

Robert Trent Vinson

I am the Cummings Associate Professor of History and Africana Studies at the College of William and Mary. I received my Ph.D. in African and African Diaspora History from Howard University and my research and teaching explore African pasts in global contexts, internationalize African-American history and center Africa and Africans in African Diaspora Studies. I first became an ASWAD member in 2001, when I was a presenter at the very first ASWAD conference in New York City.

My publications include two books, *The Americans are Coming!: The Dream of African American Liberation in Segregationist South Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2012) and *Albert Luthuli: South Africa's Mandela before Mandela* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 2018). I am currently working on two additional co-authored book projects, *Shaka's Progeny: Zulu Peoples and Cultures in the United States and South Africa* and *Crossing the Water: African Americans and South Africa, 1890-1965*, a documentary history (forthcoming, Ohio University Press). I also serve on the editorial board of *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies* and the *Ruth Simms Hamilton African Diaspora* series and the *African History and Culture* series at Michigan State University Press.

Named a Professor of Teaching Excellence at William and Mary, I teach a range of courses in African history, African-American history, African Diaspora history, black transnationalism, and comparative liberation movements in the US and Africa. From 2009 to 2012, I was founding co-chair of the Lemon Project at William and Mary, a long-term research project named after Mr. Lemon, one of many enslaved blacks owned by William and Mary before the Civil War. The Lemon Project seeks to better understand, chronicle, and preserve the history of blacks at the College and in the community and to promote a deeper understanding of the indebtedness of the College to the work and support of its diverse neighbors. I am also committed to disseminating accurate historical knowledge beyond the university, regularly giving talks about African and African American history to a range of local and national government, civic, church and fraternal organizations. I also currently serve as a member of Virginia's Statewide Commonwealth Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, a response to recent white supremacist rallies in Charlottesville, that seeks to

redress structural racial and socioeconomic inequalities, investigates hate groups and to vastly improve how Virginia and U.S. History is taught in our primary and secondary schools.

As an ASWAD board member, I would be particularly interested in building on our current position as the leading professional organization focused on the African Diaspora and furthering our mentorship program for mid-career and junior faculty as well as for graduate and undergraduate students. I would like to continue our traditional scholarly and activist focus on the African Diaspora in the Atlantic World, but also bring more attention to Africa itself, as well as to African diasporic populations in the Pacific and Indian Ocean worlds. Finally, I would like to enhance our fiscal health and continue expansion of our online presence to reach both academic and non-academic audiences.