



Reference & Instruction for African Visual Culture

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Denison in a Nutshell:

- Ca. 2000 undergraduate students
- Emphasis on small class size, intimate learning experience
- Art history classes have NO prerequisites
- Extensive “General Education” requirements
- Department of Art History
 - 4 faculty members
 - Approx. 36 declared majors (sophomore-senior)
 - Class size typically 18-25 students

African Art @ Denison

- 1 Africanist: Dr. Joanna Grabski
- Courses taught:
 - Africa on Film/African Cinema*
 - Visual Culture of African Cities* (taught as Honors course)
 - Art of Post-Colonial Africa*
 - Oceanic Art
 - 1 section of Western art survey*

* = courses with research instruction

Research Instruction: Art of Post-Colonial Africa



- City/country assignment = 1/2 class session
 - Pedagogical goal: “Africa is not a country”
 - Teach web-based tools, such as CIA World Factbook, UN Web site, web portals, online news sites
- Contemporary artist assignment = 1 session
 - Students must give mini-presentation on one contemporary African artist NOT covered in class
 - Resources taught:
 - Grove Art Online
 - Contemporary Artists Index: <http://gate3.cia.edu/cia/index.php>
 - SIRIS Catalog (thanks, Janet!)
 - Library catalog
 - Art Abstracts

Research Instruction: Africa on Film



- Typically 3 sessions
 1. Brainstorming key terms & discipline-matching
 2. Resources, part I (reference & library catalog)
 3. Resources, part II (periodicals & databases)
- 1 large project: FILM PROPOSAL
- Students can research ANY topic relevant to Africa... some examples:
 - Female Genital Mutilation (female circumcision)
 - AIDS
 - Marriage rites/ceremonies
 - TV & its influence on African culture
 - Hunting & poaching
 - Diamond trade

Research Instruction: Visual Culture of African Cities



- Taught Fall 2005 as Honors course
- 2 assignments
 1. City/Country assignment (again!)
 2. Research paper on any topic relevant to Africa
- 5 sessions:
 1. City/Country session
 2. Brainstorming exercise & discipline-matching
 3. Boolean logic & Library catalog
 4. Databases
 5. Evaluation of bibliographies/work & Q&A session