FROM APARTHEID TO DEMOCRACY

Deliberating Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa
South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings can be considered one of the most significant rhetorical events of the late twentieth century. The TRC called language into action, tasking it with promoting understanding among a divided people and facilitating the construction of South Africa's new democracy.

Other books on the TRC and deliberative rhetoric in contemporary South Africa emphasize the achievement of reconciliation during and in the immediate aftermath of the transition from apartheid. From Apartheid to Democracy, in contrast, considers the varied, complex, and enduring effects of the Commission's rhetorical wager.

It is the first book-length study to analyze the TRC through such a lens. Katherine Elizabeth Mack focuses on the dissension and negotiations over difference provoked by the Commission's process, especially its public airing of victims and perpetrators truths.

She tracks agonistic deliberation (evidenced in the TRC's public hearings) into works of fiction and photography that extend and challenge the Commission's assumptions about truth, healing, and reconciliation.

Ultimately, Mack demonstrates that while the TRC may not have achieved all of its political goals, its very existence generated valuable deliberation within and beyond its official process.

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