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**GENERATIONALITY:
On Inter-generationality, Trans-generationality, and the ‘Generation War’**

John and Jean Comaroff

ABSTRACT

How are relations between generations shifting? As anthropologists, our take on inter-generational relations and the rationalities on which they are based—i.e., generationality—is historically situated. In many parts of the world, generation has become a major axis of social and political struggle, sometimes of bitter conflict. This, we argue, is a corollary of post-Cold War transformations in economy and society—and a radical rupture in processes of social reproduction. These transformations have conduced to the perception of a rising ‘generation war.’ How, then, in these circumstances, are we to think anew of inter-generational relations—and justice?

I

How are relations between generations shifting in the contemporary world? What does the term actually *mean* in the twenty-first century? As anthropologists, our focus is on the ways in which generational relations and the rationalities on which they are based—in short, generationality—are situated in broader historical and structural forcefields. We are especially concerned with their involvement in processes of social reproduction;¹ in the processes, that is, by which a society sustains, in a recognizably enduring form, the social and material conditions of its life over time. Or does not. Which raises a series of questions. How is generation, as a social and political category, to be conceptualized? In many parts of the world right now there is

the view that it has displaced class as a major axis of political struggle, that it mediates the impact of class, race, and gender on the material and social lineaments of economy and society. To what extent is this plausible? How are we to ‘write’ generation into the unfolding history of the present?

First, however, a story from our native South Africa.

II

It is about Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, about his de-generation as historical icon. Madiba, as he is affectionately known—it is his Xhosa clan name—personifies the paradox of generationality in the here-and-now. A magnificent anomaly, he is, perhaps, the epitome of the universal hero of our times. And yet, simultaneously, he has come to serve as an allegory for an ending, for the demise of the modernist expectation that each generation might ascend on the shoulders of its predecessors to a better life.

2018, the centenary of his birth, witnessed a wave of Madiba memorials. Some, in the spirit of literary scholar Njabulo Ndebele, sought to rediscover the man in the ordinary.² Others involved epic state ritual and presidential hagiography.³ And a few were notable for their excess, banality, kitch, like the South African Airways magazine, *Sawubona*, which encouraged passengers to “remember the Icon . . . by finding [their] own Mandela within.”⁴ All partook of a politics of nostalgia, yearning for a return to the founding innocence of 1994, when Madiba became president of a ‘free’ South Africa, promising to lead it into a glorious neo-modern future. But they also expressed a simmering anxiety among a number of citizens, especially white ones, that what he had stood for—post-racial peoplehood, moral direction, political civility, forgiveness—had become a fading, fragile echo. His waning presence signaled a rupture, the dawning of a very different historical moment.

As the nation celebrated, other voicings made themselves heard. Increasingly, members of a younger generation—at least those who had not benefitted from the new dispensation—began to denounce Mandela and his historical legacy. For them, he had become something of an anti-hero: “critics on social media and callers on talk radio” began to use the term ‘sell-out.’⁵ His

negotiated deal with the *ancien regime*, which retained economic power largely in white hands, was seen as “a betrayal at worst and a failing at best;”⁶ it had left black South Africans, especially youthful ones, a long way short of their promised revolution. The vast majority continued to exist in dire poverty; joblessness among the young is disturbingly high, 66.5% late in 2021.⁷ For those born into its extravagant promises, freedom has brought neither a material nor a social dividend.

There are other views, of course, more ready to recuperate Mandela the Icon. Some, in a spirit of exoneration, stress the complexity of the deal that, in the delicate, troubled circumstances of the time, he believed he had to make. As Lwando Xaso puts it, “labeling Nelson Mandela a sell-out-is an erasure of the past. Mandela’s questions were questions of a different era.”⁸ But the label, ‘sell out,’ has stuck. Julius Malema, leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters—the parliamentary party most associated with youthful voters—used it in a speech at Oxford University in November 2015; Winnie Mandela, a hero to a great many young South Africans, had said almost as much five years earlier.⁹ Malema’s statement led to a bitter, well publicized national argument as older generation political figures rushed to defend Madiba’s legacy. What became clear in the debate was its generational character: even *before* Malema’s speech, Sandile Memela, in defending both the Mandela legacy and The Man-as-Icon from historical erasure, observed that “it is . . . 20, 30, and [even] 40-something year olds who, today, harshly condemn Mandela for being a sell-out.”¹⁰ While there are no opinion surveys, to our knowledge, that measure the precise proportion of youth who share this condemnation, it is common cause in the country that “many [of them do] see Mandela as a sell-out.”¹¹ As this suggests, for many of the post-1994 ‘born free generation’—itself a contested term¹² that blurs a complex sociological reality—old history and older generations *are* to be erased in order to move forward into their own futures. It is the present and its absences to which their attention is now drawn.

The Mandela story, in sum, is a Tale of Two Generations, of generationality at work in constructing antithetical visions of the world, its dominant rationalities and temporalities, its past, present, and its future. And the disjunctures between them. In this sense Madiba is a shifting signifier, a metonymic displacement, on whom the trajectory from one historical epoch to another is being played out—and its implications argued about among South Africans, alike young

and older. We shall return to this historical trajectory, these disjunctures, those arguments.

For now, however, this story presages *our* argument here. It is this: that we are currently witnessing a heightened degree of intergenerational antagonism, to the extent that a ‘war’ between the young and their elders is widely said to be rising across many parts of the planet; that these generations see the world, and each other, through entirely different lenses, different (gene)rationalities, different ontologies; that, while intergenerational tension is hardly new, the forms that it is taking at present are distinctive, and find voice across the broad band of media that have come to saturate the politics of everyday life. The causes for this historical turn, we shall suggest, lie in critical transformations of economy and society in the post-Cold War era, transformations that have led to a perceived crisis of social reproduction. In the upshot, younger generations hold their elders accountable for ‘stealing their future,’ for limiting their life chances, and for giving substance to their feelings of unprecedented insecurity and anxiety; reciprocally, those elders are dismissive of youth, of their cultural practices, chosen forms of resistance, and sense of being in the world. It is this intergenerational antinomy that is so cogently illuminated by the figure of Nelson Mandela—a figure caught, on the cusp of epochal change, in the crossfire between two generational imaginaries.

In order to make this argument, we shall turn, for exemplification, to South Africa and the USA. But first a brief note on the concept of generation, *sui generis*.

III

Generation, as an explicitly marked term, is anything but universal. Nor does it denote anything given by nature. Where they are culturally recognized, generations are concrete abstractions that are given meaning by virtue of their naming, numbering, and relation to one another in time. In Euro-America, their relevance as a socially marked category is commonly linked to the rise of industrialization and its division of labor, modernist notions of time, and the conception of history-as-progress. That said, life stages provide a basis of social structuring and reproduction to some degree in *all* societies;¹³ they are deployed almost everywhere to organize material, social, and political life—in short, to ground the phenomenology of everyday being.

Self-evidently, life stages may be parsed in many different ways, breaking up the linear

course of being through time, thus to situate roughly coeval persons into horizontal age categories of varying duration and social significance. Euro-American educational institutions, to take a familiar instance, use year of birth, normatively, to organize pupils into grades, thence into some version of lower, middle, and high school, and structure their pedagogic content accordingly. Similarly, many African societies have more or less highly structured age-grade systems¹⁴—albeit less so today than in the past—with each grade being assigned its roles in the social and ritual division of labor as its members move through the life-cycle. Culturally marked life stages, in other words, encode recognized subjectivities, socialities, activities, functionalities. Generation, patently, is the highest order abstraction into which these life stages may be subsumed.

The concept itself, generation, has a large sociological literature, typically traced back to Karl Mannheim,¹⁵ for whom it entailed a shared location in time, shared experience of an historical epoch, and a shared consciousness (‘entelechy’). For present purposes, however, that literature is not of primary concern. It is enough here to note that, as a term-in-use, generation tends to have three quite different aspects.

At its most general, *first*, it is an *existential* construct denoting the periodic passage of time and the location of human beings within it; also, by extension, it refers to temporal sequencing. In many societies, moreover, it is a critical axis of genealogical connection, one that structures rank, succession, and rights arising out of kinship relations. This may be true even where age cohorts, *per se*, are not culturally named. Even then, generation may constitute a relational grammar for the simultaneous vertical and horizontal structuring of the social world. And for the poetics of temporality, the experience of time, within it. Among the Nuer of the Sudan, for example, the ‘oecological time’ of everyday productive life was contrasted to ‘structural time,’ in which significant past events were recalled, with reference to the lives of ancestors, while always leaving unchanged the number of generations between the origin of the world and the present-day.¹⁶ Our attribution of, say, thirty years to a generation—given that there is no natural way to establish when any one begins or ends—is similarly a poetics of notional fixing around which to organize at least one dimension of existential time.

More specifically, *second*, the term may denote a cohort of persons who come to be

known by their relationship to specific events or periods, and may be named as such; since the early twentieth century in Western Europe and the USA, the Lost Generation, the Greatest Generation, the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials (Gen Y), Generation Z, and on. These are generations *an sich*; in themselves, to invoke a term Marx used for classes. On the assumption that they are bound together by a shared experience of the historical times in which they come of age—an experience presumed to be unique to them—they have become a target not just of commodity markets but, more soberly, of sociologies that seek to determine the macrosocial, economic, and political forces that explain their singularity. And to establish the connections between those historical times and the forms of social perception, consciousness, and practice to which they have given rise.

Some cohorts actively deploy their generational identity *fur sich*, for itself; this is the *third* aspect of the term. Not all do, as Mannheim himself stressed: it tends to occur with “an acceleration in the tempo of social and cultural transformation.”¹⁷ But when they do, they invoke a collective identity—ostensibly across lines of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and other forms of collective being in the world—in the assertion of broadly shared values, purposes, means and ends. Often their solidarity expresses itself in antagonism against those who preceded them, an inchoate other; generation is *always* relational, marked sequentially by contrast to those who come before and after. Ever since Auguste Comte, sociologists, among them Pierre Bourdieu,¹⁸ have argued that conflict between generations is endemic; so did Freud, from psychoanalysis, asserting that “the whole progress of society rests upon the opposition between successive generations.”¹⁹ Comte spoke of it as a “perpetual conflict which goes on between the conservative instinct that belongs to age and the innovating instinct which distinguishes youth.”²⁰ What is more, it has often been directly associated—including in some recent work by anthropologists²¹—with the impulse to social change.²² Lewis Feuer puts the argument at its most extreme: “generational conflict,” he says, “has been a universal theme in human history.”²³ Maybe, maybe not. Claims to universality seldom survive scrutiny; there have been long periods of inter-generational quiescence—indeed, respect and mutual interdependence—in many human societies. The point, in any case, is to establish when, why, and how generations *fur sich* emerge. And for us, in particular, why now?

We are aware that these three inflections of generation as a term-in-use cut across most of the ways in which the concept is deployed in sociology and beyond. However, as we shall see, they turn out to be productive in making sense of contemporary generationality. But another turn first, this time to classical anthropology, also productive in dealing with generation in the here-and-now.

IV

Theoretically-speaking, the anthropological treatment of generation has diverged from the sociological tradition. Where the latter has been criticized for its Eurocentrism,²⁴ the former has, until recently, focused largely on the non-capitalist, non-Western (i.e., colonial) world. Classical, that is structural-functionalist, accounts tended to see the developmental cycle of life through the double lens of social reproduction and the division of labor rather than through the lens of historical change. Social reproduction was taken to be a product of the normative allocation of roles in the division of labor according to generation appropriate economic and social activities. The performance of those roles, refracted by gender, rank, and status, was subjected to the authority of elders, ancestors, and other elevated beings who served as the source of sanction when the fabric of everyday sociality was ruptured. Under ordinary circumstances, individuals moved through the life cycle, in time taking over the rights, roles, and relationships of those who came before them—and, in time, were similarly replaced by those in the generations that followed. Therein lay the logic of social reproduction.

Some British structural functionalists, like the Manchester School, took conflict to be endemic to social and political life;²⁵ echoes here of the likes of Georg Simmel, Lewis Coser, even Comte. But they saw in that conflict a critical function: dispute and its resolution, went the argument, ensured social reproduction and structural continuity. Max Gluckman made this a first principle in his analyses of African politics, portraying fights over office, many of them inter-generational, as ‘cycles of rebellion’ that affirmed collective values—and always ended up with the *status quo ante*.²⁶

Other, more mundane forms of inter-generational tension were also seen to occur frequently in these societies, typically over the exercise of paternal authority and the transmission of property.²⁷ But, in functionalist orthodoxy, ‘traditional’ social systems, buttressed by ancestral

authority, were held strongly to favor elders over their progeny; this was largely because senior males had the means to control the labor and loyalty of wives, children, and other kin. Besides, notwithstanding youthful impatience about graduating to adulthood, the developmental cycle of life ensured that, in time, they *would* replace their elders and enjoy all the gerontocratic entitlements of seniority. And so the arc of social reproduction would move on uninterrupted, and with it a moral economy of *regeneration*. Any serious deviation was taken to be either pathological or an effect of historical change under the impact of colonialism and entry into market economies. Until then, these African societies were treated, literally, as societies without history. Generationality, in other words, lay in the rationalities by which social value accrued, and was passed over time across generations, through the life stages, leaving organic social solidarities and structures intact.

A variant approach to the anthropology of generations arose among neo-Marxists in the 1960s. They also stressed the indivisible relationship between generation and social reproduction. But, for them, it was a relationship of social domination and material exploitation. Elder males, went the argument, compelled young men to work for them on family estates well into their adulthood by withholding the marriage payments necessary for them to wed and graduate to elderhood. At the same time, those elders regulated access to nubile women, monopolizing them for themselves in polygynous unions, thus to exploit both their labor power and their capacity to bear offspring who would also spend long years bound to the family economy until they, too, matured into a deferred adulthood. Perhaps the best ethnographic example of this model of social reproduction-as-domination is to be found in Claude Meillassoux's studies of the Guro of Côte d'Ivoire.²⁸ These studies, and those of other French Marxists led, tellingly, to debate over whether, in non-capitalist societies, generation is a form of proto/class relationship, an argument most volubly made by Pierre-Phillipe Rey.²⁹ Meillassoux dissented on the ground that, with the passage of time—i.e., with the normative process of social reproduction—exploited youth become dominant elders, a process not replicated in the enduring relationship between capitalists and proletarians. The dissent is persuasive. But the *debate* about generation-as-class will become relevant to our account of generationality in the history of the present—as will this excursion into the anthropology of generation in contexts outside of contemporary Euro-America.

V

It has become commonplace of late to speak of a mounting generation war in many parts of the world—and to see it as unprecedented for the depth of animosity it evokes, the radical differences of value to which it gestures, the rage to which it gives voice. Such assertions of singularity are hard to sustain. In 1970, Charles Reich spoke influentially of a ‘revolution of the new generation,’ one that would fundamentally transform US life, inducting it to a state of ‘higher reason;’³⁰ a similarly sanguine view has been essayed of Gen Z.³¹ Patently, it did not turn out that way, largely because Reich read the times from an unrepresentative segment of 1960s counter culture.³² Nor does it matter whether or not the present moment is unprecedented. What matters is the *perception* that conflict between the younger and the older has become particularly palpable in recent times—and that generation has become a marked identity both *an sich* and *für sich*.

Moreover, it is an identity that, for the young, is frequently asserted as a ‘state of injury,’³³ rationalizing claims for recognition and redistributive justice, for a secure, well-remunerated labor market, and for empowerment in various forms—all this under the sign of a yawning difference of values. Often, too, it bespeaks bitter critique of an older generation said to be endowed with economic and political power that it will not forego, to be guilty of planetary ecocide, and to have stolen the future of youth—who, reciprocally, are said to be narcissistic, ‘woke,’ too easily given to political correctness, over-sensitive to microaggression, and disrespectful of the past. In the digital world, according to *Diggit Magazine*, the “concept of generation war . . . has spread significantly . . . since January 2019,” ranging Millennials and Gen Z, roughly 18 to 38 years old, against Baby Boomers.³⁴ In fact, talk of generation war has a longer history. It also has the ring of cliché: the invocation of ‘war’ as a metaphor for almost any line of enmity, any declared form of concerted action, has become so routine as to devalue it almost entirely; *vide* the wars on poverty, crime, drugs, and absurdly, Christmas.³⁵

Even as a figure of speech, the trope of generation war is more elusive than it may seem. While typically portrayed as a clash of ontologies, Louis Menand argues, cultural differences between generations are often more mythic than material.³⁶ While some of the young proclaim their difference loudly, the majority tend to be conformist; the real extent of generational self-

assertion, he implies, is often obscured by its decibel level. Comte, Feuer, and others may disagree, but Menand cites convincing numbers to this effect. He does not deny that there are significant ideological differences across age cohorts. But this hardly amounts to a war of ontologies. Besides, differences *within* cohorts – mediated by class, race, gender, ethnicity, faith, and other considerations—may be as great, if not greater. The lurking question here is this: could it be that the naming of generations, and the allocation to them of attributes, attitudes, and practices, is as much an effect of the workings of consumer capitalism, in its constant search for new markets, as it is a product of ideological, experiential, or ontological difference? It is a question to which we shall return.

Nonetheless, the presumption that we are caught up in a generation war persists. It is, Bobby Duffy notes, an “endlessly repeated story,”³⁷ retold across much of the world in a variety of registers. Wherein lies the motivation for that story, though? What makes it meaningful? In order to address these questions, let us return to South Africa. World-historical phenomena in times like the present often register first and most visibly in the global south.³⁸

VI

Inter-generational relations in South Africa, under contemporary conditions of economic stress, vary from uneasy to explosive. Nor is this restricted to everyday tensions between adjacent generations as in ‘traditional’ times past (above, IV). Here ‘youth,’ a generic category consisting of ‘born frees’ and those born in the late apartheid years, corresponds broadly to the age spread of Gen Z and Millennials. Among them are some wealthy individuals, beneficiaries of the new dispensation, which has favored the emergence of a small black elite. But the vast majority of young people are poor, disaffected, and, by their own account, largely future-less. Many of them, moreover, are very angry about it. Given their staggering unemployment figures—recall, 66.5% late in 2021—they have little interest in the country’s democratic political culture or the niceties of its civil society.³⁹ It is specifically this immiserated segment of the black population to which the term ‘youth’ usually applies. Their wealthier compatriots, race notwithstanding, are ‘teenagers’ or ‘adolescents.’ Largely wageless, these youth appear caught awkwardly between childhood and adulthood, a predicament known, if controversially, as ‘waithood’ in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁴⁰

Disaffected youth in South Africa, however, do not always wait around. Many drop in

and out of the informal economy, resorting to what, in Francophone Africa, is called *débrouiller* (to make do, often by artful means). Others engage in a different sort of politics, largely directed against their elders. Within families, Els van Dongen shows, “older generations,” those who once lived under apartheid, “now fac[e] another enemy,” the younger generation, against whom “they struggle to maintain control over their . . . houses and pensions”—and about whose “violence and theft” they complain bitterly.⁴¹ Their offspring, they say, are not interested in the hardships of the past. To be sure, youth politics involves the erasure of that past in pursuit of a future perennially deferred. Violence against the old, corporeal or symbolic,⁴² is not seen by its perpetrators as unmotivated. It is, rather, a claim upon those whom, they believe, have failed to deliver what was promised; worse, have denied them the means to graduate into adulthood, keeping them suspended in social space, outside the structural time of the ordinary, orderly passage of generations. Most cannot afford to marry, settle down, and create their own families.⁴³ For them, generation is not experienced currently as part of a normative process of social reproduction, the sort described by classical functionalism (above, IV). It is experienced as brute domination amidst increasing scarcity, more in the manner described by the neo-Marxists, except that exploitation of their labor is not part of it either.

Labor, or rather its disappearance, is a major part of the story. South Africa was liberated from its regime of racial capitalism at just the time that the world was entering its neoliberal moment after the end of the Cold War. This was the moment of deregulation, the end of the Keynesian welfare state, a rising global economy, and millennial faith in the capacity of the market to cure all ills. The African National Congress, post 1994, had imagined a liberal modernist, developmental state, inflected by the spirit of the Freedom Charter of 1955.⁴⁴ It was to this progressivist vision that Mandela committed the ANC. Instead, the new government was rushed by the Washington Consensus into structural adjustment, the outsourcing of many of the functions of government, and a radical reorganization of the economy, which lost literally millions of jobs and led to rapidly rising inequality.

As a result, a significant segment of the South African workforce found itself jobless—with shrinking state protection to shield them from its effects. Predictably, most were young and black. Hence their protracted dependency on their elderly kin, whose state-endowed pensions, property, and accumulated savings, however paltry, became one of the few potential

sources of survival. Hence the generational animus of the young; hence, too, the violence. Liberation accompanied by neoliberalization opened up the structural disjuncture, the inter-generational fissure, that severed Madiba the Universal Hero from Mandela the Sell-Out, under whom structural adjustment and mass unemployment were to become a ‘new ab/normal’ for so many of the young.

As we have noted, these historical shifts were part of larger epochal transformations occasioned by the rise of a ‘new’ global economy, the fallout of which has left many youth across the world living in times of growing scarcity, austerity, and precarity: times in which wage work might disappear at the behest of small changes in labor conditions in faraway lands; in which permanent employment, paying a living wage and benefits, has increasingly given way to insecure jobs, gig economies, and zero hour contracts; in which ever more people are embroiled in spiraling debt. As Bobby Duffy has suggested, “the social progress we’ve come to expect as an inevitable future of new generations taking over is far from certain;” the “future [itself]” he adds, is “under threat.”⁴⁵ Put another way, received processes of social reproduction appear ruptured beyond repair.

All of these things have been acutely felt by South African youth, adding to their sense of suspension in liminal space-time. Social media, moreover, afford the means with which to commensurate individual experience into a generational culture: into linguistic and artistic practices, into a moral economy of social demand, into shared eco-sensibilities and political possibilities that sever the young from the world of adults. Hence the point made long ago by Pierre Bourdieu, that “generation conflicts...cause one group to experience as natural or reasonable practices or aspirations which another group finds unthinkable or scandalous, and vice versa.”⁴⁶ Significantly, Bourdieu refers here to generations as ‘age classes,’ a fortuitous fusion: the more generations *fur sich* behave as antithetical to one another, the actions of each contradicting the aspirations of the other, the more generation *an sich* begins to resemble class. The difference that Meillassoux and others saw between them appears to close under historical conditions in which age cohorts come into enduring structural conflict with each other over the means of economic survival.

As this implies, generational politics in South Africa takes many forms, but all of them tend to return to the materialities of a dignified, decent life—and to waged jobs. Let us take two

examples.

South Africa has been dubbed ‘Protest Capital of the World,’⁴⁷ largely because of the frequency of so-called ‘service delivery protests.’ Estimates of their frequency vary wildly, from one to thirty every day;⁴⁸ many are violent, even insurrectionary. In point of fact, these actions are misnamed. They address much more than the provision of basic services—like clean water, electricity, toilets, and habitable housing—extending to “government corruption, rampant crime, unemployment, police brutality, inadequate education, low wages, land policy, and scanty public transport.”⁴⁹ Peter Alexander refers to them as a ‘rebellion of the poor,’ adding that a “key feature has been mass participation by a *new generation* of fighters, *especially unemployed youth*...”⁵⁰ Empirical studies support this, showing that youth feel that theirs “is a half-life, as they are unable to participate as full citizens in the economy and society,” having been “excluded from employment.”⁵¹ These, in sum, are daily rituals of rebellion, postcolonial-style. They envisage a world in which youth might enjoy the ‘full citizenship’ that they have been denied. As such, they are a critical edge at which generation expresses itself as the dominant line of cleavage in contemporary South Africa, subsuming within it race and gender and class as principles of social division.

Another critical edge lies in campus politics, a *locus classicus* of generational encounter. The fallist movement, which began at the University of Cape Town in 2015—it later spread across South Africa and abroad—fused two initiatives. One was #RhodesMustFall (#RMF), set in motion by the downing of the statue of imperialist-capitalist Cecil John Rhodes. Before its removal, his effigy suffered the indignity of having feces hurled at it; ‘throwing shit’⁵² is an established genre of protest in South Africa. The second, #FeesMustFall (#FMF), mounted mass actions calling for affordable tertiary education for the country’s black citizens. The fallist movement embraced a wide array of intersectional identities, although it also witnessed some bitter discord among its participants.

Like the ‘rebellion of the poor,’ fallism was a younger generation’s cry for *their* new South Africa, recalling Mannheim, Bourdieu, and others on the transformational dimensions of inter-generational struggles. #RMF was a demand to decolonize university education: as Khwezi Mabasa put it, to engage in ‘epistemic disobedience’ in challenging Eurocentric pedagogy, thus to “expose the *underlying youth-led discontent* caused by persistent race, class and gender

disparities . . .”⁵³ By contrast, #FMF addressed materialities. It called for an immediate reduction of tuition fees and the opening up of university education, a basic requirement of dignified employment, to the mass of citizens long denied it. The rage fallism expressed was part of the more general “anger of the young . . . pointed towards their parents and their elders,” two generations, each subsuming internal racial, gender and class divisions, deeply at odds with each other.⁵⁴ Despite dismissive responses from some black public figures and educationalists,⁵⁵ the fallist movement chalked up major successes. Not only have South African universities reformed their scholarly and administrative practices, but, in 2017, just before he left the presidency, Jacob Zuma announced that the state would “subsidize free higher education for poor and working class students.”⁵⁶

VII

The story of generation in South Africa may seem extreme. But it has strong parallels in Euro-America. According to Niall Ferguson and Eyck Freymann, the USA faces a ‘Coming Generation War,’⁵⁷ one that could well change the face of national politics by altering existing lines of political party support. Its cause, they argue, lies in the fact, clearly understood by the young, that the economy is rigged against them. Most Americans carry considerable debt.⁵⁸ But a solid proportion of that debt among older citizens—who earn more and are hence more able to service it—is vested in mortgages, which allow for the building up of equity in property, for capital appreciation, and for asset accumulation. By contrast, much of what is owed by the young—the average among Millennials is \$87,448⁵⁹—derives from loans and credit card use, both expensive and antithetical to building wealth. What is more, the high cost of tertiary education causes many young people to struggle to make ends meet for ever longer periods of time. Yet, without a college degree, they are at a major disadvantage in the labor market.⁶⁰

With or without a tertiary degree, in other words, the young are in a lose-lose situation, worsened by a decline in real wages since 2008 and by longer-term structural changes in the US economy. Ferguson and Freymann also note that, while job figures look roseate at present, they are not necessarily experienced as such by Gen Z and Millennials. This is true especially in sectors that once offered long-term, well-paid employment with benefits, sectors under attack, as well, from the rise of robotics, the gig economy, and the globalization of the division of labor.⁶¹

Consequently, “it has [also] become more common for underemployed college graduates to find themselves in low-wage jobs,”⁶² many of them impermanent, paying barely sufficient to break even. It is no wonder, then, that college loan debt has sparked resistance among the young; *vide* the ‘Million Student March’ in 2015, a mass action that recalled #FMM in South Africa.

Gatherings on campuses across America protested angrily against high fees and student debt, calling for its cancellation and demanding free college education.⁶³ In addition to debt, younger segments of the population face inflationary costs of, among other things, health care, consumer goods, insurance, education, child-raising, and, above all, housing—all of which adds further fuel to generational antagonism. For their part, Boomers seem less anxious about that antagonism than irritated by its behavioral indices. Hence their well documented complaints against the young of excessive wokeness, ‘snowflakery,’ the conflation of discomfort with harm, trauma, and unsafety—and a readiness to take offense, to accuse, to condemn.

Generational antagonism in the USA has innumerable everyday manifestations. The most palpable, perhaps, concern workplace, education, and climate.

Take, as a stark ethnographic instance, “The Generation War at Work.”⁶⁴ It speaks of trivial incidents across corporate America—like a Mexican-themed zoom party at a fintech company that ended with Gen Z staff complaining of cultural appropriation—“escalating into a warfare that is dismantling workplace dynamics.” Such incidents, observes Lotte Jeffs, are “polarizing . . . offices” and “shattering industries” as the “unconscious biases and privilege” of older employees are called out, leaving them resentful, even vengeful. Younger cadres insist on the right to speak out about their experiences—their truths—of harassment, racism, and bullying, whether slight or serious. Demanding ‘emotional safety,’ they expect that alleged offences will be sanctioned by firing, ‘cancellation,’ and expulsion from the workforce; cancellation is often also the fate of those who express sympathy for anyone accused. Jeffs, among others, suggests that the ‘generation war at work’ has become a generic phenomenon, arising—and here we interpolating our own terms—from different *behavioral* rationalities, different phenomenologies. “The fault lines . . . in workplaces,” she concludes, “are the same ones fracturing society.”

Those lines are fracturing the academy as well. Again, consider an ethnographic text, “I’m a Liberal Professor, and My Liberal Students Terrify Me.”⁶⁵ It captures the mood of many US scholars:

The student-teacher dynamic has been re-envisioned along a line that's simultaneously consumerist and hyper-protective, giving each and every student the ability to claim Grievous Harm after any affront. I am frightened [that] some simple act of indelicacy [will be] considered tantamount to physical assault.

Edward Schlosser, the professor in question, adds that the only arbiter of what is sayable is not its truth content or its value as argument. It is students' emotional reactions, the avoidance of "so much as a hint of discomfort." Similar things are said widely—albeit, for fear of attack, seldom publicly—among the university teachers. Hence their rising unease, both pedagogic and personal, in the face of students who have the capacity to end long-standing careers, even to inflict social death, by means of an allegation. As vexatious to the professoriate is the burgeoning phenomenon of students silencing and sanctioning speech from which they dissent.

Is this all a grotesque exaggeration? Some would say it is. Others would say the opposite, that it speaks to a toxic atmosphere infiltrating the academy. Already in 2012, Kristen Frey Knepp reported a significant rise of incivility among students toward their teachers,⁶⁶ itself symptomatic of a conflict of generationality. It is a conflict which *Youth Facts*, a US blog that speaks for the young, has no hesitation in calling a Real Generation War.⁶⁷ "Like the quintessential bad parent," it says, "aging America incessantly declares how much it cares about 'the children' but, somehow, keeps tossing the young under the bus . . ."

The 'bad parent' theme extends into eco-activism, a domain of generational antagonism that links the US to a global theater of struggle. That struggle has been personified by Greta Thunberg, whose 'Youth for Climate' has garnered a huge transnational following. Her accusations against political leaders for not acting on the future health of the planet speaks bitterly of a betrayal of "all *present and future generations*."⁶⁸ In the US itself, youthful eco-activism has many diffuse sites, among them the Sunrise Movement. Its self-description is significant as a generational charter:

The Sunrise Movement is a *youth movement to stop climate change and create millions of good jobs* in the process. We're building an *army of young people* to make climate change an urgent priority across America, end the corrupting influence of fossil fuel executives on our politics, and elect leaders who stand up for the health and well being of all people.⁶⁹

Sunrise openly supports the younger echelons of the Democratic Party and a Green New Deal. It speaks of effecting a generationally-inspired ‘climate revolution’ and ‘climate justice’ by reducing the influence of corporate capital, by attacking the inertia of the old, and by expanding the wage employment sector.⁷⁰ More generally, for youth in the US and the world at large, extreme weather events and other signs of a coming eco-apocalypse—circulated in terrifying images on social media, in film and literature—evoke a sense of unprecedented existential threat. Planetary extinction, the ultimate cancellation of *any* future for the young, seems all too possible. In the face of that threat, the perceived lack of concern on the part of governments, business, and civil society seems at best uncaring, at worst criminal. In short, of all manifestations of the line of fissure between the generations, this one, given its sheer gravity, and felt immediacy, may turn out to be the deepest of all; indeed, it may underlie many of the other inter-generational anxieties that we have discussed here.

VIII

In conclusion, then, all these examples in which the generations confront each other in South Africa and the USA speak to the same broad point. It is that generation, as an *existential* construct, has become an *ur*-line of demarcation, difference, and discord in the early twenty-first century. Patently, it is not the only one: race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, faith, among other things, carry their own aspirations and dissatisfactions, their own demands for rights and struggles for recognition. Every generation, moreover, is intersected internally by these axes of difference. But when it comes to conflicts of generationalities, they tend to be suspended and subsumed into inter-generational oppositions, albeit sometimes uneasily. Whether ‘generation war’ is a productive metaphor or merely a hyperbolic meme in the present moment, the instances of inter-generational antinomy discussed here gesture toward a deep sense of rupture in received processes of social reproduction. That rupture has congealed, for many young people, in feelings of precarity, lack, suspension. For them, the future seems to have collapsed into the present continuous, a tense that bespeaks tension, no way out: the modernist story of progress, generation after generation, seems to have come to a shuddering halt.

This returns us, once more, to those older anthropological models of the reproductive passage of generations, in which the cyclicity of structural time and the linear movement of

individuals through it were taken to differentiate generation from class. Contemporary historical conditions *appear* to have disrupted both the structural cyclicality and individual linearity on which generational reproduction rested. That is why generation—existentially, *an* and *fur* sich—*appears* to have become more like class, in which the domination of the young by the old, far from permitting the former to graduate to elderhood, is extended without a visible horizon. We say ‘appears’ because resemblances are not equivalences and because historical time, which subsumes both cyclicality and linearity, does not stop. But, in moments of perceived crisis, time may *appear* to be arrested. Thus it is that, for many Gen Z and Millennials, the world looks to be stuck, to ‘have no time’ for them. In response, they demand their due, erect high cultural fences, dig deep epistemic trenches, and fashion oppositional practices that bewilder their elders. The latter continue to presume the normative rationality that classical anthropology described: that, in due course, their children will inherit their world just as they themselves did from their parents—except that parents today live longer, there are proportionally more of them, and their offspring are made to wait. It is no surprise, in the circumstances, that the young rage with impatience. Nor is it any wonder that they blame their elders for their predicament. It is this caesura, this fracture in the phenomenology of time between generations, that recalls the fate of Nelson Mandela: Universal Hero to older citizens of the world, also known as *Tata* (father), but ‘quintessentially bad parent’ to the youth of his own country, whom he allegedly denied a future.

But have generations not *always* been immanently in conflict? Is it not true, as functionalist and Marxist social scientists have pointed out (above, III, IV), that adjacent cohorts *always* experience each other as antagonistic? Is there anything new about the here-and-now? The answer is both no and yes. As long as generation prevails as an existential concept, conflict between generations *is* a perennial possibility. But *whether*, *when*, and *how* it manifests itself is always historically situated and hence unique. So is the way in which inter-generational relations are cognitively apprehended, affectively experienced, and culturally represented. The character of contemporary generations and generationality has been shaped by post-World War II global history, specifically, by structural shifts in economy and society—and by a clutch of contingent causes associated with those shifts.

We have already mentioned the most significant of them. They have arisen, we argue, out of a ‘new’ global economy founded on the driving force of finance and transnational capital; on

the ideological hegemony of the market, privatization, and deregulation; and on the primacy of wealth accumulation above all else—especially above redistribution, wage equity, the social good, or the effects of rampant inequality. Along with the metamorphosis of the liberal welfare state into the corporate state, this economy has seen the emergence of a highly mobile, planetary division of labor marked by the depression of labor costs, a turn to robotics to displace and cheapen the human workforce, and the deployment of labile supply chains to keep capital operating with minimum friction. It also courts eco-apocalypse by ignoring environmental risk to the planet under the sign of economic development, itself an alibi for rank profiteering, often encouraged by cooperative political regimes. Patently, techno-advances, including the evolution of a worldwide electronic commons, biometrics, and digital population management—for both governmental and commercial ends—have quickened all of these transformations.

Recall Ferguson and Freymann’s thesis that this economy—seen by its critics as dysfunctional for its social effects, its lopsided growth, its inability to sustain infrastructure or basic services, its openness to corruption and criminality—is heavily ‘rigged’ against youthful generations.⁷¹ Its neoliberal turn has rendered employment much less secure for them, much more prone to casualization and real wage deflation; unemployment rates in some nation-states may appear low—this is a major difference between the USA and South Africa—but a job does not necessarily equate to a living income. At the same time, expenditures that most affect those at the early stages of adulthood—housing, child care, education, health, insurance (above, VII)—are rising rapidly; concomitantly, rates of marriage are declining in both countries.⁷² For many of the young, who are disadvantaged in the job market *ab initio*, cumulative debt is a trap that is hard to avoid, making wealth accumulation and financial security seem out of reach, and a sense of anxious precarity somewhat overdetermined. What makes that anxiety potentially yet more acute is the fact that, with the withdrawal of the welfare state, onus is thrown increasingly on individuals for minding their own risk, for taking responsibility for their own lives, and for acting as entrepreneurs of their own human capital—all things noted by Michel Foucault already in 1978-9 as integral elements, entailed corollaries, of the rise of neoliberalism.⁷³

These corollaries of the ‘new’ global economy, its neoliberal fallout, have not only affected the young, of course. They are also felt acutely by underclasses, broadly defined, by

people of color, women, and rural populations, by those who are discriminated against for their faith, their ethnicity, their sexual orientation, and by various other ‘others.’ But *inside* of those populations of difference, in almost all cases, it is the young who appear to feel them most, who experience the changing shape of twenty-first century economy and society at its most dire, who believe themselves and their futures to be most under threat. This is why generational solidarities, explicit or implicit, tend to subsume those other lines of discriminatory difference.

But there is a final addendum here. Another corollary of the neoliberal moment has been the branding of human capital, of persons and identities. This, as we have noted, extends to the branding of generation: of generations named, distinguished, and made objects of the market, giving powerful impetus to the hardening of generational identities *fur sich* among the young. The rise of social media, in tandem, has created a commons, a post-Habermasian digital public sphere, for them to reflect and act on those identities. It is in this entirely new domain of instant mass communication in which Gen Z and Millennials give shape and collective voice to their fears about climate change, about the ‘rigged’ economy, about social injustice and inequality, about offenses against their gendered, racial, ethnic, and sexual selfhood—precisely those things that constitute their alleged ‘wokeness.’ It is there that they speak of their political alienation, of their social sensibilities, of the mismatch between their palpably modernist expectations of the good life and the (im)possibility of realizing them under postmodern conditions. It is there, too, as *Youth Facts* reminds us, that they censure their too-long-lived ‘quintessentially bad parent[al]’ generation for the ‘Real Generation War’ in which many of them believe they find themselves. In short, it is the medium in which they are able to document, in their own expressive languages, plural, *their* explanations for contemporary generationality and generational antagonisms. In the

language of social theory, that explanation lies in the immanent failure of social reproduction to which the structural conditions of post-Cold War world have conduced. It is a world that appears, right now, to offer limited prospect of *trans*generational community or justice; after all, for the young, the existential threat to their planet, their future, is the ultimate, irrecuperable injustice for which, increasingly, they indict those who came before them.

NOTES

1. For an overview of the concept, see Hadas Weiss, “Social Reproduction,” The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology, 25 September 2021;
<https://www.anthroencyclopedia.com/entry/social-reproduction>.
2. Njabulo S. Ndebele, *The Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Essays on South African Literature and Culture*. (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 1991).
3. See e.g., “President Cyril Ramaphosa: Centenary Celebrations of the Birth of President Nelson Mandela,” 18 July 2018;
<https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-centenary-celebrations-birth-president-nelson-mandela-18-jul-2018>. See also <https://www.gov.za/mandela100>.
4. Nelson Mandela Foundation, n.d. “Madiba’s Journey”;
<https://www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/madibas-journey-landing-page>.
5. See Kenichi Serino, “How Apartheid Haunts a New Generation of South Africans,” The Atlantic, 21 September 2016;
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/09/south-africa-apartheid-mandela-born-free-university/500747/>. As some commentators have noted, many youthful critics remain polite in phrasing their critiques of Madiba, celebrating the positives and finding mitigation for his

actions in the pressures he faced in negotiating the transition.

6. “Changing Perceptions of Nelson Mandela,” *South African History on Line*, (updated) 30 July 2018; <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/changing-perceptions-nelson-mandela>. (This website is widely recognized for its reliability. It is cited regularly in scholarly work, international mass media, and government, business, and educational sources.) The article quotes Mmusi Maimane, then leader of the parliamentary opposition Democratic Alliance who, when called a ‘mini-Mandela’ by his critics, was told that, as such, “you are a sell-out of our people!” It concludes adds that “Mandela’s legacy has become a pejorative in certain groups in South Africa, particularly Black students.”

7. “South Africa Youth Unemployment Rate,” *Trading Economics*; <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/youth-unemployment-rate#:~:text=Youth%20Unempl oyment%20Rate%20in%20South%20Africa%20averaged%2054.21%20percent%20from,the%20fourth%20quarter%20of%202014>.

8. Lwando Xaso, “Mandela the ‘Sell Out’: Our Memories Have Been Blunted by Time, *The Journalist*, 26 July 2017; <https://www.thejournalist.org.za/spotlight/mandela-the-sell-out-our-memories-have-been-blunted-by-time/>.

9. Malema’s speech was widely reported in the press and social media; see e.g., Erin Conway-Smith, “South Africa Debates Taboo Question: Was Mandela a Sellout.” *USA Today*, 14 December 2015; <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/12/14/nelson-mandela-south-africa-global-post/77272038/>. On Winnie Mandela, see Tatenda Gwaambuka, “Nelson Mandela: A Saint or Sell-out?” *The African Exponent*, 1 May 2016;

<https://www.africanexponent.com/post/nelson-mandela-a-saint-or-sellout-2963>. Ms. Mandela's statement is also quoted by Erin Conway-Smith and others.

10. Sandile Memela, "Mandela No Sell-out." *Mail & Guardian Thought Leader*, 8 December 2014; <https://thoughtleader.co.za/mandela-no-sell-out/>.

11. Jason Burke, "Struggling South Africans Lose Faith in Nelson Mandela's Legacy." *The Guardian*, 5 May 2019;

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/05/south-africa-reaches-new-crossroads-25-years-after-free-election>. Earlier, during the anti-apartheid struggle, Mandela was the object of critique from members of the Pan Africanist Congress, the Black Consciousness and Unity Movements, and other political organizations. This, however, flowed from differences over ideology and strategy. The accusation of being a sell-out, especially along generational lines, is a very different matter, and altogether more recent.

12. See e.g., Vanessa Malila, "Being a Born Free: The Misunderstandings and Missed Opportunities Facing Young South Africans," *Rhodes Journalism Review* 35 (2001), 126-135; <https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC175765>.

13. See e.g., David I. Kertzer, "Generation and Age in Cross-Cultural Perspective." In *Aging from Birth to Death*, vol. II, Sociotemporal Perspectives. AAAS Selected Symposium, vol. 79. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979).

14. See e.g., Bernardo Bernardi, *Age Class Systems: Social Institutions and Politics Based on Age*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

15. Karl Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations." In *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge: Collected Works*, Paul Kecskemeti, ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952).

16. Edward E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and*

- Political Institutions of a Nilotic People. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), 108.
17. Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations," p. 309.
 18. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.)
 19. Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*,
vol. IX (1906-1908): Jensen's 'Gradiva' and Other Works, James Strachey, ed. (London : The Hogarth Press, 1959), 237.
 20. See Archives, "Auguste Comte on the Natural Progress of Human Society," *Population and Development Review* 37 (2011), 389-394, 392.
 21. See e.g., Edward Lipuma, *Encompassing Others: The Magic of Modernity in Melanesia*. (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000) and Jennifer Cole, "A Cultural Dialectics of Generational Change: The View from Contemporary Africa," *Review of Research in Education* 35 (2011), 60-88.
 22. Mannheim, "The Problem of Generations."
 23. Lewis Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations*. (New York: Basic Books, 1969), 10.
 24. See e.g., Darcie Vandegrift, "'We Don't Have Any Limits': Russian Young Adult Life Narratives Through a Social Generations Lens," *Journal of Youth Studies* 19 (2016), 221-236, 221.
 25. See e.g., Max Gluckman, *Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa*. (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1963).
 26. Gluckman, *Order and Rebellion*.
 27. For a classical overview of the topic, see e.g., Jack Goody, "Succession in Contemporary

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28. Claude Meillassoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Meillassoux’s work has been subjected to feminist critique; e.g., Maureen Macintosh, “Production and Patriarchy: A Critique of Claude Meillassoux, ‘Femmes, Greniers et Capitaux’,” *Capital & Class* 1 (1977), 119-127. It has also been debated in Marxist circles; e.g., Bridget O’Laughlin, “Production and Reproduction: Meillassoux’s *Femmes, Greniers et Capitaux*.” In *Critical Anthropology: Foundational Works*, Stephen Nugent, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2016.)
29. Pierre-Philippe Rey, “Class Contradiction in Lineage Societies,” *Critique of Anthropology* 4 (1979), 41-60.
30. Charles A. Reich, *The Greening of America*. (New York: Random House, 1970.)
31. See Roberta Katz, Sarah Ogilvie, Jane Shaw, and Linda Woodhead, *Gen Z, Explained: The Art of Living in a Digital Age*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021.)
32. See Louis Menand, “It’s Time to Stop Talking about ‘Generations,’” *The New Yorker*, 18 October, 2021, 63-67.
33. Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995.)
34. See e.g., Leonie Milder, “OK Boomer and the ‘Generation War’,” *Diggit Magazine*, 22 January 2020; <https://www.diggitmagazine.com/articles/ok-boomer-generation-war>.
35. See e.g., Derek Robertson, “How the War on Christmas Became America’s Latest Forever War,” *Politico*, 18 December 2021; <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/12/18/war-on-christmas-525273>.
36. Menand, “Generation Overload,” 64-67.

37. Bobby Duffy, *The Generation Myth: Why When You're Born Matters Less Than You Think*. (New York: Basic Books, 2021.)
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39. Malila, "Being a Born Free," 130.
40. See e.g., Alcinda Honwana, "Youth, Waithood, and Protest Movements in Africa," *African Arguments*, 12 August 2013;
<https://africanarguments.org/2013/08/youth-waithood-and-protest-movements-in-africa-by-alcinda-honwana/>.
41. Els van Dongen, "'That Was Your Time . . . This Time is Ours!': Memories and Intergenerational Conflicts in South Africa." In *Generations in Africa: Connections and Conflict*, Erdmute Alber, Sjaak van der Geest, and Susan R. White, eds. (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2008.)
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43. See e.g., Michael W. Yarbrough, "Very Long Engagements: The Persistent Authority of Bridewealth in a Post-Apartheid South African Community," *Law and Social Inquiry* 43 (2018), 647-677; also Cole, "A Cultural Dialectics of Generational Change," 61.
44. African National Congress. *The Freedom Charter*, 26 June, 1955. As adopted at the Congress of the People, Kliptown; <https://www.anc1912.org.za/the-freedom-charter-2/>.
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46. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 78.
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48. For the lowest figure, see Laura Grant, "Research Shows Sharp Increase in Service Delivery

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50. Peter Alexander, “Rebellion of the Poor: South Africa's Service Delivery Protests—A Preliminary Analysis,” Review of African Political Economy 37, no.123 (2010), 25-40 (emphasis added).

51. School of Education [Researching Education and Labour Centre], University of the Witwatersrand, Mitigating Service Delivery Protest Through Skills Development and Deployment (no date);

https://cdn.lgseta.co.za/resources/performance_monitoring_and_reporting_documents/Mitigating%20Service%20Delivery%20Protest.pdf, 12.

52. Veronica Baxter and Mbongeni N. Mtshali, “‘This Shit is Political; Shit is Real.’ The Politics of Sanitation, Protest, and the Neoliberal, Post-apartheid City,” Studies in Theater and Performance 40 (2020), 70-82, 70.

53. Khwezi Mabasa, “The Rebellion of the Born Unfrees: Fallism and the neo-Colonial Corporate University,” Strategic Review for Southern Africa 39 (2020), 94-116 (emphasis added).

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<https://www.news24.com/News24/zuma-announces-free-higher-education-for-poor-and-working-class-students-20171216>.

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May 2019; <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/05/coming-generation-war/588670/>.

58. See e.g., Bill Fay, “Demographics of Debt,” Debt.Org, 23 February 2022;

<https://www.debt.org/faqs/americans-in-debt/demographics/>.

59. Fay, “Demographics of Debt.”

60. Derek Thompson, “The Real Reason That Young People Can't Find Jobs,” The Atlantic, 10

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<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/06/the-real-reason-that-young-people-cant-find-jobs/372514/>.

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62. Derek Thompson, “The Real Reason That Young People Can't Find Jobs.”

63. The Million Student March had a political effect: several candidates in the 2016 presidential campaign, and some senators, addressed the issue at the time. See e.g., Danielle Douglas-Gabriel,

“Million Student March Fights for Debt-Free College, The Washington Post, 12 November 2015;

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2015/11/12/million-student-march-fights-for-debt-free-college/>.

64. Lotte Jeffs, “The Generation War At Work,” *Elle*, 3 March 2021;
<https://www.elle.com/uk/life-and-culture/elle-voices/a35692653/war-at-work-generations>.
65. Edward Schlosser, “I’m a Liberal Professor, and My Liberal Students Terrify Me,” *Vox*, 3 June 2015; <https://www.vox.com/2015/6/3/8706323/college-professor-afraid>. The following quote has been abbreviated without ellipsis to preserve the integrity of its intended content.
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https://www.huffpost.com/entry/greta-thunberg-climate-change-blah-blah_n_61555601e4b075408bd2dbe6 (emphasis added).
69. Sunrise Movement, “We are the Climate Revolution”; <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/>.
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