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GOING BEYOND TARZAN

Teaching About Africa in the 1990s

BY PREXY NESBITT AND JEAN ANN HUNT

If we're surprised that it's not South Africa's Nelson Mandela, Bishop Desmond Tutu or even Uganda's Idi Amin, we should not be. It's quite predictable that in America today Tarzan yet stands as representing the continent of Africa in the minds of many Americans.

Tarzan is like breakfast cereal for most Americans - everybody's tasted it. The creator of Tarzan, Sears and Roebuck ad man and Chicagoan Edgar Rice Burroughs, produced twenty-six different Tarzan novels before his death in 1950.¹ Though Burroughs never visited Africa, he became the authority on the "dark continent" for most Americans. Between 1912 (the first time Tarzan appears in a literary magazine) and 1950, one hundred fifty million copies of Tarzan appeared in 50 languages. Additionally, there were three million copies of various Tarzan comic books, thirty-six commercial feature films, hundreds of radio shows and dozens of TV shows. Author Ray Bradbury memorialized Edgar Rice Burroughs' contribution to humankind at a 1975 luncheon in Tarzana, California, commenting: "I don't know what would have happened to the world if Edgar Rice Burroughs had never been born."

Tarzan is not a graying, neutral icon on the American cultural canvas, nor is the Africa which he supposedly represents. Like the John Waynes of American western cowboy lore and the Supermans and Batmans of the pavements, Tarzan embodies the values which young, white males in the United States are socialized to embrace. Tarzan is

A NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY PH.D. CANDIDATE DID A SURVEY OF PEOPLE ENTERING THE AFRICA SECTION OF CHICAGO'S FIELD MUSEUM IN THE FALL OF 1992. SHE ASKED ONLY ONE QUESTION OF 700 RANDOM RESPONDENTS, BLACK AND WHITE, YOUNG AND OLD, MALE AND FEMALE: NAMELY, "GIVE ME THE NAME OF ANY ONE POLITICAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, POPULAR FIGURE THAT YOU ASSOCIATE WITH AFRICA?" SEVENTY PERCENT OF HER RESPONDENTS GAVE THE SAME ANSWER: TARZAN.

strong, tough, aggressive, and doesn't emote. He is empire in the making. As Dutch Scholar Jan Pieterse notes, Tarzan films are "a forum in which ideas about culture and sexuality ('me Tarzan, you Jane') can be worked out, but above all, it is a white-settler myth, a white-power fantasy of the type 'Rambo in Africa.'"²

The Africa which the Tarzan movies depict is more jungle than the jungle. Like an advertisement from the Banana Republic store, the treetop platforms and vine ropes are tailor-made for the Sunday *New York Times Magazine* Section. Tarzan's famous cry (a concoction of Johnny Weismueller) is marketed as an authentic African war cry. A white mate, "Jane", ultimately played by sex siren Bo Derek, is imported into the jungle foliage to assuage Tarzan's loneliness and provide sex scenes for the box office. In short, in the Tarzan cinemas, Africa is projected as the ideal place for the colonizer-explorer, the ultimate Eden-like paradise where the White Man's word (or more accurately his grunt) is LAW.

Renowned actor Harry Belafonte, in a recent collection of interviews, edited by theologian Cornel West, describes how Tarzan movies

created for him not only a negative image of Africa, but also of black people in the United States, including himself and his family. Mr. Belafonte points out:

My earliest knowledge of Africa was really through the Tarzan movies. The very first Tarzan movie I saw was in 1935, Tarzan and the Apes. I went to see this film about this place called Africa, with these people of color who were steeped in

*ignorance, steeped in folly, steeped in the absence of any articulation whatsoever and were not redeemable except when the great white hero came swinging through the trees and landed in the midst of them to give them direction and to describe life as they should aspire to it. For a long time I thought of Africa as a place I really did not want to be. Those were people that I would just as soon not know. And it was strange that so many people in my own community looked like them or something like them. And how lucky they were to have white leadership to help them.*³

Why is Africa presented in these ways? Is it part of universal visualization of Africa or the result of uniquely USA imagination and conceptualization? A strong case could be made that the construction of Africa done by people in the USA is rooted in the reality of race relations and a process of racialization peculiar to the United States. Put more simply, a country that has yet to get beyond Sambo, Amos and Andy, Sanford and Son, Fresh Prince, etc., imagery around its black American citizens cannot possibly conceive of the homeland of those citizens in anything but a subordinate, dehumanized and mythological framework.





Black Americans, too, are affected by these representations of Africa. Sadly, the views of Africa held by many, if not most, Americans of African descent are largely molded by the general US media-generated perception of the "country of Africa" as being a black hole with South Africa at one end and Egypt at the other (with most Americans of all colors willing to fight over a cherished belief that Egypt is part of the Middle East!). Nigerian scholar Bosah Ebo from Rider College in New Jersey put it most succinctly when he recently stated that most Americans believe Africa to be a "crocodile-infested dark continent where jungle life has perpetually eluded civilization."⁴

The popularized images of Africa the US media offer to teachers in the United States are appalling. They consist largely of swollen bellies, roaming animals, soldiers with guns and

But systematic disinformation initiatives related Africa are not

limited to burned-out journalists grateful for slavery. The distorting of Africa and its realities can be seen in children's books and films.

bare breasted women - a continent of wild children, lazy and superstitious people, ignorant of the value of the natural resources available to them. Our exposure to Africa through Hollywood and the media would have us believe: first, that Africa is only one country; secondly that it is all one type of land mass; and lastly, and perhaps most significantly, that Africa is one group of primitive peoples lacking in creativity, innovation and productivity, but abounding with savage internecine

violence and warfare.

Indicative of the above was an phone advertisement run several years ago. The commercial opened with a map of the world, a person was shown on every continent but Africa, where instead an ape sat. Such images create and reinforce inhuman and sub-human views of a place that is in reality rich in culture, languages, resources and tradition. They assist in the building of barriers which prevent not just an understanding of the real Africa, but also proscribe an understanding of the interconnectedness between the United States and Africa. The images also structure a paradigm for use in approaching Africa and Africa-related concerns. It is a paradigm in which: first, it becomes OK to exploit groups of people that are "too stupid to know better anyway," nourishing the notion that it is completely acceptable for the US to intervene into African countries' sovereign affairs, since "They" are incapable of making independent decisions. Secondly, the erroneous belief is buoyed up that what saved Africa from tribally-rooted savagery and self-destruction were the colonialists; those who brought civilization, Christianity and technology to an undiscovered "dark continent."

Africa is more than a bottomless black pit of wars and children with bulging elbows and reddening hair, the notion which conservatives like Senator Jessie Helms (North Carolina) and journalist Robert Kaplan love to promote. Africa is much more than what even the most liberated of the USA's more liberal textbook publishers or TV producers project. How Africa is taught today should not merely be shaped by a well-meaning but romanticized political imperative to project the grandeur of ancient African kingdoms and societies like Songhai, Benin, Zimbabwe and Mali. Africa needs renewed attention but that attention should not be motored merely by a triumphalist effort to emphasize the fact that math, astronomy and

alphabets appeared in various African societies when Europeans were beginning to walk upright. These are historical truths and need to be treated as just that. They are historical developments which should be normalized into all historical curricula and not relegated to the African-American studies shelf or trotted before assemblies once a year on the occasion of Martin Luther King's birthday.

Africa-bashing, particularly in American books, has recently become simultaneously pervasive and subtle. Even so-called committed and well-intentioned writers and film makers present alleged "facts" about Africa which in their partial or complete distortion serve only to further the negation of Africa process already ravishing many readers and filmgoers' minds. Two recent examples of this are the 1997 feature film, "The Ghost and the Darkness" with Michael Douglas and Val Kilmer and the 1997 book, *Out of America: A Black Man Confronts Africa* by Washington Post journalist, Keith Richburg. *Out of America* is one of the most negative and disingenuous books about Africa which we have ever read. Its inaccuracies and half truths distort African realities. The fact that the author is a black American and a seasoned journalist (whose beat was Africa) writing about Africa in a supposed genuine effort at reflection make the work dangerous. Note for instance, Richburg's comments about protest in Kenya against the repressive policies of Moi's government. He writes: "... most Africans are not struggling; they have been too violently suppressed for too long, so many now see no other way except waiting for a big white marine in combat gear to come and rescue them from repression"⁵ He continues on to say "not a peep of protest is taking place on the streets of Nairobi or Nakuru," making this inane and baseless observation at about the same time as Kenya (from Mombasa to Kisumu and Morsabit to Machakos) experienced one of the most profound, prolonged and oft-times violent challenges to the Moi govern-

ment ever seen since the most intense struggles of the 70's and 80's.

But systematic disinformation initiatives related to Africa are not limited to burned-out journalists grateful for slavery. The distorting of Africa and its realities can be seen in children's books and films. Many of today's children, not all, when reading books or seeing films concerning Africa are being cheated. They are in a sense being victimized by either the romanticization of Africa tendency or by those who consistently represent Africa in its most negative dimensions. Illustration of this latter pattern is to be found in the 1993 edition of Arthur Schlesinger's *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*. In the chapter entitled "The Battles of the Schools," Schlesinger attempts to both criticize what he sees as excessive Afrocentric pre-occupation with the glorification of the African past and praise all the changes that have taken place in the academy in terms of their attitudes toward Africa. He writes at one point:

Where Jewish-Americans can (or could until recently) look with pride on the achievements of Israel, African-Americans, hard put to find much to admire in contemporary Liberia or Uganda or Ghana, must instead seek moments of glory in the dim past.⁶

What Pulitzer historian Schlesinger ignores are the stalwart contributions which various other African countries like Tanzania, Zambia, Madagascar and more recently, Namibia and South Africa, have made to Africa's historical landscape. What Schlesinger is obviously not well-informed about is the amount and quality of political and philosophical writing which African leaders like Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, Guinea-Bissau's Amilcar Cabral, Mozambique's Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel and Angola's Agostinho Neto have given to the world's mosaic of political thought.⁷ In being so unknowledgeable, Schlesinger not only weakens his own contribution; more importantly, he does a disservice to the thousands of readers who sincerely pick up his book because they want to better under-

stand the world in which they live.

Omission too often makes a dramatic contribution to the distorting of Africa by US-based writers. A 1990 series entitled *Enchantment of the World* by the Children's Press in Chicago contains a glossy hardback called *Angola*. At first glance it seems very impressive: lots of Africans with their families, beautiful colored pictures, factual but also anecdotal. Then as one looks more closely a pattern of omitting or distorting certain key facts emerges. On page 116, a section called 'Angola and Namibia' contains the astonishing sentence, "Namibia . . . achieved its own independence thanks to the settlement arranged by [US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs] Chester Crocker."⁸ Another example: on page 57, it is written, "the US government was divided about which side to support in Angola."⁹ This is a far cry from the truth and supports the mistaken impression that many Americans have that the US stays "neutral" in most global conflicts, especially Third World conflicts. Throughout the thirty-five years of wars in Angola, from 1960 to 1995, consecutive United States' administrations, up to the Clinton administration, unfailingly supported one side — the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) with hundreds of millions of dollars in arms and aid. Allied with the US in giving this support during most of this period was the former apartheid government of South Africa and the military dictatorship of the late billionaire ruler, Mobutu Tsetse Seko. As pointed out recently in the authoritative study of Southern African conflicts by *Facts on File*: "by 1978, the United States had become UNITA's main patron, annually pumping as much as \$250 million in arms to the Angolan rebels."¹⁰

In addition to the current literature there is a group of recent films set in Africa and aimed at young audiences, that are especially onerous. This group includes, "The Ghost in the Darkness," "George of the Jungle", "Ace Ventura" and "Ace Ventura II," "The Air Up

There" and "Coming to America". It is not simply concern that this genre of films distorts Africa and African realities. It is also that they are skillfully done in such an entertaining and comic fashion that most people, including and especially young people of color, are so seized by the humor that they fail to take critical note of what they're laughing at.

What are some ways that teachers can get 'beyond Tarzan'? The first task is that teachers must learn to appreciate Africa. They must begin with understanding that Africa, three times larger than the United States, is not a country. The African continent is rich in diversity, size and variety. The fifty-six countries, 2700 different peoples, and 2500 languages and dialects which make up Africa often vary widely in history, culture and structure. Africa varies from snow-capped mountains to sand-filled deserts with "jungle" being less than one tenth of the area.¹¹ Africa is also old. The earliest humans originated in Africa over 14 million years ago. These facts and others like them provide an enormous challenge to the classroom teacher wishing to combat the omnipresent bias about Africa and help students explore, appreciate and understand this diverse continent. Fortunately, the very media used to promote the stereotypes of Africa and its people can be used to portray a more accurate understanding. For



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teachers of younger students, picture books can be a wonderful resource and for older students music and film have also been successfully used. Both media are a familiar arena and each has a way of inviting the student to experience the daily lives, hopes, struggles, celebrations and strengths of others.

One of the authors of this article is a former teacher of second and third grade students in a predominately white and fairly affluent school. These students took on the task of studying Africa, after one class member brought in a tape of an interview she conducted with her cousin, a correspondent for ABC working in Somalia. Her interview consisted of well-thought-out questions, regarding housing, lifestyle, language and schools woven with the delightful giggles of a child trying out the role of a grown-up. The children's curiosity could not be appeased with a quick look at where Somalia sits on the world map. At that time the teacher had a very limited knowledge of Africa and was afraid to take on such a huge task; afraid of simply reinforcing stereotypes. Not knowing where else to turn, she focused on children's literature. Soon the room was filled with African folktales, art work and modern day stories representing many different parts of Africa. The children scrutinized each of the books, in part trying to figure out the differences/likenesses between the African-Americans they had daily images of and the peoples of Africa. Many rich discussions and debates occurred over whether or not an author had to be from Africa to write an authentic book about Africa. The same arguments occurred over art work. Was it African or not? If so what part of Africa did it come from? Could an African-American who traveled to Africa be qualified to write a picture book? In addition the books were analyzed for stereotypes the criteria outlined in Louise Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task force book *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children*.¹²

TEN QUICK WAYS TO ANALYZE CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR SEXISM AND RACISM¹²

1. Check the Illustrations
Look for Stereotypes
Look for Tokenism
Who's Doing What?
2. Check the Story Line
Standards for Success
Resolution of Problems
Role of Women
3. Look at the Lifestyles
4. Weigh the Relationships Between People
5. Note the Heroes
6. Consider the Effects on a Child's Self-Image
7. Consider the Author's or Illustrator's Background
8. Check Out the Author's Perspective
9. Watch for Loaded Words
10. Look at the Copyright Date

As the children continued to read and add to the classroom library, a study of folktales ensued. These books provided a way to gain insights into the values of many different cultures. Other books provided pictures and stories of family life, work and children at play. One children's book in particular captured the children's attention. *Galimoto* tells the story of a young boy from Mali in search of wires and other resources to make a toy vehicle for he and his friends to play with. The 7 and 8 year old US students were completely captivated by the challenge of inventing such a toy. Several of them even tried it out themselves only to discover that their creations were not nearly as intricate or handsome as the one in the story or the real ones brought into the classroom.

A former stereotype for a group of people began to be replaced by a deep appreciation for skills and innovation. The culminating project for the class' exploration of literature, was to compile an annotated bibliography of African literature. The children took this project quite seriously, wanting to pass on their discoveries and recommendations to others:

AFRICA BROTHERS AND SISTERS

BY VIRGINIA KROLL

This book is based on African culture- like the different things they do. In the beginning a boy asks his father who his brothers and sisters are. The father tells his son all about his African brothers and sisters.

I would give this book two thumbs up! The author really describes people in twenty-one different cultures in Africa.

EMILY, AGE 7

THE VILLAGE OF ROUND AND SQUARE HOUSES

BY ANN GRIFALCONI

This book is a four star book (****). The pictures are great!

I like how the book tells about a typical African dinner, then a true folktale or so the storyteller says. The author really went to Africa and heard this tale from a young African woman who lived in the village that is told about in the story.

If you read this book, you will learn about village life in Cameroon, how food is prepared and how men and women live. I would highly recommend reading this book.

ALEX, AGE 8

As the teacher expanded the resources in the room to include other forms of art the class had the opportunity to experience Africa in a number of ways that were new to them. As music passed into the classroom walls the conversations turned to the discovery of patterns of joy, tones of pain and how melodies can bring people together. Photos were then introduced as a way to uncover the history and political undercurrents that have existed throughout time. They held the stories of resistance past and present to the bondage of colonization. One group of black and white photos taken in Mozambique

during the 1980's South African backed war of destabilization prompted a class discussion on cotton production, gold and coal mining and the exploitation of African people from Mozambique and elsewhere. Deeply moved by the pictures and stories of these people oceans away, one child suggested that the class take up a collection or raise money to help the people of Mozambique, "you know, like we did last year to buy an acre of the rain forest. We could buy the land and then give it back to the people." Much debate ensued after this comment. Were the people in the photos helpless? Did they need others to "save" their land? What happens to a country ravaged by war? What was the responsibility of the countries that were using Mozambique's war for their own profit?

It is important to note that the way in which resources on Africa are used is essential to expanding children's views. An in-depth look at the arts in combination with one another served to go well beyond a traditional study of another culture's holidays, food and clothing (all of which the children were intensely interested in). During this particular study of Africa, the children divided into groups in order to gain in-depth learning of one particular area of interest. The themes for study were initially generated by a list of questions the students had about Africa. Topics included holidays, transportation, art, languages, animals, housing and schools. As they shared their research with each other, one powerful discovery was that the answers to their questions were complex and depended on what part of Africa they were reading about. In addition, students began to feel more connected to Africa as they explored the happenings of everyday life. Children's music was brought in and infused with our singing time, we discussed homework assignments and family life, as well as what it might be like to live in a city or rural area. A special event occurred

when a group of visiting teachers from South Africa passed through our room one afternoon. The children inundated them with questions about schools, homework and extra curricular activities. The people of Africa took on names and identities. These personal connections were demonstrated at the closing ceremony for this unit. Based on their studies and interviews with these teachers, they thoughtfully arranged a celebration of their work by serving a variety

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of African foods, giving each classmate a book-mark bordered in African art and with an African name in the center of it (selected especially for their classmates based on meaning), playing music and then asking their parents (the majority of whom came) to fill out a survey with the questions they studied during the unit and to fill in the names of African countries on a blank map. The major-

On Eddie Murphy's Film

'COMING TO AMERICA'

A vast green stretch of land, exotic animals roam aimlessly through the palace yard. An eighteen year old African prince lives out his every desire. But wait . . . something's missing - the women of Africa are much too passive and unintelligent for this young man. He deserves something more, needs something more, he needs (drumroll) America!

Welcome to the sickening fantasy world which is Eddie Murphy's "Coming to America." In this film Murphy manages to depreciate Africa through creating a new ridiculous stereotype of the African people, a stereotype which is based on the constant desire for sex and money. He also belittles African woman. His character ventures to the US, for a good old American woman. One who is educated and opinionated, unlike the African women presented in this film. In many films, such as "The Power of One" and "Something of Value," the role of the African woman is ignored while the white woman's role is central to the film. Swap the white woman with an African-American and you have "Coming to America."

Why is this film not deemed the racist, ignorant, piece of garbage it is? The answer to that question is quite simple: Eddie Murphy is African-American. That explains it all, if an African-American would create this, it must be acceptable. That is a statement perhaps more ignorant than the film. Yet it is one that was made by the American people through the success and continuing popularity of "Coming to America."

MARY PASILLAS,
AGE 16, SENIOR

FRANCIS PARKER HIGH SCHOOL, CHICAGO

ity of the students could name and locate almost all of the 56 countries; the best a parent could do was nine.

One of the authors teaches a successful course about African History at a school in Chicago. Titled "Twentieth Century African History and Film," the course uses an historical array of feature and documentary films as a way of capturing and sustaining high school students' interest in African history and geography. The films range from the 1932 "Tarzan the Ape Man" through the 1966 "Born Free" and Eddie Murphy's 1987 "Coming to America"¹³ to the 1996 Zimbabwean documentary about the role of women in the Zimbabwean independence struggle "Flame". The historical content includes examining colonialism in North Africa, West





Africa, East and Southern Africa, the national liberation movements and recent developments in post-independence Africa.

Another course focuses on African Poetry as a point of entry into some high school adolescents' conceptualizing of Africa. Teaching a course based around biographies of African leaders, the teacher distributes poetry by those leaders to the students. Most of the students have been shocked to learn that many of Africa's finest political leaders were also poets. After listening to speakers about the various countries and watching films, the teacher has the students write poems responding to all they've learned. He then has the students read the leaders' poetry and their own poetry aloud. All these activities lead to the students reading a variety of information about and from the different countries and ultimately coming to new, enriched and more reality-based perspectives about various African countries and their leadership. Recently, one of us watched an elementary teacher introduce and teach about Africa to a group of third graders. The entire unit took an hour. This amount of time had been determined by the curriculum and other teachers. Students were given a whirlwind book tour through the continent and then asked to create murals portraying the various land forms of Africa and the animals that normally dwell in them. There were three total poster sized drawings; one each of the grasslands, the rainforests and the deserts of Africa. On each the children had drawn and colored in primitive looking landscapes with animals in the foreground. Zebras, camels, elephants and tropical birds stood out. The teacher expressed frustration at being given so little time to cover such an enormous subject. "I'm suppose to cover the 7 continents in 3 days. This doesn't include the time they will be taken out for art, gym and music," she lamented. "How can I even help them understand that Africa has many different countries. I'm really looking forward to Europe because I've been there and I can at least show them

my scrapbook and talk about my trip." This shift to the personal is extremely important part of the story. Indeed the teaching about Europe (France in particular) focused on people. Schools, restaurants, shops, landmarks and family life were all emphasized. Unintentionally the teacher had perpetuated the popular belief that Africa is not a place of humanness.

Time, knowledge, appreciation and a willingness to combat the biases are all vital to the successful teaching of Africa. Teachers must learn to view Africa through a new set of lenses. Discarding the glasses which show Africa through Tarzan's eyes is a first step. This requires all of us to look at the biases and assumptions we have been taught and carry around with us. We have to name these prejudices so ingrained in us through the popular portrayal of Africa, Africans, African-Americans and European-Americans. The naming of these thoughts and actions will then assist us in taking the responsibility and action needed for change. In order for this to happen our children need the teaching of Africa to be more than the learning of a few words and the gathering of artifacts. This means educating ourselves about African and being willing to challenge the taken for granted truths we receive from the media. We must develop a sense of connectedness to Africa. One in which allows for analytical thought, authenticity, richness and depth so deserving of such a great continent. A connectedness that goes well beyond Tarzan.

Prexy Nesbitt is the dean of students at the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago and an Instructor for DuPaul University School of Education. He formerly served as a presidential appointed consultant to the Mozambique government. He has made more than 55 trips to Africa since 1965.

Jean Ann Hunt is currently coordinator for the Institute for Democracy in Education and an instructor at Ohio University. She has been a classroom teacher for 10 years.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Cameron, Kenneth, *Africa on Film: Beyond Black and White*, Continuum, New York, 1994: 33.
- ² Pieterse, Jan, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, Yale, New Haven, 1992: 110.
- ³ West, Cornel, *Restoring Hope: Conversations on the Future of Black America*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1997: 5.
- ⁴ See Ebo, Bosah, "American Media and African Culture" in Hawk, Beverly, ed., *Africa's Media Image*, Praeger, New York, 1992: 15. The late James Snead in his analysis of the "King Kong", the first chapter of his book, *White Screens/Black Images* (Routledge, 1994), pointed out that from the very first Hollywood films about black people in general and Africa specifically conveyed a message of black inferiority. He wrote: "The notorious 'Africa' films have as their main function to reinforce the code of the 'eternal' or 'static' black. From 'Tarzan the Ape Man' (1932) right through such recent efforts as the 'Jewel of the Nile' (1985) blacks in Africa are seen to behave with the same ineptitude and shiffleness, even bore the three hundred years of slavery and oppression, that they exhibited, according to Hollywood films years late in America" (p. 3). Two other excellent resources on this question are: Pieterse, Jan, *White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture*, Yale, New Haven, 1992: 260ff; and 2) Newsinger, J., "Lord Greystoke and Darkest Africa: The Politics of the Tarzan Stories", in *Race and Class*, XXVIII, 2, 1986: 59-72.
- ⁵ Richburg, Keith, *Out of America: A Black Man Confronts Africa*, New York, Basic-Books: 190. From the prelude: "So excuse me if I sound cynical, jaded. I'm beaten down, and I'll admit it. And it's Africa that has made me this way. . . . But most of all I think: Thank God my ancestors got out, because, now, I am not one of them" (p. xiv).
- ⁶ Schlesinger, Arthur, *The Disuniting of America*, W.W. Norton, New York, 1993: 85.
- ⁷ The most comprehensive collection of the political writings of these African leaders is yet the three volume:

Braganca, Aquino and Immanuel Wallerstein, *The African Liberation Reader: Documents of the National Liberation Movements*, Zed Press, London, 1982. *Volume I: The Anatomy of Colonialism. Volume II: The National Liberation Movements, Volume III: The Strategy of Liberation.* Two other extraordinarily rich works are: 1) Muns-low, Barry, *Samora Machel: An African Revolutionary - Selected Speeches and Writings*, Zed Press, London, 1985: 210ff; and 2) Christie, Iain, *Machel of Mozambique*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1988: 181ff. The tragedy for readers in the USA is the virtual unavailability of all these remarkable texts except for a few specialized and restrictive libraries.

⁸ Laure, Jason, *Enchantment of the World: Angola*, Children's Press, Chicago, 1990: 116.

⁹ IBID.: 116.

¹⁰ Ciment, James, *Angola and Mozambique: Postcolonial Wars in Southern Africa*, Facts on File, Inc., New York, 1997: 3. Part of an excellent series "Conflict and Crisis in the Post-Cold War World".

¹¹ See the invaluable background papers by the Washington-based Africa Policy Information Center (APIC). Much of this factual information comes from a specific 1995 paper entitled "Africa: Dispelling the Myths." These papers, additional documentation and the auto-response information files are available on APICS's web site at: <http://www.africapolicy.org>. The e-mail address is apic@igc.apc.org.

¹² Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force, *Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children*, NAEYC, Washington, D.C. 1989.

¹³ See accompanying critical student review of "Coming to America" by high school senior Mary Pasillas.

TWENTIETH CENTURY AFRICAN FILMS

ON RACISM

Birth of a Nation by
D.W. Griffith - 1915

*Black and White in
Color* by Jean-
Jacques Annaud -
1976

Ethnic Notions by
Marlan Riggs - 1993

AFRICAN HISTORY

Something of Value
with Sidney Poitier -
1957

The Battle of Algiers by
Pontecorvo - 1967

Africa (8-part series)
by Basil Davidson -
1980s

Out of Africa by
Sydney Pollack -
1985

The Power of One with
John Gielgud and
Morgan Freeman by
John Avildsen -
1992

*Lumumba: Death of a
Prophet* by Raoul
Peck - 1992

*Africa, I Will Fleece
You* by Jean Teno -
1992

In Darkest Hollywood
by Daniel Riesenfeld
- 1994

IMAGES OF AFRICA

Kid'n Africa with
Shirley Temple -
1931

Tarzan, the Ape Man
by Woody Van
Dylke - 1932

King Kong by Ernest
Schoedsack and
Merian Cooper -
1933

Tarzan and His Mate
by Jack Conway
and Cedric
Gibbons - 1934

The African Queen by
John Huston -
1951

Drums of Africa -
1963

King Solomon's Mines

Skeleton Coast - 1987
Red Scorpion with
Dolph Lundgren -
1989

The Air Up There
with Kevin Bacon

*The Gods Must Be
Crazy*

Coming to America by
Eddie Murphy

*Ace Ventura 2: When
Nature Calls* with
Jim Carey - 1995

FILMS FROM AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

Cry, the Beloved Country
by Zoltan Korda -
1951

Come Back Africa -
1959

A Luta Continua by
Robett Van Leirop -
1971

Sambizanga by Sara
Maldoror - 1971

Black Girl and Xala by
Ousman Sembene

Sun City by Artist
United Against
Apartheid - 1983

Cry Freedom with
Denzel Washington
by Richard
Attenborough

A World Apart by Chris
Menges - 1988

Mapantsula by Max
Montocchio - 1988

A Dry White Season by
Euzhan Paley - 1989

Sarafina with Whoopie
Goldberg and Leliti
Khumalo - 1992

These Hands by Flora
M'mbugu-Schelling -
1992

