplicity, and clarity are also factors in the increase or decrease of readability.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Robert Laubach notes that there are three major characteristics in understandable writing, Clarity, Motion, and Variety.<sup>3</sup> Readability is therefore, "the quality of being easy or interesting to read; the capability of being read; legibility."<sup>4</sup>

As Olson has noted, four basic categories may be derived from the sources of readability experts, which deserve more detailed study: "(1) organization, (2) vocabulary,

---

1 Raymond M. Rigdon, "Curriculum Materials," Roland E. Wolseley, ed., *Writing for the Religious Market*. New York, Association Press, 1956, p. 170.

2 Ibid.

3 Robert S. Laubach, *52 Beans in Every Cup or What Readability Can Do For You*, New York, Woodhaven Press, n.d., p. 3.

4 Russell L. Olson, *A Content Analysis of the Associated Press A-Wire P.M. Report*. New Brunswick, Rutgers University, 1954 (Unpublished thesis), p. 101.

(3) sentence structure, (4) general interest of the topic."<sup>5</sup>

Organization is necessary to understanding what the writer is trying to say in his material. This characteristic demands a logical structure in dealing with the subject. A systematized device as chronological order will clarify the material for the reader.<sup>6</sup>

Vocabulary is not an easily determinable facet of clear writing because the creativity of the writer is involved in his choice of words. There are a few suggestions for use of words given in a number of sources. Word lists are in common use and are helpful in writing to be understood. Dr. Edgar Dale and Jeanne Chall of Ohio State University have prepared a list of words that are contained in the vocabulary of the average fourth grader and this may be consulted in determining the ease with which one may be understood.<sup>7</sup> Of even greater reliability is the Streamlined English Combined Word Lists, prepared by Thorndike-Lorge.<sup>8</sup> It presents a list for the first 500 words of an adult foreigner or a new literate's vocabulary. The second list is an advanced student is likely to add to his vocabulary. Dr. Flesch adds several suggestions about the choice of words that seem

---

5 Ibid., p. 101.

6 Rudolf Flesch, *The Art of Readable Writing*. New York, Harper & Bros., 1949, p. 56.

7 Edgar Dale, Jeanne Chall, *Educational Research Bulletin*, Ohio State, Columbus, Ohio, XXVII (Jan. to Dec. 1948), pp. 37-54.

8 Robert S. Laubach, *Toward World Literacy*, Syracuse University Press, 1960, pp. 313-320.

worth noting. Use transitive verbs with the active voice;<sup>9</sup> use a minimum of adjectives;<sup>10</sup> use the familiar rather than the abstract; use the short word in preference to the long word; use the Saxon word rather than the Latin word;<sup>11</sup> avoid circumlocution when a single word will suffice;<sup>12</sup> use one word several times rather than clutter the writing with elaborate synonyms.<sup>13</sup> Robert Gunning adds another precept, "Write unto others as you would be written to."<sup>14</sup> Sometimes the writing may actually be categorized as excellent, but it may at the same time be very difficult to comprehend for its vocabulary by the target audience. For example, it would be difficult to conceive the African Challenge printing something from the Atlantic Monthly, regardless of its relevance and excellence of vocabulary. It would simply not be understood by the Africans who have recently learned English.

Sentence Structure is similar to vocabulary in that it is difficult to set down rules in determining the best use of it. There are, however, a number of ways by which one may improve his sentence structure: keep sentences short; use

---

9 Rudolf Flesch, *The Art of Plain Talk*. New York, Harper & Bros., 1946, pp. 41, 42.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 74ff.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 40.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 66.

14 Robert Gunning, *How To Take The Fog Out Of Writing*, Chicago, The Dartnell Press, 1959, p. 6.

simple instead of complex sentence structure; write to be understood rather than grammatically correct (such as the use of colloquial expressions, sentence fragments, and even splitting infinitives);<sup>15</sup> avoid negatives as much as possible; (when understanding is the premium, rather than literary finesse) avoid rhetorical devices, which may lead to misunderstanding or be missed altogether.<sup>16</sup>

General interest of the topic is a difficult concept to define in terms of effecting it, but Dr. Flesch advises that writing be done as one speaks, in a conversational tone. This does not mean that one should strive for a Reader's Digest style of peeling away all of the "excelsior" in which the ideas are couched.<sup>17</sup> Anecdotes, examples and illustrations give the reader time to digest the main ideas of the writing, which points up the difficulty of testing a piece of writing--determining when to cut out excess verbiage and when it is necessary for adequate comprehension.

Human interest is a further factor in another facet of the interest of a piece of writing. Dr. Flesch states that the quality of interest of writing is in direct

---

15 Flesch, *The Art of Plain Talk*, New York, Harper & Bros., 1946, pp. 109-112.

16 Flesch, *The Art of Readable Writing*, New York, Harper & Bros., 1949, pp. 167-178.

17 Flesch, *The Art of Plain Talk*, New York, Harper & Bros., 1946, pp. 105-106.

proportion to its human interest. For example,

Time magazine prides itself that "our subscribers can understand the event in terms of the personality who caused it. (Joe Stalin drinks his vodka straight. Admiral Turner of the Central Pacific delights in growing roses. Air Marshal Harris' men love him because he is 'so bloody inhuman'").<sup>18</sup>

While the relevance of Mr. Stalin's drinking habits may be dubious, the principle that Time's editors suggest is clear; in writing, frequent reference to the human element increases readability. Scientific tests bear out this finding<sup>19</sup> and for whatever the reason, the implications are obvious; in writing, incorporate direct address, words relating to people, and direct quotation.<sup>20</sup>

#### B. Measurement of Readability

There are a number of formulas designed to measure some or all of the above factors to a greater or a lesser degree. But these formulas cannot provide a prescription for excellence of writing. They merely act as statistical guides to include the factors that are implicit in readable material. First, the formulas are not intended to be an indication of the readership, for there are a number of other factors which are of equal importance as readability, such as the material itself and the layout on the pages. Secondly, the

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>20</sup> Flesch, The Art of Readable Writing, New York, Harper & Bros., 1949, pp. 139-146.

formulas are calibrated for the fourth-grade American, who is considered by the government to be "functionally literate."<sup>21</sup> Thirdly, they are not sensitive enough to measure any more accurately than to give a range of easy or difficult and this is particularly true when the writing is for foreigners and new literates<sup>22</sup> as is the case with Our Africa and the African Challenge. Their value lies in the ability to look at a piece of writing and determine how faithfully one has maintained the principles of clear, effective writing. Bad readability scores may denote bad writing, but the converse is not necessarily true. Neither is the organization factor taken into account in the studies.<sup>23</sup>

### C. Types of Formulas

#### 1. Flesch Formula

Dr. Rudolf Flesch incorporated both reading ease and human interest in his original formula which was published in The Art of Plain Talk in 1946. This was discovered to be too cumbersome to be readily used. Therefore, three years later, he wrote a new book with a revised formula, which has proven to be a useful device.<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Laubach, op. cit., p. 217.

<sup>23</sup> Olson, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Appendix II for application to African Challenge and Our Africa magazines.

In the reading ease formula, the sentence structure is gauged by the average number of words per sentence. The vocabulary is appraised by the number of syllables per 100 words. Note that the vocabulary measured by the syllables per 100 words is rated at almost double the rate as the sentence length. The formula is determined as follows:<sup>25</sup>

- |   |       |               |
|---|-------|---------------|
| (1) Average sentence length multiplied by 1.015                     | _____ |               |
| (2) Average number of syllables per 100 words<br>multiplied by .846 | ----- |               |
| (3) Sum of (1) and (2)  | ----- |               |
| (4) Subtract (3) from 206.835                                       | ----- | Ease<br>Score |

The reading ease score may be interpreted as follows:

<u>Style</u>	<u>Avg. Sent. Length</u>	<u>Average Syl. per 100 Wds.</u>	<u>Reading Ease Score</u>	<u>Estimated School Grade</u>	<u>Type of Magazine</u>
Very Easy	8 or less	123 or less	90-100	4th grade	Comics
Easy	11	131	80-90	5th grade	Pulp
Fairly Easy	14	139	70-80	6th grade	Slick
Standard	17	147	60-70	7th or 8th grade	Digest
Fairly Difficult	21	155	50-60	some high school	Quality
Difficult	25	167	30-50	high sch. or some college	Academic
Very Difficult	29 or more	192 or more	00-30	college	Scientific

The human interest formula is computed from the number of "personal words" and the number of "personal sentences."

"Personal words" are defined as follows: (1) Pronouns

---

<sup>25</sup> Flesch, The Art of Readable Writing, New York, Harper & Bros., 1949, pp. 213-216.

referring to people and they, them, their, theirs, themselves, when they refer to things, (2) Words having masculine or feminine gender, and (3) The group words people and folks. "Personal sentences" are defined as follows: (1) Spoken sentences, (2) Sentences addressed to the reader, (3) Exclamations, and (4) Sentence fragments which have meaning only in context.<sup>26</sup> The formula is as follows:<sup>27</sup>

- (1) Average number of "personal words" per 100 words multiplied by 3.635-----
- (2) Average number of personal sentences per 100 sentences multiplied by .314-----
- (3) Sum of (1) and (2)-----

The human interest score is interpreted from the following chart:<sup>28</sup>

<u>Style</u>	<u>Per Cent Pers. Words</u>	<u>Per Cent Pers. Sent.</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Typical Magazine</u>
Dramatic	17 or more	58 or more	60-100	Fiction
Highly Interesting	10	43	40-60	N. Yorker
Interesting	7	15	20-40	Digests
Mildly Interesting	4	5	10-20	Trade
Dull	2 or less	0	0-10	Scientific

In this case, the "personal words" are rated at least three times as heavily as the "personal sentences."

---

26 Rudolf Flesch, *How to Write, Speak and Think More Effectively*. New York, Harper & Bros., 1960, pp. 310, 311.

27 Flesch, *The Art of Readable Writing*, New York, Harper & Bros., 1949, p. 216.

28 Robert Gunning, *The Technique of Clear Writing*, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1952, p. 29.

## 2. The Gunning Formula

Robert Gunning set up a formula to test readability which was based upon ease of use, reliability and validity.<sup>28</sup> A notable similarity to the Flesch formula is that sentence structure is measured by sentence length, but the difference is to be found in the vocabulary, which is gauged by the number of words per 100 that contain three or more syllables.<sup>29</sup> Not included in the count of three syllable words are those words which are (1) capitalized, (2) compounded easy words, (3) verbs of which the third syllable is -es or -ed. The formula is computed as follows:<sup>30</sup>

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| (1) Average number of words per sentence-----                             | _____ |
| (2) Average number of words of three or more syllables per 100 words----- | _____ |
| (3) Sum of (1) and (2)-----   | _____ |
| (4) Result of (3) multiplied by .4-----                                   | _____ |

The result of (4) is also the grade level of reading difficulty. In this formula, the vocabulary and sentence structure are both multiplied by the same .5, giving them about equal weight.

## 3. The Dale-Chall Formula

In like fashion to the previous two formulas, the sentence structure is measured by the use of the sentence length, while the vocabulary is measured against the standard Dale

---

<sup>29</sup> Olson, op. cit., p. 111.

<sup>30</sup> Gunning, The Technique of Clear Writing, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1952, p. 36-37.

list of 3,000 words. This list is based upon words which were known to 80 per cent of fourth grade school children and hence it is similar to Flesch's 100 per cent score equivalence to a "functionally-literate" person. It is determined as follows:<sup>31</sup>

- (1) Average number of words per sentence multiplied by .0496-----
- (2) Dale Score multiplied by .1579-----
- (3) Sum of (1) and (2) and 3,6365-----

The score of readability is interpreted from the following chart:

4.9 and less.....	Grade 4 and less
5.0 - 5.9.....	Grades 5 - 6
6.0 - 6.9.....	Grades 7 - 8
7.0 - 7.9.....	Grades 9 - 10
8.0 - 8.9.....	Grades 11 - 12
9.0 - 9.9.....	Grades 13 - 15
10.0 and above.....	College graduate

In this formula, the words are weighted about triple that of the sentence length.<sup>32</sup>

#### 4. The Cloze Procedure

Unlike the previous formulas, the Cloze Procedure is a method of measuring the cultural context of the words as well as the readability. The latter is not in terms of a numerical answer as the other formulas are. A passage of writing is selected and every nth word is deleted. With the deletions, the passage is given to a group of subjects, who

---

<sup>31</sup> Dale, op. cit., pp. 37-41.

<sup>32</sup> Olson, op. cit., p. 113.

attempt to fill in the blanks. The number of correct answers yield the Cloze score, which indicates the difficulty of the passage in the particular cultural context. The authors claim that it has a definite correlation to the Flesch and Dale formulas, but its results are more refined.<sup>33</sup>

While this procedure is impractical for this paper, nevertheless, such a method could be applied to the readers and a random sampling of potential readers of the African Challenge and Our Africa. The results of such a study might prove revealing to the editors as to ways by which they might increase the communicativeness of the publication.

#### D. Application to Magazines

Application of the formulas to the magazines, African Challenge and Our Africa afforded good insight into the readability of the magazines and into the use of the formulas. The Flesch Reading Ease formula and Human Interest formula, the Gunning Fog Index, and the Dale-Chall formula were applied. All of the stories were divided into six categories, according to their content and the averages of the three readability scores were compared. A summary of the comparable results, using four of the six categories follows:

---

<sup>33</sup> Wilson L. Taylor, "Cloze Procedure", A New Tool for Measuring Readability", *Journalism Quarterly*, XXX (Fall, 1953), pp. 415-433.

<u>Type of Story</u>	<u>Dale-Chall Score</u>	<u>Gunning Score</u>	<u>Flesch Ease</u>	<u>Flesch Interest</u>
----------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------	------------------------	----------------------------

African Challenge - October - November 1961

News Story	6.6	13.9	37.8	32.6
Short Feature	6.5	12.1	72.9	38.0
Column	6.1	10.2	73.8	46.6
Long Feature	6.1	10.1	68.4	41.1

Our Africa - October - November 1961

News Story	6.2	10.4	50.4	31.4
Long Feature	5.6	8.3	74.1	55.7
Column	5.5	8.1	71.5	32.9
Short Feature	5.4	7.0	73.5	37.4

On the analysis sheets, to be noted in the Appendix,<sup>34</sup> appear the two other categories--Editorial and Picture Story. These were not used in the formula study, because the number of articles so classified was not sufficient to yield reliable results. From this analysis, it was evident to the analyst that in the longer articles, from which three or more samples could be extracted, results were more easily correlated. The greater the number of samples, the proportionately greater correlation of scores. The scores were placed in descending order of difficulty on the basis of the Dale-Chall ratings and the Gunning scores. The Flesch scores differed somewhat in their findings. Apart from the normal margin of statistical error, the cause for this phenomenon may lie in the failure of the Dale-Chall and Gunning

---

<sup>34</sup> Definition of the categories may be noted in the Appendix II, p. 60, along with the statistics of Readability.

indices to account for proper nouns, which are excluded from their analyses. The Flesch ratings include these words in the syllabic count, which as was stated in the previous section are weighted almost double that of the sentence structure count. Therefore, the inclusion of proper nouns in Flesch's data would significantly alter the comparable results of the formulas, for as a cursory glance at any one of the publications studied will show, they are liberally sprinkled with proper nouns of multisyllables, not counted by the other two formulas.

The formulas may be compared by the grade equivalents which they are intended to represent. The grading is at best only relative, but it does give indication of the comparable point of reference for suggesting the relationship of the results. The most accurate grade scores appear to be the Gunning ratings. But they are also the harshest in their findings, although for new literates and for those who have recently learned English, they may represent a more useful rating. The Flesch formula tends to be unwieldy in its time-consuming, elaborate mathematical computations. The results achieved do not seem to validate the method. The score is least reliably translated into a grade score, because of the wide range of symbolic grade score equivalents. Dale-Chall is not appreciably improved in this respect, but does offer the advantage of a wider grade level equivalent. Since the accuracy of the formula is not affected to any great extent,

there appears to be no substantial reason for Flesch to carry his formula to the third decimal place, and even less for the Dale score to be carried to the fourth place. Nevertheless, the grade score, as determined by the respective formulas, is somewhat interesting to interpret and the results of the formulas applied do give some suggestion of the difficulty of a passage. Caution must be exercised in the too precise reliance upon these statistics in this study in particular, though for the African readers of these magazines may or may not be "functionally literate" in the sense in which these formulas interpret one to be literate, i.e. fourth grade equivalency in public schools in the United States. Despite this and aforementioned limitations, the grade equivalents for these analyses follow:

	<u>Dale-Chall</u> <u>Grade Score</u>	<u>Gunning</u> <u>Grade Score</u>	<u>Flesch</u> <u>Grade Score</u>
<u>African Challenge - October - November, 1961</u>			
News Stories.....	8	13	14
Short Features....	7	12	7
Column.....	7	10	7
Long Features.....	7	10	8
<u>Our Africa - October - November, 1961</u>			
News Stories.....	7	10	10
Long Features.....	6	8	7
Column.....	6	8	7
Short Features....	5	7	7

The measurement of Human Interest appeared to be of little value in the total context, because all of the stories

rated "interesting" or "highly interesting." There was no adequate distinction among the categories of interest.

While the measurement was carried to the third decimal place, the categories covered a range of two or three ten digit numbers. Features rated high on the scale, and news was at the bottom of the scale, which might be expected. The only major dissimilarity appeared in the column category, in which the African Challenge rated "highly interesting," while Our Africa rated 14 points below in the "interesting" category. This is unusual because a glance at the above chart, shows that columns in the African Challenge were slightly more difficult than those in the magazine Our Africa.

#### IV.

#### CONTENT ANALYSIS

##### A. Definition of Content Analysis

In his classic treatment of content analysis, Bernard Berelson observes that the communication process involves five steps: who (the encoder), what (the message), how (the act), to whom (the decoder), and what effect (the results),<sup>1</sup> Content analysis deals with the "what" of the communications process, or the message. Much of the journalism research in the last decade has dealt with the effect more than with the content. This is probably a result of the fact that the groups sponsoring such projects are more concerned with results than with the message presented. They may tailor their message to fit the readership.

In contrast to this purpose, Christian communication seeks to set the standards of its readership. Therefore, it is essential to study the content of the publications in order continually to evaluate their overall effectiveness as well as their spiritual qualities. To accomplish this evaluation, a technique called content analysis may be employed. Content analysis is a scientific method "for describing the various facets of communication content in summary fashion."<sup>2</sup>

---

1 Bernard Berelson, *Content Analysis in Communication Research*, Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 1951, p. 13.

2 Ibid., p. 13.

There are four basic assumptions necessary underlying a reliable content analysis. Firstly, the analysis must be limited to "manifest content," explicit in the writing. The language can be analyzed, but the meaning behind the words, i.e. the author's motivation, cannot be ascertained in content analysis. The researcher may draw conclusions relating to the author's motivation, which may or may not be valid. Regardless of the findings of the researcher, the technique's validity is not affected when it is applied properly. This reservation is included in order to protect the analysis from subjectivity on the part of the researcher or research team. Secondly, the device must have objectivity to the extent that another analyst will obtain synonymous results if the same criteria are utilized. Thirdly, it must be systematic, which means that it must analyze all relevant data in relation to the problem under consideration. This is necessary to rule out the analyst's biases in developing adequate categories to test the material. Lastly, it must be quantitative in order that it may measure frequency or at least relative frequency of occurrence, as "often," "always," or "seldom."<sup>3</sup>

#### B. Method of Content Analysis

While there are several methods of content analysis, only three have been selected for extended treatment. These

---

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-18.

were selected for their relevance to the analysis. Authority analysis attempts to distinguish between fact and opinion by separating them in very closely graded categories. These magazines do not lend themselves to this type of analysis because the highest percentage of material is editorialized in its very selection, as for example, the letters presented. What is presented as fact, may be opinion, as there is no clear-cut attempt to maintain strictures in what is put into the news content. Origin classification is another analysis that may determine categorically the origination of material.<sup>4</sup> Such a classificatory device may be useful in newspaper work, where datelines appear at the head of every story, but for magazine work, this is not satisfactory. These, along with the following, make up the bulk of methods available to the researcher. Some other methods are in use but either for very specialized analysis or of low reliability.

#### 1. Subject Matter Classification

Subject matter classification is the most useful and most common type of analysis for general purposes.<sup>5</sup> It classifies pertinent material to the problem of study by

---

4 Olson, op. cit., p. 85.

5 Fay Day, "Content Analysis in Mass Communication," Ralph O. Nafziger and Marcus M. Wilkerson, An Introduction to Journalism Research. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1949, p. 89.

prominence and recurrence. Space applied to the material and wordage given to the subject are tabulated to discover prominence, but mere indication of frequency of recurrence is not necessarily indicative of importance, because of the number of variables that must be taken into account. Actual analyses of such material vary in accordance with the research problem. In spite of the difficulties, this device is useful and is used in the analysis of the magazines, Our Africa and the African Challenge.

## 2. Theme Analysis

By far the most profitable type of analysis, this instrument of analysis operates to specify the material, most accurately defining "what is said." The problem, however, is that authentication of this method is difficult. Themes consist of statements containing a simple subject and a simple predicate. Frequency of use explicitly or implicitly are then determined from the content. From this procedure, it is evident that subjectivity would render reliability a difficult commodity to attain in this method.<sup>6</sup> This method is included for its relevance to the study of propaganda, which will be considered further along in the paper.

## 3. Symbol Coding

Somewhat related to theme analysis is symbol coding because it attempts to study the content in terms of semantics. The difference lies in the fact that the words are assigned

---

<sup>6</sup> Olson, op. cit., p. 83.

a code symbol and the incidence of the appearance of the word symbol represented by the assigned symbol identify the significance of the concept under investigation. This method is of great value in studying propaganda, for words like Communist, "Pinko," "Red," Socialist, Stalinist, or Bolshevist may be studied in Western right wing political propaganda. Contrasts are a helpful method of studying such word-concepts. In this hypothetical example, such ideas as Democratic, American, Religious, Conservative might aid in clarifying the former concepts. One method for achieving these results is determination of concepts as favorable (/) or unfavorable(-) or neutral (0). This method has been termed the Direction of the material. In addition to this type of symbol coding analysis, there are also four other types, attention (frequency of reference), subject matter (proportion of studied content given to listed subjects), themes (prevalence of statements reiterated), and type of content (classification of references by opinion, attribution, or fact).<sup>7</sup> Several of these analyses were incorporated in the study of the content, but their consumption of time and questionable results rendered them of little use in the objective study of the content. For this reason, these analyses were eventually dropped from the study. Findings,

---

7 Day, op. cit., pp. 89-91.

in a general way, will be incorporated under the section which deals with comparing the results of the magazine analysis.

### C. Results of Content Analysis<sup>8</sup>

#### 1. Format

The format of the magazines differ significantly in size and content. Below are the prominent findings:

	<u>African Challenge</u>	<u>Our Africa</u>
Page Size	13 x 10 inches	14 x 10-1/2 inches
Number of Pages	16	36
Area of Printed Matter	12.13 x 9.13	12.25 x 9.75
Total Page Area of Print	110.75 sq. in.	119.44 sq. in.
Total Magazine Area of Print	1,772 sq. in.	4,2999.84 sq. in.
Area of Advertising Content	422.46 sq. in.	912.445 sq. in.
Per Cent Advertising Content	24%	21%
Pictorial Content	428.11 sq. in.	796.58 sq. in.
Per Cent Pictorial Content	24%	19%
Written and Leaded Space	921.43 sq. in.	2,590.815 sq. in.
Per Cent Written Content	52%	60%

---

<sup>8</sup> For complete analysis sheet and explanation of categories, see Appendix II. Issues, October and November, 1961, of the African Challenge were averaged together. The same method was applied to Our Africa, which provides a basis for comparison.

These statistics formed the basis for the analysis of the magazines. Square inches were used for two reasons.

(1) The preponderance of pictures necessitated more accurate measurement than could be obtained from column inches. (2)

The type fonts varied from 6 to 12 point type, rendering column inch analysis invalid.

## 2. Article Type

All articles were classed according to their function in the magazine. In both magazines, the feature type of article dominated. The high percentage of news stories in Our Africa does not give a true picture, however, as the space allocated to news is less than that for features. The number of stories, filling that space, was large, accounting for the high percentage.

Article Type	African Challenge		Our Africa	
	# of Articles	%	# of Articles	%
Story.....	5.....	19	20.....	33
Feature.....	7.....	54	24.....	39
Editorial.....	0.....	0	2.....	4
Column.....	1.....	12	7.....	11
Picture-Story....	2.....	15	8.....	13

## 3. Content Type

Picture content was included under this category and analyzed along with the articles themselves. As a result, the data related to pictures appears along side the analysis for the articles, below as follows:

<u>Content Type</u>	<u>African Challenge</u>			<u>Our Africa</u>		
	<u>Number of Articles</u>	<u>% of Total Words</u>	<u>% of Picture Space</u>	<u>Number of Articles</u>	<u>% of Total Words</u>	<u>% of Picture Space</u>
News						
Africa	3	23%	32.5%	24	39%	22%
International	0	0	0	6	9%	2%
Informational	4	30%	37%	16	26%	41%
Ideational	0	0	0	1	2%	0
Essay	0	0	0	1	2%	4%
Crusade	2	15%	3%	4	6%	12%
Achievement	1	7%	6%	0	0	0
"How-to-do-it"	.5	5%	11%	1	2%	5%
Personality	.5	5%	8%	2	4%	3%
Inspirational	0	10%	0	2	4%	4%
Entertainment	2	15%	2.5%	4	6%	7%

#### 4. Subject Matter<sup>9</sup>

As a result of the multiplicity of sub-themes in an article, it was deemed necessary to distinguish among these. The word count method was employed in this study as it could best give an estimation of the subject content. Therefore, a number of words, corresponding with the prominence of the theme in the article were assigned to the subject which appeared in the article. The breakdown is as follows:

---

<sup>9</sup> Complete list of categories shown in Appendix II were adapted for analysis from Olson, *op. cit.*, p. 128; Morris Janowitz, *The Community Press In An Urban Setting*. Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 1952, pp. 233-237.

<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>African Challenge</u>		<u>Our Africa</u>	
	<u>No. of Words</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>No. of Words</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Nationalistic Movement.....	670	8	528	1.1
Wars - International & Civil.			362	1.1
Communism.....			246	.8
General Foreign News.....			667	2.1
United Nations.....	23	.3	434	1.4
Race Relations.....			831	2.7
Violations of Law.....			590	1.8
Law.....			648	2.2
Business, Markets, Economics.	118	1.4	535	1.8
Government.....	126	1.5	720	2.4
Sports.....			1,159	3.8
Agriculture.....	438	5.7		
Science and Invention.....	69	.8		
Medicine, Health, Safety.....			1,042	3.4
Education, Schools.....	100	1.2	735	2.1
Music.....			1,528	5
Obituaries.....			57	.2
Births.....			239	.8
Animals.....			50	.2
Holidays.....	1,278	15.3	31	.2
Personalities.....	1,087	13	1,493	4.9
Sex.....			300	1
Mass Media - Magazine.....			354	1.2
Family, Courtship, Marriage..			1,477	4.9
Homemaking.....			1,019	3.4
Letters and Answers.....	290	3.5	1,996	6.5
Acrostics, Puzzles, Contests.	144	1.7	715	2.4
Church.....	50	.6	1,555	5.1
Bible.....	880	10.5	4,034	13.2
Theology.....	102	1.2	139	.5
Missions.....	88	.1	968	3.2
Denominations.....			150	.5
Christian Ethics.....	375	4.5	1,204	4.0
Christian Life.....	1,175	14.	2,719	8.9
Evangelism.....	1,112	15.8	1,493	4.9
Hymns, Prayers.....			91	.3
Totals	8,370	100	30,513	100

In order to reduce the subjective element in the analysis, no attempt has been made to interpret the data which it yielded, in this section. In the next section, the aim will be to evaluate and interpret the findings. To these will be added the observations of the analyst and the similarities and contrasts will be delineated.

## V.

### COMPARISON OF FINDINGS<sup>1</sup>

#### A. Ownership and Control

The producers and disseminators of content of the African Challenge and Our Africa magazines are both missions, Sudan Interior and South Africa General Missions, respectively, and as a result the function of both magazines serves to propagate the Gospel. A secondary concomitant function is to present the news, information, and entertain. The letters to the editor, which constitute the feedback from the audience reached and hence provide an indicator of the audience reaction to the content, in both magazines serve as testimonies from those helped by the magazine. The result is that they do not assess the communicability, but rather add to the propagandizing intent.

#### B. Readability

Expression of the content was rated by readability techniques. By all three measures, the African Challenge was regarded as more difficult than Our Africa. This did not hold true, however, for the Flesch Human Interest Score. In this instance, the most easily grasped method of presenting the comparison is by the following chart:

---

<sup>1</sup> Structuring of this section based on C. Merton Babcock, The Harper Handbook of Communications Skills. New York, Harper & Bros., 1957, pp. 290-291.

<u>African Challenge</u>			<u>Our Africa</u>		
<u>Score</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
Dale-Chall...	6.3	67	5.7	6	
Gunning.....	11.5	11	8.9	8	
Flesch.....	63.2	9	64.4	9	Standard
Interest.....	40.0	Highly Interesting	37.0		Interesting

#### C. Format

The African Challenge is much smaller in both size and in the number of pages that it contains, than Our Africa. All but the October issue of the African Challenge pictured a woman on the cover, indicating a slight subtle sex connotation in the sale of the magazines. This suggestion was borne out in an interview with a spokesman for the Sudan Interior Mission. He stated that "We have noticed that more issues are sold when a woman is pictured on the cover and when the colors featured include bright reds and yellows."<sup>2</sup> These are both presented in a wholesome manner and do not appear to interfere with the purpose of the magazines. Advertising is arranged well in both publications and does not detract appreciably from the reading of the articles. This is more true of the African Challenge, but a reason may be that the African Challenge is subsidized, while Our Africa is attempting to become self-supporting.

The paper texture of both magazines is pulp, but the

---

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Rev. Albert H. TerMeer, Secretary of the Sudan Interior Mission.

African Challenge is a finer textured pulp than Our Africa. The latter is coarse, similar to newsprint. Both magazines are readable from a typographical point of view as well. The African Challenge employs an eight-point type with variations from six to eleven points. Our Africa, with more space both on its page and in the overall size, provides more white leaded spaces between its lines along with a ten-point type. The African Challenge's use of illustrations is better in most instances than Our Africa. The pictures in the former always match up well with the text, as the picture sequence of Dr. Azikiwe in the November issue.<sup>3</sup> By contrast to this, Our Africa makes very poor use of a picture in the reporting of a news story because the picture, placed directly below the story, was separated by a solid line, indicating that it was a separate story.<sup>4</sup> It may be separate, but the location would not so indicate. Further, the position of the picture in the lower left-hand corner does not add to the composition of the page. Rather, this news page and most of the other news pages appear to have been put together haphazardly. In general comprehensive appearance, the African Challenge is the better of the two magazines, in spite of the type size.

---

<sup>3</sup> Etok D. Udoh, "Nigeria's Governor-General," African Challenge, XI (October 1961), 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Our Africa, IV (October 1961), 20.

#### D. Subject Matter

In both magazines religious subject matter predominates, as a glance at the chart of topics in the preceding section will indicate. In both cases, the percentage of religious word content is over 40 per cent. Church, Bible, theology, missions, denominations, Christian ethics, Christian life, evangelism, hymns, and prayers were included in this category. Of the religious material, there is almost a complete absence of doctrinal material. The emphasis is upon living the Christian life. Not classed as religious directly, were a number of crusade appeals as "Beerhalls--Curse of Modern Africa"<sup>5</sup> which concern social evils of the continent. The concern comes from Christian ethical standards. Therefore, much of the material not classed as religious stems from a Christian concern.

News of both a general nature and specific, insofar as it related to the continent of Africa, probably was the next largest category for Our Africa. Features would have to be attributed to the African Challenge for its second largest theme. Regarding the news content, both magazines appear to have difficulty obtaining timely news, which would seem to lessen their effectiveness as channels of communication in a world that is racing from one crisis to another. For

---

<sup>5</sup> Ian Kazembe, "Beerhalls--Curse of Modern Africa," Our Africa, IV (November 1961), 12.

example, Dr. Nkrumah's visit to Yugoslavia on August 3, appeared in the October issue of Our Africa.<sup>6</sup> It did not appear at all in the African Challenge. Another criticism of the news reporting on the pages of Our Africa is the poor readability of the news articles. One of the worst examples appeared in the October issue, entitled "Azikiwe and Pan-Africanism."<sup>7</sup> Incidentally, the event occurred early in August as well. The article of 114 words was divided into two sentences and contained many words not on the Dale list, about 15 per cent, and about the same percentage of words were over three syllables. The Flesch score was -19.4! No attempt was made to explain the theme, Pan-Africanism, for the average reader. One other criticism is a flagrant violation of the grammatical laws, which appeared in the report of a wedding, which took place on July 15 and was noted under a column headed, "The Latest Weddings." The first sentence lacks a predicate and reads as follows:

Mr. and Mrs. C. P. M. Gumede, after their marriage on the 15th July, 1961 at the South Africa General Mission at Mbabane, Swaziland.

But while there are a number of poor news briefs, there are a number of excellent news features, which the African Challenge cannot match. "What Next in Katanga?"<sup>8</sup> combines

---

<sup>6</sup> Our Africa, IV (October 1961), 18.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Tau Ea Khale, "What Next in Katanga?", Our Africa, IV (November 1961), pp. 6-7.

excellence of reporting and news photography. The human pathos of a Belgian woman, whose husband was shot by United Nations troops comes through vividly in pictorial representation. Along with that is a picture of Mr. Moise Tshombe in animated conversation with newsmen in Kitwe, Northern Rhodesia. As Dr. Flesch emphasizes in his Human Interest formula, the major factor of interest is found in the mention of people. This appears especially applicable to the pictures as well as the writing of this article.

Nor are news features the only special features of interest in the study of these magazines. Our Africa has a monthly music feature article, "Music for You," which seeks to encourage high quality music appreciation, such as the "Overture of 1812" by Peter Ilytch Tschaikowsky.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the music section, there is a homemaker's section in which recipes and work-saving ideas are presented, along with a contest each month for housewives. These are excellent, widening the scope and influence of the magazine. It is curious, however, that neither magazine develops the topics of art or literature, either native or foreign.

As a result of the length, the African Challenge cannot present lengthy features, comparable to Our Africa. In order to fulfill its obligation to present the Gospel, the African

---

<sup>9</sup> Our Africa, IV (November 1961), p. 25.

Challenge must use almost half of its space in this manner; features are more general in nature, as the celebration of independence of African nations picture story.<sup>10</sup> The English is flawless and well-written. One notable trend in the African Challenge is the favorable light in which colonialism is presented, by contrast with Our Africa, which seems to remain neutral or antagonistic toward colonialism.

Religious content will be given further consideration in the next section.

## VI.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CONTENT

At this point in the study, the question may be raised, why study all of the secular content and what is its importance to Christian education? Looking back to the first section, it was discovered that the purpose of the African Challenge and Our Africa was to counteract the literature of the day in their respective countries, among other things. When the African Challenge began to publish over a decade ago, there were no Christian magazines competing on the open market in Africa. Then then, was an entirely new concept for the modern Christian Church. Today the field is even more highly competitive and the potential success to be reaped, if a hearing may be gained--tremendous. But to gain even a hearing taxes all of the ingenuity and ability that can be mustered.

✓ When one thoughtfully considers a statement such as one that Hugh Hefner, editor and publisher of Playboy (magazine) made in a recent interview concerning the purpose of his magazine, one wonders how Christian publications are able to maintain their own in a world of such brutal competition, "...a combination of sex in the Freudian sense and status."<sup>1</sup> He proceeds to defend these aims. Both motives may be summed

---

<sup>1</sup> Simon Nathan, "About the Nudes in Playboy," U. S. Camera, XXV (April 1962), 71.

up in the anti-Christian concepts of immorality and selfishness, by stating that they fulfill the two basic desires of life. Unfortunately, his philosophy is justified in the phenomenal success of his and other similar magazines in the United States. But, lest the erroneous conclusion be drawn that such magazines are not filtering into Africa, Miss Gourlay mentions that the African Challenge seeks to oppose actively "...the lurid trash of the western world."<sup>2</sup> Such entertainment may act as a narcotic to salve away the strain of the Nuclear Age through which the world is passing, but it does not provide satisfaction or peace of mind. The Gospel does and is still literature that will be read if properly presented. An example of this fact is Billy Graham's book, Peace With God, which has been translated in numerous tongues and sold exceptionally well in the United States. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, therefore, it should be possible to cut into even such magazine readership as Mr. Hefner's. But if the Church is to succeed in this task, and it must, the literature cannot be second-rate either editorially or graphically. Hence, the study of content and the purpose of such magazines.

---

<sup>2</sup> Rae B. B. Gourlay, "Ten Years of Challenging Africa," A Monthly Letter About Evangelism, VI (June 1961), p. 1.

### A. Propaganda

Propaganda sounds like a harsh word to the average man of the twentieth century. He thinks in terms of the radio broadcasts that Nazi Germany beamed at the Allied soldiers to discourage and hurt the cause, or the 3 billion dollar expenditure of the Soviet Union each year to propagandize Africa, Latin America, and wherever she can gain a hearing. While these are all propagandizing efforts, propaganda is not necessarily the evil word that it seems to connote. It was first applied by Pope Gregory XV and established by his successor, Urban VIII, to counter the Protestant Reformation from 1622 onward.<sup>3</sup> The success of their efforts are a sad commentary on the continuation of the Reformation, which they so artfully reversed to their own advantage. Whether twentieth-century Christians like the term or not, they are just as much engaged in the spreading of propaganda as was the Catholic Church of the Counter Reformation.

With this background, propaganda may be defined as "... the art and science of controlling the mind of mankind by overwhelming insistence upon a point of view."<sup>4</sup> Truth has

---

<sup>3</sup> Gorham Hinson, *Twelve Decisive Battles of the Mind*, New York, The Greystone Press, 1942, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

more disadvantages to overcome than does falsehood. Munson suggests that there are three reasons for this fact, (1) Truth runs counter to many vested interests and must overcome opposition, (2) Truth seems to promise only a "humdrum" existence, while the wild propagandist inciting hatred and murder appeals to this decadent civilization, (3) "Geniuses for propagandizing truth apparently appear far less often among men than does consummate journalistic ability for inventing and spreading lies and appeals to the negative emotions of mankind."<sup>5</sup>

#### B. Standard

In the preceding pages, two points of view have been suggested, that of the propagandist and that of the propagandized. The former, in the example cited, sought to propagandize for the sake of monetary gain. The latter allowed himself to be propagandized for the sake of his selfish desires. Although the methods of propagandizing have improved, efforts of men like John Wesley succeeded in revolutionizing the thought of England, and averting what might have resulted in the bloodbath that scourged France. Christians might well take notice of the way in which Wesley accomplished his task. In a reply to a question concerning the reason why he thought God raised up Methodist preachers, Wesley responded, "We have been raised up to reform the nation, more particularly the Church, to spread scriptural

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-20.

holiness over the land."<sup>6</sup> One of the techniques which Wesley applied was to utilize literary skills, producing some 400 titles in his lifetime. Considering the success and his prolific output, it must be admitted that Wesley knew literature. Therefore, the categorization of his works by his headings might prove a useful standard in determining the completeness of the present literature under study. The headings are as follows:

(1) Evangelism. Wesley sought to reach men on their level by simple, clear language and in as many varied forms as possible, which even included a magazine.

(2) Apologetics and Theology. He produced literature that was not only simple in evangelistic purpose, but he sought to reach the skeptics and deists of his day with intellectual material.

(3) Bible. Biblical literacy among the laity was one of Wesley's chief concerns.

(4) Practical Holiness. Christian living was one of his foremost desires for the people he was teaching.

(5) Christian Service. All practical aspects were considered by Wesley in guiding the lay folk in the practical ways to worship.

(6) Contemporary Problems. For Wesley, there was no distinction between the secular and the religious because the Christian life meant living in the world with all of its problems and dealing with them from Christian viewpoint. He wrote 6J. Morris Rockness, "Are We Missing the Mark?" Floodtide, (Winter 1961), p. 3.

on numerous subjects, many of which were very controversial,  
as the American Revolution.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

### C. Procedure

The procedure with both the African Challenge and Our Africa was to compare their content with Wesley's comprehensive headings in survey fashion, for the first analysis. Finally, analysis in depth was applied to the articles that were rated as purveying direct Christian truths, of which an example follows.

#### 1. Comparison with Wesley's Guide

##### a. Evangelism

Both magazines contained a high percentage of evangelistic articles. The purpose of these articles was particularly evident from the coupon for enquiry which appears at the bottom of most. One of these has been selected for complete analysis further along.

##### b. Apologetics and Theology

There was no attempt to state any theology per se nor doctrine as such in these magazines. This appears to be a great deficiency in the magazines. Our Africa comes closest to presenting theology in the Emmaus Bible Study course. It is doubtful that these courses present anything further than basics.

##### c. Bible

As in the study of evangelism, this category contained a high percentage of the total religious content. Both magazines contain reading guides. The African Challenge presents theirs in conjunction with a monthly feature, "People You

Should Know." There is no attempt to explain the Scripture readings, which are taken from the Scripture Union of London, England. Our Africa uses the same readings, but adds the Scripture Union notes to help in the instruction.

#### d. Practical Holiness

After Evangelism and Bible, Practical Holiness comes next in prominence. Motivation to live the Christian life is reiterated in a number of articles. One such article appears in the November issue of Our Africa, and is entitled, "Greater than Sorrow."<sup>8</sup> The author attempts to show how God can give comfort even in extreme sorrow of the lives of these missionaries, whose child was still-born. The writer attempts to motivate the believer to similar holy trust.

#### e. Christian Service

Very little was done with this topic in the magazines.

#### f. Contemporary Problems

The African Challenge deals with this topic only indirectly. There is no attempt to deal with contemporary problems either within or outside of Africa. It does deal with "How to Choose Your Vocation"<sup>9</sup> from a Christian viewpoint, but this is linked with the counselling ministry of the magazine.

---

<sup>8</sup> Howard Olson, "Greater than Sorrow," Our Africa, IV (November 1961), p. 27.

<sup>9</sup> African Challenge, XI (November 1961), pp. 6-7.

By contrast, Our Africa takes hold of certain controversial issues very well. On the subject of drinking, one very revealing article, "Here is What We Saw...Inside a Shebeen,"<sup>10</sup> gives the reader a good insight into the horror of these illegal drinking establishments. This was followed up by an article, "Beerhalls--Curse of Modern Africa,"<sup>11</sup> two months later.

Another method of dealing with modern problems, Our Africa used, has been to print a number of letters on a subject with opposing ideas or complementary ideas. The former of these is exemplified in an article, "Christianity Versus Politics."<sup>12</sup> The latter of these is exemplified in an article, "Marriage Isn't Easy."<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Analysis of Specific Articles

An article has been selected arbitrarily for an example of analysis applied to articles with religious content. It comes from the African Challenge, is evangelistic in tone, and is entitled, "I Was a Political Prisoner."<sup>14</sup> The most feasible method of studying these articles appears to be through an adaptation of Symbol Coding. All of the concepts

---

10 Our Africa, IV (September 1961), pp. 6-7.

11 Our Africa, IV (November 1961), pp. 12-13.

12 Our Africa, IV (September 1961), p. 25.

13 Our Africa, IV (October, 1971), p. 21.

14 Nelson Kamau, Kenya, "I Was a Political Prisoner!", African Challenge, XI, (October 1961), p. 4.

were separated into either positive or negative columns. The positive concepts outnumbered the negative, 114 to 73. A number of cliches were to be noted. At the end of the article appeared a slip of inquiry for help. A synopsis of the article is as follows:

"I Was a Political Prisoner!"

I was a political prisoner because I drank the Mau Mau oath. I was a slave to sin. I served the Devil. I committed the worst sins.

God placed me in prison. I heard a hymn, "I Will Sing the Wondrous Story of the Christ Who Died For Me." On May 9, 1955 I stopped resisting God and became saved.

When I was released, I got a job. I would not carry liquor, buy cigarettes, or work on Sunday. Withal, I have been very successful.

Reader, would you like this victory the Word of God promises in I John 1:8, 9? Accept it.

The major problem with such articles as this one is that they use a vocabulary that is foreign to the person not schooled in Christian thought. Wesley wrote the language of the people, not in foreign sub-culture terms.

A second problem is the appearance of pride on the part of the person testifying. There probably is none, but the appearance is poor for preachers. These are two ways by which the African Challenge can improve its style.

Unfortunately, the method has not yet been perfected to the extent that it can yield 100 per cent accurate results, or that it can provide more than general trends as have been suggested above.

## VII.

### GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Although it cannot be said that one magazine is better than the other, a number of conclusions emerge that may be significant to the magazines. Both have areas where improvement could add appreciably to the overall effectiveness of the magazines. Our Africa could profitably improve its news coverage, writing, and placement upon the news pages. The African Challenge could add some features, such as the homemaking and music sections of Our Africa.

This new concept of religious journalism, whereby a magazine is placed upon the market to compete with secular publications, has real possibilities but needs further research and development. The need for research is underscored in the findings that, for example, the readability of the news section of Our Africa scores very low both in the score of ease and in the score of human interest. Should a Christian publication seek to become self-supporting by advertising or should it be continually subsidized by organizations backing it? This is one of the questions that further research must seek to answer. The cost of a top-flight magazine is prohibitive and, as a result, there must be a change in policy if these magazines are to improve their style and circulation. What should be the ratio of secular to religious content? Should it approximate that of these two magazines, where the content is 40 per cent religious to

60 per cent secular material?

There exists a specific need for the study of religious publications. Probably some form of symbol coding would help in understanding the religious content. Further research in the effect of these magazines should be undertaken as well. The search for a better and more effective vehicle for communicating the Gospel must continue and the search for better means of communicating must be developed, not employing words that have been outmoded in meaning, but words of life that will bring life.

BIBLIOGRAPHYPrimary Sources

African Challenge, XI (August to December 1961).

Davis, Raymond J., "Fierce Battle," Sudan Witness, XXXVII (Fall 1961).

Gourlay, Rae B. B., "Ten Years of Challenging Africa," A Monthly Letter About Evangelism, VI (June 1961).

Our Africa, III (August 1961).

Our Africa, IV (September to December 1961).

Secondary Sources

Babcock, C. Merton, The Harper Handbook of Communications Skills, New York, Harper & Bros., 1957.

Berelson, Bernard, Content Analysis in Communication Research, Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 1951.

Boyd, Malcolm, Crisis in Communication, Garden City, Doubleday & Co., 1957.

Dale, Edgar and Chall, Jeanne, Educational Research Bulletin, Ohio State, Columbus, Ohio, XXVII (January to December 1948).

Day, Fay, "Content Analysis in Mass Communication," Ralph O. Nafziger and Marcus M. Wilkerson, An Introduction to Journalism Research, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Louisiana University Press, 1949.

Flesch, Rudolf, The Art of Plain Talk, New York, Harper & Bros., 1946.

Flesch, Rudolf, The Art of Readable Writing, New York, Harper & Bros. 1949.

Flesch, Rudolf, How to Write, Speak and Think More Effectively, New York, Harper & Bros., 1960.

Gourlay, Rae B. B., "Strategic Decade in Africa," Floodtide, (Winter 1961).

Gunning, Robert, How to Take the Fog Out of Writing, Chicago, The Dartnell Press, 1959.

Gunning, Robert, The Technique of Clear Writing, New York, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1952.

Henry, Nelson B., ed., Mass Media and Education, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1954.

Hinson, Gorham, Twelve Decisive Battles of the Mind, New York, The Greystone Press, 1942.

Laubach, Robert S., Toward World Literacy, Syracuse, University Press, 1960.

Nathan, Simon, "About the Nudes in Playboy," U. S. Camera, XXV (April 1962).

Olson, Russell L., A Content Analysis of the Associated Press A-Wire P.M. Report. New Brunswick, Rutgers University, 1954 (unpublished thesis).

Parker, Everett, et. al., The Television - Radio Audience and Religion. New York, Harper & Bros., 1955.

Rigdon, Raymond, "Curriculum Materials," Roland E. Wolseley, ed., Writing for the Religious Market. New York, Association Press, 1956.

Rockness, J. Morris, "Are We Missing the Mark?" Floodtide (Winter 1961).

Schaff, Philip, History of the Christian Church, VII. Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1953.

Taylor, Wilson L., "Cloze Procedure," A New Tool for Measuring Readability," Journalism Quarterly, XXX (Fall 1961).

## APPENDIX I - Readability Analysis Sheet.

OUR AFRICA  
 AFRICAN CHALLENGE  
 Month \_\_\_\_\_  
 Page \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sheet # \_\_\_\_\_

READABILITY ANALYSIS

Samples	#1	#2	#3	
1.	_____	_____	_____	Words
2.	_____	_____	_____	Sentences
3.	_____	_____	_____	Syllables/100 words
4.	_____	_____	_____	Trisyllabics
5.	_____	_____	_____	Personal Words/100 words
6.	_____	_____	_____	Male
7.	_____	_____	_____	Female
8.	_____	_____	_____	Personal Sentences/100 sentences
9.	_____	_____	_____	Average Sentence Length
10.	_____	_____	_____	Non Dale Chall words
11.	_____	_____	_____	Dale Score
12.	_____	_____	_____	(9) X .0496 DALE-CHALL
13.	_____	_____	_____	(11) X .1579
14.	<u>3.6365</u>	<u>3.6365</u>	<u>3.6365</u>	Constant
15.	_____	_____	_____	Raw Score (12)÷(13)÷(14)
16.	_____	_____	_____	(9) ÷ (4)
17.	_____	_____	_____	(16) X 0.4 <sup>1</sup> GUNNING
18.	_____	_____	_____	(9) X 1.015
19.	_____	_____	_____	(3) X .846 FLESCH
20.	_____	_____	_____	(18) ÷ (19) READING EASE
21.	<u>-206.835</u>	<u>-206.835</u>	<u>-206.835</u>	Constant
22.	_____	_____	_____	Ease Score
23.	_____	_____	_____	(5) X 3.535 FLESCH
24.	_____	_____	_____	(8) X .314 HUMAN INTEREST
25.	_____	_____	_____	Human Interest

## AVERAGE SCORES

26.	_____	DC Raw Score	:	<sup>2</sup> DALE CHALL CORRECTION
27.	_____	DC Corrected Grade	:	Raw Sc. Grade Level
28.	_____	Fog Index Grade Score	:	4.9 & 4th & below
29.	_____	Reading Ease	:	5.0 to 5.9 5-6th grade
30.	_____	Human Interest	:	6.0 to 6.9 7-8th grade
			:	7.0 to 7.9 9-10 grade
			:	8.0 to 8.9 11-12 grade
			:	9.0 to 9.9 13-16 grade
			:	10 and above college grad.
			:	<sup>3</sup> FLESCH - HUMAN INTEREST
			:	60-100 Dramatic
			:	40-60 Highly Interesting
			:	20-40 Interesting
			:	10-20 Mildly Interesting
			:	0-10 Dull

1 Robert Gunning, The Technique of Clear Writing, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1952, pp. 36-37.

2 Dale, Edgar, and Chall, Jeanne S., "A Formula for Predicting Readability: Instructions," Ed. Research Bulletin, 27, pp 37ff.

3 Flesch, Rudolf, How To Test Readability, N.Y.: Harper, 1951.

## APPENDIX II - Content Analysis Sheet

AFRICAN CHALLENGE		Type of Article	Type of Content	Credibility
OUR AFRICA	Story	News-Africa	Fact Statements	
Month	Feature	Int'l.	Opinion Statements	
Page#	Editorial	Informational	Quoted Opinion	
Sheet#	Column	Ideational		
	Pict.-story	Essay	Christian Truths	
For Features & Stories		Crusade	Direct	
		Achievement	Indirect	
		"How-to-do-it"		
		Personality	Direction (+ or - or o)	
		Inspirational	Communism	
		Entertainment	Nationalism	
		Other:	Colonialism	
			Kruschnev	
			Kennedy	
			Q. Elizabeth	
			Labor	
			Management	
			Missionaries	
			National Christians	
			Urban	
			Rural	
			Religion	
			News	
			Evangelism	
			Worship	
			Service	
			Bible Study	
			Social Life	
			Personal Life Exp.	
			Fiction	
			Instruction	
			Social Action	

  

For Features & Stories		1. Slanting	2. Reader Interest:	3. Composition	4. Effectiveness
Age Group			Poor Fair Good		
Sex M F					
Policy	Labor				
Socio-Economic	Farm				
Class-High/Low/Mid.	Business				
Emotional Response		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Vicariousness		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Univ. Human Needs		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Contemporaneity		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Layout on Page		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Illustration Use		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Action		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Narration		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Imagery		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Unity		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Coherence		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Emphasis		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Transition		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Simplicity		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Clarity		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Restraint		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Pace		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Rhythm		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Lead		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Body		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			
Conclusion		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0			

## SUBJECT MATTER:

Nationalistic Movement	Animals
Wars - International & Civil	Holidays
Communism	Personalities
General Foreign News	Sex
United Nations	Mass Media
Race Relations	Family, Courtship, Marriage
Social Problems	Fashions, Beauty
Disasters, Accidents, Fires	Homemaking
Violations of Law	Charity, Drives
Violence, Crime, Vice	Letters and Answers
Sports	Acrostics, Puzzles, Contests
Agriculture	Church
Science, Invention	Bible
Medicine, Health, Safety	God
Education, Schools	Missions
Music	Denominations
Art, Literature	Christian Ethics
Weddings	Hymns, Prayer
Births	Obituaries