

## **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 as useful as the dominant narrative of students protesting for socio-economic emancipation within higher education, or whether it simply reified student protesters 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 visibilised through systemic violence(s) perpetuated universities and protesters 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.