

that would be a dubious assertion” (p. 227). Dlamini then argues that Phila Ndwandwe did make the honourable choice. “She responded to her torture the best way she could, telling her captors some of what they needed to know. But she would not, and did not, take that final step and become a traitor. She collaborated but refused to become a collaborator. Therein lies the difference between her and Sedibe” (p. 228). Dlamini then firmly states that, “We cannot accept Sedibe’s claim that he had no choice” (p. 236).

In the conclusion Dlamini paraphrases two scholars in postulating that, “Knowledge does not equal power, but power cannot be exercised without it... How, then, can South Africans exercise power as citizens if they have little knowledge of this part of their past?... Life is messy. But does the messiness of life mean that we should let apartheid’s secrets go to the grave?” (p. 250).

Dlamini’s book performs a painful vivisection on our still fresh history, upsetting the almost accepted teleological national narrative purported by the ruling party. Dlamini as a gifted historian does more than what the taxidermist claims historians do – “preserving a result... only dealing with an animal’s past.” Dlamini takes into account Sedibe’s past, his then present, and the future implications of his choice to become a counterinsurgent. These events and choices are grappled with and conveyed in a considered manner in this significant book.

A school of struggle: Durban’s Medical School and the education of black doctors in South Africa

(University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2013, 385 pp. ISBN 978-1-86914-252-0)

Vanessa Noble

Johannes Seroto
University of KwaZulu-Natal
serotj@unisa.ac.za

A school of struggle: Durban’s Medical School and the education of black doctors in South Africa is an excellent authorized history of the struggles of black students at the Medical School of the then University of Natal. The author aims to understand and describe the challenges medical students enrolled at the Durban Medical School experienced during the apartheid era, and reveal

how these students contested and resisted *apartheid*-state policies.

The book consists of nine chapters throughout which the author draws from earlier research, international literature and work done by renowned South African scholars. She references 30 qualitative, in-depth oral interviews conducted between 1990 and 2000 and also a substantial number of archival sources. The first chapter provides an overview of medical education for black students in South Africa during the pre-apartheid era (prior to 1948). It also discusses the unequal and inferior education provided to black medical students, as informed by different legislative acts of parliament.

Chapter two looks at the establishment of the University of Natal Medical School in Durban. In it, Noble engages with the influence of the National Party government's racial policies on the operations of the Medical School. It is of particular interest to note that Noble elucidates that, through its 'financial strings' with the government, the school was forced to accept 'the principles of apartheid'. She also, however, reflects on how students in the Medical School undermined apartheid policies.

In her third chapter, Noble provides an insightful and comprehensive narration of the personal path of a student into a medical career. This path was characterised by racial, gender, financial and personal educational background challenges.

Chapters four and five offer an extensive and opulent account of the prevalent problems experienced by the students who gained admission to the Medical School. These challenges ranged from issues around skewed admission quotas, culture, and the differentiation of student residential facilities on the basis of race and staff-student relationships. The author exposes the substandard conditions of the hospitals in which student doctors and interns did their practicals. Chapter five further illuminates how white doctors humiliated and intimidated black students and doctors in the teaching wards. In addition, the author touches on women graduation and dropout rates, and the particular frustrations they experienced on a daily basis.

In Chapter six, Noble gives an account of and why students at the Durban Medical School were involved in anti-apartheid organisations. She also highlights what it was that mobilised students to get involved in anti-apartheid politics.

Chapter seven further explores the medical students' political activism and the consequences thereof between 1970 and 1980. The author focuses on the involvement of medical students in the politics of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) and the African National Congress (ANC). The chapter shows the ways in which students protested against apartheid policies.

The penultimate chapter focuses on the legacies of medical-education struggles in the post-apartheid education arena. Additional challenges, such as the HIV and AIDS pandemic facing the health sector, and their impact on the province of KwaZulu-Natal, are discussed.

The author concludes with a short, reflective chapter. In it, Noble (2013:336) summarises many of her thoughts as follows:

Over nearly half a century, segregated medical education in Durban developed as a site of great struggle against apartheid and a setting of deep contradictions. The provision of medical education in South Africa was always political in nature.

The book is a well-researched, well-argued, clear discussion of the topic and is presented in an engaging manner. As such, it contributes new knowledge to the history of education in the medical sector. The author has succeeded in offering a holistic, detailed historical exposition of problems prevalent in South Africa's medical education system. *A school of struggle: Durban's Medical School and the education of black doctors in South Africa* enhances our understanding of the deeply rooted historical challenges a medical student faced in South Africa, as well as the painful consequences and impact of apartheid on medical education.

Op die spoor van die Groot Trek

**(Voortrekkerleiers en trekroetes, Die Erfenisstigting, Pretoria, 2014, 132 pp.
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Jan C Visagie

Johan de Villiers
Navorsingsgenoot UZ, Stellenbosch
johanceciledev@gmail.com

Die Groot Trek as landsverhuising in die dekade 1835 tot 1845 is een van die epiese gebeurtenisse in die Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis. Die oorsake, verloop