

**The Political Economy of Southern Africa**  
**Anthropology 186 - Winter 2007**  
**Blue 105**  
**T-Th 10:55-12:40**  
**<http://minerva.union.edu/fayd/08winsa>**

**Professor**

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30 PM, Wednesday 3-4 PM or by appointment

**Course Description**

This course examines the contemporary societies of southern Africa, focusing on the period since the end of apartheid in South Africa. After a review of the rise and fall of apartheid, the course examines a series of topics related to changes and continuities over time. We begin with South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, asking about its significance for participants, how this differed according to participants' social position, its intended audience, and the wider society. We then turn to the dilemmas of neoliberalism: South Africa's liberation movements drew on Marxist thought and promises of redistribution and "a better life for all," but have come to power in an international policy context that calls for downsizing the state, liberalizing trade and markets, and privatizing public services like water and electricity. Neoliberal policies are widely seen as partly responsible for the current crisis in Zimbabwe, our third topic: focusing on the area around Bulawayo, a center of the Ndebele minority population, we'll look at the strategies people have used to cope with political and economic turmoil. We then turn to labor migration to the mines, a feature of the region's economy for the last century, and its relation to the current HIV/AIDS epidemic, through an in-depth ethnographic study of a prevention program in a mining community. In week eight, we examine the contested topic of land, and the rights and wrongs of land restitution -- the promise of restoring land to those who lost it under apartheid, and the challenges of implementing it in practice. Week nine focuses on South African novelist and Nobel Prize winner J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, a work that engages the moral complexities and unsettled hierarchies of post-apartheid South Africa. Finally, we consider tourism and immigration, considering the relationships between mobility and changing economic opportunities, and the ways in which material and symbolic boundaries are maintained and transgressed.

The course is not simply a course in history or current events in the region, nor a series of case studies. We will approach southern Africa through the analytic lenses of political anthropology. This has several implications. As far as possible, we will draw on works based in ethnographic fieldwork, linking the experiences of individuals and communities to larger processes of social change; draw on a characteristically anthropological way of thinking, asking how the world comes to be taken-for-granted, recognizing that this is a central element of political power; draw on an anthropological holism that calls into question the notion--inscribed in our academic disciplines--that economy, politics, the state, religion, etc. are separate domains of social life; build on contemporary anthropological theorization of power, exchange, and social change, seeing history not as an explanation but something to be explained.

**Requirements**

*Read this syllabus.* Understand the policies stated here. If anything is unclear, contact me for clarification. Always bring your syllabus to class in case changes are announced. *Check it frequently* to be sure you are aware of upcoming assignments and due dates. The syllabus is *subject to change*. I will announce all changes in class and post an updated version on the course web site.

*Attend class.* Attendance is required, and absences will be taken into account in determining the participation component of your grade (see below). If you expect to miss class due to an athletic event or other commitment please let me know at least a week in advance. If you miss class it is *your* responsibility to get notes, find out about any announcements, etc.

*Participate in class discussions.* This course will mostly be conducted as a seminar. I expect you to come to class prepared to talk. Most class time will be devoted to discussing the issues raised in the readings. A "Socratic method" will be used in class: it requires students to answer and debate questions as a means of learning. This method helps you to learn to think on your feet. Classes will clarify and expand upon the main ideas, issues, and findings in the assigned reading largely through student questions, comments, and responses to the instructor's questions. It is necessary to have your text and class notes with you for every class. It is essential to the success of this course that you complete all of the assigned reading prior to each class. Seminars only work well when the participants (students and professor) come to class prepared. In seminars the emphasis is not on teaching as something the professor does but on collaborative learning as something we all do actively together. Again, this course requires that you: a) come to class prepared, which means having done the reading prior to each class meeting and written out answers to the assigned questions

(when applicable); and b) that you are willing to verbally express your views and ask questions. This course can be neither educational nor interesting without your active participation.

*Do the readings listed prior to class*, preferably in the order listed. For example, you should read the selections listed from Beinart and Goodman for class January 10. The readings be necessary for adequate class participation. You may be called on if you are not an active participant.

*Bring your texts to class*. If you've read something, it's because we're going to discuss it in class.

*In the classroom*: Please turn off all cell phones, laptops, etc. You are welcome to eat and drink (preferably from recyclable or reusable containers) as long as you are not disturbing others.

*If you plan to take the course pass-fail*, you must contact the Registrar within the first three weeks of the term.

### **ADA Requirements**

It is Union College policy to make accommodations for individuals with disabilities. If you have any disability or special concern, please let me know what your needs are in order that they may be accommodated. All discussions will remain confidential to the extent permissible by law.

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must also:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Dean of Students Office.
2. Bring a letter to the instructor from the Dean of Students Office indicating you need academic accommodations. This must be done **within the first two weeks of the term**.

### **Academic Honesty**

If you cheat in this course, I will refer the case to the Dean for Undergraduate Education and recommend that, at minimum, you receive a failing grade for the course. I expect that you are all familiar with the college statement on plagiarism and academic honesty ([www.union.edu—statement.htm](http://www.union.edu—statement.htm)) and will abide by the guidelines stated there. If you have any questions on how to cite material, please consult with me.

### **Required Texts (available for purchase at the Union bookstore):**

William Beinart, *Twentieth-Century South Africa*

David Goodman, *Fault Lines: Journeys into the New South Africa*

Fiona Ross, *Bearing Witness: Women and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa*

Catherine Campbell, *Letting them Die: Why HIV/AIDS Prevention Programmes Fail*

Otrude Moyo, *Trampled No More: Voices from Bulawayo's Townships About Families, Life, Survival, and Social Change in Zimbabwe*

J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace*

### **Evaluation**

participation - 20% - including discussion leading / presentation, attendance

test - Thursday Jan. 24 - 20%

2 essays - Monday Feb. 11, Monday Mar. 3, Monday Mar. 17 - 20% each

## Class Schedule

The following abbreviations are used in the course schedule:

R -- Reserve reading available at Schaffer Library and/or from library web site

www -- Reading available from course web site

TBA -- To be announced

### Week One - Apartheid and southern Africa

**Tue Jan 08** Introduction to the course and the syllabus

in-class video: *Maids and Madams*

**Thu Jan 10** Goodman, Introduction: Fault Lines (pp. 1-18)

Beinart, ch. 1-3, 5 (123 pp.)

### Week Two - The Anti-Apartheid Struggle and the Frontline States

**Tue Jan 15** Beinart, ch. 4, 6-9

Goodman, pp. 23-52

in-class video: *Amandla* part 1

**Thu Jan 17** Beinart, pp. 254-270

Goodman, pp. 78-115

Cooper, "Late Decolonizations" (11 pp., R)

in-class: *Amandla* part 2

**Sat Jan 19** Ladysmith Black Mambazo at Troy Music Hall

### Week Three - The early 1990s: Transition and Negotiations

**Tue Jan 22** Beinart, pp. 270-308, skim ch. 13

Goodman, pp. 53-76, 115-129, 173-205

**Thu Jan 24** Test

### Week Four - Truth and Reconciliation?

**Mon Jan 29** Ross, Intro-ch. 4

In-class: *Long Night's Journey into Day*, part 1

**Thu Jan 31** Ross, ch. 5-7

R. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa*, ch. 6 (R)

In-class: *Long Night's Journey into Day*, part 2

### Week Five - Neoliberalism and the "New Realism" era

**Tue Feb 05** Beinart, ch. 12

J. Ferguson, "Formalities of Poverty: Thinking about

Social Assistance in Neoliberal South

Africa" (R)

F. Miraftab, "Neoliberalism and Casualization of Public Sector Services: the Case of Waste Collection Services in Cape Town, South Africa" (R)

Goodman, pp. 211-245

**Thu Feb 07** Grace Khunou, "Massive Cutoffs" in McDonald and Pape, pp. 61-74 (www)

Deedat and Cottle, "Cost Recovery and Prepaid Water Meters and the Cholera Outbreak in KwaZulu-Natal" in

McDonald and Pape, pp. 81-96 (www)

Goodman, pp. 246-280

In-class: *Troubled Waters*

### Week Six - Ethnicity and the Zimbabwe Crisis

**Mon Feb 11** 1st Essay Due

**Tue Feb 12** D. Glaser chapter 6 (pp. 132-160) (R)

J. Alexander, McGregor and T. Ranger, "Ethnicity and the Politics of Conflict: The Case of Matabeleland" (R)

Moyo, Introduction (pp. 1-17), ch. 1 (19-31), ch. 4-7

**Thu Feb 14** Moyo, pp. 173-285

**Week Seven - Labor Migration and HIV/AIDS**

**Tue Feb 19** Campbell, ch. 1-6  
V. Van der Vliet "AIDS: Losing 'The New Struggle'?"  
in-class: *The Color of Gold*

**Thu Feb 21** Campbell, ch. 7-end

**Week Eight - The Rights and Wrongs of Land Restitution**

**Tue Feb 26** A. Goebel, "Is Zimbabwe the Future of South Africa?" (www)  
A. Fraser, "Hybridity emergent: Geo-history, learning,  
and land restitution in South Africa" (www)  
Goodman, pp. 283-344

**Thu Feb 28** D. Fay, "Property, Subjection and Protected Areas: the 'Restitution' of Dwesa-Cwebe Nature Reserve, South Africa" (www)  
A. Bohlin, "Considering the Time Factor in Urban Land Claims: Choosing Cash over Land in Kalk Bay and Knysna" (www)  
C. Walker, "Restitution by Default: Land Claims and the Redevelopment of Cato Manor" (www)

**Week Nine - J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace and Racism in the Media**

**Mon Mar 03** **2nd Essay Due**

**Tue Mar 04** Coetzee, pp. 1-122  
R. Donadio, "Out of South Africa," *New York Times*, Dec. 16, 2007 (www)  
"Statement of the ANC at the Human Rights Commission Hearings on Racism in the Media" (www)

**Thu Mar 06** Coetzee, pp. 123-220

**Week Ten - Tourism and Immigration**

**Tue Mar 11** K. Mathers and L. Landau, "Natives, tourists, and makwerekwere: ethical concerns with 'Proudly South African' tourism" (www)  
TBA  
In-class: *For a Better Life?*

**Thu Mar 13** TBA

**Mon Mar 17** Final Essay Due