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# Book Review Essay and Group Performance

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## PLSI-1342 : International Politics

### Book Review Essay and Group performance

Write a review essay of *one* of the following three books:

- Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Picador, 1998)
- Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)
- James Kyngé, *China Shakes the World: A Titan's Rise and Troubled Future and the Challenge for America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006)

#### Format

Your essay should be no more than 1,500 words (five double-spaced pages). You should double-space your paper, use a standard 12-point font, number your pages and staple your paper (no plastic covers or paper clips). On a cover sheet, you should indicate: **your student ID** (instead of your name), **the title of the book** you are reviewing and **a word count** for your essay.

#### Your tasks in your book review essay

- (1) *Briefly* review the argument of the book. (This can be accomplished in as little as one paragraph). Your assignment is to write a review essay, not a book report. That is, the bulk of your paper should be devoted to the following task.
- (2) Critique the book. You should identify the relevance of the topic to the international politics. You should not attempt to address every point in the book. Instead, choose one or two important arguments in the book and critique them.
  - a. What major issues/ arguments is the book dealing with? Why do you think that such issues/arguments are important? Are they debatable? Why are they debatable?
  - b. To what extent is the book you choose relevant to the discussions about international politics?
  - c. How might this book contribute to the theoretical debates that we have in the class? How would theories and individual authors analyze the major arguments of this book?
  - d. Do you agree or disagree with the author's argument? Why do you agree or disagree?
  - e. What implications might the book have either for theory or for the conduct of foreign policy?

To reiterate, this is a relatively short paper, so you are not expected to address every argument made in the book you choose. It is better to focus on one or two key arguments in depth than superficially to discuss six or seven points.

#### Plagiarism

A brief reminder is that plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about academic honesty, it is always better to ask than risk committing plagiarism.

## Citation

When you quote or base your idea on another person's arguments and works, you have to annotate them. Even if you do not quote directly from another work, you must give proper credit to the authors who contribute ideas and reasoning to your paper. Use footnotes instead of endnotes. Citation styles vary. MLA, Chicago manual, APA... For instance, the syllabus of this class is based on Chicago manuals.

## Deadline

Your paper is due in hard copy at the beginning of class on your presentation day.

<b>Your Book</b>	<b>Your Book Review Deadline/ Presentation</b>
We Wish to Inform You...	October 20
The Bottom Billion	November 15
China Shakes the World	November 22

## **Group Presentation**

Your group performance is based on each group member's book review essay. Find common theme and important issues that you would like to discuss. First, you will briefly explain what the book is about and what the group tries to emphasize. After this performance, the group will lead the class in discussion about issues brought up and how such issues are related to readings and lectures in the class. You should use visual facilities to promote the understanding of your presentation. Be creative. You can introduce games, use costume, make power point slides, show movie clips, etc to present your ideas effectively and facilitate class discussions.

Submit one-paged outline about your group presentation to me at the beginning of your presentation and make photocopies of it to give your classmates.

The following questions can be the basis of your presentation.

- What is the book about? Briefly explain the book.
- What do you want to emphasize and why?
- Explain the important issues of the book that you want to discuss and lead discussions.
  - o Among your group members, is there any disagreement? Why do you disagree and to what extent you disagree? How do you deal with the disagreement?
  - o How are they related to readings, our discussions and lectures in the class?