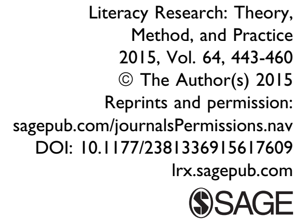
Dialogism: Feminist Revision of Argumentative Writing Instruction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Abstract

According to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), to be college and career ready students must be able to construct logical arguments using facts and reason. A feminist perspective provides an alternative point of view on the value of argumentation. The purpose of this study was to question the theories that frame the current CCSS 9–12 English language arts (ELA) standards and to propose alternative theories to be considered by literacy pedagogues in teaching of the standards. I conducted a thematic content analysis of the 9–12th grade writing standards and related content in the *CCSS for ELA*. Data revealed two shared areas between feminist pedagogy and ELA CCSS: (a) value of critical thinking; and (b) teachers' and students' power to make decisions about class content. However, three points of differences also became clear: (a) view of literacy as classified; (b) lack of women's voices; and (c) hierarchy of academic writing styles. Implications for practice require teachers to use a dialogic rather than a monologic framework for writing instruction.

Keywords

writing instruction, feminism, standards, high school students

Colleges are primarily an argument culture (Graff, 2003). Forming a logical argument in college requires the high-level skills of critical reading, critical thinking, and critical writing. Likewise, today's careers demand these same critical skills (Williams &

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McEnery, n.d.). The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) state that the skills needed to produce a quality argument are the same skills provided in any quality education (National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices [NGABP] & Council of Chief State School Officers [CCSSO], 2010b). It was this line of reasoning that helped prompt the CCSS shift in K–12 writing instruction from narrative to argumentation (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010a, 2010b).

According to the CCSS, to be college and career ready students must be able to construct logical arguments using facts and reason (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010a). The writers of CCSS ground their definition of argumentation in neoclassical rhetorical axiology (Fulkerson, 1996), which suggests that argument is a linear, logical thought progression meant to persuade the audience that one's ideas are valid. Rhetorical axiology, a dominant view in composition education, requires writers to look outward at their audience in order to persuasively position their textual argument (Fulkerson, 1990).

A feminist perspective provides an alternative point of view on the value of argumentation (Easley, 1997; Foss & Griffin, 1995; Frey, 1990; Gearhart, 1979; Lamb, 1991; Lloyd, 2013; Meyer, 1993; Tompkins, 1988). For example, Lamb (1991) and Lloyd (2013) asserted that the argument culture in academics is monologic and agonistic, and that preoccupation with winning the argument has polarized people and distracted from intellectual inspiration and knowledge generation. Energy spent tearing down others' arguments could have been spent building new knowledge (Tannen, 2002). Since the 1970s, feminist theorists have replaced the competitive battlefield metaphor for academic writing with a conversation metaphor (e.g., Gearhart, 1979; Frey, 1990; Tannen, 2002; Orr, Braithwaite, & Lichtenstein, 2012). Interestingly, the updated writings of Graff (e.g., Graff & Birkenstein, 2010), a theorist whose earlier work is cited in the English language arts (ELA) CCSS Appendix A (i.e., Graff, 2003), has also replaced the battleground metaphor with the conversation metaphor. A quality education, according to this alternative view, would help students move "from debate to dialogue" (Tannen, 1998, p. 1).

Feminist pedagogy requires students to challenge the norms and to question whether existing practices privilege certain groups and marginalize others (Capobianco, 2007; Luhmann, 2012; Micciche, 2014; Shrewsbury, 1993; Webb, Allen, &Walker, 2002). The current argument culture in academics from elementary to higher education may have unintended consequences if left unchecked or unquestioned. Presently, the CCSS establish what should be taught in schools but not how the standards should be taught (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010a). The purpose of this study was to question the theories that frame the current CCSS 9–12 ELA standards and to propose alternative theories to be considered by literacy pedagogues in teaching of the standards. This study explored the question: *How can feminist composition pedagogy inform the teaching of the ELA writing CCSS for 9th–12th grades?* The next section surveys the relevant literature on feminist composition pedagogy, followed by findings applying the feminist lens to the CCSS. The discussion centers on shifting the paradigm from rhetorical axiology to a feminist-aligned perspective with implications for classroom practice.

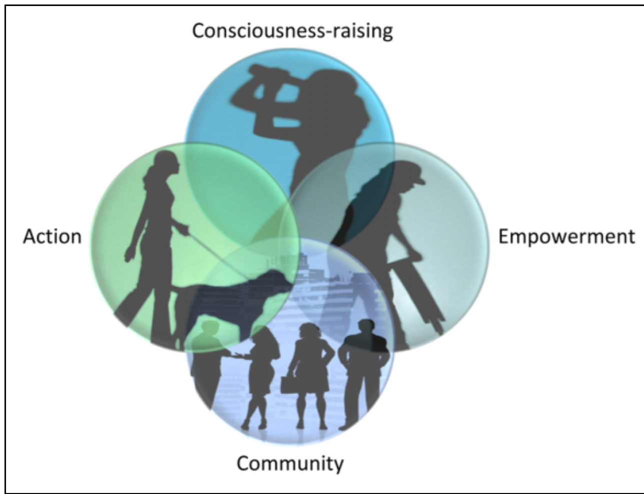

Figure 1. Dimensions of feminist pedagogy.

Review of Relevant Literature

Because the CCSS did not prescribe instructional methods, I conducted a literature review of feminist composition pedagogy in order to identify the major tenets. A synthesis of the conceptual and empirical literature on feminist pedagogy led to four dimensions: consciousness raising, empowerment, community, and activism. The dimensions were exhaustive but not mutually exclusive as displayed in Figure 1. While a sequential order could be applied, a feminist classroom could be more iterative and is always open to decisions being made at the classroom level. The following section expands upon these four dimensions.

Consciousness Raising

One goal of feminist composition pedagogy is consciousness raising (Bauer, 2003; Peterson, 2006; Siebler, 2008). With feminist pedagogy, students are encouraged to critically read texts and look closely for assumptions, for bias, and for the way different genders are portrayed. Teachers and students question previously unquestioned pedagogy and challenge existing practices as masculine (Rogers Cherland & Harper, 2007; Siebler, 2008). Students write to critique society, called critical consciousness, as well as oneself, called self-reflexivity. Self-reflexivity involves reflecting on one's own assumptions, biases, motivations, intentions, knowledge, privilege, and power during the writing process (Berger, 2013; Micciche, 2014). Feminist composition teachers work from an ethic of critique. They do not shy away from conflict but instead feel that confronting injustice is ethically the right thing to do (hooks, 1994; Jarret, 2003; Reynolds, 1993; Siebler, 2008).

Empowerment

Feminist composition pedagogues challenge traditional power structures in order to empower women and other oppressed subcultures (Breeze, 2007; Gardiner, 2002; Siebler, 2008). Rather than a protocol of competition that encourages one voice to rise above the others, feminist composition teachers create a protocol of care that encourages multiple voices to be heard and to work together to find consensus (Lamb, 1991; Noddings, 1988; Wilson, 1999). Traditional power structures are reformed, and the roles of teacher and students are restructured. Feminist composition teachers are committed to mutuality in that students gain control, but at the same time, women teachers demand the respect that is deserved (Jarret, 2003; Rogers Cherland & Harper, 2007; Siebler, 2008; Weiler, 1991). Teachers of feminist composition must work to keep power hierarchies outside the classroom from reestablishing inside the classroom (Christianakis, 2010; Jarret, 2003; Micciche, 2014; Wilson, 1999).

Community

Feminist composition pedagogy values the connections between people and recognizes that learning to write is a cognitive process as well as a social and emotional process (Siebler, 2008). Feminist composition teachers build a community of learners by encouraging open-minded dialogue (Hays, 1995; Lloyd, 2013) and collaborative writing (Gresham & Hartley, 1999; Lunsford & Ede, 2012; Peterson, 2006). Case studies have illustrated how feminist composition teachers established trust and created a safe place for members to take risks, share personal lived experiences with people from different experiences, and try alternative gender constructions (Schillinger, 2011; Strough & Diriwachter, 2000; Twomey, 2011; White, 1990). Teachers of feminist composition acknowledge diverse lived experiences breaking down the false dichotomies of (a) emotional and rational, (b) personal and professional/public (Bauer, 2003; Micciche, 2014; Wilson, 1999), and (c) man and woman (Butler, 1998). They understand that there is no universal experience inside of an identity group (e.g., woman, transgendered, Christian, Asian, etc.; Butler, 1998). Furthermore, feminist composition pedagogy takes into account that oppression based on gender intersects with oppression based on race, class, physical ability, and other identities (Berger, 2013; Blackburn, 2012; Breeze, 2007; Jarret, 2003; Micciche, 2014; Rogers Cherland & Harper, 2007; Schultz, 1996; Selfe, 2008). Intersectionality looks at the intersection of different forms of oppression, such as being a woman and being a person of color, and sees that oppression is not additive but is instead a qualitatively different experience.

Activism

Feminist composition pedagogy is education for social justice (Blake, 1997; hooks, 1994; Micciche, 2014; Rogers Cherland & Harper, 2007; Selfe, 2008). Empirical research has shown how feminist classrooms were action oriented and made political writings available

Table 1. Bernstein's Codes of Power in the Curriculum.

	Classification	Frame
Weak	Weak boundaries between disciplines	Control inside the classroom
Strong	Strong boundaries between disciplines	Control from authorities outside the classroom

to the wider public (Egan-Robertson, 1998; Luce-Kapler, 1999; Schillinger, 2011; Twomey, 2011). Civic engagement happens in the classroom through service learning, activist scholarship, and problem-based learning (Berger, 2013; Eudey, 2012). Berger (2013) describes a student who has experienced this kind of learning as one who "believes that he or she can change the world, and often does" (p. 77). Social transformation is the desired outcome of feminist pedagogy (Bauer, 2003; Weiler, 1991). Not only are students expected to take action, teachers expect this of themselves too (Micciche, 2014).

In summary, feminist theory as it relates to composition pedagogy promotes consciousness raising, empowerment of students and women teachers, community through dialogue, and social action. The next section explains the methods of analyzing the 9th–12th ELA CCSS through this feminist composition pedagogy lens.

Method

I conducted a thematic content analysis (Hoffman, Wilson, Martínez, & Sailors, 2011) of the 9- to 12th-grade writing standards and related content in the *CCSS for ELA and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, and Appendix A, B, C,* and *D*. For data analysis, I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step process of thematic analysis, once using a priori coding with my feminist composition pedagogy dimensions as displayed in Figure 1 and second using a priori coding with Bernstein's (1975) theory of codes of power in curriculum as displayed in Table 1. For each process, I first coded to reduce the data into significant statements. Then, I analyzed codes for patterns to identify themes. I compared the themes to the data and to each other once again to refine and define the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Finally, I performed a frequency count of author gender in the bibliography of CCSS Appendix A and the suggested reading list in *CCSS* Appendix B. The procedures were adapted from Sleeter and Stillman's (2005) curriculum standards content analysis method protocol and Grant and Sleeter's (2009) frequency count protocol.

Rigorous research methods were utilized to enhance validity and reliability. I followed previously published protocols from prominent critical researchers (i.e., Grant & Sleeter, 2009; Sleeter & Stillman, 2005). I analyzed the Standards themselves and CCSS Appendix A, B, and C (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010b, 2010c, 2010d) for triangulation. I also utilized peer debriefing, consulting with two professors from literacy, one professor and one graduate student from women's and gender studies, and one high school writing teacher.

Findings

Based on my thematic content analysis of the ELA CCSS writing standards, I found that power manifests in curriculum in two ways: framing and classification (Bernstein, 1975). Frame was defined as the amount of freedom teachers and students have in the curriculum to offer their own values, perspectives, questions, and pacing (Sleeter & Stillman, 2005).Classification categorized how knowledge was structured. Classification relating to literacy was the extent to which the Standards treated literacy as a set of decontextualized skills constrained to the language arts or situated as a practice that crossed traditional disciplinary lines.

When applying Bernstein's theory of power in curriculum through a feminist composition pedagogy lens, two shared areas between feminist pedagogy and ELA CCSS were evident: (a) value of critical thinking and (b) teachers' and students' power to make decisions about class content. However, three points of difference also became clear. These three issues are not without solutions. In this section, I will describe the points of similarity and points of difference between the ELA CCSS and feminist composition pedagogy. In the discussion section, I will put forth promising solutions and implications.

Points of Similarity

Feminist composition pedagogy and the ELA CCSS both value critical thinking. Both believe that education should teach students to think for themselves. The ELA CCSS introduction states:

> Students are engaged and open-minded—but discerning—readers and listeners. They work diligently to understand precisely what an author or speaker is saying, but they also question an author's or speaker's assumptions and premises and assess the veracity of claims and the soundness of reasoning. (p. 7)

Thus, through the ELA CCSS, students are moved to question what they read and hear. Although both value critical thinking, the object of the critique was different. The difference is, while the Standards were written to guide students toward the evaluation of texts, feminist theory is aimed at guiding students toward the evaluation of society.

Another point of similarity is giving students and teachers choices regarding topics to study. Feminist pedagogy restructures traditional roles to give students and teachers shared power in the classroom. The Standards themselves suggest a teacher and student centered frame, or what Bernstein (1975) termed *weak frame*.[1] A weak frame gives responsibility to those in the classroom (Sleeter & Stillman, 2005).The Standards explicitly state that students should make choices regarding the topics of their writing. The Standards state that students conduct research in order to construct their own claims as well as analyze and choose evidence to support their claims. However, data suggest that while students can make some choices, the CCSS authors believe there is a right way and a wrong way to write. To illustrate, the wording includes criteria such as "substantive topics" and "using valid reasoning" (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010a, p. 41). This act of

Distribution of Literary and Informational Passages by Grade in the 2009 NAEP Reading Framework

Grade	Literary	Informational
4	50%	50%
8	45%	55%
12	30%	70%

Source: National Assessment Governing Board. (2008). *Reading framework for the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Distribution of Communicative Purposes by Grade in the 2011 NAEP Writing Framework

Grade	To Persuade	To Explain	To Convey Experience
4	30%	35%	35%
8	35%	35%	30%
12	40%	40%	20%

Source: National Assessment Governing Board. (2007). *Writing framework for the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress, pre-publication edition.* Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc.

Figure 2. Photograph of tables from English language arts (ELA) Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

qualifying restricts choices of topics and interpretations. Feminist composition pedagogy values students' personal experiences and multiple ways of knowing.

In the introduction and in the margins of the Standards, teachers are given room to exercise professional judgment on content, writing processes, and strategies. The Standards state, "Teachers are thus free to provide students with whatever tools and knowledge their professional judgment and experience identify as most helpful for meeting the goals set out in the Standards" (p. 4). Describing teachers as having professional judgment positions teachers as assets to literacy education. Relative to a scripted literacy program, the Standards give teachers and students the power to decide what to read and write and how to read and write it. However, on the very next page, the Standards reign in the freedom by quantifying reading and writing content by genre. Figure 2 shows that writing to persuade and to explain should equal 80% of the distribution for writing content.

Overall, weak framing is evident in both feminist composition pedagogy and the ELA CCSS. However, the CCSS also shows evidence of strong framing. Having both strong and weak framing suggests more of a balance between traditionally aligned and feminist-aligned pedagogies rather than complete similarity. Moreover, many of the codes aligned with feminist pedagogy are found in the margins of the document suggesting these ideas were present but still marginalized. The Standards themselves, rather than the introduction, the notes, and the margins, serve as the basis on which the for-profit testing industry writes standardized assessments. These assessments drive instruction (Carmichael, Martino, Porter-Magee, &Wilson, 2010), even narrowing curriculum to merely what is on the standardized assessments (Au, 2007). This takes the power out of the hands of the teachers and students and places it in the hands of those corporations making the tests (Akyea & Sandoval, 2004). Following this line of reasoning, while the ELA CCSS documents may appear to be balanced between traditional and feminist theories, if the assessments do not include the points of similarity, instruction may not be balanced. Therefore, the CCSS could continue to improve in the area of weak framing.

Points of Difference

By the very nature of being a standardized set of mandatory goals for every child in the nation, the ELA CCSS did not align with all of feminist composition pedagogy

ideology. Feminist composition teachers understand that what counts as best or right depends on the culture (Akyea & Sandoval, 2004). Table 2 shows the points of similarity described above as well as the points of difference and the points that directly conflict. Three specific points of difference will be described below: (a) view of literacy as classified; (b) lack of women's voices; and (c) hierarchy of academic writing styles.

View of literacy as classified. Data showed no evidence of literacy being described as "integrated" and "interdisciplinary" (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010a, p. 4), but rather as discipline-specific skill sets. *Interdisciplinary* means that the skills would be taught by different content teachers but at the same time or as a team. The ELA CCSS authors' intent matches the term *multidisciplinary*, or applicable in different disciplines, rather than interdisciplinary (see Davies & Devlin, 2007 for full discussion of the terms' distinction).While the dimensions of literacy—reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language—were described as integrated and important in multiple disciplines, literacy skills were explicitly described as belonging within specific disciplines. The ELA CCSS introduction stated, "Literacy standards for Grade 6 and above are predicated on teachers . . . using their content area expertise to help students meet the particular challenges of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in their respective fields" (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010a, p. 3).The ELA CCSS did acknowledge that one written product may contain more than one genre. The margin of the standards stated, "They need to know how to combine elements of different kinds of writing—for example, to use narrative strategies within argument and explanation within narrative—to produce complex and nuanced writing" (p. 41). However, this statement showed that the types of writing knowledge remained strongly classified even when used within the same product. These data suggested what Bernstein (1975) referred to as strong classification rather than weak in regard to literacy curriculum. This is different from feminist pedagogy's view of literacy as integrated and socially situated, which would translate to a weak classification.

Lack of women's voices. The CCSS mandated that students "prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively" (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010a, p. 50).While the ELA CCSS purports to endorse multiple perspectives, women's voices were missing from CCSS documents. The authors of the CCSS utilized a theoretical framework that venerated argument (NGABP & CCSSO, 2010b). The framework for defining argumentation was based solely on white male scholars (100%).

Related to writing instruction is the suggested reading list in Appendix B of the ELA CCSS. It is common practice to use readings as exemplary works, model texts, or as sources from which students can draw evidence for their own claims in writing. While the intent of the CCSS authors was to provide examples of types of texts, schools may treat Appendix B as a national reading list (Aronson, 2012; Springen, 2012). For example, the media center at my institution purchased every title on the

Table 2. Table Comparing and Contrasting Feminist Pedagogy and the CCSS.

Components of Framework	Points of Similarity	Points of Difference		Conflicting Ideas	
		Feminist theories	CCSS	Feminist theories	CCSS
Consciousness	Critical thinking, evaluating multiple perspectives, and communicating one's ideas are important.	To think critically about society and oneself.	To think critically about texts.	Values multiple rationalities.	Multiple perspectives are not operationalized.
Empowerment	Teachers have valuable knowledge and expertise.	Teachers and students are empowered. Diverse perspectives included in research, theoretical framework, and curricular materials.	Teachers are empowered to make decisions from within a restricted boundary predominately based on White male scholarship.	Knowledge is contextual.	Knowledge is hierarchical.
Community	Students should learn to collaborate.	Writing is cognitive, cultural, political, social, and historically situated.	Writing is cognitive and social.	Relationships are prioritized.	Skills are prioritized.
Action	Publish student work.	To change the world. Fight for your rights.	To get a job. Fight to beat competition.	Education for social justice.	Education for global competition.

Table 3. Recommended Story and Informational Texts for Grade Band 9–10 and 11–12 by the CCSS.

Category	CCSS 9–10		CCSS 11–12	
Female author	9	20%	14	26%
Male author	37	80%	40	74%
Female main character	8	36%	15	35%
Male main character	14	63%	38	65%

Note. Not all texts identified the gender of the main character or had a main character.

list that was missing from its collection. In the 9th–10th grade band, 75% of authors and 63% of protagonists were male. For the 11th–12th grade, 74% of authors and 65% of protagonists were male. The data in Table 3 represent a frequency count as suggested in Grant and Sleeter (2009). For titles, CCSS suggested readings 9th–10th grade band ($n = 46$) and 11th–12th grade band (n = 54).

Hierarchy of academic writing style. In the ELA CCSS, writing is categorized as argumentation, explanatory, and description. The ELA CCSS Appendix A explicitly named argumentation as the most important form of writing. The authors stated, "The Standards put particular emphasis on students' ability to write sound arguments on substantive topics" (p. 24). The hierarchy was argument, informational/explanatory, narrative/description, reflection, and poetry combined with other types of creative writing at the bottom. Appendix A only mentioned the first three. Poetry and other types of creative writing were left to "teacher discretion," (i.e., omitted from the actual standards; p. 23). Dialogue, an important component of feminist composition pedagogy, is only mentioned in the ELA CCSS in regard to a skill, for 9th–12th grade that skill is writing dialogue in narratives. As narrative is discounted, dialogue could be as well.[2] Reflection, another important component of feminist pedagogy, is mentioned in the ELA CCSS anchor standards. Anchor standard for writing nine stated, "Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research" (p. 41). The importance of reflection, however, was deemphasized and shown not to mean self-reflection in the specific 9–12 standards, as the focus of standard nine stated "analyze how an author" can develop an idea and "delineate and evaluate the argument" of another author (p. 47).

Feminist theorists have problematized argumentative rhetoric in writing pedagogy for decades (i.e., Easley, 1997; Foss & Griffin, 1995; Frey, 1990; Lamb, 1991; Meyer, 1993; Tompkins, 1988). As Easley (1997) put it, "The teaching of argumentative writing was basically an anti-feminist activity. It seemed to encourage the patriarchal values of competition and conflict rather than the feminist ethics of cooperation and care" (p. 30). While I do not advocate essentialist or dualist thinking that assumes males are competitive and females are caring, Easley's point has merit. Teaching argument from a competition-based or survival-of-the-fittest ideology means that

brilliant ideas might be rejected if judged as inadequate based on the mainstream standards of the time. Knowledge would be chosen based on politics and not merely merit (Gallego & Hollingworth, 2000). This means that writing would be judged by its adherence to the academic norms rather than by the content of the ideas and the effectiveness of the method of communication.

Discussion and Conclusion

The goal of writing instruction, as with all pedagogy, is to help children reach their potential. Schooling should not take away children's ways of knowing and communicating truths but add more tools to their toolbox. Education does not need to be strictly either for social justice or for career preparation. Based on my content analysis, it can be about both. Students need to know how to argue, because presently college is primarily an argument culture (Graff, 2003). On the other hand, students need to know that other ways of creating knowledge, other ways of problem solving, and other ways of viewing the world are equally valid. In order to avoid the dualistic conventions and negative connotations associated with the word *argument*, teachers can shift the focus of writing instruction from monologic argument to dialogic knowledge construction (Lamb, 1991; Zawacki, 1992).

Dialogism

The word *dialogic* (Bakhtin, 1981) has not been widely applied to writing instruction in high school. Dialogism can stand for the ideological framework for feminist pedagogy applied to academic writing instruction. Dialogism combines the value of dialogue from feminist pedagogy and adding the value of logic from composition theory.

At the heart of dialogic learning theory is dialogue, specifically marked as egalitarian meaning making between people. Dialogic learning occurs in a social space as people interact and communicate about their observations and perceptions (Renshaw, 2004). Dialogism is often in reference to oral discourse or classroom talk, but it has also been related to writing at the college level (Bauer, 2003). Dialogic and dialectic writing are sometimes grouped together but they differ in an important way. Dialogic differs from dialectic because the goal of dialectic writing is to determine the most logical perspective. In dialogism, texts (and authors) inform each other and ideas build upon one another (Bakhtin, 1981). Dialogism as the theoretical framework for writing instruction offers three revisions to the ELA CCSS: operationalizing multiple perspectives, reestablishing the value of self-reflection, and adding negotiation and mediation. These ideas are not in opposition to the Standards but are rather missing from the Standards.

Operationalizing multiple perspectives. Operationalizing multiple perspectives means not merely saying multiple perspectives are important but using multiple perspectives to inform pedagogical theory and curriculum content. Women authors and theorists

should comprise 50% of the references in mainstream educational theory backing standards, curriculum, and assessment. Authors of other gender identities and all racial backgrounds should also be proportionately included. In addition to behind the scenes, the people represented in the curriculum should include diversity in gender (as well as authors from different gender identities who identify as different ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc.) so that culturally diverse student groups find the curriculum relevant and can connect to the lessons (Bishop, 2012; Gay, 2002; Gilbert, 1989; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Rogers Cherland & Harper, 2007). This is important because students see the gender roles presented to them in texts and in educational practice as the norm (Jones, 1993). This also allows students to use the texts as vehicles in finding their own voice.

Hearing from people's diverse lived experiences in the writing classroom gives students a chance to consider multiple perspectives and also multiple rationalities (Hays, 1995; Wynhoff Olsen, SangHee, & Bloome, 2013). Multiple rationalities are different ways of classifying rational thinking, including universal logic (i.e., Aristotle) and context-embedded rationality (i.e., Gilligan, 1982 and Foucault, 1984). Wynhoff Olson, SangHee, and Bloome (2013) found that in many 9–12 writing classrooms, different perspectives became polarized when presented in a universal logic framework. Even when teachers intended to use a more complex framework, the framework was often simplified into universal logic and/or polarized positions during instruction. The few teachers who taught from a context-embedded rationality framework had more interaction and dialogue with students while constructing arguments, and the students ended up with more sophisticated products.

Another way multiple perspectives can be operationalized is by presenting texts from more than two perspectives. Teaching from groups of three or more perspectives may help students begin to see issues as gray and not black and white. In other words, they may begin to see perspectives as contextual and not oppositional. They may also see that differences in opinion exist within identity categories, diminishing essentialist thinking.

Self-reflection. Self-reflection helps our students learn to learn and learn to unlearn (Andreotti, 2011).When students learn to learn, they reflect on their own learning processes. When students learn to unlearn, they reflect on their assumptions and biases. Learning to reflect helps students to unpack the learning process and content from an interrogatory rather than argumentative stance (Micciche, 2014). John Dewey (1938/2007) asserted that children do not learn from experience alone but from reflecting on experience. Reflection on one's learning is important to writing. Empirical research shows that teaching students self-regulation strategies to use during the writing process improved writing products and students' writing self-efficacy (Graham, 2006).

Reflection is important for moral development and relates to students' future lives as parents, business owners, and activists. Learning to unlearn is giving students the opportunity to reflect on their own assumptions, biases, and behaviors. Self-reflection writing allows quiet time for introspection (Breeze, 2007). Quiet time seems

to be diminishing in our modern technology-laden homes and needs to be protected as part of the school day. In the popular press, Martin (2013) explains, "[E]thical life needs reflection. And that reflection often requires time—moments of mentally unplugging and turning inward. Our compulsively overscheduled, hyperconnected lives are actually the perfect conditions for unethical behavior to compound itself, unnoticed underneath the frantic 21st-century buzz" (p. 2). Being able to reflect on one's thinking and actions is an important skill for ethical decision making that directly relates to writing pedagogy. Easley (1997) asserts that we must teach our students to self-reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of one's argument and to make an ethical choice about when to use different forms of writing. Self-reflexivity requires the use of logic and context in conjunction with exploring one's assumptions and biases.

Negotiation and mediation. One way dialogism can be practiced in the writing classroom is through mediation and negotiation training. Practicing mediation and negotiation requires students to be cooperative while retaining their own perspectives (Lamb, 1991). The Standards say students must "participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively" (2010a, p. 50). The results of writing instruction with this approach are for all parties to accept a solution, rather than the result of an argument where one person defeats another. This approach does not ask students to shy away from conflict but instead gives them practice at working through conflict in a socially just way (Lewis, 2000; Lloyd, 2013; Micciche, 2014; Siebler, 2008; Wilson, 1999). Negotiation and mediation are skills needed in public and personal life that would translate well to academic writing in Grades 9–12 and beyond.

Conclusion

Some things are worth fighting for. Argumentation as defined in the CCSS need not be erased from writing instruction, but it does not need to be privileged (Easley, 1997; Lamb, 1991; Tannen, 2002). Argument is an essential tool for students to be able to employ when necessary. Students should learn when argument is necessary and be prepared with ethical methods to discount illogical claims or refute biased ideas. Students must understand the difference between an ethic of critique and a habit of fault finding. The idea is that we must teach students to listen first to understand (Freire, 1970) and to consider the ethical dilemma of using argument, not teach argument as the go-to academic writing style. Since the ELA CCSS leave room for teachers and students to determine the course content, teachers can approach writing in their classrooms from a dialogism framework providing spaces for students' voices and voices from multiple perspectives to build upon each other.

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Notes

1. The word *weak* carries a negative connotation especially in relation to gender. Weak means powerless but in fact as a category means teachers are empowered. Perhaps the terms *deregulated* and *regulated* would be better suited for feminist pedagogy.
2. A search for the word dialogue in the total ELA CCSS inclusive of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language and of all grades produced three results in addition to the result reported in the findings: (a) a language standard addressing use of quotation marks when punctuating dialogue, (b) a reading standard addressing tracing how dialogue propels a story, and (c) a reading standard addressing use of expression when reading dialogue.

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