

ADVANCE INFORMATION

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Moving beyond the dead-end of race in South Africa

Gerhard Maré

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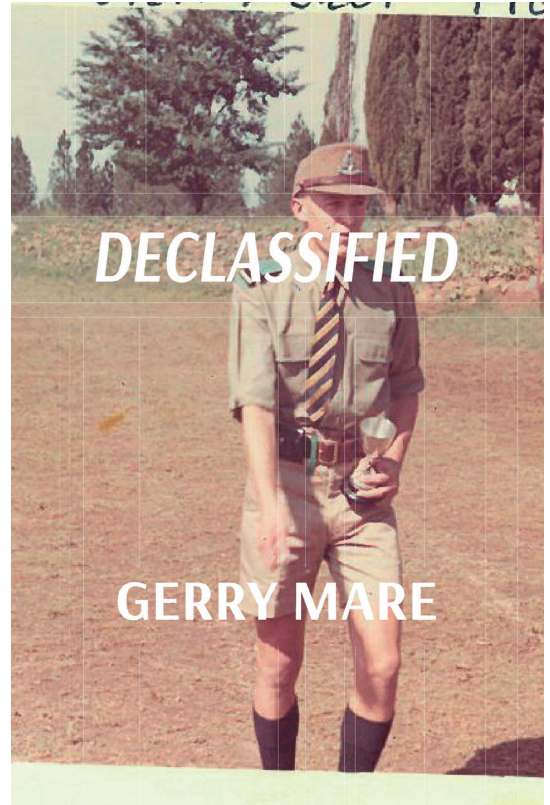
Twenty years after the end of apartheid, race still continues to play a role in South African society. Now, however, it is a black majority government that is demanding and maintaining race thinking, in an effort to redress the discrimination of the past. Both the Employment Equity Act and the Black Economic Empowerment Act, for instance, use the racial categories of apartheid to achieve their ends, but the demand to classify people racially extends beyond business to many other areas of life. Ironically, in a society that is constitutionally committed to non-racialism, race thinking and race classification have been carried forward unthinkingly from our past. Not only does the rationale for such continuation not address the real concerns of our society but the system of classifying carries inevitable seeds of conflict within itself. What is more, the classification of fellow human beings into races remains a crime against humanity, no matter what justification is offered.

In writing this powerfully engaged and argued book, Gerhard Maré takes up the challenge to imagine a world beyond the boundaries created by race, one in which we can live together imaginatively and open to the diversity each of us presents. As he says, it may not be easy to achieve, but confronting race thinking is essential to any project that is serious about changing South African society in fundamental ways.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Professor Gerhard Maré has served as the director of the Centre for Industrial and Labour Studies and as head of the Department of Sociology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He was director of the Centre for Critical Research on Race and Identity from its establishment in 2006, and remains a research associate. He was the co-author of *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa*.

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