

Contemporary African Popular Culture
AADS 340
Contemporary African Popular Culture
Prof. Young Email: hbhanayoung@gmail.com
Course Meets On-Line: 12.30-2.00pm
Zoom Office Hours: Th 2-3:30

Requirements:

1. Attendance and participation are crucial. Students have to be present with BOTH video and audio on mute until I ask questions. Active engagement such as answering or asking questions is essential. More than two unexcused absences will be penalized. I will be asking for volunteers to look up information throughout the semester and this can boost your participation grade. If you keep up with the reading and viewing, you should do well in this class. (10%)
2. Each week in the Assignment section of Canvas, students will be presented with a series of questions dealing with the topic we are covering. You will be graded on how thoroughly and thoughtfully you answer the question. Wrong answers will not be penalized but careless ones will not be accepted. Students must answer questions by 10pm the night before class (20%)
3. Students will write a short story set in a country in Africa 100 years from now. What would the country look like in a hundred years? Do research about the country you choose. For example, if you write about Angola, you must deal with the issue of landmines. What do you expect in terms of global flows of capital, environmental issues and issues of racial hierarchy, to name a few. (4 pages double spaced). Due date: Thursday 9/10. (10%)
4. Working in pairs, students will do one creative performance piece or visual installation. This may consist of either a creative video, a recorded live performance or a film of your visual installation. If you choose the video option, you cannot simply record your performance. You must engage creatively with video/filmmaking aesthetics. The performance pieces (live or video) must be 7 to 10 minutes long and engage in some way with what we talk about in class. If you make a visual installation (painting, comic book, installation), you must interview yourselves, talking about the rationale that went into the art project. These are due any time BEFORE Thanksgiving break. (25%)
5. 5-8 page final paper, due on Week 16: 12/8. Topics will be distributed later in the semester. There will be no final exam for this class. This is a research paper that requires outside sources and must include a bibliography and works cited page. I do not grade late final papers. (35%)

Please purchase: Braithwaite, Oyinkan. *My Sister, The Serial Killer*.

Code of Mutual Respect: In general, this is not a lecture class, but one grounded in dialogue. Feel free to be candid and direct in this class. Your insights are important, and your voice needs to be heard, so look forward to the opportunity to chime in. I will respect you as adults and assume that you will treat others in the class with respect as well. Because we will be sharing many personal ideas which may conflict with your own personal ideas and beliefs, it is important that you strive to be considerate,

sensitive, and respectful. Be prepared to offer constructive criticism as well as receive it. We will discuss work that includes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender themes in this course. Students are expected to approach all class material with maturity and academic rigor.

Code of Academic Conduct: University policy requires that students cite sources they use in their work. THIS INCLUDES PARAPHRASING of materials. Any inclusion of ideas that are not your own will be considered plagiarism. Students who do not properly cite ideas, quotes or paraphrasing of other published or unpublished material will automatically face disciplinary action which will also be reflected in their grade. As a reminder, the honor code of the University is as follows, “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.” For more information on the Honor Code please see the following link <http://www.utexas.edu/about-ut/mission-core-purpose-honor-code>

Students with Disabilities: Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY) for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Religious Holidays: If you observe a recognized religious holiday that is in conflict with the university schedule, please come talk to me.

Writing Center: I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, PCL 2.330 , 471-6222: <http://www.uwc.utexas.edu/>). The UWC offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. These services are not just for writing that has "problems": Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a successful writing project. The UWC's trained consultants work with students from every department on both academic and non-academic writing. Using methods that preserve the integrity of your work, they help you develop strategies to improve your writing and become a more independent writer.

Week 1:

Thursday, 8/27: Introductions and Syllabus

In Class Film: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie—“The Danger of a Single Story”

Week 2: What is Popular?

Tuesday, 9/1:

Reading: Newell, Stephanie and Onookome Okome. “Introduction: Popular Culture in Africa: The Episteme of the Everyday”.

Thursday, 9/3:

Reading: Thomas Hendriks. “Queer(ing) popular culture: homo-erotic provocations from Kinshasa. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 31.1 (2019): 71-88

Week 3: The Queerness of African Culture

Tuesday, 9/8:

Discussion of Film: Wanuri Kahiu's *Rafiki* (Amazon Prime)

Thursday, 9/10:

Reading: <http://sfoonline.barnard.edu/feminist-and-queer-afro-asian-formations/queering-the-archive-brown-bodies-in-ecstasy-visual-assemblages-and-the-pleasures-of-transgressive-erotics/2/>

Assignment 1 Due!

Week 4: Fashion and the Sapeurs

Tuesday, 9/15:

Reading: Monica Miller. "Black, Queer, Dandy: The Beauty Without Whom We Cannot Live." *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 2016. 38-39: 32-39.

Thursday 9/17:

Read and Watch: <https://haenfler.sites.grinnell.edu/subcultures-and-scenes/sapeurs/>
"The Congo Dandies: Living in poverty and Spending a fortune to look like a million Dollars"

Week 5: Sex, Sports and Caster Semenya

Tuesday, 9/22:

Discussion of video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-UX0LE_tCg

Too Fast to be a woman: The Story of Caster Semenya

Thursday 9/24:

Reading: Tavia Nyong'o. "The Unforgivable transgression of being Caster Semenya." *Women and Performance*. 20.1 (2010): 95-100

Week 6: Competition

Tuesday 9/29:

Reading: James Tar Tsaiior, "Football as Social Unconscious or the Cultural Logic of Late Imperialism in Postcolonial Nigeria."

Thursday 10/1:

Discussion of Video on Miss Angola Landmine:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kh-EBCIPfSY>

Week 7: Cultural Appropriation or Cultural Appreciation?

Tuesday, 10/6:

Discussion of Videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRgUpRx1wE8>

DooKoom: <https://www.okayafrica.com/dookoom-you-dont-exist-video/>

<https://www.okayafrica.com/dookoom-larney-jou-poes-video-storm-how-far-has-south-africa-progressed-as-a-democracy/>

Thursday 10/8

Reading: Obbard, Kiera and Stephanie Cork. "Skin Salvaged: Die Antwoord, Oscar Pistorius, and the Spectacle of the Flesh in the Rainbow Nation". *The Journal of Popular Culture* 49.2 (2016): 417-

Week 8: Walking through the City

Tuesday, 10/13:

Reading: “‘Madam, I can See Your Penis’: Disruption and Dissonance in the Work of Steven Cohen.” In *Acts of Transgression: Contemporary Live Art in South Africa*. Eds. Jay Pather and Catherine Boule. 60-81

Thursday, 10/15:

Discussion of Wura-Natasha Ogunji’s work: <https://wuraogunji.com/home.html>

Week 9: Queer Performativity

Tuesday 10/20:

Reading: Malcomess, Bettina. “Don’t get it twisted: queer performativity and the emptying out of gesture”. In *Acts of Transgression: Contemporary Live Art in South Africa*. Eds. Jay Pather and Catherine Boule. 193-218

Thursday 10/22:

Watch: FAKA, look at work by Athi-Patra Ruga and Wangechi Mutu

Week 10: Garbage and Art

Tuesday 10/27:

Reading: Afrogallonism:

<https://thisisafrica.me/arts-and-culture/serge-clottey-ghanaian-afrogallonism/>

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m67fogAmbLo>

Thursday 10/29:

Reading: Fabrice Monteiro

<https://www.themantle.com/arts-and-culture/photographic-confrontations-fabrice-monteiro-interview>

Week 11: Fallen Statues

Tuesday 11/3:

Watch in class: *Pumzi*

Read: <https://time.com/cape-town-south-africa-water-crisis/>

Thursday 11/5:

Reading:

<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1035&context=history-in-the-making>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/2020/07/12/confederate-monuments-fall-dont-forget-bree-newsomes-athletic-act-protest-2015/>

Week 12: Satire

Tuesday 11/10:

Reading: Braithwaite, Oyinkan. *My Sister, The Serial Killer*.

Thursday 11/12:

Reading: Braithwaite, Oyinkan. *My Sister, The Serial Killer*.

Week 13: Teens and Cell-Phones-Critics Company

Tuesday 11/17:

Reading: Nigerian Teen Film-makers

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UComu3ao5983Wpni7R_JcovQ

Z: The Beginning

Thursday 11/19:

Reading: Catch Up Day

Week 14:

FALL BREAK

Week 15:

Tuesday 12/1:

Final paper Workshops

Thursday 12/3:

Individual paper workshops

Week 16:

Tuesday 12/8: Final Paper Due

Additional Material on Dance That Won't be Covered in Class:

1. Jayna Brown. "Buzz and Rumble: Global Pop Music and Utopian Impulse." *Social Text* 28.1 (2010): 125-146.
2. Marissa Moorman. Anatomy of Kuduro: Articulating the Angolan Body Politic after the War. *African Studies Review* 57.3 (2014): 21-40
Watch Youtube videos on Kuduro
3. Xavier Livermon, *From Kwaito Bodies: Remastering Space and Subjectivity in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. 2020