



Mistaking Africa: Curiosities and Inventions of the American Mind

Curtis A Keim

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For many Americans the mention of Africa immediately conjures up images of safaris, ferocious animals, strangely dressed “tribesmen,” and impenetrable jungles. Although the occasional newspaper headline mentions genocide, AIDS, malaria, or civil war in Africa, the collective American consciousness still carries strong mental images of Africa that are reflected in advertising, movies, amusement parks, cartoons, and many other corners of society. Few think to question these perceptions or how they came to be so deeply lodged in American minds. Curtis Keim’s *Mistaking Africa* looks at the historical evolution of this mind-set and examines the role that popular media plays in its creation. Keim addresses the most prevalent myths and preconceptions and demonstrates how these prevent a true understanding of the enormously diverse peoples and cultures of Africa.

Updated throughout, the third edition includes a new chapter, "Where Is the Real Africa," discussing the multifaceted nature of the question and the importance of not grasping onto stereotypes of Africa’s mythical past. Keim also includes new examples and new images to expand the visual narrative of western views about Africa. *Mistaking Africa* is an important book for African studies courses and for anyone interested in unraveling American misperceptions about the continent.

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