

The Cape Radicals

Intellectual and political thought of the New Era Fellowship, 1930s-1960s
Crain Soudien

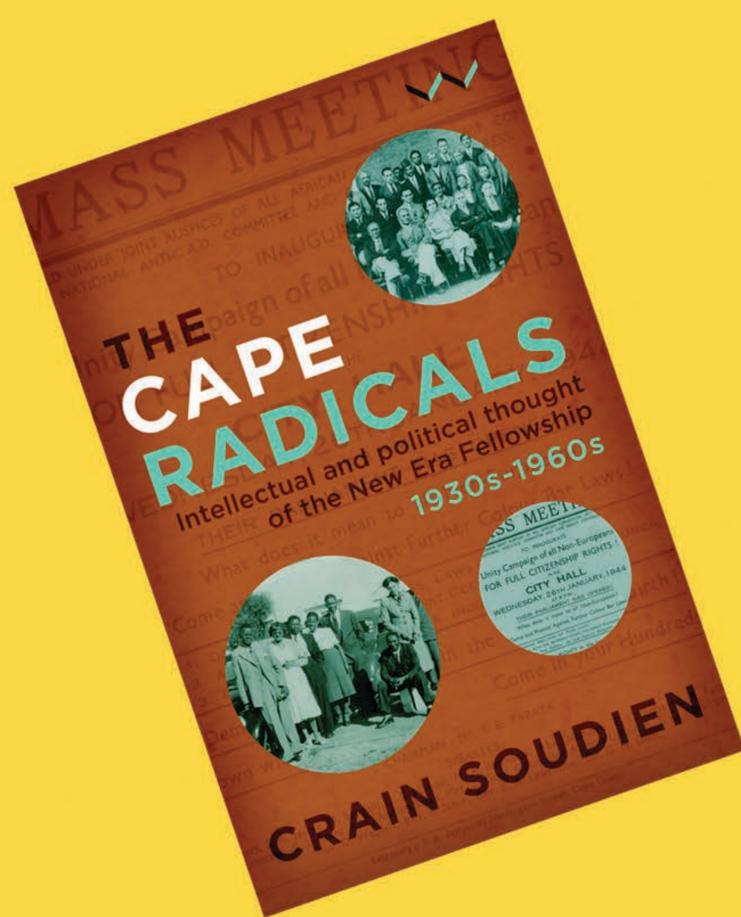
In 1937 a group of young Capetonians, socialist intellectuals from the Workers' Party of South Africa and the Non-European Unity Movement, embarked on a remarkable public education and cultural project they called the New Era Fellowship (NEF). Through public debates, lectures, study circles and cultural events a new cultural and political project was born in Cape Town. Taking a position of non-collaboration and non-racialism, the NEF played a vital role in challenging society's responses to events ranging from the problem of taking up arms during the Second World War for an empire intent on stripping people of colour of their human rights, to the Hertzog Bills, which foreshadowed apartheid in all its ruthless effectiveness.

The group included some of the city's most talented scholar-activists, among them Isaac Tabata, Ben Kies, A C Jordan, Phyllis Ntantala, Mda Mda and members of the famed Gool and Abdurahman families. Their aim was to disrupt and challenge not only prevailing political narratives but the very premises - class and race - on which they were based.

By the 1950s their ideas had spread to a second generation of talented individuals who would disseminate them in the high schools of Cape Town. In time, some would exert their influence on national politics beyond the confines of the Cape. Among these were former minister of justice, Dullah Omar, academic Hosea Jaffe, educationist Neville Alexander and author Richard Rive. This book is a testament to how the NEF was at the forefront of redefining the discourse of racialism and nationalism in South Africa.

Crain Soudien is an educationist and sociologist, Chief Executive Officer of the Human Sciences Research Council and an Honorary Professor at Nelson Mandela University. He is the author of *Realising the Dream: Unlearning the Logic of Race in the South African School* (2012).

This is a seminal text on seminal thought. It tells of dissidence infused with a rare quality: consistency between what one thinks and the way one lives.
– Zimitri Erasmus, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of the Witwatersrand



The Effects of Race & Race in Education

Edited by Gerhard Maré and Nina Jablonski, and by Gerhard Maré

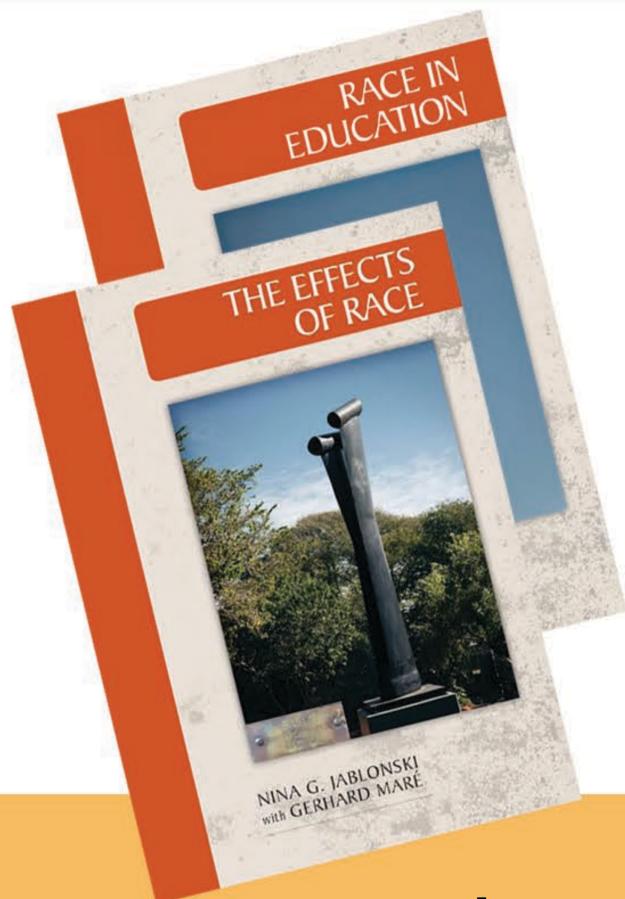
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Volume 1 - The Effects of Race: The STIAS research theme on Being Human Today explores the interrelated questions: What does it mean to be human? And: What is the nature of the world in which we aspire to be human? In the context of post-apartheid South Africa race and racism remain key references in both these questions. Why is this so, considering that the biological basis of race thinking has been refuted? Templates of race and racialism remain at the core of state policy in South Africa, periodic gross incidents of racism surface in public, and notions of the existence of races remain central to everyday thinking and discourse. This book is the result of the work of a group of leading thinkers and their in-depth conversations at STIAS during the winter of 2015 on the effects of race. Convened by evolutionary anthropologist Nina Jablonski and sociologist Gerhard Maré, the group included Njabulo Ndebele, Chabani Manganyi, Barney Pityana, Crain Soudien, Göran Therborn, Mikael Hjerm, Zimitri Erasmus and George Chaplin.

Volume 2 - Race in Education: There is global evidence that "ghosts" of notions of essentialist differences between human "groups" continue to haunt in various forms. People draw upon ideas of religion, race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and nation to draw distinctions. Racism, xenophobia, sexism, and right-wing populism are ongoing and increasing phenomena. In addition, genetic science has introduced new forms of "proof" which lends itself to misuse, to confirm "common sense perceptions". The valuable contributions of the authors in this publication not only warn against such notions, but offer ways of exploring, exposing and challenging the ghosts and the fears engendered through their contemporary forms.

Gerhard Maré is a sociologist, and a Professor Emeritus at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Nina Jablonski is a biological anthropologist and paleobiologist and the Evan Pugh University Professor of Anthropology at The Pennsylvania State University.



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