

wonder as feminist pedagogy: disrupting feminist complicity with coloniality

Fabiane Ramos and Laura Roberts

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abstract

This article documents our collaborative ongoing struggle to disrupt the reproduction of the coloniality of knowledge in the teaching of Gender Studies. We document how our decolonial feminist activism is actualised in our pedagogy, which is guided by feminist interpretations of 'wonder' (Irigaray, 1999; Ahmed, 2004; hooks, 2010) read alongside decolonial theory, including that of Ramón Grosfoguel, Walter D. Mignolo and María Lugones. Using notions of wonder as pedagogy, we attempt to create spaces in our classrooms where critical self-reflection and critical intellectual and embodied engagement can emerge. Our attempts to create these spaces include multiple aspects or threads that, when woven together, might enable other ways of knowing-being-doing that works towards disrupting feminist complicity with coloniality in the Australian context.

keywords

Gender Studies; coloniality; decolonality; wonder; feminist pedagogy; Sara Ahmed; Luce Irigaray; María Lugones

'It is through wonder', Sara Ahmed (2004, p. 180) writes, 'that pain and anger come to life', pushing us to realise that 'what hurts, and what causes pain ... is not necessary, and can be unmade as well as made'. Wonder, for Ahmed (*ibid.*, p. 181), thus 'energises the hope of transformation ... the will for politics' and is key to feminist pedagogy. Inspired by Ahmed and in thinking through how notions of wonder as pedagogy contribute to wider decolonial feminist approaches, our article explores how we employ our interpretations of wonder in our pedagogies in an attempt to challenge the ongoing epistemic and ontological violence of colonial logics in the Academy and in mainstream feminism. Our article thus documents our collaborative ongoing struggle to disrupt the reproduction of the coloniality of knowledge in the teaching of Gender Studies and our attempts to actualise decolonial feminist approaches in university classrooms. It was while working on a casual basis teaching Gender Studies courses at a research-intensive Australian university from 2017 to 2019,¹ as two early career academics, that we recognised an opening through which we might begin to disrupt the problem of feminist complicity with coloniality through our teaching practices. This article explores how we understand this complicity with coloniality, as well as theorising and documenting our collaborative efforts to resist this ongoing issue within mainstream academic feminism. Our decolonial feminist activism is actualised in our pedagogy, which is guided by feminist interpretations of 'wonder' (Irigaray, 1999; Ahmed, 2004; hooks, 2010) read alongside decolonial theory, including that of Ramón Grosfoguel (2007, 2012, 2013), Walter D. Mignolo (2009, 2011) and María Lugones (1987, 2003, 2007, 2010). Using notions of wonder as pedagogy, we attempt to create spaces in our classrooms where critical self-reflection and critical intellectual and embodied engagement can emerge. Our attempts to create these spaces include multiple aspects or threads which, when woven together, might enable other ways of knowing-being-doing that work towards disrupting feminist complicity with coloniality in the Australian context.

coloniality and gender studies in Australia

Before we turn to our ideas of wonder as pedagogy, it is necessary to first articulate what we understand by coloniality and its links to Gender Studies, as well as to comment on the location from where we speak (Meanjin, Brisbane, Australia). For us, the foundation of coloniality is based on power structures and logics generated during the colonial era such as 'the international division of labour (core-periphery), the racial/ethnic hierarchy (West and non-West), the Christian-centric patriarchal hierarchy of gender/sexuality and the interstate system (military and political power)' (Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou, 2015, p. 641). Coloniality, as Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007, p. 243) writes, 'refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration'. Coloniality thus offers a valuable frame for an analysis that takes into consideration how contemporary Australia has been shaped by the complexities and ambiguities of its unique history as a white European settler colony geographically situated in the Asia-Pacific.

In unpacking coloniality, Aníbal Quijano (2000) explains that as countries in Western Europe consolidated themselves as the centre of capitalism during their colonial expansion, they possessed hegemonic

¹ In early 2020, Laura Roberts moved to another Australian university, but both of us continue to teach Gender Studies and to develop a shared *wonder as pedagogy* praxis. For this reason, we mostly use the present tense to discuss our practices.

control over the world's market, means of production and workforce, and, as a consequence, became the centre of global knowledge production. Thinking through the philosophical significance of Western Europe's control of global knowledge production, Maldonado-Torres (2007) links coloniality to René Descartes' philosophical formulation of *cogito ergo sum*: I think therefore I am. Maldonado-Torres (*ibid.*, p. 252) argues that this notion 'presupposes two unacknowledged dimensions'; he notes: 'Beneath the "I think" we can read "others do not think", and behind the "I am" it is possible to locate the philosophical justification for the idea that "others are not" or do not have being' (*ibid.*). Maldonado-Torres (*ibid.*, pp. 252–253) links the coloniality of knowledge with the coloniality of being and makes the crucial point that 'the absence of rationality is articulated in modernity with the idea of the absence of Being in others'. Maldonado-Torres makes the point that rationality, as determined by the project of modernity, works to exclude various Indigenous, colonised and feminised subjects from the category of knower / knowledge producer as well as the realm of the human and, thus, of existence.

Based on this argument, it becomes evident that knowledge production and research in universities have been fundamental elements in the establishment of coloniality and, more specifically, the coloniality of knowledge. Backed by economic, political and technological dominance, Westernised universities have had the power to produce and spread a certain type of academic knowledge conceived as universal, neutral and authoritative produced by a privileged group of 'knowers/subjects' (Grosfoguel, 2013; McDowall and Ramos, 2018). It is thus crucial that we understand the gravity of this situation when considering or imagining a decolonial feminist challenge to the coloniality of knowledge and Being. Articulating embodied decolonial feminist ways of knowing and thinking fundamentally challenges this logic of the Cartesian cogito, its illusorily neutrality and its 'unacknowledged dimensions' as it moves towards other ways of knowing-doing and, ultimately, being.²

In the Australian context, the position of privileged knowers/subjects is deeply connected to the logic of coloniality. From the onset of colonisation, the knower/subject is conceptualised as middle-/upper-class heterosexual cisgender men of Anglo-British heritage. Accordingly, the groups of people who do not fit within these descriptors are reduced to the category of the 'known/object'. Feminist movements and the academic discipline of Gender Studies have long fought for bringing women (and more recently people of different genders and sexualities, beyond binary and normative divisions) into the realm of knower/subject. On many fronts, the discipline has made important progress in that regard; however, coloniality still governs the underlying logic of mainstream feminism and, by association, Gender Studies. Struggles and knowledge creation in this field have traditionally centred on the plight of middle-class cisgender white women (with a recent stronger presence of queer and to a certain extent transgender people) from the Global North.³ It is this location that has produced what we know today as the canon in Gender Studies. In this manner, a complicity in sustaining a colonial logic of knowledge

² For more on this, see Lugones (2007, 2010) and two recent *Hypatia* special issues: 'Indigenizing and Decolonizing Feminist Philosophy' (Bardwell-Jones and McLaren, 2020) and 'Toward Decolonial Feminisms' (Velez and Tuana, 2020). Luce Irigaray does not take an explicitly decolonial approach, but her critique of Cartesian logic is nevertheless helpful for these debates (see Roberts, 2019).

³ Despite limitations with the Global North/South as terminology, we employ these terms guided by Mignolo's (2011, p. 166) definition of the Global South/North as 'fuzzily delimited' areas of the globe that do not necessarily represent geographical locations. Following Mignolo's definition of Global North/South as metaphors to represent current global power/economic/social/political inequalities, we include Australia within the Global North category.

production with a clear centre and margins seems undeniable. It is important to note, however, that shifts to challenge and change this aspect of Gender Studies have been taking place. There is a clear trend towards inclusion and diversity, with intersectionality becoming a key catchphrase in Gender Studies' curriculums. Yet, a difficult and crucial question remains. Do these shifts go beyond tokenisation and feel-good actions based on the inclusion of women of colour and/or other underprivileged groups' representatives in the reading list?

The danger is that a false sense of diversity, inclusion and, for the sake of this discussion, decoloniality surfaces when in fact the hierarchical logic of knowledge production, with a clear legitimate canon, remains untouched. Feminists are quick to be critical of the 'dead white males' of the Western canon, but how often do we turn the critical gaze to what and how we teach in Gender Studies and their consequences in the perpetuation of coloniality? Mignolo (2009, p. 162) argues that 'it is not enough to change the content of the conversation, [but rather one has] to change the terms of the conversation ... [and] to go to the very assumptions that sustain locus of enunciation', with locus of enunciation referring to the 'geo-political and body-political location of the subject that speaks' (Grosfoguel, 2007, p. 213). Thus, if a decolonial project is to occur in Gender Studies (considering that it is possible), deep questions about locus of enunciation and the structures of knowledge production are necessary. It is not enough to include more voices in Gender Studies' narratives if the underlying coloniality of knowledge that governs the very terms of the conversation remains unchallenged. And, in the Australian context, we take our understandings of feminist complicity with coloniality from Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2000). Moreton-Robinson, a Goenpul woman of the Quandamooka people (Moreton Bay), writes:

Patriarchal whiteness surreptitiously works to support white feminists being racially disembodied as their thinking, knowing and writing becomes more consistent with Western male epistemology and disciplines. Patriarchal whiteness deludes women into thinking that their epistemology is unaffected by this process because of 'academic freedom' and their positioning as subject/knowers. Our ability to know and our experiences are limited, therefore standpoints are partial and so are the knowledges we produce. Finding ways to put a politics of difference into practice will require more than including voice or making space for Indigenous women in Australian feminism. It will require white race privilege to be owned and challenged by white feminists engaged in anti-racist pedagogy and politics. (Moreton-Robinson, 2000, p. 351)⁴

politics of location/positionalities

Following the words of Moreton-Robinson (2000, p. 351), we agree that one of the problems of feminist complicity with coloniality in Australia is that many authors of mainstream feminist scholarship remain disembodied in their thinking, failing to account for their positions within the colonial settler state and the racist structures it upholds. Given this, we require a pedagogy that considers the embodied knowledges we both bring to the classroom as teachers, the embodied knowledges of the guest lecturers, and the diverse sociopolitical locations of the students. One of our first steps then is to recognise our

⁴This article does not have the space to adequately explore the intimate links between capitalism, the neoliberalisation of higher education and the coloniality of knowledge. We do, however, acknowledge these important links and note that the journey towards decoloniality in the curriculum must take into account these links and the ways in which the intersections of these structures restrict access to university classrooms for many minority groups.

own politics of location (Rich, 1986). We are migrant women now living within the colonial settler state of Australia. We thus acknowledge our own personal geopolitical complicity with this system.

Fabiane Ramos

I remember the 21-year-old me, a cisgender woman of light-brown skin, fresh-off-the-plane, fresh to Australia.⁵ I was quickly made aware that I was not white but had an acceptable skin tone within a complicated power structure around skin colours. I was welcomed by a resident visa, which my middle-class, educated self was granted. But I soon realised that not all new arrivals had the same 'G'day' with a smile offered to them. I remember the undergraduate me learning in my linguistics class about the rhetoric used by the then Howard Government to dehumanise refugees.

I remember when I entered the field of English as Additional Language (EAL) education and felt a sense of discomfort in the stark contrast of migration experiences between my students at an exclusive private college and the new arrival refugees and asylum seekers whom I tutored. This discomfort continued in the early days of my doctorate studies as I started to become aware of the way that knowledge about people from the Global South was produced in research.

I also remember that from the beginning of my story in Australia, I was moved by the atrocities that colonisation had inflicted and still inflicts on Indigenous peoples. I thought I understood the illusion and lies of *terra nullius*. Yet, for a good part of the seventeen years since I migrated to Australia, I failed to see myself as a colonial settler. For me, a colonial settler was a white person who came here a long time ago. I was simply a non-white migrant. And because at times I endure some of the oppressions that might be linked to this positionality, I did not see my complicity with the continued colonisation and displacement of Australia's traditional custodians. As a new-migrant-colonial-settler, I am entitled to stay and compete for the privileges Australian citizens have access to that are grounded on genocide and dispossession. At the same time, I am still positioned as an outsider despite my citizenship status.

Since arriving, I have been socialised into a social system where those who hold the power to decide if I am allowed to stay or not—if I can belong or not—are a dominant class of white Australians (Moreton-Robinson, 2003). I did not have to ask any of the traditional custodians of this land if I could please come and stay. I did not have to apply for a visa with them. I did not have to be inserted into their institutions and culture(s). In contrast, I had to do all of these things in relation to the nation state of Australia and its mainstream group of inhabitants. And I could not in any way ignore the fact that the law and all institutions that I am now part of are controlled by the people who claim the positionality of 'real Australians' (*ibid.*). Indigenous Australians are not part of the invented Australian imaginary and norms with which new-migrant-colonial-settlers like me are presented. They are ignored and set aside. A desire to contest these logics and injustices started to grow as I began to understand my place in these entangled realities.

My eyes started to see past the walls built around the space I was told to occupy in Australia and academia (something like 'you may stay but do not cause trouble because after all you are not really one of us'). A necessity to disobey simmered. I began to understand that 'the wall is made out of sediment:

⁵This entire positionality section has been adapted from Ramos, 2018.

what has settled and accumulated over time' (Ahmed, 2012, p. 12). Instead of accepting the settled sediments as hindrances, I decided to climb the wall. I choose to 'transform the wall into a table', rendering the obstructing object into a platform for action (*ibid.*). As I searched for answers and prepared myself to climb the wall, important transformations took place.

I learned things that cannot be unlearned or ignored. I agree with Gloria Anzaldúa (1987, p. 48) when she says that 'knowing is painful because after *it* happens I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before'. During the early stages of my doctoral research, I learned aspects of social science research that made me uncomfortable: claiming to know the Other as the object of the researcher's gaze; homogenising groups of people with labels from master theories; speaking from a detached position as if the researcher is not deeply implicated in the process (Tuhawai Smith, 1999; Mignolo, 2009; Grosfoguel, 2012).

It was around this time that I met a group of scholars working with decolonial theories and we started a study group collective. This was a turning point for me, because collaborating and learning with/from this group opened up the possibility of other ways of knowing-being-doing in academia. It was through the collective that I met Laura Roberts, and soon a friendship-coalition flourished. From the beginning, we organically created a mutual safe space that allowed the coming together of our individual-shared *wonderings* and desires to create change. Together we felt stronger to transform walls into tables, into our platforms for action.

Laura Roberts

I am a white woman, the daughter of British working-class parents. I was born in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa, the country's second largest city, and entered high school as the country was dismantling apartheid and transitioning to democracy. I was the first generation of South African high school students to experience the decolonising of our education system and national curriculum. We read stories that were previously banned under the apartheid government, and in class we explored through literature and plays, with the help of brilliant and fearless teachers, nuanced understandings of the ways in which race, class and gender are always entangled. The racist laws of the apartheid government and the privileging of whiteness were uneasily unpacked in the classroom as well as in the school corridors. This was not easy work, but it was our reality. While not without its own complex problems, Durban is an ethnically diverse city and, in this sense, quite different to the rest of South Africa, with a majority population of Zulus and a large number of people of British and Indian descent (these latter two groups making up close to 50 per cent of the total population in the early 2000s). And, given the location of my state high school, my cohort largely reflected this demographic trend. When I entered the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, white students were very much in the minority of a large and diverse cohort. While all of us had some sense of the gravity of the changes around us, it is only on reflection and after much engagement with decolonial and feminist philosophy that I appreciate the importance of these years in forming my positionality. The curriculum, my teachers and my fellow classmates, together offered a unique space to understand what I can now name as the coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of Being. Yes, whiteness still holds many privileges in post-apartheid South Africa, but this whiteness is never invisible; it is constantly challenged and held to account. This is why, when I arrived in Australia in my early 20s, the 'invisible' whiteness of the university, the curriculum, the

teachers and my fellow classmates, was a shock. I will never forget sitting in a large lecture hall during my first weeks at university in Australia and noticing this. While I now appreciate the centuries of Indigenous resistance to colonisation and to the coloniality of knowledge at work in the university that continues to this day, as a new migrant and undergraduate student in the early 2000s, it seemed as if the patriarchal whiteness of the institution and curriculum was not being questioned or actively challenged by many academics or students. Don't get me wrong; my intention here is not to romanticise the transition to democracy in South Africa and imagine these times as the perfect decolonial project. We need only recall the 2015 Rhodes Must Fall protests to acknowledge that perhaps the decolonising of higher education institutions that began twenty years ago has not actually happened, or certainly not fast enough. My point is that my politics of location, to use Adrienne Rich's (1986) phrase, was formed during this time and place, and to locate myself in this subject position means understanding my embodied, limited perspective. Rich writes:

This body. White, female; or female, white. The first obvious lifelong facts. But I was born in the white section of a hospital which separated Black and white women in labor and Black and white babies in the nursery, just as it separated Black and white bodies in its morgue. I was defined as white before I was defined as female. (*ibid.*, p. 215)

Following Rich (*ibid.*, p. 216), I recognise 'this white skin, the places it has taken me, the places it has not let me go'. This recognition is written on my body and emerges from the fact that I came of age in a country in which it was unimaginable to not be aware of how the whiteness of my skin was implicated in one of the most recent instances of the colonial project: apartheid.

I am still learning the real history of Australia and the genocide of Indigenous First Nations peoples that took place in the country I now hesitantly call home. This haunting feeling remains, although I now have the conceptual tools and language to understand my place within this settler colonial system as well as to articulate this unease and injustice. In response to this haunting, I see my research and teaching practice as a way to challenge the broader complicity with coloniality in the academy, as well as to specifically disrupt the feminist complicity with coloniality that surrounds us.

coming to wonder in coalition: wonder as feminist pedagogy

We met during our PhD candidatures through our involvement with the decolonial collective at the university, and our friendship-coalition flourished from there. We joined forces and began co-teaching the Gender Studies courses. Taking seriously Aileen Moreton-Robinson's (2003) challenge to white feminists in Australia, we began thinking about ways in which we could challenge patriarchal whiteness and coloniality in the courses we teach. Recognising the complicity of much feminist scholarship and pedagogy with coloniality, in Australia and further abroad, we wanted to encourage students in the Gender Studies classes we teach to understand as well as to challenge colonial logics in the institution and mainstream feminism, as well as in their own lives and broader communities. During our initial critical reflections as we looked for ways to embody these challenges to coloniality in our classrooms, the notion of *wonder as feminist pedagogy* emerged.

Along with work by Sara Ahmed, we engage with Luce Irigaray and bell hooks, whose writings on teaching and wonder inspire and undergird our research and teaching praxis. bell hooks writes:

... one element of practical wisdom that comes with critical thinking that is mindful and aware is the ongoing experience of wonder. The ability to be awed, excited, and inspired by ideas is a practice that radically opens the mind. Excited about learning, ecstatic about thoughts and ideas, as teachers and students we have the opportunity to use knowledge in ways that positively transform the world we live in ... Hence, there is the capacity of ideas to illuminate and heighten our sense of wonder, our recognition of the power of mystery. (hooks, 2010, p. 188)

Thinking of pedagogy as wonder allows us to explore what it means to teach and know, questioning the difference between the transmission of information and embodied knowledge and affect. It is in this sense that we propose that we learn-teach-learn by *wondering*. In our definition of wonder as pedagogy, we are inspired by the words of the feminist writer Sara Ahmed (2004, p. 180), who tells us: 'Wonder is the means by which other possibilities open up ... wonder expands our field of vision and touch ... wonder means learning to see the world as something that does not have to be ... wonder implies learning'. Ahmed (*ibid.*, pp. 180–183) adds: 'Wonder is what brought me to feminism; what gave me the capacity to name myself as a feminist. Certainly, when I first came into contact with feminism, and began to read my own life and the lives of others differently, everything became surprising'.

In her reflection on wonder, Ahmed mentions Irigaray's reading of Rene Descartes' work on the passions. Thinking about wonder as pedagogy and wonder as opening a space for the new, 'a hope for transformation' (Ahmed, 2004, p. 181), we turn to meditate with Irigaray's thinking on wonder for a moment.⁶ Irigaray (1999) rereads Descartes' *The Passions of the Soul* (1649) and is most interested in his thinking on wonder as a passion without an opposite. Irigaray's focus on wonder as a passion without an opposite—an action that is both active and passive—alludes to a way of knowing-being-doing that fundamentally challenges binary and dichotomous colonial logics of knower and known. Moreover, as Ahmed suggests, without an opposite, the passion or movement of wonder opens up space for something new to emerge: it proposes a non-dichotomous relational logic. And in Irigaray's writing on wonder, she offers a nuanced opening to theorise a non-appropriative relationality that disrupts colonial patriarchal logics, while at the same time offering a model for ethical coexistence (and pedagogy) that does not result in appropriation or silencing of an-other. We suggest that Ahmed's and Irigaray's thinking on wonder, as a non-appropriative relationality making space for the new, can be read alongside Moreton-Robinson's thinking on Indigenous standpoints to disrupt feminist complicity with coloniality. This is because wonder, as we will see, requires each subject to take seriously their standpoints and limits to knowledge. We read these thinkers together to theorise our own positionalities, curriculum design and teaching practices.

Using these notions of wonder, we begin charting out pedagogies and new stories that hope to nurture decolonial feminist ways of knowing-being-doing. Crucially, these ways of knowing-being-doing are

⁶ We acknowledge the seeming paradox in turning to Irigaray's reading of René Descartes given the ways in which Maldonado-Torres (2007), and others, use Descartes' *cogito* argument to support their work on the coloniality of Being. However, we believe that decolonial work should challenge the idea that Eurocentric knowledge is the only source of valid knowledge by claiming plurality in terms of locus of enunciation rather than ignoring or not engaging with this work.

grounded in the materiality of our lives, grounded in our lived differences and our various standpoints. Given this, wonder as pedagogy disrupts a disembodied rationality, a disembodied subject position of knower that Moreton-Robinson rightly challenges.

In reading Ahmed's and Irigaray's meditations on wonder alongside Moreton-Robinson's challenge to white feminists, we are keen to highlight a confluence we see in their work. All three scholars are interested in questions of epistemology and, in particular, this notion of the limits to knowledge or standpoints. Moreton-Robinson (2000, p. 351) notes that 'our ability to know and our experiences are limited, therefore standpoints are partial and so are the knowledges we produce'. We also highlight the ways in which the journey to an ethical knowledge relation between and among teachers and students in the classroom can be reimagined as a non-appropriative ethical relation of co-existence. Building upon her work on wonder as an intermediary relation in her book *I Love to You*, Irigaray (1996, p. 112) writes that while you can never 'know me'—because to know me means to appropriate me—you can, however, still 'perceive the directions and dimensions of my intentionality. Importantly, you can help me become while remaining myself'. Irigaray, we argue, provides an important way to theorise a coming together to learn from one another without appropriation. We believe this is an exciting way to theorise what happens in a classroom. In order to perceive my intentionality ethically, Irigaray (*ibid.*, p. 116) suggests that we need to cultivate silence and learn to listen attentively. Irigaray (*ibid.*) writes: 'I am listening to you: I perceive what you are saying, I am attentive to it, I am attempting to understand and hear your intention. Which does not mean: I comprehend you, I know you'. Accordingly, we begin to appreciate how a radically refigured notion of wonder as the passage between, for example, ignorance and wisdom occupies the space of silence required for attentive listening and ethical communication between us.

wonder in the classroom through plurilogue and world-travel

In our discussion above, we conceptualised wonder as providing opportunities for opening and curiosity to learn-teach-learn from embodied positions that are guided by affect and intellect (not in binary opposition but as complementary elements of knowing that goes beyond objectivity and rationality). Wonder is about instigating passion for learning that disrupts taken-for-granted truisms and knowing as possession (of the 'known') in favour of knowledge as a relationship that is multiple, dynamic and never complete. In wonder, there is an eternal power of mystery (using hooks' words) because of its premise on the impossibility to 'fully know'. To claim absolute knowledge about anything or anyone means to claim possession and to kill the possibility of wonder.

So how does this concept translate into the materiality of the Gender Studies' classrooms we teach that are situated in an elite Australian university with a cohort of mostly white middle-class students? How does wonder translate into what we do? How do we instigate a sense of wonder in the students? How can this concept in tangible ways allow for moments of resistance and creation in the classroom as we work in relation to students to foster epistemic and ontological shifts? We proceeded into the designing stage of the course with these questions in mind and with a determination to embody *wonder as feminist pedagogy* despite a deep awareness of institutional-cultural-social-political-epistemological constraints and limitations. We recognise that what we have done so far are very much the initial steps of what is likely to be a lifetime-work-in-progress project. Yet, we decided that by articulating these

initial practices and guiding philosophy in this article, we would have the opportunity to not only reflect on what we have done but also to further our collaboration and conversation with feminist communities.

For us, a key aspect of operationalising wonder is a conceptual shift and the beginnings of our intervention in the course design, which means to make interventions at the level of meaning making from the onset. In other words, a conceptual shift entails reimagining not only what to include in the syllabus but very importantly how the students and us engage with the content. A central part of this work is rethinking how we read texts/experiences/realities, how we approach knowledge creation and how we encourage change that goes beyond the classroom.

In our conceptual shift, we go beyond including work by Aboriginal women, women of colour (more broadly) and diverse communities from across the globe as an add-on to a syllabus that is centred on Gender Studies' 'canon' from the Global North. We design the syllabus with diverse theories and case studies in what we call a 'plurilogue design', borrowing the concept of plurilogue from Shireen Roshanravan (2014). In a plurilogue, many voices are in conversation with one another, and this is a non-hierarchical relationship of knowledge creation. The voices within a plurilogue can be dissonant and speak different languages, but the common ground is that all voices are co-implicated in the struggles they are discussing (Shohat cited in *ibid.*). In a plurilogue, there is a commitment to honouring the complexity of all participants and this kind of engagement addresses 'Women of Color in a refusal to collapse their complexity and heterogeneity into a totalized, unified genre of thought or to frame them only as reactive to feminism's racist exclusions and distortions' (*ibid.*, p. 57).

We take the honouring of complexity and heterogeneity of all participants of the plurilogue in the classrooms we teach very seriously. As a starting point in this plurilogue, we disrupt the linear narrative of the three waves of Anglo and North American feminist history as the central story of feminism in favour of multiple/entangled stories taking place around the world that are grounded in various geo-socio-political-historical contexts. While not ignoring the important struggles that emerge in the US and British contexts, such as the suffragettes, we challenge this as the only/central story (Hemmings, 2005). And, as Roshanravan (2014) explains, we stress that various feminist movements do not simply exist as a reaction to a 'central' narrative of feminism and gender struggles. Whilst we introduce these multiple stories, we position Indigenous women and women of colour as agentic subjects and knowledge creators in their own narratives. In this process, we engage in conversations with students about their own assumptions about feminisms / Gender Studies, and by doing so we start a critical process of unpacking taken-for-granted understandings in terms of what feminisms / Gender Studies might be, who counts as knowledge creators, as well as students'/our positionalities in relation to feminist narratives and power structures.⁷

It is also from this point that we start discussing the idea that 'there is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives' (Lorde, 2007, p. 138). That is, coloniality, patriarchy, capitalism, racism and heteronormativity are interconnected and depend on each other to exist. We

⁷ Key authors we engage with in the course include Aileen Moreton-Robinson, María Lugones, Irene Watson, Audre Lorde, Sara Ahmed, Gloria Anzaldúa and Ramón Grosfoguel. Not all of these authors would explicitly call themselves decolonial theorists, but we grouped them under this umbrella term as they are thinkers whom we consider contribute to decoloniality (delinking from the dominant logics of coloniality).

unpack these notions carefully with the students in class, always locating ourselves in these systems and encouraging students to do the same. Ahmed articulates well the ethos that serves as point of departure in our course:

Many feminisms means many movements. [...] It might be assumed that feminism is what the West gives to the East. That assumption is a traveling assumption, one that tells a feminist story in a certain way, a story that is much repeated; a history of how feminism acquired utility as an imperial gift. That is not my story. We need to tell other feminist stories. (Ahmed, 2017, pp. 3–4)

From this decentering of a singular-central story to focus on multiple movements through plurilogues that acknowledge that many feminist movements go unregistered in the mundanity of people's lives, we aim to instigate an initial sense of wonder in the students. We witness sparks of curiosity in many students as they start to realise the limitations of a singular hegemonic understanding of feminism and the possibilities of opening up their fields of vision and imagination. However, this initial spark of wonder can be dangerous as it may lead to a curiosity that is driven by possessive logics of a desire to know the other. We are very aware of this and take extra care to guide students to develop a sense of being in relation to texts/knowledges/knowledge creators/communities rather than to 'learn about' something. To learn 'about' something denotes a subject (the learner) learning about an object, and that implies the very colonial logic of possession that we argue against in wonder as pedagogy. One of the challenges we face is that both students and ourselves have been trained in this kind of colonial learning, and breaking away from it requires deep, continuous and conscious efforts.

One concept that we found helpful in guiding these efforts to break away from 'possessive learning' and to deepen a sense of wonder in the courses is Lugones' (1987, 2003) 'world-travel'. Approaching what we do in the classroom, and the content that we teach-learn, as world-travel facilitates wonder by encouraging students to engage with different realities (worlds) with what Lugones (1987) names 'loving perception' rather than 'arrogant perception'. Arrogant perception denotes a detachment and an approach to seeing the other as a one-dimensional being who lacks complexity and is a subordinate to the knower's perception. On the other hand, loving perception, similar to Irigaray's conceptions of love and wonder, implies a relationality with other subjects (rather than objects) that is grounded in deep self-reflexivity and a humble-loving attitude, making space for a shift in vision where the other is animated as a complex multidimensional being.

Lugones explains that:

Through travelling to other people's worlds we discover that there are worlds in which those who are the victims of arrogant perception are really subjects, lively beings, resisters, constructors of visions even though in the mainstream construction they are animated only by the arrogant perceiver and are pliable, foldable, file-awayable, classifiable. (Lugones, 1987, p. 18)

Also, very important to this discussion, Lugones makes a definite distinction between tourism / colonial exploration and her conceptualisation of world-travel:

Tourists and colonial explorers, missionaries, settlers, and conquerors do not travel in the sense that I have in mind. That is, there is no epistemic shift to other worlds of sense, precisely because they perceive/imagine only

the 'exotic', the 'Other', the 'primitive', the 'savage', and there is no world of sense of the exotic, the Other, the savage and the 'one in need of salvation' separate from the logic of domination. (Lugones, 2003, p. 18)

In this way, Lugones stresses that the mode of travel in world-travel really matters and influences the very possibility of loving perception. World-travel for Lugones is thus deeply related to epistemic/ontological shifts as one moves through and between worlds of sense.

In our classrooms, we invite students to world-travel while engaging in a plurilogue with a focus on constructions/embodiments of (intersectional) gender. World-travel takes place in the way we approach the relationships we build in the classroom and in the engagement with content. We then function as 'guides'; we do not mean tour guides who show facts and figures about our 'destinations'. In following Lugones, we are more interested in the original meaning of the word 'travel', from the fourteenth century 'travailen', to work, labour, to go on a difficult journey (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2017). Here we can see that travel's etymological roots are not related to the idea of leisure but to difficult, arduous movements. With this in mind, we guide and support students in the work that needs to be done to approach what we do with loving perception as we start to work through our arrogant perceptions together.

An important step in world-travel is starting to break apart arrogant perception. To make this possible, we work diligently to create a safe space in the classroom that is conducive of self-reflexivity, a vital element in deconstructing arrogant perception and making space for loving perception. Self-reflexivity starts with us teachers meditating on our relationships and complicities with coloniality and our role as gatekeepers of knowledges with all its potentials for disruptions and/or maintenance of the *status quo*. We explicitly share our self-reflections with students and create spaces for them to do the same. In this process, the design of classes plays an important role. We carefully plan questions to include in the discussions that prompt students to think deeply about their places in the world, their privileges and complicities with systems of power, the ways in which they have been trained to know, and about taken-for-granted stereotypes (gender, race, otherness, culture, etc.). These questions are always framed in connection to the topics/thinkers with whom we are engaging to start fostering ways to 'read' literature/experiences/realities that are relational rather than detached.

As we experiment with wonder as pedagogy, we are aware that what we propose disrupts notions of comfort and pushes many students out of their comfort zones (it certainly pushes us). **And there is a real danger of students shutting off and disengaging, which would mean that a possibility of wonder is lost; however, in our experience, this has rarely happened.** One possible explanation is that we focus the same amount of energy that we put into choice of prompts and content (or maybe even more) into how we conduct the conversations. We share and attempt to implement the ethos of wonder (via plurilogue and world-travel) from the very beginning of the course. This means a strong emphasis on kindness, respect, responsibility, trust and openness. We make it explicit that students are respected and honoured regardless of where they are at and whatever their world views might be. However, we stress that everyone in the classroom community shares the responsibility to nurture this ethos that we propose. This includes taking responsibility for their points of view and how they treat one another. We understand that we are asking students to take risks and be vulnerable, so we make it clear that we are also taking risks and we do not refrain from showing our vulnerability and sharing our stories in the classroom too. We are not afraid to say out loud that love guides what we do, that we love what we do and that we love working with

them. This might sound clichéd (but it is okay): our classrooms are full of love, nurture and care. We laugh and we cry with students as we attempt to see/hear one another and the world(s) around us with loving perception.

Even though it is clear that not all students are willing/ready to open up, as the semester unfolds, we see a trusting atmosphere develop, and we believe this has a lot to do with students feeling respected. What we witness in our classrooms is that when students are not shut down and are given the opportunity in a supportive environment to express themselves as they cultivate, expand and change their 'readings' of worlds, they are more likely to develop a sense of wonder. We can see this quite clearly on the weekly journal entries that students are required to write. In these journals, students reflect on what we did in class, their learning, the texts we are reading and how they are in relation to all of this. As the weeks go by, we observe in many of the journal entries substantial efforts in unpacking privileges, otherness and epistemic/ontological inequalities, as well as in cultivating an ethics of relationality to diverse ways of being and knowing in multiple worlds of sense.

We have found in our courses that this medium (that also serves as formative assessment)⁸ is an excellent complement to classroom discussions in facilitating a deepening of self-reflexivity and 'readings' of worlds. The journals are also very useful from a pedagogical perspective, because they provide opportunities for guidance and intimate dialogue between us and the students that are not always possible during class. Through the weekly feedback, we are able to tailor the guidance that each student requires depending on where they are at and to facilitate continuous encouragement for growth. The other advantage of using journals as a pedagogical tool is that it suits the more introverted students who might not actively speak out in class to engage in the conversations. Finally, through weekly journals together with classroom discussions, we witness students' growing understanding of their positionalities and responsibilities in a plurilogue and on how to world-travel. We thus argue that weekly journals together with classroom discussions are key elements in actualising wonder in our classrooms.

Another example of how we actualise wonder as pedagogy in terms of assessment is the Wikipedia Project. In an effort to translate the theory with which we engage in the course into positive concrete change, this assignment requires students to produce or edit a Wikipedia page on excluded or under-researched topics or people, putting to use the decolonial feminist ways of knowing gained in this and other Gender Studies subjects at the university. The idea is for students to gain a deeper understanding of the politics of knowledge production in terms of normalised inclusions and exclusions. Students have the opportunity to share knowledge and at the same time claim a space for using their voices and for multiple voices to be heard. This assessment is also an activity of community-building, not only in terms of collaboration with team members but also with the engagement with the topics or people they choose to write about.

This project had multiple stages and culminated in a group Wikipedia Edit-a-thon at the end of semester. We invited a Wikipedia volunteer to come to class to teach the necessary technical skills and to the final

⁸ In this assessment, there is no right or wrong in terms of what students share as long as they demonstrate that they have critically engaged with content and their learning. This opens the space for students to take more risks and for us to provide deeper guidance in a non-judgemental manner.

Edit-a-thon to help with any difficulties. Students were required to submit a draft of their page or edits, as well as a project rationale, to be checked by their tutor before the Edit-a-thon. During this initial stage, we discussed with students the ethics of representation and what it meant to write about others in ways that are relational and do not appropriate. The project rationale required students to explain their reasons for their chosen project. We included the following guiding questions: Why did you choose this topic? Why is it significant to you? How does your project connect to some of the ideas or theorists we have engaged with in the course? What is the significance of adding this topic/edits to Wikipedia? The Edit-a-thon was a great success and gave the students some sense of how the theory we are learning plays out in the broader society.

Finally, the connections between the classroom and broader society do not only take place during this assessment piece but are a central aspect of our understanding of wonder as pedagogy. While it is out of our control what happens outside of class, our hope is that conceptual shifts in how and what we teach-learn in Gender Studies and feminisms fuel broader changes in the students' lives and consequently influence changes within their communities and networks. During our time teaching together, we have witnessed many students taking part in local activism fighting for various causes and going into professional positions where they have the possibility to contribute to social change. We understand that a group of privileged students taking part in activism and bringing new ethics of relationality into their workplaces might sound irrelevant to broader decolonial efforts. However, as we argued before, solidarity and coalitions are vital elements in challenging coloniality, and we believe students and ourselves have a part to play. We are aware our classroom cannot do everything, but this does not mean it cannot do anything. We can contribute to educating students to *know otherwise* and to inspire students to go out and create change within the world(s) in their reach.

In wonder as pedagogy, the learning process is never final and knowledge is perpetually in the process of becoming. This also applies to our praxis: what we do will always be a work in progress. This work is complex, limited, dynamic; it goes up and down, in circles; it gets tangled and stuck; it screams for air and sometimes flows like a river. The work we do matters to us; it hurts and gives us hope. Many students realise as the semester unfolds that we too are just as troubled as them by what we are teaching-learning, and this helps to bring us closer together. As we become closer, we start to witness weekly moments of love-intellect-reflexivity-compassion in the classroom. These are moments of magic in the classroom, where the possibility for growth and transformation lies: for students and teachers alike. These moments of wonder have the potential to reach broader communities as our work/learning spills out of the classroom onto the practices/ethics students might bring to their relationships, future careers and activism. It is then easy to agree with Ahmed (2014) that, 'No wonder, wonder is key to feminist pedagogy'. And for us, these are the very first steps to enable other ways of knowing-being-doing that work towards disrupting feminist complicity with coloniality in the Australian context.

As we bring this article to an end, it is important to acknowledge that we developed this work while employed precariously in casual academic positions. This precarity in employment (largely comprised of women academics) is a common feature of the neoliberal colonial Australian (and global) higher-education sector. Precarious employment thrives on fear and conformity, so going against the grain undeniably adds a heavy emotional load to what we do. The aim here is not a call for sympathy but a call for action and solidarity among academics (and anyone who might be reading this work). This call goes

hand in hand with our discussion on wonder as pedagogy. Our classroom praxis attempts to build community and solidarity among the students and to instigate their own sense of wonder. We also invite you to wonder with us in imagining new futures guided by decolonial logics and ethics.

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author biographies

Fabiane Ramos is an ECR and sessional lecturer in Gender Studies and Educational Studies at The University of Queensland, Meanjin (Brisbane). Her work is interdisciplinary with an emphasis on the connections between feminist and decolonial theories in reimagining realities and ethical possibilities for our collective futures. In her current research, Fabiane is applying this theoretical focus to her pedagogical practices in the Australian higher education context and to her experiences as a migrant woman working in academia.

Laura Roberts received her PhD in Philosophy from The University of Queensland, Meanjin (Brisbane), where she taught philosophy and gender studies before taking up a position as Lecturer in Women's and Gender at Flinders University in 2020. She is author of *Irigaray and Politics: A Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019), co-editor of a Special Issue of *Sophia* on 'Irigaray and Politics' (2021) and has published articles in anthologies and journals including *Hypatia* and *Australian Feminist Studies*.

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