



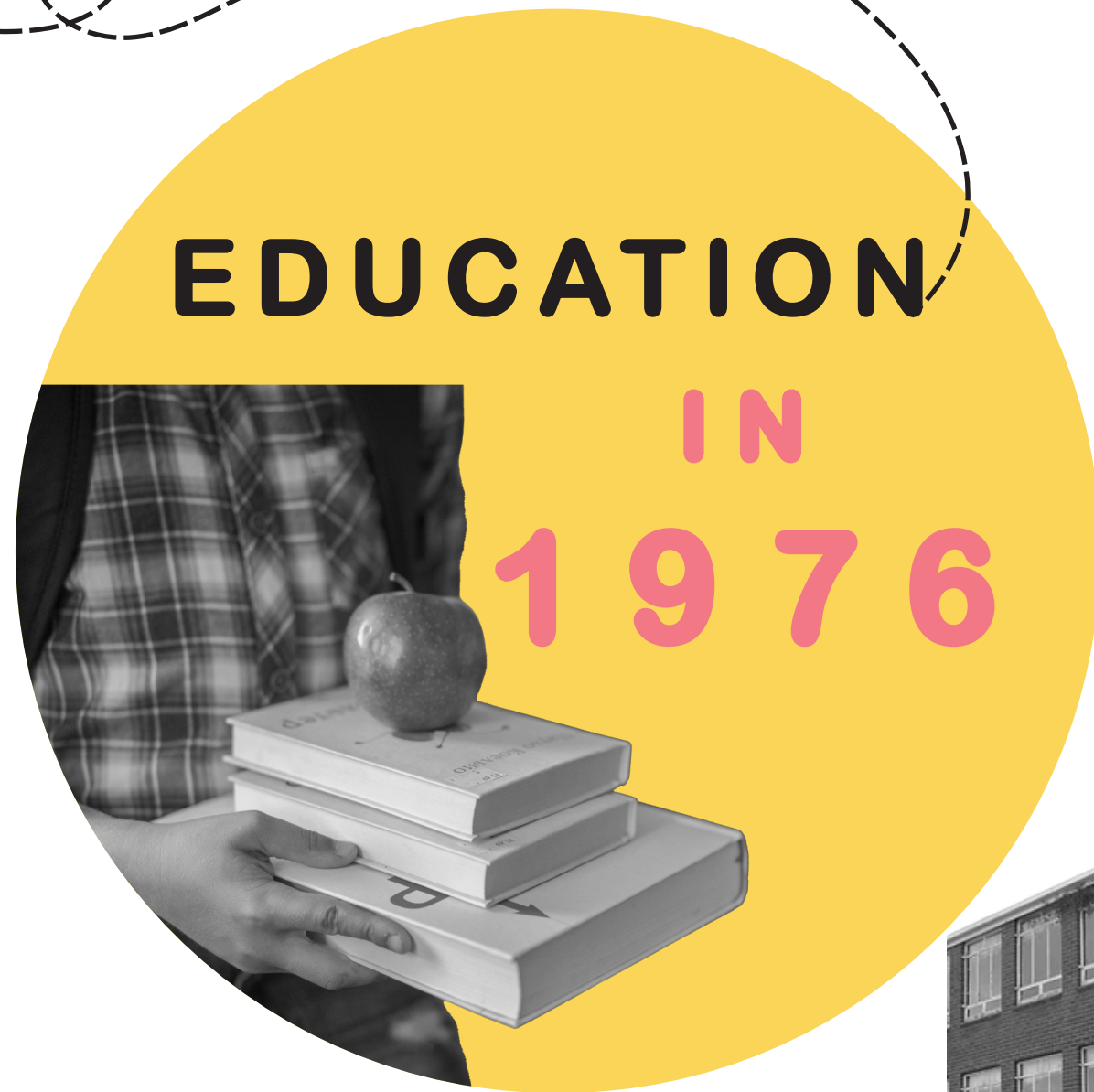
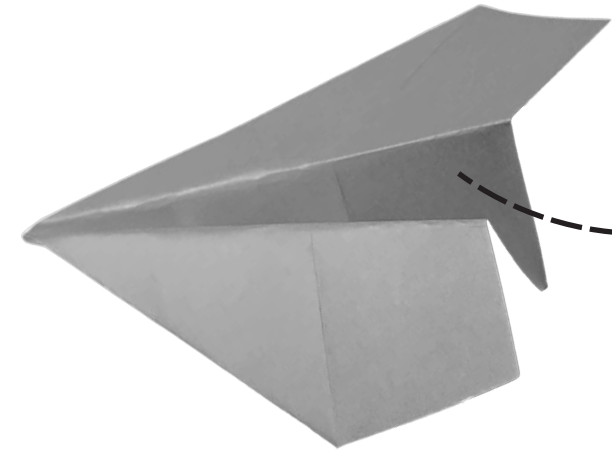
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A NARRATIVE EXPLORATION OF EDUCATION IN 1976

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 50 years, South Africa's education system has transformed dramatically — from the oppressive structures of Bantu Education, through the democratic transition of 1994, to the ongoing struggles of the post-apartheid era.

But beyond policy and statistics lies a deeply human story. Through narrative interviews with learners and educators who lived it, this project captures personal memories, challenges, and moments of hope, revealing what education in South Africa has meant across generations.



THEMES

RACIAL PRIVILEGE



The interviews revealed how privilege was often normalised and unnoticed at the time.

The ability to move freely through a well-policed, white neighbourhood points toward the broader context of protection and stability afforded to White communities. What appeared to be an ordinary school journey was a privilege produced by unequal social conditions.

'it was like 15 kilometers... they were burning buses & she was very scared'
- Dr Philippa Yaa

Dr Philippa - Yaa reflected on travelling on a 'White-only' school bus without recognising that she was not part of this group, not understanding why she was sometimes left behind.



'We didnt get involved in politics... the teachers were very good with that'
- Teresa

POLITICAL AVOIDANCE



WILLFUL IGNORANCE

Participants' stories provided insight as to how they were seemingly not affected by the political climate at the time. There was an ignorance about the cost of the racial divide in 1976, where participants felt far removed from the politics that enabled their own privilege.

PRIVILEGE & OPPORTUNITY

Extracarricular activities were a significant part of the experience of privileged schools, with participants engaging in ballet lessons and debating, which emphasised the positive experience of schooling. This is in direct contrast to the lack of basic educational resources in under-funded schools.

"You can't call yourself a member of '76 generation... you had ballet lessons..."
- Dr Philippa Yaa

Yusra, Katya & Monique

Childhood Malodies

“After June 1976, mommy took me on sabbatical with her. Trick or treating in suburban Oak Park, Chicago. Scampering skeletons and ghosts and zombies...

I'm not black
I declared, blacks are uncivilised.
They will never rule our country.
They need us whites.

WAT NIE DOOD MAAK NIE,
MAAK VET.

- Dr Philippa - Yaa

SEGREGATION

All three interviews alluded to racial segregation in education. Not only was this controlled through physical access (who was allowed to attend school where), but aslo through social interactions. Fear was used as a tool for othering. When Anna complimented a Black student's homemade suitcase, he never brought it back to school again. Anna believed that her compliment may have made him a target, "They were not allowed to talk to us."



UNEQUAL RESOURCES

Resources were unequally distributed with white schools being favoured. While Teresa discussed her school's well-kept grounds, Anna described the challenges of teaching in under-resourced Black schools that had no projectors. She said Black students used plastic bags instead of suitcases. This shows how educational resources were closely tied to race and privileged, impacting educational experiences.

"He said, 'Ma'am, you don't know us, and we don't you'"
- Anna