

South Africa Pushed to the Limit: The Political Economy of Change

Hein Marais

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Since 1994, the democratic government in South Africa has worked hard at improving the lives of the black majority, yet half the population still lives in poverty, jobs are scarce, and the country is more unequal than ever. For millions, the color of a person's skin still decides their destiny. In its wide-ranging, in-depth and provocative analysis, *South Africa Pushed to the Limit* shows that although the legacies of apartheid and colonialism weigh heavy, many of the strategic choices made since 1994 have compounded those handicaps. The economy remains dominated by a handful of large conglomerates that are now entwined in the circuitry of the global economy. The government, meanwhile, has squandered its leverage over their decisions in a series of miscalculations and errors. The social costs have been punishing. Marais explains why those choices were made, where they went awry, and why South Africa's vaunted formations of the left failed to prevent or alter them.

Shedding light on a variety of South Africa's most pressing issues -- from the real reasons behind President Jacob Zuma's rise and the purging of his predecessor, Thabo Mbeki to a devastating critique of the country's continuing AIDS crisis -- South Africa Pushed to the Limit provides a unique, benchmark analysis of the long journey beyond apartheid.



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