

# RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

## Towards A Pedagogy of Transnational Feminism When Teaching and Activism Go Online

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FIG 1.1 "UNTITLED" BY DELANEY GUNSTER FOR LASC 348A "ONLINE AND IN THE STREETS: WOMEN'S STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE IN LATIN AMERICA." TRANSLATIONS APPEAR IN THE APPENDIX.

“Untitled” is a digital illustration produced by Delaney Gunster<sup>1</sup> for “Online and in the Streets: Women’s Struggles for Justice in Latin America,” LASC348A, co-taught by the authors of this essay, Cara Snyder and Sabrina González. We developed LASC 348A as a three-week study abroad program to Buenos Aires, converted into an online course, offered between June 1 and 19, 2020. Gunster’s artwork illustrates the transnational connections students made between two contemporary struggles for justice in the Americas -- Ni Una Menos (NUM, Not One Woman Less) and Black Lives Matter (BLM) -- and highlights the synergies between online and street politics as forms of activist responses against state violence. Written on the palms of the hands are names of people from across the Americas murdered by state violence. Each finger parallels a message or activist tactic: the pinky, middle, and pointer fingers include slogans, messages written on protest signs, and text from the internet; the ring finger features hashtags; and the thumb identifies these murders as public health crises. At the tip of the fingers, the hands are joined by a demand for the state to stop killing women and Black people. We share this art to introduce our experiences teaching with a pedagogy of transnational feminism that links activism to the classroom and connects U.S. students with Latin American and Caribbean histories of organizing against neoliberal, sexist, misogynist, and racist regimes. A transnational feminist pedagogy opens the classroom to the world, teaches students to contemplate scales from the intimate to the global, exposes asymmetrical flows of power across borders, challenges the fixedness of the nation-state as a category, and builds transnational solidarities in order to take action both on and off line.

Inspired by the massification of feminist protest following NUM, the class was originally planned as a course taught on-site in Argentina (referred to by our Universities as a study abroad) during the summer of 2020. A main objective of the program we created was to build transnational solidarities between U.S. and Latin American students, scholars, and activists as U.S.-based students engaged with change-makers in and around Buenos Aires working to combat gendered violence. At the time of the program’s inception, few students at our institution had experienced a massive grassroots movement. The study abroad aimed to introduce a group of young people living and studying in the U.S. to the energy of a popular uprising. Ultimately, the goal of this immersive course was for students to feel and to witness a feminist revolution as they learned from and collaborated with feminists in Argentina.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to reconfigure our pedagogical space. We converted the study abroad program to an online class while asking ourselves what would be lost as the course moved from engaging Latin American activism in the streets of Buenos Aires to learning through the digital spaces of the classroom, social media, and art. Then, in June, during the first week of classes, uprisings against police brutality surged across the U.S. It turned out that the students did not have to be in Argentina to experience a massive protest. For instance, Gunster’s illustration reflects the extent to which the students perceived tactics and discourses of BLM and NUM to be

connected. By putting the hands together, Gunster articulates the workings of state violence and highlights anti-racist and feminist resistance against it.

We found ourselves teaching activism online at a time when change-makers throughout the world were fighting for justice in both physical and digital spaces. These include the mounting protests in Hong Kong, Ecuador, and Chile, all of which borrowed tactics from each other. In Latin America, feminists marked the fifth anniversary of the first massive protest against misogynist violence organized by #NUM, which took place on June 3, 2015. According to the website [niunamenos.org](http://niunamenos.org), the campaign began as a “collective scream against machista violence,” especially femicide (Fregoso and Bejarano 2010). In the U.S., uprisings for racial justice swelled under the banner of BLM, amidst the outbreak of COVID-19 and after the police killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and other precious Black lives named in Gunster’s art. #BLM is a transnational campaign that began in 2013, and whose stated mission on [blacklivesmatter.com](http://blacklivesmatter.com) is “to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes.” Both uprisings localized issues of state violence for U.S.-based students. Although our course focused on struggles for justice in Latin America, when the BLM protests started in May, students made organic connections between our course material and the protests happening in their local contexts. Because students were going to protests, and our class emphasized relationships between theory and praxis, and between universities and social movements, they were able to make transnational connections between struggles in the U.S. and Latin America. Through virtual spaces, students could observe and connect with local movements throughout the Americas.

“Online and in the Streets” is a microcosm of larger-scale educational changes that are underway in K-12 school systems and universities. Educators are compelled to reinterpret the relationship between online teaching and activism. The novel coronavirus has forced activists and educators for social justice to rethink the ways to protest, demand, and teach social change. The need for protest remains urgent, as governments force poor people to make impossible decisions about whether to stay safe or to work so they can eat, as abusers terrorize femmes and children confined in unsafe homes, and as police continue to kill Black and brown people with impunity. Debates about the transition to online education have also exposed issues of access and especially the lack of digital infrastructure in the Global South and U.S.-Third World (Sandoval 2000), one aspect of the Digital Divide. While educators like Drabinsky, Clark, and Roberts (in issue number 90 of *Radical Teacher*, 2011) have considered the possibilities of transformative pedagogy online, instructors must now reimagine what teaching for justice means in a world of social distance and physical isolation.

What are the possibilities for transformative teaching in this educational context?

Based on our experiences teaching our advanced undergraduate seminar, we explore approaches to online instruction that honor feminist commitments to:

1. embodied knowledge;
2. transnational solidarity and collaboration;
3. education for liberation.

We explore these approaches through course material; interviews with feminist artists, activists, and scholars, and major course projects we refer to as “experience sets” that asked students to synthesize course material, discussions, and experiences outside the classroom. The following section summarizes the structure of LASC 348. Then, the essay investigates the successes and challenges we faced as we enacted each of the aforementioned commitments -- embodied knowledge, transnational solidarity and collaboration, and education for liberation -- and taught towards a pedagogy of transnational feminism.

## Situating the Class

As co-teachers, the content and method of our class was informed by our experiences and identities. Sabrina González (she/ella) is a feminist historian from Buenos Aires, a non-native English speaker, and a first-generation student from a working-class family. Her experience as an activist in community centers, student and teachers unions, alternative media, and non-traditional schools for adults shaped her research on the history of education and her approaches to popular and feminist pedagogies. Cara Snyder (she/they), a white, U.S.-born Professor of WGSS, has lived and taught in Guatemala, Argentina, and Brazil. Their research and organizing with women and LGBT+ athlete-activists, and their two decades of experience teaching in a variety of settings, including multiple study abroads, inform Snyder’s queer, feminist, anti-racist, anti-imperialist pedagogies.

The students’ positionalities influenced how they approached the class material and the type of final projects that they developed. For example, the students who identified as Latinx (4) were able to further research their parents’ home countries and the transnational connections between the U.S. and the region. Other students (three identified as white, U.S. born, and one student identified her own journey as part of the African diaspora in the U.S.) connected to the theory and praxis of Latin American feminisms via protests and street politics in the U.S. (see Fig 1.1). The students ranged in age between 18 and 22 years old, which meant that few had lived through a popular uprising. All but one identified as women, several identified as queer, and the majority of the class related intimately to gender-based violence. Some were first-generation students who worked and took care of their families at the time of the class, and these obligations made it difficult to keep up with the speed of a three-week course.

The content of a fifteen-week semester was covered at the equivalent of one week per day of class. Inspired by the digital pedagogy of Alexis Lothain (2021), each week comprised a unit, and an experience set that culminated with a weekly project: a feminist vlog (video blog), an oral history interview, and a creative response, in that order. Beyond the weekly project, students completed daily

discussion posts and quizzes to ensure their comprehension of course materials. They were required to attend at least one of the three Zoom sessions offered weekly. A small class of eight students and shared teaching responsibilities allowed for weekly 1:1 meetings with students, something that would have been prohibitive with a larger class size. The co-teaching model allowed us to work collectively on discussion plans, the design of weekly projects, and the mentorship of students. It also allowed us to divide labor when we considered that our expertise could better contribute to the success of the class. For example, Snyder, Ph.D. in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, was responsible for the week 1 theme of “Feminist Foundations” -- assigning reading materials, creating quizzes and discussion questions, and grading -- while González, Ph.D. candidate in History, led week 2, “A Long History of Women’s Activism.”

The three-week duration of the class meant tough decisions about what to include and necessarily limited class goals. Week 1 equipped students with “Feminist Foundations.” In this interdisciplinary course, cross-listed in three units (Women’s Studies, Latin American Studies, and History), the material for this week -- which included readings, films, artworks, interviews, and digital explorations -- established a shared language for students from different majors to discuss gender, sexuality, social movements, and racial formations in a Latin American context. The second week focused on women’s histories of oppression and collective organization from the early twentieth century through the 1990s. The week’s materials introduced the arc of women’s movements during this time period. We studied interventions into the welfare state in the early 1900s, struggles for political and economic rights in the 1950s, and the resistance to the neoliberal dictatorships in the 1970s in the Southern Cone (the region today known as Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil). Here, the class’s short duration meant that we decided to focus on one geographical region, since one week would not be enough time to comprehensively address complexities across Latin America and the Caribbean. The third week focused on contemporary movements building towards “Feminist Futures.” Students learned about contemporary feminist tactics to denounce femicides and advocate for reproductive rights. We focused on #NiUnaMenos and #AbortoLegalYa, the campaign for the legalization of the abortion in Argentina.

## Embodied Knowledge

When we envisioned the class as an on-site course in Argentina, set to take place during the fifth anniversary of #NiUnaMenos, we imagined students would be fully immersed: participating in marches and trainings, dialoguing with local leaders, and working on projects alongside Argentine student activists. Along with feminist activists, students would have to *poner sus cuerpos* by documenting the anniversary of #NUM, by dancing queer tango, by organizing a cultural activity with a local social movement, and by participating in *fútbol femenino* (women’s soccer). While this experience would be impossible to reproduce in an online course, we asked

ourselves how the online class could translate such embodied elements. Incorporating physicality mattered both pedagogically, in terms of active learning, and also topically, because of the centrality of the body in Latin American feminisms.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, “*poner el cuerpo/a*” (putting the body on the line) is a metaphor that feminists have used for decades to signal the embodied character of activism: perform a song, march in the streets, and sometimes put your body at risk in front of the police. According to an activist from the Argentine Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados (MTE - Movement of Unemployed Workers), “to question inequality is not exclusively a ‘mental’ activity . . . In order to make our voices heard, we have to feel [our demands], and have them come out of your whole body” (Colectiva Mala Junta 2019, 53). Since the 1980s Latin American and Caribbean “*encuentros*”(meetings) have provided physical spaces for thousands of women and dissidents to discuss gender inequality, build collective power, and strategize local, national, and transnational feminist agendas. Beyond the *encuentros*, feminists have participated in local organizations and intervened in everyday life “putting their bodies” into transforming popular neighborhoods, cultural centers, schools, unions, universities, and the workplace (Gago, 2019; Colectiva Mala Junta, 2019; Mason 2007; Flores, 2019).

Teaching transnational feminism in a digital environment devoid of personal contact and collective action with activists from the Global South presented serious limitations. However, the uprising in the U.S. transformed how the students experienced our course: for many, participating in local actions gave new meaning to Latin American and Caribbean mobilizing. For the group of young learners in LASC348 it was the first time they were witnessing a popular movement in the streets, observing police interact with activists, and debating with friends and family about racism and white privilege. Many of them were experiencing the tiredness of their bodies after a protest, the smell of tear gas, and the anger of racial inequality. For instance, one student (who identified as white Latinx) encountered police violence for the first time when they were tear gassed by the cops while peacefully protesting. The experience radicalized this student to join anti-policing ACAB actions and to share their experiences online via Instagram and Twitter. Not all of our students participated in physical demonstrations, but even the students who were not in the streets (for a variety of reasons) gained new perspectives by listening to the experiences of their friends and classmates and by seeing media depictions of protests, especially live streams. More research needs to be done in order to understand the multiple connections between the online classroom and the streets as well as the relationship between off- and on-line activism. Yet, we believe that the protests happening at the local level and the active participation of our students in them gave practical meaning to the class material so the students could reflect about activist tactics, empathize with social justice causes, and ultimately connect state violence and protests in the Americas.

The conceptualization of digital spaces as valuable sites for social change helped students to make sense of their online practices and to consider themselves as producers of discourses, and collaborators in translocal movements for justice. *Performance Constellations: Networks of Protest and Activism in Latin America*, by Marcela A. Fuentes, looks at how bodily performances in the streets (from Ciudad Juarez to Buenos Aires) and social media campaigns work together to create “insurgent collective actions” (2) that denounce state violence, patriarchal power, and neoliberal policies, which disproportionately affect women, travestis, trans, and non-binary persons. Fuentes’s text gave students the conceptual tools to understand digital and physical spaces as part of “co-created” activist networks where people are watching, commenting, joining, sharing, attending, documenting, replicating, recycling (Fuentes 2019, 3). In *Online and in the Streets*, students were engaging in social media, reading stories from alternative news sources, and looking at personal narratives expressed in words, songs, and images. In the class discussion board, students remarked on their ability to participate in movements even when they cannot leave their homes by “sharing poems, music, speeches, etc.” Many noted they were using social media to organize “but also to educate people on white privilege, racism and institutional discrimination.” Another student noted that translation functions built into social media platforms like Instagram -- which can be configured to automatically translate posts in any language into English -- have made it easy for them to participate in campaigns across the world, like those in Hong Kong. Every response on the discussion board about Fuentes’s text linked #NiUnaMenos with #BLM evincing the transnational connections that *Performance Constellations* elucidated. Some of the similarities students noted were: practices of mourning, *denuncia* or public denouncements, overlap in slogans (for example in FIG 1.1) that call out the state for its role in enacting violence (and negating protections) on vulnerable people, and demanding the right to exist and be visible in public spaces, both digital and physical.

While recognizing the networked protests that bridged local actions in Argentina and the U.S., online forms of engagement (in both protest and pedagogy) nevertheless remain, to an extent, disembodied. In our class, we created rituals that brought students back into their bodies such as meditation and free-writing activities. We started every synchronous meeting with free-writing that allowed the students to connect class materials with their experiential knowledge and to process these through their bodies. For example, one activity asked students to reflect on: “what does your body need, what does your mind need, what does your spirit need.” In their own words, students considered this activity “healing,” and an “opportunity to keep your mind at peace” in a moment when they felt exhausted, frustrated, and alone.

These activities, along with the class materials, exposed students to feminist epistemologies that recognize women’s experiences as legitimate sources of knowledge and as motors for political transformation. For example, Merle Collins’s (2010) film *Saracca and Nation: African Memory and ReCreacion in Grenada and Carriacou* traces

the African genealogies of *saracca* on the island of Carriacou where members of Collins's family are from. Collins links the intimate and the global, connecting her personal journey of self-discovery with the African diaspora in the Americas. The filmmaker documents the song, food, and dance of *saracca* to map exchanges between the Caribbean and Africa. For instance, at one point Collins asks a village elder to identify her nation, and she responds with a song that the filmmaker traces to a tribe from the Northwestern coast of Africa. One student noted that "instead of engaging with history passively, [the film examines] cultural traditions to embody a history that is told through language, song, dance and festival" (emphasis ours).

Indeed, if *saracca* illustrates how history exists in our bodies, Collins's own embodied experiences of anti-Blackness were part of her motivation for making the film. During an interview with CK Snyder, Collins modeled a process of self-reflection, and how personal experiences can become sites of knowledge. The filmmaker shared that reclaiming and celebrating African heritage challenges the veneration of all things European that she learned in school. Drawing inspiration from how Collins's life influenced her approach to knowledge making, and from her self-reflexivity about her journey, students created a feminist vlog. In the vlogs, the students were asked to connect their own corporeal and situated understandings of feminism with debates in Latin American feminisms they were encountering in the class.

In the online classroom, we could not give the students the opportunities for embodied knowledge that they would have enjoyed in Buenos Aires. Yet, a feminist pedagogy that centers the body made it possible for the students to connect the class material with their personal experiences, to understand that the personal is political, and furthermore to grasp that the meaning of personal and political must always be situated within a historical context that is also geographic -- situated in physical and virtual space. Moreover, a feminist pedagogy that pays attention to students' experiences must also open the classroom to the world; making reading materials, assignments, and discussions relevant and meaningful by allowing the students to talk, discuss, and learn how and about what their bodies experience. In a context of uprising in the U.S., the protests localized transnational debates about police brutality, oppression, and state violence against women and Black people.

## Transnational Solidarity and Collaboration

We conceived of the on-site class in Buenos Aires as a way to create long-lasting relationships and exchanges between students, activists, artists, and scholars in Argentina and the United States. Transnational collaborations in this context signified a two way flow, from the U.S. to Argentina and vice versa. Through a process of negotiation with local actors, the study abroad would have paid women leaders for their time and expertise and allocated material and human resources to organizations

and public institutions for their time and space. Moreover, the collaborations between U.S. institutions and local entities -- like the *Red Interdisciplinaria de Genero* (Interdisciplinary Network of Gender Studies) at the Universidad Tres de Febrero and the *Prosecretaria de Géneros y Políticas Feministas* (the Office of Gender and Feminist Politics) at the School of Humanities and Education Science in the Universidad Nacional de La Plata -- would lend clout to local feminists building gender studies in the Argentine academy as well as visibilize their intellectual and organizational work. Conversely, as the first on-site course at our U.S. based university that centered feminist movements in Latin America, it would have presented an institutional paradigm where academia and activism exist in closer proximity (Ortiz-Riaga and Morales-Rubiano, 2011; Cedeño Ferrín and Machado Ramírez, 2012). The course aimed to introduce this paradigm to a U.S. institution that aspires (but often fails) to serve the community where it resides. Indeed, the fact that the on-site course was so popular (with over 30 applications submitted in the first year it was offered) put it on the radar for other professors and administrators. *Women's Movements in Latin America* (the original name of the on-site course, later changed when we moved online) made feminist movements a legitimate study abroad course at our University, with social organizers as producers of knowledge.

*Online and In the Streets* did not allow for the type of lasting, meaningful, and reciprocal collaborations that we envisioned in the study abroad in Buenos Aires. Nonetheless, the online class was able to incorporate transnational approaches. We did this via course materials that highlighted (dis)connections across borders, analyzed asymmetrical flows of power, traced movements of goods, people, and ideas, examined questions of scale, and fostered thinking that challenges and goes beyond the nation. Moreover, we used oral history methodologies that asked students to connect global issues to their intimate lives and personal genealogies. Finally, students took part in transnational conversations with invited speakers: feminist scholars, activists, and artists working on and from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Through course materials students understood the (dis)connections across borders (for instance Falcón 2015, Cowan 2017, Santana 2019, Moraga and Anzaldúa 2015). For example, so that students could link the BLM movements happening in their streets with those in Brazil, we included material about Marielle Franco, "a black queer woman, mother, sociologist, socialist, human rights defender, councilwoman from the favela of Maré," who was assassinated on March 14, 2018 ("On the Imperative of Transnational Solidarity: A U.S. Black Feminist Statement on the Assassination of Marielle Franco" 2018). The murder of councilwoman Franco took place amidst the rise of the right in Brazil and in many countries around the world, fueling the need for activists and scholars to look beyond the narrow confines of their own national borders. Following her assassination, the hashtags #MariellePresente (#MariellePresent) and #QuemMatouMarielleFranco (#WhoKilledMarielleFranco) have kept her alive, mobilizing protests and demanding accountability for her murder.

Through their introduction to Franco, students were able to compare and contrast movements for economic, racial, and gender justice throughout the Americas, challenging their U.S.-centric view of the world. In addition to the collective statement of solidarity written by a group of U.S. Black Feminist scholars, Brazilian Director Fabio Erdo's (2018) documentary "Marielle and Monica" helped students identify transnational trends in state violence, such as the increasing militarization of the police and their targeting of Black activists. At the same time, students situated Franco's murder within a long history of Latin American military dictators who "disappeared" political dissidents.

Another way students learned transnational methods was through oral history projects (Portelli 1998, Leavy 2007, Borland 1992, Townsend 2019, James 1996). The second experience set asked students to explore feminist approaches to oral history in order to connect personal stories with global processes of migration, labor, and motherhood. In the context of a three-week class during a pandemic, most students conducted interviews with family members since it was more accessible. Many students, first- or second-generation immigrants, took the interview as an opportunity to get to know their families' stories of migration. These students wanted to understand how their *madres* and *abuelas* experienced gendered norms in their home countries and how migration to the U.S. affected their choices. Oral history methodologies functioned as a tool to engage questions of scale by drawing connections between the self, the community, the nation, and beyond: in this case, a knowledge about what is proximate opened into knowing of others' experiences.

Although family histories were not part of our original expectations for the interviews, we realized that each student had personal histories that they wanted to unpack. In the process, students were tracing a genealogy that Mexican anthropologist Marcela Largarde (2018) conceptualized in her book *Claves feministas para mis socias de la vida (Feminist Keys for My Partners in Life)*. Largarde suggests that in order to build feminist leadership, we must understand where we come from. We must know the women who came before us, identify the conflicts they faced, and recognize how they navigated them (2018). Even within the limited time of our accelerated course, the discussions that arose from the second project led some students to proudly claim their genealogies and to acknowledge women's roles as transnational actors, workers, migrants, professionals, educators, and mothers. Oral history proved to be a powerful feminist method to foster dialogues between grandmothers, mothers, and daughters. It helped students to humanize and empathize with older generations, rather than judge them. Moreover, they learned how to situate contemporary feminist agendas while acknowledging past struggles.

In addition to course materials and oral history projects, our class enacted transnational collaborations through recorded interviews with instructors and Latin American and Caribbean thinkers. Despite physical distance, digital technologies facilitated collaborations with scholars who work in Latin America or who are Latin Americanists. Invited speakers included Marcela Fuentes (Argentina-USA), Associate Professor of Performance

Studies at Northwestern University, USA; Carolina Flores (Argentina), an activist and instructor at the Universidad Nacional Tres de Febrero, Argentina; Brandi Townsend (USA-Chile), a professor of History at the Universidad Catolica in Santiago, Chile; Josefina Vallejos (Argentina), a feminist activist, and Merle Collins (Grenada and Carriacou-Jamaica-Mexico-UK-USA), artist, activist, Professor and Director of Latin American and Caribbean Studies at UMD. Interviews were an alternative to the lecture, a genre that privileges the professor's point of view. They were made possible, in part, due to the labor of translation (Spanish to English) from instructors as well as the diverse networks of women the co-instructors brought into conversation. Yet, language was a factor that alienated many possible participants, especially activists from the working class. By and large, working-class people in Latin America do not have access to private instruction in English and do not have exposure to the language through international travel. Again, given the short duration of the class and limited resources, we were able to translate two interviews for our non-Spanish speaking students; but the simultaneous translation was labor intensive and doubled the interview time. Still, as a tactic for transnational teaching, the interviews functioned as opportunities to conceptualize *with* and not only *about* Latin American actors.

The interviews facilitated dialogues and promoted connections across nations but ultimately transnational feminist collaboration requires resources, long-term projects, and more horizontal exchanges between university and social movements. In the online course, the transnational collaborations we aspired to were more ephemeral, lacking the teaching and learning alliances that in-person interchanges would have made possible. Transnational feminist scholars Ashwini Tambe and Millie Thayer have conceptualized these shifts as a movement from *embodied* to *spectral transnationalism*, in their book *Transnational Feminist Itineraries* (2021). The authors describe how transnational feminist activism is increasingly forced to move online in light of neoliberal policies that defund social movements and prevent activists from physically gathering in order to make long-term alliances. In the 2000s transnational feminism shifted into spectral forms, as "traveling feminists" returned home to confront rightwing surges and diminished funding, forcing feminist organizations to either close or transition to cheaper, online forms of activism (Tambe and Thayer 2021, 19). Youth movements emerged in ephemeral surges as activists debated how to sustain such movements in order to confront enduring forms of domination. In this context, Tambe and Thayer assert, "transnationalism persists but becomes spectral, still present but in out-of-body form," cross border campaigns meet in person less and less, and local politics take center stage (2021, 19). With a project that aimed to build connections between the U.S. and Latin America, the limits that we found in the transition online is constitutive of the shifts happening in transnational feminist activism, writ large. We suggest that spectral forms of transnational feminism are also present in pedagogy, as evidenced in our experiences with *Online and In the Streets*.

## Education for Liberation

Just as we struggled to convert a class that emphasized embodied knowledge and facilitated transnational solidarity and collaboration, we were also presented with the limits and possibilities of online spaces for teaching that is liberatory. In moving from an on-site to an on-line setting, what elements of transformative pedagogy remain relevant? Latin America has a long tradition of liberatory education popularized by Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2013, 1986). Freire, who developed his method in face to face settings in the Brazilian *Nordeste* (North East), advocated forms of teaching that value students' experiences and make student-teacher relations inside the classroom more horizontal. As feminine-presenting women, one of whom is a non-native English speaker from the Global South, we appreciate feminist critiques of horizontality that acknowledge the challenges women face in being recognized as authorities and knowledge producers. Furthermore, formal educational structures, such as grading, limit possibilities for democratizing the classroom. Within the multiple structural limitations of teaching at neoliberal institutions, in general, and teaching online, in particular, what might constitute a transformative digital education?

"Online and in the Streets" aspired to liberatory methods through assignment structure, self-assessment, and collective input on the syllabus. First, we designed our class around three experience sets -- a feminist vlog, an oral history project, and a creative response -- that recognized students' experiences as sites of knowledge. This structure required students to draw critically from events outside the classroom and connect these to course materials and discussions. The experience sets also allowed students freedom and creativity since the direction of the assignments were largely self-determined. When students struggled with what to focus on, we asked them to prioritize projects that sparked their curiosity and that gave them pleasure. Second, self assessments (students grading their own assignments) made students experts on their personal growth. Self-assessment de-escalated the pressure to produce work deemed worthy by professors and kept the emphasis on the joy of learning. This proved particularly important during the third experience set that asked students to either create or analyze a work of art, which was a vulnerable process for many of our non-artist-identified students. Because the set emphasized the process rather than the outcome, students found the exercise of making art liberatory. Third, a mid-semester survey asked students to reflect on their process of learning and provide formative feedback including suggestions for topics they wished to incorporate during the third week. The practice of asking students about their interests gave them ownership over the syllabus and challenged a one-way flow of knowledge from teachers to students.

Responding to students' desires to learn more about childhood, art, and education, during the last week Sabrina González interviewed her cousin, Josefina Vallejos, a nine year old girl who defines herself as feminist. The interview explored Vallejos's definition of feminism, her sources of inspiration, her artwork, and her process of feminist

education. Vallejos was able to signal the main elements of a feminist agenda: reproductive rights, resistance to gendered forms of violence, and equality. According to her, feminism is "to have the same social rights as men. We have the right to be paid equally and to not be touched against our will. We also have freedom of expression. We have the right to kiss who we want and not be called a slut ... when men do this they are called *machos*" (4:20). Vallejos recalled the emergence of #NiUnaMenos in 2015 and the debate for the legalization of abortion in Argentina's National Congress in 2018 as two key moments in her political awakening. She was 4 years old when, inspired by the #NiUnaMenos protests, she created a sign that said "*paren de matarnos*" (stop killing us), hung it on the front door of her home, and has continued to make feminist-themed art since. It is perhaps because the interview with Vallejos responded to students' interests that it generated the most most meaningful class discussion about the construction of childhood, national policy, sex education, and the power of feminist art to educate the new generations.

Vallejos's interview also spoke to the potential of liberatory education. As a young artist, Vallejos learned from the transformative agendas that feminist movements are imagining and enacting in the present. She referenced her family members, friends with an older sister, and YouTubers as people who have influenced her ideas. Notably, her sources of knowledge about feminism come from her intimate circles and digital spaces rather than formal education state-sponsored initiatives like comprehensive sexual education. In other words, Vallejos developed a feminist consciousness in part due to the messaging that movements like #NiUnaMenos inspired. However, these social movements are advocating that the state incorporate their demands for sexual education in public education and in so doing translate the changes happening in civil society into lasting policies that educate children from a liberatory perspective. Students valued Vallejos's interview not only for her political clarity, but for the symbolic role children play as harbingers of the future. For many students and for the instructors of this class, Josefina demonstrates that feminist utopias are possible and that new generations might be more aware and willing to speak out than previous generations.

Students created art that drew from what we were learning in class about #NiUnaMenos and what they were learning in the streets from #BlackLivesMatter. Gunther's artwork (Fig 1.1) is one example. Other works included a zine on Black lesbian love, a drawing about indigenous women confronting gender stereotypes, and a digital storytelling of racialized beauty standards in Latin America. As a part of our concluding reflections, students collectively composed a poem (Vooris 2019), inspired by movements for justice across the Americas. According to students, in a feminist utopia:

*bonds are formed through communities of care  
the idea of family is far beyond the constraints of  
blood relation  
child care is a community activity  
children and girls are allowed to live*

*we look at one another  
there is no discrimination  
nobody is afraid to be who they are*

*there is peace and acceptance of all people  
there is no fear of being who you are destined to be,  
everyone can be who they are*

*we engage with love freely and vastly  
consent is constantly practiced*

*women are at the same level as men  
women can go outside without being targeted  
women are intellectually strong to combat and change  
the system*

*those who identify as women:  
can love who they want,  
are not afraid to be by themselves at night,  
are the sole decision makers of their own bodies,  
their lands are protected,  
their Human Rights are recognized*

*there is freedom  
there is no war  
people learn history properly in order to not repeat  
mistakes*

*we move from a space of social isolation to a space of  
togetherness*

Feminist, antiracist, and queer pedagogies insist that the classroom's transformations of ways of thinking, through critical processes of knowledge production and exchange, can and should open onto larger transformations in the social and political world. Digital environments shift what such transformations might look like. For instance, a physical class might require an activist assignment where students work together to stage an intervention on campus. The students' interventions in our class were smaller in scale, aimed at self-reflexivity and mediations between intimate circles of family and friends. In small ways, through the content and structure of our course, we aspired to transformative teaching as a cornerstone of transnational feminist pedagogy.

## Conclusions

This moment calls for a transnational feminist pedagogy that incorporates embodied knowledge, transnational collaborations, and liberatory learning practices for students. We are operating in a context in which neoliberal policies reduce the budget for education at the same time that conservative governments in the Americas focus on profit over life, evinced in the ongoing exploitation of human and natural resources. The danger of commodification of education via online teaching is present. Furthermore, while schools struggle and while universities hunker down in anticipation of deeper budget cuts, apparently there is always money for the police. While writing this article, the police continued killing Black people

in the U.S. In Argentina, the police disappeared Facundo Astudillo Castro, a young, working-class, activist from Buenos Aires. Activists throughout the Americas continue to make state violence visible in its multiple forms: feminicides, deforestation, police brutality. Radical educators must similarly make visible these forms of oppression, exacerbated by the pandemic.

As aspiring transnational feminist pedagogs, and in the long tradition of marginalized people struggling for justice, we sought to meet the moment with the available resources. Our pedagogy required that we understand our students (primarily queer, first gen, POC) as part of those populations historically marginalized by an increasingly privatized higher education. While acknowledging these limitations, we also celebrate what we were able to accomplish, thanks to networks of support within Argentina, and activists and artists throughout the Americas. The course was also the result of a long-term partnership between co-teachers CK Snyder and Sabrina González that enacts transnational collaborations across the Americas. In the students' words, the class was successful because it gave them the opportunity to engage ideas and to encounter authors from Latin America and the Caribbean, to know their family histories of migration and labor, and to value their creative process. At the end of the course, some students even mentioned that they started thinking about themselves as activists.

Inspired by Fuentes's work we wanted to reconsider the possibilities of online teaching and activism as important in challenging the status quo in a digitally connected world. Throughout the sections of this paper, we have shown that we do not have to lose our pedagogical principles because our media changes. Online teaching can be a tool that facilitates transnational dialogues and honors students' different abilities and desires in learning. Because our students were mostly digital natives, they were open to this environment, perhaps more so than their instructors.

However, each section showed that online teaching, as part of *spectral transnationalism*, presents serious limitations when compared with in-person instruction, especially for classes teaching about social movements and protest. Regarding embodied knowledge, Latin American and Caribbean activists teach us that social change and structural transformations in the law, family, school, and media occur primarily through collective action, through *poner los/las/lxs cuerpos/cuerpas/cuerpxs* in the streets and local communities. The internet offers new possibilities for reverberations, echoes, and enunciations that amplify what happens in the streets, but it can never replace it. The course gestured towards a transnational feminist pedagogy by centering materials and scholars from the Global South. Through assignments like the oral history interview we also encouraged students to reflect and strengthen their own transnational connections. Yet, the inadequate amount of resources and planning time that went into this three-week class limited our ability to realize meaningful, lasting transnational exchanges: namely, we were unable to redistribute resources, pay for translation, and think with our collaborators in Latin America about shared goals and outcomes. Liberation is also a collective process, and digital

spaces pale in comparison to the sense of community that often happens in the space of a physical classroom.

In an online environment, teachers faced serious challenges to make their classrooms radical spaces for transnational activism. What would it look like, for instance, to work in solidarity with teachers in Latin America who are organizing campaigns to collect cell phones since online instruction remains impossible for poor students with limited access to the internet and digital devices? What might happen if teachers in the U.S. -- facing budget cuts and *poniendo sus cuerpos* on the front lines of unsafe classrooms -- understood our struggles for justice are inextricably linked? This article described how one might incorporate Latin American and Caribbean practices of resistance to neoliberal policies in the classroom in order to open the class to local protests happening in the streets, to give students the possibilities to reflect about social change, and to recognize embodied knowledge as legitimate sources of personal and collective liberation. We would like to suggest that a transnational feminist pedagogy, one that is adequately resourced and therefore able to build transnational networks of scholars, activists, artists, and students, is a pedagogy with the potential to open to the world and enact change.

## Note

1. We have summarized student responses and not used names to maintain privacy. We used Gunster's name and art with explicit permission to do so.

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## Appendix

English Translation of "Untitled" by Delayney Gunst

Left Hand: NUM		
Appendage	Spanish	English
Pinky	-No aparecemos muertas, nos matan -Te parecemos muchas? Nos faltan miles	-We are not "appearing" dead, they are killing us -Do you think we are too many? We are missing thousands
Ring Finger	#NiUnaMenos #AbortoLegalYa #AisladasNoSolos #NiUnaMas #Seraley	#NotOneWomanLess #LegalizeAbortionNow #IsolatedNotAlone #NotOneMore #ItWillBeLaw
Middle Finger	Estos ojos son míos. Este cuerpo es mío. Esta vida es mía. (Lyrics from Rebeca Lane)  No estas sola Mi cuerpo = mi decisión America Latina va a ser toda feminista  Molesta más una mujer liberada que mil asesinadas Soy feminista	These eyes are mine This body is mine. This life is mine.  You are not alone My body = my choice Latin America will be feminist  One liberated woman bothers you more than a thousand women murdered I'm a feminist
Pointer Finger	-La maternidad será deseada o no será -Predicar la abstinencia no es educación sexual -Aborto legal para no morir -Por nuestro derecho a decidir	-Maternity will be a choice or it will not happen -Preaching abstinence is not sexual education -Legal abortion to not die -Pro-choice
Thumb	El virus más ancestral es el patriarcado	The oldest virus is patriarchy



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