

African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies

Volume 10
Issue 1 *Spring*

Article 7

4-1-2017

A Tribute To Dr. James Opolot

Ihekwoaba Declan Onwudiwe

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.tsu.edu/ajcjs>

Recommended Citation

Onwudiwe, Ihekwoaba Declan (2017) "A Tribute To Dr. James Opolot," *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*: Vol. 10: Iss. 1, Article 7.

Available at: <https://digitalscholarship.tsu.edu/ajcjs/vol10/iss1/7>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Scholarship @ Texas Southern University. It has been accepted for inclusion in African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies by an authorized editor of Digital Scholarship @ Texas Southern University. For more information, please contact haiying.li@tsu.edu.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. JAMES OPOLOT**BY****IHEKWOABA DECLAN ONWUDIWE, PH.D.****PRESIDENT, AFRICAN CRIMINOLOGY AND JUSTICE ASSOCIATION**

The assignment to pen a tribute about a notable and worthy colleague in less than a twenty-four hour notice may seem to be difficult, but not when commissioned to honor a colleague, who was a friend, scholar, mentor, and above all, collegial and an excellent human being. A man of high repute as Dr. James Opolot was, had many positive attributes and accomplishments. Unfortunately, as the Igbo adage reminds us, “death is a debt that we all must pay.” In this case, we did not anticipate that immediately after his commendable retirement from Texas Southern University (TSU) that Dr. Opolot will leave us so soon on March 10, 2017. His death was a shock and very sad news to those who knew him and adored him. He was an honest man, a gentleman, and a courageous man, who was for justice for all in academia.

He was known for his unrelenting emphasis on research, working everyday reading and researching the literature and new books in the discipline. He often, at every chance possible, inculcated to his younger folks about the need to publish especially in the summer academic sessions. I was intrigued by the comportment in which he read the Newspapers in virtually on salient issues relating to Africa and Africans in the Diaspora. His focus on security and policing matters in Africa may have motivated him to become one of the pioneers of African Criminology and Justice Association (ACJA) for which he also served as its founding President. Dr. Opolot attended almost all the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) and American Society of Criminology (ASC) conferences since I have known him at TSU. He always encouraged his colleagues to submit abstracts and attend conferences, and he also fought for funding in the Department of Administration of Justice (DAJ) at TSU.

Prior to his retirement and sudden death, Dr. Opolot was Professor and Graduate Faculty of Administration of Justice in the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs at TSU. He earned his undergraduate and Master of Arts degrees from Southern Illinois University in Applied Criminology and Administration of Justice. Subsequently, he received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the same institution. Throughout his academic work, he exemplified distinctions in teaching, service, and scholarship. He was the founder of the Administration of Justice Club and served as its Faculty Advisor for many years. Additionally, he served on many dissertation committees, and he was a regular member of the TSU Faculty Senate, where he also served as Secretary for many years. It must be noted that Dr. Opolot was a pioneering member of the ASC International Committee.

I must underscore that the DAJ has passed a resolution to rename the department as the Dr. James Opolot’s Department of Criminal Justice. In the near future, this

A

A Tribute to Dr. James Opolot by Onwudiwe

accolade will be bestowed on his name. The department recognizes the pivotal role he played in the establishment and management of criminal justice programs at TSU. The members of the DAJ believe that this deserved appreciation will serve as good news to his family as Dr. Opolot was survived by his wife and four great sons, including many young grandchildren. The ACJA also appreciates this recognition and Dr. Opolot's contributions to the organization and scholarships.

Briefly, most of his research and writing focused primarily on the many criminological issues dealing with Africa and his native country of Uganda. Below, is appended a partial list of his publications:

2008. Police Administration in Africa: Toward Theory and Practice in English-Speaking Countries. (2nd Edition Lanham, MD: University Press of America).
2006. The Challenges of Environmental Crimes and Terrorism in Africa: Evidence from Eastern, Southern, and West African Countries." The International Journal of African Studies. 5 (2) (Winter).
2002. A Discourse on Legal and Non Legal Institutions in African English – Speaking Countries. Edwin Mullen Press.
1983. "Criminology in Uganda: A chapter included in my mentor's Elmer H. Johnson, International Criminological Developments since 1945, (Greensboro Press).
1983. "Preliminary Assessment of the Uganda Police Training Needs." Police Journal, (December)
1982. "The Contributions of the African Novel to the Development of African Criminology," International Journal of Applied and comparative Criminal Justice, Vol. VI, no. 2 (winter, Pp. 203-210.
1981. "The Role of the Contemporary Judiciary in the New States of Africa." International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice, Vol.5, No.1, (spring).
1981. World Legal Traditions and Institutions. 2nd ed., (Pilgrimage Press).
1980. "Analysis of Crime in Africa by the Mass Media in the 1960's and 1970's," International Journal Of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice, Vol. IV, No. 1, (spring), pp. 43-48.
1980. Organized Crime in Africa. (A Monograph) by Pilgrimage Press.
1976. Criminal Justice and National-Building in Africa. (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America).

1977. Introduction to Modern Criminal Justice Systems. (Washington, D.C: University Press of America).
1979. "Organized Crime in Africa," International Journal of Comparative and Applied Criminal Justice, (Fall).