

[revised 8/30/18]

HIV/AIDS, Activism & the Healing Arts
AFR 374E (30750) / ANT 324L (31715) / WGS 335 (46040)

Professor
Lyndon K. Gill

Description

The AIDS pandemic is still far from over. This course explores the historical and contemporary phenomenon of HIV/AIDS principally in the art and activism of the African Diaspora. For over three decades we as a species have been using activism and artistry to champion the cause, mourn the dead, prevent infection and encourage healthy HIV+ lives. Here in the United States, in the American South, and at UT, we are part of a global movement of contagiously creative and infectiously passionate people determined to honour, preserve and celebrate life in this age of AIDS. Throughout the semester, we will gather local and international resources, tools and strategies vital for our global well-being.

**Please Note:*

1) *This course carries a flag for Global Cultures.*

2) *This course deals with aspects of gender, sex, sexuality, and HIV/AIDS in a candid and explicit manner at times. Students who do not feel comfortable with this approach should not take the course. If you choose to take this course, you have agreed to respect our classroom as a safe space. Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia or poz-phobia of any sort will not be tolerated.*

Requirements & Assignments

1. Attendance: Each student is required to attend *every* class session. Unexcused absences are unacceptable. More than one unexcused absence during the term will result in a reduction of the overall course grade for each session missed (A→A-, B+→B, etc.).

**Note: The use of laptops and mobile phones is NOT permitted in the classroom*

2. Informed participation: Each student will complete the assigned readings and bring hardcopies of these readings to class. Students will come to class on time and prepared with questions and comments on each reading.

3. **Reading responses:** Each week, students will post a **one-page reading response** by **5pm on the Monday before class**. These posts are intended to provoke conversation. The week's assigned readings must be addressed directly, but no need to summarize. Critique, compare, and pose questions for discussion or clarification. Each post must comment on at least one other person's reading response. **The first reading response is due on Monday 9/10 at 5pm.** These responses will be graded on a credit/no credit basis. Students will receive *no credit* for late posts.

4. **Discussion facilitation:** Each student will co-facilitate one class sessions. These sessions will be assigned. Students may exchange dates, but must inform the professor of this change at least one week prior to the facilitation. Facilitators are required to meet with the instructor during office hours prior to each facilitation. Facilitators are expected to draft questions for discussion based on the assigned readings and are required to read the reading responses posted for that week. The inclusion of course-relevant audio/visual material as a way to encourage conversation is highly encouraged. Students will receive a grade for these facilitations. **Discussion facilitators are NOT required to write reading responses for the week of their facilitation.**

5. **Final project proposal:** Students will be assigned final project groups (shifts are allowed between groups, but the professor must be informed of these changes at least one week before the proposal is due) and write a **2-3-page proposal** (12pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced) for a final project. This proposal will explain the form of the final project and the texts the group will be using. These texts must include course related readings/films, but may also include outside resources. This proposal will be **accompanied by a briefly annotated bibliography** (the bibliography does NOT count toward the minimum page limit). Each group member will receive the same grade.

6. **Final project:** Each group will complete a **final project to be accompanied by a 5-7 page explanatory essay** (12pt. Times New Roman font, double spaced). The project will be due on the first day of Final Exams. Each group members will receive the same grade.

- For the **Final Project** students will produce a creative work in the medium of their choice (performance, film, painting, sculpture, photography, literary text, web, etc. or using multiple media). This work **MUST** engage directly with texts/films assigned for the course and themes raised by the course. Outside sources are encouraged but not required.

Please note for all assignments:

* **Late proposals and projects will be penalized for every day they are late** (i.e. A → A- if one day late, A → B+ if two days late, etc.). Students are required to **proofread** their material prior to submission (ideally, someone else will also read the material for grammatical/spelling/flow errors your eyes might miss). Materials that show evidence of not having been proofread will be returned and marked late. Extensions may be considered only under extenuating circumstances and in emergency situations. When possible, advance notice is encouraged and documentation will be required.

* For assistance with cultivating your ideas, outlining your written work and tips on proofreading/editing your polished writing, please make an appointment at the ***Undergraduate Writing Center***: www.uwc.utexas.edu

* Students are expected to comply with the University of Texas at Austin's **Honor Code** and its standards of academic integrity:

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

It is each student's responsibility to become familiar with this code and these university-wide standards; ignorance will be unacceptable as an excuse for violations. All written assignments may be scanned for plagiarism.

* Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the University. To determine if you qualify, please contact the coordinating office at 471-6259 (voice), 232-2937 (video phone) or www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd.

Course Grade Percentages

Reading responses	10%
Class participation/ Discussion facilitation	20%
Final paper/project proposal (due 10/18)	30%
Final paper/project (due 12/13)	40%

Required Texts

Cohen, Cathy

1999 The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Geary, Adam

2014 Antiblack Racism and the AIDS Epidemic: State Intimacies
New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

[Full text available online at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>]

Hunter, B. Michael

1993 Sojourner: Black Gay Voices in the Age of AIDS. New York: Other Countries Press.

Rasebotsa, Nobantu et al.

2004 Nobody Ever Said AIDS: Poems and Stories from Southern Africa. Cape Town: Kwela Books.

The above texts are available for purchase at the Co-Op and have been put on reserve at the Perry-Castañeda Library. Additional required readings (book chapters, articles, etc.) are also available as pdf documents on Canvas.

Films

Cross, June

2015 Wilhemina's War. New York: Women Make Movies.

Everett, Karen

1996 I Shall Not Be Removed. San Francisco: California Newsreel.

<http://newsreel.org/video/I-SHALL-NOT-BE-REMOVED-MARLON-RIGGS>

George, Nelson

2007 Life Support. New York: HBO Films.

Grubin, David

1997 Bill T. Jones: Still/Here. New York: Public Square Media.

<http://billmoyers.com/content/bill-t-jones-still-here-with-bill-moyers/>

Riggs, Marlon

1992 Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien (No Regret). San Francisco: California Newsreel.

[available online <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>]

The films above not available online are on reserve at the Fine Arts Library.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

**Please Note: It may be necessary to make slight changes to this schedule as the course progresses. You will always receive prior notice of any changes.*

Week #1: Introductions

8/30

Introductions to each other and the course

Week #2: The Age of AIDS

9/4

Introductions continued

9/6 [4 hours total]

Watch: The Age of AIDS Part I & II

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/aids/#video-1>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/aids/#video-2>

Week #3: Introduction to HIV/AIDS in Black America I

[First Reading Response due Monday 9/10 at 5pm]

9/11 [24 pgs.]

Cohen The Boundaries of Blackness p. ix-xii, p.1-16

Jackson “Defying Death” <http://www.essence.com/2014/11/05/defying-death>

Anderson-Minshall “Essence Cover Model Rae Lewis-Thornton”

<https://www.hivplusmag.com/entertainment/2016/8/15/essence-cover-model-rae-lewis-thornton-23-our-most-amazing-hiv-positive>

Jordan “FX Series Pose Brings to Life HIV Through Black and Latinx Characters”

<http://www.thebody.com/content/81127/fx-series-pose-brings-to-life-hiv-history.html>

Watch:

“Twenty Years Later: Rae Lewis-Thornton”

<http://www.essence.com/video/twenty-years-later-rae-lewis-thornton>

FX Pose: Season 1, Episode 4 “The Fever”

9/13 [23 pgs.]

Cohen The Boundaries of Blackness p.17-32

Kerr & Barton “There is a Huge Impact”

<https://www.visualaids.org/blog/detail/ted-kerr-st-louis>

Watch: Endgame: AIDS in Black America

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/endgame-aids-in-black-america/>

Week #4: Introduction to HIV/AIDS in Black America II

9/18 [24 pgs.]

Cohen The Boundaries of Blackness p.78-101

Watch: George Life Support

9/20 [27pgs.]
Cohen The Boundaries of Blackness p.101-118

“Empowered: Trans Women & HIV”
<https://www.poz.com/article/watch-empowered-trans-women-hiv>

Anderson-Minshall “DeeDee Chamblee”
<https://www.hivplusmag.com/long-term-survivors/2016/8/09/dee-dee-chamblee-27-our-most-amazing-hiv-positive-people-2016>

Terrell “Trans Lives Matter” <https://www.poz.com/article/trans-lives-matter>

Watch: “Empowered Trans: Group Conversation”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6VRMg7LCcM&index=2&list=PLMg9scXawOhRsBG3F6MPnJKkUgzy0SlnG>

Week #5: Southern Exposure: HIV/AIDS in the U.S. South I

9/25
No Class - Review & Preparation Session

9/27 [23pgs.]
Cohen The Boundaries of Blackness p.276-292

Ryan “Why is HIV So Devastating Among Southern Black Women?”
<https://www.poz.com/article/black-women-28329-2587>

Phillips “June Cross Tells the Story” <http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/june-cross-tells-the-story-of-a-family-fighting-hiv-in-south-carolina/>

Watch: Cross Wilhemina’s War

Week #6: Southern Exposure: HIV/AIDS in the U.S. South II

10/2 [21 pgs.]
Villarosa “America’s Hidden H.I.V. Epidemic” [read until “On Saturday Nights...”]
https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/magazine/americas-hidden-hiv-epidemic.html?mcubz=0&_r=0

Levy “For Black and Latino Men, AIDS Is Still a Crisis.”
www.them.us/story/for-black-and-latino-men-aids-is-still-a-crisis.

Spearman “Closing the HIV Gap”
<https://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2015-09-25/closing-the-hiv-gap/>

10/4 [21 pgs.]

Villarosa "America's Hidden H.I.V. Epidemic" [read remainder of the article]

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/magazine/americas-hidden-hiv-epidemic.html?mcubz=0&_r=0

McCullom "Southern Exposure" <https://www.poz.com/article/southern-exposure>

Week #7: Black Artistry & Texas' Own Marlon Riggs

10/9 [20 pgs.]

Kerr "A History of Erasing Black Artists"

<https://hyperallergic.com/264934/a-history-of-erasing-black-artists-and-bodies-from-the-aids-conversation/>

Ford "Black Lives Matter" <https://www.poz.com/article/black-lives-matter-28217-4045>

Anderson-Minshall "Famed Photographer Duane Cramer"

<https://www.hivplusmag.com/people/cover-stories/2013/06/26/famed-hiv-positive-photographer-documenting-black-and-gay-lives>

Derek Jackson <https://www.visualaids.org/artists/detail/derek-jackson#>

Charles Long <https://www.visualaids.org/artists/detail/charles-long>

10/11 [23 pgs.]

Combs "On Marlon Riggs"

<http://newsreel.org/guides/Riggs-Guide/On-Marlon-Riggs-by-Rhea-Combs.pdf>

Hunter *Sojourner* p. xiii-xiv, 1-3, 19-23, 49-50, 146-148, 199-203

Watch:

Everett *I Shall Not Be Removed* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ku0jQyysroI>

Riggs *Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien* (No Regret) [View through <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>]

Week #8: Blackness, Mass Incarceration & HIV

10/16

No Class - Review & Preparation Session

10/18 [26 pgs.]

Geary Antiblack Racism and the AIDS Epidemic p.71-93

Kerr “Anti-black Racism Has Been Central” [3]

<https://www.visualaids.org/blog/detail/anti-black-racism-has-been-central-to-the-structuring-of-hiv-vulnerability>

[Final Project Proposals Due at 2pm]

Week #9: Poz / Rebel / Icon

10/23 [27 pgs.]

Kia LaBeija <https://www.visualaids.org/artists/detail/kia-labeija>

Ryan “Power in Crisis”

https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/nn9bdg/power-in-the-crisis-kia-labeija-456

Kerr “A Families Affair” <https://www.villagevoice.com/2017/06/21/a-families-affair/>

Mykki Blanco’s Facebook Post

<https://www.facebook.com/MykkiBlanco/posts/991532450864962>

AmfAR “Clinging to the Positive” <http://www.amfar.org/mykki-blanco/>

Reynolds “Exclusive Interview with Mykki Blanco”

<https://www.hivplusmag.com/people/2015/10/08/mykkis-mad-genius>

Wilder “This Positive Life”

<http://www.thebody.com/content/72531/this-positive-life-dee-dee-chamblee-bounces-back-f.html>

Watch:

Blanco “Hideaway”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RM7C_NRDx74

“Mykki Blanco Breaks Down Her Walls”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCAJmmftvw4>

“How Queer, Biracial, HIV-Positive Artist, Kia LaBeija Learned to Love Herself”

<http://www.nbcnews.com/video/how-queer-biracial-hiv-positive-artist-kia-labeija-learned-to-love-herself-886882371523>

10/25 [21 pgs.]

Hunter *Sojourner* p. 92-96, 104-110, 204-207

Woodard “A Soul Retrieval” p.66-71

Slocum “Zander Alexander PWA” (first 7 panels)

<https://www.visualaids.org/artists/detail/michael-slocum>

Week #10: Poz Lords of Pen & Motion

10/30 [20 pgs.]

Hunter *Sojourner* p.208-222

West “Peep Game” p.60-65

Slocum “Zander Alexander PWA” (last 7 panels)

<https://www.visualaids.org/artists/detail/michael-slocum>

11/1 [19 pgs.]

Kaye “Bill T. Jones”

<http://www.nytimes.com/1994/03/06/magazine/bill-t-jones.html?pagewanted=all&mcubz=0>

Kaplan “Bill T. Jones on Top”

<https://www.poz.com/article/Bill-T-Jones-On-Top-15891-8203>

Rockwell “Bill T. Jones: A Good Man

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/bill-t-jones-a-good-man-biographical-essay-and-tribute/1895/>

Curry “The Making of an AIDS-Inspired Masterpiece”

<https://www.hivplusmag.com/entertainment/2016/5/04/making-aids-inspired-dance-masterpiece>

Watch:

Grubin *Bill T. Jones: Still/Here*

<http://billmoyers.com/content/bill-t-jones-still-here-with-bill-moyers/>

LeBlanc D-Man Sizzle Reel <https://vimeo.com/153392999>

Week #11: Caribbean Sex, Caribbean Saint I

11/6 [31 pgs.]

Kempadoo “Dying for Sex: HIV/AIDS and Other Dangers” p.3-16

Saint Spells of a Voodoo Doll p. 1-9, 51, 69, 71, 83, 84, 87, 89, 107,

11/8

No Class - Review & Preparation Session

Week #12: Caribbean Sex, Caribbean Saint II

11/13

No Class - Review & Preparation Session

11/15

[31 pgs.]

Kempadoo "Dying for Sex: HIV/AIDS and Other Dangers" p.17-32

Scott "A New Wave for Caribbean HIV Prevention?"

<https://www.poz.com/article/A-New-Wave-for-Caribbean-HIV-Prevention-11556-5327>

Saint Spells of a Voodoo Doll p.135-137, 169-172, 213-219

Week #13: Thanksgiving Holiday

11/20

No Class

11/22

No Class

Week #14: AIDS, Artistry, Africa I

11/27

[30 pgs.]

Woubshet The Calendar of Loss p.111-117

Thomas *Impossible Mourning* p.1-12, p.50-59 [Full text available at www.lib.utexas.edu/]

Scott "Zanele Muholi" <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/05/18/out-look>

Read & View Muholi *Faces & Phases*

<http://archive.stevenson.info/exhibitions/muholi/facesphases.htm>

11/29

[32 pgs.]

Woubshet The Calendar of Loss p.122-127

Rosebotsa et al. Nobody Ever Said AIDS

p. 9, 11-15, 17-20, 105-108, 152-157, 180-182

Week #15: AIDS, Artistry, Africa II

12/4 [21 pgs.]
Woubshet The Calendar of Loss p.128-140 [13]

Rotimi Fani-Kayode <https://www.visualaids.org/artists/detail/rotimi-fani-kayode>

Cotter “Rotimi Fani-Kayode: Nothing to Lose”
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/11/arts/design/rotimi-fani-kayode-nothing-to-lose.html?mcubz=0>

BBC Africa “Prudence Mabele” [3]
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-40653944>

Hayes “Positive Living” [2]
<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2015/12/17/positive-living-art-and-aids-in-south-africa/>

Norum “World Aids Day— Positive Living” [1]
<https://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/exhibitions/world-aids-day-positive-living-art-and-aids-in-south-africa-exhibition-at-birkbeck-university-a3126851.html>

Watch: Doctors Without Borders “The Art of Positive Living”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=886FEUzsy1A>

12/6
Course Evaluations

12/13 (*First Day of Final Exams*)
Final Projects Due

Grading Schema

(Informed by “Grading Standards II” by Maxine Rodburg of the Harvard Writing Center)

The following are the standards I adhere to when I grade essays. Pluses and minuses represent shades of difference, as do split grades (e.g. B-/C+). I assign grades on the evidence of the essay submitted, not on effort or time spent.

- A:** An excellent piece of writing (this is not the same as perfect). This is an ambitious, perceptive essay that grapples with interesting, complex ideas, responds discerningly to counter-arguments, and explores well-chosen evidence revealingly. The discussion enhances— rather than underscores— the reader’s and writer’s knowledge (it doesn’t simply repeat what has been discussed in class). There is a context for all the ideas; someone outside the class would be enriched, not confused, by reading the essay. Its beginning opens up— rather than flatly announces— its thesis. Its end is something more than a summary. The language is clean, precise, and often elegant. As a reader I feel surprised, delighted, changed. There’s something new here for me, something only the essay’s writer could have written and explored in this particular way. The writer’s stake in the material is obvious.
- B:** This is a piece of writing that reaches high and achieves many of its aims. The ideas are solid and progressively explored but some thin patches require more analysis and/or some stray thoughts do not quite fit together well. The language is generally clear and precise but occasionally not. The evidence is relevant, but there may be too little. The context for the evidence may not be sufficiently explored, so that I have to make some of the connections that the writer should have made clear for me.
- OR** This is a piece of writing that does not reach as high than an ‘A’ essay, but thoroughly achieves its aims. This is a solid essay whose reasoning and argument may nonetheless be rather routine— in this case the limitation is conceptual.
- C:** This is a piece of writing that has real problems in one of these areas: 1) conception (there is at least one main idea but it is obscure and hard to get to); 2) structure (the logic behind the ordering of the text is far from clear); 3) use of evidence (there is no evidence presented or that which is provided is weak and/or the connections among the ideas are unclear or without context; the text is plagued by generalizations and absent substantial proof); 4) language (the writing is awkward and generally stands in the way of comprehension). Overall, the essay may be repetitive, poorly organized, and/or superficial in its treatment of the subject matter. In addition, punctuation, spelling, grammar, citations, and transitions may be problems as well.
- OR** This is an essay that largely summarizes any given text or other work (of art or analysis), but is written without too many major problems.
- OR** This is an essay that is chiefly a personal reaction to something. This is perhaps well written, but there is scant engagement with course content or other scholarly material; it is mostly opinion.
- D:** This is an essay that demonstrates very little effort to grapple seriously with the ideas it hopes to explore.

- OR** This is a piece of writing that is extremely problematic in many of the areas mentioned above: conception, structure, use of evidence, language, etc.
- OR** This is writing that does not come close to meeting the expectations of the assignment.
- F:** This is a piece of writing that should most definitely be re-conceptualized and revised drastically so that it can be re-submitted if that option is available.

Grading Scale

A+	100
A	99 – 95
A-	94 – 90
B+	89 – 85
B	84 – 80
B-	79 – 75
C+	74 – 70
C	69 – 65
C-	64 – 60
D+	59 – 55
D	54 – 50
D-	49 – 45
F	44 or less