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Editorial

Summary

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Presentation

These articles were originally published in the Pedagogy Series, housed in the ISA's Social Justice and Democratization Space in January and June 2022. We are republishing it in order to standardize all the articles in the Sociological Teaching journal, a new space of publication from the Thematic Group 09.

Dear colleagues,

We hope you enjoy this issue of the Pedagogy Series, housed on the ISA's Social Justice and Democratization Space. Our goal in putting together this open-access publication is to create a forum for sociology educators around the world to share their teaching practices, reflections and theoretical insights rooted in the contexts where they live and work. This issue takes an applied approach, inviting educators to share how they conceptualize and approach their teaching practice, often in collaborative ways.

In our first piece, Alma Pisciotta and Luciana Taddei write from the University of Calabria, Italy about co-teaching sociological research methods through theatrical techniques. Each author reflects on their role as instructor in a component of this innovative course. They outline their "Theatrical sociology approach," designed to provide students with tools to investigate everyday social phenomena.

Our second article features a pedagogical collaboration between Melanie Bush (Adelphi University) and Nokuthula Hlabangane (University of South Africa) through a course on "The Reshaping of Social Relations in the Modern World". Both course instructors reflect on the theoretical framing for this collaboration and its impact on students, tied to engagement, heightened global awareness and cross-border kinship.

The third paper is from Australia written collaboratively by colleagues from the University of Newcastle, Swinburne University of Technology, and Curtin University. Irwin et al. critically discuss the curriculum design for the Open Foundation program offered by the University of Newcastle. The open-access program seeks to increase participation of underrepresented groups in higher education by providing students who do not meet formal admission criteria with an alternate route to university. Drawing on data generated through the Collaborative Inquiry Project, Irwin et al. argue that educators in the program had to manage the tension between providing access to higher education and a neo-liberal social context that frames educational success as an individual accomplishment and draws on market principles to justify reductions in funding for higher education. However, educators in the program remained committed to the social justice project of increasing access to higher education. Moreover, through their teaching practices educators sought to help program participants to not only become university students, but also 'curious citizens.

We thank you for your readership.

Sincerely,

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Sociological Teaching

The Researcher's Role: Teaching Social Research Methods with Participatory Theater and Role-Playing Techniques

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Abstract

In a new world of nascent rules, restrictions, and lockdowns, a student's biggest opportunity to connect with other similar individuals beyond their immediate circles is the digital classroom. Even with equipped tools of connection, students under COVID classrooms are ironically feeling the effects of disconnection and face risks for health concerns. As digital classrooms are shown to be prosaic, platformed, and productized, we will come to understand how building relationships with others but more so, of the self, is hugely hindered by faulty methods that do not work under new circumstances, and produce digitalized others which are consequential. It is as much an individual concern of a student's performance as a statement on the public issue of current digital education. Sociological educators are essential in reshaping these pedagogical practices and beliefs, which can otherwise damage both students and their instructors. The educational and research program for students launched in 2019 as a participant laboratory for the master's degree Course in Sociology and Social Research at the University of Calabria aims to teach sociological research methods through theatrical techniques and exercises as tools for social work (Gurvitch, 1956). The program consists of two complementary learning modules executed sequentially by two teachers with different professional backgrounds in order to develop in-depth research skills, both quantitative and qualitative, with an active approach to leading students into effective strategies of interaction for field study. Students come into contact not only with the subject-object of study, but also (and above all) with

themselves, thus reducing some of their insecurities and discovering their own limits in terms of prejudices and stereotypes through the use of applied improvisation. In this way, particular attention is paid to the role that the researcher must assume in specific research contexts, working deeply on himself to achieve spontaneity through role-training sessions (Moreno, 1923; 1953). In practical terms, exercises are used to stimulate sociological imagination and promote concentration: exercises of cooperation and collective strategies, techniques of active participation and construction of the group climate to gain access to the field, exercises for control and analysis, and verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal communication (i.e. how to present yourself in public through video recordings). For example, the Theatre of the Oppressed system (Boal, 1974) shows the relationship between news and newsworthiness and proceeds with their related deconstruction. It also consists of many different ethnomethodological experiments and exercises about conversation analysis: elements of common sense, idioms, constructions, and stereotypes (present in speech). This kind of "Theatrical sociology approach" combines sociological, psychological, and pedagogical knowledge with theatrical games that become tools for the investigation of social phenomena in complex contexts. Beyond their diversity, science and art share the ability to discover and create (Nisbet, 1962), and this is what we strive to teach our students.

Keywords: Theatre, teaching, learning, researcher, reflexivity, laboratory, method

Introduction

Started in 2019, the *Didactic, editorial and research Laboratory* is a highly innovative educational course in the master's degree of the "Sociology and Social Research" program offered by the University of Calabria. It is also the first of its kind in the country, combining social research methods with applied theatre techniques as tools for sociological inquiry.

The course consists of lectures, seminars and tutorial assignments with practical experiences to show and analyze the whole research process from the

beginning - how to approach the field - to the end - for example, on how to write an academic paper and improve public speaking skills. This course focuses on teacher experiences in this area, with the aim to encourage students to reflect on themselves and their choices through pedagogical and theatrical training that also includes metacognitive strategies.

As teachers, we help students to recognize and value their professional life experiences and self-awareness, teaching them how to identify and overcome limits and insecurities, thereby reducing the risk to lapse into prejudices and stereotypes with their subject/object of study.

Indeed, in fieldwork, the researcher interacts with or observes individuals or groups, and gathers data along the way. Therefore, it is imperative to learn how to manage personal opinions and endeavor to not be influenced by common sense thinking. With the help of theatre techniques and exercises (Gurvitch, 1956), we strive to guide students in a process of reflection and action, preparing them for complex thinking about their role in a dynamic and complex reality.

Structure of the course

The laboratory includes two different activity modules.

During the first part, given by Alma Pisciotta, students are involved in many participatory theatre activities and improvisational acting exercises to discover the expressions and elements of verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal communication. It helps researchers in different circumstances such as during an observation or while conducting an interview.

In contrast, the second part, given by Luciana Taddei, is dedicated to applying quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, starting from a theoretical and epistemological perspective that bridges the gap between historical paradigms of social research (Greene, 2015). We retrace with students all phases of research design, starting with theory and hypothesis to the reporting of results.

In particular, the training includes giving interviews with or without questionnaires, conducting natural and systematic observations, organizing experiments, and using secondary documents and data to carry out an entire research

project. Great attention is paid to digital and visual methods, as well as to social network analysis and interdisciplinary research.

Finally, we focus on the best way to write or present scientific results. Students can explore the difference between writing articles, chapters, books, and papers, bearing in mind the possibility of using auditory and visual channels.

Editorial lessons focus on: 1) how to carry out bibliographic research, report citations and references; 2) how to write a text in its contents, structure, format, layout, as well revision; 3) the best ways to present data and documents (tables, graphs, images, figures, attachments, hyperlinks, etc.); 4) existing possibilities for the dissemination of results (reviews, editors, web, and open access).

This paper will examine the first part of the teaching and learning path. Among the various elements that characterize the *Didactic, editorial and research Laboratory*, participatory theatre and role-playing techniques represent an innovative approach to develop the researcher's awareness.

Laboratory teaching

Our teaching and learning proposal is structured as a team project (Hesse-Biber, 2015) including teachers with different backgrounds and a group of master's students with distinct interests. The collaboration between teachers and students allows approaching the topics in a flexible manner, continuously stimulating student interest and focus. The Laboratory never has a pre-structured plan of lessons, however lessons come up through student suggestions and teacher acceptance of *stimuli*.

We believe that the application of social research methods must be adaptable and innovative, and our teaching and learning process follows this assumption. The constant discussion with students is useful for both parties: teachers can always question themselves without losing reflexivity, and students can become protagonists of the entire research process through discussion with teachers on an equal footing. This kind of interaction requires lessons that develop from practical experiences and teachers who can tolerate and embed ambiguity and "disorder" (Bazeley, 2003). The laboratory integrates theory and practice in every step of the teaching and learning process.

Theory is the basis on which collective knowledge can be co-built, but starting with a real-world problem is a more natural method in which the individual is able

to learn deeply (see for instance, Gorard, 2010). Questions and methods are derived from the concrete problems we face in the field.

Lessons are planned mixing frontal lectures, collective activities, self-assessment pauses and individual meetings (Taddei, 2021). Frontal lectures are necessary because of the different points of departure of students. Collective activities stimulate the active participation of students, encourage debate, promote collaboration, and stimulate exchanges through examples, exercises, and simulations.

For this course, there are also important self-assessment pauses. On the one hand, students can understand the level of knowledge achieved; on the other hand, teachers can identify gaps in knowledge and grasp how to adjust and individualize pedagogical practices. In addition, individual meetings are planned throughout the course period with the aim of individualizing the single carriers.

Each year, our laboratory teaching helps us to understand better the difficulties and potential of the students. This interactive laboratory aims at transforming traditional learning by proposing a way of teaching that "challenges traditional views and assumptions; encourages new ways of thinking; and conceptualizes [research methods] in light of new knowledge, scholarship, and ways of knowing" (Kitano, 1997, 23).

Participatory theatre

Since theatre was born, it always had the function of telling stories as a celebration of society by playing pieces of reality or describing imaginary places and worlds filled with myths transformed into ethical questions posed directly by actors to audience. In contrast with other forms of comment and debate, such as the role played by mass media or other cultural products like movies in modern society, every theatrical event is a creative communication process in which partners (actors and spectators) are both present at the same time in the same place. This characteristic configures theatre and all live art performances as a peculiar social interaction and as "an active agent of change, a form for communal reflection, and a space in which to imagine a better way of living together" (Turner, 1982). This is most evident in all experimental and immersive

theatre forms grounded in audience involvement and widely used in psychology. In these cases, the audience is often called the *spect-actor* (Boal, 1979).

In fact, an interesting set of theatrical circumstances and exercises comes from the *Theatre of the Oppressed*, a term coined by Brazilian artist and activist Augusto Boal who encouraged his audience to react directly to the action. Two of his most popular techniques are *Forum Theatre* and *Image Theatre* already used in psycho-pedagogical approaches to reduce dropout.

The first consists of proposing to a group of spectators, after a first improvisation of a scene, that they replace the protagonist and try to improvise variations on his actions. The real protagonist should ultimately improvise the variation that has motivated him the most. *Forum theatre* releases the audience from the obligation of being passive so that everyone can play a part in the process by interpreting his own role, expressing his ideas, and practicing the actions he deems necessary to free himself from oppression.

The second is composed of a series of physical exercises based on the concept of a multiple mirror of the gaze of other individuals. A group of people looking at the same image is realized on the stage, for example by the *Conductor* or by other participants by showing their feelings, and what is evoked for them, and what their imaginations build up around that image. This multiple reflection will reveal the hidden aspects to the person who created the image. It is up to the protagonist (the builder of the image) to understand and feel whatever he wants or is able to take from this process. The *Image Theater* has many variations: from rebuilding the image in another manner of static poses to completing the image built by others.

Role-playing techniques

In this connection, productive methods of describing interaction among individuals are *psychodrama* and *sociodrama* invented by Jacob Levy Moreno in 1936, in which theatrical techniques and exercises are honed into an educational approach for social groups in psychology and sociometric analysis. Both use similar spontaneous role-playing, exploring aspects of life through concrete and active actions.

Like *psychodrama*, the essential goals of *sociodrama* provide greater insight and understanding of human relationships, a more thorough and relevant expression

of emotions, and experimentation with new behavior or attitudes in a mutually supportive environment. However, in *psychodrama,* the focus of the action is the life of an individual, while in *sociodrama* there is a common theme, issue or situation that the group strives to examine, not only through verbal discussion or debate but also through spontaneous action. Where psychodrama deals with personal relationships, *sociodrama* focuses on professional, workplace or public relationships. Instead of a single individual taking on the role of protagonist (the most common situation in *psychodrama*), in *sociodrama* the group itself becomes the protagonist of the session. Thus, a fundamental difference between the two is in the types of roles explored. While *psychodrama* uses as a basis for action the personal roles and life story of an individual, *sociodrama* gives the opportunity to explore the roles that people have in common.

Inspired by *psychodrama* and *sociodrama*, but developed in another way, the *Playback Theatre* was invented by Jonathan Fox and his wife Jo Salas in 1975. The *Playback* method is based on improvisational storytelling theatre in which the people in the audience, composed of single individuals or members of a specific group (for example: refugees, students, families, ethnical and cultural minorities or social groups), tell stories from their lives and then watch them performed by actors on the spot, and not by themselves - such as in Moreno's model. Far from the positivistic perspective of the sociometric approach, this method appears less invasive for participants because it allows them to take an emotional distance while watching their stories, memories and experiences from another point of view through the artistic interpretation of actors.

The *Playback Theatre* can be used in any analysis of social issues because it represents a powerful tool for research focused on life experiences, common sense, the collective imagination, and their links. Moreover, a *Playback* performance may begin with an explicit theme, and the stories are created following its thread. Sometimes there is no theme as a base, and the underlying concerns and interests of the community will reveal themselves through a deeper tapestry of the stories. This is not always evident, and a skilled conductor can stimulate consciousness by the end of the session.

Every playback session is led by the *Conductor* who covers the role of facilitator of the process. The session starts when someone who volunteers to tell, called the

Teller, will come over from the audience area to the *Teller*'s chair. The story is told from this position with the support of the *Conductor* in a brief interview in which the *Teller* also chooses actors to play roles in the story. Once the actors are chosen, they stand and the *Conductor* says: "Let's watch".

During the performance, the actors and musicians will spontaneously improvise a re-enactment of the story, and this takes place in different artistic forms (often without dialogue and only with physical action), in order to present and capture the essence of the story. Following this step, actors look to the *Teller* to receive feedback about their work. This moment represents the opportunity to say something more about feelings provoked by the performance. At times nothing more needs saying, or perhaps a few words - sometimes the *Teller* is given the opportunity to correct or transform the scene, and the actors will replay it.

Lastly, the *Conductor* thanks the *Teller* who returns to his seat in the audience, and another person is invited to tell the next story.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the peculiarity of this educational project resides precisely in the methods used in the investigation of convictions, behaviors, and beliefs shared by students through the performance of theatrical activities as strategies. This configures a kind of *theatrical sociology* understood as a specific theoretical-methodological approach, which may combine the corpus of knowledge of the art of acting with those of the social sciences (Pisciotta, 2015; 2016; 2017). It is based on those representations, which aim to stimulate the audience reactions of expecting a direct involvement on the physical, emotional and interpretative level just as it happens in the *breaching experiment* of ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1967).

The use of theatre in social work is not only desirable but sometimes necessary, especially in critical contexts such as dropping out of school or in cases of social and economic marginalization. Theatre is a sophisticated expression of a basic human need: to tell stories by bringing people together, and to create meaning through narrative and metaphor. Further, and this applies to some kinds of theatre other than those described in this essay, theatre influences thinking and feeling about our lives. It also encourages finding a way to resolve conflict and social problems through

self-reflection in a carefree mode of communication that becomes increasingly helpful with young people.

Numerous are the studies of theatre in a social context, but there are few cases in which sociology, as opposed to other social sciences, has used the techniques of theatre for its own scientific purpose and analysis, although George Gurvitch proclaimed his desire to rebuild a more empirical sociology inspired by similarities between society and theatre (Gurvitch, 1955).

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Reshaping Social Relations in Educational Theory and Practice: A Global Teaching and Decolonizing Collaboration

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Abstract

In fall 2018, students from Adelphi University in Garden City, New York and from the University of South Africa in Pretoria embarked on a pilot collaboration to engage conversation and cross-experience exchange. The initiative was rooted in the Adelphi course entitled, "The Reshaping of Social Relations in the Modern World" and through a network of students connected with the University of South Africa (UNISA) Department of Anthropology and Archaeology and decolonizing studies and projects in South Africa. This article provides a theoretical framing for this collaboration and why it holds tremendous potential for engagement, heightened global awareness and developing kinship cross-borders as well as a discussion of the process and the content of this engagement and experience through the lens of student participants' reflections. Intrinsic to this experience is an exploration of how a psychology of inequity can be challenged.

Keywords: Collaborative teaching, decolonizing pedagogy, global teaching, inequity

Theoretical Bases for Collaborative Practice in Teaching

Teaching philosophies embody the worldviews, values and horizons that an educator deems most critical to one's teaching practice, generally reflects the perspectives one holds most dear. Teaching is an engagement that intervenes to fashion and cultivate students who will, in turn, intervene in particular ways in the world. In this way, teaching as a profession is thus integral to shaping social relations

not just in the classroom, but also in society much more broadly. Whereas teaching is usually thought of at an individual level, as lessons imbibed by the student and differences made to that person, a decolonial praxis of teaching transcends the individual and cultivates a communal ethos.

As Fanon has said "...to constantly introduce invention into life... to endlessly create myself to build the world of you." (Fanon 1952: 179-181). This is a sensibility that is antithetical to the Imperial *I* who is essentially closed off from knowing the imagined "Other". Separation and closure are quintessential colonial traits. These divides are ubiquitous in the prevailing geo-political dispensation. Marked by nation-states and other colonial borders, separation and therefore mis-recognition characterize social relations. Founded in what world systems scholars such as Immanuel Wallerstein and others have called the long 16^{th}-century (Wallerstein, 1974), divides and distinctions are characteristic of all colonial relations. Antagonistic relations between nations, peoples, genders, religions, spiritualities, sexualities etc. are the norm and mis-recognition and misrepresentation a salient feature of almost everything.

In this scheme of things, Africa particularly continues to suffer the brunt of colonial muting, undergirded by a veil of separation though she is deeply immersed in global webs of entanglement. Set on terms and conditions from elsewhere, this immersion continues to inform her relationships with the rest of the world. Africa has been assigned roles of perpetual servitude and infantilization precisely because of the history that began in the long sixteenth century. Stripped of an adult status, Africa is positioned on the global stage as handicapped and humiliated and could be said to vacillate between a structural position of exploitation, erasure and seeming irrelevance. (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013).

The injustices of such a position are extensive. All means possible should be harnessed to right this wrong as part of the "decolonizing" project. Higher education in particular should be seized with an ethical imperative as a matter of course for the "structures of knowledge in westernized universities" reflect the four genocides and epistemicides of the long 16^{th} century (Grosfoguel 2013). One strategy to bridge separation, divide and misrepresentation is through lived experiences that make it possible to "abandon ethnocentric and racist systems of logic and therefore, to place the undiscussed in the center of discourse" (Asante, 1990, p. 140). Facilitating

platforms of cross-border collaboration that foster communication allows higher education to develop students' understanding of real history and contemporary realities, rather than producing technicians for the labor market with false knowledge about themselves, the world and history.

The call to decolonize knowledge speaks to the need to liberate epistemology from the constrictions that characterize colonial and western education. Scholar Dr. Amos Wilson charges that the university teaches useless knowledge that serves embedded colonial structures and calls it "higher education" (1999, p. 58-61). In this way, the utility of the academy as a particular intervention in fashioning social relations is called into question. The narrow-mindedness of the horizons that standard curricula strive for, especially in regard to its emphasis on growing individuals for their own benefit, points to the importance of closure and separation as quintessential traits of colonial education that is bereft of the recognition of the need to "...to constantly introduce invention into life... to endlessly create myself to build the world of you." (Fanon 1952: 179-181)

Tuck and Yang (2012) warn against a tendency to hollow out the notion of decolonization by equating it to processes, that while necessary are insufficient for the transformation of education. They remind us that decolonization is first and fundamentally about land restitution and reparation of indigenous ways of life that take their cue from nature, innately interconnected and open to fluidity. Closure and separation as cornerstones of colonial relations are informed by the adage "I think, therefore, I am" (Descartes, 1960; Grosfoguel, 2013), the posture integral to higher education that governs relations between the colonized and the colonizer. It is this very imperial position that has wrought so much damage and caused untold harm on all living beings.

Maldonado-Torres (2007) posits that this arrogant, inward-looking and self-valorizing position implies that others do not think and therefore do not exist. The Imperial *I* indiscriminately reproduced by an education system that is inward-looking, engaged in soliloquy by a knowing being who assumes an unknowing Other was challenged by the design of this collaboration. This engagement was a direct response to the perennial question posed by Spivak (1988) about whether the subaltern can speak. This project sought to move the subaltern from a position of

always being "deeply in shadow" and "muted", thereby affirming her agency, albeit within the limitations of Westernized education. This collaboration opened though could not fully accommodate other modes of knowledge that UNISA student participants might have introduced. This was an ambitious pilot project, and therefore limited in its scope. Its ability to radically shift horizons was limited to a beginning recognition of an "other" beyond books, conference papers and journal articles. To be fully developed and sustainable would require institutional commitments and corresponding resources.

This initiative has important lessons for a new relationality that can be fashioned as a way to bridge the gap that colonial closure has normalized. One of UNISA's tag-lines is to facilitate "learning without borders". This aspiration applies to both practical and attitudinal dispositions in an open e-learning and teaching environment and invokes a number of important notions. In this endeavor, learning is open-ended, sensitive to ground-up possibilities that work against top-down authoritarian (en)closures and control. The teacher is not the center of the learning experience rather, a facilitator of a process and space in which student voices are heard and supported. In this empowering exercise students can realize their own voices and power and learn from each other.

Such a pedagogy aspires to what is characteristic of a liberation education with potential to transcend the mere transferral of information and inculcate deep cognition. This collaboration sought to center issues of mutual interest that arose organically so students could set the agenda of their own learning. The interactions centered in what could be regarded as world problems rather than discipline-specified areas of focus. Participants were involved with issues beyond the elitist bubble of the academy and confronted questions as wide-ranging as land, health and wellbeing, violence, and others. Conversations dared to look beyond the obvious, courageously altering and replacing conventions with the possibility of new realities. Trans-disciplinarity as an approach, is an active and deliberate rejection of dogma, ideology and closed systems of thought and explores new ways of thinking and engagement. Learning through such a framework, is thus bold and does not shy away from any discussions, giving effect to the truism that the curriculum is everything and everything is curriculum, mimicking life in its fluidity and dynamism. Such open-

endedness that challenges barriers opens up questions that have settled at problematic notions reflecting the detachment of the elite class whose writing and discourse forms the fabric of what generally makes it into set curricula.

The notion of learning without borders also foregrounds "visiting" and reciprocal learning. Simpson (2017) argues that visiting... "...has the potential to bridge theory and practice and is thus organically transformative as it expands horizons and can animate the imagination beyond its comfortable confines." "Visiting" challenges insular understandings. Internal barriers are also interrogated, affording students an opportunity to grow in robustness at all levels. Visiting with one another fosters engagement that ethical protocols are not able to inculcate and has the potential to unlock research agendas with more ethical and just sensibilities. The mental universe about one another shifts, impacting relationality in a positive way by potentially undermining the "new wine, old skins" way of being-in-relationship between the erstwhile colonized and colonizers.

Writing on the imperial nature of research relations during the height of HIV/AIDS in Africa, Chilisa (2005) posits what she calls an "error of sameness" by which she means that Euro-American homogenizing power has the ultimate impact of erasing and muting the diversity of voices, least of which of those whose lives it is that are at the center of the collaborative effort. This error of sameness, goes beyond research, characterizing all aspects of whatever relationship the West has with the Rest (Chinweizu 1975); education should be actively working towards undoing this error. This collaboration was one such attempt.

Against the grain of epistemic closure, and thus decadence, this model of teaching sought to create a space for "a hundred flowers to bloom" (Mao, 1957) in challenging the conceptual frame that constrain other voices from being heard. Chilisa (2005) argues that in addition to the colonial framework that seeks to fashion the world in the imperial mold, research is caught up in frameworks that are alien to those who are researched. From this point of view then, the frame of reference when seeking to understand those researched is the accumulated alienation found in written text. The space created by this mode of teaching enabled a triangulation that is otherwise not routine in learning across borders. The idea of creating space allows all voices to be heard and in turn, to be reckoned with. In this way, a linear

understanding is disrupted to include a complexity that is otherwise elusive. Students are provoked in multi-dimensional ways that provide a glimpse out of hegemonic Eurocentric discourses. The assumed universal validity of written text about Africa, in particular, is troubled, with new understandings emerging. Knowledge is co-created and co-owned by students as agents of knowledge creation in their own right. This process allows for learning to engage with multiple epistemologies and be shaped by epistemological diversity.

Learning without borders is also a commitment to vulnerability, an intention to resist and disengage from the colonial syndrome of domination. The marginalized move to the center – on ethical and just terms and the dominant choose to shed the arrogance that comes with this positionality and succumb to a higher ideal – that of making community. Ethical listening is thus fostered. "To have a voice is to be human. To have something to say is to be a person. But speaking depends on listening and being heard; it is an intensely relational act" (Gilligan, xvi). Through ethical listening and conversation, new grammars and language that challenge the establishment are possible. Collaboration disrupts and troubles boundaries and forges horizontal alliances. A new kind of globalization that is not unidirectional is made manifest. In the process of these conversations, students in the United States reposition their thinking of "Africa", repeatedly. Africa is not a wasteland of time-space compression, with troubled relations. Students from UNISA played an active and present role in rendering a new transformed image of South Africa. The subaltern no longer speaks through self-erasure, and demonstrates power, wisdom, clarity and strength in intellectual and spiritual grasp of the modern world.

Learning without borders also means staying true to the salience of history in contemporary relations. Through engagements such as the one fostered by this collaboration, students are brought to the sharp understanding that history is as present as it is past. The global devastation of colonialism is brought into relief as experiences are shared. This allows students to unravel the logic and machinations of colonialism and its aftermath, coloniality and aids deep learning that piques rather than dumbs curiosity and interest. What could potentially be a flat subject devoid of animation has the possibility of being brought to life, cultivating critical thinking. Engagements led by students defy the control of meaning, enabling the following feats:

> […] interrogating colonial discourses, imploding their political partisanship by introducing, in strategic points of their critiques subaltern texts that sees the colonial moment differently, that use other knowledges – as distinct from western – to articulate another view of the self, of history, of knowledge-power formations, resisting in the process the burden of colonialist epistemology and in fact mounting a counter-assault by enabling previously disabled languages, histories, modes of seeing the world (Mishra 2000: 1086).

Pedagogy that challenges closure and separation by troubling boundaries demystifies subjects that are rendered simply in written texts. More than that, connection subverts the tendency to think of oneself outside of an-other. By engaging in subjects whose importance is global in reach, students were able to see their entanglement with one another. This discussion flows both ways. Communication thus fosters community in which the abyssal line (Santos, 2007) is undermined and the West is disabused of its assumed positionality as the knower of first and last instance. The colonial inclination to develop, instruct and civilize (Chilisa, 2005) is disrupted. By the same token, the traditional weakness, which is almost congenital to the national consciousness of underdeveloped countries (Fanon, 1965: 149) is dealt the same blow. In a way, this is applied learning embeds deep and complex learning with the potential to facilitate the un-learning of problematic notions and misinformation in order to re-learn drawing from a triangulated frame of reference.

Development and Implementation of the Initiative

Following decolonial summer schools in Amsterdam, at UNISA and in Barcelona, a collaboration that would give rise to this initiative was agreed upon by anchor lecturers from the respective universities. The collaboration was informed by the decolonial adage that *We Make the Road by Walking* (Horton, Freire et al, 1990) which effectively enjoins embracing the uncertainty that comes with pathfinding and ground-breaking. Building on transdisciplinary forays already being explored at UNISA in which the UNISA anchor lecturer was a central player, and reflection by the Adelphi faculty member about how to "globalize" curriculum in the U.S. context as part of an Adelphi University Teaching Fellowship, a pilot teaching collaboration was developed to cross-border interactions between students at the two universities. This ground-breaking initiative sought to create a space for applying "decolonial"

ideas through rigorous intellectual exchange across a number of barriers, including the mis-recognition of Africa as "backward".

The opportunity presented to students on both sides of the divide to engage as equals was timeous given the incessant, resounding call to "decolonize" education. Students were able to simultaneously listen and share their understandings, observations, hopes and dreams through the lens of their lived experiences. The South African cohort was clear, from the word-go, that they partake in these conversations as equals, with as valid a knowledge base as their U.S. American counterparts. This, in itself, was a revolutionary posture given the unequal power relations that characterize the two nations. South Africa is among the global leaders in conversations both in critique of coloniality and about the urgency of decolonization in all realms of the social world.

This encounter was, by design, aspiration and in implementation, an unsettling of settled paradigms. The issues that were discussed reflected deeply on the basic logics and assumptions that undergird colonial knowledge. In this way, students engaged in profound critical thought and exchange that opened up an even deeper understanding of coloniality and awareness of possibility. For instance, given the multidisciplinary make-up of the UNISA cohort, reflecting on the coloniality of space and place opened up new vistas of understanding: why this design? What basic tenets underlie it? What politics are embedded in it? What possibilities are thwarted by it? Who benefits? What nefarious acts does it allow? What are the intended and unintended consequences? These are critical questions in the "decolonizing project".

Adelphi students were privileged to be provided entry points into ways of thinking, feeling and being that are outside the western, Euro-dominant, heteronormative patriarchal dominant narratives that they had been exposed to all their lives. They learned about academic excellence and rigor that exist embedded in intellectual and practical resistance to coloniality. They initially struggled to envision a world outside the frames they have been taught to believe as truths, but when the necessity and the possibility registered, they too began to think about how museums, schools, justice systems, architecture and aesthetics might look outside of traditionally accepted assumptions about how society should be organized.

These are deep questions that when engaged in from a comparative analytical purview by students whose lived experiences differ, but who owing to the global nature of coloniality, do experience the vestiges of the same, fostered greater appreciation of coloniality and of possibility. A discussion of architecture opened up discussions that touch on every other aspect of life, whether private or public and the concept of globalization is made real. This initiative made practical compression of time and space. In a small way, it opened up the worldviews of students on both sides of the geo-political divide. As a tool for teaching, this was an effective way to inculcate a "citizen of the world" imagination in the students in ways that a "study abroad" experience for a young person from the United States might not embed. Students experienced a sense of accomplishment for having engaged in such a manner that left a lasting impression and afforded them an opportunity to "travel" to other parts of the world. This was especially the case as many of the Adelphi students and families originated from outside the U.S. and shared this diversity with the class [1]. Technological glitches notwithstanding, students on both sides grabbed this opportunity with both hands and were excited for it. This was a gift that would long inflect their academic walk in a positive way.

The question of decolonization loomed large in these discussions. Designing decolonial institutions and spaces was an added, very ambitious, bonus. The imagination that is thwarted by the colonial "one-size-fits-all" closure was liberated by this radical opening up. The decolonial walk is never finished. It never closes. The journey is just as important as the destination. That students drawn from such diverse backgrounds could hold coherent, far-reaching conversations in so short a

[1] Among the 14 Adelphi students who participated, 4 were of white and European descent, while 10 have family heritage with themselves or their parents born in India (3), Colombia (1), U.S. African American (2), Guyana (2), Zimbabwe (1), and the Philippines (1). Their religious backgrounds included Christian, Muslim, Hindi, Sikh, and Jewish. In this sense, the cohort did not mirror the U.S. student population and may have led them to be particularly open to the exchange and learning outside of the frames they had been taught throughout their schooling. The South African cohort comprised of students who can be distinguished by their political affiliation/leaning rather than ethnicity as political activity is a central feature of student life in the country influencing their views. Student politics in South Africa traverse issues pertaining to education in the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements that encompass issues affecting the quality of life of university support staff in the #Outsourcingmustfall movement. Student politics are centrally concerned with Black existential issues that involve all aspects of their lived experiences.

space of time points to the importance of creative pedagogy design and forward-looking educators who recognize that success can often be measured in the process and not solely in a predesignated outcome.

The Initiative, through the Lens of the Academy

To address the challenges of embedding global learning deeply within the curriculum and foster greater understanding of the lived experiences of people outside the United States and global hierarchies, a new course was developed at Adelphi, piloted during the fall 2018 semester. The course sought to raise awareness of the continuing impact of coloniality and the history of resistance, particularly in the global South; and engage students in opportunities that expand their technological capabilities and usage to foster deeper learning in the global context.

For University of South Africa students, the goals were to expose them to the truism and reality of the westernized University – found everywhere in the world, teaching the same body of knowledge with little, if any, consideration of the local context. Recognizing ongoing resistance to this injustice was also an important component. Understanding the parochial nature of U.S. society and its problematic take on Africa, this opportunity was used to de-mystify globalization as presumed progress and reveal its character as a hegemonizing force. Students lamented this unfortunate state of affairs, bemoaning the loss of heterogeneity and the wealth that comes with this. The urgent need to re-shape global relations was thus underscored.

The American Council on Education Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement (CIGE)[2] states that effective internationalization of higher education goes way beyond the traditional practices of study abroad and international student enrollment. The organization asserts that institutions need a more comprehensive commitment to embed global learning in multiple aspects of the University structure including the curriculum, faculty development and research. They argue that global learning is an essential part of academic learning in this historical moment and that the technology exists to facilitate this process. What they

[2] https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Mapping-Internationalization-2017.pdf

speak less about is the development of relationships between students at Universities in and outside the United States as a particularly meaningful and do-able component of global learning.

Similarly, the Association of American Colleges and Universities Shared Futures: Global Learning and Social Responsibility project "was built on the assumption that we live in an interdependent but unequal world and that higher education can prepare students to not only thrive in such a world, but to creatively and responsibly remedy its inequities and problems."[3] They assert that it is "through global learning that students are prepared with the knowledge and commitment to be socially responsible citizens in a diverse democracy and increasingly interconnected world."[4]

With few students participating in formal study abroad programs, it is essential to develop other ways of building bridges. While the presence of international students increases contact with people outside the United States, and language requirements are useful though this is insufficient. Traditional models of global learning generally focus on these strategies. We attempted to bring together the scholarship on teaching and learning regarding high impact practices and an emphasis on global learning.

The course was conducted through a collaboration between the Adelphi faculty member (Melanie E L Bush) and a faculty member at the University of South Africa (Nokuthula L Hlabangane). Dr. Bush is a research fellow at UNISA and is working with Dr. Hlabangane on other scholarly projects such as the development of a decolonial "counter-text" for the social sciences with another group of international scholars. It made great sense to attempt this collaboration as a living tribute to worldwide student demands to "decolonize education".

Students from Adelphi University and the University of South Africa engaged in conversation and cross-experience exchange on a weekly basis. The initiative was rooted in the Adelphi course entitled, "The Reshaping of Social Relations in the Modern World" and through a network of UNISA students connected with the

[3] https://www.aacu.org/shared-futures
[4] Ibid.

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology and decolonizing studies and projects in South Africa.

The course began with an examination of how the emergence of coloniality and the modern world reshaped social relations. Adelphi and UNISA students did readings and engaged conversation through Skype, Slack, WhatsApp and email on topics such as land reform, how decolonization can occur, the impact of coloniality in contemporary educational systems, the relationship of knowledge and epistemology to structures of inequality and much more.

Students then explored how we define and design "decolonized" institutions, social relations and ways of knowing, being and thinking. Through written and oral exchange of ideas, articulation of the principles that might anchor decolonized spaces, students compiled their initial thinking about "decolonized" architecture, justice, education, beauty and aesthetics, art, literature and health care. The course closed with presentations that described these designs and shared the experience of this profound exchange and collaboration.

The course closed with presentations that described these designs and shared the experience of this profound collaboration. The class will run again after a period of reflection, with students playing a leadership role in how to continue making this experience authentic, challenging, and transformatory.

Several participating students from both universities shared their experiences in a session of the conference "Unsettling Paradigms: The Decolonial Turn" in July 2019, at the University of Pretoria.

The involved faculty made a presentation at the International Studies Association meeting at the University of Ghana in August 2019.

The overall value of this project includes the following:

1. *This collaborative investigation of the reshaping of social relations in the modern world, both what occurred with the emergence of coloniality and what is taking shape in contemporary times, expands on the examination of race, class, gender and intersectionality through engagement of the theoretical framework of the coloniality of power that is much more widely embraced outside the United States. The content of the course therefore exposed students to new ideas. This was particularly true for students at*

Adelphi as critiques of coloniality and analysis of what is meant by decoloniality are less traditionally present in the U.S. context. The students from UNISA were also able to learn from the experiences and questions posted by the Adelphi students. This provided important exposure outside media framing of who young people in the U.S. are, and what they think and value.

2. *The course provided direct engagement and interaction about this material with students who have had a different lived experience and exposure to ideas. This course provides a model that can be used to establish similar classes in coordination with other universities.*
3. *In the process of the intellectual and social engagement of the material and exchanges related to lived experiences, students learned new methodologies for interaction that can ground themselves globally with the use of technology. The collaboration demonstrated that developing relationships "cross-borders", holding conversations about world events (historical and contemporary) and learning through experience of the profound interconnection of all humanity, can take place, given the technology we now have.*
4. *The outcome was extraordinarily powerful as will be clear both from student reflections on their experience and the "decolonized designs" they created.*
5.

Decolonizing Exchanges and Decolonial Designs

In this section, several students' proposals are briefly summarized. These relate to art and aesthetics, architecture and space, beauty, and youth leadership.

Art and Aesthetics

Raquel Adler, (Adelphi Fine Arts major, Sociology minor) opened with the following quotes:

> Transforming social relations in the modern world is definitely easier said than done! Some of us are very aware of the effects of colonialism, capitalism, eurocentrism, and white supremacy. We recognize the violence and structural unsustainability of the systems that organize societies around the globe. But just because we are aware, doesn't mean everyone is...

> Our current pedagogical and institutional structures have been and continue to be constructed in ways to enforce these systems. Knowledge is power, and when knowledge is withheld from us, we are left powerless. However, once we have unlocked understandings the resident power is unleashed and we can achieve anything. Once we decolonize our minds, we can begin to dismantle the structures.
> Decoloniality is essential to reshaping our modern world system because our current system is based on coloniality, an unsustainable structure. The true history and its effects are hidden from us. Through the four genocides, epistemicides, and patriarchal projects of the 16th century (Grosfoguel, 2013) we are left with epistemic racism and sexism as foundational organizing principles for society.
>
> Our pedagogies are built on the Eurocentric lens of universalism, where one person's lived experience becomes a universal narrative (that being the white, male, and Christian elite). This idea of the blanket universal truth leads to the production of disenfranchised populations who are socialized to distance themselves from their own cultures and become alienated from their own identities in favor of the "truths" of the Euro-America that rejects them (Grosfoguel, 2013).

Raquel describes coming to understand unequivocally that "The epistemologies of the Western university are set up upon these notions of mental slavery" (Hira, 2016). She notes that the most challenging part of this class was the decolonized design proposal because "all of my ideas of decoloniality were still based in coloniality" She speaks to the power of connection with the UNISA students, and in particular credits Bongisa for helping her understand that "representation is not limited to subject matter, but it is also about the artists' themselves, curators, art historians, and everyone involved. Coloniality affects everyone and it is a collective."

About her experience, Rachel conveys that,

> I had never really spoken to anyone from another country. As much as I would like to say that I am open, I am also extremely sheltered and tend to live in my own little bubble. My personal problems and experiences often consume my entire world, and it is hard for me to see that as much as I shouldn't minimize my problems, I have to realize that other people are going through something. This is one of the most important lessons that I took from our collaboration, as I listened to everyone's personal struggles ...I realized that I need to shift my mindset to a more decolonized one – and have now incorporated meditation and spiritual healing into my daily life and routine.
>
> When we did guided meditation as a class together, it truly came full circle for me: that is what decolonized learning is all about. Activities like that are so important and vital for our mental health and psyche, so why has it never been incorporated into class? It was so beneficial for me to see our learning environment as not just a place for absorbing wisdom, but also a place of healing.

> One of the articles read in class was on neuro-decolonization (Yellow Bird, 2012); there's urgency of recognizing this as an essential component of the "decolonial project". This process is different for those of us living in colonizer spaces versus regions that have been colonized however it is important to recognize that the structuring of the world's people in rigid hierarchies and separations has done damage to all of our capacity to think, learn, and grow.

Raquel concludes with a recognition that our collaboration was an opening, not an ending or a destination. She shares,

> After taking this course, I have new friends at Adelphi and new friends across the globe. During our interviews, were able to talk about impactful issues we all face due to colonialism, but we were also able to form a bond and laugh over things like real friends. We shared personal stories, anecdotes, thoughts, and ideas - and I couldn't be more grateful to have met everyone in this class and discuss these touchy topics in such a safe and collaborative space.
>
> Bongisa from UNISA has given me invaluable advice about how to be a better friend, a better ally, and a better person overall as a colonial being wanting to move forward towards a decolonized space. This journey towards decoloniality journey has definitely been a long one, but it is nowhere near over. The conversation is now open, and ready to be had.

Decolonizing and Uplifting Youth Leadership

Cyril Thabo Makwakwa (UNISA Graduate: BA Social Sciences, Honors Sociology) was one of the two lead students from the University of South Africa. The respect that the other students had for him and his clarity of vision brought them to the collaboration. He is a true leader. Thabo opened his reflection about the experience by saying:

> The world is changing; the global community is awakened from the dark ages and fast coming to a realization that it must adapt or die. However, what death could the globe face after having survived billions of years? The death of the global world I refer to is that which fails to learn from its past mistakes, develop young global leadership that would not only bring about positive change to the highly divided world, but also connect progressive youth from across the globe and establish sustainable relations. The world needs old people to learn from the young and the young to also draw knowledge from the old people.
>
> This collaboration came at a time when I was trying to contribute into the voice of young people in South Africa, highlighting the challenges faced by youth who are reeling from many forms of social injustices coupled with socioeconomic exclusion, most notably lack of representation in spheres of leadership.

Thabo conveys his evaluation of this collaboration by stating that "this initiative promoted creativity, innovation and fostered new thinking. Students were

at the center with the purpose of creating an environment where young and old are afforded equal opportunity to contribute." He describes our collaboration as "applying a values-based and servant leadership approach" by faculty.

From his perspective, Thabo shares that:

> Leadership is influence and not age influence. We were allowed to be ourselves, come up with our own perspectives and contribute as much as we could. We had the freedom to develop our individual worldview cutting across gender, culture and race. The class turned into an ideal world constituted of young people from around the world, it represented a new generation of not only academics but also leaders who in their respective communities. We became leaders who would add value and deliver sustainable social relations.

Thabo writes that "at the beginning of the collaboration, I was concerned about how the class would turn out as it had people of all races with the majority of students being from Adelphi. My fears disappeared as diversity was well managed by the entire team. Valuing each other's contribution as well as enabling space for constructive criticism, stood out as the strongest point for me." He quotes Adelphi student Carolina Medina who said that "negative thoughts must be replaced with practice of positive thinking, speech and actions through mindfulness and generate new thinking which liberate the mind from oppressive thinking" noting that:

> The contribution of each student in the group reflected multiple intelligences (cognitive, emotional, spiritual and cultural). This was from the realization that indeed, the world is struggling to close gaps between areas such as race, cultural, gender, religion and intellectual arrogance.
>
> Collective wisdom and leadership among Adelphi-UNISA students helped me realize that we are all equal and have something great to contribute to the world. This is despite the toxicity of university rankings that are divisive and limit students from engaging, importing and exporting knowledge for the betterment of our global community."

Thabo concludes his evaluation of this experience by saying:

> More interactions such as this must be encouraged in institutions of higher learning, politics and other forms of social participation so that young people may learn that the challenges faced by our communities require collective leadership. This type of leadership holds everyone in high regard, and sees no difference according to the color of one's skin.
>
> We need to create spaces for different views, be open-minded, respect diversity and other people, and be willing to continue learning about our world. The alternative form of education through online participation challenges the colonial standardized methods. It connects people of different origins through an open simplified platform that does not impose

> a way of learning - rather it relies on the people to shape both the process and the outcome.
>
> We speak one common language which is love and peace. All of us aspire to create a better and safe world where there is no looking down on others regardless of our demographic. We learned that differences can be used to teach and learn about each other's worlds. It was a significant revelation that perceptions are not natural but formed as a result of symbolic interactions in our respective environments.
>
> I learned from Adelphi students that education has no boundaries; no ranking and absolutely no ending. Our histories learned in schools are carefully scripted to feed society what is appropriate to the writers.
> We built knowledge together! I was stimulated by the class and found it to be penetrating and thoughtful.

Decolonizing Beauty Standards

Carolina Medina (Adelphi University Graduate, Interdisciplinary major, Fulbright Scholar English Teaching Assistant, Costa Rica) She focused on visioning beauty through a decolonial lens. She says:

> Notions of beauty are often conveyed through images that are Euro-oriented and first world centered. This idea and practice emerged with coloniality, white supremacy, Eurocentrism and standards about appearance that embedded the social hierarchies developed with the emergence of the modern world. Concepts of beauty are rooted in the division of humanity between the superior and inferior, worthy versus unworthy. Oppression, competition, and a single narrative about what is appealing and attractive conveys denial and disrespect.
>
> The modern, colonial concept of beauty erases, disregards and ignores those who do not have access to resources to meet their basic needs no less, to purchase items or services that are believed to enhance one's appearance. Indeed, the World Health Organization estimates that 2.1 billion people lack safe drinking water and 4.5 billion people who do not have safely managed sanitation[5]
>
> The conversation then about dominant notions of beauty are absurd and convey the valuation and lack valuation of different peoples' lives. Meeting basic needs in a capitalist society means consumption.
> White supremacy, imperialism and capitalism has perpetuated the idea that humans are just never enough. Facial and body symmetry are at the core of defining beauty standards and those standards are often Euro-centric. Women of color are often sexualized, objectified and fetishized for having different facial/ body features. Current beauty standards revolve around the idealization of a thin body, youthfulness and whiteness. Consequently, the beauty market is focused on targeting female insecurities especially those of women of color. The huge market for skin

[5]https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/12-07-2017-2-1-billion-people-lack-safe-drinking-water-at-home-more-than-twice-as-many-lack-safe-sanitation

> whitening and brightening products is just one example and a violently dangerous one, at that.
>
> Eurocentric norms establish a standardization of beauty with little to no room for multiple ways of being, and diverse appearances. The problem with our current concept of beauty is that loving ourselves unconditionally as well as embracing our roots has become a radical idea.

Carolina proposes three steps toward decolonizing beauty: Recognize and accept that we are all mentally enslaved; Practice neuro-decolonization; and Replace Problems with Vision. She concludes saying that "Beauty would no longer be what a person looks like but how a person is in their spirit and way of relating to others. Decolonizing of aesthetics to me is the acceptance that beauty exists in multiple ways, not just a physical one. Once we recognize that we perceive beauty from a single dominant narrative we can move forward to self-empowerment, self-love and self-recognition... Designing a decolonial space within a social institution was one of the hardest projects I did throughout my academic life. Critiquing ways coloniality has impacted our social institutions is easy but developing a space where inclusivity, healing and acceptance is present is extremely difficult. I had been exposed to a single narrative regarding beauty as long as I can remember and thinking about self-love and acceptance of my own natural physical features was a radical experience."

In describing her experience of the collaboration, she states that:

> Interacting with UNISA students on a regular basis was one of the most meaningful experiences for me. We exchanged ideas on structural realities. I was able to listen and learn how coloniality impacted their ideas of beauty and helped me realize that decolonizing beauty is not an easy task. This is a painful subject because of how much we have internalized these standards. Seeing beauty as a physical thing is colonial, we need to break away from perceiving beauty as only external and focus on how empowered we feel as individuals, it's about acceptance, authenticity and self-love."

Decolonizing Architecture and Space

Bongisa Msutu (UNISA graduate, Bachelors in Anthropology, Honors) pursuing a graduate degree in Architecture or Urban Planning. She opened her discussion of decolonizing space by saying:

> The decolonial philosophy is about making visible what has been made invisible. It is about unmasking the logic of coloniality in order to achieve justice and humanization. It is also about recognizing that there is not just one legitimate way of being – universal, colonial and modern – but rather there are many – pluriversal, decolonial and indigenous – most of which contradict the modern colonial, yet are just as legitimate. These many ways must be recognized and be made visible.

> At the risk of homogenizing, for most indigenous communities and societies, their concepts of space and identity are linked to the relationships between their people, landscape and their faith; and to their cultural worldview. Most importantly, according to Tuck and Yang (2012:5), indigenous peoples' sense of identity is directly tied to their land. This, the taught modern theories and histories of architecture does not consider.

She goes on to identify markers constitutive of architecture that she asserts must be addressed in a decolonized spatial plan: history, theory, use, representation, design, construction and destruction of space and structures. Bongisa explains this by saying:

> For indigenous people, the use and representation must portray their values of their relationships with one another and their environment. The construction and destruction (materials and methods) will influence the design of the architectural artefacts, of which will be influenced by the history and ever-moving culture of its people.
>
> To be able to do this, architects, designers and the fraternity must be pluriversal in their understanding of the people they design for. To not impose, but rather respectfully understand and accept.

Values of most indigenous societies are tied to land, human interactions and belief systems. Bongisa noted that her interaction with one of the Adelphi students of Sikh descent who spoke and wrote of the pilgrimage site of Sri Harmandir Sahib, convinced her that "the idea and practice of decolonized architecture and design is not as far-fetched and inconceivable as most advocators of modern colonial design would have us think. In fact, it is necessary for the redefining of humanity."

Bongisa shared that the collaboration taught her that "it is possible to create such learning spaces that allow for respectful, robust and necessary conversations with people from different backgrounds and socialization, while learning from one another." She notes, "My hope is that students from all disciplines, especially within the architecture discipline, are able to make the leap of not only interdisciplinary learning but of viewing architecture as a social science and cultural practice that must interrogate the modern colonial gospel of design."

Conclusion

Our fascination with the adage to learn and teach without borders was the driving force to facilitate this meeting of unlikely partners. The decolonial programs we participated in impressed upon us the inward-looking decadence of Eurocentrism. "If we want to understand why standard schools are what they are, we have to

abandon the idea that they are products of logical or scientific insight. They are, instead, products of history" (Gray, 2008). They are products of a history of coercion, control, discipline, servitude and unquestioning of authority. Education, including higher education, is hostile to undirected exploration and thus thwarts natural human instincts. The need to liberate education from the constrictions of coloniality is urgent if we are to fashion a healthier, more robust and involved student body. The decolonial walk is about smashing colonial borders that thwart human potential resulting in unformed and de-formed individuals who are self-involved.

In addition, as Dr. Hlabangane shares, "For sure, Africa has received bad PR, to say the least. In my unfettered love for the continent, I use every opportunity to show that, in fact, Africa is a place of beauty." Our knowledges, philosophies, ethics, relations, and overall notions of being put humanity at the center. This idea of humanity is not a warped one that reflects colonial hierarchies. It is one that promises radical democracy that posits the equality of all planetary and terrestrial beings. It was on the basis of the need to open up and engage in earnest conversation, against colonial soliloquy and closure. I am grateful for opportunities to engage.

A particular limitation of this very short exchange is that diverse knowledge systems could not be explored. Contrary to Eurocentric notions of being that are linear and closed, African conceptions of be-ing can be characterized as circles within circles that are fluid and thus robust in nature. This has important considerations to how power is understood and enacted. Such understandings can bring a much-needed change to social relations that are currently caught up in webs of destruction. The need to liberate all living beings from the conceit of colonialism begins in the classroom and it begins with facilitating spaces in which students can breathe and thus thrive.

We close here with comments from two of the other student participants:

> One way to decolonize our way of thinking and practices is to be open to endless possibilities. Just as we discussed in class, not all of us have the same ways of thinking or perspectives but that doesn't mean that they're always good or equal. We should let our minds roam yet know the boundaries which were not set by coloniality rather just humanity.
>
> Our power to revolutionize the world around us begins within us. Honoring the purpose and value of our names, languages, heritage, and identities is fundamental to restoring our sovereignty from repressive forces. When one is taught to loathe every ounce of who they are, vengeance through love for oneself is the epitome of all solutions.

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Sociological Teaching

Curious Citizens: Curriculum, Care and Social Good in Online Enabling Pathways Education

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Abstract

Situated in the context of Widening Participation policy and practice and its resonances with the traditional 'purpose' of Higher Education as a civic duty and public good (Giroux, 2002), this article draws on a Collaborative Inquiry Project (CIP) in one Australian online/blended enabling pathways program. Enabling programs in Australia are designed to provide an alternative pathway to higher education studies for students who do not possess traditional entry requirements and are similar to Access education in the UK or community college education in North America. This article interrogates the curriculum of the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) enabling pathways program at the University of Newcastle in terms of its relationship to "what matters" for enabling educators. As part of the CIP project, an audit of key curriculum indicators (Assessment, Engagement, Academic Literacies and Pedagogies) was conducted along with a semi-structured group discussion amongst the enabling educator participants. This discussion revealed a deep engagement with curriculum design and with the philosophies underpinning Enabling Pathways education and Widening Participation (see Motta & Bennett, 2018; Bennett et al., 2016). Further, these philosophies were explicitly articulated by participant-group members in ways which revealed a commitment to citizenry and the founding features of Higher Education. Enabling Pathways education, despite its diversity across Australia (Pitman, 2017; Baker & Irwin, 2016), is a robust field with strong connections to undergraduate programs, but with a unique set of considerations in terms of curriculum

design—especially in designing for diverse cohorts studying in online/blended modes. In this article we explore stories of success in online curriculum design as well as provide a view of an interdisciplinary whole-of-program approach to serving and supporting online Enabling Pathways students in becoming 'curious citizens.'

Keywords: Collaborative Inquiry, curriculum, neoliberalism, online pedagogy, widening participation

Introduction

The Open Foundation (Online/Blended) program is an enabling pathways program at the University of Newcastle. In Australia, enabling programs refer to programs of study (usually situated within universities) which offer courses designed to prepare future students for entry to higher education. As an equity and access mechanism, they provide an alternative pathway to university for students who do not possess traditional entry qualifications. The University of Newcastle's enabling program is fee-free and open access, meaning that students who wish to enter the program do not need to prove any prior educational experience, capability, or attainment. Given that enabling pathways programs and, therefore, the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) Program, provide alternatives to the 'traditional' school–university entry to higher education, they can furthermore be seen as an expression of Australia's Widening Participation (WP) or equity agenda (Cocks & Stokes, 2013) which has been articulated through various government policies and legislation since the 1970s (Irwin & Hamilton, 2020). The aim of these policies is to provide both increased participation in, and widened access to, higher education in Australia as an expression of social justice where representation in higher education reflects the demographics of the community (Gale & Tranter, 2011).

While many enabling pathways programs do not limit entry based on 'equity' group identification, they attract students from groups who are underrepresented in higher education, especially students from low socioeconomic, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and rural and remote backgrounds (Pitman et al., 2016). Despite its

diversity across Australia (Pitman et al., 2016; Baker & Irwin, 2016), enabling pathways education is a robust field with strong connections to undergraduate programs, yet with a unique set of considerations in terms of curriculum design for diverse and underrepresented cohorts.

Situated, then, in the context of WP policy and practice and its resonances with the traditional 'purpose' of higher education as a civic duty and public good (Giroux, 2002), this article draws on a Collaborative Inquiry Project (CIP) conducted with educators in the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) Program. As part of the CIP project, an audit of key curriculum domains (Assessment, Engagement, Academic Literacies and Online Teaching and Learning Methods) was conducted along with a focused discussion amongst the project team. The team consisted of eight educators in the program with a range of disciplinary expertise. Our discussion revealed a deep engagement with curriculum design and with the philosophies underpinning enabling pathways education and WP (see Bennett et al., 2016; Motta & Bennett, 2018). Further, these philosophies were explicitly articulated by team members in ways which revealed a commitment to citizenry and the foundational philosophies of higher education. In this article, we provide an insider view of an interdisciplinary curriculum approach to serving and supporting online/blended enabling pathways students in becoming 'curious citizens' despite an uncomfortable context which challenges, yet does not defeat, our capacities for care.

Widening Participation and Neoliberalism: Strange Bedfellows

The bedrock of WP policies is the desire to enact social justice for communities by broadening access to higher education so that participation is representative of populations (Gale & Tranter, 2011; Pitman, 2017). In doing this, WP programs and policies aim to facilitate access to, and participation in, higher education for those whose histories and positionings mean that they would ordinarily be excluded from higher education (Burke, 2013). This social justice desire aligns with what many researchers and commentators on higher education have posited as the long-held traditional purpose of universities: to perform a social and public good for their communities "through research, teaching and service" (Wheaton, 2020, p. 76) and to

perform the "social imperative of educating citizens who can sustain and develop inclusive democratic public spheres" (Giroux, 2002, p. 432).

However, the traditional purpose of universities has come under intense and increasing pressure from neoliberal logics in the decades since the 1980s. Neoliberalism and its manifestations in higher education are known through various guises and labels: economic rationalism, corporatisation, new managerialism, corporate culture, and others. In short, it is a form of governance characterised by a focus on individual autonomy, economic privatisation and minimal State intervention (Ball, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; Fredman & Doughney, 2012). Neoliberalism's impacts on higher education include increased competition between institutions for funding (Marginson, 2006), a focus on individual achievements and responsibility for staff and students (Macfarlane, 2017; Southgate & Bennett, 2014), and a curriculum which is becoming employment oriented and focused on human capital, while moving away from "developing an informed national citizenry" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2011, p. 12). Further, the impacts of the measurement of individual achievement on academic staff means that little value is placed on the "social, emotional and moral" aspects of their work, such as care and respect, because these are difficult to measure (Ball, 2012, quoted in Sutton, 2017).

These impacts have displaced a university governance which focuses on the purpose of providing public good (Ball, 2003; Giroux, 2002) and replaced it with universities that now must operate as part of the competitive higher education system (Marginson, 2006).

In the Australian context, WP policies have always been entangled with these neoliberal logics (Gale & Parker, 2013). In recent decades, and in response to an influential, government-initiated review of Australian higher education (Bradley et al., 2008), WP or equity in higher education has come to focus primarily on facilitating the participation of low socioeconomic status people in higher education (Gale & Parker, 2013). However, WP or equity policies are articulated as both social justice interventions and ways to improve Australia's economic future (Gale & Tranter, 2012). According to Gale and Tranter's (2011) review of Australia's higher education policies, social justice goals alone have "never been enough to justify" the expansion of universities to include underrepresented groups (Gale & Tranter, 2011, p. 41).

Indeed, they argue that economic imperatives have been used as the strongest arguments to widen participation in Australian higher education. Intertwined with these WP policies and associated interventions have been the entrepreneurial imperatives of neoliberalism in Australian universities.

While arguing that various higher educationreforms and interventions have "prioritised efforts to reduce educational disadvantage", Peacock et al. (2014), acknowledge that these reforms are situated within the context of "neoliberal education and economic policy" (p. 378). Neoliberallogics take further hold of WP interventions as they are often operationalised to support employment-oriented individual goals(Peacock et al., 2014) and used as an instrument to increase the competitiveadvantage of universities (Archer, 2007;Burke, 2013).

Navigating 'Uncomfortable'Spaces

The position of online enabling pathways education in the political and structural context of Australian higher education mirrors the tensions within WP discourses.As Irwin and Hamilton (2020) have previously argued, online enabling pathways education is 'uncomfortably'

positioned simultaneously as an expressionof WP policies (Stone, 2016) and as an instrument of neoliberal logics, through which universities can increase their geographical footprint and thereby student numbers, in an—arguably—cost effective way (Irwin & Hamilton, 2020). Indeed, online learning in higher education has long been derided as just a "technological quickfix(es)" (Giroux, 2002, p. 442) used by universities that are beholden to neoliberal, economic rationalist strategies to increase their geographical reach and attract more students in the competitive higher education 'market' (Chau, 2010).

For online enabling pathways educators operating in this environment, the pressures and tensions are numerous: guided by philosophies of teaching which are deeply embedded with care, we are committed to designing curriculums in ways which serve our students and communities. However, we must do this under neoliberal constraints which have the potential to influence how, what and why we teach.

Enabling Pathways Curriculum:Critical and Caring

Enabling pathways programs across Australia are currently free to develop theirown diverse curriculums in order to respond to their local communities,however, they all share a common purpose:"to ensure students are academically prepared to begin study at undergraduate level" (Syme et al., 2020, p. 3). As an enabling pathways program, the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) currently offers 24 discipline-focused courses acrosstwo semesters and provides free and open access to higher education for increasingly large numbers of students from the University's local and regional areas as well as from further afield around Australia. While approaches to the curriculum of the Open Foundation Program, andcorrespondingly, its online/blended mode, have evolved since its inception in 1974, the foundational concept of "adoptingmodern multidisciplinary approaches ... designed to appeal to enquiring mature minds" (Smith, 1974, quoted in May &Bunn, 2015) has remained.

The teaching philosophy guiding the Open Foundation enabling pathways program relies on Enabling Pedagogies (Bennett et al,, 2016). Enabling Pedagogies "provide dialogical spaces where students' existing knowledges are valued ..."; eschew deficit framings; and develop in students the capacities to be able to both use and challenge "the academic and intellectual resources" required for university (Bennett et al. 2016, p. 9).

Further, in its contemporary incarnation, the multidisciplinarity of the program isunderpinned by a 'multiliteracies' approach(Miller, 2015) whereby each course, while focused on specific discipline content knowledge, aims to embed explicit teachingof the tacit and implicit academic, information and digital literacies essential for students to successfully engage with the university teaching and learning environment (O'Rourke et al., 2019). As opposed to viewing students as in deficit, teaching staff value students' "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez et al., 2013) taking an 'abundance' approach (Miller, 2015) to acknowledge students' wide range of linguistic, literacies and life knowledges toinform their learning design and teaching practices. Through this approach, our educators are concerned with developing students' criticality in order to enhance their capacities and capabilities to operate as "active agents" (Hattam & Stokes, 2020)in their own learning.

Importantly, yet less visible, is the curriculum's attention to 'pedagogies of care' (Motta & Bennett, 2018) which form part of what have been termed Enabling Pedagogies (Bennett et al., 2016). Pedagogies of care "emphasis[e] optimism and empathy" (Bennett et al., 2016, p. 9). These caring pedagogies and epistemologies were found to be enacted in the Open Foundation Program and its online modality by Motta and Bennett (2018). Pedagogies of care manifest themselves through our educators' "ethics, practices and relationships" (p. 632) and have the potential to disrupt and re-balance neoliberal interpretations of access and WP initiatives (Motta & Bennett, 2020).

Collaborative Inquiry

A shared focus on praxis is fostered in the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) program through a variety of both formal and informal professional development activities for educators. Aligning with this philosophy, a Collaborative Inquiry Project was initiated by two members of the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) program in order to identify and explore any common concerns relating to our teaching practice. Ongoing, contract and sessional staff were invited to participate (n=13) with eight staffmembers contributing to the project. Ofthese eight staff members, two were full-time ongoing, one was full-time on contract, and five were sessional academics. The disciplines represented in this project are Chemistry and Life Sciences, Education, Australian History, Law, Linguistics, and Sociology.

A collaborative inquiry is an inclusive research methodology that is "participatory, democratic and reflective in design, method and dissemination" (Bridges and McGee, 2011, p. 213). The members of this collaborative inquiry were also participantsin the research. Members were asked tocontribute to all stages of the project with anumber of meetings being held to discuss the aims, research questions and outcomes of the project. While we acknowledge that this methodology challenges the traditionalacademic approach to research, it is modelled here for two specific reasons. Firstly, this methodology acknowledges theexpertise of the group in delivering online Open Foundation courses.

Secondly, with the representation of members from different disciplines, this methodology allowed for a research process that was not tied to a specific discipline, rather it allowed member-participants to bring their research expertise to the inquiry. Essentially, it "demystif[ied] the research and … empower[ed] people to research their lived experience within the context of wider sociopolitical environments" (Bridges and McGee, 2011,p. 258). While two members of the group initiated and led the inquiry, the traditional hierarchies of academic research were broken down meaning the inquiry was a joint enterprise ensuring the co-construction of knowledge.

Following the initial CIP meeting, one of the members elected to conduct an audit of pedagogical practices in our current courses to identify differences and commonalities across the Program. The audit included all 10 Semester 2, 2020 courses (an additional2 courses were added to the suite in 2021) in the following discipline areas: Business,Sociology, Education, Law, Linguistics, History, Science for Nursing andMidwifery, Life Sciences, Mathematics (two courses: Introductory and Advanced).The curriculum in these courses was organised around the following key domain areas: Assessment; Academic Literacies; Engagement; and Online Teaching and Learning Methods.

Concurrently, we collaborated online to develop the following research questions which were explored through a recorded semi-structured group discussion.

1. *How can we better understandthe ways in which different courses operate and is there a 'best' approach?*
2. *What discipline specific knowledges and / or philosophical approaches to teaching inform the way we approach our online pedagogies and course designs?*
3. *How do we manage our students' cognitive load?*

4. *The transcript from our semi-structured group discussion was analysed thematically by two of the team members and member- checked by the remaining members. The following key themes were identified:'disciplinary differences'; 'purpose of enabling education'; and 'the effects of time on online pedagogical practices.' These themes will be explored in the remainder of the article.Taking Different Roads to theSame Destination*

Explicit Differences

The audit of courses in the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) program revealed both commonalities and differences in the way online teaching and learning is approached. While program andcourse design are guided by consistent navigation principles and visual design, differences do exist between courses in terms of how learning is accessed and experienced. To some extent, these differences reveal historical influences on course design. Of special interest, however,are differences in online pedagogical practices which were found across the fourkey domains of the audit: Assessment, Engagement, Academic Literacies and Online Teaching and Learning Methods.For example, in the Academic Literacies domain, 'research' and 'referencing' were explicitly taught in seven out of ten courses, reflecting the importance of these practicesacross disciplines in terms of preparing students for undergraduate studies. Other practices, however, such as 'oral presentations' and 'group/team-work' featured in just four out of ten courses. Those courses were Business, Sociology, Education and Science for Nursing and Midwifery where oral- and team-work are both key academic and professional practices.

In speaking about their approach to teaching oral presentations in Sociology, one participant revealed how alignment with future undergraduate studies underpinned the approach:

> I always felt like we were teaching too much to the assessment tasks, rather than the underlying skill that the student needed, and would need, going into undergraduate. So that's why, when we changed it this year, we focused on those kinds of sociological skills that are aimed at assessment tasks, but also try and show students that these skills are something that's beyond this course. … So, really trying to move beyond just assessment tasks to the skills of it. (CIP semi-structured group discussion)

While discussing our different approaches to teaching and learning online, CIP participants recounted how students often questioned why they were being assessed indifferent ways, or, for example, why their learning in one course took place through multiple discussion activities, while inanother course, it took place throughreading course notes. One participant sought feedback from the CIP group ontheir own pedagogical practices,

> I mean, I don't know if you give marks to encourage students to use the discussion board or not; because I know that I have students doing Education who would really like me to encourage a bit more. You know,

> push the participation on the discussion board" (CIP semi-structured group discussion).

Participants in the group critically questioned whether these teaching and learning practices should be standardised across the program in order to minimise barriers to student learning. However, as one participant in the CIP pointed out, disciplinary differences in approaches is important, not only because the subject matter aligns to particular disciplines, but also because the academic practices may differ too: *"much of what you might consider to be transferrable is actually quite specific to your discipline and thepractices embedded in it*" (CIP semi- structured group discussion). The group discussed how it was important to explicate these differences to students:

> I often talk to students about how different lecturers and different courses and different disciplines look different in the way that they are pedagogically structured. … [P]erhaps if we're takingan interdisciplinary learning approach, that that's something that we need to take on as the course coordinators or course designers, that we make that veryclear, that the way that you're going to learn and be assessed in [one] course isgoing to be different to the way you're going to learn and be assessed in [another] course (CIP semi-structured group discussion).

In alignment with the scholarly work on Academic Literacies (for example, Lea & Street, 2006; Miller, 2015), making these disciplinary differences explicit and unpacking how and why particular disciplines operate introduces students to thinking about the situated and constructednature of academic practices in terms of what is valued in particular disciplinarycontexts. In terms of our online curriculum, these disciplinary differences are enacted, not only through our embedded academic literacies content, but also through our teaching methods and practice. In short, for our online enabling curriculum design, there is no 'gold standard', rather,disciplinary differences influence and guideour methods.

Developing 'Curious' Citizens

Irrespective of our disciplinary differences,the educators in our CIP group have sharedgoals. For all of us, our students were at thecentre of our discussions around our different pedagogies and practices, for example,

> […] whenever you are coming up with a certain assessment, or task, or whatever,trying to think from a student perspective. Like, "Would I love

> to be involved in that particular task?" "WhatI can get from that particular task? (CIP semi-structured group discussion)

All of us endeavour to teach our "*students to be university students, but also [to be] members of the world*" (CIP semi- structured group discussion). Teaching how to 'be a student' was linked to the embedded academic literacies skills and practices in courses. As one participant mentioned, "*we use [our discipline] as the beacon to teach skills for university studies. So, we're kind of teaching students the cultural capital that is needed to do uni*" (CIP semi-structured group discussion). This view is supported by Habel et al. (2016) who, through a Bourdieusian lens, found that enabling pathways programs, while developing practical skills and practices, also provide the opportunity to help students understand how to become university students.

As Allen (2020) points out, students themselves view 'success' in their enabling programs as a fluid and multilayeredconcept which does not solely rely on "graded outcome[s]" (p. 17). Our educatorsshare this view, and what was clearthroughout our discussion, is that teaching and learning is more than just equipping students with the competencies andpractices needed for them to succeed inmeasurable ways at university. Our group have hopes for their students that movebeyond the limited scope of assessment frameworks and rubrics.

The final question we posed to ourselves during our semi-structured discussion was,"what do we teach, and why?". Theanswers, despite our diverse disciplinary backgrounds and approaches, were remarkably similar and focused on our desire to contribute to the development of our students' ways of seeing and being in the world: "*When I teach my course inHistory, I make an effort to talk about people belonging to different groups of people, with the hope that they are all goingto embrace or feel curious about something*" (CIP semi-structured group discussion). Another CIP participant talked about how their discipline, Linguistics, had far reaching implications for the ways students view the world

> […] it's somethingwhich is there around them. So, to make them conscious of the fact that they can actually apply the knowledge and skills in everyday life, and how they can benefitfrom using it, and being aware of those skills" (CIP semi-structured group discussion).

Developing a critical consciousness in students was at the heart of another participant's teaching philosophy, "*I justsee my content in some ways very secondary to being good global [citizens]*

… rational, logical, can work out what's accurate, can create an argument, can see holes in arguments. All of that is really important" (CIP semi-structured group discussion). These expansive hopes for our students demonstrate a defiance of institutional, employment-focused discourses, so too, they avoid narrowly focused discourses of channelling students into undergraduate studies. Rather, they express shared and heartfelt commitments to developing a critical and curious citizenry capable of contributing to and shaping social and public good.

The Pressures and Pleasures ofTime

Despite online education being viewed by institutions as a cost-efficiency, the online educators in our CIP drew explicit connections between their careful and caring pedagogical practices and the large investments of (often uncompensated) time it takes to achieve them. Of particular significance, was the time and care taken with responding to, and teaching, students via discussion board conversations.

> I make an effort to respond to every single student that introduces themselvesto me, and make a comment, which is a really… it's time consuming in that firstweek, but I find that they engage more ifthey know that they're going to get something back from you (CIP semi-structured group discussion).

Time was a factor at play for both asynchronous teaching such as discussion board activities, as well as for synchronousactivities like online tutorials. As one CIP member pointed out, a wholly onlineteaching environment requires time and care in thinking about, preparing and composing communications and materials so that "students will get the right message"where the visual and verbal cues oftraditional face-to-face feedback and explanation is missing.

While our CIP members were happy tospend this extra time for their students, professional tensions and struggles wereevident during our semi-structured group discussion. One participant recounted theirown internal dialogue around their efforts

to engage their large cohort of students with weekly wrap-up videos, ultimately decidingthat this time and care spent for a small portion of students was "important":

> With 390 students …, I have about 70 students who look at those videos. The other night, after spending a decent amount of time recording and then editing it, I was like, "Oh, eff this. … I'm not doing that anymore, because it's a waste of my time". But then I was like, actually, I think for the people who are using it, it's quite important. Like, if it only reaches 70 people, is that better than not doing it at all? I think it kind of brings up that interesting element of seeing people, and this idea of human interaction in the online courses *(CIP semi-structured group discussion).*

This sentiment was echoed by another CIPmember, who justified their extra, unpaid time with a focus on student care and engagement, "*I know that that is a preventative measure for them, so that's why I invest the time there. But I know I'm not getting paid for it. I know it's my own choice. So that's why I invest it there*" (CIP semi-structured group discussion).

Five out of the eight members of our groupare sessional academics. For them, the discourse of 'extra time' or 'more time' equates to time spent uncompensated in measurable financial terms. Compared to face-to-face teaching, one sessional participant said they spent "*more time priorto tutes [tutorials]" with "lots of planning, and lots of extra work outside*" (CIP semi- structured group discussion). Making decisions and choices about time was of concern for another CIP member: "*but we only have so much time, obviously, and we have decisions to make in the best investment in our time*" (CIP semi- structured group discussion).

It is beyond the scope of this article toexplore these discourses fully, however, it is clear, that for the educators in our group responsibility for students' care, learning and outcomes is seen as an individual responsibility (see, for example, MacFarlane, 2017), often requiring professional struggles, uncomfortable choices and sacrifice, where personal philosophies of teaching and a commitmentto Enabling Pedagogies of care ultimately outweigh the pressures felt by operating in a neoliberal higher education context.

Conclusion

Working within an equity-focused, yet "unstable" WP context (Burke, 2013), we employed a Collaborative Inquirymethodology, to interrogate our own practices and values as online enabling pathways educators working in the Open Foundation (Online/Blended) Program. Wefound that while we inhabit anuncomfortable space located betweenhigher education's neoliberal project and the social justice desires of equity in higher education (Irwin & Hamilton, 2020), the original social justice purposes of WP—andof universities in general—are at the heart of how we, as online enabling pathways educators, design and enact our curriculums. It is clear, then, through the articulation of Enabling Pedagogies (Bennett et al., 2016), that the ballast underpinning our program (and others like ours) aligns with the broad 'public good', social welfare traditions of universities andwith the desires of WP policies. This ballast, we argue, sits outside of contemporary policy and economicdecisions which follow as a consequence.

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