WITS UNIVERSITY

#FeesMustFall – Oppression As Result of Assumed Homogeneity

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Critical Diversity Studies by:

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Declaration

I Cameron Anzio Jacobs (403822) declare that this Dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Maters of Arts in Critical Diversity Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

30th day of April 2021 in Johannesburg

Abstract

This dissertation contemplates the use of the #FeesMustFall movement as a catalyst for oppressive praxis based on the assumed homogeneity of the student protesters across South Africa in 2015, 2016 and later in 2019. The research contemplates homogenisation in protests using social contract theory as a theoretical position and includes Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL), Intersectionality and Decoloniality as tools for methodological engagement. It considers the resuscitated protests in 2019 making similar calls for free quality decolonised education and whether #FMF was a useful as the dominant narrative of students protesting for socio-economic emancipation within higher education, or whether it simply reified student protestors as out of place in an organisational ethos driven by a desire to keep order and produce capital. The research questions the politics of location and positionality in an educational economy hinged on racial, sexual and financial axes of difference that oppress and are visiblised through systemic violence(s) perpetuated universities and protestors who protested under the #FMF. The erasure of narratives, because of the insistence of engagement of a single issue unconsciously resulted in silencing certain already socially marginalised voices. The research considers how pathologising emotions such as anger, frustration and pain come to aid the upholding of certain power structures, marking the emotions appear out of place. As intersectional identities such race, class, gender and sexual orientation disrupt the #FMF status quo those fissures seem to be responsible for the protests losing momentum and buy-in towards the end of 2016.

Keywords: contractarianism, otherness, race, womxn, queer, protest, intersectionality, power, privilege, oppression, space, body, movement, patriarchy, language, sexual, racial, domination, ignorance.

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Thank you. Camagu!

List of Abbreviations

#FMF	- #FeesMustFall
Wits	- University of the Witwatersrand
UCT	- University of Cape Town
UCKAR	- University Currently Known as Rhodes – "fallists" refer to Rhodes University in this way to signal a desire for the name to change as part of the decolonisation project
#RMF	- #RhodesMustFall
Cis-het	- Cisgender heterosexual
NSFAS	- National Student Financial Aid Scheme
#RUReferenceList	- RhodesUniversityReferenceList

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

> My silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you. But for every real word spoken, for every attempt I had ever made to speak those truths for which I am still seeking, I had made contact with other women while we examined the words to fit a world in which we all believed, bridging our differences. (Lorde, 1990)

The vignette above, I believe is about seeking truth , especially in places and spaces where it is least desired. Lorde's words are instructive as they allude to the weight and deployment of words which simultaneously assist us in navigating intersections diversity across categories of difference. The vignette offers hope in a bridging of differences as this dissertation intends to do, while not shying away from the difficult conversations that make that reality possible. It is a reminder that while the world we fit into is often reductionist and sees our diversities as people in a limited way, that our heterogeneity and differential experiences when foregrounded may afford us alternatives to a status quo.

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They called us the lost generation; we were those who were blinded by the dazzling light of the rainbow that was to encapsulate a diverse, equal and free South Africa post-1994. We were sold dreams that we thought we would realise shortly after. We had opportunities our forebears did not, and our eyes still full of sleep could not possibly imagine what it would be like to be woken, to be critically conscious of intersecting systems of oppression. We took what was given to us until we saw what others had, and we grew restless. The protests were the most significant student protests in the country since the advent of democracy in 1994. They highlighted the discrepancies of what is, at least constitutionally, a South Africa on the journey to equality beyond the challenges of equity. They were dubbed #FeesMustFall (#FMF).

This research makes use of this movement and the preceding #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) as case studies. There were nuances present in both which I witnessed, having been part of the protests, even while personally more active at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). I reflect on their positionality to locate myself in this writing, which generates an engaged or emic perspective of

the protests. Their perspective is of engagement in protests over a long period since the inception of the protests at Wits in 2015. I write from the position of having been present even when conditions were violent and unfavourable. The narrative shared, therefore, at times, may appear biased. The dissertation is written in the first person as is encouraged in feminist literature, through it, I locate myself as the researcher acknowledging my experiences and emotions as part of a reflexive approach to the work. The voices of the other activists are foregrounded to create distance between myself as the researcher and protests. Methodologically this allows the reader to experience the versions of events from the perspectives of other fallists who have shared their accounts of protests. According to Dawson and Sinwell, "self-identification significantly shapes the rationale, process and outcome of any research investigation and will influence how one understands who and what knowledge is for" (2012, p. 178).

How I came to engage with the film crew, and even in the protests was largely by chance. The dissertation begins at the point where the filming and production of *The Art of Fallism* film ended. The film and research are independent projects, however, the film, the recorded interviews and transcripts, the interactions with the activists as part of the film crew, and my involvement in the protests inform the research that follows. *The Art of Fallism*, is a film which was directed by Aslaug Aarsæther and Gunnbjørg Gunnarsdóttir. The Norwegian filmmakers had heard about the 2015 student protests in South Africa and, like many others, resonated with the story of the protesting students in South Africa.

My earlier activism within the LGBTQIA+ sector saw me visit Norway in 2011, I later engaged with Norwegian activists on LGBTQIA+ issues via the GALA Queer Archives in my capacity as a volunteer. As a result, one of my Norwegian colleagues had followed the protests closely and after hearing about the project suggested to the filmmakers that they make contact. After introductory conversations the filmmakers offered me a position as an archival contributor to the film. The agreement and my involvement emanated from a desire to tell the story from the perspective of 'fallists'. My initial questions to the filmmakers set the tone not only for initial conversations around who would lead the vision and trajectory of the film but also enabled other

'fallists' who had agreed to participate in the making of the documentary film to interrogate the positionally of the filmmakers.

While it is not formally a part of the dissertation, I highly recommend that the film be viewed alongside the dissertation as the film plays a vital role in framing the interviewees in the dissertation and it provides the reader with a deeper context of their lived experiences and what informed their participation in the protests. The film further aids the dissertation in producing an account of the numerous contradictions and tensions that arose within the movement's activism. Its focus on these fissures highlight the rationale behind some of the in-fighting at the time, but perhaps more importantly, the urgency for intersectional approaches not only in protests but in activism more generally.

The film reinforces the notion of oppression arising due to students being understood as homogenous rather than heterogeneous internal and external to the movement. It echoes the literature posited in the literature review and enables the reader to contemplate the implications of homogenising protestors at the expense of sustaining protests through an understanding of heterogeneous experiences, indicating as Veriava (2019) does, that these experiences resulted in #FMF being a ‘movement of movements’. The film enables the reader to witness the diversity of voices represented in the movement and the tensions that appeared because marginalised communities, including trans persons, who felt silenced while others appeared emboldened to speak. Through the guidance of the activists depicted and the narratives shared, the film offers a rebuttal to the kind of movements or movement building which, rather than being reflexive, premise themselves on the activism operating in favour of a heteronormative, oft white racial, masculine defined centre. The film challenges the idea of the most vocal, visible, aesthetic ideal as the catalyst for change. It affords the reader a premise from which to contemplate Social Contract Theory and how it operates discreetly even in spaces which appear at first glance to be progressive. It offers instead the lesser told stories of those often relegated to the margins of our society. In doing so, it indicates how certain bodies have been devalued in systems that the activists seek to dismantle because of positionality. Simultaneously, the film illustrates devaluing those already marginalised and further marginalised due to a flawed idea of the internal and

external homogeneity of the movement. Through the film and the narratives shared in it, we begin to see the multiplicity of identities and intersectional experiences providing a stronger foundation for movements premised on heterogeneous and multiple experiences, rather than a reduction of multiplicity that serves few.

The Art of Fallism critiques the lack of introspection within the movement from the perspective of those who felt silenced, offering a call for deliberate reflections that consider the need for better ways of strengthening and sustaining movements, rather than duplicating those already passed, without question. It sets the tone for the dissertation as the research often details the messy lived experiences of 'fallists' including my own and those of Wandile, Phakamani and Mickey who are depicted in the film and whose interview excerpts lend themselves to an unpacking of Social Contract Theory and it's relevance through the messiness of their lived realities and tensions in their lived experiences holding multiple positionalities that are not congruent with one another.

> the reason why we fight is so that we can exist in a world where we can walk into a shop like this and experience candy as human beings and not feel like racialized bodies in Cape Town or God knows whatever like colonial legacy still like hovers around this (Mickey Moyo).

The dissertation, therefore, begins a reflective process in an effort to better understand the role of the body, gender, and knowledge in protest(s). It contemplates how black bodies in particular (not exclusively) have been used as the carriers of a social and political ideology that was not always in the interests of their struggles. We can track this through the experiences of the three interviewees. The accounts given by Wandile, Phakamani and Mickey offer in-depth insights into the intersecting roles of class, gender, sexual orientation, social and linguistic access and proximity to the a heteronormative, oft white racial, masculine defined centre. Phakamani in particular enables the readers to see in practical terms how the *Ignorance Contract* (Steyn, 2012) is deployed in favour of upholding a power dynamic which he articulates as coming undone when he realises his own positionally in relation to those protesting with himas he and others become more aware of the urgency of intersectionality within the movement(s).

> Yeah I think the idea of including everyone who's within the house. I think it's… it's a perfect idea where we could share… even the growth within. Like while you were joining and how… how were you thinking and how your thinking has changed and what were your moments within the struggle that you liked the most and what was the worst time and what's happening now and within the protest situation where are we… are we.. are we advancing socially, politically, academically and mobilizing the social realities within ourselves or the background of ourselves (Phakamani Ntentema).

Through a navigation of identity and making use of intersectionality we are able to see how social contracts are deployed, helping make sense of the role of Social Contract Theory as a means through which to see individual intersections of identity and their salience in the conversation. In addition to this, by making use of Critical Diversity Literacy and considering it in relation to the work of Grada Kilomba in *Plantation Memories* (2013) in the text. Through Kilomba's considerations of the centre and her consideration of positionally and that of who speaks either from the periphery or the centre, we begin to see the tensions in the movement and are able to make use of the stories told in the film, and the research, to understand why homogeneity may result in oppression especially where heterogeneity is not clearly acknowledged and enveloped into movements such as those described in the research. The dissertation thinks through what a call to action does when it hails protesters.

It does this through, initially, an epistemological questioning of self-location to narrate the shift from individual to academic enquiry. I use my voice as the researcher in conversation with others who nuance the discussion of movement building through detailing lived experiences. Because ideology brings diverse peoples together in protest, it generates an ethos of sameness, when such sameness is misinterpreted as homogeneity it reinforces social contracts which are discreet, but fully operational. The sameness is essential to sustain protest energies in the early stages of protest. As rhetoric slowly solidifies, participant opinions change as part of a crucial development, in the process of unifying individuals to advocate for a single issue. It is at that point, that the *Ignorance Contract* (Steyn, 2012) discussed later in the research seems to appear. The aforementioned social contracts reinforce behaviours which may seem ignorant, but as Melissa Steyn (2012) writes, likely only conceal such agreements whether tacit or explicit to further enable those with power to maintain it.

Single-issue struggle protests have yielded incredible results concerning the issues raised. In Guatemala, the people removed the president because of concerns of corruption. In the Arab Spring uprisings, North African countries erupted in anti-government protests, revolutions, and armed rebellions. Even in the far north of the Scandinavian countries, the Saami people have slowly started the process of dismantling colonial legacies which sought to erase their identities and culture despite being located in a context that we in the global South may perceive as being highly egalitarian. Their sentiments are shared in other movements around the globe such as the Ainu in Japan and the Adivasi in India and more recently in South Africa the Khoe people as well. This is important to acknowledge ahead of the analysis below, as these processes are not mutually exclusive, but occur in a global context where intersecting oppressions are more frequently discussed and visible because of a growing desire for recognition. Having droves of people gather in favour of a single issue has been vital in all the contexts mentioned above and numerous others the world over.

1.1 Contextual background

By providing a historical and sociological framing for the #RMF and #FMF protests, the dissertation frames the protests in relation to how the protests were engaged with in the context of higher education in South Africa by key stakeholders such as the vice-chancellors and other key stakeholders like the minister in Higher Education and Training. This context is provided such that the reader has a sense of how students were homogenised by the stakeholders in higher education while foregrounding the latter section which delves into the assumption of homogenisation which is unpacked in the latter part of the work, which considers more closely the role of such homogeneity internal to the protests. It is important to note here, how the terms used in the research are understood. Here, homogeneity is understood as a reductive sameness unlike heterogeneity which is understood as an acknowledgement of diversity and difference. The definitions of the terms will be used to guide the research enquiry and engage the reader on the importance of the distinction in the sustenance and untimely demise of the movement(s) as fissures began to emerge. The reductive sameness described above is perhaps most clearly articulated in relation to the work of Grade Kilomba in *Plantation Memories* (2013) where she interrogates the politics of racial identity and reductive sameness.

The protests described in the research below arose at a point in South African history where there had been increasing civil unrest that arose in response to deeply rooted injustice in South Africa impacting social and economic realities of black working class South Africans in particular. The #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) movement hailed other students who had discussed their unease with a university environment that did not reflect any of their histories. Six months later, protests emerged on the other side of the country. In the heart of the economic capital of South Africa, students took to the picket lines to demand a zero percent fee increment. South African university fees, amongst other socio-economic issues, had been contentious for several years, ahead of these protests. The issue now arose questioning the ideals of the Freedom Charter. The Freedom Charter of 1955 preceded the South African constitution and set out ideas for a new South Africa, some of which were later included in the constitution of 1996. The charter included amongst others, the following pledge;

> The Doors of Learning and of Culture Shall Be Opened! The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life; All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands; The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace; Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit; Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan; Teachers shall have all the rights of other citizens; The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished (Mathews et al., 1955).

Students felt these promises had not been met and 60 years later waged yet another protest which drew traction, this time across the country, at both historically black and White institutions.

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In March 2015, the ground trembled slightly in South Africa. The air suddenly became tense and what appeared to be a misplaced event in our South African present, became a catalyst for desperately needed change. What started as hear-say was real: a black male student had emptied a bucket of human faeces over a statue (Laing, 2015). It was not coincidental, nor was it misplaced.

That student had done what others had mused over in many conversations for a while before. That moment was followed by what later became dubbed as the #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) movement. The incident hailed other students; they, too, had been discussing their unease with a university environment that did not reflect any of their histories.

It is essential to mention that the black students who were leading the protests at historically white institutions predominantly enjoyed equality under the South African constitution, which is placed amongst the world's best. South Africa is regarded by many as the country of democracy because of the legacy of Nelson Mandela. Despite his 27-year imprisonment, he called for South Africans to forgive the atrocities of Apartheid in favour of unifying the nation. The reality for many black South Africans, however, is grim. The housing conditions are untenable with many black South Africans occupying underdeveloped peri-urban areas (shacks) in sub-par housing as a result of the Group Areas Act of 1950 (Johnson-Castle, n.d.). Many non-white people had little choice but to continue working in lower-level jobs (such as cleaning and gardening) with meagre salaries that were a result of Bantu education designed to subjugate black people under the Apartheid regime. The lack of access to sanitation in most areas populated by black South Africans (townships and rural areas) and the lack of essential service delivery are contributing factors in a crippling inability to access upward mobility as the challenges these issues pose are far-reaching. In desperation, many families take out loans with incredibly high interest to put their children in institutions of higher education in hopes that those children will put an end to generational poverty. The reality, however, is one of high dropout rates and in turn a further divide between rich and poor South Africans.

The #RMF movement was not just a response to faeces thrown at the statue, but rather a response to the symbolism of that action. The faeces was thrown at a statue of Cecil Rhodes, a colonialist who heavily advocated for the racialisation project and who sought to subjugate Black people to build his wealth in favour of the British empire. Not only did he manage to garner wealth through the diamond rush in South Africa, but also put Zimbabwe through a similar fate of pillage and subjugation. It was even known then as Rhodesia – after Rhodes. The #RMF protest saw black students gather with the following demands:

- Remove all statues and plaques on campus celebrating white supremacists;
- Rename buildings and roads from names commemorating only white people to names of either Black historical figures, or to names that contribute to this university taking seriously its African positionality;
- Replace artworks that exoticise the black experience (by white, predominantly male artists) which are presented without context, with artworks produced by young, black artists;
- Recognise that the history of those who built our university—enslaved and working-class black people—have been erased through institutional culture.
- Pay more attention to historical sites of violence, such as the slave graves beneath the buildings in which we learn;
- Implement a curriculum which critically centres Africa and the subaltern. By this, we mean treating African discourses as the point of departure—through addressing not only content but languages and methodologies of education and learning—and only examining western traditions in so far as they are relevant to our own experience. (University of Cape Town, #RhodesMustFall Mission Statement, 25 March 2015)

The protest's first success was the removal of the statue of Rhodes. Protesting students were worried that the University might see the removal of the statue as an end to the protests. Their approach to protest, therefore included occupation, ongoing civil unrest, the use of social media and media more broadly, and demonstrations. The demonstrations at UCT were momentarily sustained, but beyond the removal of the statue, protests seemed to die down.

A couple of months later, the air still tense, it was rumoured that the workers at Wits were planning to protest. Meetings preceding the event gathered students, maintenance workers and academic staff alike. The meetings were called to discuss a protest against the outsourcing of what had been described as non-essential staff. The meetings started with just a handful of people, but as the news spread, more joined. Finally, the day that was to become known as #Oct6 arrived. Hundreds of students and maintenance workers, as well as academic staff, gathered outside of what was then Senate House at Wits. The peaceful protest called on the University to insource workers and put an end to the exploitative practice. The overwhelming student support for the protest allied with students and maintenance workers at the University made allied academic staff visible. Nine days later, students gathered under the banner of Wits Fees Must Fall. This moment also came after many conversations had taken place concerning the exorbitant annual increment in fees.

What started as a representative student council led the protest, evolved within hours into a protest thousands strong. It soon became evident that this issue was relevant to the majority of students. For this reason, it organically led to the formation of #FeesMustFall (#FMF) which went viral around the country. For the first time in many years, student voices were heard more seriously as Wits shut down. Wits became a symbol of the power of protesting students which the country had seen earlier in the year at UCT. This action, however, was different, as the initial call was for economic access to the universities, a call which resonated with many. The protests quickly spread to other universities, and the banner #FMF was used to indicate solidarity.

The protests enjoyed public support with many universities receiving generous donations from the public to sustain the movement. Food and sanitary goods were brought to the spaces of protest as the universities had been shut down. Students who remained were to be fed and the universities needed to retain a semblance of order. At most universities, task teams were appointed. They were to oversee the planning of the protests day-to-day and report to a plenary session for deliberation and the acquisition and distribution of donations made to sustain the movement. Tactical teams were appointed to devise press statements, discuss financial possibilities for free education and legal issues about protests and medical teams were assembled and tutors assigned to ensure that students who wanted to could study while occupying the universities. These details are not often associated with the protests.

Later protests merged with worker solidarity groups protesting for better working conditions and insourcing. Finally, the movement looked at a broader, more conscious effort to remedy the injustices of the past through calling for more considered access to higher education. These changes resulted in protests that made a call for free quality and decolonised education (assumed inclusive of all movement(s) within the protest). The protests during the third quarter of 2016 were sustained by students who became increasingly aware that socioeconomic disparities in universities across the country had become even starker. The shortfalls of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and its inability to sufficiently allocate financial aid to those most in need of it were becoming dire. A subsequent discussion arose in consideration of a group later referred to as “the missing middle,” those who according to fiscal measuring apparatus had a

family income too high for financial aid but too low to cover tuition and related expenses. At the end of 2016, the president of the country announced a 0% increment to fees nationally. Protesters were, for the most part, overjoyed by the news; however, it was a short-lived victory. Many attempted to return to the academic programme, thinking that the protests had achieved free education. This misunderstanding resulted in tensions between students who wanted to return to classes and those who insisted that the protests would not end until the battle for free education was won. It is at this point that tacit social contracts seem to unravel. Just a few months later, as a result of yet another proposed fee increment for 2017, #FMF re-emerged although considerably weakened in numbers and faced with the dual challenge of socio-economic differences fracturing the movement, and what appeared to be a premeditated security force.

> Patriarchy just like racism was as pervasive and destructive to identity and the psyche of everybody who is experiencing these oppressions (Wandile Dlamini).

Again in 2018, while some protest(s) re-emerged, it was apparent that the energy of the protests in the preceding years had waned. Relative calm, despite the occasional threat of protest, was experienced for most of that year. In hindsight, it was a prelude to the next wave of protests. Fees were to rise again with increments announced later in the year to quell any opportunity for demonstrations to take place, as most students would have left campuses in preparation for the examination period.

In February 2019, the recurrence of protests and the response to them challenged us to ask questions related to the brute force used against students. On Tuesday 5 February 2019, Durban University of Technology (DUT) student Mlingisi Madonsela was shot during a scuffle with private security at the university. Madonsela died later that afternoon. Madonsela is perhaps the most notable example; however, other students like Shaeera Kalla, who was shot thirteen times in the back at close range suffered injuries during protests as well (Whittles, 2016). The fight came about as students protested at the university demanding free quality and decolonised education—these sentiments echoed those of #FMF protests from 2015-2018 which preceded them. The students protesting at DUT wanted access to the institution; they felt out of place in the academy where they had to integrate into a university ethos that did not have them in mind. They could

ultimately be rewarded for such integration by graduating, which would afford them a place in larger social structures outside of the university in the job market. Such progression becomes complex when considering epistemic and systemic violence(s) which students such as those at DUT, Wits and UCT (and universities elsewhere which get less media coverage) encounter ahead of such absorption which offers them such a place. The situation was a little different at other institutions. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that universities treated protests and the protestors themselves differently depending on their geo-locations. The country's inequality from this perspective was vivid.

Universities mark protesting students as disruptive. Interestingly, disruption in the context of the business sector is often considered positive. In institutions that are increasingly privatised due to the shortfalls in state subsidies, there is increased corporate funding. The term disruption has, as a result, increasingly made its way into the rhetoric at universities which illustrate an awareness of the fast-paced changes in part due to globalisation (Dennis, 2018). Disruption is used as a catalyst for enrolment and is responsive to globalisation and accelerated changes in the global economy. However, with the growing necessity for the universities in South Africa to supplement the state's subsidies, universities like Wits are actively pursuing corporate investments thereby increasing corporate interest in the University as outlined in the 2018 Integrated Annual Report.

> It is commonly accepted that (with certain notable exceptions) governmental funding of university systems around the world has been dwindling over the past two decades. Further, the challenge of pursuing global competitiveness from an African context is rendered more demanding by the reality of inadequate financial resources. Wits will therefore need to put in place mechanisms and programmes designed to generate the means necessary to ensure its long-term financial sustainability as an institution, as well as the proper resourcing of its scholarly and business activities (Integrated Report 2019 - Wits University, 2018, p. 12).

> Wits is currently seeing a significant increase in support from corporates and corporate foundations. In 2018, Wits received in the region of R110 million in terms of donations from corporates and corporate foundations as well as approximately R230 million in terms of sponsoring student bursaries.(Integrated Report 2019 - Wits University, 2018, p. 58).

The challenge this poses to universities is that corporate investments along the lines of sustainability increase the dependence of institutions like Wits on corporates and perpetuates the

need for the universities themselves to function as business entities rather than merely as academic institutions. The business-like behaviour of institutions like Wits and others necessitates, among other things, risk management which actively seeks to mitigate instances of protest by flagging such protests as disruptive to the institutional mandate. And yet, in attempts to save face, universities simultaneously and routinely reported that the protests were under control:

> Higher Education crises. Student and staff protest and instability at universities: Ongoing protest action result in the University constantly operating in crisis management mode. The #FeesMustFall campaign threatens the completion of the 2016 academic year and intake for 2017. It is a major threat to the achievement of the Wits 2020 strategy and could be a death sentence for Wits as a world ranked research intensive university. Further impacts could include the loss of accredited researchers and a significant drop in number of research publications, loss of high-calibre staff and students and less international students being attracted to the University (Integrated Report 2016 - Wits University, 2016 p. 87).

Universities initially appeared to support the protests through their statements, and yet the risk management strategies that were being implemented suggested otherwise. In 2015, Wits , and by extension others, appeared to be in support of the student protests. The Vice-Chancellor of Wits who was the chair of Universities of South Africa (USaF) at the time made the following statement:

> We have heard and understood the concerns raised by our students. We fully support their call for more funding for the higher education sector so that students in need are not confronted with a fee increase in 2016 […] Our students have done more to achieve this in the last seven days than we have ever managed to achieve before. The Chairperson of Council and I, together with other Vice-Chancellors and Chairs of Council, and student leaders will be meeting with the President tomorrow. We will voice support for the students' struggle and their demands […] We were dismayed to see the excessive police action against protesting students at parliament and elsewhere in recent days. At Wits, we have kept the police off the campus because we do not believe that force should be used to prevent the expression of legitimate demands by peaceful protestors. We call on the police to hold back and to exercise restraint when the students march to the Union Buildings tomorrow (Habib, 2015)

By 2016, protests had not subsided from the year before. Wits appeared to still be in support of the protests:

> It is important to realise that we cannot destroy the University and make it unsustainable. This will impact more on the poor rather than the rich and will reinforce the very inequalities that we are trying to address. We respect the rights of those who wish to protest lawfully and peacefully without

> infringing on the rights of those who want to work and learn (Integrated Report 2016 - Wits University, 2016).

In that same year, the tone of the messaging related to the protests began to change. Wits issued a joint statement expressing the sentiments of Gauteng based Vice-Chancellors:.

> We call on all sectors of society, including parents, churches and civil society, to mediate, and to work with us to ensure that the higher education sector does not suffer long-term damage. In particular, we call on the leadership of all political parties to demonstrate leadership and ensure that their supporters work towards stabilising the system. Our higher education sector is one of the best functioning sectors on the continent, which we as a country cannot afford to destroy. Our students certainly cannot afford to lose a year because a minority is determined to disrupt teaching and learning (The University of the Witwatersrand, 2016) .

It quickly became evident that as the protests continued, the University was increasingly intent on the completion of the academic programme despite the protests and at any cost:

> We will continue to reach out to student leaders and channels remain open for other engagements but we cannot afford the ongoing loss of the academic programme. (University of the Witwatersrand, 2016)

> The police responded and dispersed the crowd using teargas, stun grenades and water cannons. The protestors ran into Braamfontein, where we have heard that a bus was set alight and people were injured through skirmishes with the police. Despite these challenges, the Deans have confirmed that just over half of all lectures went ahead today across campuses. The operational control of the security is in the hands of the police and they have agreed to deploy resources on a building by building basis tomorrow. The National Commissioner has advised that there is a clear strategy to arrest any individual involved in criminal activity. At least eleven arrests were made by the police today. (University of the Witwatersrand, 2016)

Commercial interest in universities requires them to behave in a manner that prioritises productivity as illustrated above, above all. It is arguably also why the institutions could curtail protests through mechanisms such as the securitisation of campuses (biometric systems, external security companies, identity checks among others), and how, ultimately, violence was condoned in order to restore order. These actions occurred, despite the University articulating its support for the student movement and the demands being made.

> When read alongside the corporatisation of the university—corporate bonuses for senior management, incentivised publishing, performance management systems introduced under Habib's tenure—

> securitisation can be understood as a significant thrust in the privatisation, and the demise, of our public universities. (Gillespie, 2017)

For Gillespie (Reporter, 2017), "increased security and surveillance is a regressive and unimaginative intervention in the life of a university." She believes securitisation detracts from the autonomy and critical engagements which the University should be encouraging. In doing so, and in efforts to stimulate rigorous debate, the University would be closer to fulfilling its role as a publicly funded institution that should open up spaces for dissent. It is the reduction of protesting students to a disruption and a risk to be mitigated, that presumably justified the brute force used to restore order. Furthermore, the same brute force ultimately ended up killing Madonsela:

> University managers and government officials explain away increased security by invoking the sporadic violence that has accompanied student protest […] We have seen how managers and commentators have made a fetish of violence, dislocating it from its entanglement with police brutality, from its connection to serious political claims […] So the generalised hyper-securitisation mounting against it is not only unfounded but regressively changing the character of campus. (Reporter, 2017)

Over time protests grew in numbers during #FMF, the support had come as a result of frustration and anger at the inaccessibility of spaces (Themba, 2016). Those spaces held the promise of upward mobility for those who survived them. After several violent interventions by the police and private security at different institutions across the country, order seemed to be restored at the universities, which for the most part, proceeded with the academic year. Despite the continuation of academic programming, the protests had changed the ethos of the university considerably. Wits and others prioritised the procurement of more modern security systems in their risk management strategies in anticipation of future protests under the guise of security upgrades. Gillespie argued that a public university should be open to the public. According to her, it is not commonplace for academic institutions to be closed off from the public that they are meant to serve. However, after the protests, WITS ramped up security by implementing a biometric system. The decision, according to Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib's 2016 article, was proper management of the situation. Habib wrote:

> While we respect and will protect the right to protest, at the same time we have to ensure that the University is able to continue with its core activities. This is our responsibility. There will be times when protesters embark on actions that challenge the functioning of the University in ways that have far-reaching effects. (Habib, 2016)

Those core activities Habib referred to include the university functioning as a public institution supported by private sector funding. The order which the University management sought to restore behind the University barricades was fraught with internal politics. These include, but are not limited to, notable disproportionate racial representation in staffing, both academic and support, and glaring carelessness in employing workers through outsourcing until the protests listed insourcing as one of the demands. The practice indicates a devaluing of the work of so-called non-essential service workers and as such allows for ill-treatment of outsourced staff. Discrepancies permeate structures of a supposedly ordered university space which is primed with the interests of an economy built on a capitalist model. That model serves the interests of a few, this is evident in the profit generation and expansion plans at both UCT and Wits as well as other institutions considered in this research. Systemic violence, however discreet, is visible both inside and outside of the university space. Those aware were forced to remove themselves to avoid its effects or avoid confronting said effects in favour of the status quo — profit. Through an acknowledgement of the numerous discrepancies mentioned above, we can see how tacit ignorance of the socio-economic realities within the context of the university were dismissed through a feigned ignorance of the rationale behind protests.

How security was deployed and who became suspect when institutionalised racism played out at the university entrances. The assumed homogeneity of students made possible the state and its arms' antagonism of those who protested—classifying them as hooligans (Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande 20 September 2016), irrational (Langa, Ndelu, Edwin & Vilakazi, 2017) and entitled (Linden, 2017) and many instances, even dangerous (Ebrahim, 2019). Such antagonism was evident in the numerous statements made by the vice-chancellors and the Minister of Higher Education and Training. Outside the University gates, protesters were seen to be engaging in public protests. The distinction between public property and the space of the University, equally public but subject to different laws, enabled the police to be engaged in the dispersing of protestors instead of the private security which armed the university. State outside versus university inside is a gross oversimplification of the complex, intertwined nature of investments between the public and private sector.

1.2 Implications of the research for the #RMF and #FMF projects

This research considers the #RMF and #FMF protests, initially from a national perspective, in light of the background detailed above. It then introduces literature on the movement and the theoretical framework used to underpin the dissertation. I located myself in relation to the research ahead of the analytical engagement. The analytical engagement segments the conversation into three issues namely; 1) assumed homogeneity; 2) the complexity of homogenisation and 3) a countering of hegemonic views. These three sub-headings form the basis of the following chapter, which focuses on three student interviews. The interviews are used to consider race, gender and decolonisation in the protests and underlying assumptions of homogeneity. The reflections and engagements use the theoretical framework to offer a lens through which to understand the significance of assumed homogeneity.

The research ultimately argues that the assumption and role of homogeneity amongst protestors caused fissures in the movement(s) that contributed to the diminishing number of protesting students and ultimately the simmering down of the protests. The research illustrates the nuances of the provocation in the chapters that follow.

1.3 The value of the research

The research addresses tensions in the internal conversations of the student protests. It considers how those conversations were initially crucial to the development of a common understanding of the protests, and how they became a catalyst for the involvement of thousands of students across the country. The work will demonstrates multiple subjectivities and demands of students in the movement. It contemplates how the engagements occurring while the protests were underway countered hegemonic views of the student protests from within and how the fissures and oppressions experienced from within, unsettle the outsider understanding of the protests as a monolithic structure.

1.4 Purpose of the research

The literature on the #RMF and FMF protests, respectively, have addressed specific components of the protests. They include fissures in the movement, concerns for gender and intersectionality,

as well as a focus on African identities within the movement. The concerns raised have been alluded to in other work, but have not entirely addressed what this research endeavours to demonstrate as an underlying theme of assumed homogeneity. By identifying the role of assumed homogeneity in the protests and thinking through the complexities of how hegemony was countered, this research establishes causal links between student protestors, the challenges and uses of assumed hegemony. Also, it links the work of several authors writing about the protests to the voices of students who were in the protests thereby locating different positionalities. The research is attentive to race, gender, decolonisation and homogeneity as overarching themes for analysis. This research offers an analysis of the three students' views using those to identify the assumption of homogeneity and its effects on the sustainability of the student movement(s).

While engaging with this research, questions that guided the writing and were integral to my approach included: Were the interests of those who led the protests the same as those who joined them? Were the protest(s) that later became known as #FMF across the country all for the same purpose? Was there a common goal beyond free quality decolonised education across institutions, and if not, did the mantra carry the same meaning for all the protesting students?

1.5 Scope of the research

This research focuses solely on the views of the students in the protests and does not attempt to address the views of the public, vice-chancellors, academic staff, administrative staff, support staff and other role players. It does so in order to amplify the student voices without the influence of other role players. This approach to the research ensures a thorough engagement with student voices from three perspectives. This decision was made due to the amount of data available from the interviews themselves. As the interviews were in-depth, open-ended and recorded over a number of hours, I realised that it would not be possible to solicit the level of interview materials in the timeframe of the research. For that reason, and because of the amounts of information, the archives of the film were drawn on. The perspectives include the voices of a heterosexual male who was grappling with traditional values and how those played out in the often contentious feminist space of protest; a heterosexual female who appears to be grappling with a heavily

racialised institution that is complicit in the erasure of her identity and a gender non-conforming transgender person who is the youngest of the three, but also the protagonist in the film. Their voices in my opinion provide a nuanced account of the internal politics of the protests as the three interviewees give three vastly different accounts of the same experiences during that time. All three students were active during the protests and their voices are echoed by the voices of other students which are introduced through the literature review and the accompanying literature in the dissertation itself. I engaged with all three activists during the filming period and built rapport with the interviewees. I was given permission by them to use their recorded interviews for the purposes of this dissertation which was understood as a parallel project to the film. I was also present for several interviews and where I wasn't, the rest of the film team were.

While the research does not fit neatly into the anthropological framework for emic research, it does commence using an emic perspective. The research endeavours to capture the kinds of nuanced insights that would constitute emic research, without the aesthetic, auditory and other "scene setting" features of an anthropological inquiry. Instead, it relies on anthropological traditions for meaning-making and Critical Diversity Literacy in order to produce the analysis contained in the dissertation. The research was written up in 2020 and so covers the materials available at that time, however, as it was being submitted in 2021, it does not consider materials beyond November 2020.

1.6 Limitations of the research

The research engages with interviews of three protestors, which may appear to limit the scope of the research analysis. However, Crouch and McKenzie argue:

> The labour involved in conceptualization is an integral part of the research, rather than a ''framing" or "contextualization" of it. Arguably, therefore, it is its most ''qualitative" feature and, as such, its most important aspect as it simultaneously deepens understanding and builds breadth into the investigation through mindfulness of other work in the field. (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006, p.11).

For purposes of this research and in the context of the in-depth interviews that were done, the rich and textured narratives of the protestors offer us insights into the protests themselves with a lot

more nuance than would have been feasible within the constraints of the research endeavour. In their paper, Crouch and McKenzie do the work of debunking claims which minimise the work done in collecting data from smaller sample groups. They believe that the narratives collected through the interviews serve the dual function of history and biography. In the context of this research, placing the interviewees in the context of protest and including visceral and detailed accounts of the interpersonal dynamics which underpinned the movement are integral to the research endeavour. The engagement with fewer interviewees "[r]ather than being systematically selected instances of specific categories of attitudes and responses, here [become the] respondents embod[iment] and represent[ation of] meaningful experience–structure links" (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006, p. 493).

In addition to this, the research is done from the perspective of engaged anthropology (Tsuda, 2015; Ortner, 2019). This methodology has been criticised and those criticisms have been addressed in the literature review. The research, while aware of the books written mainly by vice-chancellors, deliberately does not engage with their texts beyond the literature review as the focus of the research is on the narratives and perspectives of students. While I acknowledge that this may affect offering a comprehensive analysis of the protests, the intention is to foreground student voices and not those of university administrations.

This dissertation contains seven chapters. In chapter one, I have endeavoured to locate the research in the context of the protests considering the contextual background and location of the protests in South Africa. I further contemplated the scope and limitations of the research in relation to its value and purpose in the field of Critical Diversity Studies and begin the work of contemplating what is at stake for the interviewees and by extension protestors in other contexts.

In chapter two, I engage in a literature review covering three sets of literature namely opinion pieces, academic articles and books historicising the protests. Chapter three offers a theoretical overview in which the research thinks through the implications of social contracts in relation to the protests, by giving this overview, the research engages the history of the social contract and engagements with the theory which illustrates a critical engagement with the field of social contract theory from the perspectives of sex, race, domination and ignorance. These critical

engagements inform the following chapters which make use of verbatim excerpts from the filmed interviews in chapters five and six ahead of the conclusion in chapter seven.

CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

The following literature review provides an overview of the literature on the #FeesMustFall(#FMF) and #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) protests. At the time this research was being concluded, protests had erupted elsewhere in the world. #BlackLivesMatter brought to the fore issues of race and the intersecting issues of racial profiling and police brutality in the USA. In the UK, the #RhodesMustFall movement called for the removal of another Rhodes statue. These protests arguably indicate that the issues brought to the fore during the #RMF and #FMF about racial inequality and a demand for social justice could potentially be understood as part of international discourse on subjugation and liberation. The review also delineates some perspectives on the protests which have been written, such as those of student leaders, university management, workers and academics. In doing so, the intention is to delineate three strata of writing.

The writing has been separated into three categories. Firstly, opinion pieces both within the online media and in academia more broadly (intended to illustrate the polemic stances which were taken either in favour of or against the movements). The opinion pieces have been listed as such, as they are found on websites, in news articles and in more public facing publications. Secondly,) academic articles which illustrate the breadth of work that has been done across disciplines (arguably illustrative of the effect of the protests, but also the nuances of the movement and its politics, both internal and external). The articles have been found in peer reviewed journals, or in academic publications which have been peer reviewed, and which satisfy academic requirements. Thirdly, books written about the movement used to support the arguments made in this research particularly on crucial issues discussed; these books were those that I was privy to and consulted while generating this research, in many instances these were books shared within WhatsApp groups for discussion, or books recommended to me by colleagues and peers during the writing process.

The pieces have been separated in this way, as the public opinions existed largely in the public realm and informed debates which were ongoing at the time. The public opinion pieces and the academic articles were often published by thought leaders on various platforms and the pieces are examples of the vibrant discussions that were shaping public opinion at the time. The distinction differentiates between those peer reviewed and those which through their location/points of publications influenced public opinions and which framed thrusts in academic discourse. This kind of distinction between what constitutes academic knowledge and what does not is present throughout this dissertation as the contention is one which is omnipresent in debates on academic/knowledge legitimacy which is discussed at various intervals in the dissertation, and linked to the research question. Finally, the books used have been crucial to the on-going debates and discussions within the academic space. As these materials have been included the author was mindful of their in-depth analysis often in monograph, and how the opinions in them have come to constitute the most early forms of historicisation of the movements.

The research includes information regarding more recent incidents relating to the #RMF and #FMF protests to illustrate the reverberating effects of the protests. These include the death of Mlungisi Madonsela in 2019, the #BlackLivesMatter protests (Murray, 2020) and the #RhodesMustFallOxford protests (Cheeseman, 2020). The aforementioned issues are not divorced from significant socio-economic challenges and the realities of people of colour during the coronavirus pandemic which laid bare the gross inequalities linked to intersecting identities (Harrisberg, 2020). The challenges are evident in areas such as health care, housing, education and access and economic security, among others, as written by authors from various perspectives (Harvie, 2020; Apples, Nygaard, Kerswill & Robinson, 2020; Buthelezi, 2020). The 2019 coronavirus pandemic, especially in the South African context, and more broadly on the continent, has made evident the disproportionate gender inequalities that plague our societies and as such demonstrates the realities relating to the work put forward in the Social Contract, the Sexual Contract and the Ignorance Contract respectively. The research engages the aforementioned more deliberately in Chapter 3 as well as in its conclusion.

2.1 Opinion pieces that sustained arguments in popular media

There are myriads of opinions on the movements themselves (Levine, 2016; Pather, 2015; Dickinson, 2015; Hodes, 2015; McKaiser, 2015; Gevisser, 2015; Rhodes Must Fall, 2015; Samanga, 2016; Abdulla, 2016; UCT Left Students Forum, 2016). The opinions of the authors listed above were primarily focused on events in the Western Cape, but provide an overview of the binary views held concerning the protests and the protesters. These opinion pieces informed public opinion which shifted from mostly affirming views in 2015, to what could be described as a disdain for the changes in tactics used to advance the agenda of free education later in the protests, ahead of them dying down at South African universities. The academic literature illustrates the salience of some of the strategies which were adopted in protests, as Bosch (2016) has done. She argues that the #RMF protests were resisting normative memory production and rewriting history through developing a narrative in social media that countered many of the disapproving views in mainstream media.

In other instances, academics have used the protests as an opportunity to contemplate broader implications of such production and rewriting. Their attention has been on the incongruence of a racial past and the legacy thereof which is yet to be addressed comprehensively. One such academic, Achille Mbembe (2015), considers the implications of the nuanced discussion on race and the implication of the protests occurring in a context which puts on a path of collision both old and unresolved crises and newer ones yet to be taken on. In doing so, he contemplates the issues student movements seek to resolve through protest. Simultaneously, Mbembe considers the implications of protests centred on decolonisation in institutions that were formed and are informed by colonial legacies. His sentiments are echoed in Prinsloo (2016) where she argues that there is essential work to be done concerning the conversation on decolonisation precisely because of the removal of the Rhodes statue. Prinsloo names deeply complex challenges within intellectual discourse rooted in the difficult journey of transformation within higher education in South Africa. She insists that the humanities play a vital role in the work being done toward a decolonised university and that scholars within humanities have “a key role to play both in the academy’s evaluation of itself as a colonial project and in its remaking” (Prinsloo, 2016, p. 165). The removal of the Rhodes statue in relation to the sentiments shared by both Mbembe (2015)

and Prinsloo (2016), cannot be seen as separate from a long-overdue discussion relating to the university in the African context. Both in their works are interested in the prioritisation of Western scholarship over African knowledge(s) which Prinsloo argues is a conversation which can be pioneered within the Humanities. She calls for an analysis of how our colonial and racist past continues to inform economic, political and social realities and, with reference to universities, how it shapes institutional culture, values, practices, processes, appointments, curriculum planning, standards, etc. (Prinsloo, 2016, p. 165).

Prinsloo describes the process of decolonisation as disruptive and uncomfortable for those who are in positions of privilege. White students and academics in different institutions across the country vocalised their discomfort which often related to issues of access to the institutions. This was interesting as access to the institutions—both monetary and physical—was linked to the calls being made in the protests. Black students were protesting being barred from the physical space of the university; teaching staff within the institutions and causing a disruption to normative praxis and learning, the status quo.

The discourse on access is evident in the work of Calitz and Fourie (2016) who contemplate the economic reality of higher education in South Africa. In doing so, they briefly engage with a concern that the higher education landscape in South Africa has dramatically changed in the last decade most significantly in terms of financial accessibility due to dwindling state subsidies of institutions of higher education across the country. Calitz and Fourie contextualise the protests beyond their historical links to 1976 and focus on the changes in the higher education funding landscape instead. Doherty and McIntyre (2015) extend the conversation around access and equality by looking through the lens of the protests at the increasing urgency of universal health care and coverage. Their research illustrates the far-reaching inequality in South Africa not only in the ambit of higher education and training but also in health care service provision, which simply cannot be read without consideration for the intersecting politics of race, class and gender among others.

2.2 In-depth analysis in academic articles

The following section offers an account of some of the in-depth academic analysis available at the time the dissertation was being written. The academic articles offer the reader several perspectives of academics writing at the time of the protests or after they had come to an end. Writers like Bjarke Oxlund explore the extent to which the #RMF and #FMF protests were an expression of the overall status of post-apartheid South African society. He asks pertinent questions in his account of the protests. However, sweeping statements like "[r]acial rhetoric and violent struggle are becoming the order of the day" (Oxlund, 2016, p. 12) reduces the protests in all their complexity to a barrage of violent engagements. The reductionism collapses the heterogeneous movement and its ideological stance on free education into a monolith negating its complexity. He does so despite his admission that he only had brief engagements with the protests. Oxlund's argument links the historical events and the political climate at the time of the protests to the protests. One could argue that Hodes (2016) offers a similar account of the movements and their politics and that it is similarly flawed by sweeping statements concerning the movements. Her account, while historic, illustrates a disjuncture between the political salience of the movements and the necessity of those movements within the academy. Hodes (2016) writes an account of the #RMF and #FMF movements in which she addresses concerns for what her writing suggests is an incoherent, aimless and disjointed movement. That same account does not consider the ramifications of the history she retells in her work insofar as it concerns the underlying macro structures which keep individual bodies in subjugation in perpetuity based on intersecting axes of oppression. Such subjugation is the case, whether immediately apparent or in operation in more discreet ways. #RhodesMustFall rebuts her account of the movement in response to her article and notes the that "irony is not lost on [them] when she daringly proclaims: "When race is the primary and decisive factor through which intellectual value is ascribed we are in trouble" (Hodes, 2015). Hodes offers a useful insight into the protests arguing that "[o]ne of the discursive strategies of the Fees Must Fall movement was to expand the intellectual frames of violence and oppression to include symbolic, structural, and epistemic forms" (Hodes, 2016, p. 145). Despite its shortcomings, the account does offer a few provocations which are useful for this research even though the account is contentious. Provocations made include a call for research which interrogates differences in the levels of

violence, which was more significant at historically black institutions and received less attention in the media than those which are historically white. Works like that of Dr Robert Doya Nanima (2019) raises some concerns about the effects of the protests on writing centres, which he argues play a vital role in guiding students in their academic writing. His argument focuses on the disruption of the accessibility of writing centres during university closure, which he believes had adverse effects on the student populations. His work offers solutions which are a refreshing departure from others that surface problems concerning the inability of universities to function as normal during protests, in favour of using the praxis of writing centres as he discusses in times of protest to develop new praxis. Over the years, historically black universities have been characterised by multiple and violent student protests, well before the #FeesMustFall movement in 2015 and 2016. When read with Natalija Cerimaj, who contemplates the #FeesMustFall movement at the University of the Witwatersrand in October 2015 (Cerimaj, 2018), the role of the media concerning the discourses emerging on the movement is evident. Cerimaj argues that the media coverage tended to adopt the tropes of 'War Journalism' as a reporting style, despite the marginalising effect this had. She argues this was only mitigated by the significant voice of protesters themselves in the discourse. Citing the Marikana Massacre, Cerimaj says that this was in contrast with previous examples of South African media's reporting on working-class protests. Her analysis includes samples of mainstream newspapers, statements by the University throughout the protest and the Wits Workers Solidarity Committee blog. Her research draws on othering theory, which is highlighted in Mudavanhu's article. Through an analysis of the representation of student protests on and offline, she uses the theory to contemplate the use of dichotomies which differentiate between students. Her analysis, while not necessarily useful for this research, indicates the broad engagement with the protests from a variety of perspectives. It also reiterates the salience of the role of the social media about which Selina Linda Mudavanhu (2017) has written. For Mudavanhu, the backlash against the protests was

> Reminiscent of apartheid times, throughout the #RhodesMustFall campaign, Facebook users "othered" the activists by constructing them as baboons and savages as a way to dehumanise and discredit them. While the activists largely escaped the vitriol of Facebook users during the #FeesMustFall protest, during the #Shackville demonstration, the #RhodesMustFall protestors were labelled "criminals" in an attempt to bring them into disrepute (Mudavanhu, 2017, p. 21).

For Luescher, Loader and Mugume (2016) who think through student protest in the internet age and the implications of digital space for movements such as #FMF, there are several challenges. Those include methodological considerations in the interpretations of the richness of the data available. They are challenged by the dynamics of the relationship operating inside, as opposed to outside, the university space. Their research considers the delineation of space, place and time. It offers an interrogation of fissures in the movement that are framed using the same nuanced approach as the research which considers the accompanying difficulties of navigating cyber versus real space which they posit.

The considerations, as mentioned above by Cerimaj (2018), are reinforced by Naicker (2016) who finds connections between #FMF protests and the sentiments of protesters in Marikana. She does this by showing a link to historical discourses which have still not been sufficiently engaged with or addressed. Those discourses, and subsequent inevitable realisations that the politics of protests relate to inequality, span space, place and time are illustrated through these distinct but politically connected events. The interconnectedness of space, place and time as tropes through which this analysis is evidenced can be seen in the analysis offered in #Hashtag: An Analysis of the #FeesMustFall Movement at South African Universities (2017). The anthology problematises how the protests in historically black universities can be traced back to the politics of higher education funding post-1994 and the decision by the state to reduce higher education institutions through mergers. The anthology is a collection of student voices that dissect various components of the movement. The collection includes reflections on coloniality; the unsatisfactory compromises made in favour of a new democratic South Africa; feminism within the movement; worker rights after outsourcing; and meaningful education. All of these issues related to the call for free quality and decolonised education.

In an article entitled, *Unmasking the ramifications of the fees-must-fall-conundrum in higher education institutions in South Africa: A critical perspective*, Edmore Mutekwe (2017) offers a concern with the consequences of the protests. The thesis ponders inevitable budget cuts; compromised research standards; demoralised academics and curtailed university offerings as these relate to protests. Mutekwe argues that protests are not original but recurring as the

preferred weapon of the repressed by dictators world over, to silence dissenting voices (Mutekwe, 2017, p. 147). Despite his critical view of the protests, Mutekwe offers as a chief finding that while the role of students in protests was valuable, it was so because of the force for social change which cannot be negated. He offers the conclusion that higher education fees need to fall, albeit cautiously. The protests had a life beyond South Africa, and this is an essential consideration for those like Mutekwe who appear dismissive of the protests.

2.3 Historicisation of #RMF and #FMF

The pessimism in Mutekwe's work concerning the protests is similar to the accounts by Johnathan Jansen (2017) in *As By Fire: The End of the South African University* and Susan Booysen's (2016) *Fees Must Fall: Student Revolt, Decolonisation, and Governance in South Africa*, which were published a year apart. The two works took markedly different approaches to the protests in terms of the concerns, effects and causes they raised. Both books are written relatively early in the trajectory of the protests. Jansen's book is perhaps best described as an analysis of the macro-political and economic factors in the context of conversations with other vice-chancellors. He laments the role of the media and how he perceives it as biased. His book offers large chunks of direct quotes from his engagements with other vice-chancellors but does not engage with vice-chancellors of historically black institutions. In this sense, Jansen's approach is problematic. Regardless, it remains one of the better accounts from the vantage point of the vice-chancellors. By contrast, Booysen's account offers a far-reaching account of the consequences on policy and governance, while incorporating an academic analysis of the movement of 2015-2016 through the voices, perspectives and narratives of the students and workers who were at the forefront of the movement. This research project aligns with her work in offering student voices as central to the retelling of the protests. Unlike Jansen, his counterpart, Adam Habib, offers his version of the protests in his book *Rebels and Rage* (2019). The account appears to be a memoir of his time in office during the protests.

Francis Nyamjoh (2016) offers a poignant account of the #RMF movement in #RhodesMustFall: Nibbling at Resilient Colonialism in South Africa which preceded the #FMF protests. Nyamjoh

writes from a distance, observing the protest from outside the country. His account offers some useful criticisms as well as considerations concerning race, which he considers from several vantage points. Nyamjoh's work unpacks the legacy of Rhodes concerning race and racism as well as the pervasive role of xenophobia in the protests. He thinks through the positionality of *the black child* frequently cited in protests and their white counterparts within the space of the university. Doing so, he further asks readers difficult questions about positionality and belonging as he demonstrates how dichotomies pit people against one another as superior or inferior, insider or outsider. Those considerations make this text a rich site of inquiry, and it is heavily relied upon in this research. His call for fairness and justice is echoed in the research analysis, which adds other student voices to the reflections on both #RMF and #FMF, respectively.

Also relevant to this research is *#FeesMustFall and Youth Mobilisation in South Africa*, written by Musawenkosi Ndlovu (2017). Ndlovu's account indicates the enduring historical construction, representation and conceptualisation of South African youth that are discussed as radical and at times even irrational. His book makes an argument about those criticisms. The book uses a similar approach to the research undertaken in this work. Written from an autobiographical and participatory angle, his work argues that there were indeed ideological divisions amongst the protestors. His account is much broader than the one offered here but is also written from the vantage point of themselves having been intimately involved in the protests. His work articulates some of the dire concerns which the protests have raised, inclusive of poverty, identity and privilege, acknowledging that those that benefited from apartheid still enjoy those benefits in the post-apartheid dispensation. His work has hailed other writers to pursue the gaps to which he has given visibility in the discourses relating to the protests. This research responds to one such gap, in particular, that of ideological differences amongst students, an issue which is not sufficiently addressed in his work. Despite the specific attention being afforded to the ideological differences, this research is cognisant of the other concerns he raises so eloquently, but only partially addresses those as they are not the primary concern of this project.

It is equally important to note that students wrote about the movement from within and after the protests had died down. These accounts are relevant as they indicate the students desire to be part

of telling of the history they helped to make. *Rioting and Writing: Diaries of the Wits Fallists* (Chinguno, et al., 2017), offers an intimate account of the protests from inside the University of the Witwatersrand. It is an intimate account of experiences of students during protests from a myriad of perspectives that stand in contrast with those of the vice-chancellor.

In *Rhodes Must Fall: The Struggle to Decolonise the Racist Heart of Empire* (Kwoba, Chantiluke & Nkopo, 2018), we read an account of such protests. The book explains that following calls from South African students at UCT, students at Oxford University in the United Kingdom also took to protests calling for critical engagement with the legacy of Rhodes in the space of the university and the challenge of racism rooted deeply at the very heart of the empire. Students called for the removal of Rhodes at that university too, indicating the intersectionality of the movement across continents. The urgency with which the issue was approached is part of what makes the book so profound. The accounts differ stylistically but culminate in a call for the university to not only address the outward implications of what Rhodes signifies but also to return to the internal challenges in the university space in order to address under-representation of specific racial demographics. This account of #RhodesMustFall as a movement occurs outside of the South African context. I noted the contribution but do not make use of it here while acknowledging the relevance of the engagement on the decolonisation.

In a book entitled, *We Are No Longer at Ease: The Struggle for #FeesMustFall* (Ngcaweni & Ngcaweni, 2019), a collection of personal articles, essays, speeches and poetry is shared from people who were part of the movement. The student leaders, turned academic and public commentators, together offer a unique and timely retelling of the story of the movement which both informs and teaches South African society about the movement. Their accounts offer a panoramic view, however, of the movement and those who led students despite police brutality. The book is honest and tells details not many write.

The literature review has shown that there is an expansive body of literature available on the movements. The majority of the literature focuses on 2015 and 2016. These two years were probably the most important as the protests were at their height. The research is considerate of the

opinions which have been expressed in the literature. While the literature review is intended to illustrate a familiarity with what has been written, the research itself focuses on aspects of the protests less written. The opinions contained in the literature review, as well as the academic perspectives, indicate the polarising stances which were inherent to the movement. They further illustrate that the protests of 2015-2016, because of the "contemporaneity, [offer only] current accounts of the movement [and] momentary glimpses, rendered rapidly outdated through perpetual shifts in advocacy strategies and the responses of the university and government actors" (Hodes, 2016, p141). The accounts in the literature must be considered in tandem with historical events that informed them and events which continue to occur as a result of the issues they raised.

The following chapter provides a theoretical framework for the analyses of the data. The chapter contemplates social contract theory, and offers four contemporary engagements with the canonical literature disputing the assumption that the aforementioned contracts are always entered into by equals. As this flaw in the theory enables me to interrogate assumptions of homogeneity, the theoretical framework read in tandem with the methodology provides a comprehensive theoretical engagement from which to read the analysis.

CHAPTER THREE - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This theoretical framework relies heavily on Social Contract Theory (SCT) to underpin the arguments made in this dissertation. SCT works on the understanding that modern societies are formed through tacit agreements and those agreements form the basis of society. All contract theory rests on basic assumptions—perhaps the most crucial—the assumption of property in the person and creation of equal relationships between the parties to the contract. It assumes that moral or political obligations arise from a common understanding of societal rules which they would agree to collectively based on their rationality. And that private and public spheres are distinct from one another with no bearing on how parties enter into the aforementioned contracts. Carol Pateman, Charles Mills and Melissa Steyn below disagree with these presuppositions and the arguments made in this dissertation are premised on their contributions to the field of SCT.

The arguments the author makes in this dissertation rely on the presupposition that tacit social contracts existed in both #RMF and #FMF protests, and that those contracts informed the behaviours that resulted in counter protests and disgruntlement of some of the protestors. The theoretical framework is linked to other theories which informed the protests and protest action, and which are used to form an analysis of the interview materials which are being used in the dissertation. The theoretical framework highlights the work of the three aforementioned authors who have grappled with the canonical literature on contract theory such as the work of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant and John Rawls. The authors have made use of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau's works especially to grapple with the ethical obligations of individuals entering into contracts and the presuppositions of shared ideals and values. The ethical and moral considerations in the works of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau have been crucial to the development of the critiques and subsequent arguments made by the aforementioned authors. Jos (2006), considering the implications for professional ethics, contemplates the role of the social contract and succinctly captures the ethical considerations of the canonical works as follows:

> For Hobbes, the social contract is an unavoidable and necessary admission that consensus is not possible and that we are so self-absorbed and fearful that only the coercive power of the state can stand between us and chaos. To the extent that his view can be said to embrace an ethic, it is an ethic of unconditional obedience. For Locke, patterns of cooperation can spring from the reason and good judgment of which we are capable, but authentic consensus on standards remains elusive and self-restraint insufficient. Instead, punishment of those who violate the natural rights of another is essential, and the key challenge is to ensure that those who exercise this power to punish are held accountable. Finally, it is Jean Jacques Rousseau who truly embraces the ideal of shared values and community consensus and therefore more comprehensively explores the kinds of social, institutional, and personal transformations that community requires. (Jos, 2006, p. 140)

These assertions are challenged in the work of Carol Pateman who wrote *The Sexual Contract* (1988); Charles Mills who wrote *The Racial Contract* (1997); Pateman and Mills co-wrote *Contract and Domination* (2007); and Melissa Steyn who wrote *The Ignorance Contract* (2012). They each offer their critiques of the canonical literature and in turn, have crafted theories of their own based on their engagements with the canon.

These authors provide input essential to this argument because of their engagement with contract theory from the analytical categories of race, sex, gender and identity. As such, the theoretical framework is primarily informed by contract theory but equally relies on the conceptual framework of queer theory, critical diversity literacy, decolonial theory and critical race theory as well, which form the conceptual framework of the dissertation. Using SCT as a point of departure enables me to explain the contentious intersectional politics within the protests. This vantage also allows me to illustrate how some protestors enjoyed more social capital[1] than others, resulting in a nuanced social structure underpinned by inequality, despite social, racial and in certain instances economic similarities between protestors. The outcome of the aforementioned social capital and how it affected interactions between protestors changed the narrative around the protests to reveal the fallacy of a united movement as presented and spoken about; revealing the oppressive politics internal to the movement.

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[1] Pierre Bourdieu explains social capital as "the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, Pierre, and Loïc Wacquant. 1992. *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press)

3.1 Sex, race, domination and ignorance

Pateman (1988), Mills (1997), Pateman and Mills (2007) and Steyn (2012) depart from the canonical interpretations of contract theory, interrogating how those contracts came to be understood as being entered into by equals. Their interrogation of the parameters of the contract theories enables them to approach the topic from the perspectives of sex, race and domination. Their approach enables the research to ensue from that premise of the ongoing factors concerning social contracts despite the progress made concerning human rights and social justice the world over. Cumulatively their works form the methodological framework of this research. The dissertation engages their work to contemplate the role of homogenisation in the context of the aforementioned South African protests. In doing so, it questions the role of homogenisation and how it was undoing social justice gains made in previous protests. It contemplates how issues galvanised and generated interest nationally in South Africa. The authors selected were chosen because their subject matter is epistemically and geographically relevant to the South African context in which the dissertation is framed. South Africa in 2021 is not only being ravaged by femicide and plagued by the racial injustices as result of the apartheid legacy, but is further tested by the advent and resurgence of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country. The #RMF and #FMF protests highlighted the gross inequalities and the rationale behind protests as is illustrated in the substantive literature. The insistence on decolonised institutions and curricula was necessary for the realisation of those ideals and the fight for free quality education in South African universities.

The *otherness* in the protests as illustrated in the archival research materials used in this research, surface salient points that evidence tacit social contracts in the #RMF and #FMF protests. They are not unique to the #RMF and #FMF protests but the product of legacies of inequality that appears to be part of protests which seek redress. The redress sought is not removed from issues articulated by feminists and in feminist literature by authors such as Audre Lorde (1984), bell hooks (1992) and Gayatri Spivak (1988). These authors write about marginalisation from a feminist perspective and make urgent demands for space and voice in times of unrest. The works of Pateman (1988) and Mills (1997) locate the authors in conversations that are ongoing in interdisciplinary research related to race and gender and which are vital to the formation of the arguments they make in *The Domination Contract* (2007). *The Domination Contract* is a

framework that can be used to develop an understanding of the role of *othering* and domination in the movements in this research.

Contractarians tend to dwell on distinctions between political and moral contracts, according to Mills (1997). He argues that these contracts presuppose an "epistemological" contract and so his work in *The Racial Contract* (1997) becomes crucial to make the presupposition explicit. The presupposition prescribes norms of cognition to which, Mills contends, all Whites are beneficiaries to but not necessarily signatories (Mills, 1997, p. 11). Using his argument provides part of the theoretical framework for the research which is concerned with the human construction of a contract where the presupposition is flawed and as such interrogates whose "interests should be given equal weight in the sociopolitical institutions thereby established" (Pateman & Mills, 2007, p. 86). Together Pateman and Mills (2007) challenge the assumption that all contractors are equal and involved in processes that produce institutions and structures. The outcome of the fallacy is a belief that white people and men in these contracts respectively enter a consensual contract with their victims rather than the existence of an imposed ideology of superiority and inferiority governing the status quo. This later contract theory helps us understand contradictions in society which are not evident in the earlier work on CST.

3.2 The sexual contract

Pateman's (1988) sexual contract demonstrates a patriarchal contract that since its inception had only men in mind. Canonical writers devised, developed and sustained contracts in favour of men. Those contracts, according to Pateman, were always either in favour of the subjugation or the exclusion of women. Pateman asserts:

> Sexual difference is political difference; sexual difference is the difference between freedom and subjection. Women are not party to the original contract through which men transform their natural freedom into the security of civil freedom. Women are the subject of the contract. (1988, p. 6)

It is this assertion that leads her to question domination and subjugation, which is often not considered in contract theory. Pateman's inquiry is furthered by likening the subjugation of women to the earliest form of slavery. It concerns the repression of the voices of women and the assumption of equality within the social contract. She argues:

> The original contract (is said to have) brought a modern form of law into existence, and the actual contracts entered into in everyday life form a specifically modern method of creating local power relations within sexuality, marriage and employment. The civil state and law and (patriarchal) discipline are not two forms of power but dimensions of the complex, multifaceted structure: of domination in modern patriarchy. (Pateman, 1988, p. 16)

For Pateman, power relations such as sexuality, marriage and employment stem from the original contract. It is for this reason that the original contract becomes contentious. By illustrating this, Pateman demonstrates the role that patriarchy plays as it is entrenched through contracts and permeates through society being relegated to the private sphere. In the private sphere, domestic issues are the domain of the patriarch, making possible the imbalance of domination and authority:

> To argue that patriarchy is best confronted by endeavoring to render sexual difference politically irrelevant is to accept the view that the civil (public) realm and the 'individual' are uncontaminated by patriarchal subordination. Patriarchy is then seen as a private familial problem that can be overcome if public laws and policies treat women as if they were exactly the same as men. However, modern patriarchy is not, first and foremost, about women's familial subjugation. Women engage in sexual relations with men and are wives before they become mothers in families. The story of the sexual contract is about (hetero)sexual relations and women as embodied sexual beings. (Pateman, 1988, p. 17)

The quotation illustrates the centrality of feigned male ignorance concerning the role of the women when they party to the aforementioned contracts, perpetually subject to domination in a patriarchal order. The position of a woman in such a patriarchal order is reminiscent of Gayatri Spivak's subaltern (1988). Spivak's subaltern lacks agency as a result of their social status and is the reason the research focuses on Black womxn's agency as a contention for men in this context. Black womxn's agency serves at once as a trope for the assumed homogeneity of black South Africans and a contradiction to the rhetoric of liberation in the South African context post democracy in 1994.

The sexual contract precedes the racial contract; followed by the domination contract. The genesis from the sexual to the domination contract details the blindspots of the canonical writers

and the assumptions they held relating to both sex and race, making Steyn's ignorance contract (2012) fitting as a tool to challenge the political incongruencies of the protests. In her conclusion of *The Sexual Contract*, Pateman clarifies the following:

> To retrieve the story of the sexual contract does not, in itself, provide a political programme or offer any short cuts in the hard task of deciding what, in any given circumstances, are the best courses of action and policies for feminists to follow, or when and how feminists should form alliances with other political movements. Once the story has been told, however, a new perspective is available from which to assess political possibilities and to judge whether this path or that will aid or hinder (or both) the creation of a free society and the creation of sexual difference as diverse expressions of freedom. (Pateman, 1988, p. 233)

Similarly, each contract in and of itself does not sufficiently address the intersecting identities of protestors who sustain the protests between 2015 and 2017. Therefore, making use of these contracts in tandem with one another provides a theoretical framework through which to discuss the tensions that arose in the protests until they died down.

Pateman's (1988) sexual contract is the first notable response of its kind in our era to the contract theory presented in the canonical works of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant. She challenges the assumption of state power as derived from the consent of the people. To do so, Pateman considers the enjoyment of equality and freedom which she argues are not universally enjoyed because of the existence of the sexual contract. The sexual contract gives rise to the systemic subjugation of women through contracts predicated on the social contract which presupposes a natural order. At the heart of her argument, Pateman contends that wherever property of a person is invoked, invariably, it will result in subjugation. This research considers the hierarchies during the protests as well as some of the experiences of protestors to contemplate the role of the sexual contract in the context of the protests considering whether it was being invoked tacitly in order to uphold the status quo in terms of patriarchal leadership. To this end, the sexual contract in its most crude form, is concerned with equality and freedom. The research therefore contemplates whether the interviewees experience the aforementioned equality and freedom during the protests, or whether equality and freedom were simply assumed in that context, but negated through this tacit social contract.

3.3 The racial contract

Mills'(1997) racial contract is premised on three claims: the existential claim, the conceptual claim and the methodological claim. The claims concede the existence of white supremacy both locally and globally. We can see this in more recent history with #BlackLivesMatter and the negation of the lived experiences ofBlack people in the USA and elsewhere through the counter-protest #AllLivesMatter which indicated to many the persistence of white supremacy and the related political stances premised on race. For a trans-atlantic slavery to exist, a teleology needed to be claimed and as such a political system produced. And as result of its existence, such white supremacy can be theorised as a contract between whites (Mills, 1997, p. 7), perhaps best exemplified in the attempted eradication of indigenous identities, languages and cultures of non-whites in the colonial period. Mills' engagement with classic contractarianism was "not merely normatively, to generate judgments about social justice and injustice, but descriptively [regarding] people's moral psychology" (1997, p. 5). This moral psychology according to Mills cannot be thought of independent of race and racism which he argues informed Western Philosophy and indeed the thinking of the canonical authors mentioned in the introduction of this chapter. He argues:

> [t]his omission [of race] is not accidental. Rather, it reflects the fact that standard textbooks and courses have for the most part been written and designed by whites, who take their racial privilege so much for granted that they do not even see it as political, as a form of domination. Ironically, the most important political system of recent global history -- the system of domination by which white people have historically ruled over and, in certain important ways, continue to rule over nonwhite people -- is not seen as a political system at all. It is just taken for granted; it is the background against which other systems, which we are to see as political *are* highlighted". (Mills, 1997, p.1)

Mills, much like Pateman, challenges the assumption of the innate equality in contract theory. He takes issue in his writing with approaches to contract which are premised on an assumption that the parties are homogenous. Such homogeneity, according to Mills, is a result of liberalism:

> liberalism, with its proclamations of the equal rights, autonomy, and freedom of all men, thus took place simultaneously with the massacre, expropriation, and subjection to hereditary slavery of men at least apparently human. This contradiction needs to be reconciled; it is reconciled through the Racial Contract, which essentially denies their personhood and restricts the terms of the social contract to whites. (1997, p.64)

3.4 The domination contract

Contract & Domination (2007) is a work in which Mills and Pateman reconcile the differences in their approach to CST and to synthesise the essential insights of their work taken together. In the book, they engage in a robust dialogue, at times debate, as they discuss their positionalities and approaches to their respective works. Mills asserts that for him and Pateman, there is a necessity to revise how sexual and racial subjugation are thought of in the context of political theory. Mills writes "the concept of a "domination contract" can be fruitfully employed to overturn the misleading framework of assumptions of mainstream social contract theory" (2007, p. 72). What Mills' domination contract details is:

> a clear precedent exists in the Western contract tradition for the idea of an exclusionary manipulative contract deployed by the powerful to subordinate others in society under the pretext of including them as equals. (Mills, 2007, pp. 75-76)

As result of this, the domination contract enables us to examine social contract from the purview of its use as a strategy for domination which Mills argues "provides a conceptual entry point for importing the concerns and aims of radical democratic political theory into a mainstream apparatus" (2007, p.77).

Pateman and Mills share sentiments around a confrontation of contract theory which they write "received little attention in the critical scholarship on gender and race" (Pateman & Mills 2007, p. 1). Pateman reread the works of classic contractarian's using a feminist lens, and this allowed her to interrogate marriage and employment contracts as contracts of subordination. Mills, inspired by the work of Pateman, uses her framework to interrogate racial domination. Mills then writes the Domination Contract in conversation with Pateman where he explains:

> Pateman and I are saying that the history of gender and racial subordination requires a rethinking of how we do political theory, that it cannot be a matter of some minor, largely cosmetic […] the goal is a revisioning of the tradition that we both want the white male majority of practitioners in the field to accept and to incorporate into their own work. (Pateman & Mills, 2007, p. 79)

Pateman, however, does not see value in the revival of the contract for positive ends (Pateman & Mills 2007, p. 79). While her work is necessary for its interrogation of gendered subordination, this research focuses on the work of Mills both as it relates to race and domination. Mills argues that the Domination Contract can be useful as it has the potential to:

> [o]verturn the misleading framework of assumptions of mainstream social contract theory, thereby better positioning us to tackle the pressing issues of "non-ideal theory" that, far from being marginal, in fact determine the fate of the majority of the population. (Pateman & Mills, 2007, p. 80)

Mills traces the Domination Contract back to Rousseau. Rousseau explained the "*non-natural* 'political' inequalities of class" (Pateman & Mills, 2007, p. 81). Mills argues that the contract has been deployed in a myriad of ways. While he concurs with Pateman's assertion that the contract theory is fraudulent as it has no basis in nature, he finds the framework within which the contract is discussed, at least in part useful for as "a conceptual entry point for importing the concerns and aims of radical democratic political theory into a mainstream apparatus" (Pateman & Mills, 2007, p. 83). Mills begins his work on the Domination Contract asserting the contract theory is for positive use. Pateman however, appears to think this is not possible. Mills attempts in his work to demonstrate that it is in rebuttal to Pateman's ambiguous argument concerning use (Pateman & Mills, 2007, p. 84). For this reason, while it is essential to engage with the work of Pateman in as far as it offers a framework, Mills' *The Domination Contract* better serves the argument here.

It would not, however, serve the purposes of this research framework to look only at the Domination Contract. The Racial Contract read in tandem with the Domination Contract allows for a more nuanced approach to understanding the role of race in the Domination Contract. Here, Mills introduces the Racial Contract using the premise that white people take their privilege for granted (an omission) and do not see race as political. He argues that for this reason, they cannot

understand racial privilege as a form of domination. He further argues that what is needed is a global theoretical framework which recognises that racism is a political problem, noting that its power confers "socioeconomic privilege, and norms for the differential distribution of material wealth and opportunities, benefits and burdens, rights and duties" (Mills, 1997, p. 3):

> Mills makes use of the social contract in order to posit the discussion on the Racial Contract, he offers the social contract as one which is in service of some but not all, in so doing highlighting the urgency of the Racial Contract which is for him, "the conceptual bridge between "mainstream (i.e. white) ethics and political philosophy, preoccupied with discussions of justice and rights in abstract [and the world of the other] historically focused on issues of conquest, imperialism, colonialism, white settlement, land rights, race and racism, slavery, jim crow, reparations, apartheid, cultural authenticity, national identity, indigenismo, Afrocentrism, etc." (Mills, 1997, p. 4)

While contracts are not always explicitly agreed to, the tacit agreements manifest through a negation of particular views, bodies and ideals. In this research, this is demonstrated in some of the experiences shared from the #FMF movement(s). This negation is perhaps best described as ignorance. The privilege of some is taken for granted. Those oppressed as a result of it inevitably end up fighting against inequality; from the margin of a fight against inequality. Mills argues that

> [w]e all understand the idea of a "contract/, an agreement between two or more people to do something. The "social contract" just extends this idea. If we think of human beings as starting off in a "state of nature/, it suggests that they then decide to establish civil society and a government. What we have, then, is a theory that founds government on the popular consent of individuals taken as equals. But the peculiar contract to which I am referring, though based on the social contract tradition that has been central to Western political theory, is not a contract between everybody ("we the people") but between just the people who count, the people who really are people ("we the white people"). So it is a Racial Contract. (Mills, 1997, p. 3)

The quote above illustrates how Mills concludes the social contract merits the notion of a racial contract. This dissertation urges the reader to include the merits of the Sexual and Ignorance Contracts too. These contracts in conversation with one another premise the assertion that contracts are enacted each time protests, or movement(s) occur.

The fourth contract, the Ignorance contract, written by Melissa Steyn offers another caveat in the conversation. The contract is concerned with the politics of knowing, it links the racial contract to a tacit agreement between those in power as a means to justify their social positionality and the associated benefits.

3.5 The ignorance contract

By introducing the Ignorance Contract, the research is mindful of the approach some took in protest the #RMF and #FMF protests as a single issue struggles. The failure to acknowledge the identities of others and their concern that raising the issue of free education alone was not sufficient to begin the work of free quality and decolonised education is Steyn (2012) terms feigned ignorance.

Steyn's Ignorance Contract is linked to the racial contract and more particularly to consensual hallucination I argue, because Steyn draws on the racial contract framing the ignorance contract as a sub-clause to it. Steyn's article brings the

> connection between whiteness and ignorance into sharper focus by employing the notion of epistemologies of ignorance. It also contributes to agnotology, the study of not-knowing, through showing some of the ways in which ignorance is actually constructed in social interaction for social purposes. It further extends the discussion by showing that ignorance is both a function of and functional in racialized societies. (Steyn, 2012, p. 21)

It is evident that she is in conversation with Mills who argues that "One could say then, ***as a general rule, that white misunderstanding, misrepresentation, evasion, and self-deception on matters related to race*** are among the most pervasive mental phenomena of the past few hundred years, a cognitive and moral economy physically required for conquest, colonisation, and enslavement" (emphasis my own) (Mills, 1997, p. 19). These consensual hallucinations make possible the resurgence of white domination in response to the increasing demands for social inclusion by non-whites in present-day events such as counter campaigns #AllLivesMatter and #NotAllMen. Steyn argues that

> Systematic ignorance can, therefore, be found in the knowledge constructed from positions of power. It is an

> important means for the production and maintenance of the unequal positionalities in society, with the result that, like knowledge, its distribution can be mapped along societal fault lines. In some instances, it may be knowledge, or the drive to knowledge, that is epistemologically dysfunctional or ethically reprehensible. (Steyn, 2012, pp. 10-11)

It is a consensual hallucination in South Africa that Steyn challenges as epistemologically dysfunctional or ethically reprehensible, and such ignorance makes possible calls for single-issue struggles in a context laden with intersecting challenges in an unbalanced society. Free, quality decolonial education inconsiderate of the plight of black womxn in the academy and South African society more broadly. Such ignorance is unmindful of the nuance of middle-class students speaking about/for/without working-class students whose struggles they claim to represent. This is arguably even worse when the societal context, laden with high levels of femicides and hate crimes, is well documented and in circulation in the media (Whittles, 2020). Ignorance, this research argues, sustains oppression in protest—a set of rules which underpin the relational ethos that generates hierarchy within movements such as #FMF. Steyn discusses several types of ignorance, naming them with events in the county's apartheid history. In so doing she interrogates the uses of these ignorances by placing them in a particular time and space. She notes survival/self-preservation ignorance, protective ignorance and aspirational ignorance. The wounds of South Africa's a racial past require redress. Such redress, Mills' arguments illustrate, cannot only be achieved in the abstract. Social contracts and enforced social agreements in abstraction, like the Racial Contract, require us to contemplate the complicated status of interwoven ignorance which Steyn describes in the racial tapestry of the South African context from which she writes. These interwoven ignorances are employed at various times and in different places to serve the intent of ignorance. Those consensual hallucinations and the deliberate ignorance of these matters are not congruent with what Steyn describes as;

> 'counter contract' epistemologies of ignorance cultivated in the spaces of the oppressed could probably all be characterized as *survival ignorances*, developed and circulated from positions of diminished choice and necessitated by the overarching power structures. (Steyn, 2012, p. 21)

#RMF and #FMF leaders, despite the university contexts in which they operated, were not victims of overarching power structures within the movement itself, but arguably actively

participated in the perpetuation of Dominance Contracts which differed tremendously from what Steyn describes as active participation in

> varieties of ignorance within the black community [which] appear to be *protective ignorance*, evident particularly in intergenerational dynamics in the archives. Parents would protect their children from the pain of full knowledge of the indignity imposed upon their lives under the apartheid regime. (Steyn, 2012, p. 19)

Steyn argues non-verbal agreement to the rules occurs in the Ignorance Contract, which comes into effect through participation. All those who derive benefit are signatory to or benefactors of the Ignorance Contract Steyn (2012, p. 9) asserts that "Just like knowledge, ignorance can be put in place through communicative practices and disseminated across social settings, cultivated and nurtured intersubjectively, circulating through social networks and activities". Steyn further notes that "Systematic ignorance can […]be found in the knowledge constructed from positions of power. It is an important means for the production and maintenance of the unequal positionalities in society, with the result that, like knowledge, its distribution can be mapped along societal fault lines" (Steyn, 2012, p.10). The ignorance then becomes a mechanism for social regulation and control. In #RMF and #FMF, the Domination Contract was arguably being challenged by factions in the movement(s) in order to distance themselves from the homogenous categorisation of students. It is used here to contemplate the role of domination as it permeates through all non-reflexive movements/protest(s). The research argues that these contracts to some degree inform the protests or movement(s) within them, and can even be deployed exercise power, however tacit the deployment may be. They are moral and epistemological; they exist in economic contexts and enable dichotomies of domination and subjugation (Mills, 1997, p. 9). In the Racial Contract, Mills' work illustrates succinctly the encapsulation of everyday experiences of race.

Mills writes about the contract tradition as exclusionary and manipulative as it is deployed by the powerful to subordinate others in society under the pretext of including them. Mills argues the necessity for a global theoretical framework that recognises racism as a political problem, however, if we read the provocation beyond the confines of race into all facets of subjugation, the global theoretical framework proposed may be more useful in a global society where multiplicity and individuality are heavily advocated for. The differential distribution of both power and resources through tacit agreements results in negation of the other and as such is not sustainable in the context of groups advocating for social change as in the cases of #RMF and #FMF where

exclusion and manipulation appear to have been rife in the politics of the movements, perhaps not deliberately, but because of the rejection of an intersectional approach which considers all experiences instead of reducing them to nil through an assumption of singularity.

CHAPTER FOUR - METHODOLOGY

> a task of decolonial thinking is the unveiling of epistemic silences of Western epistemology and affirming the epistemic rights of the racially devalued, and decolonial options to allow the silences to build arguments to confront those who take 'originality' as the ultimate criterion for the final judgment. (Mignolo, 2009, p. 162)

In order to approach the dissertation from a critical perspective a methodological framework precedes the methodology of the research itself. The quote above foregrounds the methodological framework that follows. The research endeavours to briefly illustrate the salience of the numerous implications for scholars like the author and others who advocate for epistemic delinking. The work of the author and other scholars in favour of epistemic delinking is in pursuit of decolonial thinking unveiling epistemic silences in Western epistemology. The framework further illustrates the diverse and extremely complex considerations in the development of the argument from the perspective of the methodological approach to this research.

The purpose of the ordering of information below is three-fold: on the one-hand it serves as a precursor to the choices made in the selection of primary research materials (archival interviews); on the other it serves as a means to engage with concepts which were prevalent in, and the author argues, important to the furtherance of the protests themselves; finally, foregrounding the methodology with authors concerned with zero point epistemology reifies the need for the approach to the primary materials and their use in most instances verbatim.

This chapter demonstrates the dissertation's contribution to the field of critical diversity studies, through the conceptual points of departure which have informed the methodological approach. The methodological approach to the research set out below begins with an overview of the Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) framework which was the context in which the research was developed. It is followed by an explanation of the salience of an intersectional approach to the research and an explanation of the salience of the decolonial lens used in the research. The author then begins to explain the methodology, but pauses as part of the methodological approach for a reflexive account of their positionality as the research methodology was developed at the confluence of the aforementioned perspectives which necessitate the reflexive exercise.

4.1 Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) framework

The research falls within the Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) framework developed by Professor Melissa Steyn (2015). Steyn developed the framework over the course of a decade in which she sought an understanding of the role of power in the construction of difference in order to:

- Generate recognition of unequal symbolic and material values associated with different social locations;
- Develop skills with which to unpack systems of oppression;
- Develop understanding definitions of oppressive systems as current social problems;
- Develop an understanding that social identities are learned and an outcome of social praxis;
- Generate diversity grammar and vocabulary to facilitate discussions of privilege and oppression;
- Enable translation and interpretation of hegemonic code;
- Assist in analysing diversity hierarchies and their effect on institutionalised oppression;
- Contemplate the role of our own emotions and emotional investment in all these facets of CDL and work towards engagement in the transformation of oppressive systems for deepening social justice multilaterally.

The 10 checkpoints in Steyn's CDL (2015) are central to developing the methodological approach to this research. They complement the theoretical framework set out in the previous chapter in framing the research as the use of this framework as a lens aided the development of the argument set out in this dissertation in which hegemonic praxis in the #RMF and #FMF protests are demonstrated. The CDL checkpoints mentioned above, provide "analytical skills with which to recognise, think about and interrupt prevalent relations of social oppression" (Steyn, 2015, p. 388). The research further contemplates the discourse that results in the homogenisation of protesting students and how support for the movements is garnered to solidify interest in the protests and the call for free quality and decolonised education.

4.2 An intersectional approach

Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) describes intersectionality through a lens which power is visiblised and collisions are evident. The term, according to her, illustrates how experiences interlock and intersect with one another such that multiple identities are seen not as distinct from one another, but as part of a tapestry of interrelated identities. Crenshaw is concerned with erasure when one identity trumps the visibility of another, making power relations discreet by dealing with only one identity at a time. Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality in 1989 to explain the multi-faceted

identities of black women seeking legal remedies on grounds of such identities. It gained popularity as a descriptor of multiple oppressions faced by marginalised segments of society. Patricia Hill Collins (1998) explains the importance of the concept in the excerpt below. Her explanation aptly captures the rationale for the approach and illustrates its sensibility in both the research, and as the author later argues, in the context of protests such as #RMF and #FMF alike.

> By pointing to patterns of omission and distortion in these and other accounts, African-American women claimed the authority of experience to challenge these prevailing interpretations of their lives (Collins 1990). By rejecting singular analyses of their group experience, reclaiming experiential knowledge, and subjecting it to rigorous intersectional scrutiny, African-American women analysed their experiences with systemic violence. Black women's location at the intersection of multiple systems of power, especially those of race and gender, generates a distinctive pattern of relationship to violence. On the one hand, intersections of race and gender that frame the category 'black women' generate a shared set of challenges for all African-American women, however differentially placed in other social hierarchies they may be. (Hill Collins, 1998, p. 926)

The research is considerate of intersectional identities and in particular how those identities concerning race, class, gender and sexual orientation became a disruption in the protests resulting in fissures in the movement. In the liberation struggle, the rights of women were secondary to the fight for racial emancipation; in the civil rights movement, rights for black people came before rights for women, came before rights for people with disabilities. The advancement of one issue to the detriment of another poses a challenge, because it ultimately translates into a hierarchy of oppression, reinforcing the power of one group of people over another, often resulting in unintended consequences in protest(s) which develop organically. Such hierarchy of oppression has been considered in Collins' work considering *Three Key Themes in Black Feminist Thought*. She argues that "[d]ichotomous oppositional differences invariably imply relationships of superiority and inferiority, hierarchical relationships that mesh with political economies of domination and subordination" (Collins, 1989, p.110).

Beyond the call for free access to quality education, students added the call for decolonisation to the agenda of #FMF. Systemic violence in the institutions was perhaps most visible in the names of buildings and art collections on the campuses, which in most cases did not reflect any South African history and where they did, that history was white. The racial inequality which ravaged the country for many years did more than simply insist on racial hierarchy. Perhaps its purest

form, systemic racism has been the colonisation of the mind (wa Thiong'o, 1994; Dangaremba, 2004). The teleological project was insistent on racial subjugation which has now become the bedrock of South African society. With the growing financial divide, the working class are often unable to traverse the class barrier into a middle-class reality. Such dire financial discrepancies resulted in an urgency to enter institutions of higher learning, visible in the increases in the number of applications to higher education institutions, which would allow for greater access to the job market and the possibility of upward mobility for whole families.

The protest(s) used the realities of the financial inequalities and burdens of financial access to generate interest. An overwhelming number of students from working-class backgrounds were immediately interested in the call for a 0% increment in fees which was where the protests were initiated. But the call was also of interest to what later became known as the missing middle: students who according to national standards were from families who should have been able to pay for their education, but whose realities made this impossible. The same metrics measured all family incomes. Nuclear families in suburbia were likely to have fewer dependents and were able distribute the income with ease.

Conversely, the non-nuclear familial units were overextended because these families often include extended family dependants; they are more often than not, non-white. Without acknowledging the intersectional identities of people to one another, we risk merely aggravating their oppressions. It is these kinds of interlocking oppressions that Collins (1989) refers to and which the author believes Lorde alludes to when she writes:

> Those who are poor, who are lesbians, who are Black, who are older — know that survival is not an academic skill. …[i]t is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master's house as their only source of support. (Lorde, 1984, p. 97)

This dissertation locates the voice of protesting students in South Africa as it interrogates constructs of power and difference in the context of a decolonial discourse which because of its existence within academia, often relegates the Black *other* to the periphery. It is important to note however, that while it is concerned with the location of the Black *other*, that *other* is in the

margin within the margin. The silent voice within the Black *other* is, as Spivak (1995) puts it, experiencing difficulty speaking within an oppressive regime. The quest for visibility in the context of the protests is that of the marginalised within the margins who are silenced because they are legible not as individuals, but are read as part of a homogenous group, here simply Black. The quest for visibility of the *other* can be found in #RhodesMustFall: Nibbling at Resilient Colonialism in South Africa (Nyamjoh, 2016), though one could argue that the text does not visibilise all those who are othered in the context of the protests, nor is the author under the impression that it seeks to do so. The preceding literature review offers a wide variety of perspectives, which in each instance illustrate the individual voices present in the discourse on the protests.

4.3 A decolonial lens

Paula Moya's *Who We Are and from Where We Speak* (2011) was used to reflect on the writing process in this research. It serves as an alternative perspective from which this work could be done, one which is mindful of the way in which identity is engaged. Her definition of identity is congruent with that of the author and as such, is captured below. This understanding of identity is not used from the onset of this research, but is the definition that informs its conclusion, Moya describes identity as follows:

> *Identity* is thus a kind of shorthand term that I use to refer to the complex and mediated way that situated, embodied human beings look out onto and interpret the world they live in. Insofar as identities track social relations, they are highly contextual and subject to change in response to the transformation of social relations; they come into being through the kinds of experiences we have, and they inform the way we interpret the world around us. Under this conception, identities are not reducible to social categories (i.e., woman, Black, Chicana, gay, etc.), nor do they refer exclusively to people's subjective (raceless, genderless, bodiless) "senses of self." Rather, they are socially significant and context-specific ideological constructs that refer in non-arbitrary (if partial) ways to verifiable aspects of the social world. (Moya, 2011, p. 80)

To reach the conclusion, the author uses identity in the chapters that follow, initially as social categories for purposes of distinguishing behaviours and to make sense of the challenges highlighted by the interviewees. In the conclusion however, the author returns to Moya's definition of identity as it is more suited to the necessity of and location of voices which during protests went largely unheard, and which the author seeks to highlight.

At the end of her article, Moya challenges scholars interested in the decolonial project. She writes "I contend that while our ideas regarding liberation are critically important, our scholarly practices are perhaps even more important for the way they materially transform the world in which we live and work" (Moya, 2011, p. 90). Her challenge has shaped the author's contribution to the field of Diversity Studies and the reflections shared in the research have informed the conclusion of the research. Her challenge and conclusion are essential to note, as they are congruent with the experiences of the author at the onset of the writing process of this dissertation. The norms and structures to ratify knowledge as such within the construct of the university, and by extension largely Western norms have meant that the way the research has been presented and the standards to which it conforms, inclusive of the structure of the work and the citations contained herein, have been especially difficult to conform to. Moya writes;

> Do not misunderstand me: I am quite willing, on occasion, to dialogue with and cite scholars of all genders and races who work in European critical theory, and I even understand the necessity of doing so. European critical theory is like a "trade language" that female and minority scholars like myself must use in order to be legitimated by the academy and understood by those who stand outside our particular circles of concern. Moreover, I acknowledge that there are some very good ideas that have come down to us from mainstream traditions of thought like European critical theory—ideas that both cannot and should not be neglected. However, I am not interested in simply reinforcing the academic structures that buttress the hierarchies of knowledge to which we have all become accustomed. Accordingly, I want to be sure that any attention I give to European critical theory does not cause me to exclude from my own dialogic situation someone who has identified a dynamic of exclusion to which I have—by virtue of my race, gender, class, sexual, or geographical privilege—turned an inattentive or uncomprehending ear. (Moya, 2011, p. 90)

#RMF, #FMF and all subsequent and related protests under those banners have insisted on the mandate of decoloniality and decolonial thinking. However, what Walter Mignolo terms epistemic disobedience in a paper titled *Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom* (2009) comes at a high price in the academy. Mignolo asserts;

> The question is: who, when, why is constructing knowledges (Mignolo, 1999, 2005 [1995])? Why did eurocentered epistemology conceal its own geo-historical and bio-graphical locations and succeed in creating the idea of universal knowledge as if the knowing subjects were also universal? This illusion is pervasive today in the social sciences, the humanities, the natural sciences and the professional schools. Epistemic disobedience means to delink from the illusion of the zero point epistemology (2009, p. 160).

Indeed, the zero point epistemology Mignolo refers to is what produces the limitations of expression in this dissertation: the necessity of citing eurocentric Knowledge in order to ratify knowledge(s) produced in the global South. This, however, is the nature of the academy which perpetuates Western ideals through universities which are the custodians of knowledge and knowledge production. It is the intention of the author to challenge those engaging with this work to follow Mignolo's call to go against the grain, and to be epistemically disobedient where possible in order to shift attention from the enunciated to the enunciation". (2009, p. 160)

In the methodology and subsequent engagement the dissertation attempts to break free from the systemic oppression of epistemologies which are inconsiderate of the identities which Moya invokes (2011). Systemic violences perpetuated through tacit social contracts such as those outlined in the preceding chapter are indicative of how deeply rooted the oppressions are in the production of Knowledge as result of what some authors have referred to as blindness (Ferber, 2012), privilege (Collins, 1998) and ignorance (Steyn, 2012). The research is concerned with issues of domination and subjugation and as such, the author has been mindful of the constraints experienced even in the process of writing this dissertation. The fact remains that work of this nature is always subject to the academy for ratification of its validity. Nevertheless, by bringing these issues to the fore, even briefly, epistemic injustice under the guise of Knowledge can be undone. This research therefore makes use of a methodological approach deeply linked to the processes of decolonisation, pursuant of a sometimes elusive multiplicity of knowledge(s). As the author is an anthropologist, the research should be legible, in part as engaged anthropology which goes beyond the outsider insider perspective and is active praxis from within the field to decolonise the anthropological approach. Reflexive praxis in this research is part of the approach necessary to generate knowledge(s) and to ensure the research is undertaken not by an 'outsider' with an etic perspective, but from an emic perspective in the context of the protest and from the perspective of a protestor. This approach is essential to moving away from the often problematized exotic gaze with which Trask (1991) is concerned. While there are criticisms of

this approach, the emic perspective in engaged anthropology cannot only be considered as it relates to insider-outsider status in the field. Kirin Narayan (1993) argues:

> Instead of the paradigm emphasizing a dichotomy between outsider/insider or observer/observed, I propose that at this historical moment we might more profitably view each anthropologist in terms of shifting identifications amid a field of interpenetrating communities and power relations. (p.671)

Takeyuki Tsuda echoes Narayan's argument writing; "Ultimately, the cultural differences we experience with the 'natives' are productive for fieldwork and essential for anthropological knowledge" (Tsuda, 2015, p.15). Additional to subjectivities of "nativeness", there is the problem of engagement. The research looks to Friere to demystify his ontological approach to the methodology. Some criticisms of Paulo Friere include the ambiguity of his work in articulating the oppressor and the oppressed. These criticisms are challenged by more recent works such as *Engaged Anthropology* by Kirsch, which challenges anthropologists to engage in anthropology which is relevant and applicable to the current global discourses and challenges on a myriad of issues, such as land rights among others. Sherry Ortner (2019) describes this as the "engaged turn" she argues that this shifts away from the earlier anthropological inquiry which focused on subjects far removed from the modern world. She writes that anthropologists are now engaging in critical and sometimes even activist ways with present-day issues. To this end, she addresses the critique of proximity by arguing the following:

> there is always, in this work, a scrupulous adherence to accuracy of the data, and to the principle that all claims of analysis and interpretation must be based on evidence within the data itself. In other words, to take an engaged stance does not in any way conflict with an adherence to the principles of accuracy, evidentiary support, and truth which are the basis of any kind of scholarly or scientific work. The only difference is that the biases of work that does not define itself as engaged tend to be hidden, while the biases of engaged anthropology are declared up front. (Ortner, 2019)

This research is inclined to the positions of the aforementioned authors. As part of the work in favour of this "engaged turn" our praxis should reflect our situatedness in an increasing global context which is not divorced from everyday global concerns. The research is arguably strengthened by my positionality as both protestor and researcher. My participation in the protests and their exposure to the university as both a former administrative staff member and student has

given them valuable insights into the South African higher education system. In the context of this research, the positing of decolonial thinking is premised on imbalanced power. In consideration of such power imbalance it would be short- sighted to not to note the work of Anibal Quijano theorising the colonial matrix of power. This matrix consists of four interrelated domains: control of economy; control of authority; control of gender and sexuality and control of subjectivity and knowledge (Quijano, 2000). My own positionally, the methodological and ontological approaches and epistemological location of the fieldwork are all of critical importance to the research endeavour.

The research also contemplates the author's positionality from a specific time and place, from a specific history and reality which Grada Kilomba grapples with in considering her own positionality as a black woman within the academic context. In *Plantation Memories* (2013) Kilomba laments the displaced *other* in the space of the academy. She writes:

> I as a Black woman, write with words that describe my reality, not with words that describe the reality of a white scholar, for we write from different places. I write from the periphery, not from the centre. This is also the place from where I am theorizing, as I place my discourse within my own reality. (p. 30)

Kilomba's work situates her voice both geographically and epistemically. This research seeks to do the same, making use of methodologies that locate the voice of protesting students in the global south in relation to their counterparts in other parts of the world. It interrogates constructs of power and difference in the context of a decolonial discourse which because of its existence within academia, often relegates the black other to the periphery. Kilomba's recollection of Jacques Derrida's "peaceful coexistence of words" (Derrida, 1981, p. 41), where she "emphasizes…a violent hierarchy that defines *who can speak*" (Kilomba, 2013, p. 28). In doing so Kilomba prompts an investigation in this research of who can speak as opposed to who cannot, whose knowledge is 'valid' and whose is not. The interviewees in this project construct their narratives of immersion in the protest(s) and their experiences of erasure which feed into a patriarchal hierarchy within protest which makes legible those who are 'contractually' capable of legibility and those who are not. The methodology further considers Kopano Ratele's (2014) contemplation of gender transformation in South Africa; his argument states that "overcoming gender inequalities tend to view feminist and pro-feminist struggles for gender equality and

transforming masculinity as detracting from the apparently more fundamental struggle against racialized inequality" (p. 36). Positions raised in this research question how specific struggles/ affirmations are overlooked in favour of others because of the assumed hierarchy which perpetuates oppression and erasure of individual voices. Cheris Current and Emily Tillotson's (2016) argument on privilege blindness is used to illustrate the fallacy of blindness in relation to race. Privilege blindness in the context of the academy is useful for considering privilege arising in the context of this research. In their paper, they think through racial and sexual tropes which ultimately result in blindness/ignorance of oppression. Current and Tillotson note their frustration with those who perpetuate unequal power relations and their concern for those who are oppressed through such oppressive praxis (p. 291).

This dissertation locates the voice of protesting students in South Africa as it interrogates constructs of power and difference in the context of a decolonial discourse which, because of its existence within academia, often relegates the Black *other* to the periphery. It is important to note however, that while it is concerned with the location of the Black *other*, that *other* is in the margin within the margin. The silent voice within the Black *other*. Here that voice is, as Spivak (1995) puts it, experiencing difficulty speaking within an oppressive regime. The quest for visibility in the context of the protests is that of the marginalised within the margins who are silenced because they are legible not as individuals, but as part of a homogenous group, here simply Black. The quest for visibility of the *other* can be found *in #RhodesMustFall: Nibbling at Resilient Colonialism in South Africa* (Nyamjoh, 2016), though one could argue that the text does not visibilise all those who are othered in the context of the protests, nor is the author under the impression that it seeks to do so. The literature review offers a wide variety of perspectives which in each instance illustrate the individual voices present in the discourse on the protests.

4.4 Method

The process of making the documentary film, "The Art of Fallism" (2019), was a complex one. In its earliest stages, the film was conceptualised and funding sought for the project in Norway. The filmmakers, two white women from that country, wanted to tell the story of #RMF and #FMF from the perspectives of artists. While their intentions were admirable, they met a huge amount of resistance early on. The #FMF protests were on-going at the time filming started in 2016. Almost

a year was spent locating participants to be interviewed, but part of the complexity of getting activists to agree was in the semantics of the story being told by white people from a white perspective when the story itself was one of a racial dynamic not only within the universities but the country as a whole. The frustration of students and other marginalised groups within the universities was a sense that they were not being heard, or seen. The systemic issues stemmed from the legacies of racial inequality as a result of apartheid, and at the point that the film project started, this contention could not go unanswered.

The filmmakers Aslaug Aarsaether and Ingvild Aagedal Skage started off in Norway with a handful of contacts from the protests in the preceding months. They made contact remotely, but there were few responses early on, and in instances where they received responses, not many were in favour of making the film, with the aforementioned reasons cited as the primary issue. The South African students were not comfortable with white people from a foreign country telling the South African story of #RMF and #FMF. Aarsaether and Skage questioned the resistance to the process, asking the few that had tentatively agreed to be filmed why they felt there was so much resistance. The author, one of those approached, advised them that the context was laden with racial complexities and that the process would not move ahead without them acknowledging and negotiating around their positionality in relation to those they sought to film. It was at that point where the author was approached to become part of the film team, playing an archival role as well as an advisory role in relation to the contextual considerations for the film project. Almost a year into the process, and through using the snowballing sampling, the filmmakers finally started to identify willing participants for the project. Kirchherr and Charles (2018) describe snowballing sampling as:

> a sampling method in which one interviewee gives the researcher the name of at least one more potential interviewee. That interviewee, in turn, provides the name of at least one more potential interviewee, and so on, with the sample growing like a rolling snowball if more than one referral per interviewee is provided (Kirchherr & Charles, 2018, p. 1).

When the formulation of the storyboard began, it was informed both by the chronological order of events as available from the media accounts and the early conversations with activists.

The participants were invited to be part of the storyboard process as they gave the early and truncated accounts of their experiences on Skype calls and via email. In this time, Aarsaether and Skage made use of sticky notes and a wall to map out the timeline of events. This process would assist them in identifying crucial moments during the life-cycle of the protests until the point that filming started and gave them a good sense of how to frame the open-ended interview questions. Soliciting specific information in live interviews would be another means of ensuring a comprehensive account of events. All interviews were planned to be conducted in the Western Cape, as the site on which the film was to be focused was the UCT campus where the story of #RMF and #FMF is understood to have begun. The interviews were either in locations that formed part of the interviewee's story, in their homes or in a location chosen by the film crew because no alternate space was available. In each instance, the interviewees were asked what their preferred space was. All of the interviewees were comfortable in the spaces in which they were interviewed. At times, where they were in a location that evoked painful memories, such as the sites of protest on campus, their interviews were only partially captured in those locations, and they were taken to a more comfortable setting to reflect on the spaces they showed to the film crew.

While there were several interviewees in the film, only three interviews were selected for the research as the interviewees were the primary protagonists in the film, but also represented three distinct groups of people which was useful for purposes of the research. I felt that it was important to make use of interviews where the interviewees experiences and stories were markedly different from one another as this would strengthen the research findings because of the the large amount of interview materials while providing differences in experiences accounted for in the analysis of the interview materials and the research literature.

Mariolga Cruz (2008) writes: "The act of textual traditions is intrinsically linked to the (im)possible task of foregrounding nonacademic's reflections about social reality in academic discourse" (2008, p. 657). Over the course of the filming period, the protests were ongoing. The interviews were approached from the perspective of activism, and while the interviewees were

enrolled in their institutions as students. The perspectives offered were those of activists rather than academics foregrounding the personal experiences as political acts. Both Chaudry (2010) and Cruz have made it easier to think through reflexive praxis necessary for research of this nature and in their work considered the significance of producing decolonial knowledge(s) relevant to this research. Their research approaches are useful as they inform the author's nuanced view of power in the protests, and the selection of interviews for this research.

4.5 Participants

Phakamani Ntentema is a heterosexual Xhosa man, who has a strong political allegiance to the Pan African Student Movement of Azania (PASMA). PASMA as an entity is ideologically in favour of African nationalism, Black consciousness, Feminism, Liberalism and Pan-Africanism. Their militant stance on issues was evident in many parts of the country as they joined other students in protest and advocated heavily for Black consciousness and Pan-Africanism. Phakamani's story is one of learning and unlearning. In his interview, he took the time to explain that he did not understand intersectionality early on in the protests, but after taking the time to read and ask questions, he began to understand the salience of the call for intersectionality in the movement. As a traditionalist, Phakamani's account of this transition is an interesting one to locate in this study as it illustrates the possibility of those who hold staunch values being able to learn and unlearn. Phakamani, as a working-class Xhosa man living in a township in South Africa, also tells the story from a deeply personal and human perspective; one of a young South African who aspires to a better life despite coming from an informal settlement. He is viscerally affected by the removal of the shack that was erected during the protests at UCT, and the symbolism of the shacks removal was a powerful anecdote that illustrated the lived realities of working-class South Africans who have been moved and removed from space throughout the country's history.

Mickey Moyo is a heterosexual woman whose mother is Zulu and her father Malawian. Mickey was heavily involved in the #RMF and #FMF protests at UCT and is depicted frequently in the media representations of the protests. She visibly challenged Max Price, who at the time was the vice-chancellor of the university, and her engagement with other male leaders was of particular

interest to me as Mickey seemed to go against the grain in her approach to authoritative figures both in the university and in the movement. Mickey quickly established herself as a leader in the protests and offered a human perspective in her interviews reminding the viewer that her life was dramatically different in the protests from her day-to-day experiences. Mickey was arrested, assaulted and threatened during the protest period, and her narrative, I felt would add nuance to the research, as she was at the forefront of the protests and highly visible in ways which Phakamani and Wandile were not. Mickey in her interviews seems to have done a tremendous amount of introspection, grappling with some of the decisions made during the protests as well as the implications of those decisions not only for herself, but for others.

Wandile Dlamini is a gender non-conforming activist who was part of the trans collective's organising during the protests. While other activists were approached, Wandile was the first to agree to be interviewed as part of the film project. Wandile's interviews are salient to the film project as they offer an account of the protests which is seldom heard. The account Wandile gives is that of a gender non-conforming person during the protests which were not in favour of intersectionality. Their interview depicts Wandile's frustration with heteronormativity in the space of protest and in the university more generally. They articulate how they felt as someone who is already marginalised because of their gender identity, however, their story is nuanced by the personal storytelling explaining their experiences of their sexuality with family and friends as well. Wandile also explains the rationale and the experience of what became known as the Trans Capture and how they were a part of closing the trans collective after the protests had ended. Wandile also offers their art as part of the storytelling, allowing the viewers insight into their creative expression of the experiences of protests at UCT.

All three of the interviewees were approached individually ahead of the commencement of the research to determine whether or not they would be comfortable with their narratives being used. All three agreed without hesitation owing to the fact that the majority of their interviews at the time had already been concluded. I approached the core film team to discuss how the research could live alongside the film, and be a part of the story being told from the perspective not only of one of the interviewees but also from the perspective of someone who was present in the

country and part of the protests in Johannesburg. As the project was conceptualised at the University of Bergen by Aarsaether and Skage, they felt that having an academic analysis being conducted would be a useful extension of the work, and would be appropriate as there had already been a discussion about the dissemination of the film, particularly in university contexts, after it had been launched on the documentary film circuit.

All three of the interviewees signed release forms for the use and analysis of the materials for this research project. All three agreed to the use in conjunction with the standing agreement between themselves and Isme Films, the Norwegian producers. A South African producer was also part of the team to ensure that South Africans also benefited from the film. While three of the film crew were Norwegian, the rest of the crew were South Africans who were from the Western Cape. This decision was made based on the initial pushback relating to Europeans telling a South African story. Wisaal Abrahams, the South African producer, was also in agreement that having academic research done on the film interviews would give the hours of unused footage new life. The challenge later faced was a decision pertaining to how much of the interview materials available would actually be used in the analysis which in turn resulted in the process mentioned in the methodology section of this chapter.

All those depicted in the film were invited to screening once the penultimate edit had been done, just ahead of the film being put into the film circuit for distribution. There were several discussions related to depictions of the interviewees in the film. Not all of those interviewed appear in the final version of the film. This was a point of contention, but given the time limit, and the way the story was being told, it had never been a given that all the footage was going to be used. There was general consensus that the film in its final edit was telling the story of #RMF and #FMF in a way that the interviewees depicted in the film and those not depicted were comfortable with.

The analysis offered in this research differs from the analysis in the film, as while the film focuses on telling the story of Wandile as the protagonist, the research makes use of the three interviewees to think through the effects of homogenisation as it occurred in the #RMF and

#FMF protests. The research does not attempt to cover all the many hours of interview materials available, but rather to extrapolate from those the parts of the interviews which tell the story of difference and differential treatment in the protests as well as the effects and affect of such treatment. In doing so, I intend to offer to the reader and potentially those who will protest in future, a glimpse into the challenges of protests which do not carefully contemplate the implications of homogenisation for those protesting.

4.6 Methodology

The research methodology selected for this dissertation is qualitative. A qualitative analysis was selected as it is suitable to engage the experiences of protestors and their narratives in order to gain insights into how individual experiences influenced collective actions. In a book titled *Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches*, Leavy (2017) describes qualitative research as research that "value[s] depth of meaning and people's subjective experiences and their meaning-making processes" (p. 124). Leavy explains that methodological approaches to qualitative research rely on "inductive designs aimed at generating meaning and producing rich, descriptive data" (p. 124).

The qualitative data used in this research draws on interviews archived as part of a documentary film project, "The Art of Fallism". The film, which serves as a prelude to the dissertation, was made between 2016 and 2019. The author was part of the team that created the documentary film, responsible for the collection and collation of the archival materials used in the film. The author is depicted in the film and was consulted while the film was being recorded. The author's role in the documentary process was to ensure the methodological approach being used to document the experiences of the protestors was mindful of the South African experience and conscious of the potential for story telling from the perspective of an exotic gaze with which Trask (1991) is concerned. Once the documentary had been edited and the interviewees had watched it and commented on the representation of their stories, the author requested permission to make use of the films archived transcripts from both the production company and the interviewees.

Canella and Lincoln (2012), in a chapter titled “Deploying Qualitative Methods for Critical Social Purposes”, are concerned with what is meant by critical perspectives, for them, critical perspectives translate to research which recognises power. Analysing movements such as #RMF and #FMF from a myriad of perspectives allows for a more nuanced approach to interpreting the movements and behaviours within them. In order to generate those perspectives, this research uses archived semi-structured interviews and digital archives for its inquiry. To analyse the data, the author considers what “[l]anguage gives form to ideologies and prompts action and consequently, is deeply complicit in power, oppression and injustice” (p. 105). These considerations are drawn from the data in the interviews and the analysis of the experiences of the interviewees. The author is however mindful of the precaution posited by Canella and Lincoln (2012) that “qualitative inquiry creates power for, and all too frequently, a focus on the researcher herself. Thus, we are caught in the paradox of attempting to investigate and deconstruct power relations, even while we are ourselves engaged in a project which creates and re-creates power accruing primarily to us” (2012, p. 106)

4.7 Reflexivity and an autoethnographic experiential account

Researchers and activists alike should approach problems holistically, learning hard lessons from what some argue is a failed project of the rainbow nation (Scott, 2020; Sall, 2018). The reflections below are considerate of Canella and Lincoln’s (2012) precaution. The insights were drawn from the author's personal experiences which exposed for the author, in retrospect, discrepancies within the #FMF movement. In a system hinged on the (re)production of hierarchies and imbalanced power relations, reflecting on day-to-day experiences begins the work of documenting oppression in less abstract terms. In short, the personal is political.

The increasing number of Black students in the South African higher education system and the increasing unemployment cannot be considered in isolation from one another, in 2020, according to Stats SA “[o]f the 20.4 million South Africans aged 15-34 years, 40.1% were not in employment, education or training (NEET) in the fourth quarter – a decrease of 0.3 of a percentage point compared to third quarter” (Statistics South Africa, 2020). There is an intrinsic link between the two. On an annual basis for the last eight years, there are fewer available jobs and a higher demand for higher education; then there has ever been in the country's democratic history (Statistics South Africa, 2020).

When the author started engaging in #FMF as a protester, they did so initially to document the movement; after some time, they engaged in the protest realising that the narratives of other students mirrored their own and eventually, the author was persuaded to facilitate discussions relating to the protests in mass meetings. During that time, the author was part of the occupation of the university's central administration block. They convened the logistics team charged with the collection of resources; they were involved in the cleaning of the space; the preparation of food and management of financial resources. In hindsight, the author had not questioned the implications of assuming responsibility for those roles. It was only in hindsight that the author began to see a need to examine their privilege and how their positionality afforded them power. Johnson, in conversation with McIntosh, describes privilege as the "luxury of obliviousness" (1997, p. 24). He discusses privileged groups and the assumption of representation in a way that is useful for the reflexivity necessary for this research.

> In a white identified system, white is the assumed race unless something other than white is marked--hence the common use of the term non-white to lump together a variety of races into a single category of "other" in relation to a white standard (Johnson, 1997, p. 103).

This is generative of a single narrative, one which allows certain norms to be upheld and for particular praxis to be sustained.

> Because systems are identified with privileged groups, the path of least resistance is to focus attention on them—who they are and what they do and say, and how they do it (p. 107).

Hall (2002) discusses race in a chapter titled "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance", where he uses race to analyse social formations. In conversation with Gramsci, Hall makes use of the term hegemony which is described in the chapter as

> "total social authority" which at certain specific conjunctures, a specific class alliance wins, by a combination of "coercion" and "consent," over the whole social formation, and its dominated classes: not only at the economic level, but also at the level of political and ideological leadership in civil, intellectual, and moral life as well as the material level: and over the terrain of civil society as well as in and through condensed relations of the State. (Hall, 2002, p. 51)

He continues to discuss hegemony as a socially constructed truism that "forges that unity between economic, political, and ideological objectives such that it can place "all the questions around which the struggle rages on a 'universal', not corporate level, thereby creating hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups" (Hall, 2002, p. 52). This phenomenon has been described in psychology as social dominance theory. The theory was developed by Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto (2001), in a book titled *Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression*. In sum, the theory discusses how hegemony operates through unspoken assumptions underpinned in many instances by a three-pillar structure. In most cases the structure is dictated by age, sex and a third more arbitrary-set (such as gender, ethnicity, educational background, economic class, language, geographic region etc.) Social dominance was visible in the context of protest to some, while for others, it remained elusive.

Only later at the beginning of the research journey did the author begin to question the role of social dominance, and how they were at times complicit in its perpetuation. After a few months of protest, what the author believed to be one-dimensional politics in the #FMF movement became a stark reality. There was a jarring ideological difference between the protestors, as some were calling for the recognition of intersectional politics, and the visibility of women, while others responded to the call, saying that intersectional politics were a white agenda seeking to derail the movement from its objectives. This is illustrated in the responses in the analytical chapter of the dissertation.

It was at that point that the author began to question the politics of difference as described by writers like Young (2011), Coloroso (2007), Gilleard (2011), Luciano and Chen (2015) and how the differences were catalysed to bring so many people together, by homogenising us. The author began to notice that the movement benefited from homogeneity as it presentation as a singular body dubbed #FMF. However, the author also noted an internal assumption of homogeneity, despite the political intentions within the leadership of the movement. This incongruence of ideologies the author argues caused a great deal of confusion and anxiety as protestors were not always aware of the implications of their involvement in protests (Dadi Patel & Sayneds, 2016).

These discrepancies, the author argues, highlighted a need for an approach to politics within movements such as #RMF and #FMF that should be more nuanced. Based on the personal

experiences of the author, the necessity for nuance in movements such as there needs to be insisted on to ensure that movements which seek to promote social justice do not perpetuate injustice. To this end, the author argues that leaders of movements especially need to be conscious of their positionality; such consciousness would enable movements to acknowledge social differences and use those to add value to the movements they seek to sustain.

By 2015 the author had resumed their studies after paying off the debt which resulted in their financial exclusion. The author studied African Literature and through the tradition began to see the extent to which colonisation and domination resulted in the subjugation not only of people but of their minds too. The experiences shared through the literature, coloured the author's own perspectives. The author was influenced by contemporary writers such as NoViolet Bulawayo, who yearns for a different time and place (Bulawayo, 2014). Nicole Fleetwood, who grapples with the hypervisibility of women in spaces and how women become legible as excess flesh—here read as the hypervisibility of *other* (Fleetwood, 2011). James Baldwin said that "to be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious is to be in a rage almost all the time" (Baldwin, 1961, p. 81). Gqola writes:

> "[w]hile there are many feminist strands, which is to say different kinds of feminism, there are also many core principles. The commitment to actively oppose and end patriarchy is one. The recognition that patriarchy works like other systems of oppression, like racism and capitalism, to value some people and brutalise others is another. Like other systems of oppression, it also requires the support of many members of the groups it oppresses". (Gqola, 2017)

Their works served as introductions to scholars who were and are epistemically disobedient. The author was simultaneously able to navigate the university space as staff and student, leading them to believe that they were able to choose how the protests would affect them; however, part of the ontological effects of movements stem from the emotional effects of ideology. The collective consciousness and experiential effects of the movements produce the connectedness which is a catalyst for movements.

It can be argued that, in 2015, the #RMF campaign gained traction because of the frustration expressed by Cumani Maxwele when he flung human excrement at the statue of Rhodes. The frustration and the racial undercurrent of the action was reminiscent of the country's apartheid

past which still haunts it. Cecil Rhodes was not only a historical figure; his fortune was amassed during the imperial project as a result of the subjugation and exploitation of black people. The statue and space it occupied, one could argue, contributed to the passive oppression of black students on the UCT campus who were reminded of the colonial legacies on which the university itself and as an institution was built. The author would further argue that the statue was a symbol of the social contracts outlined in the preceding chapter and that the passive oppression, epistemic violence, structural racism, social dominance operated discreetly, and indeed largely unquestioned for so long that it enabled tacit signatories to the social contracts the luxury of obliviousness—the ignorance contract.

Johnson offers a vignette which is useful to this argument, and illustrates the point about the Rhodes statue and its significant place in the narrative of #RMF and #FMF:

> imagine a scene in which a gang of white men are beating a black man in broad daylight on a city street. I'm standing in a crowd of white people who are watching. We aren't hurting anyone; we feel no ill will toward the man being beaten; we may even feel sorry for him. We aren't cheering the attackers on or showing any outwards signs of approval. We're just standing in silence, "minding our own business." And then one of the men stops, looks up, and says, his eyes panning across our faces, "We appreciate your support. We couldn't do it without you." This is how racism and other forms of privilege work day in day out, as a result of what might be called "passive oppression". (Johnson, 1997, p. 114)

The author self-identifies as Queer, a label used by people both within and outside the academy. There is a long history about why some people stay away from the term, and some feel that the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) acronym better encapsulates how they identify. The author went to private schools as long as their family could afford them, they present as male and coloured in the South African context, which is historically significant as this would have afforded them more rights racially during apartheid. The author is legible to most people as heterosexual as perhaps because of their performance of gender. These categories of identity all afford the author some level of privilege. The same is not true for many black, queer women who received a subpar education because of their socio-economic conditions and indeed the legacies of apartheid. Secondly, the author's presentation is often congruent with their gender which allows them to assert my authority because of their masculinity. This enabled the author to garner the attention of large groups of students who

attended mass meetings. The use of an exaggerated deep voice demanded attention during meetings when order was called by shouting *amandla* (power) which beckoned the response *awethu* (is ours). This call is ironic in hindsight because power was not necessarily shared. The acclaimed African Literature writer Chinua Achebe wrote, "[would] a sensible man spit out the juicy morsel that good fortune has placed in his mouth?" (1988, p. 2).

The author used their gender expression to traverse spaces within the movement. Their gender expression was adaptable and enabled them to enter conversations from which men were barred as a result of the toxic masculinity which necessitated a feminist response in the space. In hindsight the author also recognises how they would use their knowledge of what women wanted to say to create more room for women to speak by acknowledging them over their louder male counterparts who often interjected when women spoke in the space. In a chapter titled "Gender and discourse analysis", Coates (2012) explains that "[i]nterruptions are not the only linguistic form involved in conversational dominance. Speakers may also dominate by holding the floor for lengthy periods or taking many turns" (p. 92). Fourth, the author only claimed their proximity to Blackness when it was convenient to do so. They made use of their upbringing in a Xhosa home to associate with people differently in different social contexts within the movement.

Being multilingual enabled the author to communicate with all cohorts in the movement with the appropriate salutations, cultural pleasantries and most importantly perhaps, songs of struggle. They could code-switch not only linguistically but also in registers when oppressive language was used in the context of conversations related to outsourcing. The authors' ability to speak to many in the movement allowed them to be interviewed, to speak to negotiators during protests and to academic staff while others could not traverse spaces in the same way.

Grada Kilomba's *Africans in academia: Diversity in adversity* (2007), which preceded *Plantation Memories* (2013), articulates some of the concerns the author raises about the #FMF protest and the praxis that it comes to enshrine. She asserts that academia is not a neutral space. In reference to one of the exercises she does with her students she writes: "the concepts of knowledge and the idea of what scholarship or science is, are intrinsically linked with power and racial authority" (Kilomba, 2007). The author argues that in the context of protest, that racial authority can be substituted for other categories which afford power such as gender, class and religion. Her

reflections are applicable to other contexts too. Kilomba is attentive to the issue of race; however, both Hall and Kilomba's work apply to the experiences of *otherness* concerning gender, sexual orientation and nationality among other categories of difference that result in fractures in the movement.

Academia cannot be a neutral location as it is a white space where black people have been denied a voice. Historically, this is a space where we have been voiceless, a space we were barred from entering in South Africa. Here, white scholars have developed theoretical discourses which formally constructed us as the inferior Other - placing Africans in absolute subordination to the white subject. We were made the objects, but we have rarely been the subjects.

> This position of object, which we commonly occupy, does not indicate a lack of resistance or of interest, as it is commonly believed, but rather a lack of access to representation by Blacks themselves. It is not that we have not been speaking; but rather that our voices—through a system of racism—have been systematically disqualified as valid knowledge; or else represented by whites, who ironically become the 'experts' of ourselves. Either way, we are locked in a violent colonial hierarchy […] When they speak it is scientific, when we speak it is unscientific. Universal/specific; objective/subjective; neutral/personal; rational/emotional; impartial/partial; they have facts, we have opinions; they have knowledge, we have experiences. These are not simple semantic categorisations. They own a dimension of power which maintains hierarchical positions and upheld *white* supremacy. We are not dealing here with a 'peaceful coexistence' of words, but rather with a violent hierarchy, which defines who can speak. (Kilomba, 2007, p. 28).

Being relegated to the margins for some, persists in most facets of life, despite advances in the realm of rights and a promise of equality in the South African context. The author argues that these advances, while necessary, are not as far-reaching as intended and that the social reality lags far behind the legislated promises. They are present still in spaces and movements such as #RMF and #FMF and are often to the detriment of Black women, as Collins argues:

> Black women's insistence on self-definition, self-valuation, and the necessity for a Black female-centred analysis is significant for two reasons. First, defining and valuing one's consciousness of one's own self-defined standpoint in the face of images that foster a self-definition as the objectified "other" is an important way of resisting the dehumanization essential to systems of domination. The status of being "the other" implies being "other than" or different from the assumed norm of white [read Black] male behaviour […] A

> second reason that Black female self-definition and self-valuation are significant concerns the value in allowing Afro-American [read African] to reject internalized, psychological oppression (Bladwin, 1980). The potential damage of internalized control to Afro-American [read African] women's self-esteem can be great, even to the prepared. Enduring the frequent assaults of co trolling images requires considerable inner strength. (Collins, 1989, p. 750)

The reflexive nature of the preceding section, the author argues, is essential when engaging in critical social studies as Canella and Lincoln (2012) posit:

> By critical perspectives, we mean any research that recognises power - that seeks in its analysis to plum the archeology taken-for-granted perspectives to understand how unjust and oppressive social conditions came to be reified as historical "givens". (p. 105)

4.8 Critical Discourse Analysis

Lisa Given discusses the use of life histories as, "[t]he so-called narrative turn in scholarly inquiry invites researchers to recognise how their particular forms of discourse are ordered as narratives; that is, to think of all discourse as taking the form of a story" (Given, 2008, p. 832). Through archives, the research considered historical accounts of social justice movements. These archival accounts enable close analysis of the kinds of rhetoric deployed during preceding movements and why those were used. Leavy (2017) explains that in qualitative research:

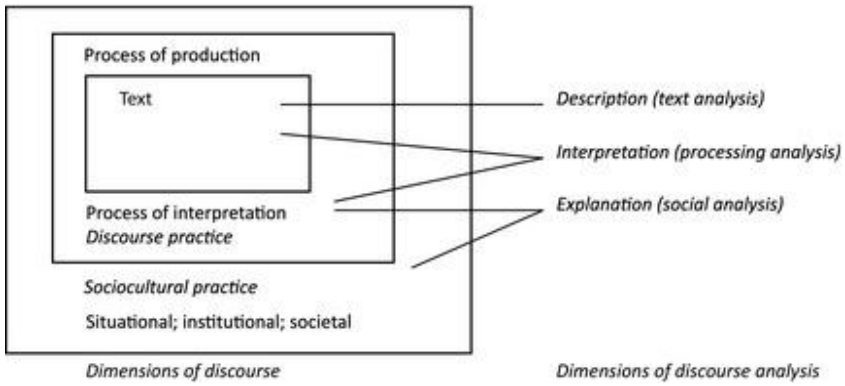
> theoretical frameworks are often used to consider the micro-politics of power, how power is negotiated, maintained and resisted by/within small groups. Further, these perspectives assume people are operating within power-rich environments, meaning power is always at play. (p. 130)

For that reason, ensuring that the author is cognisant of their own positionality, and how the research undertaken contributes to the micro-politics of power which Leavy describes, the process of interpreting the data in the transcripts is of great importance, not just for the purposes of drawing conclusions, but in order to conduct an analysis that does not lose sight of those whose voices the research is concerned with highlighting. As such, the research makes use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for its inquiry.

CDA is tied to specific current or historical contexts that offer the analyst an opportunity to draw on socially available resources that constitute the order of the discourse for analysis alongside the text itself (Fairclough, 1995, p. 10). It is concerned with the "texture of the text, their form and organisation, and not just commentaries on the 'content' of the text which ignore texture" (p. 4). It is a methodology not uninhibited by passion and subjectivity and considerate of the social conditions and the role of affect in textual production. Fairclough suggests that analysts concerned with this kind of analysis are "extraordinarily sensitive [to] indicators of sociocultural processes, relations, and change" (p. 4). CDA stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice, texts. It is also a form of intervention in social practice and social relationships. For that reason, it is an ideal for an analysis of the data in this research. It is pursuant of veiled ideological assumptions hidden in the structures of the language itself. Textual analysis requires a CDA that challenges discourse and the role of hegemony in discourse. Indeed it pursues gaps in the text being analysed with the intention of making sense of the text within a particular context. In so doing, CDA questions the role of power and who wields it in the discourse it is engaging. It is conscious of power and dominance as they operate subtly and are jointly produced. CDA is a culmination of perspectives rather than a school of thought. It evolved from critical linguistics and is influenced by the work of Foucault, Gramsci, Pecheaux and Habermas. It serves three primary functions which are set out by Fairclough's (1989, 1995) whose model for CDA illustrates three inter-related processes of analysis and three linked inter-related dimensions of discourse. Each of the dimensions requires a different kind of analysis. Fairclough's (1989, 1995) three dimensions are:

1. The object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts).
2. The processes by means of which the object is produced and received (writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects.
3. The socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

For each of the dimensions he suggests a different method of analysis (see illustration below). For text analysis—description; for processing analysis—interpretation and for a social analysis—explanation.



He further argues that dominance is jointly produced when the dominated are persuaded that the dominance is neutral. As such in the case that dominance is accepted, the dominated act in the interest of the powerful resulting in hegemony. It is essential then for purposes of conducting a CDA, that as researchers, we are aware that our language is not neutral, that it is often ideologically-based and politicised. Being conscious of this, we are aware that language use is telling of where power lies and the ideological stances taken. We are also then aware that language is not produced without context both current and historical and that it is Janus-faced in that it is connected to both past and present reality.

This research is interested in the methodological approach to discourse with which Fairclough (1995) is concerned, he argues that macro phenomena cannot be analysed without evidence of their effects on practice which comes from an analysis of discursive events (p. 88). At the heart of Fairclough's work lie several challenges for the author making use of CDA as a methodological approach to their research. They include but are not limited to an investigation of how verbal interactions shape or are shaped by social structures; engaging the text at different levels and from a variety of perspectives, with the intention of raising questions concerning the text; a challenge to imagine a different construction of the text and generating a mental comparison to other texts being considered. As a generalist, Fairclough is interested in the broadest interpretation possible of the text, as for him, there is no single correct interpretation of text.

4.9 Coding

According to Attride-Stirling (2001) who writes on thematic network analysis, "coding is regarded as a helpful, though by no means unique or indispensable, technique in qualitative

analysis" (p. 390). She describes the process of coding as a first step to reduce data, in order to make it more manageable to interpret as "it tends to be done on the basis of the theoretical interests guiding the research questions, on the basis of salient issues that arise in the text itself, or on the basis of both" (p. 390). The transcripts used in this research were coded using purposive coding/sampling as a preliminary step towards the data analysis. According to Ted Palys (2008):

> To say one will engage in purposive sampling signifies that one sees sampling as a series of strategic choices about with whom, where, and how one does one's research. This statement implies that the way that researchers sample must be tied to their objectives. A second implication follows from the first: There is no one best sampling strategy because which is best will depend on the context in which researchers are working and the nature of their research objective(s). (p. 297)

The author did not go much further than the purposive coding process which delineated the data as needed for the initial phase of the analysis, as the intention was to make use of CDA in order to make sense of the data. By assigning labels to the data in order to generate an inventory for the analysis from which to construct a narrative that would support the assertions made in the dissertation, the author was able to navigate the data through themes rather than sifting through raw transcripts alone. Specifically, the research looked for excerpts related to gender, race, decolonisation, homogeneity and intersectionality. Researchers, according to Leavy (2017), make use of content analysis to "understand the meanings that circulate in texts" (p. 146). The systematic reduction of the content while conscious of the context in which the content was created is a crucial part of the process of analysis and enable me to draw out crucial excerpts embedded within the text. Leavy writes: "during initial immersion into the data it is customary to generate a code for each unit of analysis... you continue to analyze or re-analyze the data, you may refine your codes, collapse several literal codes into a larger category or more abstract code. Eventually you identify themes" (2017, p.147). Leavy offers the following as five general phases of analysis; (1) data preparation and organisation, (2) initial immersion, (3) coding, (4) categorising and theming, and (5) interpretation (2017, p. 150).

The process which was undertaken in analysing the transcripts for this research was informed by Leavy's five phases. An initial reading of the transcripts gave the author a general sense of what the interviews covered. In the second reading, the author highlighted excerpts from the interviews

which could be used to strengthen the hypothesis which was that homogenisation of the protesting students was likely the catalyst for oppression of some students within the student movement.

The findings relied on the detailed accounts given of the experiences within the protests from different perspectives. As the interviews had already been transcribed as part of the making of the documentary film, and accompanied several hours of footage, the transcripts were a rich source for analysis. Interviews were semi-structured and the responses given were deliberately open ended to ensure that the perspectives shared by the activists were not informed only by the questions being posed, and that they were in control of the narratives they shared:

> Epistemological questions address theories of knowing and an understanding of the phenomenon of interest…These types of questions suggest the exploration of participant actions/processes and perceptions found within the data. Selected coding methods that may catalog and better reveal these epistemologies include: Descriptive, Process, Initial, Versus, Evaluation, Dramaturgical, Domain and Taxonomic, Causation, and/or Pattern Coding, plus Theming the Data. (Saldaña, 2013, p. 61)

4.10 Ethical considerations

According to Fluehr-Lobban (1994) informed consent has become a cornerstone for ethical standards in several fields of research involving human subjects. As the research did not include minors or persons who are not able to give expressed consent, it is unlikely to breach any confidentiality. This approach is mindful of issues concerning power and dominance in the context of the research, and therefore takes seriously the issue of consent in the context of personal narrative, and use. It takes heed of Kevin Gillian and Jenny Pickerill's (2012) hopeful approach to ethics, which suggests that key to "ethical research process is recognition of our location within the broader dynamics of society and seeking to reflexively critique and adjust that positionality" (p. 140).

I applied to the ethics committee of the University of the Witwatersrand for a waiver on ethical clearance, as the research undertaken did not include human participants, and met the requirements for a waiver. The waiver was granted. Each interviewee provided written consent for the use of their interviews, and permission was granted by the production company as well.

4.11 Potential challenges in the research approach

In multidisciplinary readings the author observed a diversity of perspectives and used coding to "pre-established codes that relate to attributes (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.), culture, values, attitudes, and beliefs, for example, are most likely essential to studies about identity (Saldaña, 2013, p. 62). In doing so the author was however mindful of the problematic of "experience-focused research [and the assumption of] an authorial subjectivity 'behind' the material. This approach cuts researchers off from all the other literary and cultural studies work on narrative which takes more complicated approaches to subjectivity (Squire, 2020, p. 14).

CHAPTER FIVE - ASSUMING HOMOGENEITY

5.1 Beneath the surface of homogeneity

To understand what this research describes as assumed homogeneity requires a brief engagement with collective consciousness attributed to Emile Durkheim's work ([1893] 1964).

According to Durkheim, the term homogeneity denotes "the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society" (Durkheim, [1893] 1964). Durkheim's two solidarities are useful for this inquiry. Durkheim writes of mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity in relation to what he terms collective consciousness. Mechanical solidarity relies on religious symbols, discourse, beliefs and rituals to foster collective consciousness. The other, organic solidarity, Durkheim attributes to the realisation of mutual reliance, became more prevalent in modern industrialised society. The production of collective consciousness, this chapter argues, was constituted through the two solidarities during the protests. Students relied on each other to produce collective consciousness, which could be deployed through ideologies such as patriotism and nationalism.

In this chapter we begin to see that the collective consciousness which brought students together in protests was not sufficient for the sustenance of the protests. We also begin to see the salience of tacit social contracts in relation to a collective consciousness and how those tacit social contracts reify homogeneity. It could be argued that the reification of homogenisation and the deployment of social contracts which upheld the status quo within the protests resulted in the inevitable demise of the protests and fissures in the student movements which came together in support of the protests. As more groups fought for recognition, more intersectional issues came to the fore challenging equity and equality which appeared to have been taken for granted.

Mickey and Wandile reflected on the multiplicity in the movement;

> I think for the first time you have a forging of people from different walks of life. I mean class, I mean every single set of a definer of difference was there in that space and people… you know I hear a lot of conversations about people going over the fact that they were met with certain ideas or certain conflicts or certain contrasts of existence for the first time and whether or not I was willing to believe that, it had to

> be a thing that was reckoned with, so how do you have me from my walk of life, my cross positions, my identity politics then reach over you know and almost care for you… from your… you know I think we didn't take a moment to think about that because we were in a war. We were fighting an institution […] I'm thinking about how UCT was not created for any of us. Not you, not me, not any derivative of blackness or minority body. It was literally a hub for you know Rhodes to generate you know his elite white leaders of society who would lead the African people and now we're here trying to undo this huge epistemic injustice […] I think it was a big thing and it complicated things so I don't know if we had a moment to breathe or to even see each other outside the political bodies. (Mickey Moyo & Wandile Dlamini)

Ngwenya's problematising of identity stems from his interest in the reification of identity and the capacity for such reification to explain and implicate an identity politics model which serves to impose a drastically oversimplified group identity which denies complexity and multiplicity (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 11). Mickey's reflection below is a useful vignette through which to think through multiplicity in identity which in several instances characterises the movement and disrupts the status quo as it pertains to ignorance. Mickey also describes how tensions rose between cisgender heterosexual women and the LGBTQI+ community and begins to reflect on the salience of the contentious moment:

> I remember there was a point where during one of like the meetings […] someone had said that at the end of the day cis-het woman are the enemy of the LGBTQI+ community […] I identify as cis-het I automatically do not have a healthy relationship with any person who is part of LGBTQI+ community but then I was like… but maybe I don't get to know that right. I don't get to say that somebody else whose experienced me may say that actually I feel that the way that you treat people of the LGBTQI community is X and Y and Z. (Mickey Moyo)

According to Steyn, systematic ignorance can be found in the knowledge constructed from positions of power. It is constitutive of the means through which to produce and maintain inequality in society. She argues that knowledge or the drive to knowledge is epistemologically dysfunctional or ethically reprehensible (Steyn, 2012, p. 11). She also writes that race is deeply implicated in that process. Through the reflections of the activists and engagement in this section with Ngwenya, the research suggests that such ignorance, while often relating to race in #RMF and #FMF is equally applicable to other intersections such as sexual orientation or gender identity class or even national identity.

> ‘Rhodes Must Fall’, we were all black at UCT who understood that there’s institutional racism at this place and that we need to decolonise it but that didn’t build a community, and you could tell that because we weren’t invested fundamentally in everybody’s well-being. Because some people… if some people were you know experienced some kind of hardship like they got arrested or when right! (Some people would be immediately rescued as if everything must stop even though we said this is a strategy, we need to meet with Max Price, we need to do this… no everything must stop, we must raise his bail money or we must go and pressurise the… the… the police… the police station to… to release him. (Wandile Dlamini)

> [Wandile Kasibe] shoots things really frames things in a particular way…frames people as leaders, frames women in a very particular way, frames patriarchs in quite a particular way. So yeah I just remember knowing that, that exhibition was going to misrepresent what was going on and was going to become the official document of what happened at ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ and we needed to intervene in that history-making because we can’t have a year after ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ what happened at ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ being mischaracterized so soon. Like how… how can… how can history rewrite itself so quickly. (Wandile Dlamini)

For homogenisation to occur, reification needs to sustain it. Reification is a social process, not only an intellectual practice. As such, it is central to the politics of “ethnicity,” “race,” “nation,” and other putative “identities” (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 5). For Malose Langa, one of the contributors to #Hashtag, the assumption of homogeneity among the protesting students was flawed and it became essential to take a closer look at the protests. He writes:

> it is also important to reflect on the darker side of the #FeesMustFall movement, including the domination of male students within the movement (see Wits chapter), rape incidents (see Rhodes chapter), the exclusion of gender nonconforming activists (see UCT chapter) and the party-political power dynamics and battles for leadership positions within the movement (all chapters). These observations suggest that the movement was not homogeneous and was characterised by tensions and contradictions. Some of these tensions led to the emergence of splinter groups, and to divisions and ruptures within the movement which made it difficult for all those involved to speak with one voice. These darker aspects of #FeesMustFall need to be analysed critically to assess how they may have contributed to the collapse and divisions within the movement in various universities (Langa, 2017, p. 9).

Heeding Langa's call for critical analysis, the heterogeneous nature of the movement, more so under the banner of #FMF is evident in the shifts experienced by Phakamani in his reflection. At the same time, Wandile's concern is also being identified not for the diversity of their identities but rather for what is most prevalent, in their case, their sexuality.

> Looking back now, being a student and revisiting that… currently I am an lecturer within the institution that I thought I would never be part of and me… me becoming part of the university doesn't make me less of an activist or doesn't change the way of thinking or how I am going to challenge things because in the end of the day, my… my political ideology is still in… one, is to fight the injustices and to continue fighting for black students and workers within this institution. (Phakamani Ntentema)

> So people felt like they could only talk to me about trans things, and they could only talk to me about patriarchal things and like if you don't talk about that, then there is nothing for us to talk about. (Wandile Dlamini)

Like Ngwenya, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) contribute to the analysis of protests as they call for a shift in the language of identity, which produces homogeneity. They, like Ngwenya, claim numerous categories of identification that are misrepresented under the category of identity understood as singular and stagnant on the assumption of sameness which the category produces. Beyond identity, those engaging the literature should do so in tandem with the trifecta of race, gender and class. In many instances, the primary category of inquiry is the mobilisation of race as a primary catalyst. The attention afforded to race and the complexities thereof direct the research to the role of racial politics in the South African context and, more particularly, to show a contextual understanding of how race was deployed to homogenise protestors. The research notes that such homogeneity does the work of illustrating a sameness in the experiences of black youth in pursuit of access to education while rendering those youths indistinguishable from one another. The parity should enable the reader to consider how blackness, when understood as homogenous, fails to recognise internal differences in such categorisation. By making it possible to ignore the salience of gender and class concerning the categories concerning homogeneity. Doing so is reductive. While the homogeneity is valid for the initial ideological stance, it became clear in the interviews and reading reflection in other sources such as #Hashtag that this was not the case for all, all the time. Wandile explains:

> So I think that yeah, that was like one of the best like very rare initial stages of just like realising, you're not experiencing the shit by yourself its really much across the board, and across the nation. (Wandile Dlamini)
>
> To understand the movement… like fallism as a movement, you kind of have to understand that there were like ebbs and flows of it right. (Wandile Dlamini)

> Their favourite statement was to say they're casualties of the revolution right! So I'm just like who's determined as the bad happenings to someone, how is he determined as a casualty versus the responsibility of 'Rhodes Must Fall' showed we are not a community because some people if you… if you… something bad happen to you, you were just a casualty other people it's like no it's our responsibility as a community to try and sort that. (Wandile Dlamini)

Through an awareness of the discrepancies resulting from assumed homogeneity Ngwenya's inquiry indicates the danger of homogeneity that Brubaker and Cooper as:

> a real-life dilemma: preserving cultural distinctiveness depends at least in part on maintaining bounded groupness and hence on policing the "exit option," and accusation of "passing" and of betraying one's roots [that] serve as modes of discipline. (2000, p. 33)

In this dilemma, a call for a focus on intersectional identities cognisant of gender and class seems to fall on deaf ears. It is also within that call where the movement's fissures become overly apparent and its dissolution imminent.

> If I want to call "Rhodes Must Fall" there is no one to call, there's… there's nothing and I'm wondering like it got built up and it dissipated so quickly but what would have kept us together and what would have kept us strong and glued together and I think it was… if we actually built a community what does that mean? It means I care about you in your totality […] Because if I wanted to call 'Rhodes Must Fall' to come together, where do I go? How do I access 'Rhodes Must Fall'? […] some people become legitimate and then other people, who don't do that shit then are illegitimate or doing it wrong [legitimacy models of feminism]. (Wandile Dlamini)

Brubaker and Cooper claim that "[a]ctivists of identity politics deploy the language of bounded groupness not because it reflects social reality, but precisely because groupness is ambiguous and contested. Their groupist rhetoric has a performative, constitutive dimension, contributing, when it is successful, to the making of the groups it invokes" (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000, p. 33).

Brubaker and Cooper are concerned that the homogeneity of groups is constructed externally and, as such, their heterogeneity become pervasive.

> So it's just like it became diluted exactly at that point because people were joining not understanding what the bigger goal is and not understanding how much power we are wielding in that moment. Like we could have done… (Wandile Dlamini)

> I remember being all "yeah but like why does… why does Chumani think he like represents all black people…" […] So it's just like… it almost feel like there's two instances of re-writing history. In the first instance when people capture and this is mainly by news outlets of what is happening and then there is a second instance when people recall and decide what's important and unimportant in the narrative of 'Rhodes Must Fall' and that irritates me so much. (Wandile Dlamini)

Systemic violence becomes one of the terms which unifies the protestors in the early stages of protest. It is not separate from epistemic violence and the social acts of violence in the movement. Like the statue and art surrounding it on the campus, institutional paraphernalia, which results in frustration, acts as a catalyst for the protests. Still, a motivation for the differential treatment of certain individual bodies over others is best explained through the contract of domination. Audre Lorde best articulates the challenge of such dominance relevant to the context of protest and the argument being advanced here:

> The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master's house as their only source of support. (Lorde, 1984, p. 97)

The symbols did not reflect the student populaces' histories and realities, which are increasingly black since the advent of democracy. The unease of black people still experiencing colonial rule's legacy simultaneously unifies the protestors and becomes the unease articulated in the quotations above.

The intersectional approach advocated for, whether only initially or throughout the protests, depending on which perspective it is being viewed, became a catalyst for protests which have occurred beyond the historical moment of #FMF, one could argue. Most recently, at Wits students

started protesting for accommodation. With so many students finally making it into higher learning institutions, there is an equal need for affordable and accessible housing for those who come from afar. They are not the homogeneous black child, which the research has discussed above.

5.2 Implications of race for assumptions of homogeneity in the South African context

This section introduces the voices of the three activists selected for this research. They reflect on the politics of race and racialisation in the university and the protests. Their awareness of race's implications in the institution and the protests is beneficial to engage on homogeneity assumptions—the activists' lived experience concerning that assumption are also telling.

CHAPTER SIX - REFUSING HOMOGENEITY

6.1 Contesting hegemonic perspectives

The chapter below shares some reflections of activists who were part of the #RMF and #FMF protests from the University of Cape Town. These reflections are taken from interview transcripts and highlight some critical concerns for the activists. The four activists whose reflections are engaged with below arguably have only their racial categorisation and their engagement in the protests in common. Their reflections are used to illustrate some contentious issues which arose and some of their frustrations and learnings. Their perspectives, while perhaps not exhaustive, at the very least allow them to engage from different positionalities, having played different roles themselves. For Wandile and Mickey, the vantage point is one of leadership within the broader protests, whereas, for Phakamani, the engagement is based on his political leadership and personal experiences which drew him to the protest. Their reflections have been divided into four categories for ease of reference. Those categories are race, gender, homogenisation and decolonisation. All of the quotes from the interviews have been used verbatim as this was the style of the transcription. Their reflections have informed the making of the documentary film titled "The Art of Fallism" (2019). The interviews were archived with the film company Isme Film and permissions obtained through them; also, the individuals have signed release forms for the use of their interviews for purposes of the research.

6.2 The salience of race

This subsection weaves voices of the three activists reflecting on politics of race and racialization in the context of the university and the protests themselves.

Phakamani illustrates the anxiety he experiences as a black student who has a job which is a source of income for himself and his family. He is aware of the implications of the protests, but maintains that to partake in the protests, he needed to ensure that there was balance between his social and political life:

> I had to balance the social life and the political life […] Then in the end of the day there was always a fear with the students that… what happens when you have participated in a protest. And the fear is that you are going to get… you're going to jail. You are going to get a criminal record and then your life is over. But

> then we said to ourselves how do we protect each other from the system that is very brutal to us? Then we formed the 'Progressive Union' in 2017… is it 2017? I think it's 2017 then that's where we were able to come up… because it was a straight six weeks of protest. Six weeks… six weeks of shutdown within the university, not working for six weeks. (Phakamani Ntentema)

The implications for Phakamani as a working-class black student at UCT is that he carefully contemplates his involvement in the protests. The protests, as he understood them, were in favour of systemic changes in the educational system. His awareness of the potential loss of access through being jailed and perhaps even obtaining a criminal record because of his involvement in the protests did not deter him.

> So imagine psychologically having to tell yourself that you have nothing to lose but actually you have everything to lose. But in that current state of moment you knew that what you are losing is what actually is going to be a great gain, because in the end of the day you shaped the politics of students and the politics of the country. (Phakamani Ntentema)

For him, the protests made congruent the personal and political as they were imbued with the realities of the exploitation of black workers, the inaccessibility for black students as a result of financial inaccessibility and the need for reform. He highlights experiences of protests and the removal of the statue as not merely the engagement of the issue. He understands the protests as part of a larger intergenerational conversation. His reflection on the presence of the Rhodes statue and what it represents is indicative of the profound social wound which the generation of protestors involved in #RMF and #FMF is still tending to. As alluded to earlier in the theoretical framework, consensual hallucinations and the deliberate ignorance of the institution is perhaps made use of to address the issue of systemic violence. Perhaps the sudden urgency with which the issue was raised could be characterised by an abandonment of survival ignorance in favour of not merely surviving, but actively becoming part of the system of higher education system which safeguarded epistemic violence, chastised those who challenged the system through epistemic delinking and maintained the status quo of a Eurocentric educational institution.

> 'End Outsourcing' was a campaign by black students and black workers to say end… you must end… you… we must end the exploitation of workers […] So ending outsourcing is ending the exploitation of workers within the university. (Phakamani Ntentema)

Wandile reflects on outsourcing of the workers, challenging the university's stance that the reason for outsourcing was because the university saw the services as "non-essential [which for Wandile] is quite disingenuous" (Wandile Dlamini). Phakamani continues to reflect in his interview on the demands which were presented during the #RMF protests;

> From… from 'Rhodes Must fall' the demands were clear… is to actually recognize that the University of Cape Town is a racist university that is founded up on the principles of racism because John Cecil Rhodes said "I will build UCT out of the Kaffir stomach". What do you mean if you say you are going to build something out of the Kaffir? It means that you will build the university out of the black… […] a Kaffir is a black person but that word is very racist […] when Rhodes fell it was… it was from a long because it's not only 'Rhodes Must Fall' who have fought against the statue of Rhodes but it's… it's… it's an intergenerational cause that was… it's a call, it's an intergenerational call upon and against the oppressed to say that you cannot put that man at the centre of the university […] A man who said himself that black people are nothing and he just want to exploit them. So 'Rhodes Must Fall' […] not actually the statue because the statue itself represent power, represent oppression, conqueror the word that you have conquered so when you conquer land people celebrate you but we asked ourselves whose history is being celebrated? And whose pain is being displayed and whose pain is being ignored? How do you conquer people in their own land and put a statue that represent white supremacy within a university that says it's about learning? What are you learning? But part of the demands, were the curriculum… decolonization of the curriculum. We must learn about Africa. We must learn about the representation of Africa. We must actually re-in… re-represent Africa in a way that is from an African perspective. (Phakamani Ntentema)

His questioning of institutional praxis seems to echo Steyn's sentiments that ignorance is situated much like knowledge in that it can be deployed through communicative practices and dissemination across social settings (Steyn, 2012, p. 10). The university is indeed a social setting, and in South Africa, a microcosm of the social issues which are themselves communicative practices which have sustained inequality despite the good intentions of equality and dignity for all. This assertion is evidenced through the occurrence of the #RMF and #FMF protests, and the context in which the introduction illustrated them occurring. Kopano Ratele's re-examination of traditional masculinity grapples with the role of tradition in discourse, in his case particularly with traditional masculinity. This is useful for the analysis later in the reflections of the role of such traditional masculinities, but presently, his entry into the conversation on tradition here is used to understand the sentiments the protests engendered. Unlike their predecessors, the students

in 2015 and subsequent protests stood in different positions to the dominant discourse of traditions which have been passed down through generations of the academy. The generation of #RMF and #FMF have resisted and remade the tradition transmitted to them by their predecessors and reimagined those traditions and how they will be handed down to the next generation to enter the space of higher education. For Wandile, who is the youngest among the activists, the issue of race appears to be particularly challenging. Wandile's reflections appear to differ from Phakamani in that they appear to be informed by a different upbringing. The type of vocabulary used and their annunciation of events illustrates a stark difference between the two, both in the filmed interviews and transcripts. Wandile went to integrated schools where racial dynamics were seemingly not as stark, their reluctance to associate with white people in the course of the #RMF and #FMF protests the treatment of black people and by extension their own treatment as a black person inconsiderate of their upbringing or class status.

> So as soon as you have large groups of black people you know protesting about something that is important and making use of what is deemed violent or damaged to property then it becomes laden *swartgevaar* and like definitely like these blacks are trying to like fuck up the world and fuck shit happen….Like they're unprincipled, they just don't want to work or they don't want to do anything and have nothing better to do than just burn things and this is like bad mischaracterization keeps on happening. (Wandile Dlamini)

> People feel they cannot tell the story of UCT without talking about Cecil John Rhodes and often we feel we can't tell the story of Africans without talking about colonialism and that's right, right! So I might not disagree with that but it just sucks that every time we want to talk about ourselves we have to talk about the subjugation. (Wandile Dlamini)

> No! like I would not be able to like hang out with any white person ever because I've spent my whole life in whiteness and just needed a break. But now I'm good. (Wandile Dlamini)

The racial differences for Wandile were exacerbated when during protests white students were out surfing:

> you're fucking surfing in Muizenberg… I'm not even shitting you that's what they were doing while we were being brutalized but okay fine they took holiday, didn't even bother to thank us… nothing and then I think people… there were moments when people realized that fuck this is actually like significantly like historically important. (Wandile Dlamini)

> Max Price was getting paid, the white students are either surfing on Muizenberg or studying more and we're the only ones who are getting like fucked but the thing is even if things carried on as normal we're still going to get fucked. So it's just like we might as well do this since we're fucked anyway. (Wandile Dlamini)

Here, while Wandile's frustration relates to the racialised differences which mean that black students are more likely than their white counterparts to be participating in protest, they are further angered by the sentiments which Phakamani relays in his interview regarding the double entendre which is the plight of the Black student concerning the status quo as well as the disruption of the university space. Wandile further reflects on their experiences with some of the police officers, deployed by the University to restore order during the protests.

> I remember one of the police like officers said "We're being forced to do this. We're getting instructions" like we have… and it was in that moment where I realized that I needed to build complex models because it was very easy for… from my side to villainize that the police are like you know these heartless mother fuckers who are just… like fucking ready to fuck you because they're like fucking sadist or something like that right!... I started to build a complex understanding of the world with it… was not as simplified as I thought. But yeah I get what you mean about the guilt from that moment. I don't feel it, because I knew we did not have enough social capital that if something happened to us that no one was going to have our back and that's the best I could do. That's… that's how I feel about that moment. We didn't… we had no social capital to try and do that. (Wandile Dlamini)

The complex model which Wandile refers to here is one which is mindful of the intersectionality which is visible in the protests. That of black parents in the context of the university as workers. That of black police officers in the context of protests trying to secure an income to better the lives of their children. Furthermore, black protesting students themselves who had grown weary because of the status quo and the systemic violence's which they were foregrounding in the protests.

> And I don't think it's any mistake that all of us have experience like in the blatant racism or the micro aggressive racism and we just thought it was fucked up shit happening to us and it turns out naaaaah! (Wandile Dlamini)

> … I miss that about like fallism in terms of like… just like being in blackness all the time. (Wandile Dlamini)

Wandile's hallucination is that of a better place and time. It is one surrounded by black people continuously and simultaneously the creation and dislocation of the reality of the protests and the space which they created. It is also the dislocation of such space which is hallucinated as Azania. It is the feeling of a collective consciousness, the sharing of the sameness of the pain. It is a frustration with the system, a deliberate and willful engagement in order to produce and reproduce change within higher education in South Africa. For the protestors, the protests did not occur in isolation, nor disjointed from their day to day experiences.

6.3 The fallacy of gender parity

> And this is people buying into an idea, filing through a protest, no song, no drama, no spectacle, just mass bodies coming together and saying we need to have a conversation (Mickey Moyo)

Mickey and Wandile have a conversation about what a cop out it is to see people who take part in the protest(s) engage with literature on decolonisation, citing authors like Biko. They find it deplorable that the same people who have taken the time to read up on decolonisation cannot seem to afford the same courtesy to other issues arising in the protest(s). They continue to note the power differential in terms of embodied experiences of gender. Wandile comments "[n]o one taught you black consciousness!" (5:30) Mickey contemplates the way their intervention went in a male residence, noting the gate keeping in relation to discussions of gender power imbalances and toxic masculinity. Wandile then says "you know what "Patriarchy Must Fall" taught me the most...? Is that you're the one you're waiting for". "You know when we say patriarchy was pervasive, when we say the culture is toxic. We mean every single person till the last ten is affected by patriarchy you know" (sic).

For Wandile, the work that trans people did in favour of the #RhodesMustFall movement is at risk of being erased. For them, this is not an option. Wandile's activism consciously worked toward remembrance of those who were involved in the movement who are unlikely to be documented as part of it. For them, the Trans Collective cannot as it served those who saw each other as a network who supported one another and acknowledged each other:

> Then what are you going to do to recognize the woman who was dehumanized, who was exploited, who was… there's… there's trauma, there's everything. But the moment you change the name and put somebody who can… who… whom you can feel belonging then you are actually doing justice to the people of the world or to the people of Africa and to people of South Africa. So the demands that I've said were the most important demands amongst the other long… long term demands… so yeah. (Phakamani Ntentema)

Wandile, a gender non-conforming trans activist and a member of the Trans Collective at UCT, found it frustrating having to inform other people about trans identities continuously. It seemed as if they were not doing the work necessary to understand. Wandile self-identifies asL

> A black lesbian assigned female at birth non-binary trans person occupying the space where racist, sexist, narcissist, colonialist once sat. There's power in that. There's hope in that. This feels like transform UCT will happen. I'm inspired to make that happen. (Wandile Dlamini)

They became frustrated with this knowing that information about trans persons is readily available. Nevertheless, people would not take the time to understand or read up on trans identifying persons, making use of them as a reference point.

> The Trans Collective formed quite early on understanding that although 'Rhodes Must Fall' said it wanted to advocate the marginalized beings, understanding that the politics of that space was race first when you can't decide which elements are being affected, you are all influenced simultaneously, so the trans collective thought to advocate for trans students and bring about de-gendering as part of the de-colonial Project. (Wandile Dlamini)

The Trans Collective voiced concerns about women protestors who actively perpetuated misogyny and toxic masculinity, which is violent to trans bodies. Such misogyny and toxic masculinity, according to Wandile, is what informs transphobia and leads to the devaluing of individual bodies over others. Wandile acknowledges individual shared experiences of womxn and women; they also acknowledge the marking of trans bodies as different to cis-gendere women's bodies in the movement. Wandile, reflects on the time in which the toxic masculinity was being addressed in the protest(s) and says:

> it landed up turning into a space of vulnerability and everyone was sharing all moments of assault, sexual assault, physical assault. Moments of just like experiencing some kind of toxic masculinity or like experiencing hardships and all of that and we're sharing and I chose to share about you know how trans-people fit into all of this…and, there was a distinct moment where I had stood up and tried to share and I was like… I'm glad that we're doing all of this and we're in solidarity with one another but when trans-people really ask you to rise to the occasion. When trans-people ask you… when… when we're coming together now talking about patriarchy and know that patriarchy, misogyny informs trans-phobia. Do not separate these things. They're in the exact same systems that… that inform them…When, trans-people ask for your help, I hope you show up in numbers (sic). (Wandile Dlamini)

Wandile expresses their anger when reflecting on the responses of protestors saying:

> When [they] call for issues of patriarchy and more than some people pitch, it's not as big as when we call for racism right but, when I call for trans issues no one comes. (Wandile Dlamini)

Wandile shares a concern of the differential treatment of people in the space of the movement using Masixole a prominent cisgender male in the protests as an example:

> I knew that we did not have enough social capital in the movement that the movement would run. I knew if Masixole got arrested, people would get it there but I was like no! The movement is not going to have your back and how do I tell your parents that I let you get arrested and let you get charges. (Wandile Dlamini)

Wandile questions patriarchs who identify themselves as Fallists:

> then what does it mean to be a Fallist? Because theoretically it means you subscribe to those three pillars but [patriarchs of] Fallism will definitely call themselves Fallists and think they're very legitimate in calling themselves Fallists and will die before they become feminists like (Wandile Dlamini)

Their provocation talks to the problem of thinking of the Fallist movement as a homogenous movement. She struggles to reconcile Fallism and patriarchy, as Fallism is founded on the three pillars of Pan Africanism, Black Consciousness and Intersectionality. In conversation with

Mickey, Wandile began to speak about the way in which the women of the movement reacted to 'Patriarchy Must Fall':

> there's all of these bodies of just like girls coming out and having a reckon of something is going on you know, something is shifting. So we move and what's interesting is our protest culture in South Africa is through song. We sing, I don't really remember that we sang through 'Patriarchy Must Fall', I don't. We just… we had a conviction, we were doing a thing, we're carrying conversation and we moved (sic) (Wandile Dlamini).

Mickey notes some concern relating to the way she was perceived within the movement. Her role within the protests was often at the forefront, and one could argue, necessitated the performance of militancy. For this reason, Mickey was arguably legible as someone unapproachable. Her assertion that she is human signified the effect of her performativity. Mickey's militant performance impacted her legibility as a woman in protest whether she used it deliberately or not.

> Mickey? Hugs? And I'm actually like people don't see that I'm actually a… a human being. (Mickey Moyo)

Wandile argues that the space of #RMF from early on intended to include marginalised bodies. In so doing the purpose of the movement included an intersectional approach which could not later be abandoned:

> So they [women] came in and like just got rid of them [men in the space] and then they just started lurking around and we're like "you too, you also have participated in the erasure of trans people and the thing is there was a natural allyship among like the cis women of "Rhodes Must Fall" and the trans people of "Rhodes Must Fall" because misogyny often informs transphobia right, so we face similar you know situations and hardships within the movement but it's still an act of like erasing gender as a need to de-gender as a decolonial you know tenant that we needed them to understand in that moment. Yes we've been allied all the time but what have you done really because you still freely participated in this exhibition. You're quite happy, in fact to participate in this exhibition knowing that we were invisiblised in it (Wandile Dlamini).

By the time the Trans Capture took place, however, it did not seem as if the same rules of engagement were being applied, Wandile laments:

> [Hopefully the exhibition can be used] firstly to claim back a space that actively erased us. So we want to reassert our existence, our… and our prominence in the movement by hosting our own exhibition that represents and glorifies our work as artists. Well, as trans artists and then second to that is just also coming together and trying, because we were all traumatized from that space and lots of us fell apart, like psychologically and emotionally after that. So it would be really great for us and our interpersonal relationships to really reconvene and just physically see one another in the eyes, be able to like help one another because like it's been so long, the last time we were all together was the Trans Capture (Wandile Dlamini).

> so being trans is a pretense according to cis people that they sanction us and allow us to do…that's what's underpinned by describing transgender and cisgender according to this gender, this fake but sex is real contract and I reject that thing completely (Wandile Dlamini).

Steyn concludes her chapter on the ignorance contract with the following:

> Much has been said about the ignorance of the racial order that tends to accompany whiteness. This article has brought the connection between whiteness and ignorance into sharper focus by employing the notion of epistemologies of ignorance. It also contributes to agnotology, the study of not-knowing, through showing some of the ways in which ignorance is actually constructed in social interaction for social purposes. It further extends the discussion by showing that ignorance is both a function of and functional in racialized societies. Indeed, the ignorance contract may be regarded as a subclause of the racial contract. (Steyn, 2012, p.21)

Her concluding remark on ignorance as a sub-clause for the racial contract, in this instance, is useful for the extension of this argument to power more broadly. The ignorance contract is arguably permissible in social constructions of power that confer dominance. The ignorance contract makes plausible, consensual hallucinations, and fantasies that perpetuate subjugation. Writing on the reconstruction of South African identities Michelle Ruiters contemplates how:

> Time, space and institutional structure feed into constructions of identity […] In turn these differences, in the present political milieu, determine whether groups gain access to resources and recognition, or are rendered politically or socially invisible […] A society with multiple identities will bolster democracy unless the hegemonic identity conforms to old racialized divisions within South African society. Various

> identities within an individual that are recognised in particular contexts could provide for and reinforce participatory democratic practices. (Ruiters, 2009, pp. 127-128)

The participatory democratic practices Ruiters describes requires the recognition of co-constructed identities that are not fixed as they were during Apartheid. The subjugation of groups who are perceived or constructed as inferior, based on cultural authority, reinforces other dichotomies such as gender/sex which are generative of ideologies such as patriarchy and the fallacy of male superiority. These are essential considerations for the way protestors in different moments during the #RMF and subsequent #FMF protests came to protest, and how they were perceived during the protests relative to race, gender and class which were deployed at different times to differing extents for different reasons. Nyamjoh (2016) who writes about the 2015-2016 protests specifically makes the following observation:

> In many ways, the Fees Must Fall protests found more traction with whites than did the Rhodes Must Fall and the End Outsourcing protests. Could it be that whites saw the issue of fees as a matter of class, while Rhodes was more a question of race and outsourcing a way of life? But the intersection of class and race in South Africa seldom hides for long.

Black male protestors who exerted their conferred dominance did so in the context of cultural authority afforded to them through the ideologies of Black Consciousness and Pan-Africanism. Both are arguably male-dominated ideological stances because of the prevalence of male writers in those traditions. Privileges afforded to black male students throughout the protests were not discreet, nor were they considered by those who enjoyed them. Nyamjoh's writing focuses on race, but the counter-narrative relevant to gender and class concerning race are essential because the movement purported to be built on the pillars of Pan-Africanism, Black Consciousness and Intersectionality. Nyamjoh thinks about the differential treatment of White students to their non-White counterparts arguing that such treatment was "a not so subtle reminder of the 'reality of a system that privileges white bodies as it does violence to black bodies'" (Nyamjoh, 2016, p. 202). Nevertheless, the privileging of male bodies inconsiderate of the violence done to female bodies is equally stark.

A critical approach to the notion of power at the centre of discussions about diversity in organizations is necessary, according to Halleh Ghorashi and Ida Sabelis. They believe "that

hegemonic and discursive power structures (re)produce inequalities in organizations even when inclusion is assumed" (Ghorashi & Sabelis, 2013, p. 84). For this reason, they offer some conditions, for the revival of what they term forgotten passionate activism. The conditions are set out below:;

> These conditions could stimulate reviving the forgotten passionate activism within organizations in which all actors claim their own role in changing the structures of inequality. The first step to realize this claim is the willingness to start a process of reflection on one's taken for granted positioning within the dominant discourses. The conditions to enable it are epoche´, contiguity and alterity as described above. Reaching the situative balance of sameness and difference can only be possible through recurrent negotiation of positions to create shared meanings free from power plays. This requires continuous reflection on the impact of normalization in everyday practices. To include others in the organization, images of the self and its inherent normativity (e.g. of the norm employee) need to be uncovered and rethought. To start this process, we argued that strategic essentialism could serve as a strategy for making differences matter. Yet to make it durable we believe more is needed. A 'dance of perspectives' initiated by strategic essentialism should enable reflection on the normalized structures of exclusion throughout all levels of organizational thinking and practice. This implies a constant search for, and claim of temporal niches for reflection to create non-norm based negotiation of positions to foster shared meanings and to plan common goals. (Ghorashi & Sabelis, 2013, p. 84)

The challenge was, however, that those conditions were not present during the protest. While both male and female leaders were present in the protest(s), it is evident through the occurrence of counter-protests that there were tensions during the protests. It is also important to note that all three do not happen as solitary moments, but either come as a result of or are catalysts to other moments. These protests are not unique, and naked protests have occurred in other contexts as well. Sasson-Levy and Rapoport (2003) demonstrate through comparison, reversed patterns of body/knowledge relations, each connoting a different meaning and outcome of protest which support the claim such protests are not unique but that they are part of a body of protests.

The three in focus here are for purposes of the research the three most important moments in this context. However, there were other protests too. The #MbokotoLead movement at Wits University later found traction on other campuses; the #TransCapture movement at UCT highlighted the role of trans and non-binary persons in the movement and the #RUReferencelist

movement which named and shamed sexual offenders at the University Currently Known as Rhodes. These movements foregrounded womxn's bodies in protests which were seen to be led by men. Under all three of these, women at different universities used their bodies to protest by exposing their breasts. Nude protests, while not new, challenge public space tremendously, as they use what only exists in the social imaginary as personal to make a political statement.

> The skin and the flesh expose us to the gaze of others, but also to touch, and to violence [...] Although we struggle for rights over our own bodies, the very bodies for which we struggle are not quite ever only our own. The body has its invariably public dimension. Constituted as a social phenomenon in the public sphere, my body is and is not mine. (Butler, 2006, p. 26)

At Wits, #MbokotoLead was a movement started in response to a growing discomfort of womxn in the #FMF protests around the praxis adopted what became known as mass meetings. These spaces were created for all parties interested in the protests to engage in dialogue and a decision-making process which was thought to be part of a flat-structure–a term used to refer to a structure that does not necessarily have leaders. The challenge this posed was that everyone was meant to be allowed to speak in the space should they so wish. This resulted in womxn airing opinions on matters open for public debate; however, during these meetings, it quickly became apparent that men's voices dominated the space. #MobokotoLead, #TransCapture and the #RUReferencelist advocate for urgency relating to issues of violence within the movements. Through these movements within the protest, the students construct a dynamic within the protest, which is simultaneously spoken and unspoken. In all three, the rhetoric of intersectionality as something which would derail the movement was used. Many men in the space felt that approaching the protest from an intersectional lens would detract from the single narrative that was students protesting for a free and decolonised education. For Gqola (2015) however, it is the origins of sexual violence, and its presence in South Africa linked to a long history of colonial violence which has always made the experiences, of black people and more so black women, concerning sex invisible. Gqola (2015) thinks through the hyper-sexualised black body in the collective consciousness of South Africa's, and more broadly, African colonial histories. In instances where patriarchy needed to find root those who did not enjoy its associated privileges were being silenced. The three movements, however, challenged patriarchal norms. As such, the experiences of the womxn are captured verbatim.

6.4 Countering hegemonic views

Ngwenya (2018) reading Blyden assesses Blyden's black personality and nationalism as emancipatory concepts that should do the work not of reinvention but rather of explicating Africanness as 'pluritopic' rather than 'monotopic'. His argument is arguably vital to an understanding of sustainable ideological stances in protests such as #FeesMustFall. He writes:

> In contemporary times we need not reinvent the concepts in their orthodox forms – even in our understandable need to counter orientalising discourses – whether in our anti-colonial, nationalistic, Afrocentric or Afro-radical discourses. This is because the concepts betray positionality, political opportunism and nativism exposing the limits of expedient, binarised, biocentric nationalism and certitudes and therefore inconsistent with egalitarian and inclusive Africanness. (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 136)

Ngwenya reminds us that; "Afropolitanism underscores the view that the African subject is not a stable category of nature fixed transcultural and transcendental constitution or orientation but a social construction" (Ngwenya, 2018, pp. 141). He cautions against the use of the Afropolitan claim of identity as a homogenous claim, noting that the attempt to universalize identity in Afropolitanism would "generalize identity and in consequence [overlook] cleavages of difference, varied histories and imbalances of power" (Ngwenya, 2018, pp. 141-142). His claims are substantiated by Nyamjoh who considers some differences between the protestors in both #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. Nyamjoh (2016) highlights some critical considerations concerning contentious axes of difference in the protests. Most notable perhaps was the treatment of students who were legible because of the differences in the way they were racialised and understood in the context of the protests as touchable and untouchable. He writes:

> Thought and action are instinctively black and white in South Africa. This was true of Fees Must Fall protests as well, where participating whites, to qualify to sing the song of black pain, were expected to acknowledge their privilege as a white collective in 'the context of racism – specifically, the day-to-day, violent, structural anti-black legacy of colonialism and apartheid, obscured today by the rhetoric of the rainbow nation' […] Occasionally, actions led to violence, and the violence risked a loss in legitimacy in the eyes of the largely supportive public and mainstream media. However, the violence was not always by the protesting students, as both the police and non-student opportunistic agent provocateurs were part of the action […] While students attempted a non-violent protest, officers 'vacillated between acting out the blunt

> impetus of a violence they had initiated and mitigating its effect'. Most notable was the stark contrast of treatment between black and white protesters, where white protesters could move among the officers unimpeded unlike black protesters who were physically hindered. This was a not so subtle reminder of 'the reality of a system that privileges white bodies as it does violence to black bodies'. (Nyamjoh, 2016, pp. 201-202)

> Apartheid may have died officially, but slow socio-economic transformation and slow reconfiguration of attitudes, beliefs and relationships in favour of greater mutual recognition and accommodation have meant its continued reproduction in less obvious and more insidious ways. (Nyamjoh, 2016, p. 208)

The racial tensions ultimately resulted in conversations that were mindful of the dynamics of power and privilege in the space of both #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall. As mentioned above, #MobokotoLead, #TransCapture and the #RUReferencelist were three instances that demonstrate those fissures. For Simamkele Dlakavu "[the] environment of patriarchal domination ignited the emergence of #MbokodoLead" (Dlakavu, 2017, p. 111) the deliberate interventions by womxn in all three instances illustrated that they had had enough. Nyamjoh details the involvement of women in the leadership of the #RhodesMustFall movement writing that:

> Women students were at the forefront of the occupation of Bremner building and along with their male counterparts staged many protests to summon university management to address transformation concerns, including patriarchy and sexism at the institution and nationally […] the women of RMF actually kicked all the men out of the organization because of patriarchy. This point was reiterated by the Trans Collective when they disrupted an exhibition to mark the anniversary of RMF that appeared to trivialize the contributions by women. (Nyamjoh, 2016, p. 135)

To understand the tensions which arose throughout the #RMF and #FMF protests, one needs to understand the active and implicit desire of the students to advocate for the multiplicity of their identities under the banners of the protests which resonated with them for different reasons. Ngwenya captures what this research considers as a crucial understanding of the role of assumed homogeneity, which is perpetuated because of pre-existing social conditions, and arguably the contracts mentioned above. Those who govern and make permissible in instances differential treatment of individual bodies resultant in the contract of domination. The research posits the role of an increasingly diverse South African university, and a broader acceptance of the multiplicity

in that space which functions as a microcosm, as underpinning the organic fissures in the movements. Ngwenya writes:

> In the post-independence and post-racial African era, Hall's deconstructive work on identity formation is instructive. It allows us to avoid the pitfall of essentialised racial and cultural identities. (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 119)

In countering the hegemonic discourse often associated with the #RMF and #FMF protests of solidarity and monolithic strategies toward a common target, the research deliberately pauses to consider the contestations of the counter-protests mentioned above. It deliberately challenges the reader to consider for a moment the transience of a supposedly stable identity which Ngwenya offers in his reflections on Africanness. In this research, reading Ngwenya and Njamjoh together has provided a framework in which to consider the implications of the racial project as it related to the politics of #RMF and #FMF, however, between the two texts not much time is spent thinking of the implications of having stabilised gender categories which are arguably understood as the byproduct of the African identity:

> When interrogating colonial power and its reach, it is important to register the voices of the colonized in their multiplicities, subjectivities and historicities […] A single social or political factor, however, epochal, cannot solely shape history, which is, rather, shaped by a multiplicity of interacting and interdependent factors. (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 160)

Ngwenya in the quote above is discussing Edward Said's *Orientalism*, published in 1979. He critiques the work, noting that Said "failed to develop a heterogeneous orientalist discourse" (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 160). Ngwenya's concern with identities being (re)constructed and read as heterogeneous is informed by other writers such as Homi Bhabha. Bhabha interrupts understandings of discourses on colonial and imperial powers in their 'plentitude' and insists instead on a middle ground between the coloniser and the colonised in which hybridity is developed not deliberately but as a "discursive outcome of the enunciation and translation of colonial power and authority" (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 162). He argues that hybridity should be particularised in order to engage with specificity concerning locations and temporalities (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 163). Transposing performativity onto whiteness in conversation with Butler, Ngwenya argues that "performativity can be understood not so much as a singular or deliberate

decision to wear the apparel of colonial whiteness, but as a 'reiterative and citational practice' which a discourse of colonial powers produces" (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 182). The arguments engaged with above are framed in Ngwenya's book under the title *Representing African Sexualities: Contesting Nativism from Without.* Ngwenya in the chapter "underscore[s] the narratives created by others to represent African sexualities" those narratives are culturally and historically situated and he uses "the representation of African sexualities in colonial discourses to show how the stereotypes they construct are anchored in the nativisation of African cultures" (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 151). Here Ngwenya provides a useful analysis of the performativity of whiteness which is used to reify and justify its authority in a location and temporality where such authority does not have roots. The performativity he uses as part of his analysis borrowed from Butler is used here in the research from a different vantage point. Such performativity, Ngwenya describes as the apparel of colonial whiteness. For purposes of this research, the description is being applied to #RMF and #FMF protests and the performativity of authority displayed by individual leaders. Some leaders relied on performances of authority to legitimise themselves in the movement and to legitimise their actions. Specifically, the performativity here relates to the performance of poverty, class identity and struggle credentials which are deployed to relegate individual bodies to the margins of protest generative of what Ngwenya asserts as the establishment of the violent hierarchy evident in his contemplation of Hall's deconstructive technique, where he relocates the technique in an African context arguing that

> whilst race is extant or remains with us for the foreseeable future, it can no longer operate with the same epistemology that gave it naturalistic validity under colonial *commandement* or even under emancipatory African nationalist discourses. Africanness, therefore, should be understood as an irruptive emergence of a new concept that could never be included in the colonial discourses. Once detotalised, what race retains is its social or political salience. (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 119)

Using Ngwenya's epistemological approach, this research is used to argue that gender can no longer operate as race has in the under emancipatory African nationalist discourses which have relegated it into the domain of the personal. The research furthers the argument that the detotalisation of gender in the context of emancipatory politics in the current socio-political milieu in South Africa and specifically in the contexts of both #RMF and #FMF are essential to an understanding of elevational politics. Those politics deployed in protests that subordinated

womxn and queer bodies in favour of the elevation of cisgender (gender congruent with sex) heterosexual black men without realising, particularly in the context of emancipatory protest, that simply replicating colonial subjugation through the performativity of power was in effect what Ngwenya described as the *donning the apparel of colonial whiteness* or becoming a signatory to Steyn's Ignorance contract.

6.5 Decolonisation

The call for decolonised education was not one of the initial demands of the #FMF movement, although the conversation relating to decolonisation appears to have taken place in tandem with the #RMF campaign quite early on. The call for decolonisation was mindful of the systemic violence faced by particularly black students within higher education and perhaps more specifically at institutions which were historically white. The discussion relating to decolonisation has been met with resistance at times during the protests. The rhetoric of decolonial education has necessitated conversations in many schools within universities having to contemplate the materials being taught and the history of those materials in relation to an ongoing debate about the decolonisation of knowledge. Nyamjoh writes that "Decolonisation as a universal aspiration may or may not coincide with being African or with being South African, in both a general, generous and inclusive sense of these identities" (Nyamjoh, 2016, p. 130). Decolonisation has even been discussed in the context of the destruction of the university, and the negation of knowledge that has been used to teach in the space of the university. Phakamani addresses this fallacy in an interview thinking about his own positionality and some of the remarks that he has been privy to over the course of the protests:

> there's been always this thing of… that student… student activist do not want… do not want to study, do not want to excel, they are… they are lazy, they are stupid, they just want to burn or they just want to protest. So this is a lived reality that it's actually not about that. we are very serious about education system and we want to change it and in order for us to change it, we must show the academic progress within. (Phakamani Ntentema)

For Ngwenya, who is interested in the future trajectory of African identities, the multiplicity advocated for by him is in this research understood as part of the process of decolonisation. Ngwenya writes:

> Whatever typologies we use to explain African identities and Africanness, they should remain as pluralistic explanatory devices that are open to democratic iteration, multiple mappings of Africa, heterogeneous identifications and transformation, rather than epistemologies that are normatively fixed and immune to change. Certainly, any typologies or categories should not assume a transcendence of their own, becoming an albatross that cramps the human agency of how we, as Africans, define ourselves. Identity is becoming and being. The past is there but we produce our identities in the future". (Ngwenya, 2018, p. 146)

His assertion is here understood as part of the epistemic delinking which Walter Mignolo, Ramón Grosfoguel and others such as Maldonado Torres have advanced. It necessitates an understanding of the academy and academic texts which have previously been developed with a particular kind of scholar in mind and a departure from such thinking. The work of epistemic delinking ought to be accompanied by an ontological delinking from the academy. For Mickey, such delinking requires a reframing of her own reality, one in which the world she grew up in is now being understood in relation to her own field of study and her understanding of the necessity for decolonisation within it. Throughout her interview she contemplates the ramifications of this new lens on the world.

> In the social sciences, how do you go back home and still see home as home? (Mickey Moyo) […] Can't I be militarized in a sense that I'm fighting for change in the world and if there was a protest of black lives matter or anything… I'm probably the first person that you will find in that space. I will be there fighting for change. I want UCT to change. I want South Africa to change. I want that colonial legacies to end. I want all of that and I'm willing to fight. I'm willing to take up a banner. (Mickey Moyo)

For Phakamani, the protests informed a need for inclusion. Such inclusion is part of an understanding of the multiplicities of identity within categories previously understood as stagnant. He articulates his own understanding of the movement in reflection as one which is started to do the work of decolonising the institution:

> Are we in a colonial era or are we in post colonial era and what must happen? Because if you cannot remove a name of a colonialist within the context of where black people can voice out there concerns, so the first thing was to say remove all the colonial… all the colonialists names in buildings. That's why you will find that right now as we speak Jameson Hall is no longer Jameson Hall. Jameson Hall is the Sarah Baartman Hall. The reason for choosing Sarah Baartman is we know that Sarah herself as an African, secondly as a woman who was taken out of the comfortability or out of her country to be mobbed within the European… the European Centre. (Phakamani Ntentema)

Wandile thinks about the role of the space which became known as Azania House, despite the change in location it has remained a significant site for those involved in the protests. They argue that:

> Azania House is a concept; it is not a building. …a space of education and learning outside of that formal academic setting… [where you] start learning like Critical Race Theory and I don't think Critical Gender was there but arguably there could have been a space for that so that everyone can really understand how racism and the systemic structure works. (Wandile Dlamini)

Wandile explains how the concept of Azania House informed the praxis of the movement even if it was not deliberate. The space became the Azania which was hallucinated, it incited the reimagination of protest culture as did other sites like it across the country. The administration buildings, the graduation halls, the central spaces which students felt they could gather in. At Wits it was the Senate House concourse. The space was later renamed as Solomon Mahlangu House. At Stellenbosch university students had mass meetings in the amphitheatre, as depicted in the Open Stellenbosch documentary. At UCT it was Azania House.

> So I really learnt in that particular moment that like here I was spending the whole day waiting for someone to organize I don't know who the someone was but I was waiting someone to come and organize and come and you know lead if you could call it that, this iteration of fallism but really I was just waiting for myself to realize that it's me. (Wandile Dlamini)

> I enjoy educating. I enjoy having conversations. I enjoy all of that but it's also like if you're going to publicly fuck up I'm going to publicly call you out, do you know what I mean. (Wandile Dlamini)

> […] that would have been part of community building because we can't just be traumatized together and think strategy together. We also need to feel relief together, we need to feel joy together because that would have facilitated having… having healing together … (Wandile Dlamini)

The process of decolonisation is one which for Mignolo and Walsch is "[a]t the same time, modernity/coloniality engender decoloniality. So there would be no decoloniality—and decoloniality would not be necessary—if modernity/coloniality had not created the need to delink from the rhetoric of modernity and the logic of coloniality" (Mignolo & Walsch, 2018, p. 139).

> I think the best part of the fact that seeing the Arab spring I think really made a difference in terms of 'Rhodes Must Fall' trying to document our own narratives right… I don't think there is a complete disconnect between those two. (Wandile Dlamini)

> learning doesn't have to happen in the academy. So being able to go to Bremner at any point and time was just you know sit and listen in and learn from so many people… We were accessing our own experiences, sharing our own experiences and extrapolating meaning from our own experiences. So that yeah… that's how the beginning days were. (Wandile Dlamini)

Ultimately the involvement of students and staff at universities across the country came about because of a political ideology which existed in the collective consciousness of the country. That consciousness was arguably premised on an aspirational understanding of what South African higher education could become if it was inclusive of knowledge(s) instead of the default Knowledge. It was also arguably premised on an understanding that in order to distance the country from the legacies of its apartheid past, that a more concerted effort would have to be made in favour of the accessibility of higher education.

> The overarching politics that we all have is that we want to liberate black students and one of the key barriers to that are fees. (Wandile Dlamini)

CHAPTER SEVEN – CONCLUSION

As the process of concluding this research began, #FeesMustFall again made headlines. On the 9th of March 2020, #FMF activist, Mcebo Dlamini was found guilty of public violence. He

received a suspended sentence of seven years and six months. His charges included assault, public violence, theft and malicious damage to property. The sentence effectively marked the end of his career as it related to legal practice. He was not the only one marred because of his involvement in the movement. Adam Habib announced his resignation as the vice-chancellor of Wits University by the end of the year 2019. Habib has accepted a post at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London. The initial statement announcing the resignation contained the following quote, "[w]e have lived through some tumultuous times, where politicians and activists have threatened and sometimes destroyed public institutions, either because of greed and/or misguided political adventurism", the statement was removed from the following release which came through the Wits marketing and communications team just 17 minutes later. By the beginning of 2021, Habib, got caught up in a political spat at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of London after uttering the 'n-word' several times in response to a student who raised a concern about the use of the word.

Protests again emerged at universities across South Africa and while many of the vice chancellors who were appointed at the time the 2015 protests were underway had vacated their positions, their predecessors were still being challenged in relation to the need for fee quality and decolonised education. Wits University, again at the epicentre of the protests was in the spotlight yet again, after an unarmed civilian was caught in a rubber bullets cross-fire between police and students and subsequently died. This resulted in university staff and students calling on broader communities to join protests against measures of austerity, use of rubber bullets and again, access to institutions of higher education. It is apparent to me, even at the time that this research was being concluded that the protests are unlikely to cease. The call to protests, whether as result of homogeneity or collective consciousness, continues to beckon the engagement of students nationally. This has indeed been worsened and perhaps even better illustrated by the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in those who were already living on the socio-economic margins, being further marginalised because of the gross inequalities of the country and indeed the world.

This research has been persuaded by Ngwenya's (2016) interrogation of reductive sameness which he calls nativism in his text. Ngwenya uses nativism to map the teleology and effects of the naming of Africans as such and to offer an alternative understanding of how Africans can be

named. This research has offered an overview of the protests, locating them in the context of a South African movement which spanned several years. This contextualises the #RMF and #FMF protests and to indicate the necessity of reductive sameness in uniting students across the country. The research argued that reductive sameness resulted in the assumed homogeneity of students. Such homogeneity was external by the state, universities and the media in some cases.

Conversely, internally, similar politics of homogeneity have played out which the research articulates as a necessarily contentious point in both movements as this ultimately results in unspoken signatories to contracts of domination which reify ignorance and actively perpetuate the subjugation and oppositional differences. The research has argued that counter to the initial agreements forged in the movements in favour of an intersectional approach, this did not manifest practically. However, beyond the implications of reductive sameness in the context of #RMF and #FMF, such reductive sameness permeates through our societies and is resultant in similar fissures in other spaces. The different discursive constructions of people in spaces such as protest enforce ideological stances which are often adopted because of the collective consciousness that has brought the people together in the first instance.

> But on the other hand, Black women's experienced realities, both prior to and after initiation, may provide them with "special perspectives and insights...available to that category of outsiders who have been systematically frustrated by the social systems" (Merton, 1972: 29). In brief, their outsider allegiances may militate against choosing full insider status, and they may be more apt to remain outsiders within. In essence, to become sociological insiders, Black women must assimilate a standpoint that is quite different than their own. White males have long been the dominant group in sociology, and the sociological worldview understandably reflects the concerns of this group of practitioners. (Collins, 1989, p. 315).

Double consciousness concerning the protests in the research echoes both spatially and temporally. It is this awareness which highlights the discrepancies in South African equality beyond the challenges of equity. The research reflected on my positionality in my role as a researcher and activist. This located me within the writing— creating distance in the research foregrounding activist voices ahead of my own. As Democratic congress member from Massachusetts. Rep. Ayanna Pressley recently said:

> And so, our freedoms and our destinies are tied […] You know, this is not a competition for who is sinking the fastest. There is no hierarchy of hurt. And so, what I'm looking for is equitable outrage, inclusive organising and our collective upliftment (Pressley, Rlaib & Omar, 2020)

Much like the representatives quoted above, the destinies and freedoms of black South African youth are tied together, they are actively seeking change and equitable society in which their blackness is not foregrounded in their identity and used to homogenise their realities, instead, as Mickey said:

> I had showed up for protest every day for eight weeks and I wrote a status because somebody was like… so why you're doing this and I said I fight everyday not because I hate peace but because the world hates peace right and it was such a… everyone was like wow that is like so sad and so dark. And I was thinking that the reason why we fight is so that we can exist in a world where we can walk into a shop like this and experience candy as human beings and not feel like racialised bodies in Cape Town or God knows whatever like colonial legacy still like hovers around this. I want a world where any person whether you're black… you're… you're Asian you know… whether you identify as queer… whether you're short whatever it is… (Mickey Moyo)

> She is concerned, and asks toward the end of the interview, "Were we delusional? Did these things matter? Do these things matter?" (Mickey Moyo). Wandile was concerned about the pace of the process of change, in whatever form the change occurs, they asked Mickey if change is inherently slow, they were concerned that if change comes quickly, that the effect of such change is at risk of dissipating equally slowly. For Wandile, the purpose of the interventions and processes, was to bring about sustainable change. (Wandile Dlamini)

> Everything must fall but it must all fall at once. It wasn't a matter of we're going to wait for the next moment. It was we're going to capture this moment and because patriarchy just like racism was as pervasive and destructive to identity and the psyche of everybody who is experiencing these oppressions… okay. (Wandile Dlamini)

The research has argued that the movements had a life beyond 2015 and 2016. While protests appeared to be less frequent and universities continued with their business as usual, Fallists remained uneasy. It was fatigue that had slowed the pace. Concluding her interview, Wandile thinks about time, post the protests, and says:

> Then we got to 2018 and rightfully so nothing happened because all of us… all of us are too exhausted and also we just needed a new strategy (Wandile Dlamini) […] We wanted to negotiate, we wanted to you know speak. We wanted to use our bodies to… to stop things from continuing as normal because everything, everything was abnormal. It was abnormal that our fees increased at such an exponential rate. It's abnormal that this institution is fine with black students dropping out at a higher percentage in comparison to white students. All of this is abnormal and we tried other means to the breaking point of needing to do physically violent things. So, it's literally just responding to the system in the language that it understood knowing that we tried all other means to… to explain ourselves (Wandile Dlamini) […] But it's a little bit tiring to always be the one pushing things and pushing the boundaries and expanding. It's like … it's laborious. It's just laborious. (Wandile Dlamini)

The research has necessarily engaged in the epistemological question of self-location to narrate the shift from individual to academic enquiry. In doing so, it has highlighted shared experiences of activists in South Africa, and their connectedness to other struggles questioning ideological stances taken. By treating predominantly African discourses as the point of departure, the methodologies used for learning in the protests were examined to contextualise the black body not as homogenous, but as a site of a multiplicity of experiences and knowledge(s) beyond the global West.

The removal of the Rhodes statue signified a burgeoning discussion related to a desire for a decolonial future. It became a catalyst for an organically led formation that ultimately became dubbed #FeesMustFall. The salience of the movement became evidenced by its relevance elsewhere. Decolonised education in this research is the process of prioritising African knowledge(s) over Eurocentric Knowledge, produced through the colonial ideological project. South Africa is indeed a country haunted still by its racial past. For some, the protests were not a choice, nor a first option. The protests were approached on the understanding that certain individual black bodies have and continue to experience an existence of injury, trauma and loss, which informs their everyday reality. Such historical and present colonial subjugation, epistemic and ontological, qualifies the insistence on the urgency with which the mantle of free quality decolonised education was taken up.

The movement arguably intended to remedy the injustices collectively experienced by the protestors but faltered in that it repeated the essentialising of them, whether intentionally or not. The result was risking the power of heterogeneity in the re-imagination of higher education in South Africa. Homogenisation of black students in protests, by the media, the state, the universities and by the leaders of the protests themselves are of great concern in this research. It would be remiss not to consider that *the black child* as a category is inconsiderate of intersecting issues of income, wealth, housing, lifestyle and education that become generalised when imagining all black persons in the protests as a monolithic group.

While the voices of some may be accounted for if we continue to blanket people together, only acknowledging protestors based on a single matrix of difference; however, this is here argued as a futile exercise if multiplicity is not considered at all. Such a view of large numbers of people, this research argues, is more likely to result in conferred dominance which is then more likely to operate without question.

Cognisance of the complexity of an assumed homogeneity of protestors is likely to challenge power and privilege which emancipatory concepts often work towards dismantling. In favour of deconstructing hegemonic discourse, contestations of dominant narratives in the context of decolonial setting ought to be favoured. While it could be argued that #RhodesMustFall did the work of hailing black students, this research has argued that the adherence to the call to protests emerged due to a collective consciousness of the country's historical discrepancies. The repetition of songs and chants throughout the protests generated an ethos of belonging.

While the university should ideally be an extension of public space, most universities in the country reduced the dissenting voices heightened during protests to a minor disruption one could argue only to ratify the force it used against them by arguing that their intention was solely to restore order at the universities.

Lest we forget, our struggles do not happen in isolation. The call for free quality decolonised education is not part of discourse developed and advocated for in South Africa alone, it is intricately connected to a living and breathing protest, discourse, narrative that our people can no longer live in subjugation. Our people are the people that Nyamjoh imagines on the continent,

that Bulawayo (2014) imagines in the diaspora. They are the women world over who are tired of being relegated to the margins. We are not a monolith; we are indeed part of an intricate tapestry which is resultant in the reality that we live today. It is no coincidence that education is being denied because of capitalism. It is no accident that patriarchy, misogyny and toxic masculinity is a national epidemic and a global pandemic. We are not just poor black students; we are unequal signatories to the Domination Contract that keeps intact the unequal power relations and which becomes pervasive because so many enjoy the luxury of obliviousness. The time to recognise the power of difference is now. It is time to use such differences in order to generate the kind of society we would like to be where we strive not only for parity or equity but a just society — one where our identities and the intersectionality of those identities are taken into account.

The research contemplated the role of assumed homogeneity as the catalyst for oppressive praxis as it suggests that if various interests were represented in protests, that protests are more likely to be sustained and organically developed flat structures are more likely to serve the interests of all in them. An intersectional approach to protests was arguably the primary goal during protests of protestors who are routinely marginalised along their respective axes of difference day-to-day. The legibility of individual bodies as casualties, while others were not, signified the reductionism and feigned ignorance that the research attributes to tacit contracts of dominance.

Exclusionary ideas of belonging forged greater and lesser claims to recognition of authority. These were understood as an inherited practise of hierarchies which underpinned a colonial past. The innate subjugation characterised in the colonial project, during protests, appeared to justify sacrificing the interests of some, in favour of others.

The *donning the apparel of colonial whiteness* is indeed part of the pervasive machinery which reifies dominance even within structures that purport to be intersectional. Conferred power can be as pervasive as it is due to its ability to appear natural in the collective consciousness, which is such because of a colonial past.

It is important to note that the protestors were not always activists. They adhered to a call to action which they felt would have had a dramatic impact on their lived realities. Indeed, education should never be commodified; we must challenge the praxis and practise which have been entrenched through classrooms and the curricula in every corner of our society.

APPENDICE

NB: *The link was provided by the film company for courtesy use as this dissertation is being marked and for the reader's convenience. After the allocated time period, should anyone wish to access the film for future use, they may contact the filmmaker directly for more information.* **ismefilm@gmail.com**

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