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A VIEW OF SUDANESE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT THROUGH NEBRASKA'S PRINT MEDIA

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ABSTRACT—The print media has the potential to educate the general public about newly arriving Great Plains populations, influence refugee resettlement programs, and motivate volunteers to assist in transitions. Thus, accuracy of news items is crucial to successful assimilation of new populations to host communities. In this paper, we provide results from a content analysis of eight Nebraska newspapers regarding Sudanese refugees. We focus on refugee population descriptors, cultural characteristics, resettlement issues, and refugee goals to determine what could be learned about refugees from Sudan if one used local print media. Consistent with theories of stereotyping, results suggest that limited, and sometimes erroneous, information would be acquired about any of the Sudanese tribes if one relied exclusively upon print media. Despite this potential setback, Nebraskans are assisting Sudanese refugees in resettlement and learning how difficult it is for refugees to understand and incorporate US culture into their fragile existence.

Key Words: Dinka, Nuer, print media, refugees, resettlement, Sudan, Sudanese

Introduction

The Great Plains has been shaped by immigration from many ethnic groups. Most of these groups were recent US arrivals, and their immigration success was determined by similarity to the host culture (McLemore et al.

2001). In the 21st century, as the US accommodates immigrants and refugees from all world regions, successful assimilation of each new group requires an understanding of differences between refugee and host cultures. If the host culture is to be the primary determinant of assimilative success, then the public must rely upon the media as a source of education regarding new groups. In fact, democratic systems depend on the media to provide accurate information about public issues (Siebert et al. 1963) and provide education (Chaffee and Frank 1996). Print media can raise awareness or encourage political activism (Weaver 1996); media can also shape public perceptions and set community priorities (Schulte 1983). In pursuing an accurate and objective story, media journalists certainly rely upon new research data, but cannot escape stereotypes of the dominant culture. For example, one could predict that news stories about new racial-ethnic groups will not accurately describe cultural diversity, or the plight of the population in question, because journalists share dominant culture stereotypes. One of the important features for categorization and stereotyping is perceived race (Hamilton and Trolier 1986; Zebrowitz 1991; Jones and Morris 1993; Stangor and Lange 1994). For example, racial-ethnic stereotypes can produce misperceptions of behavior (Duncan 1976; Sagar and Schofield 1980; Willis Esqueda and Swanson 1997; Willis Esqueda and Espinoza 2003). Moreover, the more remote the public's contact and information base, the more projective and distorted the stereotypes can be (Brigham 1971). The purpose of this investigation was to determine if accurate and astute representations of new ethnic-racial groups, for example, refugees from Africa's Sudan, are provided by the media in one Great Plains state, Nebraska. Specifically, we wanted to know how Sudan's refugees are labeled, what aspects of culture are discussed, what resettlement difficulties have been identified, and what goals refugees have set for themselves.

Although nearly 2.5 million refugees entered the US between 1975 and 2001, few originated on the African continent: 5%, as compared to 52% from East Asia, and 29% from the USSR and Europe (US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration 2001). Of those from Africa, just 14% (16,171) were from Sudan. Yet Sudan is home to the largest number of internally displaced persons anywhere in the world (approximately four million), and one-half million Sudanese are living in refugee camps (US Committee for Refugees 2003). The largest number of Sudanese refugees (3,833) arrived in the US in 2000, and many were sent to the Great Plains (US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration 2001). We focus on Nebraska for two reasons. First, at the time of the most recent census, the majority population, 89.6%, claimed European ancestry (US Census Bureau

2003). By contrast, just 4% of Nebraskans selected "black or African American" ancestry. Many Nebraskans have little experience with or exposure to people of color. At least three Nebraska cities (Lincoln, Omaha, and Bellevue) are refugee resettlement sites, and larger numbers of minority populations can be found there. Second, Nebraska has a history of racial conflict against peoples of African ancestry, from the lynching that plagued Nebraska cities in the early 1900s, to race riots in the 1960s, to the Klan activity that made national headlines in the 1990s (Arens 2002). Despite this history, as a state participating in refugee resettlement, Nebraska must develop successful methods to incorporate its newest African refugee populations, and the media can facilitate this effort.

Refugee resettlement is a complex process, involving international, federal, state and local entities, private agencies, institutions, and individuals (Potocky-Tripodi 2002). Currently, the US State Department signs cooperative agreements with local voluntary agencies to resettle refugees in US cities (US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration 2002). These voluntary agencies are expected to use local entities and nonpaid volunteers to accomplish resettlement for all new arrivals. Local volunteers are an integral part of any refugee resettlement program, providing clothing and household furnishings, mentoring and friendship for community orientation, and offering tutoring and teaching (US Department of HHS/ACF/ORR 2003). Given that federal and state resettlement funding fluctuates annually, it is important to understand how volunteers might become familiar with refugee needs. Moreover, if information about cultural differences allows social service agencies to design "culturally appropriate" programs and motivates community members to provide assistance to new arrivals, then the way that a refugee population is described in print media becomes vital.

Methods

Four questions were answered through a content analysis of Nebraska published news items (i.e., articles, summaries, and announcements) including: (1) What terms are used to identify a member of this community? (2) What cultural characteristics are used to describe each tribe represented in the state and their associated cultural attributes? (3) What resettlement challenges or issues were raised by a particular newspaper? and (4) Which goals articulated by the refugees were highlighted by each newspaper?

We employed three methods to locate items within Nebraska's newspapers. First, using a key word search (Sudanese, refugee, immigrant, tribal names), and without specifying a particular time frame, we scanned two

databases: Lexus Nexus and the NewsBand NewsFile Collection (1991–current). In addition, we scanned newspapers published in Nebraska's largest cities, Lincoln and Omaha, every day over a 12-month period (May 2002 through May 2003) for any topic related to Sudan and refugees. Finally, we alerted colleagues in surrounding communities of our interest in published news regarding Sudanese refugees and asked them to gather relevant pieces. In all, we located 103 published items that appeared in eight Nebraska newspapers between 1997 and 2003. All articles that were used for analysis are listed in the References and, if not cited directly in text, in the Appendix. Names of Nebraska newspapers are listed below in alphabetical order. Following the name of each newspaper is a number in parentheses that represents the number of articles referring to the Sudanese that appeared in that paper: *Bellevue Leader* (2), *Columbus Telegram* (1), *Fremont Tribune* (1), *Grand Island Independent* (16), *Lincoln Journal Star* (15), *Norfolk Daily News* (4), and the *Omaha World-Herald* (64). Each author conducted independent scans of the news items and tabulations were compared. When a discrepancy arose, the other author performed an additional scan to resolve the disparity. To answer questions 1 and 2, descriptors and cultural characteristics were scored if they appeared at least once in an article. However, when assessing questions 3 and 4, individual resettlement challenges and goals were compiled in a table if they appeared in any of the Nebraska newspapers.

Results

A range of 1 to 10 descriptive terms was used in each of the 103 published items to describe refugees from Sudan (Table 1). Most contained five or fewer designations. No source employed all descriptors, and the single most common designation for Sudan's refugees, among all newspapers, was "Sudanese." All but three of the newspapers used the term immigrants to describe the refugees. Six newspapers used the phrase "Lost Boys" in one or more articles.

Tribal names rarely appeared in any of the eight Nebraska newspapers. Of the five tribal names that were used, Nuer appeared the most often but was confined to the *Omaha World-Herald* in all but four cases. The tribal name Dinka appeared at least once in all but three periodicals. None of the other tribal names appeared in more than one newspaper.

Nebraska's print media used 24 different characteristics to describe traditional life among Sudan's cultures (see Table 2). The largest number of cultural characteristics, 21 of 24, appeared in the 64 articles published by

TABLE 1
NEBRASKA PRINT MEDIA DESCRIPTORS FOR REFUGEES FROM SUDAN

Descriptors	Number of articles with descriptor by newspapers published in Nebraska								
	BDS	BL	CT	FT	GII	LJS	NDN	OWH	TOTAL and PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL (103)
Immigrants				1	4	2	1	12	20 (19%)
Lost Boys	1	1			3	3	1	12	21 (19%)
Refugees	1	2	1	1	5	10	2	53	75 (73%)
Sudanese		2	1	1	13	12	4	45	78 (76%)
Tribes	1	1	1					5	8 (8%)
Acholi								1	1 (1%)
Dinka		2			2	2	1	3	10 (10%)
Maban						1			1 (1%)
Nuba						2			2 (2%)
Nuer			1		1	1	1	20	24 (23%)

Note: BDS = *Beatrice Daily Sun*, BL = *Bellevue Leader*, CT = *Columbus Telegram*, FT = *Fremont Tribune*, GII = *Grand Island Independent*, LJS = *Lincoln Journal Star*, NDN = *Norfolk Daily News*, OWH = *Omaha World-Herald*. Although one could compare instance of descriptors to total number of articles in a given newspaper, the focus here was on Nebraska as a whole. The major newspapers (e.g., *Omaha World-Herald*) are available across the state.

the *Omaha World-Herald*. By contrast, all others used 50% or fewer of all cultural characteristics to describe Sudan's refugees in their news items. The most common cultural characteristic employed in all of Nebraska's newspapers concerned the pattern of large family size among some Sudanese tribes. Five other cultural characteristics, tribal scarring, a subsistence pattern of

TABLE 2
CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TRIBES
FROM SUDAN AS LISTED IN NEBRASKA NEWSPAPERS

Cultural characteristics	Number of articles within Nebraska newspapers listing cultural characteristics								
	BDS	BL	CT	FT	GII	LJS	NDN	OWH	TOTAL
Large family			1		3	2	1	2	9
Midwifery							1	1	2
Women in home								1	1
Women limited education					1		2	2	5
Dental extraction		1			1	2			4
Overbite						1			1
Tribal scarring		2	1		1	1	1	2	8
Bride price		1				1		2	4
Clan loyalty								1	1
Agro-pastoralist	1	1				1		4	7
Collectivist (group important)						2		2	4
Childrearing (care & discipline)								5	5
No birth dates		1						1	2
Different concept of time					1			1	2
Traditional mud/thatch homes						1		3	4
Animals as food not pets		1						1	2
Different foods						1	1	4	6
Tribal/village problem-solving								3	3
Showing respect (no eye contact)							1	1	2
Mostly oral languages								1	1
Patriarchal society							1		1
Male dominance/domestic interactions							1	2	3
Different economic system					1			1	2
Life without technology						1		2	3

Note: BDS = *Beatrice Daily Sun*, BL = *Bellevue Leader*, CT = *Columbus Telegram*, FT = *Fremont Tribune*, GII = *Grand Island Independent*, LJS = *Lincoln Journal Star*, NDN = *Norfolk Daily News*, OWH = *Omaha World-Herald*.

agro-pastoralism, unique foods, the care and discipline of children, and the idea that women have limited opportunity for education outside the home, were mentioned just five to eight times within the 103 published news items. Thus, Nebraska's newspapers provided minimal description of traditional cultural patterns of the diverse tribes. Overall, a cultural trait was mentioned

an average of 3.4 times across all newspapers. Most of the 24 cultural features appeared in just one or two of the 103 articles.

Using 11 generic categories (children's issues; education; housing; language issues; job skills and training; transport; cultural orientation; legal issues; health and nutrition; faith, support, and mentoring; and war and trauma-related), 45 separate resettlement issues and unmet needs among Sudan's refugees were mentioned in one or more news items among Nebraska's newspapers (see Table 3). In some cases, community services were available, while in others the local social service agencies and/or volunteers did not provide assistance that was considered important to successful resettlement. In addition, agencies, volunteers, and refugees identified issues during interviews about their lives in Nebraska. Each issue appeared in an average of three of the eight newspapers. Under faith, support, and mentoring, tribal links to Christian religions was mentioned most often among Nebraska newspapers. Under the category war and trauma-related, missing family members was cited by six newspapers. Similarly, the death of family members and a devotion to Christianity are cited in five different newspapers. Most of those issues mentioned in four or more newspapers can be linked to the transition from one culture to another or to trauma suffered prior to arrival. Overall resettlement issues and unmet needs were found in one to seven of the Nebraska publications.

Refugees who were interviewed for an article in one or more of the eight Nebraska newspapers mentioned 18 different goals for resettlement (Table 4). The goals spanned 12 areas: employment, education, transportation, dentistry, vegetable gardening, citizenship, family reunification, increase cultural awareness, help other Sudanese, return to Sudan, and resolve the conflict. Among all goals, acquiring an education was mentioned in more newspapers, six of eight, than any other goal. Three goals, related to employment and fulfilling a desire to work as a doctor or minister, were mentioned in three to five Nebraska newspapers. Family reunification was also noted as important, appearing in four separate newspapers. All other goals appeared in two to three newspaper articles.

Thirty-eight percent of the 103 articles appeared on the front page or in a "Special Feature" section: 36 and 3, respectively. All others appeared on pages 2 through 55. Another 11 articles appeared on the front page of section B, and six appeared on the front page of section E. Of the 103 articles that cited refugees from Sudan, 48 (47%) did not include a photo. By contrast, 55 (53%) included from one to seven photo graphics; however, most carried a single photo within the body of the news article.

TABLE 3
RESETTLEMENT ISSUES AND UNMET NEEDS FOR REFUGEES FROM SUDAN AS REFERENCED IN NEBRASKA NEWSPAPERS

Children's Issues
Safe play areas — OWH
Day care centers — GII, LJS, OWH
Nurture cultural education/Values — GII, LJS, OWH

Education
High school diploma/GED — GII, LJS, OWH
College enrollment — GII, LJS, OWH
K-12 enrollment — GII, LJS, OWH
Lack of retraining systems — GII, LJS, NDN, OWH

Housing
Housing shortage — GII, NDN, OWH
Placed in dangerous neighborhoods — OWH
Acquisition of household goods — GII, LJS, NDN, OWH

Language Issues
K-12 ELL programs — GII, NDN, OWH
Adult ELL programs — CT, GII, LJS, OWH
Women speak limited English — CY, GII, LJS, OWH
Need for interpreters — GII, LJS, OWH
Misunderstanding of Sudan's languages — GII, LJS, OWH

Job Skills and Training
Lack of assistance with retread — LJS, NDN, OWH
Job skills training needed — GII, LJS, OWH
Computer training critical — LJS, OWH
Interest in Job Corps (intensive study) — LJS, NDN
Jobs without living wage — GII, LJS, OWH

Transport
Limited public transport — GII
Driving lessons and car insurance — LJS, NDN, OWH
Purchasing car — GII, LJS, OWH

Cultural Orientation
Climate preparations — BL, GII, LJS, OWH
US cultural training — GII, LJS, OWH
African American Community Links — OWH
Different family member resettlement—time & site — CT, LJS, OWH

Legal Issues
Taxes & preparation assistance — NDN
Refugee status — LJS, OWH
Childcare requirements — OWH
Domestic interaction — LJS, NDN, OWH

Health and Nutrition
Inexperience with US food preparation & associated technological appliances — CT, GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Little knowledge of US foods — LJS, NDN, OWH
Lack of experience in nutrition planning — NDN
No preventive health experience — GII, LJS, OWH

Faith, Support, and Mentoring
Church donations — BL, GII, LJS, OWH
Need for mentors & advisors — LJS, OWH
Refugee-operated community agencies — GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Devotion to Christianity — BL, GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Tribal link to Christian religions — CT, BDS, BL, GII, LJS, NDN, OWH

War and Trauma-Related
Starvation — CT, LJS, NDN, OWH
Missing family members — BDS, BL, GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Death of family members — BL, GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Slavery — BDS, LJS, NDN, OWH
Religious conversion and persecution — GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Physical wounds from war — BDS, LJS, OWH
Memories of war experience — BDS, LJS, NDN, OWH
Refugee camp trauma — BDS, BL, LJS, OWH

Note: BDS = *Beatrice Daily Sun*; BL = *Bellevue Leader*; CT = *Columbus Telegram*; FT = *Fremont Tribune*; GII = *Grand Island Independent*; LJS = *Lincoln Journal Star*; NDN = *Norfolk Daily News*; OWH = *Omaha World-Herald*.

TABLE 4
RESETTLEMENT GOALS AS ARTICULATED BY
REFUGEES FROM SUDAN WITHIN NEBRASKA'S PRINT MEDIA

Goal	Newspaper
Acquire education	BL, CT, GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Learn English	LJS, NDN, OWH
Find a job/work	BL, GII, LJS, NDN, OWH
Become a minister	BL, OWH
Become a doctor	BL, LJS, OWH
Get a driver's license	LJS, NDN, OWH
Acquire transportation	GII, NDN, OWH
Purchase home	OWH
Desire to plant and harvest crops	LJS, OWH
Replace teeth extracted in ritual	LJS
Family reunification	BL, GII, NDN, OWH
Spread awareness of culture/tribe/conditions in Sudan	LJS, OWH
Help other refugees from Sudan	GII, LJS, OWH
More cultural orientation	LJS, OWH
Become a US citizen	BL, NDN, OWH
Contribute to US society	LJS, OWH
Return to Sudan	BL, LJS, OWH
Peace in Sudan	LJS, OWH

Note: BDS = *Beatrice Daily Sun*, BL = *Bellevue Leader*, CT = *Columbus Telegram*, FT = *Fremont Tribune*, GII = *Grand Island Independent*, LJS = *Lincoln Journal Star*, NDN = *Norfolk Daily News*, OWH = *Omaha World-Herald*.

Discussion

In this content analysis, all eight newspapers generally employed generic terms to describe individuals in Nebraska who are from at least 14 of the southern and central tribes of Sudan: the Nuer, Dinka, Shilluk, Nuba, Murle, Achole, Bai or Bari, Maban, Burun, Azande, Uduk, Fritit, and Beja (Willis 2003). Only five of the 14 tribal names have ever appeared within the newspapers. Of these, the tribal name Nuer appeared in 23% of the 103 articles, while all others appeared in 1% to 10%. Moreover, for the two largest tribes in southern Sudan (and now in Nebraska), the Dinka and the Nuer, subtribes make up the whole but have never been described as such in Nebraska newspapers (Ethnologue 2003). These distinctions are significant because they are connected to distinct dialects, languages, traditions, and

training needs. For example, in one article refugees are said to have a "Sudanese accent" (Grayson 2001); however, there is no single Sudanese accent in that Sudan is home to 134 living languages (Ethnologue 2003).

In another article, Nebraska's refugee coordinator noted that the "Sudanese have developed a more fragmented network than other immigrant groups" (Gonzalez 2002) but failed to understand how fragmentation can be linked to tribal variation and the associated language and subsistence patterns. Iowa's refugee coordinator suggested that the Sudanese should "put together an umbrella organization" because it would demonstrate "a high degree of cooperation, organization and some astuteness in terms of how you make yourself accepted and known in the mainstream community" (Gonzalez 2002). Yet without a common language and social system, it would be impossible to work collaboratively even if all wished to do so.

Other articles refer to Dinka as a "form of Arabic" and describe both Nuer and Amharic as "Sudanese languages" (Schulz 2002). However, Dinka is both a distinct tribe and language, many do not speak Arabic, and Arabic is a language imposed by the current (and oppressing) Sudanese government. In addition, the current civil war is, in general, between Arab Muslims and black African Christians. Amharic is not a language of Sudan at all, but of Ethiopia, a previous home for some of the refugees in camps.

The phrase "Lost Boys" is used often, but both males and females from at least two tribes, the Dinka and the Nuer, make up this group of young refugees. Generic descriptors such as "Sudanese" can also describe *immigrants* to the US from northern Sudan who are of Arabic rather than black African ancestry, speak Arabic as a first language rather than one of the indigenous African dialects, and in most cases, would not be eligible for refugee classification. Lastly, it is important to distinguish between refugees and immigrants because, in the majority of cases, immigrants from the north chose to leave Sudan while refugees were forced beyond Sudan's borders in order to survive.

No matter which newspaper is examined, little can be learned about the traditional life that refugees from Sudan were forced to abandon prior to their arrival in the United States. In fact, in describing the US context as one where refugees from Sudan "find themselves light years ahead" (Grayson 2001), the skills and cultural adaptations of the refugees are diminished. Moreover, there are misunderstandings or misrepresentations about Sudan's cultures. For example, several articles described Sudan's refugees as having large families, stating that "some of the Sudanese families are quite large by contemporary American standards," or there are some "who have two children, but many parents have four or five children" (Reutter 2002). But large

families are an integral part of pastoralist subsistence systems: children are indicators of a healthy, prosperous family and contribute to the household economy. Moreover, for world regions where infant mortality rates are high, large families are essential (Population Reference Bureau 2003).

Six of the eight newspapers mentioned tribal scarring in one or more articles. However, none of the articles indicated that there are different scarring patterns between each tribe and sex to designate tribal identification and affiliation. For example, adult Nuer males often have six horizontal marks (gar) on the forehead as an indication that they have reached adulthood (Evans-Pritchard 1940), while the Dinka often have six to ten angled cuts to symbolize cattle horns (Deng 1972). In addition, males and females of each tribe may possess decorative, raised patterns on the skin of the face and/or body linked to group identity and conceptions of beauty.

The Dinka and the Nuer are classified as agro-pastoralists who migrate seasonally with herds (Evans-Pritchard 1940; Deng 1972; Hutchinson 1996). Although both tribes plant food crops, cattle herding continues to be the focus of their livelihood (Harragin and Chol 1998; Peters-Golden 2002). The Nuer and the Dinka also rely upon foods that can be gathered. One refugee mentioned missing traditional foods, "particularly the sweet fruit from the wild and warm milk from the cows" (Palmer 2002). One finds the phrase "subsistence farmers" or farming (Smiley 1997) to describe livelihood patterns that are actually cattle-centered and include monetary, social, and language systems constructed around cattle. This focus on cattle can be seen in the traditional dietary patterns of the Nuer and the Dinka whereby, as one refugee explained, a cow's meat and milk were needed for survival. The sport of bull-riding in Nebraska would never be undertaken because, "If you get on the cow (in Sudan), people will laugh at you" (Shaw 2001). Another refugee quipped, "Dogs eat better in America than many human beings do in Africa" (Buttry 2001a). Yet another refugee explained that while in Sudan sorghum is a central part of the diet, it is used to feed livestock in the US (Palmer 2002).

We outlined 11 generic categories that related to resettlement issues and unmet needs, many of which are common to all refugee and immigrant populations. However, each of these generic categories has culture-specific elements that must be incorporated within training programs. For example, one legal issue facing individuals from the Nuer tribe concerns the expectations of men, women, and children in the US. As one refugee noted, "More than any aspect of American culture, the role of husband and father is confusing and troublesome to Sudanese men." He continued, "When we were in Sudan, not everybody was equal. Here women think that they do

have rights" (Buttry 2001b). Nuer men are responsible for the well-being of women, thus disciplining a wife using physical force has been one method of correcting and controlling a woman's behavior since at least the early 20th century (Evans-Pritchard 1940; Holtzman 2000). Because this has not yet been cited as a problem for other Sudanese tribes in the United States, training would be appropriately targeted at the Nuer, and should include alternative mechanisms for resolving conflict. Ongoing training for families would have to be offered because traditional kinship networks are no longer available to assist in problem-solving.

Corporal punishment, still a primary mode of discipline in Sudan, was described in the following manner: "a beating is customary when a youth in Sudan misbehaves. . . . [I]t is not meant to harm the child. It is discipline, so tomorrow they won't repeat it again" (Gonzalez 2000). Misunderstanding of a refugee's behavior can bring disaster. For example, it was suggested that, "When you beat your kids and they call 911, the government will come and take them" (Buttry 2001d). These are unnecessary traumas that could be prevented with cultural understanding and well-designed training programs.

Another issue that is unique to many of the Sudanese tribes involves language. For example, both the Nuer and Dinka speak languages that are generally oral and, as addressed in one article, "most of the Sudanese don't read their native language, let alone English" (Gonzalez 2000). This is especially true for women who had rarely worked outside a home village or had the opportunity to attend school. Thus, many individuals do not have the experience of associating a spoken with a symbolic language. None of the refugees' tribal languages are used outside of individual tribes and, consequently, they have to learn both a new language and become familiar with US educational systems.

For those refugees who are eligible for Nebraska high school entrance, (i.e., less than 19), they have found that they were "much older than typical high school students" and/or their particular English skills prevented them from achieving a comfortable learning pace (Smiley 1997). For those who already have skills applicable to US life, (e.g., midwives, physician's assistants, lawyers, dentists), there are no retraining or skill-matching programs for refugees that would make those skills worthwhile. Most have to start over in low-paying jobs. Yet each of the tribes has a rich, diverse, and complex history that is interesting, and once understood, useful in determining how resettlement programs could maximize present skills and provide others not previously necessary.

For many of Sudan's cultures, orientation to the US is highly complicated because of the limited experience with technology. For example,

acquiring transportation in Nebraska requires more skill than refugees possess. They must learn to understand "insurance, traffic laws, street signs, how the car works, car loans, how to gauge the value of a used car" and more (Buttry 2001a). Prior to arriving in the US, most of Sudan's refugees had never ridden in an automobile.

More than any other of the unmet needs, war trauma and related difficulties have not been discussed as part of Nebraska's resettlement programs. Although starvation, physical wounds, traumatic memories, and unresolved problems associated with refugee camp life were mentioned in three or more newspapers, the most pronounced war trauma cited by refugees had to do with missing or dead family members. Not a single treatment program for addressing war-related wounds was mentioned in any newspaper. By contrast, refugees spoke of devotion to Christian religions and cited faith as essential to survival.

Finally, many of the 18 goals refugees cited reflect issues that are supposed to be tackled in resettlement programs, from language acquisition to education to job location. Yet years after refugees arrive in the US, these issues remain a hindrance to success, as evidenced by published pieces dated as late as 2003. In some cases, these needs cannot be met because the resettlement programs were not designed to assist refugees from developing countries. In other cases, stated goals (e.g., achieving peace in Sudan) are not attainable because refugees have limited legal rights (i.e., they cannot vote) and the US has not intervened in Sudan's war. Nevertheless, refugees wish to educate others about the internal conflict, hoping that this will bring an end to famine, war, and displacement of Sudan's indigenous people.

Despite the fact that 38% of the articles mentioning Sudan's refugees were prominently featured and that more than half included graphics, Nebraska's news media has missed opportunities to educate the public about this new population. Despite the fact that journalists, like all others, cannot escape their own cultural and institutional stereotypes, it is a part of the media's job to provide accurate and astute representations of the facts. After reading most of the news articles, one would not understand that refugees from Sudan are not homogeneous, but instead are culturally diverse. Although skilled for the life they had to abandon, there is a wide gap between the skills and resources they bring to the US and those they need to acquire. This omission by the media has implications for the amount and kind of assistance that the host community might offer as refugees from Sudan transition to life in the Great Plains.

Perhaps a second reason that the media provides limited or inaccurate information about refugees is due to the generic nature of federal resettle-

ment programs, a structure that implies that diversity between and among groups has no impact on success, that is, all refugees receive the same amount of resettlement assistance funding and services over eight months (US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration 2002). Nevertheless, the "social responsibility theory of the press" would suggest that it is the duty of the press to locate and publish detailed information about a topic in the public interest, that not doing so would limit the ability of the public to participate in democratic government systems (Siebert et al. 1963) that impact refugee resettlement policy and implementation. Perhaps it is time for the media to maintain a list of local citizens (i.e., professors, former Peace Corps volunteers, ministers, healers) with knowledge about particular groups that can supplement research systems. In this way, news articles can be more accurately written and cause no harm. In Nebraska, such a listing would benefit not only new refugees but also immigrants and the indigenous peoples of the state who contribute to the diversity, economy, and vitality of the Great Plains.

Conclusions

Based on results of this print media analysis, native Nebraskans living in any city, large or small, learn a limited amount about Sudan's traditional cultures or tribes after reading newspapers. The fact that little has been written about the individual tribes and their associated traditions has implications for the resettlement process. Sudanese refugees are diverse in ethnicity, languages, and traditions and are now forced to embrace markedly different lives. There are also many unmet needs related to skill acquisition and training, as well as misunderstandings related to traditional cultures that are apparent in the goals articulated by the refugees. Specifically, if employees of resettlement and social service agencies or those who might be motivated to provide volunteer assistance wanted to learn about new arrivals, they could not rely upon the print media to provide adequate information. This is true despite the fact that, as one Nebraska refugee caseworker suggested, in the US "the African refugees face much worse conditions than those in Europe" (Buttry 2001c).

Compared to Europeans, refugees from Sudan have more to learn if they are to fill the gap between their traditional culture and the new one they must now acquire. In some cases, inaccurate information has been printed, and this contributes to less favorable feelings toward Sudan's refugees and to immigrant populations as a whole. Educating the host community about a refugee population limits resentment and prejudice about why this popu-

lation has come to the US and why they deserve assistance. Although theories of stereotyping allow us to predict that the media will not accurately portray refugees from Sudan in news articles, it is the media's responsibility to ensure accuracy and truth. One remedy for this problem is the greater use of local experts by journalists in describing minority populations in print.

Despite the limited information in Nebraska's print media, some church groups and individuals are volunteering as mentors for refugees from Sudan. In this capacity, they have learned that they must teach Sudan's refugees about US culture, technology, and economy because it has become clear that "virtually every detail of American life requires some learning and adjustment" (Buttry 2001a). So in spite of the lack of federal- or state-facilitated educational programs and many print media limitations, some Nebraskans are carrying on with a long-held tradition. They are contributing to the emergent success of an immigrant population, a population that is vastly different, from a place most will never visit, and who wish to contribute to the future of the Great Plains.

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APPENDIX

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