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## Roots and Routes Toward Decoloniality Within and Outside Psychology Praxis

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## Roots and Routes toward Decoloniality within and outside Psychology Praxis

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Abstract:	<p>Recent psychology scholarship has engaged topics of decoloniality, from conferences to journal publications to edited volumes. These efforts are examples of the decolonial turn, a paradigm shift oriented to interrupting the colonial legacies of power, knowledge and being. As critical community psychologists, we contend that decoloniality/decolonization is an epistemic and ontological process of continuously disrupting the coloniality of power that is the hegemonic Western Eurocentric approach to theory, research, and practice. To document and critically understand this process of colonial disruption – the roots and routes toward decoloniality within and outside of community psychology – we collected information at conference workshops and an open-ended on-line survey disseminated across international contexts. Through an analysis of two conference workshops (Chile; United States) and a survey, we describe four orientations that capture how participants engage with a decolonizing praxis. The four orientations include: Generating knowledge With and from Within, Socio-historical Intersectional Consciousness, Relationships of Mutual Accountability, and Unsettling Subjectivities of Power/Privilege. The coloniality of power, which characterizes the ethics and tensions within the discipline, is uprooted through these orientations, thereby enabling possibilities to trek a route away from colonial theory, research, and practice, and toward the decolonial turn in community psychology.</p>

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### Abstract

Recent psychology scholarship has engaged topics of decoloniality, from conferences to journal publications to edited volumes. These efforts are examples of the *decolonial turn*, a paradigm shift oriented to interrupting the colonial legacies of power, knowledge and being. As critical community psychologists, we contend that decoloniality/decolonization is an epistemic and ontological process of continuously disrupting the coloniality of power that is the hegemonic Western Eurocentric approach to theory, research, and practice. To document and critically understand this process of colonial disruption – the roots and routes toward decoloniality within and outside of community psychology – we collected information at conference workshops and an open-ended on-line survey disseminated across international contexts. Through an analysis of two conference workshops (Chile; United States) and a survey, we describe four orientations that capture how participants engage with a decolonizing praxis. The four orientations include: *Generating knowledge With and from Within, Socio-historical Intersectional Consciousness, Relationships of Mutual Accountability, and Unsettling Subjectivities of Power/Privilege*. The coloniality of power, which characterizes the ethics and tensions within the discipline, is uprooted through these orientations, thereby enabling possibilities to trek a route away from colonial theory, research, and practice, and toward the *decolonial turn* in community psychology.

*Keywords: Decoloniality, Coloniality, Psychology, Praxis*

***Roots and Routes toward Decoloniality within and outside Psychology Praxis***

*Mi intención en cambio fue contarte sobre los caminos que he elegido y los senderos que he hecho preguntando y caminando. Pero también quise someter a consideración con vos y los lectores aquí, las pedagogías decoloniales como acciones que promueven y provocan la fisuración y agrietamiento del orden moderno/colonial, las que hacen posible y dan sustento y fuerza a un modo muy otro de estar en y con el mundo. - Catherine Walsh (2014, p. 27)<sup>3</sup>*

Coloniality outlives colonialism (Quijano, 2000). Coloniality lives on because the epistemologies borne from colonial conditions have not allowed us to trace our roots and routes toward a process of delinking from colonial perspectives in theory, research, and practice. As critical community psychologists grounded in struggles that reflect disparate positionalities and histories, we remain located transnationally and intersectionally within coloniality and colonial logics as we engage a decolonizing standpoint (Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2015). We recognize that we are located inside systems, while simultaneously attempting to shift power dynamics within these systems by drawing on diverse theoretical, conceptual, and action-oriented genealogies from and outside of psychology, and from Africa, the Americas and Aotearoa.

Decoloniality/Decolonization is a process of continued disruption and interrogation – of ourselves, our relations to people and lands, and our understandings of the worlds we transverse (Lugones, 2003). In line with this process of critical interrogation, recent community psychology scholarship has engaged topics of decoloniality at professional gatherings, such as the

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<sup>3</sup> English translation: *My intention instead was to tell you about the paths that I have chosen and the paths that I have made asking and walking. But I also wanted to share with you and the readers, decolonial pedagogies as actions that promote and provoke the fissuring and cracking of the modern/colonial order, those that make possible and give sustenance and strength to a very different way of being in and with the world.*

Running head: ROOTS OF DECOLONIALITY AND PSYCHOLOGY PRAXIS

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3 International Conference of Community Psychology (ICCP) in Durban, South Africa in 2016, in  
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5 Santiago, Chile in 2018, as well as the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)  
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7 Biennial Conference in Chicago (IL, U.S.) in 2019. Additionally, publications, such as the *South*  
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9 *African Journal of Psychology* (volume 47, issue 4, 2017), *American Journal of Community*  
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11 *Psychology* (volume 62, issue 3-4, 2018), and *Journal of Social & Political Psychology* (volume  
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13 3, issue 1, 2015), feature important contributions by scholars oriented toward a decolonial and  
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15 decolonizing standpoint (Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2015). These efforts are examples of what critical  
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17 scholar Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2011, 2017) describes as the *decolonial turn*, a paradigm  
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19 oriented to interrupt the colonial legacies of power that remain entrenched in ways of knowing,  
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21 doing and being in the world – and in our case, community psychology.  
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27 In striving to identify the roots, and forge a route for developing a decolonial community  
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29 psychology praxis, we consider questions about coloniality and its implications for community,  
30  
31 liberation, and wellbeing. A decolonial community psychology praxis is imperative to disrupting  
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33 the coloniality of power and knowledge in the current formulation of the discipline. While we are  
34  
35 mindful of the internal contradictions and contestations within community psychology as a  
36  
37 heterogeneous politico-intellectual project itself (Stevens, 2007), our purpose is to offer an  
38  
39 opportunity for introspective engagement with the *decolonial turn*; asking practitioners and  
40  
41 scholar-activists to reflect and articulate their decolonial praxes, and vision for a humanizing  
42  
43 critical community psychology that speaks to the lived experiences of the Majority World from a  
44  
45 decolonial and decolonizing standpoint. We describe four orientations – *Generating knowledge*  
46  
47 *With and from Within*, *Socio-historical Intersectional Consciousness*, *Relationships of Mutual*  
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49 *Accountability*, and *Unsettling Subjectivities of Power/Privilege* – as the roots and routes toward  
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54 a decolonial community psychology praxis. We demonstrate these through workshop and survey  
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3 participants' reflections on their positionalities, and efforts to re-center the voices and  
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5 experiences of communities on the periphery of power.  
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8 With humility we invite community psychologists and allied professionals to build on  
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10 these orientations; to engage in reflection, dialogue and intentional actions that unsettle colonial  
11  
12 power. Through these roots and routes, and our respective positionalities, we engage with and  
13  
14 build upon the *decolonial turn* in community psychology – linking across oceans, recognizing  
15  
16 the historical inheritance of earlier waves of decolonial scholarship, both inside and outside of  
17  
18 psychology (e.g., Biko, 2004; Cabral, 2016; Du Bois, 1903/2005; Fanon, 1967; Nkrumah, 1945).  
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### 21 **Conceptualizing the *Decolonial Turn***

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23  
24 Decoloniality/Decolonization consists of three interconnected elements: the delinking of  
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26 knowledge and thought from Western Eurocentric logics; undoing practices, actions and ways of  
27  
28 being that reify colonial power; and, of significance, the redistribution of power, including land  
29  
30 and material resources. The *decolonial turn* was proposed by Nelson Maldonado-Torres, critical  
31  
32 philosopher and decolonial scholar, in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century to describe the significant  
33  
34 epistemological breakthroughs and theoretical contributions at the periphery of Western  
35  
36 modernity by thinkers, like Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Frantz Fanon, Anibal  
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38 Quijano, and Sylvia Wynter, among others, who critiqued the internal contradictions and  
39  
40 dominance of Western modernity and postcolonial discourses as viewed from their unique social  
41  
42 location. As transnational exchanges and epistemological interventions have unfolded among  
43  
44 multidisciplinary critical scholars and activist groups across the Majority World, the *decolonial*  
45  
46 *turn* has expanded its meaning, drawing on multiple intellectual lineages across time and place.  
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51 Central to the *decolonial turn* is the re-centering of Majority World peoples' views,  
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53 voices and experiences. It is this visibility of what coloniality as Western modernity produced,  
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3 and continues to reify, that is the *decolonial turn*. Although the concept has come to claim a  
4 space in scholarly discourse and theorizing, the *decolonial turn* is defined by the collection of  
5 knowledge, experience, and practice, which in relation to each other, characterize the approaches  
6 and emancipatory praxes from the Majority World, including the subalterns' critiques of Western  
7 Eurocentricism. Professional gatherings, such as conferences, and scholar-activists dialogues  
8 brought these perspectives together, leading to the development of the *decolonial turn*. For  
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17 Maldonado-Torres (2011) the *decolonial turn* "points to

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19 to a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as a fundamental  
20 problem in the modern (as well as postmodern and information) age, and of  
21 decolonization or decoloniality as a necessary task that remains unfinished. (p. 2)

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23  
24 For him and others the discourse of decolonization has to go beyond "beyond the  
25 dialectics of identity and liberation, recognition and distribution" and "add the  
26 imperative of epistemic decolonization, and in fact, of a consistent decolonization  
27 of human reality. For that one must build new concepts and be willing to revise  
28 critically all received theories and ideas. (p. 4)

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38 The efforts that brought scholars and practitioners to the first conference on decoloniality in 2005  
39 at the University of California Berkeley, underscore the meaning of the *decolonial turn*.

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43 Indeed, these efforts have helped shift the routes of disciplines, like psychology, that have  
44 willfully or implicitly employed a colonial gaze, even when we know that it clouds our seeing,  
45 being and walking *with* and alongside communities. The colonial gaze in psychology in general,  
46 and community psychology in particular, contributes to the constant propensity of what has been  
47 referred to as epistemicide (de Sousa Santos, 2015; Mignolo, 2009) and epistemic violence (Teo,  
48 2010). This furthers our inability to develop a disciplinary praxis in our shared humanity and  
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3 liberation from colonialism. Maintaining the colonial roots of psychology that do not reflect the  
4 realities and conditions of communities affected, and still shaped, by colonial forces past and  
5 present will inevitably decay the discipline's values. The purpose of the *decolonial turn* in  
6 community psychology specifically is to incite and provoke a shift, an intentional active process  
7 of delinking and undoing colonial power, and knowledge within and beyond the discipline.  
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9

10 We are interested in two dimensions to such a project: a decolonial engagement with  
11 psychology as a knowledge complex itself, and the development of a decolonial community  
12 psychology in the service of a broader emancipatory socio- and psycho-political praxis. There is  
13 a growing urgency around understanding and challenging systems of power stemming from  
14 histories of coloniality – the ensuing crises tied to structural violence, Indigenous struggles,  
15 racial capitalism, the resurgence of neo-conservatism based on race, alterity and exploitative  
16 hierarchization that occurs with absolute impunity across the globe, and the recalcitrance and  
17 elasticity in systems of oppression that we do not always fully grasp through the paradigms of  
18 the 20<sup>th</sup> century – demand a more critical, humanizing and emancipatory psychology.  
19  
20

21 Community psychology does not exist outside of coloniality, and as such the discipline itself  
22 must be interrogated as it is interconnected with coloniality. To cultivate and sustain solidarities  
23 across locations, in support of building and contributing to decolonial liberation, community  
24 psychology must identify and devise critical perspectives that allow practitioners to engage more  
25 intently with the deconstruction of coloniality in power and knowledge.  
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### 28 **Decolonial and Decolonizing Perspectives in Psychology**

29 In the 'science' of psychology there is a growing interest in decolonial and decolonizing  
30 perspectives. Psychology is broadly oriented toward the study of the relationship between the  
31 mind, body and social context. It focuses on how individuals develop an understanding of  
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3 themselves, together with thoughts, identities, and affective expressions as manifested, and felt in  
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5 the body and through their relationships with others. Critiques of psychology focus on how the  
6  
7 study of the mind, within a Western Eurocentric framework, is ahistorical, acultural and  
8  
9 decontextualized (e.g., Adams, et al., 2015; Dutta, 2016; Hook, 2004; Montero, 2007; Ratele et  
10  
11 al., 2018). Furthermore, it is deplored as not incorporating a critical socio-historical analysis of  
12  
13 how the mind – how people think, perceive and behave in their worlds – is shaped by place,  
14  
15 culture and memory (Bhatia, 2020; Bulhan, 1985; Gone, 2016; Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2015; Sonn,  
16  
17 et al., 2019; Teo, 2010). Disciplinary critiques highlight the fact that histories are bound by  
18  
19 accounts of violence and conflict, as well as struggle and resistance to exist amidst colonial  
20  
21 power. These perspectives underscore what Pickren (2020) has described as the manageriality of  
22  
23 the self; where psychology has inherently functioned to serve individual needs and interests  
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25 within existing power structures (Parker, 1994; Rose, 1979).

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31 In mapping the roots of psychology, specifically in the West, community psychology's  
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33 development as a science has principally relied on its associations with, and dependency on an  
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35 individuals' relation to the nation-state. This significantly implicates the regulation or  
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37 management of the individual-self in relation *to*, and in the interests *of the status quo* (Pickren,  
38  
39 2020). The outcome of this relation is the cementing of colonial perspectives, which further  
40  
41 hegemonic neoliberal structures that erase or minimize the significance of systems, past and  
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43 present, in constraining liberatory, decolonial, relational, and humanizing processes (Fanon,  
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45 1967; Okazaki, et al., 2008; Ratele et al., 2018; Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2015). Community  
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47 psychology, if committed to a deeper understanding of the mind-body relationship, including the  
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49 formation of a just humane world, must engage with a socio-historical analysis that centers a  
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51 critique of coloniality within its disciplinary development and practice.  
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Colonial formations, as entwined with race and gender structures of oppression, as well as other intersectional matrices of othering, have remained on the periphery of psychological inquiry because much of the discipline has remained oriented toward Western Eurocentrism (Bulhan, 1985). These logics entail positivist worldviews that uphold objectivity, universality, disembodied inquiry and Cartesian thinking that dominate the discipline. Here, coloniality is disguised as the discipline's constant desire to remain 'scientific' and 'unbiased,' yet it reproduces hegemonic theories that do not fully capture the complexities of people's lives and relations. Consequently, possibilities for more subjective, constructivist and multidimensional approaches to understanding people and contexts are limited. Consistent efforts, however, have been keen to shift the discipline toward a more critical stance, particularly a critical and decolonial community psychology (Fox, et al., 2009; Kagan, et al., , 2019; Kessi, 2017; Pickren & Teo, 2015; Teo, 2010; Seedat & Suffla, 2017; Sonn, et al., 2013; Stevens, et al., 2017; Stevens, 2017). We engage with the *decolonial turn* by pushing the critical stance toward a decolonial praxis – reflecting and asking about the colonality of power and knowledge, and its implications for community, liberation, and wellbeing. These efforts guide our process of engaging intentionally across locations and positionalities, and in reflexive dialogue, to root and route a path toward decolonial community psychology praxes.

## Method

### ***Reflexive Positionalities: Our Roots***

An essential element of a decolonial praxis is the will to reflexively and critically engage our positionalities, and locations vis-a-vis the colonality of power and knowledge that shapes the contexts and institutions wherein we are embedded. We begin by locating ourselves through the decolonial praxis, values and experiences that brought us together. We follow our reflections

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3 with a brief description of the decolonial commitments and scholarly interests we share, and  
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5 build upon, recognizing however the (im)possibilities of the cusp position that we occupy, as we  
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7 are partial products of our disciplines, and yet critical thereof.  
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10 As an immigrant, raised in between Mexico and California, Jesica is a Chicana,  
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12 community-engaged researcher, and teacher-scholar-activist at a university located upon the  
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14 Indigenous lands of the Ohlone and Muwekma Ohlone tribe. The histories of genocide, violence  
15  
16 and settler colonialism, until very recently, were acknowledged by the university in response to  
17  
18 pressures by student activists and allies, which Jesica supported through her research and  
19  
20 pedagogy. Christopher is a Black South African immigrant to Australia, where he works at  
21  
22 Victoria University on the land of the Boonwurrung and Wurundjeri of the Kulin nation.  
23  
24 Drawing on his own experiences, and social and cultural locations, his research informed by  
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26 community and liberation psychology has focused on documenting the psychosocial effects of  
27  
28 various systems of oppression, such as apartheid in South Africa and settler colonialism in  
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30 Australia, along with elevating knowledge of the multiple, complex and creative ways people  
31  
32 and communities resist, survive, and enact liberation. Ronelle is a Black South African clinical  
33  
34 community psychologist who works at Stellenbosch University. Coloniality positioned her as a  
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36 “colored” South African, where she navigates working at a historically white advantaged  
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38 institution where she continues to engage with and attempt to dismantle the institutionalized  
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40 historical legacies of Apartheid engineered privilege. Her work focuses on feminist social justice  
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42 pedagogical initiatives in higher education, and how classrooms can become disruptive spaces to  
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44 enact decoloniality. Originally trained as a clinical psychologist, Garth is a Black, critical  
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46 psychologist based at the University of the Witwatersrand, whose enduring interests have been in  
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48 the study of the systemically over-determined nature of racism and violence in South Africa.  
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3 Shaped by his experiences of being Black in apartheid *and* post-apartheid South Africa, his  
4 scholarship and praxis focus on the conditions of possibility and impossibility for continuities  
5 and discontinuities in both racism and violence as pervasive colonial residues in the social world.  
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10 ***The routes that brought us together.*** Our differing positionalities and training within  
11 community psychology, although unique to our respective geographic locations and contexts, did  
12 not set us apart in our commitment to disrupt coloniality, and engage a decolonizing standpoint.  
13  
14 The routes that initially brought Jesica and Christopher together were forged at the 2016 SCRA  
15 biennial conference in Canada, where we reflected and dialogued on the challenges of unsettling  
16 whiteness, and the urgency to do so in community psychology. We formed a supportive  
17 intellectual relationship and commitment to interrogate whiteness and racial violence intersecting  
18 with colonial power in community psychology. Shortly after the biennial, Ronelle headed the  
19 editorial process for a special issue on teaching decoloniality and decolonial pedagogies in the  
20 AJCP (Carolissen & Duckett, 2018). The special issue served as fertile ground for reflections,  
21 conversations and scholarship on interrogating coloniality, especially whiteness, through  
22 decolonizing and decolonial pedagogies. Jesica contributed a paper, which served as the  
23 foundation for organizing a panel with Christopher at the 2018 ICCP in Chile. The panel brought  
24 together international perspectives from scholars actively engaged in the deconstruction of  
25 structural violence via a decolonizing standpoint that unsettles coloniality, whiteness and racism.  
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27 Christopher invited Garth and Mariolga Reyes Cruz to contribute to the panel; a connection, a  
28 route, was forged between us linking our decolonial community psychology praxis.  
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49 As the 2019 SCRA biennial conference in Chicago was approaching, we sought another  
50 opportunity to build on the conversations and reflections initiated at ICCP, many of which were  
51 provocations and insights that Garth surfaced on the importance of challenging the discipline to  
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engage with the vicissitudes of colonial violence within the spaces and places we are situated – universities, communities, and organizations. Having recently published the special issue headed by Ronelle, Jesica invited her to contribute as a co-facilitator at a roundtable workshop centered on reflexive dialogues toward a decolonial community psychology praxis. These professional gatherings and collaborations facilitated our dialogical connections, which made visible the roots and routes threaded through our work, and importantly the set of commitments that guide us to disrupt coloniality. We see these commitments as necessary to the formation of a decolonial community psychology. Our engagement with the *decolonial turn* brought us together and has continued to reinforce our decolonial and decolonizing work within and beyond the discipline – and, to root and route a path for a critical decolonial community psychology praxis. Through these early connections we sought to engage decolonial scholarship documented in a partial archive, rooted in the work of thinkers such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Steven Bantu Biko, Hussein Bulhan, Aimé Césaire, Catherine Walsh, William E. B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Gloria E. Anzaldúa, Emma Pérez and Chela Sandoval, among others.

### ***Project Background***

Grounding decoloniality within the socio-historical legacies of colonialism, we contend that decolonization is an epistemic and ontological process of continuously disrupting the coloniality of power that is the hegemonic Western Eurocentric approach to theory, research, and practice. It is also an active process of resistance to coloniality and the interrogation of power over peoples, lands and ways of knowing.<sup>4</sup> In the interest of working toward a transnational

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<sup>4</sup> We acknowledge that a number of writers and scholars make significant distinctions between colonization as a political process involving new sovereignties, as opposed to decoloniality as an epistemic, ontological and disruptive process that challenges coloniality. We use the terms interchangeably in this article to refer to the later interpretation, recognizing and accepting the value of these distinctions.

critical and decolonial community psychology, attuned to the particularities of place, we organized two roundtables, which were structured as workshops, on the topic of decoloniality and decolonization at professional conferences (Chile; United States).

At our SCRA workshop, Jesica, Chris and subsequently Ronelle invited attendees to engage four questions on decoloniality and decolonization. The questions workshop participants were asked included: 1) *How does decolonial work diverge/converge with other critical projects evident in community psychology and/or allied disciplines?*; 2) *How do you engage with the “decolonial turn”? What does the “decolonial turn” or decolonization/decoloniality mean to you?*; 3) *How do you engage with or understand decoloniality from your own positionalities and locations? How does “decolonial work” feel/look like from within your own institution?*; and 4) *How do you/we create a space where we can create dialogues on the decolonial turn?* Questions were written on poster-paper to encourage attendees to write a response, reaction or reflection. As attendees went around the room reading and responding to each question they were invited to reflect and engage with other participants’ writings. Following the activity, participants offered their reflections in a large group discussion facilitated through a process of reflexive dialogues.

### ***Survey Development and Dissemination***

Building on our conference workshops, we created and circulated an online survey within our networks, including professional listservs associated with flagship organizations, to further document and understand how community psychologists engage with and make meaning of decoloniality and decolonization. Furthermore, we sought to build upon the *decolonial turn* from our positionalities, linking across locations, communities, experiences and standpoints within and beyond community psychology that have informed our *unlearning*, and *undoing* of colonial power and knowledge. We recognize the limitations in survey methods, specifically their

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3 historical grounding in positivist frameworks, yet we are affirmed by the work of Ignacio  
4 Martín-Baró (1994), Maritza Montero (2002), and Michelle Fine (2018) who have utilized  
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6 survey methods empirically within a liberation, social justice orientation to map the distribution  
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8 of inequality, and to surface perspectives toward the democratization of knowledge.  
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12 When anchored in a decolonial standpoint, surveys can help to center voices that are  
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14 often veiled in the development and praxis of community psychology. The survey included 10  
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16 open-ended questions, four of which were used in the workshop, along with a series of brief  
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18 demographic questions that solicited biographical information, contact details (e.g., email),  
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20 profession and institutional affiliation. In this paper, we focus on participant responses offered to  
21  
22 the four questions posed at the workshop, and subsequently included in the survey. Ethics  
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24 approval was obtained by Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee before survey  
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26 dissemination. The survey, along with the responses, were circulated and stored in Qualtrics.  
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29 Key informants in community psychology and related fields were invited to respond via personal  
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31 requests. Through this survey, we garnered responses from scholars and practitioners engaged in  
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33 decoloniality, decolonization and the *decolonial turn*.  
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### 37 38 ***Contributing Voices: Participants*** 39

40 Participants contributed their reflections and understandings on decoloniality and  
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42 decolonization via the open-ended survey questions. The length of written responses for the  
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44 questions varied in depth and breadth. Some respondents offered more nuanced, complex  
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46 understandings of decoloniality and decolonization connected to their lived experiences and  
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48 community struggles. Other responses were more theoretically inclined, and referenced  
49  
50 particular scholars, literature and terminology often associated with decoloniality/decolonization.  
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3 A total of 85 people accessed the survey; however, only 24 completed all survey  
4 questions. The majority of the responses focused on questions 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 as these  
5 specifically asked about their experiences and understandings about decoloniality. Questions also  
6 encouraged respondents to reflect upon the sources of their understandings and how these  
7 manifest as decolonial and anti-colonial thought in research, practice, and relationships. There  
8 was some consistency across participants' responses to these questions, with several of them  
9 reflecting on the decolonial roots of their knowledge, such as specific readings, communities and  
10 experiences that informed their perspectives, values and approaches toward a decolonial/anti-  
11 colonial praxis.  
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24 Of the 24 people who completed the survey, most located themselves in the West,  
25 specifically the United States and Australia. Yet, several mentioned aspects of their identities and  
26 positionalities that were institutionally on the margins of their particular geographical location,  
27 or even located outside the West. For example, one respondent identified as:  
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33 Mexican American male; heterosexual; grew up at the El Paso-Juarez border frequently  
34 conscious of the inequities around me [...]; working as [faculty] in South Los Angeles in  
35 the only HBCU in the West Coast, which is also a Hispanic Serving Institution.  
36  
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40 Similarly, others described themselves by their most salient identities, "I am an African  
41 American woman located in California (U.S.)." Another engaged with the opportunity to  
42 interrogate positionality and proximity to whiteness and coloniality, stating the following:  
43  
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47 I grew up privileged in terms of most of my social identities and skated through life easily.  
48 Through activism and critical education/friends, I identify with my whiteness, cis-  
49 masculinity, middle classness, and Americanness through a process of accountability and  
50 rejection. I don't have affinity for those identities but I am critically aware of them.  
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3 Furthermore, there were others who interrogated these colonial positionings as they identified  
4 with and belonged to Indigenous communities, as one respondent claimed, “Maori from  
5 Aotearoa New Zealand.” At least half of the respondents were affiliated with a university  
6 institution, either as faculty or graduate students. Being engaged in community collaborations,  
7 partnerships and projects appeared to be a common experience among all; this reflected an  
8 important aspect that helped inform their decolonial thinking and practice.  
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### 16 17 ***Data Analysis***

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19 The themes discerned from the workshop set the foundation for our analysis of the survey  
20 data. Our analysis procedure for the workshop data was characterized by an inductive process of  
21 discernment (Miles, et al., 2014). We elaborated on the themes through an inductive data  
22 analysis procedure that involved multiple reads, initially among Jessica, Christopher and Ronelle.  
23 This set of identified preliminary themes were published in a short article, *Mapping in and for*  
24 *Decolonial Transnational Critical Community Psychologies* (Fernandez, et al., 2019). By sharing  
25 these initial themes, we sought to engage scholars and practitioners in conversation and  
26 reflection on the possibilities and challenges of a decolonial community psychology praxis.  
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37 Our analysis identified *what, when* and *how* participants defined meanings and actions  
38 aligned with decoloniality. As we developed themes, Garth offered insights and suggestions for  
39 fine-tuning them. We followed this with a careful analysis of how themes appeared within and in  
40 relation to other themes. We then developed more abstract conceptual themes for patterns or  
41 relationships. In generating novel theoretical insights associated with interconnected concepts,  
42 we focused on a set of identified themes.  
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51 We identified four orientations to represent the various ways people engage with a  
52 decolonizing standpoint: 1) *Generating Knowledge With and from Within*, 2) *Socio-historical*  
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3 *Intersectional Consciousness*, 3) *Relationships of Mutual Accountability*, and 4) *Unsettling*  
4 *Subjectivities of Power/Privilege*. The four orientations reflect participant's meaning making of  
5  
6 decoloniality, which was often informed by their disciplinary training, research, contexts and  
7  
8 positionalities. We posit that these orientations signal an inflection toward a decolonizing  
9  
10 community psychology praxis that characterizes the roots and routes toward decolonial *undoing*  
11  
12 within and beyond community psychology.  
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### 16 17 **Decolonial Undoing Within and Beyond Psychology Praxis**

18  
19 ***Generating Knowledge With and from Within: "The practices or ways of knowing by my***  
20  
21 ***mother and grandmother"***  
22

23  
24 Knowledge that is grounded in the body – embodied subjectivities (Ahmed, 2000) – and  
25  
26 rooted in place – *loci of enunciation* (Mignolo, 1999) – characterizes the first orientation,  
27  
28 *Generating Knowledge With and from Within*. We describe this orientation as a process of  
29  
30 engaging in a research practice that begins with the acknowledgement that there are multiple  
31  
32 ways of knowing and producing knowledge. This orientation emphasizes that the process must  
33  
34 begin with the community, including their individual and collective experiences of oppression  
35  
36 and resistance. Building knowledge from below, through a ground-up process, is characterized  
37  
38 by pluriversal ontologies and cosmologies that are experiential, intergenerational and grounded  
39  
40 in people's material, relational and spiritual lives (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). The boundaries of  
41  
42 the *with* and *within* are constantly shifting, and with that the knowledge produced by those whom  
43  
44 are liminally positioned in relation to the community (Dutta, 2016; Gone, 2016). A central  
45  
46 element of this orientation is recognizing that it is *with communities* and *within the boundaries*  
47  
48 where knowledge is possible because it challenges the coloniality of power that prioritizes  
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3 Eurocentric ways of knowing oriented toward binary logics that oppose pluriversal  
4  
5 epistemologies.  
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7  
8 The importance of engaging in research that aligns with and is oriented toward epistemic  
9  
10 justice, of producing/co-producing knowledge that begins from the realities and conditions of  
11  
12 institutionally marginalized people's lives cannot be understated. To underscore this point,  
13  
14 participants described sources *for* and *of* knowledge that were outside conventional academic  
15  
16 domains. Knowledge was guided by their intuitive relational experiences – or *with* and *within*  
17  
18 communities, relationships and locations – characterized by intergenerational dialogues and  
19  
20 connections with people, place, space, and histories. As one workshop participant stated, “I do  
21  
22 not know [about decoloniality], but I think a place I start with is thinking about *abuelita*  
23  
24 knowledge and the practices or ways of knowing by my mother and grandmother.” *Abuelita* is a  
25  
26 Spanish word for grandmother, and it denotes the significance of womanhood, matriarchy, and  
27  
28 *her*/histories. In many Indigenous communities the elderly hold knowledge and wisdom shared  
29  
30 through generations. Reflections like these were not exclusive to the workshops, as participants  
31  
32 responded similarly in the survey.  
33  
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37  
38 Survey respondents often reflected on their family, community and education  
39  
40 experiences, and how these shaped and informed their worldview or perspectives of their own  
41  
42 and other peoples' or communities' struggle. Some mentioned the importance of an anti-  
43  
44 capitalist non-hierarchical upbringing rooted in recognition of Indigenous sovereignty:  
45  
46

47 Growing up in Boulder [Colorado, U.S.], Ward Churchill's work and talks  
48  
49 influenced me. His talk about the AIM [American Indian Movement] and in  
50  
51 particular the way the U.S. [United States] government stealing more land from  
52  
53 the Lakota in Pine Ridge was very influential for me in terms of Indigenous  
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3 struggles. I got turned onto the Zapatistas' struggle as I worked at a socialist  
4 bookstore in Boulder. In graduate school reading Eve Tuck and Wayne Yang has  
5 been very important. In Santa Cruz other activists being active with the Amah  
6 Mutsun Tribal Band has been important to me.  
7  
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12 Relatedly, another emphasized the importance of African American enfranchisement and  
13 African-centered perspectives that honor their history, worldview and humanity:  
14

15  
16 My family has always had an African-centered worldview that values nature,  
17 social harmony, and faith. Yet, we understand that the fight for civil rights,  
18 respect, and opportunities must be advocated for at all times. Similarly, to my  
19 parents, I work in public service as an avenue to organize and advance the  
20 liberation of Black people and try to increase diverse racial acceptance. Currently,  
21 I have reclaimed an African indigenous spiritual system called Ifa, that I now  
22 practice, strengthening my worldview and values shared with me by my parents.  
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33 Of importance to this orientation is that most respondents named the lands or Indigenous places  
34 wherein they are located; how the specific histories, cultures and communities associated with  
35 these spaces have allowed them to develop knowledge with and from within these specific  
36 locations and communities. In generating knowledge rooted in a decolonial and anti-colonial  
37 praxis, respondents reflected on those formative salient experiences where their worldviews were  
38 challenged by ways of being, seeing and relating with people alike and different from them.  
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47 Yet some respondents described how seemingly perceived differences helped them find  
48 commonalities with others at the intersections of power, as one explained:  
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51 I think my development of these perspectives began back in college when I had  
52 numerous experiences of both success and struggle. For example, due to financial  
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3 constraints, I worked at factories while in college with people who were very  
4  
5 "different" than I am. At the same time, I was a mentor for undergraduate students  
6  
7 who were on academic probation and a case manager at a homeless shelter. I  
8  
9 think these experiences in tandem were the onset of this development because I  
10  
11 began to see the world through an entirely different lens that was in contrast with  
12  
13 typical American narratives of achievement and struggle.  
14  
15  
16

17 Knowledge is generated *with* and from *within*, not alone or in isolation from witnessing the pain  
18  
19 and suffering of others. Indeed, one respondent acknowledged the exhaustion that comes in  
20  
21 *doing* decoloniality and decolonization:  
22

23  
24 In some ways, decolonizing /decolonial work is exhausting because it requires  
25  
26 explanation and rapid cultural translation. Most People of Color are bi-cultural, as  
27  
28 well as non-American whites who are in touch with their ancestors and cultural  
29  
30 roots. But for a person to decolonize, it requires us explaining to non-People of  
31  
32 Color the difference between a colonial culture and ours as a form of reflection so  
33  
34 that they can see their beliefs and worldviews are not natural or universal, but  
35  
36 actually cultural like mine. This consistent energetic transference is exhausting.  
37  
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40 Generating knowledge toward transformation is, as this respondent underscored, imbued with  
41  
42 “consistent energetic transference.” The exhaustion often arises from a critical understanding,  
43  
44 even a visceral confrontation, with what scholars have described as circuits and consequences of  
45  
46 dispossession (Fine, 2015), critical consciousness (Freire, 1970), and an intersectional analysis  
47  
48 (Kurtiş & Adams, 2016). The capacity for a critical awareness of the injustices people experience  
49  
50 is rooted in a decolonial process that moves from the personal to the collective.  
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3 Complicity with systems of power, and its institutions, as well as explicitly striving for  
4 accountability to ensure these systems are undone, was also a common response. Some, for  
5 instance, described aspects of their upbringing, including their positionalities or identity  
6 development, in describing how they came to understand and engage with decolonial work.  
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11  
12 Liberation theology was important in how my dad mentored me. Anarchism has  
13 been a guiding praxis. Women of Color feminisms and radical Black history is a  
14 central framework in my life work. Indigenous liberation and decolonization also.  
15  
16  
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18  
19 Anti-capitalist liberation-oriented perspectives informed by Women of Color feminist thought  
20 were key to interrogating whiteness as a structure of power, as one respondent explained:  
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23  
24 Decoloniality is like a filter. It provides a non-personal framework to understand  
25 situations and dynamics when I feel I am not being heard or understood, so it  
26 allows me to code-switch and translate my beliefs, words, thoughts, language,  
27 into standard Western language as best I can. As a Person of Color, I have this  
28 sense of decoloniality helping me understand whiteness better and place edges on  
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Decoloniality is like a filter. It provides a non-personal framework to understand situations and dynamics when I feel I am not being heard or understood, so it allows me to code-switch and translate my beliefs, words, thoughts, language, into standard Western language as best I can. As a Person of Color, I have this sense of decoloniality helping me understand whiteness better and place edges on Western culture that has gained power by appearing *edgeless*.

Respondents identified their race/ethnic identities, as white or People of Color, and how these particular identities led them to connect with specific communities, as well as non-Western sources of knowledge, experiences and/or worldviews that centered perspectives on African American, Black, Women of Color feminist epistemologies, and Indigenous cosmologies.

Decoloniality was articulated as a “filter” from which to produce more humane and humanizing views of the world, not as *other* but as one. The associated histories and experiences attached to place and body were reflected in their responses. Survey reflections illustrated their ways of thinking and relating to community, place and history – patterns that were also observed

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2  
3 in relation to the second orientation. *Generating Knowledge With and from Within* is the  
4  
5 evolution of a set of critical epistemic alternatives from participants' privileging their ontological  
6  
7 locatedness within their worlds. Of course, there are also critiques that suggest that these  
8  
9 epistemes may be appropriated onto narrow forms of ethno-nationalist and reactionary politics.  
10  
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12 Stevens (2018), drawing on Grosfoguel, however notes:

14 that complexifying our understandings ... is not simply a form of elevating a  
15  
16 phenomenology of social experience but takes seriously that all knowledge is also  
17  
18 epistemically located and can therefore offer us alternative and deeper understandings of  
19  
20 the workings of power in local social contexts (p.47).  
21  
22  
23

24 ***Socio-historical Intersectional Consciousness: "Amplifier for voices that have been silenced"***

25  
26 Building on the previous orientation, *Socio-Historical Intersectional Consciousness*  
27  
28 refers to developing a critical consciousness of social issues as stemming from socio-historical  
29  
30 conditions of injustice and inequity tethered to coloniality, and its manifestations in structural  
31  
32 violence and racial capitalism (Gone, 2016; Kessi, 2017; Seedat & Suffla, 2017). We cannot  
33  
34 account for the racial violence of today without a critical intersectional consciousness of the  
35  
36 colonial histories experienced by communities in struggle. Thus, a key aspect of decolonial  
37  
38 thinking that most participants highlighted was the importance of understanding the significance  
39  
40 of historic events, of coloniality and its legacies, and the implications of these acts in sustaining  
41  
42 and reproducing systemic structural violence that extend social issues. Responses such as these  
43  
44 were offered by workshop and survey participants, further supporting the second orientation.  
45  
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47

48  
49 To illustrate, one participant stated, "Recapturing history, and our histories." Similarly,  
50  
51 evoking the power and significance of intersectional socio-historical connections, another  
52  
53 remarked, "Stepping into discomfort and teaching history to build connections to today." Both  
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3 responses emphasize the importance of historically anchoring social issues, as well as  
4  
5 positionalities, social and epistemic, in the making and/or reproducing of histories. To disrupt the  
6  
7 coloniality of power and knowledge, hegemonic narratives, which travel across time and space,  
8  
9 via roots and routes that are often unacknowledged, must be interrogated.

10  
11  
12 Aligned with the process of disruption, survey responses emphasized the value of  
13  
14 understanding how Western epistemologies, or worldviews, have informed the discipline of  
15  
16 community psychology. Several respondents offered reflections consistent with the following:  
17  
18

19 I think of decolonial work acting like an amplifier for voices that have long been  
20  
21 silenced because the language that we speak has been foreign to the framework  
22  
23 and underlying value system and ontology of the dominating Western cultures.

24  
25  
26 Decolonial work puts people's lived experience at the center and reshapes  
27  
28 questions around how ecosystems and social relationships that support this person  
29  
30 in thriving versus finding deficiencies in comparing people to a  
31  
32 Western/European/white cultural standard.

33  
34  
35 While Eurocentric, mechanistic disembodied research is problematically oppressive, this shaping  
36  
37 is sought to be undone in the discipline. Some approaches to community psychology have been  
38  
39 transgressive and liberatory, yet more is urgently necessary.

40  
41  
42 Respondents mentioned the importance of having a critical consciousness of people and  
43  
44 community experiences of oppression. However, this consciousness must be tethered to, and  
45  
46 rooted in anti-colonial, decolonial values, as one respondent explained, "going back to the roots:"

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48  
49 In my humble understanding it may be the following: decolonization feels like a  
50  
51 raising of consciousness to challenge old and *status quo* paradigms. This is  
52  
53 reminiscent of community psychology starting from a drive of questioning and  
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3 challenging traditional psychology and mental health frameworks and seeking  
4  
5 better ones that actually addressed the real problems and challenges in the world.  
6

7  
8 There is a seeking of social justice and recognition of our broader historical  
9  
10 contexts and how this has impacted our thinking and practices. Many of our  
11  
12 traditional practices are oppressive and not reflective of values or principles of  
13  
14 justice or humanity or holism/ecological connectedness. [...] In this sense, both  
15  
16 decolonial work and community psychology are about going back to the roots of  
17  
18 what was done well, in order to truly tackle the roots of our problems.  
19  
20

21 This critical understanding humbles them to understand, engage and disrupt how coloniality is  
22  
23 still present and manifesting in their lives, and what can be done to bring about transformation.  
24

25  
26 In other words, transforming conditions to end the coloniality of power over certain groups, and  
27  
28 cultivate contexts where they can tell their/our story.  
29

30  
31 Centering histories and amplifying voices are key dimensions of engaging in decolonial  
32  
33 work. A respondent underscored this by sharing, “Decolonial work is essential to critically  
34  
35 appraise what the West has written about *us*, and to develop *our* own paradigms that tell *our*  
36  
37 story.” Consistent with the previous reflections, this statement noted how some histories have  
38  
39 remained on the margins of knowledge production, erasing people’s histories and contributions  
40  
41 to society, and the establishing of worlds or conditions as communities experience them. In  
42  
43 doing so, however, they advocate for the creation of spaces for people’s voices to surface and be  
44  
45 heard, akin to what Pérez (1999) names as the formation of a decolonial imaginary that involves  
46  
47 reconnecting and interrogating the past to reassess reality.  
48  
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51 Critically articulated as well were questions on whose voices are centered at the expense  
52  
53 of others. One survey respondent nuanced how decolonial work does not make explicit the  
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3 deconstructing of race, colorism and anti-Blackness, and instead focuses on Latinx and/or  
4  
5 Indigenous perspectives:

6  
7  
8 Decoloniality tends to center in Latinx related cultures to the continued  
9  
10 marginalization of Black people. Persons in position of cultural power cannot  
11  
12 choose, but must seek the liberation of all of those oppressed by historical  
13  
14 experiences of slavery, genocide, colonization, and neocolonization.  
15  
16

17 As noted, decolonial perspectives are often perceived to be more grounded in a standpoint that  
18  
19 engages with Indigeneity and *mestizaje* from a Latin American perspective, in comparison to  
20  
21 other approaches to decoloniality that unsettle the coloniality of power that is tied to racial  
22  
23 violence, including anti-Blackness. Power that surfaces from and intersects with race and  
24  
25 capitalism to produce what Wolpe (1988) and Robinson (1983) describe as racial capitalism.  
26  
27

28 Indeed the refusal to be complicit in racial capitalism was described by one respondent:  
29

30  
31 So how it feels: for me it feels at times deeply connecting, spiritual, and full of  
32  
33 love, at other times, I am filled with shame, anxiety, and sadness. Some of the  
34  
35 highest highs and lowest lows. The highs are connected to seeing students grow  
36  
37 and the next generation do better than mine; the lows are connected to my own  
38  
39 hands being not clean, asking whether I am doing this right, and seeing the  
40  
41 brutality of the settler-state and capitalism.  
42  
43

44 As these responses demonstrate, participants appeared to engage with mostly the unique  
45  
46 historical pasts of their specific location. These historic accounts shaped the social, political, and  
47  
48 cultural aspects of their current context and/or community experiences.  
49  
50

51 Considering these reflections, we observe critiques about the ways in which Western,  
52  
53 Eurocentric and white settler logics have made themselves present, entrenched in knowledge and  
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3 practice. We believe that it is here where the work of critical community psychologists, among  
4 them Seedat and Suffla (2017), Ratele (2018), Bhatia (2020) and Dutta (2016), Women of Color  
5 scholars, such Lugones (2003), and decolonial theories by Césaire (2001) and Fanon (1967) on  
6 the Black body under colonial regimes, become important for guiding decolonial standpoints,  
7 and a socio-historical consciousness of the intersections of colonial power that remains in places  
8 across time and space. Thus, it is in the socio-historical experience of the multiple, referent, and  
9 intersectional forms of othering, where a political consciousness about taxonomies of difference  
10 and hierarchy develops, and a critically disruptive, interrogatory and destabilizing praxis is  
11 possible (Stevens, et al., 2017).  
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24 ***Relationships of Mutual Accountability: “I engage as a learner, cautiously finding my place”***

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26 The process of building meaningful, sustainable relationships and coalitions of co-  
27 intentional solidarity characterize the third orientation, *Relationships of Mutual Accountability*.  
28 To be clear, by accountability we are not describing the exchange or transactional nature of  
29 responsibilities within relationships; instead, we intend to use accountability as a value for  
30 honoring a commitment, a connection to a community that is intentional in being responsive to  
31 the relationship through a process of cultivating mutuality with integrity, humility and reciprocal  
32 recognitions (Fanon, 1967). Because decolonial work cannot be done alone, relationships of  
33 accompaniment, responsibility and commitment that extend collaboration must be forged.  
34 Examples include community-driven and centered projects, often aligned with a participatory  
35 action research (PAR) paradigm. PAR strives to support community determined projects, whilst  
36 fostering coalitions across groups (Fine, 2015, 2018). Through these coalitions, grounded in  
37 relationships of mutual care and commitment, researchers and key stakeholders can leverage  
38 institutional resources to support community efforts and struggles for transformational change.  
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3           Coloniality in knowledge is often exemplified via an individualistic approach to research,  
4 which requires that the practitioner's work be unbiased and non-relational. Yet we emphasize in  
5 this orientation, the importance of building relationships of ethical mutual accountability. Three  
6 workshop attendees, who contributed to our dialogues, support this point. One noted, "Let us not  
7 silo ourselves from other fields." Others respectively stated, "Engaging with students and  
8 communities in appropriate ways of building histories and community visions of change," and  
9 "How am I situated in this matrix and can I be complicit?" These responses stress the  
10 significance of relationships and accountability equally, echoing what a survey response:

21           Decolonial work is a wakeup call for our society and our civilization. An  
22 understanding that we have all been living under a colonial system that appears to  
23 serve the few privileged and entitled, but actually serves no one.

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26  
27  
28 The realization that we are tethered, connected to each other, is fundamental to a decolonial  
29 praxis. Relational epistemologies and ethics toward decolonial links that build toward liberation,  
30 transformation, and healing are central aspects of this orientation (Montero, 2007).

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32  
33           For some respondents decoloniality involved the development of relationships of  
34 accountability, transparency, cultural humility, as well as a practice of accompaniment with  
35 communities to document, develop and implement solutions toward conditions that are  
36 liberatory, healing and restorative of their own power. Survey respondents shared examples of  
37 their enacted research values, as one respondent noted:

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41           Decolonial work is a necessity in psychological research to create community-  
42 driven studies that amplify the voices of the experts of the social phenomena  
43 researchers study, participants themselves. By making studies relevant to the lived  
44 experiences, hopes and dreams of community-members we avoid an extractive

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3 self-serving approach to do research for academic self-profit only. There's a need  
4  
5 to create desired-based participatory studies that avoid a deficit-centered approach  
6  
7 in doing research instead of with marginalized communities.  
8  
9

10 Another reflected on the following:

11  
12 We strive to engage with the community as partners. A framework that promotes  
13  
14 our consciousness of how we can think differently and move beyond our  
15  
16 oppressed mindsets, to be more innovative; this is what most folks are desiring.  
17  
18

19 As some respondents underscored, PAR collaborations that equitably engage communities are a  
20  
21 mode of refusal to reproduce hierarchies in research. The delinking, when paired with an  
22  
23 intentional approach for including communities as partners, aids in the disruption of epistemic  
24  
25 violence that is antithetical to decoloniality (Fine, 2015; Smith, 1999; Tuck, 2010).  
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27

28 Building relationships of mutual accountability must be authentic, not token  
29  
30 collaborations where researchers approach the community assuming to know what is best for  
31  
32 them – a point made by a respondent:  
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34

35 Given that I am a Person of Color, immigrant and a product of colonization I seek  
36  
37 to grow in my understanding of decolonization, and hopefully it can help me  
38  
39 better develop and conduct work on social justice with immigrants and youth of  
40  
41 color with the communities I am working with.  
42  
43

44 A product of colonization was the creation of racialized hierarchies that inform oppression, and  
45  
46 power within relationships. Engaging reflexively through a critical deconstruction of  
47  
48 positionality, however, can help cultivate a humane and humanizing understandings of the self in  
49  
50 relation with others, as one respondent described:  
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3 I try to engage as a learner, cautiously finding my place in this discourse and  
4  
5 practice knowing that my identity, privilege, and profession, place me in the  
6  
7 position of colonizer. I'm looking for guidance from those with more experience  
8  
9 with marginalization and oppression, yet I don't want them to have to educate me.  
10  
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12 In these responses turning to the community for direction is critical to a decolonial praxis that  
13  
14 troubles the epistemic authority of the researchers. As researchers we are outsiders by virtue of  
15  
16 the privileged positionalities afforded by an institution, academic or otherwise. Naming and  
17  
18 reckoning with this is an important element of decolonization and decoloniality. Doing so allows  
19  
20 for humility in seeing what is often unquestioned, or rendered normal.  
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24 Several survey participants emphasized the value of developing and implementing  
25  
26 projects that engage local communities in the research and decision-making processes.  
27  
28 Engagement is enacted with the intent of cultivating an ethical relationship between the  
29  
30 researcher and “the researched.” A respondent, for example, noted: “By taking this alternative  
31  
32 viewpoint, rather than always being the "experts" who come in and try to change communities,  
33  
34 this provides us opportunities to learn from people in communities who often really know more  
35  
36 than we do.” A key element of relationships of mutual accountability is training researchers in  
37  
38 values and ethical principles of cultural humility, which a respondent made clear:  
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42 By working with coalitions to encourage and educate them on the need for justice  
43  
44 and empowerment. That it is important that they do not go into communities  
45  
46 thinking they need to tell people what they need and what to do, but offer their  
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48 knowledge and resources freely while not being in any position to judge, make  
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50 decisions, or hold any power over their use.  
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Cultural humility when paired with critical reflexivity and community accountability, aims to unsettle or interrogate dynamics of power that manifest as hierarchies.

In addition to developing partnerships with local communities, some respondents named specific Indigenous communities and institutionally disenfranchised groups as key actors in deciding research outcomes that would serve their communities best. One respondent mentioned how communities in South Los Angeles (U.S.) have been historically excluded from research processes, yet most recently have been involved in these partnerships, owing to them having a seat at the table and working closely with local institutions.

Doing the work of health inequities here in South L.A., folks in the community, activists, youth and others probably mostly welcome this kind of perspective, since they naturally question academia and traditional hierarchical institutions.

This reality here allows me to explore and be creative while engaging with it, especially with local youth of color who I want to work with.

Similarly, a respondent suggested the need to “Repower Maori (Indigenous) psychology as the norm” and to facilitate opportunities for Maori knowledge to resurface in community psychology. Developing projects that engage communities in meaningful ways is imperative. This pushes against research where the outcomes, products and material artifacts, such as publications, are inaccessible to the community that is the focus of study. Research that is not leveraged to serve or meet the needs and interests of the community is highly problematic and damaging. It is a prime example of what Smith (1999) describes as the intersections of imperialism and research; another manifestation of the coloniality of power and knowledge.

As we undo coloniality, we must remain humble as we strive to forge new bridges in accompaniment with others. As Anzaldúa (1987) and Walsh (2014) underscore, we build the



road by walking alongside each other, *aprendiendo en el andar* (learning), and forging roots and routes to a decolonial praxis through relationships. The process of delinking ourselves from the disenfranchising social conditions of others is not an element of decoloniality, however. On the contrary, decoloniality often demands relationships of accountability, as a respondent described:

Decolonizing feels and looks like a civilizational reset, where we can receive civilizational justice for historic wrongs perpetrated and simultaneously disrupt what does not align with meaningful, effective, purposeful living and thriving.

A necessary praxis of decoloniality is delinking from the colonial power that often purports notions of dualism, positivism, and disembodied knowledge in theory, research and practice. Participants reflected the significance of mutual recognition and inter-dependence as foundational elements in fostering unanimity and solidarity, to uncouple Manichean binaries associated with oppression and exploitation that act as taken-for-granted regimes of truth.

***Unsettling Subjectivities of Power/Privilege: “Deeply examining my own privilege, whiteness”***

The importance of “decolonizing the self,” of how one perceives oneself in relation to others, and how this self-concept informs their subjectivities is the focus of the fourth and last orientation, *Unsettling Subjectivities of Power/Privilege*. Fundamental to this orientation is the decentering and interrogation of whiteness (see Green, et al., 2007), and racial formations that favor structures of power aligned with white supremacy in explicit and implicit forms. Power and privilege are tied to whiteness. Often these ties are invisible or are reshaped through logics that privilege a proximity to whiteness. The disruption of oppression must begin with the unsettling, and indeed the interrogation of subjectivities – ways of knowing and being, as well as relating to others – that maintain power and privilege, and preserve structures of whiteness.

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3 During the workshops several participants reflected on the importance of “decolonizing  
4 the self,” and how this process informed their subjectivities. Participants described the  
5 importance of “abolishing whiteness,” contesting and challenging structures of oppressions that  
6 cause the invisibility of people with marginalized positionalities. Illustrated in a reflection,  
7 another claimed, “Rematriation of Indigenous land, reparation, abolishing whiteness, and  
8 building solidarities.” For most participants decolonization was tied to racial formations that  
9 keep whiteness and white supremacy set. As another participant remarked, “[decoloniality] Starts  
10 with deeply examining my own privilege, whiteness and how this affects my thinking and  
11 action.” The decolonial unsettling of whiteness is an ongoing, iterative practice of critical  
12 reflexivity and de-ideologization. The interrogation of power and privilege, via problematization  
13 and de-naturalization (Montero, 2007), allows for the deconstruction of the *status quo*.

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Power was a common concept and experience discussed in most of the survey responses  
provided. Reflecting on how power operated to inform their understandings of and engagement  
with decolonization, as well as decoloniality and anti-colonial work, one participant stated:

I came across "Critical Psychiatry." In these readings, the author, China Mills  
uses this framework to critique the history of psychiatry and it was eye opening.  
But in it she used the term "critical of the critical." So, I always remember this  
phrase, which elicited my natural skepticism, and I wondered what it means to be  
critical of the critical? What is it in decoloniality that we should be critical of? I  
think in general this framework makes a lot of sense.

Building on this notion of being “critical of the critical,” other survey participants explained that  
critical reflexivity of their positionalities allowed them to interrogate the intersections of power  
in their lives, and in relation to their work:

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3 It's interesting because as a young kid I lived in the Philippines and Portugal  
4 where my father, an English, ran textiles factories. I was a colonial boy. I'm  
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8 dealing with the sins of my father, having my own reckoning with decolonization.  
9

10 How can we turn back all the trauma and loss? I stick to activist practice instead.

11  
12 These reflexive responses, which illustrate the unsettling subjectivities of power, and whiteness,  
13  
14 can intersect with other orientations to inform a standpoint that builds the roots and routes  
15  
16 toward decoloniality. Although some responses seemed to cut across all orientation, the  
17  
18 importance of unsettling or interrogating power and privilege was specific to this one.  
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21 Reflecting on power, respondents named specific scholars, readings and writings that  
22  
23 have guided their analysis of their positionalities and subjectivities. These reflections involved  
24  
25 questioning how power made its way through their work with communities who are  
26  
27 institutionally marginalized. Consistent with this point, some explained how they made room in  
28  
29 their teaching and research practice for decolonial scholarship, as well as solidarity:  
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33 I am a white settler who teaches at a university and is active in the town I live in.

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35 It's really important for me to understand what the context of Indigenous struggle  
36  
37 is where I live. Currently, as far as I can tell, the struggle for Juristic and against  
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39 the Sargent Quarry is very important for the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. I go to  
40  
41 events like the March for Juristac, and I teach about this in my classes. I center  
42  
43 decolonization in all my classes. This quarter I am teaching Qualitative Methods,  
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45 and one of our textbooks is Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies*. It's not a  
46  
47 standard book for a class in Psychology, but I work hard to give students the tools  
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49 and context this book needs to be central to how they think about research.  
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3 It is worth noting that this participant, like others, was aware of their intersectional identities.

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5 What these observations invite us to do is to recognize that while discussions about power and  
6  
7 privilege mostly seemed to focus on the interrogation and deconstruction of whiteness – which is  
8  
9 necessary and in fact a key element of decoloniality – that is not the only identity or positionality  
10  
11 that colonial power and knowledge have produced.  
12  
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14  
15 Some participants observed how People of Color, while marginalized or subordinated in  
16  
17 some ways, can also be privileged in certain domains and contexts. Illustrating this intersectional  
18  
19 consciousness one participant offered a reflection:  
20

21 [as a Person of Color] I think in these conversations, the outcomes have to be  
22  
23 clear. For instance, in the U.S., there are many anti-racist dialogues among white  
24  
25 ally groups; however, the intention of the dialogues is not to improve the lives of  
26  
27 Black people. Thus, people are more aware of their power and privilege with little  
28  
29 willingness to expand power so that those historically oppressed can be liberated.  
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31 So, in the case of creating spaces for the *decolonial turn* in psychology, what are  
32  
33 the outcomes that the field is hoping to achieve and state those upfront.  
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38 Consistent with other nuanced responses we have presented, this statement emphasizes the  
39  
40 complexities of unsettling power hierarchies. Power is not one-dimensional, rather it is entwined  
41  
42 with how people see and experience their worlds in relation to other people, communities,  
43  
44 institutions, structures and histories, as well as present conditions. The critical awareness that is  
45  
46 attuned to the multiple formations of power in regards to whiteness, is what Sandoval (2003)  
47  
48 describes as a praxis of differential consciousness where we can “recognize one another as allies  
49  
50 [...] activities which are imperative for the psychological and political practices that permit the  
51  
52 achievement of coalition across differences” (p. 90)  
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3 The work of decoloniality necessitates a critical reflexivity that unsettles and engages  
4 with positionalities vis-a-vis those whom are perceived as institutionally, socially and politically  
5 outside or on the margins. As one participant noted, “You can't develop a psychology while  
6 sticking to the white individualistic neoliberal agenda in psychology. We need to deconstruct  
7 these things first.” Colonial power has produced race, ethnic, gender, and class hierarchies, and  
8 pigmentocracies that mirror caste system structures that rely upon each other to oppress.  
9  
10 Contesting the *status quo* is dependent on being open to having the ignorance contract that  
11 maintains the invisibility and normativity of privilege, illuminated and breached. Recognizing  
12 the falsity of the Cartesian distinction between center and periphery, and acknowledging that  
13 such positionalities are always contingent, are preconditions that render a disruption to colonial  
14 power possible within decolonial praxis. Colonialism distorts the possibility of being and feeling  
15 human to oneself and one another, and of being defined by the contours of the colonial past that  
16 left some of us with imprints as *other*. The power of coloniality, if left uncontested, will  
17 reproduce and manifest itself in dehumanizing and violent mutations of white supremacy across  
18 time and space, rotting the roots and erasing the routes that must be forged for a decolonial  
19 community psychology praxis.  
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#### 40 **Conclusion: Is a Decolonial Community Psychology Praxis Possible?**

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42 Our interests and vows to decolonizing community psychology sustain our collaboration.  
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44 In this article, we brought together the roots and routes of our decolonial praxis, with the  
45 reflections, responses, and (re)actions that characterized the decolonial understandings of critical  
46 community psychologists. Rooted in our lived experiences, specifically the embodied  
47 subjectivities of shared histories of slavery, colonialism, and global entanglement, we began this  
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60 process of reflection and collaboration via conversations amongst ourselves that affirmed our

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3 commitment to unsettling colonial power. Along this process we acknowledged a need to learn,  
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5 listen and connect with other critical community psychologists similarly oriented toward the  
6  
7 *decolonial turn* and a decolonizing standpoint.  
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10 As discussed, we invited reflections and responses, via workshop dialogues and a survey,  
11  
12 to questions about what people are *undoing* toward the *decolonial turn*. We specifically engaged  
13  
14 questions on how decoloniality and decolonization surface in community psychology. Through  
15  
16 our conversations, we generated shared understandings of decoloniality and decolonization as  
17  
18 emergent praxes in critical community psychology, which we characterized via four orientations  
19  
20 – or the roots and routes toward a decolonial community psychology. The insights, reflected in  
21  
22 the orientations, helps us “think from and with the ongoing processes of decolonial shift and  
23  
24 movement rather than simply with and from decoloniality as paradigm, consequence, and  
25  
26 position” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 50). We have organized the orientations in no particular  
27  
28 hierarchy. Instead these should be understood as part of a whole, each one pointing to how  
29  
30 people are personally, relationally and collectively constructing other ways of being with and in  
31  
32 community. The intersecting orientations combine toward a standpoint for colonial *undoing*; the  
33  
34 decolonial roots and routes to *turn away* from coloniality in community psychology.  
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40 We offer examples of how community psychologists from varied social locations,  
41  
42 positionalities and professional ranks engage with, and think about decoloniality and  
43  
44 decolonization. By considering questions of coloniality, and its implications for community,  
45  
46 research and action, we sought coordinates for us and others engaged in a critical and decolonial  
47  
48 community psychology praxis. Participants’ responses reflect intentional engagements with  
49  
50 decoloniality. We recognize, however, that our attempts to illustrate the roots and routes of  
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52 decoloniality within community psychology pose some limitations given the reach of our survey,  
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3 and the contexts for our workshops. Rather than considering these as limitations, we embrace  
4  
5 them as opportunities for ongoing collaboration and the expansion of our endeavors.  
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7  
8 First, we acknowledge that most of the responses in the survey were by participants  
9  
10 located in the U.S. and Australia, which reflects the insular ways Western Eurocentric  
11  
12 knowledge circulates. Yet, those who responded from these locations identified as People of  
13  
14 Color, including Indigenous and Black. This, we believe, is significant as it demonstrates the  
15  
16 embodied subjectivities of critical community psychologists attempting to interrogate histories,  
17  
18 and disrupt their possible complicity with coloniality, as they are located within colonial sites.  
19  
20 Second, our period of dissemination was quite brief (six weeks). As our work develops, we are  
21  
22 intent in widening its dissemination and timeframe for responses. Third, survey questions along  
23  
24 with the workshops were in English, which severely limited its inclusivity. As we continue the  
25  
26 project, we plan to translate the survey to Spanish and languages that reflect the sociocultural and  
27  
28 linguistic diversity of the discipline, especially in the Majority World. Lastly, online  
29  
30 dissemination, while convenient, demonstrates the neocolonial and neoliberal circulation of  
31  
32 knowledge. We are attuned to possibilities for alternative modes of engagement that are not  
33  
34 exclusive to online platforms. We see community gatherings, beyond academia, as well as  
35  
36 classrooms and organizing spaces, as contexts where some of these questions can be engaged. We  
37  
38 appreciate the need to be attentive to these uneven distributional regimes in knowledge  
39  
40 production, across West-East, North-South, and Centre-Periphery, even when we refer to an  
41  
42 emergent decolonial psychology that will have to be more deeply interrogated. Epistemic  
43  
44 communities value different modes of production and dissemination that are not always  
45  
46 centralized within the traditional academic knowledge production and dissemination circuits, and  
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48 we must be more expansive in our interpretations of decoloniality in practice.  
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3 With these initial orientations, we offer a partial and preliminarily rendering of some of  
4 the roots and routes through which critical community psychologists are engaging with the  
5 *decolonial turn*. We are intent in continuing this work – reflecting, dialoguing and sharing what  
6 we unearth along the way – in order to cultivate a decolonial community psychology praxis. The  
7 standpoint-oriented praxis that surfaced from this inquiry are an invitation to consider critically  
8 the *decolonial turn*. Importantly, as Montero, et al., (2017) warned about liberation psychology,  
9 the *decolonial turn* is not about a new language, but a focus on “how the shared praxis of  
10 liberation is carried, why, from where, and with whom” (p. 161). We are intent in asking these  
11 questions to push critical community psychology beyond disciplinary regimes toward new  
12 perspectives and approaches of the field rooted and routed toward the *decolonial turn*.  
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26 Decolonial epistemologies that honor the body of scholarship from the Majority World will  
27 strengthen the field as it strives toward intersectional, transnational, and multidisciplinary  
28 paradigms of liberation, wellbeing, and justice. We are striving to forge a route for developing a  
29 decolonial community psychology praxis with roots in decolonial disruption – and always  
30 recognizing that there are limits to any emergent epistemic tradition whilst insisting on a critical  
31 internal critique thereof as we seek new emancipatory possibilities that are yet to unfold.  
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40 We all have a stake in the *decolonial turn* – in rooting ourselves and routing, or re-  
41 routing, our tracks. The four orientations, and their accompanying explanations, demonstrate the  
42 importance of a continuous process of critical analytical and dialectical reflection. We recognize  
43 the urgency of decolonial work, which we seek to build and contribute to, from within our own  
44 locations and in relation to each other. In doing so, however, we acknowledge that such work  
45 comes at great risk as we are digging up the rottenness upon which our professional careers have  
46 sprouted, but have yielded insufficient wholesome goods to feed our souls and nourish our  
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3 communities. We know and feel another route is possible and worth walking, not to pave or  
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5 mark it, but to till the roots of the soil upon which we will sow seeds with others as we walk.  
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