

# Editorial: Psychology and Society in Dialogue with Decolonial Feminisms: Perspectives from the global south, Volume 1

In the call for this special issue we, incoming editors of PINS, expressed the desire to build on the fast-growing legacy and genesis of decoloniality through encouraging and amplifying the most marginalised perspectives and approaches within contemporary decolonial trends. There are a number of reasons why this particular time and place are so important. The global south is a place where the most marginalised by social systems are taking hold. Knowledge production is not just a global phenomenon, it is a global one. The reasons for this are that global inequalities that are racialized, gendered, spatial and classed are rising; and past injustices, and historical and collective traumas, are either completely erased or silenced. Calls for decoloniality have taken hold in the context of ongoing racialized, patriarchal, heterosexist and structural violence.

**Floretta Boonzaier,  
Shose Kessi,  
Amalie Ravn**

Department of Psychology,  
University of Cape Town

Contemporary calls to decolonise psychology have emerged in response to the symbolic and material types of violence of the discipline. Psychology itself has been recognised as a form of settler-colonial knowledge (Bhatia, 2018; Kessi & Boonzaier, 2018; Tuck & Yang, 2014) that works in the interests of those in power; circulates stories of pain and dysfunction, which further stigmatises those on the margins; and that produces knowledge that serves a powerful disciplinary and prescriptive force for regulating identity and behaviour. In this special issue, we invited authors to submit transdisciplinary articles that re-think psychology and society in dialogue with decolonial, feminist, queer, trans\* and disability critiques and studies. We welcomed contributions from a wide range of circumstances

Whiteness in higher education, the politics of hair, teenage pregnancy, and psychotherapy are the topics that comprise this, Volume One, of the special issue, *In Dialogue with Decolonial Feminisms: Perspectives from the global south*. One frequently silenced discourse within the context of the rise in decolonial perspectives is the continuing taken-for-granted nature of whiteness. Within the decolonial movement more generally—although there has been recognition that the ‘former’ colonizer and the former ‘colonized’ should be read within one analytic field—there is far too little critical engagement with whiteness. Kerry Frizelle attempts to tackle this issue in her important autoethnographic reflection on her own whiteness and on her positionality as a white woman in higher education in South Africa. Frizelle embraces discomfort by reflecting on her own white body in a space occupied primarily by black students. In another piece that shifts the gaze but also centres question of corporeality, Sol Maria Fernandez and Wahbie Long consider the historical ways in which black women’s bodies (and hair in particular) have been positioned as other and demeaned in the colonial imaginary. They bring this historical reflection into the contemporary by asking what it feels like to be thrown against a white background, like UCT, drawing on narratives of black women employees. The third paper in this special issue, by Catriona Macleod, Diemo Masuko and Tracey Feltham-King continues to carry through the theme of embodiment by attending to the importance of feminist decoloniality for thinking through the ways in which the bodies of young womxn and their reproductive capacities are signified through discourse on ‘teenage pregnancy’. The fourth piece is by Bandile Leopeng who practices as a psychotherapist and interrogates the important terrain of psychotherapy in South Africa and the ways in which—through lack of acknowledgement of the complex dynamics of race in the therapeutic encounter—it may be potentially damaging to those it intends to ‘heal’. Leopeng offers a decolonial dialogical framework that is client led and involves conscientization of both the client and the therapist. The final piece of this volume is a review by Amalie Ravn of the anticipated volume *Decolonial Feminist Community Psychology*, edited by Floretta Boonzaier and Taryn van Niekerk. This is a collection of articles—by and for decolonial feminists in the global South—that convincingly forges a connection between decolonial and feminist theory by simultaneously 1) critiquing mainstream enactments of feminism from a decolonial vantage point, and 2) interrogating decolonisation efforts from a feminist perspective. Ravn highly recommends this volume for its relevance to our decolonial-feminist journeys, both in the academy, in our communities and within ourselves.

PINS has a long history of critical engagement with psychology as a discipline that embraces scientific notions of rationality and as a site of knowledge production that sustains taken-for-granted truths about global and dominant economic, social and political arrangements. The views expressed in these papers continue to challenge these perspectives by disrupting the Euro-American assumptions about individuals and

groups who have become historically marginalized as a result of the colonial encounter. The focus on the self, the body, consciousness and affect that cut across this series is indicative of the value of a feminist lens to decolonial practice. It not only highlights the intersections between race, class, and gender that inform people's experiences of marginalization but also demonstrates the embodied practices that normalize and internalize and thus perpetuate structural violence and oppressive beliefs. Looking forward, Volume Two of this special issue, to be published in 2020, will extend these debates through further transdisciplinary theoretical and empirical reflections.

## References

Bhatia, S (2018) **Decolonizing psychology: Globalization, social justice and Indian youth identities**. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

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