

When Whites Riot: Writing Race and Violence in American and South African Cultures

Sheila Smith McKoy

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In a bold work that cuts across racial, ethnic, cultural, and national boundaries, Sheila Smith McKoy reveals how race colors the idea of violence in the United States and in South Africa—two countries inevitably and inextricably linked by the central role of skin color in personal and national identity.

Although race riots are usually seen as black events in both the United States and South Africa, they have played a significant role in shaping the concept of whiteness and white power in both nations. This emerges clearly from Smith McKoy's examination of four riots that demonstrate the relationship between the two nations and the apartheid practices that have historically defined them: North Carolina's Wilmington Race Riot of 1898; the Soweto Uprising of 1976; the Los Angeles Rebellion in 1992; and the pre-election riot in Mmabatho, Bhoputhatswana in 1994. Pursuing these events through narratives, media reports, and film, Smith McKoy shows how white racial violence has been disguised by race riots in the political and power structures of both the United States and South Africa.

The first transnational study to probe the abiding inclination to "blacken" riots, *When Whites Riot* unravels the connection between racial violence—both the white and the "raced"—in the United States and South Africa, as well as the social dynamics that this connection sustains.



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