



Apartheid Archive Project
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Apartheid: Building moderate memories from an extreme past – A flawed template

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South Africa's transition to democracy and the mechanisms used to deal with its past, including the TRC, were deeply flawed to the extent that they focused substantially on dealing with and responding to 'White vulnerability' and hardly on the experiences and expectations of the millions of ordinary victims of apartheid. Legislation narrowly circumscribed the scope of the TRC's work, while the compromises reached saw the entrenchment of white benefit and privilege, and little, if any substantive responsiveness to ensure redress violation of the rights of millions of Black victims. The consequence of this was the memory template as well as the reconciliation reconstruction template required for the effective transformation of our society was constructed with a distinct bias in favour of Whites, contributing to the failure by our society to deal with racism and its ongoing effects and there is clearly a need to reconstruct the template to properly reflect the scope and width of apartheid law, policy practice and its internalization.