

Robin K. Crigler

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References are listed on page 5

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Michigan State University, History, August 2021

Dissertation: "Laughter and Identity: A Social and Cultural History of South African Humor, 1910-1961"

Dissertation Committee: Peter Alegi (Chair), Sekibakiba Peter Lekgoathi, Edward Murphy, Michael Stamm

Major Field: African History

Minor Fields: U.S. History, Anthrohistory

B.A. The College of William and Mary, History and Religious Studies, May 2014

Thesis: "When George Washington's Ghost Turned Handsprings: South African Conflict and American Identity, 1895-1905" (Highest Honors)

Advisor: Robert Trent Vinson

EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor, Fixed Term, Michigan State University Department of History, 2021-Present

- Design and teach a variety of Africa-related courses for the Michigan State University History Department and Integrative Arts and Humanities programs (for details see "Teaching Experience" below).

FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship, 2019

- Supported eight months of dissertation research in South Africa, based at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Michigan State University Department of History Summer Research Grant, 2016-2017

- Supported two summers of pre-dissertation fieldwork in South Africa

Michigan State University Graduate School Travel Grant, 2017

- Supported travel to the 2017 History in the Making Graduate Student Conference hosted by Concordia University, Montréal, Canada

Foreign Language and Area Studies Academic Year Fellowship, 2015-2017

- Supported two academic years of intensive Zulu study at Michigan State University

Foreign Language and Area Studies Summer Study Abroad Fellowship, 2016

- Supported a summer of intensive Zulu study offered by the University of Pennsylvania in Durban, South Africa

PUBLICATIONS

Chapters

“There’s No Such Thing As ‘Too Soon’ Here: Taking Stock of South Africa’s Comedy Boom,” in *Stand-Up Comedy in Africa: Humour in Popular Languages and Media*, ed. Izuu Nwankwo (Stuttgart, Germany: Ibidem Press, forthcoming March 2022), 235-251

Journal Articles

“Book Review: *William Kentridge: Process as Metaphor and Other Doubtful Enterprises* by Leora Maltz-Leca, and *Awakenings: The Art of Lionel Davis*, edited by Mario Pissarra,” *African Arts* 52.3 (2019), 86-87

“No Laughing Matter? Humor and the Performance of South Africa,” *South African Theatre Journal* 31.2-3 (2018), 155-171

Pedagogical Resources

“The Apartheid Era: Should the African National Congress Adopt an Armed Struggle?,” *Infobase Issues and Controversies in History*, forthcoming late 2021.

Select Unreviewed Articles

“Remembering Stephen Gray,” *LitNet*, November 18, 2020,
<<https://www.litnet.co.za/remembering-stephen-gray/>>.

“The Great S.A. Comedy Odyssey Begins: Chester Missing, Wokpo Jensma, and the Meaning of Laughter,” *RobinCrigler.com*, April 29, 2019,
<<http://robincrigler.com/african-history-blog/blacksonly/>>

“‘Oh, How Specific!’ Explaining Your (Obscure) Topic This Holiday Season,” *The Activist History Review*, December 19, 2018,
<<https://activisthistory.com/2018/12/19/oh-how-specific-explaining-your-obscure-topic-this-holiday-season/>>

“Laughing in Grahamstown: Participant Observation and South African Comedy,” *RobinCrigler.com*, July 10, 2017,
<<http://robincrigler.com/african-history-blog/laughing-in-grahamstown-participant-observation-and-south-african-comedy/>>

CONFERENCE PAPERS & PRESENTATIONS

International

“There’s No Such Thing As ‘Too Soon’ Here: Taking Stock of South Africa’s Comedy Boom,” Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study Colloquium on African Stand-Up Comedy Practice, October 9, 2019 (Stellenbosch, South Africa)

“‘Begin With the Girls, *Wetu*’: Gender in 1930s South Africa Through the Eyes of R. Roamer, Esq.,” 27th Biennial Conference of the Southern African Historical Society, June 24, 2019 (Makhanda, South Africa)

“‘Are South Africans a Race of Clowns?’: Stephen Black, Leon Schuster, and Humor in the New South Africa(s),” Stellenbosch University History Seminar Series, July 18, 2017 (Stellenbosch, South Africa)

“No Laughing Matter? Humor and the Performance of South Africa,” Concordia University History in the Making Graduate Student Conference, April 1, 2017 (Montréal, Canada)

United States

“A Joke is Like Heart Surgery’: Money and Mockery in South African Humor History,” 47th Annual Conference of the African Literature Association, May 29, 2021 (virtual)

“The Lucrative Art of Prostitution’: The Politics of Satire in White South Africa, 1908-1931,” 20th Annual Africa Conference, University of Texas at Austin, April 3, 2021 (virtual)

“Laughter on Lockdown: South African Stand-up Comedians and the COVID-19 Pandemic,” 63rd Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, November 19, 2020 (virtual)

“Will There Ever Be an Afrikaner Nation? Humor in the White Performance of South Africa,” 60th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, November 17, 2017 (Chicago, Ill.)

“From Valley Forge to Vaal Krantz: The South African War as an American Memory,” Louisiana State University Graduate History Conference, March 5, 2016 (Baton Rouge, La.)

RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

African History
African Literature
Humor Studies
History of Journalism

Stand-up Comedy Studies
South African-American Exchanges
African Popular Culture
Theatre History

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Michigan State University, History Department

Historical Methods and Skills (HST 201): Trevor Noah Deconstructed, Visiting Assistant Professor, Fall 2021 and Spring 2022

Historical Methods and Skills (HST 201): Race, Gender, and Humor in South African History, Instructor, Spring 2021

Michigan State University, Center for Integrative Studies in the Arts and Humanities

Africa and the World (IAH 205), Visiting Assistant Professor, Fall 2021 and Spring 2022

U.S. and the World (IAH 201), Teaching Assistant, Spring 2016 and 2018, Fall 2020

Africa and the World (IAH 205), Teaching Assistant, Spring 2017 and 2020

Asia and the World (IAH 204), Teaching Assistant, Fall 2018

Michigan State University, Center for Integrative Studies in Social Science

Social Science of Sport (ISS328), Teaching Assistant, Summer 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020

History and Theory of Genocide (ISS 210), Teaching Assistant, Fall 2017

Africa in Social Science Perspective (ISS 330A), Teaching Assistant, Fall 2015 and 2016

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Dissertation Fieldwork, South Africa, March-November 2019

- Conducted interviews and examined archives in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Durban, Pietermaritzburg, and Makhanda

Pre-Dissertation Fieldwork, South Africa and Austin, Texas, May-August 2017

- Conducted exploratory research for my dissertation in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, and Makhanda, as well as at the Harry Ransom at the University of Texas, Austin

University of Pennsylvania Zulu Immersion Summer Study Abroad, June-August 2016

- Based in Durban, South Africa

INTERNSHIPS

African Serial Indexing Pilot Project, Michigan State University Libraries, 2017-2018

- Assisted the Africana Librarian of the Michigan State University Libraries with designing a multi-institution pilot project to index rare journals from the African continent held by American institutions.
- Wrote and presented a report outlining the results of Phase I of the pilot study at the annual meeting of the Africana Librarians Council in November 2017.

The Children's Center of Winston-Salem, 2014-2015

- Assisted teachers with feeding, cleaning, and other classroom activities at the Children's Center of Winston-Salem, a public school for children between the ages of infancy and Grade 5 with significant long-term physical and cognitive health needs.

HONORS & AWARDS

Irene Steindler Award, 2021

- Recognizing work related to decolonizing African history and promoting equity with higher-education institutions on the African continent.

Jeff Rooney Paper Prize, 2017

- For the best history seminar paper of the academic year, "No Laughing Matter? Humor and the Performance of South Africa"

LANGUAGES

English	Native speaker; fluent
Afrikaans	Working proficiency
Zulu	Working proficiency
German	Limited working proficiency

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS & AFFILIATIONS

African Studies Association
 African Literature Association
 Southern African Historical Society

Phi Beta Kappa

REFERENCES

Peter Alegi*

Professor of History,
Michigan State University
alegi@msu.edu
(517)-483-3993

Edward Murphy

Associate Professor of History,
Michigan State University
murph367@msu.edu
(517)-884-4943

Sekibakiba Peter Lekgoathi

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University of the Witwatersrand
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(082)-560-5526 (South Africa)

Michael Stamm

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*Ph. D. committee chair and teaching reference