Decolonizing the Academy: Lessons From the Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Abstract

The Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is intended for graduate and professional students who desire training in carrying out research in equitable partnership *with*, instead of *on*, communities. This article, written collaboratively by five of the participants in the development of the Certificate, highlights critical practices vital to efforts toward decolonizing academic research: (a) disrupting or circumventing gatekeeping mechanisms that maintain hierarchies of exclusion, (b) creating avenues for privileging a greater range of voices in knowledge production, and (c) providing training for research traditions that engage participants as coproducers of knowledge.

Keywords

decolonizing the academy, participatory research, graduate research training

. . . "Decolonizing the academy" must be an ongoing and parallel feature of any attempts to develop new paradigms.

—Davies (2003, p. x)

When Rachel Gelfand[1] began contemplating her MA research in the American Studies Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH), she had already begun to question the applicability of traditional methodologies to her project and felt the need to experiment. A historian, with a background in oral history, radio, and social justice activism, she asked, "How do archives function in the transmission of gay and lesbian history?" "What if," she thought, "I begin with the assumption that archives are living and emerging, rather than static and stowed away in dusty library basements down rarely entered hallways?" "What if I researched this project *collaboratively* with the person who has been archived?" These were not the sorts of questions Rachel had heard anyone asking in her department. She was faced with concerns that graduate students and faculty researchers in the academy encounter when they move away from tradition: "Will I find a mentor who can guide me through the research process?" "What if I do the research and it is rejected by the academy—either in completing the degree or finding a faculty or research position?"

Rachel's concerns highlight the limitations of the academy, as currently configured, to address the urgent questions of our times. The radical departures and reconfigurations of academic strictures that are necessary to accommodate emerging forms of research, particularly those guided by decolonizing methodologies, require critical shifts in university culture. Recent calls for "decolonizing the academy" follow from decades of interdisciplinary critiques of academic cultures as colonizing spaces that operate to maintain "Euro-American hegemonies at the level of thinking and therefore in the larger material world" (Davies, Gadsby, Peterson, & Williams, 2003, p. ix). There is a rich and developing literature on decolonizing knowledge production (Bishop, 1998; Denzin, Lincoln, & Smith, 2008; L. T. Smith, 2012), as well as critical pedagogy for liberation that highlights the linkages between challenging power structures, new approaches to research, and diversifying educational spaces (Brown & Strega, 2005; Freire, 1996; hooks, 2014).

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However, there is less elaboration on how the decolonizing process happens in practice, particularly in the academy itself. In the Freirian tradition of "making the road while walking it" (Horton, Bell, Gaventa, & Marshall Peters, 1990), the present article describes one academic community's ongoing efforts to engage this vibrant and rigorous scholarship as a basis for a graduate research Certificate program.

The Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research at UNC-CH is an interdisciplinary certificate program for graduate students, like Rachel, who desire training in the theoretical basis, rationale, methodologies, challenges, and motivations for carrying out research in equitable partnership with, instead of on, communities. From its inception, the Certificate was envisioned as an institutional mechanism for affirming and supporting decolonizing theories, approaches, and commitments, and also as a training ground for students seeking a critical decolonizing praxis. A decolonizing approach to scholarship attempts to center "the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 1)[2] and disrupt the ways in which knowledge has been and continues to be used as a form of colonization (L. T. Smith, 2012). This means articulating knowledge as it emanates from a wide variety of sources, rather than from what Anaheed Al-Hardan describes as gatekeeping theory used "to reinforce an intellectual class hierarchy in the academy, and with it, a colonial and Eurocentric 'ego-politics of knowledge'" (Al-Hardan, 2014, p. 64; see also Chakrabarty, 2008; L. T. Smith, 2012). Decolonizing theory means recognizing the artificiality of its Eurocentric origins and its presumed universal applicability. It means exposing the limitations of normative models and privileging the wider applicability of differently situated theories. This represents a paradigmatic shift that has profound implications for research practices.

As founders[3] of the Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research, our aim in this essay is to outline the critical process that informed the development of the Certificate and, in doing so, demonstrate three critical practices that have been vital to our efforts toward decolonizing academic research: (a) disrupting gatekeeping mechanisms that maintain hierarchies of exclusion, (b) creating avenues for privileging a greater range of voices in knowledge production, and (c) providing training for research traditions that engage participants as coproducers of knowledge. After detailing the development of the Certificate and the needs and challenges that prompted its initiatives and core course, "Decolonizing Methodologies," we elaborate each of these critical practices through a set of lessons we have learned. The article concludes with calls for creating additional academic and community spaces that challenge existing power dynamics, enable a larger variety of bodies the ability to thrive in the academy, disrupt binary thinking about "the community" and "the academy," and work to ensure Indigenous futurity (Tuck & Yang, 2012) as well as that of other marginalized groups.

The Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research: Not the Usual Certificate Program

The Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research at UNC-CH emerged from the intellectual, ethical, and activist concerns of faculty, students, and community members who led its formation. The Certificate took shape in an era of high interest in "engaged scholarship" on the part of a chancellor of the university and several other campus leaders. It built on a long history of pioneering work in participatory research in the School of Public Health (Holland, Powell, Eng, & Drew, 2010) and profited from the faculty support program of the Carolina Center for Public Service, an organization founded at UNC-CH in 1999. In the early 2000s, the faculty and graduate students interested in using and developing participatory/collaborative methodologies were scattered across departments and units across the campus. They were not coalesced academically in a way that served graduate students or provided for the collective development of an in-depth, self-conscious praxis to guide pedagogy and research. In 2007, Holland, from Anthropology, and Geni Eng, from Public Health, developed an interdisciplinary faculty seminar that brought together 30 faculty and graduate students for a series of meetings to examine the intellectual traditions and ethical concerns motivating and guiding engaged scholarship at UNC.[4] Those seminars were important steps toward the Certificate program that would eventually coordinate courses from across campus. The Certificate draws primarily from the expertise of faculty and graduate students in the College of Arts and Sciences, but also from the professional schools such as Public Health and Social Work, as well as community experts. Eng, Holland, and Parker (from Communication), were all organizers or members of that seminar and part of the subsequent founding group of the Certificate.

The organic, multiple-year process of creating the Certificate replicates the participatory praxis we wanted to champion, reflecting one of several ways it differs from other Certificates on UNC's and other campuses. Graduate certificates generally develop in response to an interdisciplinary need for specific conceptual, content, and/or methodological training across disciplines. The Certificate in Participatory Research is that, but more. It is a faculty/student/community-generated entity offering an academic credential in a paradigm of scholarship that pursues four distinctive central commitments: (a) interdisciplinarity and inclusiveness; (b) community knowledge as necessary for, and constitutive of, productive research; (c) the valuing of research for the purpose of action, particularly to disrupt

ongoing colonial forces; and (d) a conceptual and ethical framework for a critical decolonizing praxis. These underlying commitments require specific resources, training, and institutional shifts not necessary in other certificate programs. As discussed below, gaining approval for the Certificate, creating special initiatives to support student training, and developing a paradigm shifting core course reveal some of the challenges and possibilities of taking decolonization seriously within an often rigid institutional structure.

Coproducing the Certificate Proposal

Commitments to participatory design, interdisciplinarity, and inclusivity guided the development of the Certificate proposal that was eventually approved by the University administration. Bringing together disciplines with different prototypes for participatory research and faculty/graduate students with different racial and ethnicity-related experiences called for mutually respectful and open dialogue. For 2 years, the organizing team conducted a series of interviews[5] and meetings with faculty and graduate students from several disciplines and units to discuss the motivation, foundation, and requirements of the Certificate, which informed the development and production of a written proposal for the University administration.

It was clear in these initial interviews that different faculty had concerns about the participatory research of faculty in different disciplines based on their methodologies, critical stance, and theories of social change. Voicing these concerns was necessary, but could have resulted in polarization.[6] However, the 2007 faculty seminar had begun a process of building trust and of listening and respecting the visions of different disciplines and how each in its own ways contributes to critical stances and to bringing about social change. The collaborative approach was another means of expanding trust. Listening and being respectful was and continues to be extremely important. This does not mean a lack of common principles. In the faculty seminar, for example, some participants espoused social entrepreneurial approaches. In the critical discussion that followed, the consensus was that the existing models of social entrepreneurism were not forms of decolonizing participatory research.

Community members were central to the Certificate development process, and communities were recognized in Certificate materials as necessary coproducers of knowledge. Most of the involved faculty and graduate students had long-term relationships with community groups and change efforts and indeed saw the Certificate as producing researchers who could work alongside these groups. Our colleagues in Public Health had pioneered the practice of engaging community leaders and members (referred to as "community experts") as coequal participants on research teams and intervention projects. In the development of the

Certificate, it was a community expert, Melvin Jackson, then executive director of Strengthening the Black Family, a not-for-profit organization in Raleigh, North Carolina, who became central to the process of institutionalizing a community voice in the Certificate. He loves to tell the story of pointedly questioning Holland about a year into the participatory process about how community input was to be accomplished in the Certificate. Jackson became an integral part of the founding of the Certificate and the community codirector of the Certificate's advisory board. Alongside Holland, who serves as founding director, Jackson has led the board in the considerable effort that the Certificate makes to develop community experts as important shapers of Certificate activities. An important part of the vision of the Certificate program is to bring faculty and students from across campus together with community experts who know about the strengths and historically specific challenges and opportunities facing their communities. From this perspective, community mentors, faculty, and students together coproduce ways to bridge the gap between disciplinary knowledge and the lived knowledge, acquired wisdom, and "ways of doing" in their communities (Robertson & the Kwagu'l Gixsam Clan, 2012).

The Certificate Initiatives

Student training in participatory research praxis is accomplished via three initiatives and two required courses, each designed to build relationships and intellectual spaces that bring students into the intentional learning community created on campus and beyond. The *Community Expert Initiative*, led by Jackson, facilitates Certificate students' engagement with community members, providing opportunities for community-led mentoring and relationship building. Community experts often are the first to acquaint students with the kind of "refusal" that is taking place with regard to university research (e.g., Simpson, 2007, 2014). Certificate students learn that their challenge is not only to master disciplinary knowledge and research skills, but also to learn how to connect the skills and knowledge they bring to the table with local knowledge and vice versa, and to never take the participation of a community for granted. They learn, for example, to shape research questions in communication with a community and that an obligatory first step is identifying others in the community who are concerned about, if not already organized to address, the problems and/or opportunities that the graduate student seeks to engage. Similar to other knowledge producers in the academy, community experts receive honoraria when their work involves sharing specialized knowledge, such as during class visits and campus workshops.

The *Seed Grant Initiative* supports students through participatory research relationships. As of 2016, the Certificate had awarded 16 seed grants for a variety of projects.[7] Seed

grant winners work with input from fellow seed grant winners, from community experts, both locally and at their research location, and faculty. They make subsequent presentations to other Certificate students and faculty. The size of these seed grants is small, currently US$1,200, but it is enough to help students get started and provides a context where it is easy to obtain mentoring from many sources.

The *Participatory Research Workshop Forums* is a student-led initiative inspired by the workshop portion of the core course (discussed later). Seed grant winners and indeed anyone on campus with a dilemma in participatory research can avail themselves of the workshop forums. During these forums, participants seek feedback on a specific issue they are struggling with in their project from a group of approximately eight faculty members and students, who offer them suggestions, support, and guidance. Student desires to continue the kind of interdisciplinary and critically supportive community created by the Certificate, speaks to the success of these initiatives and the importance of this work.

Finally, two required courses help guide student training in participatory research praxis. The one credit-hour introductory course, *Current Issues in Participatory Research*, seeks to bring students into the community of participatory researchers on campus. The course incorporates field trips, guest speakers, and class discussion to acquaint students with UNC-CH faculty, community experts, and student colleagues engaged in decolonizing participatory research. Students hear about the problems, dilemmas, and successes of ongoing projects, are exposed to a variety of methodologies, and get acquainted with each other and the range of participants in the community. The class also works in teams to collaboratively produce resources for the Certificate website (e.g., funding sources and exemplary articles). The students also get practice in creating a project idea and workshopping it with fellow students. The important messages of the course are that participatory research differs by discipline, that disciplinary differences are of value, and that each student needs to be active in creating her or his own identity as a participatory researcher.

The three credit-hour core course, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, serves as the central node of the Certificate.[8] At the time of this writing, the team-taught *Decolonizing Methodologies* course has been taught each spring since 2014. Dennison (Anthropology) and Smith (Geography) taught the first iteration, Parker (Communication) and Dennison the second, and Smith and Parker taught the third. The course is designed to accommodate 20 students, with each instructor creating a disciplinary special topics course ("Decolonizing Methodologies") with 10 enrolled students. In the next section, we trace the development of the core course and its guiding principles to foreground some of the critical practices for decolonizing the academy discussed later.

The Core Course: *Decolonizing Methodologies*

Once the university approved the Certificate, we began the work of building the core course. With support from UNC's Arts and Sciences Interdisciplinary Initiatives Team Teaching grant, and the contributions of PhD student Pavithra Vasudevan, Smith and Dennison hosted a workshop in fall 2013, which was intended as the first event in an iterative process to refine objectives and materials for the core course. Given the focus of the Certificate, it was important not only that the core course was cotaught and thus inherently interdisciplinary, but that it was itself developed through a participatory process. Over 40 graduate students and faculty members participated in the 2-hr workshop, bringing their various disciplinary perspectives to a discussion of the central goals, readings, and assignments that would be required within the course.

Several key elements from the workshop and subsequent discussions guided the design of the core course and continue to ground its role in decolonizing the academy. First, participants in the course explore the differences between decolonizing, postcolonial, and participatory approaches to fieldwork. For example, we examine Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (1999) critiques of postcolonial approaches, which argue that for many indigenous peoples "post-colonialism is viewed as a convenient invention of Western intellectuals which re-inscribes their power to define the world" (p. 14). While postcolonialism seeks to understand what colonialism has done in the world, decolonizing work seeks to acknowledge and disrupt ongoing colonial approaches to and understandings of knowledge. The goal is to work with ongoing processes that are enabling communities to, as Dennison writes, "pick up the pieces of the current moment and create their own original patterns for the future" (Dennison, 2013, p. 117).

Second, developing, reflecting upon, and teaching decolonizing praxis is, along with the development of a decolonizing pedagogy, a central purpose of the core course. As the course is cotaught by pairs of faculty from different fields rotating for 2-year stints, common ideas of praxis must be worked out. Gavin Smith argues that praxis is "the ability of people as collective subjects to become a force in history, not merely the objects of other people's history" (G. Smith, 2014, p. 23). Pulling from Gramsci (Crehan, 2002; Gramsci, 1992), we are particularly interested in the encouragement of students coming from indigenous, working-class, and other marginalized backgrounds who wish to engage in scholarship in support of their own or other communities' liberation, and approaches that provide communities with the analyses they request about the instruments and mechanisms of power (Nonini, in press). Through the core course, everyone involved engages in a dynamic debate about new work and ideas on praxis such as Leslie Robertson's idea of "social projects," Dennison

and Holland's (in preparation) ideas of Emergent Anthropology, and Parker's work on concretizing Black feminist liberatory antiracist philosophies for collective organizing (Parker, 2016).

For us, creating a course that seeks to decolonize research means going beyond the first stages of thinking critically about research in which students may question the ethics of research and endeavor to be "good" researchers. In the casual parlance of class, we discuss the importance of distinguishing between careful methods and "not being a jerk" in the field as well as deeper and more challenging critiques that question the very foundations and categories of knowledge itself (Chakrabarty, 2008; L. T. Smith, 2012). Central to this project is asking what projects our research is serving and deeply interrogating what our commitments are. Asking ourselves questions such as "What does my research do to challenge existing power dynamics" or, "How does my work repatriate indigenous land and life?"

Finally, in the face of these challenges, the course is designed to maintain a stubborn sense of hope in the possibility of a decolonizing academy. This presents a challenge given the nature of the critique, but through a novel classroom strategy—"inspiration presentations," we attempt to leave space for hope in the difficult work of decolonization. Each week, we ask students to start the class by presenting on a project that they find inspirational. These projects come from the work of artists, academics, community activists, and projects that blur these boundaries; in the spring of 2016, for instance, they included presentations on activist-artist Favianna Rodriguez, the youth-led organization Yole!Africa, the Abounaddara Syrian filmmakers, and one student's own struggle and engagement with Pascha Bueno Hansen's suggestion that she use her own research to heal her colonial wounds. Hope, a central thread of all decolonization efforts, is at the center of the core course's teaching.

We now turn to three critical practices that frame the lessons we learned from both the successes and challenges in developing the Certificate, including its initiatives and the "Decolonizing Methodologies" core course.

Decolonizing the Academy: Critical Practices

In creating the Graduate Certificate and its core course, we took seriously Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (2012) lessons from the process of decolonizing: ". . . it is not enough to hope or desire change. System change requires capability, leadership, support, time, courage, reflexivity, determination and compassion. It is hard work and the outcome often seems a distant vision" (p. xii). Here, we elaborate on three critical practices that we believe can help concretize visions of decolonizing academic research.

Critical Practice 1: Disrupting or Circumventing Gatekeeping Mechanisms

Academic gatekeeping not only limits research, but also keeps some young scholars from diverse backgrounds from completing programs or even applying in the first place. A relational and power/knowledge production process, academic gatekeeping determines what kinds of research counts, what research purposes are legitimate, whose research gets supported, and even who is treated as a (potentially) serious contributor to the academy in the first place. The archive that interested Rachel involved Vicki Gabriner, cofounder of the Atlanta Lesbian/Feminist Alliance (ALFA), and a close family friend. Rachel was raised by lesbian mothers and is queer herself, so her methodological experiments in how archives function in the transmission of gay and lesbian history took on a bodily importance, as is often the case for students and faculty living through marginalized positionalities. Against the grain of how research has historically been described, research interests often arise from deeply personal and political experiences. If told enough times that your approach to research is not "objective" or "rigorous" enough, you are likely to shift your project or seek out a space outside of academia where this work can be done. The academy frequently does not provide the institutional affirmation, guidance, and resources to support the kinds of research that Rachel was attempting. The excitement that Rachel felt about pursuing unconventional research might easily have been quelled by uneasiness and self-censorship if faculty and fellow students had responded to her from the normalizing practices of tradition. How many potentially transformational projects die on the vine as students are told their projects are too dangerous to their careers? However, in her first semester at UNC, as she was beginning to form the seeds for what eventually became a discipline-shaping collaborative archival research project, Rachel met anthropology professor Jean Dennison, who encouraged Rachel to register in the core course she was coteaching as part of the new Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research at UNC-CH. With mentoring and support from her advisor, Sharon Holland, a professor in American Studies, Rachel signed up for the Certificate, joined its 1-hr required course, and enrolled in its core offering, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, the following spring.

Institutional gatekeeping is a key mechanism for maintaining traditional hierarchies of knowledge and is therefore an important site of intervention for decolonizing practices. Too often, students and younger faculty seeking new approaches to research are bolstered only by chance encounters with sympathetic research mentors, or worse, discouraged by unwelcoming settings where influential faculty persuade them that their research goals are out of step with respected academic pursuits. These same students and faculty are often, although certainly not always, coming from a

place of vulnerability vis-à-vis the university due to their own subject positioning, by being non-White or nonnormative in terms of their gender, class, or religion (Puwar, 2004; y Muhs, Niemann, González, & Harris, 2012). If we as academics are really committed to diversifying academia, we must disrupt the role that academic gatekeeping plays in deciding what kinds of bodies are able to feel comfortable in this space.

The founders of the Certificate, while coming from a wide variety of disciplines, including Anthropology, Communication, Public Health, Religious Studies, Geography, and Nutrition, all felt the limitations of the current structure of academia on their research relationships and desired change. We knew the challenges we faced in pursuing our desire to integrate decolonizing approaches into the fabric of a major research university. In fulfilling the publication, teaching, and university service requirements for tenure and promotion, there was little time left for a hallmark of participatory research: long-term collaborative research with communities outside the academy. Respect for community knowledge and interest in the coproduction of knowledge were novel concepts that were neither valued nor fostered in many parts of the university. When this kind of research was possible, the knowledge generated from it was too often dismissed as not useful for trending theoretical discussions. Work that challenged existing power dynamics was seen as lacking objectivity, or too steeped in a specific positionality or experience to have the necessary "impact factor." The founders sought to create a space in the academy that would not only provide more support for students wishing to do collaborative research, but also enable a community of critical scholars to push this work further and deeper, a space in which the shared goal of challenging existing power dynamics from differently situated disciplines and perspectives was paramount.

Widen the gateways to knowledge. Challenging the ways in which "engaged scholarship" was seen as less relevant or useful than "traditional research" meant first and foremost connecting to and influencing the wider conversations about the role of the University. As with other universities, UNC-CH was inspired in the 1990s by national and statewide conversations about the purposes of public colleges and universities and the call to help improve community life and educate students for civic and social responsibility (Boyer, 1996).[9] Campus Compact, a national higher education association with state and regional chapters, emerged as an organizing channel for campus-based civic engagement at UNC-CH with a mission of nurturing students' citizenship skills and forging effective community/university partnerships. These developments and others encouraged initiatives at UNC-CH to expand the university's role to place a greater emphasis on engaging communities. All of this momentum facilitated the development of the Certificate. We were able

to build upon the changes underway to create legibility and legitimacy for decolonizing research practices.

We have continued to stress these traditions and the intellectual ferment underway in participatory decolonizing research through events such as panel discussions hosted by the Certificate (see videos on http://participatoryresearch. web.unc.edu) and publications (see Grimes & Parker, 2009). In our experience, while engagement continues to be a debated term at UNC-CH, the relevance of participatory research to the core mission of the university is nonetheless easier to explain. As we would learn, however, the legibility of participatory decolonizing research as an intellectual endeavor did not guarantee the legibility of all parts of the Certificate nor was it guaranteed that it would be a high priority for institutional support.

Create institutional legibility for participatory research praxis. A key lesson for disrupting academic gatekeeping involves the necessity of creating a recognized space for decolonizing participatory research training in the intellectual and ethical life of the university. We asked ourselves, "What is the best institutional vehicle for training graduate students in decolonizing research praxis?" "Should there be a stand-alone department, a center or institute, or perhaps occasional workshops?" The tendency in universities to make "applied research," "service endeavors," and "engaged scholarship" a second-class knowledge endeavor is a distinctive problem for our vision and hopes for participatory research. Our vision for participatory research instead prioritizes the synergy of disciplinary grounding coupled with a collaborative, decolonizing praxis. It calls for building on disciplinary knowledge, but focusing that knowledge and research to the purpose of action while recognizing the importance of community knowledge for understanding community concerns and developing feasible action routes forward. Disciplinary grounding, after all, is a key asset that the university has to offer community/university collaborations.

This vision for participatory research led us to prioritize integration of the Certificate with the intellectual and ethical ferment of the university at large. The relegation of participatory research to a unit isolated from most of campus is to be avoided at all costs. We see disciplinary grounding and interdisciplinary cross-fertilization as key to maintaining the dynamism of participatory research methods and theory. The Certificate seeks to build an intellectual and praxis community that learns and develops from each other. At UNC-CH, we have multiple clusters of nationally recognized participatory researchers and community experts, from performance ethnography in Communication (e.g., Craft, 2015; Pollock, 2005, 2010) to action research (e.g., Price, Gittell, & Ferman, 2011) and collaborative archaeology in Anthropology (e.g., Agbe-Davies, 2011; McAnany, 2014), to art making in post-conflict zones in Music (e.g., Ndaliko, 2016), to model community partnerships in Health Behavior (e.g., Schaal et al.,

2016). We chose to constitute a Certificate that would engage faculty in the praxis of teaching and mentoring graduate students in the challenging work of supporting communities via collaborative research that informs action. Our goal is to increase the number of trained researchers and community experts who know how to bring the power of collaborative research to communities. A Certificate seemed the best vehicle possible for breaking down disciplinary silos, ensuring intellectual and ethical rigor for participatory endeavors, effectively concentrating university resources for graduate training, and integrating participatory concerns into the university as a whole.

Create intentional learning communities. A third key practice central to disrupting gatekeeping work is to build a space where students with decolonizing interests are legible and supported. Students are initially overwhelmed by the multiple demands of participatory research. Not only must they have some confidence about how to design and conduct research, but they also must have confidence about building relationships and cocreating projects with people in a community. Although they may have developed decolonized stances toward those with whom they are doing research, they are often overcome by questions about how to put those stances into practice. Thus, an important lesson, built into the design of the Certificate, is to create intentional learning communities to support graduate student development as participatory researchers. The Certificate's three current initiatives discussed earlier—the *Seed Grant Initiative*, the *Community Expert Initiative*, and the *Participatory Research Workshop Forums*—along with the required courses, all help students navigate these challenges.

The *Seed Grant* and *Community Expert Initiatives*, in particular, have been fundamental in helping students conceptualize and venture forth in many of the different parts of a participatory research project. Seed grants have been used for preliminary research to help develop research questions, to lay the groundwork for collaboration with community organizations, and to demonstrate the feasibility of unconventional projects, thus assisting the applicant in securing funding for participatory components of their MA thesis or dissertation research from relevant sources. Applicants often get help from board members and from the director and codirector in shaping their idea for a project. There is a definite effort to model respect for community expertise both by the consultative and mentoring roles played by the community experts, by their visits to courses that are part of the program, including the Core course, and by the fact that seed grant winners are encouraged to identify a community expert in the community of their own project and can access extra funding for an honorarium for the community expert. As mentioned, these initiatives require funding, itself an institutional barrier to be overcome.

Translate participatory research to potential donors. Raising money for the Certificate has taught us several lessons and is still a matter of uncertainty. As in other instances, the question of funding acutely exposes the limits of the academy. The hurdles to funding the Certificate demonstrate in particular the narrow definitions of what the academy does and who is recognized as participants. The Certificate was given 3-year start-up grants by two administrative offices at UNC-CH. These grants allowed the Certificate to develop initiatives to bring in community experts and to offer 4 to 6 seed grants per year. One of the internal sources explicitly channeled the funding to parts of the program other than the Community Expert Initiative, the stated reason being that compensating community people would be hard to justify given the office's research mandate. Three years later, our effort to raise money from two other administrative units for community experts met a more encouraging response from one unit, whereas for the other and more crucial source, community engagement was nowhere on the priority list. Efforts to gain inclusion in the roster of projects presented to the donors of the university have also run into the problem of illegibility. Professional fund-raisers we consulted told us that donors do not yet understand the idea of community-engaged research. A vital step of this process is crafting a narrative about the importance of this research that will appeal to donors and become legible to the academy.

One area of promise is in the appeal of the Certificate to students from a variety of fields and backgrounds, which we were able to link to the core values and objectives of the College of Arts and Sciences and the university more broadly. The Certificate clearly furthers three of the College's priorities: interdisciplinary development, inclusivity, and global reach. The program attracts an interdisciplinary, diverse set of graduate students and faculty who desire to use their disciplinary knowledge in the context of community engagement in North Carolina, across the United States, and globally (see Table 1).

Translate participatory research across disciplines. The core course and the one-hour required course serve as a space for disrupting institutional barriers to collaborative, participatory research practice through its inherent interdisciplinarity. Interdisciplinarity challenges students toward more critical reflexivity about their own disciplines and research projects. This kind of reflection begins to take root on the very first day of the core course, for example. As we sit in a circle and participants share their name, department/discipline, and research topics (including the co-instructors, who go last), the energy is palpable. Several students have commented that this is the most interdisciplinary-diverse classroom they have *ever* encountered and share their excitement for the opportunity to learn from/about other disciplines. On the contrary, there are some students who have yet to define their projects, or whose disciplines have little support for

Table 1. Certificate Participation by School, Discipline, Inclusivity, and Local/Global Reach—2016.

Feature	Certificate participation
Student college or school affiliation	73% College of Arts and Sciences
	27% Schools of Public Health, Medicine, and Social Work
Student disciplinary affiliation (*n* = 26)	26% Anthropology
	16% Communication
	16% Geography
	16% Music
	11% American Studies
	5% Anthropology/Archaeology
	5% City and Regional Planning
	5% Religious Studies
Student inclusivity (*n* = 26)	50% graduate students of color
Board member affiliation (*n* = 11)	6 board members from College of Arts and Sciences
	3 board members from School of Public Health
	1 board member from School of Medicine
	1 community expert as board member and codirector
Board inclusivity (*n* = 11)	36% board members of color
Local and global reach of student projects (*n* = 26)	38% of student projects are in North Carolina
	19% are in other parts of the United States
	38% are in other parts of the world

the kinds of decolonizing work they want to do. These students share their feelings of trepidation as they see students who are further along in the development of their projects and who seem to have institutional support for their work. There are also some latent critiques students have of how other disciplines have historically approached problems, so it is vital to help students recognize the assets and contributions different disciplines can make to shared problems.

For instance, what does it mean to decolonize musicology? How does a field that emphasizes scientific outcomes understand performance ethnography research products and their contribution to the decolonizing effort? Students speak from their individual departmental experiences and can share strategies that have worked to navigate the sometimes difficult terrain of gaining committee acceptance or departmental approval. Learning to speak across disciplines can be helpful in this regard, as can learning the ways that disciplines vary in working through the challenges of decolonization.

Teaching students how to think through decolonizing approaches to research has also forced us to move through *all* the spaces that comprise knowledge production: the kitchen table, at which a research interview might take place, but also the classroom, where graduate students and undergraduate students are trained, and, equally as crucial, the conference room in which tenure and hiring decisions are made and dissertations defended. Thus, a vital lesson for all involved in the decolonizing project is to understand what forms of destabilization and disruption need to occur within the institutional setting itself, before students even design their projects. If we had only focused on the "field" as the site at which research happens, we would have missed these crucial spaces, which contain epistemic violence and exclusion as well as generative conversation and dialogue.

Critical Practice 2: Creating Avenues for Privileging a Greater Range of Voices

The second practice we find critical in this work is the acceptance of a greater range of voices in knowledge production. This not only means building on the institutional gatekeeping work described above so that we can have a greater diversity of participants formally located within academic structures as students and faculty, but it *also* means decentering any assumptions that legitimate knowledge is produced only within academic settings. Below we attend to both these issues, offering a more extended treatise on lessons from the decolonizing methodologies classroom.

Retrofit the university to support participative praxis. Creating respect for community knowledge in university research, in the training of Certificate students, and in leadership has been one of the most challenging aspects of the Certificate. Community members, aside from those who are donors, have had few recognized roles in the university. Indeed, the process of incorporating community presence has met with institutional friction, especially when it comes to compensating community experts for their time and expertise. Homeland Security requirements, for example, specify that community people working as independent contractors serving as researchers, as visiting classroom teachers, or as mentors to Certificate students must complete costly annual background checks.

Thus, a core lesson is that university procedures and arrangements will often need retrofitting. The institutional review board, which oversees consent, confidentiality, and other practices for the protection of human subjects, only recently (after much faculty encouragement) allowed community members to be reviewed as researchers. Key to clearing this hurdle and the ones mentioned above has been the creation and legitimation of a recognized identity for community participants as community experts. Community allies such as Melvin Jackson are important and persuasive voices in helping the University recognize the possibilities for community expert roles. In addition, faculty from the Schools of Public Health and Medicine, three of whom[10] helped to found the Certificate and continue on its board,

have been instrumental in making community input more feasible and legible at UNC-CH. The institutional review board now has training materials for community members acting as researchers. Numerous hurdles remain. University processes of payment, for example, often mean that payments to community experts are delayed for months, a problem for those who do not have ready cash reserves.

Decolonize the classroom. Within the core course, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, privileging a wider range of voices means working to transform how students and faculty, coming from different spaces and places, interact within the classroom itself. The course has proven to be especially attractive to students of color, with over 50% of participants identifying in this way through the first 3 years of the course. In this first 3-year period, there were also eight different departments represented by students and a mix of MA and PhD students. Being inclusive of community experts as an integral part of the learning process is another way the course works toward privileging a wider range of voices. This diversity has a number of important implications for how the course climate develops and the extent to which different perspectives open up, rather than close down, conversations inflected with race and power.

First, identity difference signals the immediacy of our need to challenge (call in) structures of power (White privilege, class privilege, patriarchy, heteronormativity, settler colonialism) circulating in the classroom and throughout the course. Instructors for this class are faced with a paradox: the course can *only* work with the premise of a safe space, but it must also be a place where students can challenge the way power dynamics play out in and outside the classroom. Again, our lesson plans for the first day of class are instructive. As a closing activity for the last half of the class, we ask the students to circle up again for a "think-pair-share" activity. Students write their response to three questions: (a) What scares you about doing decolonizing work in the academy? (b) What institutional constraints have you encountered? (c) What gives you hope? Then they share their responses in pairs, and share some of their common or most compelling responses in the larger circle. The ensuing conversation usually identifies some of the challenges of how structures of power circulate and whose knowledge counts. In 2016, among other concerns, students asked questions about how to find mentors who could advocate for decolonizing projects, how to acknowledge privilege, be critically reflexive, but still be productive. This includes how to avoid being either paralyzed by realizations of privilege or being overconfident in your status as an ally. The coteachers use this opportunity to draw out particular challenges of engaging in a diverse classroom and working against the presumptions of White privilege, patriarchy, heteronormativity, and settler colonialism. Thus, a vital lesson is that professors must find strategies for "calling in"

students without shutting down productive conversation. For example, students rarely come to class fully understanding how "objectivity" has long supported White privilege or how their instincts to "save others" are steeped in deep colonial processes (see, for example, Abu-Lughod, 2002). Depending on teacher strengths, student personalities, and classroom dynamics, this "calling in" will sometimes happen in the moment, and at other times in written feedback on class assignments/performance.

Second, exactly how collaborations with community experts take shape in the Certificate in general, and in the core course in particular, has been a matter of ongoing discussion among the Certificate board members. One important collaborative practice is community expert visits in classes, which is a requirement for the core course. Some of the challenges we have encountered in this practice are logistical, while others are philosophical. Recognizing that many of the community experts in our networks are often underpaid, overworked, and underresourced, we took careful steps to reduce the potential hardship of asking community experts to come to campus to speak to students. The experts we have invited so far have been in our own activist networks or recommended by our students and they have let us know what kinds of accommodations are important to them, even as they eagerly accept the opportunity to share their expertise with our students. We have paid small stipends to the speakers and arranged for travel and parking. In the future, we plan to take the class to community experts to avoid the inconvenience of having them take the time away from their sites.

Critical Practice 3: Providing Training for Research Traditions That Engage Participants as Coproducers of Knowledge

Our final critical practice is to provide both training and legitimacy for research traditions that engage participants as coproducers of knowledge, rather than as sources of data. This has meant careful thinking and deployment of strategies in the core course that build on the work above. The primary goal of the Decolonizing Methodologies course, as well as the Certificate Initiatives, is to create spaces in which methodological discussions can take place around how to better coproduce knowledge. When Rachel began the Decolonizing Methodologies course, she had a broad array of topics she was interested in, including lesbian feminist studies and critical Holocaust studies. As is the nature of graduate school, her research project was taking shape through the conversations and experiences in her courses. As part of an Introduction to Oral History class during the same semester, Rachel had conducted a traditional life history style interview with Vicki, her family friend and mentor. For the Decolonizing Methodologies core course, Rachel decided to conduct a comparison interview, which

would be informal, unrecorded, in the space of the archives, and using the archival materials to prompt the conversation. In the workshop presentation for the core class, Rachel sought advice on how to theorize a queer methodology, particularly of the archives, based on this experience. In her final paper, which was a reflection on the experience of these two interviews, as well as an attempt to theorize her larger methodology, Rachel wrote about her experiences of working "in the archive toward an affective connection and transmission of lesbian activist history." The final paper artfully pulled together class discussions about the centrality of relationships to research, the importance of listening beyond the search for facts, the affective aspects of research, and the colonizing trends in research in general and archives in particular.

Rachel successfully crafted an application for a seed grant from the Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research to fund her travel to do collaborative research with Vicki over the summer, traveling to the various archives where Vicki's materials were housed, including her home. The research emerged as a rich and nuanced account of an embodied engagement with the archive. Vicki served as the community expert as they traveled to each of the archive sites and coauthored papers about their interpretations, which they each presented at conferences. One such conference was at the biannual Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research workshop, where Rachel's presentation inspired others with the potential for decolonizing the academy. This research has become the foundation for her dissertation titled *Queer Intergeneration: Visual, Aural, and Archival Forms of Remembering*.

Rachel's story demonstrates the potential in projects that transgress borders of insider/outsider in knowledge production, and the importance of privileging methodologies whereby students bring their own backgrounds and commitments to the research process. Students bring potential, forward momentum, and embodied knowledge to the center of knowledge production when they embark on dissertation research, and it is our responsibility to make space for them and find alternate paths through the academy.

Provide multiple and varied research tools for coproducing knowledge. During the decolonizing methodologies course different traditions of knowledge coproduction are interrogated for what they offer us as tools. Specifically, we look at different strategies around collaboration and activist engagement (Hale, 2001; Moses, 2001; Sangtin Writers Collective Nagar, 2006); ethnographic methods archives (Chapman & Berggren, 2005; Pollack, 2003; Sheftel & Zembrzycki, 2010; Simpson, 2014); discourse, text, and context (DeVun & McClure, 2014; LeGreco & Tracy, 2009; Williams, 2010); and crucial arts-based inquiry (Cahill, 2006; Castleden & Garvin, 2008; Conrad, 2014; Dennison, 2015). With each of these articles, we talk about what the limitations and

potentials of these approaches for the described research are and what aspects of these approaches would be useful for our own research projects. Having as many tools available to us as possible seems to be one of the most vital aspects of decolonizing our methodologies as the communities we are working with will often necessitate different approaches to the coproduction of knowledge. Described above, the required "inspiration presentations" is another way the course provides class participants with a wide variety of methodologies for knowledge coproduction. Opening up not just who we see as knowledge producers, but what kinds of forms knowledge production can take, these presentations are a vital part of the course.

Create a safe space to explore problems. One of the most important components of coproducing knowledge happens in the final third of the core course, when students workshop a specific problem they are facing in their research. This problem-based focus was designed because too often in academia we are taught to gloss over or veer away from methodological challenges we face, particularly in research proposals where we are trying to convince a committee we are ready to do research or are the best person to receive limited grant funds. We ask students to be as specific as possible with the problem and to provide the necessary background to allow their peers to help them think through their problem. A workshop problem can be anything from navigating a practical logistical problem to interrogating students' assumptions about incorporating their expertise with community knowledge.

Prior to class, students must identify and circulate to the class a relevant reading that will provide the class with some needed context in addition to writing a two-page single-spaced description of the problem that they want to work on. This assignment includes a very brief one-paragraph description of their research questions and methods, and the remainder of the article is to be comprised of a preliminary and frank assessment of the problem they face. During class, students spend 5 to 10 min on a concise statement of the workshop problem, mostly devoted to answering any clarifying questions their peers have about the problem they are facing. For 10 min, their peers then work in pairs to reflect on and brainstorm around the workshop problem, filling out a worksheet that asks the following questions (among others): What question or challenge does the person identify? What do you see as the most engaging aspect of this person's project? Why? Can you think of a different way to phrase or frame that problem? What suggestions do you have for how they might approach this problem in a thoughtful and productive manner? During this same time, the co-instructors meet with the student to provide their own feedback on the problem. The peer groups then take 5 min to report back about their conversation and the student collects all of the written feedback. The presenter is encouraged to be an active

listener throughout this process, but can ask clarifying questions as needed or at the end. Students often focus on one central problem for their research that speaks to a larger question, for instance, "How do I do political work in my hometown, across the racial border that I was socialized into?" "How do I work with people seeking health care, when the medical establishment has been a site of violence for them and for their families?" "How do I do work in an ethically responsible manner and follow my political commitments when that requires me to disagree with dissertation committee feedback?"

The workshop process creates a space for healthy and deep critique by providing a place for participants to explore their own research without having all the answers. In our experience, this is a radical space, because it strips away some of the pretense of perfection that we are encouraged to have in other types of academic spaces and creates a collaborative space where everyone is working together to brainstorm around the presented problems. Instructors can also help create this space throughout the course by refusing the role as experts throughout the class, acting more as facilitators who are developing the decolonizing potential of everyone in the room, including themselves.

Discussion

Decolonizing the academy involves working with, overcoming, and confronting persistent institutional practices. It further demands creating new pedagogies and educational spaces and changing relations between university researchers and those with whom they collaborate. It means insisting that knowledge production should be working toward community and group well-being. We have in this article concentrated on critical practices we undertook to meet institutional barriers and provide, through the core course and initiatives such as the seed grants, an intentional learning community that supports graduate students seeking to do participatory and decolonizing research. We explain how the three critical practices, (a) disrupting gatekeeping mechanisms that maintain hierarchies of exclusion, (b) creating avenues for privileging a greater range of voices in knowledge production, and (c) providing training for research traditions that engage participants as coproducers of knowledge were carried out in responding to institutional and pedagogical challenges.

The Certificate takes students from diverse disciplines and social, ethnic, and racial backgrounds and helps them to both understand the logic and intent of participatory methodologies and further their own transformation to researchers who are part of the process of decolonizing knowledge production. In this work, we are recognizing how all knowledge comes out of particularly positioned perspectives and that peoples from spaces of oppression frequently have

different and vital questions they want research to address. Attention is paid to these issues in the intentional learning community created by the Certificate activities. These activities provide a foundation for the researchers we train to deal with, among other things, the symbolic violence leveled against them by conventional researchers and proponents of existing gatekeeping mechanisms both in and outside the university.

Perhaps one of the most important lessons from our experiences with the Certificate and its core course is that decolonizing the academy requires the intentional creation of spaces that allow not only for dissent, disruption, and critique, but also for hope, care, and vulnerability. These are the sorts of spaces that participatory research can help to create for the coproduction of knowledge in community spaces as well. The surprise with which students have greeted this endeavor demonstrates the degree to which such spaces continue to be lacking (at least on our campus). In spring 2016, one student wrote on her evaluation form that

> the space to work through research problems, be creative with solutions, and openly discuss matters that may be sensitive were perhaps my favorite elements of the course; please never let these go! All graduate students—at any level—need a course like this!

Though comments like these are gratifying in that they demonstrate the utility of the course and Certificate itself, they also suggest broader challenges faced by the academy. Surely being creative with solutions and being open to the discussion of difficult topics ought to be fundamental to any graduate program. Likewise, the way that the course draws students of color is a signal to us about the kinds of spaces that are needed in the academy.

All of us still in the academy, whether in a tenured or more contingent position, must strive to see our current position in the academy as a starting point on a lifelong trajectory toward decolonization. It is vital to work on what *is* possible, and to keep both a short-term and long-term vision in mind. Our hope is for the Certificate to be just a beginning. By continually keeping multiple horizons in view, our intention is that we are all doing what we can now, recognizing the constraints that we are under, and planning for a future in which we continue to hone our skills of openness, care, and critique, so that as we progress through our careers we can also be working for a more just and fundamentally different form of knowledge production than the one that is hegemonic today. Perhaps as a PhD student, we can work with a community-based organization and receive feedback on our research plans, and hope to divert some of the research energies toward furthering the goals of that organization. But as we move into tenure-track jobs or into non-academic career paths, we could consider more radical forms of intervention into the academy or organizations we

work for through considerations of things like hiring practices, institutional racism, or theoretical challenges to Eurocentric knowledge. The important thing is to consider what is possible for us at each stage of our career, and to have a set of driving principles and commitments that are kept in view as we navigate the academy.

In all of these projects, it is also vital not to lose sight of the goal of "breaking the settler colonial triad" (Tuck & Yang, 2012). The fact is that historical and ongoing forms of Black oppression, native land theft and colonization, and global hegemony continue to be woven into the questions scientists ask, the projects that are funded, the methods that are used, the findings that are deemed valid, and the scholars that are graduated, hired, promoted, and honored. It is only by creating new academic spaces whereby structures of power are interrogated, different voices are heard, and community engagement is privileged that we can alter this cycle. Without spaces of accountability and engagement, there is no hope of decolonizing the academy.

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Notes

1. Thanks to Rachel for allowing us to tell her story and for reviewing the manuscript.
2. In their article, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012) usefully outline some of the dangers of using "decolonizing" beyond a strict focus on the repatriation of native land. They write, "Breaking the settler colonial triad, in direct terms, means repatriating land to sovereign Native tribes and nations, abolition of slavery in its contemporary forms, and the dismantling of the imperial metropole. Decolonization "here" is intimately connected to anti-imperialism elsewhere. However, decolonial struggles here/there are not parallel, not shared equally, nor do they bring neat closure to the concerns of all involved—particularly not for settlers. Decolonization is not equivocal to other anti-colonial struggles. It is incommensurable" (p. 31). In our core course and in this article, it is vital that the work we are doing not lose sight of the need for "repatriating indigenous land and life" (p. 1). We are not, however, willing to disconnect these from other projects that are essential for "breaking the settler colonial triad." This is not a project of commensurability, as Tuck and Yang warn against, but of opening up and interrogating new possible futures in which indigenous land and life are a central part.
3. The authors, four of whom were members of the founding Board, participated in the participatory process through which a core group of some 15 faculty, 10 graduate students, and two community experts created the design of the Certificate and core course.
4. The six "models of engaged scholarship" salient on University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's (UNC-CH) campus during that period are described in Holland, Powell, Eng, and Drew (2010).
5. The idea of a Certificate originated in a university/community partnership, a SPARC (Sustained Participatory Action Research Collaboration), formed between a group of researchers at UNC-CH and a nonprofit in a rural county in North Carolina. Holland and leaders at the nonprofit were thinking of creating an off-campus center in the county that would host long-term residential stays for graduate students who would learn participatory research on projects in the county. The leaders of the nonprofit, Gabe Cumming and Carla Norwood, who are a story in their own right, having decided to return to Carla's home county and devote their university training in ecology to helping to economically revitalize the area, had developed an important participatory research process called Community Voice (Cumming & Holland, 2013; Cumming & Norwood, 2012). Cumming, along with Claire Novotony, one of the first archaeology grad students from UNC-CH to champion participatory methods, carried out the early interviews mentioned above in the text. From the interviews and meetings with graduate students about the residency program, it became clear that the graduate students strongly doubted the feasibility of students with commitments to research in other locales relocating to the rural site for several months. The Certificate on campus was a practical alternative that would accomplish some of the same goals.
6. Some polarization did happen among the graduate students who attended the first iteration of the 1-hr required course, "Current Issues in Participatory Research." In subsequent versions of the course, polarization was avoided by explicitly discussing the varying engagements of different disciplines with making social change and why those in public health, for example, might need to persuade through "scientific" evidence.
7. Examples are featured on the Certificate's website, http://participatoryresearch.web.unc.edu
8. The official requirements for the Certificate are 10 hr of course credit that include the three credit core course, a three credit elective, a three credit practicum, and the one credit for the community-building, gateway course to the Certificate, "Current Issues in Participatory Research." While all four of these courses have their purposes, we focus on the core course as the exemplar of decolonizing praxis. For more information on the requirements, go to the Certificate website: http://participatoryresearch.web.unc.edu
9. He also called for the transformation of the university to lower the walls between academic units and to overcome the insular behaviors between disciplines. Boyer's call was taken seriously at UNC-CH by some units. For example, led by Ruel Tyson, the Academic Leadership Program at the Institute for the Arts and Humanities Faculty Fellowship, opened Holland's eyes in 2003 to different ways to conceptualize leadership in the university.
10. Alice Ammerman, Alex Lightfoot, and Geni Eng.

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Dorothy Holland is Boshamer distinguished professor of anthropology, emeritus, at the UNC-CH. She is a sociocultural anthropologist with ethnographic research experience in several countries including the United States, Nepal, Guatemala, and American Samoa. She is cofounder and founding director of the Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research, former chair of the Department of Anthropology at UNC-CH, and past-president of the Society for Psychological Anthropology. A longtime student of identity, social movements, and activism, she continues to be engaged in research on communities' responses to politically charged challenges around race-related inequality, economic dislocation, and environmental destruction.

Jean Dennison is a citizen of the Osage Nation and an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Washington. Her book *Colonial Entanglement: Constituting a Twenty-First-Century Osage Nation* (UNC Press 2012) speaks directly to national revitalization, one of the most pressing issues facing American Indians today. Her current research uses grounded ethnographic methods to study various accountability practices as they manifest throughout the current Osage Nation government. The primary goal of her academic endeavors is to explore how indigenous peoples negotiate and contest the ongoing settler colonial process in areas such as citizenship, governance, and sovereignty.

Sara H. Smith is associate professor of geography at the UNC-CH. She is a feminist political geographer and her research seeks to understand how politics and geopolitics are constituted or disrupted through intimate acts of love, friendship, and birth. She has worked on these questions in the Ladakh region of India's Jammu and Kashmir state, and is now engaged in a project with marginalized Himalayan youth. She also pursues these issues as they emerge in the national (U.S.) and global context, through developing work on race, biopolitics, and the future.

Melvin Jackson is a principal partner with The PRIME Collective, LLC, a group of community experts who consults and partners with investigators in how to incorporate principles of community engagement into all phases of research. The PRIME Collective also provides an avenue for addressing many of the barriers faced around community members engaging in academic research. Melvin Jackson is the founding community codirector of the Graduate Certificate in Participatory Research. He also serves as Community Course Director for the Thorp Faculty Engaged Scholars Program at the University of North Carolina, which provides two years of training, networking and skill-development in engaged scholarship to interdisciplinary faculty.