

## **How cross cultural epistemic injustice in the global health arena undermines public health care delivery in Africa**

By Helen Lauer and Joan Shenton

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**Abstract** (characters with spaces 2,465):

Assertions of scientific fact are a tightly supervised commodity when produced and promulgated by globally recognised specialists and the highest profile knowledge-generating agencies. But with increasing dependence upon protocols of recognition and deference to internationally legitimised expertise there emerges a prevailing climate of complicity in censorship. Increasingly, the discouragement of independence and diversity of perspectives and the consequent attrition of on-going evidence-based controversy has had severe repercussions on public welfare worldwide.

Paradoxically, orchestrated suppression of critical exchange is affected by virtue of the very regulations and protocols designed to ensure that scientific productivity remains impartial, comprehensive, open to evidence-based criticism and subject to revision by means of the stringent rigours of conjecture and refutation among rival perspectives. The point of this analysis is to demystify and account for this paradox.

To ground the discussion in concrete terms, this analysis will be limited to the dynamics responsible for perpetuating falsehoods about the pathogeneses that proliferate in Africa, by systematically delegitimizing and disregarding local African scientists and medical experts.

Case examples are culled from observing the practices definitive of the international scientific network that dominated the direction and funding of AIDS research in 1991-1992 conducted in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Cameroon and Cote d'Ivoire, in the global collaborative effort of governments, industry, and academia to control an AIDS pandemic. Further examples derive from 2014-2015 in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, demonstrating epistemic and documental injustices in the statistical reportage, the diagnostics, and public health care practices which were supervised under the aegis of global scientific, military, and epidemiological expertise collaborating in the high profile West Africa Ebola Emergency Response.

These documented incidents from these periods of international collaboration and intervention on behalf African publics demonstrate how accredited global authorities systematically exclude those independent experts who happen to have the greatest pertinent opinions, background knowledge and direct access to crucial evidence, given their locations in the periphery of the cross cultural domain of scientific knowledge production, financial management and decision making.

### **Brief bio notes (CVs available on request)**

Joan Shenton is the founder of the UK charity Immunity Resource Foundation, and the director of Meditel Productions, a documentary film company specializing in scientific research and medical policy concerns, whose products since its inception in 1981 have been awarded many times, including by the Royal Television Society (1988), the British Medical Association's Certificate of Educational Merit (1992), and a Medical Journalist Association Award. She has published two books and produced over 150 programmes for network television internationally including UK Channel 4, Sky News, Carte Blanche, and South Africa's M-Net. Earlier in 2016 her work received honorary mention by her alma mater, St. Anne's College, Oxford, where she studied modern languages and Spanish. Her most recent documentary of 2014 focused on the controversial and inspiring personal health narratives of individuals successfully living with HIV without drugs in Galicia, northern Spain, which has won nominations and awards at Lucerne and Marbella International Film Festivals, and was selected for six other international film festivals, winner of star award at the United Latino Film Festival and the Indie Gathering Film Festival in Hudson, Ohio (2016).

Helen Lauer is a full professor of philosophy in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, in the College of Humanities of the University of Dar es Salaam. She retired from the University of Ghana in 2014 after 27 years teaching analytic philosophy, methodologies of the sciences, and applied ethics to BSc and BA undergraduates, and to graduate students in public health, molecular biochemistry, and law. Her articles and books focus on problems at the foundation of social sciences and cross cultural injustices that sustain falsehoods about Africa in the global arena across the disciplines. Her PhD in philosophy was awarded in 1986 by the City University of New York Graduate Center, where she specialized in action theory under the supervision of David M. Rosenthal. She was inducted as a Fellow of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2015.

Corresponding author:

Helen Lauer

Private P.O. Box 35089

University Hill, UDSM

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, East Africa

[helenlauer@yahoo.com](mailto:helenlauer@yahoo.com)

+255 743 925 800 / +255 626 645 496