

Module Four: Imagining Feminist Futures

Day Four Morning Session: In Conversation with Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola

Facilitated by: Ms Iris Nxumalo

In conversation with Prof. Pumla Dineo Gqola, this session will explore the joys and complexities of living a feminist life. The conversation will illuminate the intentionality of feminist living, by specifically highlighting the deliberate choices, practices and commitments that feminist leaders can undertake to craft their feminist futures.

This conversation will commence with Prof. Pumla's musings on African Feminism. In previous conversations, Prof Pumla has identified African feminism as "a movement, a way of thinking and being that has at its centre, the freedom of African women – and all others- of all ages, locations, classes and sexual orientations"¹. Central to this understanding of African feminism is a commitment to be anti-homophobic and queer. In this segment, Prof Pumla will share her thinking regarding the position of African feminism as a distinctive – and not divisive - strand. We will also explore her interest in the African Feminist Literary Imagination, and illuminate her position as an African writing and rioting feminist women who is engaged in memory-work against erasure².

The second segment of our conversation will elucidate the choices and strategies that Prof. Pumla has employed in her feminist leadership journey as a professor, award-winning author and Dean of Research at the University of Fort Hare. We will pay specific attention to the commitments that she has made in her navigation of 'impossibly rigged spaces'³, and how she crafts, imagines and realises feminist futures in the current spaces that she occupies.

This conversation will then take a 'personal turn', by considering the radical possibilities that may exist in love, sisterhood and parenting as a feminist. Prof. Pumla will be invited to share her experiences and reflections on lobola, the pursuit of feminist freedoms in romantic relationships and her commitment to be "self-reflexive, attentive and with a full life of [her] own" as a mothering feminist. Furthermore, we will explore the options that subversion offers us in our lives as feminists, and ponder the possibilities that being rogue, badly behaved women affords us.

The conversation will close with an ode to the feminist lineages that have shaped Prof. Pumla's journey. By focusing on her lived and inherited feminist heritages, we hope to pay tribute to the people and spaces that have crafted her feminist imaginations, delve into the beauty of feminist rage and the role that these play in enabling her to realise feminist futures.

¹ African Feminist Forum (2016). Know Your African Feminists: Prof Pumla Dineo Gqola. Recorded at the African Feminist Forum in Harare, Zimbabwe. Available [here](#).

² Prof. Pumla Dineo Gqola (2017). Reflecting Rogue: Inside the Mind of a Feminist. MF Books: Johannesburg, p. 174

³ Prof Catherine A. Odara Hoppers (2019). Turning the Impossibly Rigged Spaces in Society to an Opportunity for the Generation of Justice . Lecture at Module 2 of the Zanele Mbeki Fellowship. Available [here](#).