

**ANTH 3400**  
**PEOPLES AND CULTURES OF AFRICA**  
MWF 12:00–12:50pm  
Fall 2023 CHEM 352

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Doug Henry  
**OFFICE HOURS:** TUES, WED 1:00 – 2:30pm. Sycamore 104-B.  
You can also email me to set up a time:  
[doug.henry@unt.edu](mailto:doug.henry@unt.edu)

**Instructional Assistant:** TBD

**Description**

This course is designed to explore the diversity of African people and culture through a variety of sources—ethnographies, films, literature, videos, and narratives. We will address both the reality of life in contemporary Africa as well as the way it has been portrayed by anthropologists, explorers, historians, the media, and African scholars themselves. While this is an anthropology course, the subject of the course is Africa, not the history of anthropology in Africa. This means that we'll look in detail at the continent's rich geography, environment, history, politics, religion, economics, and ethnicities, as well as the challenges that current events in Africa pose for its people, and for the rest of the world. There are no course prerequisites.

**Course Objectives**

1. To develop an awareness of the rich diversity of the peoples and cultures of the African continent.
2. To develop in students an open-minded objectivity in realizing not just other ways of doing things, but other possibilities of ways to make sense of the human condition.
3. To develop scholarly critical thinking skills, and effective means of organizing and presenting them.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Electronic course readings.** The bulk of readings for this course will be available electronically through the course website. You should be able to access it by entering your student ID through UNT's "E-Campus" Canvas site: <https://learn.unt.edu/>. In addition, there are several websites that you will need to read through completely and thoroughly, and three short books (see syllabus). If you want you can print the articles on any standard printer, either at home, in the library, or in a UNT computer lab (print for free).

**Texts** (all of these can be rented through the UNT bookstore for about \$25. Or- you can also buy them on Amazon for cheap!).

Dangarembga, Tsitsi

(2004) *Nervous Conditions*. New Hampshire: Berkeley, CA: Seal Press.

Holloway, Kris

2007 *Monique and the Mango Rains: Two Years with a Midwife in Mali*.

Beah, Ishmael

2007 *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*. New York: Sarah Crichton Books.

**Class Project:** Students will be expected to do a detailed study of a selected African ethnic group or area (*try to do a single subgroup within a country, not the whole country, though some exceptions can be made*). The project will be completed in three phases. Phase 1 will be due after the first third of the course, Phase 2 in the middle; Phase 3 near the end of the course. Late projects will be penalized. For each of these, double-space, use 12 point, Times New Roman font, with no more than 1.2” margins. Because it’s a research paper, you will need to use lots of in-text citations like this (Henry 2005), with a reference section at the end (cite like the readings listed above). Everyone will submit their papers electronically, through our UNT Canvas course. For all of these, don’t plagiarize, or use an AI software like “ChatGPT” (UNT monitors for “AI” software use, anyway).

**Phase I:** Find and name your group. Locate them geographically; find the names of the largest cities in the area. Start with geographic/ topographic information, answering at least the following questions: What is the terrain like? The weather? How does the geography/ topography condition their subsistence or style of life? What religions are represented? Can you characterize rites of passage, or relations between men and women? Research the colonial-era history of the country or area where your group is located, and how this impacted your group. Summarize the information in a 5 page double-spaced paper turned in to me (i.e., 5 pages of text, not including pictures or the bibliography). You should have at least 5 sources, at least 3 of which need to come from a UNT library source (e.g.- non-internet/ webpage sources; simply citing a book that an Internet site also cites doesn’t count—you have to go to the library website). Remember, don’t plagiarize, or use a “ChatGPT” kind of AI. Include in-text citations, that look like this (Henry 2019), and bibliographic references at the end (you can use the style of the readings that I have in the syllabus, above).

**Phase II:** I want you to research the arts/ arts scene in the country where your group is located (it can be just your group, or you can broaden out to the country-level). Pick a particular artform to research, something like a particular music style or drumming, cinema, fabric, dance, fashion, even hairstyling- either traditional arts, or contemporary. Try to zero in on just 1 artform (although 2 is acceptable), so you can research it in depth. E.g.- “Nollywood film,” “Malian kora,” “Congolese bark-cloth,” “Ugandan dance,” “Accra fashion scene,” “Senegalese hip hop.” Include answers to the questions, “what is unique about this art form?” “what is its history?” “who are the major artists/ practitioners?” You’ll need 3-5 citations total; you must use at least one UNT library source, but can also use Internet webpages in addition to this. Include in-text citations, that look like this (Henry 2019), and bibliographic references at the end (you can use the style of the readings that I have in the syllabus). Make sure you cite all internet sources! 2-3 pages of text, double-spaced.

**Phase III:** Begin with either library sources or the Internet to do research on what current issues and/ or challenges exist for the people in your research area. Pick one or two of these issues, and construct a research paper around what the issues are, and what development agencies (e.g.- Non Governmental Organizations/ NGOs, or other development groups) are doing about them. Try to include both local and international agencies (you can google something like “COUNTRY-NAME development directory NGO,” or use something like “NGOExplorer.org”). In your own words, describe the activities (DO NOT cut and paste from their website). What needs or problems exist that they are targeting? What activities are they doing to accommodate the interests of your ethnic group or other local communities? Try to hone in on a particular area, such as “YOUTH” or “HEALTH” or “CHILDREN” or “EDUCATION” or “ENVIRONMENT.” In writing up, you should

probably start with some background research about the social problems and their prevalence in your group's area (though this should not be the focus of your paper- about 1-2 pages is OK), to give context for what the development agencies are doing. Summarize the information in a 5 – 6 page guide to be turned in. You should have at least 5 sources, at least 2 of which need to come from non-internet sources. Include in-text references/ citations, and bibliographic references at the end.

In addition to the class projects, there will one short in-class map quiz, short assignments covering the book-readings, two tests, and a final exam. Tests and the final will consist of multiple choice and short answer type questions, and will come from both assigned readings and class lectures. Make-up quizzes or tests will not be given unless the student has arranged in advance to miss or can document a legitimate excuse.

### Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

To succeed in the course, there are some things you should know how to do:

- Use Canvas
- Use email and the Internet
- Use Microsoft Word (or similar word processor)
- Use the UNT library catalog

**Attendance/Class Participation:** If you want to do well on the exams, you'll have to come to class.

### Student Evaluation:

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Map Quiz                        | 8% of grade (80 points)        |
| Project (Phase I)               | 13% of grade (130 points)      |
| Test 1                          | 15% of grade (150 points)      |
| Test 2                          | 15% of grade (150 points)      |
| Project (Phase II)              | 12% of grade (120 points)      |
| Project (Phase III)             | 15% of grade (150 points)      |
| Final                           | 15% of grade (150 points)      |
| Film Assignments/ responses     | 5% of grade (50 points)        |
| Readings Assignments/ responses | 3% of grade (30 points)        |
| <u>UNT Core Evaluation</u>      | <u>2% of grade (20 points)</u> |
| <b>TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE</b>    | <b>1,030</b>                   |

All quizzes and tests will be given online, and will be timed.

### TOTAL POINTS:

927–1,030 = A  
 824 – 926 = B  
 721 – 823 = C  
 618 – 720 = D  
 0 – 617 = F

Your primary responsibility as a student is to master the material presented in class and in the readings. This is easily achieved, with steady work. Come to class, take notes, watch the films, and do the readings! I wouldn't assign bad readings—they're all in fact pretty good. At times concepts or issues raised might be unclear. Students come from a variety of backgrounds and have various experience, strengths, and weaknesses. If you have ANY questions or feel unsure about any class material, see me after class or during office hours as soon as you realize there may be a problem. DON'T wait until the end of the term. Please realize that my goal as an instructor is not just to grade, evaluate, and test, but to help you gain a valuable life perspective to carry outside the class, into whatever you do.

**Plagiarism and Cheating.** The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. The unauthorized use of "ChatGPT" kind of AI software is also considered cheating. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic "F" in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

**Student Behavior in the Classroom.** Student behavior that interferes with other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct.

**Attendance.** I will randomly take attendance in class. Those with higher attendance rates will be "bumped up" should they have a borderline grade.

**Class Copyright.** This class and all the written materials in Canvas are copyrighted. Students may not post or otherwise share anything from class outside of class. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to both lawsuits and disciplinary action.

#### **UNT IT Help Desk**

**Email:** [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)

**Live Chat:** <https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk/chatsupport>

**Phone:** 940-565-2324

**Hours and Availability:** Visit <https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk> for up-to-date hours and availability

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

#### *Other Student Support Services*

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry)

*Academic Support Services*

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (https://library.unt.edu/)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS (use this one)**

**Days highlighted in yellow mean “NO IN-CLASS MEETING”**

| <u>Date</u>          | <u>Topic and Pre-Class Readings:</u>  |
|----------------------|---|
| Aug 21               | Introduction to Course  |
| Aug 23               | <b>Encountering and Representing Africa:</b><br>The “Idea” of Africa<br><br><i>Readings before class (in Canvas):</i><br><i>Jere-Malanda, Regina (2004) Confessions of a Foreign Correspondent. Ode Magazine, September 2004</i>  |
| Aug 25               | <b>The Lenses through which we see Africa</b> No IN-CLASS today- watch the film!<br>Film: <i>Tubabs in Africa</i> (56 min)<br><a href="https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/tubabs-in-africa">https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/tubabs-in-africa</a><br>(note: if the link doesn’t work, just link to it yourself through the UNT library catalog).<br><br><i>Readings before class:</i><br>Go to Instagram, and spend 5-10 minutes looking at the Community: “OkayAfrica.”<br>Come to class next week ready to talk about the differences in perspectives you see about “Africans,” and the messages they get across. |
| Aug 28               | <b>Geography, Climate, and People</b><br><br><i>Readings before class (in Canvas):</i><br><i>Nowak, Rachel (2002) How the Rich Stole the Rain. New Scientist. London: Jun 15, 2002. 174 (2347): 4-5</i>   |
| Aug 30               | <b>Human Origins and migrations</b><br><br><i>No Readings- study the Map!</i>   |
| Sept 1               | <b>MAP QUIZ NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED IN CANVAS!</b><br><br><i>(NO IN-CLASS today- do the Map Quiz in Canvas)</i>   |
| Sept 4 <sup>th</sup> | Labor Day (no class- UNT is closed)   |
| Sept 6               | <b>Migrations and language, Ancient Civilizations</b>   |

**Readings before class (online):**

Chris Lowe: *The Trouble With Tribe: how a common word masks complex African Realities*. <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/spring-2001/the-trouble-with-tribe>

Sept 8

**Ancient Civilizations**

**Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Khpera, Saafu. (2000). *Ancient Egypt: Africa's Stolen Legacy*. *New African*, Oct2000 Issue 389: 18-26.

McConnell, Tristan (2005). *In Timbuktu, a New Move to Save Ancient Manuscripts*. *Christian Science Monitor*.

Sept 11

**Africans in the Americas – I**  
(the Slave Trade)

**Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Gyasi, Yaa (2016) *Esi*. In *Homecoming*. New York: Alfred Knopf

Watch this clip of the author: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDB0y-dWDOE>

(Trigger warning: this is Yaa Gyasi's fictionalized account of a woman being captured and sold into slavery on the African coast, and so it's every bit as violent as you might imagine. If you're triggered by reading about acts of violence done on individuals (including some sexual violence) and you'd rather read something else, let me know and I'll arrange something).

Sept 13

NO IN-CLASS TODAY.

**WATCH the Class Film: "The Language You Cry In" (53 min)**

<https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/0452ef30-6ee9-43c1-9c79-255c1bbcc2ab?referrer=https:%2F%2Fiii.library.unt.edu%2F>

If the link doesn't work, just find the link yourself through the UNT Library catalog

**Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Gyasi, Yaa (2016) *Esi*. In *Homecoming*. New York: Alfred Knopf (just finish if you haven't already)

Sept 15

**Slave Trade - II**

**Watch these videos before class (in Canvas):**

**Big Think - Uzodinma Iweala- What is the legacy of colonialism in Africa? (5 min)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwOqmThOL0U>

**Big Think- Richard Dowden- Colonialism's Impact on Africa (4 min)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhnG8JbBegA>

Sept 18

## Colonialism I

### **Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Rodney, Walter (1972) *The Supposed Benefits of Colonialism to Africa. In How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.* Washington, DC: Howard University Press.

Sept 20

## Colonialism II

Noah, Trevor (2019). *Apartheid and Born a Crime. Pp.19-31 In Born a Crime: stories from a South African Childhood.* New York: Spiegel and Grau

Sept 22

**Test 1 (no in-class today- the test will be available on Canvas for today only)**

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Sept 25

## Social and Economic Organization

Hunter-Gatherers

### **Readings before class (in Canvas):**

David S. Wilke and Gilda A. Morelli. (2000) *Forest Foragers: A Day in the Life of the Efe Pygmies in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Parts 1 and 2.* *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 24 (3), (4).

Sept 27

## Social and Economic Organization

Hunting-Gathering and Pastoralism

### **Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Harman, Danna (2001). *Kenya's Child Shepherds Tend the Books by Night.* *Christian Science Monitor.* September 4, 2001.

Fratkin, Elliot (2001) *East African Pastoralism in Transition.* *African Studies Review* 44 (3): 1-25.

Sept 29

No in-class today- watch the film!

**Film:** *Milking the Rhino* (52 min)

<http://docuseek2.com.libproxy.library.unt.edu/view/check/149123815610000001197100000120/1/0/0> or- search the library catalog

**No Readings- work on class project!**



**Oct 2**                    **Social and Economic Organization –  
Pastoralism II**

*No readings*  
**Class project Phase I due!!**

**Oct 4**                    **Horticulture, Agriculture**

*Readings before class (in Canvas):*  
Start reading *Dangarembga, Tsitsi (1988) Nervous Conditions. Boulder, CO: Rienner Publishers (read through page 65)*

**Oct 6**                    **Urbanization**

*Readings before class (in Canvas):*  
Francesca Perry (2016). Beyond the Chaos: a real human bond: Lagos residents share their stories <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/feb/26/things-changing-better-lagos-residents-share-stories>

Adegbeye, Olutimehin (2018). Husbands to rent: try being a single woman in Nigeria. <https://africasacountry.com/2018/10/husbands-to-rent>

**Oct 9**                    **Marriage, Coming of Age, Discussion**

*Readings before class (in Canvas):*  
*Dangarembga, Tsitsi (1988) Nervous Conditions. Boulder, CO: Rienner Publishers (read through page 121)*  
**READINGS ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CANVAS! (10 points)**

**Oct 11**                    **FEATURE-LENGTH FILM I: Subira (96 min)**

<https://video-alexanderstreet-com.libproxy.library.unt.edu/watch/subira>  
No in-class meeting today- just watch the film, and do the assignment in Canvas

**Oct 13**                    **FEATURE-LENGTH FILM II: Subira (96 min)**

No in-class meeting- just finish the film and do the Canvas assignment.

**Oct 16**                    **Social Transformations and Gender II**

*Readings (in Canvas):*  
*Watch Vice- The Land of No Men up to about 9:50*

[https://video.vice.com/en\\_us/video/samburu-land-of-nomen/55dba6111956df9a33a7581c](https://video.vice.com/en_us/video/samburu-land-of-nomen/55dba6111956df9a33a7581c)

Oct 18            **Transformations, Religion, Philosophy,  
and Cosmology**

***Readings before class (in Canvas):***

*Aderibigbe, Ibigbolade (2015). Religious Traditions in Africa: an Overview of Origins, Basic Beliefs, and Practices. Pp. 7-18 in Contemporary Perspectives on Religions in Africa and the African Diaspora. Aderibigbe and Jones, Eds. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Or if you'd rather watch a video: Michael Wesch "Ifa Divination animated and explained" (it's about Yoruba religion)...*

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

Oct 20            **Cosmology/ Religion II**

*Elnathan John (2020). How to Worship the Nigerian God (2 ½ pages). Becoming Nigerian: a Guide. Abuja: Cassava Republic Press.*

*Start reading Evans-Pritchard!*

Oct 23            **Discussion, Witchcraft**

***Readings before class (in Canvas):***

*Evans-Pritchard, E.E. (1985) The Notion of Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events. In Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic Among the Azande. Oxford: Oxford University Press.*

**Oct 25            Test 2 (no in-class today; test will be available on Canvas this day only!)**

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Oct 27            **Contemporary Issues: Politics and the State**

***Readings before class (in Canvas):***

*Mwenda, Andrew (2021). The Challenge of Democratic Politics. The Independent. June 28, 2021.*

Oct 30            **Aesthetics, Spirituality, and World View-I**

***Readings before class (in Canvas):***

*Touber, Tijn (2004). The World According to Ubuntu. Ode Magazine, September 2004.*

Nov 1            **African Aesthetics and Art**

**Class project Phase 2 due before class;**

*No readings*

**Nov 3**      **Africans in the Americas (no in-class meeting)**  
**Film:** *Dollars and Dreams: West Africans in New York*.  
<https://video-alexanderstreet-com.libproxy.library.unt.edu/watch/dollars-and-dreams-west-africans-in-new-york?source=autosuggest>

**Readings for class:**

Adichie, Chimamanda (2010). *The Thing Around Your Neck*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.  
**TRIGGER WARNING:** the beginning of this chapter contains a brief description of an uncle-in-law making an unsuccessful (but physical) “pass” at the narrator. If you’d rather not read this, skip just the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph.

**Nov 6**      **Africans in the Americas II (NO IN-PERSON CLASS TODAY- I’LL PUT A NOTATED CLASS PRESENTATION ONLINE!)**

**Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Adebayo, Sakiru (2021). *The Nigerian Dream is to Leave Nigeria*.  
<https://africasacountry.com/2021/03/the-nigerian-dream-is-to-leave-nigeria>

**Nov 8**      **Globalization and the Economy - I**

**Video to watch before class:**

**Youtube:** *Born Free: Hip Hop in Johannesburg*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npdpOTWhXjc>

**Nov 10**      **Film “Big Men,” by Rachel Boynton (no in-class meeting)**  
<https://unt.kanopy.com/video/big-men>

**Readings (in Canvas):**

Gary, Ian, and Terry Karl (2005) *Bottom of the Barrel: Africa’s Oil Boom and the Poor*. Technical Report for Catholic Relief Services. Baltimore: Catholic Relief Services.

**Nov 13**      **Contemporary Issues: Poverty**

**Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Holloway, Kris (2007). *Monique and the Mango Rains: Two Years with a Midwife in Mali*. – READ FIRST HALF

**Nov 15, 17**      **NO IN PERSON CLASS (I’m away at a Conference)**

**Readings before class (in Canvas):**

Holloway, Kris (2007). *Monique and the Mango Rains: Two Years with a Midwife in Mali*. SECOND HALF. Do the assignment in Canvas.

**Nov 20-24 NO IN-CLASS MEETING (fall break! Happy Thanksgiving)**

**Nov 27 Globalization II: Poverty, Education, and Health**

LISTEN to the first 30 minutes of “On Being” NPR podcast with Wangari Maathai: <https://onbeing.org/programs/wangari-maathai-marching-with-trees/> , and complete the online assignment in Canvas.

**Class Project Phase 3 due!**

**Nov 29 Globalization: Poverty, Education, and Health**

*Beah, Ishmael (2007). A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier. New York: Sarah Crichton Books.- READ FIRST HALF*

**Dec 1 Nutrition, AIDS, and Malaria**

**Readings**

*Beah, Ishmael (2007). A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier. New York: Sarah Crichton Books.- READ SECOND HALF. Do the assignment in Canvas*

**Dec 4 Conflict and Refugees II (Discussion)**

**Video to watch before class:**

*Vice- Wrestling for Peace*

[https://video.vice.com/en\\_us/video/wrestling-for-peace-in-south-sudan/57bc533c40f990b3503a566e](https://video.vice.com/en_us/video/wrestling-for-peace-in-south-sudan/57bc533c40f990b3503a566e)

**Dec 6 Course wrap-up and review**

***Don't forget to do the core assessment in Canvas, worth 2% of your grade.***

**Dec 8 STUDY DAY- NO CLASS**

**Final Exam Wed Dec 13<sup>th</sup> This day only!**

*Note: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of this course or syllabus.*

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**Sources for map quiz help or practice**

<https://online.seterra.com/en/vgp/3163>

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/africa/africaa.htm>

<http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/africa.html>