

## “From South Africa to Donald Trump's America: A Comparative Perspective”

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Free and open to the public

Instead of America presuming to have all the lessons about democracy, the United States will have to look to countries such as South Africa for dealing with the resurgence of racism and corruption. In the 1980's the ANC, with Mandela as its symbol, built arguably the largest multi-racial movement in the world, comprising of whites, Indians and Coloureds. Instead of seeing themselves as separate entities, African Americans and Latinos can form the kind of solidarity that was forged by Steve Biko's Black Consciousness among Africans, Coloureds and Indians in the 1970's. The South African constitution describes these groups as Black, making Blackness more of a political than a biological concept.

Charismatic and inspirational leadership is, however, not a substitute for organization building. In the darkest days of apartheid repression, Black South Africans organized “street committees”, which met weekly to discuss issues around which to mobilize against what seemed like an invincible behemoth.

Without a sense of hope, South Africans would never have made it to the finish line in the battle of against apartheid. But as Nelson Mandela said, “after climbing a wall, one only finds that there are many more walls to climb”. In the quest for justice there can be no letting up, perhaps moments of rest, but the “long walk to freedom” must continue, in the United States as in South Africa.

**Xolela Mangcu** is Professor of Sociology at the University of Cape Town. He was the 2014 Oppenheimer Fellow at the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University. He has also been a fellow at The Brookings Institution, Rockefeller Foundation, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is the author and co-author of nine books, and more than two dozen journal articles and book chapters, including *Biko: A Biography* (Tafelberg 2012). He holds a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from Cornell University, and MS (Development Planning) and BA (Sociology) degrees from Wits University in Johannesburg.

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