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## **Beyond Walls**

Mary Stanton Knight

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### **Beyond Walls**

#### Lessons of Racial Reconciliation in South Africa

APRIL 30, 2014 BY MARY STANTON KNIGHT





Wilhelm Verwoerd

I live in Mississippi, so when it comes to Civil Rights and racial issues, as Faulkner famously wrote, "the past is not dead, it's not even past." I also work at the state's flagship university, which houses one of the leading institutes on race, the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation. If you are unfamiliar with the Winter Institute, I suggest you take a moment to visit their website and read about the wonderful things they are doing not just for this campus, but for our state, the nation and the world.

Susan Glisson, the director at the Winter Institute, has been to several countries, including South Africa, to work with others on this global issue of race and reconciliation. Her connections have resulted in visits from scholars and those working toward solutions that will bring all the world's people together.

One such person who recently spoke on campus was Wilhelm Verwoerd, the grandson of South Africa's Apartheid Prime Minister, Hendrik Verwoerd. After growing up with the "architect of apartheid," Wilhelm went through years of self-discovery and questioning to eventually form the organization Beyond Walls.

There was an honor to have a conversation with Wilhelm and to learn his viewpoints on how each generation must face the issue of race. To hear Wilhelm talk about the lessons of his past and to see what he is doing now to unite, instead of divide like his grandfather did, was an experience I wish all students at this university could have.

You can learn more about Wilhelm's work with Beyond Walls by visiting http://beyondwalls.co.uk and also by watching the video I filmed with him (http://youtu.be/NPR3t\_StQnM).

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small token of my appreciation to Ole
Miss, the faculty and staff, and the
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