



SAIO UPDATE

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Profiles

2002 has been a momentous year for South Africa. In addition to recently hosting the second conference on sustainable development, South Africa's Thabo Mbeki, along with his peers from Nigeria, Algeria and Senegal provided instrumental leadership in the formation of the new African Union (AU) and in conceptualizing the New Economic Partnership for African Development (Nepad). Nepad was recently forged amidst much fanfare in an effort to advance the fortunes of the continent. South Africa has also recently had the dubious honor of being prominently featured in the international media as a result of its unwillingness to effectively sanction Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe or to effectively intervene in the violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Most recently, Mbeki, as a member of a Commonwealth "Troika" along with Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo, sided with one another and against the Australian Prime Minister to allow Zimbabwe to remain in the Commonwealth.

By holding the Sustainable Development Conference in Johannesburg in 2002 and the World Conference on Racism in Durban in 2001, the international community reaffirmed the virtual universal good-will that it holds for South Africa. South Africa continues to be, in the eyes of many, a miracle in the making. It has exceeded most conventional wisdom in its ability to remain both peaceful and democratic in a region

where peace and democracy have never really been the norm and it continues to exercise restraint and discipline in its fiscal and monetary policies. Most recently, the ANC has shown hints of a progressive policy position by, among other things, allocating scarce state resources in order to provide a social safety net for many of the country's elderly pensioners.

And yet, only within the last several months has President Mbeki acknowledged – under considerable local and international pressures – the link between HIV and AIDS, a move that finally resulted in the availability of anti-retroviral drugs for some pregnant women. And while the ANC continues its close tripartite alliance with its partners from COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), allegations of the ANC's "Zanu-fication" policies may be jeopardizing the sanctity of the relationship. Both Cosatu and the SACP have serious differences with the ANC on issues of economic development in general and on privatization in particular. Meanwhile, the ANC as well as white farmers in South Africa continue to deliberate on how South Africa can avoid the perils of land restitution as evidenced in Zimbabwe and possibly (without significant policy reforms) in Namibia in the near future.

Perhaps it's unfair, but South Africa is held to a higher standard in the region. It's a

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burden that the nation didn't ask for and arguably doesn't deserve considering the unprecedented hurdles that it's already faced since 1994. But if this is the case and if South Africa is expected to be the regional standard-bearer of plurality and development for the troubled sub continent, what if any, is the international community's obligation to South Africa? And why have the fixed, long term investments so desperately needed by South Africa failed to materialize despite the prudent and relatively conservative fiscal and monetary policies that have been implemented by its Central Bank?

Nepad is supposed to represent a framework for a new African partnership (with the international community) aimed at addressing the litany of ailments that plague the region. Despite the extraordinary challenges currently facing sub Saharan

Africa, I for one, believe that the sub continent's prospects are exponentially better with South Africa assuming a leadership role than without it. And although this role must become better defined and more suited to the resource capacities and strengths of South Africa, it's clear that the nation's future is inexorably intertwined with that of the sub continent.

By extending opportunities for intellectual collaboration and individual and institutional capacity building for South African communities and post secondary education institutions, the South Africa Initiatives Office celebrates its role as a committed and long-term partner in the country's transformation. This commitment is manifested by the efforts of our colleague Professor Nesha Haniff, who recently led a team of students to South Africa to develop a community-based HIV/AIDS awareness

and prevention program. It is also represented in the year-long program that the office sponsored in 2002 entitled *Race, Truth and Reconciliation: A Comparative Assessment of the South African and American Experience*.

In addition, many of our Moody Scholars from the University of Michigan traveled to South Africa this summer, including Professors Susan Brown and Gerri Conti of the Kinesiology Department. They worked with their South African counterparts to assess the impact of malnutrition on motor control skills. John Katunich examined the implications of context and language within higher education, explored a wide range of fields pertaining to the transformation of the nation. We look to affirm our commitment to this vital region by continuing to provide energy, ideas and resources to the communities of

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BOOK REVIEW

Country of My Skull by Antjie Krog

Country of My Skull by Antjie Krog
In 1995, a year after the first democratic elections, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa was established. Its charge was to investigate human rights violations committed under the Apartheid system of government. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the anti-apartheid cleric and political activist became the Chairman of the Commission along with Dr Alex Boraine. Antjie Krog is a journalist, who led the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) team. The SABC Radio team followed, reported and researched extensively on the hearings across the country. In this book, Krog details the strains,

associated with the proceedings of the commission. She discusses the losses, abuses and countrywide violence that characterized the nature of the hearings. This book demonstrates the effectiveness of the healing power of knowledge. The confessions by perpetrators, testimonies of victims, the tears of those who lost loved ones create a stage from which healing and forgiveness must start if South Africa is to humanize itself. Krog gives us a picture from the insider's perspective as one of Dutch descent. She takes us on a journey that explores meaning in the Afrikaner identity, the struggles that seem to embroil that sense of identity and nationalism. Krog also expands on the loss felt by most victims, commissioners, and conservative Afrikaners as South Africans try to come to terms with their past, grieve their loss, and embrace their new democracy as a free nation. Reading through Krog's book one realizes that there are assumptions and agendas underlying processes such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Who defines reconciliation in South Africa?

For whom is it defined, on what terms and to what end? Who is to reconcile with whom and why? The rhetorical function of Krog's work is to inform, educate and move the audience to be reflective about the proceedings and nature of the TRC. However, the book is riddled with abstract poetic quotes that create esoteric barriers for the reader. An excessive use of Afrikaans language (not universally understood) creates a break in the flow of the text. Although it is not possible to write about all the cases from all 9 provinces in South Africa, Krog tends to report largely on proceedings from the Western and Eastern Cape, and the Northwest Provinces. The reason for this bias could be due to the fact that the SABC television news captured stories of most civil rights activities at the neglect of the other provinces. Despite all this, Krog's writing is exceptional and her insight of the process of the TRC makes the book a worthwhile read. ♦

Kalúke Mawila
Doctoral student, School of Education

scholars in South Africa and the University of Michigan.

Thank you for your continued support of the South Africa Initiatives Office. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or comments on our Newsletter, programs and services. ♦



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Study Abroad "Pedagogy of Action 2002"

"REFLECTIONS ACROSS THE WATER"

"Welcome to South Africa. Cradle of Civilization. This is the birthplace of Humankind. Welcome Home."

I'm standing in the airport of Johannesburg, South Africa. "Egoli"- the city of gold. It is truly a humbling and amazing experience to read these words emblazoned on a plaque hanging on a pillar within this bustling space where people rush to collect their luggage and continue to their destinations.

Somehow, as I stand gazing at the portrait of the shaman rock painting depicted beneath the inscribed words, a powerful emotion overwhelms me. All the terms and labels that society seeks to use as a means

of explaining my existence no longer define me. For this fleeting moment, I am merely a human who has returned to the place where the first of my kind slept, wept, loved and lived. I am in Africa.

I am home.

Home is where you make it, my grandmother used to say. Moving across South Africa over the summer of 2002, this fascinating country truly became my home. As part of a delegation from the University of Michigan's Center for Afroamerican and African Studies' Pedagogy of Action study abroad program, I traveled all around the country, training people in HIV prevention. AIDS is an issue that is devastating many communities. South Africa is in crisis due to the effects of this horrible epidemic. Families are being destroyed, communities are being diminished, and yet...

I am home.

How different is this situation from the statistics that tell me that the greatest killer of young African-Americans in the United States between the ages of 25-44 is this same disease? How many families do I know in Detroit who whisper about those whose lives have been claimed by this stealthy thief, whose greatest strength is that most people are in denial of its presence? How do we begin to change the attitudes and behaviors causing the disease to increase until the spiral of death seems almost too large to control?

I am home.

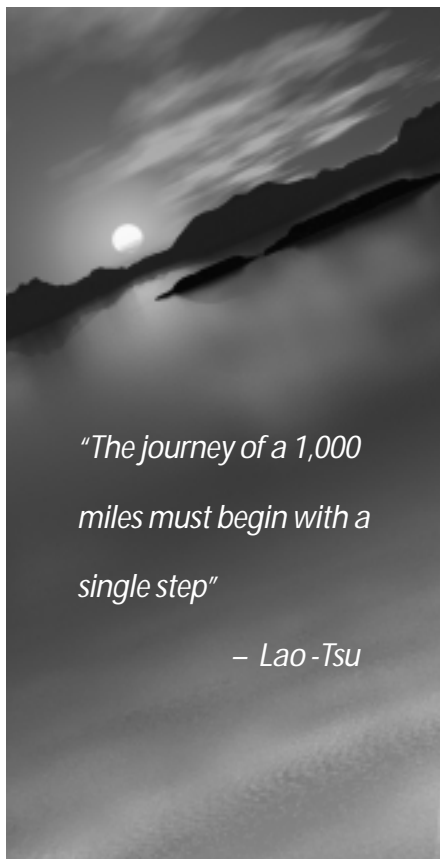
Walking through the informal settlements (the p.c. term for townships these days), where life is a constant struggle to obtain basic necessities for survival, I am reminded of the reservations and the inner cities I know in the United States. I have never gone to bed hungry, but looking into the faces of those who live in what would be termed poverty, I am certain that I have also grown up lacking in some ways. Whether I am in Cato Manor in Durban or Herman

Gardens in Detroit, the strength of these residents is more powerful than the bars protecting the homes of the rich. The laughter you hear is far more resilient than the barbed wire protecting the wealthy in their gated homes.

As a child of paradox, it became clear that whether I was in the United States or South Africa, I felt at home. It is truly a curious condition that you can be on either side of the world and still be so aware of how connected we are by our circumstances. Somewhere along the path, I discovered that even as I stood at the top of a mountain in the Limpopo (Northern) Province or at the Cape of Good Hope at the tip of the African continent, all that I saw was a reflection of the United States, be it economic issues, institutionalized racism or simply smiles.

Either way, I am home. ♦

*Elizabeth James
Program Assoc. CAAS/SAIO*



*"The journey of a 1,000
miles must begin with a
single step"*

– Lao-Tsu

DEATH OF A DREAM?:

WHITE LAND AND BLACK POVERTY IN ZIMBABWE AND POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA



Given the current land and racial crises in Zimbabwe, I attempt to draw lessons on how South Africa's future is inexorably intertwined with experiences in the Southern African region. The land reform and racial tension in Zimbabwe have generated the stereotype of African transformation as conflict ridden, disastrous and corrupt. In the process, the tragedy and suffering of black Zimbabweans has inadvertently been overlooked in the process because of the highly prolific criticism against President Robert Mugabe's stance on land reform. White farmers have essentially been portrayed as the innocent victims (Bird & Mthala, 2000:18-20) while Black Zimbabweans are often treated as seeking revenge against whites.

What I find profoundly disturbing is that the fate of black Zimbabweans, historically denied access to agriculturally productive land, is scarcely mentioned while the fate of the white farmers is given prominence. The media (both print and electronic) seem

to pay excess attention to the fate of a few thousand white commercial farmers at the expense of landless peasants who continue to live in abject poverty and overpopulated communal areas. The moral and legal questions around re-distributive justice are reduced to the fundamental question of human rights, narrowly defined to protect white interests.

The land question in Zimbabwe is complex, and examining it through a single racial lens can only result in poor responses/solutions to the problem. As South Africa embarks on its land reform program, it is imperative to unpack the Zimbabwean experience and its implication for post-apartheid land reform initiatives. In this article, I provide an alternative way of looking at the problem and unpacking its implications for post-apartheid South Africa.

Max du Preez (2002) posits that the land question is fundamentally influenced by

African political leadership's notion of who is African or not, and the attitude that "Africans are black only." President Mugabe's response to the plight of landless Zimbabweans (an important social and political constituency) through land reform has been widely perceived as "land confiscation" driven by his "belief that white people are not really Africans and should not be allowed to own land" (Max du Preez, a well-respected South African freelance journalist, *The Star*). The morality of redistributing white land to landless black Zimbabweans is questioned on the assumption that white farmers have "through commitment to and identification with land, earned the right to be called sons and daughters of Africa with an equal, not superior – right to own and farm land" (Max du Preez). Max du Preez's conceptualization of land ownership is flawed in that it ignores the historical evidence on land dispossession and colonial social engineering programs that created African reserves on marginal lands. There is enough historical evidence to show the atrocities committed by the colonial regime against indigenous African communities in its attempt to appeal to white settlers. The history of land dispossession in colonial Africa and apartheid South Africa is closely tied to past racist Land Appropriation legislation, which favored white settlers. Without historicizing the land question, one can easily dismiss the sociopolitical embeddedness of land and its racialized nature in Southern Africa. While I acknowledge that every citizen has the right to own farmland, it is important that we understand the historical land inequities that exist between the white farming community (owning more than 80% of agriculturally productive farmland) and the majority of landless peasants (residing in marginal productive land, former Bantustans, and reserves).

Recognizing this form of injustice against landless peasants and the state of deprivation they experience requires that the privileged white farming community assist the government in identifying and proposing proactive land reform solutions.

The white farming community should become proactive in defusing the land crisis through identifying burdened communities, extending present communal lands, and assessing the number of potential black commercial farmers needing support. Unfortunately, the white commercial farmers in Zimbabwe have been socially, politically, and economically disengaged from the aspirations of landless peasants, and tend to build 'islands' of white communities. Consequently, the land crisis is, as experienced in Zimbabwe, a function of white community's disjunction with the reality of landless black Africans. It is a tragedy that has its roots in the racist social organization and colonial property rights.

Land reform in Zimbabwe and post-apartheid South Africa has to be understood as an essential aspect of democratizing economic life and creating socially and politically stable countries. Furthermore, the anti-colonial struggle was built around the land issue, and the unnecessary delays in land redistribution only serve to frustrate landless Africans and thereby potentially threatening stable democracies. The Zimbabwean experience bears testimony to the crisis of expectation among landless Zimbabweans.

It is often argued that President Mugabe has for 20 years ignored the need to reallocate land, and only to push aggressively land reform as a campaigning strategy due to political and re-election pressure. Smith, Simpson and Davis (1981), in the book titled *Mugabe*, clearly articulate the complexity of the land question in Zimbabwe and the dilemma that President Mugabe faces today in satisfying both white and black constituencies. Smith et al argue that whites will leave if Mugabe takes too much away from them, and on the other hand, blacks will revolt if Mugabe gives too little to them. It is this tightrope that Mugabe is expected to keep walking even though he remains between a rock and a hard place.

The white community has been reluctant to offer agriculturally productive land for resettlement and demand compensation for their farmland in foreign currency (Dladla & Munnik, 2000:8). If white farmers truly believe in their Zimbabwean heritage and citizenship, why then do they request payment in foreign exchange instead of local currency? I believe their actions re-emphasize their dual identities and loyalty to foreign or European heritage despite claims of their "African-ness." What further surprises me is that Mugabe actually, for a decade, stuck to the Lancaster House agreement by not redistributing white commercial land, and thereby defending colonial property rights while landless black Zimbabweans continued to live in overcrowded communal lands. Consequently the majority of landless peasants felt that they were being held at ransom by the Lancaster House agreement through its protection of white farmland.

The economic reform and expiration of Lancaster House agreement in the 1990s opened up challenges to the wisdom of protecting colonial property rights (through the willing seller/willing buyer clause) and the use of market price in land reform. The slow pace of land redistribution in the early 1990s triggered the land crisis, and there were difficulties associated with raising funds to pay for productive farmland at market value. The land crisis could have been averted or at least minimized had white farmers shared their land 'pie', helped model and finance progressive land redistribution initiatives. Instead, white commercial farmers attempted to stifle land resettlement and reform programs by out-pricing their land, emphasizing the willing buyer/willing seller principle and demanding compensation in foreign currency, which they truly understood posed major financial constraints to Mugabe's government effort on land resettlement. As a result, the white Zimbabwean farmers have been accused of protecting their 'privileged, colonial master mentality,' which seem detached from the socioeconomic expectations and

reality of landless black Zimbabweans. It is arguably the same criticism that has been leveled against some white South African commercial farmers. Given these perceptions, what do South African white farmers need to learn from Zimbabwe's land crisis and racial tension?

In the book *Zimbabwe - The Death of a Dream: Lessons for South Africa* (2000), Jim Peron posits that land hunger (including land invasion) is not likely to be an issue in South Africa in the foreseeable future (p.123). Peron's argument seems shortsighted as it ignores how the conditions and manifestations for land hunger in South Africa may resonate with the Zimbabwean experience, even though with different expressions. According to Govan Mbeki, a prominent anti-apartheid activist and the father of South African President Thabo Mbeki, "People who argue that there is not the same land hunger in South Africa as in Zimbabwe, forget this difference was forged through far reaching social engineering around land, designed to create labor for the mines, industry and white agriculture. We should not consider agricultural production as the only reason for land demand – the 9 million South Africans who live in rural urban slums have an equal right to demand land, and so do the people in huge squatter settlements around our cities... To solve the land question, it should be addressed beyond the confines of the 'rural'" (Dladla & Munnik, 2000:12).

Similar to the early 1980s warnings to Mugabe about striking a delicate balance between white interests and black expectations, post-apartheid South African leadership (President Thabo Mbeki) and the African National Congress struggle to deliver promises of post-apartheid rewards to the black political constituency without alienating white South Africans (Peron, 2000). Implied in this statement is the notion that re-distributive justice cannot be achieved until African leadership has won "the economic freedom that only whites can give" (Smith et al, 1981:218, emphasis my addition). A liberal policy of

wealth creation is advocated, and redistribution is treated as a misnomer (Peron, 2000). The fundamental weakness with Peron's thesis is that it advocates status quo, which leaves white structures of wealth accumulation unchallenged (for example, land), and thereby conditioning the suffering black constituency to poverty, landlessness and racial inequality. Unfortunately, as currently witnessed in Zimbabwe, such a scenario poses fundamental threats to democracy and sociopolitical stability of both white and black South Africans. The maintenance of white privilege through its structures of accumulation and the lack of attention to the harsh realities of black poverty and landlessness serve as major triggers for the sociopolitical and economic tragedies of post-colonial Southern Africa. Therefore, responsibility for the "death of a dream" rests squarely on the privileged white community and African leadership. Robert Mugabe is as much to blame as the white farmers for the land crisis in Zimbabwe, and his current response in face of crisis is an open question. It reflects his leadership crisis (maybe lack of leadership), political

survivorship, and/or a pragmatic response to the genuine needs of landless blacks in Zimbabwe.

This paper illustrates the Zimbabwean land crisis and how it serves as an early warning system to South Africa. It signals the sociopolitical and economic embeddedness of the land question, and the *reality* of the crisis of expectation among black communities with regards to post-colonial rewards. Democracy, re-distributive justice, and transformation in Southern Africa require a critical re-examination of structures of accumulation and "the long-term results of colonialism, including the theft of land and other productive resources" (Murombedzi quoted in Dladla & Munnik, 2000:12). The re-distribution of land as natural resource wealth is central to sustaining democracy. Can democracy in South Africa or Zimbabwe be sustainable in the long-term through the protection of white colonial property rights that legitimized inequality, landlessness, and black poverty etc.? If so, whose dream is being protected? If not, whose dream is dying? ♦

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(i.e views expressed herein are those of the author, and not SAIO/CAAS)

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE FALL SEMESTER

AHMED KATHRADA VISITS CAAS

"While we will not forget the brutality of apartheid, we will not want Robben Island to be a monument of our hardship and suffering. We would want it to be a triumph of the human spirit against the forces of evil. A triumph of wisdom and largeness of spirit against small minds and pettiness; a triumph of courage and determination over human frailty and weakness; a triumph of the new South Africa over the old."

- Ahmed Kathrada

As part of fulfilling its mission to understand and assist South Africa's transformation to a democratic society, the South Africa Initiatives Office invited Mr. Ahmed Kathrada, a political activist, to share with University of Michigan faculty and students his reflections on "Robben Island as a Symbol of Reconciliation and Memory." As Chairperson of the Robben Island Museum, now a World Heritage site, Mr. Kathrada applauded University of Michigan students for supporting divestment in South Africa during apartheid years. He encouraged the audience to continue engaging in discourse that contributes toward the transformation and development of impoverished South Africans. Mr. Kathrada also invited U.S. businesses to continue supporting investment in South Africa. ♦

Devon Adjei
 SAIO Administrative Assistant

RETURNING HOME... SOUTH AFRICA

Study Abroad "Pedagogy of Action 2002"

I have said many times since my return, being in South Africa was an indescribable experience. I could easily tell people why I went to South Africa and rattle off the cities I visited during my stay there but that would not do justice to my journey. From the moment I stepped out of Johannesburg International Airport, I knew my journey would be life changing. I wanted to share this experience with those I had left behind in the United States of America. As a black woman, I knew I would serve as the eyes and ears for my family and friends who would never see their 'home'. Thus, one of my goals was to bring this symbolic, ancestral home back to my modern one, America. Attempting to do so has offered me one of the biggest, yet most satisfying challenges in my life.

My first try at bringing Africa back with me reflected the materialistic existence I have cultivated as a member of my American society. I bought, took and kept everything and anything I could afford and/or get my hands on. South Africa has a rich cultural and artistic heritage. The

variety of tribes and ethnicities inspire a wonderful artistic culture. For instance, in Durban, the BAT Center (a place dedicated to showcasing and nurturing black artists) featured a number of visual and musical artists who rival any of the people here. In addition, in most cities and villages, you can find vendors selling authentic jewelry and other beaded crafts, the earnings going to support families and communities. Despite the beautiful things I bought, I soon realized that things could not speak for me. I started looking for the source of South Africa's magical energy.



Sangoma (traditional healer) in Durban, South Africa demonstrates Neshia Haniff's HIV prevention module

South Africa is a very spiritual country. You can feel its positive aura at every step. When listening to people's stories about South Africa, I saw that every person took pride in their country. Working past the dark period of apartheid, South Africans were full of hope for and loyalty to their nation. At an informal settlement, a man talked about his future. His expressions were peppered with possibility; he anticipated a time when he would no longer live in one room with four or five other people. At our graduation certificate ceremony for our HIV/AIDS trainees, a crowd of one hundred sang "Nkosi Sikelel'i-Afrika", the national anthem. United in the belief that overcoming tribulation makes one stronger, their voices soared.

Returning to America, though, has taught me what it truly means to bring Africa back home. Telling stories about the people I got to know have been met with glib interest. Few people were interested in my life-changing experience, even if it was in the 'Motherland'. The gifts I bought during my visit can only say so much. But what I

PROFILES

Kaluke Mawila is a doctoral student at the University of Michigan Center for Studies in Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE). Kaluke was born in South Africa. She holds a Bachelors degree from the University of Cape Town in South Africa and a Masters degree in Student Affairs from Michigan State University. Kaluke has been a recipient of the Fulbright Scholarship. Her hobbies include traveling and learning languages. Kaluke is fluent in all 11 South African languages.

Brian Maguranyanga is a doctoral student in Resource Policy and Behavior at the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources and Environment. He received a Bachelors degree in Sociology Honors at the University of Zimbabwe and a Master of Arts in Sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. Brian's doctoral research focuses on the social, political and organizational challenges of biodiversity conservation in post-apartheid South Africa.

Devon Adjei is an Administrative Assistant at the South Africa Initiatives Office (SAIO). She is a native of Ann Arbor. She graduated with a degree in Sociology at the University of Michigan. Before joining SAIO, Devon worked for 6 years in a corporate environment. Devon is devoted to working with people interested in making a difference, and she does this through her interactions with faculty, students and guest speakers.



CAAS' study abroad program participants visit the Hector Peterson Memorial in Soweto, South Africa, June 2002

bring back from South Africa is everlasting. I learned to be a better person. From HIV-positive people, I learned that true generosity benefits me more than those I help. I have learned what it means to share my humanity with another, not just my time or cash. From the British and Afrikaner people

I met, I saw that people can indeed redeem themselves. I resolved that the ability to forgive is an important characteristic for me to have. From the impoverished people I learned that materialism does not bring happiness- hope and faith do.

Today, as I drove home, I looked at the twilight sky and realized that it was identical to the one I saw in South Africa only three months ago. Realizing I am no longer in my second 'home'... South Africa, I can still hold on to the memories of my time there. I see

that the lessons and values are the same everywhere, despite the differences in the cultures, languages, and histories between South Africa and the United States of America. ♦

*Ebony Sandusky
Pedagogy of Action Study Abroad 2002
participant and U-M alumna*

CAAS' Pedagogy of Action 2002 Study Abroad Program members with Professor Nesha Haniff who led the program and South African activist Mac Maharaj, June 2002



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