

**Seeking Gendered Perspectives**  
**Southern African History**  
**Foundation Seminar - Jeanne Marie Penvenne**  
**History 91 – Fall 2009**

**Syllabus**

**Basic Information:**

Class time: Wednesdays 7 block, 1:30 – 4:00

Class location: East Hall Lounge & Tisch Media

Instructor's Office & Office Hours:

East Hall 105, Mondays 1:30 – 2:30, Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:00

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**Introduction:**

All people create, experience and interpret history as agents of change within the parameters of their social location. Among the most familiar criteria shaping social location are age, gender, sexuality, class, nationality, ethnicity, and race. Foundation Seminars wrestle with the overall problematic of experiencing and interpreting history, specifically the historiography, theory and methods appropriate to specific places and time periods. Our focus is Southern Africa in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thanks to its colonial and settlement heritage, Southern Africa has contending historiographies, theories and methods.

Our challenges this semester are: to retrieve women's history from predominantly male centered historical sources, to engage contending viewpoints from race and class divides, to explore and evaluate digital primary sources and 'new media.' We focus on three skills: retrieving and evaluating sources, writing critical essays and constructing a good literature review. Course materials for discussion include scholarly essays, documentary and feature films, photographs, literature, poetry, interviews and a range of materials considered ephemera: pamphlets, newsletters, leaflets, buttons, posters, t-shirts etc. Each class will combine discussion, analysis of visual production, and work with digital or microform sources.

We will take a field trip to the African Studies Center and the African Studies Library at Boston University. It is the closest federal Title VI African Area Studies Center, specializing in African document collection and paid for by your tax dollars. You should know what your nickel purchased.

**Required / Recommended Reading & Viewing**

All required readings and viewings are available at Tisch Library through JSTOR or on reserve. The recommended reading list is for enrichment and guidance with the literature review. It will be distributed in class.

**Student Evaluation**

Map Exam – Self Challenge

Quality Class Discussion – 30%

Source Search & Evaluation - 2 at 5% = 10%

Critical Essay - 2 at 15% = 30%

Literature Review – 30%

**Statement on Student Evaluation:**

This is a once a week seminar. **Students are expected to complete required readings before class, attend and participate fully in class meetings.** Scholarly rigor depends upon building an intellectual community. We must all bring our energy to each class and assignment. **NO student will be allowed to submit extra work for extra credit.** Except for extraordinary circumstances, confirmed through the office of the Dean of Students, all students will be evaluated according to the above formula and guidelines. Due dates are firm. Any student who is apprehended in any form of academic or personal dishonesty in the course will be subject to the fullest university sanctions.

**Schedule of Classes**

**Class One 9 September**

Introductory Lecture – The Region, The Historiography, the Challenges

Opening discussion - History and “New Media”

Film : Generations of Resistance

**Required Reading for Week Two:**

Frederick Cooper, “Possibility and Constraint: African Independence in Historical Perspective,” *Journal of African History*, Vol. 49 (2008):167-96.JSTOR

William Worger, “Southern and Central Africa,” in Robin Winks, Ed. *Oxford History of the British Empire*, Vol. 5 *Historiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003) Reserve

Jeffrey W. Knopf, “Doing a Literature Review,” *Political Science & Politics* Vol. 39, No. 1 (2006):127-132. JSTOR

**Class Two 16 September**

Dominant Narratives and Gender I / Discussion of Cooper & Worger

Literature Review – Defining topics and goals.

Film : You have Struck a Rock

**Required Reading for Week Three:**

Tiyambe Zeleza, "Gender Biases in African Historiography," *Engendering African Social Sciences*. Edited by Ayesha M. Imam, Amina Mama, Fatou Sow (Dakar: Codesria Book Series, 1997): 81-115. Reserve.

Helen Bradford, "Women, Gender and Colonialism: Rethinking the History of the British Cape Colony and its Frontier Zones, c. 1806-70," *Journal of African History*, Vol. 37 (1996): 351-370. JSTOR

Iris Berger, "'Beasts of Burden' Revisited: Interpretations of Women and Gender in Southern African Societies," in R. W. Harms, J. C. Miller, D.S. Newbury and M.D. Wagner, eds. *Paths toward the Past: African Historical Essays in Honor of Jan Vansina* (Atlanta: African Studies Association Press, 1994):123-141. Reserve

**Class Three 23 September**

Map Exam – Self Challenge

Dominant Narratives and Gender II / Discussion of Zeleza and Bradford  
Exploration of ALUKA database / Brainstorming “New Media”  
Discussion Format of Search & Evaluation Assignment 1

**Required Reading:**

Susan Geiger, “What’s so Feminist about Doing Women’s Oral History?” in Expanding the Boundaries of Women’s History; Essays on Women in the Third World, edited by Cheryl Johnson-Odim and Margaret Strobel.

Jeanne Marie Penvenne & Bento Siteo, “Power, Poets and the People: Mozambican Voices Interpreting History,” *Social Dynamics* Vol. 26, No. 2 (2000):55-86.

**Class Four 30 September**

Oral History & Praise Poetry I: Discussion of Geiger, Penvenne & Siteo

Film : Songs of the Adventurers / Discussion Praise Poetry & Gendered Migration

DUE: Search & Evaluation Assignment 1 (3-5 pages)

**Required Reading:**

Bojumil Jewsiewicki and V.Y. Mudimbe, “African Memories and Contemporary History of Africa,” *History and Theory*, Vol 32, No. 4 (Dec. 1993) 1-11

Steven Feierman, "Colonizers, Scholars and the Creation of Invisible Histories," in Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt. Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1999): 182-216.

**Class Five 7 October**

Discussion of History/ Memory and the Creation of Invisible Histories

Jewsiewicki, Mudimbe and Feierman

Choose Text for Critical Essay 1

**Required Reading:**

Iris Berger, “Gender & Working Class History,” in *Expanding the Boundaries of Women’s History Essays on Women in the Third World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press,1992.

Judith Lütge Coullie, "The Power to Name the Real: The Politics of Worker Testimony in South Africa," *Research in African Literatures* 28:2. (Summer 1997):132-144.

Elsa Joubert, *Poppie Nongena* Reserve and Used Copies Part One

**Class Six 14 October**

View A World Apart

First Group Meetings on Digital Sources / Penvenne in Canada

**Required Reading:**

Elsa Joubert, *Poppie Nongena* Part Two for discussion 28 October

David Schalkwyk, “The Flight from Politics: An Analysis of the South African Reception of *Poppie Nongena*,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 12, 2 (1986):183-195.

**Required Research:**

Locate and be prepared to report on reviews / discussions of *A World Apart*

**Class Seven 21 October**

Discussion of *A World Apart*

2:30 GIS workshop

Explore Michigan State University's "African Activist Archive Project  
CAMP and Benjamin Pogrund's Collection from Southern Africa

DUE: Critical Essay 1

**Required Reading:**

Kristi Dalven, "Native Witness, White Translator': The Problematics of Tran/scribing in Poppie Nongena," in Deirdre Lashgari, ed., *Violence, Silence and Anger: Women's Writing as Transgression* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1995), 80-91.

**Class Eight 28 October**

History, Popular History, Literature and Personal Narratives. Ethical Issues in History  
Discussion of *Poppie Nongena*, Schalkwyk & Dalven

**Required Reading:**

Extracts from Steve Biko, *I write what I like* and *Biko lives! : contesting the legacies of Steve Biko*, edited by Andile Mngxitama, Amanda Alexander, and Nigel C. Gibson (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

**Required Viewing:**

*Cry Freedom* – Scheduled outside class / Penvenne provides classy pizza

**Class Nine 4 November**

View: Biko: Breaking the Silence

Discussion – *Cry Freedom* / *Breaking the Silence* / *Literature & Legacy Biko*

ALUKA and Michigan State African Activists collections – Information on Biko

Confirm selection for Critical Essay 2

**Required Reading:**

David William Cohen, Stephan F. Miescher and Luise White, "Voices, Words and African History," in *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History* (Bloomington : Indiana University Press) pp. 1-27, Reserve.

Louise G. White, "Collecting Data: Qualitative Data and Field Research," in *Political Analysis; Technique and Practice* (3d ed) Chapter 8 pp. 211-237 (pdf on Reserve).

**Recommended Viewing:** *Long Night's Journey into Day*

**Class Ten 11 November**

Discussion: Cohen, Miescher & White and Louise White.

Lecture: Feminism / Womanism and Masculinities

Confirm Topics for Literature Review

Review Microforms US Foreign Policy on South Africa / National Security Archive / Truth and Reconciliation Commission Documents

History and "New Media"

DUE: Critical Essay, 2

<http://www.info.gov.za/otherdocs/2003/trc/>

**Required Reading:**

Marc Epprecht, "Enriching Gender Studies in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Canadian Journal of African*

*Studies*, Vol 36, 1 (2002): 119-123.

Robert Morrell, "Of Boys and Men: Masculinity and Gender in Southern African Studies," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 4 1998. (605-630).

Mary E. Modupe Kolawole, "Re-conceptualizing African gender theory: feminism, womanism and the Arere metaphor," in *Re-thinking sexualities in Africa*, Signe Arnfred, ed. (Uppsala, Sweden : Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, c2004):

### **Class Eleven 18 November**

Class Field Trip to African Studies Center / African Studies Library - Boston University  
Karter-Gerhard Collection – Newspapers/ Freedom of Information Documentation / Ephemera  
Confirm Literature Review Readings

#### **Required Reading:**

Student generated sources / developing literature reviews.

## **HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

### **Class Twelve 2 December**

Discussion: Epprecht, Morrell & Kolawole

Confirm Literature Review Readings

View: Chain of Tears

#### **Required Reading:**

Student generated sources / developing literature reviews.

### **Class Thirteen 9 December**

Discussion : Gendered Perspectives in S'm Africa based on student generated bibliography

View Forgiveness

DUE: Source Search & Evaluation, 2

Choice of MSU "African Activists" or Karter-Gerhard Collection or US Foreign Policy on South Africa microfilm or TRC documents or student generated 'New Media.'

Due December 15, Literature Review

Turn in HARD COPY in Penvenne Mailbox East Hall Room 10 by NOON