

TO: Parents of Students in Dr. Neufeld's History Classes
FROM: Dr. Neufeld
RE: "Hotel Rwanda"
DATE: Wednesday, December 6, 2023



I think that an important part of teaching history is to link the past to the present. We are currently studying the many diverse groups of people who lived on the African continent from 1000 BC to the AD 1400s. One important part of these times in Africa was the great diversity of culture and religion. Also was a conflict among these many different tribes. This is a common trait we have already found among the people in Europe and will learn about the people of Asia and the Americas as our studies this year advances. This conflict among tribes has continued, even to our present time. A fabulous film to show this link from the past to the present is titled "Hotel Rwanda." Made in 2004, this film is a true story about the 1994 revolt between people of the Hutu tribe and those of the Tutsi tribe. This true story is about man who risked his life to save hundreds of others. It is a conflict that resulted in the death of close to 1 million people in just two weeks. It is a film that also shows how people of the western world did little to help those being slaughtered. It is a comparison of what happened in Europe during World War II, and what is currently happening today in Congo and Darfur.

This film was rated PG-13 for its graphic content of war. The film does not have any scenes of a sexual nature. In showing the reality of what happened in Rwanda, there are scenes of violence. Once again, I will continue to discuss with the students in my classes the issues of war and conflict in society before we view the film. I have also edited the film to pull the scenes that are not crucial to understand the story.

On the back of this paper is more information on the film. **I have posted the movie preview on my web site. To view it, go to "DrNeufeld.com"**, click "**C5-C6 Africa**" and scroll down to and click "**Hotel Rwanda**". You will see the preview there. I also listed two web sites you could use to learn more about the movie. I would be more than happy to loan my copy to you to view before I show it during the week of Dec. 15 if you so desire. In our conversation of this film, I have learned that several students in each class have already seen the film with you! If you would like more information, or if you would like to see the film yourself, you can e-mail me at doug_neufeld@lawndalesd.net or call me at school at 310/676-4806.

Thank You!

Please return this form by Friday, December 15, 2023!

Name of Student

Period (in history class)

Yes, my child can watch the 2004 film "Hotel Rwanda."

No, I prefer that my child not watch the film and complete another project instead.

Parent Signature



Two reviews of **Hotel Rwanda**:

Solidly built around a subtle yet commanding performance by Don Cheadle, *Hotel Rwanda* emerged as one of the most highly praised dramas of 2004. In a role that demands his quietly riveting presence in nearly every scene, Cheadle plays real-life hero Paul Rusesabagina, a hotel manager in the Rwandan capital of Kigali who in 1994 saved 1,200 Rwandan "guests" from certain death during the genocidal clash between tribal Hutus, who slaughtered a million victims, and the horrified Tutsis, who found safe haven or died. Giving his best performance since his breakthrough role in *Devil in a Blue Dress*, Cheadle plays Rusesabagina as he really was during the ensuing chaos: "an expert in situational ethics" (as described by critic Roger Ebert), doing what he morally had to do, at great risk and potential sacrifice, with an

understanding that wartime negotiations are largely a game of subterfuge, cooperation, and clever bribery. Aided by a United Nations official (Nick Nolte), he worked a saintly miracle, and director Terry George (*Some Mother's Son*) brings formidable social conscience to bear on a true story you won't soon forget. --*Jeff Shannon* from the US

I have no doubt that this is the only movie for the past year that can get me totally, if not 101%, emotionally involved. For other movies, I might be interacting with the story a lot, say associating my personal experiences with the characters, making judgment on them, criticizing the development of the story, ways of expression, the cinematography, acting, etc. BUT, *Hotel Rwanda* simply took me over as I was watching it. My emotion was going along with Paul (Don Cheadle) all the time. The director did a great great job in capturing the feelings of people facing uncertainty, horror, ridicules, anger, death, waning faith... Family, life and dignity/integrity become the largest things in the situation. What's more is that it squarely shows the realist thinking in international politics. It honestly shows the weakness or helplessness of the UN and the non-governmental organizations. It truthfully tells how indifferent most of the international community (or individuals, which may or may not include you and me) are towards the deprivation of social justice taking place in other parts of the world. It makes you question to what extent that it is true to say what we see (the sufferings in the world) is what we tolerate. It shows you how monstrous human being can be. It scares you how sanity would fail. At the same time, the uglier the people become, the more beautiful you find those who have managed to keep brave and maintain humanity. The movie fully succeeds in showing me the spirit, faith, and compassion that the world is dreaming for. *Author: Maggie (Moraine_ying@email.com) from United States*

For more information about this film, check out these two web sites:

http://www.amazon.com/Hotel-Rwanda-Xolani-Mali/dp/B0007R4T3U/ref=bxgy_cc_d_text_a/105-2390456-1215662?ie=UTF8&qid=1192112990&sr=1-1

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0395169/>