

HIS 364G/AFR 372G: African History in Films and Photographs
Tue/Thu 11:00-12:30 UTC 3.122

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Western exposure to Africa has primarily been through stylized Hollywood films which rarely offer any historical context for the events they depict. These films have led to an overall lack of understanding for the complexities of African history and had detrimental effects on popular conceptions of Africa, its peoples, and its plights. This course seeks to increase the understanding of the social, economic, and political challenges present throughout Africa's history through an examination of several documentaries and popular films. Each film will serve a twofold purpose. First, it will be a case study used to speak to an issue central to the history of Africa, and second, aid in dispelling many of the misconceptions present in popular portrayals of the continent and its peoples. Each film, where possible, will be accompanied by a text that corresponds with the subject matter. It is the intention of these texts to speak to events and major themes of African history. The ultimate goal of these films, lectures, and discussions is to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of Africa, its societies, cultures, governments, and histories.

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To increase the knowledge and understanding of African history, culture, and society
2. To identify key themes in African history that transcend national boundaries
3. To help students understand the social, cultural, political, and economic agents which have influenced Africa's history
4. To assess the viability of film as a historical source
5. To learn to interpret and evaluate primary sources
6. To understand perceptions about Africa and how they lead to misunderstandings of the past

Books :

It is recommended that students wait to purchase one of the following books until they know what topic interests them for the response paper. Refer to the project choices to see which films match with the books.

Davidson, Basil. *African Civilization Revisited: From Antiquity to Modern Times*. New York, African World Press, 1990.

Hochschild, Adam. *King Leopold's Ghost*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.

Van Woerden, Henk. *A Mouthful of Glass*. London: Granta Books, 2000.

Biko, Steve. *I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*. London: Bowerdean Press, 1978.

Gourevitch, Philip. *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our Families: Stories from Rwanda*. New York: Picador, 1998.

Eggers, David. *What is the What?* New York, First Vintage Books, 2006.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignment (100%)	Due Date	Grade Percentage
Film Reviews	Varies (see syllabus)	20 %
Take Home Reflection Project	March 6	20 %
Africa Conference Review	April 10	15 %
Blackboard Discussions	Varies (see syllabus)	15 %
Attendance	daily	10 %
Response Paper	May 1	20 %

Grading Scale:

Letter Grade:

93-100: A

90-92: A-

87-89: B+

83-86: B

80-82: B-

77-79: C+

73-76: C

70-72: C-

67-69: D+

63-66: D

60-62: D-

0-59: F

Grade Assessment:

A = Excellent

B = Above Average

C = Average

D = Below Average

F = Little evidence of
learning course material

Special TA Office Hours:

In the event that a student wishes to review a film they are unable to access at the library, the TA will hold additional office hours by appointment only on Fridays at the Fine Arts Library. Students must schedule an appointment 48 hours in advance. If a student fails to meet an appointment without at least a 24 hour notice, the TA reserves the right to refuse scheduling additional meetings with the student outside regular office hours. The only exception to this policy is a documented emergency.

Attendance Guidelines:

Students must be present to view each film; therefore, attendance is mandatory. Late attendance will disturb the class. You must arrive on time. Make-ups will be granted only in the case of medical illness or a university-related conflict. Such conflicts will require signed documentation from the Dean's Office explaining the reason for your absence and the student must view the missed film at the Fine Arts Library. Cell phones must be off and there should be no talking in class during film viewing. If you would like to hold a conversation you should step out of the lecture hall. To get full points for attendance you may only miss 2 classes without a documented absence.

Africa Conference Review Guidelines:

All students must attend **TWO** panels and the keynote lecture during the Africa Conference (April 3-6, 2014)—additional information will be announced in class. Students may select any two panels based on their own individual interests. Students must write a **THREE** page paper discussing each of the panelist's papers, the discussion following the panel presentations, and the keynote lecture. For example, if you choose to attend two panels that have four members speaking each, you must discuss all eight of the presenters, their papers, the discussion following the presentations, **AND** the keynote lecture. Successful papers will include summaries of each of the presentations and your opinion of each paper (strengths, weaknesses, etc.). Your papers must be stapled. The report will be due one week after the lecture. No email submissions will be accepted. Your lecture reviews will be worth 15 % of your final grade.

Take Home Reflection Project:

The project will include two essay questions covering class readings, films viewed in class, and lectures/discussions. One essay question will be related to films and the second will be related to the Women's War book, and will include analysis of the text and primary sources, which will test the student's ability to evaluate primary source documents. The student will be given one or two documents from *The Women's War of 1929* text. The student will also be given a question prompt to guide their analysis of the documents.

Sample Questions:

Question 1: **Compare** the film *Egypt: The Habit of Civilization* with *Time Life's Lost Civilizations: Egypt*. **Evaluate** how the two documentaries differ in their presentation of Ancient Egypt. **Use lectures and course readings** to support your answer. The answer must **use specific examples** from the films and readings to assess historical accuracy. Conclude your essay with an assessment as to why you think two documentaries can portray the same subject matter differently and which documentary is historically more accurate. **Explain your answer.**

Question 2: Read the two primary documents then answer the following questions **in an essay format**: Who wrote the documents? What are the documents about? When were the documents written? What are the purposes of the documents? What are the writers trying to accomplish? What do the documents tell us about the time period or the events they refer to? What are the limitations of the documents? The essay **must compare and contrast** the two accounts and arrive at a decision as to which account they believe is more dependable and why the two accounts differ. Use **specific** examples, **explain** your answers, and **evaluate** the documents.

Response Paper Guidelines:

Each student is required to write a response paper that incorporates two films and a selected reading. The student has several options to choose from for the second film and the selected reading. See the list at the end for details.

Reviews must be between 1200 and 1500 words, typed, double-spaced and stapled.

Reviews should be analytical, and not just a retelling of the book and film narratives. You must analyze the film in your own words and critically examine the historical content, style and the overall impression these had on you. Additionally, you will need to incorporate examples and evidence from the readings that either support or contradict the film. Feel free to express your own opinion, but do so clearly with a well supported argument. Organize and develop the main points you wish to make and re-emphasize them in a conclusion.

Do not simply reiterate the story lines, but discuss the context, style and perspective of the films, and how the book either supports or refutes these themes. (Additional materials will be posted on blackboard to assist you with this project).

Proofread your review before submitting it. The university writing center located at the FAC building offers free writing assistance. Students are encouraged to utilize this resource. Silly mistakes take away from the quality of the paper--so don't forget to spell check please!

Turn your review in on time (that means at the beginning of class). Late reviews will be penalized five points for each calendar day late (not class day). After three days late, a grade of zero will be given. Emailed submissions will not be accepted. Your review will be worth 20 points of your final grade.

Regarding a bibliography and citing sources for the response paper: If you are only using the two required films and the required reading (and *Key Events*) then you do NOT need a bibliography. If you use any additional sources then please include a full bibliography (even if its film reviews/background). For any direct quotes (from required reading or non-required) then you MUST cite the page number and book/author it came from. You can use parenthesis or footnotes--whichever you feel more comfortable with--as long as you are consistent. Most historians use Chicago/Turabian style, but as long as you are consistent you may use whatever format you are used to.

Response Paper Options:

Students will choose one of the options below to write their response paper. The student must watch the corresponding film and read the required pages in order to complete the assignment.

Option 1: African Civilizations (used with the films *Lost Kingdoms of Africa*)

FILM: *Magical Egypt-Episode 7; Illumination* (request from TA)

BOOK: Davidson, Basil. *African Civilization Revisited: From Antiquity to Modern Times*. New York, African World Press, 1990. (required, p. 1 – 166).

Option 2: Colonialism in Africa (used with the film *Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death*)

FILM: *This Magnificent African Cake* (VIDCASS 1663)

BOOK: Hochschild, Adam. *King Leopold's Ghost*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.

Option 3: Racism in Africa (used with the film *Black and White in Color*)

FILM: *Cry, the Beloved Country* DVD 9291

BOOK: Van Woerden, Henk. *A Mouthful of Glass*. London: Granta Books, 2000.

PT 5881.33 O314 M6613 2000

Option 4: Independence Struggles (used with the film *Lumumba*)

FILM: *Cry Freedom* DVD 138

BOOK: Biko, Steve. *I Write What I Like: Selected Writings*. London: Bowerdean Press, 1978.

DT 763 B48 1978

Option 5, Governance and Violence (used with the film *Sometimes in April*)

FILM: *Hotel Rwanda* DVD 3702

BOOK: Gourevitch, Philip. *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our Families: Stories from Rwanda*. New York: Picador, 1998. (p. 5-171.) DT 450.435 G68 1998

Option 6, Governance and Violence (used with the film *General Idi Amin Dada*)

FILM: *The Devil Came on Horseback* DVD 6451

BOOK: Eggers, David. *What is the What?* New York, First Vintage Books, 2006. (p. 9-207)

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Blackboard Discussions:

Students are required to respond to discussion board assignments throughout the semester **and** read and respond to at least two of their classmates' posts. Discussion posts need to be approximately 6 sentences in length (150 words), and reflect the topic of discussion and engage the course material. All posts must conform to proper etiquette and show respect for fellow students and the subject matter. Any student who violates appropriate university rules of conduct will be subject to removal from the class. The discussion board posts are worth 15 points of your final grade. The points are earned or not earned – there are no partial points. To get the points for each post you must fully engage the question and meet the length requirement and you must respond to two classmates with each assignment. No late posts will receive credit. This is the only assignment that cannot be turned in late. There will be a one week window in which to complete these posts. The deadline for each post is listed on the course schedule.

Film Reviews:

During each film students will be required to fill out Film Review handouts and turn them in following the class discussion of the film. Student responses should reflect analytical thinking and the complexities of the topics covered. Each film review will require students to do a minimal amount of pre-film research. This simply means to “google” the film and become familiar with the topic, filmmaker, time period and issues addressed by the film. It is impossible to understand what is going on in the film (and therefore to adequately complete the Film

Review) without coming to class with some basic context. A total of FIVE film review sheets will be randomly selected and graded.

Extra Credit Policy:

There will be no extra credit for this class. The discussion board assignments and attendance are free points. All they require is for you to participate and follow instructions.

Format Guidelines:

All assignments must be stapled, typed, double spaced, have 1” margins and size 12 Times New Roman font. Assignments that do not follow these guidelines will receive a five point deduction.

Part of writing history includes clearly communicating your ideas. As such, written assignments must conform to standard rules of written English including the organization of essays and grammar. Students who require assistance can use the undergraduate writing center in the FAC free of charge. There will also be additional materials posted on blackboard for your assistance.

Plagiarism:

How do you avoid committing plagiarism? Here are some basic tips:

1. Historians use a variety of citation formats, including footnotes, endnotes, and indicating their source directly in their text within parentheses. Within those formats, they use a variety of styles. For this class, you will be using the Chicago Manual Style for the response paper. A guide will be posted on blackboard.
2. Take notes carefully. Whenever you copy a direct quotation, protect yourself by putting quotation marks around it. Attach a full, accurate citation to any borrowed passage, whether quoted or paraphrased, and keep it attached as you write.
3. Although borrowed ideas must be fully acknowledged in a citation, you do not need to provide a citation for information that your reader can reasonably be expected to know. When in doubt, include a citation.
4. Plagiarism includes taking direct quotes or ideas from a source without giving the original author credit through a citation. It is easier to avoid plagiarism that involves verbatim copying or handing in the same paper twice than it is to avoid plagiarism that involves paraphrase, probably the trickiest area of all. Certainly it is the area where most instances of plagiarism occur.

Class Policies:

- **Policy on Late or Missed Assignments/Examinations:** Make-ups will be granted only in the case of medical illness or university-related conflict. Make-ups will only be given when a request is made prior to the date of the exam or assignment except for documented medical emergencies. Even with prior notice, an alternative exam date will only be given in extreme documented cases.

- **Assignments:** All assignments must be submitted on due dates. Assignments turned in late will incur a penalty of 5 points per calendar day late. Assignments more than three calendar days late will not be graded and will receive a zero for the assignment.
- **University of Texas Honor Code:** The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. Any student found guilty of scholastic dishonesty may receive an “F” in the course and be remanded to the appropriate University of Texas authorities for disciplinary action. For more information, view Student Judicial Services at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.
- **Use of Class Materials:** No material presented in lecture may be directly or indirectly published, posted to the Internet, or rewritten for publication or distribution in any medium. Neither these materials nor any portion thereof may be stored in a computer except for personal and non-commercial use. All information derived from the internet must be adequately cited.
- **Student Privacy:** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) require that student privacy be preserved. Thus the posting of grades, even by the last four digits of the social security number, is forbidden. All communication will remain between the instructor and the student, and the instructor will not be able to share details of the student’s performance with parents, spouses, or any others.
- **Documented Disability Statement:** The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone). Students who require special accommodations need to get a letter from the Service for Students with Disabilities. This letter should be presented to the Professor at the beginning of the semester and the specific accommodations discussed at this time. Five days prior to an exam, it is the student’s responsibility to remind the professor of the accommodations needed. If the student fails to produce the letter and speak with the Professor five days before the exam, then the student may not get the accommodations he/she requires.

Course Schedule:

Part One: African Origins and Pre-Colonial Africa

Week One: Introduction to Africa

- Jan. 14 Lecture: Film analysis and Stereotypes of Africa
Reading: *Key Events*, Africa: An Overview and Chapter 1
Mandatory Article: “Talking about Tribe” pdf article available on blackboard
FILM: Africa Series by Basil Davidson: Episode 1: *Different But Equal* (51 mins)
- Jan 16 Lecture: African Origins/ Civilizations
FILM: Africa Series by Basil Davidson: Episode 2: *Mastering a Continent*(51 mins)
Reading: *Key Events*, Chapters 2 and 3

Week Two: Images of Africa

- Jan 21 Lecture: “Perceptions of Africa”
FILM: Africa Series by Basil Davidson: Episode 3: *Caravans of Gold* (51 mins)
Reading: *Key Events*, Chapters 4, and 5
- Jan 23 **FILM:** Africa Series by Basil Davidson: Episode 4: *The King and the City* (51 mins)
Assignment: Black Board Discussion 1: (deadline Jan 25 at midnight)

Week Three: African Civilizations

- Jan 28 **FILM:** *Lost Kingdoms of Africa: Nubia* (60min)
Reading: *Key Events*, Chapters 7, 8, and 9
- Jan 30 **FILM:** *Lost Kingdoms of Africa: Great Zimbabwe* (60min)/ discussion
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 10, 11, 12

Week Four: African Civilizations cont.

- Feb 4 Class discussion of documentaries and Ancient Africa
- Feb 6 Lecture: Africa’s Contact with Europe
FILM: *Mountains of the Moon* (136 min)
Assignment: Black Board Discussion 2: (deadline Feb 8 at midnight)

Week Five: Early African Contact with Europe

- Feb 11 **FILM:** *Mountains of the Moon* cont

Reading: *Key Events*, Chapters 13, 14, 15; *Women's War* Chapter 2
Part Two: Colonial Africa

Feb 13 **FILM:** *Mountains of the Moon* discussion
Lecture: "Scramble for Africa"

Week Six: Colonialism in Africa

Feb 18 **Primary Source Discussion**
FILM: *Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death* (84 min)
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 16, 17, 18
Women's War Chapter 3

Feb 20 Lecture: Africa in the World Wars
FILM: *Congo: White King, Red Rubber, Black Death* cont / discussion
Assignment: Black Board Discussion 3: (deadline Feb 22 at midnight)

Week Seven: The World Wars

Feb 25 **FILM:** *Black and White in Color* (90 min)
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 19, 20, 21
Women's War Chapter 4
Begin working on Response paper reading

Feb 27 **FILM:** *Black and White in Color* cont/ discussion
Lecture: Independence and African Radicalism

Week Eight: Independence Struggles

Mar 4 **FILM:** *Lumumba* (115 min)
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 22, 23, 24
Women's War Chapter 5

Mar 6 **FILM:** *Lumumba* cont/discussion
Assignment: Black Board Discussion 4: (deadline Mar 8 at midnight)
Assignment: Take Home Reflection Project due

**** SPRING BREAK****

Part Three: Independent Africa

Week Nine: Independence Struggles cont.

Mar 18 Lecture: Independent Africa

Mar 20 **FILM:** *General Idi Amin Dada (90 Min)*

Week Ten: Governance and Violence in Africa

Mar 25 **FILM:** *General Idi Amin Dada (90 Min) cont/discussion*
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 25, 26; *Women's War* Chapter 6

Mar 27 **FILM:** *Sometimes in April (140 min)*
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 27, 28; *Women's War* 128-130; 137-139; 156-162
Assignment: Black Board Discussion 5: (deadline April 5 at midnight)

Week Eleven: Governance and Violence cont

Apr 1 **FILM:** *Sometimes in April (140 min) cont/discussion*

April 3 NO CLASS!!

******AFRICA CONFERENCE: April 4-6******

Week Twelve: Gender

Apr 8 Lecture: Contemporary Issues in Africa/ Response Paper Instructions
Students should have finished reading for the response paper.

Apr 10 **FILM:** *Moolade (124min)*
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 29, 30, 31; *Women's War* 169-172, 181-195, 247-259
Websites:

<http://www.equalitynow.org/fgm>

<http://www.iac->

[ciaf.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18&Itemid=9](http://www.tostan.org/web/page/644/sectionid/548/pagelevel/3/interior.asp)

<http://www.tostan.org/web/page/644/sectionid/548/pagelevel/3/interior.asp>

Interview with filmmaker Ousmane Sembene:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2005/jun/05/features>

Assignment: Africa Conference Response Paper Due

Week Thirteen: Gender cont

Apr 15 **FILM:** *Moolade cont / discussion*
Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 32, 33; *Women's War* 269-279, 294-296, 304-306, 309-311, 313, 348-349, 375, 378-381

Apr 19 Lecture: Apartheid in South Africa

FILM: *National Archives Politics International: Apartheid in South Africa, 1957(33 mins)*

Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 34, 35; *Women's War* 385-393, 400-405, 410-412, 425-431, 481-487, 506-508, 516

Week Fourteen: Apartheid

Apr 22 **FILM:** *The Wooden Camera* (105 min)

Reading: *Key Events* Chapters 36; *Women's War* 600-602, 628-641, 667-674, 707-717, 746-747

Apr 24 **FILM:** *The Wooden Camera cont / discussion*

Week Fifteen: Globalization

Apr 29 Lecture: Final Thoughts

May 1 **Assignment: Response Paper Due**