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Witchcraft in the Press

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African Press Reports. Daily, Sunday, weekly and vernacular newspapers carry news articles, editorials, feature articles, cartoons and photos about witchcraft. Norman Miller's collection of nearly 600 press reports between 1960-2010 provides hints about modern witchcraft.

A sampling of headlines:

**ANGRY VILLAGERS KILL SUSPECTED WITCH
WITCHCRAFT BLAMED FOR DEATHS & STAGNATION
DRIVER KILLED BY WITCH'S CURSE**

**WITCHCRAFT ALLEGED IN COURT
WITCHCRAFT FEARS HIT SCHOOL
WITCHCRAFT IS A NATIONAL PROBLEM**

**KILLER WITCHDOCTOR STONED TO DEATH
SCHOOLGIRL HAD WITCH'S CHARMS
WITCHCRAFT LASHED AS "COLONIAL RELIC"**

Learning from the African Press

Research on the role of the press in covering witchcraft topics led to the analysis of 594 newspaper reports that appeared in East African newspapers between 1960-2010. The broad content of the collection fell into six categories:

Violence and Law (32%). Subjects included assault, wounding, murder of suspected witches, ritual murder, court cases, laws, legal issue

Economy (21%) Extortion reports, selling of witchcraft items, market-place violations, negative stories on how witchcraft negatively impacts economic development

Government/Politics (18%) Election rigging stories about witchcraft threats between political leaders, political intimidation, enforced oathings, rebellions using witch-hunting promises to recruit followers, state-sponsored terror

Witch-Finding (12%) Witch-hunting movements, mob killings of witches, arrest of witch-finders for naming people witches

Healing and Witchcraft (9%) Traditional medicine, local practitioners dealing with witchcraft, herbalism

Witchcraft and Society (8%) Issues of witchcraft in churches, missionary scholarship, school issues, education about witchcraft, witchcraft in sports, music, TV

Content of articles: Violence; Political issues and witchcraft Economics, exploitation about witchcraft; Traditional Healing and Witchcraft; Social Issues: Schools, Sports, etc.