Community Psychology

Floretta Boonzaier
Taryn van Niekerk *Editors*

Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology

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Community Psychology

The Community Psychology book series is envisaged as a space to review the established assumptions and knowledge economy underlying community psychology, and encourage writings that recognize the plurality of people and the many geographical, psychological and sociological locations that they occupy. The book series will enable contributors to stimulate thought that questions that which is constructed as critical knowledges, community psychology, and the meanings of liberation and community. Contributions to the book series draw attention to the applications of community psychology in the Global South and the Global North as they relate to such issues as violence, socio-economic inequality, racism, gender, migration, dispossession, climate change, and disease outbreaks. In do so, it centers community psychology as focused on the well-being of collectives, and dealing with such focal issues as deploying psychology to support social justice, the relevance and appropriateness of its internal logic, and methods that deal with the range of psychological, social, cultural, economic, political, environmental, epistemic, and local and global influences that bear on the quality of life of individuals, communities and society. The book series concentrates thus on the following three key areas of focus: 1) decoloniality, power and epistemic justice, 2) knowledge production, contestation and community psychology, and 3) community psychology in context. The series is of vital and immediate relevance to researchers, practitioners, faculty and students from the intervention sciences, including anthropology, sociology, public health, development studies, social work and urban studies

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Editors

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Editors
Floretta Boonzaier
Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychologies in Africa
Department of Psychology
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch, South Africa

Taryn van Niekerk
Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychologies in Africa
Department of Psychology
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch, South Africa

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This work is dedicated to those countless feminist and decolonial scholars and activists who have come before us, those who are still with us and those who are still on their way.

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Contents

Contributors

Lütfiye Ali Digital Ethnography Research Centre RMIT University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Floretta Boonzaier Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychologies in Africa, Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, South Africa

Malvern Tatenda Chiweshe Rhodes University and London School of Economics, Harare, Zimbabwe

Josephine Cornell Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa

South African Medical Research Council-University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Cape Town, South Africa

Institute for Social & Health Sciences, University of South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa

Brittany Everitt-Penhale University of South Africa, Institute for Social and Health Sciences, Lenasia, Johannesburg, South Africa

South African Medical Research Council, University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Tygerberg, Cape Town, South Africa

Shose Kessi Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa

Peace Kiguwa Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Catriona Ida Macleod Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa

Nick Malherbe University of South Africa, Institute for Social and Health Sciences, Lenasia, Johannesburg, South Africa

South African Medical Research Council, University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Tygerberg, Cape Town, South Africa

Haile Matutu Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, South Africa

Jabulile Mary-Jane Jace Mavuso Rhodes University, Pimville, Soweto, South Africa

Linda Mkhize Institute for Social & Health Sciences, University of South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa

South African Medical Research Council-University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Cape Town, South Africa

Taryn van Niekerk Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychologies in Africa, Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, South Africa

Puleng Segalo Office of Research and Graduate Studies College of Human Sciences, Pretoria, South Africa

Tamara Shefer Department of Women's and Gender Studies, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa

Shahnaaz Suffla South African Medical Research Council, University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Tygerberg, Cape Town, South Africa

University of South Africa, Institute for Social and Health Sciences, Lenasia, Johannesburg, South Africa

Gabriela Távara Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Peru

Introducing Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology

Floretta Boonzaier and Taryn van Niekerk

Contents

This volume is situated within the revitalised 'decolonial turn' in psychology, a turn which has been argued to recentre critical approaches such as feminist, critical, liberatory, indigenous, black and Marxist psychologies within the discipline (Seedat and Suffla 2017). The colonial and imperialist roots of psychology are now almost taken-for-granted in much critique of the discipline and the ways in which it functions in the mainstream (e.g. Howitt and Owusu-Bempah 1994; Kessi and Boonzaier 2018; Macleod et al. 2017). In the postcolonial period, psychology in Africa (and elsewhere) has been argued to have 'retreated into scientism' involving the uncritical application of western scientific methods to the study of African people (Mama 1995). In reflecting on the post-liberation period on the African continent Amina Mama (1995) has argued that:

> "… (psychologists) seemed to have buried their head in the sand of empiricist methods, travelling about the continent administering questionnaires and tests to obscurely defined groups of subjects, and then using these to make all manner of generalisations about an African subject who has remained entirely mythical." (p. 38)

In South Africa in particular, the location from which a large part of the contributions to the book emerge, there has been longstanding recognition of the role of psychology in enabling and justifying institutionalised racism through apartheid (Nicholas and Cooper 1990). Given this history, as well as the contemporary ways in which knowledge production within psychology continues to pathologise those

F. Boonzaier (✉) · T. van Niekerk
Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychologies in Africa, Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, South Africa
e-mail: Floretta.Boonzaier@uct.ac.za; Taryn.vanniekerk@uct.ac.za

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with long histories of suffering (Kessi and Boonzaier 2018), there is little argument against the idea that psychology must indeed be decolonised. Everyday life in global Southern contexts is steeped in inequalities, global capitalism, migration, refugee crises, violence, migration, and dispossession that provide a rationale for adopting a wide-angle approach to well-being and liberation. There is growing recognition that the problems-in-contexts described as 'postcolonial' resonate with and emerge from histories and 'presents' of imperialism, colonialism and metacolonialism (Bulhan 2015), neoliberalism and hyper-capitalism. Despite technological advancements that could be argued to bring people in diverse parts of the world closer together, divisions between the global North and South have deepened and have been maintained through the rise of neoliberalism, predatory hyper-capitalism, and the institutionalisation of poverty though development imperatives (Escobar 1995). At the same time, the dominance of hegemonic, Euro-American-centric modes of theorising shapes knowledge economies in the South and often misrepresent or speak over local knowledges. The lens of decoloniality is useful for recognition of the continuities in the decimation, destruction and dispossession wrought by colonialism and for challenging the ways it manifests in the present through knowledge production, representation, and everyday life.

In this book, however, we make a case for feminist critique to be situated alongside the decolonial critique of psychology, community psychology in particular. In contemporary contexts, decolonisation discourses specifically centre racialised subjectivity, to a large degree ignoring the ways in which this is intersected with other forms of subjectivity and power, with gender being amongst the most important. The book aims to bring together the strands of critique in knowledge production and theories, emergent methodologies and critical and reflexive community psychology practice to argue for a decolonial feminist community psychology.

Towards a Feminist *and* Decolonial Community Psychology

Formally recognised as a sub-discipline of psychology for approximately 50 years (Yen 2008), the development of community psychology was seen as a response to ongoing debates around psychology's relevance as a discipline (Martín-Baró 1994). There is consensus in the literature (see Yen 2008) pointing to the origins of the field of community psychology as located in the USA with the Division for Community Psychology established in the American Psychological Association (APA) in 1967. Scholars, such as Yen (2008), speak to this emergence of community psychology as shaped by the social and governmental policies of the time and the social and civil rights movements of the 1960s. Community psychology has been defined as "the applied study of the relationship between social systems and individual well-being in the community context" (Hanlin et al. 2008, p. 524). It can be distinguished from other fields of psychology through its focus on ecological, community and prevention perspectives, as well as on social power and the privileging of praxis in addition to theory (Nelson and Prilleltensky 2010; Rappaport 1977).

Community psychology's development has been characterised by is heterogeneity, methodologically and in terms of practice. In the west, in contexts such as the US, the development of this sub-discipline has emerged concurrently with the discourse of social and civil rights, while in southern contexts such as Latin America and South Africa, discourses of liberation and resistance to colonial oppressions have been key to community psychology's assembly (see Martín-Baró 1994; Seedat et al. 2001). Countries such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Mexico and Cuba saw the development of community psychology in the 1970s, often in the context of political oppressions and exclusions and propelled by discontent with mainstream clinical psychology (Yen 2008). Importantly, forms and interpretations of this sub-discipline are variable and have been taken up differently across global contexts, with some approaches functioning to reinforce the status quo rather challenge it (see Seedat et al. 2001). Euro-American, malestream (cf. Arnfred and Ampofo 2010) forms of community psychology, although diverse, largely serve to reinforce the capitalist and patriarchal status quo, rather than challenging oppressive systems at the structural level (Seedat et al. 2001).

In a similar vein, although positioned as a universal response to social injustices and practices of liberation, scholars have shone a light on the incompatibility of some feminist perspectives with movements towards decoloniality (Kurtiş and Adams 2015). Mainstream feminist psychology's departure from liberatory principles is in part the product of neo-colonial manifestations of hegemonic Euro-American, northern feminist knowledges but also as Kurtiş and Adams (2015) suggests, its "complicity with neo-colonial tendencies [within] hegemonic psychological science" (p. 388). Western and mainstream enactments of feminism in psychology have tended to universalise understandings of 'gendered oppression' and liberation through the lens of western, educated, industrialised knowledges (Kurtiş and Adams 2015). Much of these discursive forms of colonisation reproduce racial and cultural knowledges that leave womxn[1] living outside of the Euro-American centre – usually black, poor, and gender non-conforming persons who are affected by racist, patriarchal, misogynistic and homophobic violence– subject to their own erasure, othering and pathologization (Ampofo 2010; Mohanty 1988). Positioned as 'producers of knowledge' (Connell 2014), feminist theory and activism located in the global North have largely favoured the interests of the middle- to upper-class, white, cisgendered individuals – imposing western feminist values on others, whilst re-presenting those in the global South as unitary, singular, powerless and ignorant (Mohanty 1988). At the same time, neoliberal discourses of empowerment, as Rutherford (2018) has argued, has had a long reach in global development initiatives. The key character who figures in this discourse of 'empowerment', is the "racialised, third world girl" (Rutherford 2018, p. 624) who

[1] We use the terms 'womxn' and 'mxn' to unsettle the essentialisation of normative notions of gender and sex. Through these terms, we aim to centre the experiences of black womxn and mxn located in the global South, as well as those who identify as transgender, intersex, queer and all womxn and mxn who have found themselves erased from dominant norms of femininity and masculinity.

is saved by white philanthropists and/or her 'feminist sisters' in the global North. Through the imposition of western, white feminist values, womxn in the global South are positioned as: "look[ing] to their liberated sisters in [Western] worlds for rescue" (Kurtiş and Adams 2015, p. 389).

Despite the goal of feminist community psychology being to attain social justice, the approach also presents with a number of problems, particularly in its mainstream form. Currently, mainstream forms of feminist community psychology are regarded as having much potential, yet are "designed to liberate a privileged few to participate in the ongoing domination of the marginalized many" (Kurtiş and Adams 2015, p. 389). It appears that feminist forms of community psychology have struggled to free themselves from the shackles imposed by the domination of white, western feminism. Scholars have moved these debates forward to imagine more critical, liberatory agendas for feminist and community psychologies, which first and foremost require engagements with a process of decolonization, and to importantly liberate these scholarly practices and approaches from neo-colonial modes of *doing* and *thinking*.

The work of Frantz Fanon (1967) presented an important historical turn in critiquing mainstream psychological science, moving the discipline towards a decolonising agenda. In sidestepping the pathologizing and individualist mantras of mainstream psychological science that position experiences of distress and oppression as a product of the self, Fanon (1967) provided a situated understanding of the psychological and emotional distress experienced by the colonised within the oppressive structures of colonialism. Martín-Baró (1994) through his agenda for the development of a liberation psychology, broke away from the individualising agendas set forth by mainstream psychological thinking and instead cultivated a consciousness of a community psychology praxes for the disenfranchised and one with social justice at its centre. Since these early contributions, there have been a range of works toward theorising the decolonisation of the discipline of psychology, including its different branches such as community psychology. According to Seedat and Suffla (2017) decolonising approaches to community psychology are united by their:

> "… attitudinal orientations that affirm situatedness, marginal voices, liberatory modes of knowledge creation, ethico-reflexive praxes, non-hierarchical learning and teaching, and dialogical community engagements, constantly intending to transcend the obsession with formulaic methods" (p. 428)

In addition to these advances towards establishing a decolonial community psychology, we centre African, black, intersectional, postcolonial and decolonial feminist perspectives because of their capacities to recognise that the colonial project was not only a racializing one, but that it was fundamentally gendered too. African feminist thinkers, for example, have long recognised the importance of imperialism and coloniality for shaping racialised and gendered subjectivity and power relations (Lewis 2011; Mama 1995; Oyěwùmí 1997). African feminist approaches have also foregrounded an understanding of womxn's experiences within and after colonisation and imperialism. Furthermore, decolonial feminist Maria Lugones (2010)

argues that the decolonisation of gender/feminism cannot be accomplished without simultaneous attention to racial, class and other inequalities. This book aims to foreground such perspectives in its argument for a decolonial feminist community psychology, centring perspectives that have been marginalised.

The challenge to decolonial thinking has not only emerged from scholarship on the issue but has also been highly visible in decolonial activisms. It is no accident that protests around decolonisation have occurred in primary spaces of knowledge production, such as universities, across the global North and South (e.g., #RhodesMustFall in South Africa and at Oxford University; #AsiGanaChile – The Chilean Student Movements; #RoyallMustFall at Harvard University[2]). At the same time, some of the social movements around decolonisation have faced challenges and contestation around their marginalisation of feminist (in particular, intersectional feminist) concerns and politics (Omar 2016). Black feminists, such as bell hooks (2015), have cautioned against the erasure and silencing of womxn in activist movements based on advancing racial justice. In this regard, social movements that do not seriously address intersecting oppressions and identities are at risk of failing to advance true social justice.

Articulating a Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology

This book includes contributions that provide exemplars of modes of engagement, research, dialogue and reflexive practice that espouse the principles of an emerging decolonial feminist community psychology. In the first chapter Mavuso, Chiweshe and Macleod draw on narrative-discursive methods infused with African feminist theorising in their work on pre-abortion counselling and decision-making amongst Zimbabwean and South African womxn. They show how African feminist theorising enables understandings of womxn's experiences and resistances informed by race, culture and womxnhood – highlighting the multiplicity and complexity of African womxn's experiences and challenging essentialised notions informed by white western feminist discourses that we refer to above. At the same time, Mavuso and colleagues' work advances a decolonial feminist agenda through thinking beyond the research paper and the advancement of their own academic careers in the development of a policy brief on pre-abortion counselling guidelines emergent from the narratives of the womxn themselves.

In another chapter that foregrounds a methodological approach toward the advancement of a decolonial and feminist community psychology, Távara draws on her feminist participatory action research with Andean womxn in Peru. She illustrates how Andean womxn who have suffered long and continued histories of colonial and patriarchal oppression reflect, contest and make meaning of development initiatives introduced in their communities. Távara shows how the

[2] See for example https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/apr/13/racism-harvard-law-school-slaveholder-seal

project served as a space for the womxn to actively reflect on their local knowledges in relation to dominant development discourses that enter their community. Importantly, the chapter engages with how womxn challenged western feminist notions of the assumed victimhood of indigenous Others by subverting ideas about the assumed passivity of womxn who actively take up subjective positions as 'mothers' or those involved in assumed 'feminine' tasks such as knitting. Womxn reclaimed these meanings and actively construct themselves as the producers of knowledge about their own lives. This work resonates with the earlier arguments about how western feminist discourse positions womxn in the global South as "singular monolithic subjects" (Mohanty 1988, p.333) without agency.

Our chapter follows on from Mavuso and colleagues' and Távara's contributions that engage with methodologies that have the potential to exemplify a decolonial feminist community psychology, this time within the context of research on intimate partner violence. Given the high levels of mxn's violence in the context of intimate heterosexual relationships, a focus on transgenerational traumas and the epistemic violences enacted on people is required. We suggest that these relationships can be interrogated through life history methodologies on the lives of black mxn who have been historically oppressed, and who currently perpetrate partner violence against womxn. Importantly, we attempt to bring into view the complex intricacies of privilege and disadvantage that shape their lives through our reflections on the application of the life history methodology with two mxn. Fundamentally, we engage with and begin a critical dialogue around what it means to humanise research participants, particularly marginalised black mxn who have been positioned in research and public discourse as inherently violent, isolating their very racialised and classed identities as 'risk factors' for violence. We thus foreground potential opportunities offered through the life history approach and what that might mean for a decolonial feminist community psychology as well as its capacity for challenging normalised ways of *doing* and for consciousness-raising.

Decolonial feminist work involves ongoing critique, including the critique of approaches that are assumed to be liberatory. Participatory action research is an established method within community psychology that is informed by liberatory ideas around participation, consciousness and social change. Although these ideas are central to decolonial feminist work, the methods by themselves cannot be assumed to be inherently progressive. In the fourth chapter of this volume, Cornell, Mkhize and Kessi critically interrogate the participatory dimension of a photovoice process. They reflect on a photovoice process from three varying positions of power, the academic research supervisor, the postgraduate student researcher and the research participant. This interrogation of 'participation' is an important critique because, although participants are frequently regarded as co-researchers and included in the research process (usually the data collection phase) they rarely participate in the scholarly dissemination of the work, being excluded from the production of knowledge more broadly. Cornell and colleagues' chapter also amplifies an issue that is rarely articulated in academic writing, namely an illustration of the process of intergenerational feminist mentorship – work that is fundamental to nurturing the next generation of feminist, decolonial scholars.

Continuing with critiques around the taken-for-granted transformative nature of the PAR project put forward by Cornell and colleagues, Malherbe, Suffla and Everitt-Penhale interrogate issues of youth voice, power and reflexivity through the process of participatory film-making and the enactment of critical feminist reflexivity. They reflect on a youth driven participatory film-making initiative on teenage pregnancy aimed to facilitate a 'coming to voice' and conscientisation of young South African people. The intention of the project was to work against discourses that position young people as incomplete adults, lacking in agency and activist potential, whilst at the same time working against the silencing of the experiences of young people in both feminist and decolonial community psychologies. In what they describe as complex work that is fraught with contradiction, they reflect on the concerns, challenges, uncertainties, regressions and successes inherent in community-centred work that hope to engage with liberation but may inadvertently interact with coloniality. In this regard, the emancipatory potential of youth's 'coming-to-voice' to enact social change requires constant critical reflexivity to approximate a decolonial feminist community psychology praxes.

The chapter by Ali provides a critique of the decolonial turn in community psychology through illustrating how the identity of Muslim womxn in Australia are shaped by colonial structures of power that are simultaneously heteropatriarchal. Ali focuses specifically on the ways that gender intersects with sexuality, race, ethnicity and religion in the lives of Australian womxn. She draws on the Borderlands theorising of feminist scholar, Gloria Anzaldúa to reveal that the womxn's gendered bodies become a platform for ethnic Muslim communities to construct borders around identity and to resist colonial power by asserting moral superiority. Ali shows that her work, beginning with Borderlands theory, with its focus on multiplicity enables us to move beyond binarisms that have been inherent in much mainstream psychological theorising. Ali's work concurs with our argument that beginning with the work of feminists in the global South means that questions around resistance to coloniality and imperialism will already be centred. Decolonial feminist work must therefore, not only engage in critiques of western, imperial feminisms but must begin with and centre feminisms emergent from the global South which are developed from the experiences of womxn in these geopolitical contexts.

The chapter by Matutu follows by providing insight into what a decolonial feminist research agenda might offer for a reconsideration of research ethics in community psychology. The chapter interrogates notions of community, especially applied to a critique of marginalised groups, specifically LGBTQI+ groups and their erasure in community psychology scholarship. Centring feminist decolonial research in his work with non-gay identifying mxn who have sex with mxn, for Matutu, means interrogating questions about how the research might be humanising, non-oppressive and ethical. On the latter point, the chapter makes an important contribution on the limits of the regulatory ethical requirements that researchers are compelled to adhere to and how these are limiting for the kinds of decolonial feminist community psychologies that we imagine. Matutu undertakes critical ethical reflexivity to interrogate the ethical quagmires he encountered in his research and to make a case for a considered ethics in practice as ongoing and dialogical.

Psychology, and psychological knowledge production has not traditionally centred questions of activism. Both decolonial and feminist work has centred social justice and made the point that we must begin by centring the needs and desires of the 'epistemologically disenfranchised' (Garuba, personal communication). At the same time decolonial work means that we need to push the boundaries of our disciplinary thinking; which for psychologists could mean that we need to begin with questions of activism to ask: where does activism fit into our scholarly endeavour? This is a question engaged in the chapter by Kiguwa and Segalo who write and identify as two decolonial feminist academics. They reflect on the challenges and the gaps in relation to teaching, supervision and mentorship, research and community activist work and how these gaps serve as obstacles to the fulfilment of a decolonial feminist community psychology. For Kiguwa and Segalo, a decolonial feminist psychology disrupts the binarism between scholarly and activist engagements towards transformative praxes that works in the interests of the disenfranchised.

The theme of activism is also taken up in the final contribution by Shefer who illustrates the operation of a decolonial feminist community psychology in activist spaces of social movements and artistic expression. Shefer reiterates the earlier argument that decolonisation work must foreground gender, as well as class, race and other intersectionalities, and in some cases, this form of intersectional engagements in such movements may already exist. Through what she terms, *performative activism* and *activist performance*, Shefer provides powerful examples of the ways in which young people in South Africa have deployed intersectional and decolonial discourse that brings the inequalities of race, gender, sexuality, age, dis/ability to the fore through a range of creative, performative modalities that also engage the body, affect, materiality and subjective experience.

Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology: An Ongoing Conversation

When we put out a call for contributions to this volume we had envisaged receiving contributions that would help us to develop and envision an emerging decolonial feminist community psychology. We had not imagined that such a form of psychology already exists. The contributions to this volume illustrates that a decolonial feminist community psychology is already here. This decolonial feminist community psychology takes questions of activism seriously, begins with decolonial and feminist theorising from the global South, engages critical reflexivity and critical ethical reflexivity, is anti-essentialist, acknowledges multiplicity and intersectionality, centres the voices and concerns of the disenfranchised, deconstructs notions of community, considers issues of representation and whose interests might be served by the work. We consider the development of this work as ongoing and we are pleased to have begun this conversation.

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Overcoming Essentialism in Community Psychology: The Use of a Narrative-Discursive Approach Within African Feminisms

Jabulile Mary-Jane Jace Mavuso, Malvern Tatenda Chiweshe, and Catriona Ida Macleod

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Introduction

Given the history of race- and gender-based colonialism in Africa, racial and gendered power relations are key issues to be tackled in community psychology interventions in general, but also crucially in those dealing with gendered practices such as sexual violence, unsafe abortion, circumcision and virginity testing, for example.

J. M.-J. J. Mavuso (✉)
Critical Studies in Sexualities and Reproduction, Rhodes University, Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown), South Africa

M. T. Chiweshe
Critical Studies in Sexualities and Reproduction, Rhodes University, Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown), South Africa

London School of Economics, London, United Kingdom

C. I. Macleod
Rhodes University, Pimville, Grahamstown, South Africa
e-mail: c.macleod@ru.ac.za

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Fundamental to these interventions is how gender is understood and how womxn[1] and mxn are positioned as (non)gendered beings. Central, too, is an understanding of the ways in which womxn and mxn are positioned within these interventions and how these positionings play into or subvert historical and raced representations of African and Global South peoples.

A decolonial feminist community psychology approach understands individual experience as being embedded in, enabled and shaped by discursive and social power relations. It also understands that meaningful, transformative change is only possible once social practices and experiences are viewed in the context of social power relations. African feminisms are an example of an approach that could be taken up and used as a resource in decolonial feminist community psychology spaces.

African and Global South[2] feminisms have a strong tradition of critiquing mainstream Western feminisms[3] for what Mekgwe (2008) terms the mal-representations of womxn (and mxn) of Africa and the Global South more generally. African feminisms have thus also been concerned with the challenging task of exploring and producing accounts of the complexity and multiplicity in womxn's (and mxn's) experiences of localised, multiple forms of oppression and the resistances enacted against them (Mekgwe 2008; Tamale 2011). In this chapter we show how the utilisation of a narrative-discursive method within African feminist theorising may be useful in achieving this task. We illustrate our argument with examples from two studies conducted by the second and first authors respectively: Zimbabwean womxn's narratives of abortion decision-making and health service providers' positioning of womxn who have had abortions (Chiweshe 2016); South African womxn's and healthcare providers' narratives of their experiences of the pre-abortion counselling healthcare encounter in the Eastern Cape public health sector (Mavuso 2018). By fusing these scholarships, the constraints and productive capacity of discourses and power relations are placed alongside a view of the individual as acting

[1] We use the term 'womxn' and ('mxn') to disrupt normative assumptions about gender and sex, here taken to be socially constructed, which write gender and sex *onto* individuals. The term 'womxn' denotes and recognises all persons with the biological capacity to become pregnant (because the studies discussed here are around abortion), including transgender, intersex, womxn-identifying and mxn-identifying persons. We also use this term to foreground the experiences of womxn of colour, womxn from/living in the Global South, trans, queer and intersex womxn, and all womxn-identifying persons who have been excluded from dominant constructions of 'womanhood' and feminist praxis on the subject

[2] The term Global South refers to countries from Africa, Latin America, and developing Asia including the Middle East which face serious problems and challenges as a result of geopolitical processes of colonialism and imperialism. The term is however, problematic as it can homogenise various countries.

[3] Western feminism is also a potentially problematic term and to avoid any misconceptions its use here refers to feminism from the first world countries or the so-called Western world. When we use the term 'Western feminists' we are not trying to imply that the view from this part of the world is monolithic by any means but rather we are following in the footsteps of Mohanty (1991, p. 52) who states that, "I am attempting to draw attention to the similar effects of various textual strategies used by writers which codify Others as non-western and hence themselves as (implicitly) Western" in reference to Western feminists.

upon and within the social world. Our approach enables, we argue, understandings of African womxn's experiences and resistances which are informed by definitions of racial identity and culture, womxnhood, and social reality as dynamic social concepts and practices. These kinds of understandings facilitate community psychology interventions that are relevant and 'emancipatory' as they stem from the multiplicity of participants' narrated experiences and the social and discursive power relations implicit in these narratives.

In the following, we discuss decolonial feminist community psychology as a transformative approach. We describe the specific decolonial approaches we used and the methodology deployed in our studies to provide a case for utilising a narrative-discursive approach within African feminisms, thus enabling a framework that reads similarities and differences, and oppressions and resistances in African womxn's experiences. We conclude by demonstrating, by way of a policy brief that has been developed into a step-by-step abortion counselling guide, how the results of a robust narrative-discursive analysis may be used to meaningfully impact on and improve the lives of those beyond our research participants.

Community Psychology and Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology

Community psychology as a discipline and field is expressly committed to the production of emancipatory theories and research. In other words, it is committed to bringing about meaningful societal change for communities that are shaped by injustices and inequalities. As Cruz and Sonn (2015) note, however, aside from critical approaches to community psychology, the discipline is still largely shaped by an understanding of people and structural systems that obfuscates socio-historical power relations. These power relations create and sustain the very oppressions and injustices that the discipline seeks to eradicate.

In order to avoid reproducing a community psychology that at best misunderstands and misrepresents the communities it means to serve, and at worst deepens the injustices and oppression faced by those communities, community psychology needs to be informed by approaches which are able to: make visible individuals' embeddedness within social, discursive and material power relations, incorporate a cognisance of historical representations of participants, and pay attention to moments of resistance and the bending of oppressive norms.

A decolonial feminist perspective has much to offer community psychology. Indeed, a decolonial feminist community psychology understands that individual experiences are enabled and shaped by social structures (Grabe et al. 2014). It also recognises that such an understanding is necessary in order to eradicate the social power relations that create individual womxn's experiences. We argue that applying an African feminist narrative-discursive approach to abortion research (and womxn's experiences more generally) not only follows the principles of a decolonial feminist community psychology, but also provides the means to achieve the emancipatory goals of a decolonial feminist community psychology. Through the use of an African

feminist postcolonial/poststructural narrative-discursive analysis, we demonstrate how womxn's individual experiences of understanding abortion as well as procuring an abortion and going through abortion counselling, are shaped by interacting patriarchal and economic power relations. We argue that this approach enables 'interventions' that are relevant, powerful and most importantly 'emancipatory' as they stem from participants' own voiced experiences and an understanding of how those voiced experiences are occasioned by social, discursive and material power relations.

African Feminisms

African (and Global South) feminisms share a historical (and to a lesser extent, contemporary) commitment to a just representation of those who have historically been, and still continue to be, mal-represented in academic knowledge production that remains skewed towards Global North resources and scholarship (Blay 2008). These mal-representations, which maintain the very systems that create oppression, tend to include an essentialised and rigid portrayal of womxn from/living in Global South countries which tends to be a negative one in which 'the Global South womxn' lacks agency, is dominated by those with whom they are in relationships of power and is consequently always already the 'oppressed victim' (Wilson 2011).

In attempting to correct these mal-representations, however, some African feminist approaches (see discussion in Salo 2001) have themselves produced essentialised and rigid accounts, albeit in different ways, of 'the African womxn's experience'. For example, some authors have written about motherhood as a defining value in African cultures (see Chilisa and Ntseane 2010) as opposed to mothernormativity, an organising normative expectation that governs societies (Tamale 2006). Such approaches notwithstanding, a strength of contemporary African feminisms is their commitment to shedding light on local realities as experienced by African peoples, particularly womxn and girls, and as shaped by "specific contexts, cultures and peoples" (Chilisa and Ntseane 2010, p.619). This has meant, in South Africa and other parts of Africa, an attunement to, and theorisation around, how oppressions may be raced, classed and gendered in intersecting and interacting ways (de la Rey 2001). In South Africa, for example, feminist efforts include an understanding of the raced and classed barriers to access to equitable healthcare and healthcare service delivery (including abortion, ante- and postnatal care), among many other concerns.

We argue that the narrative-discursive method we employ here allows for grounded analyses that expose the multiplicities of African womxn's lives, as well as the local and global power relations that serve to constrain or enable particular experiences. This method falls within the broad area of African postcolonial/post-structural feminist approaches, which we briefly describe below.

African Postcolonial/Poststructural Feminism

From a postcolonial/poststructural African feminist perspective, patriarchal power relations, domesticity and sexual politics are important ways in which womxn's oppressions are enacted and are therefore sites of resistance. Whilst acknowledging how patriarchy has been conceptualised in some African feminist theorising to refer to a monothetic overpowering structure which may lead to "a danger of ontologising male power, and assuming that human relationships are inevitably moulded by tyrannical power relations" (Bakare-Yusuf 2003, p. 2), an African postcolonial/poststructural feminist perspective understands patriarchy as a relational form of power where womxn are not mere victims of mxle oppression but are actively involved in challenging, contesting and in some situations perpetuating patriarchal power relations. What results is "an account of African gendered experience[s] that does not assume fixed positions in inevitable hierarchies, but stresses transformation and productive forms of contestation" (Bakare-Yusuf 2003, p. 3).

An African feminist post-structural/postcolonial approach (as we are defining it here) has much in common with a post-structural feminist discursive analysis which aims to "subvert the taken-for-granted discourses around ways of being and behaving that run through hegemonic discourses and preserve patriarchal power relations" (Thompson et al. 2017, p. 4). An important element in the African version is, we argue, the highlighting/foregrounding of (neo)colonialist power relations that are frequently neglected in other theories. Despite the end of formal colonialism, this approach views the position of womxn in many societies as being relegated to the position of the 'other' which mimics the one colonised subjects used to hold: that is, experiencing a politics of oppression and repression (Azim et al. 2009). An African feminist postcolonial/post-structural approach is particularly attuned to how African womxn are represented and is committed to researching (and producing knowledge about) the experiences of African womxn in ways that recognise the multiple oppressions and resistances in African womxn's experiences. It is also concerned with identifying and recognising the points of convergence and divergence in and between their experiences to avoid producing a homogenised account of the 'African womxn's experience' of any social practice or event. Like other approaches to African feminism (e.g. Blay 2008), an African feminist postcolonial/post-structural approach is attuned to and works to document and bring an end to African womxn's experiences of imperial/geo-political, raced, economic and gendered oppression (among others). However, it proposes that 'Africa' and 'womxn' are necessarily open signifiers to which meaning is attributed in particular situations. These meanings are variable depending on womxn's material conditions and their cultural, socio-historical, political and geographic locations. Thus, Blay (2008 p. 67) states that "the designation "woman" is not universal and therefore", 'women' "never experience their oppression in the same ways". Multiplicity, variability, and complexity are therefore foregrounded.

Regarding power, an African postcolonial/post-structural feminism necessarily views power as relational and dynamic. When viewed in this way, power is "negotiated and negotiable, assessed in relative rather than absolute terms, and rightfully framed within cultural, historical, and generational contexts" (Blay 2008, p. 69). In this way, an African feminist post-structuralist approach avoids representing African womxn as monolithically 'oppressed victims' or empowered, both of which are harmful in the experiences they render invisible. Furthermore, power is understood to be bound up in/with normative constructions of race, gender and sexuality (as well as other social locations). Thus, Tamale (2011 p. 16) argues that sexuality and gender "are creatures of culture and society, and both play a central, crucial role in maintaining power relations in our societies", and de la Rey (2001) writes that race is a socially constructed powerful organising system which deserves attention in the South African feminist political landscape. An African feminist postcolonial/post-structural approach therefore explores systems of thought or discourses and the practices they (de)legitimise and (ab)normalise and analyses womxn's experiences from this perspective.

Despite the explanatory and emancipatory potential of post-structural approaches, they have been criticised for either relegating the material[4] to the realm of non-significance (if discursive and social processes constitute social realities) or being unable to meaningfully incorporate the material, and its relationship to the discursive and social, into their accounts (see Burkitt 1999 and Rahman and Witz 2003 for discussions on this). This criticism has led to debates about whether post-structural approaches do, or can, allow for the visibilisation of social realities, with some arguing that this is indeed the case (Burkitt 1999). This is made possible in two ways: (1) by understanding, as we do, that the relationship between materiality and the social is one wherein both are mutually constitutive of and constituted by the other in a dynamic sense (an example of this is Foucault's analytics of bio-politics in which both the individual body and population politics are intricately interweaved with knowledge, discourse and power (Foucault 1977)); (2) by applying data collection and analysis methods (such as the narrative-discursive approach and Macleod's (2016) framework of supportability[5]) that make materialities, as they are experienced and made relevant by participants themselves, visible.

[4] Materiality as a concept is variously understood in the feminist literature as referring, perhaps most notably, to economic conditions and resources and to lived experiences of being a body (the embodiment literature speaks to this), but also to objects (nature, tools, buildings and structures, and technological objects), space and time, and non-discursive practices (Rahman and Witz 2003).

[5] Macleod (2016) introduces the construct 'unsupportability' as one which, unlike the oft-used term 'unintended' (often conflated with 'unwanted') locates pregnancies within social, structural and individual contexts which are seen to intersect.

A Narrative-Discursive Approach in African Feminisms

African feminists have recognised the importance of analysing narratives (see, for example, Kashyap 2009) and discourses (see, for example, McFadden 2002) in highlighting gendered oppressions. In our work, we have combined the strengths of these kinds of analyses: the more micro-analytical work enabled by narrative analyses, and the more macro-analytical labour enabled through discursive analyses. In the rest of the chapter, we demonstrate how using Taylor and Littleton's (2006) narrative-discursive method enables the kind of African feminism elucidated upon. Within our work, discourse is understood as both constraining and productive in constructing objects/social practices and particular selves which relate to objects/social practices in particular ways (Foucault 1972). Ultimately, discourse acts upon individuals in ways which render individuals knowable and governable, whether in constraining or productive ways (Foucault 1977). Critical discursive approaches, including Taylor and Littleton's narrative-discursive approach and Davies and Harré's (2001) positioning theory, extend this understanding of discourse to allow for individuals to 'act upon' discourse making the process of subject formation a bidirectional one. Thus, individuals use discourse to position themselves and others in particular ways. However, the ability to do so is constrained and made possible by the availability (and dominance) of particular discourses. This understanding of discourse and the relationship between discourse and individuals is captured in the concept of discursive resources.

Discursive resources may be understood as culturally-specific features of talk which are made available by and within an individual's socio-cultural context or community (Reynolds and Taylor 2005). They constitute an individuals' discursive environment and thus shape what can be said and in what ways. However, as the word 'resources' implies, within a narrative-discursive approach, these features of talk may be actively drawn upon and used by individuals for specific ends and goals, for example, to position themselves or others in particular ways, or to justify a practice, defend against expressed or anticipated criticism and so on (Reynolds and Taylor 2005). As Taylor (2015, p. 10) states: discursive resources "amount to a historically accrued but ever-changing pool of meanings, associations and even patterns of words which pre-exist talk on a topic or issue and shape what is (and is not) sayable and said about it". Discursive resources include ideas, images, assumptions and expectations about objects and social practices. In our extension of Taylor and Littleton's approach, we view discourses, as well as narratives, as resources to be taken up by speakers in their talk and writings (Taylor 2015).

Within Taylor and Littleton's (2006) narrative-discursive approach, narratives are "a construction, in talk, of sequence or consequence"(p. 95). This highlights two aspects of narratives. The notion of 'sequence' implies a temporal ordering of events and may be communicated minimally through words such as "and then" or through references to time (past, present and future). The concept of 'consequence' refers to

causality which is attributed to an event or experience by individuals during their talk. The presence of either or both constitutes a narrative. What is distinct about a narrative-discursive approach, say from other narrative analyses, is that narratives are conceptualised as both a resource and a construction (Taylor and Littleton 2006). In other words, narratives are told by individuals but may also be drawn upon, alongside discourses, to construct other narratives.

Adapting Taylor and Littleton's (2006) approach, two kinds of narratives need to be distinguished: canonical narratives and micro-narratives. Canonical narratives, or grand/meta-narratives, are common stories with familiar plotlines and structures, such as the hero narrative (a situation of crisis requires intervention, which the hero then resolves through brave action) (Reynolds and Taylor 2005). Canonical narratives tend to reflect or speak to normative expectations and understandings of social reality and the way things are or should be (e.g. the motherhood narrative, which views womxn as progressing, at the right time, through pregnancy and birth into a state of blissful motherhood).

In contrast, micro-narratives are localised, small stories which are often constructed in the context of question and answer interactions, such as the research interview (Blommaert 2006). Micro-narratives, therefore, tend to be highly specific not only to cultural and socio-historical contexts, but also to a specific event or experience, making them temporary (O'Donovan 2006). Indeed, it is this specificity and relativity which enables and makes visible disruptions of normative expectations (Lyotard 1979 as cited in O'Donovan 2006). When narrative is understood as both construction and resource, then, the interaction of the micro and macro is illuminated in individuals' negotiations with discourses, canonical narratives, as well as the materialities of their social realities.

The approach we used highlights the importance of resistance not only to understand womxn's experiences but also as an important aspect of feminism's emancipatory goal of eradicating all forms of oppression. Using a narrative-discursive approach within an African feminist framework makes resistances visible. By studying narratives, which are voiced experiences, in a way that is informed by scholarship on discourse and power, possibilities for alternative ways of being, feeling and thinking can be made visible. This visibilisation may be achieved through an exploration of participants' micro-narratives and narratives as sites where social structures (discourses, canonical narratives and power relations), material conditions, and individuals meet and interact. By analysing individuals' (micro-)narrative constructions of their experiences, then, ways of representing and understanding social practices, events and objects, which may conform or run counter to hegemonic understandings, are made visible through individuals' voiced experiences. In the next section, we draw on our two studies to demonstrate the usefulness of an African feminist narrative-discursive approach.

Our Studies: Abortion Decision-Making and Pre-Abortion Counselling Experiences

Our first study used a Foucauldian postcolonial African feminist approach, read through a narrative-discursive approach, to explore Zimbabwean womxn's and health service providers' narratives of abortion decision-making. The data for the study were collected from three sites in Harare, Zimbabwe. The three sites were Harare Hospital, Epworth and Mufakose. Because Zimbabwe currently has restrictive abortion laws, womxn's abortion decision-making narratives could only be accessed retrospectively. Thus, the 18 womxn (six at each site) who participated in an adaptation of Wengraf's (2001) narrative interview method had (clandestinely) terminated pregnancies in the year prior to data collection (2013–2014). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six service providers (two nurses at Harare Hospital, two village health workers in Epworth and two nurses in Mufakose). The six service providers who were interviewed were recruited precisely for their experience in working with womxn who have terminated pregnancies [for a fuller explanation, see Chiweshe (2016)].

One of the main findings of the study was that when narrating their abortion stories, the womxn spoke in a socially-sanctioned manner. One of the discursive resources employed by the womxn, was a discourse of 'shame/stigma'. Shame and stigma, which were seen to be important in determining what makes a pregnancy unsupportable, and also an abortion complicated, can be viewed as a way of sanctioning what is allowed and what is forbidden in the particular context. Shame and stigma are used to discipline womxn's bodies regarding their sexuality – making pregnancies unsupportable by shaming womxn who get pregnant outside marriage and also those who have an abortion. This sanctioning is attached to gendered understandings – womxn being responsible for ensuring that pregnancy occurs only 'within' a heterosexual conjugal relationship and womxn accepting their reproductive role should pregnancy occur.

In their interview talk, then, womxn spoke of how they were caught in a double-bind, where the circumstances of a pregnancy could be viewed as shameful and abortion was also viewed as stigmatised/stigmatising. The double-bind creates a dilemma concerning what is culturally and morally acceptable, with both keeping a pregnancy under certain circumstances (single parenthood, relationships outside of marriage, fatherless children) and proceeding with an abortion being seen as morally reprehensible. While both options were depicted as bad, womxn proceeded with an abortion because it could be hidden, whereas a pregnancy could not. The fear surrounding community members finding out about the abortion meant womxn did not present for post abortion care if they experienced complications. Here it is precisely the double-edged nature of shame/stigma ('incorrect' pregnancies and abortion) that contributes to the regulation of womxn's reproductive behaviour. Society is seen in the womxn's micro-narratives as having the means (through stigma/shame) of disciplining those who act contrary to the social norms.

In their micro-narratives, womxn also drew on the 'conjugalised fatherhood' and the 'masculine provider' discourses. Both these discourses construct gendered ideals of sexuality, motherhood and masculinity. The 'masculine provider' discourse shows the operation of domesticity where womxn are expected to be economically dependent on mxle partners while providing gratuitously the necessities of productive and reproductive social life (Tamale 2003). The operation of both these discourses within the womxn's narratives meant that marriage (which was assumed always to be a heterosexual union) was seen as the expected aspiration of womxn as well as being the appropriate place for reproduction. Accordingly, mxn's role was that of financial provider for the family, with the absence of a male provider rendering the pregnancy unsupportable.

Importantly, then, womxn's narratives also spoke to the ways in which the materialities of their lives, namely the economic (which sometimes interacted with the patriarchal) conditions of their lives, necessitated abortion. Thus, participants discussed how continuation of the pregnancy would result in lost opportunities: being unable to complete their education and become economically independent as continuation of the pregnancy would necessarily mean marriage and economic dependency on their mxle partner; or needing to stop working in order to take care of the resultant child. Participants also spoke of how poverty meant that there were no economic resources to support continuation of the pregnancy and parenting.

While womxn in this study drew on hegemonic discourses of masculinity and femininity, and also hegemonic discourses which construct abortion as shameful, we also view their narratives as resistance against these hegemonic discourses around abortion and womxnhood. As the second author argues (Chiweshe 2016), the very act of speaking, and in great detail, about having had an abortion was itself an act of resistance – a resistance against the injunction, underpinned by the discursive and legal prohibition of abortion, to not speak about abortion and therefore to appropriately portray shame about having done the undoable and unspeakable. By speaking about having had an abortion, the womxn went against hegemonic discourses which construct the ideal womxn as always already a mother, and demonstrated how abortion is part of (some) African womxn's realities. The health services providers drew from a moralistic religious and cultural discourse to construct womxn who have abortions as immoral and evil. By drawing from these hegemonic discourses, the health service providers took on disciplinary roles through stigmatising those who went against societal norms.

Our second study drew on an African feminist post-structuralism and Foucauldian scholarship on discourse, knowledge and power and applied this to a narrative-discursive approach in order to explore womxn's and healthcare providers' narratives of their experiences of waiting room interactions and pre-abortion counselling. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 30 womxn and four healthcare providers who were recruited from three public hospitals in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa where abortion legislation is liberal (an abortion can be requested up to 12 weeks of gestation, and thereafter under particular conditions). Womxn were asked about their experiences of the counselling (information provision and decision-making aspects) and their experiences of interacting with

other womxn and healthcare providers while waiting to receive counselling and/or their abortion procedure. Healthcare workers (two nurses, and 2 volunteer counsellors) were asked about their experiences of providing counselling (information provision and decision-making aspects) and their experiences of interactions with womxn in the waiting room (Mavuso 2018).

Through moralisation discourses, abortion was predominantly constructed by womxn and healthcare providers as immoral, with some participants drawing on a religious discourse to construct it as sinful as well. Womxn were thus positioned (and positioned themselves) as deviant and as committing a wrongful act while healthcare providers positioned themselves as saving womxn from abortion. For healthcare providers, the immorality of abortion was tied to some providers' expectations of the embodiment of shame where womxn were expected to be visibly ashamed, through their posture, facial expressions and demeanour, of what they were about to do. Using an awfulisation of abortion discourse (Hoggart 2015; Wahlström 2013), abortion was constructed as risky, dangerous and harmful to both womxn and foetus. This positioned both womxn and the foetus as vulnerable and under threat and as needing to be saved from this threat. Notably, however, the construction of abortion as threatening to the foetus carried the implication of positioning womxn as a threat to, instead of protector of, the foetus. The risks of abortion stated by healthcare providers included a risk of contracting cancer, risk of infertility, as well as the certainty of mental or psychological ill-health.

Importantly, some participants challenged normative discourses around the immorality and shamefulness of abortion. Thus, one healthcare provider normalised and rationalised womxn's embodiment of happiness which is significant in going against the normative expectation that womxn should not only feel sad and ashamed but should visibly embody this before, during and after having an abortion. Related to this, and equally important, was that some womxn constructed a micro-narrative of 'We were chatting/sharing stories' in which womxn described how their embodied experiences of being together in the waiting room and sharing their stories about abortion led to feeling comfort, solace and strength, and to a normalisation of abortion as part of the everyday. For some womxn, these conversations provided a counter discourse to the awfulisation of abortion, moralisation and pronatalist discourses drawn upon by healthcare providers in their counselling practices. To the extent that womxn also took up these discourses during interviews, experiences of these waiting room conversations may also have enabled womxn to not only begin to view abortion differently, but also may have mitigated against the shame, guilt, and emotional difficulty which is produced by dominant constructions of abortion (Kimport et al. 2011) and which was experienced by some of the womxn in this study. The micro-narrative of 'We were chatting/sharing stories', then, highlights how materiality, in this case referring to embodiment, may shape, in a transformative and subversive way, taken-for-granted discursive and social practices (i.e. not only how abortion is constructed but also the experience of obtaining an abortion).

Womxn's micro-narratives also spoke to how the materialities of their lives shaped their decision to have an abortion. Thus, womxn spoke about how the economic realities of their lives (such as being the sole economic provider and being

unable to stretch already strained economic resources, or needing to complete their education or be available for an upcoming job, or being unemployed and economically reliant on their mxle partner) necessitated abortion, even in the face of directive counselling practices which delegitimised (through the provision of information on foetal development or the use of foetal models and photographs, for example) abortion as an appropriate way to resolve the pregnancy.

An African feminist post-structural/postcolonial approach demands a rethinking of what we understand about gendered and raced experiences. Our two studies highlight the variability and complexity of womxn's experiences of thinking about and procuring abortion in legally liberal and restrictive settings. Contrary to discourses which construct abortion as antithetical and foreign to African cultural systems, our data points to an understanding of how abortion may be an important part of reproductive decision-making in South Africa and Zimbabwe. In our Zimbabwean data, womxn spoke about how cultural expectations (such as not having another child while one child is still breastfeeding) not only complicated pregnancies but also necessitated abortion. Womxn also, however, spoke about how Shona culture stigmatises womxn who have abortions.

Both our studies highlight how Tamale's (2006) concept of mothernormativity as an organising system may operate oppressively to disallow and/or stigmatise abortion. Thus, in both studies, abortion was highly stigmatised, being constructed as abnormal, immoral and shameful. Our South African data particularly shows how mothernormativity may be drawn upon (through foetal personhood construction) during pre-abortion counselling to position womxn as always already mothers who are expected to protect and nurture their child, and therefore as 'bad mothers' in the event of an abortion. The ways in which culture and gender were negotiated by the participants in our two studies implies that continued efforts are needed to re-imagine understandings of womxnhood, racial and cultural identity so as to enable womxn's access to safe abortion (where the concept of safety extends to include freedom from stigma and the distress it causes, and freedom from directive counselling).

The findings of research studies (including our own) on womxn's reasons for abortion necessitate an understanding of abortion as an expression of, and a means of ensuring, womxn's reproductive autonomy. Patriarchal power relations may mean that womxn may not be able to negotiate whether to have sex, whether to use contraception and therefore whether to have children and how many. When womxn become pregnant, (access to) safe abortion becomes an important means of controlling reproduction. An African feminist postcolonial/post-structural approach to the womxn's experiences, as we have discussed here, demands that abortion is understood as an expression of/means for womxn's economic autonomy in a context of patriarchal power relations. Participants' own descriptions of the material (i.e. economic) conditions that occasioned abortion reflect the often intertwined patriarchal and economic oppressions womxn may face in their journey to abortion. Thus, for some of the womxn in our studies, abortion was a means of avoiding economic dependency on their mxle partner. Furthermore, and as Macleod (2002) notes, the intertwined and historical nature of economic and patriarchal oppressions means that womxn are often forced to choose to either continue with the pregnancy (and parent or place for

adoption) or be economically productive and independent but not both. Some of our participants were similarly constrained by these oppressions.

Lastly, the different legal contexts of our two studies and their implication in terms of the data produced, further highlights the patriarchal oppressions womxn face at the level of policy and legislation. In our Zimbabwean data, restrictive laws on abortion meant that womxn had to terminate their pregnancies using unsafe and potentially dangerous methods, a decision which participants framed as a choice between two undesirable options: an unsupportable pregnancy and/or (deepened) poverty on the one hand, and the possibility of serious ill health or death on the other.

Transforming Pre-Abortion Counselling Policy

Through one of our studies which explored womxn's and healthcare providers' experiences of pre-abortion counselling, and a partner study which analysed recordings of the pre-abortion counselling sessions, we were able to make visible the discourses and power relations underpinning the counselling practices as well as the narratives or voiced experiences of womxn who participated in the counselling sessions.

These findings will be used in the training of healthcare providers who provide pre-termination of pregnancy counselling. Based on the above-mentioned research, the first and last author and another co-author initially put together a policy brief which identifies counselling practices which were found in the research to be: harmful to some womxn; emotionally burdensome to some healthcare workers providing the counselling; or useful to both womxn and healthcare providers (Mavuso et al. 2017). In producing the policy brief, we made no assumptions about womxn's essential experiences of counselling or termination of pregnancy, but highlighted, based on the stories produced in the research, how divergent the womxn's experiences of the pregnancy and counselling are and how, given this, flexibility is needed in the counselling encounter. Noting the discourses drawn on by the participants in describing their experiences (e.g. awfulisation of abortion; moralisation of abortion), we recommended counselling processes that serve to undermine these discourses (e.g. normalising abortion as a standard medical procedure). Thus, the methodology that we used in our research allowed us to integrate personal narratives and social dynamics in our recommendations for abortion counselling.

This policy brief has been developed into a step-by-step counselling guide for healthcare workers providing abortion counselling. The intention is that it will be used to train healthcare providers and be implemented to provide abortion counselling that does not produce the very harm that counselling expressly sets out to alleviate or prevent. The result of deploying a critical African feminist narrative-discursive approach within decolonial feminist community psychology praxes is that abortion counselling may be re-imagined in a way that helps both womxn who receive coun-

selling and those who conduct counselling. This is because it is based on an analysis which avoids essentialism and homogenisation, and because it brings the individual and the social together and enables an analysis of the interactions between the two. Although the programme is in its early stages and no evaluation has been conducted, we are confident that the integration of our theoretical approach, our narrative-discursive methodology into the recommendations, guidelines and training material will bear some fruit in terms of providing pre-termination of pregnancy counselling that empowers womxn in their reproductive lives and bodily integrity.

Conclusion

The field of community psychology is in no way homogenous. Indeed, there are community psychology approaches, such as decolonial feminist community psychology, that locate themselves in a context of the social structures in which individuals and communities live and struggle. However, the discipline is still in some ways troubled by approaches to knowledge production that do not take full account of the historical and social processes that produce and shape individuals' and communities' everyday experiences of oppression, nor of the ways in which individuals and communities actively shape historical and social processes and in so doing enact resistances against their myriad and intersecting oppressions (Cruz and Sonn 2015).

Feminist praxis too has been critiqued. Much feminist knowledge production has been historically, and continues to be, founded on homogenising and essentialising assumptions about womxn from/living in the Global South and North (Mekgwe 2008). Using our studies, we showed how a theoretical and methodological synthesis could produce the kind of qualitative analysis that registers similarities and differences in individual experiences. This work highlights experiences in the context of the discursive, social and material power relations that enable and shape those experiences, as well as registering resistances to hegemonic power relations. Thus, we described how we interweaved an African feminist framework with Taylor and Littleton's narrative-discursive approach; the former is oriented towards the ways in which the experiences of womxn from/living in African countries are represented and which understands power as not only relational but dynamic, while the latter makes visible patterns (similarities and differences) in participants' voiced experiences and the social realities in their experiences. This synthesis, we argued, enacts decolonial feminist community psychology principles and therefore enabled, firstly, an understanding of how discourses around gender, sexuality, reproduction and abortion as well as patriarchal and economic power relations shape experiences around abortion, and, secondly, how individuals act upon the conditions of their lives as a result of taking up, negotiating or resisting these discursive, social and material power relations. The result was a socially situated account of the variability and complexity of participants' abortion experiences.

By way of an example of a policy brief and healthcare providers' step-by-step abortion counselling guide, we showed how interventions which are both relevant

and emancipatory are possible when they start from the myriad and complex experiences of individuals and communities. These experiences can only be accessed through theoretical and methodological approaches to knowledge production that are steeped in an understanding of historical, social and discursive processes which shape individuals' lives and are in turn shaped by individuals. Applying this to community psychology will ensure not only that the field maintains a critical, self-reflective outlook but that it also achieves its emancipatory and transformative goals.

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Engaging and Contesting Hegemonic Discourses Through Feminist Participatory Action Research in Peru: Towards a Feminist Decolonial Praxis

Gabriela Távara

This chapter is an adaptation of part of the author's dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of her doctoral degree in Applied Developmental psychology.

Contents

Peru, as many other countries that were once European colonies, is one in which its colonial past is still very present permeating its social fabric and giving place to racialised interactions that marginalise several non-white groups, particularly indigenous Andean people. Moreover, due to the entrenched patriarchal dynamics present in Peruvian society, Andean women are even more vulnerable to this marginalisation, which is evidenced by the ongoing conditions of material poverty many of them continue to face. In this scenario, oftentimes professionals work with Andean women in social and economic projects that seek to promote their development and wellbeing. Although well intentioned, through these projects professionals might be unknowingly reproducing colonial and patriarchal dynamics by not incorporating Andean women's knowledge (s) and by privileging ideas and practices informed by their disciplinary training, which is largely rooted in western knowledge.

This chapter presents some reflections drawn from a Feminist Participatory Action Research (PAR) project in which I worked with a group of Andean women.

G. Távara (✉)
Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, Peru
e-mail: gtavara@pucp.edu.pe

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These women had come together to "organise-as-women" establishing a knitting association that allowed them to face forms of ongoing structural violence that affected their lives and those of their families. Women's organising is usually understood as organising in social and political struggles to achieve social change (Ferree and Tripp 2006). Despite these connotations, and acknowledging the connections between social and political issues and economic conditions, the term "organising-as-women" is used in this chapter to refer to processes of organisation with the view to improving one's conditions of life in an economic reality fraught by poverty. This feminist PAR project provided a space for the participants (and me) to reflect about how this process of organising-as-women was influenced by a variety of ideas and discourses which came into this Andean community introduced by agents and institutions external to it, such as state institutions or non-governmental organisations (NGOs). As will be seen, ideas about organising-as-women were also deeply informed by ideas about development and progress, and ideas about violence against women and how to resist it.

This chapter seeks to contribute to developing a feminist decolonial community psychology by analysing the ways in which ideas and practices informed by western discourses are introduced into Andean communities by professionals and academics such as ourselves. Furthermore, it seeks to illustrate that Andean women are not passive recipients of ideas and practices external to their cultural background, rather they critically engage with these ideas as they transform and contest them. This chapter is situated along a line of scholarly work that challenges hegemonic discourses' positioning of indigenous women and other women of colour as 'Third World Women' (Mohanty 1988; Lugones 2008), that is as those who are ignorant, uneducated, and victims of their circumstances. It challenges this reified image of women from "developing" countries, by foregrounding the experiences and reflections of a group of Andean women who positioned themselves as active constructors of knowledge through a feminist PAR project. Before discussing the project and the learnings from it in detail, I situate Andean women's historical marginalisation, and resistance to it, in the Peruvian context.

Andean Women's Marginalisation and Resistance in Peru's Racial, Class, and Gender Hierarchies

The marginalisation of Andean people is deeply threaded into Peru's social fabric. This marginalisation reflects racism that is rooted in colonialism, but which still persists today, although in slightly different forms. Although colonialism as a political system has ended, we can still see its social and economic effects in Peru (Quijano 2000). Most of those who live in rural areas and are dedicated to agricultural activities earn very little for their work, and are Andean people; while those who hold most positions of economic, social and political power, with some exceptions, are mestizo or white (Thorp and Paredes 2011). However, being white or mestizo does not depend exclusively on phenotypic elements; these ethnic differences

include symbolic and cultural elements as well. In the Peruvian social hierarchy, social and cultural markers are mapped on to race (De la Cadena 2001). Among the most important markers is money and the possession of resources, a marker strongly associated with whiteness and western culture. Therefore, in this racialised social hierarchy elements and characteristics associated with whiteness and western culture are seen as superior, and those associated with indigenous Andean culture are seen as inferior. This interconnection between race and class yields a social stratification that is fluid but still very hierarchical.

Racialised social hierarchies and the dynamics of marginalisation associated with them are not only present in the Peruvian society at large, but can also be observed in Andean communities which also tend to be stratified. In these, some individuals and families hold more economic and/or political power relative to others and have more access to resources. Within this hierarchy, because of how race, class, and gender intertwine, Andean women are usually positioned at the lowest level. They tend to have a subordinate role to men, who are considered as the head of the household, and make the important decisions at the family and community levels (Radcliffe et al. 2003). In some Andean communities, men also exercise great economic control by having more rights to land and other material resources (León 2011). Because Andean men have been assigned more power in their own communities, they also have more access to other circles of power beyond the community, extending into urban areas. With this greater access to urban areas also comes greater possibilities of access to education.

Education is usually associated with greater opportunities for social and economic progress, and this is not an exception in Andean communities. Andean families believe that by providing education for future generations they can put a stop to the marginalisation to which they have historically been subject (Ames 2002). Unfortunately, many times the opportunity for Andean women to complete their basic education is limited. Access to equal education in Peru has improved compared to previous decades (World Bank 2007), during which women living in rural areas had very little, if any, formal schooling. However, inequality in education persists despite there being no gender gap in primary school attendance. Rather, the gender gap appears in secondary school and increases as girls grow into adolescents (Montero 2006). Studies have documented how some Andean families stop sending their daughters to school because they fear they will be sexually abused, and because they expect them to take on more domestic chores (García 2003; Montero 2006). Other studies have shown how pregnancy continues to contribute to adolescent girls dropping out of school (World Bank 2007). As may be observed, Andean women face greater challenges to reach higher levels of schooling which leaves them at a disadvantage compared to other groups in Peruvian society. The challenges to complete their education as well as the racial and patriarchal marginalisation present both in their communities, and in Peruvian society at large, continue to inhibit many Andean women's ability to escape poverty. Official statistics from 2017 show that the highest levels of poverty and extreme poverty in the country are found in rural areas of the Andes (INEI 2018). Moreover, due to the interlocking forms of structural violence explained above, poverty can be even more detrimental to the wellbeing of Andean women.

Andean women's racial and gender marginalisation has also been evidenced in the particular ways they have been affected by socio-historical processes, such as the Peruvian internal armed conflict (1980–2000). This conflict hit hardest the central-southern regions of the Andes, disproportionately affecting Andean communities (CVR 2003). Founded in June 2001, The Commission for Truth and Reconciliation (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación in Spanish) found that three out of every four victims, among the almost 70 thousand victims, were quechua-speaking campesinos [peasants in Spanish] (2003). Moreover, among these victims the majority (80%) were young men between the ages of 20 and 49 (CVR 2003). In this scenario, many surviving Andean women had to find ways to face the new challenges that emerged in the wake of the conflict as they struggled to reconstruct their lives in conditions of dire poverty (Bueno-Hansen 2015). Several women's organisations emerged seeking to face these harsh material conditions. Among the most well-known of these organisations was one in which women organised under their identity as mothers, *Club de Madres* [Mothers' Club in Spanish]. These women advocated for the families who had survived the conflict so that their material needs could be addressed (Bueno-Hansen 2015). Their work has had a significant impact organising women in Mother's Clubs at the district level through many regions. By the time the conflict ended there were approximately 1800 Mother's Clubs in the region of Ayacucho. In the wake of the conflict the women from Mother's Clubs became protagonists of an important social movement who advocated for the guarantee of their families' livelihood (Venturoli 2009).

Women in post-conflict contexts, and in impoverished contexts more broadly, have been organising to improve their conditions of life in several parts of the world, and many times becoming involved in development projects working in collaboration with NGOs and state institutions. Most development projects have focused on improving women's economic development at the micro level through income-generating projects in which women are trained in several skills (see Walsh 2000 in Bosnia; Kalungu-Banda 2004 in Kosovo). Unfortunately, these projects have often overlooked the structural issues, such as the patriarchal and racial dynamics present in the context, the issues that have led to women's marginalisation in the first place. Also, oftentimes these projects are conceived by professionals in institutional contexts far away from the social realities in which they will be implemented. Therefore, they lack a contextualised comprehension of women's experiences vis-a-vis development as well as about the challenges they find as they seek to achieve it.

In order to contribute to a feminist decolonial praxis it is important not only to incorporate indigenous women's understandings about development and in general, about how they want to live, but to place them at the centre. In this way, professionals, such as community psychologists, can contribute to challenging the hegemonic discourses about development and wellbeing that are prevalent in psychology. This feminist PAR project sought to contribute to this line of work by foregrounding Andean women's understandings about development and about how gender dynamics operate in their local context and beyond, either constraining or fostering women's development.

Feminist Participatory Action Research with Andean Women

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a conceptual and methodological approach to research that entails shared decision-making in identifying the research questions, methods, data collection processes, and analysis and interpretation of the findings. These decisions are shared between "outsider" researchers, that is, those typically from outside the community and university-based, and "insider" researchers, that is, those from the community (Fals Borda 2001). For several decades community psychologists have been embracing PAR as their flagship methodology in their work with communities given its participatory and collective methods. However, many times professionals hold an idea of a homogenous and united community, which leads them to overlook how women's experiences and understandings tend to be excluded due to the patriarchal dynamics present in each context (Maguire 1987). Feminist PAR acknowledges these challenges and incorporates critical feminist theories to the approach proposed by PAR. However, without incorporating a decolonial lens, feminist PAR risks further obscuring the diverse experiences women have, particularly *vis-a-vis* the dynamics of racial and class marginalisation and forms of marginalisation tied to colonial histories. Incorporating a decolonial lens entails recognising how historically research (and other academic processes of knowledge construction) have been inextricably tied to the colonial project (Mohanty 1988; Smith 2012). The colonial project has continuously constructed knowledge about the world from a western perspective while silencing indigenous people's stories and experiences and positioning them as objects to be theorised about and known, but never as subjects who are themselves knowers (Smith 2012). By embracing a decolonial and intersectional perspective the feminist PAR project reported on here sought to challenge and reject this view of indigenous women by centring the understandings and experiences of a group of Andean women and facilitating a process through which they could collectively and dialectically engage in processes of knowledge construction.

Context and Participants in the Feminist PAR project The feminist PAR process referred to in this chapter was developed with a group of Andean women from the town of Huancasancos in the department of Ayacucho, Peru. This town is part of a region that was strongly affected by the Peruvian armed conflict (CVR 2003). In Huancasancos, the campesinos are mostly dedicated to cattle rearing and subsistence agriculture. Knitting is also an activity preferred by many campesina women in this town, which has a long tradition of textile production. It is also important to note that due to political and economic changes several professionals working either in state institutions, NGOs, infrastructure projects, or extractive industries, have established in Huancasancos in the last three decades creating many shifts in local dynamics.

The participants in the project were a group of approximately 15–20 Andean women from the town of Huancasancos who had just formed a knitting association. They formed their association with the support of the district municipality and the person in charge of community relationships from the staff of a Peruvian mining

company. This person played a key role by providing support with the logistics and procedures required to formally register the association.[1]

Data Collection and Analysis: Processes of Collective Knowledge Construction The research focus of the feminist PAR was to explore how a newly founded women's association could be a means to confront structural violence, including racism, hetero-patriarchy and economic violence—all forces rooted in colonial histories that continue to marginalise and contribute to Andean women's impoverishment. To this end, I facilitated several participatory workshops during nine months, and these generated the core data for the research. In these workshops we explored topics that the participants and I saw as related to the research focus through the use of creative techniques. These techniques included both creative arts—such as drawings, sculptures, and collages—and embodied practices, such as role play and frozen images (Boal 2013). Both creative arts and embodied practices have contributed importantly to feminist PAR processes with indigenous women (see Lykes and Crosby 2015 in Guatemala).

For the most part of the workshops, creative techniques were used collectively in groups of four or five participants. An iterative process of data analysis was carried out in which participants used these techniques, such as collective drawings, to express their understandings regarding a particular topic. The product of these techniques was then presented to all participants giving place to subsequent group discussions. The process was iterative given that I recorded both the products of these techniques (e.g. drawings, colleges, dramatizations) and the discussions about them, and then, after organising and synthesising this emergent information, I presented it back to the participants in the next session for their further analysis. When the workshops ended, I analysed the transcribed discussions that took place in the workshops through a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2014). I complemented the analysis of the workshop transcriptions with data from individual interviews conducted with some of the workshop participants and with field notes.

Feminist PAR processes might seem to provide an unmediated representation of participants voices. However, as researchers we also play an important role when facilitating these processes given that we partly shape the knowledge that emerges from participants when we interact with them in the workshops and also when we organise and write-up the findings. Thus, rather than presenting these results as purely the participants' understandings or voices it is best to refer to the findings that emerge from feminist PAR processes as dialogic co-constructions (Lykes et al. 2003). Also important is to critically and reflexively interrogate our own positionality vis-a-vis the participants given that it can help us understand how it informed the knowledge constructed through these processes (St. Louis and Barton 2002). I have previously analysed and written about my privileged positionality as a mestiza woman who is part of an upper-middle class in relation to the group of Andean

[1] I previously reflected about the complex power dynamics present in the relationship between the extractive industry company and this group of Andean women (see Távara 2018). However, it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss in detail these complexities.

women I collaborated with (see Távara 2018). I have also reflected about how the power dynamics taking place in our relationship constrained the processes of knowledge construction, and how we sought to counter these dynamics and promote the protagonism of participants.

It is also important to underscore that this chapter presents locally constructed knowledge that responds to the socio-cultural and historic particularities of this Andean community. Thus, even when it might contribute to understanding social processes related to the incorporation of western ideas in other similar Andean and indigenous contexts, this research by no means seeks to portray a homogenised version of Andean women's experiences and organising processes. Furthermore, even when at times this chapter tends to present Andean communities in clearly delimited contexts and in opposition to what is external to them, it is important to acknowledge that these boundaries are flexible, porous and increasingly unclear. It is partly because of the porosity of these limits, that ideas forged elsewhere are increasingly being incorporated, adapted, and transformed within Andean communities. In the following section I present in more detail Andean women's engagement in some of such processes. I finalise this chapter by reflecting on some of the learnings that can be drawn from this feminist PAR project for building a feminist decolonial community psychology.

Andean Women's Engagement With External (Western) Ideas Through Feminist PAR

The Andean women participants in the feminist PAR were interested in forming a women's knitting association. In this process they found themselves relating to ideas about organising-as-women, and to ideas about development and violence against women. Through these findings I seek to present the particular ways in which Andean women were relating to these ideas, some of which they perceived as external to the community.

Organising-As-Women As Foreign to the Community Although organising as collective groups has always been part of this Andean community— which has long been organising for social, economic, and cultural activities—in these groups both men and women have participated, and women have typically had a subordinate role. Organising in women-only activities was foreign to the town and women in the past were mostly dedicated to their household chores (including caring for children) and to their daily campesina activities, which participants described as very isolating (Távara 2018). About this a participant mentioned "*In those times we didn't know about that [in relation to women's associations]. Each woman [was] on their own, in the fields, caring for their animals*".

Significant changes started taking place in the town in the mid 1980's when it was declared a provincial capital. Multiple offices, housing and state institutions

moved to the town as well as NGOs. Consequently, more outside professionals moved into the town giving place to a host of changes that connected Huancasancos to an increasingly globalised world. Among these changes were new ideas about organising-as-women being introduced by professionals working in NGOs or state officials working in different areas and programs of the local, regional, or national government. Participants reported that these professionals had given talks on topics related to gender and offered trainings on economic and productive activities for women (Távara 2018). As one woman stated: *"I went to two or three talks [given by an NGO]. They were about agriculture and about what to feed our children, to overcome malnutrition and progress. They also talked about how we can develop projects in the future, and about farming"*.

The group of women knitters who participated in the feminist PAR had just formed an association with the support of outside professionals. Thus, they were also being influenced by ideas regarding organising-as-women brought from outside the town. Furthermore, participants' discussions evidenced how they saw organising-as-women as connected to ideas about development and progress. One woman mentioned "*Among women, we can call each other. When seeing that someone is not doing well, we can tell her 'come here, let's work together'. This way we will move forward"*. As can be seen participants saw organising and working together as women as a means to promote their development. Participants also saw organising-as-women as connected to violence against women. For them violence against women was an obstacle to women's capacity to organise and, at the same time, through coming together and organising they had greater opportunities to challenge that violence. Regarding this a participant stated: *"There are several homes with family violences. So because we are working in an organised way, now it is diminishing a little [Interviewer: The violence?] Yes, violence is diminishing because we support each other, and also because when women sell what they knit they have their own income"*.

Even when the idea of organising-as-women was strongly perceived as being introduced from the outside, participants' ideas about development and about violence against women and how to resist it, were not exclusively influenced by external ideas. Rather they were informed by participants' own understandings grounded in their particular experiences as Andean women at the interstices of race, gender and class.

Organising-As-Women for Development In this feminist PAR process, Andean women discussed their ideas regarding development. Underlying their descriptions was the assumption that development was partly brought from outside the community, mostly by the state. They saw development reflected in the construction of infrastructure, to improve water and electricity availability, and also in the newly paved roads that connected the town with neighbouring urban centres. They also associated development with businesses, such as town shops and the local market. Nevertheless, included in the participants' conceptions about development was also the improvement of campesino activities; for example, enhancing the processes for cattle rearing and field cultivation.

Knitting, a practice very tied to Andean women's cultural identities, was also encompassed within participants' idea of development. These Andean women felt that by coming together and knitting to earn an income, they could improve their conditions of life, as illustrated in the following quote: *"I've knitted like three or four jumpers, with the purpose of selling them. I'm very motivated to improve (...) Now that we are associated and knit a lot, we can move forward and progress for our families' wellbeing"*. As can be seen, Andean women draw their ideas about development and progress from their own cultural practices and knowledge(s); these influence how they engage capitalist production, as evidenced by their decisions to incorporate local traditions (e.g., knitting) into a market economy (Radcliffe and Laurie 2006).

The participants' perceptions about the community's development also reflected their desire to combine the "traditional" and modern world. They not only saw development and progress as the construction of infrastructure or the creation of businesses, but also as something that should include their campesino activities. This suggests that Andean women see their culture as offering resources that can contribute to progress and to a more modern way of life. In relation to this point, one participant stated: *"With the irrigation technology, we will be able to... wow! grow crops in that big field. That will bring progress. [Development] is also cattle rearing, cows for example. We produce a lot of cheese, we have the best cheese, we will be able to do business with the roads"*. This research illustrated that participants are reluctant to leave their knowledge and practices behind. Rather, they have a desire to generate income from this knowledge and these practices to enable them to survive in the current economy (Ruiz Bravo 2005).

As can be seen, Andean women have much to contribute to notions about development and about how to live a better life in the contemporary moment. However, many times, due to the way ideas about development are defined and introduced into Andean communities their voices are not incorporated, neither prioritised. Rather, Andean women tend to be positioned in unfavourable ways *vis-a-vis* development. Development is a definitional project—usually defined from a place of power and privilege—that fixes an idea of the modern society that all should pursue. The ideas and perspectives of groups identified as "developing" are not included in this framework nor in its policies (Esteva 1985). Consequently, groups such as Andean women are defined in relation to this idea of development and so are positioned as underdeveloped and not-modern. In our work with communities, as outside professionals, we might be unknowingly promoting this message as well by not incorporating Andean women's knowledge(s) and ideas, and by focusing on what needs to change in them, the "underdeveloped" subjects. Therefore, we need to shift our focus to what needs to change, not in Andean women, but in the social structures that are marginalising them. In this challenge towards social transformation Andean women have much to contribute.

Andean Women's Racialised Experiences of Violence Against Women and Their Resistance to It Violence against women is a social problem that has enormously damaging effects on the lives of women all over the world. However, the

particular shape this violence takes and how it is experienced by women can vary significantly depending on their position at the intersection of race, class, level of education, among others. Seeking to incorporate a feminist decolonial lens, that places the diverse experiences of marginalised women at the forefront, the feminist PAR project referred to sought to analyse and highlight the particularities of Andean women's experiences regarding violence against women as well as their understandings about how to resist it.

For the Andean women who participated in the research, violence against women—particularly intimate partner violence—was an ever-present experience that permeated several areas of their lives. They spoke about many forms of abuse that women in the town experience at the hands of their husbands and expressed that although forms of physical violence had decreased in the recent years, forms of psychological abuse were still present. They indicated that some men treated their wives with disdain, yelling at them and bossing them around. Men were described as domineering, and their economic control was described as particularly harmful for Andean women. About this control, one participant stated: *"Sometimes unemployed women do not have an income (...) So because of this women are underestimated. Their husbands tell them 'I have you, I feed you, I dress you'"*. Participants explained how some men do not allow their wives to work outside the home or to have their own income. Thus, most (if not all) domestic chores, including child-rearing, fall onto women.

Participants described rearing of children as a particularly limiting activity, one that leaves Andean women with no time to do anything other than caring for their offspring. Women mentioned that children "cut off their hands", expressing how their hands no longer belong to them; they were just for their family and children. Furthermore, experiences of motherhood and becoming pregnant were described by the participants as something that interrupts life plans of many young townswomen. They explained how many young girls become pregnant while they are still in high school and most of them drop out. In the words of a participant: "*So, when we are studying, sometimes you end up getting pregnant. So men… well, we women are screwed, right? You have to care for your child.*" Their description suggests that they perceived motherhood as being out of women's control.

Andean women's descriptions of being pushed towards domestic life and not having control over their pregnancy and motherhood reveal how control over women's reproductive life contributes to their being controlled economically (Radcliffe 2015). Moreover, this control is experienced at a corporeal level. Women experience neither their hands or womb belonging to them. Through this symbolism these Andean women conveyed a lack of control over both their own productive labour (their hands) and their reproductive labour (womb); productive (income-generating) labour is limited by reproduction. Therefore, because of patriarchal ideologies enrooted in Andean communities, women's self-fulfilment becomes subordinated to the fate of their children or spouses (Velázquez 2007). In this scenario, the importance women place on using their hands for knitting acquires additional relevance: it is a way of reclaiming the use of their hands for a task they have decided upon so as to improve their own future and that of their families. In

this way women take control over their productive labour in the service of the children they have produced, but on their own terms (Távara 2018).

In order to further understand Andean women's experiences of violence it is important to situate their experiences of gender marginalisation in relation to the racial and class dynamics present in their context. Participants described several cases of discrimination against Andean women who were perceived as poorer and as having less education. These women are treated in patronizing ways, as ignorant by others in the town and from outside and are not taken seriously. Women related that they were sometimes called "polleronas", in relation to the name of the traditional Andean woman's skirt called "pollera". In relation to this humiliation a participant said: *"For example, when professionals see a pollerona they don't even answer you well. Or if your child is studying and you go to the school, they'll answer you 'yeah, yeah, yeah' and they send you back."*

The mock and therefore reinscription of the pollera on Andean women's bodies, can be understood not only as a devaluation of their Andean culture, but also of their Andean womanhood. In a way, this reveals the control of Andean women's subjectivity and representation through discourse (Távara 2018). Decolonial feminists have asserted that women from the global south are placed in an essentialised position of subalternity (Mohanty 1991). This phenomenon can also be observed in the Peruvian national imagery wherein a woman in a *"pollera"* with braided hair appears as the most emblematic symbol of a rich cultural legacy on the one hand, and as the last remains of a backward culture on the other (Babb 2017). Thus, the choice of the word *"pollera"* in this case, evidences an expression of racialised gendered violence against Andean women, a form of violence against women that goes beyond the normative western-informed understandings of this social problem.

As can be seen, the distinctive shape violence against Andean women takes, and how they experience it, is strongly informed by the racial and class dynamics present in their context. Similarly, the way Andean women seek to resist this violence is also influenced by contextual factors as well as by the particularities of their ethnic and gender identities. Thus, Andean women's understandings of resistance to violence against women might significantly differ from the ways western-informed feminist have envisioned these struggles.

In the feminist PAR project participants showed an apparent ambivalence towards ideas and actions related to gender inequalities, particularly in relation to gender roles. They emphasised that women can do the same things as men. In relation to this a woman stated: *"Now women and men are equal, women can produce and men can produce as well"*. They expressed that women needed to get out of their homes to organise and work. However, at the same time they expressed that it is women's responsibility to take care of domestic tasks and that it is in their nature to care for children because, as a participant mentioned, *"women are the cornerstone of the home"*. Similarly, even when most participants valued talks and workshops about gender equality given by outside professionals, some of them strongly opposed state institutions and services that protect and promote women's rights because they felt that they were threatening marriages and families. These ambivalent reactions might

give the impression that Andean women's gender identities are still strongly informed by patriarchal ideas. However, this ambivalence might also be revealing that for some Andean women their roles as caregivers and mothers within families and communities are foundational. Possibly because of this Andean women's associations have tended to organise around what would be considered traditional roles, such as motherhood, or in the case of the participants from this feminist PAR, as knitters (Boesten 2010).

Sometimes ideas about womanhood put forward by professionals influenced by western feminist thinking, are not aligned with Andean women's ideas about their gender and ethnic identities, identities they are constantly constructing and negotiating vis-a-vis their social setting. This is not to say that some of the ideas regarding womanhood that Andean women hold do not lead them to engage in oppressive dynamics, but rather to question the extent to which gender identities and roles that at the first glance might seem restraining for those of us trained in western feminist thought, might be source of pride and strength for Andean women. Furthermore, organising under the role of motherhood or knitters might give the impression that women are taking a conservative approach that remains within the permissible margins of power. However, in these groups, women could gain more empowerment and gender awareness, which might be more responsive to their actual experiences and afterwards contribute to unforeseeable shifts that undermine existing patriarchal relationships (Boesten 2010).

Gender emancipation is a culturally grounded process and as such women will traverse different paths, and the process will look different depending on the socio-cultural setting in which they work and live. In Peru, Andean women's identities develop not only in relation to their own local histories, but also because of continuous confrontation with dominant models of femininity and masculinity brought from Lima, and by other people who enter their communities from further afield. Andean women choose to identify with some of these external ideas and appropriate them in their own ways to their local contexts, but they also choose to reject others (Ruiz Bravo 2005).

Concluding Thought and Recommendations

Through this chapter I have discussed how a feminist PAR project allowed a group of Andean women and me to analyse how they were engaging and responding to ideas (about organising-as-women, development, and violence against women) strongly influenced from outside the community. In this way, I have sought to illustrate how working in feminist PAR process with indigenous women can contribute to a decolonial feminist community psychology, specifically in relation to ideas around 'development' and gender.

Feminist PAR can facilitate spaces through which indigenous women's knowledges and understandings about their own experiences of gendered and racialised

marginalisation can emerge. In this way indigenous women position themselves as active constructors of knowledge about their own lives. They reclaim an active subjectivity and resist their continuous subjectification, that is, the process through which others form (and inform) them as subjects (Lugones 2010). In this feminist PAR Andean women were able to reflect, express, and discuss among each other their own experiences and understandings as they advanced in the process of forming a knitting association. They discussed what this association meant to them within the broader context, and how it could contribute to facing their material poverty, an expression of structural violence rooted in their colonial history.

Through feminist PAR processes indigenous women, and other women of colour, can also reflect about how they make meaning and interrogate their own and others' knowledge(s) and assumptions. In this project the collective discussions and the dialectic dynamics facilitated a space in which Andean women situated external ideas brought from outside professionals in conversation with, or contestation of, the more traditional elements of women's work, family, and community lives. In some cases, they incorporated their own cultural practices and identities combining and adapting them to external ideas; in other cases, they cautiously analysed these external ideas and discourses, challenging them and only incorporating what they felt was aligned with their own way of being in the world. What is important, is that through feminist PAR these processes of meaning making carried out by indigenous women can be apprehended in more depth by them and by the professionals who accompany these processes.

Being exposed to Andean women's knowledges and understandings— through processes such as feminist PAR—can facilitate community psychologists' own critical interrogation of the assumptions on which they have built feminist struggles. As academics, we community psychologists are part of system that has carried out the colonial project through history. Therefore, through our work we can easily reproduce forms of epistemic violence by privileging our own western knowledge and by continuing to marginalise the knowledge and understandings of indigenous women. By incorporating a decolonial lens we are able to take a more critical view of the assumptions on which we have built a western-informed feminism.

Incorporating a decolonial feminist lens requires community psychologists to work with indigenous women in a dialogic manner, while recognising the inequitable power circulations in these processes and their roots in colonial histories. By doing this we can better ground projects for Andean women's development and emancipation in their social settings. We can critically interrogate together patriarchal structures in context and arrive at new understandings on these issues and potential ways to address them. These new conceptualisations might be more attuned with Andean women's understandings of their problems and at the same time they could incorporate, in a more critical way, western feminist thought. Working in this way we might have a greater chance of contributing to the feminist decolonial praxis that as community psychologists we seek to embrace.

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The Life History Approach as a Decolonial Feminist Method? Contextualising Intimate Partner Violence in South Africa

Taryn van Niekerk and Floretta Boonzaier

Contents

> I think my story needs to be heard – it is something that I kept almost all my life to myself. I was raised in a happy family; my mother and my father were always there, but things turned out differently after they got divorced. He started drinking a lot and hitting my mother so stuff did change a lot for us – for me, my sister and my brother. (Scott)

A key problem area we engage with in this chapter involves the question of how to humanise research participants (cf. Paris and Winn 2014) whose lives have been fundamentally shaped by the epistemic and material violences of colonialism, slavery and apartheid but who have simultaneously benefitted from patriarchal domination and have perpetrated violence against womxn[1] partners during the course of their lives. We work with an understanding of colonial patriarchy that recognises the long shadow that colonialism casts and how it continues to shape the lives and experiences of the formerly colonised and their descendants, through structural violence and ongoing political, social and economic exclusions and marginalisations (Irwin and Umemoto 2016). In building on a body of work that takes an intersectional

[1]We use the terms 'womxn' and 'mxn' to unsettle the essentialisation of normative notions of gender and sex. Through these terms, we aim to centre the experiences of black womxn and mxn located in the global South, as well as those who identify as transgender, intersex, queer and all womxn and mxn who have found themselves erased from dominant norms of femininity and masculinity

T. van Niekerk (✉) · F. Boonzaier
Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychologies in Africa, Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, South Africa
e-mail: Taryn.vanniekerk@uct.ac.za; Floretta.Boonzaier@uct.ac.za

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perspective on mxn's lives, especially mxn located in the global South, and that acknowledges the ways in which colonialism involved the assertion of not only racist domination but also heterosexist and gendered domination (Boonzaier and van Niekerk 2018; Moolman 2013; Ratele 2013a; Salo 2007) we talk about the violence mxn perpetrate against the womxn in their lives and about their own precarities as mxn located within a colonial hypercapitalist patriarchal context.

In our previous work involving interviews with mxn in domestic violence intervention programmes, we find that mxn bring the contexts of their lives, experiences and histories into view through talking about their participation in the programmes (Boonzaier and van Niekerk 2018). Mxn's understandings of themselves, their violence and their potential for changing consciousness around violence against womxn appear to be shaped by their intersecting identifications with race, class, gender, history and location. We have found that the complex entanglement of their family histories, community norms and social and cultural norms of violence and gender and how this shaped their processes of 'transformation' are centred in their narratives (van Niekerk and Boonzaier 2016). In this chapter we work with the life history approach to foreground the realities of black mxn's lives within a racist patriarchal context, such as South Africa, to illustrate how it brings to view the complex intricacies of privilege and disadvantage that shape their lives. We explore the potential of the life history methodology to exemplify the principles of a decolonial feminist community psychology through mxn's narratives of intimate partner violence (IPV) against womxn. We reflect on the application of this approach with two black mxn participants – Michael (age 46) and Scott (age 33) – recruited, in Cape Town, South Africa from a programme intended to end mxn's violence against intimate partners. Importantly, we explore the utility of the life history approach for working with marginalised mxn given that research has predominantly explained the high levels of violence against womxn in South Africa as a symptom of particular identities and statuses of mxn (i.e. black, poor, low education). In a country so fundamentally marked by racialised inequality, any reading about violence that links it to poverty, low education and unemployment, will uncritically mark black mxn as inherently violent, isolating their very racialised and classed identities as 'risk factors' for violence (Boonzaier 2018). In the South African context, importantly, it is the entanglement of black mxn's histories of racial oppressions and their complicity within hetero-patriarchy that require attention through methodologies, such as, the life history.

In this chapter, we present mxn's narrations of their violence within the broader contexts of their histories and lives, and have placed a focus on the emancipatory and transformative potential of the life history approach and the benefit it might hold for understanding this larger context of marginalised mxn's histories and their lives. We conclude by providing commentary on the potential opportunities offered through a life history approach and what that might mean for a decolonial feminist community psychology as well as its capacity for challenging normalised ways of *doing* and for consciousness-raising.

The Geopolitics of Pro-Feminist Studies on Mxn, Masculinities and IPV

It has been suggested in work by Shefer et al. (2015) as well as our recent work (Boonzaier and van Niekerk 2018) that global understandings of mxn's violence against womxn have been dominated by western and radical feminist discourse. In broad terms, westernised forms of radical feminism position all mxn as equal beneficiaries of the patriarchal gender order, casting all womxn as equally oppressed (Boonzaier and van Niekerk 2018). These patterns similarly carry through into criminal justice work and intervention programmes in South Africa designed for violent mxn which tend to take a reductionist approach to 'treating' mxn through their identities as 'perpetrators' while the complexities of their lives are not foregrounded. For example, we illustrate how this one-dimensional focus on mxn – who racially identify as black – fails to acknowledge how they may have been victims of other forms of violence, such as structural violences and histories of family violence (see Boonzaier and van Niekerk 2018). Research in South Africa also suggests that black mxn who are marginalised in terms of their race and class experience masculinity in a particular way as a result of structural and racial oppressions, ways that western mainstream feminist theories fail to capture (Ratele 2013b). These problematics around the hegemonic production of knowledge from the West speak to the one-directional flow of knowledge that tends to globalise and normalise Euro-American knowledges, "silencing their positionality and location" (Kessi and Boonzaier 2018, p. 304).

Although western feminist perspectives have been central to shaping gender justice discourse globally, these have also been critiqued – for example through black feminist theorising (e.g., Crenshaw 1994, Mohanty 1988) that argues that there is a limited focus on gender or patriarchy, and that western feminist discourses fail to acknowledge how multiple identities, such as race, social class, sexuality, amongst others, intersect (Boonzaier and van Niekerk 2018). It is important to interrogate mxn's violence against partners in the context of gendered power relations, but it is also crucial that attention be paid to how this violence is shaped by intricate systems of domination and histories of ongoing oppression unique to the location under investigation – issues which are central to intersectional feminist as well as decolonial feminist perspectives (Kessi and Boonzaier 2018). The lens of decolonial feminism is useful for the recognition of continuities in the decimation, destruction and dispossession wrought by colonialism and for challenging the ways it manifests in the present through knowledge production, representation, and everyday life in global southern contexts. In avoiding the "'danger' of reproducing Northern authority" (Shefer et al. 2015, p. 169), we turn our attention to the variety of feminist theorisations (e.g., Gqola 2007; Ratele 2013b, 2018) developed in South Africa and on the continent, where we see how the complexities of mxn and womxn's lives in the global South are attended to. It is through this work that complex questions of power, violence and difference can be contextualised and engaged with. Central to

these investigations is the utilisation of methods of knowledge production that allow for the acknowledgement of these complexities. One such method, we argue, is the life history approach.

The Life History Approach as a Decolonial Feminist Method in Community Psychology

Together with scholars such as Kessi and Boonzaier (2018), we imagine a central aspect of the decolonial feminist project for community psychology to engage with the complexities of historical traumas in relation to South Africa's past of colonialism, slavery and apartheid, and how these traumas manifest in the present to shape those previously subjugated. In order to fully grapple with the persistence and high levels of mxn's violence in the context of intimate heterosexual relationships, a focus on transgenerational traumas and the epistemic violences enacted on people is required (ibid.). These relationships can be interrogated through life history methodologies on the lives of black mxn who are descendants of historical oppressions, and who currently find themselves positioned as perpetrators of IPV.

Scholars, such as, Sonn et al. (2013) have noted the potential of storytelling methodologies to encompass a decolonial agenda and to disrupt power relations, particularly in the fields of community and liberation psychology. However, as noted in the introduction to this volume, although there may be a strong commitment amongst some forms of decolonial community psychology to achieve liberation and conscientisation, methodologies that exemplify these visions for social transformation – along the axes of gender *and* race – are less visible (Montero 2009). This has particularly been the case for mainstream forms of community psychology taken up in the South African context where, in spite of its intended alignment with principles of critical psychology, it has tended to depart from its liberatory and critical aims (Seedat et al. 2004). In this chapter we argue that the life history approach offers an opportunity and the potential to take up principles of a decolonial feminist community psychology that aims to interrogate complex systems of power and histories through the lens of gender, race, class and location. Through its holistic approach, this methodology places a focus on personal narratives within their wider socio-cultural, historical and material contexts, and places emphasis on the social dynamics of power, oppression and resistance relayed in these narratives (Atkinson 2012). The act of telling a life story additionally provides the tools for those who have been historically oppressed to offer personal narratives that work to bring 'everyday' forms of racial and structural oppressions to the surface, as illustrated through Chaudhry's (2016) study that employs an intersectional life history methodology to gain insights into the structural violences encountered in the lives and histories of Pakistani Christians. In this way, storytelling might be conceived of as a socially transformative praxis in its potential to disrupt power relations and 'unsilence' those historically and currently subjugated (Chaudhry 2016; Sonn et al.

2013). We ask how life histories might elicit transformative praxes, in this chapter, specifically amongst mxn who are in the process of ending their violence against womxn, and who may continue to be marginalised through their racial and class identities but in powerful positions relative to their subjectivities as heterosexual mxn. We additionally show how stories of historical traumas and structural violences emerge through mxn's life history narratives (see Chaudhry 2016), allowing those who have been silenced to represent their lives and experiences on their own terms, which aligns with ideas around decolonising the research endeavour.

It is in the context of Michael and Scott's life histories that we argue for the potential of a life history approach to espouse the principles of a decolonial feminist community psychology, especially in its potential to exemplify transformative praxes, to make historical traumas and violences visible, and to conscientise mxn who aim to end their violence. The mxn provide a wide angle reading of their lives and histories, bringing them (and us) to the current moment in which they are positioned as perpetrator in an intimate partner violence intervention programme.

The Study: Sampling, Data Collection and Analysis

The life history data we use in this chapter emerges from a larger, ongoing study which aims to examine the social and collective features of IPV amongst a range of actors, including partner violent mxn. In addition to being positioned as a study of community norms of gendered violence, this larger study explores how these resources allow individuals to construct meanings around such violence and employs critical qualitative methods and feminist methodologies in the interest of privileging participants' voices.

Here, we draw on life history interviews conducted with two mxn who had been participants in a programme[2] for perpetrators of intimate partner violence. Life history interviews were conducted over two interview sessions. The first interview focused on their lives from childhood to adulthood in a relatively unstructured manner, inviting them to free associate and speak generally about their past and current lives. The second interview focused more firmly on their perpetration of violence against their partner and the specific incident of abuse that resulted in them having been mandated into the programme. As the questions were broadly framed, the mxn had the opportunity to speak about their intimate relationships and perpetration of violence in both interviews, if the moment presented itself. Consistent with narrative approaches to interviewing, we follow the meaning frames of participants as they lead us through their stories. The two interview sessions were scheduled three weeks apart to allow participants time for reflection, but also enough time to reflect on the teachings from their participation in the programme sessions.

[2]The programme adopts a psycho-educational, Duluth-CBT-type intervention model and takes place over a period of 20 sessions. Both voluntary and largely court-mandated mxn received education about domestic violence through this programme.

Aligned with the life history method's positioning within the field of narrative studies (Atkinson 2012), we employed a thematic narrative analysis. We were guided by Riessman's (2008) outline of the method with a focus on 'what' is said by participants, rather than 'how' narratives are relayed, while also placing emphasis on language, power, subjectivity and the co-construction of meaning. We additionally acknowledge that our own reading of the data represents one of many interpretations and is shaped by our own histories, identity markers and institutional affiliations. As black cisgender womxn conducting and engaging with the interview data, we were able to identify with the mxn based on our shared racial identities and upbringings in various Cape Town communities but also through our working-class backgrounds. In decolonising the way we 'do' research, we prioritise mxn's life histories by attempting to keep them intact – as far as that is possible in an academic paper – to ensure that their voices are privileged above ours. Doing so was important especially as the academy continues the epistemic violences of colonisation in the ways in which it retells and packages the stories of the colonised and their descendants (Tuck and Wayne Yang 2014). We present each of the mxn's life stories separately, extracting significant themes that relate to their intersecting identities.

We attempt to understand the complexities behind mxn's narrations about historical traumas of violence, oppressions and the normalisation of violence experienced in their lives, and the functions these narratives may serve. For example, in spaces such as the interview and the intervention programme, these narratives may function to justify their perpetration of partner violence. However, our intention for this chapter is to move beyond the study of how mxn's accounts of their violence minimise and justify their acts towards situating these narratives within the broader historical and social contexts of their lives. As noted here, and in previous work by Boonzaier and van Niekerk (2018), mxn's reflections on their perpetration of violence cannot be imagined outside the historical conditions that fostered various oppressions and structural violences, and the normalisation of violence that oftentimes represent a form of 'protection' and conflict resolution in mxn's homes, families and communities. The life history methodology allowed for a perspective on the complexities behind mxn's perpetration of violence in the context of their home environments, histories and social and cultural contexts.

Precarious Positions and the Lives of Black Mxn: Readings at the Intersection of 'Race', Class and Gender

Michael's Story

Michael is a 47-year-old mxn, living in an area on the northern outskirts of the Cape Town metropole, and married with a daughter of 19 years of age. He holds a bachelor's degree in computer science and is employed in a full-time capacity. As the eldest of three siblings, he grew up in Soweto, Johannesburg in a household run by his mother. He describes his father as absent, having left when he was a young boy.

Although he explains that he is unable to remember much about his parents and their relationship during this time, there appears to be some recollection of their frequent arguments and fights. Michael's childhood was shaped by the responsibilities he was expected to carry out as the eldest son in a household with no father.

> **Michael:** As a child, look I mean being the eldest and I have three siblings, I felt responsible for them most of the time, I mean I could…I could understand that my parents were having issues and at the same time, I had these three innocent people that looked up to me and wanted to play with me. That is all they wanted, just wanted to play with me […] it did not affect me, it is just that it made me more responsible, I think, early on in life, before most people were responsible. So, I already had that knowledge of looking after kids, making sure that they have eaten, making sure that when my mother comes back from work, everything is sorted, I need to go pick them up from crèche. You know, sometimes I would walk with my brother to school when he started school, we were in the same school, and my sister at the same time, so for me it was just taking care of business, that is all it was, nothing else.
>
> **Taryn:** You were an adult figure in the eyes of your siblings …
>
> **Michael:** That is all I was basically, I was like my mother's husband in a sense – I mean that is pretty much how I looked at myself. I mean, my father was not there so I thought, you know what, I am the mxn, so pretty much that is how it was.

Michael narrates about his younger years as a time where he was propelled into the responsibilities of an adult to ensure the care of his younger siblings and to provide the necessary support to his mother as the single-parent and breadwinner. The responsibility and parenting identity taken on by Michael is what some psychologists have called 'parentification' or the 'parentified child' (see Jurkovic 1997), identified by the blurring of boundaries of the parent-child relationship, with the potential in some cases to impact negatively on the child's self-esteem and to compromise their sense of security. Rather than positioning himself as ill-equipped to take on the parentified role, Michael describes this transition from boy-to-mxn as a necessity and in terms of 'responsibility' and 'business' (i.e., "*it is just that it made me more responsible, I think, early on in life, before most people were responsible*" and "*so for me it was just taking care of business*"). He adds that "*I was like my mother's husband in a sense*", having taken on the position of responsibility and paternal care. Although Michael's narrative of responsibility and duty could be read through the lens of 'parentification' as a sign of his maturity at a young age, it could also be read within the context of structural violences enacted on black families and communities. Michael's story about transitioning from the position of 'child' to 'adult' at an early age in apartheid South Africa is part of a larger narrative that characterises the experiences of black working-class people forced to the margins, living lives imposed on them by various structural violences, and forging ways to survive these daily violences. These include scarce employment, poverty, a lack of social support and challenges around providing for families – issues that pervade the lives of those who continue to be marginalised in contemporary South Africa. As Bell (2016) so eloquently put: "[a focus on structural violence] holds the potential of broadening our definition of injury, widening the aperture through which we can examine the effects of colonially produced trauma on individual and community life" (p. 116).

Michael's childhood was additionally shaped by the political and social climate of the time. He vividly described everyday experiences of living through the Soweto Uprising in the 1970s, which is regarded as an important turning point in South African history and which brought about a series of protests through the country's transition from apartheid rule to a democratic one.

> We lived in pretty much a military zone, I mean there were times when the army was just all around us, all the time and you get out and you go to school, "oh there is the army", it is like you know, it was just regular so that is what people do not realise, that we…Soweto, or rather most of Johannesburg, in those troubled places, was actually a military area. The presence of the army was there the whole time […] There is always the presence of the military or some type of force, that is what it was like, you get up, you get out of the house, the army is there, patrolling […] they are checking everything, that was normal, you know, that was. Now you realise, if you think about that, I mean that went on for more than 10 years […] Imagine the type of violent minds that came out of that. You see that is why our country is where we are right now in terms of the level of violence, that is pretty much it. I mean, gangsters were… were grown out of a situation like that, I mean as kids we knew how to cock a gun, a rifle, we knew exactly what type of rifle he was carrying, you know what I am saying? We were like 12, we already knew all of that, the *Kasper* [military vehicle], we knew *Nyala* [military vehicle], we knew a *Apache* helicopter, whatever it was […] Most white conscripts would be placed in Soweto as part of their military training, and a lot of the people we work with now can tell you that they were placed in Soweto and this is how they learned leadership skills. And I am thinking: "but hang on a second, I learned survival skills in the same place".

The picture that Michael attempts to paint in narrating his story above is of the precarity of growing up, as a black boy, in a context of racialised military repression and violence – a context that so fundamentally shaped every aspect of his existence. Drawing on narratives of violence, survival and various forms of oppression, he speaks about growing up in this historical context where there was much violence and oppressive policing of black people. Rather than feeling protected by the police, black people in an apartheid state were mistrusting and fearful of the police. At the same time, Michael provides a commentary on different types of masculinity and racialised interpretations of violence. As Tengan (2002, cited in Irwin and Umemoto 2016) argues, racially privileged mxn are quick to point to the violence and hypermasculine practices of mxn on the racialised and classed margins in order for them to position themselves as superior. What Michael is pointing to here are the ways in which mxn like himself had to learn to survive in that context (fostering perhaps a particular kind of masculinity) while the white mxn's violence gave them a skill that was described as something more respectable: "leadership skills". Michael's narrative here hints at how violence is racialised and interpreted differently depending on whether one is black or white.

Narrative continuities that foreground his racial identity emerged from his childhood stories of living in Soweto to his experiences of attending a predominantly white South African university for his tertiary education.

> It was not the best of places, I mean it was still white back then, I mean you struggled as a black person. That was the bottom line, you just struggled. And, not because people are racist, because things had just changed so quickly for all of us. I mean Mandela had just been released, and suddenly we were forced to now be together and not a lot of people understood and traditionally Rhodes University was a white university. That is the bottom

> line and at that time it was still white, so I …you know, you struggle…we struggled a lot to just get by and that…that also makes you grow up quickly, so yes, it was a difficult time.

It was in the context of the historically white university that Michael speaks about the experience of feeling his racial identity and blackness marked, in a similar way in which black South African students continue to feel today (Kessi and Cornell 2015). Michael makes it clear that he wanted to get as far away as possible from the violent and oppressive militarised area he grew up in, when he says earlier in his interview: *"so that is why the first thing I wanted to do when I got out of Soweto is some place free, some place where there is no sign of you know military, whatever, just some place where it is quiet"*. While trying to escape one form of oppression, he found himself trapped in another, being forced to live in a space *for* white people, as he expresses above, "*suddenly we were forced to now be together*". Michael uses the word "struggle" four times in the above extract, stressing the continued structural oppressions, and the daily battles and challenges he experienced as a black working-class mxn attempting to obtain a higher education.

In Michael's reflections on his current location – as a participant in the programme for partner violent mxn – he notes his own perpetration of violence against his partner as part of a larger idea around the normalisation of violence.

> **Michael**: I'm actually quite positive and hopeful about this programme and I actually intend to put it to good use. I'm actually thinking of even starting a blog to actually mention this so that other people can realise that there are ways out there. I mean I grew up in an environment where violence became an acceptable act and before you know it, it's violence all over the place, and this is where we are as a country; we are in this violent situation where people are killing each other, striking each other, doing all sorts of things regularly. But when you look at the cost of the, the source of the problem, it could have been handled differently, and we don't need to wait for, we don't need [Organisation] after the act; it should be something that happens even before people become violent.

From Michael's life story above, it is clear that the meanings he makes of himself currently, as a mxn who had perpetrated violence against his intimate partner, cannot be divorced from the larger story of his life having been shaped by colonial and apartheid patriarchy. In the South African context, importantly, and from Michael's story, it is the entanglement of black mxn's histories of racial oppressions, structural violences and their complicity within hetero-patriarchy that require attention.

Scott's Story

We began this chapter with an extract from Scott's life story and his narration of his history. At the time of our interviews, Scott was 33 years-of-age living in a neighbouring community to Michael's. Having attained an engineering diploma, Scott is employed in a part-time capacity to do manual labour on oil ships. He is married with two young daughters, aged three and four years.

Scott narrated about the early stages of his childhood with fond memories of receiving good care and love from his parents. However, things took a tragic turn in his family, which Scott describes as being brought on by his father's alcoholism and

physical abuse against his mother. The disintegration of Scott's family played itself out in the divorce and relocation of both his parents, leaving his older sister to be the primary caregiver for Scott and his brother – in a similar way to which Michael had to take care of his siblings.

> Basically, we were on our own, my sister was still always taking caring of us. They divorced and my father, he got married to another womxn, and my mother went overseas and got a job as a nurse in London. So basically, she was there for 10 years, but she came to visit us once, twice a year and my sister was taking care of us then. We did not have that structure of mother and father. This all started when I was eight years old and we were depending on our sister and she had to provide for us […] When my mother came back, she started drinking a lot and that is when things went wrong. Most days, I did not sleep at home, I slept by friends and that.

Like Michael, the western, colonial, patriarchal assumption (Oyewumi 2002) of children growing up in a two-parent nuclear family home did not apply to Scott. Although Scott did not articulate the reason for his mother's rapid relocation to London, his narratives express the sense of abandonment of having both parents leave to take on separate lives and the process of dealing with the major financial implications of his parents' alcohol addictions.

> He [Scott's father] got fired from his job because of drinking. He was under the influence of alcohol when he was at work, he got fired, he took all his money. He did not give my mother a cent. He moved out, he married a younger womxn and has two kids now. My mother moved to England and came back. I do not know what happened, she also started drinking and drinking. She lost her job because of drinking.

Scott's childhood hardships appear to form part of a larger narrative about child-headed households where, through financial need, parents or family members are forced to migrate to cities and financial hubs to earn salaries for their families, leaving children under the care of guardians or older siblings, as in the case of Scott's older sister. Beyond the rights of the affected children being compromised in child-headed households, the responsible child would need to attend to domestic chores and earn an income to cover food, clothes and other basics, meaning that oftentimes, they would be unable to attend school, compromising their own educational development to care for their siblings (Mogotlane et al. 2010). Scott's mother returned home when he was 16 years old. She continued to struggle with alcohol abuse which made Scott seek refuge in other people's homes.

> I was sleeping by my friends and I saw violence all the time. They lived like in the ghetto. They did not have what we had: cars, nice house, not a noisy neighbourhood and that kind of stuff.

Scott narrates how his constant attempts to have a sense of belonging and place of safety put him at further risk, in terms of placing him in violent contexts and being exposed to normalised violence during his younger years, which resonates in some ways with Michael's early encounters. Central to his narrative was his attempt to keep track of "*where it went wrong*" for his family. He frequently expressed anger and disbelief at how his family – once described as financially stable, religious, educated and 'respectable' – became a 'broken' family.

> I am angry but I think my whole situation goes around my father and my mother because we were a happy family once and everything we asked for, we got. I do not know where it went wrong because we were also on Sundays, as a family, in church. We got the best school education – my sister is a social worker, my brother finished now – he is an accountant, I got to study fabrication engineering. There was no fighting in our house and drinking and smoking because we knew that it is harmful to our bodies and stuff. My mother is a nurse and she told us the effects that that stuff has on you, but then my father started drinking […] I heard my father was dead, because of all the drinking. I was not even at his funeral because my mother did not let us go to his funeral. So, I decided to live with my grandmother after that, she paid for my studies after school.

After the death of his grandmother with whom he had a close connection, Scott explains that his addiction to alcohol began ("*A few years back, four years ago, my grandmother died, we were close. It is then that I start drinking*"). Narratives around the intergenerational transmission of trauma and family history of substance abuse as a means of problem-solving were central to Scott's life history. Similar to Scott's experience of having an absent father, he too considered himself an absent father especially in the context of his employment which involved working on ships for lengthy periods. Although this form of employment allows him to financially provide for his family, it also supports a culture of drinking, making it even more challenging for Scott to maintain his sobriety which he describes as a constant challenge.

> It's only when I go back to sea that it is difficult, because for that four, five, six months we are on standby that's when they drink a lot on the ships […] You can get everything for free on that ship […] everyone on that ship is drinking […] I don't want to test myself and be on that ship and be around all guys who are drinking because I know I'm going to fail by testing myself. That's why I asked one of my bosses last night whether he can transfer me onto that one Meridian ship because most of the guys don't drink because there are older mxn on that ship. Basically, the guys on that ship that I am currently on are 20, 26, 30, and most of the guys are single.

Scott believes that his alcohol addiction, violence perpetration and employment that keeps him from his family for months impacted negatively on his family, especially on his eldest daughter, who he paraphrases as saying, "*daddy is never at home, he is always with friends, friends, friends and when he goes to work, we only see him after a long time*". Scott's life story followed a cyclical pattern in how narratives of alcoholism, violence, and broken families recurrently featured, in childhood and the contemporary. He expressed much internal conflict with having witnessed his father's abuse against his mother and having started abusing his wife too, while also reflecting on his eldest daughter who is now similarly exposed to Scott's abuse towards his wife.

> Sometimes I cry at night because why, my father he did it to my mother and it does not give me excuse to do it to my own partner, I must know better because I am educated and I know what is right from wrong.
>
> Only thing is now, playing with my kids, spending time with them, try to convince them to see me in another way because they see me now as that monster that was hitting their mother and the older one is the clever one. She sits in front of me, and she will look at me like I am a monster. I know she is a stress freak because every time anyone speaks, or screams in the house, then she starts crying and that psychiatrist, she blames me for all that stuff and I know I am to blame for it. […] That older one always comes bragging at home,

> that this one child in her classroom always talks about her dad as her hero and all this. What has she got to say in the classroom? Her dad is a womxn beater and I do not feel like living like that anymore. I want to make changes in my life.

As noted by Ratele (2018) "a great feat of economically, racially and sexually violent structures is precisely in predisposing its victims to hurt each other. Ironically, the violence of the (formerly) oppressed against each other may sometimes follow the same lines as the violence of the (former) oppressor: the formerly colonised become neo-colonialists, those who were abused become abusers" (p. 96). There are a number of recurring narratives to highlight in Scott's life story; that of the oppressed becoming the oppressor, the abused becoming the abuser. More so, themes of the intergenerational abuse of alcohol and violence as well as his ideas around respectability were central to his story. Scott's disbelief about how his family life took a tragic and unfortunate turn may relate to his understandings around 'class' and the broader ideology of respectability. In describing his home environment as a space unlikely to cultivate violence and alcohol abuse, he says above and in an earlier extract that his family practiced good values, built a financially stable home, and experienced the privileges of advancing him and his siblings' education beyond high school. In contrast, he narrates about violence and other high-risk behaviours as more likely to occur in his friends' communities, which he calls the "ghetto". In South Africa we see the reproduction of stigmatising discourses that represent working-class black masculinities as embodying the "streetwise gangster", as violent, criminal and as dangerous (Haupt 2012, p. 153). Scott appears to have internalised these discourses and relays a sense of disbelief at his current circumstances and how his life did not follow the trajectory of a boy having grown up in a respectable, educated household.

Families who have experienced the upheaval of their lives being disrupted by colonial and apartheid structural violences are often the very ones who, through public and media narratives, end up carrying the stigma of that disruption. These families become marked as 'chaotic', 'alcoholic' and 'violent' – lacking respectability. They carry the shame and stigma of what had been perpetrated against them. Scott is grappling with feelings of shame as he attempts to reflect on what went wrong in his childhood family as well as in his current one. As with Michael' story, Scott's life narrative carries much complexity and shows how the meanings he makes of himself and his family – as a mxn who had perpetrated IPV against his partner – cannot be decontextualised from the larger story of his life, one that has been shaped by colonial and apartheid patriarchy, and structural violence.

Implications and Final Considerations

We have foregrounded mxn's narratives contextualised within their histories and at the intersection of their race, class and gendered identities to better understand how their 'selves' un-folded over time and how multiple identities rather than a singular

subjectivity as perpetrator was foregrounded. Our focus in this chapter counters and problematises scholarship that explain the high levels of gender-based violence in South Africa as a symptom of particular identities and statuses, that is, of black, poor mxn with low education in decontextualised ways. Exploring men's lives in detail, it allows us to challenge and disrupt ideas that stereotypically position black masculinities as inherently violent and shows the various pathways mxn have taken to arrive at their current situations.

In this chapter, we have asked mxn to narrate about their violence within the broader contexts of their histories and lives, and have placed a focus on the emancipatory and transformative potential of the life story interview to exemplify decolonial feminist community psychology praxes. In its potential to espouse decolonial feminist principles, the life story approach provided a space for the mxn's narratives about their vulnerabilities in their younger years to surface, showing how their lives and histories have been shaped by structural violences of colonial racialised and patriarchal arrangements and by apartheid. Their narratives show how racial marginalisation and male privilege are the key organising principles of everyday life in colonial patriarchy (Irwin and Umemoto 2016). As articulated by Irwin and Umemoto (2016), in relation to the position of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander youth: "males are tasked with being protectors and providers while their families were relegated to some of the most precarious positions in the economy and political system" (p. 151). This sentiment is shared through the chapter's findings, which suggests that while colonial patriarchy considers mxn to be in positions of agency, the system sets them up for economic, social and political precarity (ibid.).

In foregrounding mxn's life histories, articulated in their own words, we have also attempted to resist the ways in which academic discourse re-packages and re-colonises the voice of the oppressed to reproduce stories of pain and oppression (Tuck and Wayne Yang 2014). We have attempted to work against having mxn's narratives of pain circulate as "common tropes of dysfunction, abuse and neglect" (ibid, p. 229) marking the oppressed in ways that continue the stigmatisation invented by colonisation. Importantly, we also point to how mxn's narratives about their lives and histories have the potential to establish a renewed consciousness about patriarchy and violence; the mxn's interpretations of past events were brought to the fore to allow taken-for-granted narratives of the past to be disrupted. Mxn's narratives show the potential to bring about conscientisation which illustrate how the life history methodology may serve a practical, transformative function for partner violent mxn. We argue that the life history approach has the potential to mobilise mxn towards greater self-knowledge by building consciousness about how their histories shaped their beliefs and perpetration of violence against partners, and thus, holds the potential to exemplify principles of a decolonial feminist community psychology.

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Envisioning Photovoice as Decolonial Feminist Praxis

Josephine Cornell, Linda Mkhize, and Shose Kessi

Contents

J. Cornell (✉)
Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa

South African Medical Research Council-University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Cape Town, South Africa

Institute for Social & Health Sciences, University of South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa
e-mail: Josephine.cornell@mrc.ac.za

L. Mkhize
Institute for Social & Health Sciences, University of South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa

South African Medical Research Council-University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Cape Town, South Africa
e-mail: mkhizl@unisa.ac.za

S. Kessi
Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa
e-mail: shose.kessi@uct.ac.za

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Introduction

Photovoice is a visual participatory action research methodology (PAR) influenced by feminist theory and Freirian critical consciousness (Foster-Fisherman et al. 2005; Wang 2006), that speaks to some of community psychology's central aims, such as empowerment, liberation and social justice. However, these aims can be ambiguous and legitimize rather than challenge dominant structures (Burton et al. 2012). The participatory aspect of community psychology interventions are often undertheorized and are the point at which these aims are challenged in practice (Cooke and Kothari 2001). We argue that current debates on the decolonisation of psychology (e.g. Adams Gómez Ordóñez et al. 2017) should extend to community psychology to highlight power-relations in participatory endeavours. In this chapter, we reflect on how photovoice research might be practiced within an emerging decolonial feminist community psychology focusing particularly on participants' voices in the analysis and dissemination of academic knowledge.

Background on Photovoice Methodology

Photovoice, developed by Wang and Burris in the 1990s for public health research, has been used within community psychology to explore multiple issues including youth perceptions of safety (Suffla et al. 2015) and violence (Chonody et al. 2013); fatherhood (Helman et al. 2018); and survival after political repression (Lykes et al. 2003).

Photovoice connects with community psychology's stated – but often ignored in practice (see Gokani and Walsh 2017) – goal of social change. Participants produce photographs documenting aspects of their lives (Wang and Burris 1997; Wang 1999), which are then used to engage participants in critical group discussions about the oppressive conditions of their lives and how to enact social change. These photographs are publically exhibited to key stakeholders and the broader community, illuminating participants' experiences and perspectives; presenting opportunities for participants to engage with decision makers (Foster-Fisherman et al. 2005; Wang 2006; Wang and Burris 1997); and sometimes resulting in concrete changes in participants' lives (e.g. see Bishop et al. 2013).

Photovoice thus espouses an emancipatory research paradigm positioning participants as experts of their own lives, agents of change in their communities and co-producers of knowledge in the research endeavour (Wang and Burris 1997). Knowledge production is considered a participatory and collective process that mitigates the epistemic violence of much psychological research. However, participatory research has been criticised for subtly reproducing power relations (Cooke and Kothari 2001) and often participation ceases at the academic dissemination phase. As we will examine below, for photovoice to enable emancipatory praxis we propose situating the methodology within decolonial feminist community psychology,

which may mediate some of the implicitly oppressive tendencies of mainstream community psychology.

Photovoice as Decolonial Feminist Praxis in Community Psychology

Critiques of mainstream community psychology suggest it is largely acritical and at times complicit in upholding systems of oppression (Coimbra et al. 2012). There is some debate as to whether reactionary and apolitical inclinations within the discipline have been increasing over time (see Coimbra et al. 2012) or have been prominent within dominant community psychology since its development in the 1960s (Gokani and Walsh 2017). Regardless, critics emphasise the need for critical community psychologies to explicitly examine:

> the constructed consequence of prolonged colonialist oppression and profound social injustice recently reproduced in recent reactionary, so-called, 'innovations' in mental health social policy and practice in Western Europe which fail to address the most basic social, political and economic issues and, paradoxically, contribute to the creation of oppression, injustice and suffering (Coimbra et al. 2012, p. 138).

Community psychology in South Africa emerged in the 1980's as a critical response to much needed theoretical and methodological expansions within the discipline of psychology (Seedat and Lazarus 2011). Many were questioning the relevance of psychology (Long 2013), a discipline historically implicated in legitimising the oppressive structures of apartheid and colonisation by espousing practices of inferiorisation and control along 'categories' of race, class, and gender (Kessi and Boonzaier 2017). However, current debates on the decolonisation of higher education in South Africa have highlighted the need to revisit issues of relevance and the extent to which psychological research and practice sufficiently consider the particularities of postcolonial contexts (Kessi and Boonzaier 2017). In this regard, PAR methods such as photovoice have much to offer research in community psychology (Foster-Fisherman et al. 2005; Orford 2008). We propose that combining photovoice research with an explicitly decolonial feminist lens is a step towards challenging pathological thinking about colonised peoples and renewing the relevance of psychological research and practice.

Photovoice falls within feminism's theoretical ambit. Developed partly as a feminist approach to PAR (Wang and Burris 1997), photovoice, as Latz (2017) asserts, "is one way to *do* feminism" (p. 59). Photovoice, like feminist theory, is grounded on participants' active involvement in decision-making and the privileging of knowledge gained through lived experience (Wang 1999). However, feminist theories hold different overarching conceptions of participation. Whilst dominant approaches to feminism in community psychology tend towards liberal feminism which focuses on a gender rights discourse, alternative feminisms, such as Marxist feminism, radical feminism or African feminism have anti-capitalist, anti-patriarchal,

anti-racist, and anti-imperialist agendas (Kiguwa 2004). We see a decolonial feminist praxis as drawing on these different approaches and addressing the multiple and intersecting workings of power at local and global levels. A decolonial feminist framework is not only rooted in a historical understanding of the effects of colonial power in contemporary society, but also centres the lived experiences of womxn[1] in their interconnectedness with others and with the institutions and structures of society, as well as the experiences of all those (womxn and mxn) who have been historically marginalised and oppressed. The 'decolonial turn' is not a distinct school of thought, but rather various theoretical positions, such as decolonial feminism, that all "share a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem in the modern (as well as postmodern and information) age, and of decolonization or decoloniality as a necessary task that remains unfinished" (Maldonado-Torres 2011, p. 2).

Framing photovoice as decolonial feminist praxis means that its key basis of *participation* must espouse an ongoing commitment to challenging these historical multiple and interconnected forms of power. In practice, this is difficult to achieve and participation has ambiguous effects. Critics of international development work, for example, demonstrate how 'participatory' projects can legitimise processes that maintain uneven power-relations between stakeholders (White 1996). This is reinforced through complex international aid chains (Kelly and Birdsall 2010) and the institutional power to define 'how' participation will occur and what is considered a successful outcome (Seckinelgin 2012). Contradictorily, this instrumental use of participation can further disempower already marginalised groups. Furthermore, without sufficient access to symbolic and political power, participants in a PAR project may inadvertently reproduce notions about themselves and their communities as disempowered (Kessi 2011). Hence, photovoice projects too risk becoming "instrumental practice" (Coemans et al. 2017, p. 18–19) if they fail to create conditions for agency and resistance (Howarth et al. 2014) within oppressive power structures.

When photovoice is "situated at the interface" of critical feminist and decolonial methodologies it can facilitate "participant protagonism towards emancipatory praxis" (Lykes and Scheib 2015, p. 131). A decolonial feminist theoretical framework explicitly challenges the gendered, classist, and racialised power structures embedded in the photovoice participants' lives and promotes socially just praxes (Lykes and Scheib 2015). Thus, it may counter mainstream community psychology's tendency to seek 'social reform' at an individual level rather than transformative changes to oppressive systems (see Gokani and Walsh 2017).

In the photovoice project we describe below, we were concerned with these multiple and intersecting oppressions operating within South African higher education institutions and how photovoice can provide the tools for resistance and change. Specifically, we extend the often ambivalent concept of 'participation' to include the practice of co-authorship between three decolonial feminists from different backgrounds and situated differently in a photovoice project.

[1] We use the term 'womxn' to allow space for individuals who identify as genderfluid, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, or non-binary.

Photovoice, Participant Co-Authorship and Critical Reflexivity

Although photovoice has social justice and empowerment potential, theorists have questioned whether in some applications of this method "much of its critical edge has been diluted" (Lykes and Scheib 2015, p. 140) with the risk of reproducing power inequity under the illusion of participatory action (Bishop et al. 2013). As Latz (2017) highlights, acknowledging the influence of feminist theory on photovoice does not guarantee that all aspects of a project will exemplify feminist principles. Despite photovoice's theoretical emphasis on participation, it is uncommon for participants to be involved in the academic dissemination of the research (Evans-Agnew and Rosemberg 2016; Sitter 2017). Only minimal published research articles have photovoice participants as academic co-authors (e.g. Bishop et al. 2013). Evans-Agnew's and Rosemberg's (2016) critical review of 21 photovoice studies concluded that photovoice project designs vary in how participant voice is advanced, to the extent that participant voice is most absent in the manuscript publication stage. This absence is significant because researchers' power is most often exercised in the publication and dissemination process (Lykes and Scheib 2015). There is a need to reflect more thoroughly on whose voice is served in the academic publication of participants' photo-stories (Evans-Agnew and Rosemberg 2016). Participant co-authorship has many important benefits. It ensures adequate credit is given to those who have contributed to knowledge creation (Castleden et al. 2010); and it reinforces the importance of considering perspectives and forms of knowledge from outside the academy (Flicker and Nixon 2016). For those participants based in academic environments (such as the participants in our study, who were university students), co-authorship may also have direct professional advantages (Flicker and Nixon 2016).

Qualitative research generally, and feminist and decolonial frameworks particularly, have highlighted the importance of considering researchers' reflexivity. This includes rejecting researcher neutrality; reflecting on the researcher's intersecting identities, their intentions, and their ideological assumptions; and considering the power dynamics between researchers and participants (Burr 1995). In photovoice projects, ongoing reflexivity ensures marginalised voices are centred and social change is promoted, but also reveals the author's influence and position. Despite researchers' ultimate control over photovoice project data dissemination and despite the commitment to critical reflexivity in feminist research, researchers rarely reflect on their positionality within PAR publications (Smith et al. 2010). The few photovoice researchers who have published critical reflections provide insight into the varied dynamics within the photovoice process (e.g. Horwitz 2012; Suffla et al. 2015). Suffla et al. (2015), for example, utilise reflexivity to reveal the tensions, power dynamics, and variabilities in their photovoice project on youth perceptions of safety. In community psychologies drawing on critical paradigms, such as decolonial feminist community psychology, changing oppressive and inequitable social arrangements requires a reflexivity comprising both critical reflection and action (Montero 2011; Suffla et al. 2015). As researchers we cannot challenge epistemological violence embedded in research practice without "deep reflection on

the ways the intersectionality of our identities plays out in the framing, design and interpretation of research" (Law 2016, p. 530). For a photovoice project to embody PAR aims, and align with both Freirean theory and decolonial feminism's attention to transformative praxis and challenging power imbalances, researchers should ensure reflective participation throughout the entire photovoice process, including dissemination (Sitter 2017). As Evans-Agnew and Rosemberg (2016) recommend:

> Given the underlying social justice intent of photovoice, and the primacy of privileging participants with the ability to speak and the right to be heard, we are left to question whether future photovoice researchers should rethink the fundamentals of their designs, and engineer distinct strategies to advance participant voice in the analysis and dissemination of photo-texts (p. 1028).

Until now, although participants in Shose and Josie's work have been involved in other forms of dissemination, despite our stated commitment to participatory research none of our academic publications have included participants in co-authorship roles. Shose and Josie have authored several publications on the project's findings (see Cornell and Kessi 2017; Kessi and Cornell 2015), including a publication in which we analysed Linda's photovoice data (see Cornell et al. 2018). We have tried to be sensitive to the participants' voices. We produced the photographs and captions unedited so the participants' voices reach otherwise inaccessible audiences directly. When participants used nudity to resist the University's institutional culture and requested that their photographs were uncensored, we agreed despite discomfort around the naked body in academic publishing. However, we felt a truly decolonial feminist reflection on the photovoice process should include participants' perspectives more directly. In this collaborative chapter, by adopting a decolonial feminist lens, we disrupt this, and reflect critically on the photovoice process from three positionalities within a photovoice project: research participant, student-researcher and academic supervisor. Specifically, we explore the enactment of decolonial feminist mentorship in community psychology through the lens of a photovoice project examining transformation at a South African university. Rather than analysing Linda's photo-stories, as Shose and Josie have done elsewhere, Linda presents, reflects on and contextualises her *own* photo-stories as co-author rather than subject. We argue this also addresses some of the ambiguous effects of participation, being the ability for powerful institutions (such as academia) to define the participatory process outcomes and we propose that this offers a method through which to decolonise how research in the academy is traditionally carried out.

Photovoice Study Background and Context at UCT

Our photovoice project examined black students' experiences of transformation at a historically white South African university, the University of Cape Town (UCT) between 2013 and 2015. After the dismantling of apartheid in 1994, UCT's transformation policy has focused on increasing the diversity of the student population.

However, beyond a more representative student body, transformation has been slow, inadequate and contested. As the RhodesMustFall[2] and FeesMustFall[3] student protests have highlighted, the University's institutional culture privileges whiteness, and many black students and staff experience alienation and exclusion. The photo-stories created by the students in our studies have elucidated, amongst other things, the curriculum's Eurocentric focus; the colonial symbolism around campus; the adherence to rigid gender binaries in the organisation of space; the lack of black academic staff; and the dominance of stigmatising discourses around blackness within the University. The students in the photovoice studies used their photo-stories to resist the coloniality embedded within the University's institutional culture and emphasise the need to decolonise the institution.

Part of this study formed the basis of Josie's Research Psychology Masters' thesis, supervised by Shose. Linda, an undergraduate student in the Department of Psychology at the time, was a participant in the 2015 stage of this project. Since her participation in the project, Linda pursued psychology as a postgraduate and now professionally. As a postgraduate student, Linda conducted her own photovoice project exploring how blackness and gender/sexuality is navigated at a historically white university.

Critical Reflections on Photovoice Across Levels of Participation

It has been a privilege to work together as emerging decolonial feminist community psychologists in this photovoice project about race in the academy. In many ways, the three of us were bound together from the start of the project given our common situatedness in an academic institution. Despite differences in our everyday experiences of UCT, we nevertheless shared an insider perspective on many unspoken and assumed cultural practices occurring within academic institutions. Unlike other community psychological work where researchers enter a community as complete 'outsiders', this project reflects our deep personal and political connection to the space and motivation to change it, as revealed in the following reflections.

As supervisor, lead researcher and initiator of this project, Shose's research practice is located within a historical institutional space in which she has experienced alienation as well as deep connection, therefore presenting both possibilities and limitations for promoting critical consciousness and social justice. Through this project, engaging with race, class, and gender within the university itself went to the core of the necessary epistemic questioning involved in building decolonial feminist scholarship. Before venturing into communities 'out there', it is important to ques-

[2] RhodesMustFall is a student resistance movement initiated in 2015, which calls for the decolonisation of higher education in South Africa.

[3] FeesMustFall is a student resistance movement concerned with increased fees at South African universities which further impede black, poor and/or historically disadvantaged students.

tion our own situatedness and whether our conceptual and methodological practices can contribute to any kind of social justice. This project represented a 'way in' for students at UCT, both as researchers and participants, to reflect on the idea of the university, its role and its functioning through their own experiences of alienation and belonging.

Photovoice as a Participant

Linda's 'way in' was initially as a participant. As she reflects here below:

> *As the researched, I was involved in the photovoice project reflecting on the experiences of black students at UCT. My then lecturer, Shose, who would later informally become a mentor to me, approached me to participate. After a focus group discussion and camera training, I was asked the question "what does it mean to be a black student at UCT?" and used photography to answer this. Responding to this question verbally was straightforward as there was already an ongoing conversation about transformation in the institution. However, visually capturing what it meant to be a black student at UCT was a new and exciting challenge. The challenge came with knowing what my lived experience was in this body but being concerned with how I would meaningfully represent all of this in just a few photographs. I have always known that I am black but it was through my university education and experience that I came to understand what that truly meant on a larger scale. Each of my social science classes contributed differently to my growing critical consciousness, which unquestionably developed alongside this photovoice project. The answer to the aforementioned question included photographs of the base on which the Cecil John Rhodes*[4] *statue once sat (see Fig. 1 and 2).*

This photograph spoke to how fulfilling it was to have been a part of the process of getting the statue removed. Simultaneously, the remaining base was a painful reminder of how institutional racism remained even after the physical statue had been removed.

Additionally, I photographed (see Fig. 3) the doors and names of nine academics in the Mechanical Engineering department which I felt demonstrated the skewed racial and gender representation of academics at UCT.

> *In hindsight, my understanding of blackness was narrow and non-intersectional. I had expected that other participants would have similar experiences to me and that each photo-story would reiterate what others had captured. In my photo-stories, I spoke about and, more importantly, reflected on the range of experiences related to my racial identity. This included my involvement in the #RhodesMustFall movement, expressing my frustration with the lack of black academics in my department/university and speaking about the rude awakening that came with encountering microaggressions inside and outside the lecture halls. There was a moment of reflection of my gendered experience which meant speaking*

[4] Cecil John Rhodes was Prime Minister of the Cape Colony in the late 1800s. He implemented multiple laws forcing black people off their land. He bequeathed the land on the slopes of Devil's Peak (the site of the University's Upper Campus) as the site for UCT and despite being a reviled figure the statue commemorating his memory was displayed at UCT until the RhodesMustFall student protests in 2015 forced its removal.

Figs. 1 and 2 Cecil John Rhodes Is Still Here: The above pictures were taken where the Cecil John Rhodes statue used to sit. Now you will find the stand with the words "C.J waz here!" and a shadow of the statue spray-painted in the same area. The #RhodesMustFall movement was an attempt at racial transformation at UCT. However, even though the physical removal of CJR was a great achievement, there is still a lot of racist actions within the institution. In my particular experience, the drawing of the CJR shadow is representative of a lack of empathy for the struggles of black students at UCT. It is painful to think that someone thought it would be funny or necessary to paint this shadow of CJR after students had articulated their struggles during the RMF movement

Fig. 3 What's in a name? The above pictures are of several names of the lecturers/professors in the Mechanical Engineering department. Here I attempted to show the lack of racial and gender representation within UCT. One of my biggest struggles has been that I seldom see people who look like me at the front of the classroom. The lack of diversity, in terms of race and gender, but also in terms of disability, sexual orientations, religion, etc. is concerning at such a university. A transformed UCT is one where these doors represent all types of social identities

on the lack of women academics and then having to find sisterhood with other black women lecturers and friends to compensate for this. Looking back again, I realise that I did not account for my able-bodied or cisgender privileges, nor mention my sexuality. It was during the photo-sharing portion of this photovoice project that I realised that the experience of being a black student at UCT was tremendously nuanced. One participant revealed the difficulty of being black while transgender and having to plot something as simple as going to the bathroom. Another participant highlighted how coming from a disadvantaged background and surviving at UCT was almost impossible. One other participant pointed out the difficulty of having a mental and/or physical illness and physically navigating and successfully completing one's studies. At this point I fully comprehended the many ways people experience their blackness. I came to better understand that is not only about race but also class, gender, sexual, mental/physical ability amongst other factors.

Photovoice as Student-Researchers

Linda's involvement as a participant deepened her understanding of the multiple raced, classed and gendered experiences of being black. But the development of critical consciousness through the photovoice process, while mostly considered in relation to participants, can also be considered in relation to researchers. Linda's experience as a photovoice participant and working with decolonial feminist researchers, impacted how she conducted her own photovoice project, how she made decisions around her own postgraduate research work and supervision choices, and the decolonial feminist principles she drew on when doing so:

> *I became the researcher the following year as a postgraduate student undertaking my own research project. The lecturer who had headed the photovoice project was one of three black women lecturers in my Psychology Department. When I had to choose a supervisor, although I was unsure about my research topic, I knew I would only be able to work with a black woman. I had decided on this for two reasons. Firstly, these black women offered comfort and camaraderie that was uncommon in my department. Secondly, their work was often based in critical or decolonial scholarship which was the same kind of academic work I intended to pursue. Fortunately, when the time came my project and my supervisor aligned perfectly. My familiarity and understanding of photovoice made it an easy choice for my own project. The research project looked at the experiences of black and queer (i.e. gender and sexuality) students at UCT. It was an unintended extension of the photovoice project in which I had previously participated. This project, however, was intentionally based on my thoughts and experiences of sexuality. At the time, I was navigating my complex identity as a queer and black woman and wondered about other students' experiences. It was only with my supervisor and the empowering process of photovoice that I felt I could be vulnerable yet still secure enough to conduct research rooted in my personhood.*
>
> *When I became the researcher, I wanted to provide a similar space and experience that had previously been offered to me as a participant. As the researcher, I felt it was vital to apply reflexivity as often as I could. I knew I presented as a black, cisgender woman and was typically assumed to be heterosexual. This meant that particular narratives of gender and race were mutual to myself and my participants. However, being heterosexual-assumed meant that participants would not know if I shared experiences related to sexuality with them. I considered how this would affect the process and attempted to make it known during the interview process that I was queer to create a space of support and common understanding as I had witnessed as a participant in my first photovoice project. Despite great efforts, my photovoice project did not make it to the final and, arguably, the most essential part, the exhibition, as UCT encountered its second phase of #FeesMustFall which called for an institution-wide shut down. This meant that I was able to collect these stories for the sake of my project, but I was unable to share them with other students and relevant stakeholders such as UCT. For a long time I meditated on the problematic nature of this. It potentially placed me alongside academics who collect the stories of marginalized people for the sake of scholarly consumption without contributing to broader change. Essentially, it was from a researcher's perspective that I understood the limitations of the photovoice.*

Josie, like Linda, was involved in photovoice as a student-researcher under the supervision of decolonial feminist academics. Unlike Linda, whose research project

was rooted deeply in her personhood, Josie describes herself as a privileged white student whose experience at UCT was characterised by belonging:

> *Shose invited me to complete my dissertation as part of a photovoice research project she had conceptualised around black students' experiences in higher education. Shose made the decision to focus the research project on black students' experiences, based on the importance of centring and highlighting the voices of students who at that stage in 2013 (the project began prior to the RhodesMustFall movement and large scale student resistance initiated and lead by black students) were often silenced in discussions around higher education transformation in South Africa.*

Shose considers that this was vital because:

> *The focus on black students was instrumental in building solidarity amongst individuals with common experiences of alienation yet who were nevertheless situated on varying levels of privilege and disadvantage. As Linda suggested, the consciousness of being black took on many forms that were raced, classed and gendered.*

In her reflection, Josie says:

> *Because I am a white, middle-class, cisgendered, able-bodied postgraduate university student who occupied a privileged and comfortable position within this institution in comparison to many of the participants, there was a risk of this project becoming one in which a white student did research on black students, and spoke on their behalf. PAR methodology was thus important to enable participants to take an active role in the research process which may minimise my role, voice and possible influence (although as discussed in the literature review above, this is not guaranteed).*

For example, the participants were actively involved decision making around the public exhibitions of the photo-stories. The participants gave speeches and shared their experiences at the exhibition opening nights, to an audience including high-ranking members of the university administration. In this way, the participants were able to speak directly to otherwise inaccessible institutional decision makers. Some participants also took ownership over the exhibits and used the photo-stories in their own events which were not part of the photovoice project or initiated by the researchers. Linda's own reflection on the exhibition as a participant, illustrates how the exhibition was able to do this and the benefits that can be gained from the PAR process. As Linda describes:

> *At the end of this photovoice project, there was an exhibition where each participant had a board displaying their consolidated photo-stories. Fellow participants, students, lecturers and university stakeholders such as deans and heads of departments attended. It was both empowering and intimidating to have my work exhibited – especially considering the topic. The planning process was equally empowering because there was freedom in deciding how pictures would be displayed and when/how the event would run. Other participants took the opportunity to speak directly to the audience – an audience they would otherwise have been unable to access. This process allowed me to begin to build relationships with other students and lecturers who I might have never have engaged with had I not been a part of the venture. Years later, these relationships have benefitted me personally and professionally. It was the openness and fluidity of the photovoice process that facilitated the development of such relationships.*

However, although the PAR process created space for participants' active participation and benefitted participants such as Linda, the research space was still influenced by Josie's position as a white researcher:

> *My whiteness may have affected, for example, how comfortably participants spoke about race at UCT in front of me. In her study of staff experiences of transformation at a previously white South African university,* Ismail (2011) *found that, as a fellow black academic, most participants considered her an 'insider' and thus felt comfortable discussing their experiences with her. In some ways, I was an 'insider', doing research on my own university, with fellow students often from the same department. However, the position of 'insider' is not fixed, and what is deemed 'inside' depends on my varied identity positionings (*Trowler 2016*). My whiteness and other normative intersecting identities afforded me substantial privileges within the university's structure compared to many of the participants. Due to this 'insider/outsider' tension and status, I attempted to ensure participants felt comfortable and secure when discussing their (often painful) experiences in front of me. I think part of what helped is that the photovoice process started with focus groups in which, in terms of race, the participants outnumbered me as the white researcher (five in each group). In fact, the participants appeared to be comfortable being critical of white students at UCT even in the focus groups I (a white UCT student) was leading. I think what also helped was that my co-researchers*[5] *were black, and except for some focus groups, they lead many of the interactions with the participants, such as the workshops in which the participants discussed their ideas for their photo-stories. I think having black academics from senior positions discuss these issues with the participants validated their experiences and ensured they felt secure voicing their perspectives. Although, this does not negate the presence of my white body in this space.*

As Josie's supervisor, Shose reflects that:

> *Having a white woman as student-researcher in a predominantly black space was an opportunity to reflect on the role of photovoice in dismantling whiteness and developing the researcher's knowledge and consciousness.*

Josie's involvement in a project as a white student, has affected the development of her own consciousness around her privilege and oppressive behaviours and assumptions. Continued critical reflection, guided by Shose, has been an important part of this ongoing development. As Josie reflects:

> *The university experience of marginalisation and silencing described by the participants as commonplace, was unfamiliar and surprising to me and one in which I was (and in many ways still am) complicit. Furthermore, as a student protected by my whiteness, class and other intersecting privileges I am able to reap the benefits of engaging in decolonial feminist research critiquing my university and whiteness, without taking on as much of the professional risk and emotional labour faced by my supervisor, Shose, (as a black academic) and the participants (as black students) at a university with an institutional culture privileging whiteness. To quote* Law (2016) *from her critical reflection on researching inequality in psychology: "I am privileged to ask, but not to answer. I am privileged to construct the questions, rather than being constrained to respond to them" (p. 530). For these reasons, I think this kind of critical reflection is vital, if my co-authors and the participants are expected to dive into uncomfortable personal reflections then so must I; including examining my complicity in upholding the oppressive and marginalising structures embedded within this and other higher education institutions. The involvement of white academics*

[5] Joy Moodley (as an honours student) and Professor Kopano Ratele of the University of South Africa were involved in various stages of this project.

in the project of decolonisation of higher education requires continued self-reflexivity, acknowledgement of privilege, and the unlearning of exploitative and oppressive knowledges (Heleta 2016)*. As a supervisor and decolonial feminist mentor, Shose has guided me along this process of critical reflection in a sensitive, supportive and insightful manner. This shows that the inclusion of a more representative body of academic staff will bring nuanced and diverse experiences and perspectives to teaching and supervision, to the benefit of all students.*

Photovoice as Supervisor and Mentor

Shose and other decolonial feminist psychologists in the Department, such as Professor Floretta Boonzaier, play an important role in mentoring emerging student-researchers such as Linda and Josie, engaging in decolonial feminist praxis. Particularly, in her facilitator role, Shose was guided by the following considerations:

Linda's and Josie's testimonies above speak to the importance of engaging with the interconnectedness of oppressions in the research project in terms of race, class and gender although it was also important to anticipate and manage how these differences would play out with a minimum of power relations. I saw my role as facilitating that process so that student-participants and student-researchers could participate and find a sense of ownership in particular aspects of the project. Does photovoice enable us to do research that gives voice? What does it mean to 'give voice'? What does it mean when a white woman analyses and presents black students' stories? What does it mean when a black academic analyses and presents black students' stories? What happens to the black students once their stories have been told and shared publicly? I cannot definitively answers these questions, but in the past decade of doing photovoice research, it has become clear to me that managing power dynamics have much to do with the experience, knowledge, and facilitator's sensitivity. The participatory work that I have engaged in over the course of my career, using photovoice in particular, has led me to reflect on my role as supervisor but also the many other elements of academic knowledge production. To this end, in collaboration with my colleague Floretta, we established the Hub for Decolonial Feminist Psychologies in Africa[6] *located in the Department of Psychology at UCT. This Hub emphasises the need for joint supervision of students and participatory ways of teaching and doing research, including publications.*

Concluding Reflections

In this chapter, we critically reflected on the dynamics of a photovoice project from the different positionalities we occupy: as a photovoice project participant turned photovoice researcher; as a white student in a university with an institutional culture of whiteness researching black students' experiences under the supervision of a black academic; and as a black woman academic and decolonial feminist scholar in

[6] https://www.facebook.com/UCTfeministdecolonialpsychology/

a historically white institution. As we have shown, photovoice has much potential for conducting decolonial feminist research in community psychology. As Linda reflects:

> *Out of this entire process, I formed necessary and fruitful relationships. With my supervisor, I co-authored a paper exploring black queer students' alienation in historically white university spaces. One participant produced a documentary on black, queer youth. They later reached out to screen the documentary at my new institution and potentially turn it into a forum for further discussions. With all of this in mind, I am still significantly fond of the photovoice process. It has offered me a delicate balance between decolonial feminist theory and praxis and provided me with mentorship I otherwise might not have had.*

Josie Concludes

> *I think my involvement in this project, while fraught with complex power dynamics and practices (such as academic publishing) which reinscribe my privilege, working with participant co-researchers, such as Linda, and under Shose's decolonial feminist supervision has been crucial in helping me along the ongoing and incomplete process of learning to enact a decolonial feminist praxis in community psychology.*

Shose Reflects

> *This particular project was highly successful in achieving many of the stated aims: it gained visibility at the highest institutional levels; student participants became involved in political mobilisation and action beyond the project's scope, such as RhodesMustFall and FeesMustFall; Linda chose a photovoice project for her honours research; Josie wrote a first class Master's thesis; and, up until today, we are receiving ongoing requests for presentations and dissemination of the photo-stories in various channels within and beyond the university both nationally and internationally. I attribute these successes largely to the ways in which the participatory, creative, affective and visible aspects of photovoice methods enabled participants to feel recognised and empowered within and beyond the project. A decolonial feminist lens enabled us to build openness and trust in which students shared deeply traumatic experiences because of the critical ways in which these experiences were located and understood in a social historical context, and not reduced to personal failure.*
>
> *This particular project significantly impacted my professional advancement at UCT. The stories told by our participants gained the attention of the senior leadership at UCT. In the first presentation of the findings at UCT in 2014, the then vice-chancellor, Dr Max Price unexpectedly attended the seminar. This was followed by multiple presentations and exhibitions in the various UCT faculties. I was subsequently invited to be an advisor on the Special Executive Task Team in the midst of the 2016 student protests. This project along with my other decolonial work has brought much attention in the university on how to embody a decolonial agenda for South African higher education.*

Our project's focus on praxes through creative participatory techniques represented a powerful channel through which student-participants, student-researchers and academic collaborators were able to start building a decolonial feminist agenda for the University.

It is important to acknowledge that the collaborative possibilities in this project were enabled by our proximity to each other as stakeholders of an academic institution. Although power dynamics were present, these were minimal in comparison to projects where the participants are removed from the researchers in terms of geographical location as well as identity considerations. The proximity and relative privilege we share made this co-authorship possible. Indeed, participant co-

authorship may not always be possible or advisable. Some participants may wish to remain anonymous. There is also a risk that the participant co-authors may appear to speak for all participants (Castleden et al. 2010). Some participants may not wish to co-author on academic publications as they are largely inaccessible and are implicated in a history of serving dominant colonial interests. Participants may also feel that there are more valuable uses of their time, and methods of dissemination better suited to their needs (Flicker and Nixon 2016). Despite the value of photovoice and our ability to extend its participatory imperative through the present co-authorship, it remains to be seen whether and how such a practice can be replicated in and with other participant communities.

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Engaging Praxes for Decolonial Feminist Community Psychologies Through Youth-Centred Participatory Film-Making

Nick Malherbe, Shahnaaz Suffla, and Brittany Everitt-Penhale

Contents

Introduction

Coloniality is the long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism. In defining social, intellectual, economic and cultural life (see Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2011), coloniality permeates all aspects of social existence and gives rise to new geocultural identities (see Lugones 2007). Resultantly, articulations and enactments of justice are frequently framed by and made compatible with systems of coloniality. Exemplary in this respect are many enactments of mainstream

N. Malherbe (✉) · S. Suffla · B. Everitt-Penhale
University of South Africa, Institute for Social and Health Sciences, Lenasia, Johannesburg, South Africa

South African Medical Research Council, University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, Tygerberg, Cape Town, South Africa
e-mail: nicholas.malherbe@mrc.ac.za; shahnaaz.suffla@mrc.ac.za

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feminism and 'malestream' community psychology. If we are to "liberate liberation" (Kurtiş and Adams 2015, p.389), the manner by which community interventions and social movements engage with issues of justice must be subject to decolonising praxes that are able to realise a relevant and action-orientated agenda.

In this chapter, we explore a youth-driven participatory film-making initiative which sought to facilitate coming-to-voice (see hooks 1989), interrogate coloniality, and stimulate the politicisation, enabling powers and conscientisation of young people. In this way, the initiative is responsive to the casting of young people within both dominant and resistance narratives as 'incomplete adults' who lack epistemic agency and activist potential (Suffla et al. 2012). Indeed, young people have, across time and space, repeatedly resisted this construction in different ways. In South Africa, for instance, youth were as essential in anti-apartheid activism (e.g., the African National Congress Youth League and the Pan Africanist Youth Congress of Azania), as they are in today's call for the decolonisation of higher education and workers' rights (e.g., the student-led Fallist movement), as well as fighting for public housing and against evictions (e.g., the Youth League of the shack dwellers' movement Abahlali baseMjondolo). In addition to their role in political movements and moments, young people in South Africa have also instituted creative, arts-based modes of resistance, including anti-apartheid art (see Williamson 2010), as well as numerous contemporary arts-based activist efforts that range from graffiti (e.g., Tokolos Stencils), to film (e.g., the Leaving Home documentary series), and to photography and visual art (e.g., iQhiya, a youth-based, black and female arts collective). It is clear that the creative activist energies of young people have been, and continue to be, instrumental in agitating for social and epistemic change processes. Accordingly, we consider how praxes for decolonial feminist community psychologies are able to attend to individual psyches while building and encouraging critical solidarities and resistances between young people and their communities.

In what follows, we discuss decolonisation with regard to feminisms, community psychologies, and feminist community psychologies. Proceeding this, we reflect on issues of youth voice, power and reflexivity within iterations of participatory action research (PAR) that are framed by principles of decolonial feminist community psychologies. Finally, in clarifying and exploring some of the concerns, challenges, uncertainties, regressions and successes inherent to this kind of research, we examine a representation from our community-engaged work that saw young people produce a participatory film on teenage pregnancy.

Interrogating Mainstream Feminisms and Malestream Community Psychologies

In formulating praxes for decolonial feminist community psychologies, we provide necessarily brief definitions of feminism and community psychology. Mekgwe (2008) defines feminism as an activist movement and a body of ideas that underline

the need for transforming society in a manner that ends the marginalisation of women (and, we would add, gender non-conforming people, LGBTQIA+ persons and anyone else living under the heel of patriarchy). Feminism is more than an account of oppression; it provides people with tools for understanding and changing their situation without succumbing to it (Lugones 2010). Community psychology, on the other hand, is an effort to shift psychological services beyond an individual, one-on-one basis, towards the level of community so that psychology is able to serve disenfranchised populations more effectively (Rappaport 1977). However, with mainstream iterations of both feminism and community psychology having roots in coloniality (see Kurtiş and Adams 2015), conceptions of justice within each can, and often do, serve to bolster oppression in numerous ways.

Mainstream Feminisms

Mainstream feminisms, such as those espoused by Katie Roiphe, Camille Paglia and Naomi Wolf (see hooks 1994), usually serve as the public face of feminism. They are typically grounded in struggles pertinent to white, middle-classed, Euro-American, cisgendered, able-bodied women, and overlook intersecting issues of racism, capitalism and geopolitical conflict. In turn, instead of remaking or dismantling oppressive systems, many mainstream feminisms endeavour to gain equality within existing structures of dominance (Grey 2004). Such feminisms narrowly, if it all, consider issues of coloniality, favouring instead biological, stagnant conceptions of identity which ignore gender's status as a colonial Eurocentric capitalist construction (see Lugones 2007). Indeed, there is a neocolonial impulse characterising much mainstream feminism which positions female-bodied persons from the Global South as ignorant and in need of saving by a superiorly conscientised kind of feminist from the Global North (Kurtiş and Adams 2015). Responding to this, many scholars and activists have called for different ways of describing gender liberation, such as African feminism, womanism, postcolonial feminism, decolonial feminism, and Black feminism (see Gqola 2001; Lugones 2010).

If we are to articulate ways of understanding and dismantling the colonial/modern gender system (see Lugones 2007), and other dialectically entangled systems of oppression, such as racial capitalism, we should interrogate how liberation has been conceived, cohered and enacted by mainstream feminism. We must, to this end, remain sceptical of feminisms that are organised and articulated by, for, and in Global North contexts exclusively. However, as Gqola (2001) notes, although a decolonising feminism must resist patriarchy and white, bourgeois imperial feminisms, it must also involve itself in writing new, decolonising futures. These futures need not be grounded in the pragmatic constraints of the present neocolonial moment, but should strive towards liberatory feminist knowledges that are rooted in experience, as well as imagination (Arnfred and Ampofo 2010). By understanding knowledge as 'gendered', such a project may, through a framework of decolonial feminism, begin to materialise proactive, plural and goal-orientated decolonising

progammes through dislodging biological conceptions of identity, while drawing connections between the oppressive logics of capitalist labour, imperialism, sex and the coloniality of power (Lewis 2001; Lugones 2007; 2010).

Malestream Community Psychologies

Like feminism, enactments of social justice in the context of mainstream community psychologies frequently enhance or acclimatise people to, rather than dismantle, coloniality; ultimately defending oppressive social systems (see Fryer and Laing 2008). Mainstream community psychologies of this sort often seek to aggrandise participant voice without facilitating social action (Zavala 2013). At the same time, many mainstream community psychologies do little to embrace feminisms, and have thus been described as "malestream" (Arnfred and Ampofo 2010).

In the US, the 'officiating' of community psychology at the May 1965 *Boston Conference on the Education of Psychologists for Community Mental Health* (at which all but one participant was a white male), held in Swampscott, Massachusetts, sought, largely, to universalise and essentialise notions of community, Truth, subjecthood and justice from a Western, colonially-informed, patriarchal position (see Gokani and Walsh 2017). Yet, despite mainstream iterations of community psychology being furnished with progressive rhetoric, many are enacted in ways that are formulaic, ethnocentric and acritical. Nonetheless, there are critical, systems-focused community psychologies across the world, including Latin America, New Zealand, Australia, Palestine and South Africa (Fryer and Laing 2008). However, as these more critical enactments of community psychology are usually housed in academic or state-funded institutions, they are subject to neocolonial and neoliberal currents of influence. Subsequently, many critical community psychologies based in the Global South are, as much as those located in Global North contexts, at the mercy of coloniality (see Yen 2008).

In attempting to enact a decolonial community psychology, the respective work of Martinican psychiatrist Frantz Fanon (1967) and Spanish-born social psychologist Ignacio Martín-Baró (1994) is instructive. Although psychology in general has historically ignored, and indeed continues to remain inattentive to, a decolonising orientation (Kurtiş and Adams 2015), Fanon's work has been seminal in articulating decolonial psychological practice. Locating colonised peoples' mental distress in the oppressive structures of coloniality, Fanon (1967) urged people to dismantle oppressive social structures, rather than locate the origin of all psychic distress within the self. Similarly, Martín-Baró's (1994) pioneering work on liberation psychology shifted mainstream psychology's preoccupation with the individualised psyche to a focus on developing new horizons, epistemologies and critical praxes with disenfranchised communities. We argue that one way of decolonising community psychology is to work in the tradition of these two thinkers by enabling people's disruption of dominant colonial and imperial narratives, as well as enacting social justice on systemic and material levels within and beyond communities.

Articulating Praxes for Decolonial Feminist Community Psychologies

There are substantial overlaps between decolonising iterations of feminism and community psychology. Both consider the hierarchies of power in knowledge-making and being; employ emancipatory methodologies; advance epistemic justice; focus on researcher reflexivity; enact contextual and historical sensitivity; seek to aggrandise marginalised voices and agentic capacities; centre affect and the politics therein; reject positivism; assume an explicit political orientation; draw links between the structural and experiential, as well as the individual and the group; and strive to harness social action (e.g., Cosgrove and McHugh 2000; Lykes and Coquillon 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2011). All of this is puzzling, as we see the failure of malestream community psychologies – and perhaps also critical community psychologies to some extent – to embrace feminisms (Cosgrove and McHugh 2000), as well as the insensitivity of much mainstream western feminist work towards community processes (Lykes and Coquillon 2007). We thus contend that it is the work of feminist community psychologies to articulate, accentuate and build links between these epistemic and methodological similarities.

In constructing praxes for feminist community psychologies, one should remain aware of the kinds of coloniality to which feminisms, as well as community psychologies, are subject. For example, Arnfred and Ampofo's (2010) remark that donor funding can diminish liberatory feminist programmes by placing them within the limitations of a neoliberal state agenda is applicable to both malestream and critical community psychologies. Decolonial feminist community psychology praxes must therefore strive to be subversive, local and transnational in focus, all while acknowledging their complicated ontological position, wherein they are fundamentally opposed to many of the neoliberal, patriarchal and colonial institutions upon which they rely.

Feminist community psychology praxes must strive to make visible the psychologist and the unequal power dynamics (gendered and otherwise) inherent to community psychology work. Yet, as Cosgrove and McHugh (2000) highlight, feminist interventions have, generally, been better at instituting reflexive engagement than community psychologies. Feminist community psychology praxes require on the part of the psychologist an ongoing process of self-examination/interrogation that may be difficult and painful (see Pillow 2003). For white community psychologists – and especially white male community psychologists – reflexivity, while striving towards decolonisation, means acknowledging the institutionally-embedded self as it exists in the context of exploitative imperialist histories and power structures. Reflexivity is then a core site of feminist decolonial intervention. It is by reflexively deconstructing, unpacking and interrogating (yet never rewriting and/or erasing) the psycho-social self that community psychologists are able to better facilitate the harnessing of participant voice in dismantling and rebuilding inherently unequal configurations of power and knowledge.

Power and Coming-to-Voice

In this section, we argue that a feminist youth-centred PAR is able to foster among young people a combination of enabling power and coming-to-voice. Indeed, if young people are to become change-making agents, that is, if they are to *be political*, they must have access to the kind of speech/voice from which they are structurally denied (see Gordon 2017). Following this, feminisms and/or community psychologies are not inherently liberatory in their ability to facilitate speech/voice. Rather, their emancipatory potential emanates from their ability to facilitate *coming-to-voice*, that is, the process of moving from silent to speaking subjects who are able to use their voices to enact social change (see hooks 1989). Sustainable change is then dependent on how coming-to-voice is harnessed.

Gordon (2017) notes that power is frequently understood solely in relation to its coercive qualities (e.g. state power). However, power can also be conceived as politically enabling. We might think of such power simply as "the ability to make things happen, to make the possible actual" (Gordon 2017, p. 39), which would necessarily include the dismantling and/or reconstitution of colonial epistemes. Building on this, we posit that by utilising coming-to-voice as a means of engaging an enabling conception of power, space is created wherein participants may articulate and enact decolonising feminist futures, which interrogate the coloniality of being and knowing (Walsh 2015).

PAR has been drawn into feminist (e.g. Lykes and Coquillon 2007) and community psychology (e.g. Mitchell and de Lange 2011) engagements. It follows then that a particular kind of PAR represents one way of imagining how praxes marked by decolonial feminist community psychologies are able to facilitate people's enabling power through their coming-to-voice. PAR, in its most general sense, is an empirical methodological approach in which people affected by a problem engage as experts and as co-researchers with this problem in order to address it meaningfully (Rodríguez and Brown 2009). Speaking to the absence of feminisms in traditional enactments of PAR, Lykes and Coquillon (2007) formulate a feminist-infused PAR that repositions gender, race and class so that together researchers and participants can facilitate in their work knowledge construction, education, collaboration, learning, reflection, conscientisation and transformative action. By using feminist PAR to represent meaning in a manner that is sensitive to issues of gender and patriarchy, and to build expansive feminist knowledges, we are able to address questions related to gendered, raced, classed and 'bodied' hierarchies of knowledge creation and dissemination (Reid and Frisby 2007).

There is a lack of feminist PAR work that explicitly engages with young people (see Sánchez 2009 for a notable exception). Working with young people in this manner would serve as a necessary corrective to the kind of PAR that strives to 'give' young people voice so that they are able to exercise power through established communicative channels (that is, normalised patriarchal-colonial avenues of expression), which function to structure participation along lines of liberal respectability (Rodríguez and Brown 2009). Feminism's sensitivity to gendered power dif-

ferentials in particular may then ensure that PAR does not fall back on framing youth engagement and agency within limited, binary and monolithic hermeneutic frameworks. We posit that a youth-centred feminist PAR, conceived as an enactment of decolonial feminist community psychology praxis, positions young people as change agents who, together with researchers, act to engage reflectively with the research process, while striving towards decolonising expressions of politicisation, resistance and radical inclusion.

In what follows, we draw on a specific instance of our community-engaged work that saw young people produce a participatory film on teenage pregnancy. The project sought to aggrandise the voices of young people – which are frequently neglected in both feminist and community psychology engagements – in order to facilitate a politics of recognition that connects young people's experiences to decolonising feminist activism. However, in acknowledging that feminist and decolonial knowledge praxes are not homogenous, we must recognise, reflexively, that confronting coloniality is often contaminated by dominant imperial cultures.

Participatory Film-Making as Community-Engaged, Feminist Methodology

Although enactments of youth-centred participatory film-making vary, they typically see participants work with researchers to develop a film's basic concepts; create its storyboards; plan its shots; and get involved in shooting and screening processes. It is in producing and screening the film that youth participants are able to explore their environments in critical ways, while, it is anticipated, conscientising them towards socially just action (Malherbe and Everitt-Penhale 2017).

Where participatory film-making, like all modes of story-telling, is bound to the confines of its genre, and certainly does not entirely disallow for the reproduction of colonial discourses and tropes, it is through selective, reflective multimodal representations that the method emerges as potentially decolonising, community-engaged and feminist. Indeed, telling stories is an important feature of decolonising consciousness as it allows for the creative exploration of identity, as well as the theorisation of oppression and freedom-spaces beyond the limits of linearity and exactness (Gqola 2010). In short, reflexive and participatory story-telling allows us the possibility to think beyond the logic of coloniality. Through the kinds of story-telling facilitated by participatory film, we may access alternative kinds of meaning to those of the written or spoken languages upon which much social science research typically relies (Niesyto et al. 2003).

There has been considerable work exploring youth-centred participatory film-making in community contexts. *The Odenwald Study*, which took place between 1986 and 1988, saw rural youth between the ages of 15 and 25 create 30 films (Niesyto 1992). These films focused on the tensions of living both in rural and urban areas. Similarly, in one of the largest youth projects to employ participatory film-

making, *Video Culture* explored how young people from around the world (Germany, England, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the US), between the ages of 14 and 19, produced, exchanged and understood various films, all while examining transcultural audio-visual languages (Niesyto et al. 2003). Both *Video Culture* and *The Odenwald Study* are important in showcasing the centring of youth and youth interests within participatory film-making. However, although commendable examples of youth-centred participatory film-making, the projects point to the budget constraints that may face groups from marginalised contexts seeking to undertake similar initiatives.

Poverty in the South African context has formed the focus of a number of youth-centred participatory film-making projects. Mitchell and de Lange (2011), for instance, implemented a community video project entitled *Izindaba Zethu* (isiZulu for "Our Stories") in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, with 19 senior secondary school students and a number of adults. After receiving training in producing films, each of the participants produced a three-minute film. Collectively, the films focused on rape, gender violence and poverty, and were publicly screened in the participants' community. In another example, Moletsane and her colleagues (2009) worked with young women in a rural South African setting to produce a participatory film entitled *It All Began with Poverty*, which examined their experiences of poverty and HIV and AIDS as a means of reflexively envisioning change initiatives. Although these projects harness feminism and community-centredness to varying degrees and in different ways, they were not geared explicitly towards challenging coloniality. Further, they did not comprehensively explore the participatory character of the method, or the ways by which it enabled participants to resist, reinscribe and articulate their experiences of coloniality.

Considering the above, we argue that, with respect to their change-making capacities, participatory film-making projects should connect to broader social justice movements that defend and react to, but also foster the insurgence of, those who exist outside of Euro-modern hegemony (also see Walsh 2015). An important concept in this regard is Fals-Borda's (1985) *comunidades de base* (directly translated from Spanish as *base communities*), which seeks to link PAR to community-driven radical collectives and bottom-up structures that are not tied to state apparatuses. In responding to the relatively few enactments of community psychology that are associated with radical, progressive and/or transformative social movements, praxes defined by decolonial feminist community psychologies are challenged to harness *comunidades de base* towards the construction of spaces wherein critical, actional responses to coloniality are developed, as is the generation of political, transformative, ethical and accountable modes of psychological recovery and healing (Zavala 2013).

Participatory film-making has shown to engender a sense of purpose and critical reflection among young people (Moletsane et al. 2009), while holding the potential to make critical contact with other community members. In this regard, youth voice is brought into the kinds of authoritative discursive spaces typically afforded to adults, thereby disrupting hegemonic power hierarchies. Further, the method allows black people; the economically, historically and socially disenfranchised; as well as feminised, queer and/or disabled bodies to be heard by others, thus facilitating the

expression of voices considered outside of 'zones of being' (see Fanon 1967). Further, participatory film-making methodology is able to centre young people's concerns in a manner that highlights the systemic and the collective rather than the individual (Malherbe and Everitt-Penhale 2017). It should, however, be noted that if the method is to be furnished with such cohesive and decolonising potential, participants must retain relative autonomy from researchers and their agendas (Mitchell and de Lange 2011). It cannot be that 'they' participate in 'our' research (Zavala 2013).

The Engaging Youth Project

In 2011, and again in 2012, a number of schools located in a low-income peri-urban community outside of Cape Town, South Africa, collaborated with what is currently the Research Unit on Men and Masculinities in the Institute for Social and Health Sciences at the University of South Africa, to host a series of Youth Day campaigns, each of which took place over the course of a day and was driven and directed by high school learners. Following learners' recommendations on how such activism was to be expanded, in 2013, a group of young people participated in a Photovoice project that interrogated representations of fathers and fatherhood. The project saw participants discuss their photographs in groups and host a well-attended photographic exhibition in their community (see Helman et al. 2019 for a more detailed description of the Photovoice project). Building on the relationships formed with ten of these school-going learners (who worked with one another to recruit other participants), a year later, the Engaging Youth Project sought to further harness the youth-driven community engagement instituted in the Photovoice project. The final group of 15 participants included eight girls and seven boys between the ages of 14 and 17, all of whom spoke isiXhosa and identified as black South Africans.

For several weeks, participants performed a number of group exercises that assisted them in determining the issue(s) on which the Engaging Youth Project would focus. These included focus group discussions, debates and workshops which centred on the challenges and social issues identified by the young people as important in their lives and communities. Although the entire group participated in these meetings, participants on one occasion met in groups of their identified gender as a means of discussing that which they understood as gender-sensitive matters. Following these sessions, one of the facilitators shared examples of youth-driven change initiatives from around the world in order to demonstrate how media has been used in the service of social action. After several weeks of meetings, participants decided to use film (a natural progression, they argued, from the photographs of the previous year's Photovoice project) to tell a story of teenage pregnancy, an issue that they considered especially pertinent in their community. Participants were provided with cinematic training, which included lessons in storyboarding, script-writing and how to use a video camera. After rehearsing and planning the film, participants worked with a professional filmmaker who, directed by the learners,

shot the film over a single afternoon at the participants' school. For a more in-depth background discussion of the Engaging Youth Project, as well as a critical consideration of its procedure, participatory issues, ethical enactments and limitations, see Malherbe and Everitt-Penhale (2017).

Although the Engaging Youth Project was initially conceived theoretically as aligning with feminist community psychology, upon reflection, it became clear that it had also interacted with decoloniality (and coloniality) in a number of ways. Below, we reflexively consider how the Engaging Youth Project engaged principles of decolonial feminist community psychologies.

Participatory Film-Making and Decolonial Feminist Community Psychologies

If we are to engage the complex manner by which the film component of the Engaging Youth Project attended to principles of decolonial feminist community psychologies, it is, for the sake of clarity, perhaps best to do so at the three distinct stages of film-making described by Fiske (1987). These stages include: the production text (the process of film-making); the primary text (the film product); and the secondary text (audience reactions to the film).

The Production Text

Examining the coming-to-voice process at the production stage of participatory film-making, with the sort of criticality afforded by praxes of decolonial feminist community psychologies, requires that we consider the inherent challenges and unevenness therein. In the Engaging Youth Project, crucial in developing group consciousness around hegemonic arrangements of power – and in creating the conditions for participants to assert their own enabling power – were the numerous discussions held with participants at each stage of production, during which they were encouraged to assess and reassess their script, what they were going to shoot and how they would tell a particular story. Participants were able and encouraged to challenge and support one another, while attempting to work their divergent and complicated viewpoints into a coherent film product.

All the participants were involved in location scouting, shooting, acting, set design and script writing. Several also assisted in recording songs for the film's score and, later, translated the dialogue – spoken in isiXhosa – into English subtitles. Issues around representation were central in these processes. The facilitator (and third author of this chapter) repeatedly encouraged participants to examine the messages around gender and gendered roles that their film would communicate and represent. In their film, participants demonstrated insight in this respect by focusing their story on the lead female character as, they argued, it is the voices of women and girls that are most often silenced. In this way, participatory enactment was not

parochially understood as *who* was represented in the film, but rather *how* such representation was constructed, and for what purposes. Shots and dialogue were also constantly revised during filming and, in this sense, participants demonstrated an awareness of how both the content and the form of their film contributed to the ways by which the topic of the film was engaged.

Throughout the production text, the facilitator (a white, English-speaking female) occupied a somewhat contradictory position. She was not to obscure the coming-to-voice process that was so essential to the project's aims, yet, at the same time, was to guide the film-making process in a manner that encouraged participants' critical attitude towards hegemonic power structures pertaining to the issues considered in the film. This saw the facilitator attempting to promote feminist ideals, including critical engagement with gendered issues in the film, without coercing the participants to align with the kinds of myopic and imperial feminisms that most closely speak to experiences of whiteness (see Grey 2004). As discussed elsewhere (see Malherbe and Everitt-Penhale 2017), the Engaging Youth Project's longitudinal researcher-participant relationship moderated some of the tensions that mark the facilitator's role in participatory research. Indeed, when the facilitator posed challenges to participants – with respect to coloniality and/or patriarchy – she drew on the arguments and critiques that participants themselves had formulated in earlier discussions. In this way, coming-to-voice was engaged in a way that was sensitive, open and alert to the progressions and regressions of individual voices.

Although the longitudinal engagement mitigated slightly the instating of an all-knowing and authoritative facilitator, there remained a power differential predicated on an institutionally-located, gendered, raced and classed facilitator. In this regard, an ontological – and possibly also epistemic – distance reinscribed onto the research space various strands of coloniality. Indeed, the white facilitator assisted participants in a way that she determined decolonising and, perhaps more explicitly, feminist. The manner by which participants represented resistance to oppressive circumstances was then, unwittingly, predicated on terms of engagement constructed by the kinds of power and privilege available to, and afforded by, the facilitator's raced, institutional and classed positionalities. Upon reflection, the coming-to-voice process, while participatory and critical, was also constrained by the very systems of oppression that it intended to challenge. At different moments, the facilitator – although supervised throughout the project by an experienced researcher who attempted to ensure that the project remained as participatory as possible – may have been too far removed from experiences of coloniality to have confronted this sensitively and/or legitimately.

To interrogate how coloniality shaped the facilitation of this project, we attempted to conceptualise and articulate a form of decolonial pedagogy (see Walsh 2015). However, the conversations between participants and facilitators – in an effort to learn, unlearn and relearn particular practices of and complicities in oppression – may not have optimally engaged the power hierarchies, epistemes, positionalities and subjectivities that came to characterise this space. By muting the oppressive currents that operate in all research spaces, coloniality exerts influence over the research process in ways that are subtle and therefore powerful. Making visible in a conversa-

tional and pedagogical context the coloniality, complexities and limitations of coming-to-voice within certain environments may then act to conscientise facilitators and participants. In this way, facilitators are able to embody their inherently contradictory role, while interrogating and challenging any complicity with coloniality.

The Primary Text

The focus of the participants' film – teenage pregnancy in the context of a low-income South African township – spoke to a broader socio-discursive backdrop. In South Africa, legacies of slavery, colonialism and apartheid have rendered the notion of 'family' and 'home' immensely complex sites of generational trauma and oppression (see Gqola 2010). Added to this, the ongoing neoliberal capitalist project undertaken in South Africa ratifies and arbitrarily naturalises the heteropatriarchal nuclear family as the healthiest possible familial arrangement (see Helman et al. 2019).

To offer a brief synopsis of the film, a romantic relationship develops between two high school learners, Asanda and Lucas, neither of whom were sexually active prior to their relationship. After Lucas declares his love for Asanda, the two have unprotected sex, which results in Asanda's pregnancy. Facing rejection from her mother and Lucas upon the discovery of her pregnancy, Asanda turns to her extended family for support. Lucas, following his initial dissociation from Asanda, attempts to reconcile with her. She makes the decision to discontinue her relationship with him and chooses to focus on child-rearing and her schoolwork. Although disappointed by Asanda's decision, Lucas remains part of the child's life.

In approaching the film, which participants titled *My Teenage Years*, as a cultural artefact, we are aware that it subscribes to principles of a decolonial feminist community psychology in a manner that is uneven, contradictory and open to interpretation. While we acknowledge that our reading of the film, like any text, is undoubtedly coloured, shaped, restricted, informed and enabled by our respective identities, we nonetheless offer an interpretation of how the film engaged principles of feminist decolonial community psychologies. Our interpretation serves as one among many modalities for exploring the kinds of conversations for which the film allows (and perhaps also disallows). For us, one of the most striking features of the film is Asanda's agency, which is gradually enhanced through the film's narrative slide into centralising Asanda's story over that of any other character. Examples of such agency are noted throughout the film. During their pre-coital conversation, Asanda does not declare her love for Lucas as explicitly as he does for her; yet, it is Asanda who instructs Lucas to "lock the door". Although it is Asanda that asks Lucas for a condom, she appears excited, rather than resigned, to continue without one. In this way, patriarchal constructions of femininity as fragile, ever-responsible and passive are rejected. Later in the film, Asanda responds to her mother's and Lucas's withdrawal (Lucas by coldly accusing her of sleeping with other men, and her mother by forbidding her to live in the family home), by creating a family that does not subscribe to the nuclear heteropatriarchal ideal. Asanda therefore builds a family in

accordance to her own will, choosing to see Lucas again after 3 months. What emerges as the film's meta-narrative is Asanda's story, and her agency in shaping it.

In constructing their film, participants appear to have remained sensitive to the kinds of systemic oppression that poor, black South Africans face, especially young black women. It is clear that Asanda's story – marked by gendered discrimination and a lack of support – is not anomalous. We are reminded of this through the patriarchal and discriminatory discourses on which Asanda's mother, as well as the respective friendship groups of Lucas and Asanda, draw when learning of Asanda's pregnancy. Further, Asanda herself grew up in a single-mother household, which does not seem to appear in the film as an indictment of this family form, but rather as an allusion to its commonality in post-apartheid white-supremacist, capitalist patriarchal South Africa. Masculinity is also considered in interesting ways in the film. When Lucas's friends discover that he has not yet had sex, he is verbally chastised. As viewers, we are made to feel that such peer pressure drives his decision-making in choices around sex, as well as his initial abandonment of Asanda. Hegemonic masculine performance then comes to harm both Lucas and Asanda, the latter of whom, towards the end of the film, rejects Lucas's pleas to continue their relationship. Participants debated among themselves and the facilitator whether Lucas would come to embody a fathering role or abandon Asanda altogether. It was eventually decided that, in an attempt to demonstrate a positive kind of masculinity (one that popular discourse so often denies to black men), Lucas would – after his initial rejection – engage fathering *outside* of the traditional nuclear family form, in accordance with Asanda's decision.

There were, however, times when we understood the film as slipping into a kind of moralising discourse which obscures instances of systemic oppression. Exemplary here was the repeated emphasis on Asanda and Lucas having to take responsibility for their "mistake". With each party appearing perpetually at fault, structural considerations were dislocated for an individualising hermeneutic. Although it could be argued that, in this way, the film highlights the individualising impulse of dominant neocolonial discourses in South Africa, in our understanding, one of the central ways that young people in the film come to a kind of self-actualisation is through their embrace of individualism.

The film appears to offer visceral and youth-centred insights into gender, poverty, teenage pregnancy and coloniality as they intersect within South Africa's liberal democracy. In considering the above, we might also refer to Fanon's (1967) insistence that psychic distress experienced by colonised subjects can be located in systems of coloniality. In relation to the film's open-ended and unresolved ending, we may also return to Martín-Baró's (1994) liberation psychology, which shifts mainstream psychology's analytical focus on the individualised psyche as the source of malady, to imagining and developing new, liberatory horizons, epistemologies and critical praxes. Perhaps then, new interpretations of the film and suggestions of how it could be used towards emancipatory ends will enable us to embody liberatory imaginings in a manner that brings together the insights of Fanon and Martín-Baró towards praxes marked by decolonial feminist community psychologies.

The Secondary Text

After participants, working with researchers and filmmakers, had produced their film, they began working on setting up a public screening event. This is important for igniting critical dialogue and promoting participants' ownership of their work (Malherbe and Everitt-Penhale 2017). After a few weeks of promoting the event (through word-of-mouth, as well as using posters and flyers that they had designed and disseminated), participants hosted the event at their school. The venue reached maximum capacity and, to promote youth-driven authority that disrupts the adult-centric spatial arrangements on which much community psychology typically relies, participants led, facilitated and organised the screening. They chaired the event, explained to the audience how they understood their film and its social contribution, and performed songs and poetry. In this way, modalities of participatory (un)learning that occurred in the production text informed the constitution of the secondary text.

In planning the event, we met with participants to discuss how to link the secondary text to organised resistance struggles, solidarity formations and potentialities of critical, enabling power – that is, activating Fals-Borda's (1985) *comunidades de base*. With homophobia highlighted by the group in an earlier stage of the project as an issue warranting attention, participants decided that a community activist associated with the human rights organisation Free Gender should open the event. Founded in 2008, Free Gender is a prolific community-based organisation that focuses on the liberation of queer black women living in South Africa, as well as eradicating homophobia and gender-based violence more generally. A spokesperson from the organisation discussed violence faced by queer people living in impoverished communities in South Africa. Here, *comunidades de base* functioned in two ways: firstly, by speaking to homophobic violence within a space that was seemingly focused on the specific issue of teenage pregnancy, connections were made between gender oppression and other violences. This then opened up a discussion on complex forms of structural domination. Secondly, participants and audience members were made aware of how patriarchal systems depicted in the film are being effectively resisted in organised ways. As a method of political conscientisation (infrequently extended to young people), *comunidades de base* was, in this case, able to expose community psychology work to organised feminist politics (and the possibilities therein) which are relatively autonomous from state intervention, thereby conceiving social change beyond community psychology's institutionalised scope.

The audience dialogue that emerged from the screening included numerous divergent interpretations of the film, with ensuing debates around religiosity and teenage pregnancy. It has, however, been retrospectively noted (see Malherbe and Everitt-Penhale 2017) that a more diverse audience may have contributed to especially robust debate and discussion. Looking back, other resistance groups could have been invited to the screening event (or perhaps other screenings) as a means of diversifying the project's political engagement, while ensuring the centrality of youth voice. In this way, we may begin to build on the kind of *comunidades de base* that was established through Free Gender.

We are challenged to enhance our readings of secondary texts within participatory film-making projects. This implies reflexively analysing and documenting how such events are able to serve as sites of conscientisation (especially between young people and elders) and critical dialogue, neither of which is inherently decolonising or feminist in orientation, but are nonetheless crucial steps in engaging such liberatory praxes.

Summary and Concluding Thoughts

Efforts to "liberate liberation" (Kurtiş and Adams 2015, p.389) must consider critically the manner by which justice is conceived, articulated and enacted. In this chapter, we attempt to formulate praxes of decolonial feminist community psychologies that address and dismantle currents of coloniality which operate in much mainstream feminism; speak to the colonial assumptions at play in malestream community psychologies; and highlight, with a focus on decoloniality, the overlapping concerns of feminisms and community psychologies. Community-centred work that engages liberation in this manner is as messy, complex and fraught with contradiction as it is necessary and overdue.

As a means of exploring some of the complexities of PAR, as framed by principles of decolonial feminist psychologies, this chapter draws on a community-engaged project that saw a group of South African school-going learners work with researchers and filmmakers to produce a participatory film on teenage pregnancy. Throughout the film's production, primary and secondary texts, participants engaged in a process of coming-to-voice, where they ignored, subverted, challenged, remade and (in)visiblised hegemonic knowledges and powers in a manner that signified their enabling power.

In our analysis, we consider the participants' attempts to collaboratively engage with and (re)present patriarchy by focusing on teenage pregnancy in both the production and primary texts, while undergoing a kind of conscientisation through *comunidades de base* in the secondary text. As researchers, we engaged with reflexivity – an important feature of decolonising praxes – in two ways: firstly, it was acknowledged throughout that our own interpretation is but one of many on offer, and is undoubtedly constrained and enabled by our particular institutional affiliations and identity markers. Secondly, we acknowledge that throughout the project, the facilitator (that is, this chapter's third author – a white, middle-class, woman), despite developing a long-term relationship with participants, possibly inhibited their coming-to-voice by influencing this process (both wittingly and unwittingly) in ways that (re)inscribed coloniality in certain ways, while, perhaps, also remained inattentive to various subversive and participatory potentialities.

We do not outline comprehensively in this chapter the many ways by which community psychologists can, through PAR, bring their work into the orbit of decolonising feminisms. Nor do we offer an assessment of such praxes – indeed, doing so would negate the complexities and paradoxes inherent to this task. Rather, by exam-

ining three distinct stages of a youth-centred participatory film-making project, we have attempted to demonstrate that approaching principles of decolonial feminist community psychologies through PAR requires a difficult process of conscientisation on the parts of both researchers and participants. Such a process should disable the rigidity of the disciplinary traditions to which we refer in this chapter, and articulate and embody a notion of liberation that extends beyond foreclosed epistemological boundaries (see Gordon 2017). By striving towards emancipation, sustainability, collective healing, solidarity, conscientisation, politicisation and social action within frameworks of decoloniality, work of this nature is able to address, in a relevant and meaningful manner, some of the potentially regressive elements operating in numerous feminisms, community psychologies and feminist community psychologies.

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Australian Muslim Women's Borderlands Identities: A Feminist, Decolonial Approach

Lütfiye Ali

Contents

In her play, *At Her Feet,* Nadia Davids asks: "Why are Muslim women not given the space to air their doubts and beliefs?" (Davids 2006, p. 67). In exploring the intersections of race, ethnicity, politics and religion in the lives of Muslim women in the South African and global context, Davids explains that the gendered challenges faced by women who occupy this subject position are 'subsumed' by racial ones. She explains that challenges arising from their gendered identity are all too often processed in private thoughts or within the boundaries of 'safe relationships'. Davids, similar to feminist Muslim scholars in Canada (Zine 2008) and Australia (Hussein 2010), explains that Muslim women are often rendered invisible or are silenced by voices that speak for 'us', at 'us' and to 'us'. I have also experienced this (self)silencing in my work, exploring the diverse identities of Muslim women in the Australian context.

My (self)silencing became evident to me when, in reflecting on my work and my history, I realised I was not fully attending to the multiple sources of oppression and power informing Muslim women's subjectivities. I was cautious of bringing to light the gendered experiences of oppression in a context where the vilification of

L. Ali (✉)
Digital Ethnography Research Centre RMIT University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
e-mail: Lutfiye.ali@rmit.edu.au

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Muslims is premised on constructing Muslim women as oppressed—I have been and am concerned about my voice being co-opted by and used in the interest of colonial discourses and practices. It was at this point that I realised that in order to speak I had to take a U-turn and, borrowing from Lugones (2003), return to the worlds I have travelled, and continue to travel, to bring to the surface the plural identities I have been navigating (see Baker et al. 2018). These plural identities are born out of the experiences of and resistance to racist and patriarchal oppression–a way of life that is familiar to women of colour (Lugones 2003). This act of reflexivity, which enabled me to consciously engage in and bring to fore the gendered and racialisation of my experiences, plays a crucial role in my commitment to claiming a discursive space for the diverse voices of Muslim women that have been constructed, restricted and/or silenced through the standpoint of those who do not occupy this subject position.

Whilst the developments in the decolonial turn in community psychology offered me epistemological frameworks that enabled me to understand my experiences and the experiences of communities that have been marginalised by racial discourses, I found my voice in the work of black and third world feminists who have been writing and developing epistemologies to attend to the realities and the intersections of power in the lives of women of colour. In this chapter, I put forward a feminist decolonial approach to build and contribute to understandings on identity and power in the decolonial movement in community psychology. I draw on Borderlands theory (Anzaldúa 2007) to demonstrate the diverse and complex ways that power arising from the cornerstones of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity and religion intersect in the lives of 20 Australian Muslim women. I argue that Borderlands theory, with its focus on multiple positionalities and power in light of the social, material and discursive context, enables radical possibilities to go beyond binary thinking which has permeated community psychology to better understand and respond to complexities in the lives of marginalised communities.

Race, Ethnics, Muslims and Muslim Women: Legacies of Colonialism in Australia

Race and racism have been, and continue to be central to the nation building of Australia (Hage 2000; Moreton-Robinson 2015). Australia has a long history of racial discrimination beginning with white colonial ‘settlement’ in the eighteenth century, the Australian Federation in 1901, the Immigration Restriction Act and the implementation of racially discriminatory policies which privileged the ‘white race’, and which constituted what is better known as the ‘White Australia Policy’ (Cleland 2001). This history formed the premise for a white Australia nationalism which centred around Anglo Celtic identity whilst implementing an assimilationist approach to integrating non-Anglo Celtic migrants into Australian society (Hage 2000). In 1973, the White Australia Policy was officially replaced with the national policy of Multiculturalism.

In multicultural Australia, while 'diverse ethnic groups' are supported and have the right to practice their cultural and religious beliefs, legacies of colonialism continue to operate. Colonial discourses of racial privilege operate through processes of Othering and not necessarily through overt forms of rejection and exclusion (Ali and Sonn 2009). The ethnic identity position in Australia embraces migrants and subsequent generations who are of 'different' racial, cultural, and religious backgrounds to Anglo Saxon-Celtic Australians who occupy a privileged, dominant and normative position (Ali and Sonn 2009; Hage 2000). Following the global events of September 11 and the Bali and London bombings (Ho 2007; Yasmeen 2007) at the turn of the twenty-first century, colonial discourses of difference, which emphasised racial difference in terms of ethnicity, began to be mapped onto Muslim identities. While this heightened visibility and discriminatory practices occur as a result of the current global climate; the Othering and the negative portrayal and exclusion of Muslims have a long history in Australia (Brasted 2001), and are deeply seated in historical colonial practices and representations of Muslims (Said 1979).

Contemporary colonial discourses in media and political arenas construct Islam as a religion of terror and violence (Casimiro et al. 2007), a backward belief system that is incompatible with, and that poses a threat to 'Australian values' (Yasmeen 2007). Despite their diversity, and the history of Muslims in Australia, Muslims have been homogenised and stigmatised as the unassimilable Other (Ali and Sonn 2009, 2017; Casimiro, et al. 2007; Yasmeen 2007). Physical expressions of religious identity such as the hijab, beard, or other clothing are associated with signs of religious fundamentalism, radicalism, threat and 'cultural backwardness' (Zine 2006).

Colonial representation of Muslim women in Australia, as elsewhere, are homogenised and reduced to the veil (Akbarzadeh 2010; Hussein 2007, 2010; Yasmeen 2007). Although the veil cannot be read as a singular signifier of Muslim women's identities, it has been understood to signify an authentic Muslim identity, often leaving those who do not veil on the margins of this social category (Akbarzadeh 2010; Hussein 2010). The veil signifies both patriarchal oppression of Islamic tradition whilst being positioned as a powerful signifier of the existence and prevalence of Islam. Additionally, these colonial discourses have been used to express 'concerns' for the status of Muslim women and to form the basis for 'paternalistic and anti-Muslim nationalism' arguments in Australia (Ho 2007, p. 290) and globally (Abu-Lughod 2013; Fernandez 2009).

Voices of Muslim Women in Academic Literature

Given the current socio-historical and political context, scholars have increasingly focused on the experiences and the identities of Muslim women. The scant research within the field of psychology has often treated the identities of Muslim women as fixed, singular and given. There is also a growing body of work exploring the

identities of Muslim women that is largely informed by critical frameworks including discursive, post-colonial studies, post-structural approaches, critical race theory and intersectional feminist theory on the fringes of psychology (for example Lorasdagi 2009; Ozyurt 2013; Skandrani et al. 2012; Traversa 2012) and predominantly in disciplines including sociology and education and interdisciplinary fields such as geography, transnational studies, cultural studies, gender studies and ethnic studies. Past research has explored the identities of Muslim women at the intersections of race, religion and ethnicity in the context of anti-Islamic discourses emerging at the turn of the century (for example, Fábos 2012; Imtoual 2007; Mirza 2013; Ozyurt 2013; Poynting 2009; Zaal et al. 2007). While this body of work acknowledges gender, other scholars have specifically focused on Muslim women's identities at the intersections of gender, ethnicity and religion, (Ahmad 2001; Palmer 2009; Ramji 2007; Traversa 2012), particularly in relation to the veil (for example, Lorasdagi 2009; Mishra and Shirazi 2010; Rangoonwala et al. 2011). This body of research has predominantly focused on the veil and agency of Muslim women who adhere, or explored within an Islamic framework. To a lesser extent, research has also focused on deconstructing Islam, ethnicity, gender and sexuality and other forms of agency and the discursive resources Muslim women draw on to negotiate their identities (Farahani 2007; Khan 2002; Skandrani, et al. 2012). Since 2000, there is an urgency to demonstrate the agency of Muslim women and challenge the hegemonic representations of Muslim women as oppressed (Fadil 2011; Hussein 2007) negating the complexity of ethnicity, culture and identity when gender and sexuality are not attended to or critically deconstructed. Academic research, in an attempt to challenge the 'oppressed Muslim woman' discourse, seems to reinscribe the exotic Muslim woman Other who is over determined by her religious identity.

Decolonial Community Psychology

Research within the field of community psychology in Australia has attended to the challenges faced by communities that have been racially marginalised. Historically, approaches to culture and identity among immigrant communities in Australian community psychology have been influenced by Eurocentric epistemologies (Gridley et al. 2007), such as the concept of a psychological sense of community and acculturation theory, which were further developed and interpreted in the Australian context (Pretty et al. 2007). Such theories developed from a Eurocentric epistemological standpoint are not neutral and objective but rather stem from and privilege the worldview and serve the interest of those to who speak it (Grosfugal 2009). In recent years, there has been a 'decolonial turn', which is marked by the epistemic shift on identity and culture among racially marginalised communities, in the field of community psychology (Reyes Cruz and Sonn 2011) and psychology more broadly (Bhatia 2018; Bhatia and Ram 2001; Okazaki et al. 2008).

Scholars have challenged Eurocentric models by making explicit how race and colonialism operate in epistemologies used to explore the lives of communities that

are racially Othered. Scholars have reconceptualised identity as not fixed nor a singular outcome of mental processes and work has illustrated how identity is informed by social political conditions within which communities negotiate and navigate identities. They have argued for the importance of the social, historical, and political context and discourses to understand the ways culture is negotiated (Bhatia 2007; Bhatia and Ram 2001; Glover et al. 2010; Hodgetts et al. 2010; Okazaki, et al. 2008; Reyes Cruz and Sonn 2011). It has brought to light the ways in which colonial power operates as an unmarked and normative organising system through the concept of whiteness (Ali and Sonn 2009; Green et al. 2007). Post colonial, decolonial, liberation and critical social theory have been used as epistemic frameworks along with methodological approaches to recover and bring to focus the experiences and voices of marginalised communities whilst critically attending to social relations of power in the broader socio-historical and political context (for example Ali and Sonn 2009, 2010; Sonn 2012; Sonn and Lewis 2009). It has contributed to community psychology by highlighting the way the colonial past continues to influence identity and culture (Reyes Cruz and Sonn 2011). Its focus on developing ways of knowing and knowledge that reflect and promote the interests of racially marginalised people has enabled community psychology to work towards its commitment for social justice.

Whilst decolonial approaches in community psychology enabled me to understand and to decolonise my own thinking and bring to consciousness the ways race and racism has been informed and shaped by subjectivity and communities that have been racially marginalised, it does not adequately theorise or address the ways in which gender intersects in these processes. Developments in decolonial thinking in the field of community psychology does not allow for centring the ways Muslim women living in Australia negotiate their identities across intersecting relations of colonial, Islamists and patriarchal power.

Theorising Muslim Women: A Decolonial Feminist Approach

Attention to intersecting multiple power relations have been central to decolonial, postcolonial, black and third world feminist theorising (Alarcon 1990; Anzaldúa 2007; Brah 1996, 2007; Collins 1998, 2000; Crenshaw 1991; hooks 1981, 1984; Lugones 1994, 2003, 2010; Minh-Ha 1992; Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Moreton-Robinson 2015). While the boundaries between these traditions are permeable, contested and were developed in different theoretical traditions, in different contexts and in relation to different colonial and patriarchal experiences and marginalisation by feminist theorists, all attend to complex relations of power in the lives of marginalised women (Mendoza 2015). Both intersectional theory and the decolonial school of thinking has been informed by Borderlands theory developed by Gloria Anzaldúa (2007), a Chicana feminist who is often referred to as a third world or decolonial feminist.

In her book "Borderlands/La Frontera: The new Mestiza" (2007), Anzaldúa navigates complex relations of power arising from the nexus between culture, patriarchy, sexuality, race and colonialism in the lives of women. She draws on her own experiences and social location and revisits not only her own history but the history of her people to understand the ways in which history has shaped the material reality of Chicana women. Central to her theory of identity is social location and an appreciation of historical, social and material processes as fundamental to shaping the subjectivity of people. It is rooted in the broader history of racial and ethnic forms of oppression whilst recognising the importance of challenging the patriarchal forms of oppression in one's culture, in her case, Mexican culture. Anzaldúa challenges Eurocentric epistemological assumptions of 'disembodied objective knowledge'. She theorises from the flesh by privileging her voice, her epistemological position arising from her multiple positionalities. Anzaldúa argues that it is "...only through the body, through the pulling of the flesh, can the human soul be transformed. And for images, words, stories to have this transformative power, they must arise from the human body..." (2007, p. 97). This quote highlights the challenges and importance of developing knowledge that emerges from the worldview of those whom it aims to serve. It calls for the centering of voices, in this case the voices of Muslim women, that have been silenced and subjected to epistemic injustices due to Eurocentric epistemologies that give way and force a "consciousness of duality" (Anzaldúa 2007, p. 59).

Anzaldúa (2007) concept of the Borderlands refers to the physical border between the U.S and Mexico as well as a psychosocial border arising from her multiple positionalities. Borderlands theory captures the complexity of identity making at the borders where binary and mutually exclusive identities meet and intersect. Anzaldúa's theory on Borderlands identity synthesises binary and oppositional social identities. Anzaldúa explains that the Borderlands is the psychic and social terrain of people who, as a result of occupying multiple social spaces, live in between different worlds. Anzaldúa (2007) recognises the self as shaped by discourses and material reality whilst recognising the agency of individuals in everyday life. To do this, Anzaldúa develops her conceptualisation of "a new mestiza consciousness" (2007, p. 99). This new subjectivity is embedded in contradictions and ambiguity and emerges and develops as a result of, and in resistance to binary understandings about identity. The mestiza consciousness operates in the Borderlands, the physical and psychosocial space where contradictions and dichotomous categories meet and blend. Anzaldúa contends that the mestiza consciousness is the result of "Racial, ideological, cultural, and biological cross pollinization" (2007, p. 99). Anzaldúa went on to say: "Because I, a mestiza, continually walk out of one culture into another, because I am in all cultures at the same time..." (2007, p. 99). Her reference and call for the recognition of the new mestiza consciousness calls in to question the functions of boundaries and borders created by western binary thinking that limits multiple forms of identification. In doing so, Anzaldúa also challenges colonial understandings on hierarchal binary thinking that have been used to know the colonised subject (Lugones 2010).

Borderlands theory, with its focus on complex and intersecting relations of power, offers community psychology a framework that enables more meaningful understandings of identity and oppression of marginalised communities. While the decolonial turn in community psychology centres the perspective of those whom it aims to serve and locates this perspective in light of social, historical, discursive and material conditions it does not adequately address multiplicity and tends to privilege race and racism. Borderlands theory enables community psychology to develop meaningful knowledge by attending to multiple subject positions and the complex relations of power that stem from these positions in the lives of marginalised others.

Although Borderlands theory has been developed from the experiences of Chicana women who are racially and ethnically diverse, and arises from a very different socio-historical and political context where Borderlands are not only psychosocial cultural but also physical borders, it can be drawn on to understand the experiences and identities of people who are subjected to living on the margins by dominant discourses. It enabled me to attend to the diverse ways intersecting relations of power inform the subjectivity of Australian Muslim women and situate these intersections in a broader context where colonial power defines racial and cultural difference in hierarchical and binary terms.

Australian Muslim Women's Borderlands Identities

In this section, I apply the work of Anzaldúa to explore complex multiple intersecting relations informing the subjectivity of Australian Muslim women. Twenty Muslim women were interviewed between 2008 and 2011. The women self-identified as being from; Cypriot Turkish, Turkish, Lebanese, Egyptian, Pakistani, Indian, Somali, Ethiopian, Iraqi and Albanian backgrounds. Most of the women were second generation Australians who are defined not only as migrant descendants who were born in Australia, but also migrated to Australia around the preschool age of five. Four of the women migrated to Australia during young adulthood. All the women, irrespective of being migrant or second generation, had a university level education which not only affords them social prestige within ethnic migrant communities but also social capital and mobility (Ahmad 2001). Efforts were made to recruit women who did not wear the veil and also from non-religious spaces, as past research on Muslim women has focused on women who veil and privileged Muslim women's religious identity. Over half of the women were married, four were single, one had a boyfriend and four were divorced. Conversational interviewing was used to explore the women's understandings and experiences. The interviews took place at a location chosen by the women and the duration of the interviews varied between one and three hours.

To foreground the women's negotiations of identity and culture across multiple relations of power the 'Power and Subjectivity' approach developed by Parker (1992) was drawn on. Departing from traditional understandings of truth and knowledge, language is not considered as a mere tool to convey knowledge but

rather recognised as having functional dimensions in that it constructs and mediates reality. Furthermore, the functionality and political significance of discourses is the focus rather than how language is used (Parker 1992). This approach to the analysis of discourse, although arising in response to different hegemonies (Lugones 1994), is consistent with the intersectional feminist approach adopted here, in that the self is viewed as fluid, multiple, contested, and constructed within the context of broader relations of power. A discursive approach frames social identities as social positionalities that are socially constructed, contested, shifting and in negotiation (Brah 1996). This analysis specifically focuses on the ways in which women negotiated their identities across multiple relations of power including religion, gender, sexuality and ethnicity - intersections which have not been adequately explored in past research.

Performing Islam: Constructing Binaries Between Muslim And Non-Muslims

The re-emergence of colonial representations of Muslims at the turn of the century has given way to essentialist and fixed discourses among Muslim communities in an attempt to preserve Islam, relegating the diverse expressions of Muslim identity resulting from different levels of religiosity and cultural variations of Islam as unauthentic (Ahmed 2011; Yasmeen 2008). Islamist discourses, here understood as those which portray Islam as universal and as ahistorical, construct the veil and praying as essential for Muslim identity and as markers of difference (Ahmed 1992; Yeğenoğlu 1998). From the women's narrations, it is evident that these performative dimensions of Islam are constructed as practices that construct binaries between Muslims and non-Muslims as demonstrated in the following quote by Fatma:

> *The thing with Islam is that you fast, pray and go to hac. If you don't, then you are not Muslim. To be Muslim you have to follow your Prophet and his worship, belief and behaviour. I accept them and I act on them and I can call myself a Muslim. But if I disregard the laws of Allah and I do everything that is good then there will be no difference between me and non-Muslims because there are non-Muslims who are also good people. (Fatma)*

Other participants resisted narrow definitions of Islam. These participants contested essentialist binary versions of Islam by drawing on the egalitarian voice of Islam (Ahmed 1992), and used "new symbols" to "create new myths" (Anzaldúa 2007, p.104) to reflect their experiences of being Muslim. The quote below by Nevin emphasises that being Muslim is demonstrated in one's character and investment in humanitarian values and everyday mundane acts rather than adhering to mandated religious practices:

> *I practice Islam and for me my priority is not the covering or rituals, however what attracts me to Islam (pause), it encourages peace and I don't want anyone to hijack it and make me to interpret it the way they do. I have as much ownership as anyone else... I practice Islam in everything I do, the way I talk to you, the way I eat, the way I dress. (Nevin)*

Akin to the mestiza consciousness, the women constructed Islam in ways that intersect with multiple identity locations. Highlighting multiplicity emerging from the intersections between Islam and ethnicity enabled women to resist binaries and hegemonic versions of Islam:

> *We were what you would call culturally Muslim. Uhm, so we weren't religious to a point where we were it defined us but it was part of our overall culture. So, a part of your socialisation. So we pray and fasted. We did all that sort of stuff. I think the average Indian Muslim is pretty much like that. Like don't really wear the veil or don't really that sort of thing. I think your average Indian is not so Muslim or not so practicing is because they have grown up with Hindus and other communities and other religions specifically. (Ajda)*

Many women who did not veil explained resistance to the veil as a marker of their Muslim identity. Ebru, who veiled according to context as a result of community expectations, commented that her understanding of veiling intersects with sect. Ebru, drawing in her intersecting thinking, challenges Islamist patriarchal interpretations which place emphasis on the veil:

> *Women have their own identity and it is not fair for women to be forced into something you are not or don't want to be. Islam gives equal rights. Women can think but why is someone else thinking for them. So if they are created in a way they can think then it should be respected. They don't respect women's ability to think. They interpret it the way they want to. They think it is right... but in Islam there are 72 communities. The Ismaili community that I belong to has Muslims. (Ebru)*

The women emphasised and offered 'inner' dimension of being Muslim to counter Islamist definitions of Islam that mandate 'doing' Islam to construct binaries between Muslims and non-Muslims. While the doing aspect of Islam was a powerful discourse, the feeling Muslim discourse was also strong. As Verkuyten and de Wolf (2002) explain, 'feeling discourse' cannot be opened to the same critique as 'doing' discourse. Feeling discourse functioned as a form of resistance to hegemonic understandings of Islam, whilst claiming a discursive space for diverse expressions of Muslim identity. Thinking and feeling Muslim were interlinked in the sense that feeling was related to worldview, a framework which helped women make sense of events and situations, as demonstrated in the excerpt below:

> *Allah gives good to the good. I truly believe that. I have seen it throughout life too many times not to be true. That is why I said there is more to religion to me than just the physical image and it doesn't matter how they portray the religion to me it has a total way... I believe that is the way it was instilled into me, not visible at all. (Amina)*

In the excerpt below, Ajda explains despite contradicting and challenging norms and expectations, she is comfortable with ambiguity. Akin to the mestiza consciousness, her subjectivity is embedded in contradictions and ambiguity, which she turns into something else. She unites all the ambivalence and contradictions by recognising it as a place in its own right:

> *I also believe that each person's faith is to their own. And yes, I am not Muslim in the way I should be to my father for example. I don't wear the hijab. I don't cover myself completely. My husband is Aussie uhm. We are not right. But I am very comfortable with the person I am and I identify with it. (Ajda)*

> *For me, I guess I am a pluralist. That's not how a lot of Muslims would define their practice...So someone that says "look my religion is right where as a pluralist will say we all see the sun but from different angles. So therefore, I will respect that you see the sun as well. So, I use reasoning as opposed to blind faith…Some people when they want to tell you and preach to you that you are not practicing proper Islam. They focus on the hijab more. It is an obsession. (Nevin)*

Synthesising binaries and contradictions is not an easy task and may, as suggested by Anzaldúa (2007), result in the "swamping of (one's) psychological borders" (p. 101). Dilara appears to hold ideas and concepts relating to her identities in rigid boundaries. She begins by explaining that being Muslim is an internal dimension of her identity; however, she follows with ambiguity:

> *My faith is here (pointing to her heart). I believe in Allah in here. I don't have to look different or show it. Insanin içi temiz olsun (meaning to have good intentions). As long as you are clean inside. My dad used to hate that. If you don't do namaz (pray). If you don't do oruç (fast), if you don't do zekat (give to charity); what is the use. Içi temiz (good intentions), what is the big deal everyone's inside is clean. You have to do these to be a Musluman (Muslim). And maybe he's right and maybe I am not Musluman because I am not doing all those things so I feel like. (Dilara)*

She is told that internal dimensions, such as believing in Allah or having "a clean heart" does not make a person different to other non-Muslims and can be undermined by 'lovers of purity' (Lugones 1994), in this case the mosque culture and her father. 'Lovers of purity' suggest that you need to show, practice and demonstrate Muslim identity in order to be different to non-Muslims. Dilara, despite her efforts at transforming ambiguity, concludes that "maybe she is not a Muslim". She seems to display what Anzaldúa describes as feeling cultureless and as experiencing psychological unrest.

Good (Muslim) Women and Other Women

While many of the participants challenged hegemonic constructions of what it means to be Muslim, many upheld the importance of modesty reinscribing binary thinking. Muslim women constructed themselves as modest by virtue of being veiled and/or through the ways they dress and behave. The good Muslim woman position responds to Islamic ideology regarding female sexuality, morality and social order (Mernissi 1987). Mernissi (1987) argues that in Islam the woman is perceived as a threat to the patriarchal social order due to her beauty and her dangerous sexuality, resulting in restricting the autonomy of women in order to maintain the social system. In this study, non-Islamic ways and women are used as a negative "contrastive comparison" (Nader 1989, p. 348) to construct borders around the ethnic and/or Muslim women as the 'good girl' who is modest. The 'Other woman', depending on the participants' standpoint positions, was homogenized and in turn represented as "Australian/ Aussie", "western", "non-Muslim", "Christian", and "white". The 'Other woman' was also perceived as

heterosexual and promiscuous, holding relaxed values and attitudes towards sexuality. This is reflected in the following quotations where the women positioned themselves as morally superior in the context of ethnic culture and Islam that continue to structure and inform social life:

> *They (Australian women) probably have different values uhm. Probably not as strong as ours or maybe different. A lot more loose and flexible in what they may consider as acceptable. (Amina)*

> *There are Catholics and Christians that don't do it...it is against their religion too but they are not religiously focused. With us, when we are being brought up, religion and culture come together as the bringing up at home from our parents. For them they don't even have a culture let alone have a religion and practice a religion, it is different. So if they are more conservative about sleeping around then it is because them as an individual and personality. (Ruby)*

This binary construction of ethnic and religious difference through feminine sexuality also reflects the Madonna/Whore duality (Conrad 2006; Tumanov 2011) which permeates modern western representations of women more generally (Conrad 2006). In this case, discourses of difference function to construct boundaries between 'us', (Muslim) 'Madonnas', and 'them', 'Whores', women who represent the gendered embodiment of white/ western/Australian hegemonic patriarchal notions of femininity and sexuality.

Demonstrating a Mestiza consciousness (Anzaldúa 2007), the women's accounts of their identities in relation to Other women was multiple and contradicting. They highlighted gender equality as something that the Australian woman has; therefore, the discourse of difference gives way to a subordinate position relative to the 'Other woman'. Nevin explained that while the "white Australian woman" is positioned as morally subordinate she is also perceived as having more equality in relationships:

> *Comparisons are made. There are people who are open to different ways of life. If you talk to them they will say there is good and bad women in both sides. There might be an admiration of the Australian woman and the advantages she has. It depends on who is talking, if it is a Somali woman, they often admire the "white" woman and they might see old people holding hands and say "Ah that's so lovely". (Nevin)*

These representations of liberated western women relative to non-western, 'third world' women are embedded in Orientalist discourses. Mohanty (1988) explains that "universal images of "the third world woman" (the veiled woman, chaste virgin, etc.), images constructed from adding the "third world difference" to "sexual difference" are predicated upon (and hence obviously bring into sharper focus) assumptions about western women as secular, liberated, and having control over their own lives" (p. 81). These binary representations of the 'third world' and western woman function to create and reaffirm assumptions that western women, therefore by extension the West, as liberated (Mohanty 1988). These discourses constructing western secular women, therefore by extension western culture, not only inform subjectivities but are also used to reinforce the 'oppressed Muslim woman' discourse which forms the premise for colonial representations and domination of Muslims.

Gendered Boundaries: Resisting Assimilation and Colonial Power

The excerpts below demonstrate that the previously discussed discourse of differences between good 'ethnic' Muslim women and Other women, are closely related to processes around identity making in a social context where communities are marginalised and Othered. As evident in the previous section, these binary differences informing women's subjectivities were not always easy to transgress as they function to preserve cultural and religious identity and functioned as strategies of resistance to assimilation and the uncontested hegemonic colonial discourses and domination. In response to racism and colonial discourses, Muslim women are positioned as markers of ethnic as well as Muslim identity. Maintaining ethnic identity is heavily embedded in women's bodies, behaviour and particularly sexuality as they are symbolic carriers and transmitters of ethnic and religious identity (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 2005; Anzaldúa 2007):

> *They have come from there and they have sort of stopped in a time zone. They try to hold on and say "No, no you are an Arab, you are not supposed to do this and that, they (Australian women) are different they can do whatever they want but you can't". They try to hold it together like they are too scared and don't want to let go. Once that is gone that is it. So, they always want to remind, you, "Remember where you come from, this is how we are, we are different", they make you realise you are different and you are not the same. (Ayşe)*

Yuval-Davis and Stoetzler (2002) contend that women 'embody borders and boundaries' that they also transgress. Transgressing is associated with being "Aussie". Leila, who demonstrated conscious awareness of not conforming to hierarchal binary categories, explains that she found herself being positioned as being in the process of 'becoming Australian' as she did not adhere to social ideals on hetero-sexuality. Although homosexual relationships are prevalent among Muslims, in Muslim societies they are often constructed as "un-Islamic", "western" and "modern" (Ali 2006, p. 29). Leila finds herself in a position where she must overtly perform and engage with the signifiers of culture such as religious celebrations and language:

> *My partner and I are conscious about visiting people for bayram (Eid) because it is almost contradicting their own expectations like thinking "Oh yeah, now look they have become Australianised and you know she is not going to be the same now that she has come out". So we deliberately try to challenge their conceptions about who we have become by being the same people. (Leyla)*

Conclusion

In this chapter, drawing on Borderlands theory, I have put forward a decolonial feminist approach to understand the identities of Australian Muslim women. Anzaldúa's decolonial feminist theory enabled me to centre the experiences of Muslim women by attending to the multiple and intersecting social positions of

power and the broader historical and political context within which Muslim women negotiate their subjectivity. The findings demonstrate that the identities of Muslim women emerge at the intersections of race, gender, ethnicity and Islam as they grapple with various binaries and borders. Muslim women's identities are embedded in historical global power relations, and struggles over difference and identity whereby the gendered identity and bodies of Muslim women become a platform for ethnic Muslim communities to resist colonial power. The identities of Muslim are informed by Islamist and colonial structures of power which are both underpinned by competing versions of hetero patriarchy. Binary constructions of difference interpellate women, prompting them to negotiate their identity within narrow parameters. While women were able to challenge binaries and borders and negotiate the complexity and ambiguity arising from their intersecting social locations, other times some women negotiated their identities in ways that reinscribe these binaries.

This paper makes an important contribution to the decolonial turn in community psychology. While the decolonial turn in community psychology recognises that colonial forms of power operate as a racial construct which intersects with other discursively constructed social identities that take shape according to the socio-historical and political context (Green, et al. 2007), it has not adequately explored nor theorised these intersections resulting in the privileging of race and limiting the ways the discipline can attend to the communities it aims to serve. Borderlands theory, with its emphasis on intersections of multiple identity locations in light of asymmetrical social power relations, allows community psychology to deepen its understanding of how complex relations of power manifest and are contested by marginalised communities. It enables community psychology to centre experiences of people by attending to the multiple and diverse ways socio-political conditions marginalise people, which are all essential in community psychology constructing meaningful knowledge that is necessary for social transformation. Its focus on intersecting relations of power enables us to reclaim the voices which have been silenced by western binary thinking that instead has permeated community psychology. It offers community psychology an epistemological framework to move beyond borders and work towards social justice.

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"On the Way to Calvary, I Lost My Way": Navigating Ethical Quagmires in Community Psychology at the Margins

Haile Matutu

Contents

Introduction

Community psychological research that seeks to disrupt oppressive systems is fraught with ethical complexities, more so when it involves investigations concerned with non-normative sexual and gender identities in contexts such as South Africa. Students who undertake community research inquiries concerned with sexuality as part of their professional training may find themselves with little guidance when they are faced with ethical dilemmas in the course of conducting psychological research in communities. In this chapter, I present the ethical complexities that emerged over the course of a study I conducted with non-gay identifying men who have sex with men (NGI MSM) in Cape Town South Africa. Through this study I

H. Matutu (✉)
Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, South Africa
e-mail: MTTNKO001@myuct.ac.za

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came to experience how received knowledge, in the form of 'standard research ethics practice', functions as epistemic violence when applied as universals in contexts other those from which they originate. That is, what emerged in the study illustrated the limitations of regulatory forms of ethics, given their finite sensitivity to contextual issues. This study on the constructions of gender and sexual identity among non-gay identifying men who have sex with men used non-probability, purposive sampling to recruit 10 adult participants. Half of whom were recruited from an online location based social network application: *Grindr*, one of the most popular social networks for gay, bi, trans, and queer people.

While this project started out with a focus on finding a way to do psychological research in ways that are not oppressive, the way I imagined what oppression might look like reflected my thinking about oppression as something external to myself. That is, I could not fathom that, I as a queer Black man could be the source of oppression towards people with dissident sexual practices and/or marginal sexualities. At the inception of this study, I conceived of oppression as originating from a place of uncaring forceful usurping of another person's power. With little reflexion, I took my knowledge of the challenges of being in the world as Black and queer to be a suitable basis for building a bridge that would connect me and the people who would take part in this study. However, I was gravely mistaken in assuming that this 'shared' experience would be sufficient, so too in my thinking that my methods, because they were marked with institutional approval, would naturally be void of oppressive tendencies. What emerged was that my sense of 'good conduct' was experienced by potential participants as an attempt to either convert or force them to give an account of themselves for being non-normative. The very attempt to 'research' NGI MSM was considered by the men as part of an effort to 'normalise them'. That is, an attempt to shame them as people "whose sexuality and desire do not have the conjugal home as their (primary) venue, whose lives are considered less real or less legitimate" (Butler as cited in Ruti 2017, p. 13). Over the course of the study my application of ethics emerged as discordant with the perspective of a 'regulatory enterprise' but was rather intrinsically aligned to reflexivity. In the early parts of the study, some men who refused to participate assumed that I was after narratives of pain and suffering brought on by their refusal to take on the yoke of identity. Seen from this vantage point, my intentions were not enough to justify what seemed to be a colonialization of their knowledge of themselves. My experience of recruiting men for this study led me to consider that ethical conduct in community research with marginalized populations can be more useful and affirming when it is ongoing, critical, and dialogical (Cannella and Manuelito 2008; Figueroa 2014). It further necessitated an approach that would allow for an epistemological openness and one that fosters relationality and authentic rapport. Through this work I came to embrace a decolonial feminist research agenda, seeing it as an opportunity to reconsider the practice of ethics in research and attend to the unjust erasure of dissidence from community psychological research. From this vantage point, the study worked against the affinity between research and epistemic violence.[1]

[1] The term MSM is widely used in public health discourse and has been found to be useful in con-

The study I draw from to map out the lessons we can learn for thinking about and developing a decolonial feminist psychology was not designed to be feminist nor decolonial, per se. My choice in these approaches emerged as a result of the limitations of mainstream ethical frameworks to engage with the participants in a manner that I could recognise as ethical and non-oppressive. At first, I approached this task only with the guidance of the ethical frameworks that are made available for students of psychology in most university settings: research ethics guidelines and the professional codes of conduct that regulate the discipline. In the sections that follow, I first discuss and critique how non-gay-identifying subjects, who refuse identity come to be considered as community; and some of the discordance that may be associated with this framing. I follow this discussion by highlighting some of the salient ethical concerns that emerged within in this study. I explore institutionalised regimes of ethics and the latent power wielded by institutional review boards and their effect on the conduct of community psychological research. The chapter concludes with a few examples of the ethical quagmires that I encountered in the course of conducting this research, and points to the utility of feminist decolonial approaches as means to humanise the research encounter (see Paris and Winn 2014) both for participants and those who conduct community psychological research.

Positioning Queer Subjects as Community

> "The ideal of community presumes subjects who are present to themselves and presumes subjects can understand one another as they understand themselves. It thus denies the difference between subjects" (Young 2004, p. 195).

One of the initial challenges I had in conceptualising this study related to how I would come to delineate the men who would be participants: could they be considered a community, given that they mostly eschew any form of identity related to their relations with men with whom they have sexual relations? Or were they merely individuals who happened to share an affinity to engage in sexual relations with other men? While most men in the study spoke of living as loners, where their same sex desires were concerned, all of them spoke of the efforts they went to in order to build or fashion forms of 'community'. For some these were family members who were sympathetic to difference, for others this was in the form of friendships with other non-normative men. The virtual space of social network applications was another productive source of a sense of community for some of the participants. It should be noted that this view of these online platforms exists in spite of all communication occurring between two individuals at a time. Mark, for example, spoke about *Grindr* as a space of refuge, albeit with increasing heteronormativity:

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texts where interventions aimed at sexual minorities may not be permitted if men took up identity labels such as gay, bisexual etc. The term is also problematic in its apparent reduction of sexuality to 'acts', and no less for its possible denial of sexual-minority groups' right to name themselves.

> the queer community… at least the way I see it, it's supposed to be a community that is accepting, no matter what degree of queer you've experienced… you're meant to know what it's like. So, this should be like a safe haven… the queer community, you know… this is where you go when you know that you're not straight or identify or when you don't identify as straight! Why do you need the same utility? Like… to navigate this space? You know… because you don't need to hide from anyone here. But then again, I think it has to do with the whole thing of like… we've also adopted heteronormativity…

In South Africa, the term community is loaded with connotations of deficiency (Carolissen et al. 2010). Furthermore, there seems to be a blind sidedness in formulations of community as a concept. Most salient is the mythologizing of community which ignores the often inegalitarian and unfair aspects of communities paired with a limited consideration of the problematic specificities of particular communities in their socio-historical contexts (Coimbra et al. 2012). It is in the light of this potential to mythologise community that the need to define our use of the term in time and space gathers urgency; more so when our inquiries concern marginalised subgroups such as people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI). In spite of many radical theories' use of the ideal of community as an alternative to the oppressive and exploitative patriarchal society, the concept of community is seldom articulated explicitly. Instead, much theorisation around 'community' tends to evoke what Young (2004) refers to as 'effective values'. Conventional and subcultural definitions of community both carry strong connotations of familiarity and belonging thus giving the sense that to belong to such a collective one would be in the midst of the familiar, comfortable, and affirming (Dahl 2010). The warm and fuzzy idea of community has also been contrasted in dominant discourses with a place that is "marginal, amoral, anomic, foreboding, forbidding and frightening" (Coimbra et al. 2012, p. 135). It is in this terrain of seemingly oppositional framings of community that researchers invested in emancipatory sexuality research are called to traverse. For this reason, I propose that we delineate the form of community we are invoking when we refer to the 'LGBTQI Community' as such a delineation has implications for our approach to research ethics.

In order to think through what a practice of 'doing community psychology differently' might be within this broad community, we need to look at the ways that community psychology has engaged 'community'. As an example, we can look at the emancipatory, liberation-centred, and critical orientation that community psychology has taken in its development in South Africa and consider how it has created what approximates a blind spot. Firstly, what is considered community psychology is largely taken to be work that makes interventions directed at clearly identifiable communities. That is, an orientation towards communities as permanent, corporeal populations with clear boundaries – much of which is geographical – with clearly delineated gatekeepers (Dahl 2010; Meyrowitz 1997).

Much of these communities that the discipline engages are marginalised, generally poor, exhibiting some degree of impoverishment, and almost universally Black (see Swartz et al. 2002). Secondly, other than Participatory Action Research (PAR) and similar participatory approaches to research, there is generally a dearth of sexu-

ality research that situates itself squarely within community psychology. A cursory search on major Psychology databases shows very little psychological research that owns up to being simultaneously concerned with sexual subjectivity and community psychology. Exceptions to this being research that addresses the intersections of sexuality with health-related issues and their impact on community wellbeing such as HIV research (see for example, D'Augelli 2000). This gives the impression that community psychologists do not research sexual subjectivities unless they are "community projects"- conceptualised in the terrestrial perspective outlined above. There has been little engagement with the discordance between the seemingly conflicting ontological foundations of both community psychologies and the quintessentially individuating mainstream Psychologies. We can discern from these tendencies that there is a generalised fear of descending into the murky waters of individualising experiences that community psychology has worked against since its emergence. However, our reluctance to engage the personal – even as we embrace ecological and systematic approaches to psychological inquiry – comes off as dishonesty; especially since it renders sexuality as exceptional. When the personal (here one might read sexuality) is perceived as exceptional, above all other social activities, it gets imbued with an inherent sense of danger (Webber and Brunger 2018). Again, this has tangible repercussions when we consider our approach to research ethics when working with people situated/situating themselves at the margins. Given the problematics presented above, how might researchers minimise the seemingly inadvertent harms that may be created through the way sexuality research is framed both in practice as well as in the resulting reporting of the same? The next section offers some possible approaches. I offer these as possibilities that yield very different results.

Regulatory, Principilist Ethics Vs Dialogical, Value-Based Ethics

While ethical frameworks offer criteria against which researchers might consider what actions are morally justifiable in the conduct of research (Wiles 2013); these frameworks may, at best, be considered idealised ethical guides, and vary according to a researcher's professional and disciplinary affiliation as well as their politics. de Laine (2000) offers a useful definition of ethical dilemmas; she holds that they are problems "for which no course of action exists because there are 'good' but contradictory ethical reasons to take conflicting and incompatible courses of action" (p. 3). There is little agreement among scholars about the nature of these dilemmas. Wiles (2013) contends that even though ethical dilemmas may be situational and contextual, the consideration of ethical frameworks does not preclude individual deliberation on the part of researchers. She argues that the dilemmas that emerge in the field are essentially moral dilemmas. Other scholars such as Hammersley and Traianou (2012) have suggested that research ethics should be viewed as a type of

occupational ethics. They forward an argument for a decentring of politics from the research process by claiming that while 'the political' might be a motive for the conduct of research, it should not be a substitute for its institutionalised goal. The perception here is that 'motives' – as they refer to them, be they social justice, or empowerment – should never be the goals of research. For them, the centring of politics as the goal of research is only likely to increase the danger of error in findings (ibid.). This view is of course discordant with any form of an emancipatory research undertaking. Contrary to the position taken in professional ethics codes and guidelines, where ethical dilemmas are viewed through the prism of objectivity and from an intellectual distance, researchers in community psychological research experience these dilemmas with an immediacy heightened by personal involvement drawn from intuition, empathy and feelings (de Laine 2000).

Institutional Research Boards (IRB),[2] Research Ethics Committees (REC), and the professional codes of organisations such as the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), favour a regulatory form of ethics to guide community psychological research (see von Unger 2016). The principlist approach to ethics is the most widely used approach in the evaluation of applications for ethical clearance by RECs (Wiles 2013). The regulatory orientation towards research ethics focuses on the punitive mechanisms written within the various codes or standards should a researcher fail to meet those standards or common rules. Many of the principles addressed in professional codes largely relate to concerns about the wellbeing and rights of research participants. Given that many researchers who conduct research may not belong to professional organisations, ethics regulatory bodies, in the form of RECs and IRBs, are often the sole means of ensuring researcher compliance with some form of ethical framework. While these bodies may have an influence in determining how ethical issues will be handled before research projects commence, researchers generally do not seek the guidance of these structures once they are in the process of conducting research (Wiles 2013). The codes and standards of RECs' framing of ethics are largely concerned with three ethical principles, which are viewed as universal across all cultures: respect for personal autonomy, beneficence, and justice (Mutenherwa and Wassenaar 2014). Where autonomy refers to the inalienable right to the respect and dignity of research participants; beneficence relates to the ways in which research participants might benefit from participating in research, and the cardinal issue of research: participants being given enough information to make informed choices about the risk and benefits of participation; and justice being the degree to which participants are treated with fairness and equity throughout the research process (Munro 2011; van Wijk and Harrison 2013).

The universality of these principles has been questioned (see for example, Macklin 1999; Redwood and Todres 2006); the argument here being that these prin-

[2] Institutional Review Boards (IRB), Ethics Review Boards ERB), Ethics Review Committees (ERC), and Research Ethics Committees (REC) are all terms that refer to groups of suitably qualified persons who have a mandated institutional or national authority to review and approve research involving human participants (Kruger and Horn 2014). In this chapter I shall use the REC to refer to all these groups as that term is the most frequently used in South African institutions.

ciples rely on Western notions of ethics and that ethical issues in Africa may require dialogical frameworks that are less prescriptive (Mutenherwa and Wassenaar 2014). Critique against ethics review in community psychology concerns the origins of the three principles – the Belmont Report – which was written in response to growing concerns about research misconduct in the medical field (Wendler 2012). While the principles that are highlighted in the Belmont Report are important for the protection that they afford research participants, they are limited in their utility for the navigation of ethical dilemmas that researchers may be confronted with when conducting community psychology research with marginalised communities in the Global South.

Regulatory guidelines are often at odds with the character of qualitative research (Hammersley and Traianou 2012). In part, this is related to the inadequacy of the 'principlisim' inherent in regulatory ethics that renders it inept at responding to context-bound complexities (Onuoha 2007; Wiles 2013); as well as the biomedical research origins of these ethical codes. What guides ethical research conduct may not always be a conscious engagement with ethical frameworks. This need not mean that ethical frameworks have no utility whatsoever. For example, Wiles (2013) argues that often researchers rely on their own sense of moral judgement. What remains though, is that researchers are expected to justify the decisions they make. Wiles (2013) then proposes that ethical decision-making may need to apply levels of reasoning that draw on the researcher's moral sense (informed by their values) as well as the various ethical codes and disciplinary codes at their disposal. Thus, for Wiles, ultimately ethical dilemmas need to be evaluated in terms of principlist ethics (beneficence, non-maleficence, honesty, and fairness).

The regulatory approach to ethics is also problematised in Community Psychology scholarship for its inadequacy to respond to: differential power dynamics; the history of research institutions vis-a-vis the communities we do research with, often experienced as epistemic violence; and the discordant conceptualisations of consent, beneficence, and harm. The research ethics that guide much of institutional research endeavours are largely founded on a concept of asymmetry of power between the researcher and those with whom they do research. However, in this formulation, there is little acknowledgement of the power wielded by Research Ethics Committees (RECs), which have tangible effects on the relational interplay between the researcher and study participants. There is a need to critically engage the misconception that research participants always enter sexuality studies with little or no power. While it is acknowledged that researchers have agenda-setting power, we should not neglect to consider that research participants often bring their own agenda into the research relationship and in many instances, they drive these agendas with as much resolve and determination as researchers drive their own (Oliffe and Mróz 2005). Scholars such as Juristzen et al. (2011) argue that research participants could be harmed by some of the protective efforts of ethics monitoring bodies. As such, following Silva et al. (2011), I contend that it is necessary to consider how these traditional conceptions and procedures of research ethics might be modified through a decolonial feminist approach to research ethics in community

psychological research. The following section outline some of the quagmires of researching at the margins.

Navigating Ethical Quagmires

I am interested in the tensions that result from expanding what is considered 'doing community psychologies' and incorporating the personal while focusing on the emancipatory potential of non-oppression, or liberation-oriented community psychologies. What might be lost in the effacing of 'the personal' in community psychologies that centre non-oppression and liberation ideals in researching marginalised communities – particularly LGBTQI and other sexual minorities? Drawing on the study I conducted with NGI MSM, I now turn to exploring how ethics in the conduct of community psychology research with these forms of communities are affected by the void created by this ontological gap, as well as the regulatory approaches to research ethics favoured within the academy.[3] To do this, I frame my discussion around Cannella and Manuelito's (2008) feminist decolonial perspective, which understands the research encounter as multivocal, fluid and hybrid. I also heed Cannella and Manuelito's call for the consideration of the material effects of oppression on the marginalised – especially their call for researchers to attempt facilitating a social justice agenda. Arguing that by combining these anti-oppression, liberatory approaches, we may bridge the artificial divide between what is considered to relate to community and the personal in community psychology sexuality enquiries.

Reaching & Engaging NGI MSM: An Ethics of Care

It is said that the academy uses the pain of our research participants, many who are impoverished, disenfranchised and exhibiting some form of deficiency – for the personal gain of researchers (Tuck and Yang 2014; Wiles 2013). From this vantage point, it could be argued that I was involved in this very type of exploitative and parasitic tendency. The men I spoke to between December 2017 and September 2018, marginalised to differing levels, living in the shadows of their families and communities, and almost all carrying feelings of wishing to belong could fit this framing of victims of a capitalistic and voyeuristic academy. From a different vantage point we could see the men who took part in this study as agentive. They chose to speak with me, many of them had strong feelings about what they wanted to be known about them. Ian, in the exchange below, in an interview that was conducted

[3] By regulatory I mean an orientation that is concerned with prescribing what one might do in the context of conducting research, as well as the prohibition of forms of conduct that are deemed to be unethical.

via text messages, illustrates this capacity to refuse. He had simply ignored my probing into his avoidance of talking about relationships:

04/18, 20:13 – Haile: The last thing I asked you was about how you liked to change the subject when a question about relationships came up.
Haile: I didn't want to read into that…
Ian: I do it only because of being used and hurt in the past.
Haile: Okay… I hear you… anything you would like to share about that…
Ian: Not really.

Tuck and Yang (2014) theorise refusals not as "subtractive, [but as] theoretically generative and expansive" (p.239). They argue that a methodology of refusals regards limits on knowledge as productive. This form of refusal is an attempt to place limits on the colonial premise of frontiers where knowledge signifies conquest. In all their interviews these men never missed an opportunity to tell me off, if there was anything they were not willing to go into with me. This capacity to refuse is something I relished whenever it came up in our exchanges, be they the interviews that were recorded and formed the corpus of this study or in the multiple messages we exchanged before they agreed to sit with me for what one man called "the interview".

One of the challenges of doing research with marginalised groups, let alone one that aims at emancipatory and liberatory goals, is not only reaching them but also engaging them in a process that would lead to them being partners in those enquiries. The men in this study were recruited to share their experiences of talking about embodying non-normative sexualities; there was no expressed need for them to take part in a study such as this. This may seem to be at odds with the ideas of doing community psychology, especially since it is recommended that researchers should not impose their own ideas of bringing about change in communities but should rather wait to be approached by communities before intervening (see Tomlinson and Swartz 2002). The men I spoke with were uniformly interested in talking about their lives and their sense of 'being in the world'. There was no a priori need for my intervention per se. Instead, we were drawn together either by our interest in embodying these differential selves or by our perceived sense of difference and resultant fascination with how others who are part of this 'community' may be navigating the worlds we find ourselves in. One participant, Jason, when asked what would have made the interview better, indicated that he would have found it beneficial to be interviewed with other men in similar situations.

Jason: Maybe to sit and hear real stories of other gents told from the heart.
Haile: I see. It is difficult to do that when everyone wants to remain anonymous… but it's an idea…
Jason: Ja, hey.

These exchanges were facilitated by an ethics of care. Ethics of care is relational and does not involve a consideration of general rules but rather a desire to act in a manner that benefits the individual/ group that is the focus of inquiry. Some regard it as a form of virtue ethics (see Wiles 2013) as it consolidates an ideal of what ethi-

cal research conduct might look like and relies on notions of an aspirational character. The benefit of creating this relational environment, where I intentionally humanise the research encounter by privileging reciprocity over objectivity while centring their capacity to refuse, is evident in the exchange I had with Ben:

Haile: Yet I sense that it makes you uncomfortable.

Ben: What **this**?

Haile: Well from the response you've just given

Ben: Oh no, the only reason why I'm here, is because you're accessing the brain. And a little of my heart through my brain. Not my heart, but my person. Through asking me pointed questions.

Haile: Okay…

Ben: Actual questions that go into "what did you think about this; how do you view this; what's the label of that?" these things my mind can work with. And occasionally you add this "how does it make you feel", which is fine. But if the premise is always the guiding sort of like structure… it's always like "how does your mind or your personality guide you through this experience?", then I'm okay with that. But you know, that doesn't always happen in the one on one connection you have – maybe if I ever have one with Pearl or people on a day to day at [name of nightclub]. This [clears throat] safe zone, as it were, normal exchange of mind and thought or whatever does not exist out there, sunshine. People are there with hunger, they are out there with intent, they're out there with needs, desires. You know these things. Me too, of course! But then it becomes a smorgasbord of whatever the hell goes on. Before this meeting, you've set out "okay, Ben: You can end at any time, you can walk away at any time, you can do this, you can… not answer these things" These things are structures that I feel comfortable with. Because you gave me a structure to work in, and that you're gonna work within! And that is awesome! [clapping his hands] Now how many times does this safeguarding happen there? The short answer is no. Not often.

Reconsidering Consent

In studies where participants have completed consent forms via email, it is useful to revisit the issue of consent at the beginning of the interview. This is important because the researcher is never present when participants sign online consent forms, and there is no way of knowing if they understand the conditions under which they are participating in the studies (Jowett et al. 2011). It is also important to be cognizant of participant fatigue which often manifests itself through body language such as arms on the fold or explicitly checking the time" (Oliffe and Mróz 2005, p. 259). In online interviews it is not easy to read these cues. Assessing a participant's capacity to consent in online research is challenging. The researcher contractually bound

by principlist ethical frameworks demanded by ethics committees may risk participant attrition in the course of enacting this requirement. The process of acquiring consent online may be seen as cumbersome by participants who may have to dedicate extended interview time validating their capacity to consent to research participation (Wiles 2013). One of the participants, Marc, who chose to do an instant messaging interview rather than meeting me in person was greatly inconvenienced by my desire to tick all the boxes of what I initially considered 'good ethical behaviour'. In my notes over the course of this interview I noted that I grew impatient with Marc:

> "Keeps going offline. I'm getting annoyed. I keep thinking he's pulling a prank. He claims to be with his brothers yet insists on doing this now. I'm going along with it. I keep thinking he might be genuine. He contacted **me** after all!"

As perplexed as I was about Marc's apparent slow engagement and the delays in communication it became apparent to me when I reviewed the transcript that an hour after we had started the conversation, we had only covered issues of ethics. I spent much of this time trying to figure out if he was legitimate. I was also concerned that he was too keen to speak without understanding what participation meant. By adhering to this rigid conceptualisation of ethics, I had brought about an untenable and unreasonable demand on Marc's time. What was meant to be an hour interview turned into a long chat over 15 days. Much of this was because Marc could only speak when he was alone, which tended to be in spurts of 15-minute intervals. He eventually stopped communicating with me after a few days of similar lines of questioning.

While the encounter with Marc proved that an unreflexive adherence to ethical frameworks may be counterproductive, in other encounters, there was much to gain in constantly renegotiating consent. In a different interview, I found myself needing to remind a participant that he was still on the record. A level of refusal may be useful in navigating the issue of consent, where participants may forget that they are still part of a research project due to the personal nature of the encounter.

Rapport & Conflict of Interests

> A psychologist shall refrain from entering into a multiple relationship if such multiple relationship could reasonably be expected to impair the psychologist's objectivity, competence or effectiveness in performing his or her functions as psychologist or otherwise risk exploitation or harm to the person or organisation with whom the professional relationship exists. (HPCSA 2006, p. 6).

While the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) rules of conduct's framing of dual relationships is useful for therapeutic contexts. It has very limited utility for feminist decolonial research, this approach centres relationality, and problematises the boundaries that are imposed between the researcher and the researched (Figueroa 2014). The decolonial feminist approach "reveals and actively challenges

social systems, discourses and institutions that are oppressive and that perpetuate injustice" (Cannella and Manuelito 2008). That is, feminist decolonial research explicitly centres the political. In contrast, Hammersley and Traianou (2012) forward an argument for a decentring of politics from the research process by claiming that the political might be a motive for the conduct of research but that it should not substitute its institutionalised goal. The perception here is that if these 'motives' as they refer to them, were to be the goals of research, they would likely increase the danger of error in findings.

What transpired between me and the men I interviewed was something altogether different from what the literature said an interview could be. How this happened, I am not entirely sure. I was terrified of admitting to this fact, but it is important for what I propose in terms of reaching and engaging knowledge co-creators. In the initial stages of this research I lived in fear of my ethics review committee. No one had ever told me I should be fearful of this institutional committee. Even my engagement with them at my proposal defence was nothing short of what could be considered a pleasant engagement with scholars who were well versed in all the theory, methodology and methods I was proposing to deploy in the implementation of this study. Yet, in the first year of this study, there was seldom a moment when I was not thinking about what this group of very agreeable scholars could do to influence my future prospects of doing this form of work were I to make any blunder or compromise the integrity of the institutionally sanctioned study – which I always imagined should be above reproach. I lived in constant fear that what came to me as most natural would lead to me being reported as a person with bad ethics or rather one who lacked ethics in the conduct of research. In this way, principlist ethics served to 'make strange what is most familiar' to me (see Manganyi 1984); that is, it alienated me from my very sense of being African.

Much of the interactions with the men who took part in this study were facilitated by a rapport that took a long time to develop. I was in conversation with some of these men for about eight months before they agreed to take part in this study. In that time, we spoke at length about many issues related to queer subjectivity, their thoughts about being men in a society that is at times antagonistic towards difference. These exchanges created a form of intimacy that may not be recognisable as 'doing research' if one were to look at them through the prism of detached positivist research. While I would not characterise these as friendship, there is something deeply human in the way they evolved. While the openness with which I approached the relationship building of these inter-views was firmly rooted in the epistemic orientation of this study, I was also unsure about what was developing between me and the research participants. At times I wondered if the familiarity that was emerging could be seen as 'faking friendship' (see Newton 2016).

I was a researcher in an online community known for its fickleness, superficiality and aversion to anything approximating depth. My friends often told me that nothing of substance could come out of *Grindr*. Yet I persisted with my profile (Fig. 1), even citing Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. It was by putting 'substance' in my profile that allowed the rich and layered conversations I was to eventually have with some of the men on this platform. It became important that I inserted myself (my relationship

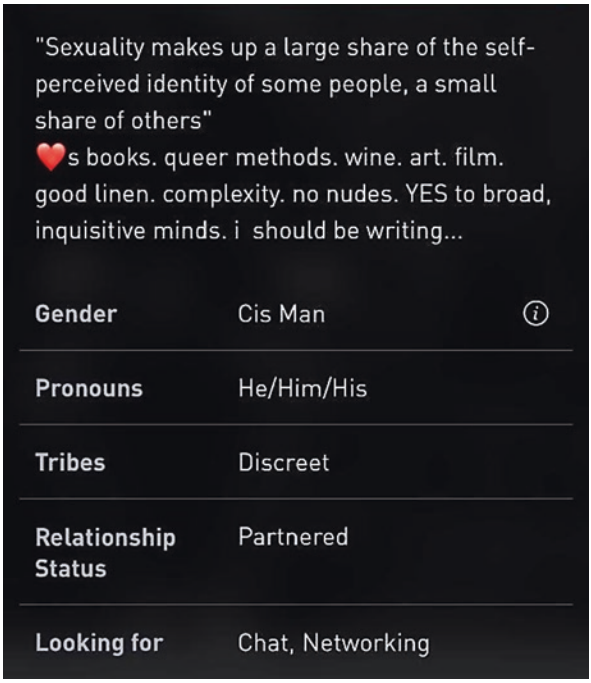

Fig. 1 Grindr profile created for this study

status) in the midst of what I was trying to do, (i.e. looking for opportunities to speak about non-normative subjectivity).

The idea that I shared characteristics with some of them became the reason that some of men responded to me, and ultimately participated in the study. Of course "Chat and Networking" are sometimes used by men to denote all manner of conversations; not all of it is devoid of 'the sexual'. Similarly, 'Networking' can incorporate a number of possibilities including the pedestrian variety that most business people and academics engage in at conferences. It was important for me that I should not pretend to be an aloof researcher because I wanted to have a more personal engagement with the participants. This humanising orientation was not coming through in the early stages of the recruitment. The fear of being seen to be dabling in salacious recruitment practices was ever present.

My initial attempts at recruitment often fell flat. I toyed with variations of invitations most of which made mention of the fact that this was a legitimate study. I even supplied a UCT email address, because I believed that the institutional affiliation would distinguish this invitation from other fantastical invitations that the platform's users may have been in the habit of receiving. Figure 2, *Doing Research Right*, illustrates how many of the unsolicited invitations were perceived. In his study with a similar population, Walby (2010) chose to not openly address his own sense of sexual identity in terms of a category, such as gay. Instead, he took a vaguer approach to

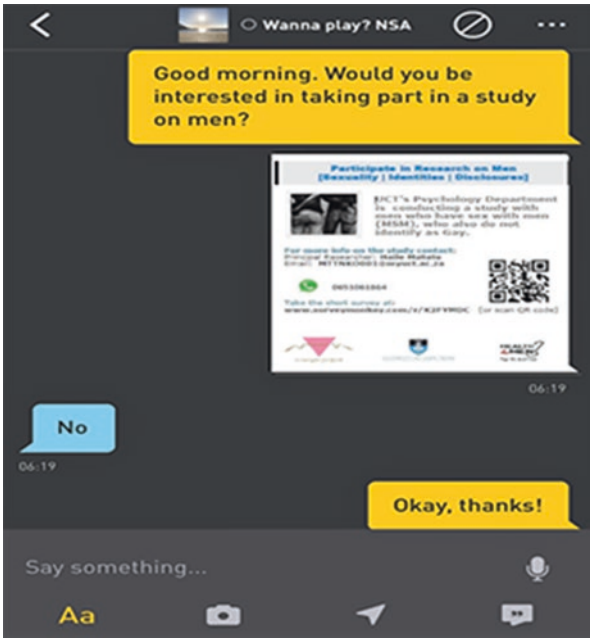

Fig. 2 Doing research right "Yes, Please"

answering a question that many queer people ask in these research settings, that is, 'are you gay?'. He is reluctant to engage what he considers 'bonding ploys'.

'Bonding ploys' that result from participants assuming a shared insider identity with the researcher are problematised by some scholars (for example, Schwalbe and Wolkomir 2001), the argument being that in the context of queer research these ploys may create a sexualised rapport. I am uncertain about the utility of these measures of control for the manner in which they approximate positivist aspirations of neutrality and for their attempts at presenting an asexual and somewhat detached researcher subjectivity. This position should not be taken as advocating for unbridled boundless sexualisation of the research encounter. Rather we should consider it as an attempt to extend the humanizing orientation of sexuality research and extend this perspective to include the researcher. However, my concern is not to indiscriminately centre the sexuality of the researcher, as that would defeat the aims of research. It is the narratives of the participants that we are most interested in. It is my contention that we may elicit these without de-humanizing the researcher.

The discourse of the confessional plays out in a didactic manner in interviews where men interview MSM. The expectation that one ought to confess something about their sexuality goes both ways and may influence the direction of rapport within that encounter (Walby 2010). I too had a story of speaking about my own queer subjectivity. Many of the participants in this study were privy to this knowledge, even though for the most part my own story became known to them after we had sat for our 'on the record' interviews. What became apparent to me were the versions of the narrative of my speaking of non-normative subjectivity that different

participants heard. The way I constructed the story of my 'being in the world' was always different depending on the person with whom I was speaking. The facts of the narrative never changed, however, the details and how I framed myself within these was informed by the degree that each man was comfortable with aspects of their own subjectivity. With Mark I could speak about being a Xhosa man and what that did to my relationship with my father. This happened in a very natural way, in our exchanges through nods at "we don't know how to speak about being queer in non-oppressive language", laughing at the homophobia of our mothers' friends, for example. Yet with some others, there was an assumed freedom in my version of queerness, with Mike noting that "it's different for your generation" (Mike was a few years older than me but is married with two children). Where it was appropriate, I opened up about my own struggles and achievements. There was however, one narrative which at the time was not complete – how I spoke to my parents about embodying my sexual identity.

Imagining Risk and Vulnerability

Normative judgments about sexuality frames research participants in sexuality research as vulnerable (Webber and Brunger 2018). Non-normative participants are relegated to the subject position of 'vulnerable' in a manner that suggests that they have limited capacity to be autonomous such that their perceived social discrimination takes a de facto diminished agency (Irvine as cited in Webber and Brunger 2018). However, social researchers agree that what constitutes harm is by no means straightforward (Hammersley and Traianou 2012).

In a context where sexuality research is scrutinized more than other fields of research, and as inherently more risky than other forms of research, how might community psychology act in ways that protect both themselves as well as the communities they work with? We might start by considering that risk and harm aren't always seen as linked by those who engage in research (both participants and researchers). Determining risk in advance, is "paternalist and a colonial practice that overrides participants' self-determination" (Webber and Brunger 2018, para 2). In fact, a level of risk in the field might enhance our understanding of social phenomena and enrich the production of knowledge. When we centre the participants in assessment of risk, we may find that RECs demands for safeguarding measures may have unintended repercussions. Let us for example consider what is understood to be 'distressful' in sexuality research: it has been reported that participants in sexuality studies enjoy talking about their sexuality and sexual practices and that talk about these issues is perceived by those participants as a positive experience (Webber and Brunger 2018). Most importantly, participants voice an appreciation of having the occasion to "speak frankly about their perception of sexuality with an interested and non-judgmental interlocutor" (ibid, para14).

Humanising the Research Encounter: A Decolonial Feminist Approach

Decolonial feminist approaches to research involve researchers enabling participants to tell their own stories about their lives; as a result, researchers need to value and pay close attention to how these stories are constructed both within the research encounter as well as in the narratives that are written about those research encounters. This necessitates a keen sense of reflexivity (Wiles 2013). In the study I have drawn from, reflexivity took on the position of an ethical framework. This in turn created the affirming, humanising, participant-centred research encounter privileged in feminist research. Part of this humanising framing pertains to how beneficence is imagined in community research. When we as researchers are the primary benefactors in these research encounters and the participant's pain becomes an instrument to further our aspirations, we enter into the exploitative terrain of conquest critiqued by decolonial scholars (see for example, Figueroa 2014; Wiles 2013). Narrative approaches present ethical challenges in relation to the management of relationships with participants as well as the sensitivity with which stories are handled. These necessitate that we humanise the research encounter from both the perspective of the participants as well as the researcher. If we are to take seriously the task of avoiding the coloniality of speaking for the marginal voice, we ought to decentre the discipline's propensity to "pose as voice box, ventriloquist, interpreter of the subaltern voice" (Tuck and Yang 2014, p. 225). In contrast to the more mainstream approaches to psychological research, where the locus of identity is taken to rest within individuals or their inner workings, community psychology – in its critical varieties – exposes and contests community injustice and misery (Coimbra et al. 2012). Decolonial feminist approaches to community psychology necessitate a reflexive ethical engagement; as Seedat and Suffla (2017) remind us, these approaches work to resist and expose dominant methodological, epistemic, and intervention traditions. How then should we regard ethical frameworks, within a decolonial feminist perspective? I am not altogether convinced by the perception of ethical frameworks as deterministic. However, we know that in practice, they are not enough to guide us through challenging ethical terrains. Centring reflexivity as an ethical framework anchored on decolonial feminist approaches is a worthwhile endeavour when we do research at the margins.

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From Where We Stand: Reflecting On Engagements With Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology

Peace Kiguwa and Puleng Segalo

Contents

Introduction

In an earlier conversation we highlighted the challenges and silences in psychology concerning feminist psychology (Segalo and Kiguwa 2015). In particular, we highlighted the challenges of mentorship, marginalisation of feminist work and Black scholars in the discipline, and the hegemony of western-centric knowledge systems. In this chapter, we reflect on these continued gaps and challenges with particular focus on our work in the academy. Through a decolonial feminist lens we highlight aspects of our teaching (including supervision and mentorship), community work, and research. In doing so, we engage the complexities of working from a decolonial feminist perspective highlighting the potential for disruption of the academic space. Furthermore, we argue that the separation of academic and community work remains a barrier to doing decolonial work. This is because decontextualised

P. Kiguwa (✉)
Department of Psychology, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa
e-mail: Peace.Kiguwa@wits.ac.za

P. Segalo
Office of Research and Graduate Studies College of Human Sciences, Pretoria, South Africa
e-mail: segalpj@unisa.ac.za

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psychology is inadequate in its engagement with communities. Finally, we discuss the potential of a decolonial feminist community psychology for re-imagining the discipline.

Self-Location

We start by offering a reflexive background to our epistemological positioning as feminist/decolonial/community psychologists. This self-location is important given our entrenchment within social justice and feminist politics. Social justice and feminist work and politics emphasise the need for continuous self-reflexivity within our scholarship. This is important because it is necessary to continually interrogate our enmeshment within intricacies of power. In choosing to self-locate we recognise that we are part of the myriad dimensions of power – both conscious and unconscious – that influence our subjectivities and politics. In order to continually interrogate these intricacies of power within ourselves as well as how they impact our work within communities, recognising and interrogating who we are and how we are located within society and the communities within which we work is important. We draw from Paulo Freire's pedagogy of freedom (Freire 1998) and assert that we cannot be facilitators of learning if we do not recognise with great clarity that our practice demands of us a definition of where we stand. This self-locating is important for two reasons: firstly, it allows an awareness of self and value orientation that is necessary for a more socially just psychology; secondly, this awareness facilitates a transformative approach to practicing psychology. This will allow us to engage layers and possibilities for change that are not imposing, dehumanising, and oppressive. This chapter discusses our teaching, community work, and research as a means of engaging these possibilities and troubling current practices. Writing our stories and reflecting on our practice is both a personal and political necessity that recognises that it is through critical interrogation of ourselves and our practice that we understand how we are always configured in politics. This understanding is necessary for disciplinary disruptions that unsettle how Psychology in general remains epistemologically and methodologically problematic. We discuss these continuing problematics later in the chapter.

When I (first author) frame myself as a feminist psychologist I understand this as an interest in social (in)justices and their effects on women. I am also interested in how we can respond to social injustice not only as a society but also as psychologists. Feminist psychology for me means thinking about how psychology can engage issues of gender and sexual inequalities in society as they affect women. I am interested in how psychology can be of service to healing the gendered traumas that remain so pervasive in our society. Doing this work means two things: it means not viewing gender-based traumas that result from inequalities through an individualistic lens but rather as community focused. It also means working towards intersectional responses to structural violence. I am also interested in what it means to do feminist work as a black woman and African psychologist, living in Africa as

opposed to living elsewhere and embodying a different raced and gendered body. Given this, we will have to take seriously what it means to practice and position ourselves as decolonial African feminists in an African context. We will have to consider the myriad ways that a feminism rooted in western-centric contexts is problematic for African contexts. When we blindly and uncritically attempt to understand any context through an ontological and epistemological lens that belittles, fails to fully see, as well as further marginalizes how cultures and people do gender differently, we stand in danger of enforcing a kind of epistemic violence as researchers.

Being a decolonial feminist psychologist involves me (second author) taking seriously the everyday structural challenges that women face in society. I am interested in the ways in which psychology plays a role in contributing towards how women are marginalised, are perceived as helpless and in many ways without a voice. I frame myself as a decolonial feminist psychologist because the aim is to build on what feminism has offered us and to interrogate some of the ways in which it addresses gender. In many ways, 'imperial feminism' is a feminism that operates on behalf of American and European canons. It dominates instead of liberates; and it does this often without taking context and geographical specificities into consideration. A feminism that embraces decoloniality has the potential to see the importance of history, colonization and the impact these have had on the perpetual gendered challenges we constantly have to contend with. I am interested in a psychology that acknowledges the multi-layered, multi-textured, fluid and complex understanding of spaces occupied by women and men.

Contextualizing Community Psychology

Community psychology departs from 'traditional psychology' as it acknowledges the importance of context in the work that we do. A number of community psychology scholars (e.g. Dutta 2016; Lykes 2013; Prilleltensky 2012; Seedat and Lazarus 2011; Sonn 2016) have discussed the need to critically reimagine the sub-discipline and challenge the ways in which it has not thoroughly engaged with communities' multiple and intersecting experiences and injustices. In her proposal for a decentered community psychology, Dutta (2016) asks pertinent questions around what counts as knowledge and what are the implications thereof. She challenges community psychology to move from labelling and categorizing people as, for example, 'lacking' or helpless towards acknowledging the resources that people possess and how these could be drawn upon if a space for a participatory approach is created. In such a space, multiple forms of knowing are acknowledged. Community psychology has the potential to and should engage and confront the taken for granted notions of knowledge production and how the right and power to produce knowledge is often reserved for those from the Global North while 'others' are constructed as consumers of this knowledge. It has to shift from what Sonn calls "intellectual colonisation" (2016, p. 310) where voices and experiences of those based in the

Global South are not offered space in our theorising in community psychology. However, within the Global South current decolonization projects have also tended to reproduce this dichotomy of knowledge imposition. For example, decolonial knowledge canons (based largely in South America) have also tended to marginalize voices and knowledge contributions from Africa. Even more layered is the marginalization of feminist contributions to this canon of knowledge. Very few feminist contributions to the decolonial project have been widely recognized within the canon, with the exception of scholars such as Maria Lugones and Oyeronke Oyěwùmí. In a series of social justice movements, gender tends to take a back seat to race as a galvanizing stronghold that demonstrates how race has predominantly been taken up as a political project and not gender. And yet, as scholars such as Pumla Gqola show, gender has always been central to the colonial project. If it has been central to the colonial project then it makes sense that it should be central to the decolonial project.

Within South Africa in particular, much community psychology has taken a liberatory stance (Freire 1993) wherein a concerted effort is made to have learning happen within communities. However, teaching and learning in community psychology is often undergirded by the assumption that researchers go into communities to 'empower', 'impart knowledge', and 'introduce programmes' without acknowledging the knowledges already present in the communities. We often go in as 'experts' and this can be seen in many of the practical sessions students are required to fulfil as part of their training. It is at this point where we deem a decolonial approach important for rethinking how we practice community psychology. Community Psychology has to be self-critical and should acknowledge its complicity over time on how Euro-centric knowledge was privileged and assumed applicable in multiple contexts globally. Community psychology does not toss the net wide enough to allow for the multiplicity of ways in which people engage the world.

While there has been progress within community psychology regarding the need to acknowledge context and people's knowledges, we would like to argue that there is still a need to take seriously issues of gender, sex, race and class amongst others. Not paying attention to these dimensions is problematic as it assumes that they are not important when engaging in people's lived realities. These omissions are even more problematic when understood in relation to the ways in which they shape women's experiences. Understanding these issues from a decolonial feminist perspective would mean taking history and the influence of colonialism into perspective when engaging with how these play out. For example, Mmatshilo Motsei (2007, 2017) works with gender-based violence and with men in communities using a socio-historical and feminist approach that sees violence not as intrinsic to the community or to men. She sees violence as having a history that intersects with multiple layers of how people are violated (economically, socially, and culturally) and how all this has a history that ties back to colonialism. She connects this with the intergenerational transmission of trauma so that the attainment of masculinity comes to be seen as something that is violent. Her work offers an example of how a decolonial feminism might be possible and the ways in which community psychology can be practiced from a decolonial perspective.

Cosgrove and McHugh (2000) maintain that community psychology has indeed incorporated elements of feminism in its engagements with oppression and injustice. However, they also point out that the sub-discipline has not fully embraced feminist scholarship. We would argue that this may not always have been the case. Community and feminist psychology both challenge and engage with assumptions made by mainstream psychology; often uncritical in how it engages societal issues. Mainstream psychology does not pay particular attention to political, historical, cultural and structural issues that play a role in how people make sense of the world. Specifically looking at women, mainstream psychology often defines women as lacking, helpless and needing to be rescued. They are marginalized and assumed to have no agency. As Cosgrove and McHugh (2000, p. 816) note, "as feminist researchers we challenge the implicit values in traditional research that render women as Other and conflate difference with deficiency". In our psychological research endeavours it is important to critically engage theories and methodologies used to make sense of what we know and how we come to know. What does it mean to privilege feminist understandings of the world? It is this privileging that we want to pay particular attention to and we do this by drawing from a decolonial feminist perspective which we believe can assist us to move towards a decolonial feminist community psychology. And yet, the work that continues to be prescribed in most community psychology classes relies on "traditional, psychologistic assumptions about subjectivity" (Cosgrove and McHugh 2000, p. 824). Those who have embraced a critical stance still do not centre feminist theories in their engagement with communities. In this sense then, mainstream community psychology has been deeply problematic as a resource for decolonial and feminist interventions within the community. In the rest of the chapter, we point to ways in which this can be addressed. Drawing from a number of examples based on our own work, we highlight what this might look like by providing examples that show how we attempt to move towards an action-oriented and a liberatory approach in our teaching and in the research projects that we are part of.

Teaching, Community Work, and Research

Pedagogies of Disruption in Teaching and Learning

Troubling current practices demands a willingness to disrupt our current ways of envisioning the world as well as the content of what we teach. Through a pedagogy of disruption, we can begin to not only challenge the current canon of knowledge but also engage alternate knowledge systems. For example, the reading materials that we prescribe in our curriculum, including the teaching of community psychology, include the works of Euro-Western black and African black (women) scholars in conversation with each other. We do this as an attempt to epistemically rebel against the perpetual centering of Western canons which assumes knowledge to be universal and therefore applicable everywhere. We aim at de-centering that which

has been centralized by acknowledging the need for pluriversal ways of knowing and being. A pluriversal approach allows us not only to gain a sense of marginalised scholars' contributions to psychology as a discipline but also to engage with the socio-political context.

The materiality of race and gender is important to address as one of the key gaps of the discipline and as characterised by western-centric knowledge canons. By materiality we refer to the phenomenological experiences of race and gender as these are embodied in the lived realities and bodies of black Africans. Here, race and gender do not just function as structural realities that exist in social policies and institutional structures but also come to take on real embodied 'livedness' in people's lives and bodies. How we understand gender and race in our work must therefore incorporate these micro embodiments. Canons of knowledge that tend to favour so-called objectivist, individualist, and empirical forms of knowing do not acknowledge these subjective and micro politics of human subjectivities to the detriment of enhancing social justice interventions in communities. We argue that borrowed ways of knowing, such as the view that gender is binary (Oyěwùmí 1997) that we have given home in our minds, cannot be used as a basis to imagine and transcend coloniality. We acknowledge that often the fundamental framework of our studies is not African. We may have an African perspective (that purportedly addresses African ways of knowing) but when our work relies on such alienating epistemologies/theories, we stand in danger of engaging in epistemic violence in our interventions. Our aim therefore is to think from where we are unashamedly; and this starts with the pedagogical practices we employ.

We see the teaching space as a dialogical space that involves students and teachers engaged in a dialogue about themselves and their society. This involves shifting from the obsession with the end product/outcome and instead focusing on the process of learning and creating an environment where students are active participants in the creation of knowledge. In so doing, we align ourselves with Paulo Freire's (1993) notion of liberatory pedagogy which prioritises the student's capacity for critically reflecting on the world with a view to transforming it. In this instance the student and teacher are both co-creators of knowledge, where at one given moment one takes on the role of the teacher (and the other a student) and at another moment the other takes on that role. Where a large class size of 500+ students makes it challenging to be creative, the temptation is to deliver the lecture in a banking model (Freire 1993). While a bigger size class may be challenging, it is not impossible to deviate from the traditional banking roles of teaching. For example, the ways in which the curriculum is structured should be in such a way that allows for a dialogue and not a rigid model and approach to teaching. Students should be able to speak back to the curriculum and in that way contribute towards the reshaping of it. There should be space for them to draw from their experiential ways of knowing. For example, mainstream psychology's construct of the self that is introduced in the history of psychology invalidates other ways of knowing that are rooted in community and other relational networks.

The process of how we teach and what we teach has many implications for how we assess. Traditional methods of assessments favour particular understandings and

forms of knowledge to the detriment of others. For example, multiple choice forms of assessment require students to choose from a selection of pre-determined answers thereby not allowing space for engagement, disagreement or critique. Many forms of assessment *force* students to memorise what they have learnt in a quantitative manner (e.g. how much can you remember?) as opposed to qualitative shifts in learning, such as students' ability to reflect on the socio-political context of their world. It is these shifts that influence and contribute to students' capacity for transforming their world. A community psychology that is committed to being relevant should prioritise the latter form of learning and assessment.

Further complicating assessment practice is the role of prioritised languages in South Africa (such as English and Afrikaans) as primary mediums for assessment. These mediums function to exclude speakers of other languages who, given the chance might be able to articulate their knowledge more efficiently if allowed the opportunity to engage in a language they are more comfortable with. The quantitative mode of assessment demands the use of the prioritised languages whereas a more qualitative mode of assessment that is focused on students' critically reflective shifts allows for the possibility of a more inclusive engagement. This will include students engaging in their preferred language. What we are calling for is a rethinking of current pedagogical practices that emphasise written assessment tasks to the exclusion of other modes of engagement. Both students and teachers may feel a sense of discomfort with such a pedagogical shift. However, as Bozalek et al. (2010) have argued, discomfort is fundamental to consciousness raising. The urge to make ourselves and our students comfortable in the classroom makes it impossible to engage fully and reflexively. This is akin to Leonardo and Porter's (2010) notion of a pedagogy of disruption which posits disruption not as repressive violence but as productive violence. The latter allows for authentic dialogue and interrogation of our place in society. For example, a curriculum that disrupts whiteness as the centre of knowledge and normative way of being is very often received by many white students in the class as violent. We maintain however, that this form of violence is necessary and productive in its invitation for more authentic forms of engagement that is not characterised by coloniality of power.

Pedagogic disruption is also important to how we re-imagine the supervision space and the transmission of knowledge between student and supervisor. In keeping with Freire's (1993) notion of critical pedagogy, we advocate for the supervision space as a reflective dialogical space that considers how both the student and the supervisor are co-constructors of knowledge. Part of this process entails reflecting on our choices for research topic exploration including how we mentor and reflect with students their engagements with the communities that they work with in this process. This relationship between student and supervisor is very important for mentorship and inculcation into a critically reflexive epistemology whereby the student begins to understand in practice the ideological and political ramifications of self-positioning in research. Furthermore, the supervision process itself is a deviation from the banking model in which the supervisor is positioned as the arbiter of knowledge to one which recognises that there will be moments where the student becomes the teacher and the teacher becomes the student. For example, in a study

exploring black women's experiences of the meaning of sexual liberation within a democratised South Africa I (second author) and my student had to carefully consider what it means to gain knowledge from communities without ethically engaging them in the challenges that they open up to us. As one community member said to my student: "*You know they open up this well of pain and then leave you like that and not come back to assist you based on what you told them. I am only talking to you because you are like my grandchild; otherwise I don't want to hear from those people who exploit our pain just so they can write big reports and forget about us*" (Chauke, forthcoming). This assertion was a critical reminder of the epistemic violence that is possible when we do not reflect on self-positionings as 'experts' when we work with communities. It is also a reminder of the ethics of undertaking such work for the mere purpose of excavating stories about suffering. Feminist decolonial community psychology must continually interrogate what it means to bring these stories to light. Community work must be aimed at bringing about social change and transformation that directly speaks to the needs of the community. It also means recognising that communities are able to exercise agency in choosing whom they will be in conversation and collaboration with.

In another example utilising a feminist participatory action research epistemology, I (first author) had to consider the implications of producing knowledge that is challenged and rejected by the rest of my team and participants. In engaging with research data through a feminist lens, what does it mean for us when our participants refuse the epistemologies that we work with and also offer alternative understandings that fundamentally challenge our feminist framings? In this particular study, my reading of participants' gendered constructs of identity, behaviour and agency (through the self-identified registers of 'top' vs 'bottom') amongst a group of self-identified lesbian, gay and bisexual youth as reproductions of a heteronormative norm was not only rejected as "elitist and patronising" by these youth members but they also offered an alternative reading that positioned this other register as empowering. In continuous dialogue within the group, we (the facilitators) challenged our different ideological positions and reflected on our different identity intersectionalities in how we interpreted the data. In the end, we settled on an analysis that incorporated these multilayered ways of seeing and critically engaged with the myriad implications thereof. What is important to note here is that we adopted an approach to doing research that did not exclude or marginalise conflictual voices in the project. We also engaged a process of self-interrogation that demanded we understand each other's point of view.

Towards Transformative Mentorship

The idea of 'academic acculturation' has been used by scholars such as Davis (2008) to describe the mentorship process that happens between students and faculty members of the academy. Academic acculturation engages those processes and practices whereby new and emerging scholars – who may include students and/or emerging faculty members within an institution – are socialised into the disciplinary and institutional profession by an established scholar. The latter person takes on the role of

socialising the newcomer into the values, networks and resources necessary for successful adaptation to the new context. Such a process and practice is further made complex through intersections of race, sexuality, disability, class, language and gender dynamics that can either hinder or enhance the mentorship process. Understanding the challenges and experiences of marginalised bodies within the academy requires a more critically reflective effort at understanding the role and practice of mentorship within institutions. Davis (2007) demonstrates that the career trajectory and aspirations of many black students and staff are likely to be influenced by the lack, quality and form of mentorship that they experience within the institution. Her study also highlights the importance and role of black faculty as mentors to black students and other black faculty members. This is a finding that Chan (2008) also highlights in a study on mentoring ethnic minorities in the academy.

In our experiences as emerging scholars we experienced several challenges related to finding mentors as emerging black feminist women scholars. In our earlier work (Segalo and Kiguwa 2015) we pointed to the struggles that we were confronted with as a result of a lack of mentorship and mirrors we could look into so as to imagine the journey ahead. The discipline of psychology for a long time *refused* to offer a platform to women (Black women, in particular) scholars thereby making it difficult for many of us to imagine ourselves occupying such spaces. A transformative mentorship makes it possible to re-imagine our sense of belonging in the academy. In this sense, we re-imagine the academic space as community; a place where our identities are not questioned, where our knowledges are part of the canon, and our competencies acknowledged. Furthermore, a transformative form of mentorship should cut across hierarchies: between students and academic staff, among staff members, and among students. This could be achieved through collaborative projects that develop different skills and promote the interchange of skills.

Mentorship further allows for the sharing of experience and anxieties related to the bureaucratic functioning of the academy. For example, in my (second author) work with women academics at my institution we have created what we call *Women Researchers Corner* which is a platform that brings together both emerging and established women researchers. This platform aims at providing space for the sharing of ideas, guidance on how to confront challenges linked to studies (mainly Masters and Doctoral studies), writing funding proposals, navigating the academic space more broadly, and how to respond to negative feedback. This engagement is not confined to the university space as we also go on retreats off-campus where we spent time engaging the multiple challenges faced by women researchers. In another example, at my (first author) institution we have formed the *Women Intellectuals Transforming Scholarship in Education* which consists of academic staff and students. This group provides a space for sharing research ideas, a platform for engaging scholarship for women and by women. It is also about developing skills for sourcing of funding and a space for sharing anxieties, experiences and ideas in how we engage with the broader university community. We further provide skills-building workshops. These examples highlight the necessity to shift away from traditional modes of mentorship that (1) impose and sustain hierarchies of power; (2) do not create spaces for the personal and (3) do not recognise the importance of (Black) women only spaces.

Community and Research (Within and Beyond the University)

In her enunciation of decolonial feminism principles, Lugones (2010) calls for an approach to gender that is not individualist but considers gender in relation to the community. Gender is understood here as not fixed. She argues that part of the task of resistance of a coloniality of gender involves shifting from such an individualist approach that separates our sense of being and doing from our communities: "Communities rather than individuals enable the doing; one does with someone else, not in individualist isolation" (p.754). A decolonial feminist community psychology approach recognises the role and meaning of community to individual well-being and sees these two modes of connection as inseparable. Understanding how gender structures itself in our everyday lives requires an engagement with socio-political and psychosocial dimensions of gender in terms of such connection.

A decolonial feminist community psychology proposes a radical shift from the linear and binary modes of thinking that present gender and gendered violence in binaried ways. We acknowledge that who we are now as 'gendered beings' is as a result of the colonial past which has pitched people against one another. In her seminal work, *Rape: A South African Nightmare*, Gqola (2015) discusses race as an ordering system that institutionalises violence against particular bodies. She further argues that gender's history is no different but rooted in a colonial past. This past orders gender in linear and binary ways that do not acknowledge the histories and cultures of African peoples. Oyěwùmí (1997) argues this strongly in her claim that the colonial state not only categorised men and women in specific gendered ways but also created different axes of privilege and power in relation to this. Therefore it is important to take these historical moments into consideration as they play a critical role in how gender is performed in the present.

Our approach to community work and research adopts a view of these two practices as interconnected. Two such projects which we discuss next and that we are part of (*Inside-Out Outside-In Corrections Project* and *The Young Women's Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Project*) demonstrate this interchange between community work and research. We conclude by reflecting on the importance of collaborative community engagement that does not treat communities as merely sites for data collection.

Inside-Out Outside-In Corrections Project

The *Inside-Out Outside-In project* that I (second author) am a member of, started as an interest group that later morphed into a formal community engagement project. The project seeks to create a platform that engages the lived experiences of offenders, ex-offenders and corrections officials. The project looks broadly at some of the challenges faced by incarcerated women, notions of motherhood and fatherhood

while incarcerated, and challenges faced by ex-offenders upon their release from the corrections facilities. The project looks broadly at the multi-layered functioning of corrections and zooms in at the possibility of rehabilitation and what it means through the lens of those who are part of this system. It is a collaborative project that involves multiple stakeholders and collaborators with the hope and aim of having multiple voices engaging on challenges and possibilities linked to corrections. It is a university project housed in a Psychology department but functions in close partnership with multiple correctional facilities based in various parts of South Africa. Through engagement with our collaborators, we learn with and from each other and together critique and re-imagine what corrections could look like and we further imagine the possibility of a differently functioning system. The idea is to work towards a system that opens itself up to the possibility of thinking differently about how we deal with and respond to 'societal norm digressions'. A decolonial feminist community psychology is a useful theoretical lens that helps us to do the work of tackling masculinities in societies, especially what we would call toxic masculinities. A feminist approach challenges patriarchal and hegemonic notions of what it means to be a man. The *Inside out-Outside in project* importantly focuses on male prisoners because it is about addressing toxic masculinities and doing the work of reimagining what a healthy masculinity could look like. One of the aims of decoloniality is not to impose but be involved in a participatory intervention process that allows space for people in the community (in this case, the corrections facility community) to determine their own needs as part of this reimagining.

The project takes a participatory action approach wherein all the stakeholders contribute towards the shaping and identifying of concerns to be given attention and the possible directions to be taken in responding to identified issues. In their article entitled *Participatory Action Research: From Within and Beyond Prison Bars*, Fine et al. (2004) engage with the various ways in which a participatory approach offers space for multiple voices and perspectives that lend themselves to de-centralising where the power lies. Their work points to the importance of having a multi-stakeholder collaboration when planning, executing and implementing a project. Working within the Corrections environment, they highlight challenges and opportunities that exist when working within a highly regulated and securitised space.

Young Women's Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Project

The *Young Women's Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights* research team (YWL in SRHR) that I (first author) currently coordinate with a team of colleagues seeks to develop young women researchers in the field of sexual and reproductive rights. This seven year-old project creates a platform for young women students within the tertiary education context to develop their critical research skills while also developing their psychosocial engagements with the university and the

community at large. Through weekly research mentorship meetings that involve all members of the team reading, sharing and discussing aspects of their own and the group project, this platform provides a space for the mentorship and growth of women academics that is not typically cultivated in this context. The team has also formed partnerships with community and Non-Governmental partners that highlight the necessity for bridging the academic-activist divide that tends to exist in the academy. These partnerships entail work related to gender-based violence, conducting workshops and intervention community briefings that engage the community in aspects of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Through these briefings we construct a platform for dialogue and reflexivity related to core tensions in doing feminist participatory action research and critically interrogating the notion of empowerment. The Project's epistemological thrust is that matters of sexual and gender violence in South Africa and the continent more broadly, are structurally and intra-psychically intersected with a psycho-political history of colonialism that continues to influence current configurations of violence. In addressing gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive rights for women, it is important that such a psycho-political history is considered in how we conceptualize and intervene in different contexts. Gendered configurations and experiences embody the struggles, contradictions and tensions of such a history that in turn influence how the personal configured in the social and vice versa is a political and not just psychological project.

The above two examples highlight the importance of not treating community sites as merely sites for data collection whereby proposals for recommendations are made that do not include the voices of the community. Decolonial feminist community psychology recognises the arbitrary divide that tends to exist between the academy and activist spaces. This divide posits superficial claims to legitimate knowledge in the one domain to the detriment of the other. Thus indigenous knowledges are often positioned as 'non-academic' or 'non-scientific' and therefore illegitimate.

Towards a Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology

A decolonial feminist community psychology must carefully consider the capacity for agency that communities possess in thinking about solutions to challenges that they are confronted with. This means a rethinking of how we disseminate knowledge gained as a result of our engagement with communities. Conversations and dialogues are critical in this process. We show in our examples of the projects we run that being academics and being activists involve identities and practices that we do not easily separate from ourselves as feminist decolonial community psychologists. We believe that academic engagement with broader communities outside of the academy must not be reduced to data collection processes that leave communities feeling exploited and undermined. Instead, we view such interaction and engagement as dialogical between community members and ourselves as

researchers, that involves shared learning and that includes joint intervention brainstorming. In this chapter we have highlighted and shared some of our ideas for reconceptualising community psychology practice from a decolonial feminist perspective. We note some of our tensions and discomforts as black female academics working in institutions of higher learning that continuously separate the practice of the academy in teaching and research from broader community practice. We argue that this divide remains an artificial one that only serves to reinforce hierarchies of power in knowledge production. Through examples of some of our mentorship, teaching and community practice, we demonstrate some of the ways that decolonial feminist community psychology entails a shift in epistemological lens as well as adoption of teaching and research practice that deviates from the traditional approach of objective and expert observers. A decolonial feminist community psychology endeavours to reframe how we think about communities, how we conceptualise our roles as knowledge producers, the politics of knowledge dissemination and teaching as critical pedagogical practice.

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Performative Activism and Activist Performance: Young People Engaging in Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology in Contemporary South African Contexts

Tamara Shefer

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Introduction

South Africa is a quarter of a century into the post-apartheid democracy and efforts to rebuild a socially just society, yet high rates of sexual and gendered violence persist which are entangled with systemic violence shaped by centuries of colonization and decades of apartheid (Boonzaier 2017; Gqola 2015). It is also evident, however, that the many efforts to challenge such inequalities, injustices and violence, at scholarly, policy and community-based levels, are not as effective as hoped, and may even serve to reinstate and bolster existing discourses and practices of sexual and gender injustice and inequality. Notwithstanding what has been well acknowledged as an excellent piece of constitutional and legal machinery in support of gender equality (Rustin 2018), South Africa remains characterized by

T. Shefer (✉)
Department of Women's and Gender Studies, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa
e-mail: tshefer@uwc.ac.za

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high rates of gender and sexual violence, homophobia and homophobic violence and sexism and racism at multiple levels of the societal, political, ideological and material.

South African community psychology directed at social justice goals has a relatively long history, emerging out of critiques of mainstream psychological services that were the exclusive preserve of white and middle-class South Africans, and as a part of the larger anti-apartheid and mass democratic movements, particularly from the 1980s onward (see for example, the Psychology in Society Journal founded in 1980; Duncan et al. 2015; Naidoo et al. 2007; Ratele et al. 2004; Visser and Moleko 2012). In many ways, community psychology in South Africa encapsulated the goals of developing a more socially relevant project for psychology as a discipline and profession. In this respect, community psychology was and remains directed at attempting to address both the accessibility of services to support and promote social-psychological health that goes beyond individualized, inaccessible services, and to work in preventative ways to challenge material and discursive forces that undermine subjective and community mental health and well-being. Writing in the South African context, Naidoo et al. (2007, p. 12) defined Community Psychology as 'an emerging branch of applied psychology concerned with understanding people in the context of their communities, using a variety of interventions (including prevention, health promotion and social action), to facilitate change and improved mental health and social conditions for individuals, groups, organisations and communities (Naidoo et al. 2007, p. 12). While this field of psychology became entrenched in South African psychology from the late 1980s, for example taught as part of the clinical and counseling training for South African psychologists in many local universities, there has been little work up until recently that engages with decoloniality and feminist theory and community psychology. Moreover, as Reyes Cruz and Sonn (2011, p. 209), writing across transnational contexts argue, the dominant canon in community psychology has tended to reproduce the authority of the psychologist as researcher and professional and reinforced the trope of the community psychologist as focusing on challenges 'that exists outside of the observer (i.e. researchers and practitioners)' (Reyes Cruz and Sonn 2011, p. 209). Thus, those in privileged positions of whiteness and middle-classness for example 'are typically not asked to reflect on their cultural identities because their culture is the norm' (2011, p. 224). They argue that work in community psychology 'requires actively deconstructing notions of the other based on the enduring legacy of colonial relations' (2011, p. 213). A number of other contemporary critical psychologists (including Adams et al. 2015; and Kessi 2017) also make this point. Contemporary South African psychologists are increasingly engaged in rethinking practices in psychology, both in research and professional engagements (for example, Kessi and Boonzaier 2018) and increasingly moving towards modeling a decolonial feminist community psychology through re-thinking and re-making normative practices of pedagogy and research.

In this chapter I explore a number of examples of what may be termed *performative activism* and *activist performance* (Shefer 2018) directed at social justice in South Africa. I use these terms to refer to forms of mobilization and activism

that deploy performance and art in their practices of advocacy and consciousness-raising; as well as artistic performance and creativity that is activist and pedagogical. Diverse forms of performative activism/activist performance which work across and between the divides of activism, art and scholarship, arguably serve as forms of community psychology, fulfilling both a pedagogical and consciousness-raising project while also serving community psychological goals of providing support, healing, safety and care at a community rather than individualized level. The proliferation of such intersectional feminist and queer activist and artistic interventions provide an important example of what Boonzaier and van Niekerk (2019) term 'modes of engagement, research, dialogue and reflexive practice that espouse principles of an emerging decolonial feminist community psychology' in the introduction to this volume. I suggest the importance for community psychology as a profession and discipline to dialogue with and provide space for such community led interventions in scholarship and practice. Local examples of diverse community psychology practices serve as rich resources for community psychology since they model participatory active research and practice and take forward the goals of community psychology for both prevention and amelioration related to inequalities, abuse and violence, in ways that are appropriate and accessible for young people in South Africa and further afield. The chapter draws on a number of contemporary local interventions to unpack how engagements with these and many other examples reinvigorate a role for a critical, feminist and decolonial community psychology in the acknowledgement of the psychosocial demands of social change.

Contemporary Contexts of Intersectional Feminist Queer Discourse and Practice in South Africa

The last few years in South Africa have seen an inspiring proliferation of online and public activism, art and performance that has been directed at an intersectional gender and sexual justice project. Student protests beginning in early 2015 strengthened existing efforts and inspired further political activism and art among young South Africans. Notably, young people's protests, both on and off campus, have been firmly located within a decolonial discourse with a strong thread of feminist and queer theory. An assertion that sexual and gender justice must be a key part of decolonial struggle has been powerfully articulated within the larger framework of student and public protest as well as in critical art and performances. Intersectionality was from the start a key narrative among activists in higher education and elsewhere, taken forward by movements such as the trans-collective and others around sexual violence at South African universities, and also evident in wider pedagogical and activist efforts. Also of significance in the South African context where feminist discourse has been strongly associated with whiteness, middle-classness and the global North (Dosekun 2007; Gouws 2016), young Black womxn and trans people have been particularly active in leading sexual and gender justice struggles in the decolonial movement (Gouws 2016, 2017). A clear feminist

and queer agenda was evident in student activist calls for intersectionality in the decolonial agenda on campus and also represented in larger public performative activism and activist performance, as will be elaborated further.

Performative Art for Feminist Decoloniality

There are many current examples of performative activism and activist performance that disrupt 'business as usual' and call attention to social injustice, speaking in particular to intersectional gender and sexual justice goals. One powerful example is the performance by Sethembile Msezane of a Great Zimbabwe Bird during the removal of the Cecil John Rhodes Statue at the University of Cape Town, following calls from students and staff to decolonize the university, on the 9 April 2015 (see also Buikema 2016, 2017; Shefer 2018). During this statue's ejection from its prominent place overlooking the university and the city of Cape Town (of course a powerful colonial gesture on its own), an artistic installation by Msezane, a Masters graduate at UCT's fine art school was performed in parallel[1]. Msezane stood near the 'falling' Rhodes statue for the entire few hours it took for the statue to be removed. Msezane's human stature with raised wings for flight gestured to the soapstone African bird statues that were stolen from Great Zimbabwe during the colonial period and sold on to powerful male settlers, including Rhodes (Huffman 1987; Hubbard 2009). Rhodes had purchased a number of these artworks, one of them still housed in his former home in Groote Schuur estate in Cape Town, known as the 'Cecil Rhodes' Bird' (Hubbard 2009). Msezane later also performed this installation at the Great Zimbabwe site in Zimbabwe as part of her performative activist project (http://www.sethembile-msezane.com/kwasukasukela/). While the fall of the Rhodes statue was an important political and socio-psychological moment, that 'marked the beginning of a new narrative about the politics of space and belonging' (Kessi and Boonzaier 2015, p. 3), Msezane's installation brought a powerful intersectional gendered lens to this decolonial moment. Constituting an activist performance and pedagogical intervention, this installation was arguably a poignant material-discursive disruptive moment that surfaced the entanglements of patriarchal and colonial plunder and violence. The moment may be read as an ascendancy of an agentic powerful African femininity, with the descent of male, northern white settler, both a symbolic reclaiming of that which was stolen, possibly fulfilling a larger public sense of 'correction', together with a political, pedagogical and psychological call to the imperative to disrupt colonial and patriarchal logics in the university and the broader social realm.

Importantly, then is the public acknowledgement of intersectionality, also a significant discourse in student decolonial movements over the last few years with the performative representation of the enmeshment of patriarchy and colonial power and

[1] See https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/may/15/sethembile-msezane-cecil-rhodes-statue-cape-town-south-africa for more detailed description and http://www.sethembile-msezane.com/projects/ for more of Msezane's work.

violences. As Rosemarie Buikema (2017, p. 147)[2] suggests, Msezane's performance 'thus inserts both academy and art into an activist performance, creating an image which forever links the de-colonization movement's critique of imperialism and patriarchy in an innovative and thought provoking way'. Msezane (2017) similarly portrays her work as informed by a struggle to challenge intersectional exclusions and erasures, and represents her work as addressing what are arguably community psychological projects of working with memory of trauma and oppression and ongoing subjugation. Through centering 'African womxn as re-imagined protagonists', she argues that 'performance has been key, in my practice to re-locating the presence of the black female body… Collectively these works narrate resistance and self-assertion in response to dominant ideologies in the public space' (Msezane 2017, n.p).

Sethembile Msezane's activist performance is significant not only for drawing attention to and symbolically recovering stolen heritage but it also speaks to intersectional gender inequalities, to 'subalternities' (Spivak 1988) of the colonized, disenfranchised and womxn. The 'civilizing project' of universities, like the University of Cape Town, and their role in bolstering colonialist endeavours is flagged in this moment. The power of the installation is the assemblage created by the removal of the statue and the artist (and indeed much more, the university, the crowd, the crane, and so on). It portrays the stark disjuncture between the in/corporeal, masculine, white, cold stone statue representing the humanist colonial project and the corporeal, female, Black, warm embodied representing a decolonial feminist future. Strategically dialoguing with the removal of the statue of a white northern patriarchal colonialist, Sethembile Msezane raises consciousness about intersectional inequalities and abuses of the past and their continuities in the present. She performs the ascendance of an African womxn in the form of a bird gesturing to the soap stone statues stolen from Great Zimbabwe, notably also a historical place representing flourishing and strength of African cultures and lives. Not only is this articulating a powerful symbolic challenge to patriarchal (post)colonization and the recalcitrant role of the university in imperialist settler violences and continued intersectional inequalities, but it inspires the hope of alternative equal and non-violent futures. Msezane's performance together with the fall of the statue may be fruitfully thought of as an *assemblage*, which as conceptualised in the Deleuzian and Guattarian tradition, represents a particular arrangement of elements that constitute a different pattern, that create a new knowledge. As articulated by Anna Tsing (2015, p. 23) assemblages 'don't just gather lifeways; they make them. Thinking through assemblage urges us to ask: How do gatherings sometimes become "happenings," that is, greater than the sum of their parts?'.

This powerful piece of performative activism or activist performance certainly creates new knowledge and constitutes a happening that is more than the sum of its parts, and arguably serves also as a form of community psychology that is a project of public pedagogy and consciousness-raising. The *assemblage* shifts the public imaginary in multiple ways, beyond the most obviously significant displacement of a settler statue and its constant reminder of colonial abuses.

[2] This quote appears in Buikema's (2017) book in Dutch, shortly to be translated, and cited from a paper presented in English at a conference in 2016 (Buikema, 2016).

Queer Performative Activism in the Disruption of Racist Heteronormativity

Queer and LGBTIQ+ activism, both within the larger decolonial project and also increasingly evident within a contemporary artistic and performative activism is growing rapidly in South African public and internet spaces. Within the student decolonial movement, beginning in 2015, queer and feminist activists were particularly vocal in foregrounding the intersectionality of sexual and gender justice goals. Notable in the context of higher education is the work of the trans collective[3], including the performative activism in the group's disruption of an exhibition at the University of Cape Town commemorating a year since the #Rhodesmustfall movement started (see also Gray van Heerden 2018; Shefer 2018).

Such activism has often been characterized by public and publicly available performative activism and activist performance. A wide range of online performances and youtube videos that challenge heteronormativity and its embeddedness in colonial logics have proliferated in recent years. One such example is Johannesburg based performing duo, FAKA, Fela Gucci and Desire Marea who describe their project as being directed at social justice and change through art, in particular 'to create an eclectic aesthetic with which they express their ideas about themes central to their experience as black queer bodies navigating the cis-hetero-topia of post-colonial Africa'[4]. The duo perform music which presents themselves as non-binary people taking pride and pleasure in frequently flamboyant dress and performance of Black, queer embodiment and relationality, calling into question the continued subjugation of and violences against queer people of colour. Their performances challenge heteronormativity while also disrupting the still salient trope of the unAfricanness of gay and queer desire and practice. As international performer, artist and poet, Mykki Blanco (2017, n.p.), argues, activist artists like FAKA are 'redefining what it is to be African, queer and visible where all over the world queer voices are being silenced'. In a reflection on their experiences of marginality and erasure of being Black and queer, FAKA artist and performer, Desire Marea, poignantly argues the intersectionality of subjugations and the way in which their activism then speaks to a decolonial, feminist and queer project:

> This feeling of spatial exclusion became all the more reified when I grew older and certain contrasts my body made within spaces put me in positions of danger. In many other instances, it was not only my very "blackness" that was in conflict with spaces, it was my femininity and my queerness[5].

In many ways, dynamic, artistic and performative engagements such as FAKA's powerful work that flags racist, heteronormative oppressions reproduced by the patriarchal colonial logics that are implicit in every day social relations, as well as

[3] https://www.facebook.com/transfeministcollective/posts/113220963351248, accessed 18 June 2016.

[4] http://www.siyakaka.com/about-1/.

[5] https://10and5.com/2016/09/22/on-visibility-and-the-illusion-of-the-safe-space/.

resistance and challenge, serve a community psychological project. Such representations both articulate the pain and injustice that many face in not fitting a white, heteronormative stereotype yet are also about pleasure, agency and freedom. This artistic work arguably raises consciousness in local and transnational communities (both online and material) while also often serving as socio-psychological, arguably therapeutic spaces facilitating identification and belonging for those marginalized, 'othered' and excluded in a continued heteronormative and homophobic space. Nigel Patel (2017, n.p.), a well-known local queer activist, writing about 'Siyanibona',[6] a new television show representing a partnership of Iranti-Org[7] (a queer human rights visual media organization based in Johannesburg) and Soweto TV (directed at LGBTIQ+ advocacy) says:

> Siyanibona's importance is multidimensional. For many, the authentic queer stories will be significant because they may be the first or only ones in which people either see experiences similar to theirs, or learn about experiences different from their own. It is a sincere hope that the show has the ability to transform feelings of confusion, loneliness and fear into safety, affirmation and hope.

Patel powerfully articulates what are recognizable as community psychological endeavors, flagging how social media and activist art may open up space both for social consciousness and collective social justice education while also facilitating subjective identification and breaking the alienation and isolation of 'difference' in relation to rigid status quo norms and privileges.

Collective Embodied Action Against Sexual Violence

A strong wave of protest, art and performativity against sexual violence and harassment against womxn has heightened in local South African contexts over the last few years, both through online strategic engagements (for example, Hussen 2018) and through collective activism such as marches and protest actions (for example, Gouws 2016, 2017). Such activism further serves a pedagogical and collective psycho-social role with respect to challenging sexual and gender-based violence which

[6] Siyanibona has generated 13 television episodes so far which highlight discrimination against LBTIQ+ as well as resistances and advocacy (see for example, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ew-A8B-lI0; http://www.mambaonline.com/2018/02/08/sas-first-lgbti-tv-show-celebrates-coming-closet/)

[7] Iranti is a queer human rights visual media organization based in Johannesburg, South Africa. Iranti works within a human rights framework as its foundational platform for raising issues on Gender, Identities and Sexuality. Founded in January 2012 by Human Rights activist, photographer and curator, Jabu Pereira is formed with the clear intention of building local partnerships and movements that use media as a key platform for lobbying, advocacy and educational interventions across Africa. Through the use of various visual mediums such as videos, photography, audio recording, among others it sets itself as an archive of Queer memory in ways that destabilize numerous modes of discrimination based on gender, sexuality and sexual orientation'. (https://www.iranti-org.co.za)

remain challenges in contemporary South African society. Over the last few years there have been widespread activism particularly at university campuses as part of the #fallism movements, and in the public terrain through mass mobilizations such as the #totalshutdown movement that challenge high rates of sexual and gender violence in South Africa. Sexual violence is understood as built into the fabric of South African society through the complex and interwoven heritages of coloniality, apartheid and patriarchy (Boonzaier 2017; Gqola 2015; Ratele 2013). It is also increasingly flagged as a particular challenge at universities where high rates of gender-based abuses and the regulation of female students' lives through the threat of sexual violence and lack of safety on campus exists (for example, Bennett et al. 2007; Collins 2014; Dosekun 2013; Hames 2009;).

One key example within the student protests has been the wave of activism over the last few years at various universities against sexual violence, which more recently has been joined by wider community and collective activism in public terrains against sexual violence. Linked to the larger #fallism movement since 2015, anti-sexual violence protests were bolstered by a series of activisms at different universities. For example, at Rhodes University, in the Eastern Cape, students marched in the streets of the small city, Grahamstown, around the University (see Macleod and Barker 2016, for a more detailed overview). Students called on university leaders to challenge sexual violence on campus and revisit policies that they argued fail to protect rape victims. Importantly, this activism which followed at many of the other university campuses was lead by Black womxn students, which has been noted as significant in a context where Rape Crisis movements and feminism in general have been associated with white and middle-class womxn (Gouws 2016). Notably, student activist endeavours frequently emphasized embodied precarities through, for example, deploying partial nakedness with texts such as 'revolt' and 'still not asking for it' written on activists' bodies, challenging victim-blaming and sexist rape myths that continue to be salient in South African contexts (Hussen 2018). These struggles have been especially important in bringing an intersectional project to sexual violence activism and in flagging the coloniality and racism of sexual violence (Gouws 2016; Shefer 2018). The narratives employed in the protests also extended, as did the actions of the trans collective, a language of intersectionality to the larger decolonial and social justice movement in higher education and further afield, as argued by Gouws (2016, n.p.):

> The actions of women students in the #EndRapeculture campaign, on a symbolic level, articulate how the intersectionality of race, gender and sexuality positions black African women as sexual subjects in relation to men but also in relation to white women and white men – something that an intersectional African feminist identity expresses.

Activism against sexual violence has in recent years increasingly deployed online modalities to publicize events and mobilize, which also serve as strategic political activism and pedagogical interventions in their own right (Hussen 2018). The #MeToo global movement, other more national-based movements such as the Icelandic #freethenipple (Rúdólfsdóttir and Jóhannsdóttir 2018), and the local

South African movement that emerged and has grown significantly from 2018 as #totalshutdown[8] serve as key moments of transnational and locally-based interventions at large scale public levels against sexual harassment and violence. The latter South African based movement, which began at the start of what has come to be known as women's month (with August 9th as National Women's Day) in 2018, called for all womxn to 'shut down' (boycott work, shops, and so on) and join a mass march to parliament, and serves as a significant example of current use of social media in mobilization for social justice. Such movements, while not uncontested,[9] together arguably serve community psychological goals of both psycho-education and consciousness-raising as well as facilitating more subjective healing through recognition, identification with others, safety, belonging and collectivity. While often operating in a context that is not a geographically, geopolitically or culturally-based community but a 'virtual community' on the basis of shared or similar violences, injustices or threats, these interventions serve to create a virtual and at times material (for example during marches) 'safe space' similar to other forms of community psychological interventions and research on sexual violence (see for example, Campbell et al. 2004; Lichty et al. 2018).

Concluding Thoughts: Towards a Critical Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology

My project in this chapter is to illustrate how a de/anti-colonial and feminist community psychology is *already* there in contemporary South African and transnational contexts, particularly through the agency of young feminist and queer activists and artists. I suggest that community engagements, both virtual and material, with sexual and gender justice initiatives, performances, activism and online protests amongst others, are powerful forms of community psychology.

The chapter has drawn on a small handful of the many current examples of the proliferating engagements over the last few years that speak to a range of goals key to a community psychological approach, including consciousness-raising, social solidarity and more subjective therapeutic support that engages people in communities, rather than individually. There are of course constraints to such forms of community engagement; as is usual in an unequal global capitalist economy; those with more resources, such as access to data and online electronic resources such as smartphones, are more able to access such support. Notwithstanding such challenges, a key imperative for community psychology as

[8] See https://www.facebook.com/WomenProtestSA/.

[9] While representing a transnational example of women's solidarity, #MeToo also raises intersectional inequalities since the campaign has tended to be driven by global northern white womxn, while many of those in global southern and other marginalized, less resourced parts of the world have not been.

a discipline and profession, engaged in pedagogical and community-based practice and privileging those disadvantaged economically and socio-politically, would be to acknowledge community initiatives *already* there that speak to a critical decolonial and feminist project. In particular it would seem important for those in community psychological institutional positions, whether in universities or health services, to direct energies and resources towards supporting, bolstering and making further spaces for the efforts of communities and activist agents and 'champions' in diverse communities.

Young people in South Africa are 'troubling' every day injustices that are part of the fabric of our colonial and patriarchal heritages and that bleed into the often unquestioned hegemonic institutionalized practices and discourses of universities and broader society. Donna Haraway (2016, p. 1) reminds us that the word 'trouble' has its roots in a French word meaning '"to stir up," "to make cloudy," "to disturb."' Young South Africans are indeed stirring up, disturbing and clouding the rigid binarisms of race, class, gender, sexuality and many more indicators of difference and injustice that continue to shape exclusionary practices and make erasures and violences of certain bodies and communities possible. Community psychologists in the project of community socio-psychological changes and collective therapeutic and well-being goals are arguably well-placed to 'stay with the trouble' as Haraway (2016, p. 1) urges:

> Our task is to make trouble, to stir up potent response to devastating events, as well as to settle troubled waters and rebuild quiet places. In urgent times, many of us are tempted to address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe, of stopping something from happening that looms in the future, of clearing away the present and the past in order to make futures for coming generations. Staying with the trouble does not require such a relationship to times called the future. In fact, staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings.

Importantly, community psychology faces the task of the ongoing challenge of decolonizing and depatriarchalising the discipline and profession. The project of re-engaging and re-enervating methodologies of participatory, agentic and community-led dialogical and reflexive practices, that have long been a part of the larger struggle against an increasingly individualist, consumerist and pathologizing mainstream psychology, is urgent and taking shape. A decolonized community psychology would arguably benefit greatly from productive and ethical intra-action with contemporary decolonizing feminist and queer projects of young people, in South Africa and in transnational contexts.

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