

**South Africa and United States: Race, Rights, Resistance and  
Transnational Movements in Comparative History**

**Fall 2017 HIST 535 and 615: \*\*First Mandatory Meeting\*\*8/29, Tues.  
7:20-10:00 PM, Innovation Hall 316**

**After 8/29, all seminar meetings \*\*will be held in Rob B room 333\*\***

**Dr. Benedict Carton, Robert T. Hawkes Professor of History  
Office hours: Tues. 4:30-6:00 PM, Robinson B, Room 355B  
Or by appointment: bcarton1@gmu.edu**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the comparative histories of South Africa and the United States. From the 1700s to 1800s, a growing number of indigenous and immigrant groups in South Africa and the United States resisted settler rule, as the legacies of slavery increasingly defined the rights of “European” and “non-European” populations. With widening global networks in the twentieth century, the identities of indigenous, settler and immigrant peoples continued to evolve. At this time, transnational movements such as Ethiopianism and Garveyism brought the two societies closer together in far-reaching struggles against legalized racism. Indeed, more and more South Africans and Americans recognized what they shared in common: white supremacy. By the 1940s, the South Africa state had come to embrace apartheid while the US government edged away from segregation. Our seminar focuses on scholarship that examines these intersecting and divergent paths. Along the way, we consider whether national comparisons deepen or distort our historical understandings of South Africa and the United States.

**CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

- 1. Please do not arrive late to seminar.**
- 2. Please turn off cell phones and do not eat in class.**
- 3. You are required to finish weekly readings before coming to seminar.**
- 4. You are strongly urged to participate in class discussions.**
- 5. When emailing your professor, please include the heading, “SAfrica-US Seminar.”**

## **READINGS**

The readings include works of historical analysis and synthesis. Several required journal articles will need to be downloaded from an online source. **The following required books are available at the GMU bookstore:** **1)** Iris Berger, *South Africa in World History* (Oxford University Press, 2009); **2)** Zine Magubane, *Bringing the Empire Home: Race, Class, and Gender in Britain and Colonial South Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 2003); **3)** George M. Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study of American and South African History* (Oxford University Press, 1982); **4)** James Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998); **5)** Robert Vinson, *The Americans Are Coming!: Dreams of African American Liberation in Segregationist South Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2012); **6)** Mark Mathabane, *Kaffir Boy: An Autobiography--The True Story of a Black Youth's Coming of Age in Apartheid South Africa* (Free Press, 1998); **7)** Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (Delta, 2004); **8)** Carol Ann Muller and Sathia Bea Benjamin *Musical Echoes: South African Women Thinking in Jazz* (Duke University, 2011). **9)** Robert Houle, *Making African Christianity: Africans Reimagining their Faith in Colonial South Africa* (Lehigh University Press, 2013).

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

Class participation is worth **15%** of your overall grade. **If you have poor class participation**—due largely to absences—**your final grade will fall dramatically.** For example, if your average mark on papers is an A- but you have poor class participation, your final course grade will drop to B- (or lower).

**Please bring your required weekly reading(s) to class for every seminar.**

You are required to write two 5-page book-review essays. Each essay is worth **25%** of your overall grade. **You must complete a draft of your essay and email it to [bcarton1@gmu.edu](mailto:bcarton1@gmu.edu) no later than 4:00 PM on the Tuesday that it is due.** Please give me the final (hard) copy of the essay in seminar on Tuesday evening. Your “draft” essays will inform our weekly discussions. During our second class of the semester, I will ask you to choose one book to review from section I and one book to review from section II. I will also send you several “anonymous” examples of book review essays from previous seminars. You should consider the following basic guidelines when writing a review:

A) What is the main argument of the book and/or articles? B) Do the primary and secondary sources support the main argument? D) How does the scholarship build on previous ideas? E) Are certain interpretations or methodological approaches singled out for criticism? F) Are these criticisms fair? G) Does the book ignore crucial perspectives that undermine its findings?

Finally, you are required to write a 20-page final paper; it is worth 35% of your course grade. This final paper will critically assess **at least 7 assigned books** (the special journal edition qualifies as a book). You will need to include at least 3 books from section I and at least 3 books from section II. In addition, you must incorporate some works from section III. You will be given a choice of final paper questions in November. **PAPERS IN THIS CLASS WILL BE PENALIZED ½ A GRADE POINT FOR EACH DAY LATE. Please note that this grading penalty applies to every day late of a seven-day week.**

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

GMU is an Honor Code university. Please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? When you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on any aspect of someone else's work, you will give full credit in the proper (academically accepted) form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and open debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of our class will be conducted with civility and respect for different ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

## **GMU EMAIL ACCOUNTS**

Crucial resources for HIST 535/615 will be sent through the university server to your GMU email, as listed on Patriotweb. Thus, students must use their Mason electronic address to receive key information, including important messages to the class and several key required readings. Please see <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

## **OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS: <http://ods.gmu.edu>

## **IMPORTANT CAMPUS RESOURCES**

WRITING CENTER: Rob A114; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: <http://library.gmu.edu/>

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES: (703) 993-2380.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for GMU policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in academic affairs. Other policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

## **FALL 2017 SEMESTER SCHEDULE**

**Week 1, Aug. 29:** Required class meeting and seminar introduction.

### **SECTION I: South Africa in Global and American Perspectives: Approaches to Comparative History**

**Week 2, Sept. 5:** South Africa in global perspective with American dimensions.

Week 2 we discuss Iris Berger, *South Africa in World History* (Oxford University Press, 2009); C. Lowe, T. Brimah, P-A Marsh, W Minter & M Muyangwa, "Talking about Tribe" [http://africanactivist.msu.edu/document\\_metadata.php?objectid=32-130-153D](http://africanactivist.msu.edu/document_metadata.php?objectid=32-130-153D)

**Week 3, Sept. 12:** Nineteenth-century South Africa and Anglo (developed British and undeveloped American) Empire: A "post-colonial" historical analysis.

Week 3 we discuss Zine Magubane, *Bringing the Empire Home: Race, Class, and Gender in Britain and Colonial South Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 2003).

**Week 4, Sept. 19:** Pioneering comparisons: Part one: The strangely familiar careers of white supremacy in South Africa and United States.

Week 4 we discuss George Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study of American and South African History* (Oxford University Press, 1982), xi-135. Consult the "Chronology of Events," 283-287.

**Week 5, Sept. 26:** Part two: The strangely familiar careers of white supremacy in South Africa and United States.

Week 5 we discuss George Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study of American and South African History* (Oxford University Press, 1982), 136-282. Consult the "Chronology of Events," 283-287.

**Week 6, Oct 3:** Race, class and labo(u)r in South Africa and United States.

Week 6 we discuss Peter Alexander & Rick Halpern, "Introduction: comparing race and labour in South Africa and The United States," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 30, 1 (2004): 5-18. \*Also read Ochiltree, Worger, and Bonner in this journal edition: <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cjss20/30/1>

**A seminar about method: Comparative to transnational historical analysis. Please start reading for 10/17 the long book by** Robert Houle, *Making African Christianity: Africans Reimagining their Faith in Colonial South Africa* (Lehigh University Press, 2013).

### **SECTION II: Transnational Christianity: South Africa and United States**

**Week 7, Oct. 10:** NO CLASS. **GMU COLUMBUS DAY RECESS.**

**Please continue reading for 10/17** Robert Houle, *Making African Christianity: Africans Reimagining their Faith in Colonial South Africa* (Lehigh University Press, 2013).

**Week 8, Oct. 17: African evangelicalism, American holiness, and Zulu spirituality.**  
Week 8 we discuss Robert Houle, *Making African Christianity: Africans Reimagining their Faith in Colonial South Africa* (Lehigh University Press, 2013).

**Week 9, Oct. 24: Part one of the “Ethiopian” revolutions: African-American redemptive religion and South African liberation.**

Week 9 we discuss James Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998), vi-179.

**Week 10, Oct. 31: Part two of the “Ethiopian” revolutions: African-American redemptive religion and South African liberation: the pendulum of systemic racial violence.**

Week 10 we discuss James Campbell, *Songs of Zion: The African Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States and South Africa* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 180-334; Benedict Carton and Robert Vinson, “‘Ethiopia Shall Stretch’ from Africa to America: The Pan-African Crusade of Charles Morris,” in D. Hodgson and J. Byfield, eds. *Global Africa into the Twenty-first Century* (University of California Press, 2017); a pdf of this essay will be emailed to each student.

**Week 11, Nov. 7: The Transnational Gospel of Garvey: Pan-Africanism in the United States and South Africa.**

Week 11 we discuss Robert Vinson, *The Americans Are Coming! Dreams of African American Liberation in Segregationist South Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2012).

### SECTION III: Personal Comparisons and Crossings

**Week 12, Nov. 14: Searing memories of segregationist South Africa.**

Week 12 we discuss Mark Mathabane, *Kaffir Boy: An Autobiography--The True Story of a Black Youth's Coming of Age in Apartheid South Africa* (Free Press, 1998).

**Week 13, Nov. 21: Searing memories of segregationist America.**

Week 13 we discuss Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi* (Delta, 2004).

**Week 14, Nov. 28: Living in similar racial worlds?**

Week 14 we discuss Carol Ann Muller and Sathia Bea Benjamin *Musical Echoes: South African Women Thinking in Jazz* (Duke University, 2011).

**Week 15, Dec. 5: A seminar about historical method and writing: we consider drafting an excellent final essay on the comparative and transnational histories of the United States and South Africa.**

**\*\*\*\*\* Your final 20-page final paper saved in a MSWORD file is due Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 Noon, Fairfax time. Your bibliography, should you elect to append one, is not counted in the 20-page requirement. Please email your paper (in MSWORD attachment) to my GMU address:**

**[bcarton1@gmu.edu](mailto:bcarton1@gmu.edu) \*\*\*\*\*Please remember the “1” in [bcarton1@gmu.edu](mailto:bcarton1@gmu.edu)**