WRITING ASSESSMENT, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Edited by Mya Poe,
Asao B. Inoue,
and Norbert Elliot

Perspectives
on Writing

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Acknowledgments

In the hope that we can become better teachers, this book is
dedicated to our students.

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THE END OF ISOLATION

Mya Poe, Asao B. Inoue, and Norbert Elliot

Imagine a college student taking a first-year writing course over the summer. The student is a senior, a single parent, and trying to graduate. It is the student's last required course for graduation. In the reflective letter accompanying the final portfolio, the student writes that she has taken the course four times and that she has had to repeatedly withdrawal because she feared failing. The student describes that fear has accompanied all her college-level writing because of high-stakes assessment practices. The student explains that upon entrance into the college, a timed-writing exam resulted in placement into a developmental writing class, a skills course not offered by the English department but by a remedial division. In that class, failure was commonplace and that sense of failure has followed her throughout her college-writing experiences.

This imagined scenario is not that hard to believe for most writing teachers. But this story is not imagined; it is the story of one of Asao's former students. The student, Cynthia, was a bright and hard-working Asian student, an excellent reader and responder to her peers' drafts. We find it unjust that Cynthia, who described her writing experiences until college as meaningful—a poet, short story writer, and daily journal keeper, whose father was a pastor, a man who worked with words every week—could not find that same passion for language in college.

Cynthia's story could easily be about one student, struggling against institutional writing assessment mandates. But Cynthia's story is not the story of a single student but entire groups of students: non-traditional students, veterans, working-class students, first-generation students, disabled students, multilingual students, and students of color. And that is what makes Cynthia's story one of social injustice, the ways that social systems work against entire groups of people to maintain the unequal distribution of opportunity, wealth, and justice. Social injustice often has no villain, no one person to blame. Instead, social injustice works through seemingly normalized systems—educational systems, health care systems, housing systems, and so on. Because we do not question those systems, social injustice often seems natural. In Cynthia's case, for example, we look to the individual student's writing ability, not the system in which that ability is measured, valued, and distributed. We do not look to the sequence of courses that Cynthia must take, the lack of alignment between course work and assess-

ment, or the ways that the writing program is structured so that teachers do not share information about students who repeat courses; we do not look to institutional markers such as "time to degree" that determine success and failure or institutional economics where students like Cynthia must pay for courses over and over again; and we do not look to gain wisdom from Cynthia herself so that we can make writing instruction and assessment more meaningful. Because we are blind to these considerations, injustice occurs because of the system and its tacit structural injustices. Cynthia's case is not only typical but is the status quo for many students.

It is for students like Cynthia that we have sought the wisdom of our contributors in *Writing Assessment, Social Justice, and the Advancement of Opportunity* to answer a core question: *How can we ensure that writing assessment leads to the advancement of opportunity?*

As suggested by the title of this collection and our core question, three principles inform this collection. First, we do not limit our understanding of writing assessment to only programmatic or large-scale testing. Writing assessment must also include classroom assessment. Furthermore, we insist that writing assessment must be understood within an ecological framework. Because our metaphors structure our conceptual systems, ecological realities and the rhetorical framework used to describe them are necessary to displace elementalist notions of process and product.

Second, we adopt *social justice theory* in order to shift the focus from the potential harm done by writing assessment to a more expansive view of the possibilities of writing assessment. In mapping the history of social justice theory, we find ourselves drawn to the influences of John Rawls' work in *A Theory of Justice* (1971/1999) and *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (2001) as well as Iris Marion Young's work in *Responsibility for Justice* (2011).

Third, following legal precedent set through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which followed from the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution), we focus on the *advancement of opportunity* in order to identify opportunity structures and actionable outcomes in educational contexts. In our use of the term *opportunity structures*, we follow William A. Gamson and David S. Meyer (1996) in their observation that opportunity balances structure and agency. Opportunity structures, once identified, lead to additional opportunities to learn, a concept demanding articulated connections between writing assessment and the instructional environment. Pamela A. Moss and her colleagues in *Assessment, Equity, and Opportunity to Learn* (2008) have made substantial and enduring contributions in linking assessment, instructional environment, and opportunity to learn—thereby establishing a framework for the creation of opportunity structures in educational contexts. As James Paul

Gee writes in that collection (2008), insistence on opportunity to learn yields the following: universal affordances for action, participation, and learning; assurances to value experiential ranges among students; equal access to relevant technologies that are related to the learning ecology; emphasis on information communication and the communities of practice that manage that information; and emphasis on identity, value, content, and characteristic activities associated with language across academic areas. Emphasis on opportunity to learn, therefore, holds the potential to play an important role in the achievement of social justice in writing assessment.

In connecting writing assessment, social justice theory, and the advancement of opportunity, our collection seeks a restorative milestone in the history of Writing Studies (Phelps & Ackerman, 2010); we reject the historical isolation of assessment scholarship from the social justice orientation of our field (Conference on English Education, 2009; National Council of Teachers of English, 2010). Put as clearly as possible, our vision for the merger of writing assessment, social justice, and the advancement of opportunity is as follows:

> As a form of research, writing assessment best serves students when justice is taken as the ultimate aim of assessment; once adopted, that aim advances assessment as a principled way to create individual opportunity through identification of opportunity structures.

In making this three-part connection between practice, theory, and action in the realm of assessment, *Writing Assessment, Social Justice, and the Advancement of Opportunity* complicates received views of U.S. diversity, educational assessment, and educational processes. This particular collection makes interventions in historiographic studies, new applications of fairness and validity, innovative frameworks for outcomes design, and new directions for teacher research and professional development. Collectively, editors and contributors have worked hard to identify bigotry in its intentional and unwitting forms and chart a new future. In that process, as our volume amply demonstrates, we aim to get in the way of injustice.

MARILYN STERNGLASS AND THE REJECTION OF ELEMENTALIST REASONING

Undertaking this project demanded that we address the elementalist reasoning that often informs the measurement of student learning (Ash, 1998; Boring, 1950). For support in this endeavor, we looked to the literature. The field of Writing Studies is rich with scholarship on the harm perpetuated by unjust as-

sessment practices. Researchers such as Marilyn Sternglass (1997), Mike Rose (1989), Ira Shor (1996), Keith Gilyard (2011), and many others all serve as inspirational voices in the need to humanize the role of writing assessment in the lives of our students. Sternglass' study of her writing students at City College, in particular, has been a catalyst for our work because of her attention to the ecological complexity of writing assessment.

In *Time to Know Them: A Longitudinal Study of Writing and Learning at the College Level* (1997), Sternglass followed 53 CUNY undergraduate students in her three first-year writing courses: the lowest level of basic writing; the second level basic writing course; and the single semester first-year writing class. Of those 53 students, 21were African American, 26 were Latino, four were Asian, and two were white. At the end of six years, Sternglass found that 17 graduated, 10 transferred, 18 dropped out, and eight were still in college. From an assessment point of view, what remains striking about her study is the way that placement and exit tests—whether created by for-profit companies, non-profit organizations, or locally developed academic institutions—have serious detrimental consequences on some students. Those negative consequences of assessment were most likely to be felt on multilingual students whose intersectional identities were also informed by their working-class, immigrant backgrounds as well as their racial identities. Thus, broader social inequalities played out in local assessment practices. Moreover, those assessment practices masked the fact that, according to Sternglass' longitudinal findings, students can and do learn critical literacy over the course of their college years but that development is far from a smooth trajectory.

In reflecting on *Time to Know Them*, Sternglass explained:

> Placement and exit exam for composition courses are insidious in providing hazards for students with second-dialect or second-language backgrounds. In the case of the first, the placement exam, the student is confronted with a timed, impromptu test demanding essentially all the components of writing required for entrance into the regular composition course, requirements that are probably not too different from the outcomes required to complete the course. Students who fail to demonstrate such competence are then placed either into basic writing sections or into ESL programs. The instruction in these [basic writing] courses deliberately teaches the students to write drafts and later edit their texts, including the formal conventions of writing. But when these students confront the exit examinations, again timed, impromptu writ-

> ing is demanded and no time for editing is available. Thus,
> the instruction has set the students up for likely failure, when
> they lack the time to edit their writing. (pp. 206-207)

There are many elementalist rebuttals to Sternglass' claims that assessment practices provide "insidious" "hazards" for students. For example, it could be argued that multilingual students often, in fact, do need additional support for their writing when they enter college. In this case, students are assessed against a linguistic norm of college-level writing. A second argument could be that writing tests are based on cognitive skills that students will need in both the academy and the workplace. Without clear demonstration of competency of these skills—skills that are articulated in academic outcomes—we fail the students. In both of these arguments, assessment practices do not necessarily create inequality; they reflect where students are developmentally.

And yet, these elementalist arguments deserve critique. First, over forty years ago, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis (1976) demonstrated how working-class schools and parents have different values and promote different habits in schools than middle-class, suburban schools and parents—locations where colleges and universities take their cues. This sociocultural perspective means that some students are not born into conditions that easily allow them to acquire linguistic practices that are understood as norms leading to common academic assessment standards—i.e., the construct of writing valued on placement tests, exit tests, and other high-stakes tests. In Marxist terms, Bowles and Gintis explain the way school systems in capitalist societies reproduce the social order.

A deficit approach to understanding such linguistic and cultural difference—rather than a culturally sustaining one (Paris, 2012)—is not only antithetical to democratic ideals, it is based on a factual error that educational processes are based purely on an ahistorical cognitive model of learning. Alas, theories of learning do not sit outside cultural context for there is no universal linguistic norm for students at a particular developmental moment. Rather, theories of learning and linguistic development have arisen at particular historical moments and reflect the social and cultural tensions of that time as well as the understanding of learning and language itself within disciplinary paradigms. When we buy into the fallacy that there is a universal linguistic norm and that the additional support that some students need for their writing means relinquishing their home literacies at the front gates of the university, we are complicit in reproducing social inequality (Brandt, 2001; Carter & Thelin, 2017; Heath, 1983; Matsuda, 2014; Richardson, 2002). As Sternglass demonstrated, such students, unable to draw on those literacies—literacies can act as valuable scaffolds for academic learning—and assessed only through common academic assessment

standards of the white middle class, often find themselves subjected to the institutional penalties of being placed in non-credit bearing basic writing classes with curricula that do not align with first year writing. Thus, the fallacy of a universal linguistic standard results in replicating the existing social hierarchy under the false promise of opportunity.

The second argument above also deserves a critique from a social justice point of view. Even if the writing construct that is valued in higher education is unjust in terms of students' prior learning, that construct could still be considered appropriate, given that higher education's goal is to prepare all students for the English language communication demands that students are likely to have in middle-class professional and civic spaces. This argument too is elementalist. If a college or university's goal is to prepare students for such future middle-class professional and civic communication demands, then proficiency in these areas should not be a prerequisite for admission and placement. An admitted student is a qualified student.

Finally, in terms of future workplace success, it is not clear from educational studies that cognitive outcomes alone—such as those identified in a discursive norm or construct such as writing ability defined by Standardized American English—is related to future success for any student. In fact, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis (2002) looked at 25 different studies dating from 1960 to 1995 and found that "[t]here is no apparent trend in the estimated importance of cognitive performance as a determinant of earnings" (p. 6). That is, what a student can demonstrate cognitively in a writing assessment episode may not predict how much money that student can earn in the future. While this finding says little about cognitive performance and future success at those jobs, it is quite revealing that one's chances of making more earnings have little to do with the isolated cognitive traits or skills acquired in college. To wit, this lack of relationship between cognitive skills and future earning potential calls into question the very necessity of assessing any student on cognitive language skills for the purposes of future economic gains.

What do researchers find more associated with future economic success? Non-cognitive traits, such as perseverance and the "big five"—openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (pp. 10-11). Closely related to the big five personality factors are the habits of mind (curiosity, openness, engagement, creativity, persistence, responsibility, flexibility, and metacognition) identified in the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, and National Writing Project, 2011). In this extension from Cognitive Psychology to Writing Studies, the *Framework* becomes powerful in its potential to contribute to the future success of students through broad representation of the writing construct. In

the end, one message has been consistently clear in the analysis of 40 years of educational attainment data: Constrained construct representation—whether it be a narrow focus on grammatical correctness or a limited measure of cognition—is the enemy of social justice and opportunity advancement.

SOCIAL JUSTICE THEORY AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

The rejection of elementalist reasoning alone is insufficient for this project; thus we turn to social justice theory for its expansive potential as a means to advance opportunity. Varied over time and circumstance, social justice theory demonstrates the deeply rooted concern for the ways we are bound together, the nature of justified constraint, and the extent of individual freedom.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) identifies 1824 as the first use of the term social justice. In *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Distribution of Wealth Most Conducive to Human Happiness*, William Thompson wrote:

> The first principle of social justice, that "the sole object of all institutions and laws ought to be to promote the happiness of the whole of the community, or, where there was any incompatibility, that the happiness of the greater number should be always preferred to that of the lesser." (pp. 314-315)

Influenced by the utilitarian Jeremy Bentham (Hunt, 1979), Thompson expresses two enduring conceptualizations of social justice: insistence on benefit and identification of solution. Responsive to the rise of industrialism in his native Ireland, Thompson's expression of the value of community is best understood as set in opposition to the rise of capitalism. The value of utilitarianism is apparent in its opposition to the accumulation of wealth by the few.

In debates over the Italian Risorgimento, or the attempts to unify Italy in the nineteenth century, the conservative Jesuit philosopher, Luigi Taparelli D'Azeglio used the term, "social justice" in 1834 to advance conservative ends (Burke, 2010). He was engaged in debates about the foundations and nature of the state which had arisen at the time. Ironically, Taparelli's conception of "social justice" was linked to its relationship to inequality: a society with an aristocracy requires that we accept inequality. Social justice, Thomas Patrick Burke (2010) explains of Taparelli's ideas, is used to justify the belief that all people are "naturally unequal among themselves in everything that pertains to their individuality, just as they are naturally equal in all that pertains to the species" (pp. 101-102). Despite Taparelli's conservative argument that stemmed from an assumption about that which God had given each person—that is, we should not change that natural

inequality among people—he also identified a key idea in social justice accounts that endures: the paradoxical and the interconnected nature of all people.

Departing from the defense of societal inequality given by Taparelli, contemporary Anglican theologian Nicholas Sagovsky (2008) has identified four key strands of justice: maximization of freedom, rule of law, meeting of need, and responsible action. Each can be found, as he observes, in John Rawls account of social justice.

While the OED does not cite Rawls in identifying the etymological origin of the term social justice, today Rawls' ideas are of great influence on social justice theory. Setting aside the teleological assumptions associated with utilitarianism and Western ethical traditions, the theory of social justice stands in opposition to dominant capitalistic theories of social good. Because he addresses distributive principles based on social advantage, the work of John Rawls is especially important to the scholars in the present volume. For Rawls, justice is defined as fairness—thus eliciting a contractarian theory in which maximum liberty is pursued under realistically constrained conditions necessary to maintain the compact each of us has with society. Whatever the faults of *A Theory of Justice* (1971/1999) and *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (2001)—Sagovsky notes "the absence on the personal nature of doing justice" (p. xvi)—these two volumes provide a moral center under which principled action may be taken in the service of individual liberty.

Also important to the scholars in the present volume is the work of political scientist Iris Marion Young. In *Responsibility for Justice* (2011), Young focused on social structures of economic inequality and the political debates that have shaped our understanding of social mobility from the twentieth century into the twenty-first century. In engaging with the debates in political theory on social structures and individual responsibility, Young argued that social justice is about the relationship of individuals and the dispositions of social structures. Social structures are not inherent in society; rather, they become visible as we investigate the whole society and one comes to distinguish patterns in relationships among people and the positions they occupy relative to one another—i.e., social connection. As Young notes,

> People act within institutions where they know the rules, that is, understand that others have certain expectations of how things are done, or that certain patterns of speech and behavior have certain meanings, and that individuals will react with sanction or in other, less predictable ways if the implicitly formulated or formal rules are violated. (2011, p. 61)

For the purposes of social justice, establishing these patterns as they are pro-

cedurally formed is thus as important as categorizing the patterns themselves. Young went on to identify four axes of responsibility for justice: those with greatest power or influence; those with greatest privilege; those with greatest interest; and those with the potential for collective action. Because the pursuit of social justice is about creating equitable relationships, distribution of resources, and decision making among these and other communities, it is the emphasis on decision-making—on action—where we may find purchase for the project of writing assessment as social justice.

Finally, while social action can be used to mobilize individuals, legal precedent is one avenue to realign structural inequalities in order to leverage opportunity. Nowhere is the linking of action and legal precedent more explicit than the work of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Martin Luther King Jr. For example, in reflecting on the admission of black students Vivian Malone and James Hood to the University of Alabama, President John F. Kennedy in his June 11, 1963, Civil Rights Address invoked the ideals of human rights, tolerance, and reciprocity. Kennedy called the issue of equal rights a "moral issue"—an issue that every American should embrace because of its connections to the founding principles of American democracy: "The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened."

Beyond interlacing notions of morality and democracy, Kennedy established a vision for opportunity to learn: "As I've said before, not every child has an equal talent or an equal ability or equal motivation, but they should have the equal right to develop their talent and their ability and their motivation, to make something of themselves." The legal means to accompany this vision were established under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, signed by Lyndon B. Johnson. For Kennedy, the right to develop one's talent—was more important than the actual talent that one possessed. Measurement of ability was secondary to opportunity to learn.

Before concluding this section, we note that important for future scholarship on social justice and assessment may be Islamic traditions such as Zakāt (alms giving and its association with wealth distribution) and Buddhist traditions such as those found in the teaching of Thich Nhat Hanh. Thich Nhat Hanh's concept of interbeing, a fundamental pillar in his practice of peace as social justice, asks us to compare our common, received views (such as those of a rose and the contents of a garbage can) and identify resonance (enacted in process). Viewed beyond elemental surface contrasts, we find that "the rose will become part of the garbage" and the garbage "transform[s] into lovely vegetables, and even a rose." Furthermore, "looking at a rose you can see the garbage, and looking at the garbage you can see a rose. Roses and garbage inter-are" (Hanh, 1991, p. 97). In terms of his emphasis on that which is potentially in harmony, Thich Nhat

Hanh life's work can be viewed as a social justice project. In many ways, he is the embodiment of social justice through his work around peace and suffering with others. When speaking to U.S. Vietnam Veterans about their ongoing pain and suffering, he explains the interbeing of veterans and their larger society. He reminds us that "our individual consciousness is a product of our society, ancestors, education, and many other factors . . . Your personal healing will be the healing of the whole nation, your children, and their children" (2003, p. 125).

THE END OF ISOLATION

Through our scholarship over the last seven years on writing assessment and race, fairness, and now social justice, we have rejected the disciplinary isolation of assessment from the social justice orientation of Writing Studies. Specifically, Mya, Asao, and Norbert have undertaken a program of research dedicated to exploring theoretical, empirical, and actionable directions for writing assessment framed by evidence of fairness.

- In 2012, Asao and Mya revisited a 1981 study by White and Thomas in their investigation of test results of racially diverse first-year college students in order to understand the "effect of different kinds of testing upon the distribution of scores for racial minorities" (p. 276). Asao and Mya examined the English Placement Test, a writing assessment still in use at the time of the study and discontinued on August 2, 2017, by an executive order from Timothy P. White, Chancellor of the California State University system because of the barriers to student success associated with the test. Anticipating just such an outcome, Asao and Mya compared the White and Thomas findings to their 2008 findings at California State University, Fresno. By looking at racial data from writing assessments, they documented performance differences among student groups and questioned what variables of writing constructs, such as knowledge of conventions, result in student disenfranchisement.

- In 2012, Asao and Mya also published *Race and Writing Assessment*. In the first edited collection of its kind, the author and their colleagues drew on their experiences as instructors, researchers, and writing program administrators to investigate issues of racial identify as it is shaped by teaching and assessing writing. With special focus on validating assessments in terms of response processes and consequences, the volume attempted to identify construction within and across student groups. Chapters were devoted to the absence and presence

of race in writing assessment, technologies of assessing linguistic and racial variation, responding to such variation, placement methodologies, and new directions in placement. In one place, and for the first time, the collection brought assembled a formal discussion of race and identify formation as shaped by writing assessment practices.

- In 2012, Norbert and his colleagues performed the first differential validity study of automated writing assessment used for placement purposes. With emphasis on under-prediction for individuals within sub-groups, the study raised questions regarding the presence of a national culture of remediation and the role that automated writing assessment played in that culture of disenfranchisement; the need for local validation of purchased tests to prevent discriminatory practices; and a call for new frames of reference related to validation that emphasized fairness, especially in terms of performance of specific groups of students. Because the study used general linear modeling techniques to examine scores as they were related to criterion measures such as holistic scores from local measures and course grades, it demonstrated the need to disaggregate scores according to student groups before decisions regarding score use are made.

- In 2014, Mya and Norbert, working with legal scholar, John Aloysius Cogan Jr., and Tito Nurudeen Jr., a law student, continued empirical work with focus on disparate impact analysis. Using a thought experiment to examine the presence of unintended racial differences in outcomes resulting from facially neutral policies or practices, the study demonstrated that basic statistical techniques (four-fifths analysis and chi-square methods) could be used in support of a renewed emphasis on fairness. This newly proposed three-step process includes analyzing placement rates through threshold statistical analysis, contextualized inquiry to determine whether the placement exam meets an important educational objective, and consideration of less discriminatory assessment alternatives. In essence, the study illustrated the value of using empirical techniques having legal force to interrupting received views of placement—algorithmic formulations that question whether an admitted student is worthy of credit-bearing coursework.

- Continuing the emphasis that an admitted student is a qualified student deserving our most informed attention, Asao published *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future* in 2015, reinforcing a moral basis for the field. With emphasis on the social contraction of race as exemplified in insistence

on standardized edited American English, Asao calls for a new pedagogy based on an ecologically centered understanding of students and their labor. With emphasis on understanding the role of the individual within ecologies of power, parts, purpose, people, processes, products, and places, Asao challenged meritocracy. In place of the promised equal playing field and the lies associated with its constriction, Asao recommends specific practices, from grading contracts to peer review, as part of antiracist assessment ecology.

- Mya guest-edited a special issue of *Research in the Teaching of English* in 2014 that brought together researchers from Australia, Canada, the US as well as *Assessing Writing* editor Liz Hamp-Lyons to address questions of diversity in international writing assessment. The special issue evidenced the various theories and methodologies at play in different national contexts as well as the ways that vulnerable populations are made visible through those methodologies. As well as Inoue's compelling theorization of failure, the special issue introduced David Slomp's framework for making visible and using consequential validity evidence. Moving writing assessment research out of its parochial focus on U.S. contexts, this special issue was also notable for its connection between writing assessment and global language testing.

- In 2016, Mya and Asao edited a special issue of *College English* that further advanced the work they started in *Race and Writing Assessment.* Moving beyond anti-racist approaches to writing assessment to a social justice orientation, the special issue brought attention to the expansive potential of social justice theory applied to writing assessment research: "If social justice is about creating certain kinds of relationships, distribution of resources, and decision making . . ., it is this last point—decision making—where we may find a toehold for . . . writing assessment as social justice. In fact, . . . achieving justice is very much akin to the processes of validation" (p. 117). Contributions from Stephanie West-Puckett on the potential of alternative forms of classroom assessment using digital badging and Jerry Won Lee's call for bringing together writing assessment research with research on transingualism demonstrated the ways that a social justice orientation to writing assessment opens interdisciplinary possibilities. David F. Green Jr.'s essay on writing assessment at a HBCU was revealing in its potential for using race as a formative lens to see institutional assessment practices, such as the push-pull legacies that inform writing assessment in HBCU contexts.

- In 2016, Diane Kelly-Riley and Carl Whithaus edited a special issue of *Journal of Writing Assessment* on a theory of ethics for the field. The time was ideal for such extended deliberation on the role of fairness in educational measurement in general: The 2014 publication of the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* had elevated evidence related to fairness as equal to evidence related to validity and reliability. What would happen, the contributors wondered, if fairness were elevated above validity and reliability in the Trinitarian model of evidence? Extending the social justice scholarship of John Rawls (1999, 2001), Norbert proposed a theory based on identification of fairness and provision of opportunity structures created through maximum construct representation, with special attention paid to the extent which benefits are realized for the least advantaged. Mya and John continued work on disparate impact, this time focusing on the burden-shifting heuristic used by entities such as the Office for Civil Rights to redress disparate impact. Bob Broad defined a new perspective, structured ethical blindness, an applied it to the U.S. testing industry; and Ellen Cushman examined legacies of imperialist thought that permeates our understanding and use of validity. Building on work first published in the special issue of *Research in the Teaching of English* (Slomp, Corrigan, & Sugimoto, 2014), David Slomp presented and applied an integrated design and appraisal framework (IDAF) to the design of classroom-based writing assessments. Especially welcome is David's dedication to ethical design and appraisal in the classroom. David's consistent presence in our program of research illustrates what can be accomplished when colleagues remain focused on exploring theoretical, empirical, and actionable directions writing assessment framed by evidence of fairness.

Together, our overarching goal over the past seven years has been to refute insidious denials of diversity, ignorance of educative processes, and displacement of responsibility. In place of these oppressive practices, we seek to end isolation of writing assessment research and those hindered by unfair practice. Our cause is to connect writing assessment aims to those of social justice; our practice is to advance opportunity for all. To those ends, in answering our core question—*How can we ensure that writing assessment leads to the advancement of opportunity?*—this collection offers us a way to propose a connection between writing assessment, social justice theory, and the advancement of opportunity:

- *To liberate writing assessment from its constrained role as a tool used to support admission, placement, progression, and certification*

    In liberating writing assessment from its narrow disciplinary confines, we instantiate writing assessment theories, histories, and practices as central to the field of Writing Studies;

- *To reposition the primary focus of validation studies from score use to justice*

    In repositioning the primary aim of writing assessment validation from its often-myopic focus on score use, we broaden the methods available to writing assessment researchers and find a space to position justice, not simply "test use," as a central aim of writing assessment, and;

- *To reimagine writing assessment as a way to create opportunity structures for all students*

    By reimagining writing assessment as a tool of possibility, we can achieve advancement of opportunity through assessment. Summative tests of writing ability used for admission, placement, progression, and certification should be dismantled for their constrained construct representation, diminished understanding of reliability, and failure to produce evidence related to fairness of comparable consequences for all.

As is the case when product and process are inextricably interrelated, our vision is a hermeneutic one. Following Richard E. Palmer (1969), we take the hermeneutic experience to be historical, linguistic, dialectical, and ontological. As the present volume illustrates, research undertaken with this hermeneutic vision is principled, embodying historiographic, access, curricular, and pedagogical frameworks. There need be no division between research and advocacy: Sound assessment practices advance social justice, and social justice requires sound assessment practices. Associated with a such exegetic perspectives, this volume offers a body of knowledge associated with the social justice turn in writing assessment.

THE PRESENT VOLUME: A DIACHRONIC PERSPECTIVE

Each of the chapters in this collection contributes to research in writing assessment regarding the relationship between assessment, social justice, and opportunity. Our authors have sought to identify ways that opportunity can be advanced for all stakeholders of assessment: advisory boards, administration, faculty, par-

ents, professional organizations, students, and the public. Indeed, when the phrase opportunity to learn is used in this volume, it should be extended to relationships among these groups; that is, opportunity to learn is not limited to identification of opportunity structures for students, but, rather, for all involved in education. As our authors demonstrate, opportunity advancement can be achieved through broad attention to meta-paradigms of historiography and specific attention to practices of admission and placement, outcomes design, and teacher research. Through their work, we see the enactment of social justice must result not solely in the identification of injustice but in demonstrable change for educational communities. As this collection demonstrates, change may be brought on through, among other means, the theorization of structures and processes, methodological advances in providing empirical evidence for fairness, and the articulation of values that align with the advancement of opportunity.

In Part 1: Advancing Opportunity Through Historiography, each of the authors expands the disciplinary lens of writing assessment to include historiography. In doing so, they liberate writing assessment from a view of itself as disembodied, technocentric, and ahistorical. J. W. Hammond in "Toward a Social Justice Historiography for Writing Assessment" engages in a social justice historiography of writing assessment by examining the early years of the *English Journal* (1912–1935) for the way articles frame writing assessment. Using a Critical Race Theoretical lens (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005) in Chapter 1, he finds progressive era racism prevalent through nativist and eugenic assumptions and appeals in the journal's articles. Hammond highlights two characteristic articles, one from H. L. Cohen, "The Foreigner in Our Schools: Some Aspects of the Problem in New York" (1913), and the other from C. E. Brown, "Foreign Language Errors of Chicago Children" (1931). From his discussion, Hammond concludes that social justice historiography of writing assessment can contribute to present day challenges to eugenics, to nativism, and to racial discrimination by continuing to call into question the majoritarian narratives sometimes invoked to shield these injustices from critical scrutiny. Key to his historical account is a non-teleological framework that refuses to support a narrative of triumphalism in which the present is necessarily free from past practices of disenfranchisement.

In Chapter 2, "'Human Beings Engaging with Ideas': The 1960s SEEK Program as a Precursor Model of Ecological and Sociocultural Writing Pedagogy and Assessment," Sean Malloy offers an archival micro-history of the City College SEEK program made famous by Mina Shaughnessy's work. His historical study of the program during the 1960s reveals the ways its founders, Leslie Berger and Allen B. Ballard, assured that the program was innovative in its various assessments, from entrance and placement to grading. Today, the program—

presently being curated at the CUNY Digital History Archive—offers a useful example of a precursor program that consciously employed elements of presently emerging ecological and sociocultural theories. Far from objectively distanced, its pedagogy and assessment had the express goal of fighting for racial and social justice. As a result, SEEK assumed that each high school graduate, given well-designed opportunity structures, has the potential for learning opportunities in a demanding college curriculum. As such, the SEEK ecology dispelled cruel myths of meritocracy achievement and replaced them with conscious, principled support that is required for the achievement of social justice.

In Chapter 3, "Assessment's Word Work: Early Twentieth Century American Imperialism and the Colonial Function of the Monolingual Writing Construct," Keith L. Harms historically contextualizes the relationship between the US and the Philippines. His focus is on the Monroe Report, a 1925 document containing over 200 pages of analysis of large scale educational assessments administered across the colony. As Harms demonstrates, there were moments where the U.S. commission had opportunities to address the educational needs of local students; nevertheless, in each case colonial bureaucrats adopted racist value dualisms endemic to colonial regimes in order to displace indigenous values and solidify foreign power. An 1899 photograph entitled "insurgent dead just as they fell in the trench near Santa Ana, February 5th" suggests the multivalent ways that military action is related to subsequent racist pedagogies. This use of evidence greatly expands our understanding of the ways that deeply contextualized research alters our conceptualization of pedagogical legacies.

In Part 2: Advancing Opportunity Through Admission and Placement, the contributors confront issues of transparency in the pursuit of justice. In doing so, they confront the limitations of conventional validation methods that focus on score interpretation to questions of fairness and impact, thus shifting the framework of accountability to institutions and government to collect and release disaggregated data on student assessment results. Christie Toth in Chapter 4, "Directed Self-Placement at 'Democracy's Open Door': Writing Placement and Social Justice in Community Colleges," examines a problem central to post-secondary education: Evidence that standardized, purchased tests used for writing placement at open admissions community colleges appears to be systematically under-placing students in ways that undermine their likelihood of persistence and degree completion. In her methodological analysis of locally developed practices using Directed Self-Placement (DSP), Toth examines social justice issues surrounding writing placement at open admissions community colleges, as well as social justice-related arguments related to DSP. While she identifies promising validity evidence that DSP can be successfully implemented at community colleges, she also notes the absence of evidence related to fairness

in terms of disaggregated DSP outcomes data to examine the consequences of DSP for different student groups. Toth expertly demonstrates a central dilemma of contemporary writing assessment: standing in gap a where little is known and much is demanded. In this case, the dearth of published scholarship on DSP in community colleges illustrates the high stakes of writing placement in community colleges. As the case study demonstrates, approaches to placement that advance social justice are not immune to the challenges of demonstrating consequences for diverse student groups.

In Chapter 5, "Chasing Transparency: Using Disparate Impact Analysis to Assess the (In)Accessibility of Dual Enrollment Composition," Casie Moreland uses disparate impact analysis—a transparent, empirical methodology designed to identify unintended racial differences in outcomes resulting from facially neutral policies or practices—resulting from the use of ACCUPLACER WritePlacer® test scores. While she found that test score data was not disaggregated by the institution or publicly available, she also found that extreme and unnecessary complexities in obtaining writing assessment data are common. Such lack of transparency emphasizes the necessity and urgency for validity studies to determine the fairness of testing practices. As Moreland argues, requiring a standard of fairness and transparency has the potential to enable a fluid understanding of assessment genres that determine student placement.

In Chapter 6, "Writing Assessment and Responsibility for Colonialism," Mathew Gomes demonstrates the value of a social connection model of responsibility to writing assessment methodology. Building on the scholarship of Young (2011), Gomes elaborates the responsibilities of individuals and institutions for redressing structural social injustice in terms of power, privilege, interests, and potential. In presenting an empirical thought experiment, he also uses disparate impact analysis to document the presence of linguistic imperialism—the dominance of English as a vehicle for continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages. Finding application in recent trends demonstrating the internationalization of U.S. postsecondary education, Gomes emphasizes an urgent need to attend to demands for English language proficiency—a flawed opportunity structure characterized by elementalist emphasis on correctness and knowledge of conventions—serves to disenfranchise students and subvert opportunity to learn.

In Part 3: Advancing Opportunity Through Outcomes Design, the contributors draw on their frustration with the status quo of writing assessment to open assessment to a variety of critical and methodological approaches. By emphasizing the role of structural violence in traditional assessment methodology as well as the blindness of writing assessment research to institutional critique and student experience, the contributors help us see new ways of understanding how to

create opportunity through writing assessment. In Chapter 7, "The Violence of Assessment: Writing Assessment, Social (In)Justice, and the Role of Validation," Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick argue that most writing assessments, both classroom and large scale, do violence to those they measure. The authors begin by focusing on structural violence: that which is unwittingly interwoven into the social fabric. To interrupt these processes, they emphasize the role that validity evidence and validation processes can play in interrupting structural violence. Adopting the pragmatic, argument-based approach of Michael T. Kane (2013, 2015, 2016) to establish validity, Lederman and Warwick emphasize the power of score interpretation and use to identify and disrupt structural violence. Nevertheless, as they acknowledge, structural violence will remain hidden from many empirical methodologies—particularly those that operate within historically dominant paradigms in which score disaggregation, as Moreland establishes, is not present. As such, validation research emphasizing social justice will require inquiry traditions that specifically deal with less visible matters of power and systemic oppression: feminist, queer, postcolonial, anti-racist traditions which actively seek to examine the distribution of power. As Lederman and Warwick conclude, a commitment to writing assessment as social justice demands assessment practices that actively seek to disrupt tacit structural violence.

In Chapter 8, "Fired Up: Institutional Critique, Lesson Study, and the Future of Antiracist Writing Assessment," Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty employ a lesson study project—derived from research by William Cerbin and Bryan Kopp (2006)—in order to identify methods aimed at structural white *habitus* that make institutions hostile to diverse educational communities. In lesson study projects, groups of teachers engage in a recursive process in which they collaboratively design, teach, observe, and discuss the results of the lessons. Using ethnographic methods, the authors found seemingly contradictory results: statistically significant improvement of outcomes of learning in the lesson accompanied by absence of willingness or interest in challenging institutional racism through activism. Reflectively, the authors identify a potential reason for the contradictory findings: an impetus to develop lessons and programs centered on social justice issues while retaining inflexible and incurious pedagogies. As a way forward, the authors argue for writing program assessment that incorporates students' agency in a variety of ways to ensure that students are not disempowered by the very programs intended to empower them.

In Chapter 9, "Writing Program Assessment, Attitude, and Construct Representation: A Descriptive Study," Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham report on a writing program assessment at Drexel University designed to examine the intrapersonal domain of student engagement. Their descriptive, baseline study analyzes student attitude surveys through Likert and free-response items and

uses ATLAS.ti coding tool to create a variable model. The authors find that students enter into the first-year writing program with poor attitudes toward school writing and mixed attitudes toward writing in general. Implementing a curriculum focused on student-centered writing has a strong impact on improving students' attitudes toward school writing. Expanding the writing domain model thus has implications for diverse student groups whose attitudes toward writing are linked to their writing performance.

In Part 4: Advancing Opportunity Through Teacher Research, the contributors leave us with much optimism, providing compelling portraits of how writing assessment research, when conducted with not just a local perspective but a *socially just local perspective* can make real change. Our contributors offer inspiration for the kind of work that writing program administrators, writing teachers, and writing center directors can accomplish in the advancement of justice. In Chapter 10, "Bending the Arc of Writing Assessment Toward Social Justice: Enacting Culturally Responsive Professional Development at Standing Rock," Kelly J. Sassi studies the ways writing teachers talk about writing in writing assessments at Sitting Bull College, a tribal college in North Dakota that serves mostly Dakota and Lakota Indians. To explore the issue of writing assessment at a tribal college, Sassi employs Christine Sleeter's 2014 framework of four dimensions of social justice teaching, as well as indigenous perspectives of Sandy Grande and others. While quantitative data in the form of essay scores during writing assessment were collected, qualitative coding focused on emic coding resulting from labels that emerged from discourse patterns. Under a social justice orientation, teacher discourse demonstrated raised expectations and changes in teaching practice. Modification of testing materials to draw on cultural strengths was observed, as was evidence of professional development when teachers elected not to add another unwarranted basic skills class. An increase of writing scores when more culturally relevant prompts were used was also established. Partnering with K-12 educators also suggests willingness to address structural inequities. As Sassi concludes, roots of settler colonization run deep and future research on writing assessment in tribal settings would do well to emphasize professional development using social justice as a framework for instruction and assessment as a necessary step toward rhetorical sovereignty and decolonization.

In Chapter 11, "Queering Writing Assessment: Fairness, Affect, and the Impact on LGBTQ Writers," Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks examine how writing centers, programs, and classrooms engage in assessment projects that attend to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) writers. The authors used focus groups methodology to listen to LGBTQ students explain their lived experiences and narratives about writing assessment in and out of the classroom before the process of designing a writing assessment episode.

A queer turn in writing assessment, Caswell and Banks find, provides a way to advance a socially just writing assessment agenda that privileges the intersections between queer rhetorics and writing assessment methodologies. In establishing the instrumental value of the case, the authors conclude that gender and sexuality represent vexing ontological categories for writing assessment; that assessment data should be gathered in ways that are attentive to participant vulnerability; that administrators can provide leadership on campus by advocating for the collection of aggregate data on LGBTQ students; and that in order for LGBTQ experiences to become a form of validity evidence, researchers must collect and analyze student narratives and attend to local context.

THE PRESENT VOLUME: A SYNCHRONIC PERSPECTIVE

Complementary to the developmental studies presented in the eleven chapters, we provide two additional features that allow an actionable standpoint for the ideas offered herein—*Eighteen Assertions* drawn from the contributions in this collection and an *Action Canvas for Social Justice*. These features allow a synchronic perspective in which readers may approach social justice at any given point in time through a principled framework.

First, following Chapter 11, we detail the eighteen assertions we present below concerning writing assessment, social justice, and the advancement of opportunity. These assertions are derived from topics shared among our authors: history, theory, methodology, outcomes, classroom research, institutional research, purchased assessments, policies, and next generation research. The assertions are meant to both reflect the contributions in this collection and guide future research. They are, in other words, descriptive and aspirational.

Eighteen Assertions on Writing Assessment

On History

1. Histories of writing assessment are invaluable in the analysis of practices viewed as deterministically objective; therefore, these histories have profound impact on contemporary methods, policies, and consequences.
2. Social justice historiography reveals normative fixations and yields reflexive engagement.

On Theory

3. Theories of writing assessment are invaluable in the formation of ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives that have profound impact on method, policy, and consequences.

4. New theories of writing assessment are needed that hold the achievement of justice and the advancement of opportunity as equal aims of assessment.

On Methodology

5. Analytic techniques are best understood and used when they are linked to clearly articulated, ethical assessment questions.
6. Writing assessment researchers should be able to demonstrate proficiency in a range of methods.

On Outcomes

7. To advance justice and opportunity, the articulation of writing outcomes should be based on robust writing construct models that are informed by current sociocognitive and sociocultural research.
8. Perspectives drawn from a variety of educational community members are required to develop writing outcomes.

On Classroom and Writing Center Research

9. Direct work with students is the first step in writing assessment.
10. Classroom research is best accompanied by inferences that allow others to apply findings across settings.

On Institutional Research

11. When institutional research on student writing is conducted, collection of information related to age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic identity, race, veteran status, and sexuality should be justified with an understanding of current ethical standards and institutional contexts for the gathering and securing of such information.
12. Because all inferences about student academic ability can have profound consequences for the purposes of social justice, distinctions between high-stakes and low stakes should not be accompanied by different standards for inferences about writing ability.

On Purchased Assessments

13. Purchased assessments—those assessments developed by testing companies—hold the potential to provide valuable information about students, but their use should never constrain the interrogation of social justice queries in local contexts.
14. Unless the vendor provides evidence of fairness, validity, and reliability, purchased assessments should not be used to make decisions for or draw inferences about students.

On Policies

15. Institutional policies regarding writing assessment are best developed from clear pedagogical value and include details about their aims, design, proposed uses, and potential consequences.
16. Organizational policies are best developed using professional standards and empirical evidence.

On Next Generation Research

17. Efforts should be made to eliminate high-stakes tests of writing for purely summative purposes.
18. Efforts should be made to strengthen writing assessment for formative purposes in order to develop innovative approaches to assessment informed by social justice perspectives.

These assertions, along with exposition by the editors and commentary by the authors, are provided in the final chapter of this collection.

Second, our call for action is further articulated in Table 1 through an Action Canvas for Social Justice—a tiered framework that allows (perhaps demands) social justice to be viewed as actionable.

Our tiered action-oriented approach is inspired by two sources. The first source is from the theory of change invented by Carolyn Hirschon Weiss in 1972. As the Beatrice B. Whiting Professor in the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University, Weiss was an advocate with a strong stance for democratic policies. Dissatisfied with the writing of reports as the final step in research to program effectiveness, she advocated for understanding the ways that "the social sciences influence the development of policies in the modern state" (1991, p. 307). In Weiss' alternative mode of evaluation, known as theory-based evaluation, the evaluation itself (the findings) are based on theories of change (paths for action based on the findings). As Weiss wrote, because all programs, especially educational programs, are based on explicit or implicit theories,

> [t]he evaluation should surface those theories and lay them out in as fine detail as possible, identifying all the assumptions and sub-assumptions built into the program. The evaluators then construct methods for data collection and analysis to track the unfolding of the assumptions. The aim is to examine the extent to which program theories hold. The evaluation should show which of the assumptions underlying the program break down, where they break down, and which of the several theories underlying the program are best supported by the evidence." (Weiss, 1995, p. 67)

Thus, like action research, Weiss' approach to evaluation acknowledges the social matrix in which research is conducted and the way that decisions drawn from research findings work within a constellation of social ideologies. Reflecting in 1998 on the general uses of evaluation, Weiss provocatively wrote the following:

> Programs operate within systems of funding, personnel re-
> cruitment and promotion, staff in service training, and so on.
> To think of increasing the use of evaluation without consider-
> ing the organizational surround is to miss a good part of the
> story. If results are to be implemented for program improve-
> ment, *organizational conditions* may have to be changed—to
> remove impediments and to supply supportive structures
> to incorporate and sustain new approaches and activities.
> Effective use of evaluation often requires institutional chang-
> es to undertake and support new activities and to provide
> incentives and rewards for staff who adopt the new stance.
> If changes are to be sustained over time, the ways in which
> institutions function have to be addressed. (p. 28)

"Use," she continued, "is about change. Any theory of evaluation use has to be a theory of change" (1998, p. 31). "We cannot," she concluded, "leave the process of evaluation utilization to chance or regard it solely as an in-house conversation among colleagues" (1998, p. 32).

Certainly, Weiss' approach may be critiqued for its narrowness—i.e., research flows from the ideological positions of its authors, funders, or promoters. As such, it encompasses a rather limited sphere of participation. Yet, Weiss' approach is valuable because it lays bare the ways that all research is ideological in nature and the ways that social scientists in the 1970s (and today) were and often continue to be "naïve in failing to understand the tenacity of ideological convictions and organizational self-interest" (Weiss, 1991, p. 311). Simply put, research alone does not change institutions and social policies; research attuned to the rhetorical and ideological positions of its stakeholders is what brings about change. Today, in writing assessment research, the value of localism has made writing assessment researchers attuned to institutional ecologies; yet the ideological orientation of researchers in relation to institutional stakeholders is often presented as a vexing impasse, not as an opportunity to explore theory-based evaluation. Our work in this collection seeks to demand attention to broad conceptual frameworks and daily finances; tacit assumptions are made explicit and, in doing so, can be examined for their usefulness and value. The written report (or, in our case, the published edited collection) is therefore only a step on the road to change.

The second source of inspiration for our action canvas is from the software Launchpad, a tool used in innovation management and entrepreneurship. Adopted by the National Science Foundation in its I-CORPS and Small Business Research Innovation programs, the Launchpad platform emphasizes a structured approach, emphasizing values, activities, stakeholders, and hypothesis testing in order to bring ideas into reality. Although other models of application are available in action research, we were inspired by Launchpad because it is not merely a checklist of obvious steps. Specifically, Launchpad provides a heuristic for entrepreneurs to build theories and examine the assumptions behind them. In our minds, the heuristics in the software facilitate the shift from evaluation to action. As Weiss would put it, we have to understand both *why* we do good and *how* that good must be accomplished.

To express action in terms of the present volume, we therefore offer a procedural plan for the enactment of social justice in writing assessment. In doing so, we now unite the following to propose three paths of actions: (1) the chapters by our authors, (2) the eighteen assertions derived from those cases, and (3) the authors' commentaries on the eighteen assertions.

Defined as a heuristic device that can be used to identify paths for action in the achievement of social justice, the action canvas shown in Tables 1a and 1b leverages the eighteen assertions on writing assessment by category. These categories are then used to postulate the existence of value, the significance of insight, the challenges of adoption, the usefulness of present applications, and the promise of future directions. As an alternative way to read the edited collection synchronically, the action canvas illustrates the social justice turn and its applications.

To describe the application of each category, we will specifically focus on writing program administrators (WPAs) in their daily work in course design, writing center support, writing across the curriculum, writing in the disciplines, and assessment. Whether the WPA is novice or experienced, the action canvas is useful because of its established stance for social justice.

Table 1a. Action canvas: Writing assessment, social justice, and the advancement of opportunity

Assertions					
	History	Theory	Methods	Outcomes	Research
Example in Collection	Chapters 1, 2, and 3	Chapter 7	Chapters 6 and 7	Chapters 7, 8, and 9	Chapter 9
Present Use: Why do we use such a line of inquiry?	Perspective/ memory	Framework	Claims	Accreditation/ program improvement	Pedagogy/ teacher education

Assertions					
	History	**Theory**	**Methods**	**Outcomes**	**Research**
Value: What perspective is valued in this line of inquiry?	Historiography	Conceptualization	Consequences	Application	Inclusion
Insight: What insights are typically provided through this line of inquiry?	Power distribution and social recovery	Orientation, processes, practice	Empirical evidence	Domain modeling	Student, teacher, and community identity
Challenges; What challenges does this line of inquiry face?	Determinism	Utilitarianism	Reductionism	Standardization	Curriculum design
Future Directions	Justice narratives	Forms of justice	Experimentation ethics	Standpoint	Generalization

Table 1b. Action canvas: Writing assessment, social justice, and the advancement of opportunity

Assertions				
	Institutional Research	**Purchased Assessments**	**Policies**	**Next Generation Research**
Example in Collection	Chapters 5, 10 and 11	Chapter 5	Chapters 4 and 5	Forum
Present Use: Why do we use such a line of inquiry?	Outcomes/ accreditation	Meritocracy/ efficiency	Enforcement/ guidance	Knowledge-building
Value: What perspective is valued in this line of inquiry?	Localism	Qualification	Accountability	Epiphany
Insight: What insights are typically provided through this line of inquiry?	Student learning processes	Test-maker transparency	Value articulation and alignment	Programmatic and pedagogical expansion
Challenges; What challenges does this line of inquiry face?	Resource allocation	Public perception	Compliance	Sustainability/ group think
Future Directions	Cross-national research	Resonance	Innovation	Application

History: Attention to history allows the identification of multiple perspectives associated with author and subject and forces an articulation of historiographic method. In cases where power has been distributed unequally, attention can then be given to possible paths to social recovery. Explicit and implicit analyses bound to determinism (i.e., the present condition is the logical result of the past) can be exposed and examined. Such exposure and examination allows for analysis and critique of the ways that present conditions are manifold and causation is not solely determined by the historian's logic. Once attention is drawn to social justice, histories of writing assessment can be written in different ways so that stance becomes the driving force for analysis.

> *Example*: Every WPA can benefit by attention to the history and development at the specific institutional site of the writing program. Each course—basic skills, credit-bearing first-year courses, advanced courses—have their own unique histories, from when they were initiated to the assumptions driving the curriculum. In turn, these courses are controlled by admission assumptions. If attention to knowledge of conventions is over-emphasized in placement and progression decisions, for example, constructs of writing will be poorly conceptualized and individual students are likely to be disenfranchised. Taken in this way, the long history of purchased writing assessments can be the subject of (re)appraisal and (re)calibration. As large-scale studies associated with the Complete College America (2016) project have revealed, reductionist legacies exist and are instantiated in daily practice; historiography allows for the (re)appraisal and (re)calibration of Complete College America statements that are presented as inevitable fact: "If you're African American, Hispanic, or a low-income student, you're more likely to be headed toward the remediation dead end" (p. 6). Each of us can interrupt such information forcefully by social justice perspectives used to write histories of our own writing programs—narratives that are then used to justify needed curriculum reform.

Theory: While often taken as abstract, theory is the most practical way to enact stances of social justice in our writing programs. Attention to theory demands that we make explicit our ontological, epistemological, and axiological frameworks—the "as if" series of statements and actions we take as if they reflect objective realities (Morton, 1980). This articulation has great value in helping us express our conceptualizations while offering insight into our own orientation,

processes, and practices. This value is nevertheless challenged by narrow views of utilitarianism in which each idea is tested for its use so that happiness is maximized for the greatest number. Because the best use of theory attends to broad views of use including individual good, we can envision new ways to bring social justice into daily practices of teaching and assessing writing.

> *Example*: For every WPA, theorizing social justice leads to identification of forms of justice. Genre theory provides a useful illustration of this claim because of the way it connects form to pedagogical action. In the case of genre, requiring students to produce only final drafts of essays aimed solely at the instructor constrains student understanding of audience, frustrates individual identity, and interrupts professional association. Conversely, broad use of genre, peer review, and collaborative practice introduces students into rich conceptualizations of writing in both academic and workplace settings. As such, genre theory (Bawarshi & Refff, 2010) achieves practical application in ensuring a socially just future for writing assessment.

Methodology: While methodologies remain a contested space for Writing Studies in general (Haswell, 2005), attention to the interpretation and use arguments used to establish claims (Kane, 2012) provides a rubber–meets–the–road way of approaching research design. Such argument-based methodologies work in a middle ground between experimental, hypothesis-testing studies and descriptive and observational studies. In addition, attention to consequences of information use allows insight into empirical techniques—disparate impact, differential validity, and differential prediction—associated with social justice enactment. To have access to such tools will require new approaches to doctoral study in Writing Studies in which methodologies are understood in terms of their uses—and in which empirical study becomes a moral obligation attendant to socially just instructional and assessment practices. This is a substantial challenge that, unless met, can potentially deprive students of their education because researchers do not have the ability to pursue data-based legal and policy arguments. Put differently, this challenge can reduce the present volume to a research curiosity (a conversation among specialists) instead of an articulated stance (undertaken on behalf of students). Educated in new ways, future researchers will experiment with innovative methodologies based on many kinds of stances, including social justice.

> *Example*: For WPAs, use of assessment methodologies which integrate evidence of validity and reliability under the frame of

fairness provides new ways to help students. Under a fairness-first framework, WPAs can ask evidence-based questions on inter-rater and inter-topic reliability as related to distinct student groups along with questions of construct validity in terms of the assessment tasks. If evidence reveals that the costs of present systems (such as legal challenges based on disparate impact) outweigh the benefits (additional tuition revenue based on policies legally understood as contributing to discrimination), then received views of placement (in which some admitted students are unworthy of credit-bearing instruction) can be permanently kicked to the curb. Only when all writing placement is understood as potentially paternalistic and discriminatory can new methods be developed, such as concurrent enrollment, to structure opportunism for admitted students.

Outcomes: In general terms, accountability is often associated with the development of curricular outcomes. When applied wisely, outcomes provide students with demonstrable educational aims and their instructors with useful ways to improve instruction. Recently, domain modeling has become a beneficial way to represent outcomes in terms of cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal domains (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017; National Research Council, 2012). In writing assessment, the addition of a neurological domain (of critical importance to disability research associated with social justice) has resulted in a newly proposed way to model writing constructs within a given curriculum (White, Elliot, & Peckham, 2015). Social justice interventions in outcomes research further extends construct models of writing by considering cultural formations, such as racism and homophobia.

> *Example*: For WPAs working in first-year courses, substantial advancement within specific institutions can be made by adoption of the *WPA Outcomes Statement for First Year Composition* (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2014), and the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, & National Writing Project, 2011). Specifically, attention to the habits of mind expressed in these documents aligns with recent emphasis on interpersonal and intrapersonal domains—and opens opportunities for new outcomes associated with disability research. Were curriculum designers to pay as much attention to fostering curiosity as to ensuring knowledge of conventions, writing programs would

take new shape in their efforts to create student identity and community, thereby increasing retention and improving graduation. Furthermore, fears over compliance would be replaced with innovation.

Classroom-based and writing center research: Since its benefits were revealed by Janet Emig in 1971, classroom-based research has become a mainstay of Writing Studies (Goswami, Lewis, Rutherford, & Waff, 2009). With classroom-specific pedagogy aimed at inclusion, students and teachers form community and construct identity. This view of instruction has been widely adopted by the K-12 community, with efforts through the National Writing Project and the Bread Loaf School of English. Unfortunately, in post-secondary education, curriculum is not often designed and improved through articulated programs of research in which classroom instructors play an active role. Indeed, we may well wonder if the same forces of bureaucratization that drive all education are evidenced in the absence of innovation driven by classroom observation. Once attention is drawn to social justice in classroom-based research, inclusion resonates throughout programs because of its connection to classroom learning. Inclusion is no longer an aspect of the sampling plan; inclusion becomes the key to validity.

> *Example*: For WPAs, attention to classroom-based research yields new ways of understanding student writing. Using the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*, research can be undertaken across multiple classes (and, if well planned, across multiple sites). In terms of composing in multiple environments, for example, instructors can learn which genres are most useful to students according to majors and which kinds of digital affordances—blogging and wiki development, for example—are associated with writing improvement. With attention to social justice, teachers can also provide additional evidence that addressing the digital divide is insufficient without attending the material conditions of technology in students' personal lives. By understanding the ways that students live with technology, teachers can be in a position to improve curriculum in their own classes as well as substantially increase the generalization inferences we can make across classrooms and campuses.

Institutional research. Institutional research lends value to specific sites in investigations of student learning. With inferences intended for specific curricula, institutional research can, if done well, add to our knowledge about how

students learn. However, resource allocation for such work is often scarce with often poor to no theorization of the writing construct, writing processes, or writing development—and, as a result, often tied to periodic assessment of educational outcomes required for program and institutional accreditation. Hence, we see the well-known lurch for accountability undertaken in cosmetic fashion solely to gain approval of visiting agents who, in turn, sanction institutions and programs for their accreditation masters—and depart following three days of systematized lies on everyone's part. Instead of planned and well-funded review undertaken for the benefit of students, we witness as evidence of institutional research only the mind-numbing reports criticized by Weiss. Under a social justice perspective, institutional assessment is re-imagined as ongoing, recursive, and prioritized as the institutional mission is transformed to emphasize serving diverse student populations—not solely in meeting outcomes needed for accreditation. Emphasis is thus given to using institutional assessment to provide feedback to individual students, especially those most at risk.

> *Example*: For WPAs, the advantages of longitudinal institutional research are clear. In terms of student retention and timely graduation, multidisciplinary teams can investigate important aspects of student learning associated with transfer and, based on findings, restructure curricula to be more complementary in terms of across–the–curriculum efforts such as the establishment of learning communities and attention to service learning. It can also keep in focus whether curricular innovations are having disparate impact on various populations—for example, does multi-model writing allow for equal access for students with disabilities? In all such research, the WPA can position the central role of writing for academic and workplace success.

Purchased assessments: While they certainly have the limits of locally based research, purchased assessments can be important in gathering evidence of student learning based on categories of fairness, validity, and reliability. As well, these large scale assessments are invaluable in providing large data set comparisons. At the present, many bought assessments have at their basis the false assumptions of meritocracy—that all students have been given equitable educations revealed in the homogenizing presence of bubble–and–booklet tests. Thankfully, increasing attention by many measurement leaders such as Rebecca Zwick (2017) have raised attention to practices that frustrate affirmative action. In calls such as hers that question sole or over-use of text scores, we see the need for increased vendor transparency by test makers in terms of a wide variety of

evidence—from norming procedures to group impact. While public perception remains a substantial barrier—Who among us has not witnessed administrators boasting scores on admission tests or reducing costs through outsourcing placement decisions to machines?—resonance is possible between purchased tests and locally developed tests.

> *Example*: For WPAs, leveraging complementarities allows the accumulation of evidence across institutions. New emphasis on assessment portfolios from test-makers—many of whom are developing both surveys as well as performance tests—can allow triangulation of methods and comparison across sites that are difficult with locally based assessment. Imagine a large-scale purchased survey such as the National Survey of Student Engagement designed to yield information about student attitudes towered colleague instruction combined with an across–the–disciplines writing sample taken in classrooms. If well planned, such a study could reveal important information about the teaching of writing and attitudes toward it—information that could be used to identify new opportunities for student learning.

Policies: As is the case with the outcomes they produce, policies are often driven by the need for enforcement and the demand for accountability. At their worst, they are mind-numbing statements of the obvious that protect their writers by incorporating vagueness at every turn; at their best, they articulate important cultural and institutional values. While the extrapolation inferences are difficult to gauge—How, exactly, is the U.S. call for equity realized across post-secondary institutions?—there is room for innovation in the development of new policies aimed at social justice. A social justice perspective to policy, in the spirit of Weiss, connects research to the policy orientation of particular organizations and stakeholders. In doing so, policy need not be a vapid exercise in wishful thinking but a roadmap to debate and action.

> *Example*: As a model for innovative policy development, WPAs are in unique positions to adapt the *Statement on Antiracist and Social Justice Work in the Writing Center* used at University of Washington at Tacoma (2017). In its commitment to openly discuss social justice issues as they pertain to the writing at hand, such policies instantiate a social justice framework in the contact zone between tutor and student at the point in which writing is shared. Similar models may be found in the *Students' Right to Their Own Languag*e and the *Statement on Second Lan-*

guage Writing and Writing, both issued by the Conference on
College Composition and Communication.

Next-generation writing research: While it is presumptuous to conclude
that the present collection is an example of next-generation writing research,
it is equally questionable to conclude that such work is part of an established
tradition in Writing Studies. Indeed, no such program of research existed before
the 2012 dual publication of *Race and Writing Assessment* (Inoue & Poe) and
"Placement of Students into First Year Writing Courses" (Elliot et al.). From
these humble beginnings, we see in the present volume the rich conceptualiza-
tion, innovative methodologies, and daring conclusions signaling an epiphany as
direct and sudden as any imagined by James Joyce. As our authors demonstrate,
the challenges of research sustainability can be overcome in part with systematic
attention to social justice. Along with the challenges of sustainability is the re-
lated challenge of groupthink—where next generation research simply becomes
the order of the day and any attempt to shift the paradigm becomes heresy. A
social justice perspective to next generation research acknowledges that not all
perspectives are equally to be valued (e.g, monolingualism) and that any field of
inquiry should be subject to regular critical reexamination. Without principled
inquiry and rigorous reflection, any discipline falls into a state of torpor.

> *Example*: The remaining challenges for next generation
> research must be identified by our readers, among them our
> WPA and other colleagues, who must themselves determine
> the applications afforded by stances of social justice. The ap-
> plications are many and varied, and they can be used to create
> a common future in which participatory democracy is realized
> with each keystroke of our students.

Derived from the chapters and forum discussion, the action canvas therefore
demonstrates the power that can be summoned when writing assessment and
social justice are envisioned as complementary actions. Approached synchron-
ically, the collection may therefore be considered as aligned with—and inspired
by—the fragments of Heraclitus. His disposition toward flux serves as an im-
portant foil to the inevitable categorization accompanying modern capitalism.
In fragment B31 he writes this of cosmology: "The reversals of fire: first sea;
but of the sea half is earth, half lightning storm" (2010, 47). The emphasis on
an eternal flame is important to recognize as both an element of origin and of
continuation. In writing assessment as in all things, the more flux is recognized,
the better the chances at coming to more socially just futures for everyone. Our
emphasis on fire is meant to call to mind the spiritual "Mary Don't You Weep."

God gave Noah the rainbow sign

Said "No more water but fire next time."

As James Baldwin wrote of these lines, "Everything now, we must assume, is in our hands; we have no right to assume otherwise" (1963, p. 120). Taken this way, our assertions may also be understood as provocations to a field of study, to a nation of individuals, concerning their land and their future. Herein we seek a defended way for us all.

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PART 1. ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH HISTORIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 1.

TOWARD A SOCIAL JUSTICE HISTORIOGRAPHY FOR WRITING ASSESSMENT

J. W. Hammond

Research Problem: Scholars recently have begun the work of explicitly theorizing writing assessment and/as social justice, but this social justice turn has not yet found equally explicit expression in writing assessment historiography. Social justice historiography is needed to complement and support the promotion of social justice in–and–through writing assessment.

Research Questions: What would it look like to (re)write assessment history by foregrounding social justice? Providing one racial justice-centric example, this chapter asks: How did racial injustice and assessment intersect within the pages of *The English Journal* (*EJ*) between 1912 and 1935? Specifically, this chapter interrogates assimilation and Americanization practices discussed or promoted in *EJ*, a journal that provides one site for examining the disciplinary preoccupations and commitments of early twentieth century English educators and writing experts.

Literature Review: To outline social justice historiography, this chapter interweaves insights from justice theorists John Rawls and Iris Marion Young, from historiography, and—with respect to this chapter's example—from critical race theory. Taken together, these insights frame justice/injustice as structural, underlining the importance of historiography for making justice/injustice structures more visible. To provide background for my consideration of *EJ*, I review scholarship on Progressive Era assimilation initiatives in education—work clarifying the context for assimilation-related classroom assessment practices featured in *EJ*.

Methodology: Using JSTOR, I identified relevant *EJ* articles by reading titles and conducting keyword searches. Analyzing select articles, I attended to articulations between race, immigration, lan-

guage, writing, and assessment. To provide an in-depth look into the intersection of these ideas, I conducted detailed readings of two *EJ* articles. Close textual engagement at this level helps excavate injustices and assumptions potentially less visible under different, more distant methods of scrutiny.

Conclusions: For some *EJ* contributors, assessment was freighted with assumptions about racinational deviance, with standard language use and writing indexing a (white) racinational standard that immigrants and "foreigners" needed to be conditioned to meet. Informal classroom assessments of writing (including peer assessments) provided mechanisms for refashioning students according to this standard.

Qualifications: This chapter's account is necessarily partial: It neither comprehensively documents the intersection of race, assimilation, and informal classroom assessment in *EJ* between 1912 and 1935, nor represents all of the ways *EJ* contributors participated in (or militated against) racial injustice. Moreover, this chapter focuses on racial justice within the confines of one journal during a specific period; it does not provide a full, multidimensional account of the relationship of social justice to writing assessment inside (much less outside) that journal.

Directions for Further Study: This chapter is intended as one exchange within a broader conversation that locates social justice at the heart of writing assessment historiography. Future work from a range of critical perspectives is needed to provide a more inclusive and textured understanding of the historical relationship between writing assessment and social justice.

INTRODUCTION

Questions of social justice are, to some extent, questions of history. The advancement of social justice necessarily rests on the diagnosis of past injustices and on the appraisal of the present, relative to previous events and future possibilities. In the disciplinary spaces of Writing Studies and English Language Arts education, there is perhaps no site for historical reappraisal more promising than *writing assessment*, because assessments have been envisioned, alternatively, as causes of or cures for injustice (e.g., Stein, 2016). To move forward, we must assess the history of our assessments (e.g., Elliot, 2005; Serviss, 2012). The time has come for a *social justice historiography* for writing assessment.

In this chapter, I define and provide an example of social justice historiography for writing assessment. I agree with Hayden White (2005) that "history-writing is more about meaning than about knowledge" (p. 338). No telling of history is merely a neutral and objective recounting of events. All historiography is rhetorical, inflected (explicitly or implicitly) with beliefs, values, and narrative choices (Weiler, 2011; White, 2010). Social justice historiography for writing assessment (re)appraises and re-presents the past with a normative commitment to identifying and interpreting injustices (or efforts to combat them). As one means (among many) of instantiating historiographic commitments to social justice, I provide a racial justice-focused example of social justice historiography, looking back to the intersection of racial injustice and writing assessment in the United States through articles published in *The English Journal* (*EJ*) between 1912 and 1935. Specifically, my chapter considers *progressive racism*, a term I adapt from Walter Benn Michaels (1995) to designate attempts to contain or eradicate racionational difference through assimilation or "Americanization." Beginning my analysis in 1912—when *EJ* emerged as an outgrowth of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)—promises insights into *EJ*'s founding preoccupations. The year 1935 provides a useful cut-off for my analysis; Samantha NeCamp (2014) selected this year as the terminal point for her recent examination of Americanization discourse, and notes that "the rhetoric of immigrant literacy crisis waned in the 1930s thanks to the advent of the Great Depression and restrictive immigration policies" (p. 9).

As the immediate progenitor of *College English* (and, more distantly, other NCTE publications), *EJ* has been the site of several backward glances, with scholars drawing on *EJ*'s past to better understand, among other things, the disciplinary history of English (e.g., Brass, 2012). While recent writing assessment scholarship has invited deeper critical consideration of race and racism (e.g., Inoue, 2015; Poe & Cogan Jr., 2016), existing histories of *EJ* have paid only cursory attention to race or racial injustice (e.g., Brass, 2012). Furthermore, scholars have documented the complicity of large-scale assessment and standardized testing in Progressive Era anti-immigration restriction efforts (e.g., Elliot, 2005; Serviss, 2012; Tucker, 1994), but, to date, our histories remain comparatively silent on the relationship of local assimilation-oriented assessment to white supremacy during this same period. Academic exemptions like these risk leaving long-standing injustices in place. Color-blind historiography will not do; we need a commitment to excavating historical injustices and the assumptions, mindsets, and actions that made them possible. This chapter brings visibility to classroom assessments and racial injustices that have, to date, remained largely invisible in our historical scholarship on *EJ*.

My intention is *not* to paint every aspect of progressive education with the

broad brush of (progressive) racism; there is much inspiration we can draw from progressive education (e.g., Cremin, 1961; Gallagher, 2002). It is important we bring historical attention to injustices that lurk within even our most promising and humane projects. Speaking of the "need to look backward," Iris Marion Young (2011) tells us, "The purpose of such backward-looking accounts . . . is not to praise or to blame, but to help all of us see relationships between particular actions, practices, and policies, on the one hand, and structural outcomes, on the other" (p. 109). To this end, I begin the next section by outlining a social justice historiography for writing assessment; I then discuss racial justice-oriented historiography as one critical means of engaging in social justice historiography. Following this work, I provide historical context for my examination of progressive racism, and draw on *EJ* examples to indicate how progressive racism informed classroom assessment practices that assigned value to student language use—and to writing, specifically. I conclude by considering the broader importance of social justice historiography.

SOCIAL JUSTICE HISTORIOGRAPHY

With John Rawls (2001), I believe social justice inquiry should focus on structural justice promotable through attention to "the basic structure of society"—Rawls' phrase for "the background social framework within which the activities of associations and individuals take place" (p. 10). A *fair* basic structure ensures "equal basic liberties" and "fair equality of opportunity" to all (Rawls, 2001, p. 42), with "[s]ocial and economic inequalities" permissible only when "they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least-advantaged members of society" (pp. 42-43). For Rawls (2001), the basic structure has an important educational dimension:

> Educated and trained abilities are always a selection, and a small selection at that, from a wide range of possibilities that might have been fulfilled. Among what affects their realization are social attitudes of encouragement and support, and institutions concerned with their early discipline and use. (p. 57)

Structures shape educational development and opportunity. In this vein, Zachary Stein (2016) claims "[m]easurement infrastructures form a part of society's basic structure" (p. 47), such that "[t]ests structure access to basic goods—educational goods—which are prerequisites to the exercise of liberties" (p. 52). Relatedly, Norbert Elliot (2016) defines "[f]airness in writing assessment . . . as the identification of opportunity structures created through maximum construct

representation. Constraint of the writing construct is to be tolerated only to the extent to which benefits are realized for the least advantaged" (§3.1). Taken together, these extensions of Rawls into assessment direct our ethical attention to *what* and how we ass*ess* as well as t*he consequen*ces of these choices.

While Rawls' structural justice centers on formal institutions and frameworks, Young (2011) helpfully reformulates structural justice in terms of social relationships and positions, including "everyday habits and chosen actions" (p. 70), such that individuals—even unintentionally—can "contribute a great deal to the production and reproduction of structural injustice" (p. 73; see also Poe & Inoue, 2016). Social injustices—which for Young (1990) include all manifestations of oppression and domination (pp. 33-65)—are not located exclusively in the large-scale institutional background, but are found also in individual behaviors and relationships that promote inequality. Social justice inquiry for writing assessment requires attention not only to injustices enabled by institutional norms and large-scale assessment structures, but also to the ways local assessments and individual actors participate in (or work against) those injustices. In keeping with recent work by Asao B. Inoue (2015), this approach regards "writing assessment as an *ecology*, a complex system made up of several interconnected elements" (p. 9, emphasis mine)—examining structural justice in terms of large-scale structural formations and their articulations to individual actors, groups, events, artifacts, and contexts.

Historical work is essential to the promotion of social justice. Young (2011) argues, "Understanding how structural processes produce and reproduce injustice requires having an account of how they have come about and operated in the past coming up to the present" (p. 109). Bearing this requirement in mind, the role of social justice historiography for writing assessment is, as I define it, to shed historical light on writing assessment ecologies, in terms of a) constructions and representations of students, teachers, other stakeholders, and the aims of assessment, and b) the underlying assumptions, uses, and consequences of measurement infrastructures (e.g., assessment artifacts/technologies; administration, scoring, and validation practices) and constructs (e.g., intelligence; writing), so their effects on opportunities and inequalities can be better understood. The sphere of social justice historiography extends also to c) critical reflection on the assumptions, absences, and presences characteristic of existing accounts of writing assessment history, and d) reflexive and speculative engagement with the ways histories of writing assessment do/can/ should inform disciplinary practice or thinking. These *four aspects of social justice writing assessment historiography* aid us in accounting for the origins of assessment-related injustices and afford a critical vantage for re-appraising our present practices.

How we write our histories matters. Kathleen Weiler (2011) claims,

> What is at stake in the writing of history . . . is not a reflec-
> tion of a prior reality, but an intervention in the creation of a
> *sense of reality*. In this sense history contributes to an "imag-
> ined community" in Benedict Anderson's phrase. In their
> narratives of the past, historians delimit, include, and exclude
> who counts as members of that community. (p. 252, emphasis
> mine)

Social justice historiography for writing assessment is premised on the assump-
tion that this sense of reality is altered not just by *whom* we represent (e.g., Glenn
& Enoch, 2009), but also *how* we represent–or–construct them, the structures
they inhabit, and the writing assessments with which they engage. Representa-
tion can expose structural violences or—as Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick
(Chapter 7, this collection) suggest—it can exacerbate them. We shape history
and reality through the narratives we choose to depict (or not) and the details we
foreground (or elide). Historiography is "always partial and always interested"
(Glenn & Enoch, 2009, p. 331), its edges sharpened to carve the past at joints
specified by our critical commitments. Our tellings of history are not neutral—
they are *incisive*. White (2010) holds that

> a specifically *historical* inquiry is born less of the necessity to
> establish *that* certain events occurred than of the desire to
> determine what certain events might *mean* for a given group,
> society, or culture's conception of its present tasks and future
> prospects. (p. 230, emphasis in original)

Where history is concerned, "[t]he 'facts' do not 'dictate' at all but are subject
to the specific choices, inclinations, and prejudices of the historian, which are
inevitably moral and aesthetic rather than simply epistemic" (Doran, 2010, pp.
xxiii–xxiv). Facts are voiceless when left unvoiced, and take on new shapes and
meanings when articulated to (and through) new contexts.

Our work as historians is to recover or reconstruct pasts, situating them in
ways that clarify the significance we believe them to have. When undertaking
social justice historiography for writing assessment, this situative act poses as-
sessment artifacts, events, and ecologies against the backdrop of social justice,
throwing their relationships to injustices into relief. Beyond this shared point of
departure, though, specific instances of social justice historiography can differ
radically—conforming to the principles espoused by the historiographer and,
by extension, the significance those principles assist in drawing out. Even when
converging on the same event, or engaging with the same archival materials,

scholars approaching their work from different critical angles will arrive at different (albeit, perhaps, compatible) interpretative destinations. In this way, we could claim the writing of history as one terrain where we can have "validity without reliability"—to borrow, from the educational measurement context, Pamela A. Moss' (1994) turn of phrase.

As sketched here, social justice historiography is by design an open and plural project, accommodating diverse critical traditions and local historiographic needs, while also remaining broadly inclusive in the research methods it embraces. Consulting White, we are informed that inclusivity of this sort is a feature endemic to historical scholarship generally, in that "there is no such thing as *the* historical method" (as cited in Domanska, 2008, p. 10, emphasis in original). One general methodological constraint focuses social justice historiography for writing assessment: In making clear the social justice stakes of writing assessment, scholars must adopt and disclose some principled basis for appraising the past relative to social justice and injustice. However much of historical work is idiosyncratic and unreplicable, it is within our power not only to document where we have sought out historical data, but also, crucially, to describe the kinds of critical scrutiny we have placed those data under. What beliefs about justice or injustice have guided our work? What theories are we bringing to bear in our analysis? To be sure, making explicit the principles underpinning our analyses will not guarantee generation of identical histories. Instead, what it will guarantee are historical accounts that explicitly and legibly center the social justice stakes of writing assessment, rather than deemphasize or ignore those stakes. The unifying methodological feature of social justice historiography is to be found not in the specific methods used to bound or assemble archival datasets (though, of course, this work is foundational to any historical scholarship), but instead in the kinds of questions we ask of those datasets—in the critical standards against which we assess our disciplinary pasts. Our commitments are the stuff social justice historiography is made of.

This point is worth dwelling on, if only briefly. No two researchers step into the same archive, so to speak: "Archival acts of reading . . . are tethered to the researcher's perceptions and prejudices as well as the theoretical frame used to approach his or her work" (Glenn & Enoch, 2009, p. 331). The same events can be imagined and described multiple ways, corresponding to the critical commitments and analytic focus of the historian. For this reason, social justice historiography methodologically requires we (re)examine the history of writing assessment through analytic lenses calibrated to identifying justice or injustice along one–or–more social axes (e.g., theoretical perspectives on class, decoloniality, disability, gender, race, sexuality, and intersectionality). Historiography for social justice runs parallel to what Christie Toth (Chapter 4, this collection) dis-

cusses, in the context of validity, as "validation for social justice." For Toth, social justice validation entails engagement with one (or more) social formation(s). Social justice historiography entails no less, highlighting assessment-related injustices (or efforts to counter them), and making explicit for readers the social justice stakes involved and insights gleaned. Attention of this kind supports the work of identifying, mapping, and interpreting unjust assessment ecologies, so we can subvert and supplant them. It supports, too, the work of detailing and exploring initiatives that foster inclusion, support diversity, and promote more socially just practice.

As a place to begin, social justice historiography for writing assessment might take, as its substantive focus, assessment ecology-relevant questions like the following (corresponding, sequentially, to the *four aspects* of social justice historiography outlined above):

1. How have students, teachers, other stakeholders, and the aims of assessment been constructed or represented? What assumptions are embedded in these definitions? Whom do they advantage or disadvantage?
2. What beliefs/assumptions have authorized or animated assessment infrastructures and constructs? How have uses of these measurement infrastructures and constructs contributed to unjust consequences?
3. How have writing assessment-related injustices been highlighted or elided in our histories? Whose experiences/perspectives have been represented and discussed? To what effects? What assumptions undergird these choices?
4. How does/can/should our historiography foreground questions of justice? How do/can/should our histories and historiographic methods challenge injustice and promote justice?

These general questions engage social justice concerns about writing assessment ecologies, their histories, and how those histories are (or should be) written. They shed light on beliefs and values that undergird, and are advanced by, our writing assessments; they target our historiographic "sense of reality" by interrogating who and what we represent, how, and to what ends. Questions like these resonate not only with the objectives of politically oriented revisionary historiography (Skinnell, 2015) and "archival research that 'trouble[s]' histories of rhetoric and composition" (Glenn & Enoch, 2009, p. 323), but also with recent writing assessment scholarship that explicitly and methodologically takes up questions of social justice and fairness (e.g., Elliot, 2016; Inoue, 2015; Poe & Cogan Jr., 2016). Assessing the history of our assessments affords us the opportunity not only to (re)define our disciplinary history relative to the project of social justice, but also to rethink assessment. In this way, social justice histo-

riography assists not only in (re)writing the past of writing assessment, but also its present and future.

RACIAL JUSTICE AS A SOCIAL JUSTICE HISTORIOGRAPHIC LENS

A diversity of critical approaches is needed to support this work. To illustrate and explore one such approach, the remainder of this chapter focuses on racial justice—an historiographic focus also found in the work of Keith L. Harms (Chapter 3, this collection) and Sean Molloy (Chapter 2, this collection). For those of us committed to promoting racial justice, historical inquiry has particular significance in light of the roles that purportedly objective assessment ecologies have played in producing or reproducing structural inequalities along the axis of race (e.g., Inoue, 2015). Inevitably, our assessments (like our histories) are inflected with our assumptions, biases, and goals. The role of social justice historiography is to excavate these sometimes subtle influences. Critical race theory (CRT) draws attention to the analytic power of this work: "Current inequalities and social/institutional practices are linked to earlier periods in which the intent and cultural meaning of such practices were clear" (Matsuda, Lawrence III, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993, p. 6). Social justice historiography provides a window to the nature and origin of injustice, affording much-needed perspective on the ubiquity and diversity of race-related injustices normalized in the present day.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1998) reminds us, quoting Richard Delgado, that "CRT begins with the notion that racism is 'normal, not aberrant, in American society' (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv), and, because it is so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture" (p. 11). Racism is, in other words, *structural*, in Young's (1990) broader sense of that term (see also Inoue, 2015). Within American society and schooling, whiteness is hierarchically privileged and regularly taken as an unexamined standard, with departures from it coded as deficits or defects (e.g., Chambers, 1996; Inoue, 2015; Young, 2011). Put differently, "race, within the scheme of whiteness, is seen as a malady. That is, if we accept the notion of whiteness as normal, then any person who is *not white* is abnormal" (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005, p. 16, emphasis in original). Young (1990) describes this oppressive approach to marking and examining difference as "cultural imperialism" (pp. 58-61, 122-124).

Under present day regimes of cultural imperialism in the United States, my identification as a white, straight, cisgender, middle-class man provides me an intersectionally privileged, unmarked status. I share in the *responsibility* (Gomes, Chapter 6, this collection; Poe & Inoue, 2016; Young, 2011) for publicizing and dismantling the inequalities my intersectional privilege participates in. Critical

examination of whiteness by means of social justice historiography is one part of this project. This is not to say that "whiteness"—or any racial classification—has fixed, essential content. Race is a historically contingent construction (e.g., Omi & Winant, 2015) and "is (at least partially) constructed through spaces and discourses" (Dolmage, 2011, p. 29)—an idea consonant with the work of Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty (Chapter 8, this collection) on "white habitus" (see also Inoue, 2015). Critical historical inquiry is necessary to understand the nature of these constructions, including the hierarchies they endorse and norms they establish.

As CRT suggests, racial injustices in education are—at least in part—invisibilized, normalized, or authorized by master narratives that pitch education and assessment as neutral, color-blind, and objective. These narratives are sometimes discussed as "majoritarian narratives," which "are stories in which racial privilege seems 'natural'" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 28; see also Love, 2004). We might count, as popular manifestations of majoritarian storytelling, narratives characterizing racially disparate educational outcomes (or "achievement gaps") as the neutral–and–natural effects of innate, essential group differences (e.g., intelligence disparities) and/or meritocracy (Love, 2004), rather than as byproducts of structural injustice. Helpfully, CRT critically questions assumptions of "neutrality, objectivity, color blindness, and meritocracy" (Matsuda et al., 1993, p. 6)—key components of race-centric master narratives concerning American education and testing (Love, 2004) that have recently been called into question in writing assessment scholarship (e.g., Inoue, 2015).

Social justice historiography works to dislodge majoritarian (hi)stories that authorize and excuse structural injustices. Harms (Chapter 3, this collection), for example, engages in this kind of work by questioning commonly circulated narratives about the United States' occupation of the Philippines, uncovering colonial violences lurking within even putatively "progressive" pedagogies. Too often, historical attention to past racial injustices is dismissed as a "presentist" error, "illegitimately assessing historical figures based upon contemporary [i.e., present day] values and goals" (Cho, 1998, pp. 79-80). This shielding of past racial injustices from critical scrutiny underwrites the perpetuation of majoritarian narratives; Sumi Cho (1998) argues, "A critical race historiography, to the contrary, would ensure that the context of the majority does not trump the context of the minority through the allegedly context-sensitive, anti-presentist critique" (p. 81). Historiographic attention to injustice is context-sensitivity by other means, attentive to violences that majoritarian narratives work to erase. This attentiveness to injustice is at the core of what I take to be a social justice historiography for writing assessment. My consideration of progressive racism in *EJ* is but one approach to undertaking a social justice historiography for writing

assessment: a (re)writing of the history of writing assessment that foregrounds—rather than de-emphasizes or ignores—social justice concerns.

In the case of early twentieth century progressive education, scrutiny of this kind helps us understand how informal classroom assessments—even when imagined by educators as benevolent—can (re)produce structural inequalities by sponsoring white normativity. (This work iterates the first two aspects of social justice historiography for writing assessment, described in the previous section.) In at least this limited sense, social justice historiography is itself an active means of promoting social justice: Chipping away at master narratives exposes injustice to more vigorous critique and helps make unthinking participation in injustice less tenable. It is to this reconsideration of racial injustice in *EJ* that I turn to next.

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION AND PROGRESSIVE RACISM

Spanning from the 1890s through the first decades of the twentieth century, the United States' Progressive Era witnessed landmark efforts to stimulate social and political progress through justice-promoting activism (e.g., the women's suffrage movement). This same period saw rapid industrialization and efforts—led by figures like Frederick W. Taylor and Henry Ford—to systematize labor through scientific management and social engineering, refashioning workers into inter-changeable parts (Marcus & Segal, 1999). The era's progressive education reflect-ed these commitments to democratizing reform and systematizing uniformity. On one hand, progressive education is often remembered in terms of its democratizing inclusivity, child-centered pedagogy, and commitment to social reform in–and–through education (e.g., Cremin, 1961). On the other, educational mea-surement expertise—embodied in figures like Edward L. Thorndike and Ben D. Wood—emerged during this period as an extension of the belief that education can be improved through managerial systematization and assessment (Cremin, 1961; Elliot, 2005). These conflicting Progressive Era pressures, Chris W. Gal-lagher (2002) contends, foundationally influenced the disciplinary development of composition—including the creation of *EJ*, "the self-identified 'progressive' publication of the National Council of Teachers of English" (p. xviii).

What is often not emphasized in narratives about progressive education is that it emerged alongside, and is implicated in, efforts to contain or eradicate "foreign" racionational difference. The late nineteenth century lead-up to the Progressive Era "saw a dramatic increase in the number of students at all edu-cational levels—largely as a result of massive waves of immigration" (Gallagher, 2002, p. 11). Reflecting the commonly held idea that Americans "believe in the full inclusion of all, 'without regard for race, creed, or color'" (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 22), majoritarian narratives about this increase in immigration suggest

that America gazed upon its "latter-day pilgrims" (Cohen, 1913, p. 618) with color-blind eyes, granting them access to meritocratic opportunity through education—provided they assimilate (through hard work) into the normal American collective (see also Jacobson, 1998; NeCamp, 2014).

To be sure, Progressive Era educational regimes might have *included* immigrants—yet we ought not to equate inclusion with unconditional "color-blind" acceptance. Born partly from industrial-capitalist pressures to render the workforce uniform and efficient, Progressive Era assimilationist projects also bore marks of hostility to difference and a desire for "cultural and even racial defense" (NeCamp, 2014, p. 84). European immigrant groups were among those considered racially suspect (Dolmage, 2011; Jacobson, 1998). Racial belonging was (and is) constructed and regulated rhetorically; we can think of Ellis Island, for instance, as a kind of "operating theater" policing national entry through a "racializing and normalizing process" of screening (Dolmage, 2011, p. 27). While "[w]hite privilege in various forms has been a constant in American political culture since colonial times" (Jacobson, 1998, p. 4), for early twentieth century European immigrants, white racial membership was often contingent on prevailing prejudices and (at least in part) on exhibitions of successful assimilation—a kind of *theater of sameness* we might think of as dramatizing progressive racism.

Described by Michaels (1995), "Progressive racism was nationalist, concerned with eliminating sectional differences and deploying racial identity on behalf of both the nation and the state. It was hierarchical and assimilationist: white supremacy made possible the Americanization of the immigrant" (p. 67; see also Jacobson, 1998). Revising this description, I use the term *progressive racism* to more expansively designate efforts to contain, eradicate, or rehabilitate racionational alterity by means of education and assimilationist inclusion, rather than nativist exclusion. To be clear, not all early twentieth century inclusionary or educational practices count as emanations of progressive racism. Assimilation and education are *progressive racist* in character when they assume and pursue a white standard, assessing "foreign" difference against a rubric of whiteness. Progressive racist assimilation is both an ideal and a (potentially indefinite) process. This process need not be formal and it need never be completed; rather, it includes informal, recursive efforts to curb or rehabilitate "foreign" speech and thinking. These efforts target not only recent immigrants, but perceived foreign elements within the American body—or, as *EJ* contributor George Philip Krapp (1918) might present them, the "great masses of people of foreign tradition" (p. 89) believed by educators to be "imperfectly assimilated" (p. 90).

Juxtaposed against the history of nativist exclusionary efforts in the United States (Dolmage, 2011; Elliot, 2005; Serviss, 2012; Tucker, 1994), we might be forgiven for thinking of any assimilationist efforts (formal or informal) as

a kind of unproblematic good. Social justice historiography works to complicate this portrait by highlighting affinities between (nativist) exclusionary and (progressive racist) inclusionary approaches to difference. Both are strategies for promoting and policing sameness; both take a white standard as a starting place and goal. According to the progressive racist view, national health and progress required a kind of ideological and linguistic uniformity. Immigration was permissible, provided immigrants were refashioned to more closely resemble the "native" white population.

This is not to suggest equal treatment across immigrant groups, nor is it—in Jacobson's (1998) words—"to argue that race is freighted the same way from period to period or from case to case" (p. 9). Indeed, intense majoritarian attention to assimilating European groups into mainstream (white) American society suggests these groups occupied a position of comparative racial privilege, adjacent to "native" whiteness. My aim is, instead, to show that under progressive racism, the racial identity and status of immigrant students—even when members of these comparatively privileged groups—was intertwined with, and partly predicated on, English classroom performance. Terminology is important here: Because these immigrant groups and ethnoreligious minorities were often explicitly constructed as distinct *racial* groups—including by *EJ* contributors (e.g., Brown, 1931; Moriarty, 1921)—my analysis treats them as such, referring to the targets of progressive racism as "racionational" groups. This categorization is intended to capture the conflation of national origin with race during this period, and includes not only recent immigrants but any "foreign" group within the United States believed "imperfectly assimilated" (Krapp, 1918, p. 90) or presumed plagued by "foreign language errors" (Brown, 1931, p. 470).

One important stage for progressive racism's theater of sameness was language (NeCamp, 2014), with the classroom serving as rehearsal space and performance hall. As Amy Dayton-Wood (2008) notes:

> The English classroom has historically been an important site
> for addressing the conflicts brought on by increasing linguistic
> and cultural diversity. . . . Americanization workers embraced
> a vision of the US as a culturally homogenous and monolithic
> nation, and they encouraged the immigrant to embrace this
> vision too. (pp. 401-402)

The positioning of linguistic difference as an affront to American homogeneity is something CRT scholars might view as a linguistic front for advancing white normativity and supremacy. In the minds of many Americanizers, "[i]lliteracy is a marker of foreignness; therefore, eliminating illiteracy became in many ways synonymous with eliminating foreign thoughts, languages, and beliefs" (Ne-

Camp, 2014, p. 82). Literacy instruction and assessment served as eliminative technologies within broader progressive racist ecologies, purging foreign difference; or as disciplinary mechanisms of "linguistic containment" geared toward "quarantining" linguistic difference (Matsuda, 2006, p. 641) and promoting what Mathew Gomes (Chapter 6, this collection) describes as monolingualist "English linguistic imperialism." In Nick Otten's (1980) account, "the public schools were, in the cities, filled with immigrants, who were treated like deviant persons or patients who had to be made undeviant or cured" (p. 42). Assimilation efforts provided a means of regulating and recuperating otherwise "alien" populations. Progressive racism *neutralizes* the non-native threat, in the sense both of disarming that threat and of recreating the foreign in the image of a neutral "native" standard.

This homogenizing impulse is well-represented in the Ford English School. Seeking to "engineer" worker efficiency, Henry Ford established in 1914 an on-site English-language school for immigrant workers at his Highland Park manufacturing complex, working "to weld systematically the diverse groups comprising Ford's labor force into a standardized, dependable cohort" (Marcus & Segal, 1999, p. 194; see also NeCamp, 2014). Completion of this process was staged through a melting pot-themed graduation ceremony (Figure 1.1): Immigrant workers—wearing "their national garbs and carrying luggage"—descend into an enormous "melting pot," only to emerge transformed, their clothing replaced with matching suits, their luggage substituted with hand-held American flags (Marcus & Segal, 1999, p. 194). The Ford English School becomes the forge in which immigrant difference is burned away, refashioned to match Ford's specifications for American sameness. This process parallels Michael Omi and Howard Winant's (2015) observations about the complex and conditional promise of inclusion in the United States: Framings of inclusion may "seem to liquidate racial difference and thus freedom and democracy, to deny deep historical injustice, and to insist on universalizing the dominant—white—culture. . . . The offer of inclusion may be a Faustian bargain, in which one (or even a group) achieves acceptance at the price of deracination" (p. 23). As the Ford English School demonstrates, the English classroom is one historical space in which this "liquidation" can occur.

Along these lines, Gallagher (2002) observes that early *EJ* featured content that was part of "the Americanization movement, which aimed to enact the 'melting pot' myth by extracting or suppressing difference in favor of a homogenous 'Americanness'" (endnote 10, p. 200; see also Brass, 2012; Dayton-Wood, 2008; NeCamp, 2014). In the sections that follow, I build on this observation: A social justice-oriented reconsideration of *EJ* between 1912 and 1935 reveals the presence of progressive racist assumptions at work in classroom literacy instruction and assessment described in that journal.
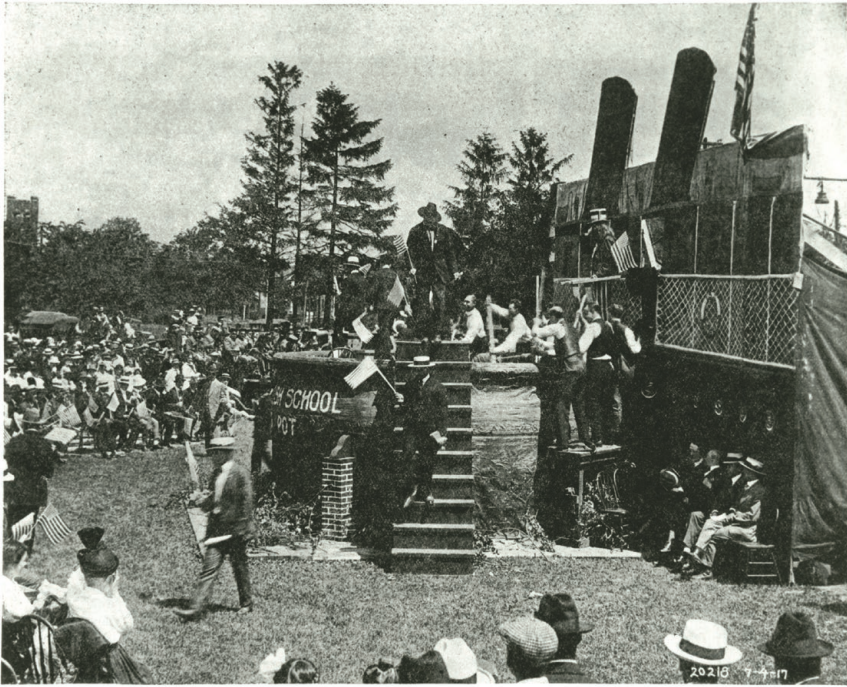
THE "MELTING POT" OF THE ENGLISH SCHOOL OF THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY AT DETROIT

Figure 1.1. Melting Pot Ceremony at Ford English School, July 4, 1917. Photo reprinted from the Collections of The Henry Ford. Gift of Ford Motor Company. All rights reserved.

JOURNAL INFORMATION AND METHODS

From 1912 through 1935, *EJ* published 24 volumes (240 issues, total). *EJ*'s content included research articles, commentaries, NCTE meeting proceedings, committee reports, letters, reviews, round tables, editorials, periodical digests, short stories, plays, and poetry—content composed by public and private school educators (and occasionally students), as well as college professors. To identify relevant articles through JSTOR, I read the titles of *EJ* articles published between 1912 and 1935, and also identified relevant articles through keyword searches, using terms related to progressive racism (e.g., "race," "native," "foreign," "alien," "Americanization"). My work was further supported by existing scholarship identifying assimilation-relevant articles within *EJ* (e.g., Dayton-Wood, 2008; Gallagher, 2002; NeCamp, 2014). Reading through select *EJ* articles, I attended to progressive racist content *and* its relationship to assessment. Importantly, relevant *EJ* articles often discussed "writing" as part of "literacy," or as an

extension of "reading" and "speaking" (e.g., Thorngate, 1920, p. 127). To more closely reflect the textured ways assessment was discussed within *EJ*, my analysis references not only "writing," but also "reading," "speech," and "language use."

Because of the wide (and subtle) variety of ways that assessment, assimilation, race, ethnicity, immigration, and nationality can be represented or referenced, it is difficult (perhaps impossible) to identify precisely the full number of relevant texts within *EJ*. (For instance, a search for "native" within JSTOR's *EJ* holdings yields 403 results; "examination," 848.) For this reason, the analysis undertaken below aims at being suggestive rather than comprehensive, providing a nuanced (albeit partial) textually grounded account of the ways progressive racism is manifested or supported within the pages of *EJ*; it does not cover all the ways *EJ* contributors participated in (or militated against) racial injustice. This account is supplemented by in-depth readings of two *EJ* articles—Helen Louise Cohen's (1913) "The Foreigner in Our Schools: Some Aspects of the Problem in New York," and Carroll Edgar Brown's (1931) "Foreign Language Errors of Chicago Children"—each providing a useful case for sustained analysis.

RACE, LANGUAGE, AND IMMIGRATION IN *EJ*, 1912-1935

Between 1912 and 1935, *EJ* featured content associating race, language, and progress (or regress) that might be thought of as providing a supportive conceptual infrastructure for progressive racist sentiment. For example, Claudia E. Crumpton (1917) of Girls' Technical Institute in Montevallo, Alabama, claims that putative errors in (white) language use can be partly blamed on non-white speech:

> We found that the most embarrassing deficiency, even among many of our cultured people, is a tendency toward slovenliness of speech. I might say in passing that, while much of this is due to mere public tolerance, much is also due to the influence of negro dialect, to the imitation of the negro just for fun, and to the children's imitation of the nurse's speech. (p. 96)

Positioned as a kind of linguistic contagion, "negro dialect" infects "even . . . our *cultured* people" with cultural deficiencies and defects. Something like the opposite process is suggested by Philip Stevens (1916), a teacher at Santa Monica High School in Santa Monica, California, who treats his Filipino students' written responses to English poetry as indicative of "the possibilities of English literature for stimulating the intellect of eastern peoples" (p. 253) or, as Stevens later puts it, "the oriental mind" (p. 256)—commentary consistent with the co-

lonialist mentality described at greater length by Harms (Chapter 3, this collection). Despite their differences, Crumpton (1917) and Stevens (1916) converge on a shared vantage: Whether writing from the perspective of the English-using "occident" or discussing the speech of "*our* cultured people," they take whiteness as a baseline and benchmark.

It might not surprise us, then, that during this same period, *EJ* featured content describing immigrants and "foreigners" in terms of linguistic or racionational deficits to be managed—even provisionally overcome—through education. Here, racionational difference constitutes deviance from (or threat to) the "native" white norm; linguistic sameness affords a correction for this deviance, a response to the threat of alterity (NeCamp, 2014). As Dayton-Wood (2008) writes, "Educators believed that English language instruction would serve as a cultural unifier to bring immigrants and native-born Americans together, creating a coherent national identity through 'the use of one language and of the same ideals' (Thorngate 124)" (p. 404; see also Cody, 1918). In discussing this homogenization project, some contributors to *EJ*, like Omaha, Nebraska educator Ella Thorngate (1920), referenced the image of the "'melting pot'" (p. 123; see also NeCamp, 2014).

While many *EJ* contributors describe the monolingual, monocultural aspirations of Americanizing assimilation as a kind of benevolent good, it is not hard to detect a note of nativist anxiety underlying their goals. Frank Cody (1918)—an Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Detroit, Michigan—sounds this note of menace:

> These [foreigners] have rapidly colonized among previous arrivals of their race and have changed nothing but their habits of work. Ignorant of the English language, of American customs and ideals, they have helped to swell the so-called "hyphenated" class. These conditions existed before, but it took the present world-conflict to bring forcibly home to thinking Americans *the danger within the country.* (pp. 615-616, emphasis mine)

Writing after America's entrance into World War I, Cody is sensitive to the violent threat of nationalist factionalism. He appears to locate this danger in the incomplete linguistic and cultural assimilation of immigrants, who remain "hyphenated" Americans (in contrast, apparently, to "full" or "native" white Americans). This line of thinking was not Cody's alone. NeCamp (2014) reminds us that the Great War coincided with "a call that framed immigrants as actual threats to American democracy but that displaced this threat onto immigrants' literacy. . . Because 'illiteracy' and not 'immigration' was marked as the problem,

immigrants' education was a matter of national and cultural security" (p. 34).

Cody (1918) holds ("native" white) Americans partly accountable for national dis-integration: "The development of these foreign colonies [within America] was natural. The American, even under the guise of benevolent paternalism, seldom offered anything more encouraging than *words* to the newcomers" (p. 616, emphasis mine). Cody's text seems to imagine the "foreign colonies" of immigrant-dominant communities established within the United States as neutral or benign masses within the American body politic—masses which, without intervention, might metastasize into insurgencies. Schooling provides the socio-cultural machinery for domesticating and neutralizing this foreign-born danger (see pages 616 and 622). The idea of offering little more "than words to the newcomers" is intended to underscore the insubstantial nature of (white) American outreach to immigrants, but when viewed within the context of the English classroom as an Americanization apparatus, Cody's words appear freighted with unintended meaning. Within the Americanizing vision, immigrants *are offered words* as the keys to assimilation: Instruction in and assessment of reading, writing, and speaking provided the basis for reversing what Cody might consider immigrant ignorance of English. This knowledge of *words*, in turn, afforded access to American culture, believed by some commentators to be locked away in English-language literature (e.g., Cohen, 1913; Moriarty, 1921). Linguistic sameness, it seems, was believed to pave the way to racinational sameness.

The corollary of this belief is important: Because differences in language are imagined not as natural and normal sites of difference, but instead as malfunctioning opportunities for sameness, departures from Standard English were viewed by some scholars as signs of immigrant deficiency or under-development. Frederick Martin (1921), Director of Speech Improvement for the New York City Board of Education, identifies "foreign accent" as a speech defect—in fact, "the largest class [of speech defect] with which we have to deal in the public schools of our great city" (p. 27). Linguistic difference is reified as a kind of disability; sameness is the treatment, and the sign one has been cured.

Relatedly, in outlining a general program for the improvement of American speech, Columbia University professor Krapp (1918) excludes outright as special cases "persons who cannot be said actually to have acquired American speech" (p. 89). "In all our cities," Krapp tells readers,

> there are great masses of people of foreign tradition who
> apparently speak English, but who often speak it with traces
> of German, or Polish, or Yiddish, or of any one of a dozen
> tongues, in their manner of speech. These persons are imper-
> fectly assimilated, and are *like children* in the sense that they

are still in the process of acquiring the language. (pp. 89-90, emphasis mine)

Assimilation, for Krapp, is a function of the removal of traces of foreign tongues and manners of speech. Krapp's infantilizing rhetoric, which casts "imperfectly assimilated" language use as childlike, is shared by Mary L. Moriarty (1921)—an educator at the South Philadelphia High School for Girls in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—who describes "foreigner[s]" as "embryo Americans" (p. 576). Tellingly, Moriarty celebrates Americanization in colonialist terms:

> There are hundreds of foreign families represented in our school. The books brought yearly into these hundreds of homes . . . number over 16,000. Think of it! 16,000 books, largely by English and American writers, 16,000 books dealing with Anglo-Saxon ideals, Anglo-Saxon institutions, Anglo-Saxon modes of thought, Anglo-Saxon attitudes toward life, brought into the very heart of the foreign colony! Do you think we can possibly overestimate the value of such a factor as an Americanizing influence? (p. 580; see also Gallagher, 2002)

Through this framing of foreign-language communities as "foreign colonies" within American borders—a framing adopted by other *EJ* contributors (e.g., Cody, 1918; Thorngate, 1920)—immigrants are imagined as linguistically, socially, and culturally bringing with them a foreign land. Their very unassimilated presence territorializes American space, (re)claiming it for an Old World in which Anglo-Saxon language and culture have little power or purchase. Benevolent paternalism, as Cody (1918) might put it, requires rescuing the benighted foreigner from ignorance. Words are the means of rescue, harboring within them ideals, institutions, modes of thought, and attitudes toward life. Through instruction in English, and assessment that detects and roots out foreign language "errors," the foreign colony is brought under American(ized) control.

CASE 1: PROGRESS AND SUPER-PERFECTION IN COHEN'S "THE FOREIGNER IN OUR SCHOOLS: SOME ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM IN NEW YORK"

Progressive racism need not advocate total eradication of immigrant culture. Cohen (1913)—a teacher at Washington Irving High School in New York City—provides an example of what we might consider a less virulent strand of progressive racism in early *EJ*. Dayton-Wood (2008), for instance, seems to cite Cohen's work as one example of "the humanitarian branch of the American-

ization movement, which treated immigrants' existing knowledge and cultural heritage as important classroom resources" (p. 408). Indeed, Cohen's work *does* appear in many ways to match this description. Yet as I will show, belonging to the Americanization movement's "humanitarian branch" does not preclude the presence of progressive racist roots.

At the outset of her text, Cohen (1913) makes clear that, "Foreigners arrive and remain in our city at the rate of 800 every twenty-four hours. It is our problem to assimilate these latter-day pilgrims" (p. 618). Cohen does not consider illiteracy a problem endemic to immigrants; she also does not advocate a wholly eliminative approach to assimilation. Speaking of "the immigrant," Cohen submits, "He [sic] is always encouraged to conserve the best of his own heritage for the benefit of the country which he is to make his home" (1913, p. 619)—an idea recalled in Cohen's concluding line: "The conservation of all that is worthy in the old life is undertaken as a foundation on which to base the structure of the new" (p. 629). Nested within this promise, though, is an implied caveat. Immigrants themselves are not fully at liberty to determine what is best or of value within their heritage. Student language use and thought must be externally assessed and remediated. Further, while the "best" of an immigrant's heritage is permitted (or extracted) for national benefit, the *rest* is promised no such protection. Speaking of the "foreigners" in her classroom, Cohen cites "peculiar idioms" and "a very marked distortion of certain English sounds" (1913, p. 621) as characteristic problems of "the speech of the young people with whom we have to deal" (pp. 620-621). Quoting Joseph Villiers Denney, Cohen announces the *raison d'être* for her course as "'the creation of *universal intelligibility*, on high levels of thought, among the multitudes who are to be self-governing'" (1913, p. 621, emphasis mine). Against this universalizing backdrop, the problem of assimilating "foreigners" requires (among other things) elimination of language errors—defined against an undisclosed standard of "universally intelligible" English.

Importantly, Cohen (1913) does not restrict her work to inculcating linguistic correctness, but prizes also "the development in the pupil of habits that will *fit* him [sic] to be of most service to the community" (p. 622, emphasis mine). Concerned that formal examination practices can undermine "the community motive in classroom instruction" (1913, p. 621), Cohen maintains that "such examinations become less harmful as they are recognized as an administrative device, or as they are framed to test habits of mind and character, rather than to call for some arbitrarily determined body of information" (p. 622). Factual recall fails as a standard for examination because it is not thorough (or invasive) enough to account for *student mindsets*—a more proper target for managing the "problem" of the "foreigner in our schools." This distinction might not surprise

us, insofar as historically "[l]iteracy instruction was closely associated with larger cultural goals, and writing teachers were as much or more interested in *whom* they want their students to be as in *what* they want their students to write" (Faigley, 1992, p. 113, emphasis in original). Cohen (1913) is by no means alone in her concern for what Lester Faigley (1992) calls "subjectives—the selves we want our students to be" (p. 114): "habits of mind" are also advocated by the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (CWPA et al., 2011). While closer consideration of the *Framework*'s "habits" is beyond this chapter's scope, we might pause—in light of Cohen's "habits"—to question where they might be guided by the assumption that students are unfit or deficient, save for the curative effects of the classroom.

Cohen (1913) seems to view classroom writing tasks as more appropriate sites for monitoring and assessing student thinking, and she presents excerpts of two such tasks, each detailing "'What the Foreign Child Can Contribute to the English Work in American Schools'" (pp. 625-626). Of the "foreign child," the first student-composed excerpt judges that, "He [sic] is a problem to the teacher, for she must drive away the foreign idioms to which he clings. But the *determination* with which the foreign child sets about his work is marked" (as cited in Cohen, 1913, p. 626, emphasis in original). Here, we see that Cohen's student has internalized one of the key precepts of progressive racism. Societal belonging and successful schooling are predicated on the discipline or removal of the "foreign" tongue. As the title of Cohen's article suggests, the "foreign" student—no matter how *determined*—is a "problem" for the teacher to solve.

Students appear to be trained by Cohen (1913) both to devalue non-Standard aspects of their own speech and to root out these "errors" in the speech or writing of their peers: "The girls correct one another whenever they are conscious that a mistake has been made, and the teacher is able to set matters straight in the same spirit as the girls without too much of the *ex cathedra* attitude" (pp. 626-627, emphasis in original). Students internalize the search for perfection—something we might associate with the "habits of mind and character" foundational to progressive racism. In the words of the second student excerpted by Cohen:

> The purpose of the study of English, as of every other branch, is the progress of civilization, and civilization will attain its culmination only when the perfect things, the traditions, the ideas, and the customs of every corner of the world are combined to form what might be called super-perfection. (as cited in Cohen, 1913, p. 626)

Expressing reservations about her student's prose style, Cohen endorses its under-

lying sentiment, writing that "under the fustian there is an idea" (1913, p. 626). And, indeed, the idea is one that harmonizes with Cohen's own assimilationist work: In this passing description of the purpose of English, Cohen's student presents something like a global variant of progressive racism. Progress, in this description, is not a function of heterogeneity and cosmopolitanism, but instead *sameness* at greater scale. (At its most concentrated, progressive racism—as I have been discussing it—could be thought of as a kind of local super-perfectionism, recalibrating difference in pursuit of an imagined "perfect" or "universal" white ideal.) The aim of super-perfection is (perfect) cultural homogenization—with the seizure and synthesis of what is "perfect" and, presumably, with the removal of all that falls short of that standard.

This pursuit of super-perfection strikes a chord with Cohen's (1913) reminders that "the best" of the "old life" can be preserved. The symbol of this seemingly more inclusive model of assimilation might well be not a melting pot but a sieve, straining out of students all that is deemed linguistically or culturally inferior—all that is less than "the best." Consider: Cohen appears to offer, as an example of valuable heritage, "a knowledge of European literature" (read: non-English "foreign" literature) possessed by some of her students, and mentions that "occasionally this familiarity is evident in their composition work" (1913, p. 629). Even here, though, such knowledge can prove double-edged. "Unfortunately," Cohen recalls of one student's composition,

> the young writer had read Gorky's dismal *Nachtasyl*. Not exactly food for the growing girl, you will say, but the gray art had passed into her soul, along with a great deal of literature of similar content, and there was no way of erasing these ugly phases of society from her consciousness. (1913, p. 629)

Note how student writing is imagined as a window into the "soul" or "consciousness" of the student; not just *what* students write but *who* they are. Note, too, how progressive racism—even at its most tolerant—remains deeply ambivalent about "foreign" culture. Knowledge of European literature can be enriching; it can also act as a cultural contagion, infecting student mindsets. Put in Moriarty's (1921) idiom, the wrong foreign (literary) substance can have a teratogenic influence on "embryo Americans" (p. 576)—an outcome in stark contrast to proposed uses of *English-language* literature in promoting "Anglo-Saxon ideals" and "modes of thought" (p. 580), or providing "race ideals on which to work" (Cohen, 1913, p. 623), or (to revise Stevens, 1916) "stimulating the intellect of [foreign] peoples" (p. 253). Under progressive racism, the classroom becomes cultural quarantine and crucible for fear that, without proper supervision and expert assessment, the Old World might contaminate the New.

CASE 2: "LOW I. Q., STREET-PLAYING LIVE WIRES" IN BROWN'S "FOREIGN LANGUAGE ERRORS OF CHICAGO CHILDREN"

A more forbidding approach to progressive racism is evident in the work of Chicago educator Brown (1931), who takes assessment as central to effective instruction and student success in composition:

> It is important for the teacher to know the mistakes his students make in order to teach what they need, and if the students find that they are getting what they need enthusiasm can be developed that will materially improve writing and lessen the teacher's burden. (p. 469)

Asserting that "[f]oreign language errors are the chief difficulty of city children" (1931, p. 469), Brown not only assesses his students' language use by cataloguing perceived errors in writing, he also taxonomizes these errors by race. Apparently drawing data from student compositions and speech over a six-year period (1931, p. 469), Brown assures readers that "[m]istakes of various racial groups have been classified as well as possible" (p. 470). These classifications map not only the foreign idioms Brown believes necessary to drive away, but also what Brown regards as innate or essential characteristics of each racial group—characteristics offered, seemingly, as partial explanations for the errors identified in student writings.

Brown's (1931) language is laden with hereditarian assumptions about innate intelligence: "They [Brown's students] were low I.Q., street-playing live wires whose names read like the list of European delegates to the League of Nations" (p. 469). Disaggregating students into racinational types, Brown's analysis is filled with racist caricatures of, for instance, "[t]he temperamental, hard-working Polish" (1931, p. 472), "[t]he grinning, fighting, likeable Irish" (p. 472), and "[t]he soft-spoken, energetic, and more or less hard-boiled Italian" (p. 473). Adding to these implied racial explanations for linguistic deficiency, Brown sometimes offers an analysis of student English-language errors rooted in foreign language use itself. For example, Brown not only argues, "It is probably more difficult for the slow, sociable Chinese to learn how to write acceptable English than for any other race," but also explicitly alleges that familiarity with Chinese language impairs English-language learning: "Any child who can talk volubly in Chinese will find the use of any tense but the present very difficult" (1931, p. 470). Along these lines, Brown claims, "Of all races, the children *who speak Jewish or hear it much* make the greatest number of mistakes" (1931, p. 470, emphasis mine)—gauged partly by "errors . . . from student papers" (p. 471). The slippage here is important: Race is defined by Brown in terms of linguistic participation (children are raced "Jewish" by "speak[ing] Jewish"), and

the very fact of hearing "Jewish" degrades or pollutes English language use by increasing error frequency. This view of speech as racial(izing) corruption echoes Crumpton's (1917) anxieties about "negro dialect" (p. 96): Linguistic intermixing endangers the purity or correctness of language and culture.

The racialized classification scheme promoted by Brown (1931) both facilitates teacher-led correction of student writing, and also provides a basis for students to pursue local super-perfection by correcting (to say nothing of publicly debasing) the work of their peers. Brown informs his readers that his "low I.Q." foreign language students are painfully aware of their own linguistic infirmities, and believe language difference results in poverty and incites racist antipathy:

> They [students] were quite sensitive about foreign language mistakes because they knew their parents' lack of ability to speak English properly was one of the major causes of their low incomes. They agreed that one of the reasons such opprobrious names as Wop, Honyock, and Greaser were applied to their peoples was that others outside their racial groups found their peculiar language expressions so difficult to understand, and that it irritated them. The class enthusiastically undertook to teach each other about foreign language errors. (pp. 469-470)

The method of this enthusiastic peer-teaching, Brown makes clear, is publicly shaming the foreign-language errors of others, possibly while voicing invectives. The underlying logic of Brown's approach to assessment, then, appears to be that it enables teachers to pursue more (racially) targeted strategies for driving out student errors, while also inculcating in students a) the belief that non-Standard language use signifies inferiority, and b) the drive to police and eradicate imperfections in the language use of their peers. Like Cohen, Brown cultivates in students a kind of progressive subjectivity, invested in correcting (or, we might say, *perfecting*) others. Here, each embryo American becomes a taunting pedagogue, not only internalizing Brown's discriminating tastes, but also theatrically externalizing them.

In this regard, Brown's (1931) concluding paragraph is worth quoting in its entirety:

> In our mixed city classes there are few mistakes common to the whole group, and after some drill on these, especially verb tenses and prepositions, students may help each other when compositions are written under the laboratory method during class time. Each student becomes so sensitive about making mistakes that others do not make that improvement comes naturally and promptly, especially if sufficient publicity is

> given to the errors. There is so much privacy about teacher markings that are not followed up, that it can never be as effective as a corridor call, "Jimmie's a Bohunk. Jimmie's a dumb Bohunk. He said, '. . .'" (p. 474)

Shame and shaming are, in Brown's account, important techniques for an assessment-instruction cycle that isolates, publicizes, and discourages non-Standard language use. The "corridor call" branding "Jimmie a Bohunk" for something undisclosed that "[h]e said" is explicitly positioned as a public complement to the private markings teachers (perhaps inefficaciously) provide as feedback to student writing. Students, sensitive to the censure accompanying language errors, self-regulate so as to not "mak[e] mistakes that others do not make"; where this self-regulatory system fails, teacher markings and student corridor calls provide the necessary corrective.

Readers never learn what Jimmie said. Instead, Brown elides Jimmie's words, recounting only his peer's public rebuke. This, I think, provides an appropriate figure for the erasure of student voice under progressive racism. The words of Jimmie's accuser are recorded; after all, these words supplement, and maybe stand in for, the kind of racist marking of language Brown advocates. In place of Jimmie's words, though, we are left only with a void—a written absence speaking to the notion that "foreign language errors" render communication unintelligible, emptied of linguistic meaning. Under progressive racism, Jimmie is silenced.

CONCLUSION: "PEOPLE WHO CAN'T SPEAK AMERICAN"

Cohen (1913) and Brown (1931) structure their classrooms around a kind of inclusion. Social justice historiography aids us in seeing that, appearances to the contrary, these models of inclusion resonate, in at least one key respect, with exclusionary nativism. Both, in their way, pivot around the axis of sameness, assessing difference and deviance against an imagined "native" white norm or ideal. More generally, returning to early *EJ* articles clarifies that the management of racionational difference can be counted among the founding preoccupations of that journal and, by extension, the emerging discipline it was created to support. Revisiting this period in our disciplinary history affords us a trenchant reminder that even ostensibly tolerant approaches to difference in writing instruction and assessment can rehearse the lesson of Ford's Melting Pot: Acceptance is no antidote to injustice, when by *E Pluribus Unum* we mean that the diverse many must be melted down to match a homogenizing standard.

Social justice historiography of this kind can support the growing movement in writing assessment scholarship to attend sensitively to questions of race and

racism; it can also assist us in engaging critically with more general questions about literacy and educational inequality—to say nothing of continual anxieties about American educational underperformance—that have long been fixtures of public, legal, and policy debates about schooling. This chapter is intended as one exchange within a broader conversation that locates social justice at the heart of writing assessment historiography. In focusing on the journal as a kind of disciplinary space, the example of social justice historiography undertaken in this chapter—a partial re-examination of race and (progressive) racism in *EJ* from 1912 to 1935—provides one methodological avenue for exploring questions of justice and injustice in the history of writing assessment, but this avenue is not the only one available to us. For instance, Keith L. Harms (Chapter 3, this collection) and Sean Molloy (Chapter 2, this collection) demonstrate what is possible when we direct our justice-oriented historical inquiry to other sites, such as specific assessment practices and institutions.

Furthermore, the kind of work undertaken here in my example could profitably be extended forward in time (considering *EJ* after 1935), broadened to include other disciplinary sites (e.g., other NCTE publications), or reoriented toward disciplinary coverage of particular events, figures, artifacts, or ecologies believed by scholars deserving of deeper scrutiny. Alternatively, scholarship building on the example provided here could return to the period of *EJ* discussed, broaden the terms of inquiry to more fully consider injustices along other axes of identity, and examine how they intersect with what I have discussed here as progressive racism. More capaciously, historical engagement with racial injustice and writing assessment could include detailed consideration of a host of adjacent developments and debates in law, policy, politics, and popular culture—developments like the famous Ann Arbor "Black English" case and decision (e.g., Ball & Lardner, 1997), the so-called "Bell Curve Debate" (e.g., Jacoby & Glauberman, 1995), or the race- and testing-related history of immigration restriction in the US (e.g., Schrag, 2011). Without rehearsing these connections at length, though, I conclude by briefly discussing one way a social justice historiography for writing assessment can help us engage with questions of social justice confronting us in the present.

Recent years testify to the popular re-emergence (or endurance) of rhetorics explicitly advocating the quarantine of racional difference. For this reason, there remains a pressing need for scholarship that identifies, explicates, or challenges progressive racism and nativism. Consider this recent example from the 2016 United States presidential election cycle, documented in *The Boston Globe*:

> "Trump said to watch your precincts. I'm going to go, for sure,"
> said Steve Webb, a 61-year-old carpenter from Fairfield, Ohio.

"I'll look for . . . well, it's called racial profiling. Mexicans. Syrians. *People who can't speak American,"* he said. "I'm going to go right up behind them. I'll do everything legally. I want to see if they are accountable. I'm not going to do anything illegal. I'm going to make them a little bit nervous." (Viser & Jan, October 15, 2016, emphasis mine)

Setting aside Webb's apparent endorsement of race-based voter intimidation, his construction of "racial profiling" offers important insights. Like some *EJ* contributors discussed above, Webb a) collapses national origin with racial identity, and b) treats language use as an index of racial belonging and—as Cody (1918) might have put it—"the danger within the country" (p. 616). And while decidedly extra-educational, what Webb discusses is, in its own way, a form of assessment: scrutinizing linguistic performance to draw inferences about the performer, to guide intervention, and to test accountability (i.e., "see if they're accountable"). Webb's shibboleth for racionational belonging is *American* language use: Failure to speak English, it seems, brands one an interloper. For Webb, language betrays group belonging, much in the way that, for Brown (1931), "speaking Jewish" discloses racial affiliation.

Social justice historiography provides one means of excavating long-standing assumptions about language, race, and assessment that authorize and normalize perspectives like these—assumptions foundational to progressive racism and to the nativist profiling Webb advocates. The advancement of social justice requires our thinking be ecological (Inoue, 2015; Molloy, Chapter 3, this collection)—concerned with the diffuse assumptions, practices, relations, and background structures that shape (and are shaped by) assessment. Our critical focus cannot be limited to our classrooms alone—a point persuasively made by Burns, Cream, and Dougherty (Chapter 8, this collection). Questions of racial belonging and assessment have grave importance inside *and outside* the academy. The promise of social justice historiography is that it not only draws attention to writing–assessment–based injustices, but that it also affords us insights into the structures and assumptions underpinning those injustices—structures and assumptions that extend beyond our classroom walls.

Racial justice-oriented scholarship, though, is only one historiographic approach of many necessary, if we are to rewrite the past, present, and future of writing assessment. Even the dullest historiography cannot help but be incisive, carving in the direction of its assumptions and commitments. For this reason, additional critical perspectives (including those focused on class, decoloniality, disability, gender, sexuality, and intersectionality) are needed to help ensure our historiography can cut to the core of injustices experienced along multiple over-

lapping and intersecting social axes. Our assumptions and commitments matter. Social justice historiography for writing assessment intervenes productively in our "sense of reality" (Weiler, 2011), redefining *who* counts in our assessments and in society—and *how*. If it is true that injustice is structural—evident in, and normalized by, everyday assumptions and practices—then the ways we write and remember history can support the work of subverting unjust assessment ecologies by undercutting the (hi)stories sustaining them.

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CHAPTER 2.

"HUMAN BEINGS ENGAGING WITH IDEAS": THE 1960s SEEK PROGRAM AS A PRECURSOR MODEL OF ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL WRITING PEDAGOGY AND ASSESSMENT

Sean Molloy

Research Problem: Newly developed theoretical models of ecological assessment and sociocultural validity urge administrators and teachers to expand writing assessment goals beyond fairness and toward social justice. But application of these dense theories can be challenging without concrete models in which they have been successfully applied to real college programs.

Research Questions: How does the 1960s' SEEK desegregation program at City College help us to better understand theories of ecological and sociocultural assessment? How do these assessment models help us to better understand SEEK's racial and social justice goals and practices?

Literature Review: I ground this history in the larger civil rights struggle to desegregate America's white colleges during the 1960s. I also bring forward objective and subjective theories of writing assessment that have developed (often in tension) within the educational measurement and Writing Studies fields over the last four decades. I focus on the ecological and sociocultural models that have rapidly developed within both fields since 2010.

Methodology: This is an archival micro-history and case study, documented with oral histories, some of which have been published on YouTube and are now being curated at the CUNY Digital History Archive. This combination of sources provides a poly-vocal

view of the interplay between the City College ecology, the SEEK ecology, the ecologies of individual writing classrooms, and the individual learning ecologies of several SEEK students.

Conclusions: The 1960s City College SEEK Program offers a useful example of a precursor program that consciously employed elements of presently emerging ecological and sociocultural theories and practices in its pedagogy and assessment with the express goal of fighting for racial and social justice.

Qualifications: SEEK is only one precursor model. It was grounded in the unique circumstances of its time and place. Recovery of the SEEK story fifty years later offers a partial view of all these ecologies. Much remains lost; memories have faded and many of the original SEEK leaders and teachers have already passed away, including Leslie Berger, Anthony Penale, Toni Cade Bambara, Barbara Christian and Addison Gayle.

Directions for Further Study: Further research into SEEK may provide a fuller account of this seminal program. Additional case studies of teaching and writing programs that have used forms of ecological and sociocultural assessment to seek social justice may yield both expanded theorization and a deeper understanding of those cases.

In the 1950s, Marvina White grew up in the Dyckman Houses projects on the northern tip of Manhattan. Always a good girl and a diligent student, Marvina loved her integrated neighborhood public elementary school until one day in third grade when she struggled to read a badly faded mimeograph.[1] Suddenly, Marvina's teacher lashed out at her: "Stand up, Stupid, and go to the back of the classroom! All you Negroes need to move back to Harlem!" Unable to understand her teacher's racism, the seven-year-old walked to the back of the room as instructed; but then she "burst into tears and ran down to the principal's office to try to confess" (White, January 25, 2015, p. 419).

After that day, Marvina was always plagued by self-doubts related to her race. "That moment though never really kind of left me. . . . I think, actually there was always a little bit of doubt implanted in me, around my being less than and maybe not really as smart or not as capable—and maybe I didn't really belong, maybe we shouldn't have been in the classroom . . ." (p. 419). When

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1   In addition to providing her video oral history in 2015 as part of my dissertation project, Marvina White kindly reviewed and commented on a draft of this chapter (email communication, November 21, 2016). She suggested using her first name throughout (email communication, November 29, 2016).

Marvina was eleven, it became her job to cook dinner for her family every night and "school took a back seat pretty much" (p. 418). Somewhere along the way, Marvina's schools labeled her "as an underachiever" (p. 422).

> I was a student who was kind of winging it, trying to manage, taking care of my brother, cooking food, making sure groceries were in, doing the laundry. . . . I was squeezing in my school work some kind of way for the most part. I was always looking for a way to save myself, this much I know. (pp. 421-422)

In high school, Marvina worked afternoons and weekends at a shoe store and saved her own money for college. But her parents had both dropped out of high school and her father had joined the merchant marine when he was fifteen. They expected their daughter to get married and feared that college would harm her chances. They refused to sign any loan forms and they even confiscated Marvina's savings from her shoe store job as a rent payment.

Marvina graduated from high school with an academic diploma, but her grades were too low for the free but exclusive four-year colleges within the City University of New York system (CUNY) and she had no way to pay for any other college (White, email communication, January 27, 2015).

RACIAL EXCLUSION ACROSS AMERICAN COLLEGES

If Marvina White had been born two years earlier, she would have been excluded from CUNY's four-year colleges—and likely from any college, as had always been true for the vast majority of black students in America. We now designate historically black colleges and universities as HBCUs and Alexandria Lockett (2016) argues we should refer to all other colleges and universities as historically white, or HWCUs. But in 1964, racial exclusion within American higher education was not yet historical. A decade earlier, the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* had unanimously struck down racial segregation in public schools. "In these days it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education" (*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka,* 1954, p. 493). In a 1956 Manhattan speech, Martin Luther King Jr. had praised *Brown* as a "glorious daybreak to end the long night of human captivity" (1956, p. 472). But King had warned that there would be defiant and determined resistance to integration, not only in its "glaring and conspicuous" southern forms, but also in its "hidden and subtle" northern forms (1956, p. 475).

In the decade after *Brown,* in line with King's warning, northern and southern

white colleges all resisted racial integration, but in very different ways. Southern public colleges defiantly defended their systems of overt racial exclusion. Northern colleges rationalized their more subtle *de facto* racial exclusion through their uncritical acceptance of high school grades and SAT scores as "the best basis for evaluating a student's potential for academic success," even though these standards excluded most black students (Ballard, 1973, p. 81). In 1960, there were only 70,000 black students at all American white colleges, comprising only 2.4% of the total enrollment of 2.8 million. But African-Americans constituted close to 13% of the college age population, such that their equal proportional representation in white colleges should have been 364,000 (Molloy, 2016).

By early 1965, this racial exclusion was nowhere as glaringly obvious or as deeply and sadly ironic as at the campus of the City College of New York, which sat on a northern Manhattan hilltop looking down to the east across Harlem. Founded as a free public academy in 1847, City was by far the oldest college within the newly formed CUNY system and its reputation had been brightly burnished by its history of struggles for social justice. Yet even in the spring of 1965, City was overwhelmingly white (Ballard, 2014). Each day, the excluded black and brown sons and daughters of Harlem, Manhattanville and Hamilton Grange continued to watch streams of white students emerge from the subway entrances and climb the hill to City's cloistered, hilltop towers.

But tensions were mounting. On the morning of July 16, 1964, James Powell—a fifteen-year-old, black middle-school student—was shot twice and killed by a white policeman outside Manhattan's Robert Wagner Junior High School where Powell was attending summer classes (Jones, 1964). Three days later residents rallied on 125th Street to protest Powell's death and a crowd gathered in front of the 123rd Street Precinct. The New York Police Department summoned reinforcements, barricaded the block and fired shots into the air. The protests then erupted into nine days of Harlem riots, all in the shadow of City's hilltop campus (Montgomery & Clines, 1964). On February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated by black gunmen in the Audubon Ballroom at 165th Street and Broadway, only twenty-five blocks north of City. On March 8, 1965, New Yorkers watched on television with the rest of the nation as Alabama state troopers and volunteer policemen tear-gassed and attacked peaceful protesters in Selma. The editor of *The New York Amsterdam* repeatedly accused City College of being "about as lily white . . . as the University of Mississippi" (Hicks, May 9, 1964, p. 9; cited in Blintz, March 18, 1965, pp. 1-2).

In the fall of 1965, City finally launched a "Pre-baccalaureate" (Pre-Bac) desegregation and social justice program which admitted 113 mostly black and Puerto Rican students from the surrounding communities and provided them with financial support, counseling, and a special teaching program that prepared

these new students to bridge into the mainstream college. All the 1965 Pre-Bac students had family annual incomes below $5,000 (Levy & Berger, November, 1965; Levy, February 23, 1966). After a successful pilot year, the Pre-Bac program was renamed SEEK, meaning the Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge. SEEK received $1.4 million in New York State and CUNY funding and it expanded across CUNY (Bowker, August 15, 1966). Marvina White applied and was accepted as one of City's 190 Fall 1966 incoming SEEK students.

Fifty years later, Marvina's face lights up as she remembers her first college class, a SEEK summer writing course taught by Barbara Christian:

> there were probably about eight or nine of us in the room. Barbara assigned a couple of books: *Native Son*, *Invisible Man*. We listened to her; we read those books; . . . [it was] exciting as she walked around the room talking to us, looking us in our [eyes]. (White, January 25, 2015, p. 420)

For Marvina, "the whole experience was just one of human beings engaging with ideas" (p. 420). Christian responded to Marvina's specific ideas about the readings, an experience she had never had before. The class had no grades:

> It was really read, talk, write, listen to what the teacher thinks about what you're saying, look at how you might write this paper better, look at how well you did this, whatever that particular thing was. But it was the most human experience I've ever had in the classroom. It was also everything I imagined college to be, everything, including the teacher. (p. 421)

SEEK AS A PRECURSOR MODEL OF ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL WRITING ASSESSMENT

Formal calls for "ecological" models of writing assessment date back at least to 1988, when Catherine Lucas Keech recognized the harmful effects of writing tests on teaching and learning and called for "ecologically, pedagogically and psychometrically sound evaluation" for writing at all school levels, even as she also scoffed at "the old, naïve idiosyncrasy in teacher responses to student writing" (1988a, p. 16). Keech suggested "a new synthesis of internal and external, qualitative and quantitative assessment" (1988b, p. 5).

Keech's ecological model idea at first received little attention. Instead, writing assessment theory was trapped for decades within what Brian Huot in 2002 called the "positivist philosophy" of classical test theory, which assumed "that student ability in writing, as in anything else, is a fixed, consistent, and acontex-

tual human trait" (p. 83). Huot traced this theory back to psychometric research begun in the 1920s. This was a troubling foundation because those early testing researchers shamefully bent "objective" findings to serve overtly racist ends (Elliot, 2005; Kamenetz, 2015). While recognizing that "assessment must be a multi-disciplinary enterprise," Huot also believed that "teachers and students need to have the most input about writing assessment and all important teaching decisions" (2002, p. 2). He also observed that writing assessment models continued to conflate fairness with mere reliability: "there is nothing within current assessment procedures which addresses, let alone ensures, fairness" (2002, p. 88).

Over the last thirty years or more, many writing teachers have resisted reductive writing assessment models that often employed timed multiple-choice or essay tests. Teachers instead developed portfolio assessment models (Huot, 2002; Kelly-Riley, 2011; Yancey, McElroy, & Powers, 2013). At SUNY Stony Brook in the mid-1980s, Peter Elbow and Patricia Belanoff replaced timed exit tests with portfolios as writing course assessments—arguing that timed tests failed to capture the robust nature of the construct of writing. Their portfolios included three revised essays, a reflective essay, and a timed, unrevised essay (1986). Elbow and Belanoff's system was not perfect; they compromised individual teacher agency and acceded to objectivist assessment theories by requiring that course grades be ratified by other teacher/readers in mid-semester and semester-end mandatory teacher group review sessions. But in practice, the groups deferred to teacher grades 90% of the time (1986). Elbow and Belanoff reported that their teachers retained "almost complete power over grades" and many teachers assessed writing less often, grading fewer papers and offering more "useful comments" (1986, pp. 337-338).

Over the last two decades, digital portfolios have become increasing common (Yancey, McElroy, & Powers, 2013) as writing teachers have recognized a "digital imperative" to teach new forms of composing and persuading (Clark, 2010). Eportfolios have challenged "our basic notions of . . . linear, verbal, single author texts" (Herrington & Moran, 2009, p. 2) and have created "a new exigence for assessment" grounded in a "new vocabulary, a new set of practices, and a new theory congruent with the affordances that eportfolios offer" (Yancey, McElroy, & Powers, 2013, p. 3). Over roughly the same time, writing assessment theory has embraced a broader view of fairness as a central concern, including the politics and negative consequences of testing on teaching and learning (Cheng & Curtis, 2004; Hillocks, 2002; Soliday, 2002) as well as the disparate impacts of assessment systems (Inoue, 2012; Inoue & Poe, 2012; Poe, Elliot, Cogan, & Nurudeen, 2014; Shor, 1997).

Despite advances in theory, old writing assessment models remain pow-

erfully entrenched. In Toth's thorough survey of the development of directed self-placement practices in two-year colleges (Chapter 4, this collection), she observes that up to 99% of them have not adopted DSP models despite their clear advantages. Gomes maps a multiple–choice–test writing placement system used by a doctoral university where it unfairly targets international, multilingual students (Chapter 7, this collection). Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham gather studies showing that a rising focus on accountability has pushed writing assessment at the K–12 level toward shallow tools and arbitrary cut-scores, with 47 of 50 states employing either multiple choice or timed, on-demand writing tests or both (Chapter 9, this collection).

Elliot sees troubling traces of objectivist Platonism surviving even in the 2014 AERA *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*, which often adores the abstract as it dismisses the material (Elliot, 2015). Elliot also castigates the 2014 *Standards* for continuing a tradition of denigrating teacher research and assessment, appearing to believe that teachers "lack rigor, intelligence or both" (2015, p. 582). The 2014 *Standards* add a new fairness chapter "to emphasize accessibility and fairness as fundamental issues in testing" (AERA, 2014), and Elliot argues that fairness is the principal concern of the 2014 *Standards*, "including technical properties of tests, reporting and use, elements impacting interpretation, and consequences of test use" (2015, p. 678).

As fairness has become a more central concern in writing assessment, interest in ecological models has grown and the writing assessment field has begun to reexamine "its own complicity in reproducing structures of social inequality" (Toth, Chapter 4, this collection). In 2010, the AERA annual meeting chose "Understanding Complex Ecologies in a Changing World" as its theme and AERA president Carol Lee challenged her colleagues to replace static, deficit models of learning with an approach that centered "diversity within and across ecological contexts" (Lee, 2010, pp. 643-644). Lee proposed a complex model in which individual learning ecologies are shaped by an interwoven "braid" of biological and cultural influences that in turn produce adaptive responses through multiple pathways—all of which are further shaped by interdependent levels of context (2010). In Lee's model, each person's learning ecology is a complex, dynamic and self-organizing "system of perceiving, feeling and thinking" which is shaped by individual personality, shifting senses of efficacy, assumed identities, ways of learning and using language, ranges of relationships, available resources, accrued and constructed knowledge, and bodily health (2010, p. 644). Lee even argued that studying "how . . . learning unfolds in the rich fullness of the ecologies of [people's] lives is the quintessential purpose of a science of learning" (2010, p. 653).

In 2012, Wardle and Roozen argued for "ecological" writing program as-

sessment models that combine different research methods and voices to provide a "fuller, richer account" (p. 107). That same year, Inoue and Poe defined ecological models as employing writing assessments that are conscious of "the entire system, environment, and even agents" involved as well as the "shaping effects" of "various racial, socioeconomic, gender, and other sociopolitical formations" (2012, pp. 3-4). In 2015, Inoue further defined ecologies as organic, mutually constitutive and livable systems of change and action and White, Elliot and Peckham adopted a central ecological metaphor in their treatise on writing program assessment, recognizing "the need for a system of conceptualization that yields robust understanding of construct representation, affords a systems analysis framework to engage complex interactions, anticipates threats to the system, and allows planning within the local environment to achieve sustainable development and growth" (p. 32). Arguing for "humility" in assessment theory, White, Elliot and Peckham's ecological framework also recognized that "only an informed instructor, watching a student develop over time, can hope to make a valid claim about the totality of the writing ability of that student" (2015, p. 32).

Educational Testing Service scholar Robert J. Mislevy now proposes adopting a "situated, sociocognitive perspective on learning" for educational assessment (2016, p. 267). Building on and expanding Messick's view of construct validity, and echoing Lee's complex ecological model of learning, Mislevy argues for a more robust construct validity (especially for more complex tasks) by considering "the interplay among" individual cognitive processes, social practices and interactions among people and things, and larger linguistic, cultural and substantive patterns (2016, p. 268). This interplay requires some individualized focus on each student's "past experiences [which are] continually assembled, adapted, and revised to make meaning and guide action in each new situation" (Mislevy, 2016, p. 268). Mislevy recognizes that reliance on many larger cultural patterns may be "tacit" and asserts that his model would make them visible. Evaluating more complex tasks would require consideration of students' "physical capabilities, language proficiency, requisite knowledge, cultural background, and familiarity with interfaces, genres, and evaluation standards" (Mislevy, 2016, p. 267). Mislevy believes that considering the interplay of these three cognitive/social/cultural domains is especially important where "advances in digital technology enable us to evoke, capture, evaluate, share, and integrate information ever more widely and rapidly" (2016, p. 265).

In support of their critical framing of ecological assessment, Inoue and Poe (2016) also endorse a "sociocultural model of validity." They directly probe the tacit cultural assumptions of powerful agents within schools and assessment systems, challenging illusions of objectivity that conceal subjective agendas.

"Deflection of agents in conventional validity theory creates the illusion of objectivity. Decisions are objectified, leaving the outcomes to the individuals who experience the personal responsibility of assessment" (p. 118). Instead they see all validity arguments as "rhetorical in nature" and therefore subjective—grounded in "particular worldviews, values and dispositions" (p. 118). Similarly, J. W. Hammond and Keith L. Harms both warn us to be vigilant against the subtle, sincere, well-meaning forms of myopic "progressive racism" that have within the last century grounded deeply harmful monolingual and error-centric writing pedagogies (Chapters 1 and 2, this collection).

Inoue and Poe (2016) insist that "validity inquiries are not bloodless undertakings; the cares and concerns of people must be included among the claims, warrants and qualifications" (p. 119). And in order to resist "false objectivity," they urge colleges to include "student and teacher voices in classroom and program assessment" (p. 119). They also argue that even a broad view of fairness is not a sufficient goal for assessment theory. Justice must be a distinct goal of the writing assessment community and they urge us to view social justice and fairness as "mutually beneficial projects" (pp. 118-119).

As a desegregation program within a white college, SEEK's social justice goal was clearly understood: to prepare and empower previously excluded students to succeed to their maximum potential within a demanding and often hostile environment—even as conservative forces mounted determined resistance. Fifty years later, I suggest here that we can study SEEK as a precursor program that: 1) built a new ecological learning and assessment model within City College; 2) directly considered the interplay of individual, social and cultural domains in evaluating its students; 3) embraced a subjective, individualized approach that empowered writing teachers and students; and 4) openly critiqued and challenged the tacit, objectivist cultural assumptions that distorted student assessments at City College and across all university systems.

BALLARD AND BERGER SHAPE SEEK

Although many hands shaped and supported SEEK, political scientist Allen B. Ballard and clinical psychologist Leslie Berger were its principal founders, leaders and theorists. Ballard had attended a black grade school in segregated Philadelphia (Ballard, 2011). He had then felt the isolation and pressures of being one of the first black undergraduates at Kenyan College (Ballard, 1973). Even in 1961, the University of Virginia withdrew a faculty position interview as soon as Ballard called to warn them he was black (Ballard, 2011). As a victim of racism and as a political scientist and historian whose early work focused on the Soviet Union, Ballard was adept at discerning and attacking the cultural biases and

racism hidden within "neutral" college assessment systems.

As a boy growing up in 1930s Austria, Berger watched his mother forced to sew yellow silk stars on their family's clothes. Anti-Semitic abuses steadily escalated; in the spring of 1944, Berger was interned in Nazi concentration camps where his parents and almost his entire family were murdered before he was liberated in May of 1945 (Berger, n.d.). After the war, Berger immigrated to America and worked in a Brooklyn handbag factory during the day while he learned enough English to pass his night classes at Brooklyn College. In 1957, Berger earned his doctorate in clinical psychology and personality theory at the University of Michigan. He worked for a year as an instructor and staff psychologist at a University of Pittsburgh clinic and then spent three years as a staff psychologist and administrator at a Veterans Administration hospital in Montrose, New York. Berger began teaching courses at Brooklyn College in 1959. Like Ballard, Berger began teaching at City College in 1961. In 1963, he was board certified in clinical psychology (Berger, 1976).

As a clinical psychologist, Berger assessed patients one at a time. In 2010, Revelle, Wilt and Condon noted that "[c]linical psychology has always been concerned with individual differences" (p. 10). They observed that differential analysis deeply influenced all psychologists in the 1960s, following the influential work of Raymond Cattell and Hans Eyseneck, who "emphasized individual differences broadly conceived . . . [attempting] to integrate physiological, emotional, cognitive and societal influences on human behavior" (p. 8). As a Holocaust survivor, working-class immigrant, and clinical psychologist, Berger was well suited to develop an individualized, subjective student assessment system that also critiqued the social and cultural influences on academic success or failure in an unjust and often cruel world.

Together, Ballard and Berger focused on the individual differences of SEEK students as they critiqued and rejected the biases, myopia, and false assumptions embedded within static, "objective" academic standards that wrongly excluded or stigmatized many students as inferior. In effect, they called for and used what Mislevy, Inoue, and Poe now call a "sociocultural model of validity," grounded in a subjective and interactive model of individual learning that anticipated Lee's 2010 learning ecology model. These ecological and sociocultural models call for attention to the interactions between the ecologies of individual learners and the ecologies of cultures and educational systems. Ballard (the political scientist and historian) focused his critique on systemic and cultural biases while Berger (the clinical psychologist) attacked traditional admissions and instructional standards as incompetent and biased constructs of college potential—in large part because they could not measure the complex interplay of the individual, social, and cultur-

al causes of academic failure.

BALLARD AND BERGER CHALLENGE EXCLUSIONARY ADMISSIONS STANDARDS

In his 1973 book, *The Education of Black Folk,* Ballard argued bluntly that the exclusion of black students from white colleges was deliberate and structural— part of a larger, century-long pattern of racism in American education that he traced in detail. College systems had "a duty to redress that historical imbalance" even where such redress required admission of students "ill-prepared both intellectually and financially" because that "educational imbalance [was] built upon a long history of injustice" that could not "easily be destroyed" and which also required more than mere "[p]eripheral attention" to entering students who were "suffering the consequences of that injustice" (p. 75). Rather, Ballard advised that "[e]very program should meet each student at his own level and lead him as far as possible academically without premature penalties or experiences of failure" (p. 98).

In a series of articles and speeches, Berger (1966) argued that high school transcripts and SAT tests unfairly reflected "middle-class cultural experience" and failed to identify disadvantaged applicants with potential college ability (p. 1). Rather, the best way to assess college ability was also the most direct measure: challenging students to perform college-level work (Berger, 1966). At the heart of Berger's critique was his deconstruction of the complex, real-world causes of academic failure. He recognized that successful high school GPAs "usually" indicated the presence of ability, motivation, adequate study skills, and a supportive environment. But, he observed that low GPAs could be caused by deficiencies in "any or all of these variables" (1968, p. 382; see also Berger, 1969b). Moreover, they could also reflect "the inadequacies of our social and educational system," or psychological or cultural characteristics (Berger, 1969a, p. 9). College admissions standards that focused on high school GPAs ignored "the educational and environmental realities of our poverty areas" in which "slum conditions and large city public schools have operated to prevent students from reaching their potential" (Berger, 1969b, p. 2).

Although he did not use assessment theory terminology, Berger essentially argued that admissions standards had weak construct validity in attempting to predict college potential. In this way, Berger directly anticipated Inoue's recent call for complex and racism-aware constructs of failure that avoid "naturalizing and reifying" test scores and which instead recognize the complex causes of failure, including the roles of schools and teachers (Inoue, 2014). Indeed, for those students who bore the weight of racial and economic injustice, Berger argued

in essence that no combination of available admissions criteria could have robust predictive value; all such measures therefore unjustly excluded promising students. Instead, Berger argued that college potential could only be predicted through a "protracted and individualized college entrance process, in which a student's educability can be assessed according to his actual performance under favorable conditions" (1968, p. 383).

Berger and Ballard's theoretical challenges to admissions standards were directly reflected in SEEK's actual admissions practices. In 1965, Ballard, Berger, and mathematician Bernard Sohmer carefully selected the 113 pilot program students; they cared little about SAT scores and searched within individual high school grades for some sign of intellectual "sparkles" (Ballard, 2014; Berger, 1969b). Most students were recruited through community agencies near City College, including "Haryou-Act, local Y's, and . . . the educational committee of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico" as well as high school counselors (Levy & Berger, 1965, p. 19). But as Berger expanded his attacks on admissions standards and as SEEK spread across CUNY's colleges, SEEK admissions soon became fully open. In the Fall of 1967, virtually all eligible applicants were accepted (Berger, 1968a). Then, as applications rose beyond available places, "we shifted to a totally random method of selection, and that's the method we have continued to use" (Berger, 1969b, p. 5).

SEEK'S ECOLOGY OF CHALLENGE, CREATIVE TEACHING, AND HOLISTIC SUPPORT

Once SEEK students had been admitted, Ballard and Berger designed a bridge program that was academically challenging, yet also holistically supportive and student-centered. Recognizing that social and cultural forces often caused student failure, SEEK offered financial support, counseling and tutoring—all to "develop an attitude in the student that will enable him to find pleasure in educational accomplishment and that will provide him with a reasonable expectancy of achieving professional status after graduation" (Berger, 1966, p. 3). In December of 1967, SEEK also began an employment development program that placed 600 SEEK students into summer jobs, including a training program at CBS News that led to full-time jobs and careers (Berger, 1968a; Covington, June 8, 2015; Wiltshire, November 20, 2015). To directly address the psychological and emotional harms of racism, SEEK students also met weekly with psychological counselors. In 1968, Ballard explained that the "[counseling] program remains the primary instrument for communication between the students and the college. The [counselors] perform the functions of faculty advisor, personal advisor, and [dispenser] of stipends to the students" (p. 8). In 1968, Berger

credited the counselors with promoting student success by successfully "individualizing the college experience for each student" and by reducing "frustration and failure" (1968a, p. 76).

SEEK's holistic support services were similar to other educational opportunity bridge/support programs developed during the 1960s, including the federal CAMP and Special Services for Disadvantaged Students programs (now SSS/TRIO). But SEEK was also a semi-independent teaching program/department that developed its own course structures and bottom-up pedagogies. Berger theorized academic success as a mutual responsibility controlled in part by teachers and colleges—a critical stance which often required the college and faculty to change to meet students' needs. If students were not succeeding, SEEK teachers were "expected to question themselves and explore different approaches" (1968, p. 386). This critical, bottom-up approach empowered teacher and student voices and required innovation. Berger saw SEEK as "a challenging experiment in creative teaching" (1966, p. 3).

Ballard and Berger were under extraordinary pressure to report almost constant programmatic assessments to CUNY faculty and administrators, New York legislators, and community groups (Berger, 1968a). Berger recognized the need for "continuous evaluation"; but he argued that SEEK should employ "research and assessment only insofar as they do not rigidify the program's growth and development," including "an atmosphere of openness in which classroom teachers and counselors alike can be encouraged to systematically explore and develop new approaches" (1968a, p. 75). Berger and Ballard's reports focused on direct metrics of actual success: "retention rates, number of credits earned and grade average" (Ballard, 1968; Berger, 1968a, 1969c). Their use of criterion validity avoided creating any metrics that were external to the normal workings of the academic system and in essence deferred to faculty assessments as reflected within course grades across the curriculum. As a desegregation and bridge program, SEEK's clear mission was to prepare its students to succeed in the mainstream college by persisting in their studies and meeting the collective expectations and judgments of the entire faculty. Berger and Ballard measured their programmatic success through the direct criteria of that student persistence and collective faculty judgment.

WRITING TEACHERS SHAPE SEEK

SEEK's writing courses were critical to its success. "The writing program was the essence of it" (Ballard, 2014, p. 413). Ballard and Berger knew nothing about writing instruction and they relied on writing teachers to develop successful, supportive and challenging pedagogies, course structures, and writing assess-

ments. At the same time, SEEK's new ecology did not develop in a vacuum; the SEEK writing teachers also reported to the conservative English Department and its chair, Edmond Volpe. Moreover, SEEK was a bridge program and the SEEK writing teachers knew they had to prepare their students to succeed within the larger, often hostile ecology of the mainstream college.

In 1965, Volpe assigned Anthony Penale, a 50-year-old lecturer who had taught night classes for several years, to be the first SEEK English director. Within the department and to his students, Penale was a "legendary" and "extraordinary" grammar teacher (Molloy, 2016, p. 505; see also Charlton, 1996). Volpe also hired the 26–year–old Toni Cade Bambara, who had just completed her master's degree at City College (Zeichner, 1965, October 7). In fall 1965, Penale and Bambara taught writing to all 113 SEEK students, each with two day sections and one evening section (Pre-baccalaureate, October 7, 1965). In the Spring of 1966, Penale and Bambara were joined by Barbara Christian, a 23–year–old Columbia Ph.D. student and prodigy from St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands; Christian had graduated from Marquette University in 1963 at age 19 (Molloy, 2016; Volpe, 1965). In 1966-1967 Volpe hired four more SEEK lecturers: Addison Gayle, Fred Byron, Amy Sticht, and Janet [Singer] Mayes (Mayes, 2016; Volpe, 1966). In mid-1967, Volpe hired Mina Shaughnessy as the new SEEK English director, replacing the then-ailing Penale (Shaughnessy, 1967). Other early SEEK writing teachers included David Henderson, Blanche Skurnick, and Alice Trillin (CCNY, 1968), and then June Jordan, Audre Lorde, Larry Neal, Raymond Patterson, and Adrienne Rich (CCNY, 1969; Jordan, 1981).

Berger had expected that the writing program would begin with grammar, but the SEEK writing teachers "insisted that actual writing be done" and that readings focus on "minority literature . . . in order to stimulate the students to write."[2] Bambara told Ballard she wanted her students to "write, write, write" (Ballard, email, September 2, 2015). Bambara, Christian, Gayle, and other SEEK writing teachers quickly developed successful individual pedagogies; they challenged—and even directly criticized—conservative forces within the English Department. The early SEEK teachers used different approaches to teach grammar; but overall, they deemphasized errors in favor of building confidence and fluency (Molloy, 2016). SEEK student Francee Covington remembers that her English classes with Christian, Bambara and Gayle were

> a lot of work, but very well [worth the] effort to have what

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2   (Berger, 1969-70). Two sources from Berger's surviving files (preserved for 20 years after his death by his daughters Noelle Berger and Nicole Futterman) offer key insights into the first years of SEEK. Neither document identifies its author and I cannot tell if they were ever published or promulgated. I attribute the first as "Levy & Berger, 1965, November." I attribute the second as "Berger, 1969-70." For further explanation, see Molloy (2016) p. 67 at n.13.

is in your heart and your mind put on the paper by you and to have it critiqued, not criticized, but critiqued by someone with an enormous brain and an enormous heart like our instructors and it was an amazing experience. (Covington, June 8, 2015, p. 435)

Bambara's "positive reinforcement" led Covington and Bambara to "be great friends." When Covington launched a SEEK student newspaper, Bambara was its faculty advisor and contributed her own literacy narrative as an article (Bambara, 1968a). When Bambara published an anthology of black women writers, she included an essay by Covington (Covington, 1970). Covington also remembers Christian as

amazing. She was . . . a tiny person with so much knowledge and so much ability to analyze things. Not just to analyze the work that you were given or the work that you did participating in class, but giving things a larger context and "What does that mean?" "And what does this mean?" "And how does that relate to this?" "Okay, are you going to mention this as well . . . in your papers or you're going to take a different stand?" (Covington, June 8, 2015, p. 435)

SEEK student Eugenia Wiltshire remembers: "all of these SEEK teachers were young, but they were so knowledgeable, and they taught in a way that was just easy to absorb. They were communicators, they weren't instructors and they didn't tell us what to think . . ." (Wilshire, November 20, 2015, p. 449). Ballard recalls the SEEK writing pedagogy:

And those teachers meshed with the students in the sense that they took the students from where the students were, and moved them up the ladder to the point where they were ready for movement into the regular curriculum. How did they do that? They did it by first of all respecting the students—respecting the students' background and respecting the students as individuals. And letting the students bring to the classroom, right, their own gifts and their own lives. And as the students did that, the teachers would then turn around and say . . . "Oh, it's very good. But now, how can we make it better?" And at that point they would make it better . . . by adding in the rules of grammar, right?—and the rules of past participles and all those things that have to come in, right? They basically kind of make that on the basis of the structure

> already, of the content, that had already come forth from the
> students. (Ballard, 2014, pp. 414-15)

Writing teachers also served as counselors and tutors. Some SEEK students could tell their writing teachers anything "that was happening" in their lives because they "had established a rapport" (Covington, June 8, 2015, pp. 434-435). Although she loved her English courses, Marvina White struggled in her first year and she found herself on probation. Marvina's counselor, Betty Rawls, teamed up with Barbara Christian to call a meeting with Marvina's parents to explain "what it was that [she] needed to be successful (White, January 25, 2015, pp. 422-423). In September 1967, SEEK opened a student residence hall where Marvina and many other students escaped their often difficult home circumstances. Marvina credits her teachers and the dorm as helping her to succeed and graduate. "[The] experience of living with other students and studying, actually having something called the study lounge and places we would all gather and talk about what [we were] reading or . . . gather and just do our work . . . was a dream" (White, January 25, 2015, p. 423).

SEEK COUNSELORS AND TEACHERS GUIDE STUDENTS' PLACEMENT AND RETENTION CHOICES

SEEK developed a system of course placements that combined teacher assessments with student self-placements guided by counselors. Individual programs for incoming SEEK students were developed based on placement tests administered by the academic departments and "preferences [students] expressed in personal interviews" (Levy & Berger, 1965, p. 20). In practice, the choices for incoming students were limited. For example, all Fall 1965 incoming SEEK students were placed into the same SEEK five-hour composition course. In total, the Fall 1965 SEEK students were placed into 266 sections of special SEEK courses: English Composition (113), Speech One (75), Elementary French (24), Elementary Spanish (29), and Math Review (25). They were also placed into 176 mainstream course sections: Phys. Ed (70), Art One (41), Music One (33), French and Spanish (25), and several math courses (7). Some SEEK students also were placed into "remedial reading" courses (Pre-baccalaureate, October 7, 1965).

Psychological counselors met with SEEK students weekly, including meetings to plan their course registrations for every new semester. Counselors were expected to provide "support and encouragement" and to "communicate a feeling of acceptance and respect," but also to "assist with reality testing" (Berger, 1967, p. 2). Where students realized they had real gaps in knowledge, skills and sophistication, the counselor helped them to deal with those gaps:

> The psychologist makes clear to the student that what has occurred is not the result of inferiority, worthlessness or inability. They begin to explore together ways of overcoming the academic deficiencies and they prepare a plan of action. This helps the student to reality test and encourages him by introducing the concept that his present state will pass. He is also helped to recognize his potential ability. The student must discover his limits through competitive action in this supportive environment. As the student becomes aware of his academic ability, he gains confidence in himself. (p. 5)

Berger saw this guided self-assessment as "a continuous process in which the student and the psychologist closely collaborate" (p. 2).

Within SEEK, teacher assessments were accorded substantial weight. For example, writing course placements for returning students were largely determined by their teachers' assessments of success in previous writing courses, sometimes with input from students and the approval of the SEEK English Director. For example, in the midst of Spring 1969 student protests, only six students showed up for the final session of Adrienne Rich's SEEK English One writing class. Four others had disappeared weeks earlier; Rich was unable to reach them and they had missed substantial work. Rich wrote to Shaughnessy, asking for help giving out summer assignments to the missing students so they could make up the incompletes. Rich graded the six students who completed the course; she sent Shaughnessy their final in-class essays and urged that one student be allowed to skip English Two. A second student had asked to skip English Two and Rich passed on the request to Shaughnessy. A handwritten note on Rich's letter suggests Shaughnessy approved one skip and denied one. Rich also recommended that two other passing students receive "intensive grammar" tutorials in the fall and she noted that she also planned to work with them over the summer (Rich, Summer, 1969).

SEEK's ongoing effort to craft individualized programs through consultation between students, counselors and teachers anticipated Daniel Royer and Roger Gilles' 1996 directed self-placement writing course system at Grand Valley State University. DSP programs have proliferated in various forms since then as a means to promote student agency and recognize the human complexities underlying course selection (Isaacs & Molloy, 2010; Royer & Gilles, 1998). But SEEK's DSP model extended beyond initial writing course placements to all courses and all semesters, based on a continuing conversation among students, counselors, teachers and administrators that both guided and empowered students. This system even gave students agency over leaving the program. If

"sufficient evidence [became] available indicating that a student [was] not educable on the college level," SEEK counselors could help the student to develop an "alternative vocational objective" (Berger, 1967, p. 3). In this way, students effectively decided their own college potential based on their experience of attempting challenging work within a supportive environment, guided by sympathetic counselors and teachers who were dedicated to their success.

THE CONSERVATIVE ECOLOGY OF CITY'S ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

The challenges faced by the SEEK writing lecturers were heightened because they were also supervised by City's English Department, which in 1965 continued to espouse a first-year writing pedagogy that had been long mired in shallow, sentence-level formalism. City's faculty had always cared about grammar and sentence-correctness, but composing and rhetorical instruction there had once been far richer and deeper. James Berlin credits the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century works of George Campbell, Hugh Blair, and Richard Whately as completely dominating "thinking on rhetoric in America" and as being "overwhelmingly dominant in American colleges" throughout the nineteenth century (Berlin, 1984, pp. 19, 34). The influence of Campbell and Blair is visible in the early City rhetoric course textbooks, such as the widely popular Samuel P. Newman's *A Practical System of Rhetoric*. City's students studied Whately directly in their logic classes (CCNY, 1855).

Rhetoric and writing instruction within American college English departments was reduced between 1875 and 1925 in three critical ways. First, oral and written composing, rehearsing and performing exercises were reduced to written composing. Second, frequent composing study and practice were limited to one or two courses. Third, complex rhetorical constructs of composing devolved to focus solely on style and sentence mechanics within reductive writing "modes" that merely narrated, explained or described. These stylistic rhetorics often devolved further to focus mainly on correcting sentence errors and completing grammar drills (Berlin, 1984; Connors, 1997). City College followed this larger pattern. By 1920, rhetoric and logic study across the curriculum was reduced to style and grammar study within two writing courses, English One and English Two; this structure remained unchanged until 1965. City's 1920 Register described English One as a

> laboratory course consisting of work done in class without
> home preparation, and with discussion and explanation of the
> principles involved. Frequent personal conferences with the

instructor will require extra time from the student. Credit for the course will not be given until a student can write grammatically and spell correctly. (CCNY, 1920, p. 94)

In 1930, a new zero-credit English Five course covered solely the "mechanics of correct writing." This course was prescribed "for students who do not obtain a grade of C or better in English 1, and for such others as are reported to need the instruction" (CCNY, 1930). Although the English Department tweaked them over the next 35 years, these first-year writing courses remained in place until 1965.

In 1965, just as City began to admit significant numbers of black and brown students, a new aversion to teaching writing courses among English Department faculty and increased doubts about student abilities were reflected in several changes to the writing program. The faculty approved an English department proposal that eliminated English Two and reduced required writing courses to a single semester (CCNY, 1965a). The department then designed the remaining required writing course (English One) to focus on grammar instruction. English One teachers were urged to use Joseph Blumenthal's 1962 workbook, *English 3200: A Programmed Course in Grammar and Usage* (CCNY, 1965b). Periodic grammar tests were suggested as a way to prepare students for similar grammar questions on the department's mandated final exam (CCNY, 1965b). For good measure, the department then approved a new high-stakes grammar final exam section for all first-year writing courses. Students who failed the grammar test would automatically fail the writing courses (CCNY, 1965c).

Volpe also segregated the non-tenure track SEEK lecturers. For two years, he did not allow other English faculty members even to volunteer to teach SEEK classes. Only in March of 1967 did Volpe propose "permitting regular members of the department to teach in [SEEK] on a voluntary basis" as other departments had already done (CCNY, 1967a, p. 2). Gayle believed that the English Department had employed a strategy "to minimize contact between whites and [blacks] in an educational setting. It created a special branch of the department and hired a special staff of [black] teachers" while it discouraged both white applicants and regular faculty from teaching in SEEK (Gayle, 1971, p. 55). A decade later, Gayle recalled that SEEK lecturers had been "regarded as pariahs not only by the general faculty, but by the English Department to which we were assigned. We were given no office space, barred from serving on department committees, segregated at one far end of the campus" (Gayle, 1977, p. 115).

Not all English faculty subscribed to the official basic skills pedagogy, the new

exam, or the segregation of the SEEK teachers. Eugenia Wiltshire remembers learning process writing from Eve Merriam (Wiltshire, November 20, 2015). Novelist Mark Mirsky piloted a "voice" model English One with other creative writer-teachers (CCNY, 1971). In SEEK's third year—once volunteering was allowed—six mainstream department teachers did volunteer; but Volpe assigned SEEK classes to only three of them (Volpe, 1972).

SEEK'S STRETCHED COURSES AND "J" GRADES

Berger knew that "remedial courses taught in a narrow context, are usually the most deadening of courses." He believed placing students into fully remedial coursework was a failed approach that survived due only to colleges' "vacuousness or rigidity" (Berger, 1969-1970, p. 4). Instead, most SEEK courses were credit-bearing versions of mainstream first-year requirements (Ballard, 2014). These compensatory SEEK courses had fewer students and were stretched to meet "for one or two more hours per week than regular courses covering identical material" (Berger, 1966, pp. 2-3, 1968a; see also Levy & Berger, 1965). They advanced the program's main goals of meeting students where they were, while challenging them to tackle college-level work as quickly as possible in a supportive environment (Berger, 1968a; 1969c). By 1967–1968, City College SEEK offered "basic, stretched out credit bearing courses to students in areas of English, Speech, Reading, Mathematics, Social Studies and Romance Languages" (Ballard, 1968, p. 1). By 1966–1967, SEEK also offered "remedial" courses that corresponded to the existing zero-credit mainstream remedial courses.

Unlike the mainstream college, SEEK did not eliminate English Two. This had the effect of stretching City's new mainstream, single-semester writing requirement across two semesters for most SEEK students. A small number of SEEK students were placed directly into the single-semester mainstream writing course. (For example, in Fall 1967, about 35 out of the 173 incoming SEEK students were placed directly into the mainstream course (Berger, 1968a).) After 1965, some SEEK students were also placed into SEEK versions of the zero-credit English Five, which extended their required SEEK writing courses to three semesters.

At City, a "J" grade had long been a substitute for "F" in some circumstances. To avoid premature experiences of failure, Ballard and Berger repurposed "J" grades to replace all "F" grades in SEEK course sections. SEEK students could fail in their mainstream courses, but not in their SEEK courses. Berger explained that where a student improved "in English, but had not the time to cover the entire content of the course, he would not be given a failing grade but would start out from the point where he left off the following semester." A "J" grade

meant "failure to complete the course without penalty" (Berger, 1969–1970, p. 6). In effect, SEEK used these non-punitive grades to stretch individual courses across semesters when needed.

At the same time, SEEK was a bridge program that gauged itself based on the actual success of its students when they advanced to mainstream course-work. SEEK courses had to challenge students in order to prepare them for the mainstream college. The "J" grades allowed supportive teachers to maintain high grading standards without fear of pushing students towards suspension or expulsion and they used "J"s frequently. For example, among all Fall 1967 SEEK courses, students received a total of 43 A's, 130 B's, 162 C's, 59 D's, 93 P's (for pass), 182 J's and 21 incompletes. In all Spring 1968 SEEK courses, students received a total of 50 A's, 134 B's, 161 C's, 71 D's, 232 P's (for pass), 275 J's and 16 incompletes (Ballard, 1968, App I.)

The SEEK writing teachers were also both demanding and supportive. For example, Covington remembers Gayle as

> a tough marker and he took pride in being a tough mark-
> er. But he was also one of the instructors that we would sit
> around with and have coffee with and just laugh and joke
> and just talk about current events. And what was going on in
> black America particularly, really good. (Covington, June 8,
> 2015, p. 436)

In Fall 1967, 326 SEEK students took SEEK writing courses and teachers assigned a total of 78 "J" grades (Ballard, 1968, App I).

SEEK's "stretched" writing course model anticipated the core concepts and structure of the 1992 Arizona State writing course stretch-model (Glau, 1996). But SEEK stretched courses in multiple subjects and it stretched writing courses in three ways: It added extra teaching hours within semesters. It stretched the new mainstream single-semester writing requirement into two semesters. And it used "J" grades to allow individual students to stretch courses across semesters with minimized penalties.

RESISTING TESTING AND RETAINING TEACHER AGENCY

In a critical act of resistance, the SEEK writing teachers did not administer the "required" departmental final exams for English Five and English One. Some SEEK teachers gave final exams in some form. But Wiltshire, looking now at the May 1967 Departmental Exam, says she never saw "this poor excuse for a test" (CCNY, 1967b; Wiltshire, email communication, January 12, 2016). Marvina White also recalls no final exams in her SEEK writing courses and she

remembers taking no grammar tests of any kind (White, email communication, January 12, 2016). SEEK instructor Mayes gave no grammar exams in her SEEK writing courses and believes none of the 1960s SEEK teachers used any high-stakes grammar tests (Mayes, June 29, 2016). While this collective refusal at first may have been informal, by 1969 it appears to have hardened into a rule that SEEK students did not take the departmental final exam (Shaughnessy, 1969). Instead, the SEEK writing teachers controlled their own course teaching and grades. Covington remembers her SEEK writing course assessments:

> [W]e of course were graded on class participation, everybody aced class participation because New Yorkers love to talk, so there you go. We had smaller papers and larger papers that we had to turn in. We . . . would have quizzes, we would have exams. I don't remember [a] large final exam, I remember a final paper and papers going through the course of the entire semester and that was good, because we had pressure for final exams in our other classes. (June 8, 2015, p. 436)

This SEEK teacher resistance to the English Department's mandated assessments offers one powerful example of the complex pressures, influences and struggles between conflicting programmatic ecologies within a larger college system and their direct impact on the learning ecologies of individual students. It reinforces Inoue and Poe's (2016) argument that assessment structures are never objective nor "bloodless undertakings." These teachers' voices and actions enabled SEEK to effectively resist high-stakes writing tests with poor construct validity and a false objectivity that veiled the tacit cultural agenda of the conservative English faculty (p. 119).

The SEEK writing teachers did not teach or grade in isolation. They attended regular teacher SEEK "staff meetings" where they discussed all their students (Kreigel, 1972, p. 173). Teachers also were expected to meet at least twice a semester and to "keep in touch" with their students' counselors (Berger, 1969–1970, p. 6). They also submitted mid-semester, informal narrative progress reports about each student (CCNY, 1970, Fall; Molloy, 2012). The teacher meetings sometimes involved uncomfortable but productive discussions. In at least one case, they even produced formal teacher research. In 1966, Gayle challenged Penale to approve an anthology of black authors, prompting a discussion among the SEEK teachers as to how students might react to the new readings. Gayle then used the readings in his courses, surveyed student responses and then published an article recounting their positive reactions (Gayle, 1968).

In these ways, SEEK's collaborative ecology empowered teachers and valued their judgment while it also established a culture and practice of open, collabo-

rative, and reflective teaching that remained focused on students' success.

SEEK SUMMER WRITING COURSES WITH NO GRADES

Starting in 1966, the SEEK writing teachers ran summer enrichment courses. It was one of these courses that Marvina White remembers as her perfect introduction to college. Christian saw them "as a means of experimenting with different techniques of involving the students in writing" (Christian, 1968, p. 17). These courses bore no credit and students received no grades—no conventional student assessment at all. In fall 1968, Shaughnessy led the SEEK writing teachers to prepare a 39-page "Report on the 1968 SEEK English Summer Seminar." Shaughnessy, Christian, Bambara, Gayle, Henderson, and Byron each wrote their own course narrative reports. Christian added four student essays. Henderson added one. The bottom-up pedagogy and teacher agency within the early SEEK program was apparent as each teacher adopted a different approach and different teaching goals. But the top-down influence of SEEK's ecology was also clear as each teacher challenged students to tackle difficult material and found ways to build their self-confidence. The only programmatic assessments were discussions among the teachers and their shared teaching narratives.

The summer of 1968 was an agonizing time. On March 31st, Lyndon Johnson, mired in the lost cause of the Vietnam War, had announced he would not run for reelection. On April 4, Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated in Memphis. In late April, Columbia University students and other protesters had occupied administration buildings and took three administrators hostage for three days. Throughout the spring, worker strikes and student protests had erupted worldwide. On June 5, Robert Kennedy was assassinated in Los Angeles.

Meeting her class for returning students in June in the SEEK dorm, Bambara asked them to craft the course themselves. They chose the theme of "Colonialism, Neo-Colonialism, and Liberation" (Bambara, 1968b, p. 10). The students often took over class discussion, which centered on dissecting rhetorics of power. Bambara described these students "as painfully aware of the gaps in their education, frantically alert to their need to establish a viable position, a stance in what for them is a daily toe–to–toe battle with the uglier elements of this country" (10). And so, she crafted a course with "few limits, no specific end, personal, often agonizing" but worthwhile because "it lends itself to two-way learning" (pp. 10-11).

Bambara's incoming students asked for help writing book reviews, some grammar "magic tricks" to defend against "ruthless red pencil marks," and some academic vocabulary (1968b, p. 13). Instead, she began their class with LeRoi Jones' "Cuba Libre" essay which led the students to a theme of "lies" that they

then pursued throughout the course. Students wrote response papers and kept personal journals. In the end, Bambara regretted that these students had only started to understand "that a subject cannot be adequately addressed" in a single, quick draft. She felt the students were more enthused by "how and why language is used and what it can effect," but she wished she had dumped her readings and instead assigned papers about the "lies" theme "over and over in various disguises so that at the end they could fuse the papers and discover what a real composition looks like, how much time, energy, thinking, initial drafts go into the paper of substance" (p. 14).

Having been told by his students that they felt "deficient" or "weak" in reading, especially the classics, Byron's aim was to provide them with this foundation (1968, p. 5). Using a traditional literature course approach, he required the most reading and writing, teaching three short stories, *Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, eight Greek plays, and three Shakespeare plays. He used two handbooks "The Study of English" and "Gods and Goddesses in Art and Legend." He assigned five main writing assignments as well as eight critical commentaries on the plays. He supplemented the readings with his own supportive materials, including stage diagrams.

Gayle (1968b) structured his courses as a seminar on naturalistic and existential literature, with a "corollary aim" to discover weaknesses and strengths in writing skills, introduce new writing concepts, and to develop student ideas "through literature" (p. 24). Using four novels and Piri Thomas' memoir *Down These Mean Streets*, Gayle assigned two prompted papers that asked students to compare the books and apply them to current issues. He conferred with students about their first papers, reviewing grammatical errors—most of which he reported did not recur in the second paper.

As Christian's students often believed they had nothing to write about, her teaching goal was to help them to "see, believe, and respond to the depth and subtlety" of their own worlds (1968, p. 17). An eviction scene in Ellison's *Invisible Man* resonated "for they had all seen evictions" and their discussion generated "a great deal of writing" (p. 17). Some began to keep and share journals, writing for their own pleasure. From these journals, some drew revised pieces wanting "to perfect this new ability" (p. 17). When the students grew interested in discussions of jazz in the readings, Christian brought in records and they listened to work songs, blues and jazz together. More excited discussion followed Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul on Ice*. Students copied Cleaver's style to write similar vignettes. Christian attached four student essays to her report; she believed that "we had just gotten started [but] the jump to more rigorous writing could be made in a few weeks" (p. 18).

The SEEK English summer enrichment courses trusted the writing teachers

to effect meaningful teaching and learning without immediate student assessment. (Indeed their teaching goals would have been difficult or impossible to directly assess.) Yet the success of their summer courses was soon evident from their students' actual success in other courses and their progress toward graduation. After taking the 1966 summer course, Marvina White struggled throughout her first year at City. But Christian introduced Marvina to a world of new ideas:

> I spent a lot of time at her apartment with other students. . . . She connected me with an editor at the Village Voice to write an article for them. I accompanied her to any number of Black Arts Movement gatherings, especially at Larry and Evelyn Neal's brownstone, went to jazz clubs. In other words, she was much more than a teacher working with me on my writing. (White, email communication, November 21, 2016)

As a teacher and a friend, Christian built Marvina's confidence and encouraged her to believe she had as much potential as any other student—and as much right to study at City College.

SEEK'S SUCCESS AND INFLUENCE

The City College SEEK program was an immediate success. After one year, 72% of the 1965 incoming class was still studying at City. Over one-half had a "C" average or higher—CUNY's minimum grade for acceptable academic performance (Berger, 1966). In Fall 1967, 62 out of 83 SEEK students who were placed into a mainstream literature class earned grades of A, B or C, and a "roughly similar pattern of achievement prevailed" in mainstream history, biology and sociology courses (Ballard, 1968, p. 1). In the Spring of 1968, 69% of the City College third-year SEEK students (40/58) had earned at least 48 college credits and 53% (31/58) had earned at least 59 credits (Berger, 1968a). From September 1965 to June 1969, City College's average SEEK student retention rates were: one semester (91.8%), two semesters (80.7%), three semesters (72.9%), four semesters (63%), five semesters (58.4%), six semesters (50.4%) and seven semesters (46.9%) (Berger, 1969c).

SEEK quickly expanded across CUNY's four-year colleges and its success proved to be replicable. SUNY launched its SEEK program at SUNY Buffalo in 1967 and expanded a year later to three additional SUNY colleges with a $2 million grant (Gould, 1968). In a 1969 Milwaukee speech, Berger offered SEEK as a national model to the first convention of "Educational Opportunity Programs in Higher Education." CUNY's SEEK was by then "considerably larger than

any other experimental program" (1969b, p. 7). By its fourth year, SEEK grew at CUNY from a pilot program with $125,000 in funding and 100 students to an $8.25 million program with about 3,000 students (Berger, 1969b). In 1968–1969 alone, SEEK admitted 1,800 new CUNY students (Berger, 1969b).

Marvina White, Eugenia Wiltshire and Francee Covington all graduated from City College in less than five years. White went on to teach college writing at City College, Princeton, and Stanford for 33 years (White, 2015; Molloy, 2016). Overall, close to 40% of the City College SEEK students in the 1965, 1966, and 1967 incoming classes graduated by mid-1972 (Frost, 1972). Even Volpe was forced to admit that "if we have not been gauging intellectual potential with our admissions standards, then we are perpetuating—in a democratic society—a caste system that we have presumed was based upon natural ability and intellect but turns out to be primarily a matter of social and economic background" (Volpe, 1972, p. 767).

Berger argued that the SEEK students' successes proved his point that college admissions assessments were invalid and that student potential could not be predicted by "past achievements." Rather, college success depended on the abilities of each college's teaching and counseling programs to unlock student potential (Berger 1968a). Berger's attacks on admissions criteria and the actual successes of the SEEK students provided critical support for CUNY's 1969 adoption of its 1970 Open Admissions program. In December of 1969, CUNY Vice Chancellor Timothy S. Healy wrote that without "SEEK the idea of open admissions would never have been born; without SEEK the operation could well fail."

After 1970, SEEK's impact at CUNY was astounding: within a dozen years after SEEK launched in 1965, CUNY's student body was fully racially integrated. Despite endless battles over budget cuts and many structural changes, the SEEK program has continued to fight for social and racial justice at CUNY for fifty years.

However, the struggle for social justice in writing pedagogy and assessment at CUNY proved to be a losing battle that ended in defeat in 1978 when CUNY launched a system-wide high-stakes, minimum skills reading, writing and mathematics testing system that has remained in place in various forms for 39 years (Molloy, 2016). CUNY finally began to dismantle that testing system in 2017.

A MODEL FOR JUST, ECOLOGICAL AND ROBUST CONSTRUCTS OF WRITING ASSESSMENT

As I responded to and graded the website portfolios, essays, movies and research studies composed by my first-year writing students in the fall of 2016, I found myself often quietly guided by Berger, Ballard, Bambara, Christian and Gayle.

Across the drafts, many students gradually shared their struggles with their classmates and me; as digital rhetors, some have now chosen to make their work public. I read about extended families that supported each other as they struggled to escape public housing projects. Students taught me about racism and colorism in their home communities, school communities and online in Google search engines and Instagram sites. One student traced the ways that a flawed financial aid/meal plan system traps some students into food insecurity on our campus. Immigrants and the children of immigrants described facing poverty, isolation, endless indignities and legal uncertainties. Latinas struggle to escape the gender oppression and the machista culture that immigrated here with their families. Muslims struggle with a newly rising tide of American Islamophobia. Students with autism spectrum disorder struggle to navigate an incomprehensible college website. Others struggle with absent or divorced parents, family illnesses and deaths, or their own serious health conditions. Working single moms somehow balance full-time jobs, parenting, and demanding college classes. New college students wonder why their high schools taught them only to write five-paragraph essays with a relentless focus on fixing errors rather than teaching them to create, expand, examine, and reshape their own ideas—leaving them deeply underprepared for college writing assignments.

How do I respond to all that work, both during the semester and at its end? How do I become the "informed instructor" envisioned by White, Elliot, and Peckham who, having worked with students over fourteen weeks, "can hope to make a valid claim about the totality of" their writing abilities? (2015, p. 32). How do I develop a robust assessment construct that fully appreciates all that each student has accomplished when each digital portfolio is deeply and differently shaped by individual, social and cultural struggles and constraints, including the lapses and limits of my own teaching? Accepting Inoue and Poe's challenge to pursue justice and fairness as complementary values, how can I be both fair to all and just to each?

For me, SEEK's founders proved it can be done. More importantly, they offer us a real example of how to do it, even in the face of entrenched opposition. In this way, SEEK helps me to understand and apply new theories of ecological and sociocultural writing pedagogy and assessment—even as these theories help me to better understand SEEK.

In a remarkably short time, this small group of teachers built and theorized a physical and pedagogical ecology of the kind that Inoue now describes as a "mutually constitutive and livable [system] of change and action" and that Bambara then more simply called "two-way learning." SEEK assumed that every high school graduate, given the appropriate supports and challenges, has the potential to succeed in a demanding college curriculum. As such, the SEEK ecology

expelled harmful and biased myths of meritocracy and embraced the kinds of conscious structural and pedagogical supports required to work for justice. It challenged its writing teachers to balance justice and fairness by working to support and challenge each individual student to overcome the often-cruel realities of an unjust world and to develop into a critical and creative writer and scholar. SEEK's ecology both enabled and challenged its remarkable writing teachers to reject shallow and harmful writing pedagogies and assessment tools and to instead attempt the difficult and complex work of teaching and assessing writing in ways that can foster real growth, achievement, and success for each student.

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CHAPTER 3.

ASSESSMENT'S WORD WORK: EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND THE COLONIAL FUNCTION OF THE MONOLINGUAL WRITING CONSTRUCT

Keith L. Harms

Research Problem: Because U.S. overseas colonial expansion in the early twentieth century is a much ignored part of our nation's history, archival work in writing assessment has overlooked the colonial legacies informing the ways we think about the role of language in writing and its assessment. This has led recent assessment work to ignore international scholarship that is already asking important questions about the colonial legacies of writing assessment practices.

Research Questions: What can writing assessment during the U.S. colonial period in the Philippines tell us about the racist assumptions in our current assessment practices? Where can we look outside of our familiar disciplinary territories in addressing these assumptions?

Literature Review: To contextualize the historical context of U.S. colonialism, I rely largely on the work of Filipino and Filipino–American scholars. This move is especially important because the voices of Filipinos not working for the U.S. colonial administration have been largely erased. I situate my own history within the tradition of histories in composition and writing assessment, and bring these traditions in conversation with "internationalization" scholarship in composition and assessment.

Methodology: I began this case study with the Monroe Report,

a 1925 report that contained over 200 pages of analysis of large scale assessments administered across the entire colony of the Philippines. I supplemented this report with digitized archival materials in the HathiTrust Digital Library, which provides access to a wealth of documents from the U.S. colonial period. These documents would have otherwise been extremely labor and time intensive to locate and sift through.

Conclusions: The "internationalization" of composition and writing assessment are not recent phenomena of global capitalism, but were, in fact, an essential part of enacting the "white man's burden" of a supposedly benevolent colonialism. Writing instruction and assessment have from their beginnings been animated by a colonialist inside/outside binary, and much of our current practice is still problematically animated by this binary.

Qualifications: My study covers only a very small part of the assessments that were carried out in the Philippines. Further, my characterization of writing instruction in the U.S. colonies is based largely on one report. The complexities of the colonial educational contexts are relegated to the background, but not addressed directly and in depth.

Directions for Further Study: Deeper study into rhetorical education in overseas U.S. colonies needs to be done, not only in the Philippines, but also in Puerto Rico and Guam. Very different decisions about education were made in these colonies, most notably regarding language policy. There are hints of attempts at localization in the Monroe Report that a deeper study would look at in order to shed more light on recent calls for localization in writing assessment. Comparative analysis within Native American boarding schools is essential to understanding the depth and breadth of the colonialist legacy of U.S. rhetorical education.

You see, my ancestry is partially Filipino. Even as I remain largely a stranger to the Islands, and though learning my mother's language was never a task I undertook, I am a Filipino. One of my many online identities is named "bundok," a Tagalog word denoting "mountain," and connoting "remote area." Significantly, bundok is also the root word for the American word "boondocks," which was adapted into the U.S. English vernacular by Philippine–American War soldiers to connote a remote and confusing place. The earliest print usage of the word in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is from 1944 in a publication called *The Marine*

Corps Reader, referring to the "boondocks" of Paris Island, South Carolina. Given the textual evidence, it seems that the adoption of the word bundok into the U.S. English lexicon as "boondock" has roots in imperialist military action. The *OED* identifies 40 entries of Filipino origin and "boondock," is the only entry that can be said to have actually changed the U.S. lexicon at all. All other entries are the names of Filipino flora, fauna, foods, and customs. "Boondock" stands in stark contrast to the development of a widely used creole English/Tagalog language in the Philippines called Taglish. The word illustrates the lasting influence linguistically and educationally that U.S. colonialism had on Philippine culture after establishing an English Only public education system. That the Philippine origins of "boondock" are unknown to so many Americans, is a symbol of our forgotten colonial history in the Philippines, and especially the long colonial war fought there in the name of the "white man's burden." One additional legacy of the colonial project in the Philippines was the establishment of educational testing that modeled the forms of assessment given in U.S. schools.

My grandmother was an English teacher in the English Only U.S. colonial school system discussed in this chapter. It is entirely possible that she was a student when the assessments I discuss were administered. Whatever her attitudes towards English Only education and American linguistic imperialism were as a student, to hear her, and many of my family members, tell it, the U.S. occupation of the Philippines was nothing but perfect, a truly benevolent partnership. I have no doubt that this aspect of my family history played a role in my sister and I not learning either Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines, or Visayan, the language spoken by the majority of my Filipino family. So while my Korean-American friends in high school took classes in Korean language, I did not learn the language of my family. I do not necessarily regret this, but I don't *not* regret it. As a teenager, I would have resisted spending my Saturday afternoons in a community center learning a language I would never have to use. But this is, in large part, the point. Having grown up in the metropole, raised as a citizen of the center rather than the periphery and speaking the language of the colonizer, the legacy of English language policy in the Philippines means that I can function there without an understanding of local language. My cousins and their friends, especially the ones who live far from urban centers, struggle to speak English with me while I do not struggle to speak theirs.

What my history with Filipino languages and American varieties of English illustrate is that being raised a native speaker of a prestige variety of English is an unexamined privilege, one that has only recently received scant attention from compositionists who study writing assessment (Behm & Miller 2012; Inoue, 2015). Not only were arguments in favor of English Only education born during "the high tide of imperialism, colonial adventure, and overseas mission-

ary societies" (Horner & Trimbur, 2002, p. 608), but was actually the official educational policy in the Philippines. So it is through this word work that I connect the same colonial history to writing assessment.

My own purpose is to look directly at the policies enacted within the colonies as reflected in the assessment practices. In particular, I will look at score interpretation practices that expose parallels in the ways we talk about language, composition and writing assessment today and the ways that colonial administrators justified enforced English monolingualism. It is especially important to note that U.S. colonialists characterized their mission as a social justice one from the start. It is odd, even contradictory, from our perspective to imagine an overseas social justice mission that consisted of violent colonial war and a public education system informed by white supremacist theories of intelligence. Yet, as my analysis below will show, this was the case. At least the colonial administrators responsible for the writing assessments I review really did believe that U.S. colonialism was in the best interest of the Filipino people, no matter how anglo-centric. Further, I will show how their discourse regarding the relationship among writing education, writing assessment and language have parallels in recent writing assessment discourse, especially with regard to international students. These parallels should give us pause to reconsider the ways that writing assessment practices, when framed by a white supremacist language ideology, reify colonial attitudes toward non-white composition students.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE IMPERIALISM IN THE ARCHIVES OF RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

U.S. compositionists' histories of both composition and writing assessment tend to focus solely within U.S. borders, despite the fact that early twentieth century imperialism, the rise of college composition and early educational assessments were deeply intertwined. My study will look at literacy assessments undertaken in U.S. colonial Philippines in 1924 in order to look at the historical intersection of these three phenomena. If we are concerned with the social justice work of writing assessment, we should consider the colonial settings in which the earliest efforts to internationalize composition and writing assessment took place. The Philippines is a particularly productive location to look at because it was there that American exceptionalism drove educational administrators to implement a universal education requirement by importing American education wholesale. But importing U.S. education faced what administrators frequently called "the language problem." The Philippine Islands were only unified into a single nation by Spanish imperialism. During the 400-year period of Spanish colonialism, the local church never insisted on enforcing a royal decree that all locals learn Span-

ish because priests found it easier to learn the local dialects themselves rather than to teach Spanish. As a result, at the time of U.S. imperialism, Filipinos still largely spoke the hundreds of local vernaculars, with the exception of a small local elite called *illustrados* who had learned Spanish in religious private schools. If the U.S. colonial administration were going to institute a universal education requirement, they decided after much debate, that English Only would be the appropriate policy. This insistence on English Only haunts composition and assessment to this day.

Bruce Horner and John Trimbur (2002) point to parallels between the ways that we talk about the role of language in composition and pro-English Only arguments from the turn of the twentieth century. Significantly, they demonstrate that many of these parallels surface even in arguments *against* English Only today because "assumptions about language that were institutionalized around the turn of the century, at a high tide of imperialism, colonial adventure, and overseas missionary societies, have become sedimented in the way we think about writing pedagogy and curriculum" (Horner & Trimbul, 2002, p. 608). They identify a "chain of reifications" which "purifies the social identity of U.S. Americans as English speakers, privileges the use of language as written English, and then charts the pedagogical and curricular development of language as one that points inexorably toward mastery of written English" (2002, p. 607). This chain of reifications created the notion of an idealized, monolingual English understood as the goal of writing education. Though Horner and Trimbur draw our attention to important assumptions behind our language practices in U.S. composition, they are nonetheless focused solely on practices within United States universities. This tendency of U.S. compositionists to look at practices only within U.S. borders, rooted in our disciplinary histories which treat internationalization as a recent phenomenon, looks similar to the American Exceptionalism that informed composition and assessment practices in colonial Philippines.

In fact, American exceptionalism informed both pro- and anti-imperialist arguments at the time (Baldoz, 2009). On the one hand, anti-imperialists argued that the United States' exceptional character as the world's leading democracy could not impose government unwillingly on another country, while pro-imperialists argued that it was exactly the nation's exceptional character that would allow them to lead other nations such as the Philippines into the twentieth century. Donahue (2009) identifies a similar pattern in the ways we talk about internationalization work in composition. She identifies import/export metaphors which tend to depict international composition work thus: "Notice that we 'import' problems (the challenges of multiliterate, multicultural students, for example) and we 'export' our expertise about higher education writing instruction" (2009, p. 226). And

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though Donahue goes on to question the assumption within composition studies that we U.S. compositionists are always the colonizers, she nonetheless points us in the direction of two concepts that should never be far from our minds when we consider the parallels between U.S. colonial policy and current composition practice: American exceptionalism and assumed monolingualism. It may seem odd to use Donahue's criticism in order to make a point about the ways that we read a composition practice instituted within a blatantly colonial past by unapologetic colonialists. However, her warning about always reading colonial relationships as one-way resonates with the ways we should read our discipline's colonial legacy, especially with regard to language policy.

Pennycook's (1998, 2009) work on English language policies in former British colonies is particularly instructive when addressing these notions, in particular because of his continued rejection of the assumption that colonial language policies always function unidirectionally from metropolitan center to colonized periphery, even when they are intended to do so. Pennycook's *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* (2009) traces a long history of shifting educational policies regarding the English language. Unlike the American administration in the Philippines, the British never attempted to implement English as the medium of instruction for all citizens (Pennycook, 2009); rather, English language instruction was reserved for local elites who would eventually serve in administrative roles. As the British expanded education beyond the elite, it was decided that the vernacular would be best suited for educating people "in such subjects as will best fit them for their position in life" (*Report* as cited in Pennycook, 2009, p. 71). In Pennycook's discussion, he shows the ways that the debate over the role of the English language was never settled in colonial India, fought between the Anglicists on one side who advocated for English language education and Orientalists on the other who advocated for vernacular education.

What both sides shared was an assumed Otherness by their colonial subjects and a perceived need to import European culture. The difference between the two camps was to what *extent* to import European culture and the best means, linguistically, for achieving those ends. Although American exceptionalism allowed U.S. colonialists to imagine a very different colonial mission which valued educating an entire populace for the stated purpose of eventual democratic self-rule, the importing of American culture was seen as a necessary component of this mission. Though American goals in the Philippines were different, and therefore supposedly more progressive, than those of the British in India, both colonial missions nonetheless shared the assumption of the "white man's burden" to "civilize" supposedly savage nations. The colonial policies in India and Hong Kong that Pennycook's work addresses were very different than that of the United States' policies in the Philippines, but looking to this legacy is nonethe-

less instructive when we consider that U.S. colonial policies were purposely set up in contrast to European colonial policies. The insistence on English as the medium of instruction stands in strong contrast to European colonial missions in Asia, but there are important parallels in colonial thinking that inform the two divergent practices. Most important for our purposes is the "white man's burden:" the perceived need to export Western culture in an effort to "civilize" locals.

It is not a new statement to say that education is an important process for reinforcing colonial hegemony, but in the history of the Philippines, the role of English language education and its literacy assessments were tools of hegemonic control within larger, historical contexts of nation-building. Thus, Pennycook offers guidance for us in resisting "a common representation of colonial history in which a simple past is contrasted with a complex present" (2009, p. 69). After all, if we see our work in a simple dichotomous relationship with our colonial history, we can too easily overlook the problematic assumptions and practices that survive into our current moment. Canagarajah (1999) has similarly used Pennycook to illustrate the ways that colonial histories tend to be driven by stereotypes and create dichotomies that fail to describe actual language practice and policy. Like Canagarajah and Pennycook, I reject the narrative told by Phillipson (1992) which depicts a one-way power relationship between English and local languages. If the benevolence of the U.S. colonial mission is disputed, the role of English language education is even more so largely because of the prestigious status of English in a global economy. For example, a now canonical article in Filipino-American studies by Constantino (1970) depicts the U.S. colonial education system as "a means of pacifying a people who were defending their newly won freedom from an invader who had posed as an ally" (p. 179). He then goes on to make the further claim that "English became the wedge that separated the Filipinos from their past and later was to separate educated Filipinos from the mass of their countrymen" (p. 181). However, he then lists English language literacy as a virtue of the colonial education system. Importantly, in addition to English language literacy, Constantino also lists becoming "more conversant with the outside world, especially the American world" (p. 180) as additional virtues of this educational system.

Hamp-Lyons (2014) has leveled a similar criticism at U.S. compositionists working in writing assessment who do not share their expertise internationally. Though it might appear at first that Hamp-Lyons' argument looks like the "exporting expertise" end of the problematic binary described by Donahue, we should not read Donahue's caution as a call to withhold our expertise, but rather to avoid seeing our expertise as existing within an inside/outside binary. This has recently led Hamp-Lyons (2016) to extend her critique of the insularity of the

"large majority in the U.S. composition community" (p. A2) to the ways that our opposition to psychometric testing "ignores the reality [. . .] of the existence of 'big tests' and powerful testing agencies" (p. A2). Though we have used validity theory to move toward more just assessments, our insularity ignores the international success of U.S. psychometric testing "techniques developed in the first half of the last century" (Hamp-Lyons, 2014, p. 357). Hamp-Lyons identifies these techniques as an instrumental driver of international writing instruction in English which "looks very much like [. . .] current-traditional rhetoric: an emphasis on correctness, adherence to a conventional form, conscious practice of modes of discourse, and translation (not from Latin but from the dominant local language)" (p. 358). The composition and assessment landscape described by Hamp-Lyons in contemporary overseas settings is startlingly similar to the colonial Philippines. Given that our history of "exporting" composition began simultaneously with developments in educational measurement and in response to a supposedly more just form of colonialism, it is important to keep in mind the parallels with current composition and assessment practices, especially with regard to localization. In addition to keeping U.S. compositionists from participating in international conversations about writing assessment, our tendency to see composition through a U.S.-centric lens has similarly led us to ignore important language policy work in international writing assessments.

For example, Behm and Miller (2012), while rightly asking for a new wave of assessments which "challenge entrenched, 'white' linguistic patterns lionized as normal, natural, and rational; and to repudiate racialized standards reinforced by rubrics and other classroom assessment practices that reify discursive practices of whiteness and privilege" (p. 137) by developing "multifaceted criteria [. . .] that follow appropriate standards, including the standards of AAVE, Latino/a Englishes, and World Englishes" (p. 138), they seem unaware of work in international language policy which has already looked at the role of assessment in suppressing language variety and marginalizing users of non-dominant languages (Hamp-Lyons, 2007; Shohamy 2006, 2007; Spolsky 2012). Shohamy (2006) would even caution against defining standards for *any* variety of English. Drawing on Hutton and Pennycook, she specifically demonstrates that the drive to classify and describe languages at all was historically rooted in early twentieth century nationalism. Even terms such as "code mixing" come from a desire to see languages as pure, closed systems (p. 32). All of this suggests that defining alternate standards as a response to monolingual assessment designs is an extremely complex and potentially problematic undertaking. Interestingly, some of Shohamy's recommendations are not that far from those made by Behm and Miller, such as "the inclusion of different voices" or "shared and collaborative assessment models" (p. 108). But she is additionally concerned with the *uses* of

tests and not exclusively the construction of tests, proposing "ways in which test takers can guard themselves from misuses of tests" and "consider[ing] the uses of tests from a critical language-testing perspective" (p. 108). The latter of these two suggestions might remind us of Brian Huot's (2003) introduction of assessment scholarship to composition, in which he asks us to consider the way a test is used as a validity criteria. Because so much of our historical work, especially regarding writing assessment, has been so inwardly focused, even our scholarship that has taken up a critical language perspective has talked about students in terms similar to the import/export model. The question then is whether or not setting standards for non-prestige uses of English is sufficient to undo this binary, or worse, would it, as Shohamy's analysis seems to suggest it might, perpetuate it? And would setting these standards ensure fair score interpretation as long as the lens through which those scores are interpreted is still seen through this binary?

Drawing on the work of Ellen Cushman, Elliot (2016), in "A Theory of Ethics for Writing Assessment," has stated that "When diverse populations are considered in terms of curricular initiatives and assessment programs, [. . .] the aim of decolonization must extend from task design to consequence determination" (sec. 3.2.3). What this means is that fairness must be considered along every step of the process by taking such action as, for example, ensuring "maximum construct representation" (Elliot, 2016, sec. 3.1) and disaggregating data in order to ensure fairness for the least advantaged groups before making decisions about the use of the test results. Under Elliot's theory of ethics, the constant testing of fairness for the least advantaged would ask us to make sure that the active creation of standards for uses of English considered nonstandard were really in the best interest of students. More recently, Poe and Inoue (2016), drawing on the work of Young, have asked us to look to Young's axis of decision making as a place for a "toehold for the project of writing assessment as social justice" (p. 117). More directly relevant to this chapter, they ask:

> How can we engage in fostering a more just society within
> our classrooms or programs, perhaps around the priorities
> that translingual approaches to language offer, when we know
> that most outside our classrooms will assess our students' writing in vastly different ways, often to our students' detriment,
> often in contradiction to the lessons we offer them about
> language and its valuing? (Poe & Inoue, 2016, p. 121)

As expected, the score interpretations discussed below are deeply problematic and informed by racist theories of language. After all, if problematic understandings of language are so prominent today, causing the dilemma discussed by this

volume's editors in the above quote, how could we expect any different from early twentieth century colonial administrators? Yet, alongside their very problematic and racist views of language and writing, we also find these colonial administrators reacting to the dilemmas posed to Filipino students by English monolingualism in surprisingly progressive—though certainly still problematic—ways. Specifically, if we look to decision making as the axis upon which to build our toehold for assessment as social justice, and consider the role of language in this decision making, we find, then as now, a retreat from decision making about language that we commonly see in both writing assessments and composition pedagogies. If others, frequently more powerful others, are demanding a standard English from our students, the thinking goes, then what power do we have in composition and assessment to resist this? I don't want to imply that this is an easy dilemma to navigate. But make no mistake that this question looks very much like arguments made by early twentieth century colonialists who felt that the murder of Filipinos in 1901 had been committed for their own good (Figure 3.1).

Previous archival research in writing assessment--at least from within U.S. composition—like much historical work in composition in general, tends to focus on composition practice strictly within U.S. borders. The familiar narratives center around the emergence of composition at the beginning of the twentieth century at Harvard in response to more democratic admissions policies and shifting socioeconomic and cultural priorities in post-Civil War United States (Berlin 1987, Brereton 1995). Though many subsequent composition histories have questioned the narrow focus of disciplinary narratives focused on elite universities, they are still geographically limited to the United States. Even Trimbur and Horner's history, though recognizing the way that colonial attitudes influenced language theories in early composition scholarship, is still focused solely U.S. composition. Similarly, internationalization work such as Donahue's tends to talk about internationalization as if it were a new phenomenon. In fact, the internationalization of both composition and assessment were phenomena of early twentieth century U.S. imperialism. As one example, we can look directly at one historical figure who features prominently in both Berlin and Brereton's now canonical composition histories, as well as Elliot's (2006) history of writing assessment: former Harvard President Charles W. Eliot. Eliot was prominent both in the establishment of a composition requirement at Harvard, the implementation of an admissions test and was an early advocate of U.S. universities adopting the German research model. According to curriculum historian Coloma (2009), President McKinley consulted with Eliot prior to picking Fred Atkinson, at Eliot's suggestion, to administer the public education system in the Philippines. So Eliot had a hand—however indirectly—in the earliest internationalization efforts of U.S. composition.

Assessment histories from U.S. scholars are similarly focused on local and national assessment contexts. Elliot's comprehensive history tells the story of writing assessment in the twentieth century exclusively within U.S. borders. More recently, work by Serviss (2011) looks at New York State literacy assessments administered to immigrants and finds that the tension between localization and standardization is "not just a new, contemporary problem, but a long-standing historic one" (p. 226). Serviss' study nuances one of the master narratives we have long told ourselves about assessment history, and also shows how early twentieth century tensions between localism and standardization can offer us guidance by illuminating how complex the construct of literacy is. She further shows that recent scholarship that recognizes validity as a process that "allows for even more overt negotiation of constructs like literacy that, if molded, allow for vast, complicated notions of 'literacy' that address both local and broader conceptualizations" (p. 226). Yet, it is possible for an uncautious reader to read her narrative through the lens against which Donahue cautions us: that of importing problems. As Donahue demonstrates, this issue of importing problems represented in the bodies of foreign students, is always a risk when we look at composition strictly through a U.S.-centric lens. It is exactly this inward looking tendency that historiography can help us address in order "to wrestle with the compulsion of English to 'help' the so-called third world, minority, student, or basic writers by creating and legislating their 'needs'" (Lu, 2009, p. 10). In doing so, we should "dwell on the complexities of power relations, on power and resistance as multiply located, and on both being examined in specific historical and material contexts" (Bahri, 1998, p. 35). Looking at these assessments tells us that the internationalization of composition and educational measurement are not recent phenomena tied exclusively to globalization, but a feature of composition and writing assessment from the beginning. In studying this relationship, I will look at a set of assessments carried out in 1924 in the Philippines, and will point to parallels with our own arguments about the role of language in writing assessment that our inward focus has allowed us to ignore.

U.S COLONIAL EXPANSION, AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM, AND ENGLISH ONLY IN THE PHILIPPINES

The image of dead Filipino soldiers in Figure 3.1 is a reminder that the U.S. colonial mission was never as benevolent as its proponents wanted their publics to believe, a narrative that has led to the very erasures I discussed in my opening paragraph. It also serves as a reminder of the "violent" part of Mohanty's (2003) claim that "colonization almost invariably implies a relation of domination and a suppression—often violent—of the heterogeneity of the subject(s) in ques-

tion" (p. 18). Violence and the suppression of heterogeneity of colonial Others has been central to white colonialism in the Philippines. The very denial of heterogeneity of the English Only public educational policy of U.S. colonial Philippines was built on the bodies of these Filipino soldiers. Unifying the Philippine Islands as a single colony under Spanish colonial rule was itself an act of denying heterogeneity. These Filipino dead are a reminder of the violence necessary to carry out the supposedly benevolent practice of tutelary colonialism. This photograph depicts "the high tide of imperialism, colonial adventure, and overseas missionary societies" (Horner & Trimbur, 2002, p. 608) that is the context for assumptions about language we carry with us today identified by Horner and Trimbur. This photo depicts the aftermath of the specific military action which enabled the US to take its first steps to becoming a world power and made its first steps toward economic expansion in Asia. Just as war paved the way for large scale testing in the US (Eliot, 2005), the death of these Filipino soldiers paved the way for the wholesale exportation of racist American pedagogies, including current-traditional rhetoric. As such, it is the military action that enabled the internationalization of composition and, twenty years later, U.S. psychometric testing which was to first occur in the Philippines in 1924.

Figure 3.1. Dead Filipino soldiers following the first day of fighting in the Philippine-American War (source: National Archive)

A common telling of U.S. occupation in the Philippines entails exclusively the signing the of the 1898 Treaty of Paris in which—following their defeat in the Spanish–American War—Spain "granted" the U.S. possession of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines. In describing the ways that Americans tend to remember the occupation of the Islands, Filipino historian Ileto (2002) cheekily writes that "the myth generally persists that there was merely a 'Spanish–American War' in 1898 which almost magically landed the Philippines on Uncle Sam's lap after some treaty in Paris and the payment of a check to Spain" (p. 4). But, in fact, there was a prolonged war, which, similar to recent military intervention in Iraq, was declared over long before the cessation of hostilities. Filipino scholar Oscar Campomanes has looked at the disputed casualty figures during the "official" war versus the figures during the "guerrilla" fighting after the war was officially over to ask why the Spanish–American War is told as the "real" action while the Philippine–American War is told as the afterthought, if told at all.

For Ileto, the central question for the telling of the history of American occupation is "Why is it so difficult to speak of the relationship [between the Philippines and the United States] in terms such as invasion, resistance [. . .] war, combat, colonialism, exploitation, discrimination?" (p. 3) For Ileto, the answer, though complex, begins with the public school system established by the Americans. As a historian, Ileto is more interested in the stories told in the school system by colonial administrators who characterized the war as "misunderstanding," caused by Filipino republican leaders "who were not mature or intelligent enough to understand the intentions of the United States (which was to help the Filipinos complete their revolution [against Spanish colonial rule] under their tutelage)" (p. 3). It is, of course, this tutelage that makes the relationship so difficult to talk about in the terms Ileto prefers.

Tutelary colonialism is the term for a system of colonization in which the colonizers claim the goal of eventual self-rule of the colonized, and used by sociologist Go (2008) to describe the U.S. colonial mission in the Philippines. There is much debate in Philippine–American studies about the sincerity of this claim, and it is important that we remain skeptical of it. But whether or not we maintain this skepticism, it is useful to remember that American exceptionalism informed the educational mission that in 1924 administered the literacy assessments that I will discuss below. Baldoz (2011) explains the American colonial mindset:

> The United States itself was a product of anticolonial struggle,
> with a political mindset that rested in part on universalist
> principles of natural rights and government by consent [. . .]
> As a result, U.S. officials were careful to highlight the benevo-

> lent and paternal aims of overseas expansion, suggesting that American imperium was different from the kind of rapacious colonialism practiced by European powers [. . .] The United States, they claimed, was uniquely positioned to bring the light of civilization and economic development to populations who had fallen behind the rest of the world while under centuries of Spanish misrule. (pp. 21-22)

In order to justify colonial expansion to a citizenry that might recognize the irony of a nation that prided itself on self-rule, at least in the ideal, the war had to be justified on humanitarian grounds, and policy decisions had to follow those grounds. This included universal education and English as the medium of instruction. The United States' perception of itself as a city on a hill defined the educational mission in the islands as a social justice one. In Go's analysis, colonial administrators used various strategies to "control semiotic resources"—including mandatory universal education in English—in order to remake the Philippines into an idealized image of a democratic state.

Go's analysis goes on to discuss those pro-colonialist Americans who he characterizes as educated, white elites, progressively minded, but still informed by racial theories of social development that held that a society's "level" of development, although not an essential racial characteristic, was nonetheless *related to* the race of its people. And while educated, elite Filipinos were given posts within the colonial government, they still answered to white Americans who held the highest posts in the colonial administration because of their racial superiority. The mission of eventual self-rule identifies those responsible for the colonial project as progressive-minded reformers. For them, colonialism was necessary because the Filipinos could not be trusted to self-govern without the guidance of white colonists, and to many educators competence in a standardized English was necessary both to unify the Islands into a single nation and for the economic and political success of this nation.

THE MONROE REPORT: "TO DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE OF FORM APPEARS TO BE THE CHIEF AIM"

Educational assessments were first administered in the Philippines in 1924 and test results were reported in *A Survey of the Educational System of the Philippine Islands, 1925*. The report is referred to in the literature as the Monroe Report, named after the assessment committee chairman, Paul Monroe. Prior to his service in the Philippines, Monroe had served as a professor of the History of Education and Director of the Teacher's College at Columbia

University. He wrote several books on the history of education during his time at Columbia, and prior to his service in the Philippines, he co-edited a collection entitled *The American Spirit: A Basis for World Democracy* (1918) with Irving Miller from the education department of the Washington State Normal School at Bellingham (now Western Washington University). It is a collection of historical and then-current patriotic speeches, essays and poems. In the introduction to the book, the editors write, in reference to the Philippine–American War (or perhaps the Spanish–American War or both—the wording is unclear): "Foreign war and the complicated problems of modern world diplomacy enabled the nation to reject an imperialistic policy in favor of one of generosity and humanity towards the weaker nations, of justice and honor among its peers" (p. iii). Included in the volume are the transcriptions of speeches from President McKinley and former Secretary of War Elihu Root denying that any sort of territorial claims are the goal of U.S. colonialism, but rather that only humanitarian ends are any motivation for war with the Philippines. So it would appear that in Paul Monroe the Bureau of Education had a true believer in a particular vision of the American exceptionalism informing colonial policy that moves beyond tutelage in democracy toward a mission of "humanity [. . .] justice and honor" (p. ii.) Importantly, Monroe and Miller go on to vaguely discuss "insidious attempts in the last few years to array group against group to the end that we may not present a united front" (p. iv). These undefined "recent attempts" have failed, according to the editors, in ways particularly important to this essay: "the very measures employed [. . .] have gradually brought to consciousness and focused the American Spirit until it has asserted its supremacy over hyphenism of any sort" (p. iv). We need to be careful of reading too much into such vague statements, but what is significant is the dichotomy set up between a unified "American Spirit" (however vaguely defined) and "hyphenism of *any* sort" (emphasis mine). Monroe and his co-editor's vision of social justice, then, depends on assimilation and a denial of heterogeneity. Here, we might recall J. W. Hammond's discussion of progressive racism in Chapter 1 (this collection), in which progressive educators, though advocates of inclusive education, nonetheless saw the eradication or containment of "'foreign' racinational difference" as a part of this education.

The Monroe Report (1925) itself is an almost 700 page report on the entire education system from elementary school through college, which includes such topics as administrative structure, costs, curricula, enrollment numbers, history, and other topics related to the administration of a national public education system in the colony, including the University of the Philippines. Most relevant to this article is a section of the report dedicated to a series of assessments administered throughout the entire public educational system.

According to the report, a total of 223,710 tests were administered nation-wide (p. 223). The tests were administered to students from grade five through first year of college as well as to elementary and secondary teachers, as shown in the table below, reproduced from the original report in Figure 3.2:

Test	No. given
Paragraph reading	2,540
Sentence meaning	2,540
Vocabulary (word meaning)	2,540
Arithmetic reasoning	2,540
Arithmetic computation	2,540
Nature study and science	2,540
History and literature	2,540
Knowledge of language	2,540
Understanding dictation and spelling	2,540
Mental ability (Verbal, Otis Test)	2,540
Mental ability (Verbal, Thorndike) Entrance Examination	376
Total in fourth-year high-school classes	**26,846**

FIRST YEAR UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES (MANILA AND CEBU)

Test	No. given
Paragraph reading	853
Sentence meaning	853
Vocabulary (word meaning)	853
Arithmetic computation	853
Arithmetic reasoning	853
Nature study and science	853
History and literature	853
Knowledge of language	853
Understanding dictation and spelling	853
Mental ability (Verbal, Otis Test)	792
Mental ability (Verbal, Thorndike)	153
Total in First Year University of the Philippines	**8,622**

TEACHERS ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY IN MANILA AND TEN PROVINCES

Test	No. given
Paragraph reading	1,077
Sentence meaning	1,077
Vocabulary (word meaning)	1,077
Arithmetic computation	1,077
Arithmetic reasoning	1,077
Nature study and science	1,077
History and literature	1,077
Knowledge of language	1,077
Understanding dictation and spelling	1,077
Mental ability (Verbal, Otis Test)	691
Mental ability (Verbal, Thorndike)	386
Total tests given to teachers	**10,770**

Figure 3.2. Number of assessments administered to high school seniors, college freshmen and elementary and secondary teachers.

Figure 3.2 shows a list of the total standardized tests administered for the survey for senior year high school students, first year college students at both the Cebu and Manila campuses of the University of the Philippines, and for elementary and secondary teachers in ten separate provinces. This excerpt of the table focuses on fourth year high school and higher, but it does list the entirety of all of the tests administered, as the same tests were administered to all grade levels. Two things are important to note: first, the number of tests administered to measure the efficacy of literacy instruction in Philippine public schools and second, how many of those test are language-focused. In fact, if we remove the two arithmetic tests, the history and literature test and the science test from the list, we are left with the famous Otis and Thorndike tests and five separate language related tests.

There is no direct writing assessment listed in Figure 3.2, but there were three direct writing assessments referenced in the report, which I will discuss in this section. Of the tests listed above, literacy is not tested in any way that we would consider a valid way to make decisions about students' facility with it. Instead is a list of traits related to literacy: reading comprehension (sentence and paragraph), knowledge of language, and dictation and spelling. These reading and knowledge of language tests consisted of multiple choice questions. The dictation and spelling test asked students to transcribe spoken English. Given common understandings about the history of writing assessment, we might expect that these indirect assessments to comprise the whole of how they measured literacy and writing, especially given the importance of English language to school success. The dictation and spelling test is especially interesting because a similar test was part of the national civil service exam, suggesting clerical work in the civil service as a goal of English language education. We might remember Pennycook's discussion of English education in India in which English education was reserved for local elites to participate in colonial government. The main difference here is that English education is not only universal, but compulsory, a result of a particular version of the "white man's burden" informed by American exceptionalism. What the two colonial language policies share in common is a perceived need to legislate student needs without consulting the wishes of Filipinos for their own education.

As I mentioned previously, in addition to the list of tests above, the Monroe Report briefly mentions three direct writing assessments. The first of the two direct writing assessments was meant "to provide a measure of the ability of Filipinos to do constructive writing in English" (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 170). In order to provide this measure, they "collected several thousand compositions written by school children" (p. 170). Because of the heavy workload involved carrying out the assessment, it "was recognized as necessary" to have

"the compositions scored by trained Americans who were not members of the staff of the Bureau of Education" (p. 170); however, the report says, "Since no one else was at hand to do it, the members of the Commission are unable to report their own measurement of the ability of Filipinos to express ideas in English" (p. 170). So they collected papers with the purpose of carrying out a direct assessment—and perhaps most importantly, an assessment of texts produced in response to a specific writing context—but because of a lack of trained American raters, the committee placed the papers in storage for future review when the time and desired raters would be available.

Whether or not these materials were ever put to use is unclear. We might ask why it was deemed necessary that the raters be American, but the report never addresses this question. One clue can be found in the other two direct writing assessments discussed in the report, and another clue can be found by recalling the chain of reifications identified by Horner and Trimbur above which associates language with nationality, or by recalling Shohamy's history of language policy which aligns the classification of language—and especially "correct usage" —with nationality. An additional clue can be found in the local language practices, as discussed in the second of the following two direct writing assessments—the 1921 civil service exam and a collection of letters written by Filipino school administrators.

In order to provide some sort of direct data for writing, the Board reprints a table of the passing rates of a 1921 civil service exam, taken from a 1921 article in a now defunct newspaper called *The Philippines Free Press* (the archives of which are unavailable), and written by Field, the chief examiner of the Bureau of Civil Service (Monroe, 1922). The data from this study are summed in Figure 3.3.

Second Grade and Promotional First Grade exams are general exams applicants to certain positions would take in addition to job-specific exams. There were three "grades" of exams with third testing for entry-level jobs and first testing for the most "advanced" jobs. The "promotional" first grade exam likely indicates an exam for someone seeking a promotion out of a "second grade" job and into a "first grade" job.

The Monroe report provides the following commentary on the high failure rate (99% of the 566 examined in English composition, 97% of the 172 examined in thesis writing, by contrasting the results with results for arithmetic, spelling, penmanship and other tests that are not specified:

> Summing these all up [Field] shows that the greatest difficulty
> lies in English composition and letter writing [. . .] In sharp
> contrast to these results in language are those in arithmetic,

spelling, penmanship, etc. The percentage of failure in arithmetic [. . .] are: 41,55, 58, 85, 65, 63. In spelling they are 77, 22, 35, 54. For penmanship, 6, 7. These percentages of failure correspond very well to those of results of taking the examinations of the United States Civil Service Examination. (1922, p. 171).

JUNIOR TEACHERS EXAMINATION			
	Number examined	Number failed	Per cent failing
English composition..	566	565	99
TEACHERS EXAMINATION			
Thesis	172	168	97
CLERICAL EXAMINATION			
Letter writing	169	164	97
SENIOR STENOGRAPHER			
Letter writing	33	27	82
SECOND GRADE			
Letter writing	135	132	98
PROMOTIONAL FIRST GRADE			
Letter writing	59	58	98

Figure 3.3. Pass/Fail rates for the writing section of the 1921 Philippine Civil Service Exam.

In short, the composition, the thesis, and the letter writing portions of the civil service exam listed in the table demonstrated a much higher rate of failure among Filipino test takers versus the rate of failure among U.S. test takers, while other measures, such as those not listed in the table for arithmetic, spelling and penmanship, showed similar rates of failure.

The Monroe Report never discusses the testing methods or evaluation criteria for the Philippine Civil Service exam, and information on the 1921 test is unavailable, but the testing manuals for the exams from 1901–1912 reveals a heavy emphasis on error. For example, the 1901 instructions for raters state: "In rating the letter its errors in form and address, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, syntax, style, and its adherence to subject will be considered" (Monroe, 1925, p. 27). Notice that "adherence to subject" is the only trait not related to correctness. The instructions for the 1912 thesis exam are exactly the same. The Monroe Report's discussion of the 1921 tests is worth quoting at length:

> We have here a long time measure of the composition work of the schools. Is it valid? Are the schools failing so completely to produce young people who can express themselves clearly and correctly in English? Or are the standards of the Bureau of Civil Service so rigid that the failure to pass its examination is not a fair index of lack of ability in composition? To answer the latter question the Commission collected from the Bureau of Civil Service examples of papers that were rated as (a) excellent; (b) just not passing; (c) poorest. (1925, p. 72)

It is interesting that the discussion of direct assessment of writing opens by raising the question of validity, they never address the question that they themselves raise. Rather, their discussion of the papers that they collected in order to answer the question skips directly to discussion of standards:

> Careful study of these papers leads us to believe that the standards in English composition maintained by the Bureau are not too high. The qualities of writing demanded by the Bureau seem to us to represent a fair requirement to expect of high-school graduates.
>
> We have no complete assurance, of course, that the standards of earlier years were comparable to those of today. We are told, however, by the present officials that in order to secure enough successful candidates to fill vacant positions, they have been somewhat relaxed. If, therefore, the earlier ratings were more rigorous than could be justified the percentage of

successful candidates perhaps should have been somewhat higher than it actually was.

The evidence seems to be clear, therefore, that the present organization of English composition in the elementary and secondary schools is not producing young people who can express themselves in writing clearly and correctly. (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 72)

There is clearly an assumption of alignment here: the English language education in the colony is a means of training Filipinos for certain kinds of bureaucratic work. The commission believes that the "composition work of the schools" is not achieving this goal, based on the high rate of failure on the civil service exam. Furthermore, the commission believes that the imperial standards for passing a test should "represent a fair requirement" for high school graduates. Significantly, almost ten years after the Jones Act which set in motion the eventual independence of the Philippines, the question of whether or not a monolingual education is in the best interests of the Filipino people is not even raised in discussion of this failure rate. The question is raised briefly in the report, and is discussed in the next section of this chapter. And it is in that discussion where we find the most interesting parallels with much discussion of the purpose of composition and our responsibilities regarding the teaching and assessment of language standards in composition today, especially with regard to international students.

While we should be careful about how we interpret the commission's use of the words "clearly" and "correctly" in their evaluation of the civil service exam data, I do think the use of these words suggests that their ideas about "good" writing are informed by a current-traditional ideal. The discussion continues:

The fact has already been pointed out [. . .] that Filipino students do have marked ability to recognize correctness and incorrectness in the form of written language. The composition course of study has been designed to bring about that result. Scores of class exercises were observed by members of the Commission. They were dominated by attention to the formal details of language structure. The result is that the graduates of these grades *know* what is right and wrong in language usage but have little skill in expressing ideas in writing. In the elementary grades the attention of teachers is centered on technical grammar. To develop knowledge of form appears to be the chief aim. Oral work in the classroom consists of formal mechanical question–and–answer concerning usage.

> Very little practice in using English correctly is given. (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 172-173)

We can only guess at what they mean by "the qualities of writing demanded by the Bureau," but the description of classroom instruction is notable. Though it is not clear how instruction "centered on technical grammar" or developing "knowledge of form" is differentiated from the preferred classroom practice of "practice in using English correctly," it appears that whichever classroom method is deployed, the desired outcome is related to some concept of correctness. This makes sense given the assumed alignment between high school graduation and performance on the writing portions of the civil service exam which placed such a heavy emphasis on error. We might be reminded of Hamp-Lyons' description of the current-traditional classrooms she sees internationally as a result of the success of the internationalization of early twentieth century American testing methods. Alongside the seemingly progressive observation that students need practice in using a language in order to understand a language, is the current-traditional notion that successful writing depends on error-free English prose, a standard defined by a racist colonial government.

Especially telling is their analysis of the final direct assessment of writing discussed in the report, which consists of "a very large number of letters written by Filipino *principals* and *supervisors*" (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 173, emphasis in original). It is important to consider the perceived need to assess the English language writing of principals and supervisors. What are these administrators' letters' relationship to curriculum and learning? In its 700 pages, the report doesn't tell us in any useful detail, but it is clear that the commission values and assumes a top-down, centralized system in which leaders and administrators should *necessarily* have reached the end of the chain of reifications identified by Horner and Trimbur. The commission's commentary on these letters is a particularly good example of the chain of reifications: "There can be little doubt that these letters represent better-than-average usage of English among Filipino teachers [. . .] These are *typical examples of Filipinized English* now current in the schools. Teachers, principals, and supervisors can neither write nor speak English smoothly and correctly. In the majority of cases they have moderately good vocabularies but little control over them in discourse" (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 173, emphasis mine). The examples of what the commission considers typical examples of Filipinized English are as follows: "lack of mastery of prepositions [. . .] Errors in tense [. . .] Gender and case [and] Inability to combine various forms correctly, pronouns, prepositions, tense, desire to avoid use of first-person pronouns, etc." (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 174), among other examples, all of which devalue Philippine uses of English.

Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised, as scholarship on World Englishes is still a long way off in the distant, *post*colonial future. There is rich scholarship on Philippine Englishes, and it would be beyond the scope of this article to review it. What is important to point out is the commission's recognition of a local and recognizably stable form of English in use by Filipino school administrators, yet it is assumed that this relatively stable use of English is a pattern of errors rather than a developing English. If we follow Pennycook and Canagarajah's example, we might remember Bahri's claim that postcolonial scholarship should always look at "power and resistance as multiply located." We can then read the use of "Filipinized English" in these letters as an exercise of power or resistance against a hegemonic language policy. After all, these school administrators presumably passed the thesis writing exam that placed so much emphasis on syntax and style and had such a high failure rate. Who were the audiences for these letters that the commission later collected? In what context were they written and about what? All of these are basic rhetorical questions that inform current writing assessment. However, writing at the height of current-traditional rhetorical education, in a system that assumed a standard monolingual English, these questions were not even considered. In fact, the commission's report seems to conflate a not explicitly stated idea of good writing with "correct" usage to the point where the discussion of a direct writing assessment—in this case the collection and reading of letters—can contain the following statement:

> A radical modification of the language program of the training schools must be made which will provide constant practice in correct writing under supervision. This supervision must include daily practice in the critical evaluation of written English. Constant practice in writing is one of the crucial needs in the training of teachers. (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 174)

What is telling about these three sentences, in addition to the obsession with "correct" usage, is the slippage from the specificity of English language instruction through writing in the first two sentences to the more general "practice in writing" in the final sentence. And again, there is a lack of specifics in describing what this practice would look like and how they imagine it to be different from existing classroom practices. It is similarly telling, even when the language of instruction is, by law, exclusively that of the ruling colonial power, that a process-oriented idea, "practice in writing," in service of correctness is not seen as problematic.

We might further question what they mean by "supervision" and who the

commission imagines the supervisors to be. It is probably worth noting Constantino's discussion of the 1916 Jones Act which ceded much governmental control of the Philippines over to Filipinos: "Although the government services were Filipinized, although the Filipinos were being prepared for self-government, the department of education was never entrusted to any Filipino" (2002, p. 179). This ceding of control of government services *except for* education over to Filipinos serves as an interesting illustration of Go's characterization of the colonial administrators who saw themselves on a social justice mission. And, again, though we have legitimate reason to be skeptical of the sincerity of these colonial administrators' claims to eventual Filipino self-government—especially in the early days of occupation when the United States saw fit to fight a bloody war that would turn out to be longer and more deadly than the Spanish American War (depicted in mainstream histories as the "main" war). The claim nonetheless clearly influenced actual policy, and these policies could only be carried out by an administration that either ignored the high death toll illustrated in Figure 3.1 or felt that the death toll was justified in the name of a noble cause.

We might remember Monroe's discussion of the wars that resulted in U.S. colonialism in the Philippines, in which appeals to a universal humanity justify the entire colonial mission going back to the war itself. Given my discussion, it might seem odd that I characterize the colonial mission as social justice. But I think that Monroe is sincere in his belief in the rightness of U.S. colonialism for the Filipino people, however grossly misguided. Remember Go's characterization of the early colonialists who were sure of the inherent racial inferiority of non-white peoples. Though at the time, they may have been seen as relatively progressive in their belief that this inferiority was not essential, but could instead be overcome, this inferiority also meant that they were perceived as unable to determine their own national destinies without the strong, paternal guidance of white men. Nowhere is Monroe's sincerity more apparent in the Monroe Report's discussion of what it calls "the language problem," discussed in the next section.

THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

How does this look at the history of literacy education in the Philippines, through the Monroe Report, speak to writing assessment today? There are moments where the commission HAS an opportunity to make gestures toward the educational needs of local students, but in each case falls back on the racist inside/outside binary endemic to colonial regimes. In doing so, they abdicate responsibility for decision making with regard to language. For example, in a section of the report entitled "The Language Problem," the commission takes up

the question of how to establish a nationalized curriculum in such a linguistically diverse environment. Because it had long been decided that English Only would be the answer to this question, the commission does not spend much space debating the issue. They do, however, comment that "there is no absolutely satisfactory solution" (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 26) to the problem, since "No one of the possible alternatives could be adopted against which serious and unanswerable objections could not be brought" (p. 26). And not only does the commission recognize that English Only is far from ideal (in practice if not in theory) they caution readers against taking the results of the testing at face value because of the difficulty faced by teachers and students who are asked to labor in a language entirely different from what they speak outside of school: "At no time in the school career of the Filipino child does he encounter the single task of studying in his mother tongue [. . .] their efforts are being combated constantly by the pervasive influence of the dialect with which they are surrounded in all of their out–of–school hours" (pp. 39-40). Here, we see glimpses of Paul Monroe's appeals to universal humanity in ways that reveal inherent contradictions in inside/outside, center/periphery dichotomies in colonial social justice projects. On the one hand, the report is aware that the language of instruction places barriers to access for both students and teachers, but on the other, the problematic language practices are those occurring outside of school. The community languages are seen as taking up arms against English rather than the other way around. English is the center, the inside while community languages are assaulting from the outside.

Though they recognize the legitimacy of arguments against English Only education, they nonetheless describe what they see as a need for a common language "for intercourse in business, professional, intellectual, political, and cultural affairs" (Board of Educational, 1925, p. 26) which would serve as "a medium of communication between all the educated members of the dialect groups, a source from which to draw the culture materials of a common world civilization and a means of communication with the world at large" (p. 26). On this point, we might be reminded of the current internationalization discourse which justifies and/or critiques (depending on one's ideological alignment) international English writing education in terms of global capitalism. There is a great deal of concern throughout the report over a perceived lack of "culture materials" by which the commission seems to mean literary works that can be assembled into a national canon, without which, "there is no possibility of building up a stable group or a national culture" (p. 26). So English Only is meant to provide two services to the Filipino people: first, a means for building an educated class who can serve as a unifying ruling class, and second, a sense of national identity. Interestingly, though the commission recognizes the possi-

bility that such a system may create a situation in which "the local dialects of the peasants and the culture language of the educated [be] so great [. . .] that the members of one class [. . .] cannot understand those of the other" (p. 26), there is no indication that they find such a situation necessarily problematic, so long as this educated ruling class exists as both a unifying force among "dialect groups" as well as cultural, economic and social leaders. Their anxiety about the language problem seems contradictory. On the one hand, they worry about providing access to education; however, they also worry about the creation of an elite class which the education system should take a role in creating through English language education. There are probably many reading this volume who can recognize parallel anxieties existing side–by–side within their own English departments and universities, and especially with regard to the role of writing instruction and assessment. Is the role of composition to gate-keep or provide access? If the latter, what role should language instruction play for non-white users of English? And what role should writing assessment play in making that determination?

TRANSNATIONALISM AND THE ARCHIVES OF RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION AND WRITING ASSESSMENT

It is in these anxieties about the future of Filipino students and their relationship to languages of community and school that we begin to find parallels with current composition and assessment discourse. The Board of Education's stubbornness in assuming a monolingual construct despite the recognition of local language practices should raise questions about the ways that we deploy monolingual writing constructs in our own assessments. In the case of the Monroe Report, standardization is not the problem, but the educational context is. We should certainly critique the use of standardized assessments in U.S. colonial Philippines, and likewise we should critique their assumption of a monolingual writing construct and blind faith in standardized assessments. Though the commission locates the problem in a different place than we would today (within the community rather than the school or larger power structures), they nonetheless recognize the tension between the lived language experiences of Filipino students outside of school and the educational expectations placed upon them. This recognition is certainly related to the perceived social justice mission of American colonialism. And it is significant that in the commission's discussion of English Only education they both recognize the possibility that the policy may not be the best for Filipino students' learning, but accept that it is nonetheless the mission they have been given. It is further significant that English is unquestionably identified as necessary in the name of "business, professional, in-

tellectual, political, and cultural affairs." This statement resonates most with why we struggle with students' own languages forty years after the Students' Right.

By the time the Board of Education conducted their survey and carried out the assessment I discussed above, the national education system had already been operating for over twenty years as an English Only school system. English had long been established as the official language of government, and the prestige language of business and culture. What is important for us to recognize is the ways that our discourse about language in composition and writing assessment resonates with a white supremacist educational administration which saw a deadly war of conquest as in the best interest of the colonized. The dilemma we face in regard to language and demands made on students outside of our classrooms is real. The status of English in the global economy is real, and as a result, U.S. composition and psychometric testing have power. As such, important recent work on validity and localization in writing assessment, though valuable, cannot be a retreat into ourselves. Work in this collection is a move in the right direction. When we make decisions about language—and we must make decisions about it—we have to look beyond our local contexts, disciplinary boundaries and familiar histories that ask us to not pay attention to the colonialist ways of thinking embedded in even progressive notions about language use. We need to think, for example, beyond notions of assessment that rely on predetermined language standards, or upon validity models that ask what we value, but fail to ask if we *should* value those things. Beyond assessment models that do not directly involve all stakeholders, including students and other users of language. Finally, our assessments have to account for the ways that traditional methods of score interpretation reify colonialist assumptions about language users that are part of the very history of our assessment and teaching practices.

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PART 2. ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH ADMISSION AND PLACEMENT

DIRECTED SELF-PLACEMENT AT "DEMOCRACY'S OPEN DOOR": WRITING PLACEMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Christie Toth

Research Problem: Recent research suggests that the standardized tests used for writing placement at a majority of open admissions community colleges may be systematically under-placing students in ways that undermine their likelihood of persistence and degree completion. These tests may have particularly negative consequences for students from some structurally disadvantaged groups. Directed Self-Placement (DSP) has been touted as a more socially just approach to writing placement, but to date there has been little published research on the consequences of DSP in community college settings.

Research Questions: What are the motivations of community colleges that adopt DSP? What have been the consequences of adopting DSP at these community colleges? What are the consequences of DSP for different groups of students at community colleges?

Literature Review: I ground this study in an examination of the social justice issues surrounding writing placement at open admissions community colleges and the various social justice-related arguments made for and against DSP. I also synthesize the available literature on how DSP affects different groups of students.

Methodology: I reviewed the scholarly literature, searched the archives of professional listservs, and used listservs and professional email lists to identify community colleges that have implemented DSP. I then conducted semi-structured interviews with faculty and administrators at twelve two-year colleges that either have imple-

mented or are piloting some form of DSP. I coded the interview transcripts using a grounded theory approach and reviewed institutional reports provided by interviewees.

Conclusions: Many community colleges implementing DSP are motivated by ethical or social justice concerns. There is promising evidence that DSP can be successfully implemented at community colleges. Interview participants with outcomes data for DSP reported that completion rates in first-year writing courses remained the same or improved after DSP was implemented, and most saw a decline in enrollment in developmental writing courses, suggesting that DSP can reduce under-placement. However, no community colleges disaggregated DSP outcomes data to examine the consequences of DSP for different groups.

Qualifications: This study draws primarily on self-reported interviewee perspectives and pre-assembled institutional reports. I did not have direct access to DSP outcomes data, nor was I able to obtain current writing course completion rates for most of the community colleges.

Directions for Further Study: There is a pressing need for more research in that examines the consequences of various approaches to DSP for different groups of community college students, particularly those from groups that have been systematically disadvantaged by the use of standardized tests for writing placement.

In October 2015, I had the good fortune to attend a workshop for community college faculty in the state of Washington called "Standing in the Gap: COMPASS is Leaving—Now What?" The workshop was sponsored by the state's Board for Technical and Community Colleges and facilitated primarily by two-year college faculty. Its purpose was to discuss options for student placement in the wake of ACT®'s announcement that it would be phasing out COMPASS®, a suite of standardized placement tests for reading, writing, and math used by nearly half of community colleges nationwide (Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2011). As reflected in a flurry of inquiries on our professional listservs, versions of this conversation were playing out at community colleges around the country. Reform had been brewing since the early 2010s, when researchers associated with Columbia University's Community College Research Center (CCRC) released a series of papers suggesting that the high-stakes standardized tests used for placement at most community colleges were "under-placing" large numbers of students into developmental courses. Such placement appeared to reduce students'

likelihood of enrollment, persistence, and degree completion, with evidence that students of color experienced particularly negative impacts (Bailey, 2009; Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010; Community College Research Center, Columbia University, 2012a,, 2012b; , 2012c; Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2011). These findings raised troubling questions about the gatekeeping function of placement assessment at the institutions Marlene Griffith and Ann Connor call "democracy's open door" (1994). ACT's announcement, a response to reform pressures, created new openings for colleges seeking more socially just placement.

Drawing on emerging research, English faculty at several Washington community colleges had been developing placement processes that used "multiple measures" of readiness for college writing, such as high school GPA, scores on GED or high school proficiency exams, and/or portfolios of student writing. In 2014, Highline College implemented multiple measures placement and saw 20% more students—including 26% more students of color—place directly into first-year composition, with no decline in overall course success rates (Klausman et al., 2016). Faculty at four Washington colleges, including Highline, were also piloting forms of Directed Self-Placement (DSP). The Standing in the Gap workshop was an effort by these "teacher–scholar–activists" (Andelora, 2013; Sullivan, 2015; Toth, Calhoon-Dillahunt, & Sullivan, 2016) to seize the kairotic moment presented by COMPASS's demise and persuade other colleges to adopt multiple measures and consider the possibilities for DSP.

I had been invited to the workshop to share findings from my interviews with faculty and administrators at community colleges that had tried DSP over the last decade and a half. As I listened to the morning's presentations, I was struck by the rhetorical choices the faculty organizers made in their calls for reform. Like many of my interviewees, they discussed community college placement as a matter of social justice. After reviewing the national history of placement policies that had led to high-stakes tests like COMPASS, then laying out the mounting evidence that such practices were not serving students well, the organizers presented a short video (borrowed from the faculty-led California Acceleration Project) in which actual community college students discussed their experiences with placement testing. These testimonies were distressing: students described being unaware of the purpose and stakes of the tests when they took them, dissatisfied with or shamed by the tests' evaluation of their academic preparation, bored and sometimes insulted by developmental classes covering content they had already learned, and frustrated with the time and money they were spending in courses that did not count toward their degrees. The students were linguistically diverse, and most appeared to be people of color and/or from working-class backgrounds. After the video, the workshop facilitators presented multiple measures as a way of reducing such damaging under-placement, and

DSP as an approach that could transform placement from a sorting mechanism into an opportunity to communicate with students about the curriculum, invite reflection on prior learning, and foster a sense of agency in their education.

As someone who has been researching community college writing instruction and working on DSP initiatives for nearly a decade, I believe we are in the midst of a significant shift. Just a few years ago, two-year college faculty with passionate commitments to educational access were often skeptical of DSP (e.g., Sullivan, 2008a; Sullivan & Nielsen, 2009). Even if such processes were beneficial to students in the context of open admissions, which many doubted, DSP seemed politically unfeasible given limited institutional resources and dominant assessment ideologies among administrators and policymakers. However, events like Standing in the Gap, the surge of interest in DSP among community college faculty on our professional listservs, and the publication of the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) "White Paper on Writing Placement Reform" (Klausman et al., 2016)—as well as growing attention to DSP among higher education researchers (Hodara et al., 2012) and reform-minded philanthropies (Burdman, 2012)—suggest this paradigm is changing. We are at a crucial moment in which we must think carefully about whether and how DSP might offer community colleges a more socially just way to place the diverse student writers they serve. Those are the questions I take up in this chapter.

I begin by framing community college writing placement as a social justice issue, one tied to the distinctive missions and contested functions of these open-admissions institutions. I then turn to the moral and ethical debates surrounding DSP as an approach to writing placement and review the evidence regarding its impact on diverse groups of students across institution types. With this overview in place, I present findings from twelve interviews with faculty and administrators at community colleges that have implemented DSP, discussing their self-described rationale, the outcomes they report, and their (limited) understanding of the consequences of DSP for the diverse groups their colleges enroll. I argue that there is reason for optimism about DSP's potential as a more socially just option for community college writing placement. However, if we are to realize that potential, we must proceed with greater attention to how DSP serves the diverse students entering these "open doors."

WRITING PLACEMENT AT THE OPEN DOOR

Community college writing placement sits at the nexus of several complex and competing social justice discourses. Advocates often refer to these open admissions institutions as "the people's college," committed to educational access and opportunity for students from all backgrounds, particularly groups that have

been underrepresented in postsecondary education. Community colleges operate from the democratic premise that all people should have the lifelong right to learn, develop new capacities, and make positive life changes through low-cost, locally accessible education (Griffith & Connor, 1994; Pickett, 1998; Sullivan, 2008b). These institutions have multiple missions: they typically provide community education classes and vocational programs as well as transfer degrees fulfilling general education requirements for the baccalaureate. Most also offer a range of "developmental" reading, writing, and math courses for students deemed "underprepared" for college-level coursework, and many provide adult basic education and/or GED completion programs (Cohen, Brawer, & Kisker, 2014).

Two-year colleges are a crucial point of educational access for students of color, who make up 52% of community college attendees nationally (American Association of Community Colleges, 2017). In fact, the percentage of two-year college students who identify as African American, Hispanic, Asian American, Pacific Islander, or Native American/Alaska Native exceeds these groups' proportion of the U.S. population as a whole (Cohen et al., 2014 for more on writing assessment at two-year tribal colleges, see Sassi, Chapter 10, this collection). Likewise, community colleges have long been an important educational pathway for low-income, working-class, and first-generation college students, as well as women, older/returning students, veterans, linguistically diverse students (including immigrants and aspiring citizens), students with disabilities, and students who are place-bound for family, cultural, and/or financial reasons. In response to rising university tuition and the boom in dual/concurrent enrollment programs, more middle-class and academically "high-achieving" students are beginning their postsecondary education at community colleges (see also Moreland, Chapter 5, this collection). On average, however, students at these institutions still tend to be less academically prepared (at least as measured by standardized test scores) and to come from lower-income households than their university peers (Cohen et al., 2014). Community colleges' open admissions policies, comparatively low tuition, flexible scheduling, commuter-friendliness, and amenability to part-time attendance—as well as their small class sizes and minimal risk for students who are unsure what (or whether) they want to study—make these institutions accessible and attractive to a diverse range of learners (Sullivan, 2008b).

Over the decades, however, some have questioned the celebratory rhetoric of community college advocates, asserting that these open admissions institutions offer students "false promises" (Pincus, 1980) that actually sustain structures of inequality. Such critics argue that, although community colleges provide the illusion of egalitarian access to the baccalaureate, and thus the middle class, they

actually function to divert students—particularly students from marginalized racial and socioeconomic backgrounds—into low-status institutions dominated by vocational programs, thereby reducing those students' likelihood of completing a bachelor's degree and their long-term earnings prospects (e.g., Brint & Karabel, 1989; Karabel, 1986; Pincus, 1980). Jerome Karabel's critique is representative:

> Far from embodying the democraticization of higher education and a redistribution of opportunity to the wider society, the expansion of the community college instead heralded the arrival in higher education of a form of class-linked tracking that served to reproduce existing social relations . . . The overall impact of the community college has been to accentuate rather than reduce prevailing patterns of social and class inequality. (1986, p. 18)

In these critical analyses, community colleges serve as a "safety valve," letting off the steam of lower-class ambitions while maintaining the elite status of universities and fulfilling capital's need for semi-skilled labor (Brint & Karabel, 1989, p. 208). More recently, some have also questioned the pervasiveness of neoliberal ideologies within community colleges, suggesting that these institutions may contribute to social inequality by facilitating economic globalization, the corporatization and instrumentalization of higher education, and the casualization of postsecondary teaching (e.g., Klausman, 2016; Kroll, 2012; Levin, 2005).

Between these poles are arguments that community colleges struggle to fulfill competing missions that reflect broader tensions in U.S. society. Kevin J. Dougherty describes the community college as a "contradictory" institution whose "antidemocratizing effects are as powerful as its democratizing ones" (1994, p. 8). Likewise, Josh M. Beach argues that community colleges offer "a limited opportunity and a mixed blessing" (2012, p. 128): while they provide access to postsecondary education to many who would otherwise have been locked out, most students who enroll at these "overburdened and underfunded" (2012, p. 69) institutions never earn a degree. Scholars in this vein value the democratic mission of community colleges but see a need for significant reform and public reinvestment before its idealism can be realized.

Central to debates about the structural effects of community colleges has been the notion of "cooling out." In 1960, Burton R. Clark argued that one function of community colleges is to cool out the baccalaureate aspirations of "underprepared" students through a process of "substitute achievement, gradual disengagement, denial, consolation, and avoidance of standards," incrementally

lowering students' sights and tracking them into "terminal" vocational programs (1960, p. 569). The cooling out hypothesis has been the subject of extensive debate (e.g., Bahr, 2008; Deil-Amen, 2006; Deil-Amen & Rosenbaum, 2002; Hassel & Giordano, 2013; Lovas, 2002; Sullivan, 2008b), with evidence that community colleges can and do perform a "warming up" function by elevating some students' aspirations over time (Deil-Amen, 2006). Two-year colleges can have both effects: a key social justice question is *who* gets cooled out versus warmed up, and how.

This question is profoundly linked to placement assessment. As Clark wrote, "the initial move in a cooling-out process is pre-entrance testing: low scores on achievement tests lead poorly qualified students into remedial classes. Assignment to remedial work casts doubt and slows the student's movement into bona fide transfer courses" (1960, p. 572). This "remedial" label goes on to play an important role in how advisors counsel students, including whether they encourage students to pursue transfer courses or shift to vocational programs. While advising at community colleges has changed significantly since the 1950s (Bahr, 2008; Deil-Amen & Rosenbaum, 2002), Clark's observations intersect with a major social justice debate within composition studies: whether "basic" writing courses function to support or subvert the long-term academic success of students deemed underprepared for college writing.

As George Otte and Rebecca Williams Mlynarcyk trace in their history of basic writing (2010), many of the movement's early voices were at open admissions institutions, including community colleges. When they first emerged, basic writing courses often sought to support students' academic success by improving their control over the features of so-called Standard Written English and initiate students into the conventions of "academic discourse." Beginning in the 1990s, however, critics began arguing that such assimilationism served to reinforce rather than challenge inequitable social structures and in the process created the stigmatized category of "basic writer"(Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). Ira Shor went so far as to call basic writing "our apartheid," part of "an empire of segregated remediation" that worked against social change (1997, p. 95). From this perspective, basic writing was a racialized cool-out tank.

While such characterizations did not go uncontested, the institutional mechanisms that produced "basic writers" came under greater examination (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). Peter Adams' (1993) study of the long-term success of students placed into basic writing at his community college (findings he affirms and extends in later studies—see Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Roberts, 2009) made two startling observations. First, many prospective students who placed into basic writing via his college's multiple-choice placement test never went on to enroll, suggesting that such placements discourage some students from pur-

suing postsecondary education. Second, students who placed into basic writing but chose to enroll directly in first-year composition completed that course at higher rates than those who adhered to their basic writing placement. This study eventually led to Adams' Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), developed at the Community College of Baltimore County and taken up widely by other colleges, which enables erstwhile "basic writers" to enroll directly into credit-bearing composition courses with supplemental support (Adams et al., 2009, 2012; Hassel et al., 2015).

While Adams has focused his attention on curricular reform, his 1993 study also raises questions about placement. Adams notes that he and his colleagues tried unsuccessfully to change his college's mandated multiple-choice placement test. Writing assessment theorists have long objected to relying on such tests for course placement, often on the basis of what Lee Cronbach and Paul Meehl (1955) and, later, Samuel Messick (1989) call *construct validity*. These tests are indirect rather than direct measures of writing ability, they focus narrowly on linguistic and mechanical issues rather than broader rhetorical considerations, and they do not align with what most programs value in writing. In short, they do not adequately represent or measure the *local construct* of college writing (Hassel & Giordano, 2015; Huot, 2002; Klausman et al., 2016; White, Elliot, & Peckham, 2015; Williamson, 1994; Yancey, 1999). As Norbert Elliot (2016) argues, this enduring issue of construct representation is central to gauging the fairness of a writing assessment.

The use of these tests for writing placement also lacks *consequential validity*: that is, the consequences of using these tests to make placement decisions may be socially undesirable or unjust (Kane, 2016; Messick, 1980; Poe & Inoue, 2016; Shepard, 1997). Because standardized tests do not adequately represent the local construct of writing, they often do not predict students' success in actual writing courses, and they communicate misleading messages to incoming students about the rhetorical and pedagogical context they are entering, which can undermine teaching and learning. Furthermore, and most importantly for our discussion here, these tests can disproportionately penalize students of color and other historically disadvantaged groups (Klausman et al., 2016; Poe, Elliot, Cogan, & Nurudeen, 2014; Thomas & White, 1981).

Over the last decade, the field of writing assessment has been reexamining its own complicity in reproducing structures of social inequality (Inoue, 2009b, 2015; Inoue & Poe, 2012a; Kelly-Riley & Whithaus, 2016). Informed by Critical Race Theory and other critical traditions, scholars in this "fourth wave" of writing assessment scholarship (Behm & Miller, 2012) have been questioning established practices and advancing a "sociocultural model of validity" (Poe & Inoue, 2016, p. 118). Two concepts emerging from this conversation that are

particularly helpful for examining placement are *racial validity* (Inoue, 2009b, 2015) and *disparate impact analysis* (Inoue & Poe, 2012a, 2012b; Poe et al., 2014). Both concepts advance the argument that we should interrogate how our writing assessment practices interact with and participate in local racial formations; disparate impact analysis focuses specifically on identifying consequences for legally protected groups that could constitute violations of federal and state anti-discrimination laws (see also Casie Moreland, Chapter 5, this collection as well as Gomes, Chapter 6). These kinds of validity inquiry require drawing on multiple assessment measures and disaggregating data to determine how different racial groups are experiencing our curricula and assessments (Inoue, 2009a, 2009b, 2015; Ketai, 2012). The wisdom of disaggregating local data on the consequences of assessment practices extends to additional—often intersecting—social formations such as class, gender, age, disability, and linguistic diversity. For the purposes of this chapter, I will refer to such inquiries as *validation for social justice.*

As the conversations at the Standing in the Gap workshop suggest, it is a particularly opportune moment to undertake validation for social justice in community college writing placement. Despite the concerns of writing assessment experts (and some community college faculty), the perceived efficiency and reliability of standardized tests has long made them irresistible to college administrators (and some other faculty). These assessment practices are now, however, under widespread scrutiny. Currently, more than half of all community college students enroll in at least one developmental course (Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2011), and while there is evidence that "misplacement" can go both directions, CCRC researchers argue that many incoming community college students are being *under*-placed into "unnecessary" developmental coursework that actually reduces their likelihood of entering credit-bearing courses and persisting to degree completion (Bailey, 2009; Bailey et al., 2010; Community College Research Center, Columbia University, 2012a, 2012b; Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2011;).

The CCRC research also signals the possibility of disparate impact. At least one study showed that the likelihood of persistence through the developmental sequence to credit-bearing courses was lower for men, African Americans, older and part-time students, and those in vocational programs (Bailey et al., 2010). These findings suggest that the negative consequences of under-placement may be greater for some legally protected groups. Those consequences are a function of both the placement instruments themselves and the ways that scores have been used. Several CCRC studies point to the problems with making placement decisions based on a single high-stakes test score rather than multiple measures of "college readiness," such as high school GPA (Community College Research Center, Columbia University, 2012b) and so-called "non-cognitive factors"

like motivation, problem-solving abilities, time management, study skills, and awareness of college norms and expectations (Community College Research Center, Columbia University, 2012a; Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2011).

The CCRC research has been critiqued by developmental education researchers on both methodological and ideological grounds (for an illustrative exchange, see Bailey, Jaggars, & Scott-Clayton, 2013; Goudas & Boylan, 2012, 2013), and there are real reasons to be concerned about its impact on education policy, particularly in state legislatures motivated more by budgetary concerns and neoliberal instrumentalism than a commitment to educational access as a public good (Rose, 2012, 2016). However, the CCRC studies have also been rhetorically useful for community college writing faculty seeking to implement placement practices that better align with disciplinary knowledge and values (Klausman et al., 2016). The organizers of the Standing in the Gap workshop believed DSP could offer a more socially just alternative for writing placement, and other community college faculty around the country are following their lead. Such a claim, however, should not be taken on faith. In the next section, I will examine the social justice-related arguments surrounding DSP and the evidence regarding its impact on diverse groups of students.

DSP AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Much of the research on DSP has focused on selective-admissions four-year institutions. However, this literature offers several insights that are salient for considering DSP at open admissions community colleges. DSP is not a singular procedure, but rather a principle: the importance of *informed student choice* (Royer & Gilles, 2003). DSP processes and materials thus vary widely across institutions. Over the years, DSP has been adapted to facilitate student decision making for a variety of curricular options, including stretch courses, honors courses, and supplemental supports like writing studios or accelerated learning courses. Some institutions have opted to vary DSP eligibility and processes for different student populations, such as:

- students conditionally admitted or otherwise considered "at-risk" (Chernekoff, 2003; Cornell & Newton, 2003; Das Bender, 2011; Gere, Aull, Green, & Porter, 2010; Klausman et al., 2016; Pinter & Sims, 2003)
- international or multilingual students (Crusan, 2006; Das Bender, 2011; Gere et al., 2010; Klausman et al., 2016; Pinter & Sims, 2003)
- students deemed to be within a "decision zone" based on standardized test scores (Klausman et al., 2016; Tompkins, 2003).

The nature of the DSP materials and processes, the choices offered, and differential access to that choice all shape the consequences of a DSP process for different student groups in local context.

Advocates have made bold claims for DSP that may be attractive to many community college faculty. Daniel Royer and Roger Gilles' germinal essay on DSP argues for its principles primarily as a matter of "rightness" (1998, p. 62). For them, rightness includes the legitimacy of DSP in comparison to impromptu essay-based procedures, which did not seem "fair to anyone involved" (1998, p. 59). Rightness also encompasses the soundness of students' decisions—that is, their ability to select the "right" course, given their prior academic experiences—as well as the recognition of students' *right* to make an informed choice about their own education. Although they gesture to the importance of reliability and validity, Royer and Gilles are more concerned with shifting the terms of debate to the value of fostering student agency, or "the dignity of making such a [course] choice for themselves" (1998, p. 65). Royer and Gilles (1998, 2003) ground this orientation in the pragmatist philosophy of John Dewey, a theorist of progressive, democratic education. Thus, from its first articulations, advocates have advanced DSP using the language of *rightness*, *fairness*, *agency*, and *choice*.

These discourses have been extended by scholars who have adapted DSP to their own institutional contexts. Robbie Sims and Ellen Pinter (2003) and Janice Chernekoff (2003), for example, invoke critical pedagogues Paulo Freire, Ira Shor, and bell hooks to describe the appeal of decentering institutional authority and foregrounding student agency in the placement process. David Blakesley views DSP as a reminder that placement is a "fundamentally rhetorical and thus social act," one that functions as an "expression of power and a symptom of the institution's normalizing desire" (Blakesley, 2002, p. 12). Recognizing and relinquishing some of this power, Blakesley argues, advances democracy: "The simple act of providing students some stake in exercising personal agency in such an explicit way can begin the process of achieving that more noble goal of higher education: to prepare a citizenry to write its own future by deliberating on its past" (2002, p. 29). Asao B. Inoue (2009a) situates DSP within a "living environment [of programmatic assessment] that (re)produces not just academic dispositions but particular social and racial arrangements in the university and community." To the extent that unjust arrangements can be recognized, challenged, and changed through placement assessment practices, he argues, DSP becomes a form of "social justice work." Echoing Inoue, Rachel Lewis Ketai asserts that "DSP is a major advancement in programmatic writing assessment with unprecedented potential for social justice along racial lines" (2012, p. 143).

However, those who express skepticism or caution about DSP also frame their arguments in moral terms that have serious stakes for community colleges.

Some have turned the rhetoric of DSP on its head, as when Theresa Freda Nicolay asserts, "the process actually disempowers students by asking them to make a judgment without the benefit of the expertise their instructors possess" (2002, p. 43). This issue of "expertise"—whether students understand the writing context they are entering well enough to know what they do not know—is a central concern for DSP doubters (Bedore & Rossen-Knill, 2004; Condon et al., 2001; Neal & Huot, 2003; Nicolay, 2002; Schendel & O'Neill, 1999). Because students' placement decisions have real consequences in terms of time, money, and long-term academic success, critics see self-placement as an ethical quandary rather than self-evidently "right" (Schendel & O'Neill, 1999). Rich Haswell writes, "At issue, then, is who should assume the risk for making such a potentially damaging placement, the teachers or the students. Directed self-placement puts the burden on the student" (Condon et al., 2001, p. 204). In this view, DSP is an evasion of responsibility that leaves students holding the bag.

Ellen Schendel and Peggy O'Neill suggest that such burden-shifting has Foucauldian dimensions. They worry that "self-assessments may require that students participate in their own surveillance and domination" (1999, p. 200), asking whether we are, in effect, having students "do our dirty work for us" (1999, p. 206). They go on to state, "we believe that students come to college experienced with the gaze of educational assessment—both large-scale and classroom-based—and that their self-assessments and self-images may be influenced by the internalization of others' evaluations of them" (1999, p. 218). This concern has important social justice implications. As Schendel and O'Neil observe, "That students may have internalized cultural biases or values so that their self-assessments only reinscribe negative or unproductive stereotypes is very troubling" (1999, pp. 220-221). They wonder

> how race, class, gender, or disabilities might affect students'
> self-assessments—information that we think warrants research
> and discussion because such information is linked both to
> the validity of the assessment and the ethics of the assessment
> practice. Do men and women students assess their abilities
> differently? What about minority students, ESL students, or
> non-traditional students? (1999, p. 219)

Such questions of differential impact are central to understanding the social justice consequences of DSP in its myriad local contexts, and may be particularly relevant at open-admissions community colleges.

Perhaps because Royer and Gilles seem dismissive of validity (1998, 2003), several writing assessment scholars have cited the lack of validity studies as their biggest misgiving about DSP (Harrington, 2005; Neal & Huot, 2003; Schen-

del & O'Neill, 1999). These critics have called for validity inquiries into DSP's consequences for students—particularly students "not traditionally privileged within the university" (Neal & Huot, 2003, p. 251)—as well as for faculty and writing programs in local contexts. In recent years, there have been a number of methodologically innovative efforts to validate DSP (Gere et al., 2010; Gere, Aull, Perales, Escudero, & Vander Lei, 2013; Inoue, 2009a; Toth & Aull, 2014). However, not all local DSP studies have been explicitly framed as validation inquiries, and they vary considerably in the attention they pay to consequences for different groups of students. Most of the published studies encourage optimism about DSP, indicating that, overall, students at four-year institutions fare as well or better in first-year writing courses as they did under mandatory placement and often report high levels of satisfaction with the placement process and their course decisions (Bedore & Rossen-Knill, 2004; Blakesley, 2002; Blakesley, Harvey, & Reynolds, 2003; Chernekoff, 2003; Cornell & Newton, 2003; Crusan, 2006; Inoue, 2009a, 2009b; Jones, 2008; Pinter & Sims, 2003; Royer & Gilles, 1998). Likewise, the two published studies in community college settings found that DSP resulted in high student and/or faculty satisfaction and did not lower students' average final grades or portfolio pass rates in college-level courses (Klausman et al., 2016; Tompkins, 2003) (although Tompkins did report slightly elevated course withdrawal rates among students who participated in his small DSP pilot). In order to evaluate assertions regarding the social justice potential of DSP, however, we must take stock of the evidence regarding its consequences for what Inoue calls "local diversities" (2015, p. 68), particularly in the under-researched context of open admissions community colleges.

A few researchers have investigated the DSP experiences of multilingual students, a group sometimes assumed to be ill-equipped for self-placement (and present in large numbers at community colleges). Deborah Crusan (2006) acknowledges concerns about how cultural differences might shape students' understandings of DSP, particularly the nature of self-assessment and institutional authority, as well as the family and financial interests that might influence international students' course-taking decisions. However, she argues for the importance of including these students in DSP, characterizing "the exclusion of second language writers from any form of self-placement" as "discriminatory" (2006, p. 211). Likewise, in his decolonial thought-experiment regarding writing placement for international students, Gomes (Chapter 6, this collection) suggests that DSP offers possibilities for challenging linguistic imperialism in writing placement. Gita Das Bender (2011) examines how Seton Hall's DSP process initially overlooked so-called Generation 1.5 students—those who have grown up in multilingual households but completed at least some of their K-12 education in the United States. A single self-inventory question about students' language

background, Das Bender found, did not adequately account for these students' diverse identities or literacy experiences. After revising Seton Hall's DSP questionnaire, she found high levels of satisfaction with DSP among Generation 1.5 students, but they sometimes appeared to prioritize their self-identifications as native English speakers (a self-identification that may intersect with other racialized identity markers in a predominantly white institution) over their self-assessed writing abilities when making course decisions. Crusan and Das Bender's work suggests that DSP can support the success of multilingual students, but that these students also present unique considerations for designing and implementing DSP processes in local contexts (see also Gere et al., 2010). Further, students' language considerations may interrelate with local racial formations and other identity categories like class and gender.

While DSP skeptics have expressed concern that women and students of color might reproduce their own subordination through self-placement—a particular concern at community colleges—the available research suggests that these groups appear to benefit from DSP in some settings. Preliminary DSP data from Southern Illinois University showed that women were *more* likely than men to place themselves into challenging writing classes, while both men and women reported high levels of confidence in their course decision making (Blakesley et al., 2003; Reynolds, 2003). Cornell and Newton's (2003) four-year longitudinal study of the impact of DSP on students categorized as "at risk" by DePauw University found little difference in long-term persistence among different groups, but both women and African Americans performed better, on average, than the university would have predicted based on their "readiness" scores, which were determined by ACT/SAT scores and high school centile. Overall, the study findings suggest that DePauw's adoption of DSP benefitted white students and women more than African Americans and first-generation college students. However, DSP still appeared to be more beneficial to "at risk" African Americans and women than mandatory placement based on standardized test scores.

An important model of validation for social justice is Inoue's mixed-method assessment of California State University, Fresno's DSP process (2009a, 2009b, 2012, 2015). Inoue's assessment design included entry and exit course surveys; student portfolio evaluations from independent raters, instructors, and peers; student course progress measures and pass rates; course grades distributions; and supplemental findings from additional short-term studies. These data, Inoue reports, were "analyzed along three lines: race, gender, and generation of student" (2009a). He concludes that, while DSP has been successful in the context of Fresno State first-year writing curricula, "Blacks are most at risk, least satisfied, and fail most often. And yet, it appears that our DSP encourages retention, even when students fail their courses" (2009a). While more than half of failing course

portfolios were from black or Hispanic students, these same groups also reported the highest rates of increased satisfaction in their DSP course selection between midterm and final surveys (Inoue, 2009b). Inoue's research demonstrates that sustained validity inquiry for social justice that draws on multiple methods and data sources can help a program identify how DSP is contributing to more equitable student outcomes and how it might work to improve its placement process in this regard.

Taken together, this literature suggests that, in concept and in practice, DSP can be a promising option for placement that consciously strives to produce more socially just writing programs, institutions, and communities. However, DSP's ability to achieve that promise is contingent on processes designed with a critical awareness of ideologies that reproduce social inequalities. As Ketai (2012) models in her analysis of two DSP self-inventories, writing programs must continuously examine their placement instruments and processes for such ideologies. Furthermore, Inoue (2009a) demonstrates that striving to realize the social justice potential of DSP requires ongoing, multiple-measures validation studies as part of a larger culture of programmatic assessment that explicitly foregrounds social justice goals. This labor must be undertaking carefully, critically, and continuously.

In sum, there is reason for optimism that, if well-implemented and validated, DSP could offer a more socially just approach to writing placement in the nation's diverse community colleges. However, there is much we still need to learn about adopting various forms of DSP in these open admissions contexts. In the final section of this chapter, I present findings from interviews with faculty and administrators at 12 two-year colleges that have attempted DSP. These conversations demonstrate that DSP can be successfully implemented in community college settings, and that faculty and administrators are often drawn to DSP for social justice reasons. To date, however, there has been little effort to examine the consequences of DSP for different groups of students at these institutions. I will argue that validation for social justice should constitute an important part of DSP development and ongoing programmatic assessment as community colleges undertake the much-needed process of writing placement reform.

DSP AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The goal of this IRB-approved study was to better understand the viability of DSP in community colleges, given these institutions' open admissions policies; I did not initially approach the project as an inquiry into social justice per se. In retrospect, I believe my own subjectivity as a white woman—and as a university-based scholar sensitive to the complex power relations involved in researching

with and writing about two-year college faculty—made me slow to embrace a critical orientation. However, as I conducted and analyzed the interviews, considered the findings in light of this collection's theme, and engaged with emerging writing assessment literature, it became clear that social justice inquiry offered a productive lens through which to examine these data. I am grateful for the feedback on early drafts of this chapter from both the collection editors and faculty participants, a few of whom encouraged me to develop the social justice framework and pushed my thinking further in that direction. They persuaded me that community colleges need such critical work in order to live up to the democratic rhetoric of open admissions.

Methods

This research is an intensive case study of DSP development and implementation in two-year colleges. Because I was interested gaining an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon, I used nonprobabalistic, purposive sampling to identify interview participants who had led DSP implementation at their colleges (Bernard, 2012). I began by reviewing the scholarly literature on DSP, searching the archives of the Writing Program Administrators (WPA) listserv, and recalling my own conversations with two-year college colleagues to compile a preliminary list of thirteen two-year colleges that had attempted DSP. I sent interview invitations by email to individuals at all of these colleges, and seven agreed to participate. From there, I posted calls for participants to the WPA and Council of Basic Writing (CBW) listservs, and, with the help of staff at the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), sent direct email queries to the entire TYCA membership (the TYCA listserv did not exist at this time), and followed up on chain referrals from participants who knew of other two-year colleges that had attempted DSP. Through this recruitment process, I heard from faculty at five additional two-year colleges who agreed to participate in the study.

In total, I conducted twelve interviews: nine with English faculty (eight individuals and one pair) and three with administrators, one of whom had been faculty at the time of his college's DSP pilot. The participants included six men and seven women, all white, ranging in age from early 30s to mid-60s. They were employed at colleges in eight different states (for institutional demographics, see Table 4.1). All of these participants were assured that neither they nor their colleges would be identified in publications resulting from this study, and all were given the opportunity to review and respond to a draft of this chapter. The interviews were conducted through either phone or video conferencing. Ten participants provided copies of DSP materials (questionnaires, course descriptions, and/or writing tasks), and five sent me institutional reports or conference

presentations detailing DSP outcomes at their institutions. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. I analyzed the transcripts using a grounded theoretical approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), iteratively memoing and coding to identify key themes and axial codes. This approach enabled me to understand patterns in perspectives and institutional experiences emerging from participants' own descriptions. A graduate research assistant reviewed 25% of the coded data, randomly selected, and together we negotiated minor revisions to code names and definitions. The findings I present here derive from three broad code categories: *rationale for adopting DSP*, *outcomes of DSP*, and *impact of DSP on student sub-populations*. While the *Rationale for DSP* section below draws on analysis of all twelve interviews, the *Consequences of DSP* section focuses on findings from the five DSP programs that shared data on student outcomes.

Table 4.1. Institutional demographics ("IPEDS," 2016)

Institution	Student Race/Ethnicity	Student Gender	% 25 and older
College 1 Small Suburban West Coast *Active DSP*	51% White 31% Hispanic/Latino 9% Asian 5% Two or more races 2% Black 1% Unknown 1% Non-resident	51% Female 49% Male	22%
College 2 Mid-size Rural Midwest *Active DSP*	82% White 7% Unknown 3% Black 3% Hispanic/Latino 3% Non-resident 2% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Two or more races	58% Female 42% Male	25%
College 3 Small Suburb Midwest *Active DSP*	87% White 6% Black 4% Unknown 1% Hispanic/Latino 1% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Two or more races	64% Female 36% Male	34%

Institution	Student Race/Ethnicity	Student Gender	% 25 and older
College 4 Mid-size Large City Midwest *Active DSP*	38% White 29% Black 17% Asian 8% Hispanic/Latino 6% Two or more races 1% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Unknown	54% Female 46% Male	53%
College 5 Small Small City Northwest *Active DSP*	40% White 26% Unknown 13% Asian 9% Black 7% Hispanic/Latino 3% Two or more races 1% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	66% Male 34% Female	68%
College 6 Large Suburb Mid-Atlantic *Pilot study only: no active DSP*	60% White 23% Black 7% Hispanic/Latino 4% Two or more races 3% Asian 1% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Unknown	57% Female 43% Male	29%
College 7 Small Online *Institution defunct: no active DSP*	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
College 8 Large Suburb West Coast *Piloting stage*	34% White 15% Asian 11% Hispanic/Latino 11% Unknown 10% Black 9% Two or more races 7% Non-resident 1% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	58% Female 42% Male	34%

Institution	Student Race/Ethnicity	Student Gender	% 25 and older
College 9 Large Small city West Coast *Piloting stage*	46% White 16% Non-resident 9% Unknown 8% Hispanic/Latino 8% Two or more races 7% Asian 4% Black 1% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	50% Male 50% Female	29%
College 10 Large Rural Intermountain *Piloting stage*	69% White 14% Hispanic/Latino 10% Unknown 2% Asian 2% Black 2% Two or more races 1% American Indian/Alaska Native	58% Female 42% Male	53%
College 11 Large Town Intermountain *Piloting stage*	74% White 17% Hispanic/Latino 3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 2% Unknown 1% American Indian/Alaska Native 1% Asian 1% Black 1% Two or more races 1% Non-resident	64% Female 36% Male	43%
College 12 Large Rural Northeast *Piloting stage*	73% White 14% Unknown 6% Black 4% Hispanic/Latino 2% Two or more races 1% Asian	57% Female 43% Male	27%

As with all research, this study has its limitations. First, I rely primarily on participant self-report. While all participants were leaders in campus DSP initiatives, they inevitably had their own perspectives shaped by their disciplinary knowledge, their professional roles, and other aspects of their personal identities and experiences, including race, gender, and age. Likewise, I was reliant on these participants for whatever empirical evidence they had available about DSP outcomes, and what they were able and willing to provide through follow-up correspondence;

most were unable to provide current data on course completion rates. I did not have access to the raw data, and I was privy only to the metrics their colleges used, which limits my ability to compare or generalize across institutions. As I discuss below, none of these colleges had disaggregated data by student demographics. While I cannot make claims about the social justice-related consequences of DSP at these institutions, I can describe the arguments participants made for DSP and the evidence they provided in support of its continued use. I can also suggest the kinds of local inquiries that would enable community colleges to develop more robust validation for social justice of their DSP processes.

DSP IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

The findings of this study demonstrate that, contrary to the portrait in the scholarly literature (Ostman, 2013; Sullivan, 2008a), there *have* been a number of efforts to implement DSP at open admissions community colleges. While there may be additional colleges that have attempted—and, perhaps, rejected—DSP, I was able to identify 17 two-year institutions (roughly 1% of community colleges nationwide) that have tried DSP since the late 1990s. Twelve were actively using DSP in Fall 2015. Of the institutions no longer using DSP, one (an experimental online college) has ceased to exist, one underwent system-wide restructuring that ended its DSP experiment, and one had shifted from DSP to COMPASS. The last college had conducted a promising DSP pilot study, but the faculty member who conducted it was unable to persuade administration take the program to scale. Of the 12 active community college DSP programs, three had been using DSP for more than a decade, two had been using it for five years, and seven were piloting new DSP processes, reflecting the recent surge of interest in alternative approaches to placement in the context of developmental education reform (Burdman, 2012; Hassel et al., 2015; Klausman et al., 2016). (Since closing data collection for this study in January 2016, I have heard from seven additional colleges that have recently launched DSP pilots.) I was able to interview participants at all three long-time DSP programs, one of the five-year-old programs, six of the new pilot programs, and two of the programs that no longer exist.

Rationale for DSP

Most of the interview participants indicated that their college's interest in DSP emerged from dissatisfaction with their previous placement system, which in all cases was either a standardized test of grammar and usage, a reading comprehension exam, faculty evaluation of an impromptu writing sample, or some combination thereof. Echoing themes in the writing assessment literature, several partic-

ipants stated that standardized tests did not account for the full range of writing abilities expected in first-year writing and were therefore not very predictive of student success. Likewise, participants whose colleges had been evaluating impromptu writing samples found the process burdensome and were not convinced that it yielded useful placement information. Several indicated that prior placement processes did not align well with their department's writing curriculum and, as a result, many students were placing into courses that did not match their abilities.

For some institutions, DSP had a pragmatic appeal: it seemed less logistically and financially taxing than previous placement methods while promising better outcomes for students. On the other hand, multiple interview participants observed that DSP was *more* logistically challenging and no less expensive than using commercial placement tests. Across the interviews, one of the most common reasons for adopting DSP was the desire for a placement process that reflected departments' writing curricula and values. Several participants saw DSP as an opportunity to turn what had been a tedious placement test into a dialogue with students about writing. As one faculty member put it,

> Placement is communication, placement is conversation, and . . . what really should be happening when we're assessing students is that we're communicating to them about what courses they're going into, what the expectations should be. We're also listening to them about their past experience . . . With a static test you don't get that. You don't get that opportunity to have a conversation.

Having read the DSP literature, many participants hoped this "conversation" would encourage students to be more invested in their writing courses. Some also anticipated that DSP would help destigmatize developmental courses, and that students would enter whichever writing course they chose with improved attitudes and motivation.

Many participants also saw DSP as a way to offer students greater control over their own education. One faculty member described enthusiasm across campus for DSP's emphasis on choice: "Student Development got the idea of self-efficacy, and the right message, which was 'student agency,' you know, with the right time, day one, for the right reason, respecting them, and an informed student has the capacity to make a personal placement decision." Participants sometimes linked the importance of agency to a desire to treat students like "adults," perhaps implying that mandatory placement seemed paternalistic. The word "empower" also came up frequently across the interviews, suggesting that the idea of DSP—and the rhetoric with which it is often promoted in the literature—appeals to the critical pedagogical orientations that motivate many community college faculty.

For some participants, DSP was not only about respecting students' agency and empowering them as decision-makers: it also fostered greater writing self-awareness. Several stated that students might benefit from reflecting on their own literacy experiences. As one faculty member said,

> We were giving students the tools to make an informed decision . . . It flipped the premise, that students best know their own academic histories or literacy histories. So, by giving students a method to investigate that history, and to make sense out of it, and to think about how it might map on what we offer, it really seemed to be a better, a more ethical way of placing students than looking at a paragraph or even an essay.

As this quote illustrates, many participants saw an ethical dimension to DSP. One faculty member pointed out that there are inadequacies in any placement system and said, "Okay, so we don't have a good way to do it. So, what's the most ethical way? Well, to allow someone else to choose." In this instructor's view, DSP was more honest than the available alternatives about the limits of institutional knowledge.

Finally, participants were deeply interested in DSP's potential to improve student outcomes. While some noted the value of giving all students the opportunity to choose the additional time and support offered in developmental writing courses, many were committed to reducing perceived patterns of under-placement. Several cited recent CCRC studies regarding the negative consequences of placement into "unnecessary" developmental coursework, which they viewed as an important social justice issue for their predominantly low-income and often racially and linguistically diverse students. As one faculty member described,

> [The impetus] came from not only exposure to the scholarship on [DSP], but me and a few other people getting into our English 100 courses—the course right below 101—and being like, "Why are some of these students in here? What are they doing here?" Not realizing it until later and seeing that misplacement—seeing the way it harmfully affected students. It's really then seeing it as a social justice issue right away. Really not just thinking about it as efficiency for the college— seeing it as what's most just for these students.

Thus, many participants saw DSP as a promising corrective to structural injustices in their placement practices. They believed that DSP's emphasis on self-assessment and student choice offered a more just, pedagogically sound approach, one that reflected the democratic promise of the community college.

Despite the admirable commitments to student empowerment, learning, and success evident in these participants' rationales for DSP, it worth remembering Schendel and O'Neill (1999) and Ketai's (2012) warnings about the ways that student agency might be shaped or constrained by their lived experiences with structural inequalities related to race, class, gender, age, (dis)ability, and standard English ideologies. Students may reproduce the narratives about their own identities, languages, and literacies that they have experienced through prior school-based assessments. Indeed, although DSP purports to offer *all* students choice, its processes and materials may project and reward a white, middle-class *habitus* that results in disparate outcomes for different groups (Behm & Miller, 2012; Inoue, 2015; Ketai, 2012). In short, adopting DSP does not guarantee socially just writing placement in community colleges or any other type of institution. Rather, we must validate for social justice by continuously examining the consequences of specific DSP instruments and processes as they are used in local contexts, particularly for students from structurally disadvantaged groups.

CONSEQUENCES OF DSP

Participants from all seven colleges that collected and shared outcomes data expressed enthusiasm for DSP's impact on their writing programs (see Table 4.2). Five colleges saw a reduction in the number of students who enrolled in developmental writing courses under DSP, and participants from these institutions interpreted this decline as correcting under-placement that occurred in their previous placement processes. One college found that enrollments in developmental writing remained roughly the same after implementing DSP, and one reported an increase in the number of students who enrolled in developmental courses. The faculty participant at that college interpreted the increase positively, viewing it as an indication that students who wanted more time and feedback on their writing were being given that option under DSP. Although the types and specificity of the data that participants provided varied, Table 4.2 suggests that the worst fears of DSP skeptics—increased failure rates in first-year writing caused by students placing themselves into courses for which they are not prepared to succeed—did not come to pass at any of these open admissions institutions. In fact, most colleges saw increased student success as measured by course grades and/or completion of the required first-year writing course. Likewise, those who measured student satisfaction found that students responded positively to having a choice in their writing placement. (Readers seeking DSP outcomes data at colleges similar to their own might cross-reference Table 4.2 with the institutional and demographic information in Table 4.1.)

Table 4.2. DSP outcomes

Institution	Type of Evidence	Outcomes
College 1 Small Suburban West Coast	Faculty poll	Faculty believe DSP as or more effective than previous placement
	Student surveys	Students report high levels of satisfaction with placement process and course decision
	Comparative study with another CC in the state that uses mandatory placement via testing and writing samples	FYC pass rates similar at both institutions
College 2 Mid-size Rural Midwest	Pass rates on FYC exit portfolios before and after implementing DSP	3-year average pass rate for FYC exit portfolio increased 9%
College 3 Small Suburb Midwest	Course grades in basic writing and FYC before and after implementing DSP	Students earning "C" or better in BW increased 30% BW completers earning a "C" or better in FYC increased 21%
College 4 Mid-size Large City Midwest	ACCUPLACER scores and pass rates in FYC	"Decision zone" students who choose FYC do as well or better in FYC than students who either place directly into FYC or pass from BW into FYC
College 5 Small Small City Northwest	Pass rates in basic writing and FYC before and after implementing DSP	Pass rates in basic writing increased 3% Pass rates in FYC increased 4%
College 6 Large Suburb Mid-Atlantic *Pilot study only*	Pilot participants' FYC course grades/pass rates	Students who would have placed into BW but chose FYC earned grades of A or B at 14% higher rate than overall college average
	Pilot participants' FYC course completion rates	11% higher rates of FYC course withdrawal than overall college average
	Student surveys	Students reported high rates of satisfaction with DSP process and materials

Institution	Type of Evidence	Outcomes
College 7 Small Online (defunct)	Pass rates in FYC before and after implementing DSP	Increased student pass rates in FYC
	Student surveys	Students reported high rates of satisfaction with course choice

As Inoue's (2009a) assessment model demonstrates, there are many other metrics that would help build more robust validity arguments for DSP in these local contexts, such as direct assessment of student writing at various stages and data on student persistence, overall GPA, rates of/time to degree completion, and transfer-related outcomes. Nonetheless, the generally positive consequences of adopting DSP at these community colleges suggests that this approach to placement can be successful, at least in broad strokes. The question remains, however, whether DSP offers disparate benefits to different groups of students in these settings.

Of the seven colleges that had outcomes data, only one (College 1) had what its faculty participant characterized as a predominantly middle-class student population. The others served primarily low-income, working-class, and first-generation college students, and each had its own local diversities in terms of race, gender, age, languages, and countries of origin (see Table 4.1). However, none of these institutions had disaggregated their DSP outcomes data for different groups, legally protected or otherwise. Indeed, when I asked in interviews which groups of students benefited most or least from DSP, all of the participants struggled to answer. As one administrator put it, "You know, I didn't run the demographics on it, and I probably should have." At least at the time of these interviews, disparate impact analysis of the kind advocated by Mya Poe and her colleagues (2014) did not appear to be common practice. Like 78% of community college faculty nationwide (Cohen et al., 2014), all of the participants in this study were white. It is tempting to interpret the lack of data disaggregation in institutional validation of DSP as the result of a "color-blind" assessment paradigm that can inadvertently reproduce structures of racism and inequality (Behm & Miller, 2012; Inoue, 2015).

Although they had not examined disaggregated outcomes data, three faculty participants did attempt to answer my question anecdotally based on their classroom experiences. Perhaps in part because of their own white subjectivities, as well as the demographics of their particular institutions, these faculty focused primarily on age and gender rather than race or ethnicity. All three indicated that they thought older students, particularly women, seemed more likely to under-place themselves through DSP. One observed:

> It is harder for us to self-place with them . . . Sometimes
> they're ten or twenty years out from their previous course

> work, they may not remember it much, they may have
> dropped out of school, they may have been terrific students
> until they got pregnant or—who knows what, you know? Of
> course, they learned a lot over previous years by doing things.

These participants did not see older students' selection of a developmental course that "cuts them the anxiety" as necessarily a bad choice.

Conversely, all three faculty suggested that the group most likely to "over-place" themselves were those "who are young and kind of full of their writing abilities." Two indicated that their colleges had recently begun rethinking long-standing DSP processes in light of the rapid growth of dual/concurrent enrollment: placement practices deemed successful with older student populations did not necessarily fit high school students well. One participant saw age-related challenges as a function of gender, as well. The group who benefited least from DSP, in his view, was "confident 18-year-old males . . . That's the group that I see making, most frequently placing themselves up higher than maybe the full picture warranted." He did not comment on the racial identities of those "confident" young men. These patterns of faculty response suggest the need for rigorous and ongoing local validation studies examining whether DSP benefits students differently based on gender and age, perhaps particularly as those identities and experiences intersect with other identity categories like race, language diversity, and (dis)ability.

In sum, we have reason for cautious optimism that DSP can benefit students at open-admissions community colleges. However, there is still a great deal we do not know. We have no information about DSP *failures* at two-year colleges, including what the consequences of those experiments might be for different groups of students. Likewise, we have little understanding of DSP outcomes with recently reformed community college curricula, including various forms of developmental acceleration, modularization, contextualized learning, and dual/concurrent enrollment (Hassel et al., 2015). And, as I have indicated, we need much more research into how various DSP processes serve different student groups in local community college contexts, whether there is evidence of disparate impact, and what approaches to DSP might mitigate disparate impact with different local diversities.

NEXT STEPS

Throughout this chapter, I have been standing in a gap: the dearth of published scholarship on DSP at "democracy's open door." I have sought to establish the stakes of writing placement in community colleges, to trace the debates about

DSP as an approach to placement that advances social justice, to examine how community colleges make the case for DSP, and to identify what they have learned and still need to know about its consequences in their local contexts. I hope this synthesis enables two-year college teacher-scholar-activists to move beyond the roadblock question, "Can DSP work at community colleges?" The answer is *yes*, it can and it has. Indeed, as Siskanna Naynaha observes, skepticism about the viability of DSP at community colleges may reflect a "paternalistic" disregard for the decision making capacities of the racially and socioeconomically diverse students these institutions enroll (2016, p. 199). We can now shift our attention to the as-yet largely unanswered question, "How can DSP contribute to making community colleges more socially just institutions?"

As Anne Gere and her colleagues' (2010) validation study demonstrates, the success of DSP at any institution hinges on its implementation. Allocation of sufficient resources, conceptual understanding and buy-in from campus stakeholders, and continual revision based on ongoing validity inquiry all shape the consequences of DSP in particular contexts. Community colleges planning or piloting DSP should consciously consider the experiences of the different groups that make up their local diversities as they design their processes and build this kind of inquiry into their evaluation of DSP. Likewise, community colleges that have already implemented DSP should undertake ongoing local validation that includes disaggregating student outcomes data and critically reviewing DSP processes and materials as part of their larger programmatic assessments. In short, fulfilling the social justice potential of DSP requires a sustained commitment of intellectual and material resources, including administrative attention and responsiveness to institutional change.

Our field also needs more mechanisms for sharing information about DSP initiatives and findings from local validation studies in two-year college settings. The Washington community college placement consortium that has emerged from the Standing in the Gap workshop offers one promising state-level example. Pooling such knowledge will enable individual colleges and the field as a whole to gain a better understanding of the possibilities for DSP at open admissions institutions. This knowledge will help more faculty step into the temporary gap left by COMPASS to develop placement practices that further social justice goals. If we do not undertake this work within our own institutional, disciplinary, and professional communities, testing companies will likely present us with pre-packaged DSP products that are far less amenable to local validation and control.

Finally, our discipline's emerging "fourth wave" of writing assessment scholarship must explicitly attend to community colleges. William Morris and colleagues observe the near-invisibility of two-year college students in the writing assessment literature over the last three decades:

> Many of these two-year college students suffer the consequences of socially biased writing assessments designed to keep second-language learners, low-income students, and others who have traditionally made up the majority of community college students off the highway of educational privilege . . . [I]t is important to recognize the important influence writing assessment can have for students' educational opportunities, especially at two-year colleges, which enroll the majority of postsecondary under-resourced students. (2015, pp. 120-121)

As Inoue (2015) suggests, assessment influences every aspect of our writing ecologies. The ideologies and power dynamics of assessment shape classroom pedagogies and practices, writing curricula and programs, writing centers and other student support services, and the climate for faculty in departments and professional organizations. Thus, given the important role community colleges play in the national postsecondary landscape, particularly for students from historically underrepresented groups, their assessment practices bear directly on our discipline's efforts to promote equity across all dimensions of writing instruction. To date, however, institutional hierarchies have constrained our disciplinary knowledge-making in ways that perpetuate social inequality. If we are committed to reimagining writing assessment as social justice, then community colleges, their students, and their faculty must be at the center rather than the margins of our scholarly conversations.

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CHASING TRANSPARENCY: USING DISPARATE IMPACT ANALYSIS TO ASSESS THE (IN)ACCESSIBILITY OF DUAL ENROLLMENT COMPOSITION

Casie Moreland

Research Problem: Dual enrollment (DE) programs are touted as giving the opportunity for "all students" to gain college credit in high school. Many DE FYW courses require pre-college assessment for enrollment. When test score data is not transparent or available, disparate impact and fairness of a chosen pre-college assessment genre is indeterminable.

Research Questions: What are the implications of assessment genres that determine student eligibility and access of Dual Enrollment programs? Do assessment genres that determine student access and DE FYW placement produce evidence of fairness?

Literature Review: This chapter relies on Rhetoric and Composition Studies scholarship, which includes DE FYW specific scholarship, and DE scholarship from the field of Education. This chapter also relies scholarship that explains methods and theories for determining the fairness, validity, and reliability of assessment genres—primarily disparate impact analysis as proposed by Poe and her colleagues (2014) for validation studies.

Methodology: This chapter narrates the complications of conducting a disparate impact analysis when data and information is not transparent or available. To understand the implications and fairness of DE FYW student access and placement, I sought AC-CUPLACER WritePlacer® test scores that determine student placement at my chosen research site to replicate the disparate impact analysis model for validation studies as proposed by Poe and her

colleagues (2014). While test score data was not disaggregated by the institution or publicly available, I found that my research site was previously under investigation from the Office of Civil Rights. Information about the OCR complaint was also confidential. I then utilized multiple methods for obtaining information about both the scores and OCR complaint. This inquiry included email and telephone correspondence with the Office of Civil Rights, the U.S. Department of Education, and Arizona Board of Education. I also filed formal requests with the legal department at my research site as well as Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests on the state and federal levels.

Conclusions: Without transparent data and accountability for that data to enable validity studies such as disparate impact analysis, an assessment genre cannot be deemed valid, reliable, or fair. The lack of comparable data to understand how assessment is influencing access to DE writing courses is a violation of students' civil rights.

Qualifications: My chosen research site was not legally bound to provide me as an outside source with test score data—scores may have been made available to someone within the institution. Other DE programs may keep more clear records of assessment scores, including those of the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer.

Directions for Further Study: Overall, there is a need for continuing research of the transparency, validity, reliability, and fairness of assessment genres that determine student access and placement in DE and DE FYW courses. One idea for further study would be to—where scores are available—utilize Poe and her colleagues' (2014) model to conduct a disparate impact analysis of DE FYW access and placement assessment genres.

In at least the last sixty years, dual enrollment (DE) courses have become an increasingly popular way for students to earn college credit. Students who participate in these courses do so dually—as high school students that upon access, placement, and admission, enroll and obtain credit for their high school and college course(s) simultaneously. Since the advent of dual enrollment (DE) courses in the 1950s (Estes, 1959; Radcliffe & Hatch, 1961), enrollment has grown rapidly. The most recent data records at least 1.277 million students enrolled in the United States in 2010-2011 (Marken et al., 2013). The number of students enrolled in college-level first-year writing (FYW) courses as well as the number of FYW DE programs in the US is not known. However, it is record-

ed that college-level first-year writing was one of the first courses to be offered to high school students for dual credit. "College-level English" (described as a course in composition and literature) (Estes, 1959, p. 332) has been available at the self-proclaimed "longest running" DE program in the US—the University of Connecticut's Early College Experience—since the program began in 1955 (University of Connecticut Early College Experience, 2016).

There are multiple reasons that college-level first-year writing was one of the first courses offered in this setting—all of which seem to have been a response to the instillation of the first-year writing requirement at Harvard—and Charles Eliot's role in that creation—in 1885. At this point Harvard, other colleges and high schools, and national organizations began seeking ways to better prepare high school students for college. In 1885, Charles Eliot approved the first-year writing requirement (shortly thereafter, many institutions also developed required first-year college-level writing classes). The same year that Eliot approved the first-year writing requirement, in what seems to be a response to what Robert Connors (1991) refers to as the creation of the "first literacy crisis" in American colleges (p. 66), Eliot suggested a national board to develop and administer college entrance examinations (Schudson, 1972).[1]

In 1892, Eliot was appointed chairman of the National Education Association's Committee of Ten, a committee "charged with formulating a better curricular mesh between school and college" (Schudson, 1972, p. 43). In 1900, chief publicist of the report of the Committee of Ten, Nicholas Murray Butler, (with the support of Charles Eliot) went on to head the creation of the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB). English was one of the nine subject areas included on the first CEEB examination given in 1901 (Schudson, 1972). It should be noted that a writing sample was not a part of English—or any portion—of the exam until 1959 (Valentine, 1961).

Although a writing sample was not a part of the CEEB exams prior to 1959, English and writing was an area of focus for those seeking ways to prepare students for college—prior to entry. In 1952, the General Education in School and College committee released a report of the 1951 graduating class of Harvard that aided in further development of college-level writing courses prior to college. In the report, it was found that many students were repeating courses in college that were required in high school. Therefore, the committee recommended particular courses of study for high school to be followed by achievement tests to "enable qualified students to enter college with sophomore standing" (Jones, 2010, p. 49). English language and literature were two of the eight separate curricular areas proposed by the committee. According to Joseph Jones (2010),

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1   For more details about the events leading up to the creation of the CEEB, see Schudson (1972).

among other things, this report highlighted how the teaching of writing was "primarily the responsibility" of the high schools (p. 50) and led to practices that would exempt high school students from college-level first-year writing.

Meanwhile, in 1952 the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Advancement of Education sponsored an experimental "Advanced Standing" program known as the "Kenyon Plan" at Kenyon College in Ohio. This program allowed select high school students to take courses that upon completion and examination would give them partial or full credit for college-level courses (Jones, 2010; Radcliffe & Hatch, 1969). With the help of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) the first tests—that were based on the course subjects—were administered in 1954 (Jones, 2010). Two separate exams were given for English—one in literature and one in composition. The pilot courses and subsequent exams and scores led to the interest and adoption of the Kenyon Program by the CEEB in 1955. Once the CEEB assumed responsibility, they renamed the program the Advanced Placement Program (Radcliffe & Hatch, 1961). As institutions began participating in AP programs, other institutions were developing individual advanced standing programs "in order to meet the needs of their particular communities" (Radcliffe & Hatch, 1961, p. 19). The earliest recorded advanced standing dual enrollment program began in 1955 as the University of Connecticut's Cooperative Program for Superior Students. At least one of the original seven high schools to participate in this program, Manchester High School, offered "a 'College Level English' course since the inception of the program" (Estes, 1959, p. 332).

Although advanced standing, advanced placement, and therefore dual enrollment programs that enable students to gain college credit for writing in high school were an almost instantaneous response to the first-year writing requirement that began in 1885, there are currently fewer than 30 publications that focus on DE composition (Denecker, 2013; Frick & Blattner, 2002; Hansen & Farris, 2010). These works offer important details to understanding the construction and complexity of DE FYW, such as maturation of students (Anson, 2010; Tinberg & Nadeau, 2011), teacher training (Anson, 2010; Farris 2010; McCrimmon, 2010), curriculum, (Anson, 2010; Farris, 2006) and perceptions of efficacy of DE on college readiness (Franks, 2016), there has yet to be any data collection that focuses specifically on DE admission and placement practices.

In writing assessment scholarship, researchers have analyzed different assessment genres, such as placement exams, essays, and portfolios that rely on "traditional" student enrollment, i.e., students enrolled in a college writing class on a college campus, at least 18 years old, and possess a high school diploma or the equivalent (Huot et al., 2010, White, 2001; see also Williamson & Huot, 1993). Edward White and his colleagues (2015) explain that Writing Program

assessment should capture "all genres of writing assessment" and grapple with "limited and robust construct representation at all levels of the curriculum, from admissions to placement" (pg. 86). However, if we follow Carolyn Miller's 1984 invocation of genre as social action, then we must understand that genres are not merely form but rise from different social exigencies. To that end, we need different evidentiary categories associated with various assessment genres to determine different social exigencies. Transparency is how we can link the social exigencies by which assessment genres arise and their consequences. In all, no composition-specific research accounts for the consequences of different assessment genres that determine access and enrollment for students that are seeking to be dually enrolled in high school English and college writing courses. In many cases, enrollment in DE FYW courses requires both admission and placement assessment. DE enrollment, then, refers to students that successfully meet both admissions and placement assessment requirements.

One question that obviously arises from such co-curricular programs is: How are students who have not completed high school or its equivalent assessed to qualify for DE and placed into college level DE writing courses? In fact, the ways students are assessed for placement into DE programs and DE writing courses varies depending on the state, high school, and institutions that offer courses. A related question thus follows: Do the programs produce evidence of fairness?

When the fairness of a practice is questioned, the social justice of the practice must also be questioned. In the same vein as FYW, DE FYW courses were developed for educational and therefore social mobility. The question of equity in admissions is particularly important in DE programs because co-curricular programs are attractive to an increasing number of students because they offer the opportunity to obtain college credit for writing more quickly (and in many cases, more cheaply) than would be possible after matriculating to the university context.

In the case of DE, many institutions rely on standardized placement tests (such as the CEEB's ACCUPLACER WritePlacer® [developed by Pearson]) to determine which students will have the opportunity to gain college credit for writing in high school more quickly. Evaluating the validity of the placement practices (and/or tests) is one way to determine the fairness and therefore social justice of DE.

Michael T. Kane (2015) explains the importance in validating testing practices if it is anticipated that a genre is linked to "unintended consequences"—specifically "social consequences" (p. 10). According to Kane, there are currently two main concerns of social consequences in validation studies: "[1] differential impact against particular groups (which may or may not be associated with identifiable sources of bias) and [2] undesirable systemic effects

(particularly in education)" (2015, p. 10). Kane explains that there must be categories of evidence to support the fairness of an assessment genre as issues of fairness and validity are "basically the same" (2015, p. 181). In this way, validity and fairness studies focus on the implications of testing procedures or scores and the social consequences (and social justice) of the implemented procedures and use of the scores. However, a validity study (to determine aim and consequences) is only possible when a writing construct has been identified and sample constructs and supplementary data are transparent. Because no assessment practice can be deemed valid without analysis, and analysis is only possible with transparency, I argue that issues of transparency are "basically the same" as issues of validity and fairness. The 2014, American Educational Research Association *Standards* included for the first time a chapter on fairness, which Diane Kelly-Riley, Norbert Elliot, and Alex Rudiny explain, "elevated the concept of fairness to be a foundational consideration for tests, parallel in importance to validity and reliability (2017, p. 3). Therefore, conversations pertaining to assessment should be extended to account for the implications of assessment genres that are not supported with clearly accessible and transparent data to support fairness.

The makeup of students in FYW classes is dynamic and the work of many scholars has shown that students' race, language, gender, and economic backgrounds should not impede their college and FYW experience (Inoue & Poe, 2012; Martinez, 2009; Matsuda, 2006; Ratcliffe, 1999; Wallace, 2009). Most DE courses are marketed as a means for "all" students to have more access and an easier transition to college. The purpose of one type of DE format—Early College (EC) high school programs—are to "serve low-income young people, first-generation college goers, English language learners, and students of color, all of whom are statistically underrepresented in higher education and for whom society often has low aspirations for academic achievement" (Jobs for the Future, n.d.). Despite the intended (and marketed) purposes of DE programs, Keith D. Miller and I (2016) found that while students of color are the majority in Texas, white students make up the majority of students enrolled in DE programs.

In this chapter, I build upon my previous research focused on DE enrollment to interrogate fairness issues surrounding student DE admission and placement assessment practices, interrogating the implications of practices that determine student eligibility and access to DE programs. While previous research was based on data from Texas, for the work in this chapter I chose a more localized system. This institution, which I will refer to as Arizona College (AC), is one of the largest community college systems in the US with DE course offerings at local high schools.

As I illustrate in this chapter, DE enrollment data at this institution was not reported or available. Therefore, there is not transparency of the scores that are necessary to determine the fairness, reliability, and validity of the institution's pre-college assessment for students seeking to be enrolled in courses that allow students to gain high school and college credit simultaneously. In this way, the scores are not transparent, therefore the fairness, reliability, and validity of the instruction's chosen assessment genre is not transparent. And in instances when data from institutions may not be reported or available, other avenues that do have the authority to gather such data, such as the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) serve as important resources to understanding the problematic implications of the lack of transparency in assessment practices. When claims of discrimination are made, the OCR compiles and analyzes data using what is called a burden-shifting approach. This three-step process has been taken up by Mya Poe and her colleagues (2014) in the form of a validation tool that identifies unintentional forms of discrimination—disparate impact analysis.

This chapter is organized into the following sections. I first give an overview of DE composition and associated areas of concern to highlight how assessment practices that determine enrollment requires more data-driven inquiry. Such orientation situates how Moreland and Miller's work necessitates more empirical scholarship that focuses on if—and where—discrimination in DE is happening outside of Texas. I then detail my research site, how enrollment in these DE FYW courses rely on ACCUPLACER WritePlacer test scores, and how there is no data publicly available or internally compiled data regarding these placement scores. While there are no records of data, there are records of how AC was investigated by the OCR for discriminatory practices regarding, among other things, how students gain knowledge about and access DE courses. Therefore, I also include explanation of these claims and the larger functions of the OCR. To determine if the chosen research site is operating in a way that discriminates students via ACCUPLACER WritePlacer test scores, I explain disparate impact analysis as a validation tool, as proposed by Poe and her colleagues. Finally, I conclude by demonstrating how the lack of data available at my chosen site complicates the disparate impact approach presented by Poe and her colleagues and emphasize the need for transparency in testing practices and scores as to better understand the intended and unintended social consequences.

DE ASSESSMENT AND ACCESS MET WITH GROWTH IN ENROLLMENT AND CONCERNS

In Stephanie Marken and colleagues' 2013 report, it was found that 25% of institutions that offer DE courses in the US "reported eligibility for high school

students in grade 9" (p. 3), meaning that in some cases, students qualify at the age of 14.[2] DE researchers have raised concerns over the age of students in DE programs given that how students write at any level is informed by their cognitive abilities (MacArthur & Graham, 2015; Taczak & Thelin, 2009), their level of maturation (Anson, 2010; Tinberg & Nadeau, 2011), and various other, age-related facets that influence writing (White et al., 2015).

Second, inconsistent DE admissions standards means that DE enrollment is based on varied assessment practices. In 2015, for example, 27 states required standardized test scores, such as the ACT or SAT, to determine student access (Zinth, 2015). In the remaining states, there was no state policy; the institutions constructed unique eligibility requirements. ACCUPLACER WritePlacer test scores are commonly used in institutions with and/or without state policy to determine student eligibility for DE writing courses. In the end, according to the U.S. Department of Education Reports from 2010–2011, only 46% of colleges offering DE courses held students to the same admission standards of the institution (Marken et al., 2013), despite calls from organizations such as CCCC that programs offering DE should reflect the "sponsoring college composition program" (Farris et al., 2012). It is extremely important to understand here that in the case of DE composition, in instances where the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer test scores are used, placement into the course determines a student's ability to enroll at the college. For example, if a student is seeking to enroll in only DE composition, they must first take the placement exam and receive a score that places them into DE FYW and then they can enroll in the college. However, if the student does not receive the recommended score for the course, they will not be admitted to the college.

The varied rhetorical situations and communities in which students who are immersed in DE courses write leads to a third inconsistency: curriculum. According to Esther B. Hugo (2001) high school and, therefore, DE curriculum play a large role in DE students' eventual success in college. However, David E. Schwalm (1991) argues that writing courses taught on college campuses are "impossible to replicate in a high school senior English class" (p. 53). Chris Anson (2010) (in reference to Farris, 2006) writes that some dual credit programs have "'slapdash' curricula that exploit high schools and do a disservice to aspiring students" (p. 245). WPAs at many institutions that accept DE credits have no voice in the curriculum design for DE programs and there is minimal, if any, communication with the local offering institutions. In fact, Melinda Mechur Karp and colleagues (2004) report that less than one-third of states with a dual enrollment policy have policies about course content or curriculum. The lack of

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2   In Schneider's study of the TECHS (Toledo Early College High School) program, there were 100 ninth grade students enrolled. One student participant of this inquiry was 14.

state and institutional policy lends to inconsistent DE curriculum guidelines. Ultimately, unlike FYW that looks to WPA guidelines for program construction and evaluation, DE courses largely function to meet the standards of outside sources, such as the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP).

NACEP is an organization that was designed specifically for the advancement of another variation of DE courses—Concurrent Enrollment (CE). A large function of NACEP is to accredit programs; one aspect of accreditation is that the curriculum of the programs must be the same as that of the providing college. But policy does not always influence or dictate practice, especially when policies are not in place.

A fourth inconsistency in DE programs arises in the ways instructors are trained to teach. Until recently, there was no agreed-upon, research-based way that teachers receive preparation or training to teach DE FYW classes (Anson, 2010; Farris 2010; McCrimmon, 2010). In October 2015, the Higher Learning Commission (HCL) adopted a policy revision to Assumed Practice B.2. This will require all instructors, including those of DE courses to have "18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach" by September of 2017 (p. 2). This policy revision was largely influenced by dual credit courses:

> The institution must assure that the faculty members teaching dual credit courses hold the same minimal qualifications as the faculty teaching on its own campus. This requirement is not intended to discount or in any way diminish the experience that the high school teacher brings into a dual credit classroom. Yet it is critical that the content of the dual credit course match the complexity and scholarly rigor of the same course delivered to the student population on the college campus. With millions of high school students now earning college credit through dual credit programs, the advancement of higher education and the value of student learning rely extensively on the adequacy of faculty preparation and demonstrated qualifications among dual credit instructors. (HLC, 2015, p. 4)

This adoption has added new problems for dual enrollment and writing programs across the country, as community colleges that are largely involved with DE course offerings do not offer graduate-level courses and many of the high school instructors do not hold an M.A. or Ph.D. (much less degrees in Rhetoric and Composition Studies or Literacy). Among other things, the HLC's revision is causing WPAs to "scramble" to create more graduate-level course offerings for

instructors seeking to meet the qualifications; there is also a concern with finding ways to pay "for the additional credit hours, [and] encouraging high school teachers to participate" (Smith, 2015).

In the end, the fragmented practices of DE mean that we have little understanding of what students' varied age levels, teacher training, curricular differences, and admission standards yield in regards to equitable outcomes for various student groups and writing programs. Without meaningful and more transparent data, and analysis of that data, we simply cannot ascertain the fairness of DE and whether DE results in socially just outcomes for all students (and instructors) within these programs.

IMPORTANCE OF DATA FOR DETERMINING DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

Given that little is known about issues of equity in DE admission and the effects of DE over the course of a student's college career, it is imperative that there be more data driven studies of DE evaluation. Of the few DE composition-specific publications, five—Denecker (2007), Denecker (2013), Frick and Blattner (2002), Post and colleagues (2010), and Taczak and Thelin (2009)—offer models for data collection and analysis that can act as models for future research. While these studies do highlight some aspects of writing assessment; in short, to my knowledge, there are no DE-specific validation studies in the composition research journals.

In regards to DE and social justice, data collection and analysis is needed to evaluate the validity and therefore fairness of assessment practices to see if these practices. As previously mentioned, Kane (2015) writes that issues of fairness and validity are "basically the same" (p. 181). Validity theory upholds the idea that: "It certainly is appropriate to evaluate a decision rule in terms of the extent to which it achieves the goals of the program, but it is also important to attend to unintended effects that have potentially serious consequences" (Kane, 2013, p. 55). Some potential negative impacts, or consequences, according to validity theory, are adverse (and/or disparate) impact.

Mya Poe and John Aloysius Cogan Jr. (2016) discuss how validity and/as fairness of test scores holds larger meaning for social justice:

> Test scores may reflect social inequality, but the *use* of test scores works to create that social inequality. Racial isolation and structural inequality are not merely reflective of such social mechanisms; social mechanisms work to sustain racial invisibility, racial isolation, and structural inequality.

This "structural inequality" is precisely what the work of Miller and I (2016) found in the state of Texas based on enrollment data. In 2007, the state of Texas mandated that all high schools offer at least 12 hours of college credit to their high school seniors (Friedman et al., 2011). However, not all schools were able to pay for student's courses and texts. Therefore, socioeconomically disadvantaged students were not always provided this option. In many instances, students that are at an economic disadvantage, and therefore have more disadvantages in regards to college placement tests because of a lack of resources in their high schools, are also students of color and/or from multiple language backgrounds (Zwick & Himelfarb, 2011). In our work, Miller and I (2016) looked at data from Lawrence B. Friedman and colleagues' 2011 report that focuses on the then-current state of DE in Texas that highlights how although students of color outnumber white students in the state of Texas, white students are the majority in DE courses. Miller and I analyzed this data using whiteness theory as well as aspects of George Lipsitz's *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* in which he identifies the ways that certain people—those categorized as white—benefit from structural racism in society. In regards to education, Lipsitz expands on the ways that, "[un]equal opportunities for education play a crucial role in racializing life chances in the United States" (2006, p. 33). In the end, our work shows how the promises of DE programs fail to meet the call for advancement of "all students" in the state of Texas, which we argue can be applied to the US as a whole.

Given our findings from the Texas study, it seems that claims regarding equitability of DE programs are suspect. Such findings beg the question whether equitability of DE is simply a matter of access—i.e., more poor students need access to DE—or whether equitability is related to assessment practices.

Thus, in the following study I sought to identify if enrollment patterns at a large institution in another state (Arizona) that offers DE is reflective of the enrollment patterns in Texas. After establishing whether there was a disparity in enrollment, I endeavored to identify some possible reasons for this disparity. Specifically, I ask why students of color do not seem to be accessing DE courses in the same ways or at the same rates as white students.

RESEARCH SITE OVERVIEW

In order to create a research project focused on determining if discrimination of students based on testing practices that lend to DE enrollment happens outside of Texas, I chose to focus on DE policies and assessment/placement practices in a large community college in Arizona. Arizona Community (AC) is one of the

largest community college systems in the United States. There are 10 different branches and, in 2014, a reported 128, 212 students enrolled (Office of Institutional Effectiveness). Approximately 15% or 19,103 of these students were enrolled in what is referred to as High School Dual/Concurrent Enrollment (Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2014). Additionally, in 2014, the 10 colleges in the system provided more than 400 academic and occupational courses at over 50 "traditional" public, private, and charter high schools (High Schools with Dual Enrollment Courses, n.d.). In 2015, at one NACEP accredited branch of AC, it was reported that about 7,000 students took classes for college and high school credit simultaneously; 38 students received their associate degree before graduating from high school (The Republic, 2015). The number of these 7,000 students that participated in DE first year writing courses is not documented. However, in order for these students to obtain their associate degrees, they must have completed the required FYW courses.

DE ACCESS AND PLACEMENT AT AC BASED ON ACCUPLACER WRITEPLACER

At AC, placement into FYW courses—DE and otherwise—is based on the institution's predetermined qualifying scores from the College Board's ACCU-PLACER WritePlacer exam. According to the ACCUPLACER website, the "WritePlacer is a direct measure of a student's writing skills. The student's response is scored electronically using an automated system, and scores are returned within seconds. Institutions can also use WritePlacer to assess English as a second language (ESL) writing skills" (ACCUPLACER, 2015a). As can be gleaned from the information provided by ACCUPLACER, students must take the test in English only.

While ACCUPLACER is touted as supporting "accurate placement decisions" (2015b) there are multiple accounts of how tests, such as the ACCU-PLACER WritePlacer, incorrectly place students. Judith Scott-Clayton (Community College Research Center, Columbia University, 2012) reports that placement exams are "better predictors of success in math than in English" (p. 2). Paul Fain (2012) explains that "up to a third of students who placed into remedial English classes on the basis of the placement tests could have passed college-level classes with a grade of B or better." Christie Toth (Chapter 4, this collection) suggests alternatives to standardized placement tests as they largely under-place students. Norbert Elliot and his colleagues (2012) report that "populations of diverse students may be disenfranchised" (pp. 304-305) as "AC-CUPLACER failed to achieve statistical significance for females and for Asian,

Hispanic and Black students" (p. 300).

An analysis of DE students' ACCUPLACER WritePlacer scores at AC would allow me to better understand how this form of assessment might lend to student enrollment patterns. At AC, student placement first year writing, language skills, basic writing, and even honors FYW courses is based on scores that range from 0-8 (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1. WritePlacer score and course placement at Arizona Community

WritePlacer Score	Course Placement
0-1	ENG 071 Language Skills, ESL077 or take CELSA if ESL
2	ENG 081 Basic Writing Skills, ESL 087
3-4	ENG 091 Fundamentals of Writing, ESL 097
5-8	ENG 101/107 FYC; Score of 7/8-Consider Honors

Students can re-test for course placement. The guidelines for re-testing are as follows:

> Students will be permitted one re-test in English, reading or math level after at least a 24-hour waiting period. **ONE additional re-test is permitted no sooner than three months from the oldest valid score date at any course placement testing site.** Course placement scores, with the exception of the reading exemption scores, will be valid for two years from the date of the original or re-test assessment. (Course Placement Chart, 2015, emphasis in original)

An important thing to note here is that based on the institutions' test scores and placement, students admitted through the normal college admissions process have access to basic writing. However, if a high school student does not place into ENG 101/107, they do not have the option of taking Language Skills, Basic Writing, or Fundamentals of Writing courses. Thus, if students do not meet placement criteria, they are denied access to DE FYW courses. Not allowing DE FYW students to take basic writing courses is not specific to AC. As of 2015, only nine states had clear options to allow DE students access to developmental coursework (Zinth, 2015). The state of Washington does offer high school students the ability to avoid developmental coursework in college when they participate in a Washington Bridge to College English course while in high school. While students will not earn college credit for the course, upon successfully completion with a B or better they earn direct placement in first-year writing courses at participating colleges (State of Washington, 2017).

TEST SCORES NOT COMPILED OR AVAILABLE

Given that the goal of my research was to understand the impact of DE placement assessment, my first task was to ascertain how many and which students were taking the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer exam for placement in Arizona Community's DE FYW courses. I also needed to know how many and which students were placing into the DE FYW courses. Based on these goals, I sought data regarding the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer scores at AC via five sources: ACCUPLACER, the college, corresponding high schools, the Arizona Department of Education, and later, the U.S. Department of Education.

Upon my initial inquiry, I found that these institutions' websites do not offer data or statistics regarding the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer scores. For this reason, the next step was to contact individual institutions. I first contacted AC-CUPLACER where I was told that while they do make the test available, they do not have any data about the number of students taking the WritePlacer or their exam scores as the college is responsible for these scores. I then contacted two corresponding high schools of AC in which DE FYW courses are available and asked if they had data regarding how many of their students seeking DE writing courses took ACCUPLACER WritePlacer and how many placed into courses. They also informed me that they do not keep records of this. They suggested I contact AC and also the Arizona Department of Education. Arizona's Department of Education told me (via multiple phone conversations) that they do not have records of those scores either as these scores are for the colleges and college students. I must note here that this is concerning as the DE students are, in fact, still high school students which would seem to hold the state accountable for keeping data where it concerns these students.

I then sought data through AC. Via a telephone conversation with AC's Director of Research, Planning, and Development provided details for my data collection, I was told while the college does keep record of students' ACCU-PLACER WritePlacer test scores, the records are not disaggregated based on students' testing for traditional versus DE writing courses. This data, I was told, would only be compiled and released upon *approval* of a formal request first submitted to the Director of Research, Planning, and Development at AC and then forwarded for approval. For this reason, I created a formal request. The information requested from the college is as follows:

1. The number of students taking the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer test for placement in English-Composition (FYW) courses as well as the age, race, gender, and educational level (educational intent) of these students.[3]

3   I requested FYW student information rather than dual enrollment-specific students, as I was made aware that students taking the tests do not have to specify if they are testing for DE or

2. The breakdown of the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer student test results based on the colleges' qualifying scores (0–1; 2; 3–4; 5–8) as well as the age, race, gender, and educational level of these students.

3. The number of students currently enrolled in English/Composition specific courses (ENG 071, ENG 081, ENG 091, ENG 101/107) as well as the age, race, gender, and educational level (educational intent) of these students.

4. The total number of students enrolled in Dual/Concurrent enrollment ENG 101/102 courses as well as the age, race, gender, and educational level (educational intent) of these students.

Once submitted, my hope was that the director and/or college would eventually get back to me with some of the information requested—at the very least, I thought I would receive an update of progress of the request. I never heard back from the college or the director at the college—even after multiple follow up emails to check on the status of my request. Since the information should be available under the Freedom of Information Act, this led me to inquire about this information through the college's legal department.

AC's Omsbud service provides the facilitation of "an external constituent's efforts to maneuver through what the constituent feels to be 'bureaucratic red tape'" (Office of Public Stewardship, n.d.). I contacted the manager of the Office for Public Stewardship to get advice about how I might gain access to the data. I also asked if I could receive the raw data to sort on my own and was told that this request was not possible. I was told that I should send the same request I had previously sent to the college so that my inquiry could be processed to determine if the college has any legal obligation to release the data. After a short wait, I was informed that the college is under no obligation to release the data. More specifically, I was told via email that, "the data you are requesting does not already readily exist in the form of a record—thus—we are not required to generate a report under public records law—nor dispatch staff to create such" (Name redacted for confidentiality reasons, personal communication, December 22, 2015).

My next step was to consult the U.S. Department of Education as they do accept requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, enacted in 1966. When a person or organization files a request for information, they will learn: 1) If records are available and 2) If the records

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"traditional" FYW courses. It is for this reason I requested the educational level (educational intent) of the students, as the college system does document the educational intent. The categories for educational intent are: "Transfer to University," "Enter/Advance in the Job Market," "High School Dual/Concurrent Enrollment," "Personal Interest," "Meet University Requirement," and "Undeclared" (Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2014).

are releasable. However, it is possible that even if records are available and can be released, the data can cost the individual filing money out of pocket as well.[4] I sent a formal email to the Department of Education's FOIA manager outlining my inquiry and the current complications as well as to request advice on possible steps to gain access to the data requested (FOIA request 16-00801-F, 2016). In an email response (with an attached letter) I was told to:

> Please be advised that the Department of Education does not maintain those types of records/information. We recommend that you contact the School or the company that performances [performs] that task, as only they would be able to provide that information for you. (EDFOIA Manager, personal communication, February 4, 2016)

As discussed previously, neither the school nor ACCUPLACER is legally bound to release such data. Ultimately, through inquiry at multiple sites, there was little knowledge about how and where student assessment scores that determine student access and placement were located and could be accessed. This lack of data is highly problematic in regards to understanding how, on a large scale, the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer influences student assessment and subsequent enrollment in DE courses.

What is arguably more problematic is how the lack of responsibility and accountability of maintaining the data on a federal, state, and local level. Although AC offers DE FYW courses at multiple participating institutions—and all of the institutions rely on ACCUPLACER WritePlacer test scores for student placement—there are no known organized records of how many students are taking or placing into FYW (DE or otherwise) via the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer. On a federal level, FOIA is not responsible for maintaining records at state and local agencies as "most states, and some local jurisdictions have their own laws about access to state and local records" (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). However, as stated previously, since AC did not maintain records they were not required to generate the file "under public records law" (Name redacted for confidentiality reasons, personal communication, December 22, 2015). Here, both the federal and local education agencies deny responsibility of maintaining or producing these records.

In a Propublica (2016) article, multiple contributors recount difficulties in gaining access to public records under FOIA law. A common denominator in these requests is that:

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4   There is an option to waive the cost if "is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in my commercial interest" (template http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/samples_foia.html). Website: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/foia/request.html

local, state and federal agencies alike routinely blow through deadlines laid out in law or bend them to ludicrous degrees, stretching out even the simplest requests for years. And they bank on the media's depleted resources and ability to legally challenge most denials. (Weychert, 2016)

At AC, because there is a lack of accountability for any federal, state, or local agency to keep the records, there is no party responsible to ensure the fairness of the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer for DE FYW placement. And while President Obama did sign the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 that was supposed to enable more transparency for those seeking records, "the act explicitly provides no new resources for implementing these provisions" (Weychert, 2016).

COLLEGE INVESTIGATED BY THE OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS (OCR)

While searching for information about the institution and test scores, I inadvertently found that AC was recently under investigation from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The investigation was based on a claim made by a local, non-profit Civil Rights Center. According to Chen (n.d.), members of the Civil Rights Center claimed that, "the college system is creating an environment hostile to undocumented immigrants and is discriminating against minority students." AC applications asked "students for their immigration status" and the tuition rates were higher for students that are not residents of the county, which "discourages [students] them from pursuing higher education at the community college level (Chen, n.d.). This constitutes a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs.

In a 2013 press release from the Civil Rights Center, it is written that because of the claim, the college will:

> make changes to address the following allegations: . . . [that the college] 1. -Discriminated in the basis of national origin by engaging in practices that may chill or discourage the enrollment of High School students in their Charter Schools based on their or their parents' or guardians' actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status. 2.-Discriminated against national origin of minority individuals in [on] the basis of their limited English proficiency by failing to provide meaningful access to information and services and by failing to provide meaningful access to Board Meetings. (Cornejo, 2013)

In educational institutions that receive any type of government funding (e.g., grant monies, federal student loan programs, etc.), the OCR is where formal complaints of discrimination are made. In 2013–2014, the OCR received nearly 10,000 civil rights complaints, which is "the highest numbers in OCR history" (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2015, p. 4). Complaints range, in addition to complaints about racial discrimination, from disability access claims to sexual assault on campuses. The work of the OCR highlights the ways that social injustices in education are as present today as they ever were. Ultimately, the mission of the OCR is to "ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights" (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, "About," 2012*).* In order to carry out their mission, the OCR resolves complaints filed "by anyone who believes that an education institution that receives Federal financial assistance has discriminated against someone on the basis of national origin as prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; sex as prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; disability as prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and/or age as prohibited by the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2012). In the case of AC, the persons filing the complaint were advocates for those they believed to have been victims of discrimination.

Given the research on ACCUPLACER WritePlacer's potential discriminatory effects on students of color (Elliot et al., 2012) and the fact that AC was already under investigation by the OCR for its DE program practices, I look to Poe and her colleagues' disparate impact analysis as a validation tool that was developed on the basis of the OCR's burden-shifting approach for investigating claims of discrimination.

DISPARATE IMPACT ANALYSIS

Disparate impact analysis is a precedent used by the courts and adapted by OCR to investigate education discrimination claims. In their article, Poe and her colleagues (2014) explain how to utilize the OCR's three-step burden-shifting approach as a validation tool for assessment practices to determine unintentional consequences specific to disparate impact. Disparate impact, it should be noted, is unlike intentional *disparate treatment.* Disparate treatment "requires direct evidence of discriminatory intent" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 593). On the other hand, disparate impact discrimination is "*unintended racial differences in outcomes resulting from facially neutral policies or practices that on the surface seem neutral*" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 593). Disparate impact approach then, as a type of legal

heuristic, is traditionally used to determine unintentional discrimination (Poe et al., 2014). The idea that institutions may be, intentionally or not, discriminating against students reflects the importance of utilizing disparate impact analysis as a validation tool, which is apparent in the work of Mathew Gomes (Chapter 6, this collection) and Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty (Chapter 8, this collection).

Disparate impact as a validation tool, Poe and her colleagues write (2014), "connects testing and curriculum" and "speaks to our historical and current struggles to provide meaningful writing instruction to all students" (p. 605). Validation tools, according to Poe and her colleagues help understand "the local effects of writing assessment" and "may mean the difference between college success and failure for many students" (2014, p. 589). In validity studies, "information is at the center" and there are four main agreed-upon sources of validity evidence: scoring, generalization, extrapolation, and consequences (Poe et al., 2014, p. 590). Scoring establishes "performance through a scoring framework" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 590). Generalization evaluates "different conditions that impact student performance" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 590). Extrapolation is the "inference linking the test to a range of performances associated with the concept under investigation" and consequence is the "anticipation of intended outcomes, adverse impact, and systemic effects" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 590).

Poe and her colleagues (2014) extend these concepts to assert that a disparate impact analysis is beneficial for writing assessment in two important ways. First, this type of analysis can determine "the relationship between scores and the local context in which decisions about assessments are made" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 591). Additionally, the main sources of validity evidence—scoring, generalization, and extrapolation—when combined with disparate impact analysis are "not to be understood as a discrete set of categories. Rather, each is understood in terms of its integrated impact on diverse student groups" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 591). This contextualization of the evidence supporting the use of scores is vital as without this, "the validation process is suspect" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 591). In this way, Poe and her colleagues advance that using disparate impact accounts for both the legal responsibilities of writing assessment practices and also the local contexts where these assessment practices take place.

In order to model disparate impact approach as a validation tool, Poe and her colleagues (2014) adapted the OCR's three-step burden-shifting approach, which investigates "disparate impact claims in education settings" (p. 591). The self-study design allows for writing programs to conduct their own analysis not to determine if writing programs comply with federal law, per se, but to utilize disparate impact as a validation tool for "an evidence-based approach to decision making that relies on quantitative information as well as contextualized reason-

ing" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 591). And while disparate impact analysis commonly focuses on race—as does the model provided by the authors—they note that this approach can be extended to include other classifications, such as nationality, gender, sexuality, international students, students' socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency.

The three steps of the disparate impact self-study model that Poe and her colleagues (2014) adopted follows the OCR's burden-shifting approach, and are as follows. The *first* step is to "show an adverse impact on students of a particular race as compared with students of other races" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 599). This step would begin with "a statistical analysis of the pass rates within the population of test takers, disaggregated by race" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 600).

The *second* step determines if the assessment practices are necessary to meet an educational goal; that is, if there is a justifiable educational need (Poe et al., 2014). This step is made up of multiple phases, each of which requires empirical evidence. The inquiry, Poe and her colleagues note, should include the following procedures: determine whether "the elements of writing that the test measures are important components of student writing ability"; ensure that the test results capture those components; document that "the basic writing course provides help to students for the identified writing deficiencies"; and demonstrate that the test "is predictive of or significantly correlated with students' performance in college writing" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 601).

The *third* and final step is to determine if there are alternatives that meet the institution's educational goal with less of a burden. This step "encourages" the imagining of "a wide range of alternative assessment practices" and could offer the possibility of "a method of assessment that would result in equally good outcomes for all its students but without the racialized score distribution" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 603).

For my study, using disparate impact analysis to find ways to "provide meaningful writing instruction to all students"—i.e., one of the stated promises of DE programs—would allow clarification of how the goals of DE are actually being carried out. In the case of AC, this type of analysis would be extremely beneficial to understand how their assessment practices are influencing "all students" access to DE FYW classes. The question was, however, would I be able to replicate the model analysis provided by Poe and her colleagues

REVISITING OCR

After a thorough search of the OCR's database via their website, I found that while many resolution letters and agreements are available, neither the resolution letters and agreements nor the complaint number for the case against

AC's Early College High School was available on the website. I then contacted the OCR and was told that the complaint information may not be available on the website because the case might be either so small that the information would not be useful to audiences or there may have been a request to keep all documents confidential because they may be heavily redacted and they want to protect those involved; because of this, I would need to find the complaint number and then submit a FOIA request (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights-Denver, personal communication, February 8, 2016). To find the case number, I contacted the author of the press release that, as previously cited, explained the revisions mandated by the OCR (Cornejo, 2013) who was able to direct me to an individual that provided me with the complaint number. I then filed a FOIA request (16-00856-F) for documents pertaining to OCR case 08-112-2170. Within a few weeks, the OCR released the resolution letter for the complaint to me.

In the letter, it is written that the Complainant alleged that AC:

> discriminated against national origin minority high school students by engaging in practices that may chill or discourage the enrollment of students based on their parents' or guardians' actual or perceived citizenship or immigration status. The Complainant also alleged that . . . [AC] discriminated against national origin minority individuals on the basis of their limited English proficiency (LEP) by failing to provide meaningful access to information and services" and to AC Board Meetings. (Ciapusci, 2013)

It is also noted in the letter that before the OCR had made any findings, AC took "voluntary steps to ensure compliance with Title VI," which allowed them to forgo any investigation:

> Pursuant to Section 302 of OCR's Case Processing Manual, a complaint may be resolved when, before the conclusion of an investigation, a recipient expresses an interest in resolving the complaint and the OCR Office Director believes that doing so is appropriate, so long as the remedies align with the allegations. (Ciapusci, 2013)

As part of compliance, AC agreed to multiple things, including drafting "procedures to provide a mechanism for LEP students and parents" at the charter schools—both of which are a form of dual enrollment (an Early College High School and College Preparatory Academy)—to "ensure meaningful access to LEP individuals" (Ciapusci, 2013). In other words, AC was responsible for

implementing procedures to provide LEP students and their parents information about how students could access the Early College program.

While voluntary compliance could seem to be positive, early compliance could also create oversight. While I cannot be sure that data regarding placement procedures would have been collected or analyzed, an early compliance and lack of full investigation may have resulted in the lack of investigation into how students were testing and placing in DE Early College courses (including DE FYW) via the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer.

The lack of a full investigation into the discriminatory practices concerning LEP students seeking Early College courses made me wonder how the OCR may go about investigating claims of discrimination in which data is not being collected (as in the case of AC). Upon inquiry, I was told by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights FOIA coordinator that all claims such as this would require a formal claim that, upon evaluation of the "subject matter," may or may not be investigated (personal communication, February 8, 2016).

CONCLUSION: THE CALL FOR DATA TRANSPARENCY

As the work in this chapter has detailed, there are extreme and often unnecessary complexities in obtaining writing assessment data, which emphasizes the necessity and urgency for more transparent data for validity studies to determine the fairness of testing practices. In short, because test score data were not available from AC, I could not conduct a disparate impact analysis to see if there is evidence of negative consequences for the current use of the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer. While there cannot be certainty that an analysis of the scores (step 1) would result in reaching step 3, to "imagine a less discriminatory alternative" (Poe et al., 2014, p. 604), there should be transparency in test scores to analyze the implications of testing practices—especially those that are potentially discriminatory against students.

Poe and her colleagues explain: "Because discrimination flows from the test design, process, or use of test scores, rather than from the intent of the test giver, disparate impact analysis focuses on the *consequences* of specific testing practices" (2014, p. 593). The "*consequences*" of not having testing data to analyze to determine disparate impact at AC seems to have the possibility of a wide range of discriminatory practices that could have meaningful legal implications. I argue that the lack of comparable data to understand how assessment is influencing access to DE courses is a violation of students' civil rights. Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks (Chapter 11, this collection) also faced bureaucratic red tape when attempting to collect demographic data specific to sexuality and gender identity to identify how programs are meeting the needs of LGBTQ students.

This is another instance where the lack of data is a violation of students' civil rights. Without self-studies, such as disparate impact analysis in place, writing programs could face OCR complaints.

There should be practices in place for student access to programs that are more transparent so that the positive and negative consequences are clearer. As Kane (2013) details:

> A program can have substantial negative consequences and still be acceptable if the benefits outweigh any negative consequences. Negative consequences that are not offset by positive consequences tend to render a decision rule unacceptable (at least for stakeholders who are concerned about these consequences). (p. 54)

I argue that the stakeholders administering any tests *should* be "concerned" regardless of their decided approach for placement. At any school that requires the placement tests to determine student enrollment in FYW—DE or otherwise—such as the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer, data should be collected and recorded in a way that allows for an evaluation of the validity of the test and consequences (and the tests and consequences *should* be validated). This data compilation and evaluation would be a less discriminatory practice in that there can be a clear understanding of the positive, negative, and possible social consequences of the testing practices. In this way, disparate impact approach as a validation tool outlined by Poe and her colleagues becomes expanded to hold institutions more accountable for keeping data.

As there are social injustices present in many areas of writing assessment, there are undoubtedly social injustices present in DE writing assessment. The lack of transparency in data is, like intersectionality, mutually constructed by "unjust systems of power" (Collins, 2012, p. 19). Janet Alsup and sj Miller (2014) write: "It is nearly impossible to refute that schools and schooling are inequitable and that multiple injustices affect schooling environments daily" (p. 211). In regards to college admission testing, Kathleen Blake Yancey (2012) explains that, "testing constructs what it purports to measure as it serves *a predetermined end in social, economic, administrative, and educational institutions*" (p. 173).

While the lack of data available made it impossible to determine if the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer constructs what it purports to measure, the ACCUPLACER WritePlacer is one example of how testing companies are not held accountable for their products. Bob Broad (2016) explains that, "like other industries (e.g., tobacco, fossil fuels, and soft drinks), the standardized testing industry profits from selling a product that has repeatedly been shown to harm the public good"; yet, there has been little to no advancements towards eliminating,

regulating, or validating these tests.[5]

Using disparate impact analysis as a guide, this chapter's purpose was to examine the validity, fairness, and social justice of placement practices that determine DE FYW student eligibility. As my case study has shown, just because an assessment genre has evidentiary categories that support a validity argument does not mean that evidentiary categories are sufficient to support a fairness argument.

DE courses tout the opportunity for "all students" to gain college credit for writing in high school. However, this promise is faulty when the opportunity for students to learn in these courses is not clear or transparent. Kelly-Riley, Elliot, and Rudiny (2017) explain how "advancement of the opportunity to learn, subsumes all other assessment aims . . . [and] demand[s] articulated connections between the assessment and the instructional environment, and provide resources for the least advantaged students" (p. 18). The opportunity to learn, then, is a potential consequence of pre-college assessment. In this way, the visibility of test scores is vital to understanding the opportunity to learn as an intricate aspect of assessment. Therefore, my suggestion that institutions make data visible at the local level cannot be extremely beneficial if the theory used to analyze the data does not address the fairness of the practices. A standard for assessment must be transparency in the scores that supports fair practices regarding students' opportunity to learn.

Requiring a standard of fairness and transparency has the potential to enable a more fluid understanding of assessment genres that determine student placement in FYW and DE composition courses. A standard of transparency will be paramount to future research that focuses on how and if DE courses are living up to their intended goals of allowing "all students" an opportunity to advance in DE courses regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic class, language backgrounds, and other widely varied subjectivities that should be accounted for, rather than hinder, how students are testing and placing in DE FYW courses.

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5   Bob Broad suggests federal government regulation to "manage this industry for the same reasons and in similar ways that it manages other risky, profitable industries" (2016). I think that this is one important way that the test data would be more accessible. If the tests were regulated by the federal government, specifically the Department of Education, access to the scores and records would not be a responsibility of the local agency, therefore making the data of test scores available through FOIA requests, such as the one I submitted.

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CHAPTER 6.

WRITING ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLONIALISM

Mathew Gomes

Research Problem: Recent writing assessment scholarship promotes the goals of fairness and social justice. As part of this aim, scholars and practitioners should more fully address colonial relations between U.S. postsecondary institutions and the effects of these relations on first-year writing programs.

Research Questions: How can writing programs—especially at institutions that specifically recruit international students—begin to investigate and accept shared responsibility for ameliorating colonialism, inluding linguistic imperialism?

Literature Review: Building on the social connection model of responsibility (Young, 2011) and its application to writing assessment methodology (Poe & Inoue, 2016), I argue writing programs have power and interest in decolonial projects, namely the project of redressing linguistic imperialism. Scholarship in Writing Studies demonstrates an interest and belief in our power to undermine linguistic imperialism, evidenced by a tradition of scholarship advocating for linguistic inclusiveness. This estimable history includes milestones in national language policy statements, as well as a rich body of scholarship that includes advocacy for linguistically inclusive writing pedagogies. However, recent trends in the internationalization of U.S. postsecondary education suggest a particular need to pay attention to the concept of "English language proficiency," especially given that U.S. postsecondary institutions tend to increase internationalization in tandem with declining state support, and to use Intensive English Programs as sources of revenue.

Methodology: The overarching goal of this study is to produce knowledge that others can use to more fully share responsibility for the social justice problem of colonialism. The chapter presents

a thought experiment (Kuhn, 1964/1977) that draws from FYW placement data at a doctoral-granting university—Three Fires State University. To show how Three Fires State University can begin to accept responsibility for colonialism, this thought experiment provides a decision tree, which maps the complexities of FYW placement at Three Fires State University. After outlining the technical features of FYW placement, I provide a disparate impact analysis (Poe et al., 2014) using placement data Three Fires State University gathered in Spring 2015.

Conclusions: The thought experiment involving FYW placement at Three Fires State University reveals how the theoretical model allows English linguistic imperialism to flourish. Moreover, placement data suggested evidence of adverse impact for international students. Precisely mapping the technical details of placement, however, also reveals ways FYW programs can investigate and begin to share responsibility for colonialism.

Qualifications: The focus in this chapter is on possible colonial relations between writing programs in U.S. post-secondary institutions and international students. However, there is still work to be done addressing the colonial relations between writing programs in U.S. post-secondary education, and indigenous peoples as well as other colonially disenfranchised groups.

Directions for Further Study: Additional studies can help contribute to a larger, and more specific repertoire of research practices for decolonizing writing assessment research.

In her 2016 article, "Decolonizing Validity," Ellen Cushman offers an important contribution to growing discussions on justice and ethics in writing assessment research. While the theoretical concept of validity is familiar to writing assessment researchers, Cushman examines validity from a decolonial perspective. As Cushman explains, as the term took hold in the sixteenth century:

> . . . validity developed as a concept that totalized the Western imperialist reality. Validity identified what counted as authority in law and perfection in the church; as what became valued in well-founded arguments, proofs and warrants; and even as a person could be said to be "valid" if s/he was in good, sound, and robust health—or if not, the person was said to be an "invalid."

According to Cushman (2016), validity was a technique of colonization that was both instrumental and meta-discursive. While individual techniques emerged as more or less appropriate "to manage peoples, knowledges, lands, governments, and institutions," the discourse of validation also tacitly justified the philosophical, epistemic, and cultural bases for colonial management. The effect was the emergence of a discourse of validity, which "always already creates the social hierarchy that places itself at the top—differencing, denigrating, dismissing, disrespecting, devaluing all other forms of law, religion, knowledge, and being as it does."

Not just a mechanism for ranking differences but also for creating colonial difference, Cushman suggests that validity frameworks are frequently fated to reproduce colonial hierarchies. As a result, she argues that those doing writing assessment should, "see validity evidence tools, not as a way to maintain, protect, conform to, confirm, and authorize the current systems of assessment and knowledge making, but rather as one way to better understand difference in and on its own terms."

Borrowing from decolonial writers Madina Tlostanova and Walter D. Mignolo, Cushman concludes by inviting writing assessment scholars to practice border-dwelling, that is, to dwell in the borders of validity by "[seeking] to identify understandings in and on the terms of the peoples who experience them." In other words, border-dwelling can help decolonize writing assessment, because it provides the opportunity to understand its impact on those who are least advantaged within our programs and those who are marked as ontologically different within those programs.

Cushman's argument represents a growing attitude that historical concepts like validity and reliability are useful, but insufficient for grounding writing assessment methodologies. Her argument describes the colonial underpinnings that haunt North American post-secondary education and invites scholars to consider how colonization affects the problems of writing assessment. If WPAs and institutions consider assessment situations through the lens of decoloniality, they may find that normalized and validated academic processes wind up rationalizing colonial injustices, thus causing harm to some students on campus.

In this chapter, I build on Cushman's advocacy for a decolonial perspective and writing assessment agenda. First, I argue that North American writing programs should share responsibility for redressing the colonial inequalities that emerge in a globalized/colonized world. Building on the *social connection model of responsibility* (Young, 2011) and its application to writing assessment methodology (Poe & Inoue, 2016), I argue writing programs have power and interest in decolonial projects, namely the project of redressing linguistic imperialism. Linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992) names the structural inequalities colonial

agents produce between English and other languages. Scholarship in Writing Studies demonstrates an interest and belief in our power to undermine linguistic imperialism, and this is evidence of responsibility under the social connection model. Writing programs at internationalized North American institutions have a special responsibility for redressing colonialism, because these institutions may have more direct power in creating colonial injustices and may benefit or gain privileges from colonial injustice.

The second portion of this chapter describes a thought experiment, which draws on data from a four-year, public, Midwestern doctoral-granting university that I refer to as Three Fires State University. An analysis of the Spring 2015 placement process at Three Fires State University revealed underlying theoretical problems within the placement model. Those theoretical problems consequently exposed international students to four particular risks: (1) dropping out; (2) marginalization of international student labor; (3) linguistic containment and linguistic imperialism; and (4) constrained student agency. The thought experiment also helps illuminate possibilities for sharing responsibility for colonialism. Considering these risks, I argue that writing programs can develop strategic alternatives to linguistic containment (Matsuda, 2006) that promote linguistic plurality. Such strategic alternatives will help WPAs and researchers decolonize writing assessments and writing programs.

WRITING ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLONIALISM

Decolonization is part of the shared responsibility of writing programs at land grant colleges. In their introduction to a recent special issue of *College English*, Mya Poe and Asao B. Inoue (2016) argue that Iris Marion Young's (2011) social connection model of responsibility can help conceptualize socially just writing assessments. Similarly, I argue that Young offers a good starting point for articulating the collective responsibility to redress colonization that internationalized universities have.

Young's social connection model of responsibility elaborates the responsibilities of individuals and institutions for redressing structural social injustice. Given the complexities of structural injustice, Young argues it is often impossible to identify individual agents as blameworthy. Many people acting in socially and legally acceptable ways contribute to structural injustice. If people are to accept responsibility for structural injustice, Young argues that we need to move away from the concept of "personal responsibility" and accept that individual and institutional agents bear a shared responsibility when "they contribute by their actions to the processes that produce unjust outcomes" (2011, p. 105). We

should share responsibility for injustices according to:

1. the power we have to impact structural processes;
2. the privilege such processes afford us;
3. personal interests in dismantling unjust systems; and
4. potential to mobilize the resources needed to change an unjust situation.

According to Young, when people and agents share responsibility in this way, the outcome is opportunities for social justice.

Poe and Inoue (2016) argue that Young's discussion of the "personal responsibility" discourse of poverty echoes a common trope within assessment rhetoric. Assessments are designed to identify, manage, and in some cases, punish "failing" individuals. In contrast, writing programs might eschew the discourse of personal responsibility and share responsibility for helping solve social injustices. Instead, such assessments might focus on identifying the societal failures that creep into educational structures (e.g., patterns of racism), and maximizing the availability of learning opportunities and resources. Using Young's social connection model, Poe and Inoue argue that writing assessments and teachers should take responsibility for social injustices when they

1. have direct power to affect structural injustices;
2. gain privileges or directly benefit from structural injustices;
3. have interest in amending direct harms done to writing programs, teachers, students, and community members; and
4. have the potential to collect resources needed to challenge and change injustices (2016, p. 121).

Young argues that like poverty, colonization is a social injustice. Colonization involves the many ways in which agents of European and American culture exploit the land, resources, and labor of indigenous and non-aligned nations; rank people according to distinctly European ontological schema like race (Quijano, 2000), nationality (Mignolo, 2011), and gender (Lugones, 2007); manage communities according to an imperial will and deprive local communities of self-determination or sovereignty (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999); and assert the supremacy of European and American epistemologies, cultures, and literacies (Mignolo, 2003). Young writes that the US has "responsibilities toward people in Africa today in relation to the historic injustices of the slave trade and colonialism, and responsibilities toward American Indians in relation to the ravages of the North American conquest by Euro-Americans" (2011, p. 174).

While colonization is historical, it is also ongoing and continual. Mignolo (2011) argues that contemporary colonial projects often rehabilitate colonial supremacy. For example, *English linguistic imperialism* is an example of one con-

temporary colonial project. Robert Phillipson (1992) defines English linguistic imperialism as:

> the dominance of English—asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural (material: institutions, financial allocations) and cultural (immaterial/ideological: attitudes, pedagogical principles) inequalities between English and other languages (p. 47).

Therefore, English linguistic imperialism is a specific colonial phenomenon in which colonial states assert their legitimacy through language. The effects of this colonial project are multidirectional—at once, English linguistic imperialism asserts upon non-Native English speaking nations and people a colonial exigency for learning English. Simultaneously, English linguistic imperialism has an inward ideological effect, giving rise to exclusive language ideologies, such as English-only language policies (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996).

It is not my intent to lay blame for colonization upon writing programs. However, writing programs are also not neutral agents. Young's (2011) distinction between personal responsibility and shared responsibility is again, instructive here: writing programs need not be personally responsible for perpetuating colonial outcomes to accept a shared responsibility for redressing colonization. It is certainly worth investigating if writing programs can share responsibility for ameliorating colonialism, and the conditions that might compel a writing program to do so.

Poe and Inoue's (2016) framework of shared responsibility (by way of Young), suggests that writing programs should share responsibility for colonialism when they have the power to impact structural processes that have identifiably colonial consequences, when colonialism creates privileges or an interest in mitigating colonial harm, and when they have sufficient potential to impact colonialism. When writing programs take responsibility for conditions of colonization that may manifest in North American post-secondary institutions, they can aim more precisely for socially just outcomes. For example, when writing programs at highly internationalized post-secondary institutions in North America take responsibility for linguistic imperialism, they can design curricular experiences that honor and represent linguistic diversity as an asset.

THE *POWER* AND *INTEREST* OF WRITING PROGRAMS

As others in this collection have argued, English language instruction can promote neocolonial agendas (Harms, Chapter 3, this collection), with English linguistic imperialism as one effect. I favor the term English linguistic imperialism because it

is a reminder that language policies and practices can contribute to a condition of colonial injustice when they privilege standardized forms of English.

While the term English linguistic imperialism appears infrequently in Writing Studies, our field has offered compelling arguments against and alternatives to English linguistic imperialism. Landmarks in this estimable history of resistance include national position statements, such as the Students Right to their Own Language (SRTOL) resolution, which famously affirmed first in 1972 "students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language" (CCCC, 2014a, p. 1). Additionally, the CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers, urges WPAs to "take responsibility for the regular presence of second language writers in writing classes" by offering professional training and coursework supporting the teaching of second language (L2) writers, and by conducting research about the efficacy of writing programs for second language writers that integrate perspectives of the participants (CCCC 2014b). The National Language Policy (CCCC 2015), similarly, affirms linguistic diversity and inclusivity, and rejects English Only ideology outright, describing it as variously as "unfair," "educationally unsound," "oppressive and dehumanizing," and "dangerous."

Beyond disciplinary proclamations, our field continues to have significant ongoing discussions about how best to respect and honor linguistic diversity in our writing pedagogies and programs. Vershawn Ashanti Young and Aja Y. Martinez (2011), for example, have recently offered examples of "code-meshing" in action, demonstrating pedagogical alternatives to linguistic imperialism that promote linguistic equality. Similarly, Terry Zawacki and Michelle Cox (2014) have also edited a recent collection that urges WAC administrators and instructors to advocate for language difference as an asset, and to develop programs and classes that provide L2 students with equal opportunities to succeed in writing. The recent momentum of translingual scholarship, which includes a special issue of *College English* (Lu & Horner, 2016) reveals the growing excitement in our field about how to support pedagogies that honor and practice a wide range of literacies. This scholarship suggests that respect for linguistic diversity is a central value of the field, and have been for a long time.

The enduring necessity of this scholarship, however, also reveals the deep entrenchment of linguistic imperialism in the various locations of writing U.S. post-secondary education, and embedded in their assessment artifacts (Inoue, 2009). Bruce Horner and John Trimbur (2002) have argued that, despite scholarly opposition, tacit English Only policies have long shaped U.S. writing instruction, research, and program administration and continue to do so. Horner and Trimbur's history helps illuminate linguistic imperialism as one of the most persistent consequences colonialism has in relation to writing instruction.

Linguistic imperialism is a problem, historically, internationally, domes-

tically. The volume of knowledge that scholars in Writing Studies have produced about this reality suggests the considerable *interest* Writing Studies has in changing the reality of linguistic imperialism. Moreover, the orientation of scholarship toward pedagogical action and programmatic change demonstrates a general belief that teachers, administrators and scholars also have the *power* to build linguistically inclusive writing programs.

THE POWER AND INTEREST OF INTERNATIONALIZED INSTITUTIONS

Janice Gould (1992) has written that "there is not a university in this country [the US] that is not built on what was once native land" (p. 81). This passage is a reminder that all of us working in North American writing programs continue to occupy and operate on indigenous land, and continue to *benefit* from the colonization that, for example, makes public universities fundamentally capable of receiving public funding.

However, increasing globalization in the latter half of the twentieth century has driven *internationalization*, producing opportunities for new forms of colonial injustice. According to Phillip Altbach and Jane Knight (2007), the structural forces of globalization have compelled post-secondary institutions to create "academic programs, institutions, innovations, and practices . . . to cope with globalization and to reap its benefits" (p. 27). Internationalization comprises both outward-facing projects—like study-abroad programsas well as inward-facing projects, like international student recruitment. Internationalization can bring incredible diversity to institutions and traditionally, can also enhance their "competitiveness, prestige, and strategic alliances" (p. 29). However, internationalization also raises a host of social justice considerations, including financial exploitation, and linguistic and epistemic imperialism.

Scholars have also questioned the economic motives of universities participating in internationalization. While Altbach and Knight (2007) describe profit as one motive of internationalization, they also caution against treating internationalization as "simply a profit center" (p. 35). Frances Vavrus and Amy Pekol (2015) have also noted that the rise of internationalization coincides with declines in public funding for post-secondary education in North America and Europe. Consequently, many universities have been under pressure to restructure financially, and turned to internationalization as one solution. The excoriation of "profit-driven" internationalization however, also suggests that exploitative economic arrangements can and do emerge in global post-secondary education.

These exploitative conditions may affect the conditions surrounding writing instruction. In our own field, Paul Kei Matsuda (2006) has argued that interna-

tionalization gave rise to strategies of linguistic containment, in which institutions quarantine linguistic difference and promote the "myth" that U.S. colleges are linguistically homogeneous, English Only spaces. Matsuda (2006) argues that policies of linguistic containment have been historically part of post-secondary education but are especially apparent beginning with the early influxes of international students in U.S. colleges after World War I. Matsuda writes that despite an increasingly multilingual population of students and scholars on U.S. campuses, "the dominant image of students in the composition class," remained overwhelmingly as monolingual (p. 648). The same is true today, Matsuda argues, and an increasingly diverse linguistic landscape means that the impacts are felt by second-language writers, both international and domestic, as well U.S.-born multilingual students and speakers of unprivileged dialects of English. I argue that the myth of linguistic homogeneity is a colonial myth, to the extent that it exerts linguistic imperialism, and shores up the legitimacy of the colonization of the US.

As Matsuda notes, some varieties of linguistic containment run counter to our field's belief in the value of multilingual and multimodal literacies. Nevertheless, North American universities have occasionally profited from "containing" international students for additional writing and English language instruction. For example, Rubin (1997) has reported that institutions pursuing internationalization can treat Intensive English Programs or English as a Second Language (ESL) writing programs as a valuable source of additional revenue. Eaton (2015) has also written about the profitability of IEP and ESL programs, arguing that their profitability may come at the expense of students, instructors, and administrators. Eaton identifies specific exploitative conditions that can emerge from the general marginalization of IEP and ESL programs, including:

1. failing to offer academic credit when students take ESL and IEP courses;
2. undervaluing ESL and IEP instructors' labor relative to their colleagues; and
3. holding program administrators to inappropriate labor expectations (p. 176).

These are forms of exploitation when universities seek revenue as a primary aim. Moreover, when institutions create IEP and/or ESL programs to enact the "linguistic containment" Matsuda describes, they can produce the false notion that our universities are linguistically homogeneous, or that international students enter in with language deficits, thereby promoting linguistic imperialism.

To the extent that curricular experiences facilitated by ESL programs contribute to the local discourses around writing instruction, the outcomes of those ESL programs should be of interest to all writing programs at institutions pursu-

ing internationalization. Writing programs at institutions pursuing internationalization must be aware and capable of identifying when students with domestic and international citizenship encounter differences in their broader curricular experiences with writing.

Both financial interest and the politics of teaching writing to international students can, unchecked, reproduce colonial relationships. In the worst cases, these two exigencies can lead toward financial exploitation and reinforce an epistemic hierarchy that uncritically promotes the supremacy of colonial epistemologies, for example, in the form of linguistic imperialism. To ensure such outcomes do not happen, writing programs at North American institutions pursuing internationalization should share special responsibility for cultivating educational environments that are conscientious and respectful of the financial commitments international students make, cultivate non-exploitative economic arrangements, and communicate with writing professionals across campus to build curricular experiences that reject English linguistic imperialism and treat language difference as a learning asset, rather than an obstacle.

THOUGHT EXPERIMENT: THE COLONIAL RISKS OF FYW PLACEMENT AT THREE FIRES STATE UNIVERSITY

In this second portion of the chapter, I turn to a thought experiment, utilizing data from the first-year writing (FYW) placement process at a university, which I refer to as Three Fires State University. Kuhn (1964/1977) has argued that thought experiments can help refine theories, and are particularly helpful when theories fail to adequately explain observed phenomena. By compelling researchers to identify both explicit components of a theory, thought experiments can help researchers identify specific "ways in which both expectation and theory must henceforth be revised" (p. 261). In the case of writing placement, a thought experiment is instructive, because writing placement processes exhibit and manifest aspects of underlying theories of placement. Moreover, this example adds to a body of thought experiments about writing programs, which have recently been used to work out the legal and ethical aspects of writing program assessment and administration (Elliot, 2016; Poe et al, 2014). In this case, the thought experiment reveals several ways that the Three Fires State University writing program can share responsibility for colonialism, through the writing placement process.

I begin by describing the structure and assessment processes that impacted students' FYW placements during one semester. Next, I describe how such a process and structure contributed to an environment in which international students were exposed to risks that included financial exploitation, marginalization

of labor, linguistic containment, and deprivation of agency. Finally, I identify options for specific interventions this program could make, that reflect a shared responsibility for colonialism. Like Cushman's (2016) notion of "dwelling in the borders of validity," these interventions contribute to a growing repertoire of strategies for decolonizing writing assessment.

First-Year Writing at Three Fires State University

Three Fires State University is a large, four-year, public land-grant doctoral university in the Midwest. As with many institutions, the school has recruited more international students, and has subsequently seen substantial increases in the international student population. For the semester in question, Spring 2015, international students comprised about 15% of the total undergraduate population. Three Fires State University has many resources and programs to support international students. Many of these students were multilingual, and some, but not all, were English language learners (ELL).

The data used in this thought experiment is from Spring 2015. At that time, it had been many years since the Three Fires State University program had revisited its FYW placement mechanism. During that semester, students in the university's writing program could place into two general kinds of FYW experiences: Students could place into a one-semester "mainstream" FYW experience, that carried four credits toward graduation; alternatively, students could also place into a two-semester sequence, which included a three-credit basic writing course, as well as a no-credit lab, taken before the mainstream course. Students enrolled in this experience were required to attend and pay for more credit hours than they received toward graduation. This arrangement was stipulated under the university policies on "remedial-developmental-preparatory" courses. The essential difference between these two experiences was that the "basic writing" sequence was longer, and required students to pay for courses that did not count toward graduation, while the "mainstream" experience was shorter, and all courses counted toward graduation.

Placement at Three Fires State University

When Three Fires State University began to inquire into the effects of FYW placement for international students, they found that public information about placement was sometimes outdated, and that communication about FYW placement lacked coordination across institutional units. Therefore, the program needed to understand how placements were affected by multiple institutional units. The process of untangling and mapping the decision points that impacted

FYW placement required speaking to administrators and representatives from within the FYW program, as well as the Admissions Office, the Registrar, and the Academic Orientation unit.

Figure 6.1 organizes all the salient details that impacted placement into the FYW program at Three Fires State University during Spring 2015. This decision tree illustrates the two major assessments that impacted students' placements: the FYW program guidelines for FYW placement, and the English Language Proficiency examination.

When a domestic student applied to Three Fires State University, they were assessed only in accordance with FYW placement guidelines. Using cutoff scores recommended by the FYW program on the ACT English and/or the SAT Critical Reading, the Registrar automatically enrolled students into either the "mainstream" sequence or the "basic writing" sequence. The cut scores according to FYW program guidelines in Spring 2015 were 16 on the ACT English and/or 390 on the SAT Critical Reading. Students who attended academic orientation programs were also advised about appropriate placements by advisors from the Academic Orientation unit and subsequently had the opportunity to challenge their placements by taking a timed writing exam.

When international students enrolled, the factors that affected their FYW placement multiplied. This was because international students were subject to an English Language Proficiency requirement that was outside the purview of the FYW program.

For the English Language Proficiency requirement, international students could submit scores on a range of tests, including ACT English, SAT Critical Reading, TOEFL, and IELTS tests. After submitting scores from one or more of these tests to the Admissions office, students received either "regular" or "provisional" enrollment status.

When international students submitted test scores above the cut scores on qualifying tests for English Language proficiency, they received "regular" status. These students were then placed into FYW courses based on ACT English and/or SAT Critical Reading scores and according to placement guidelines for students with domestic citizenship. However, the scores necessary for students to establish English Language Proficiency with the SAT Critical Reading (480 or higher) or ACT English (18 or higher) were both higher than those domestic students needed to place into a credit-bearing, "mainstream" FYW course. Regularly admitted international students without SAT or ACT scores automatically placed into the "basic writing" sequence.

However, when international students' test scores were below the English Language Proficiency cut scores, they were admitted with "provisional" status and redirected to an Intensive English Program (IEP), for further assessment.

The IEP then evaluated this subset of international students again, using a home-grown test that included multiple-choice listening and reading comprehension sections as well as a writing section with a 35-minute timed writing assignment. This test was used to place students into IEP coursework or determine that a student had met the institution's English language requirement. Students with IEP coursework transitioned into FYW depending on exit examinations–graded, timed writing tests. When students received high enough grades on their essays, they were then read and placed by ad hoc committee from the FYW program. At this point, unless the student took it upon themselves to produce evidence of high ACT English or SAT Critical Reading scores, readers' decisions were final.

FYW Program Guidelines ← — — — · · · · · · English Language Proficiency · · · · →

Did the student have **domestic** or **international** citizenship?

Domestic and international students may have placed differently when their scores were:
ACT English = 17
SAT Critical Reading between 390-480

Domestic

International

Were scores above the cutoff for mainstream placement? (ACT English ≥ 16, or SAT Critical Reading ≥ 390)

< · · · · · Yes · · · · ·

Were test scores above the cutoff for English Language Proficiency? (ACT English ≥ 18 and SAT Critical Reading ≥ 480)

Yes   No

No

Did the student successfully challenge her placement on a timed writing exam?

Did readers place the student into a credit-bearing experience, based on timed essay from IEP exit exam?

Intensive English Program Coursework

Yes   No   Yes   No

Yes

Did IEP determine student's timed writing scores qualified her for a placement reading?

Credit-bearing FYW Experiences

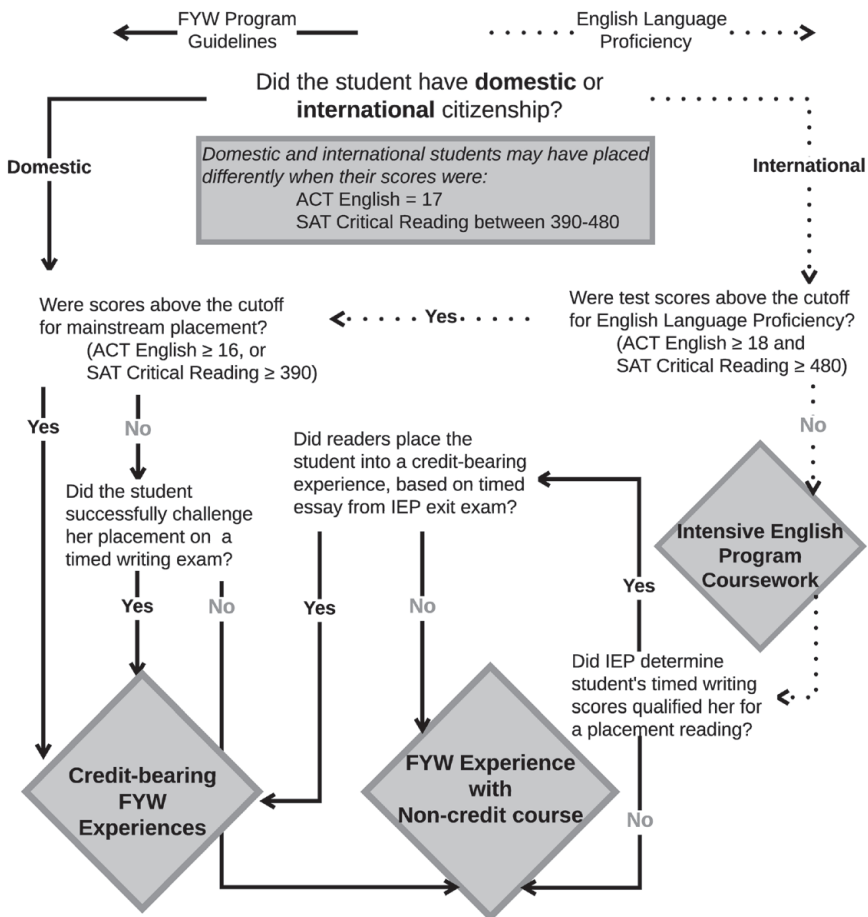**FYW Experience with Non-credit course**

No

No

Figure 6.1. Decision tree of assessments that affected FYW placement in Spring 2015.

Theoretical Problems in FYW Placement

The decision tree in Figure 6.1 reveals several areas of theoretical concern including: (1) the distinctions made between domestic and international students; (2) using admissions exams for the purposes of writing placement; (3) the difference in actual cut scores used for domestic and international students on the ACT English and SAT Critical Reading.

The first important area of theoretical concern is the initial distinction between domestic and international students and the different assessments these different groups encounter. The initial theoretical distinction presumes language proficiency differences between domestic and international students. However, at Three Fires State University in Spring 2015, it was not explicit or clear that differences in national origin necessarily signified differences in language proficiency. This assumption does not account for multilingual students with domestic citizenship, nor does it recognize that some international students came from primarily English-speaking educational environments.

Moreover, Figure 6.1 reveals a second theoretical concern: students' final placements were the consequence of either ACT English and SAT Critical Reading scores, or, for some international students, a timed writing examination administered by the IEP. What was the relationship of these artifacts to the program's writing construct? While many postsecondary institutions use admissions exams for placement purposes (Breland, Maxey, Gernand, Cumming, & Trapani, 2002), those in Writing Studies have argued that these admissions exams often do not meaningfully represent FYW, as it is taught in U.S. postsecondary education (Isaacs & Molloy, 2010). Furthermore, some international students who took IEP courses were placed based on a timed writing exam, developed and scored by the IEP faculty. To use admissions tests and timed writing exams for the purposes of placement, the Three Fires State University writing program would need a strong argument, validating the appropriateness of these procedures. Additionally, that validation argument would need to address why different techniques are appropriate for IEP students, compared to domestic students and regularly admitted international students.

The differences in the actual cut scores is another area of theoretical concern. As Figure 6.1 indicates, a comparison of FYW placement guidelines and the English language proficiency requirement shows that the cut scores on the ACT English and SAT Critical Reading were different. Domestic students who submitted ACT scores needed to score a 16 or above on the ACT English to place into the credit-bearing, mainstream course. However, international students who submitted ACT scores needed a score of 18 or higher on the ACT English to demonstrate English language proficiency. Because this assessment

pre-empted the FYW placement procedure, the effective placement cut score on the ACT English was two points higher for international students.

Similarly, domestic students who submitted SAT scores needed a score of 390 on the SAT Critical Reading section to place into a credit-bearing FYW experience. However, international students who submitted SAT scores needed a score of 480 on the SAT Critical Reading to demonstrate English language proficiency. Again, the *de facto* placement cut score for international students was higher on the SAT Critical Reading, since they needed a higher score to just pass the English language proficiency requirement.

Consequently, in Spring 2015, there were different effective cut scores for domestic and international students, and, a range of scores where students might have placed differently, depending on their national origin. If a domestic student submitted a score of 450 on the SAT Critical Reading, she would place immediately into the credit-bearing FYW course; if an international student submitted the same score, she would receive "provisional" admission, and to place into the same course as the domestic student, she would have to demonstrate English language proficiency on the IEP's homegrown exam; or take IEP courses and perform sufficiently well on timed exit exams.

Therefore, this third theoretical concern involves the rationale for applying different effective cut scores to domestic and international students. In the case of Three Fires State University writing program, the difference in cut scores emerged because requirements for FYW placement and English language proficiency developed independent of one another, and had not been coordinated. However, it became clear that the English language proficiency requirement had the potential to impact international students' FYW placements. Aware of this potential, an important theoretical question emerged for Three Fires State University: what should be the relationship between the English language proficiency requirements and subsequent IEP courses, and the FYW placement process and its courses? Figure 6.1 reveals how the combinations of these requirements at Three Fires State University throttled international student enrollments into credit bearing FYW courses.

The placement model, then, manifested three problematic assumptions. The first problematic assumption was that U.S. citizens were proficient in English, whereas students with international citizenship were not, to such a degree as to warrant additional testing. The second problematic assumption was that the subtests from admissions examinations were valid instruments for placing students into FYW courses. The third problematic assumption was that higher cut scores on these tests should apply for international students, than should for domestic students. The combined effect of these three problematic assumptions, was that they reproduced the colonial myth that the

linguistic landscapes of U.S. postsecondary education are primarily or ideally English-speaking, and monolingual (Matsuda, 2006). The higher volume of assessments and higher cut scores that international students experienced propelled them toward the basic writing experience, setting the stage for a localized form of English linguistic imperialism.

Relationship Between National Origin and Placement

After finding that the FYW placement process applied extra scrutiny and higher standards to international students, the Three Fires State University FYW program wanted to learn if there was evidence that the process impacted international student FYW placements. Three Fires State University modeled an inquiry on Mya Poe, Norbert Elliot, John Aloysius Cogan Jr., and Tito G. Nurudeen Jr.'s (2014) disparate impact method for investigating unintended discrimination. While the authors offer disparate impact analysis as one method for investigating unintended racial discrimination, they also maintain that the approach "may be applied to any discrete, nonmajority group" (p. 592). The first step of a disparate impact analysis is to identify adverse impact, for which the authors recommend tests of statistical significance. Such tests furnish evidence as to whether differences in outcomes are likely to be a matter of chance or an effect of the assessment itself. Therefore, the Three Fires State University FYW program sought to determine if there was evidence of adverse impact for students with international citizenship.

In Spring 2015, the program at Three Fires State University surveyed students internally about their placements, their awareness of the placement process, and their course experiences. Due to a lack of immediately available, disaggregated data (which Casie Moreland, Chapter 5 this collection, identifies as its own justice problem), the program used these data to disaggregate students by citizenship.

Survey participants were recruited by their Three Fires State FYW instructors between Week 13 and Week 16 of the Spring 2015 semester. Of the 3,157 students enrolled in FYW that semester, 790 responded to the survey (25% response rate). Thus, for the purposes of calculating possible adverse impact, there was a sufficiently robust sample of participants at the 95% confidence interval with a margin of error of 3.02%. Survey participants reported their ethnic origin as well as the FYW courses they had placed into.

Results from this survey were used to investigate whether statistically significant relationships existed between students' national origin and their FYW placements. Table 6.1 indicates the findings from this survey.

Table 6.1. Chi-square analysis of placements for domestic and international students

Reported Citizenship	(NC)[1]	(CR)[2]	% NC	% CR	Expected NC	Expected CR	X^2 / p
Domestic	20	540	3.6%	96.4%	127.6	432.4	403.596
International	160	70	69.6%	30.4%	52.4	177.6	$p < .0001$

[1] *Non-credit basic writing experience*

[2] *Credit-bearing writing experience*

Note: Because simple chi-square models require cell counts of five, the sample for this survey was adequate for this analysis. This analysis includes the relatively small number of domestic students who reported placing into non-credit, basic writing courses

The results of a chi-square test showed a statistically significant difference in placements among FYW students with different citizenship identifications (X^2 (1, n = 790) = 403.596). Meeting the 95 percent confidence interval, these results indicated that, for the sample of students surveyed in Spring 2015, placement differences were not the result of chance but were instead related to the placement process itself. These results also suggest that one consequence of the additional scrutiny placed on international students was a greater likelihood of placing into the basic writing course.

According to Poe and her colleagues (2014), these results suggest there was *adverse impact* for international students enrolled in Spring 2015. The next steps in a disparate impact analysis of the Three Fires State University FYW placement process would be to identify an educational *need* for international students to enroll in the non-credit, basic writing course. Finally, a full disparate impact analysis would compel the program to consider whether there existed alternative placement options with less burdensome consequences for international students.

However, the Three Fires State University writing program was not able to locate a validation argument supporting their placement model. While validation arguments may have existed that supported the university's English language proficiency requirement, the program did not find evidence of recent programmatic validation argument explaining why international students should take the remedial FYW sequence more frequently. Rather than try to establish the educational need for international students to take remedial courses, the Three Fires State University FYW program had the opportunity to do as Cushman (2016) advocates, and "dwell in the borders created by the colonial difference." In other words, the findings from the FYW program's investigation into

placement outcomes for international students offered an opportunity to contemplate and imagine more precisely the nature of the differences the placement process created for students.

The Colonial Risks of FYW Placement

Following Cushman's advice, "dwelling in the borders" of the placement situation illuminated four colonial risks the process posed to international students. These risks included: economic exploitation of international students; marginalization of international student labor; linguistic containment and English linguistic imperialism; and suppressing student agency.

Exposure to Dropping Out

When students enrolled in the basic writing experience, they paid money and spent time in courses that did not carry credit toward graduation. The burden would be on the program to justify why such an arrangement was necessary. Failure to justify this arrangement would constitute negligence at best, and could predispose international students to increased rates of dropping out. The Complete College America project (2012) has documented the problems of over-remediation, which include much lower graduation rates. Good justifications may exist for international students to spend more time in FYW than their colleagues; however, in the absence of those justifications, Three Fires State University risked over-remediating international students, and exposing them to higher dropout rates.

Marginalization of International Student Labor

Marginalization of student labor happens when students fail to receive credit for their courses. Again, students enrolled in the remedial sequence took courses that did not count toward graduation. This marginalized the labor that was happening in the basic writing course sequence. Such labor marginalization is common in remediation programs (Eaton, 2015), however, it minimizes students' educational opportunities: specifically, the opportunity to move through their coursework in a way that is timely, systematic, and justifiable. In the worst cases, Three Fires State University risked distributing this harm unequally to international students, thus marginalizing international student labor. Such a risk is colonial to the extent that it reproduces historical patterns of marginalizing the labor of non-U.S. citizens.

LINGUISTIC CONTAINMENT

The remedial structure of FYW and its disproportionate effect on international students, suggests Three Fires State University was also practicing linguistic containment by submitting international students to additional language assessments prior to FYW placement. Analysis of the FYW placement process showed the program ran the risk of "containing" international students regardless of the specific nature of their linguistic differences, given evidence of extra scrutiny and adverse impact.

Moreover, because the institution conceptualized the course as remedial, it treated the linguistic distinctions between remediated students and their peers as "deficiencies," structuring inequalities between English and other languages. A further colonial risk of attempting to validate the FYW placement procedure is linguistic containment, propagating the ideal of English only, thus structuring English linguistic imperialism.

CONSTRAINING STUDENT AGENCY

Finally, the Three Fires State University saw that their placement process operated almost entirely independently of students' perceptions of their rhetorical needs. Instead, the placement process was what Blakesley (2002) calls an "expression of power and a symptom of the institution's normalizing desire" (p. 12). As an expression of such power, the placement process modeled a hallmark of colonial administrations, wherein the institution assumed authority to make placement decisions on students' behalf. This act also denied students their sovereignty and self-determination, important hallmarks of decolonial practice (Spurr, 1993; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Christie Toth (Chapter 4) in this volume, documents well the risks that this can create for vulnerable populations, which include under-placing students of color (Bailey et al., 2010).

RISKS, BENEFITS, POWER AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This brief analysis of FYW placement at Three Fires State University reveals some of the privileges and harms that can emerge within writing programs located in the context of internationalization. While universities perhaps stand to accrue the privileges or the benefits of internationalization, there also may exist processes that risk harming these students considerably. Universities risk harming international students when they exploit them for their resources, devalue their labor, articulate their linguistic differences as "deficiencies," and constrain

their abilities to make their own educational choices. While my focus has been on international students at one university, all students stand to benefit from interventions the program makes to mitigate these colonial risks.

I argue the program could take this as an opportunity to share responsibility for redressing the colonial consequences of internationalization. Again, the program need not be personally responsible for these colonial consequences to share responsibility for redressing the colonial consequences of internationalization. Per the shared responsibility framework (Poe & Inoue, 2016; Young, 2013), the FYW program at Three Fires State University would have a charge to redress the colonial consequences of internationalization, based on the privileges it accrued from internationalization, the interest it had in mitigating harm to international students, and the direct power it had to impact potential colonial injustices.

How, then, would a FYW writing program like Three Fires State University begin to take responsibility for the colonial risks its placement model posed to international students? In the final section, I describe some possible strategic interventions that emerge from the analysis I have presented in this chapter.

SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLONIALISM

As others in this volume and in the writing assessment scholarship have argued, we can pursue fairer and more just ends when we maximize opportunity structures and occasions for learning (Elliot, 2016; Perryman-Clark, 2016; West-Puckett, 2016). To this end, Elliot (2016) argues that writing assessments should identify the opportunity structures created through maximum writing construct representation. What would the basic writing course look like, if Three Fires State University imagined the course not as a place to contain linguistic difference, but to promote linguistic diversity as an asset? What would it mean to refuse the colonial pressure to remediate students with language "deficiencies" and, instead, systematically privilege language differences? This process would also fulfill the final step in a disparate impact analysis in compelling the Three Fires writing program to consider whether there existed alternative placement options with less burdensome consequences for international students.

POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS AT THREE FIRES STATE UNIVERSITY

First, the FYW program at Three Fires State University could eliminate the remedial status of the lower-level basic writing course and revise its content. In the context of significant diversity, a remediation policy predicated on linguistic "deficiencies" echoed the rhetoric of linguistic imperialism and containment. Moreover, the marginalization of international student labor and heightened

risk of dropping out was a problematic, colonial risk of the remedial structure. Therefore, Three Fires State University could work to change the institutional designation of the basic writing course. Such a course would more fully honor linguistic diversity and could operate as a strategic alternative to linguistic containment and linguistic imperialism. Additionally, such a course could better honor students' labor by allowing the program to offer credit toward graduation for this course.

Additionally, this course could be more responsive to the increasingly international and multilingual populations of students who are pushed toward this course by its placement procedures. Such a course could be oriented around the principle of multiplying, rather than restricting educational opportunities for multilingual and international students. This course could treat linguistic and cultural difference as a genuine asset.

Imagine, for example, a distinct, non-remedial experience within the FYW curriculum that assumes students are linguistically diverse, rather than linguistically homogeneous. This course could:

- Treat prior cultural and rhetorical knowledge as an asset for learning and a resource for writing;
- Recognize students' experience and expertise with culture and language;
- Create a diverse community of writers who engage and support their colleagues' development as writers;
- Treat students' educational and rhetorical needs as culturally situated; and
- Articulate affordances and challenges of using writing to manage cultural transition.

While Three Fires State University revised the overall placement process, it could also maximize opportunity structures to better serve multilingual and international students and develop the basic writing course into FYW class productively oriented around language difference.

Next, the Three Fires State University FYW program could take further responsibility for the colonial risks its placement process posed to international students by addressing the theoretical problems of the placement process. In the short term, Three Fires State University FYW program could work with institutional partners to articulate a more meaningful basis for assessing English language proficiency and better coordinate the cut scores for FYW placement and English language proficiency requirements. This could begin to ameliorate some of the inequalities between international students and their domestic peers.

In the long-term, however, Three Fires State University's writing program

should consider using instruments other than admissions test. Specifically, a Directed Self-Placement (DSP) process could produce more socially just outcomes for international students. Elsewhere in this volume, Toth (Chapter 4, this collection) argues that DSP models can produce socially just outcomes, especially when administrators foreground social justice in their validation of DSP. Daniel J. Royer and Roger Gilles' (1998) claim that part of DSP's value is in its "restoration of interpersonal agency" (p. 61) is especially persuasive, and a DSP model could restore at least in part students' self-determination. As Three Fires State University FYW writing program found, the placement process manifests the colonial administrative practice of managing people and deprives them of self-determination. DSP might be an effective option to ameliorate this problem. While using a DSP model alone cannot solve problems of equity (see, for example, Ketai, 2012; Schendel & O'Neill, 1999), a well-implemented and validated DSP model, such as the diligently documented process at the University of Michigan (Gere et al., 2010; Gere et al., 2013; Toth & Aull, 2014) could contribute to a decolonized FYW program by restoring an element of informed agency in FYW placements.

CONCLUSION

The case of Three Fires State University shows how structured institutional processes like placement can unintentionally prop up or reproduce English linguistic imperialism, which can adversely affect international students, or other groups susceptible to colonial disenfranchisement. Moreover, this case also reveals how writing programs may be affected by assessment processes beyond their direct control. Writing programs, therefore, can and should share responsibility for colonialism without necessarily having or needing to establish personal responsibility. North American writing programs at institutions participating in internationalization, especially, can and should share this responsibility, especially when they have the power and resources to do so, or, stand to accrue benefits or harms from internationalization.

The interventions above represent a larger aim, which I would like to offer to the growing repertoire of techniques for decolonizing writing assessments. Writing programs may decolonize writing assessments by developing strategic alternatives to linguistic containment that promote linguistic plurality. In contrast to policies, course structures, and assessments that structure "inequalities between English and other languages" (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47), these strategic alternatives can include policies, course structures, and assessment procedures that thoroughly integrate an ethic that recognizes and values linguistic heterogeneity, rhetorical flexibility, as well as multilingual, multimodal, and translingual

capacities. This aim could have more just outcomes for the multilingual international students in the Three Fires State University Writing Program. However, more broadly, this aim is a concrete direction writing programs might pursue, as they begin to share responsibility for colonialism.

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PART 3. ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH OUTCOMES DESIGN

CHAPTER 7.
THE VIOLENCE OF ASSESSMENT: WRITING ASSESSMENT, SOCIAL (IN)JUSTICE, AND THE ROLE OF VALIDATION

Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick

Research Problem: The negative consequences that accompany writing assessment are investigated—whether large-scale or classroom-based—and attention is given to better understanding of ways to conceptualize and mitigate these consequences.

Research Question: Can writing assessment be understood as a form of violence, and if so, what can be done to avert negative consequences?

Literature Review: We review writing assessment scholarship and peace research (specifically, Johan Galtung [1969, 1990]) in order to make the case that many of the negative consequences that accompany assessment and can be rightly considered violent; then we review validity theory literature to examine ways to discover, identify, and mitigate these consequences.

Methodology: We develop a theoretical framework by constructing a definition of violence. We then examine writing assessment through this theoretical lens. Finally, we argue that validity theory can and should work for the goal of limiting the violence of assessment.

Conclusions: We argue that the argument-based approach to validation proposed by Michael T. Kane (1992, 2001, 2006, 2013, 2015) plants the seeds for a theory of validity and validation that could be more sensitive to the violence of assessment than is usually the case. We make specific suggestions for how to adapt Kane's approach for these purposes. Specifically, we argue that shifting the role of mitigating negative systemic consequences (e.g., structural violence) into the very interpretation/use argument (IUA) of the

assessment will necessitate that such potential violence be investigated as part of the validation process, and not relegated to a secondary role.

Qualifications: Our focus is on locally developed and used writing assessments, not on published tests. Our aim, however, is to provide a theoretical framework that might guide inter-institutional assessment, and/or serve as a guiding principle of local assessments at any variety of sites. In addition, we note that while we focus on Kane's argument-based approach to validation, and while Kane's work is perhaps the most widely accepted model/theory of validity and validation, not all educational measurement specialists support this model (e.g., Borsboom et al., 2004).

Directions for Further Study: As noted above, we suggest actionable ways to foreground structural violence in assessment arguments as a necessary part of validation. Future studies might report on validation research that takes the potential violence of assessment seriously enough to frame the disruption of structural violence into the IUA of the assessment, and therefore as a primary area of investigation for the assessment's validation inquiry.

It is no secret that writing assessment, at all levels, can *feel* violent to those assessed—whether by discouraging their progress, making them feel incapable or unintelligent, reinforcing a history of voices telling them that they "can't write," placing them in Basic Writing when they don't feel that is where they belong, or denying them exit from a writing course or program. On one hand, classroom grading practices, which are intended to help students understand where they stand in a course or on a project, can reify hierarchical power relationships between the teacher/authority and the students/subjects (e.g., Shor, 1992), obscuring students' views of their writing abilities or paper qualities (e.g., Inoue, 2012, 2014), or encouraging students to engage in inauthentic writing situations, as noted by Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckahm (Chapter 9, this collection; see also, Pulfrey, Buchs, & Butera, 2011) when they point out, "Only in school do we write to show others we know how to write—for a grade." Assessment scholars like Inoue (2015) validate such anecdotes, noting that grades can be indeed "destructive to student learning in writing classrooms" (p. 178; see also Kohn, 2011). On the other hand, large-scale assessment—such as placement and exit assessment—comes with its own set of problems: students are often rendered powerless, receiving life-level decisions out of placement and exit from the nameless, faceless will of the institution (Lucas, 1988; O'Neill, 2011), and

as Marilyn S. Sternglass (1997) pointed out, large-scale assessment of timed-essays like the CUNY Writing Assessment Test (used for both placement and as a "rising junior" exam), pay "scant attention to the quality of the ideas being expressed and no concern with the writer's purpose in responding to the test question" (p. 143).

Assessment can also feel violent to teachers and writing program administrators, often making them feel that they have to conform to imposed criteria that may not fit their students or their pedagogies, or forcing them to quantify unquantifiable matters just for the sake of satisfying institutional pressures. In classrooms, many of us dread the day that we hand back those first papers and watch our classroom full of critical co-investigators (Freire, 1970) begin to look more like unhappy employees who will do whatever the boss says but will not like it, the pay(off), or the boss. Program assessment can feel equally violent. For example, many commonly used writing assessment methodologies—such as score-based placement and exit assessments—are based upon such outdated assumptions, which often put teachers and placement/exit evaluators in a position where writing assessment actually undermines their philosophies of teaching, learning, and literacy. Even recent innovations, such as outcomes assessment, can be fraught; Chris W. Gallagher (2016) argues that outcomes assessment can take away teachers' abilities to more genuinely engage in the types of pedagogical praxes that composition theory and practice strives to achieve, later saying that "top-down outcomes assessment regimes can lead to latter-day Taylorization" (p. 257). As history reveals, disenfranchisement is related to violence.

So the suggestion that writing assessment—as an enterprise of sorting and ranking students, particularly via comparison to pre-determined outcomes—can be harmful on several fronts is not likely to shock many. In this chapter, we aim to articulate when the harm caused by writing assessment becomes violence, and further, identify contexts in which that violence impedes social justice. In making this argument, we build a tradition of research in writing assessment on the effects of construct underrepresentation in assessing the writing of diverse students. From White and Thomas's (1981) study of the English Placement Test to more recent work by Poe and colleagues (2014) on disparate impact in placement testing and Elliot and colleagues' (2016) study of eportfolios, writing assessment researchers have traced the various ways that writing assessment may disadvantage various groups. With the exception of Inoue (2015), however, this work has not used structural violence as an explanatory framework.

Our main focus in this chapter, then, is on structural violence (Galtung, 1969), which is a less interpersonal or direct kind of violence and one that is laced into social structures and inflicted upon some groups but not others—e.g., when the poor suffer health issues from having less access to quality foods; when

racial or ethnic minorities have differential access to police protection; when, as Kelly J. Sassi (Chapter 10, this collection) points out, "the rate of death by suicide by Native female adolescents is nearly four times that of White females (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2011)" (see UNESCO [2015] for other specific details/examples). Although composition scholars may be familiar with the concept of structural violence, the term is often used loosely, and we seek here to trace the history of the term in order to identify a more precise application of it in regards to writing assessment. We thus follow peace researcher Johan Galtung, who coined the phrase structural violence in 1969, and use his theory of violence as a framework for discussing and making visible the types of social (in)justice issues that arise when we assess student writing. In focusing on structural violence, our work follows in the tradition of scholarship in health (e.g., Farmer et al., 2006), sociology (e.g., Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), anthropology (e.g., Gupta, 2012), law (e.g., Peresie, 2009; West-Faulcon, 2009) and peace and conflict studies (e.g., Galtung, 1969, 1990), among other fields. We further seek to explore the mechanisms through which such potential violence seeps into our assessment efforts. In particular, we explore the roles that representation and normativity/normalization play in both (a) the types of worldviews that beget structural violence (e.g., informing a colonialist mindset) and (b) in nearly all assessment practices. Finally, while we offer no solution per se, we end with a suggestion that an assessment validation model based on Michael T. Kane's argument-based approach (1992, 2001, 2006, 2013, 2015), with certain key revisions, could work to make these matters more visible for validity claims.

DEFINING AND THEORIZING VIOLENCE

Johan Galtung, who is often recognized as the founder of peace and conflict studies, coined the term structural violence in a 1969 article (Farmer et al., 2006; Galtung, 1990; Gupta, 2012). In that article, Galtung (1969) uses *structural violence* and *social injustice* interchangeably: "In order not to overwork the word violence we shall sometimes refer to the condition of structural violence as social injustice" (p. 171, italics original). Similar to Galtung's method, we do not attempt "to arrive at anything like the definition, or the typology—for there are obviously many types of violence" (p. 168, italics original), agreeing instead that what's "[m]ore important is to indicate theoretically significant dimensions of violence that can lead to thinking, research and, potentially, action" (p. 168). Our goal here is to develop a deeper understanding of what violence is, and how it relates to the larger project of writing assessment, so that we can work toward more nonviolent/socially just assessment practices and methodologies. In what

follows, we suggest three components of violence that will be central to our discussion below: (a) potential-actualization distance, (b) a zero-sum cost-benefit relationship, and (c) the avoidability of the harm inflicted. The conceptual framework informing our search for a deeper understanding of violence is shown in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1. Violence defined and differentiated

Violence	
Potential-actualization distances *exist*	
Potential-actualization distances are *avoidable*	
Personal Violence (Direct)	**Structural Violence (Indirect)**
Clear assailant-victim connection	No clear assailant-victim connection
Intentionality on the part of the assailant	No intentionality on the part of the assailant
Clearly visible	Largely invisible

Galtung (1969) defines violence as

> the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is. Violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance. (p. 168)

Rather than defining what a person's or people's potential may be, Galtung asserts that whatever that potentiality is, violence is the cause and impact of being held back from reaching it. This framework is particularly powerful because potentiality can relate to larger social goals such as "freedom, education, autonomy, dignity, and the ability to participate in society" (Deaton, 2013, p. 9), and it can relate to mirco-level matters such as academic achievement, job opportunities, and leadership roles. For example, when a person is less likely to get a job interview because their name sounds more Latinx or African American than white (e.g., Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2003; Matthews, 2014), Galtung argues that violence is what causes and what maintains that distance between the potential to be employed and lesser likelihood of actualizing that potential because of these social factors. Similarly, when students from certain zip codes have a greater potential-actualization distance because their school has less qualified teachers (Goldhaber, Lavery, & Theobald, 2015), more physical violence, fewer resources, less likelihood of proper diagnosis of learning disabilities or special education needs (Morgan, et al., 2015) than students from a different zip code experience, we can describe this as violence; all of these students may have similar levels of

potential, however defined, but the chances of actualizing that potential are far lower for the first group. These disparate situations are not just matters of happenstance or bad luck; they are created and maintained by violence. J. Elspeth Stuckey (1991), famous for her work *The Violence of Literacy,* makes a similar point when she argues, "To elucidate the violence of literacy is to understand the distance it forces between people and the possibilities for their lives" (p. 94).

Violence that occurs on the physical, individual level—as opposed to the structural level—seems predicated upon both direct action and intentionality. The existence of an agent directly and intentionally inflicting harm upon another seems to be, in large part, what distinguishes violence from mere or accidental injury. Galtung (1969) uses the word pairs *personal-structural* and *direct-indirect* to delineate this type of direct, physical violence from forms of violence that inflict harm through the smooth functioning of unjust social structures (see also Žižek, 2008). Galtung states, "Violence with a clear subject-object relation is manifest because it is visible as action. . . . Violence without this relation is structural, built into structure" (p. 171). Thus, "in a society where life expectancy is twice as high in the upper as in the lower classes, violence is exercised even if there are no concrete actors one can point to directly attacking others, as when one person kills another" (p. 171). Given this notion that structural violence has no clear direct assailant-victim relation, using the metric of intentionality to identify acts of violence can be problematic because without that subject-object relation between the victim and the assailant, it may seem as if there is no violence when there is no concrete agent intending to benefit from the suffering of another. But Galtung warns that "ethical systems directed against *intended* violence will easily fail to capture structural violence in their nets" (p. 171, our emphasis). In other words, when one looks only for intentional harm as indicating violence, the existence of structural violence becomes invisible. Focusing on intent may actually misdirect our attention from the indirect, structural violence that exists in these systems.[1]

Rather than intentionality, then, we focus on the types of violence that entail a system of *beneficiaries* and *casualties* operating in a zero-sum relationship— meaning that those who benefit do so *because of*, and *to the extent that*, those who suffer, suffer. Farmer and colleagues (2006), using Galtung's framework to explore the violence of differential disease spread and healthcare opportuni-

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1   Iris Marion Young's (2011/1990) discussion of oppression asserts a similar point: she argues that oppression refers not only to "the tyranny of a ruling group over another" but that in the "*structural* sense[,] oppression refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of the often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions, media and cultural stereotypes," to the "everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society" (p. 42, our emphasis)

ties, point out some of the major instances of structural violence in the modern world, e.g., poverty, racism, and gender inequality. In terms of a zero-sum system of beneficiaries, these matters can be seen as violence in part because (a) the non-poor benefit from the unequal distribution of resources that keep the poor in danger of all kinds of harm; (b) men benefit from the opportunities disproportionately unavailable to women; (c) white people benefit from, among other things, a legal system that is less concerned with their transgressions than with those of racial minorities. These beneficiaries may not wish for these benefits, but as Charles W. Mills (1997) notes in *The Racial Contract*, "All whites are *beneficiaries* of the Contract, though some whites are not *signatories* to it" (p. 11, italics original). Many may even wish to give up their received benefits if it were possible; however, when the suffering of some exists in this zero-sum relationship with benefits experienced by others, regardless of intentionality, we have reason to call it violence.

The final component of our definition of violence stems from Galtung's (1969) point that violence can be seen as avoidable harm. He uses the example of an earthquake, stating "[T]he case of people dying from earthquakes today [1969] would not warrant analysis in terms of violence, but the day after tomorrow, when earthquakes may become avoidable, such deaths may be seen as the result of violence" (pp. 168-169). As we explore the violence of assessment and of assessment methodologies, we will also focus on the question of avoidability, using the question of whether assessment has to be done in certain ways—or whether certain practices and principles are avoidable—as part of our inquiry.

With this framework in hand, then, we next explore the ways in which two methodological pillars of writing (really, all educational) assessment work to usher in the potential for violence in even our more carefully thought-out and context-sensitive assessment practices: representation and normalization/normativity. Matters of social (in)justice will require the kinds of critical social inquiry traditions that specifically deal with less visible matters of power and systemic oppression—such as feminist, queer, postcolonial, anti-racist traditions which actively seek to problematize historical power-relations (including dominant or assumed/unexamined positionalities), some of which we cite in this section.

VIOLENCE, REPRESENTATION, AND NORMALIZATION

One of the key connections we see between structural violence and writing assessment occurs in the process of representation, or the act of speaking on behalf of others or creating a description or portrayal of others. Representation will always be problematic, as it takes over (at least part of) the decision-making process for the represented; speaks *for* others; chooses what to include (and im-

portantly, to exclude) from any description or portrayal; and delimits agency, in that the represented are at the mercy of the representor in terms of how they will be portrayed to the world and back to themselves. Postcolonial theorist Edward Said (1993) stated:

> We have become very aware in recent years of the constraints upon the cultural representation of women, and the pressures that go into the created representations of inferior classes and races. In all these areas—gender, class, and race—criticism has correctly focused upon the institutional forces of modern Western societies that shape and set limits on the representation of what are considered essentially subordinate beings. (p. 80)

Feminist ethnographers Avishai, Gerber, and Randles (2012) similarly describe "the problematic power dynamics of speaking for others" (p. 402).

In terms of violence, it would seem that those with the power to represent others have the power to control the potential-actualization distance of those others. As Said (1993) noted in the above quote, modern Western societies possess the institutional power to determine the boundaries (the shape and limits) of how others (by gender, class, and race) will be represented, a point that echoes Galtung's (1969) first principle of violence, namely, the increasing of another's potential-actualization distance. But Said also points out that this "capacity to represent, portray, characterize, and depict is not easily available to just any member of just any society . . . . [R]epresentation itself has been characterized as keeping the subordinate subordinate, the inferior inferior" (p. 80). Thus we see that zero-sum system of beneficiaries at play here too. Those with the power to represent, with the power to decide how others are to be portrayed, are invariably the ones who benefit from both the representation of the other, as well as of the self (Coronil, 1996).

As for the third component of our framework, avoidability, Said (2003/1977) says "it needs to be made clear about cultural discourse and exchange within a culture that what is commonly circulated by it is not 'truth' but representations" (p. 21). Indeed, Said's "analysis of the Orientalist text therefore places emphasis on the evidence, which is by no means invisible, for such representations as *representations*, not as 'natural' depictions of the Orient" (p. 21, italics original). In other words, the given representation of a group or group member cannot be unavoidable since it is predicated upon a decision made, not upon what is the 'truth' or what is 'natural'—which might then be seen as avoidable.

The connections to assessment here should be clear. Whether we represent a specific paper with a letter grade, a student with a placement decision/identity (e.g., basic writer), or we represent their semester's or year's coursework as a pass

or fail via exit assessment, our assessment scores and decisions nearly always reflect an image back to the student/writer of themselves, one which will never capture the totality of their learning/literacies, and one which is always rooted in some type of cultural and/or institutional values that were decided by those with the power to decide. As James Baldwin succinctly put it in a 1963 interview, the white power structure of the modern world was based upon the "possib[ility] for an Englishman to describe an African and make the African believe it . . . [,] for a white man in this country to tell a negro who he is and make the negro believe this" (Mossberg, 2012). Writing assessment—whether classroom-based or large-scale, formative or summative—would seem to entail a very similar power of description/representation. Key is focusing on the interpretation and use of scores.

Further, we know from the brief history of our field that the mechanisms through which we represent students are methodological choice, none of which offers a "natural" depiction of the "truth" of the student/writer/writing. At one time, for example, the notion of direct writing assessment—that is, actually reading student writing instead of assessing their writing via multiple-choice tests—was once viewed as unfeasible; White (1993, 2001) recounts the battle to convince relevant audiences that direct writing assessment could be made reliable enough to replace indirect, multiple-choice testing. Today, the choice to use multiple-choice testing, with its highly reliable but dangerously thin representations of student writing, is very clearly avoidable—from a methodological perspective, if not always from a financial perspective. Since that time, the direct assessment of timed-essays has been largely over taken by portfolios and/or eportfolio assessment as the soundest, richest methodology for assessing student writing/writers. And scholars such as White (2005) proposed specific methods that are far more cost effective than what once seemed plausible. The point is that as time passes and fields develop, the matter of avoidability changes, and that which once seemed unavoidable (and therefore, nonvoliolent) can indeed become a matter of violence—as Galtung (1969) pointed out in stating that in 1969 a deadly earthquake "would not warrant analysis in terms of violence, but the day after tomorrow, when earthquakes may become avoidable, such deaths may be seen as the result of violence" (pp. 168-169).

Inseparable from representation is another relic of colonialist thinking—perhaps *the* archetype of a structurally violent worldview—is the drive toward normalization and/or normativity, or the rewarding of proximity to a norm and punishment of distance from it. Normalization involves expectations for what student writing will look like by the end of the semester or program; the methodological assumption behind outcomes assessment is one that privileges proximity to a dominant norm, which renders the assessor unable to see anything but that distance/deficit when the text does not line up to the outcomes

as predicted (Gallagher, 2012). Normalization also involves norming readers/raters to those criteria that indicate good writing (Gallagher, 2014). According to Gallagher (2012, 2014), both aspects risk losing what is "surprising or excessive or eccentric" on the part of the reader, not just the student/writing: "[C]onsensus-driven processes [risk] marginalizing, or managing away, outlier views and dissent in favor of shared understandings and normed judgments" (p. 82). In other words, normalization as a fundamental methodological assumption ensures that we only see the already agreed-upon (limiting our responses to the anticipated, scripted, programmed) and hence, we blind ourselves to what is surprising or idiosyncratic, or simply of high quality but in unexpected or non-pre-determined ways.

When we conflate literacy learning with normativity, even if done in the belief that the same definitions of literacy create the fairest assessment for all students, we create or reinforce differential potential-actualization distances for the already (and historically) normative and the already (and historically) marginalized, maintaining a smoother road for the former and a rockier road for the latter. In that way, assessment-as-normativity-check will differentially impact students/writers from socio-historical situations that are already closer to or further from those dominant norms—a clear zero-sum game in that those born into circumstances closer to the expected norms are privileged to the extent that those further from the expected norms are held down. What is more, while some may suggest that the privileging of proximity to predetermined norms is unavoidable, arguing that there is no assurance of fairness outside of such a move, we note that more and more scholarship over the past quarter century—in both writing assessment (e.g., Gallagher, 2012, 2014; Inoue, 2015; O'Neill, 2011; Whithaus, 2005) and educational measurement literature (e.g., Miselvy, 2004; Moss, 1994; Parkes, 2007)—has worked to problematize this premise, suggesting that such methodologies have the type of avoidability that Galtung (1969) noted as a facet of structural violence.

In a similar vein, Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks (Chapter 11, this collection) assert that "heteronormativity continues to enact violence on our teachers, students, instructional contexts, and research practices," and Sassi (Chapter 10, this collection) problematizes the whitestream discourse of the rubrics used to assess Lakota/Dakota Indian student writing at Sitting Bull College, reporting that "[s]teps toward a more socially just writing assessment were possible only after educators proved to themselves that their students were making gains on a whitestream measure." Furthermore, J.W. Hammond (Chapter 1, this collection) argues, while we may frame such enterprises around notions of inclusivity, in reality, they "pivot around the axis of sameness, assessing difference and deviance against an imagined "native" white norm or ideal," ultimately

serving as a "linguistic front for advancing white normativity and supremacy" and the "purging foreign difference."

To be sure, there is a practical counterargument that such critical arguments face: We must have some centralized standard against which every student is evaluated, otherwise the assessment cannot ensure that all students are being evaluated fairly. Writing that displays vastly different norms, but receives the same scores, may seem patently unfair, inequitable. But on the other hand, due to the uneven nature of background social structures, some students are essentially born into situations with norms that already conform to these expectations, while other students—particularly those from non-dominant backgrounds—are born into situations where these norms are foreign or even actively resisted (e.g., Gee, 1989; Ogbu, 1999, 2004). As such, evaluating all students' writing against the same criteria or norms may be the unfair approach in that it requires both a different path (longer and bumpier for some) from the home language and literacy practices to the tested practices and it ignores all kinds of social and community pressures to resist such conformity to school-based language and literacy practices that only student writers from non-dominant will be likely to experience (Ogbu, 1999, 2004). From a critical perspective, it seems, then, there is no way to establish a norm *a priori* that is politically neutral, as history shows that those with the power to say what is normal always tend to assert their norms, and then require conformity from all others (Mathew Gomes, Chapter 6, this collection; Keith L. Harms, Chapter 3, this collection).

THE VIOLENCE OF ASSESSMENT: A CASE STUDY

Linda Harklau's (2000) longitudinal study, "From the 'Good Kids' to the 'Worst': Representations of English Language Learners Across Educational Settings," demonstrates how representation and normativity leads to the increased potential-actualization distance for a group of long-term US immigrant students. Harklau's article focuses on three participants, each a long-term immigrant and language minority, who all experienced vastly different institutional relations and projected learner identities after their transition from high school to a local community college. All students had been praised in high school for their work ethic and determination, seen as "an inspiration to everyone" (p. 46). In college, all three were placed in the ESOL program—by means of a "diagnostic test—a commercially published, standardized multiple-choice, grammar-oriented measure designed for nonnative speakers of English" (p. 57)—whereupon Harklau noticed that, for all three, their effort and achievement wilted and their resistance rose. These students had been in U.S. schools for 6, 7, and 10 years, respectively, and the college's ESOL program consisted mainly of international

students and recent immigrants. Its curriculum was partly dedicated to teaching "American" activities like how to read a newspaper, "on the assumption that they were not accustomed to extensive reading in English" (p. 47). But in fact, two of the three participants were not enrolled in the ESOL program at all in their senior year of high school, and one was literate only in English. By the end of that first college semester, Harklau reports, "these students' resistance to alienating representations of their identities had become complete rejection" (p. 61).

We suggest that Harklau's (2000) piece can be seen as a case study of potential structural violence of assessment—and the implications of representation and normativity—as the shift from the good kids to the worst is kicked off by the placement procedure. Harklau's study itself is not focused on writing assessment, and all we are told about this placement test is that it was "a commercially published, standardized multiple-choice, grammar-oriented measure designed for nonnative speakers of English." But what Harklau describes about the lived experiences of her participants can be viewed as the consequential fallout from this assessment; the violence that we see enacted upon these students—particularly visible in the elevated potential-actualization distance vis-a-vis their learner-identity trajectories—stems in great part from the representational label ESOL student at this particular college, a label placed upon them via placement assessment.

Part of the problem must be seen in the larger ecology in which that placement test took place. Harklau (2000) notes:

> In the context of the high school, these images ['Ellis Island' images of immigrants leaving their homes, enduring financial and emotional hardships, and through sheer perseverance succeeding in building a better life for themselves in America] informed a representation of ESOL students as hardworking highly motivated students who had triumphed over adversity. (p. 46)

But Harklau observed that the college context stemmed from more of a deficit model, one that saw ESOL students as deficient and in need of acculturation:

> Walking into college ESOL classes, the students in this study found themselves viewed in ways that not only were discontinuous with the predominant representation of their identity as ESOL students in high school but also seemed to cast their experiences with U.S. schooling and society in an unfavorable light. . . . [T]he prevailing representation of ESOL student identity depicted students as in need of socialization into U.S. college norms and behavior as well as to life in U.S. society

> more broadly. The curriculum in ESOL classes reflected this image of students as cultural novices. (p. 53)

As Harklau points out, this "prevalent institutional and programmatic representations of what it means to be an ESOL student had material effects on students' motivation and classroom experiences" (p. 62), as various forms of resistance "began surfacing in all the case study students and escalated over the course of the semester" (p. 60). Some of the forms of resistance were subtle, like one participant "declaring to her reading teacher that she seldom read the assigned newspaper" (p. 60). But one student stopped handing in assignments by the end of the semester and began missing classes. Another student only did the minimum requirements for credit, which "made it clear to her teacher that she regarded language assignments as busy work" (p. 58). On one assignment about clause connectors, the student "used since for every sentence. Because the teacher did not specify which connectors to use, she technically fulfilled the assignment requirements. Nevertheless, she drew her teacher's ire and a C on the assignment" (p. 58, italics in original). Harklau's observations in November and December of that semester report on participant spending most of her grammar classes either kicking and fidgeting or putting her head on her desk, and the other two participants "conspicuously for[getting] to bring their books to class" (p. 60).

To be sure, it seems clear that Harklau's participants were fully capable of doing better work in college, of being the "good" kids, as they had been in their earlier years. Their struggle in these college classes seems less a statement of their capabilities and more a signal of unequal social relations—i.e., the description/representation/label of each student as ESOL college student with the various negative connotations that label brought in this particular setting. Such labeling became another example of Baldwin's observation that power structures exert the ability to "tell a [student] who he is and make the [student] believe this" (from Mossberg, 2012). We should ask: What does it do to a first-generation college student, a long-term immigrant (recall, 6, 7, and 10 years, respectively), one who has finished their high school career in the US no longer needing any enrollment in an ESOL program (for two of the three participants), when the first institutional statement from college tells you, "No, you are indeed an ESOL student; you need to be taught how to be a real American"? How is such a student to avoid the trap that Baldwin describes of believing the descriptions through which institutional power structure represent you?

In terms of normativity, while we do not know much about the specific assessment by which Harklaus' participants were placed in the ESOL program, it seems clear that a "commercially published, standardized multiple-choice, gram-

mar-oriented measure designed for nonnative speakers of English" (p. 57) will be driven by the methodology of assessing students vis-a-vis proximity to a pre-determined norm. Such exams—again, given the standardized multiple-choice, grammar-oriented nature Harklau describes—en masse, are not meant to observe and evaluate test-takers' actual language abilities but rather to operationalize the (only) criteria through which those literacies will be acknowledged; one could argue that the premise of such assessment methodologies is to determine that which is to be considered normative, and then to measure students' proximity/distance vis-a-vis that norm. But while we do not have enough information to speak more about the assessment instrument and decision-making process itself, we can speak of the impact of normalization/normativity at play in the larger ecosystem of the assessment-program-curriculum-instruction as well.

As Harklau observed one participant (Penny) in class, she saw that "while her teacher lectured the class on how to locate stories in sections of the newspaper, Penny could be seen flipping to her horoscope and local department store ads, a small but telling act of resistance as well as a more authentic act of newspaper reading than the class exercises" (p. 57). Ironically, in a program in which the "curriculum was partly dedicated to teaching 'American' activities like how to read a newspaper" (p. 47), Penny may have been displaying the most normal, authentic American teenager behavior. She already knew how to read a newspaper fluently, yet her paper reading behavior was clearly not the normal that her teachers or the program sought. Penny was expected to align her reading behaviors with institutional norms—to read in an idealized American way.

Harklau and her participants all noticed this issue as well. Harklau (2000) states, "[I]ronically enough, teachers implicitly rejected the very Americanness of [Harklau's] students' educational backgrounds in favor of the class and educational backgrounds of students educated abroad." Further, she notes that "the case study students recognized and sometimes resented the favoritism shown toward newcomers in their classes" (p. 59). Clearly, there is a certain type of narrow normativity (Americanness) that is valued over others in the larger ecosystem of this ESOL program. Extended to assessment practices used to funnel students into the program, this singular view of American normativity is troubling.

Are these side-effects of the ESOL placement indications of violence? If we consider impact of a college education—or the lack of one—in the 21st century United States, especially for students from historically marginalized social groups, and the decreased likelihood of students like Harklau's participants making it through college after such a rough welcoming, we can clearly see the seeds sown for increased potential-actualization distance, Galtung's (1969) baseline definition of violence. We ought to further ask who benefits from this situation, for it is clearly not these three students. In addition, if there are factions of society benefitting

from the potential-actualization distance suffered by students like these—perhaps students whose college readiness is overestimated by similarly shallow measures of grammar (which often really means dialect), or students who come from college educated families and who have more guidance about the consequences of placement tests, and who even know how to speak to the right people to overrule placement decisions—if there are factions of society benefiting from the potential-actualization distance of other student, in a zero-sum relationship, we suggest that students like Harklau's participants are suffering the violence of assessment. Finally, in terms of avoidability, if there are better ways to determine which students would be best served by which courses and programs—methods more sensitive than commercially developed grammar-oriented multiple-choice exams, methods that would approach the type of maximum construct representation, which Elliot (2016) asserts as the definition of fair assessment—then by the definition laid out in this chapter, the label of violence seems appropriate.

With that said, pinning the ensuing problems entirely on the placement exam is neither fair nor our intention. However, the exam is surely involved; the exam does not exist in a vacuum. Taking an ecological view, we must see that the test-based placement decisions and their consequences do not exist outside of the larger social and institutional systems in which student with certain scores will be subjected to certain types of treatment and expectations—because of those scores. While the exam may be claiming to place students, by measurement of (and only of) their English language abilities, into programs of study that will best serve their academic futures, we can clearly see that the test results foisted Harklaus' participants into an environment in which (a) their ESOL status was forefronted as a larger part of their identity than it had been in high school, and in which (b) the teachers expectations of ESOL students was far lower than in their previous schooling (see Rubie-Davies, 2006, for a study and a review of the impact of low teacher expectations upon students). In this way, the assessment is surely caught up in a larger system that upholds this type of violence, particularly for students from certain vulnerable populations—language minority students, in this case. At this point, some may question if the assessment can legitimately be called violent, just for working within a larger system the propagates violence, while possibly not enacting violence itself. We hope to address this critically important question below.

MOVING PAST THE VIOLENCE OF ASSESSMENT: THE ROLE OF VALIDITY AND VALIDATION

If the violence of assessment is to be mitigated, it first must be made visible through more vigilant evaluation of specific assessment practices. The process

of evaluating an assessment—including the search for indications of structural violence—is the process of validation. For decades now, validity theorists have argued for the incorporation of social consequences—and in particular, a concern for unintended negative social consequences—into the very definition of validity and, therefore, as central to the validation of assessments. While there is considerable debate about both what role consequences should play in validity and validation (e.g., Linn, 1997; Mehrens, 1997; Popham, 1997; Reckase, 1998; Shepard, 1997) and which negative social consequences should count as evidence for or against validity (e.g., Cronbach, 1988; Kane, 2013; Messick, 1989)[2], the term negative social consequences (emphasizing the word social) clearly echoes the phrases social injustice and/or structural violence, and so we believe that these matters are unquestionably relevant to the validity or invalidity of writing assessment practices. To suggest otherwise is to argue that structurally violent assessment can still be valid assessment, and there should be no room for such a contradiction in a conceptualization of writing assessment validity. Our aim here is to explore the potential that current educational measurement validity theory holds for spotting and disrupting the violence of assessment, but we also aim to push that theory (particularly as it relates to writing assessment) in directions that will focus more explicitly on the search for and disruption of this violence. In particular, we explore the potential of Michael T. Kane's argument-based validation model for incorporating social justice into the very validity of writing assessment practices, thereby rendering assessments that propagate social injustice/structural violence, by definition, invalid.

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2   A great deal of validity theory regards the development of tests by testing experts, whose goals are to design the best possible test for a particular use, but who will have no first-hand experience of the consequences of the test's use. Published tests are designed to be used across as many sites and contexts as possible, and so the actual decision made and consequences experienced at any given site of test use are far removed from the daily practice of such test developers. The validation concerns of such test developers do regard the consequences of test use—or at least, they are supposed to (e.g., American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014)—however, the way such consequences impact their validation research would tend to be much less direct. Whereas we might instantly rethink and revise an assessment procedure that was harming our students and their learning, a test publisher would need much more data about the nature of such consequences, the degree to which they resulted from proper or improper use of their product, and evidence that these consequences stemmed from problems with the test itself (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014, p. 21; Messick, 1989, p. 68). But to the extent that our writing assessments remain locally-controlled, site-based, and context sensitive (Huot, 2002), the separation of the validity of an assessment and the consequences of that assessment make little sense. As such, we take for granted that the validity of (locally-controlled, site-based) writing assessment is inseparable from the consequences (social, individual, negative, positive) of the decisions it helps us make.

ADAPTING KANE'S ARGUMENT-BASED APPROACH
TO WRITING ASSESSMENT AS SOCIAL JUSTICE

For Kane (2013), validation consists of two key stages: first, "a clear statement of the proposed interpretations and uses," called the interpretation/use argument (IUA) and second, "a critical evaluation of these interpretations and uses" (p. 64), called the validity argument. For writing assessment purposes, we interpret Kane's model as requiring (a) an IUA that articulates what we hope to achieve through the assessment—what decisions we want to make and how we plan to draw inferences from the collected writing to make such decisions—and (b) a validity argument that evaluates the theoretical and empirical soundness of this plan. Kane's approach/model has arguably become the primary model in the educational measurement research and literature over the past decade or so, replacing Samuel Messick's long-standing but more abstract and philosophical theory of validity. Messick's (1989) major treatise on validity, along with his other works throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, emphasized (a) the need to incorporate social consequences as fundamental to the concept of validity, (b) the notion that validity is a unified concept (i.e., that there are not types of validity, such as content- or criterion-validity; there are only various lines of evidence for the overarching judgement of validity for an assessment procedure), (c) and that construct validity is the totality of validity; in other words, that the meaning of the assessment scores vis-a-vis the construct of interest, interpreted through multiple lines of evidence and multiple methodologies, is where validity is to be found. (The notion that a test itself can't be considered valid, but rather that validity regards the inferences drawn from the test scores—these matters pre-date Messick's major work [e.g., Cronbach, 1971]). For all the philosophical richness of Messick's work, particularly Messick (1989), some theoretical contradictions seem to exist between (a) and (c), as well as (b) and (c) above. His work left those charged with validating specific testing instruments a bit uncertain as to how to proceed. This is where Kane's more pragmatic model has been somewhat of an antidote to the problems of applying Messick's work. In fact, Kane speaks at length about the processes of validation, but does not himself delineate a theoretical definition of validity itself. Again, Kane (2013) breaks down the process of validating an assessment into two steps: articulating the IUA, and then evaluating the coherence and "evaluating the coherence and completeness of the IUA and the plausibility of its inferences and assumptions" (p. 9). Our belief is that while Messick's work lays the foundation for the centrality of consequences to the validity of an assessment, Kane's approach holds the greater potential for our specific goal here of making visible, and rooting out, the potential and actual

violence of specific assessment practices.

At the same time, we call for some adaptation to Kane's approach, particularly centering around one aspect. We want to emphasize the empirical element of the validity argument (the second stage) more than Kane has tended to, and in a different way. Kane repeatedly emphasizes the need for the validity argument to check on the coherence and completeness of the IUA and on the plausibility of its inferences and assumptions (e.g., Kane, 2013, p. 1, p. 9, p. 14, p. 18, p. 64-65; Kane, 2015, p. 5, p. 12), but he provides little emphasis upon the types of social research that Messick and others (e.g., Moss, 1994) have argued are vital to evaluating the consequences of assessment-based decisions. That is, Kane's second phase of the argument-based validation approach may stay too focused on the internal logic and coherence of the IUA, with too little emphasis on exploring the worldly impact of the decisions (the use) of the assessment scores.

To proceed with a social justice agenda, however, the spotting and disrupting of structural violence must be a top priority, and these matters require empirical social inquiry. Rarely, if ever, will structural violence become visible through the assessment developers' *a priori*, rational considerations of the logical coherence of their IUA. As we note above, from a critical perspective, it seems there is no way to establish a norm *a priori* that is politically neutral. In fact, structural violence will hide from many empirical methodologies— particularly those that operate within historically dominant paradigms and positionalities. As such, validation research that is genuinely concerned with these matters of social (in)justice will require the kinds of critical social inquiry traditions that specifically deal with less visible matters of power and systemic oppression—such as feminist, queer, postcolonial, anti-racist traditions which actively seek to problematize historical power-relations (including dominant or assumed/unexamined positionalities).

We are not the first to recognize that traditional measurement-based research methodologies are largely ill-equipped to investigate unintended social consequences like structural violence/social injustice. Edward Haertel's (2013) article "Getting the Help We Need," for example, notes that "most measurement specialists still feel a stronger affinity to the models and methods of psychology than, say, sociology, anthropology, or economics [and] may be ill-equipped, working alone, to investigate fully the systemic effects of testing programs" (p. 87), and he recommends teaming up with colleagues from fields like sociology, anthropology, economics, law, and linguistics. Pamela A. Moss (1998) similarly discusses the need for "studying the consequences of the repeated and pervasive practices of testing," noting that "[w]hile many of us may not have the resources to undertake this kind of work ourselves, we can

at least (initially) seek to develop collaborations with those who do. We have colleagues in AERA who engage in and find funding for this sort of research regularly" (p. 11). Many of us in writing assessment are in a better position to develop and engage in this type of inquiry than those in the measurement community given that our field is so closely tied with non-dominant research traditions. The question is how to make this type of inquiry fundamental to validation research and to the validity of writing assessment practices, and to not leave it as an afterthought.

Perhaps the answer is to reposition the role of these unintended negative consequences, namely structural violence/social injustice—to shift them from plausible threats to otherwise valid assessment, as most validity theory suggests, to part of the intended, expected benefit of the assessment itself. That is, if part of the very IUA of an assessment—the articulation of what the assessment plans to achieve and how it hopes to achieve it—entails a description of how this assessment will work to ameliorate or disrupt existing social injustice, then social inquiry into the structural violence of assessment would be part of ensuring that the intended goals/benefits of the assessment are reached. If we can issue this challenge to ourselves as developers and users of locally-controlled, site-based writing assessments, we may find a way for a concept of validity that truly works against assessment-based social injustice.

Nearly 30 years ago, Lee J. Cronbach (1988) stated, "*Tests that impinge on the rights and life chances of individuals are inherently disputable*" (p. 6, italics original), but outside of certain notable exceptions (e.g., Callahan, 1999; Chudowsky & Behuniak, 1998; Lane & Stone, 2002; Lane, Park, & Stone, 1998; Poe et al., 2014), empirical inquiry into such impingement is far from the norm. Indeed, the measurement community has an equally long (perhaps longer) history of what some term a confirmationist bias (Haertel, 1999, 2013; Kane, 2001; Shepard, 1993) in that those who design and validate assessments tend to place emphasis on confirming how well they work, and less emphasis on searching for evidence of invalidity (and even less when such evidence requires inquiry into social/systemic matters). When we consider the potential violence of assessment and recognize that our definition of validity—and resulting approaches to validation—are critical for identifying and disrupting this violence, the notion of confirmationist biases becomes deeply troubling. When assessment developers only look for evidence that their instruments are working, but we do not push ourselves to actively seek out less visible ways in which problematic consequences are unfolding, we embrace that confirmationist bias. When we rest easy with evidence for the positive impact of an assessment program but do not consciously explore instances of structural violence that either result from, or simply operate smoothly within,

our assessment systems, we are complicit with that violence.[3] As Paulo Freire (1985) reminded us, "'Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral" (p. 122). We need to resist theories of validity and validation that end their investigations with evidence of clean hands.

If writing assessment is to be an agent of social justice—not just something that tries to stay out of the way—then fighting against social injustice (i.e., structural violence) should be central to "the only genuine imperative in testing, namely, validity" (Messick, 1989, p. 20). When our theory of validity allows for assessments to operate within such systemic inequalities, as long as they stem from matters like differential access, opportunity, quality of education, health, or other instances of structural violence—when we find it okay for testing to merely reflect these existing social inequalities, as long as the tests themselves show no evidence of invalidity—we need to consider ourselves agents of that structural violence. Any assessment program could harbor potential violence, and so if we are not conceptualizing assessment and validity/validation practices that seek to disrupt this violence, it would seem we are complicit in it.

CONCLUSION

In discussing structural violence, or violence built into the very systems we have created, like healthcare, education, and the legal system, and because Galtung (1969) characterizes structural violence as having an absence of an actor or actors acting on a direct object, it can be easy to overlook that people participate in and maintain these systems—that people can and do enact structural violence. It may seem that people are only involved in personal or direct violence. Part of the issue is that often the processes of structural violence that they enact are often rendered invisible because they are part of established systems—because they are part of the very fabric of our society. They are normalized and rendered invisible (Žižek, 2008). However, it is important for our work in connecting structural

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3   Such complicity can still be seen lingering in the newest Standards revision (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014), which owes its stance on testing consequences to Samuel J. Messick's (1989) outlook on the testing-consequences dialectic. While Messick is often (rightly) considered the driving force behind the inclusion of social consequences as central to validity, the fact is that he left open a loophole in his theory which can be seen in passages like this: "[I]t is not that adverse social consequences render test use invalid but, rather, that the validation of test use should assure that adverse social consequences do not stem from any source of test invalidity, such as construct-irrelevant variance" (Messick, 1989, p. 68). In other words, for Messick, negative social consequences only threaten the validity of a testing program when they can be traced to problems in the testing instrument itself (e.g., construct-irrelevant variance).

violence and writing assessment that we see that people play a role in enacting structural violence.

As part of his work on examining structural violence, Galtung (1969) points this issue out. He asks: "Is there really a distinction between personal and structural violence at all?" (p. 177). To answer this question, he notes that people can

> act violently not only on the basis of individual deliberations but (also) on the basis of expectations impinging on him as norms contained in roles contained in statuses through which he enacts his social self; *and*, if one sees a violent structure as something that is a mere abstraction unless upheld by the actions, expected from the social environment or not, of individuals. (p. 177 , emphasis in the original)

People often become indoctrinated to ways of knowing and doing that are built on supremacist values—racism, patriarchy, value of abled bodies, and so forth— values that systems are built on. We see this very issue play out in Nicole Gonzalez Van Cleve's (2016) research of racism and injustice in the criminal courts of Cook County-Chicago. As Van Cleve writes, "It is as though attorneys inherit a culture of racism that has existed 'a priori' (before) their participation. The *a priori racism* that defines the courthouse culture and the legal habitus existed long before they arrived at the courthouse, and it will sustain itself long after they retire" (p. 4). This court system is an example of structural violence. A dominant (white) group is advantaged over a nondominant group (black and Latinx people). The system creates and maintains distance between what is potential and what is actual and these issues are avoidable. Van Cleve argues that essentially two criminal justice systems exist in Cook County and "they are two systems that are separate and *unequal*—one with a front door and one with a hidden back door where the majority of citizens—the poor and people of color—experience America's failed promise of fair and equal justice" (p. xii). And *people* make this system run and they maintain its violence because they have inherited its culture and continue to pass it on, it seems without any critical examination—that is until Van Cleve took a critical look at it.

In this chapter we hope that we are contributing to creating tools to help ourselves as a writing community take a critical look at writing assessment. We began this chapter by incorporating a framework of structural violence as a lens through which to view the social impact of writing assessment, particularly on groups that have historically been denied access to higher education, in large part because of the ways that educational assessments past worked as sorting and ranking mechanisms intent more upon selecting the elite and identifying the unprepared, as opposed to finding ways to ensure access to education and op-

portunity to diverse groups and individuals. Our working definition of violence was based upon Galtung's (1969) article in which he defines violence as potential-actualization distance, and in which he offers a definition of structural violence, i.e., violence that is equally deadly but which possess a less direct/visible assailant-victim relationship, and he equates structural violence with social injustice. Our major three criteria for interpreting a situation as violent built upon the notion of potential-actualization distance; and, we added in the matter of benefit—specifically, a system of beneficiaries that exist in a zero-sum relationship to those suffering the cost of the situation; finally, we included Galtung's notion of avoidability, such that, if the harm inflicted upon persons and groups in a given situation is unavoidable, there may be no basis upon which to call the situation violent—but if the harm can be reasonably viewed as avoidable, then violence is indeed at play.

We next sought to theorize the Trojan horses, as it were, through which violence enters into even those assessment practices that are focused upon creating the best learning opportunities for all. We argued that, to some extent, all assessment seems rooted in the representation of the student/writer/writing, in the institutional description of the students/writers back to themselves—and not always in ways that help the student as individuals (in terms of reaching learning potential) or as social-historical group members (in terms of access and marginalization). Hand in hand with representation, we suggested that most if not all assessment methodology, on some level, center around the matter of normalization/normativity—they reward proximity to a norm and punish distance from it. And the delineation of these norms, again in line with colonialist thinking, are never rooted in notions of truth but always reflect certain values of what is expected by certain people in certain situations. We looked at how this violence appears in Harklau (2000), where we see how it affected three particular students; but we note that these particular students are examples of students whose escape from the historical cycles of marginalization is made less possible due to an assessment (the placement test, in this case) and the larger curricular/institutional ecology that drives, and is driven, by that assessment.

Finally, we suggested that, while eliminating violence from assessment is likely impossible, developing validation practices that make this violence more visible, and explicitly call for the reduction of that violence as fundamental to the validity of a writing assessment practice, is indeed possible. Thus, we issue the following challenge: Rather than asking assessment to "watch out for" collateral damage of unintended negative consequences, a stronger commitment to assessment as social justice would require assessment that actively seeks to disrupt the structural violence/social injustice already present in the larger systems in which students write and that writing is assessed. What would follow is a concept of

validity that sees ensuing or recurring structural violence not as the "cost" of the cost-benefit equation of validation research, not as negative unintended consequences, but instead incorporates the disrupting of structural violence as fundamental to the intended consequences, the benefit side, the very *raison d'être* of any nonviolent, socially just writing assessment. An actionable way forward, it would seem, would entail more explicit statements of the types of unintended negative consequences that would be unacceptable results of an assessment program or practice—statements included in the very design of the assessment. As mentioned above, making such statements part of the IUA itself would limit the possibilities for confirmationist biases to open the door for structural violence because validating such an IUA would entail explicit investigation into these unintended consequences; a validity inquiry that failed to perform such investigation would not have fulfilled its obligation to validate the assessment's IUA, which means that the assessment would not have sufficient evidence of its validity, even if such inquiry provided strong evidence supporting the assessment's positive intended consequences.

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CHAPTER 8.

FIRED UP: INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE, LESSON STUDY, AND THE FUTURE OF ANTIRACIST WRITING ASSESSMENT

Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty

Research Problem: Recent efforts to enact antiracist writing assessment within writing classrooms and writing programs signal a welcome social justice development in Writing Studies. Yet, the white habitus we seek to interrupt and challenge pervades entire institutions, not just writing classrooms.

Research Questions: How might we leverage assessment to not simply make our writing assessment ecologies less racist but to also contribute to dismantling the institutional white habitus that makes entire institutions less inhabitable and often outright hostile for students, faculty, and staff of color? How might institutional critique and Lesson Study support antiracist institutional outcomes beyond the individual classroom?

Literature Review: We ground our study in the following overlapping scholarly conversations: sociological and rhetorical examinations of the white habitus; institutional critique as a rhetorical methodology for change; Lesson Study, a collaborative and recursive model of teacher research developed in Japan that places focus on learning problems and responsive lesson planning.

Methodology: We collaboratively developed a study lesson on social privilege and teacher cohorts delivered that lesson in multiple FYW classrooms. We ethnographically observed the lessons and collected pre- and post-lesson writing artifacts from students. We then applied a four-variable assessment model to those writing artifacts to assess the results. In our report, we contextualize the study through the rhetorical methodology of institutional critique.

Conclusions: While our assessment suggests statistically significant outcomes of learning in the lesson, the vast majority of student writing does not indicate a willingness or interest in challenging institutional racism through activism. We suggest pedagogical improvements, including the inclusion of students in the design and implementation of the assessment itself, to more effectively approach institutional change through antiracist pedagogy.

Qualifications: Since we operated with the Lesson Study model, which is conducted in one class period, we cannot comment on the ways that a semester-long engagement in the material might have deepened the desired institutional outcomes.

Directions for Further Study: We recommend closing the feedback loop by involving students in the design and assessment of future lesson study projects, thereby uniting the collaborative pedagogical innovation potential of Lesson Study with the liberatory potential of constructivist assessment techniques grounded in integrative validity models.

How might assessment technologies drive institutional change and support a vision for racial justice on college campuses and beyond? This is a question that is long overdue, and finally getting sustained attention in Writing Studies (Behm & Miller, 2012; Inoue, 2015; Inoue & Poe, 2012; Poe et al., 2014). In essence, scholars are seeking to inject a critical race-conscious turn into a writing assessment conversation that has long been anchored by the local (Broad et al., 2009; Haswell & Wyche-Smith, 1994; Huot, 2002). This critical race critique of localism is conversant with efforts to more consistently align such localized assessments with global disciplinary best practices (Gallagher, 2010, 2012, 2016; Kelly-Riley & Elliot, 2014; Kelly-Riley, Elliot, & Rudniy, 2016). Recent conversations (Gallagher, 2010, 2016) suggest that local consensus-driven assessment technologies like dynamic criteria mapping can result in outcomes that are quite difficult to contextualize for outside stakeholders, even within the same discipline, without a concurrent process of validation through disciplinary best practices. And scholars like Inoue (2015) remind us that such locally driven assessment technologies can still result in values that are anchored by the color-blind racist assumptions of a white habitus. In a related methodological critique of localism, Poe and her colleagues (2014) argue that programs may find a powerful antidote to the sometimes ineffective frame of localism by importing "disparate impact analysis" from civil rights jurisprudence to help practitioners more effectively measure the effects of writing assessment on students of color,

effects that are often hegemonic in local assessments. This is crucial work, and we applaud it. Like Christie Toth, we see disparate impact analysis as a crucial component of any assessment technology's validation for social justice (Chapter 4, this collection). For an extension of this work in practice, check out Casie Moreland's call for transparency and access to data that will allow disparate impact analyses to proceed (Chapter 5, this collection).

As much as we welcome this critical race turn, though, we worry that focusing on assessment in writing classrooms and programs may limit the more radical potential for assessment to drive the transformation of institutions. A local focus on classroom assessment can obscure the ways that we might unconsciously use assessment to support and extend institutional conditions of white racial habitus—a term which draws on Bourdieu's (1983) notion of habitus as a physical embodiment of the ideology of culture. By restricting our assessment models to the writing classroom or the writing program, we risk leaving intact and undisturbed the institutional ecology of white racial habitus that pervades everywhere else. To riff on Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick's framing of the issue, what use is a nonviolent classroom assessment when the institution itself is daily engaged in other violent forms of official and unofficial assessment (Chapter 7, this collection)? Recent work by critical race theorists Bonilla-Silva, Goar, and Embrick (2006) informs our use of habitus as a distinctly hegemonic feature of the socialization process that cultivates and sustains whites' perceptions, highlighting the stakes in supporting antiracist pedagogies with antiracist assessment. Making writing assessment ecologies more antiracist is merely a drop—albeit a crucial and important one—in a much larger institutional bucket.

This essay reports a descriptive exploratory study of a first-year writing cohort conducted at West Chester University in January 2015. As we report our use of a methodology much more common in K-12 education, lesson study, we analyze the usefulness of lesson study as a tool for addressing white privilege and implementing antiracist writing pedagogy in the writing program at WCU. Our worry about the resilience of white habitus is based on our own experience trying to pedagogically support the institutional activism of our students in the wake of #BlackLivesMatter in Fall 2014. With the deaths of Eric Garner and Michael Brown still heavy on our hearts, we watched the non-indictments spark outrage locally and nationally, as media highlighted for many the state's active participation in the machineries of black death. Here at our predominantly white institution (PWI), this outrage led to mass demonstrations, protests, and student organizing on a level that many of us had not thought possible. But it has also led to a profound and painful backlash of both color-blind racism (#AllLivesMatter) and overtly racist vitriol aimed at silencing this groundswell of activism, a backlash most visible in anonymous physical and digital spaces.

How might antiracist writing assessment address the fact that a white habitus pervades entire institutions, not just our classrooms? How might we leverage assessment to not simply make our writing assessment ecologies less racist but to also dismantle the institutional white habitus that makes entire institutions less inhabitable and often outright hostile for students, faculty, and staff of color? Following Barnett (2000), we understand institutional white habitus to include, among other practices, an insistence on: coded racial discourses like color-blindness; the invisibility, objectivity, and neutrality of whiteness; whiteness as "unraced individuality as opposed to a racialized subjectivity that is communally and politically interested;" on whiteness as privileged arbiter of how difference ought to be celebrated, defined, recognized, denied, or denigrated in a given context (p. 10).

Following the lead of our student activists, we contend that a critical race turn in writing assessment must swell beyond our classrooms and programs to take into consideration entire institutional cultures as it seeks to challenge the pernicious effects of the white habitus. It must thickly describe the institutional conditions these programs inhabit and the consequences of our teaching practices on those conditions. To do so, we employ a mixed methods approach akin to Chen's (2015) action model/change model as detailed in *Practical Program Evaluation*. Chen's approach seeks both a more robust, theorized understanding of the problem and the improvements needed—a change model, or descriptive assumptions—as well as an implemented action plan to seek to enact this change—an action model, or prescriptive assumptions. Chen's action model/change model schema affords a flexibility in evaluation design aimed toward enacting effective changes in programs, informed by the idea that "Research methods should be tailored to meet evaluation needs, *not* vice versa" (2015, p. 86). To deepen the change model our field operates from in antiracist assessment, we first offer institutional critique (Porter, Sullivan, Blythe, Grabill, & Miles, 2000) as a rhetorical methodology suited to tracing, critiquing, and challenging the entrenched white habitus pervading institutions of higher-education, especially at PWIs like ours. Institutional critique is especially important in writing programs like ours whose classrooms are also charged to fulfill general education diversity requirements for the institution. Our students' activism and the racist backlash against it highlight the toothlessness of our institution's current diversity requirement and the futility in leveraging its outcome-based assessment for racial justice outcomes.

To support our activist students and help to transform our institution's diversity requirement, we then worked to develop a *lesson study project* for the First-Year Writing program (FYW) at our institution as a recursive action model to pair

with institutional critique.[1] Joined by fifteen colleagues in the writing program who helped to undertake the lesson study project, we constructed a curricular experience for students in first-year writing classes to increase awareness of white privilege and support a culture of student activism.[2] We posit that lesson study dovetails nicely with institutional critique as a mixed methods approach to evaluating antiracist pedagogy, as it helps us to enact the concrete action for change demanded of both institutional critique and Chen's action model/change model as methodologies. Our group hoped the lesson study project would support the student activists and help us better achieve the long-deferred "diversity" goals of our general education curriculum. Though we will have more to say about lesson study later, we'll briefly offer that it is "a teaching improvement and knowledge building process that has origins in Japanese elementary education" (Cerbin & Kopp, 2006, p. 250; see also Yoshida, 1999). Cerbin and Kopp (2006), who are largely credited with adapting the process to undergraduate education in the US, describe lesson study as a process where "teachers work in small teams to plan, teach, observe, analyze, and refine individual class lessons, called research lessons" (p. 250).

In framing the lesson study, we constructed a four-variable assessment model reflecting the lesson's desired outcomes: activism, awareness, confusion, and rejection. Our assessment of the lesson study, reported below, demonstrates the tangled knot of assessing diversity outcomes, even using an approach that consciously adopts antiracist pedagogical practices. In support of those practices, the present essay outlines our experience as a case study, reports on and assesses its results, and theorizes some appropriate responses to those results by combining the antiracist writing assessment turn with constructivist evaluation innovations such as Guba and Lincoln's Fourth Generation Evaluation (1989, 2001) and Chen's bottom-up approach to integrative validity (2010). Unfortunately, our

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1   Michael conceived of and initiated the lesson study project early in 2014, joined by Randall and Tim as primary researchers in Fall 2014. Each of us is a straight man with relatively high socioeconomic standing in our roles as professors, but our individual subjectivities structure the classroom. Michael is an Arkansas-born black man. Randall is an Alabama-born white man. And Tim is a white man from the Philly suburbs. We acknowledge that our own racial and gender formations condition the ways we are seeing the following data, and we foreground our identities and ideological commitments here to make this inevitability as transparent as possible.

2   This group consisted of Amy Anderson, Mary Buckelew, Kristine Ervin, Margaret Ervin, Stacy Esch, Karen Fitts, Bill Lalicker, Joe Navitsky, Rodney Mader, Cherise Pollard, Justin Rademaekers, and Ilknur Sancak-Marusa alongside the three authors. Anderson, M. Ervin, Esch, Lalicker, and Mader also contributed additionally to the development of the original study lesson and study design. We thank them for their hard work and insight on this project. When this article refers to "our group," the authors are referring to this larger crew of fabulous and dedicated colleagues. When it states "we," the authors are specifically referring to Michael, Randall, and Tim.

initial goal of adopting antiracist pedagogies to help students move from confusion through awareness to activism was not reflected in the data gathered by the lesson study team; our results suggested a much messier dataset and did not support a clear movement from confusion to awareness and activism. Instead, our data suggest students become less aware and more confused by a lesson on privilege. Our interpretation proposes that students' loss of awareness and increase in confusion are, in effect, noise: artifacts of our project's lesson study methodology. We predict that student confusion, given the space to conduct a more controlled longitudinal study, would resolve itself into the other variables of awareness and activism. This resolution, we should note, is not reflected in the data gathered by our project and reported here. The limit of artifact-based writing assessment to note such a resolution, however, is reported and interpreted; this limit is the condition of relating assessment to the writing classroom in support of change.

ANTIRACIST ASSESSMENT ECOLOGIES, WHITE HABITUS, & INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

As Inoue (2015) reminds us, standardized writing assessment grounds its judgments in the supposed universality of the white racial habitus, a concept emanating from Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1983) which describes habitus as "perceptions, appreciations, and actions" that are socially constructed in order to shape an individual's orientation in the world (83). Bonilla-Silva (2003) extends Bourdieu's notion of habitus to whiteness, arguing that white habitus is a "racialized, uninterrupted socialization process that conditions and creates whites' racial tastes, perceptions, feelings, and emotions" (p. 104). White habitus is, in Bonilla-Silva's definition, a product of "collective experiences" that results from limited contact with others, where interactions are replaced by unverifiable stereotypes that have the appearance of objectivity while "maintaining the existing racial hierarchy" (2006, pp. 233-234).

Bonilla-Silva's invocation of white habitus has been taken up by leaders of the critical race turn in assessment (Inoue, 2015; Behm & Miller, 2012). Inoue (2015) has provided the most robust account of how to conduct antiracist assessment in classrooms, but Behm and Miller (2012) describe the critical race—or antiracist—turn needed in writing assessment as the "fourth wave" of writing assessment. Building off Yancey's (1999) "wave" metaphor for eras of assessment in composition, we applaud Behm and Miller's call for a "fourth-wave" of writing assessment scholarship to challenge color-blind racism in classroom and programmatic assessments (2012, p. 136). For more on this scholarship, see Toth's excellent literature review (Chapter 4, this collection). Yet, we are also

cognizant that doing this well requires new metaphors. We suggest that we get out of the surf, and right into the fire. Our title, "Fired Up" highlights this need for something more urgent than surfing. Echoing James Baldwin, we are calling for the fire. Importantly, though, Behm and Miller note that a critical race-conscious turn requires us to "[analyze] the ways in which assessment practices and interpretations of data constitute and are constitutive of a white habitus" (2012, p. 136).

The centrality of understanding white habitus has also been taken up by compositionists working in critical whiteness studies such as Edward Hahn. In Hahn's essay "Embodied Censorship" (2014), he both advances a rhetorical critique of Bonilla-Silva's ontological reification of white habitus and extends the term through a return to Bourdieu (see especially Hahn's penultimate section, "Towards a Materialist Social Theory"). Hahn argues that antiracist teachers need to understand white habitus not as an embodied fact inhering in white individuals, but as a series of learned practices and values in "fields" of situated "social-historical activity" like school or home (2014, para. 22). In Hahn's conception, white habitus, rather than ontological, is produced and cemented through repeated practice and performance. Hahn, *contra* Bonilla-Silva's construction of habitus as a condition of limited exposure, argues that habitus performs a situated tendency by "well-meaning agents' (mis)readings of texts that challenge the values 'made body' through their participation in the everyday practices of an agonistic field" (2014, para. 30). This aligns well with J. W. Hammond's finding that even progressive pedagogies of inclusion have historically helped to preserve exclusionary nativist assumptions (Chapter 1, this collection). In sort, we become what we practice in institutional settings like classrooms.

Hahn's insight here can be applied, for instance, to the hidden presence of diversity curricula that have more importance than what institutions, leaders, or teachers *say* in classroom spaces. For example, students who attend most whitestream public schools in the United States have learned that diversity functions in specific ways—most often circumscribed in classes or lessons ostensibly *about* diverse perspectives. When white students in our writing classrooms at West Chester University (WCU) question the relevance of a text written about white supremacy or black life, it is not rooted in Bonilla-Silva's sense of color-blind racism as a white habitus. Rather, it is difficult for these students to confront a practice that transgresses their embodied learning for how one *does* school. When a general education writing class starts from the assumption that rhetorical education must confront white supremacy to enable responsibility, students are confused. Challenges to the white habitus disrupt the hidden curriculum that celebrates diversity in "appropriate" spaces but scrubs the rest of institutional life from the presence of diversity.

By locating white habitus, Hahn recaptures the ability of Bourdieu's concept to not just explain agents' unreflected actions, but also to represent the ways in which structural forces exert their influences in social spaces for even "well-meaning" members of society. Latent in Hahn's redefinition of habitus is its capability for producing social change, as well as its well-acknowledged role in serving as a force for resisting change.

Here at WCU—a mid-sized public university in Pennsylvania—we are cognizant of a need to shift the focus from the hidden curriculum of diversity that produces and sustains the white habitus toward locations where that habitus is made explicit, mitigating its presence in our teaching, classrooms, and students. Our struggle at satisfying our university's diversity outcomes highlights the need for antiracist assessment ecologies that account for institutional contexts that extend beyond our classrooms. We see two ways to activate this shift, one of which we'll enact rhetorically in this piece and the other we offer as a recalibration to this research project: (1) institutional critique and (2) more thoroughly constructivist evaluation concepts.

Institutional critique is a rhetorical methodology for programmatic change based on the work of Porter, Sullivan, Blythe, Grabill, and Miles (2000) that resonates with our own attempts to situate the writing classroom as a site of productive struggle within a larger field of action. In calling on institutional critique, we follow others who have recently applied it to antiracist contexts (Craig, 2014; Diab et al., 2013). Porter et al. point out the toothlessness of criticisms that "exist only in the form of ideal cases or statements, which all too often bracket off discussions of materiality and economic constraints in favor of working out the best case scenario—which, all too often, does not come to pass" (2000, p. 615). Instead, they suggest, we must craft methodologies and enact assessment practices that actually change the institutions within which we are situated. Just as importantly, publications must do "more than *recommend* or *hope for* institutional change;" a project must first "enact the practice(s) it hopes for" as a part of the project itself (2000, p. 628). In this way, institutional critique becomes a process of engaging in *ethical activities central to the inhabited spaces of these institutions*. Their model suggests that writing programs must both *act* to alleviate institutional conditions and *report* on the effects of that intervention. This model is serviceable as both a critique *of* institutional conditions and a critique *for* concrete change to those conditions.[3] Our project, which includes activities in the Fall of 2014 and Spring of 2015 *and* the space of this piece itself, strives to enact institutional critique as

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3   Though space does not allow for it here, this focus on ethical activities connects with important new trends in writing assessment. See, for instance, the *Journal of Writing Assessment's* 2016 special issue on ethics in assessment edited by Diane Kelly-Riley and Carl Whithaus.

a component of antiracist writing assessment that is responsive to conditions beyond the classroom.

This responsiveness, of course, is much more difficult to enact than it is to imagine. To enact that responsiveness, we turn to our second call: constructivist assessment models that serve as both tools of evaluation and look to enact positive change (e.g., Chen, 2015; Guba & Lincoln, 1989, 2001; Yarbrough et al., 2011). Too often, as Guba and Lincoln point out in their influential monograph *Fourth Generation Evaluation* (1989), assessment unconsciously reinforces attitudes that render students passive, inert, and disengaged from the lesson. As learning is constructed by humans and between humans, and for the benefit of improving human relations and conditions, Guba and Lincoln articulate a framework for evaluation that works to empower all individuals—"stakeholders" in their nomenclature. We recommend attempting to develop evaluation schemas that Guba and Lincoln as well as Chen propose to ensure that evaluation consists of a series of negotiations or interactions between individuals representing different perspectives and positions of power—in our case, students, faculty, staff, and members of the community. While there is no requirement that consensus emerge in evaluation, in the interplay of positionality Guba and Lincoln propose "authenticity" as an additional criterion for an evaluand's success beyond traditional models of validity. For constructivists like Guba and Lincoln, authenticity is context-dependent, multi-perspectival, and empowering to all. We have come to see authenticity as a necessary component in program-level assessment that can help programs like ours achieve institutional critique. A brief examination of the constructivist concept of authenticity will help underscore this potential, as well as point the way forward.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) proposed to add "authenticity" criteria (pp. 245-250) to augment—and perhaps to ultimately replace—traditional notions of validity, transferability, or objectivity in a given evaluand. As detailed in their more recent "Guidelines and Checklist for Constructivist (a.k.a. Fourth Generation) Evaluation" (2001), assessment as a dialectical negotiation recognizes power differentials explicitly and preserves the authenticity of context through a nine-step evaluation process:

1. Identify stakeholders
2. Elicit constructions/viewpoints
3. Provide a method for interaction/dialectic
4. Generate consensus where possible
5. Help negotiation where possible
6. Collect information and document
7. Establish a forum for disagreement

8. Develop a report
9. Recycle and repeat to build upon growing consensus (p. 3).

This approach to evaluation is noticeably social, involving a range of individuals and roles throughout. In fact, only one of the nine stages (step eight) could reasonably be attempted by a sole actor. Authentic evaluation underscores the importance of interaction in assessment, and ensures each of the actors is critically empowered. In addition to the aptly termed "fairness" requirement, authenticity should be "ontological," or mutually transformative; "educative," or mutually informative; "catalytic," or mutually stimulative; and "tactical," or mutually empowering (Guba & Lincoln, 2001, p. 7). As faculty, we are accustomed to designing *lessons* to accomplish these aims, confident in the knowledge that learning requires openness and mutuality. Assessment and evaluation, though—whether of students or of projects or lessons—often trigger a very different process. Constructivist assessment is tough, because it takes time and space; it is difficult to implement. Indeed, Chen's (2010, 2015) model of bottom-up integrative validity addresses much of Guba and Lincoln's critique of traditional notions of validity while still working in these more recognizable frameworks. Rather than rejecting scientific validity outright, Chen offers "viable validity" as a first test of an evaluation's real-world efficacy and effectiveness. This viable validity concept is very much akin to Guba and Lincoln's catalytic and tactical authenticity measures, yet it sits more comfortably in traditional evaluation frameworks, thereby appealing to both academic and practical stakeholders. Additionally, the messiness in Guba and Lincoln's framework can empower students as co-evaluators, encouraging them to use evaluation as a critical tool beyond the class. Indeed, Inoue (2015) applies a version of Guba and Lincoln's process in the negotiated classroom assessment model he describes in *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies*. While our study did not embrace constructivist assessment in its design, as we discuss in our analysis and conclusion sections below, we plan to anchor our project's revision in both Guba and Lincoln's and Chen's frameworks in order to more fully empower students.

After Ferguson and the on-campus protests, we looked to explore our teaching's ability to disrupt the habitus of our students, ourselves, and the larger institution. In doing so, we sought to assess institutional climate indirectly through the writing classroom. We think the problems we faced, and continue to face, are shared by many institutions that resemble our public university in the leafy suburbs of Philadelphia. We think that our response to these challenges, while not a rousing success, aligns with the critical race turn by pushing the work of writing assessment to more consciously adopt notions of white habitus put forth by Hahn and constructivist assessment models offered by Guba and Lincoln as well as Chen.

INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE OF WCU'S DIVERSITY ASSESSMENT & CAMPUS "CLIMATE"

Here at our institution, one important place to begin mapping the production of whitely beliefs is with our general education student diversity outcome: students should "be able to respond thoughtfully to diversity" (Curriculum and Academic Policies Council, 2012). Note how the white habitus is centered here in framing diversity as an external thing to ambiguously "respond thoughtfully to." Note too how this goal is rooted in a multicultural paradigm that scrubs diversity of any relationship to power. With such a diffuse goal in a suffix-driven General Education program that prioritizes student choice, it's small wonder that the goal has relatively few advocates within the classroom. Some faculty resent the goal itself as curricular bloat; many others are appalled at the goal's lack of ambition. Students resent any ethical remediation and sense institutional confusion in the curriculum. What's more, it is much easier to require this fuzzy aspirational goal of students than it is to assess any student's—and thereby the institution's—ability to attain this goal.[4] As a result, there is both a high-degree of dissatisfaction with the goal and a persistent impression that the goal is not being adequately met. Rather than challenging the decontextualized multiculturalism or the implicit white habitus of the outcome, though, a recent institution-wide effort to establish methods of assessing courses' ability to meet the diversity outcome resulted in only one clear directive: the need to develop a new rubric for measuring diversity education.

Against this backdrop, the First-Year Writing (FYW) program developed its own stronger goal for addressing diversity in writing courses. In 2012, the FYW committee mandated that upon completing the program, student portfolios should contain writing that "acknowledges structural inequality, either through content or style" and should convey "a perception that ideology influences social structures" (WCU FYW Committee, 2012). Yet our program has found it vexingly difficult to implement this goal in all sections, and even harder to assess. The emergence of #BlackLivesMatter and the student activism on campus opened a kairotic opportunity to enact these goals more deeply in our program.

The white habitus is not only inscribed into our diversity outcomes and curricular structure. It also pervades our location in the suburbs of Philadelphia. Our campus, West Chester University, is a member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), a 14-institution system of state colleges and universities that has accessible education for residents of the Commonwealth literally inscribed into its founding mission; no college in the state

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4   We should note that diversity goals are notoriously tough to assess (Boatright-Horowitz et al., 2012; Case, 2007; Kulik et al., 2008).

offers degrees for lower tuition than these fourteen sister schools. As the largest and best-resourced of these 14—and the only one located within a metropolitan area—WCU enjoys the benefits of what Kynard (2015) might call an "historical accident" that produces apparent diversity as measured by retention and graduation. Students do not ordinarily transfer from a cheaper school to a more expensive institution, as demonstrated by WCU's retention rates of first-year students currently at 87.9% for all students, according to 2015 data (WCU Office of Institutional Research, 2015). The retention rate for first-semester African American students is similar, at 81.9%. These are enviable numbers for many institutions nationwide, but they may not reveal much locally beyond the relative bargain represented by tuition at WCU. Graduation rates suggest the data mask a larger issue. WCU graduates the majority of white students within four years at a rate of 51.6%; by the fifth year, graduation rates rise to 70.5% for white students. On the other hand, WCU graduates its African American students at much lower rates: 24.6% in four years and 46.8% in five years (WCU Office of Institutional Research, 2015). Using the disparate impact analysis method suggested by Poe and her colleagues (2014), there is powerful evidence of *something* impacting African American students that causes another year of tuition and study. Although more qualitative data is needed to support stronger interpretations, at first pass there is a suggestion that student retention does not readily correlate with equivalent opportunities to succeed.

As the campus response to Ferguson would demonstrate, these data reflect not the typical challenges of recruitment and retention, but rather the more significant (but less visible) issues of campus climate. Overly vague implementation of diversity outcomes are but "a local manifestation of more general social relations" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 621), suggestive of an institutional white habitus. A more robust, activist-oriented diversity outcome—alongside an ethically responsive assessment program—may, as we argue below, begin to address the impact of white habitus on campus climate.

For students, campus climate is neither hegemonic nor unitary; many have not yet internalized the institution's resistance to change. A student flyer from November 2014 underscores this hope: "from one student to another I believe [we] could help further change the climate" (Anonymous flyer). The flyer projects the belief that students can produce a wholly different *climate for themselves*. As the movement grew beyond an ad-hoc group of protesters, students began to notice "a divide not only within the multicultural community, but also between the students of color and the students not of color" (Anonymous flyer). Students recognized quickly that the struggle to influence campus climate was both *about* race and *beyond* race itself. The move beyond visibility to action and interaction is reflected by the students' choice in Fall 2014 to declare themselves the Black

Friday Coalition (BFC), "students who care about the well-being of their fellow African American peers [coming] together to help them have a voice and advocate for change in the racial climate at West Chester University" (BFC Facebook Public Group Description). Of note here is the BFC's use of "climate" in their call for action, which appropriates the institution's use of the term and reveals the terrain of contest as a semiotic system of material realities and experiences of black students (Porter et al., 2000, p. 625).

The contingency of diversity as a tool to affect or sustain a positive campus environment can be seen in events on our campus, and campuses nationwide, responding to #BlackLivesMatter. At WCU, students worked in what Sibley (1996) refers to as "zones of ambiguity" (p. 33), or under-disciplined spaces on campus, to coordinate public action that included die-ins, rallies, marches, and daily silence on the campus quad. These sustained activities—wherein students and faculty placed their bodies in various locations on campus—forced "a simple spatial reordering" and represented "a micropolitical and rhetorical use of space" that constituted "effective political action" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 630). In altering the physical space of the campus, students effectively disrupted the regularized patterns of white habitus. Since habitus serves as a background support for a host of social knowledges (Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Bourdieu, 1986; Hahn, 2014), its disruption can be terrifying. Even as the spaces of the campus were being consciously disrupted by black bodies, a number of anti-black sentiments emerged. In the contested physical space of the campus, signs and posters were defaced, overwritten, or ripped down. Sibley (1996) describes the encounter with spatial disruption as "a source of anxiety. It is a zone of abjection, one which should be eliminated in order to reduce anxiety" (p. 33). White habitus creates, for its bearers, a "need of definition and regulation in order to remove the anxiety of the occupier" (Sibley, 1996, p. 34). We witnessed this anxiety as students lost the pose of neutrality and were forced to traverse zones of ambiguity on campus each day.

The use of space to discipline race and create order is a significant component of white habitus in institutions like WCU. This order can be threatened physically or in virtual space, and the anxiety of disorder can manifest just as easily on campus as on Facebook or anonymous forums (e.g., Yik Yak). In the use of space as a technology to order and rank conflict, Sibley is not alone in finding a preoccupation with exclusionary zones; other researchers have connected these neat architectural spaces to the separation of self from other (Graham & Marvin, 2001; Massey, 2005; Perin, 1977; Sennett, 1992). The spectacle of hundreds of black protesters and allies disrupting the campus' neat lines and manicured lawns threatened the pretense of "order, conformity, and social homogeneity" (Sibley, 1996, pp. 38-39). The disruption of space is, as we know, the disruption

of habitus and its unconscious and conscious ideologies. If the discursive spaces of hallways witnessed racist graffiti and defacement, the administration's anxiety at this disruption reveals a deeply embedded habitus. Our institution, like many others, struggled to respond to the movement, deferring in hopes of avoiding the conflict. This conflict of space and ideology, of deferral and silence, provides the context for our lesson study.

DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDY: LESSON STUDY AT WCU

Our group's approach to lesson study aligns with what Hutchings (2011) sees as the method's ability to bring "faculty together to exchange ideas and to collaborate on matters of instructional design and classroom practice in ways that make a difference" (ix). Channeling the moment in December 2014 before winter break and in the midst of campus responses and reactions to #BlackLivesMatter, our group hoped that lesson study could serve "to actually enact the practice[s] it hopes for" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 628) by using the study as a mechanism to achieve the writing program's goals that by itself it has no agency to enact. Our group identified ambitions for the project:

1. to improve teaching effectiveness in the diffuse area of general-education diversity outcomes;
2. to connect with each other and with students, to build a coherent and responsive curriculum;
3. to support and extend the activist moment our campus was experiencing; and
4. to highlight some of the gains being made through institutional critique and make them permanent.

Our group thought that lesson study was the perfect avenue for these ambitions, with its dual focus on revealing pathways of learning and activating mechanisms of reflection.

Lesson study is a recursive process for lesson development that places specific focus on student learning. Cerbin (2011) offers that the goal of "a lesson study is to put a lesson under a microscope, to carefully analyze how students learn from our teaching and then use that knowledge to improve future performance—ours and theirs" (p. 2). Faculty study a lesson in order to assess its effectiveness and improve its ability to achieve its desired outcomes. As a collaborative process, lesson study orients instructors toward students and the practice of teaching.

Lesson study contains both a research lesson—which itself is revised—and a study designed for reflective and systematic analysis of the lesson observations. The lesson study cycle contains eight recursive steps. It begins (Step One) with

participating instructors' development of learning goals and identification of a focus for the lesson. Next, (Step Two) a lesson is developed to address the learning goals, along with (Step Three) a study design to measure the effectiveness of the lesson. Both the lesson and the study design are reviewed and revised, then (Step Four) a team member teaches the lesson while "other group members attend the class to observe and collect evidence of student learning, thinking, and engagement" (Cerbin, 2011, p. 15). The group members focus on collecting observations that document *student* behavior as a response, not instructor behavior. After the lesson is presented, (Step Five) instructors and observers meet to share "their observations, interpretations, and comments on the lesson" (Cerbin, 2011, p. 17). Cerbin notes that the meeting "should focus on the lesson (not the teacher) and analyzing what, how, and why students learned or did not learn from the experience" (2011, p. 17). The group rethinks the lesson and (Step Six) proposes revisions, which are implemented in the next iteration of the lesson. Then, in the second cycle (Step Seven), that revised lesson is offered by a second member of the group while other members again conduct observations according to the study design (Steps Four–Six). This process is repeated until the study is complete; along the way, (Step Eight) the entire process is transparently documented and catalogued.

Lesson study operates in the material and conceptual space located between classrooms and institutional mandates, providing overt mechanisms for evaluating the connections between classroom practices and learning outcomes. Because of its intentionally active, reflective, recursive processes, we view lesson study as a form of institutional critique, well-suited to antiracist writing assessment when it is paired with a lesson focused on social justice. Lesson Study also provided, for our teaching group at the end of 2014, a way to engage more directly in the struggle for a better campus climate, an issue at the heart of our campus student movement.

We also were well aware that the study fundamentally alters the role of the teacher as leader of a class. Quite consciously, the study prioritizes observing the actions of students rather than instructors, asking instructors to alter their strategies based on observed student affective and written responses. As we will offer in more detail below, our study design asked observers to note students' actions, students' interest and engagement, students' interactions with each other, and students' language. Here, the study works to disrupt the material and conceptual space of classroom lessons and classroom observations. Instead of visiting a classroom to assess teaching competence, we visited to measure the responses of students. Observation is a routine part of our department, but ordinarily we are "institutional representatives" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 611) with the administration as audience. Here, lesson study reframes officialdom into a *learning obser-*

vation, situating us to "improve the conditions of those affected by and served by institutions" by shifting the focus to student learning (Porter et al., 2000, p. 611). The bodily practice may appear the same, but resetting the rhetorical frame shifts the *activity* toward institutional critique. As the results section below shows, many of our goals were unaddressed. However, despite any failure, lesson study revealed new spaces to integrate more critical assessment practices into our FYW program, especially when more explicitly paired with fourth-generation negotiated evaluation practices that involve students more fully in the lesson's design and evaluation.

THE STUDY LESSON ON PRIVILEGE

At the start of our lesson study project, we identified the learning problem as students' resistance and cynicism to discussions about race and social privilege. Our pilot lesson adopted the following goals: students will be able to recognize the value of an attention to race, will begin to see how race influences the way we think, and can recognize white privilege and their connection to it. Here we were attentive to Cerbin's (2011) suggestion to use "backward design to plan the lesson" (p. 13). For the study, we worked as a team to plan a single lesson, supported by a prefatory at-home reading assignment and writing assignment. Following Cerbin's (2011) suggestion that the research lesson plan "should describe fully the sequence of lesson activities, the material the teacher will use in the class, the teacher's questions, and even possible responses to students' questions" (p. 13), we developed our privilege lesson in four steps: (1) an initial activity, (2) a homework activity of reading and reflective writing, (3) a group discussion in class, and (4) reflective writing at the end of the lesson. This entire sequence of events transpired across two class sessions. To allow for assessment, we designed steps two and four of these moments to provide collectible data that would facilitate assessment of students' pre- and post-discussion writing. Within faculty cohorts, we overviewed methods for collecting data to support the lesson study and the research plan: preserving artifacts of student writing, noting formal and informal conversations during the lessons, and recording observable behavior during the lesson observation in step four. Each cohort was charged with adhering to the study design, while also free to revise any and all aspects of the initial lesson in order to achieve the goals of the study.

After asking for and receiving informed consent from all participants, the lesson study commenced with an in-class activity at the end of the class period preceding the observed lesson. We chose a "wastebasket" activity about social privilege that had been making the rounds on the internet. Originally

attributed to an unnamed "high school teacher" (Pyle, 2014), the activity asks students to crumple a piece of paper at their desks. The teacher places a bin at the front of the room and announces that everyone in the class has the opportunity to achieve great wealth and live in the upper class. Students *only* have to shoot their paper ball into the bin, without leaving their desks, to win. We hoped that the inherent unfairness of the activity would expose the various privileges we all experience daily. Our protocols asked instructors to end class with the wastebasket activity and avoid discussion until the following class.

As homework, students were assigned to read Gina Crosley-Corcoran's "Explaining White Privilege to a Broke White Person" (2013). Originally a blog post on *Feminist Breeder* before going viral and appearing in *Huffington Post* and other content aggregators, the article overviews notions of racial privilege for an imagined white audience that considers itself relatively removed from the taint of racist attitudes. Students were asked to read the article then compose a response structured by questions that asked them to engage with privilege. Following Cerbin's (2011) suggestion that lessons be designed with "cognitive empathy" and that designers "take on the perspective of the student" (p. 13), we hoped these activities would provide students an opportunity and framework for reflection, extend the insight of the inequitable wastebasket activity, and provide the grist for class discussion during the study lesson in the next class meeting.

On the day of the lesson, students would check-in with informed consent or be excused should they not wish to participate. The initial lesson plan called for instructors to open class by briefly reminding students about the focus for the day and introducing the observers. There were two observers for each delivery of the lesson. At the lesson's beginning, instructors modeled a recognition of their own privilege, helping students express a detailed recognition of privilege that we'd identified as a learning goal. Next, students were asked to organize into small groups for discussions that paired interpretation of the reading assignment with synthesis of the reading's goals through their own lives and experiences. Students were asked to document their discussion through a tasked note taker, and the study collected these artifacts of student learning. Moving into a large group report-back, instructors placed different group reports into contact with each other to facilitate exchange and empathy across the class. The lesson moved to an open discussion, allowing consideration of new ideas, before finishing with an in-class reflective writing assignment that asked students to synthesize the lesson and provide feedback on the lesson and its delivery. All written artifacts would be collected at the end of class.

After the lesson, the project asked instructor and observers to meet and analyze the lesson's effectiveness (Step Five), and (Step Six) share notes and revise

the lesson as needed based on observations and analyses of student writing.[5] The study protocol asked the team to switch roles twice, with each member delivering a lesson and serving as observer twice (Step Seven). Along the way, we asked for cohorts to retain written artifacts from students and observers' notes and documentation. With five groups of three instructor-observers, we hoped that our study would produce five distinct effective lessons on social privilege that could be used within any of our general education writing classrooms at WCU.

STUDY DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The research lesson and plan for the study were developed during December and January 2014–2015. We designed a project that would meet the intellectual aims of lesson study, meet the procedural requirements of the IRB, meet the local exigencies of support for student engagement and activism in #BLM, and meet our disciplinary duties to provide critical assessment data for diversity education across the curriculum. Of course, the study balances these competing needs to varying degrees of success. As a *lesson study* research project, we designed our protocols around the structures of a single class meeting, with a focus on repeatable lesson delivery and observable phenomena to indicate learning in students. This limit allowed our lesson to quickly hone in on unconscious instructor behaviors and hidden student responses, revising the lesson to better meet the needs of the students and faculty. The research study acknowledges, however, that this focus on the lesson as a series of granular acts comes at the expense of longitudinal study of the process of learning; such a longitudinal study is needed, we acknowledge, but remains beyond the purview of this project. Methodologically, we chose early on to avoid tracking individual student artifacts, a decision that made IRB compliance much easier but cost us the ability to measure changes across the pre-lesson and post-lesson artifacts for individual students. The lesson met its initial aim of providing support for student activists and protests in support of BLM; of the nearly 70 English faculty members we solicited to participate in the project, 15 instructors actively joined the lesson study (and upwards of 30 initially voiced their support). Based on teaching schedule and availability to observe other colleagues teach the lesson, the 15

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5   Here we diverged from Cerbin's prescription. While he suggests conducting one study lesson in a semester, we attempted to run through three cycles of the lesson study in that time. As we move forward, we—and hopefully others who reflect on the work in this chapter—will especially note Porter and his colleagues' assessment of institutional resistance: "Institutions change slowly, and the results of a given project—and here we mean both the results of a researcher's interactions during a study as well as results seen as publication—may not be visible for some time" (2000, p. 625).

instructors were grouped into five cohorts of three members each. Six faculty collaborated to develop the initial research lesson, while the research study was designed and coordinated by the three of us. We sought and obtained IRB approval for the lesson study under the category of exempt research on educational practice in ordinary educational settings.

The enthusiasm for the project proved difficult to sustain across the multiple revisions, reflections, and observations required of the study. Of the five initial cohorts, only two cohorts completed the full study cycle of one lesson and two revision opportunities per member. While the lesson study generated abundant data reflecting students and faculty responding to race, privilege, and diversity in the writing classroom—reflecting the learning goals "students will be able to recognize the value of an attention to race, will begin to see how race influences the way we think, and can recognize white privilege and their connection to it"—for the research study and publication we agreed to only analyze and report data from cohorts that fully completed the cycle. Our dataset includes materials from six sections for a total of 150 students, five instructors, and four distinct lessons. We received informed consent and writing artifacts from 102 student participants, for a participation rate of 68% (Table 8.1). Due to differences in lesson revision (cohorts were free to alter the lesson) and the parameters of ethical writing research (students were eligible to participate without submitting any artifacts for analysis, or could submit only in-class artifacts), our dataset includes 66 short individual responses from the pre-lesson homework reflection (HW) and 102 post-lesson written reflections (WR).

After the conclusion of the study, we coded artifacts for theme and type, following Strauss and Corbin's (1990) method of grounded theory and allowing themes to emerge from materials being studied (see also Charmaz, 2006). We built four categories to analyze the artifacts: (1) opposition to or *rejection* of the learning outcomes on concepts of race and privilege; (2) *awareness* of the learning outcomes on concepts of race and privilege; (3) *confusion* regarding the learning outcomes on concepts of race and privilege; and (4) an *activist* orientation toward using the learning outcomes to promote and effect change in the world (see "Categories," Table 8.3). After discarding artifacts in the dataset from students without informed consent, we removed names and other personal information from the dataset and coded each artifact by two individuals, using a third coder as needed. We analyzed pre- and post-lesson data to assess lesson effectiveness, but the research study's principled adherence to anonymity and inclusiveness (we allowed passive participation, and so could not assure that each student submitted one and only one artifact) prevents a more granular approach that might allow us to track individual results more effectively.

RESULTS AND QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA

Results from artifacts written before students attended the lesson on race and privilege suggest that students were widely acculturated to rhetorics of race and privilege, and largely unmotivated to using this habitus as a tool for critical engagement or action (Table 8.1). In the 66 pre-lesson Homework Writing artifacts (HW), 59 artifacts (83.4%) expressed a vague or general awareness of issues of privilege and race. Six artifacts (9.1%) expressed a sense of confusion around issues of race or privilege. One artifact (1.5%) expressed a rejection of issues of race and privilege. No artifact expressed any sense of commitment to action or willingness to explore potential activities to address issues of race or privilege.

Table 8.1. Variables of student responses from pre- and post-lesson artifacts

	Pre-Lesson		Post-Lesson	
Response Themes	N	(%)	N	(%)
Awareness	59	89.4	77	75.5
Confusion	6	9.1	13	12.7
Rejection	1	1.5	2	2
Activism	0	0	10	9.8
Total	66	100	102	100

Instructor cohorts read post-lesson artifacts during the lesson revision process, but to avoid confirmation bias the team of researchers waited until the lesson study was complete to code the artifacts. As Table 8.1 above shows, in 102 post-lesson artifacts, 77 artifacts (75.5%) expressed a general awareness of issues of privilege and race. Thirteen artifacts (12.7%) expressed a sense of confusion around issues of race or privilege. Two artifacts (2%) expressed a rejection of issues of race and privilege. Ten artifacts (9.8%) expressed a sense of commitment to action or willingness to explore potential activities to address issues of race or privilege. These results largely confirm our expectations going into the project, which predicted that students would use the lesson to move away from confusion and rejection and toward awareness and activism.

The data suggest a significant discrepancy between the pre-and post-lesson groups on the theme of awareness, but the dataset remains too small for granular inferential analysis. Based on our experiences in delivering the lesson and observing student participation, we created four variables to describe students' artifacts and predicted the following presence of these variables: awareness =

65%; confusion = 20%; rejection = 5%; activism = 10%. As Table 8.1 shows, it appears that our coding experiences approximated what actually occurred in the response theme of awareness; however, our coding experiences in the variables of confusion, rejection, and activism were not aligned with the themes that appeared in student writing artifacts. Our initial response to the data was to suggest some lack of fit necessitating a growth in categories; further statistical analysis demonstrates this more fully. Table 8.2, below, uses a null hypothesis to assess the significance of the lesson as a contributing factor in the occurrence of variables; due to the sample size, *chi square* values are computed for only the variable of awareness.

Table 8.2. Chi-square analysis of lesson significance by variable

	Pre-Lesson (n=66)		Post-Lesson (n=102)		X^2 / p
Response Themes	**Expected**	**Observed**	**Expected**	**Observed**	
Awareness	44	59	77	91	403.596
Confusion	13.	6	13	9	$p < .01$
Rejection	3.	1	2	2	
Activism	7	0	10	0	

Our study used pre-lesson student artifact percentages to construct a null hypothesis for the lessons, in this case arguing that the lesson had *no* effect on student behavior and post-lesson data reflects either random clustering or attitudes held prior to the lesson. If the lesson were not impactful, we would expect similar variable numbers post-lesson. The null hypothesis (H_0) predictions are reported in Table 8.2 above.[6] Using a test of statistically significant difference (X^2 (2, n=102) = 103.73, p <.01), we can reliably reject the null hypothesis that the lesson delivered had no effect on student responses distributions, and thereby infer a relationship between the lesson and the student artifacts differences. Although the results may not conform exactly to our expectations, especially in the levels of activism we were able to instigate through the readings and discussions, the results nevertheless suggest the potential impact of race-conscious writing pedagogy.

In general, the data reflect students engaging with issues of race and privilege to structure writing artifacts that express an awareness of the issues (75%). While this produces for students a much less desirable outcome than student activism, this development is directly consistent with the study's learning goals—*students will be able to recognize the value of an attention to race, will*

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6   Pre-lesson data is analyzed to derive a percentage for each theme, then multiplied by the number of responses in the post-lesson dataset.

begin to see how race influences the way we think, and can recognize white privilege and their connection to it. The relative ease with which our study met this desired goal—almost 90% of students expressed this learning outcome *before* the lesson—underscores the frustrating futility of awareness-based diversity learning outcomes. While we felt relieved at the relatively low rate of resistance expressed (1.5% pre-lesson, 2% post-lesson), we were extremely disappointed in low levels of activism throughout the study (0% pre-lesson, 10% post-lesson). With only 10% of students expressing a desire to take action, even when directly prompted by questions in class, we viewed the lesson study as a missed opportunity for supporting and extending the work of the BFC and other student groups. These data reflect an impotency inherent in our classroom-based study: by remaining within the boundaries of the classroom, we were unable to significantly catalyze efforts beyond that space, leaving students with either awareness or confusion.

Frustratingly, the data suggest a marked uptick in the level of confusion in our students: from 9.1% to 12.7%, a nearly 30% growth rate occasioned by the lesson. One interpretation might attribute that growth in confusion to the cognitive dissonance inherent in disruptions of white habitus. As we argue above, the desire for order is a powerful instrument of habitus, and the disruption of that order can be a terrifying process. Even after the lesson, 75% of student artifacts offer awareness as an appropriate response to racism, signaling the work we might have done in connecting thought to action.

Our team's response to the relatively high number of artifacts within the variable "Awareness" (89% pre-lesson, 75% post-lesson) was to subdivide awareness to reflect the potential for widely different attitudes from the student-writers shown in Table 8.3. Our results sub-divide this tricky category to identify these attitudes: (a) awareness as an end; (b) thankfulness; (c) critique of society without any suggested action; (d) charity or a desire to help those less fortunate; (e) an increased sensitivity to others; (f) feelings of *carpe diem*, or an awareness of privilege as a gift that one must take advantage of; (g) guilt about oneself; and (h) resignation that the situation as unchangeable. For both pre-lesson and post-lesson data, we allowed artifacts to have multiple themes present, and used a third coder when necessary.

The data in Table 8.3 indicate one immediate effect of the lesson was to transform expressions of awareness as an end–in–itself (reduced from 71% to 36%) into other more concrete areas: thanksgiving (10%), charity towards others (23%), sensitivity (21%), and carpe diem (10%). Without follow-up interviews to confirm the facets, however, we have a relatively low confidence in their ability to accurately reflect underlying student attitudes; this remains an area of future research.

Table 8.3. Facets of awareness

Topic	Pre-Lesson		Post-Lesson	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**
Awareness as end	42	71%	28	36%
Thanksgiving	1	2%	8	10%
Critique w/o action	14	24%	6	8%
Charity	0	0%	18	23%
Sensitivity	4	7%	16	21%
Carpe Diem	0	0%	8	10%
Guilt	0	0%	6	8%
Resignation	1	2%	3	4%
Total	62	100%	93	100%

If our goal was to produce student activists, then the lesson study is a categorical failure; while 10% of our student artifacts express a desire to work for change, an equal number seem confused *by the lesson itself*. In short, instead of opening a space for critique that uses action to produce change, the lesson study seemed to reify our students' identities as students. However, we are aware that the proposition of institutional critique "also suggest[s] that we be more patient in judging the effects of research practices and publications" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 628). In addressing these misgivings, we have come to realize the importance of constructive methods of assessment as better able to reflect and produce change within all stakeholders (Chen, 2015; Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Using more qualitative data, we will document the successes and failures we encountered in order to propose a more detailed way forward.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS: THE PRODUCTIVITY OF UNRESOLVED CONFUSION

Even as we collected the data reflecting students' engagement in meaningful discussions about race and privilege, we recursively revised the lesson to try and light a fire, to get students to move from *thinking* to *doing*. As the data reveals, though, students were far more willing to express *awareness* than *activism*. Our analysis reveals the breadth of attitudes contained within expressions of awareness. For example, one student wrote:

> I acknowledge that I have had it much easier than other
> ethnicities. I have never been objectified because of my race.

> I have never really noticed that most people I come into con-
> tact with are the same race that I am. (Student SP, pre-lesson)

The artifact hints that this student has already incorporated insights from the Crosley-Corcoran reading into their understanding of privilege. Some students expressed an awareness of intersectional forms of social privilege:

> I've also seen that there is privilege along with being straight .
> . . Being a man has privilege. Lack of fear, higher pay, respect
> in the workplace, but men don't see it as a privilege it is just
> who they are. I also see privilege in race. There is still a divide,
> no matter how much we want to cover it up, between races.
> (Student DY, pre-lesson)

This student's response reveals an awareness of social privilege evidenced as both absence ("lack of fear") and tangible material advantages ("higher pay"). At the same time, though, some artifacts indicate a diminishing of the importance of race:

> [R]ace and color are not always determinates of privilege. Priv-
> ilege primarily means that some people just work much harder
> to live through things and that some people may not have the
> opportunity to get to live those actions because of how they
> were brought into this world. (Student LS, pre-lesson)

This response troubled us. Even as this student reduces the importance of race in the determination of social advantage, they indicate that circumstance of birth is a factor in determining social privilege. For many of our students, the accident of our reading materials would forever conjoin notions of privilege with the concept of work. The artifact quoted above contains an implicit nod to exceptionalism as a means to counter social privilege, more or less deflecting the trajectory of our lesson. As is clear now, within the over-broad category of aware-ness is a host of responses to race and privilege. Just as clearly, these responses indicate that awareness is a dangerous learning outcome for race-conscious writ-ing assessment, since awareness can easily serve to reinforce white habitus and reduce students' ability to understand themselves as agents of change.

The post-lesson data suggests expressions of awareness might be even more complex than the pre-lesson data hints. The data are tough to interpret, since it is at least possible that students are seeking to prove their knowledge for the instructor. The statistically significant reduction in the theme of awareness (Ta-ble 8.2, above), along with the proliferation of categories of awareness (Table 8.3, above), suggests an engagement with complex theoretical work in student

responses. As we noted above and discuss below, the increase in confusion may reveal a meaningful encounter with disruptions to the habitus, allowing us to correlate increases in confusion with increases in activism. Without more refined data—especially the ability to track an individual student's progression, or conduct follow-up interviews where students clarify their own words—we are left to conjecture.

Confusion

At first blush, the increase in confusion following the lesson (from 9% pre-lesson to 13% post-lesson) seems to contradict the efficacy of our lesson on race. We interpreted the pre-writing responses of six students (9%) as exhibiting confusion about the concept of social privilege. At times this confusion surfaces as the beginning of opposition; at others, confusion evokes a genuine perplexity. For example, one student offers that, "It's hard to see how a poor woman can have advantages in life just because she's a U.S. citizen and she's white" (Student 11A). Intersectionality challenges this student's self-conception, and one can imagine the next move being summative: being poor, for this student, outweighs any advantage of citizenship or race. Rather than resist, though, this student continues between accepting and resisting. "I don't know what to do with these privileges since I'm not fully aware of my advantages" (Student 11A). As we interpreted the results of our study, though, we came to see confusion as a productive space for writing classes and writing students. Like the frustrating torpor of Socrates in Plato's *Meno*, confusion can become a valuable place for students to work out just *what to do*. In this way, confusion is clearly a much more productive space than an awareness that privilege "is all about hard work, perseverance, and luck" (Student 6B). One entry point to confusion is the material's challenge to meritocracy. Students struggle to navigate this challenge:

> I agree that in some cases being born into a privileged family can help, but at the same time people who work hard can overcome their birthplace. If you are lazy and rich you are much less likely to succeed than someone who is hard working and poor. (Student 11C)

While this student formally acknowledges socioeconomic status as one basis of privilege, they later undercut that with the myth of work, a key component of the meritocratic foundation of white habitus.

After the lesson, 13 artifacts (12.75%) evidenced students' confusion about social privilege as students struggle to assimilate the lesson in the least disruptive way possible. For example, one student offers, "The idea that is unclear to

me is the fact that we all have the same opportunity. I don't understand what that means if we all come from completely different places" (Student Reflection 28C). This student's response places the concept of privilege, recently acquired, into contact with the myth of equal opportunity, concluding that if privilege holds true, there can't really ever be *equal* opportunity. Another student states, "I don't think I understand my own privilege or privilege in general," then later continues "if I have the power to change something for the better, I would" (Student Reflection 4C). Even more than the pre-lesson reading, the class discussion seems to have asked students to make connections between incompatible perspectives. The growth in confusion underscores the very real cognitive dissonance of reconciling privilege to the white habitus.

ACTIVISM AND REJECTION

Anecdotally, the data suggest that reading essays on race and privilege alone are insufficient to incite the move to activism in students, but conversations and sustained reflection might be much more effective. In addition to the remarkable growth in confusion discussed above, there was an increase in activist sentiments following the lesson's delivery, from 0% to 10%. Undoubtedly, the ability to opt-out of the lesson study likely reduced the number of students rejecting the premises of study itself. Before the lesson, no student evidenced an activist stance in the pre-writing, and only one student rejected privilege: "If people were truly worried about race and being treated with little to no respect, the president would not be African American" (Student 5A). The post-racial logic of this student's response absences race from the root of worry even as it holds up Barack Obama's presidency as evidence of a resolution of racial problems. After the lesson, two students (2%) expressed sentiments of rejection. One student offers:

> The most important thing I learned today is next to nothing.
> I am told that privilege has everything to do with race, gender,
> sexual orientation, wealth, and so many other factors, when a
> simple observation of the world we live [sic] shows that that
> is not true. Can anyone explain to me how Crosley-Corcoran
> is privileged despite being raised in a terribly poor family?
> (Student TJ)

This student's honest assessment of the lesson initially engages race and other socially constructed determinants of privilege before making a "simple observation" that actively challenges the materials and the conversations of the study lesson. The connection with the cognitive dissonance of confusion is evident,

but this student moves a step beyond in their reconciliation of the white habitus to the challenge of privilege. While clearly rejecting, this response also contains a ray of hope: the student makes an effort to demonstrate a degree of engagement with the lesson's materials. And resistance that engages, Plato's *Meno* might teach us, can be quite productive. The other post-lesson artifact manages to reject the issues much more thoroughly:

> I know successful people who fall into some of the disadvantage [sic] groups I promise they never talk about their disadvantages. Their to [sic] busy over coming them they waste no time making an issue of them. (Student 13C)

The agonism here is much more total, and much less consequential. Silence becomes a virtue, a testament to the need for order and civility at the heart of habitus. And hard work becomes a surrogate for luck and privilege, returning the student to the Lockean dream of equity.

A qualitative investigation of the activist orientation in post-lesson artifacts underscores the potential of lesson study as an element of institutional critique, even as its relatively small proportion (10 students, 9.8%) suggests a missed opportunity. One student offers,

> I can use what I learned in this class to spread this awareness to others that take what they have for granted and help them understand not everybody is born with the same advantages in life. I hope with the help of this lesson people will better understand this subject and create a more inclusive environment for everyone. (Student 7B)

This student connects understanding to action in just the way that we'd hoped. Another student underscores this relationship:

> This project made me think about what I can do to make a change. I am not 100% sure what it is yet, but it's always going to be in the back of my mind for the rest of my life. (Student 2C)

The need to connect awareness to action is a clear thread amongst the activist students. Another student immediately makes this connection:

> We will never get rid of subconscious prejudices, but if we are aware of them we can keep them in check, and that will reduce the effects of institutional prejudice and privilege on a mass scale. (Student 16C)

Even as this student is doubtful that we can ever be rid of individual forms of prejudice, they recognize the relationship between awareness and change in collective practice. The student's use of "we" is also interesting in that it suggests a collective effort that cuts across lines of social identities.

The consistent use of intersectionality to avoid race in preference of class, combined with a too-eager tendency to affirm one's own sagacity, questions the utility of privilege within the lesson study. As McWhorter (2015) reminds us in his provocative critique of teaching white privilege as an end–in–itself, "It's a safe bet that most black people are more interested in there being adequate public transportation from their neighborhood to where they need to work than that white people attend encounter group sessions where they learn how lucky they are to have cars" (para. 28). In short, if the point of education about privilege is *solely* to raise awareness, what good is it? Only a few students report their commitment to work actively for justice (10%). Achieving 75% awareness as a result of the lesson study may achieve the *learning outcome* of the lesson even as it misses our own goal in framing the study: supporting student activists and facilitating institutional critique. Even as the lesson revealed the suitability of privilege as an entry point to discussing race, it also proved to be a poor avenue to social justice activities, either within the campus or in the larger community.

WRITING ASSESSMENT AND CRITIQUE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

For us, these frustrating analyses confirmed events on the ground in Spring 2015, as we witnessed decreasing engagement between white students and activists of color in the BFC. In the second semester of protest, fewer white students joined their black peers around campus. Our classroom-based study indirectly documents this reticence, even as it collects self-reports of awareness of race-based privilege. As a strategy for engaging in institutional critique, then, our lesson study of 2015 proved unsuccessful for the critical moment. But in its failure, it succeeds in demonstrating the contours of a white habitus that must be acknowledged in order to produce effective change. We believe our study points forward in true lesson study fashion. By revising the study itself, we believe that institutional critique remains a possibility within antiracist writing assessment.

To quote McWhorter (2015), our Lesson Study "put the laser focus on the awareness raising" and not "to actually changing society" (para. 14). Our choice of reading material provided an intersectional lens for the privilege discussion that allowed students to decouple race and class. After reading the materials on privilege, economic class was more than twice as frequent a focus for students in the pre-lesson artifacts, versus a rather even distribution of race (18), class

(18), and gender (17) in post-lesson artifacts. As we've argued, the emphasis on economic privilege presents an opportunity for the pervasive white habitus to deflect criticism and resist direct confrontation. Students grasped at privilege as a common phenomenon, reporting that everyone is privileged. Rather than engaging students in dismantling structures of oppression, our analysis suggests that the lesson helped them to use class to inoculate themselves from race. Students used intersectional privilege to find commonality on economic hardship. This echoes Trainor's (2008) finding that students in her high school sample consistently minimized difference and emphasized commonality. While commonality is to be valued, we must move beyond privilege discourses no matter how intersectional.

Interestingly, we as teachers and researchers weren't the only ones searching for something more. When asked directly in the reflection writing, most students articulated confusion about what *to do* with new-found information about privilege. One student exclaimed, "I never/don't really think of myself of privileged because of my skin but now after this I do see it and recognize it and it is sad things have to be that way" (Student Reflection 21C). We think this student's stasis represents a significant failing in our lesson: the lack of a clear path forward out of the cognitive dissonance of white habitus. Without that path, the reflection above simultaneously notes raised consciousness and a sense of white supremacy's inevitability. Indeed, it would seem that one clear consciousness raising that occurred in our lesson study is a heightened sense of color consciousness for students, a growing awareness by white students of their own whiteness. If the essence of white habitus is its own invisibility, then framing white privilege *as white* seems to be a critically important step towards critical color consciousness. Despite this newfound consciousness, our lesson study did not help students develop agency. And herein lies the difficulty of assessment in a writing program built around diffuse questions of "diversity" or "critical thinking," as so many of our programs are.

Our impetus to develop lessons and programs centered around social justice issues often obscures hidden assumptions within our own pedagogies; often, the more committed we are to these real-world social justice issues, the more inflexible and incurious we can become about our own pedagogies. As Fox (2002) offers, "we manifest and reproduce whitely ways of being in the world" (p. 203). Hammond's essay in this volume helps to show that throughout our field's history, even our most pedagogically progressive impulses can be dragged down by nativist—or whitely—assumptions (Chapter 1, this collection). Despite our best intentions, we too often project a passivity onto our students in the very act of construction, pre-imagining relatively complacent students responding in relatively predictable ways to the programs we love so much. In our own lesson

study project, for example, our coding scheme located just four avenues—the very rare "reject" model, held by just 1–2% of students; the unimaginative "confused" model, whose membership grew as we conducted the project; the catch-all "awareness" model, which grew to hold almost all of the students; and the holy grail "activist" model, which never had more than a handful of students from across the six sections. Despite our analysis in the preceding section, we suspect that our study reveals, more than anything else, how little agency was afforded students in our model, and by extension is afforded in most classrooms. Students' confusion about agency mirrors the too-often unexplored side of the dialectic Diab and her colleagues (2013) name between "critique against" and "critique for" in their own efforts to apply institutional critique as a method of antiracist action. Without coordinating, each lesson was unconsciously pitched as a critique *against*, and students' anxious paralysis reflects the limits of that model in producing action *for*. We've learned that we need to pitch the lesson to a place of "critiquing for" the dismantling of white supremacy. As we revise, we think that such a task demands new ways of imagining solidarity, and new ways of *critiquing for* concrete, embodied action. Awareness on its own simply reinforces the white habitus.

As a conclusion, we propose two strategies for future research in order to reach the goals that our project sought but did not achieve. First of all, we suggest that institutional critique requires a transgression of spatial boundaries in order to activate its potential for real, sustained action. And secondly, we suggest that writing assessment must embrace action-oriented evaluation (Chen, 2010, 2015; Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Huebner & Betts, 1999; Lay & Papadapoulis, 2007) in order to ensure that students are not disempowered by the very programs intended to empower them. If that dynamic of disempowered empowerment sounds familiar, it is because you have seen iterations of it traced throughout this book: Hammond's essay traces it historically (Chapter 1, this collection); both Harms (Chapter 3, this collection) and Gomes (Chapter 6, this collection) trace it in the linguistic imperialism of U.S. colonialism practiced, respectively, abroad and at home. We argue that lesson study, with its process of recursive revision, is a means to implement both institutional critique and action-oriented evaluation.

If each lesson unconsciously shaped itself towards paralysis by building a strong critique *against* privilege, then our lesson study fell short as a catalyst that produces change demanded by institutional critique. Our design imagined the institution as a mere collection of individuals, where each micropolitical struggle attempts to make real, if infinitesimal, alteration in the institution. We are not alone in that design; Porter and his colleagues (2000) demonstrate this vision of the composition classroom is a common trope. Classrooms are powerful spac-

es, and transformative acts occur within their walls and under their aegis. But we must also acknowledge that when we seek to use classroom space to effect students as agents of institutional change, we risk both effective learning and institutional change. If, as institutional critique describes, the classroom is an effective space for "micropolitical action," then student learning necessarily becomes a tool of resistance (Porter et al., 2000, p. 616). This dynamic is risky because the rhetoric of institutional critique takes *space* as a foundational concern, and the space of the classroom is not the space of the institution—materially or rhetorically. Without an overt focus on rhetoricizing space and inviting students to interrogate the boundaries of seemingly color-blind institutional structures, the classroom risks making institutions and their white habitus "seem monolithic and beyond an individual's power for change—except in a kind of liberal, trickle-up theory of change that pins political hopes on the enlightened, active individual" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 617). Without explicitly making the institution itself accessible to students as agents, through an overt and critical attention to space, writing classes will never succeed in engaging the institutional fabric of the white habitus that chokes campus climates with color-blind racism.

We must commit to working beyond the walls of our classroom, and beyond the spaces of our program assessments, if we are serious about lighting a fire for our students. We must design and assess critical race pedagogies that use the space of the institution itself to engage students in embodied and rhetorical practices aimed at weakening the taproot of the white habitus—within the hallways, the quad, the student union. For this to occur, we argue that lesson study projects and institutional critiques such as ours must work to engage students *beyond* the space of the classroom itself. We suggest, and hope to implement in our next iteration of the lesson study at WCU, a critical pedagogy that invites students to physically transgress the boundaries of the classroom in order to more effectively engage with and disrupt the myriad spaces of the institution. If our classes can be disrupted by the relatively simple act of recycling bin basketball, then we can begin to imagine the disruptive effects of lessons that locate privilege directly in the physical spaces of the university. We envision asking students, for instance, to ethnographically document the Student Union, the Quad, the Food Court, and other locations on campus as raced spaces. By disrupting and directly engaging with the spaces of the university that organize and mediate race, we see a very real potential to challenge white habitus—that force of behavior orientation that never quite reveals itself directly. And we're convinced that taking up this large and pressing task is central work for anyone wishing to work in the long-awaited, badly needed, critically raced space of writing assessment.

Just as significant as the need to traverse space in order to expose the institution and its habitus to effective critique, though, is the need to more thoroughly

integrate students as actors throughout the evaluation process, thereby reimagining the critical act of assessment. We argue that writing classes that undertake race-conscious agenda with students as meaningful actors must also undertake modes of assessment—within and beyond the class—that embrace race-conscious agenda with students as meaningful actors. When we as faculty construct classes *without* students as meaningful actors in the assessment of their own learning, we unintentionally create mechanisms of passivity and disengagement. In retrospect, it is clear that we built our lesson study on a relatively naive model of student learning, on a presumption that learning is externally observable, relatively easily distinguished in silent artifacts after the class. This presumption, as Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue, reinforces positivist passivity in students. An exploration of Guba and Lincoln's constructivist evaluation schema suggests that our lesson study project *may* have succeeded more than we first thought—if our original goal of spurring students to begin to think about race as a complex component of campus and community is to be credited—but that our project also suffers from a noticeable lack of authenticity because it didn't seek to fully involve the stakeholders (students) in their own assessment or in the much more important acts of assessing the lesson study research project itself. Faculty framed the study; faculty devised the lesson; faculty evaluated the results. Without authenticity, evaluation can never produce what Guba and Lincoln (1989) term its proper aim: the mutual education of each of the stakeholding individuals involved in the process. Although the study's data is difficult to parse, our anecdotal experience suggests that writing programs without authentic roles for students to shape assessment and interpretation risk students recognizing their status as objects and embracing the all-too-common model of passive engagement. Our project data reflects, we fear, this trend.

In order to avoid this circumstance, we propose that those who wish to take up writing as a critical space in the interplay of race and economies of becoming deliberately engage students in the act of assessment, both locally (assessment of the students themselves) and globally (evaluating lessons, classes, programs, and institutions). In our students' growing confusion (growth of 30% post-lesson) and shifting realignment (within facets of awareness), we see a lack of tactical authenticity, or a recognition that students were not as empowered to define avenues of action as were the faculty who framed the project. In Chen's (2010) language, our lesson approach did not possess student-defined viable validity, and thus didn't catalyze student-led institutional critique. We propose the next iteration of our lesson study project—and, if we are to adopt a constructivist, fourth-generation approach, there must be a repeat—involve students not just as research subjects, but as researchers and evaluators. Only by involving students as real actors, or stakeholders, in each of the project's stages can we ensure that

they are truly empowered and able to act. In the context of the white habitus at our institution, we are already actively seeking to design assessments that measure the extent to which students complicate their own perspectives and build tolerance through ontological and educative authenticity. But just as importantly, we are looking for actionable change. We want to design lessons, classroom environments, and assessments that stimulate institutional action and open vistas of individual agency for making collective change at West Chester, what Chen might call action models (2015) that are built from bottom-up student input and that privilege viable validity. Indeed, if students are more involved in devising action plans that they see as viably practiced across the student body, we might begin to see results with more educative and ontological authenticity. Indeed, perhaps such attempts at tactical authenticity and viable validity ought to be added to the racial validity and disparate impact analyses that Toth calls validation for social justice (Chapter 4, this collection). While the latter metrics seek actively to understand the harm being done by assessment, the former additions ask that we involve students directly in envisioning and implementing harm-reduction strategies as both pedagogy and assessment technology.

Within this case study, then, we see many productive failures and lessons to be learned. We see the way that our project crystallized the presence of white habitus as a foundational component of campus spaces. We see the dangers of intersectionality as a maneuver to avoid sustained conversations of race, substituting class as a less threatening surrogate for race. And most clearly, we see the dangers of assessment as an under-theorized component of even the most carefully planned race-conscious approaches to writing for social justice. We have already initiated the next instantiation of our lesson study project. If that study, as this one, raises as many questions as it answers, we are nonetheless hopeful that its failures will be as instructive as the ones we report here.

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CHAPTER 9.

WRITING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT, ATTITUDE, AND CONSTRUCT REPRESENTATION: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham

Research Problem: Student attitude is related to willingness to write, and this facet of the intrapersonal domain has implications for how often and how well students wrote—as well as for equity in writing assessment.

Research Questions: When entering the university, what are students' attitudes toward writing overall and school writing in particular? Can an ecological assessment model improve student attitude toward writing to make them want to write more during class and beyond?

Literature Review: We rely on literature from writing pedagogy and writing assessment as well as research regarding sociocognitive aspects of teaching and learning.

Methodology: This is a mixed-method exploration of student attitude toward writing before and during a first-year post-secondary writing sequence. We analyzed student attitude survey data using descriptive statistics and used the ATLAS.ti coding tool to determine details associated with attitude on students' free-response answers to survey questions regarding writing.

Conclusions: Students enter into the first-year writing program with poor attitudes toward school writing and mixed attitudes toward writing in general. Implementing a sociocognitive assessment of attitude toward writing had a strong impact on improving students' attitude toward school writing.

Qualifications: Our focus on attitude as an assessable program component isolates an intrapersonal domain from interpersonal and cog-

nitive domains, which are closely linked though not studied here.

Directions for Further Study: We propose continuing research about how improving student attitude toward school writing corresponds to writing performance (quantity, time–on–task, attitude). To learn more about group and individual difference, we also propose disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, and social class.

We frame our assessment within the ecology of writing (Cooper, 1986), more lately described as the "turn" toward ecocomposition (Dobrin, 2011). The ecological model tracks back to Walter Clyde Allee's (1949) protocol in the early twentieth century for investigating organisms. He argued for naturalized research, by which he meant that to truly understand a life form, you observe it within its habitat—what Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln (1985) term naturalized inquiry. (To study a starfish, you observe it within its environment; when you extract the starfish out to analyze it, you are no longer studying a starfish. You are studying the denaturalized starfish, which is a different life form (or death form) from the starfish in its environment.) By linking observation to an embedded biosocial context, naturalized inquiry also highlights the richly textured emotional, social, neurological, and cognitive potentials for assessment. Sociocognitive research, which includes interpersonal, intrapersonal, cognitive, and neurological aspects (White, Elliot, & Peckham, 2015), is a logical outgrowth of an ecological paradigm that explores how likely people are to act in particular ways in particular situations (Mislevy, 2016). Mislevy argues that adding sociocognitive elements to assessments can help provide "limitations on the interpretations and uses of assessment results" that have narrow construct representation (2016, p. 265). Sociocognitive assessments move beyond measuring a proficiency artifact (e.g., an exam, national and state-based standardized assessments, a graded essay) to include the social, emotional, cultural, and neurological resources that surround and define the creation of the artifact; in so doing, these assessments can mitigate construct bias that reflects environmental variance. As we demonstrate, we believe an ecological assessment model that includes sociocognitive aspects is an important vehicle for the pursuit of social justice through robust construct representation (Elliot, 2016).

In the following sections, we begin by situating our assessment within sociocognitive studies on the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects of student learning and their connection to social justice. We describe the context of our research and how we moved our portfolio pedagogy toward a more ecological model by shifting our assessment from artifact to attitude (White et al., 2015). We then move to a description of our assessment project including

the sequence and purposes of our surveys. In the subsequent results section, we begin with our baseline analysis of students' attitudes toward writing on entering Drexel University, the site of our case study. We follow our baseline analysis with data charting the results of our instruction and collaborative investigation of productive pedagogies with students and teachers, presenting the results of subsequent surveys with representative student responses over the course of two and a half years. In presenting these findings, we demonstrate that by prioritizing the quality of our students' experiences in our writing classroom, we can have a significant effect on their attitudes toward writing. We conclude by arguing for the value of an ecological model of research, assessment, and pedagogy based on non-judgmental responses to student writing in which students are invited to learn in an environment of mutual respect (Molloy, Chapter 2, this collection). We believe in, and our research confirms, the value of this kind of project—that is, if one truly believes in fairness (Elliot, 2016; Rawls, 1971)—in assigning equal value to the language of students and mitigating assessment variances associated with race, ethnicity, gender, and social class.

CONTEXT: THE NEED FOR A NEW ASSESSMENT PARADIGM

Drexel University is a large (25,595 total students; 16,464 undergraduates) private, urban, doctoral granting institution known for its cooperative education program. The school is an expensive university with a student population primarily interested in STEM-oriented professions. Drexel students are racially diverse, with 53% white students, 18% international students, 16% Asian students, 6% African American students, 6% Hispanic students. The average high school GPA of incoming students is 3.56. Students overwhelmingly come from higher income parents—the average tuition and board cost being $34,000.

The school operates on a quarter system and has a three-quarter required writing sequence (English 101, 102, and 103). All students are required to take English 101 and English 102; students with an AP score of 4 or 5 are exempt from English 103. Prior to our shift to prioritizing attitudes toward writing, the first-year writing program relied on the Phase 2 portfolio model (White, 2005) to assess student achievement at the course-level at the end of each quarter and at the program level at the end of the final quarter.

The Phase 2 portfolio approach, scored holistically by faculty trained on a six-point scale, revealed no differences by gender or race when we compared international students with domestic students but significantly lower scores when we compared students who came from countries where English was not the medium of school instruction. The results changed our program ecology: the significantly lower scores of students who came from countries where English was not the me-

dium of school instruction inadvertently supported the complaints of faculty who viewed international students as burdens rather than assets to first-year writing classes. In response to faculty concerns, we created a pre-ENGL 101 course for those students who failed to meet minimum academic proficiency in our portfolio assessment. While our assessment allowed us to uncover and address a perceived need, we worried that our solution was based on the deficit-model of language that pervaded conversations about students' language skills and had unintended negative consequences (Papay & Williams, 2010). Even while we valued the portfolio process and appreciated that portfolio methods attempted to situate writing within a larger ecology, we saw that our assessment was clearly discriminating in troubling ways, unintentionally enacting the "linguistic imperialism" that Mathew Gomes discusses (Chapter 6, this collection).

Our assessment also failed to account for the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal domains to writing and its assessment. For us, this lack pointed to a potential fairness issue. The 2014 Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing urge assessors who find subgroup performance differences to look for possible sources of construct-irrelevant bias; we believed that ignoring the intrapersonal domain in our assessment was one such bias. This fairness concern, ironically, pointed to an untapped pedagogical tool: a 2012 Academies of Sciences report on learning listed inter- and intrapersonal skills as two of the top three domains correlated to deep learning, suggesting that paying attention to these domains in our assessment could benefit students (Pelligrino & Hilton, 2012). We recognized a gap between our pedagogy, which encouraged facilitated group projects and ongoing reflective analysis (intrapersonal and interpersonal domains) and our assessment strategy, which focused exclusively on the cognitive domain. Fortunately, Peckham had previously worked with White and Elliot to incorporate intrapersonal and interpersonal domains into writing assessment, arguing that both instructors and employers assess writing tasks based on cognitive, personal and interpersonal domains (White et al., 2015). We realized that our current portfolio assessment was incomplete and—more importantly—not fully supportive of our learning goals or all of our students.

Our work was part of an emergent paradigm shift seeking to remediate issues of assessment equity associated with narrow construct representations (Elliot, 2016). Recognizing the importance of sociocognitive habits to writing success, the jointly published NCTE/CWPA/NWP's *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (2011) describes eight intrapersonal factors (curiosity, openness, engagement, creativity, persistence, responsibility, flexibility) related to successful post-secondary writing. The National Academy of Sciences' (2012) *Education for Life and Work* report refined the "Big Five" personality factors linked to success that have been replicated extensively (McCrea & Costa, 1987) by

distilling these traits into three domains of competence: interpersonal, intrapersonal, and cognitive (Pelligrino & Hilton, 2012). Jessie Barrot (2015) termed writing pedagogy focusing on these domains "sociocognitive-transformative," arguing that writing is "an activity to express meaning and to build and realize interpersonal relations and social transactions between interlocutors" and so must be concerned with sociocognitive aspects of learning (p. 112). In 2015, White, Elliot and Peckham argued for the addition of a fourth domain for writing assessment—neurological—to account for the physical ability of the nerves to process information necessary to write, such as task attendance and vision. Situating our work within this understanding of sociocognitive domains, we questioned whether assessing students' attitude toward writing (an aspect of the intrapersonal domain) could be an integral component of a more just and effective writing program.

In the fall of 2014, we began experimenting with an alternative model of program assessment that more accurately represented our curriculum, redesigned to include "meaningful writing experiences" and to prioritize attitude over argument (Eodice et al., 2016). In shifting our emphasis, we hoped to welcome the voices of international students, marginalized students, and mainstream domestic students, many of whom who had learned to dislike writing prior to entering Drexel. We relied on studies that linked attitude to learning and writing (Bandura, 2007, 2011; Bruning et al., 2013; Csikszentmihalyi, 2009; Dewey, 1938/1970; Driscoll &Powell, 2016; Duckworth et al., 2007; Farrington, 2012; Fink, 2013; Hindman, 2001; Inoue, 2014; Lucardie, 2014; McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer, 1985; Micciche, 2007; Murphy & Alexander, 2000; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, & Deci, 2004; Yeager & Walton, 2011) and on correlational research that showed more broadly that interpersonal and intrapersonal skills contribute to college retention and success (Herman & Hilton, 2017). Our focus on attitude and meaning is also part of a longer trajectory, echoing the 1960s City College SEEK program detailed by Sean Molloy, (Chapter 2, this collection) that emphasized engaged writing as communication to support students who had been academically marginalized prior to college. Molloy reminds us that the SEEK program focused on attitude toward learning, claiming as an explicit goal to "develop an attitude in the student that will enable him to find pleasure in educational accomplishments" (Berger, 1966, p. 3, as cited in Molloy). Charles MacArthur, Steve Graham, and, Jill Fitzgerald's (2016) meta-analysis of writing research from a cognitive perspective supports our focus on attitude, claiming, that "developing positive motivation toward writing is an important outcome of instruction" (p. 24). Our work, then, was both empirical and experiential: we knew the research about the importance of attitude to writing success but were not sure what it would mean to measure atti-

tude in our program. We found few earlier assessments on which to build; when Herman and Hilton (2017) queried the state of assessments on interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, the authors concluded that "the state of measurement of most of these competencies is still markedly underdeveloped," and called for more research in these domains (p. 16). Our research is one response to this call.

We were particularly interested in learning what studying attitude would mean for the L2 students marginalized in our earlier assessment. We hoped that by asking students to write about and analyze their earlier relationships to writing we would shift negative experiences with writing from perceived failure into useful data. The consequence of our assessment, particularly important for students used to being evaluated on a deficit language model, was that we could document students' improved attitude toward writing, knowing that this improved attitude correlated indirectly with better writing outcomes (MacArthur, Graham, & Fitzgerald, 2016). An early indicator that we were onto something came from the response of a student who matched our earlier profile of "at-risk" learners who came from countries where English was not the medium of school instruction. This student, after receiving a compliment from her professor on her writing, replied, "Thank you for complimenting me on my composition project, I never had anyone compliment me on my writing. I always thought that I was bad at writing so really, thank you for making me feel like I can write now."

Inadvertently, in the process of creating a particular type of discourse community, we mimicked L2 motivation and discourse theory arguing that students learn best when they can imagine themselves in a successful discourse community that will occur post learning (Peng, 2015). For our students, the successful discourse community began in the midst of learning, not at its end (Walton & Cohen, 2007). The consequence of our assessment, particularly important for students used to being evaluated on a deficit language model, was that we could document the student's improvement in attitude toward writing. We do not claim that this shift in attitude transformed all aspects of the student's writing, but we do know that our assessment gave the student the chance to analyze and build on her past writing experiences rather than repeat them. Rebecca D. Cox's 2009 study of community college writing aversion highlights the consequences of this action:

> At times, the desire to avoid failure led students to inaction.
> Every assessment-related activity posed the risk of exposing
> to others (the professors and other students) what students
> already suspected: their overall unfitness for college-student
> status. Thus, not participating in classroom discussions,
> avoiding conversations with the professor—whether inside

> or outside the classroom—or choosing not to attend class
> sessions offered fear-driven students another reprieve from ex-
> posure. The greatest risk, of course, lay in graded assessments
> of student performance. In the absence of evidence from as-
> sessments, students could still cling—however tenuously—to
> their college-student identity. (p. 66)

We wanted students to have the chance to reimagine a relationship to writ-
ing that would be useful—and even pleasurable—to them and to situate them
within an assessment construct that gave credibility to their experiences and
attitudes. We took seriously Kathleen Blake Yancey's 2004 claim that "What we
ask students to do is who we ask them to be" (p. 738). Students have too many
years of drilling for tests not to understand that what we measure is what we
value; our assessment gave both credibility and student agency to our pedagogy.

FOCUSING ON ATTITUDE IN THE DREXEL WRITING PROGRAM

As we moved to assessing students' attitude toward writing, we revised our pro-
gram overview to emphasize writing as communication ("meaningful writing"
in Eodice et al.'s [2016] terminology):

> In the First-Year Writing Program, we focus on two of the
> Drexel Student Learning Priorities: communication and
> self-directed learning. We encourage students to write clearly
> with a firm sense of their readers—the people with whom
> they are communicating. We believe that when writers con-
> nect with their readers about subjects of real concern to the
> writers, they will more readily continue to learn and practice
> writing on their own, an attitude we believe is fundamental
> to improving one's writing. As a result, our students will use
> writing effectively in their personal, academic, and profession-
> al lives (Drexel First-Year Writing Program, 2014).

In meeting those goals, we encouraged teachers to use portfolios at the mid-
term and at the end of the course to determine grades. We emphasized writers
having something to say to interested readers about interesting subjects and the
readers responding as readers, not critics. This pedagogical emphasis shifted our
program ecology again, pushing against our earlier summative assessment by
asking faculty to situate student experiences in a larger model of learned and
perceived attitudes toward writing. As Kelly J. Sassi (Chapter 10, this collection)

details, professional development that shifts faculty perception from student writers from negative to positive, from writing to writer, can increase the social justice of local writing assessments. By shifting student writing from noun to verb—i.e., from performing to communicating—we believed our assessment model helped faculty shift to a more egalitarian mode of student interaction.

Method

For the purposes of program assessment, we sent voluntary Likert and free-response survey questions surveys through the university system to all students enrolled in our first-year writing courses. We assumed a regular progression through our required writing sequence (ENGL 101 Fall term, ENGL 102 Winter term, ENGL 103 Spring term). In our data collection, we included the negligible number of off-sequence students (transfer students, students taking the courses later in their academic career, and students who were not required to take all three courses). We did not begin by collecting student-specific identifiers, though after revising our IRB approval we asked for at-will identification.

We used the ATLAS.ti coding tool to analyze free-response questions. At the end of the AY 2014–2015 and 2015–2016, Peckham and Nulton independently coded inductively for each free-response question, then met and agreed on a codes and interpretations before a final standardized coding.

Table 9.1 lists the surveys administered and their related tables. The total numbers shown below refers to the number of students who completed each survey; since questions could be left blank, subsequent discussions of response rates—which refer to only one question in the larger survey—may not match the overall response rates listed below.

Survey Results

Our quantitative and qualitative survey results indicate that students shifted from primarily negative attitudes toward school writing prior to entering Drexel to positive attitudes toward writing in our writing courses. We present the data progressively as we administered the surveys, beginning with our initial writing inventory and then discussing each survey administered over the course of the term and program. The survey numbers vary considerably: since the initial writing inventory was a course-based writing assignment, we requested that a representative sample of students share their work (voluntarily) and coded these responses; all other surveys were emailed to the entire class cohort. Survey response rates varied depending on when in the course cycle (with its commensurate workload) they were administered; the mid-term survey had the highest response rate each year.

Table 9.1. Schedule of surveys

Name of Survey	Time of Administration	Year/Number of Students	Reference Table and Description
Initial writing inventory	Day one of ENGL 101	2014–2015 n=262 2015–2016 n=177 2016–2017 not administered (administration change)	Table 9.2 Initial writing inventory in which students described their history as writers and their attitudes toward writing.
Mid-term survey	Week 5, ENGL 101	2014–2015 n=233 2015–2016 n=571 2016–2017 n=637	Tables 9.3, 9.4 Mid-term Likert and free-response questions about ENGL 101.
ENGL 101 survey	Post-ENGL 101	2014–2015 n=192 2015–2016 n=203 2016–2017 n=432	Table 9.5, 9.6 Retrospective Likert and free-response analysis of ENGL 101.
ENGL 102, 102, 103 composite survey	End of term, ENGL 103	2014–2015 n=283 2015–2016 n=289	Table 9.7 Retrospective Likert and free-response analysis of all courses.

INITIAL WRITING INVENTORY: STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD WRITING

The first data from the 2014–2015 survey documented student attitudes' toward writing prior to entering Drexel. Because we were shifting the primary focus of our writing program from academic argument to our students' attitudes toward writing and their experiences with writing in our program, we were interested in a baseline: what were their attitudes when they entered our program? We asked students the following question:

> Please tell me about your history as a writer—what kind of good and bad experiences have you had (and what kind of in-between experiences). Reflect on outside influences that shaped your experiences—what may have influenced how much you enjoyed or didn't enjoy the writing experience.

Student free-responses were lengthy, invested, and informative. We realized as we began to code students' responses that we needed to account for a major distinction in attitude toward writing: 1) "writing overall," which was an overall determination of attitude toward all writing (what we originally planned to

measure), and 2) "school writing," or writing that was created in and for classes. Our coding for positive and negative was based on an impression whether the student's overall attitude toward writing (overall or school) was positive or negative; in cases where positive and negative comments were equal, we coded the response as mixed. In a few instances when we could not determine if the writer was positive or negative (and there were not clearly mixed comments) we coded the responses as neutral.

Table 9.2 demonstrates how coding for attitudes toward overall writing versus attitudes toward school writing revealed quite different patterns. In AY 2014–2015 and AY 2015–2016, the surveys showed that students had more positive attitudes toward writing overall than school writing (the initial writing inventory was not administered in 2016–2017 due to a change in administration). Although we were pleased to see that more than 50% of students had positive attitudes toward writing overall in those two years at college entry, we wondered how students' negative experiences in school writing influenced their overall attitudes toward writing.

Table 9.2. Attitudes toward writing prior to college, coded free-response, first quarter (n=439)

Writing Type/Year	Positive	Negative	Mixed	Neutral	Undetermined
Overall/2014–2015 (n=262)	52%	23%	17%	0%	8%
Overall/2015–2016 (n=177)	57%	16%	25%	0%	2%
School/2014–2015 (n=262)	20%	37%	24%	0%	19%
School/2015–2016 (n=177)	12%	31%	41%	4%	12%

Students' responses both years showed a negative attitude toward school writing and a comparatively positive attitude toward writing in general. The following student sample shows an overall attitude toward school writing (coded as school/ negative), and a positive attitude toward writing in those moments when the writer was "writing for myself" (coded as overall/mixed). This student's dislike of school writing when creativity is limited was a common theme for our students:

> Ever since I remember I have found writing to be an unpleasant experience, but I suppose this has been partially my fault. When I think of writing, thoughts of stress and sleepless nights flood my mind. Most, if not all, of the writing I have

ever done has been academic writing for school, and as it had been my tradition in high school I would leave it for the night before. Throughout middle and high school having a paper due the next day had meant staying up until 2–3 a.m. "Why do I dislike writing so much?" was a question I had not asked myself before taking this course, and I did some thinking (as much thinking as is possible in 20 minutes), and I realized it was my fault. I dug through the painful writing experiences I had before and found moments when I had enjoyed writing. What made these moments or experiences different was the fact that those times I was not writing for a teacher, but I was writing for myself. I have mostly written about books, and researched about topics in which I did not have much interest in, and I realize that that is what I do not like about writing.

MID-TERM SURVEY RESULTS

In week 5 of our 10 week fall term, we sent surveys to students asking about their attitude toward writing in English 101. The results shown in Table 9.3 represent three years of our mid-term survey collection. By week 5 (mid-term) in each of three years, the data show that students have a more positive attitude toward school writing (57%, 59%, and 61%, respectively) than when students enter the university. Attitudes toward school writing in this case were based on students' attitudes toward English 101.

Table 9.3. Student attitudes toward English 101, percentage on Likert scale, week 5 (n=1,468)

Attitude	2014–2015 (n=262)	2015–2016 (567)	2016–2017 (n=639)
Very Pleased	15	17	21
Pleased	42	42	40
Neutral	31	31	26
Displeased	9	7	9
Very Displeased	4	3	3

We also asked the follow-up question in week 5: "Can you tell us briefly why you're pleased or displeased so far?" For each response, we coded once as overall positive, negative or neutral and also coded according to how many characteristics the student mentioned—e.g., one student may have mentioned three positive features such as lack of stress, professor, and topic choice. Codes for the most frequent responses (using 2016–2017 as an example) are in provided in Table 9.4.

Table 9.4. Students' top three reasons for attitudes toward English 101, coded free-response, week 5 (n=498)

Positive Characteristics Percent		Negative Characteristics Percent	
Overall positive	61	Overall negative	21
good topics/topic choice	28	writing tasks too constrained	7
good professor relationship	13	poor professor relationship	7
reflective, personal topics	6	no discipline-specific writing	5

Student responses show that positive attitudes toward school writing were heavily linked to their having a choice of topics, a positive relationship with the instructor, and a personal investment in the writing. Negative attitudes were associated with writing tasks in which the student had little control or with classes in which the student had a poor relationship with a teacher. Our results support concurrent research on writing efficacy and performance that correlates students' emotions and positive mentor relationships with more successful writing (MacArthur et al., 2016). Additionally, we noted that students seemed more willing to reflect on specific aspects of learning when their experience was positive than when their experience was negative.

END OF TERM SURVEY RESULTS

In the ENGL 101 retrospective survey, we again asked students about their attitudes toward writing. (In 2014–2015 students gave free-responses, so we have not included those statistics in Table 9.5 below).

Table 9.5. Students' attitude toward writing in ENGL 101; percentage on Likert Scale (n=633)

Response	2015–2016 (n=201)	2016-2017 (n=432)
Liked a lot	34	42
Liked somewhat	45	33
Neither liked nor disliked	10	11
Disliked somewhat	7	10
Disliked a lot	4	4

Again, these two years of data show positive movement from the initial 12–20% positive school writing experience (see Table 9.2) to 75–79% positive experiences with school writing as they reflected on those experiences in the second quarter of their first year of college.

In 2016–2017, we added a question on the survey about whether students' attitude toward writing had changed as a consequence of their experiences in ENGL 101. The results are shown in Table 9.6.

Table 9.6. Students' change in attitude; percentage on Likert Scale (n=429)

Response	Percent
My attitude toward writing improved in ENGL 101	52%
My attitude toward writing stayed the same in ENGL 101	44%
My attitude toward writing got worse in ENGL 101	4%

Our follow-up question shows students' shifts in attitude as a consequence of their English 101 classroom experiences. We believe that students who can articulate their improved relationship to writing (52% of our students in 2016–2017) are poised to use writing with more composure and effect than students who do not develop an improved relation to writing. Our next version of the survey will ask whether the unchanged attitude was originally good, bad, or neutral. We suspect, given the 75–75% of students who said that they enjoyed ENGL 101, that many of the 44% of students with unchanged views originally held neutral or positive attitudes toward writing.

OVERALL PROGRAM RESULTS

In 2014–2015 and 2015–2016 after students had completed ENGL 101, ENGL 102, and ENGL 103, we asked them to rate their attitudes toward writing in each course. The results are shown in Table 9.7.

Table 9.7. Students' attitude toward writing in ENGL 101, ENGL 102, and ENGL 103; percentage on Likert scale (n=1,135)

Course/Yr	A Lot	Some	A little	Not at all
101:2014–2015 (n=199)	27%	45%	21%	8%
101:2015–2016 (n=133)	35%	42%	14%	10%
102:2014–2015 (n=208)	34%	33%	20%	13%
102:2015–2016 (n=134)	36%	36%	16%	13%
103:2014–2015 (n=272)	35%	42%	17%	7%
103:2015–2016 (n=189)	39%	37%	13%	12%

Again, we saw clear improvement in attitude toward school writing from the 12–20% positive baseline reported in our initial inventory (see Table 9.2). For example, students in AY 2014–2015 reported over time increasingly positive ex-

periences with school writing in Drexel English courses—27% in English 101, 34% in English 102, and 35% in English 103. Besides suggesting that students found the English curriculum meaningful, we found such results suggestive that positive student attitudes toward school writing can be sustained over three separate courses taught by different faculty.

CLOSING THE LOOP

After we had coded the week 5 responses, we sent an email to students and faculty explaining what we found. Sent in 2015–2016, the opening to one note to students is shown below:

> Dear First-Year Writing Students,
>
> Thank you all for sharing your insights about how your first quarter is going in the First-Year Writing Program. Overall, 567of you responded to our survey where we asked you how class is going through week 5 of the term. Here's what you had to say (we coded when only 509 of you had responded, in case you're a number junkie!):
>
> *Q4 - How much do you like the writing that you're doing in ENGL 101 so far?*

Very pleased	n=88 17%
Pleased	n=215 42%
Neutral	n=158 31%
Displeased	n=31 6%
Very displeased	n=17 3%

> We also asked you why you were pleased or displeased with the course so far and we analyzed what you had to say. Here are the top responses:
>
> Those of you who said you were pleased with class so far (about 61% of those who offered comments) said it was because
>
> • You could choose what to write about
>
> • You had freedom/room for creativity
>
> • The topics you wrote about were interesting
>
> • The writing was fair and enjoyable
>
> • You learned about writing
>
> • Your professor was good and made class enjoyable
>
> • You got to engage in ungraded, informal writing

- You liked the writing that allowed you to understand and explore yourself

Those of you who said you were displeased with class so far (about 16% of those who offered comments) said it was because:

- You needed more teacher feedback
- There wasn't enough "useful" writing—writing that felt like you would use it again or could apply what you learned later
- The class was too disorganized/expectations were not clear
- There were too many assignment spaced too close together so you couldn't do your best work
- You weren't learning to write in your particular major or discipline

Approximately 30% of you were neutral in your analyses.

Sending the survey to students involved them in our programmatic assessment; when we asked them what would improve the program they told us and thanked us for making them part of the research team. As one student responded,

> I personally filled out the survey because I'm all about making things the very best they can be. I never expected the results to be released to us students. Not only did you send us the results, but you went far beyond the norm and put in many hours of analyzed data based off the feedback received. Again, I was just so impressed because I've done a lot of survey's [sic] but have never really gotten the results back.

We sent similar analyses to faculty and students each quarter as a way of making the assessment part of an ongoing conversation among students, teachers, and program administrators. We hoped to encourage faculty and students to see themselves as researchers in a non-judgmental assessment cycle.

STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS ON SURVEY DATA

We turn now to qualitative analysis of how our assessment informed our pedagogy. After students completed their initial pre-Drexel writing inventories in 2014–2015 and 2015–2016, many classroom teachers used the first week of class to ask students to read and respond to each other's responses and then generalize about other students' experiences with writing. This writing task was not a part of our formal assessment project, but, with student permission, we asked teachers to send us any responses they thought would interest us. Reading students' responses

allowed faculty to contextualize writing resistance and to humanize and empathize with students in ways that, we believe, fostered the student-centered classrooms that improved students' writing experiences and attitudes.

One student, an architecture major, described what we also saw in students' initial survey responses (see Table 9.2):

> After reading other people's experiences with writing, I realized that a lot of people shared similar back stories with me. People kept saying they started off liking writing, and did it as a hobby or even a habit. People kept journals and made lists and wrote stories. And then after a few years of school, there was a tendency for people to lose interest in writing. It became mundane and repetitive; something that was an assignment for a grade, not something to put a piece of yourself in to express or answer questions about yourself. . . . [A]t a certain point writing like this becomes boring, and quite frankly not useful for anyone involved.

Another student, an electrical engineering student wrote: "[T]here is a constant theme amongst all my group members and their experience with English class: It used to be fun and productive but as we focused more on analyzing literature and writing for specific purposes or objectives, things became dull, drab, and boring." That same student reflected:

> As a child, I would always go to the library at least 3 times a month, though the thought of being a writer never crossed my mind. I would read a book and get a general idea of what it was about. I had lots of thoughts and ideas, but I did not know how to express them in words. My essays as a child were bad, very bad. I loathed writing, and I still do. English was the one class I dreaded. I do love reading, but I lack the in-depth skills that are required. I hate writing because I can never express myself through words.

What can we say about our profession when an unintended consequence of teaching and assessing writing is that students learn to hate writing?

It's worth noting that for someone who thinks he cannot express himself through words, this student expresses himself quite well in this excerpt. He, in fact, stirred us—negatively. His words got inside us and created a kind of pain in the head and constriction in the chest (Bazerman, 2013). We feel sad when we find students like this student who loathe writing and that such loathing is the result of teaching and assessment.

We contrast these early attitudes toward school writing with that of a student who explained how her attitude toward writing improved in ENGL 101:

> Writing has always came [sic] slowly to me. But, despite that, I do enjoy writing. It is nice to respond to certain papers. I enjoy writing about opinion based prompts the most just because the words flow freely from my brain and I feel like I am translating my ideas on to the page . . .

> English 101 made my writing much better, in a sense of becoming my own writer. I never sat down and hated writing a paper. The words flew on to the page and before I knew it, I was going over the maximum amount of words I could use. The course really helped me tremendously. With all the experiences I mentioned, I have become a better writer. . . . Writing should be enjoyed and I feel now I do like to write.

Finally, as one student observed on a final evaluation of the three courses sequence:

> I absolutely love writing for all three of my English courses this year. I write on my own and personally love write. But I have to admit I hated writing papers for teachers in middle school and high school. Nothing we did seemed important or relevant to me . . . In English 101, 102, and 103, I wrote essays on topics I am interested in. For example, I wrote my "How to Essay" on "How to Become a Muslim." I was frustrated after a really terrible experience where I was interrogated and put under security check because I am Muslim. This is something I care about so when I wrote the essay it meant so much to me. And, that's just one example. Almost everything I have written this year for English made me a better writer only because I put effort in my writing which is because I was enthusiastic about the topics.

For us, this is the kind of writing that counts: the writer in touch with her words and having something important to say to readers she thinks should hear her. You can almost hear her self-location as a writer.

We received hundreds of comments like this one—as well as the inevitable comments from students telling us that their time and money were wasted in our classes. Nevertheless, as we have shown in our data, the negative comments were in the clear minority. We are not congratulating ourselves. We have paid

attention to educators like John Dewey, James Moffett, John Tagg, and Richard Fried and to writing theorists like Norbert Elliot. We want students and faculty to use writing to communicate ideas that they care about to people who want to hear them. We want to look at fish in the water.

TEACHERS' REFLECTIONS ON SURVEY DATA

Given our ecological paradigm, it should be unsurprising that our revised assessment also affected faculty. Twenty-one faculty members responded to an open-ended question about their experiences with reading the initial student narratives about their earlier experiences with writing; only two responses were mildly negative (95% positive response). Representative responses from teachers follow:

> The essays gave me insight into what the students thought and felt about prior writing experiences that they had. Some of them had very similar experiences. After I responded to all of the students, I had the students read and respond as well. Many of them were very supportive of each other.

> It was a great way to begin the dialogue between students and me and to begin to form our community of writers.

> They were fun and interesting, especially as I asked students to think of this as a snapshot or selfie to which they could return at the end of ENGL 103. I want them to see self-discovery or metacognitive work on their own writing as a goal for the FWP.

> They get to see how varied other students' backgrounds are in writing and that people respond to different kinds of writing in different ways. Some people actually LIKE research essays, while others—in spite of being majors in engineering—like creative writing.

> Very interesting. Most of what I read confirmed what I suspected, but there were also surprises. The best outcome of reading this was that it showed me where they are insecure, what they struggle with so that I can try to work with that in class.

> It was interesting to see the students so invested in what they wrote. Many like writing, but others revealed they were afraid.

Reading students' responses began to naturalize assessment, allowing faculty to contextualize writing resistance and to empathize with students in ways that,

we believe, fostered classrooms that improved students' writing experiences and attitudes. When we broadened our assessment construct, we changed the ecology of teaching and learning in our program by contextualizing students and their writing.

CONCLUSION

We believe that situating our writing program assessment within an ecological model moved us closer to an equitable assessment paradigm by expanding our construct representation. Instead of scoring student writing products, we created a dialogic assessment of the intrapersonal domain that encouraged students to enter into an improved relationship with writing and so to increase their chances of writing success. Our model helped administrators, teachers and students to communicate about teaching and learning in our program and informed changes to teacher training and student outcomes (which now reflect a programmatic focus on attitude). We do more in our classes than focus only on attitude, but we have made attitude, "first among equals" (Elliot, 2016, p. 679). We have focused in this article on attitudes toward writing because we believe a positive attitude is an important way into engaged learning. We have solid evidence that by the end of their three-course sequence we have encouraged students to become more engaged in their school writing, an engagement that we believe will have long-term effects.

Our research has given us data to support unsurprising claims—students like to be allowed space within which to explore themes and forms; they don't want to write by formulas about issues in which they have no interest (and neither do we).

In response to clarion calls for accountability, educators have largely taught students that assessment is done to them, not with them. Rather than ascribe to this practice, we are asking students to collaborate with us to improve our program—to gaze with us on the starfish in the water and describe and question the conditions they see. Changing a to-them into a with-them paradigm seems a logical step toward self-directed learning—one of Drexel's twelve student learning priorities—or as it is framed in many university essential learning outcomes: Life-long Learning. Our surveys are distinguished from traditional end–of–course evaluations in that students are not being asked to evaluate the course or teacher abstractly—instead, we are asking them to tell us how engaged *they* have been with writing and why—or why not. They are telling us what they need to consider and we want to know.

Our ecological assessment model focused us on the sociocognitive landscape we had previously ignored and helped to pinpoint where fairness and justice can broaden pragmatic assessments decisions. We hope that we have presented a useful model for assessing students' attitudes toward writing and using attitude data

for programmatic improvement. Research on learning has consistently shown the importance of attitude in teaching and learning. You can teach someone all the strategies of playing the violin, but if she never picks the violin up to play on her own, you have not taught her much. In our assessment, we asked why the violin (or the pen) became too heavy a burden—and what might lift that burden. In so doing, we began to uncover how attitude and writing intersect within a deeply embedded sociocognitive context at our university, moving us closer to entwining social justice imperatives with programmatic practice.

Our study comes with caveats; while we have demonstrated the importance of attitude to our program, we have not assessed correlations between attitude and performance, which, though vexed on many levels, is the coin demanded by many institutions. We have also not explored writing transfer beyond our courses: whether students' attitude survives complicated rhetorical situations constructed in other discipline-specific courses. Finally, we have not conducted a controlled experiment: while we claim that our pedagogy is what changed students' attitudes toward school writing, it is possible that simply writing in college —an environment that is essentially more self-directed than K-12 environments—accounts for some of the change in attitude. These are important caveats and we hope other researchers will begin to answer some of the questions inherent in our study.

Assessments have historically driven writing curriculums, constraining writing practice and affecting fairness. Since the conditions of teaching and learning—the sociocognitive experiences of our students—are not equal, assessments that ignore these conditions will seldom be fair. We offer a corrective assessment practice that defines student experiences and attitudes as fundamental components of learning, helping students to embrace a broader sense of writing and of self. Our assessment is a beginning, not an ending; by linking assessment with student attitude toward writing, we believe that we are changing our writing program through an expanded sense of construct representation.

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PART 4. ADVANCING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH TEACHER RESEARCH

CHAPTER 10.

BENDING THE ARC OF WRITING ASSESSMENT TOWARD SOCIAL JUSTICE: ENACTING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT STANDING ROCK

Kelly J. Sassi

Research Problem: Tribal college instructors believed that placement test results did not reflect the job they were doing as writing instructors, and they wondered if students might need an additional remedial writing course. These questions about writing assessment led to a locally based collaborative assessment of student writing that addressed larger goals of culturally responsive professional development and improving the teaching of writing from elementary through college.

Research Questions: 1) During writing assessment research, what discourses do educators engage in and how might writing assessment research be used for professional development? 2) Does the professional development during writing assessment reflect the values of culturally responsive pedagogy? 3) Does culturally responsive professional development attached to writing assessment lead to addressing social justice issues?

Literature Review: To explore the issue of writing assessment at a tribal college, I use theories of culturally responsive, relevant, and sustaining pedagogies from the field of education, and Christine E. Sleeter's 2014 framework of four dimensions of social justice teaching, as well as indigenous perspectives from Devon Mihesuah, Angela Wilson, Sandy Grande, and Scott Richard Lyons to complicate and critique these theories and to extend the work on participatory assessment to include tribal colleges.

Methodology: In addition to quantitative data in the form of essay scores, this project primarily relied on discourse analysis modeled on Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin's grounded theory approach. Analysis involved emic coding resulting from labels that emerged from patterns in the discourse, combined with etic cross-coding, using elements of culturally relevant pedagogy as an analytic tool.

Conclusions: Despite the presence of culturally congruent mission and vision statements in local contexts such as Sitting Bull College, large-scale writing assessments have great power over teachers and students; nonetheless, as this study shows, this power can be questioned when groups of teachers work together to assess writing collaboratively. Teacher discourse demonstrates raised expectations, changes in teaching practice, and evidence of modifying testing materials to draw on cultural strengths. There was also evidence of the professional development around writing assessment leading to social justice outcomes when teachers chose not to add another remedial class to their curriculum and instead adopted culturally relevant prompts. Such prompts increased writing test scores. Partnering with K-12 educators also suggests willingness to address structural inequities.

Qualifications: The sample size of the writing was very small and not all increases in writing scores were statistically significant. The discourse analyzed may have been particular to this group of educators and not representative of other groups of educators engaged in professional development around writing assessment. Despite the tribal college context, most of the writing instructors were non-Native, so this particular study may not have been the most conducive to exploring how Lyons' vision of rhetorical sovereignty can be applied to writing assessment.

Directions for Further Study: How would the discourse differ if there were a greater proportion of Native American instructors participating in writing assessment? How would the results differ if the mode of assessment were further indigenized? What does Lyons' theory of rhetorical sovereignty look like when it comes to writing assessment?

As this chapter was being prepared for publication, the site of this study, Standing Rock Reservation, was garnering national and international attention as water protectors gathered by the thousands at Oceti Sakowin camp

to protest the route of the Dakota Access Pipeline under Lake Oahe, which would put the water supply at risk and disturb sacred cultural sites. From my perspective as a non-Native American ally visiting the camp to volunteer at the camp school, the main conflict appeared to be between a highly militarized (e.g., use of vehicles designed to withstand land mines) response on the part of both the Sioux County, North Dakota Sheriff's office and the National Guard and peaceful protesters seeking to stop the construction of the pipeline. But it was about more than that, too. It was about sovereignty and treaty rights. Similarly, issues around writing assessment at tribal colleges are also about sovereignty, according to Scott Richard Lyons (Leech Lake Ojibwe) (2000), who conceptualizes rhetorical sovereignty as "the inherent right and ability of peoples to determine their own communicative needs and desires in this pursuit, to decide for themselves the goals, modes, styles, and languages of public discourse" (449-450). Rhetorical sovereignty, I argue, also extends to the right to determine how writing is assessed, a topic explored in this two-year study (Fall 2011 to Spring 2013) of professional development at Sitting Bull College on the Standing Rock Reservation.

The affordances of writing assessment for professional development have been well documented in the field. Broad's model of Dynamic Criteria Mapping (2003) has been taken up at many local sites in ways that put writing teachers and their students at the center of writing assessment, allowing us to hear what they really value about writing and also providing space for teaching and learning to be affected by assessment. This has provided a counternarrative to that of large testing companies and their rubrics. Gallagher (2011), in particular, has asserted "the primary agency of faculty and students in education and educational assessment" (p. 461) by using Burkean analysis to expand the scene of writing assessment and redraw the circumference, and, most importantly, to reject the stakeholder theory of neoliberalism that "implies all interest groups are equal—equal stakes, equal say— . . . a 'marketplace of ideas' in which reasoned arguments among sovereign subjects will carry the day" (p. 459). Gallagher's use of the term "sovereign" is interesting because it is by pivoting on that particular term that an argument can be made for reordering the assessment scene at tribal colleges on American Indian reservations, land negotiated by treaties between actual sovereign nations. Just as Green (2016) has argued that "participation" in writing assessment can look quite different at HBCUs where there is a tradition of push-pull theories of language and race, in the following article, I explore how notions of rhetorical sovereignty played out over a two-year period at Sitting Bull College, a tribal college in North Dakota. Rewriting the assessment scene in such a setting is anything but straightforward. Theoretically, extending Lyons concept of "rhetorical sov-

ereignty" to writing assessment is a fitting application, but in practice, there are many challenges to doing so, not the least of which is the legacy of settler colonization and its continuing impact on education.

This research project took place over two academic years and uses both quantitative and qualitative data. The project was initiated by tribal college writing instructors who wished to learn more about writing assessment, find out on their own terms how students were doing, improve their assessment practices, and work with secondary teachers to improve students' writing skills. As an action researcher from outside the institution, I envisioned my role as reciprocal; I would bring my resources and skills to support them in meeting their goals, and I hoped to learn more about professional development focused on writing assessment.

For the purposes of this study with Sitting Bull College writing instructors, I focused on the ways that college and high school educators in the project talked about teaching and assessment within the context of professional development. Researchers like Margaret Vaughn (2015) have found evidence of promising practice through qualitative research that analyzes teacher discourse. In working with Native and non-Native American teachers on a reservation, she found that "[E]xamining the dialogue and actions teachers engage in during inquiry group discussions may provide insight into the instructional practices and actions teachers conceptualize to support culturally responsive principles and adaptability" (p. 5). I posit that a similar analysis of the discourse of K-12 teachers and tribal college instructors engaged in localized writing assessment will help us answer these questions:

1. During writing assessment, what kinds of discourse do educators engage in and what parts might constitute professional development?
2. Does the professional development during writing assessment reflect the values of culturally responsive pedagogy?
3. Does culturally responsive professional development attached to writing assessment lead to addressing social justice issues?

In this chapter, I describe the elements of culturally responsive pedagogy that could be salient in professional development experiences for educators focused on writing assessment. Then, I describe the cultural context of the tribal college where I was a facilitator of such professional development over a two-year period. Although quantitative data on student writing was collected during that period, this chapter primarily focuses on what the qualitative data reveal in regard to the research questions above, but also—as issues of sovereignty erupted at Standing Rock during the writing of this chapter—how rhetorical sovereignty might be extended to writing assessment.

ROLE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE/RELEVANT PEDAGOGY IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To explore the issue of writing assessment at a tribal college partnering with K-12 teachers, I use theories of culturally responsive, relevant, and sustaining pedagogies from the field of education. First, I will define these terms, then discuss how they lend themselves to a social justice orientation, and then how they can be used at tribal colleges.

In a *culturally relevant pedagogical* approach, teachers "increase the classroom participation and academic achievement of students from different ethnic groups by modifying instruction so that it draws upon cultural strengths" (Banks, 2006, p. 197). Culturally relevant teachers demand that all students "be critical thinkers and problem solvers, not merely students who have mastered minimum competencies in the basic skills" (Irvine, 1992, p. 81). Culturally responsive educators exhibit "the *tenacity* to relentlessly pursue comprehensive and high level performance for children who are currently underachieving in schools" (Gay, 2000, p. 44). Holding high standards does not come at the cost of students' home cultures, however. Teachers attend to the cultural experiences and the needs inherent in those experiences (Irvine, 1992). *Culturally responsive pedagogy* (CRP), "simultaneously develops, along with academic achievement, social consciousness and critique, cultural affirmation, competence, and exchange; community building and personal connections; individual self-worth and abilities; and an ethic of caring" (Gay, 2000, p. 43). Furthermore, these tenets of CRP particularly lend themselves to culturally responsive professional development: "ways of knowing, understanding, and representing various ethnic and cultural groups in teaching academic subjects, processes, and skills. It [CRP] cultivates cooperation, collaboration, reciprocity, and mutual responsibility for learning among students and between students and teachers" (Gay, 2000, p. 43).

What sets culturally relevant pedagogy apart from the multiculturalism that preceded it is social justice. Paulo Freire's notion of teaching for social justice and liberation informs CRP. Because social justice is a term commonly used but not so commonly defined, Christine Sleeter (2014) "synthesized various frameworks for social justice education (Carlisle et al., 2006; Chubbuck, 2010; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Dover, 2009; Gorski, 2013; Jones & Vagle, 2013) into four dimensions," and these four are useful to consider here because she specifically synthesized them "to prompt work that deepens social justice teaching" (p. 4). They are the following:

1. Situate families and communities with an analysis of structural inequities.
2. Develop relationships of reciprocity with students, families, and communities

3. Teach to high academic expectations by building on students' culture, language, experience, and identity

4. Create and teach an inclusive curriculum that integrates marginalized perspectives and explicitly addresses issues of inequity and power (Sleeter, 2014).

Situating the study within the theoretical frames described above, helps expand the assessment scene in ways advocated by Scott and Brannon (2013), and in ways that are relevant to this particular study. That is, to incorporate the K-12 educators the tribal college writing instructors worked with and the larger tribal community. The collaborative nature of culturally responsive teaching is not new to American Indian leaders like Tatanka Iyotake (Lakota Chief Sitting Bull, namesake of Sitting Bull College), who said, "Wakháŋyeža kiŋ lená épi čha táku waštéšte iwíčhuŋkičiyukčaŋpi kte" (Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children) ("Vision," 2016). When one considers the collaborative approach that can be inferred from this famous quote and the undoubtedly culturally relevant focus throughout the history of Native American peoples, calls to adopt a culturally relevant pedagogical approach can seem somewhat ironic, even patronizing. This is perhaps not surprising, given the paternalism that pervades colonial institutions (Harms, Chapter 3, this collection). As theories of culturally responsive and relevant pedagogies continue to evolve, they become more consonant with the concerns of indigenous people. For example, Django Paris' concept of culturally sustaining pedagogy, is more suitable to Native American contexts because of the greater attention to cultural practices. What culturally sustaining pedagogy offers teachers is a "way of both naming and conceptualizing the need to meaningfully value and maintain the practices of their students in the process of extending their students' repertoires of practice to include dominant language, literacies, and cultural practices" (Paris, 2012, p. 95).

However, even newer iterations of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy may not be enough for some Native American scholar-teachers: "as Indigenous people, our strategies for decolonization and empowerment are in some ways necessarily markedly different" (Wilson, 2004). That is, these pedagogies retain the deep structures of Western thought (Grande, 2004) and therefore may not lead to the desired social justice outcomes. That is, merely *maintaining* students' language practices may not be enough. In settings where the forces of colonization have resulted in active erasure of language and culture, decolonizing pedagogies and assessments may be needed.

At the very least, as a step toward social justice, writing assessment should be conducted in partnership with or, better yet, by members of the tribal commu-

nity. Lyons (2000) stresses the importance of tribal inclusion and control with regards to writing and writing instruction:

> Placing the scene of writing squarely back into the particular contingency of the Indian rhetorical situation, rhetorical sovereignty requires of writing teachers more than a renewed commitment to listening and learning; it also requires a radical rethinking of how and what we teach as the written word at all levels of schooling, from preschool to graduate curricula and beyond. (pp. 449-450)

The radical rethinking Lyons proposes is not just for teaching, however, but should also be considered for writing assessment. Social justice for Native American student writers, according to Lyons, would mean that Native Americans have control over the systems of writing assessment used at tribal colleges. The Sitting Bull College statement about writing assessment would support such a social justice move, yet the test used for writing assessment—as explained later—hindered it. Could professional development help bend the arc of writing assessment in the direction Lyons suggests?

SOVEREIGNTY OF MISSION AT RESEARCH SITE

Sitting Bull College is an open enrollment, tribal college located in Fort Yates, North Dakota on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, which was created by the Fort Laramie treaty of 1869. The reservation straddles the state line between North Dakota and South Dakota and has a population of roughly 11,000 people, most of whom are Lakota/Dakota. At the time of this study, the size of the SBC student body was about 300 students. The largest student group was Native American women, who made up about 73% of the total student population, and the average age of SBC students was 30. Sitting Bull College fostered (and still does) the academic growth of its students within the guiding framework of their Lakota/Dakota cultural heritage. The mission at the time of the study (it changed in 2012) was "Sitting Bull College is an academic and technical institution committed to improving the levels of education and training, (economic and social development of the people it serves while promoting responsible behavior consistent with the Lakota/Dakota culture and language." Furthermore, "assessment begins with the Sitting Bull College mission statement," reads the Assessment of Student Learning statement. "The SBC mission and its corresponding vision, values, purposes, and goals inspire all assessment activity." (The current mission statement is "Guided by Lakota/Dakota culture, values, and language, Sitting Bull College is committed to building intellectual

capital through academic, career and technical education, and promoting economic and social development.")

The mission statement for Sitting Bull College is based on the Seven Lakota Virtues: prayer, respect, compassion, honesty, generosity, humility, and wisdom. According to Lakota writing instructor Chad Harrison, each virtue lends itself to the holistic idea of a sound mind, body, heart and soul, which is the center of traditional Native American teachings. He included these additional concepts about the cultural context when presenting on this project at a national conference:

- Lakota/Dakota people possess a culture which is steeped in oral tradition
- The tradition of storytelling allows for the teaching and learning of our youth
- Context plays an important role in teaching and learning
- There is a pragmatic attitude which leads to a need for applicable lessons
- These old traditions and attitudes clash with the instant gratification attitudes of today to make a difficult teaching and learning environment

Harrison pointed to these activities as important to improving writing instruction at Sitting Bull College:

- Collaboration—"norming" for the instructors
- Communication—opening our ears and minds to different ideas from a variety of perspectives, especially students
- Identification—finding a common ground between teachers, teachers/students, and teachers/students/administration
- Experience—helping teachers and students relate through experience
- Consistency—providing a stable way of teaching and assessing in an otherwise unstable environment

In addition to the Lakota cultural context represented by Harrison, Comeau, and the college's mission and vision statements, part of the cultural context for this study can also be described as white, Anglo-European, or as Sandy Grande calls it, "whitestream," a combination of white and mainstream.

WRITING ASSESSMENT AT STANDING ROCK

In North Dakota, the ACT® English score is typically used for placement in college writing classes. Nationally, the average English score for American Indians/

Alaska Natives was 16.3; for whites it was 21.9, a 5.6 point "gap" (ACT, 2016, p. 14). In North Dakota, the average English score for American Indians/Alaska Natives was 14.2; for whites it was 19.9, a 5.7 "gap." The so-called "achievement gap" is often used to call attention to supposed deficits that underrepresented groups bring to college, but Inoue and Poe remind us that "One cannot assume that just because a test identifies a student as 'remedial' for instance, it is a function of the student's abilities as a writer, especially when larger racial patterns can be seen" (2012, p. 6), as is the case in North Dakota. Because ACT does not reveal the standard deviation of these averages, it is impossible to calculate whether these differences in the average are meaningful. As Casie Moreland's work in Chapter 5 tells us, incomplete test score data is a barrier to research on social justice in writing assessment. Despite the lack of information about test scores, they are, nevertheless, in North Dakota used to funnel disproportionate numbers of American Indian students into remedial writing courses. Furthermore, potential for harm exists in writing assessment measures that do not reflect the cultural values of tribal people or tribal college missions and the circumstances of the college's student body.

At Sitting Bull College, the ACT COMPASS® test has until recently been used to place students into writing courses. Nationally, the ACT COMPASS Test has generated much criticism. For example, a 2012 study had found that "up to a third of students who placed into remedial classes due to their COMPASS or Accuplacer scores could have passed college-level classes with a grade of B or better" and colleges are finding greater success switching to the use of multiple measures to place students into writing courses (Fain, 2015). Scott-Clayton's analysis of the predictive ability of the COMPASS found that "Using high school achievement alone as a placement screen results in fewer severe placement mistakes than using test scores alone—substantially so in English" (Community College Research Center, Columbia University, 2012, p. 37). In 2016 ACT acknowledged the limitations of the COMPASS Test: "[the] ACT COMPASS is not contributing as effectively to student placement and success as it had in the past. Based on this analysis . . . , we have made the difficult decision to phase out the all ACT COMPASS products by December 31, 2016" (Fain, 2015).

Although these studies had not been published at the time of this research project, concerns about writing placement were the motivation for Sitting Bull (SBC) tribal college instructors to initiate a professional development project in partnership with the Red River Valley Writing Project and North Dakota State University. Additionally, two of the three instructors at SBC were former K-12 reservation teachers, so they also had an interest in working with K-12 teachers on the amount and quality of writing instruction in the reservation schools.

Given the mission statement of SBC, it is surprising from a philosophical perspective that the ACT COMPASS test was used at Sitting Bull College for placement into writing courses starting in 2005, where it was "used to complete an analysis of reading, writing, and math skills for all incoming freshmen and transfer students," according to the college's assessment report (Assessment Report, 2011–2012). This practice and the baseline scores for placement are determined by the North Dakota University System, not the tribal college. Students were placed into a developmental English course based on their COMPASS scores at a rate of 53% in the first semester of this study—Fall 2011(Assessment Report, 2011–2012). The average rates of students labeled underprepared according to their English COMPASS score for the years in which data is available is shown in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1. Number of students labeled underprepared in English, according to ACT COMPASS score[*]

Year	Total number of students	Total number underprepared in English	% Underprepared
2008–2009	124	79	64%
2009–2010	118	44	37%
2010–2011	159	72	45%
2011–2012	123	59	48%
2013–2014	83	29	35%
2014–2015	79	37	44%

There is a discrepancy in the assessment report between the percentage and the number.

Students then repeated the COMPASS test at the conclusion of their Associates level studies; the goal of this repeated testing was to demonstrate student learning for the Higher Learning Commission accreditation (R. Froelich, personal communication, October 14, 2016). Moreover, although the ACT COMPASS test has no effect on graduation or on teaching, it was "required for grant purposes," according to the assessment report (Sitting Bull College). The repeated testing process showed that although there was some improvement in sentence fluency and support, the overall scores were not necessarily higher and, according to the SBC instructors, did not seem to reflect the learning that occurred. In regard to the disappointing end–of–studies COMPASS scores, Tribal member and SBC English Instructor Chad Harrison surmised, "Assessment may not always reflect the job we are doing."

WRITING CURRICULA AT SITTING BULL COLLEGE

The writing curricula at Sitting Bull College at the time of the study were as shown in Table 10.2. (The course numbers 110 and 120 are common to all courses in the North Dakota higher education system.)

Table 10.2. Writing courses at Sitting Bull College

Course Number	Course Title	Number of Credits
ENGL 010	Developmental Writing	2 credits
ENGL 110	College Composition I	3 credits
ENGL 120	College Composition II	3 credits

Both 110 and 120 are required for completion of an Associate's degree at Sitting Bull College. Developmental Writing is the course students are placed in if their COMPASS score is low.

When the project began, instructors explained that in addition to the COMPASS test, all students wrote an argument in response to a prompt at the end of English 110 and at the end of English 120. This end–of–course assessment was run by SBC instructors, who administered the same writing task in different ways. For example, some gave it as an in-class, timed writing; others allowed students to take the prompt home and work on it. Instructors also graded their own students' writing and did not necessarily use the rubric in the same way. Results were reported to the department chair, who prepared a report for the college. This procedure had some value for individual instructors, but when it came to programmatic assessment, the methods were problematic because they did not result in data about student improvement in writing across the program. Furthermore, there was little opportunity to collaboratively discuss the meaning of the results and think about how they might influence teaching practices. Also, because instructors assessed student writing only at the end of the semester, they said they were not confident that student writing was improving over the course of the semester.

DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

It is significant, in terms of sovereignty, that this project began with an invitation. Karen (Swisher) Comeau (Standing Rock Dakota), who has written extensively about Indian education and the role of researchers (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Swisher, 1996; Swisher & Tippeconnic, 1999), invited me to meet with the tribal college writing instructors in the spring prior to the study. Comeau

was the author of the Lilly grant that funded the first year of this two-year study. The second year was funded by a SEED grant for high-needs schools from the National Writing Project. In addition to the tribal college personnel, a variety of K-12 teachers from reservation schools participated in this project because the tribal college instructors wanted to reach out to those educators preparing students for tribal college work.

Comeau had recently worked to create an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to provide the Standing Rock Community with more control over research done on the reservation. This research project was reviewed and approved by tribal members through the Sitting Bull College IRB and also through North Dakota State University's IRB.

There were three composition instructors at the college and a writing center director. All three participated in the project. Carla Gerriets is a European American female who taught mainly developmental writing courses and commuted daily from Bismarck. Renee Froelich is a European American female who taught Composition I and II courses and lives on the reservation. She also informally serves as the department head for English. Chad Harrison is a Native American male instructor who taught Composition I and II courses, lives on the reservation, and is a tribal member. Lori Hach, a European American female who lived on a ranch on the reservation, was the director of the newly formed campus writing center, called the Academic Excellence Center.

The K-12 teachers were different in each year of the study. There were five teachers the first year and 10 different teachers the second year. Data on race/ethnicity was not collected on this group, but the demographics of this group generally reflected the demographics of the secondary teachers in the state—96% white (Boser, 2014). I am a white European American female with an indigenous genotype (Sami), working as a professor at North Dakota State University and residing in Fargo, North Dakota, a four-hour drive from Standing Rock Reservation. I am a fourth generation descendent of Finnish and Norwegian settler colonizers who participated in homesteading in North Dakota. I lived out west and in Alaska for 40 years before returning to the state in 2008. M. K. Laughlin, a European American female graduate student from North Dakota State University, assisted with the project. Except for Carla, Erika and me, none of the participants had previous experience with the National Writing Project.

Because the writing instructors chose to forego anonymity when they published an article on the work for *Tribal College Journal* and presented on the project at a national conference, their real names are used in this piece as well. The K-12 teachers did not choose to make their identities known for the research project, so their real names and schools are *not* identified and pseudonyms are used to protect their anonymity.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Audio recordings of the writing assessment meetings were made and transcribed. Exit slips were given to all participants, and the tribal college instructors were each interviewed to learn more about their perceptions of student writing and assessment in general. Meetings were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded using Strauss and Corbin's methods, which included an emic approach to coding. That is, the codes arose from patterns detected in discourse analysis, these patterns were labeled, and then the data was reviewed again, looking for occurrences or references to these labels.

Preliminary emic coding revealed the following labels: Student writing issues, pedagogy, comparing high school and college, comments on writing assessment, new learning, identification of needs/wants, changes in student writing, general discussion about writing, and cultural considerations. This preliminary coding showed the professional development concerns that naturally arise when educators are engaged in collaborative writing assessment, but did not answer my second and third questions about culturally relevant pedagogy and social justice. For that, it was necessary to do some etic cross-coding, using elements of culturally relevant pedagogy as an analytic tool. These elements included increasing academic achievement by modifying materials to draw on cultural strengths, holding high standards and changing expectations, and collaborative community building.

YEAR 1: DEMYSTIFYING WRITING ASSESSMENT

At the preliminary meeting in Year 1, the three composition instructors (Froelich, Gerriets, Harrison) and the writing center director (Hach), along with Comeau, discussed their concerns about student writing. They identified attendance, retention, motivation, and a lack of improvement on the ACT COMPASS test given at the beginning and end of their degree as the main issues. Froelich described students as "reluctant writers," who "draw a blank" when asked, "What do you think?" about an issue they are writing about. In contrast, Comeau said students connect with opportunities for using more sophisticated language. Hach and Gerriets were most concerned with readiness for college writing, estimating that about 60% of their incoming students are not prepared to write at the college level. Harrison identified the following problems that impact his work as a composition instructor:

- Attitudes—Contemporary, technological and traditional attitudes add up to a tough teaching situation
- Environmental—Poverty and social ills are contributing factors for underachievement

- Loss of traditional ideals and the holistic approach to life

As these comments illustrate, the tribal college instructors had different perceptions of student writers and writing assessment, but they decided to work together, with my assistance as facilitator, to answer these questions that they collaboratively created:

1. How can we determine if student writing is improving from 010 to 110 and from 110 to 120?
2. Is there a need for an additional course between 010 and 110?
3. How can we improve ACT COMPASS scores at the end of their program?
4. How can we work with high school teachers and students to prepare students better for college level writing?

These were pragmatic questions that were important to the instructors at this institution, and as an outsider to this context, it was important to respect their questions. Through the process of engaging in answering these questions, new questions about the nature of professional development during writing assessment arose and some questions, such as #3, became less important.

Year 1 Protocol: Pre/Post Testing

For the first year of this study, the writing instructors decided to use the same prompt and rubric (see Appendix for a list of all the prompts) for all of their writing classes at the beginning and end of each semester and to score these essays collaboratively as a group using a norming process that sought to increase accuracy in scoring of student writing. For example, in Year 1 at the beginning of the year, this ACT-style prompt was used:

> The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires all school libraries receiving certain federal funds to install and use blocking software to prevent students from viewing material considered "harmful to minors." However, some studies conclude that blocking software in schools damages educational opportunities for students, both by blocking access to web pages that are directly related to the state-mandated curriculums and by restricting broader inquiries of both students and teachers. In your view, should the schools block access to certain Internet websites?
>
> In your essay, take a position on this question. You may write about either one of the two points of view given or you may

present a different point of view on this question. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

Other prompts included topics on whether high school should be extended to five years, the length of the school day, and the importance of arts in the curriculum. The second paragraph was the same on all prompts.

The rubric used to score papers in this study was ACT's older (pre-Common Core) six-point holistic rubric. According to this ACT rubric, papers at the highest level, exhibit characteristics like taking a position on the issue in the prompt, dealing with the complexity of the issue (which includes responding to counterarguments), and logically and fully developing ideas. In addition, a top-scoring essay will have clear organization; transitions that "reflect the writer's logic"; clear, effective, and well developed introductions and conclusions; "varied and precise" sentence structure; and "a good command of language." Recognizing that these are first drafts, written in about 30 minutes, even a top-scoring essay (a 6) is not required to be error-free, but the few errors should not "distract the reader." This rubric offers differences between the scorepoints, such as the following: a 6 essay offers a "*critical* context for discussion," and a 5 offers a "*broad* context." In addition to these fine distinctions between individual scorepoints, there is a clear difference between upper half (scorepoints 4 through 6) and lower half (scorepoints 1-3) in that a 4 essay offers "adequate skill" in responding to the task, whereas those in the lower half do not. Indeed, the language in the lower half focuses more on deficits (e.g., transitions may be "innapropriate or misleading") than in degrees of competency.

A rubric like this privileges a certain kind of discourse—whitestream discourse. If we go back to Sandy Grande's point about the "deep structures of Western thought," we can see evidence of such structures in the language of this rubric. For example, the act of "taking a position" may be problematic for students with other worldviews. Some of my Alaska Native First Year Composition students at the University of Alaska struggled with thesis statements because circumspection is a cultural value (Blalock, 1997, p. 85). Furthermore, "The value the composition teacher and tutor place on direct assertion in the thesis statement erects a serious cultural barrier to the rural Native student," who values humility and circumspection over anything that could be construed as bragging (Blalock, 1997, p. 89). One of the whitestream characteristics Grande points to is "reason as the preferred mode of inquiry" (2004, p. 3), and we see that reflected in the multiple references to logic in the ACT rubric. The language about errors not distracting the reader may also be problematic, as readers may have differing attitudes about "correctness" in language use.

Professional development around writing assessment provides space for edu-

cators to analyze rubrics, a first step toward deconstructing the values implicit in such rubrics and, hopefully, replacing them with a more culturally relevant way of describing student writing.

I must acknowledge that the SBC instructors' decision to do their assessment in this way runs counter to the way writing assessment is used at most colleges—as a single test to determine readiness/serve as gate-keeping for college or as a single measure of outcomes. Colleges seldom use a pre- and post-test model to look at student growth from the beginning to the end of a class. Doing so is time-consuming and the gains are most likely modest, if at all. Yet, this is what the tribal college instructors desired for their open enrollment institution because "we have to work with students where they are at," as one instructor explained. They wanted to know if each and every student in their classes was making individual improvement as a writer. The small class sizes allowed them to include every student in the assessment, instead of just samples, as is often done at larger institutions.

To use ACT-style prompts and rubric seems paradoxical in a setting where tribal college instructors felt that writing assessment was something "done to" them and their students. However, this approach was similar to the timed essay they were already using (and which some of them felt was handled in a biased way). The ACT COMPASS results did not show improvement in student writing, and they wanted to know why. They wanted to increase their understanding of how such large-scale assessment worked. So, we began a process of demystifying high-stakes assessment, starting with professional development on the basics of assessment, drawing from the demystifying assessment section from *Writing on Demand* (Gere et al., 2005). I believed that some demystification would occur that might free them to take greater ownership over future decisions about how to do local assessment.

Writing instructors read and discussed the prompt, then analyzed and talked about the rubric, scored a set of "anchor" essays, and talked through their differences on the scores. We tried to come to consensus, so they would know how this works with large-scale writing assessment, but consensus was not forced; there was time and space to discuss our differences. We then begin scoring student essays using the first set as anchor essays to help make scoring decisions. The rubric was chosen because it is one commonly used for assessing college-ready writing, and two of the three courses focus on preparing students for English 120, which is considered the first-year college composition course. SBC instructors chose to undertake this assessment activity in collaboration with middle and high school teachers as a way to begin a conversation about the high school to college transition in writing. Moreover, collaborating with K-12 teachers was an intentional goal of the grant from the Lilly Endowment.

Year 1 Results: Improvement in Student Pre/Post Scores

Data from the first semester showed that student writing improved by almost one point on a six-point rubric in all courses This answered the first question created by the instructors: How can we determine if student writing is improving from 010 to 110 and from 110 to 120? They were relieved to see that even with use of the ACT instrument, their students' writing was still improving. These results also supported their decision to answer the second question—should an additional remedial course be required—with a definitive "no." This decision was important from a social justice perspective because if they had chosen to add a course, it would have further slowed students' time to degree. By the end of the first year, instructors also decided that the third question—how can we improve ACT COMPASS scores—was no longer important to them. There was much less talk about COMPASS after they got these results. This left the fourth question, "How can we work with high school teachers and students to prepare students better for college level writing?" as the focus for Year 2 of this project. Participants had recognized the professional development benefits of collaboratively assessing student writing and wanted to continue the work.

Year 2: Steps Toward Sovereignty in Writing Assessment

In Year 2, the Lilly grant ended. After one year of collaborative writing assessment, the instructors took a more active social justice stance—they sought and were awarded a SEED (Supporting Effective Educator Development) Grant for High-Needs Schools that would support them in working more intensively with secondary teachers on the reservation while continuing their exploration of writing assessment. This grant had different goals and support structures, which affected how the activities unfolded. For example, elements of the National Writing Project Summer Institute model became a part of the work. This meant a dedication to providing writing time and support for all educators, with the philosophy that educators with an active writing practice themselves are better teachers of writing. Another element was the inclusion of teaching demonstrations by all participants to model and share best practices in the teaching of writing and to support each other in developing leadership skills to share those practices at their own schools. Another element was time to read into the research on the teaching of writing and to discuss it. So, while the collaborative assessment continued, it was embedded in a different kind of professional development experience that deemphasized assessment and focused more on teaching and learning.

Year 2 Protocol: Making Pre/Post Testing More Culturally Responsive

With the second and third questions answered, the tribal college instructors focused on questions one and four: 1) How can we determine if student writing is improving from course to course? and 4) How can we work with high school teachers and student to prepare students better for college-level writing? The protocol was similar to Year One, but as facilitator, I encouraged them to think about how they could change their assessment to be more responsive to their students' needs. In Year 2, Sitting Bull College instructors moved toward using more age-relevant and culturally responsive prompts. The prompt they decided on for the fall pre-test of Year 2, had to do with Native American identity:

> People define "Native American" in many different ways. Some people believe that being Native American means going to pow-wows, doing beadwork, speaking the language, etc. Others believe that being Native American does not necessarily rely on traditional activities like those above. In your opinion, how would you define what a Native American is and what being Native American means today?

Year 2 Results: Continued Improvement in Students' Pre/Post Test Scores support Sitting Bull College Instructors in Changing the Narrative about Testing

There were continued gains in year 2 of the writing assessment. The writing assessment resulted in the quantitative data shown in Tables 10.3 and 10.4. The scores shown are the average score on a scale of 1-6, with 6 being the highest.

Table 10.3. Pre-essay scores for all students in SBC writing courses

Date	Prompt, number	M	SD	Range	n
Fall 2011	1	2.67	1.17	5	49
Spring 2012	3	3.15	0.97	5	60
Fall 2012	5	3.13	1.28	5	63
Spring 2013	6	3.25	1.42	5	60

Table 10.4. Post-essay scores for all students in SBC writing courses

Date	Prompt, number	M	SD	Range	n	t
Fall 2011	2	3.39	1.03	5	49	3.18**
Spring 2012	4	3.16	1.14	5	59	0.05*
Fall 2012	Same as pre	3.38	1.40	5	29	-0.80[nss]
Spring 2013	Same as pre	3.92	1.22	4	39	1.21[nss]

*Note: nss = not statistically significant; *p < .05; **p < .01*

These data help tell a different story about student writing gains than the one told by the institution's COMPASS scores. The improvement in writing from the beginning to the ending of the fall 2011 and the spring 2013 semesters were statistically significant; the other two were not, though all sample sizes were small, so inferences that one can make are limited. There is practical significance seen in the steady improvement in student writing, not just from the beginning to the end of each semester, but also overall, from semester to semester, which could suggest improvement in the writing program as a whole. What the data provided was an opportunity to change the narrative about how these Lakota/ Dakota students did on writing tests. Changing the narrative is the prerogative of those with power and an exercise of rhetorical sovereignty. I will now discuss each of the themes that emerged from analysis of this qualitative data.

FROM TEST SCORES TO BUILDING TEACHING PARTNERSHIPS AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

As the following analyses illustrate, a community had been built among the K-12 and college educators, a community that could enter into a supported and sustained discussion of teaching and learning, but also of the larger scene, which included devastating topics, such as suicide. What is important is not just the scores on the writing assessment—though everyone was heartened to see quantitative evidence of the success of Sitting Bull College students—but also the partnerships that we were building between many different levels of educators. The discussions—grouped by the following themes from culturally relevant pedagogy: *increasing academic achievement by modifying materials to draw on cultural strengths, holding high standards and changing expectations, holding high standards and changing pedagogical practice,* and *collaborative community building*—are important for the educators' own professional development, development that, in turn, benefits future students.

Increasing Academic achievement by modifying materials to draw on cultural strengths

According to instructors, the Year 1 sample prompts on Internet blocking, length of high school, start time of the school day, and school curriculum did not appeal to the tribal college students very much. While using these ACT prompts and the accompanying rubric gave participants a clear idea of what purchased tests like the ACT COMPASS test looked like, there is an obvious reason why they did not find them appealing: the average SBC student is not a recent high school graduate. These issues have very little relevance to their lives. However, some who are parents did find the prompts of interest from a parenting perspective (R. Froelich, personal communication, October 14, 2016).

In Year 2, Sitting Bull College instructors moved toward using more age-relevant and culturally responsive prompts—a prompt on the topic of Native American identity. As part of the professional development activities conducted around the writing assessment, participants analyzed the prompts and even wrote a response to them. This was part of a larger effort to provide more opportunities for educators to do their own writing because of the grant from the National Writing Project in the second year. The shift from identifying as "teachers" to identifying as "teachers who write" was transformative, but also painful for some. Some of the pain was simply because some teachers did not like to write. They may have had a bad experience in the past or had been away from their own personal writing practice for a long time. Another kind of pain was in trying to write assessment prompts or to write out of one's comfort zone. For example, non-Native participants in the group struggled with the Native American identity prompt from Year 2. Whereas they had no shortage of things to write about with the previous prompts and also demonstrated confidence in sharing their thoughts about the issue at hand, with this prompt there was much more hesitation. Non-Native instructors experienced the same struggle that their students had most likely been feeling on the earlier standardized prompts: "I don't have the personal experience that could be used for specific reasons and examples."

Another change observed with the use of more culturally relevant prompts was improvement in student writing, especially in higher order thinking skills. Productive conversations during the assessment helped educators think about these changes in student writing and consider the impact on their teaching practice. For example, engaging students in discussing topics relevant to their day–to–day lives on the reservation to develop the rhetorical skills they needed to write strong arguments. This revelation led to creation of new teaching materials as well.

At the final meeting of the two-year project, instructors discussed how the final prompt was chosen and what their plans were for the future.

> Carla: We wanted to do the same prompt, but the Salazar
> has truly affected a lot of entities on the reservation . . . You
> responded to it and finished it because it wasn't finished. So
> what we do within all of our classes the same week, we give
> the prompt and then all of our students write on the prompt.

The Salazar that she refers to is the class action lawsuit *Cobell v. Salazar* that was finally settled in 2011 after 15 years and awarded $3.4 billion to the plaintiffs for mismanagement of Indian lands held in trust by the U.S. government (Secretary Salazar, 2011). The funds are used to buy back land fractionated by the Dawes Act, pay individual claimants, and to support education (Indian Trust Settlement, 2011). Checks were starting to arrive on Standing Rock at this time, and individuals were receiving different amounts at different times. According to the Sitting Bull College instructors, some students stopped attending when they received their checks, and the casino, a major local employer, had many employees quit as soon as they received checks. Chad Harrison, the only tribal member among the college instructors, is the one who proposed this topic for the prompt:

> In December 2009 the government announced having
> reached a settlement in the *Cobell v. Salazar* class-action trust.
> The $3.4 billion was placed in a bank and $1.4 billion will
> go to individuals, mostly in the form of checks ranging from
> $500 to $1,500.
>
> Prompt: Some say that there are negative social effects of the
> disbursement of these checks, such as a sense of entitlement
> or large numbers of people quitting their jobs or leaving
> school. Others believe that the entitlement money has a
> positive effect on society, improving the economic status of
> individuals and the larger community. What is your stance on
> the settlement money? Support your argument with examples.

This prompt and the previous one were more culturally relevant than the prompts used in Year 1 of the project, and, significantly, locally developed. More significantly, this last prompt was created by Chad Harrison, the only tribal member in the group of writing instructors, an act of rhetorical sovereignty.

It also was conducive to having students do research in order to do the post-assessment, something that was lacking in Year 1 of the project. By "same prompt," Carla means having students do a timed writing at the beginning and at the ending of the semester, using the same prompt, rather than using a different prompt at the beginning and at the end of the semester. This is an important

shift because it was a way for instructors to get at looking at the growth they were interested in with their first research question, the growth from beginning to ending of a course. It also mirrored the instructional approach to writing process, with its emphasis on revision, used at the college. And with multiple semesters of this kind of growth, they finally had data that could speak back to the dismal story told by entry-only COMPASS scores.

HOLDING HIGH STANDARDS AND CHANGING EXPECTATIONS

Raising achievement and holding high standards for all students is a hallmark of culturally responsive educators (Banks, 2006; Gay, 2000; Irvine, 1992). Much of the talk about student writing levels, especially in preliminary meetings and earlier in the project focused on how low student writing ability was; for example, "What I learned is that our students absolutely do not know the purpose for writing" and "The trouble is we know that they don't know how to write." This focus on weakness was also evident in the written exit slip questions from Year 1 that participants responded to:

> *Exit Slip Questions—Year One*
> 1. What was the most useful part of the day?
> 2. What did not work well or should be changed?
> 3. What did you learn about assessment?
> 4. Will today's experience affect your teaching of writing? If so, how?
> 5. What did you learn about SBC students' writing

All comments about student writing were negative except one, which was, "Some students put a lot of thought into what they are writing." One was neutral, acknowledging that, "their abilities and use of language varies." All other responses were negative, expressing dismay at the low level of these college writers or surprise that the writers have the same problems with writing that the teachers see in the high school and even in the middle school. One wrote, "[I learned] that I need to step up my writing instruction. If some of these kids were mine, I am embarrassed. It showed me that we aren't doing enough to prepare kids to write in college." Although the deficit thinking was sadly apparent, in the last quote there is also acknowledgment that thinking about student writing can serve as motivation to change their teaching practices.

However, when educators characterize students as being unable to do certain writing tasks, it appears that expectations for student performance are low. Like the suggestion that clerical work is the goal of education (Harms, Chapter 3, this collection), these low expectations could be a residual effect of the boarding school era, when Indian children were trained for "manual labor—such as

farming skills for boys/men and bourgeois homemaking ones for girls/women" (Robbins, 2017, p. 200). Therefore, I paid attention to instances in the data when educators were working against this trend by holding higher expectations or convincing each other to expect more from students. These instances tended to occur when educators were assessing the post-essays. At these times, conversation about student writers shifted from one that focuses mainly on their weaknesses to one that looks at the changes and improvements in their writing.

At the first writing assessment meeting, one of the non-Native K-12 teachers was talking about how students struggle with writing arguments, "It has to be so spelled out to them." Chad, the Native American tribal college instructor, tried to both empathize with the K-12 teacher, but also reframe his assumption: "It happens at our level too, not the spelling it out, but once you start to giving them different options, it actually opens their eyes to all the different possibilities."

During the norming portion of the writing assessment meeting, when the group was working to come to consensus on a set of anchor papers, Chad again positioned himself as someone in the group who held higher expectations. He tended to score essays lower than the rest of the group (comprised of non-Native participants). I have observed Native teachers in Native schools with high proportions of non-Native teachers at another site also holding higher expectations than their non-Native colleagues (Sassi & Lajimodiere, 2016). In arguing for lower scorepoints, he frequently referenced textual elements of the essay, such as content, organization, and sentence clarity. Once he argued that the group was reading more into the essay than was actually there:

> Chad: *We're* jumping to saying that's what they're saying. To me they're not saying that at all. That's not what the sentence says.

This example is only a representative example of many times when Chad was the low scorer on an essay and resistant to raising his original score so that the group could come to consensus. This was challenging and a conflict for me as the facilitator, because I both wanted to develop a solid set of anchor essays to support consensus in scoring but also honor Chad's efforts to get the group to raise their expectations because holding high expectations is a characteristic of culturally relevant pedagogy. In some cases, Chad compromised a bit from his original position, but often he helped convince others to raise their expectations, including me.

To counter the negative characterization of student writing that was abundant throughout the data, I specifically asked teachers to compare end–of–term essays with beginning–of–term essays in terms of improvements.

> Kelly: What are the things you saw them getting better at?
>
> Carla and Dave [in unison]: Introductions and conclusions.
>
> Carla: Organization. Don't get me wrong, there is room for improvement, but the difference between the pre and post essays!
>
> Carla: I noticed command of language. I thought it increased.
>
> Chad: I like the idea of a prompt that does raise some bristles. I have students ask, is this an appropriate conversation, can I use this word? And I tell them, you guys are adults . . .
>
> Chad: In terms of the six I read, I think they improved in the thinking process. Even in the lower-scored ones there were a lot of ideas brought up.

Clearly, instructors had many positive things to say about student writing. Perhaps comments on the positives of student writing would have arisen without prompting, but as a facilitator, I did explicitly elicit these comments, both verbally, as the example above shows, and below, in the written exit slips prompts that participants wrote to. Note the shift from asking about the strengths of the writing to asking about the strengths of the writers:

> *Exit Slip Questions—Year Two*
>
> 1. What are the principal strengths of the writers whose essays you scored?
> 2. Since you first participated in a collaborative writing assessment, how has your confidence in scoring essays changed? Greatly increased—somewhat increased—about the same—decreased somewhat—greatly decreased
> 3. Will today's assessment experience affect your teaching of writing? If so, how?
> 4. Please evaluate the value of this experience in relation to your own professional development. Highly valuable—somewhat valuable—neutral—not very valuable—not at all valuable

The following strengths in student writing were identified: well developed and detailed supports for their opinions, strong and varied oratory, riveting and entertaining details. In addition, teachers recognized student writers' abilities to voice their opinions, organize thoughts, develop a good introduction and conclusion, and evoke an emotional response in them as readers.

Fifty percent of the educators reported that their confidence "greatly increased" from participating in assessment and 50% said it had "somewhat in-

creased." When it came to affecting their teaching of writing, responses varied widely. Some wanted to duplicate the scoring and norming session with their own students, while others said they would generally work on improving student writing. One wrote, "I enjoy writing, but had felt my students were lost as I made writing assignments. These sorts of assessments not only help me, but help the students as they develop their stories." This kind of self-reflection can help educators raise awareness of how their own attitudes toward writing are not the same as their students' attitudes. On the final question, fifty percent reported that the experience was "highly valuable" to their own professional development and fifty percent said it had been "somewhat valuable."

These data show that the collaborative writing assessment activity was an impactful professional development experience for educators of all levels. Productive conversations during the assessment helped them consider connections to their teaching practices and the needs of their students.

HOLDING HIGH STANDARDS AND CHANGING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Instructors shared strategies that they thought had been most effective. One of the strategies was grant-related. SBC created a Center for Academic Excellence and hired Lori as the director of the Center. She worked closely with the foundations instructor, Carla, to provide intensive one–on–one work in the Writing center. Chad talked about how he engaged students in discussing topics relevant to their day–to–day lives on the reservation to develop the rhetorical skills they need to write strong argumentative papers.

To facilitate this discussion, participants read the NCTE policy brief on writing assessment, *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve the Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools* (Graham & Perrin, 2007), the ND Common Core State Standards (2011), and *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (National Council of Teachers of English, Council of Writing Program Administrators, & National Writing Project, 2011). Discussions of policy and research as well as sharing of stories about our classroom practices made the discussions especially rich. In terms of pedagogy, a key social justice issue that emerged was that in some K–12 classrooms, Standing Rock students are not given many opportunities to practice writing. For example, a teacher named Jill has been resistant to providing writing opportunities to her students throughout the year. This meeting is in April of Year 2, and she is discussing changes to writing instruction she has made to her teaching:

> Jill: I don't mind writing, but I hate to grade writing. There-

> fore, I don't assign much writing. Because I am a perfection-
> ist, and if you miss a comma or a period or write the word "I"
> with a dot at the top, i, it just eats me. And so, I'm . . .
>
> Erika: [whispers] . . . let it go.
>
> Group: [laughter]
>
> Jill: I am . . . Erika is tutoring me to let that go. I had my kids
> write, um, a letter from after the end of the book *The Boy in
> the Striped Pajamas.* I had them write a letter to the father.

Writing research shows that students need many opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences to develop fluency. That Jill could maintain a resistance to allowing her students to write within a writing project context suggests how strong this resistance is. Jill clarifies why she does not have students write—she hates grading it, and the reason she hates grading it is that she cannot stand the errors in writing conventions she sees, liked missed punctuation or using a lowercase "i" when referring to self. In Chapter 3, Keith L. Harms identifies Jill's dilemma thus: "If others, frequently more powerful others are demanding a standard English from our students, the thinking goes, then what power do we have . . . to resist this?" Because this discussion took place within the context of writing assessment-focused professional development, Jill had an opportunity to air and confront her attitudes toward grading student writing.

In the excerpt above, we see some peer pressure at work on Jill. Erika whispers, "Let it go," when Jill explains why she hates to grade her students' writing. The spontaneous laughter from the rest of the group further underlines how untenable they find her position. Jill then begins to describe how, with Erika's help, she is starting to let it go and experiment with providing more opportunities for her students to write, an important step toward being a social justice educator who holds high expectations for students, and, significantly, provides an opportunity to learn (OTL). Theories of OTL have been greatly expanded by the sociocultural perspectives that "draw our attention, explicitly, to what learners—with minds and bodies, home and peer cultures and languages, previous learning experiences, interests and values—bring to their learning environments and how that shapes their interactions with those learning environments" (Moss et al., 2008).

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY BUILDING

Professional development centered on writing assessment has the potential to drive people apart as they air their personal standards for measuring writing,

disagree with others on scores, and struggle with coming to consensus. However, such activities also bring people together because scoring an entire set of essays requires collaboration. The participants in this study expressed humor and tolerance throughout the process sharing of pedagogical practices discussed above helped create a sense of community.

Another research-based pedagogical practice the group studied was the use of models to help student writers, both in the form of mentor texts and also the modeling of the writing process by teachers who write. This was also something that Jill resisted, which is surprising because she is a good writer. The reason for this turned out to be more complex than one might think.

Erika relates Jill's concern: "She [Jill] had shared her own writing before they wrote and that was something they said they demoed last . . . time that we talked about was consider sharing and and um one of your [Jill's] concerns was that they were just going to use this exact thing that I wrote, that modeling is going to lead to them copying."

Besides the fear that students will just copy her writing, Jill had another fear in sharing her writing—that it would make her emotional. This comes out in the following excerpt:

> Kelly: Was that the . . . was that the first time you've shared your writing with students?
>
> Jill: Um no, I have shared my writings before.
>
> Kelly: But you have been hesitant to in the past?
>
> Jill: Yeah, because a lot of times I write things that make me cry.
>
> Erika: . . . [Y]ou don't go into that real personal and never have because I have seen some of your writings when I was in your classroom.
>
> Jill: 'Cause you know when our secretary George died, I wrote a poem . . . and put it on my door so they could read it, and so, everyone said it was pretty good. And then I wrote another one, it might have been in here, yeah, I did, and it was one of our students killed themselves.
>
> Kelly: Hm, yeah, I have experienced that before. It's so hard. Yeah.
>
> Erika: But if you're feeling that, think about what the students are feeling.
>
> Kelly: Hhhhmmm.

> Erika: You know, they see that personal side, and that's what makes writing valuable.
>
> Kelly: Uhhmm hmmm.
>
> Erika: You know, if it's not surface level, then that's how they become good writers as well as, you know, compassionate people, that's our goal, that's our goal in education.

For Jill, using her own writing as a model in her class is risky because she writes about emotional topics such as deaths of school staff and students. The Standing Rock community had experienced a series of teen suicides. This is also a social justice issue, as the rate of death by suicide by Native female adolescents is nearly four times that of white females (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2011). This tragedy is something that needs to be talked about and acted upon, and it was through a discussion of writing that educators were able to discuss suicides on the reservation. The transcript continues with this discussion for quite some time. The group shared ideas for how to provide opportunities for both students and staff to write about their losses and also efforts for prevention. The community building that occurred over the course of the study led to safe, supported discussions about hard topics like these.

CONCLUSION

The content, rubrics, and structures of large-scale writing assessment have tremendous power over people, resulting in their use even in contexts like Sitting Bull College, on reservation lands where the Native Nation is a literal sovereign state and where the mission statement explicitly calls for consideration of cultural context in assessment practices. At the beginning of this two-year study, the tribal college instructors seemed to feel accountable to the external measure of writing used by the state of North Dakota and had internalized some deficit thinking that accompanies a focus on measures like these. Steps toward a more socially just writing assessment were possible only after educators proved to themselves that their students were making gains on a whitestream measure.

An analysis of educator discourse does help answer the research questions about writing assessment, professional development, and social justice.

During writing assessment, what kinds of discourse do educators engage in and what parts might constitute professional development?

Participants in the study, who came in with varying degrees of assessment literacy, discussed student writing issues, pedagogy, comparison between high school

and college, comments on writing assessment, new learning, identification of needs/wants, changes in student writing, general discussion about writing, and cultural considerations as part of writing assessment meetings. There is evidence of educators teaching each other, whether through convincing each other to have higher expectations, using different teaching practices, or demonstrating their own approaches to assessing writing. That is, teacher–to–teacher talk about actual student writing during assessment is what makes professional development possible.

Does the professional development during writing assessment reflect the values of culturally responsive pedagogy?

Analyzing qualitative data gives insight into the nature of the professional development that happens between and within the activity of collaborative writing assessment. Using the elements of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy as an analytic tool revealed the following practices were present in the study: increasing academic achievement by modifying materials to draw on cultural strengths, holding high standards and changing expectations, and collaborative community building. However, many elements of culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy were not present in the data. For example, social consciousness and critique was minimal or not present in most discussions. There was no apparent evidence in the data of Lakota ways of knowing being explicitly integrated into teaching processes and skills. Furthermore, critiques of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogies (Grande, 2004; Wilson, 2004) were not explicitly considered, nor was decolonization explicitly studied or discussed.

However, there was shift between the beginning and the end of the study from focusing almost exclusively on student weaknesses to productively discussing students' strengths as writers. Just as discussions that build on student strengths are more productive than those that focus on deficits, we might consider how facilitating capacity-building activities that value and build on reservation educators' experiences may be an effective way to work collaboratively in a tribal college setting to benefit students.

Does culturally responsive professional development attached to writing assessment lead to addressing social justice issues?

Using Sleeter's 2014 analysis of social justice frameworks, one can comment on each of the four dimensions of social justice she identifies. The first is to situate families and communities with an analysis of structural inequities. Sitting Bull

College instructors had noticed that the COMPASS test results their institution was using for program analysis did not correspond to their own conception of student improvement in writing. The misleading test results were about to be used to add an additional required remedial course to the sequence of writing courses that students at Sitting Bull College take. An additional required writing course would have added to the time to degree and also the cost of college, both of which may have resulted in an even higher non-retention rate. With better data from the writing assessment they collaboratively constructed, SBC writing instructors decided against adding this course, thereby avoiding what could have been construed as a structural inequity. By choosing to partner with K–12 schools in undertaking their writing assessment, instructors implicitly tackled some structural inequities in schools.

The second of Sleeter's dimensions is developing relationships of reciprocity with students, families, and communities. As a researcher, I worked with a spirit of reciprocity, prioritizing the questions of the participants in the project, facilitating work that would allow them to answer those questions for their own programmatic needs, encouraging them to share their work at a national professional conference (a first for all of the instructors), and supporting them in sharing the results with peer institutions through *Tribal College Journal*, even though doing so would not "count" in my own tenure case, as *TCJ* no longer does peer-reviewed articles. This chapter comprises the first "taking away" of data from the research site, and I hope that I have brought to the site a comparable amount of resources, time, energy, and opportunity for the participants to feel that the project was reciprocal in nature, but that is a judgment for the Standing Rock Community to make.

The third dimension is to teach to high academic expectations by building on students' culture, language, experience, and identity. The results of the study show that there was some movement toward higher expectations, as seen in the parts of the scoring discussions led by Harrison and in the group discussion around Jill's transformation from a teacher who did not provide opportunities for her students to practice writing to one who did so.

The fourth and final dimension is to create and teach an inclusive curriculum that integrates marginalized perspectives and explicitly addresses issues of inequity and power (Sleeter, 2014). This dimension was somewhat addressed in this study. The students of the educators who were involved in this project benefited in that there was an increase in achievement as measured by an assessment of impromptu essays written at the beginnings and endings of each of four semesters and that scores improved as more culturally relevant prompts and pedagogical practices were used. Educator discourse also reflected culturally relevant and responsive themes, which may have had an indirect effect on pedagogy. However,

additional research would be needed to determine what this effect might be. There was little work on culturally sustaining pedagogy.

If we return to Lyons' notion of rhetorical sovereignty, this project falls far short of the robust picture he paints of what this could be. Lyons states, "Sovereignty is the guiding story in our pursuit of self-determination, the general strategy by which we aim to best recover our losses from the ravages of colonization—our lands, our languages, our cultures, our self-respect" (2000, p. 449). Standing Rock tribal members had control over whether this research project could even take place by putting their own Institutional Review Board in place, and tribal member Chad influenced how the writing assessment was done by arguing for higher standards in scoring and drafting the only culturally relevant prompts used, but as only one person in a group of 12 or so (numbers of participants varied over the two years), perhaps his exercise of sovereignty would have been greater had there been more members of his Native Nation participating in the writing assessment. As the outsider in this project, I made efforts to read about the community, hang out in the community, read the works of Native scholars and even took two courses in Dakota language during the project, reflecting on my own position and interrogating my assumptions, but even "deep hanging out," Sandy Grande's indigenous version of Gallagher's "being there," is not enough when it comes to sovereignty in writing assessment. This is only a partial picture of writing assessment as social justice in this particular cultural context.

In the end, how can the findings of this study influence future work with writing assessments at tribal colleges? First, state institutions and funding agencies that serve indigenous populations should avoid requiring tests that serve as barriers to student success. At the institutional level, it is important that the demographics of the teaching force reflect the student body. Although the white educators in this study were knowledgeable and caring, with a great deal of experience with and dedication to teaching Native students, there was a clear difference between their discourse and the Native instructor's discourse (though he may not be representative of all Native educators' discourse), and because the Native instructor was a minority in the group, his voice may not have had the same weight had the group included more Native educators. Another step that could be taken is to implement alternative means of evaluation, such as the "Indigenous Framework for Evaluation" developed in Canada (LaFrance & Nichols, 2010), which synthesizes indigenous ways of knowing with Western evaluation practice. Researchers can and should take a more critical approach to the theories that undergird their studies, recognizing that even culturally responsive, relevant, and sustaining pedagogies may "retain the deep structures of Western thought" (Grande, 2004). The roots of settler colonization run deep

and future work on writing assessment professional development should consider using social justice as a framework for instruction and assessment as a step toward rhetorical sovereignty and decolonization.

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APPENDIX

Table 10.5. All pre/post testing writing prompts

Number	Prompt
1	The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires all school libraries receiving certain federal funds to install and use blocking software to prevent students from viewing material considered "harmful to minors." However, some studies conclude that blocking software in schools damages educational opportunities for students, both by blocking access to web pages that are directly related to the state-mandated curriculums and by restricting broader inquiries of both students and teachers. In your view, should the schools block access to certain Internet websites?
2	Educators debate extending high school to five years because of increasing demands on students from employers and colleges to participate in extracurricular activities and community service in addition to having high grades. Some educators support extending high school to five years because they think students need more time to achieve all that is expected of them. Other educators do not support extending high school to five years because they think students would lose interest in school and attendance would drop in the fifth year. In your opinion, should high school be extended to five years?
3	Some high school administrators debate whether to begin the school day several hours later in the morning, even though this would result in a later end to the school day. Some administrators support this schedule change because they think most teenagers are more alert later in the morning. Other administrators do not support this change because they think it would limit students' opportunities to work or participate in extracurricular activities after school. In your opinion, should high schools begin the school day several hours later in the morning?
4	While some schools offer art and music courses to their students, these courses are not always mandatory. Some teachers, students, and parents thinks that schools should emphasize traditional academic subjects like math and science, as those skills will help the students more in the future when they join the workforce. Other feel that requiring all students to take classes in music or the visual arts would teach equally valuable skills that the students may not learn otherwise, and would also help them do better in traditional academic subject areas. In your opinion, should art or music classes be mandatory for all high school students?
5	People define "Native American" in many different ways. Some people believe that being Native American means going to pow-wows, doing beadwork, speaking the language, etc. Others believe that being Native American does not necessarily rely on traditional activities like those above. In your opinion, how would you define what a Native American is and what being Native American means today?

6	In December 2009 the government announced having reached a settlement in the *Cobell v. Salazar* class-action trust. The $3.4 billion was placed in a bank and $1.4 billion will go to individuals, mostly in the form of checks ranging from $500 to $1,500. Prompt: Some say that there are negative social effects of the disbursement of these checks, such as a sense of entitlement or large numbers of people quitting their jobs or leaving school. Others believe that the entitlement money has a positive effect on society, improving the economic status of individuals and the larger community. What is your stance on the settlement money? Support your argument with examples.

CHAPTER 11.

QUEERING WRITING ASSESSMENT: FAIRNESS, AFFECT, AND THE IMPACT ON LGBTQ WRITERS

Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks

Research Problem: While our writing center purposefully worked to cultivate an inclusive space that provided our staff a welcoming venue for discussing concerns about sexuality and writing, we did not know how sexuality functioned in the assessments of writing from either a consultant or student perspective. Sexuality, as a writing assessment concern, remained invisible. We also did not know how the sexuality of writers shaped the responses to or assessments of student writing from consultants, students, or faculty.

Research Questions: How do writing centers, programs, and classrooms engage in assessment projects that attend to LGBTQ writers? How might we develop validity arguments that consider whether our proposed writing program and writing center assessments are appropriate for LGBTQ students throughout their time in higher education?

Literature Review: Our chapter considers how queer rhetorics and a sociocongitive perspective of measurement allow writing assessment scholars to engage questions of fairness, validity, and reliability while opening the door to queering writing assessment in more structurally sophisticated ways. Our interpretations of LGBTQ data hinges on our theoretical understanding that LGBTQ students experience writing assessments in structurally different ways from their non-LGBTQ-identified peers.

Methodology: We conducted two focus groups with a total of five students who identify as gay. Focus groups allowed us to listen to LGBTQ students to better understand their lived experiences before designing writing assessments. Our focus groups employed a semi-structured interview script designed to elicit students' experiences and stories with writing assessment in and out of the class-

room. We engaged in inductive, emergent coding (Kelle, 2007) in order to preserve the students' experiences.

Conclusions: A queer turn in writing assessment provides the necessary space to push forward a socially just writing assessment agenda that privileges the intersections between queer rhetorics and writing assessment. We argue that writing assessors must concern themselves with the emotional (and physical) safety of the students they assess, recognizing that because knowledge and ability are fundamentally embodied experiences, we must attend to those bodies that remain marginalized in and by culture.

Qualifications: Our focus groups provided us the experiences of gay-identified students reflecting a narrow sample.

Directions for Further Study: We need to hear from more LGBTQ students to understand their experiences as writers. Further information is also needed on how the affective aspects of writing assessments impact LGBTQ students.

In 2010, our institution began designing a writing-focused Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) re-accreditation. Emerging from the QEP was a new writing center space that allowed us to quadruple our writing center staff, invest in a data collection system, and eventually triple student usage of our services. The quick growth of the writing center also drew our attention to particular usage trends in assessment reporting data. One of the patterns we noticed was that sexuality remained an invisible part of those data trends even though sexuality was a prominent staff meeting topic. As administrators, we noticed a significant number of LGBTQ students on our staff, and their stories about how to interpret faculty comments during writing center sessions, how to work with homophobic essays, or how to engage with writing assignments in the classroom, while important to our staff development, went undocumented and undervalued in our end–of–year reporting.[7] While we

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7   For the purposes of this chapter, we have chosen LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning) as our acronym for the population of students whose experiences with writing we want to explore in our study and about whom we want to raise significant questions regarding assessment practices. Institutions are increasingly comfortable with engaging LGBT students, in part because those identities seem stable and trackable. However, we include Q for both queer/gender-queer and questioning in order to remind ourselves and readers that categories intended to name or represent sexuality should remain fluid and complex, as are the lives these letters and terms are intended to represent. Likewise, in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014), Standard 3.17 now recognizes that this sort of embodied complexity is essential for those doing assessment work.

purposefully worked to cultivate an inclusive space that provided our staff a welcoming venue for telling these stories, we did not know how sexuality functioned in the assessments of writing from either a consultant or student perspective. We also did not know how the sexuality of writers shaped the reading, responding, and assessing of student writing from consultants, students, or faculty. In these moments, we noticed all around us something different and exciting happening, and we also wondered where to showcase those changes, how to attend to the knowledges being developed, and how to honor the diverse experiences that were suddenly being called to our collective attention.

In order to foreground the knowledge and experience of LGBTQ students, we began to collect information in the writing center related to sexuality/sexual orientation and gender identity as part of programmatic assessment efforts in spring 2016. We started to think about how we might make sexuality a component of our larger university-wide writing portfolio assessment and why we might need to do so. We started conversations with offices on campus that were also beginning to collect and track data on LGBTQ students; we began looking at how we might partner and share data and work together to better support and advocate for all our students. Our experiences with students and our conversations around assessment as writing program administrators caused us to pause and recognize that, until recently, we too had not been collecting or thinking carefully enough about LGBTQ concerns in our assessments, certainly not as much as we should. Paying attention to LGBTQ students in our assessment projects should be a core concern for any faculty, administrator, or researcher who is committed to social justice work. Sexuality, like gender and class, intersects racial and ethnic identities in ways that offer us more complex and sophisticated understandings of ourselves.

Throughout this chapter, we identify several ways in which we see the lived experiences of LGBTQ students, sexuality, and queer rhetorics converging with writing assessment. Our approach cuts across various contexts of writing assessment, such as classroom and portfolio assessments, programmatic assessments, and placement testing. In doing so, we demonstrate why questions of justice, particularly with diverse populations, must be central to writing assessment research. Through our emerging queered writing assessment methodology, we offer other WPAs/WCDs the opportunity to reflect on and to question their own current assessment projects and practices. Ultimately, we argue that writing assessors must concern themselves with the emotional (and physical) safety of the students they assess, recognizing that because knowledge and ability are fundamentally embodied experiences, we must attend to those bodies that remain marginalized in culture at large. Equally important, we note, is the fact that since gender and sexuality are for many people fluid and unfinished experiences, par-

ticularly among youth, we must consider the complexities of sexuality both in forming the structure of our writing assessments and in the validity arguments we make based on our results. In short, failing to attend to complex notions of gender and sexuality in our work jeopardizes fairness, validity, and reliability in our assessments.

Beginning with an analysis of a new study of writing assessment in action, we take a primarily theoretical approach in this chapter in order to challenge various elements of writing assessment that remain normative to classroom-based and programmatic work. Following Cole's (2015) recognition that theory works to historicize and materialize language and thinking, our approach establishes new avenues for the ethical collection and analysis of data within an educational measurement framework (see also Elliot, 2016). Our chapter builds on feedback from two focus groups of gay-identified students to help us think about how classroom assessment, programmatic assessment, and larger, standardized assessments would benefit from the intersection of queer rhetorics and writing assessment. This theoretical approach to writing assessment allows us to consider how individualized moments of feedback impact students' learning and writing development, as well as how their writing can be used for programmatic assessment. We name the writing assessment contexts in this chapter as we shift between the classroom and programmatic spaces while detailing a queer turn to assessment, but we privilege the classroom context as a beginning space to think through the larger relationships between queer rhetorics and writing assessment scholarship because queer rhetorics tend to value diverse and distributed contexts rather than top-down frames for inquiry and analysis. As such, we begin our inquiry into/critique of writing assessment by looking at how assessment practices operate on individuals so that any theory we build around writing assessment grows out of the lived experiences of those individuals and feeds back into those experiences in meaningful ways (Moss et al., 2008).

Our entry into queering writing assessment, likewise, draws from the larger inquiry of educational measurement and Critical Validity Inquiry (CVI). Drawing on Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Jeffrey Perry's (2012) CVI places validity inquiry in conversation with CDA and sociocultural understandings of language. The overarching goal of CVI is to understand the embedded power and possibility within assessment to break the social reproduction of privileged epistemologies in our work, particularly around positivistic notions such as standardization, measurement, and reliability that continue to guide normative practices in writing assessment. As a result, we believe CVI is one way to move toward greater social justice in writing assessment since CVI asks us to design "reflexive methodologies that continually challenge the researcher's method of producing results" (Perry, 2012, p. 187). Similarly, Mislvey (2016) argues for educational as-

sessments to develop ways to meet the sociocognitive challenges in measurement. Mislevy extends our thinking on socially just writing assessments by providing a sociocognitive perspective to help us consider the complex interplay of "cognitive processes within individuals, interactions among people and things in the world as we experience them, and between-persons social practices and LCS [linguistic, cultural, and substantive] patterns" (2016, p. 268). In particular, we are concerned about the lived, embodied experiences of LGBTQ students as they participate in writing assessments that call upon their experiences which Mislevy situates as an important step in establishing validity arguments.

While Mislevy argues that "a sociocognitive perspective views a construct as an aggregation over clusters of individuals' unique constellations of resources, in a way that suits the assessor's purpose and point of view" (2016, p. 274), we believe queer rhetorics can draw our attention to the highly constructed and often unsettling performance of the self—self as agent, self as researcher, self as autonomous, self as performative—and provide language to either identify the individual or to represent our realities. Browne and Nash (2010, p. 1) ask, "What meanings can we draw from, and what use can we make of, such data when it is only momentarily fixed and certain? And what does this mean for thinking about ourselves as researchers?" Central to queer methods of inquiry, therefore, has been a concern for reflexivity. Where queer rhetorics, like other poststructural projects, recognize the slipperiness of language (and data), reflexivity becomes a core method for testing our hypotheses and interpretations. Thus, we argue that assessment practices that assume gender or sexual orientation categories as fixed or taken for granted can offer only limited or partial data. Queer rhetorics, a sociocognitive perspective of measurement, and Perry's CVI offer one way for writing assessment scholars to engage questions of validity, fairness, and reliability while opening the door to queering writing assessment in more structurally sophisticated ways. We enact and enable a "queer turn" in writing assessment by considering how we might develop validity arguments (Kane, 2010, 2015) that consider whether or not our proposed writing program and writing center programmatic assessments are appropriate for LGBTQ students over their educational careers in higher education. Our interpretations of LGBTQ data hinges on our theoretical understanding that LGBTQ students experience writing assessments in structurally different ways from their non-LGBTQ-identified peers.

HOW QUEER THE TURN?

Recently, Jonathan Alexander and David Wallace's (2009) review of key texts in Writing Studies articulated a "queer turn" in the field that can help the discipline toward a "better understanding of how heteronormativity operates in society at

large, in our classrooms, and in the pages of our books and journals" (p. 301), and they make a strong case for the multiple and varied ways that heteronormativity continues to enact violence on our teachers, students, instructional contexts, and research practices. Yet, the work of assessment remains absent either from their critique or review for obvious reasons: to date, no scholars in the field have explicitly addressed the interconnections of queer studies and writing assessment in terms that make it clear that what many queer scholars have been discussing all along are issues directly related to assessment practices, methodologies, and epistemologies. This absence leads us to wonder below how the subfield of writing assessment might tackle such a thorny and difficult problem, as well as why the queer turn has seemed to have had so little impact on writing assessment? When we look at the extant scholarship through an assessment lens, we begin to notice how important and interrelated these areas of study are.

For example, early LGBTQ scholarship in Writing Studies concerned itself extensively with classroom assessment issues like responding to and evaluating student writing, even if this concern was often contextualized through first-person narratives of teaching experience and the practitioner's concern: "What do you do when/if?" Scott Lankford's (1991/1992) presentation at MLA, "'Queers, Bums, and Magic': How Would You Grade a Gay Bashing?" initiated a watershed moment of discussion in the field about responding to homophobia in student writing. Lankford offered a critical look at a student paper that he had received and which detailed a straight male student's travel narrative about a trip to "San Fagcisco." While the essay met all the criteria of the assignment that the teacher had listed, what Lankford had not accounted for was the possibility that a student would write a sadistic, homophobic essay in response to the prompt. As part of the narrative, the student recounts how he and his friends stopped a man on the street to ask if he were a "fag" so they could ask him questions for a class project. Later in the essay, the student recounts how he and his friends urinated on a homeless man in a dark alley—a man whom they then kicked multiple times for sport. Lankford posed the question that many of us have been forced to ask ourselves: what are we grading when we grade student work? And as important, how do we respond to texts that violate our sense of ethics and our concern for engaged, thoughtful public dialogue on important topics or issues?

This presentation reverberated through the field at a time when it was only just beginning to deal with its own silences around sexuality. Richard E. Miller (1994) would eventually write about the exchange and his own concerns around the text in "Fault Lines in the Contact Zone: Assessing Homophobic Student Writing," arguing that "this student essay . . . has seized the attention of more teachers, taken up more institutional time, and provoked more debate than any other single piece of unpublished undergraduate writing in recent memory" (p.

391). After a discussion of multiple grading options, Miller reports, Lankford assigned the paper a low B and treated it as a fictional account of "megaviolence" reminiscent of Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*. The grade evoked as much debate and frustration as the type of response to give. For Miller, this essay offers a dramatic example of what teachers face each time they sit down to respond to student writing. He writes that the two primary response paths offered by teachers in the room—1) remove the student from the class, and 2) comment on surface features and treat the text like fiction—demonstrate the paucity of professional development for preparing "teachers to read and respond to the kinds of parodic, critical, oppositional, dismissive, resistant, transgressive, and regressive writing that gets produced by students writing in the contact zone of the classroom" (Miller, 1994, p. 394). We share this "contact zone" moment from our recent disciplinary history at length because we remain uncertain that Writing Studies, some twenty years later, has dealt in significant ways with the questions that Lankford's student essay and Miller's read on it (and our field) have created for us. What role, if any, is the assessment community going to play in this conversation?

While Ball (1997), Inoue (2015), and Inoue and Poe (2012a, 2012b) have explored response concerns regarding race; and while Haswell and Haswell (1996) and Cleary (1996) have explored these questions regarding gender, there has not been the same inquiry into sexuality and classroom assessment and response. Yet, things are beginning to change. One change is making LGBTQ identity visible. For example, in the most recent *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014), the assessment community moved to recognize the importance of LGBTQ participants in our work:

> When aggregate scores are publicly reported for relevant subgroups—for example, males and females, individuals of differing socioeconomic status, individuals with different sexual orientation, individuals with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, young children or older adults—test users are responsible for providing evidence of comparability and for including cautionary statements whenever credible research or theory indicates that test scores may not have comparable meaning across these subgroups. (Standard 3.17, p. 71)

By recognizing the importance of including sexual orientation in a sampling plan design, Standard 3.17 requires score disaggregation, evidence of comparability, and cautionary statements when scores do not hold the same meaning across these sub-groups; the inclusion of sexual orientation reminds assessors

that the experiences of LGBTQ participants may vary from heteronormative participants.

A second change is recognizing that writing assessment is no longer understood as a primarily normativizing project, rather an interpretative and argument-based undertaking (Kane, 2013, 2015). Unfortunately, as we sit in campus assessment conversations, ranging from departmental committee work on writing assessment to campus-wide reaccreditation discussions, the discourse of normalization (e.g., base lines, norms, agreement, and standards) remains.

A final change is engaging the scholarly community to include the voices of queer students in writing assessment practice. We hazard that one reason many queer scholars have been reticent to engage with writing assessment is that so few of us had extensive assessment training in our graduate programs, and where we did, the older discourses of normativity were still prevalent. More recent writing assessment work, however, seems to be opening a productive space for queer rhetorics to engage with assessment practices and theories. As with current assessment work being used to promote social justice broadly conceived (Inoue, 2015; Inoue & Poe, 2012; Poe & Inoue, 2016), we recognize that where assessment conversations still engage "baselines" and "norms," a queer notion of assessment might ask us to consider alternative notions of "growth," including the idea of growing sideways (Bond, 2009). Likewise, where norming readers functions to achieve interrater reliability/agreement, a queer lens for assessment might instead value dissensus and disagreement, paying attention to outliers in order to challenge those texts/readers/values that fall so neatly into our norms. What, then, would program assessment look like if we dismiss reader-norming and its implicit assumptions around "reliability"? While assessment experts would recognize our move toward validity, WPAs and WCDs might still wonder how such a shift will help their programs. For example, the 2016 *College English* issue "Toward Social Justice as Writing Assessment" includes Alexander's critique of writing assessment: "I'm not sure that writing assessment can ever be queer. It still seems too invested in norming at times, even in normalizing experiences of composing and its teaching. We are called upon to produce results, to justify our existences even. But we can also tell other stories" (205). Banks and Alexander (2010) explore similar issues when they note how difficult it has been to engage queer theory at the programmatic level since so much of our field's discourse around "programs" has to do with commonality, uniformity, and an obsession with outcomes that privileges normativity over dissensus, conflict, intentionality, failure, or any number of concepts we might articulate as "queer values." Likewise, many compositionists encounter assessment as an outside force, something that comes from external pressures like reaccreditation (Sharer et al., 2016); from

system or campus-level attempts to determine which programs are "successful" and thus which ones to cut or "restructure"; or as department or program level impositions on teacher independence and academic freedom. In the end, while assessment as a field has moved on significantly in the last few years (Kane, 2010, 2011, 2016), WPAs and WCDs work in contexts where the assessment conversation has not yet moved on, so we are not surprised that queer compositionists have spent so little time engaging with assessment beyond the individual classroom or the individual teacher-student experience.

Yet, we believe that writing assessment—the conversations it engages and brings into being—has the potential to lead Writing Studies to enact and engage in queer work; we believe that assessment can be (re)understood as a queer project. To do so, Writing Studies needs to wrestle with WPAs' and WCDs' misperceptions of contemporary assessment theory in order to see how the work of assessment is one avenue for advancing a queer turn in our field. Following Mislevy (2016), we see spaces for challenging normativization (Lederman and Warwick, Chapter 7, this collection, for further discussion on challenging normativization) and reconsidering what we want writing assessment to do for us (and our students) and why. In the study we outline below, we demonstrate how issues of gender and sexuality are central to considerations of fairness, validity, and reliability through our attention to LGBT students.

LISTENING TO LGBTQ STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES WITH ASSESSMENT

Response research has consistently called for more inquiry on student voices (Blakely 2016; Huot, 2002; Kynard, 2006; Murphy, 2000) in the classroom and how students understand feedback, yet aside from a few studies (Sommers, 2006; Straub, 1997), we still have a limited knowledge of how students experience classroom and programmatic assessment. And, as Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham (Chapter 9, this collection) remind us, the sociopsychological aspects of teaching and learning impact students' attitudes toward writing and provide valuable insight to students lived experiences with writing. As administrators working to ensure fairness, validity, and reliability, we turn to student voices (response processes) as another point of validity evidence. Conversations with LGBTQ students about their writing strategies and writing assessment experiences "can yield evidence that enriches the definition of a construct" (*Standards*, 2014, p. 15). Focusing on LGBTQ students' experiences with writing assessment requires us to redefine student-centeredness to incorporate the emotional welfare of LGBTQ students. As Kalikoff (2005) reminds us, "students are not inevitably central to student-centered learning," but when considering

research on LGBTQ students and their experiences with writing assessment, students *must* be the center (p. 116).

After a conversation with a student affairs educator on what information our university gathers and tracks with regard to LGBTQ students, we started to think of ways we could listen to LGBTQ students in gathering data ourselves. Before conducting large-scale studies about LGBTQ students' GPAs, or how LGBTQ persistence/retention aligned with other demographic markers, we needed to talk to students to understand how to develop identity taxonomies and what data to collect. Focus group methodology provided one way to gather student input on designing studies that include LGBTQ students as a demographic category.

We conducted two IRB-approved focus groups with a total of five students who identify as gay. Both focus groups were audio and video recorded. For the purpose of this chapter, we focus exclusively on the audio. Our focus groups employed a semi-structured interview script with five questions designed to elicit students' experiences and stories with writing assessment in and out of the classroom. The first focus group included two undergraduate male-identified students: Michael, a white junior transfer student, and Marcus, an African American senior. The second focus group included one undergraduate student and two graduate students, all white males: Jason, a senior; Matthew, a first semester master's student; and Steven, a third semester master's student. All participants have been given pseudonyms. The first focus group lasted about 45 minutes whereas the second focus group was closer to 75 minutes. We initially attributed this difference in time to having three participants in the second focus group, but as we listened to the audio recordings, it became clear that participants in the second group demonstrated a greater sense of personal awareness and confidence as gay men and as students more generally.

Following transcription, we engaged in inductive, emergent coding (Kelle, 2007) to preserve the students' experiences and to think through how those experiences shape the ways we approach researching and writing about LGBTQ students and assessment. Three key codes emerged as we read through the transcripts: affective markers (e.g., teacher/classmate behaviors that suggested LGBTQ topics were welcomed); curriculum markers (e.g., presence/absence of LGBTQ topics in syllabi or assignment directions); and identity markers (e.g., students negotiating "coming out" in college or high school contexts; demographics). These minor codes led to our major code that writing assessment for LGBTQ students is emotionally risky. In the following section, we explore our participants' experiences through the lenses of ontology, epistemology, and axiology because these terms represent key areas of "risk" for writers and provide an analytic frame that foregrounds LGBTQ bodies and lived experiences as a category of validity evidence in writing assessments.

LGBTQ ASSESSMENT IS EMOTIONALLY RISKY

Despite seemingly radical changes in the political climate of the United States between 2000 and 2016, including current marriage equality options for gay and lesbian couples, participants in the focus groups frequently shared stories from high school about negotiating their sexuality in a context of restrictive expectations from family members, religious institutions, and various communities they were part of:

> My knowledge of LGBTQ was literally bound to health class and homosexuality that was all that was talked about. That was my only knowledge. I don't even think we covered transgender. The only thing I remember is the section in the health book was homosexuality. By section I mean the definition and then the next paragraph was something else. (Michael)

Stories like Michael's did not necessarily surprise us, but after a somewhat banner year in terms of LGBTQ equality and acceptance (e.g., marriage equality, increased visibility for trans* people like Laverne Cox and Caitlyn Jenner), it was important to remember that these sorts of political and social changes happen slowly. In terms of writing assessment, they also reminded us how personal such work can be and *should* be if we want useful, student-centered assessment data.

Our participants also shared stories of how they navigated their college writing experiences with the major difference being that many came out during their college career. Coming out to friends, family, and classmates shaped their classroom, writing, and assessment experiences. During high school, participants were mostly closeted and not involved with LGBTQ communities, and they often reflected on the paucity of informed, responsible information when it came to LGBTQ people. For example, several noted that their middle or high school health classes had been primarily "clinical" and used words like *homosexuality* and *heterosexuality*, while the focus had been on abstinence. Living in an atmosphere of near total silence around sexuality, we might ask, how could these students possibly write about such issues? This reminded us that for many LGBTQ students, college is the first time they have had the opportunity to practice writing about their sexuality or identities in full and complex ways (Alexander, 2008; Gonçalves, 2005; Malinowitz, 1995), so unlike their peers, who have perhaps thought about their ethnicity, race, or gender in any number of ways, LGBTQ students may struggle to engage such topics or to do so in "academic discourse." In part, this is Alexander's (2008) point that all of our students need more experiences exploring sexual literacy, that such awareness-in/through-writing should not be only the work of queer youth because all people

benefit from greater awareness of sexuality and gender issues. We also need to discover what impact, if any, this disconnect between high school and college is having for LGBTQ students. At the very least, this re-thinking about the connection between high school and college may challenge some of the current work being done on writing transfer, as the genres, experiences, and topics reflected in transfer scholarship may not work for LGBTQ students (Alexander & Gross, 2016). We see writing assessment taking a leadership role in helping us to better understand how ontology and epistemology are inextricably linked for LGBTQ students—how their varied and shifting experiences with being shape their ways of knowing and communicating that knowledge.

At the university level, our participants had to negotiate how and when to come out to classmates, teachers, and friends/family alongside students' typical concerns about writing (e.g., what does the teacher want? what does the rubric say? how do I phrase this?). For LGBTQ students, choosing to write about their personal experiences or an LGBTQ issue for a graded assignment becomes both a grade-based choice and a political choice as well as one filtered through multiple issues around personal growth and development. Aside from just wondering what the teacher wants or the writing context demands (e.g., organization, citation style, length, or type of sources), student writers may also need to consider the political leanings of their instructor, classmates, and university community. When our participants did elect to write on LGBTQ topics, it was because they felt it was somehow *permissioned*:

> It was in the 1200 English class [Composition II]. It was well
> received. I chose what was most relevant to me at the time:
> coming out. And the other I wrote on LGBTQ issues—wrote
> about coming out because I was coming out—went fairly
> well. Turned it in late because of the emotional issues, but she
> was understanding about that. . . . but it didn't really affect
> the way I wrote about it . . . just because at that point and
> time I was fine with who I was. It didn't make me uncom-
> fortable. She was awesome: my favorite English teacher ever.
> Went to her office hours and she would listen. It was like
> a counseling session/how am I doing on my paper session.
> (Michael)

Ultimately, Michael even noted that his teacher's "comments made me more comfortable with writing." Marcus also told a story of how he wrote two different versions of an assignment before he could discern if it were "safe" to submit the one that outed him. He was enrolled in a face–to–face summer course with a professor he eventually came to describe as "cool":

> In the course "marriage and family relations," we were asked
> to write about our ideal family. I wrote about my idea of a
> family in the —marry my partner/husband. He respond-
> ed with comments in the margins about society "coming
> around" and the teacher echoed the same thing—he thought
> it was cool . . . I actually wrote 2 different papers. I was debat-
> ing this one or this one where I had a pronoun difference for
> the partner. (Marcus)

In addition to adhering to the assignment guidelines, LGBTQ students have to read the political and affective aspects of the teacher and classroom (Cox, 2017). In both of these cases, we see that assessment practices are directly related to composition practices: for one student, the emotional work of articulating a self in text (Banks 2003; Hindeman, 2003) was significantly different from other types of "personal" writing (Newkirk, 2000), and in this case impacted the time it took for him to finish the project and turn it in. Unlike the often innocuous stories of favorite childhood toys, summer vacations, or family tradi-tions that pop up in a number of both test-based and classroom-based narrative assignments for students from kindergarten to college, "coming out" as topic and trope remains one that students in classroom settings have little experience writing, receiving feedback on, and revising. Recognizing the affective impact that such writing has is important. For example, should Marcus' "late paper" lose points? Marcus may have done twice as much work as his peers because the paper he wanted to write and the paper he thought "safer" to write were at odds. Both of those experiences suggest that LGBTQ students may struggle more with certain writing assignments or activities as they attempt to negotiate their own sense of safety in a classroom or assessment setting. How do our current class-room assessment practices consider these sorts of writing complexities, which operate at the intersections of ontology and epistemology?

Of course, we are well aware that not every student is fortunate enough to be in a classroom where they can freely explore topics that are important to them. In fact, it came as no surprise that some classrooms are set up for students not to question either topic or instructor, or to imagine other ways of engaging with pedagogy, as this elementary education major indicated in his story:

> I never really thought about it in undergrad as an elementary
> education major in writing lesson plans—that was the main
> genre for writing . . . the buzzword for lesson plans was global
> awareness. . . . I feel like, looking back, there's this element
> of diversity as multiculturalism that every elementary major
> should strive for. So there was this understanding that you

> need to be inclusive and you need to tailor your curriculum
> and your instruction for different kinds of audiences, but
> there was this unspoken rule that nothing you do in the class-
> room should bring in any kind of discussion of sexuality and
> gender. I didn't really see it as a problem at that point and just
> something I accepted. Now, I would certainly write a lesson
> plan that was inclusive of LGBTQ students. (Matthew)

Matthew's story reminds us how easy it is, even for LGBTQ students writing in their major courses, to be convinced that their lives and experiences are fundamentally extracurricular, so much so that Matthew did not really think to challenge or question the absence of LGBTQ students or texts in the global curriculum he was learning. In such cases, we believe that writing assessment can also demonstrate leadership at the intersections of Writing Studies and queer rhetorics by providing frames to bridge the epistemological and the axiological: How do writing prompts frame what is possible or not for LGBTQ students? How do our writing assessments engage with beliefs, mores, and values that operate in the classroom to keep some topics (bodies, experiences, knowledges) off limits or out of bounds?

These initial stories around teacher feedback point out the criticality of re-membering that LGBTQ students and experiences exist, as well as the need to consider the emotional safety of individual students before we can think about research projects involving writing assessment. Equally important, they fore-ground the complexities among being, knowing, and belief for LGBTQ students. In regards to writing assessment, we believe that the role of writing assessment should be in keeping the lived and embodied experiences of LGBTQ writers as central to assessment designs, validity arguments, and data analysis. While this approach to writing assessment may limit larger, data-driven validity inquiry studies, our approach to writing assessment allows researchers to design local assessments that value student voices. Our participants remind us there is still a level of vulnerability for LGBTQ students in classroom-based writing assessments. Where sexuality can be a hidden or invisible identity marker, re-searchers also need to be attuned to the ways students are electing to reveal their sexuality. Sometimes, this "reveal" may be in topic selection, as one of our partic-ipants noted; he chose to write about LGBTQ issues in a research-based paper. Matthew noted leaving LGBTQ issues out of his lesson plan for an education class. Had he done so, at least in his mind, that would have been tantamount to outing himself to his teacher and peers.

Similarly, our participants wanted to remind teachers that "if there [are] per-sonal details in there or personal events regardless of what they are you should go

a little easier on that not in terms of the structure of the raw essay, but the content." Our participants backtracked a bit to say that teachers should not go easier on the grading, but "I guess what I am trying to say is, don't invalidate what they [students] are putting in the paper" (Michael). Similarly, Marcus noted an ongoing concern for LGBTQ students: "don't put your personal opinion into how you are grading or effect your grading." Part of what Michael and Marcus are both getting at, it seems to us, is a "felt sense" (Perl, 2004) that writing teachers may not be prepared to engage topics in LGBTQ students' papers. A concern for the grade cuts both ways: students did not want to be "graded down" from a homophobic teacher, but they also did not want a teacher to "feel sorry" for them because their story may involve pain or disappointment. Responding to writing that is layered with affective experiences remains a struggle for writing teachers; one significant shift in writing assessment could be to include more work from queer affect studies which should work to include voices and experiences from LGBTQ writers.

LGBTQ DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORIES
AS MARKING THE UNKNOWN

While the most recent *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (2014) marks the assessment community's recognition of LGBTQ participants in our work, writing researchers have not yet demonstrated the impact of difference markers on LGBTQ student writing; likewise, researchers rarely approach demographic markers as fundamentally intersectional (Crenshaw, 1989; McCall 2005; Thompson, 2002), each individual research participant representing more than one demographic category.

Of course, paying attention to race, gender, socioeconomic status, and other "acceptable" census/demographic categories in assessment seems obvious/normal, in part because data on these markers are actively and aggressively collected by many institutions. In contrast, finding data related to sexuality often requires teachers and programs (1) to make it a priority by naming sexuality and calling attention to it; (2) to collect new assessment data that includes sexuality; and (3) to provide a safe or welcoming environment in which students can identify their sexualities among other demographic markers. We should also remember that categories of sexuality may not be as fixed as other demographic markers. For example, it is not uncommon for some young people to identify as "bisexual" in their adolescent years and then as either gay or lesbian once they enter college (Savin-Williams, 2006). Similarly, some trans* people may initially identifying as gay or lesbian in their youth because they think those categories will be easier

for their parents and friends to understand, or because they do not yet understand themselves as trans* persons. At the same time, while trans* is usually included when we discuss sexuality, not all trans* people understand "trans" as demarking a sexual orientation: a female–to–male (FTM) trans* person may experience sexual attraction to other men, to women, or to both; his/their embodiment as male does not necessarily dictate his/their sexual orientation.[1]

With this complexity of categories in mind, one of our questions to our focus group participants was, "What would/could/should the 'categories' look like?" Like Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty (Chapter 8, this collection), we too want our assessment data to drive institutional change and have been considering the ways the writing center can challenge demographic data collections. Thus, using the writing center as an example of a space that might be interested in collecting such demographic data, we asked them how they would structure such a question on a form or as part of registering for an appointment on the website. Michael wondered, "well, what do they personally identify as?" and Steven asked, "could they specify their own?" Other ideas participants shared included, "Do you identify as LGBTQ? Please specify." Our conversations took an interesting turn when we started to think about the ACT/SAT/GRE and other standardized assessments that students take during their educational career. How would they have reacted to seeing questions about sexuality? What would their response be if the writing prompt had something to do with sexuality or LGBTQ issues? As an example, during our focus group, we offered, "Make an argument for or against gender neutral bathrooms in schools." After we moved beyond the shock and awe of such a possibility, one of our participants reflected,

> At that time in my life I don't think I could've actually formed
> an answer. I don't think I would've known enough about it or
> had enough personal experience with it. . . . now that I know
> more I can write more; give it to me. (Michael)

We had two motives for asking our participants to think about this question. First, we wanted to begin to think about how to collect this demographic data on sexuality in our local writing center. Second, we wondered if we could get our students to think outside their classroom experiences to consider larger, programmatic assessment experiences. Participants offered useful insight and complexity to our decision to collect LGBTQ data in the writing center. In trying to help us form demographic questions, they also demonstrated how hard it was

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1   It is important to note, as well, that while some trans* people identify with traditionally gendered pronouns, others prefer the plural-singular pronoun series *they, their, them* because their experiences of gender do not fit neatly into the either/or, male/female binary.

for them to imagine such questions. We had approached the idea of collecting demographic data on LGBTQ students as an obvious move for our program and one that would show our support for these students, but our focus group responses reminded us that there remain good reasons why students would be hesitant to identify themselves officially through such forms. We have begun to wonder when it is most responsible to collect data on sexuality? Is a generic registration form a "safe" space for students to disclose their sexuality? In what ways might age remain a factor in these disclosures? Besides the intellectual work needed to think through what categories to use and the data collection processes, at what point do students have access to the knowledge they need to be able to engage in LGBTQ research prompts/data collection categories?

We acknowledge, of course, that asking these questions and/or challenging the data sets available for large-scale assessments (e.g., NSSE, FSSE) is complicated and comes with some degree of risk. Based on our initial focus groups discussed above, for example, we decided to begin collecting demographic data related to sexuality and gender identity, in addition to data already collected around race/ethnicity, year in school, etc. Doing so, however, triggered an avalanche of resistance at our institution that was somewhat unexpected. While the campus LGBTQ Resource Office administrator and students were pleased to see the questions about sexuality and gender identity, there was some concern expressed by our campus EEOC office that collecting this data might harm students or cause writing consultants to treat students differently based on disclosures on their registration forms. After an investigation by EEOC, we were contacted by one of the university attorneys, who in very firm language "suggested" we cease to collect such data. The Registrar is the only office on campus, we were told, allowed to collect demographic data and we should ask them for this data. Of course, no office on campus that we know of collects data on sexuality or gender identity (as opposed to anatomical sex). While we have worked this out by having the campus Institutional Review Board approve our data collection as research, multiple meetings and emails with EEOC, university attorneys, and the Provost represent an important set of moments where we were actively discouraged from asking these questions because of perceived risk by the university. At one point, when Will suggested it was perhaps a homophobic response for the university attorney to dismiss the need to know this demographic data for assessment purposes, he was told that no other program on campus asks about students' sexuality; they serve all students and have "no problems." Will pointed out that just because students do not complain, that does not mean that there are no problems, as our initial focus groups demonstrated. In the absence of assessment data, how do those programs *know* that they are meeting the needs of LGBTQ students? The silence that followed was deafening.

Of course, even if local assessment practices attempt to render LGBTQ students visible through demographic data that is reported on in aggregate form, it is nearly impossible to validate that data against other assessments. If one's university does not collect similar data, for example, local assessments that are responsible to LGBTQ students cannot be compared to other data from different programs; this failure to compare data renders localized assessments silent in larger conversations about important markers like persistence and retention. Likewise, while the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) both collect data on sexuality from participants, that data is not necessarily selected for inclusion in local reports to universities. At our university, for example, Institutional Planning, Assessment, and Research (IPAR) carefully selected out sexuality, as well as granular race/ethnicity categories, when it collected and shared NSSE and BCSSE data for our campus. Unfortunately, at present, NSSE and BCSSE do not request information concerning gender identity but only binary anatomical sex (M/F).

DOING LGBTQ ASSESSMENT

In the 1990s, when he first began to research the literacies and lives of LGBTQ people, Will ran into roadblocks at every turn: resistance from colleagues, anxiety from student participants, and everything from mild reluctance to outright hostility from campus Institutional Review Boards. His experience is not novel, of course, and the literature of our field is filled with similar stories and experiences for LGBTQ researchers. It is no wonder that it has taken so long to begin to engage LGBTQ students throughout research in Writing Studies. In this section, we would like to turn our attention to two similar but somewhat separate sets of conclusions/reflections on our initial foray into this work: 1) what might be initial best practices for writing assessment scholars to consider as they begin to include LGBTQ students and writing in their research? and 2) how might queer theory impact writing assessment theory and generate new avenues for inquiry?

The easiest way to keep LGBTQ people and their experiences at the margins of our field is not to do the research because such research may prove difficult. At this point, failing to attend to LGBTQ writers as part of basic demographic research is inexcusable and demonstrates an active, homophobic resistance on the part of researchers, writing program administrators, writing center directors, and other Writing Studies scholars engaged in research involving human participants. To that end, we offer the following points of consideration.

Gender and sexuality represent vexing ontological categories for writing assessment. Paying attention to LGBTQ bodies and experiences in writing assessment will mean changing business as usual in writing programs and centers.

What role, if any, do LGBTQ people and issues play in your writing program? Are LGBTQ people and concerns central to placement practices (e.g., essay prompts)? Are LGBTQ people and texts part of shared textbooks (Marinara et al., 2009)? What, if any, training/support do instructors receive for developing LGBTQ-friendly topics or course projects—for responding to drafts by LGBTQ writers/on LGBTQ topics? The one thing that was abundantly clear from our focus group participants was that they noticed if LGBTQ texts, people, stories, anecdotes, experiences, and data were part of class discussions, syllabi, and other curricular materials. The presence and absence of those materials gave them clues about whether or not they could write about LGBTQ topics or could be open about themselves to the teachers. Paying attention to the ways that we demonstrate inclusivity is an important first step. Paying attention to LGBTQ students' progress and learning offers teachers and students critical spaces for confronting heteronormative assumptions about language and ideas in the world in ways similar to the ways that paying attention to students' whiteness helps form anti-racist assessment projects (Inoue, 2012).

Assessment data should be gathered in ways that are attentive to participant vulnerability.

Paying attention to pedagogy and program design also means paying attention to the data we collect. WPAs typically collect syllabi from faculty and graduate teaching assistants; adding "LGBTQ content" to the elements that WPAs notice as absent or present offers key assessment data at the program level that does not require students to feel vulnerable. One focus group participant, enrolled in a sociology class on "Marriage and Family," noted that there was no mention in the syllabus of LGBTQ families or relationships, which let him know from day one that the course might not be a "safe" space to discuss such topics. That student recognized that such a course *should* have LGBTQ families and family structures as a topic; this absence suggested, at the very least, a tacit hostility toward LGBTQ people that worked to keep him silent on the topic. While students may feel powerless to intervene, colleagues or program administrators can offer productive feedback on such documents. Likewise, by simply noting in annual program reports that "X% of composition syllabi included no LGBTQ texts or topics," WPAs may find that a conversation emerges among teachers about what and how they might include LGBTQ

texts or topics. This sort of work supports LGBTQ students without making them have to do the work of advocating for their own inclusion.

WPAs and WCDs can provide leadership on campus by gather advocating for the collection of aggregate data on LGBTQ students.

Find out if your campus tracks LGBTQ student success and persistence. Ask if sexual orientation is part of standard demographic data collection. Where this is not the case, WPAs/WCDs and other Writing Studies scholars can begin to advocate for such data to be collected. We might partner with campus LGBTQ support offices, where they exist, to advocate for better data tracking and a greater concern for student success. These relationships might provide WPAs and writing scholars with valuable insights from LGBTQ students about what they experience in writing classes that could lead to better professional development for teachers and richer writing assessments/research projects. Writing Centers might also lead this sort of work, as we are doing at our university, by offering "Safe Zone" training to writing consultants and by starting to track LGBTQ demographic data in our usage reports.

In order for LGBTQ experiences to become a form of validity and fairness evidence, researchers must collect these stories from students and pay attention to their local context.

Writing assessment researchers should listen more to students generally, but certainly we need to gather more stories from LGBTQ students in order to understand how and when LGBTQ students begin to/are allowed to write about such topics or when their writings around LGBTQ topics become part of their academic assessments. During National Day on Writing 2015, for example, a trans* student participated in a "Writing for Change" activity in our writing center. He was not sure what to write about; his thinking was constrained by what was "appropriate" given what he was currently learning in his composition course. After a while, he asked, "If I wanted to tell someone on campus about trans* safety issues, who would I write?" From there, he went on to write four letters to key figures on campus advocating for trans* safety issues in residential housing. When we asked if he needed any help, he said quite happily, "Nah, I'm good. I wish we could write about this sort of stuff in comp class—I'd never shut up!" And away he went, tapping for over an hour on the keyboard. Stories like these may lend insights into how better to address the previous suggestions in much the same ways as our focus groups have helped us to think through how to collect LGBTQ demographic data in the writing center. While we can pay more attention to LGBTQ issues in writing assessment as researchers and program directors, we need to hear from more students to help us identify the most

pressing issues. LGBTQ voices should have a constant presence in discussions around the assessment of students and their writing. Until we listen to LGBTQ students and understand their experiences as writers in classroom and other assessment settings, we will not know whether or how our assessment practices are impacting them as writers/students.

CONCLUSION

We believe our queer turn in assessment has provided the necessary space to push forward a socially just writing assessment agenda that privileges the intersections between queer rhetorics and writing assessment. When we consider three key concerns in writing assessment—fairness, validity, and reliability—a queer turn for writing assessment not only engages LGBTQ students as composers, but also forces writing assessment researchers and writing program administrators of various kinds to consider how they are engaging LGBTQ issues in both local and large-scale assessment practices—and if not, to ask why they are making this conscious and purposeful omission. As we look toward designing fairness arguments alongside our validity arguments (Kane, 2010), we can attend to fairness by designing writing tasks and prompts that are accessible for all students and promote a greater opportunity to learn in higher education. For example, based on the stories our students shared in the focus group, we can hypothesize that the affective aspects of assessment might impact LGBTQ students more than others because of heightened levels of vulnerability. LGBTQ students report experiencing a more negative classroom climate (Brown, Clarke, Gortmaker, & Robinson-Keilig, 2004) than their straight peers, and we cannot help but wonder how these negative spaces impact their classroom assessments, which may or may not appear in program assessments.

When we consider the affective context and aspect of writing, especially vulnerability, we need to reexamine our constructs so that students' cognitive and social patterns are accounted for (Mislevy, 2016). Different construct models account for various skills, traits, and behaviors, and as we focus on our validity arguments we need to define the construct in a way that elicits valuable writing from all students. We should remain mindful of Mislevy's (2016) justification to include the sociocognitive perspective in our validity arguments because "understanding the kinds of things people need to do in certain kinds of situations not only helps us define constructs, but it helps us determine forms of tasks we can use to obtain evidence, and what they can tell us and what they cannot about the capabilities we are interested in" (p. 270). From our positions in the writing center, we see the influence of negative classroom spaces as student writers struggle to negotiate their identities and writing concerns while working with

writing consultants. If we want students to bring their whole selves to the classroom—and more important, to have access to their whole selves as part of their invention, composition, revision, and publishing process—then we need to consider the whole self in our assessments. Our construct model should include the affective aspect of education and the embodied, lived experiences of students.

Finally, in terms of reliability, we believe a queer turn in assessment works to ensure that writing tasks and their evaluations are available across the curriculum so that students can increase their abilities, in a reliable fashion, beyond the course at hand. LGBTQ students should not have to guess at what assignments or what courses allow for LGBTQ topics, but instead feel emotionally (and physically) safe to write on any topic that they see fit for the assignment. As we have mentioned throughout this chapter, WPAs and WCDs can provide faculty guidance on how to create an inclusive curriculum on local campuses. Ultimately, we argue that the lived experiences of LGBTQ students should not be ignored in our assessments just because the data may be hard to collect or the technology may not seem customizable enough (Straumsheim, 2016). Until we deliberately and systematically consider sexuality and gender together as central components of our assessment designs, just as we do in our other research contexts, we will continue to reproduce the normative practices that constrain current data collection methods and limit our ability to see how the intersectionality of identity both impacts and is impacted by our writing assessments.

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THE BRAID OF WRITING ASSESSMENT, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY: EIGHTEEN ASSERTIONS ON WRITING ASSESSMENT WITH COMMENTARY

Proposed by the following writing assessment researchers: William P. Banks, Michael Sterling Burns, Nicole I. Caswell, Randall Cream, Timothy R. Dougherty, Norbert Elliot, Mathew Gomes, J. W. Hammond, Keith L. Harms, Asao B. Inoue, Josh Lederman, Sean Molloy, Casie Moreland, Karen S. Nulton, Irvin Peckham, Mya Poe, Kelly J. Sassi, Christie Toth, and Nicole Warwick.

The present volume celebrates an important milestone in the history of Writing Studies: a unified call to action. In the field of writing assessment, the time has come to end the disciplinary isolation of writing assessment. In ending the isolation of writing assessment as mere technique and bureaucratic action, we end the isolation that has denied student agency over their educative processes in written language development.

In what has become a nightmare of unequal power relations, standing with our students is restorative. To secure this restoration and place students at the center of teaching and assessing writing, we turn to a new conception of writing assessment—a conceptualization that advances opportunity for every student.

As we noted in the introduction, authors for *Writing Assessment, Social Justice, and the Advancement of Opportunity* were invited to deliberate on a single question regarding the relationship of writing assessment to opportunity: *How can we ensure that writing assessment leads to the advancement of opportunity?*

In their answers, our colleagues addressed this question in terms of theorization, research methods, policy implications, and future directions for research.

What becomes clear in their contributions is that a body of knowledge now exists connecting the achievement of social justice through opportunities created by writing assessment. Concepts, activities, and beliefs include the following:

- Historical analysis of purportedly meritocratic systems associated with student advancement can be used to reveal structures of power that result in both group and individual disenfranchisement.
- Theory-building can exist to locate the achievement of justice and the advancement of opportunity at the conceptual center of writing instruction and writing assessment.
- Wide ranges of research methods can be used to ensure that unjust systems are identified, displaced, and replaced with opportunities to learn.
- Construct-informed outcomes can be used to displace soulless bureaucratization and foreground authentic student experience.
- Using evidence of fairness, validity, and reliability, classroom research can be justified to stand the center of intellectual inquiry in writing assessment scholarship.
- Rather than a bureaucratic answer to accountability, institutional research can be viewed as a way for colleagues to collaborate in multidisciplinary inquiry intended to create opportunity structures.
- Purchased and locally developed assessments can both be held to the same principled methods under which justice and opportunity are advanced.
- Policy can be developed with the deliberate and articulated aim of advancing justice and securing the achievement of individual opportunity.
- Rather than continue present efforts in the justification of summative testing, next generation programs of research can be imagined with the explicit intention of matching the educational experience to the individual student through formative assessment.

Based on our colleagues' responses, we derived 18 assertions for the future of socially just writing assessment. The assertions include directives on history, theory, methodology, outcomes, classroom and writing center research, institutional research, purchased tests, policies, and next generation research. We advance these assertions for the consideration of those involved in the development of written language practices: advisory boards, administration, teachers, parents, professional organizations, students, and the public. Each assertion is based on a single principle: Justice and opportunity are foundational requirements of writing assessment.

EIGHTEEN ASSERTIONS ON WRITING ASSESSMENT

ON HISTORY

1. **Histories of writing assessment are invaluable in the analysis of practices viewed as deterministically objective; therefore, these histories have**

profound impact on contemporary methods, policies, and consequences.

Writing assessment is embedded in material practice, and so are principles used to conduct assessment. With attention to contextualization, histories of writing assessment bring to light empirical practices that are themselves value laden and reveal the need for socially just educative processes.

2. **Social justice historiography reveals normative fixations and yields reflexive engagement.**

   Historical analysis of educational communities and their assessment aims allow us to examine opportunities and inequalities. Defined as analytic methods dedicated to the examination of valued laden structures, social justice historiography extends critical reflection on the presence, assumptions, and characteristics of writing assessment practices.

On Theory

3. **Theories of writing assessment are invaluable in the formation of ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives that have profound impact on method, policy, and consequences.**

   Writing assessment remains under-theorized and, as such, often follows theories that may not align with humanistic values or human rights. Writing assessment theories are needed that advance dual aims of justice and opportunity.

4. **New theories of writing assessment are needed that hold the achievement of justice and the advancement of opportunity as equal aims of assessment.**

   These new theories will be useful as they help communities explore evidential categories; provide overarching referential frames; offer systems orientations; provide unifying functions; account for stakeholder perspectives; offer value for a range of assessment contexts; and hold assessment users to actionable ethical principles.

On Methodology

5. **Analytic techniques are best understood and used when they are linked to clearly articulated, ethical assessment questions.**

   Aligning research techniques to aims allows for the ethical and appropriate selection of methodologies—including, but not limited to, archival re-

search, case studies, classical test theory, focus groups, ethnography, inter-
views, item response theory, historiography, narrative analysis, and surveys.
—needed to investigate the intricacies involved in the socially just assess-
ment of writing.

6. **Writing assessment researchers should be able to demonstrate proficiency
   in a range of methods.**

   While it is foolish to claim that writing assessment practitioners must have
   proficiency in quantitative and qualitative techniques as prerequisite to re-
   search engagement, it is equally foolish to believe that arguments can be made
   to administrators and policymakers without a basic knowledge of a range of
   methods and techniques. Important for the advancement of opportunity are
   methodologies that invite decolonial, anti-racist, feminist, and queer perspec-
   tives. Additionally, new research developments in corpus analytics, educa-
   tional measurement, and psychometric theory offer important potential for
   answering research queries regarding social justice and writing assessment.

On Outcomes

7. **To advance justice and opportunity, the articulation of writing outcomes
   should be based on robust writing construct models that are informed by
   current sociocognitive and sociocultural research.**

   Cognitive, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and neurological domains of writ-
   ing should be used to articulate construct models before outcomes are de-
   veloped. With such models, the sociocognitive and sociocultural variables
   of writing will be understood as related to an expansive understanding con-
   struct representation of writing. Such an approach that ensures that we do
   not return to overly contracted views of writing that have resulted in unjust
   outcomes for too many students.

8. **Perspectives drawn from a variety of educational community members
   are required to develop writing outcomes.**

   Community involvement should elicit inclusive outcomes that prevent
   emergence of a dominant norm against which deficits are registered. The
   development of inclusive outcomes serves as a way to disrupt structural
   violence and foster socially just writing assessment practices that advance
   opportunity for all.

On Classroom and Writing Center Research

9. **Direct work with students is the first step in writing assessment.**

    With direct observation of student work and student participation, we reach a deeper understanding of writing ability, including the ways that students' experiences shape their relation to writing. There is great value in context specific research undertaken in order to generate insight that benefits both teachers and students.

10. **Classroom research is best accompanied by inferences that allow others to apply findings across settings.**

    A variety of reporting techniques—including institutional profile, sampling plan design, student characteristics, curricular details, methods and procedures, and study limits—allows writing case studies to have broad implications. Rejecting value dualism, writing assessment practitioners should develop techniques to identify resonances between case study and large-scale research. By valuing classroom research on writing assessment, we open additional avenues to the identification and creation of opportunity structures.

On Institutional Research

11. **When institutional research on student writing is conducted, collection of information related to age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic identity, race, veteran status, and sexuality should be justified with an understanding of current ethical standards and institutional contexts for the gathering and securing of such information.**

    In collecting information on age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic identity, race, veteran status, and sexuality, we should seek Internal Review Board approval in order to avoid aporetic risk associated with flagging groups and individuals. While sub-group disaggregation is an important part of the justification of score use, the collection of such information should never become the default method of information gathering. Additionally, we challenge any superficial frameworks that avoid sustained conversations about the relationship between identity categories and hierarchical social structures. The collection and reporting of demographic data always has implications for social justice.

12. **Because all inferences about student academic ability can have profound consequences for the purposes of social justice, distinctions between high stakes and low stakes should not be accompanied by different standards for inferences about writing ability.**

    Too often the distinction between high-stakes and low-stakes assessment inadvertently leads to the assumption that inferior measurement is acceptable for low-stakes assessments. All forms of writing assessment must maintain equal integrity, and inferences drawn about student ability must be based on evidence derived from high quality assessments.

On Purchased Assessments

13. **Purchased assessments—those assessments developed by testing companies—hold the potential to provide valuable information about students, but their use should never constrain the interrogation of social justice queries in local contexts.**

    Assessment standardization can be a way to obtain fair, valid, and reliable evidence of student ability. As is the case with all writing assessment, benefits and costs of selecting a purchased product for an identified aim must be clearly identified in advance of assessment use, align with local goals, and allow for the transparent reporting of data from purchased test results.

14. **Unless the vendor provides evidence of fairness, validity, and reliability, purchased assessments should not be used to make decisions for or draw inferences about students.**

    Whether based on classical test theory or item response theory models, reporting requirements must be presented by the assessment developer before purchased tests are used; as well, assessments must not be used, without validation, for purposes other than that for which they have been developed. At a minimum, developers must provide information including descriptive and inferential evidence regarding impact on student sub-groups, a defined construct model, and topic and reader reliability correlations.

On Policies

15. **Institutional policies regarding writing assessment are best developed from clear pedagogical values and include details about their aims, design, proposed uses, and potential consequences.**

    Institutional policies must specify forcefully and precisely the principles of

action for all forms of writing assessment used at a specific institutional site. These principles must include communication of the evidence identified in Assertions 13 and 14 before assessment use. Institutional assessment policy must include resources dedicated to faculty development in assessment theory, methods, and uses, adhere to current standards for test taker rights and responsibilities, and assure cultural responsivity associated with justice and opportunity.

16. **Organizational policies are best developed using professional standards and empirical evidence.**

Both professional consensus and peer-reviewed empirical information are needed to create informed policies that can advance justice and opportunity in powerful and fluid ways. Policy statements should also be understood as historically situated documents that may not include, at the time they are drafted, the insights of shifting demographic groups. To that end, professional organizations should attend to the regular revision of professional standards to create space for others to join the discussion.

On Next Generation Research

17. **Efforts should be made to eliminate high-stakes tests of writing for purely summative purposes.**

Because of the complexities of the writing construct, only instructors observing students and collecting information about their abilities are in a position to make summative judgments on student work. Once authority is returned to classroom instructors, the reductive equation between assessment and testing may be eliminated and attention will be given to the value of formative evaluation informed by the experiences of diverse student populations. Without the meaningful involvement of teachers in writing assessment, the identification of opportunity structures will be ignored.

18. **Efforts should be made to strengthen writing assessment for formative purposes in order to develop innovative approaches to assessment informed by social justice perspectives.**

As high quality formative assessments are developed and integrated into instructional practices, new programs of research will begin in which actionable information related to justice is provided to students. This process will, in turn, support writing improvement across the entire educational spectrum. Programmatic in nature, new research programs will be devel-

oped to address principles of justice required to advance opportunity in an increasingly diverse U.S. educational environment.

COMMENTARY ON THE EIGHTEEN ASSERTIONS

In a closing gesture, our colleagues read *Writing Assessment, Social Justice, and the Advancement of Opportunity* in its entirety and commented on how the 18 assertions are woven throughout their own work in relation to the work of the other contributors. Reflections by Mya, Asao, and Norbert are provided in italics after each commentary. These reflections are accompanied by cross-references to the eighteen assertions.

Assessing Social Justice Assessment

J. W. Hammond

Open a social justice tome by John Rawls (1999) or Iris Marion Young (2011), and you will find the words "test," "assessment," and "evaluation" scattered throughout. Fundamentally, social justice theories are theories of assessment. Theories of social justice advance *justice constructs*, and they specify procedures for assessing past, present, or future conditions in terms of those constructs. While this collection showcases several social justice-oriented theories, exchanges between social justice and writing assessment remain largely unidirectional, with justice-oriented theories informing writing assessment theory, history, and methodology. What can writing assessment say about—or to—social justice?

Justice constructs and logics require regular interrogation and refinement. Writing assessment history demonstrates this need: The many forms of colonialist violence have historically been authorized under the banner of "social justice" (Chapter 3). Through the classroom, justice abstractions assume material reality and force—their subtle assumptions concretized and limitations made legible. Writing assessment scholarship is well-poised to complicate these assumptions and move us beyond these limitations. Consider: Rawls' justice theory—which partly informs my work (Chapter 1)—assumes the existence of "natural assets and abilities" to be distributed, such as "intelligence, strength, and the like" (as cited in Poe & Inoue, 2016, p. 120). By showing "there is no IQ before IQ tests" (Inoue, 2015, p. 26), writing assessment scholarship problematizes the idea that "intelligence" is a natural asset/ability, enabling more critical and productive engagement with Rawls. To take the full measure of injustice, both branches of assessment—writing assessment and social justice—must more reciprocally and recursively redefine each other.

In terms of agency, social justice work entails methodological (re)appraisal and (re)calibration on (at least) two levels: the assumptions and impacts of our assessment methods, and our methods for researching and reporting those assumptions and impacts. I am heartened by the insistence throughout this collection that our methods must reflect our commitments to justice. This insistence extends to validation work: Collection contributors (re)define validity and validation relative to social justice aims (Chapter 4, Chapter 7, and Chapter 11)—an important methodological predicate to collecting and interpreting validity evidence.

Moving forward, we will need to continue interrogating where and how our research methods comport with, or depart from, our social justice commitments. This work is especially important where our most promising social justice methodologies, such as disparate impact analysis, are concerned. Reliant on the collection and comparison of subgroup data, disparate impact analysis invites complementary investigation of how relevant subgroup classifications are defined and made (and by whom), as well as careful consideration of how these classifications intersectionally overlap and interanimate (Chapter 11; Poe & Cogan, 2016, §4.0).

While this volume discusses policies and standards (hereafter, "policies") intended to coordinate disciplinary/professional communities (e.g., the 2014 *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* authored by the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and National Council on Measurement in Education), its most striking engagements are with policies implemented at classroom, program, and institution levels. For instance, collection contributors make clear that placement policies are vitally important sites of social justice inquiry (Chapter 4 and Chapter 6). This collection reminds us that policies are developed and enacted at multiple levels; even well-known, large-scale policy documents take on different meanings and effects when introduced into different education ecologies. Our social justice policy work, therefore, must critically engage with questions of policy interpretation, adoption, adaptation, or rejection by particular institutional actors.

Policies regarding information access also warrant sustained attention. Casie Moreland (Chapter 5) suggests transparency is a justice issue; similarly, it is worth critically considering whether and how our scholarship on writing assessment—even when justice-oriented—is inaccessible to stakeholders unable to reach beyond the paywalls cordoning off our writings. Open-access publishing (e.g., WAC Clearinghouse; *Journal of Writing Assessment*) provides one possibility among many for publicizing our work, but the question remains worth asking: Where our organizations and journals are concerned, what policies toward access do we embrace, and how do these policies affect who is able to engage with and respond to our work?

In terms of future research weaving writing assessment, social justice, and advancement of opportunity, Mya Poe and Asao B. Inoue (2016) observe that, "Many of the issues that create unfairness and unequal opportunities are not completely writing assessment issues. . . . If writing assessment as social justice is to be a reality, it must be more than a project about how to judge students' writing, more than just about *our* classrooms and programs" (p. 125, emphasis in original). Maintaining the spirit of this claim, we might instead say that, to date, we have defined "writing assessment issues" too narrowly: Social justice assessment work requires expanding the boundaries of what we consider assessment ecologies and what we count as writing assessment issues.

Boundary resetting of this kind is already underway in this collection, with chapters recommending that our social justice assessment work encompass both classroom and institution level efforts (Chapter 8), and articulating classroom or program level (in)justice to broader social ecologies and histories (Chapter 3 and Chapter 5). The future of writing assessment research should continue in this direction: by extending greater focus to how writing is assessed outside of formal education spaces; by examining how extra-educational policies affect, and are affected by, the assessment of writing in formal education spaces; and by directing attention to how social subgroups, language use, education, and writing are represented in popular and political cultures. All are writing assessment issues: Our assessments inform, and are informed by, the broader ecologies in which they emerge.

> *In asking "What can writing assessment say about—or to—social justice?" Hammond shifts the focus from applying social justice theory to writing assessment to using writing assessment to enrich social justice theory. His challenge reminds us that justice itself is in need of repeated re-interrogation and that through next-generation research the construct of justice itself might be expanded. Moving to methodological considerations in expanding justice and writing assessment, Hammond points to consequence and transformation—what impacts are our assessment having and how can we resist reductionism in reporting our findings? To answer those questions through next generation research, Hammonds encourages us to look beyond academic contexts in which writing assessment occurs to public spaces where evaluation is taken up. More importantly, he encourages us to look at the connection between public and academic spaces. As he states, the future of writing assessment should include "examining how extra-educational policies affect, and are affected by, the assessment of writing in*

formal education spaces; and by directing attention to how social subgroups, language use, education, and writing are represented in popular and political cultures."

Assertions drawn from Hammond's contribution:

- ***History: Assertion 1**. Histories of writing assessment are invaluable in the analysis of practices viewed as deterministically objective; therefore, these histories have profound impact on contemporary methods, policies, and consequences.*
- ***Theory: Assertion 4**. New theories of writing assessment are needed that hold the achievement of justice and the advancement of opportunity as equal aims of assessment.*
- ***Methodology: Assertion 5.** Analytic techniques are best understood and used when they are linked to clearly articulated, ethical assessment questions.*
- ***Next generation research**: Assertion 18. Efforts should be made to strengthen writing assessment for formative purposes in order to develop innovative approaches to assessment informed by social justice perspectives.*

RESISTING MYOPIA

Sean Molloy

I find myself often tempted to avert my eyes from the complex realities, painful choices, and daunting struggles that constrain the lives of many of my students in this deeply unjust world. I also resist examining my own interests, motives and biases—as well as those of the well-meaning but often unjust systems in which I work. Myopia is always more comforting and convenient. It makes me more collegial and less angry; it urges me to mind my own business; it might help me get tenure or promotion.

But one of the reasons that I deeply admire the founders of the SEEK desegregation and social justice program at City College in the 1960s is that they had the commitment, courage, and clarity to openly and directly challenge and empower themselves, their colleagues and their systems to resist myopic misconceptions about students, teachers, their college systems, and the unjust world all around them. By extension, what excites me most about this collection is how the theories, stories, and actual practices we share here combine to collectively

challenge and empower us all to resist our myopias by consciously centering our thinking, advocacy, practices, and research on the complex and robust goal of social justice. Among the many useful theories here for me, Kelly J. Sassi (Chapter 10) synthesizes the ideas of several theorists, especially Christine Sleeter (2014), to draw a detailed definition of culturally relevant pedagogy as a framework for social justice teaching. In addition, Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick (Chapter 7) propose a powerful redefinition of the consequential harms caused by assessment systems as forms of "structural violence," which they argue deserve more central consideration within validity models.

The varying methods here enable us to tell stories that shed light from different angles. J. W. Hammond (Chapter 1) and Keith L. Harms (Chapter 3) use century-old articles and reports to trace the failure of sincere and well-meaning American educators to overcome their shared "progressive racism." These myopias led educators to embrace deeply harmful monolingual and error-centric writing pedagogies and systems. Hammond and Harms both argue (as I do in Chapter 2) for the value of historical work within writing assessment research as these past successes and failures uncover the troubled roots of our own, often similar, challenges today. In Chapter 5, Casie Moreland tells a different kind of story as she recounts the challenges she faced as an outside researcher seeking to analyze a large public Arizona community college system's dual enrollment program. Moreland's frustrating and fruitless efforts serve as a reminder that sometimes only inside researchers (especially WPAs and WCDs) may be able to force unjust practices into plain view by assembling and reporting clear evidence. But Sassi also shares her story as an outside researcher/teacher who was invited into Standing Rock Reservation to facilitate the systemic change sought by a group of college teachers who wanted to see their students and their teaching more clearly than COMPASS® test scores would allow.

Academic myopias can be deeply entrenched and persistent. In Christie Toth's thorough study of the development of Directed Self-Placement (DSP) theory and practices at two-year colleges in Chapter 4 (Royer & Gilles, 2003), she observes that DSP has been successfully adopted at several colleges in ways that have improved student success rates and empowered student agency (Chapter 4). Yet, Toth also notes that up to 99% of two-year colleges have failed to implement DSP. In close conversation with both Harms and Toth, Gomes maps and critiques a writing placement system used by a doctoral university to place students into different tracks of FYW courses based on their SAT multiple-choice question test scores—a system which he finds unfairly targets international, multilingual students (Chapter 6).

Again and again, I find that the most powerful tool for dispelling my myopias are conversations with students. I hope that we will find ways to include

students' voices more often in future assessment models, policy debates and research. Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks (Chapter 11) observe that, despite past calls for research that focuses on student voices, "we still have a limited knowledge of how students experience classroom and programmatic assessment." They share the key insights they gained in focus groups with five LGBTQ students at East Carolina University. Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham (Chapter 9) describe their impressive writing program shift at Drexel University toward assessing both labor and students' affect/attitudes, all in order to prioritize "the pleasure of writing" as a core goal. But I am equally impressed that Nulton and Peckham have centered their programmatic assessment on a series of student surveys that they used to create an ongoing conversation among students, teachers and administrators about the effectiveness of writing instruction. In a similar vein, Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty warn that excluding "students as meaningful actors in the assessment of their own learning, . . . unintentionally [creates] mechanisms of passivity and disengagement" (Chapter 8).

I agree with my colleagues that it is essential to engage with and hear students' voices within our teaching and assessment work so that we can see more clearly how to reshape our systems, theories, arguments and practices to better serve students and to advance social justice.

> *Molloy uses the metaphor of myopia—nearsightedness—as a counterpoint to social justice's expansive potential. Although it is often comforting as an educator to divert our gaze from oppression, history provides a lesson in the importance of confronting pain. Through historiography, such as Molloy's research on the origins of the SEEK program, we can "uncover the troubled roots of our own, often similar, challenges today" and resist the myopia that results in harmful error-centric and monolingual practices. On a personal note, Molloy says that one way educators can resist myopia is through student voices; by listening to students, "we can see more clearly how to reshape our systems, theories, arguments and practices to better serve students and to advance social justice."*

> *Assertions drawn from Molloy's contribution:*

> - ***History: Assertion 2.*** *Social justice historiography reveals normative fixations and yields reflexive engagement.*
> - ***Classroom and writing cetner research: Assertion 9.*** *Direct work with students is the first step in writing assessment.*

- ***Next generation research****: Assertion 18. Efforts should be made to strengthen writing assessment for formative purposes in order to develop innovative approaches to assessment informed by social justice perspectives.*

Border Dwelling, Assessment, and Language Policy

Keith L. Harms

During the research for my chapter, I started to wonder about the ubiquity of the "border" metaphor in postcolonial scholarship. Specifically, I wondered about the applicability of the metaphor to those postcolonial spaces like the Philippines whose borders are oceanic, whose hybrid spaces are centralized major cities. I wonder if the ubiquity of the metaphor speaks to a limited imagination about where we look for postcolonial spaces. I do not know that it does, but I do wonder. When I think about this metaphor relative to this collection, I think of Ellen Cushman's (2016) "border dwelling," which appears in Gomes' Chapter 6 as a reminder of the violent colonial history of the land on which our colleges and universities stand. Given the legacy of overseas U.S. colonialism and role of both composition and writing assessment in that legacy, it is appropriate that Gomes further uses this metaphor to raise questions about the assumptions that we bring to assessing the writing of international students, especially with regard to language. Control of language and space are always key to the maintenance of colonial hegemony, and writing assessment functions as a technology for the control of both.

As the contributions by Gomes, Christie Toth (Chapter 4) and Casie Moreland (Chapter 5) illustrate, assessment determines who enters the spaces of our classrooms, under what circumstances, and in what capacity they can participate. Assessment regulates the participation itself by reifying the value systems that delegitimize literacy practices arbitrarily deemed problematic. As Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick remind us in Chapter 7, it also regulates the conditions under which students leave those spaces. Within assessment contexts, language is the semiotic resource that writing assessment restricts in order to control access to these spaces. If border dwelling helps us to value those marginal uses of language that assessment delegitimizes, we have to pay more direct attention to language. In doing so, we have to follow Paul Kei Matsuda's (2014) call to learn more about language difference by looking "both inside and outside the field" of Writing Studies (p. 483). Note the wording: both inside and outside. My understanding of border dwelling is that we situate ourselves in a space that honors both simultaneously.

We should think about border dwelling methodologically, as well. This collection makes praise-worthy use of methods familiar to Writing Studies such as archival research, grounded theory, and critique, among others. Because so many of these chapters are interested in telling the stories of people in specific locations, I read this work as extending Chris Gallagher's (2011) reframing of assessment as relations between actors in locations. Notably, Gomes in Chapter 6, as well as Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty in Chapter 8, look outside our disciplinary boundaries to find less familiar methods for answering questions about the relationship between writing assessment and racial and colonial justice. Looking forward, we should extend our boundaries. If we want to take language seriously, and if we take efforts to decolonize assessment as an important contribution of social justice research, perhaps this new direction might mean looking to methods from language policy, applied linguistics, and sociolinguistics. Many in these fields have already produced research on the problematics of monolingual writing assessments. We would do well to look to them for guidance while maintaining our drive for more socially just assessments. Meanwhile, we should keep in mind Cushman's guidance to "delink" research from a history of imperialism by rethinking "research as storytelling, teaching as relationships and English as Englishes" (2016, para. 4).

In fact, a CCCC language policy that appears in this collection has already done just that. The resolution Students' Right to their Own Language (1974) drew heavily on linguistic research and the current version includes an annotated bibliography added in 2006 guiding us toward much of this research. The annotated bibliography can serve as one useful starting point for us, I think, but it is just that: a starting point. We can also look to the CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing (2009) for guidance. Although the statement relies heavily on Writing Assessment: A Position Statement (2014) when it addresses assessment directly, our community can serve as a place to begin thinking about our positionality as writing assessment researchers and practitioners. Statements such as Students' Right to their Own Language and the Statement on Second Language Writing have the power of a professional organization, a way of sanctioning border dwelling. As is the case with all policies and position statements authored by committees and meant to reach as broad an audience as possible, such statements should serve as starting points.

Whatever my reservations about the universal applicability of the border metaphor to all postcolonial spaces, I nonetheless think that Cushman's border dwelling should serve as a basis for continued attempts to decolonize assessment. By dwelling in the borders, we should additionally take care to look at our own practices, lest we find ourselves repeating patterns of thought similar to those of the progressive racists J. W. Hammond discusses in Chapter 1. Border dwelling

needs to be a conscious act, one that includes constant interrogation of our own practices. For example, I think my own institutional colleagues Dwight Atkinson and Christine Tardy, along with their co-authors (2015), might take issue with my own casual mention of translingualism despite the fact that the educational setting I researched was, in fact, an L2 (second language writing) setting. Is my uncritical mention similar to uncritical progressive era acceptance of a colonialist ideal of "progress?" I don't know yet, but it is worth asking. As I continue attempts to situate myself in the borders of language and writing assessment, it is a question I will carry with me.

> *In his forum contribution and chapter, Harms interrogates the limitations of the postcolonial theory of "borders." He argues that postcolonial spaces such as the Philippines, "whose borders are oceanic, whose hybrid spaces are centralized major cities," challenge border theories. Instead, Harms encourages a more expansive search for postcolonial spaces; his historiographical work on early twentieth century educational policy—and the implication of assessment in that policy work—in the Philippines illustrate show such work might be done. Harms says that "by dwelling in the borders, we [can] take care to look at our own practices, lest we find ourselves repeating patterns of thought similar to those of the progressive racists." Border dwelling, thus, is an orientation toward research that relies on interdisciplinary theories and methods for the purposes of socially just next generation research.*
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> *Assertions drawn from Harms' contribution:*
>
> - ***History: Assertion 1.*** *Histories of writing assessment are invaluable in the analysis of practices viewed as deterministically objective; therefore, these histories have profound impact on contemporary methods, policies, and consequences.*
> - ***History: Assertion 2.*** *Social justice historiography reveals normative fixations and yields reflexive engagement.*
> - ***Methodology: Assertion 6.*** *Writing assessment researchers should be able to demonstrate proficiency in a range of methods.*
> - ***Policy: Assertion 15.*** *Institutional policies regarding writing assessment are best developed from clear pedagogical value and include details about their aims, design, proposed uses, and potential consequences.*

Toward Writing Assessment that Accounts for (and to) Community Colleges

Christie Toth

The chapters in this volume draw on theoretical perspectives from multiple disciplines: theories of justice from political philosophy; critical race theory originating in legal studies; critical and culturally relevant/sustaining pedagogies; postcolonial, decolonial, and queer theory; and the recent turn toward fairness and social justice in writing assessment. Each of these bodies of theory offers insight into issues of equity in writing assessment and its possibilities for enacting social change. Taken together, these chapters confirm that the field has moved beyond narrow conceptions of validity—a term that itself has been retheorized many times over—in its efforts to account for the social consequences of writing assessment (Poe & Inoue, 2016).

These chapters also signal our field's receptivity to critical examinations of writing assessment. Perhaps because of our roots in the humanities, we have long embraced a healthy skepticism about the provenance and applications of educational measurement and suspicions about the interests it serves (Yancey, 1999). Several chapters in this volume, such as those by J. W. Hammond (Chapter 1), Keith L. Harms (Chapter 3), Mathew Gomes (Chapter 6), and Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick (Chapter 7), demonstrate the enduring importance of ideological critiques of writing assessment, past and present. However, I am also heartened that many chapters—such as those by Kelly J. Sassi (Chapter 10), Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham (Chapter 9), Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks (Chapter 11)—draw on a range of theoretical perspectives to imagine writing assessments that actively further social justice goals. Because writing assessment shapes (and, potentially, reshapes) institutional structures (Inoue, 2015), it offers promising possibilities for translating critical theories into concrete social change. Speaking from my own scholarly and political commitments, I believe our efforts to theorize and enact writing assessment for social justice must account for—and be accountable to—the distinctive institutional contexts of open-admissions community colleges.

The chapters in this volume demonstrate that conversations about writing assessment and social justice can and should be informed by a diverse range of methodological approaches. Gomes, Lederman, and Warwick, with Caswell and Banks, offer valuable explorations of how writing assessment might benefit from engagement with additional critical theories (see also Alexander, 2016; Cushman, 2016; Inoue, 2009b; Inoue & Poe, 2012). Hammond, Harms, and

Sean Molloy turn such critical lenses toward the archive: Their historical/histo-riographical investigations show us the perils and possibilities of where we have been, informing our imaginings of more socially just assessment futures (see also Elliot, 2005; Yancey, 1999). Likewise, the studies presented by Casie Moreland; Nulton and Peckham; Sassi; and Burns, Cream, and Dougherty illustrate how empirical methods can provide an evidentiary basis for pursuing more socially just writing courses, programs, and campuses (see also Inoue, 2009a; Poe et al., 2014).

Particularly promising, in my view, are methodological approaches such as those articulated by Sassi—as well as by Nulton and Peckham, Caswell and Banks, and Burns, Cream, and Dougherty—all of whom embrace an ethic of dialogue and reciprocity in assessment. Such methods create new opportunities for us to assess writing with our students, with non-tenure-track colleagues, and with faculty across institution types and sectors. As a university-based scholar, I strive to collaborate with two-year college faculty and students as co-research-ers, and I know how easy it is to misstep or fall short in these efforts, thereby undermining the very social justice goals we aim to advance. As the program of research described in this volume continues, I hope the field will continue to develop collaborative methodologies—both for conducting local assessments and for producing writing assessment scholarship—that challenge the potential-ly unjust power dynamics of conventional research.

Several of the chapters in this collection have implications for writing as-sessment policy that advances social justice. Caswell and Banks, for example, make a compelling argument for implementing data collection policies regard-ing students' LGBTQ identities in order to better understand how assessment practices impact their learning. Gomes' discussion of linguistic imperialism in writing placement suggests that the discipline might articulate policies to guide more just placement for international students. Likewise, the challenges Mo-reland encountered while attempting to conduct a disparate impact analysis of dual enrollment eligibility testing demonstrates the need for state and/or federal policies requiring that such data be made public. Taken together, these studies suggest that we must work to develop theoretically coherent assessment policies at institutional, disciplinary, and governmental levels.

However, in community college contexts, Writing Studies scholarship of-ten has little direct impact on the policies that shape writing assessment. The current placement reform movement, for example, is being driven primar-ily by higher education research that does not always share our field's un-derstanding of the complex relationships between language ideology, literacy assessment, and structures of social inequality. The Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) has attempted to influence these policies through its re-

cent "White Paper on Writing Placement Reform," which asserts that all such reforms should be: "grounded in disciplinary knowledge," "developed by local faculty who are supported professionally," "sensitive to effects on diverse student populations," "assessed and validated locally," and "integrated into campus-wide efforts to improve student success" (Klausman et al., 2016, pp. 150-151). Moving from the rhetoric of position statements to on–the–ground change requires political capital and professional status. University-based writing assessment scholars might consider how we can be allies to two-year college colleagues, both locally and nationally, in their efforts to implement more socially just assessment policies.

Two-year colleges have long been underrepresented in writing assessment research (see also Hassel & Giordano, 2013; Morris, Greve, Knowles, & Huot, 2015). This oversight is a loss for our field's knowledge-making: Molloy's chapter demonstrates that open admissions institutions have much to teach the field about writing assessment. On the other hand, community colleges' relative invisibility in our scholarship does a profound disservice to the diverse students these institutions serve. As Moreland's chapter shows, we often know little about how community college writing assessment may be reproducing structures of social inequality (see also Naynaha, 2016), or, for that matter, how assessment practices at four-year institutions may differentially impact transfer students (Alexander, 2016; Gere et al., 2017). Informed by the array of critical perspectives in this volume, there is a pressing need for additional research that supports writing assessment as social justice in community colleges.

Nevertheless, it is not enough to simply shift the gaze of disciplinary knowledge-making to these settings. If we are to produce scholarship that is relevant and actionable for two-year college colleagues, we must attend to their distinctive rhetorical contexts (Toth & Sullivan, 2016). Some community college faculty have little background in writing assessment research, and, on first encounter, the specialized discourses of this subfield can be daunting (Klausman et al., 2016). Further, community college faculty often have limited professional authority over assessment at their institutions, and Writing Studies scholarship sometimes has little persuasive power with colleagues and administrators (Toth, Griffiths, & Thirolf, 2013; Toth & Sullivan, 2016). If future writing assessment scholarship is to have a meaningful impact at community colleges, we must strive to make it accessible to two-year college colleagues and engage the higher education research driving reform movements. Such efforts are, I argue, essential to writing assessment as social justice: Failing to account for these institutional contexts in our research is failing to be accountable to the racially, ethnically, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse students who attend community colleges.

Toth's work speaks back to a number of the ways our assumptions about writing assessment research has not accounted for community college perspectives. In resisting the top-down flow of research and looking to collaborative, accessible approaches to assessment, Toth looks for assessment methods that have a local social justice impact. Toth also observes how the link between practice and policy is often broken at community colleges because of conflicting epistemological stances between higher education researchers and writing researchers at community colleges. She urges university-based researchers to become "allies to two-year college colleagues, both locally and nationally, in their efforts to implement more socially just assessment policies;" otherwise, we risk "undermining the very social justice goals we aim to advance."

Assertions drawn from Toth's contribution:

- ***Methodology: Assertion 5.*** *Analytic techniques are best understood and used when they are linked to clearly articulated, ethical assessment questions.*
- ***Institutional research: Assertion 11.*** *When institutional research on student writing is conducted, collection of information related to age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic identity, race, veteran status, and sexuality should be justified with an understanding of current, ethical standards and institutional contexts for the gathering and securing of such information.*
- ***Policy: Assertion 15.*** *Institutional policies regarding writing assessment are best developed from clear pedagogical value and include details about their aims, design, proposed uses, and potential consequences.*
- ***Next generation research: Assertion 18.*** *Efforts should be made to strengthen writing assessment for formative purposes in order to develop innovative approaches to assessment informed by social justice perspectives.*

REORIENTING WRITING ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH AS SOCIAL JUSTICE

Casie Moreland

In Chapter 1 of this collection, J. W. Hammond explains that to conduct a social justice historiography, the methods must be "calibrated to identifying justice or

injustice." The chosen methods used for any investigation are based on theories, which almost always necessitate calibration. The theories used in this collection are used to evaluate the social justice aspects of multiple facets of assessment. Throughout the collection, it is apparent that many of the theories used, such as Delgado and Stefancic's critical race theory (2001), Carolyn Miller's genre theory (1984), Samuel Messick's (1989) and Michael T. Kane's (2013) validity theory, and others required a type of calibration.

Calibration is especially necessary when seeking to understand the social justice of an assessment practice. The reason for this, I believe, is apparent in each chapter as the authors (including myself) looked locally and globally at how assessment practices impact individuals—actual living beings that are impacted in very realistic ways by assessment practices. In Chapter 11, Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks discuss at length the importance of building around theory, letting lived experience, rather than theory lead their work. Social justice work requires a flexibility in theory and methods that accounts for each unique individual influenced by an assessment practice. This collection has a variety of examples of how theories can be calibrated to account for how assessment practices are influencing unique individuals in a variety of settings and on various local and global scales.

Just as the theories used in this collection required calibration, so too did the research methods. In this collection, contributors use a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods that include, but are not limited to, data collection, interviews, surveys, archival research, and historiography. In many chapters in the collection, authors express how their approaches were dependent on their research site, and in many instances the methods/models/designs for their focused research changed throughout the process based on the environments and/or situations. In Chapter 9, Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham express how their "research design is far from polished" as they explain: "We are learning, much as one writes, as we go along." Just as there is not one assessment practice that is *always* socially just, there is not one research methodology that is best suited for determining how assessment genres are socially just. This collection offers examples of unique approaches to research methods for determining the social justice of different genres of assessment practices.

The policies that influence assessment are reflective of the evolution and current state of assessment. Multiple chapters in this collection offer examples of how policies are constantly in need of development, especially when policy is needed to assure socially just practices—and even when previous developments have been beneficial in advancing ideas associated with assessment. The addition of fairness to the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, and Na-

tional Council on Measurement in Education, 2014) is an example of a how an advancement can take place. That advancement may influence policy, but the development still requires more inquiry as is detailed by Sean Molloy, Chapter 3 (see also Elliot, 2015; Kelly-Riley, Elliot, & Rudniy, 2017).

In multiple chapters within this collection, the authors show how the fairness of a policy and subsequent assessment practice is inconclusive without visible data. As I explain in my Chapter 5, without access regarding the placement practices that determine which students place into dual enrollment writing courses, the policies for enrollment are suspect. In Chapter 4 of this collection, Christie Toth explains how there is not clear data that supports Directed Self-Placement (DSP) policies (Royer & Gilles, 2003). In Chapter 6, Mathew Gomes describes how there was no immediate data to support the placement of international students in writing courses. And in Chapter 11, Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks narrate how policies at their institution did not allow the collection of demographic data related to gender and sexual identity to understand how and if assessment projects "attend to LGBTQ writers." For a policy to be considered socially just and fair, as suggested by the 2014 *Standards*, there must be a level of accountability on behalf of program directors and the institution to keep a variety of disaggregated data that visibly supports policies in place (or that develop as a result of research in the future).

As the chapters in this collection have shown, there are a variety of ways that the ways student writing is assessed in multiple arenas requires individual inquiry in conjunction to understanding the larger implications of these assessment genres. Future research will require inquiry and investigation in local and more broadly defined settings. Looking specifically at local situations is helpful, but this restricted gaze may not work to produce the same outcomes in multiple different locales. Similarly, looking at detached institutions' assessment practices can only advance social justice in as far as the institution's reach.

Future social justice research therefore requires a look at local assessment practices in the contexts in which they reside—from all perspectives. The research should move programs and institutions to account for the fairness of an assessment practice prior to the implementation of a said practice. The fairness and justice of any practice should be a foundational requirement of any assessment practice that is used in writing programs, classrooms, and beyond.

> *Moreland writes that "Social justice work requires a flexibility in theory and methods that accounts for each unique individual influenced by an assessment practice." As a result, researchers working from a social justice perspective need to be familiar with a range of methods so as to account for local contexts. Moreland also points to*

policy, reminding us that theory and method need action. She puts institutional policy in relation to writing assessment research, arguing that program directors and institutions must be held accountable in supporting policies that resonate within particular contexts and in the careful reporting of data by subgroup.

Assertions drawn from Morelands' contribution:

- ***Methodology: Assertion 5:*** *Analytic techniques are best understood and used when they are linked to clearly articulated, ethical assessment questions.*
- ***Methodology: Assertion 6***. *Writing assessment researchers should be able to demonstrate proficiency in a range of methods.*
- ***Institutional research: Assertion 11***. *When institutional research on student writing is conducted, collection of information related to age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic identity, race, veteran status, and sexuality should be justified with an understanding of current, ethical standards for the gathering and securing of such information.*
- ***Institutional research***: ***Assertion 12.*** *Because all inferences about student academic ability can have profound consequences for the purposes of social justice, distinctions between high stakes and low stakes should not be accompanied by different standards for inferences about writing ability.*

QUESTIONS TOWARD INTERSECTIONAL INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE AND CHANGE

Mathew Gomes

The volume includes a wide range of theoretical influences, including critical race theory, queer theory, decolonial and postcolonial theory, and validity theory. A reading of the volume as a whole suggests that many authors, including myself, believe that injustice plays out along intersecting axes of structural oppression. Simultaneously, these axes prove fruitful for mounting productive projects, such as the assignment Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty describe (Chapter 8). One theme that stands out to me is the importance of both documenting and intervening in particularized expressions of oppression, as well as recognizing the potentiality for both intersectional

oppressions and opportunities. This echoes the call both Poe and Cogan (2016) and Elliot (2016) have issued for attention to intersectionality in disparate impact analyses and examinations of fairness. To that end, there appear to be opportunities to develop theories of socially just writing assessment with further attention to issues raised in disability studies. To what extent are we measuring the fairness of our writing constructs for neuro-diverse student populations? As Elliot (2016) suggests, this may be especially important given documented associations of poverty with health conditions affecting cognitive abilities (Hotez et al., 2014). Along the same lines, are programmatic consequences equitable and just for students with varying physical abilities?

Authors' contributions to this volume include an impressive array of methods for conducting primary research, including archival methods (Hammond, Chapter 1; Molloy, Chapter 2; Harms, Chapter 3), interviews and focus groups (Toth, Chapter 4; Caswell & Banks, Chapter 11), theory building (Gomes, Chapter 6; Lederman & Warwick, Chapter 7), surveys (Gomes, Chapter 6; Nulton & Peckham, Chapter 9); lesson study (Burns, Cream, & Dougherty, Chapter 8), and narrative methods (Moreland, Chapter 5). All of these methods are appropriate forms of evidence for capturing the broad ranges of effects a writing program might have upon differently situated peoples and environments.

As I read other contributors' chapters, however, I began to wonder if our work might be more impactful if more of us conscientiously adopted replicable, aggregable, and data-driven (RAD) approaches to social justice work. RAD approaches, which are defined as "inquiry that is explicitly enough systematized in sampling, execution, and analysis to be replicated; exactly enough circumscribed to be extended; and factually enough supported to be verified" (Haswell, 2005, p. 201).

There is, nevertheless, much agreement in this volume. Many, including myself, have grounded research on the premise that injustice is systemic; therefore, we might be able to examine our diverse institutional settings and anticipate finding evidence of injustice, as well as individuals working to ameliorate those injustices. Casie Moreland's Chapter 5 identifies two other perspectives. First, there appears to be growing consensus around the concept that disparate impact analysis can—as Mya Poe and John Aloysius Cogan Jr. (2016) claim—prove helpful for examining a range of educational injustices in U.S. post-secondary education. Second, as Elliot (2016) has argued, data disaggregation helps illuminate our differing landscapes of social (in)equity. Given our mobilization around common commitments, and a growing acceptance of several methodological principles, I believe it is worth considering that RAD's emphasis on replicability (especially) might allow us to better document the persistence of systemic injustice, and then build a robust repertoire of methods with empirically demonstrable capability to ameliorate problems of justice.

Authors in this volume have invoked several explicit disciplinary policies. Many of these deal with advocacy for linguistically inclusive and responsive environments for writing instruction: National Language Policy (College Composition and Communication, 2015); Students' Right to Their Own Language (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2014); and Statement on Second Language Writing (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2009). In most cases, authors mobilize these policy statements as evidence of disciplinary interest in social justice, or to highlight elements of best practices in the field currently.

However, it is worth further investigating how national policy statements highlight institutional responsibilities for writing assessment, as well as for producing the kinds of fair, just, and ethical learning opportunities many authors in this volume would like to see. For example, the first principle articulated in the CCCC Writing Assessment: A Position Statement (2014) holds that "Writing assessment is useful primarily as a means of improving teaching and learning." We might ask how well such a statement facilitates the kinds of justice projects described in this volume. Or, does this statement subtly encourage us to focus on demonstrating evidence of improved teaching and learning, and thus primarily on the evaluation of teachers and learners?

Many in this volume underscore the importance of holding institutions responsible for producing good outcomes for teachers and learners. Throughout this collection, there are direct and indirect varieties of institutional critique (Porter, Sullivan, Blythe, Grabill, & Miles, 2000). Burns, Cream, and Dougherty explicitly align with such methodologies; and Moreland highlights the responsibility for programs and for maintaining transparent, disaggregated data. Additionally, Poe and Cogan (2016) have articulated a "burden-shifting" approach to writing assessment which usefully highlights institutional responsibility for producing fairness; and Elliot's (2016) articulation of *fairness* as institutionally structured calls attention to the need for sites of instruction to define the role of justice in assessments. While an orientation toward "teaching and learning" might tend to concentrate attention on teachers and learners, an orientation toward institutional production of learning opportunities is also needed. While a full review of policies is beyond the scope of my contribution, it is worth investigating the extent to which current assessment policies concentrate on methodological techniques in terms of their consequences for the total operation and ecological impact of a writing program, as well as on individual stakeholders.

> *Gomes begins by postulating the ways that writing assessment theory can draw on insights from disability studies to make writing assessment fairer: "Are programmatic consequences equitable*

and just for students with varying physical abilities?" In looking beyond typical models of writing development, Gomes is leveraging a social justice perspective to expand study design. But he does not stop with theory. Like Moreland, Gomes is interested in the ways that writing assessment researchers can draw on an array of methodologies for the purposes of social justice research. Rather than rejecting replicable, aggregable, and data-driven research (RAD), Gomes ponders whether RAD research "might allow us to better document the persistence of systemic injustice, and then build a robust repertoire of methods with empirically demonstrable capability to ameliorate problems of justice." In the end, he calls for "an orientation toward institutional production of learning opportunities," he points to the importance of institutional responsibility in advancing aims of fairness. Without institutional change, resonating from theory to method to policy, colonial perspectives are likely left intact.

Assertions drawn from Gomes' contribution:

- ***Theory: Assertion 3**. Theories of writing assessment are invaluable in the formation of ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives that have profound impact on method, policy, and consequences.*
- ***Methodology: Assertion 5:** Analytic techniques are best understood and used when they are linked to clearly articulated, ethical assessment questions.*
- ***Methodology: Assertion 6**. Writing assessment researchers should be able to demonstrate proficiency in a range of methods.*
- ***Policy**: Assertion 16. Organizational policies are best developed using professional standards and empirical evidence*

Toward Justice and Opportunity

Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick

The chapters in this volume have done important work with critical theories such as post-decolonial theory, queer theory, and critical race theory. Each of these traditions complicates the notion of the white, male, straight, subject as the pillar of normativity and as the yardstick against which all others should be compared for the purposes of assessment. The tradition of assessing students and

their writing outside of cultural-historical contexts has been deeply problematized of late, and these chapters carry on that tradition. The chapters here both look at how writing assessment may impact issues of justice and opportunity for students of color, LGBTQ students, and students from indigenous populations, but their authors also help reveal how problematic the concept of assessment can be when we allow tacit assumptions of normativity—which nearly always equal what Inoue (2015) calls white racial habitus—to frame our methodologies. Disability studies could make an interesting and important contribution to this conversation, as could other critical theories such as certain feminist, posthuman, and indigenous methodological perspectives.

Methodologically, with the exception of Casie Moreland's and Mathew Gomes' use of disparate impact analysis in Chapters 5 and 6, the chapters in this volume tend to use qualitative approaches or mixed method approaches to exploring the connections between writing assessment, social justice, and the advancement of opportunity. While disparate impact analysis does seem to be a vital ingredient for such work, qualitative empirical work and critical, theoretical work also seem essential. The quantitative validity evidence gathered by testing organizations to justify the use of their purchased products is clearly insufficient for matters of justice and opportunity, as evidenced by the persistent differential opportunities afforded to marginalized social groups as the result of such test use. Validity evidence related to fairness, however, as we sought to argue in Chapter 7, cannot be identified where such differential opportunities result from a testing program. Thus, methodologies that seek to ferret out what we call the violence of assessment—qualitative, ethnographic, case study, longitudinal, multi-method—are critical for the validation of any assessment that seeks to disrupt social injustice and work toward the advancement of opportunity. In addition, a number of the chapters also used historiography as their methodology, which is vital because, over time, approaches and viewpoints can become naturalized. Providing historical analysis to document how approaches, viewpoints, and perspectives originate can be an important tool for disruption and change.

The policy implications of this volume can be seen throughout. Keith L. Harms (Chapter 3) speaks in depth about English Only policy instituted by the U.S. colonial administration in the Philippines, and we also see mention of various resolutions and position statements by our professional organizations, such as Students' Right to their Own Language (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2006), the Conference on College Composition and Communication the Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers (2009) and The National Language Policy (2015). These various policies have polar objectives—with the English Only policy being one of linguistic and cultural assimilation and the statements of our professional organization seeking to

undo that legacy. In Chapter 10, Kelly J. Sassi also mentioned the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Common Core State Standards (2011), and the National Council of Teachers of English, Council of Writing Program Administrators, and National Writing Project Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing (2011), which mark opposite ends of the spectrum of constraint and diversity in language use. The larger question is whether policy is the place to foster social justice and advance opportunity. To be sure, policies that make these matters impossible (e.g., segregation) need to be removed before these struggles can even begin.

But how often do policies fostering diversity effectively lead to justice and opportunity? Considering the theme of peering into the darker corners where the flashlight of mainstream normativity—the majoritarian narratives noted by J. W. Hammond in Chapter 1—we may conclude that existing policies do not shine. The notion of policy itself may be too geared toward the center. The Students' Right to their Own Language resolution is nearly half a century old. Yet how many students use whatever may constitute their own languages without suffering punishment as a result of writing assessment? Perhaps instead of policy, the move toward justice and opportunity will happen as mindsets change, something that we hope the program of research presented in the current collection will help achieve.

Looking forward, as Christie Toth notes in Chapter 4, Directed Self Placement needs a great deal more research in terms of its impact on various social groups. In terms of face validity, it seems to be an agent for empowering student writers, imbuing them with agency to make their own best decision about course placement. But as others have mentioned (e.g., Perry, 2008; Schendel & O'Neill, 1999), there is the danger that this agency may rest less with student writers and more with their history of previous assessments—that are themselves products of constrained societal expectation of linguistic and cultural assimilation. Ellen Schendel and Peggy O'Neill (1999) refer to this as the Foucauldian *gaze* of the institution—an instance of constraint, both present and invisible, enacted in order to prevent the advancement of opportunity for all. Research programs dedicated to such advancement will need to employ methodologies that take the problem of that gaze as their fundamental assumption and use critical (queer, feminist, postcolonial) methodologies to advance justice and structure opportunity. We fight an invisible foe in this battle; there are no laws enforcing inequality of opportunity, no mission statements that state the goal for reinscribing social injustice. Future research will need to begin with the question of why these problems still exist then, where the mechanisms lie that facilitate them, and which common assumptions help the smooth operation of this machinery—all work of contextualization to be done before we can move on to questions of whether an assessment is ready to produce evidence of its validity and reliability.

At the 2017 Conference on College Composition and Communication, the division of Writing Program Administrators-Graduate Organization held a session called Think Tank for Racial and Social Justice in the Writing Program, with the goal of developing action items to help achieve racial and social justice (Kareem & Macklin, 2017). We discussed one of the barriers to social justice activism, which seems to be that people see social justice research and work as optional—one more theory to choose from among a growing list. But even this view is born of privilege that allows people to see work that is critical and essential as merely one more option from a list. In the vein of Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty's research in Chapter 8 in which they explore how teachers can move students from awareness to activism—and since assessment is often a major component of the work WPAs engage in—we feel it is important to consider how we might move administrators and faculty to social justice activism.

> In their forum contribution and chapter, Lederman and Warwick point to the historical violence of assessment—for example, in testing organizations limited quantitative claims regarding questions of fairness. To make writing assessment less violent, Lederman and Warwick seek expansive methodologies, including case studies, qualitative research, and longitudinal studies, in addition to current argument-based methods. They postulate that an expansive view of methodology, and of social justice work itself, might entice more researchers to take up the advancement of opportunity and ultimately the advancement of more socially just forms of writing assessment.

> *Assertions drawn from Lederman and Warwick's contribution:*

> - **History: Assertion 1.** *Histories of writing assessment are invaluable in the analysis of practices viewed as deterministically objective; therefore, these histories have profound impact on contemporary methods, policies, and consequences.*
> - **Methodology: Assertion 6.** *Writing assessment researchers should be able to demonstrate proficiency in a range of methods.*
> - **Classroom research: Assertion 10.** *Classroom research is best accompanied by inferences that allow others to apply findings across settings.*
> - **Purchased assessments: Assertion 14.** *Unless the vendor provides evidence of fairness, validity, and reliability, purchased assessments should not be used to make decisions for or draw inferences about students.*

Validation for Rhetorical Sovereignty: Involving Students as Agents against Linguistic Imperialism

Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty

It has truly been an honor to contribute our collective voice to the important research in this collection. As we look toward the future of writing assessment, we trust that this volume will help to propel what Christie Toth calls "validation for social justice" in Chapter 4 from the periphery to the center of best assessment practices in higher education—and beyond to other areas where language uses are constrained by assessment practices.

To realize that vision, we would do well to listen closely to the theoretical frameworks introduced in this volume. While our chapter focuses on extending the critique of institutional white habitus begun in earlier work being called "fourth wave" (Behm & Miller, 2012; Inoue, 2015), we were struck by the depth of theoretical vision exhibited across this volume. On the one hand, scholars like Keith L. Harms (Chapter 3) and Mathew Gomes (Chapter 6) examine both historical and contemporary sites to center our attention on the linguistic imperialism that often accompanies institutional assessment work, whether that work exists in the overt colonial context of the U.S. presence in the Philippines or in the often-covert colonial context at work in institutions of higher education. In each site, there is an institutional mandate for monolingualism that positions certain students and rhetorical performances as deviant and sub-standard until they are scrubbed clean. These cases drive home Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick's point in Chapter 7 that assessment is often an act of violence—an act that too often reinforces structural violence.

To combat such linguistic imperialism and structural violence, we would do well to attend to some of the other frameworks employed throughout this volume, such as Kelly J. Sassi's introduction of Scott Lyons' concept of rhetorical sovereignty in Chapter 10. While Sassi appropriately applies the concept to the assessment context of a tribal college, rhetorical sovereignty might be extended to other sites of higher education. How, for instance, might applying the framework of rhetorical sovereignty to assessment of all undergraduate students reinvigorate our field's commitment to Students' Right to Their Own Language (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2006)? In offering this application, we want to reiterate that Lyons' concept is based in a nation-people's sense of sovereignty as radical relationship to the land. Any application of this concept must be careful to center that understanding amidst the settler colonial conditions of the U.S. nation-state. As well, this concept

might be a useful start in delinking from what Malea Powell (2012, via Walter Mignolo) has called the colonial matrix of power in Writing Studies.

To accomplish such delinking, though, requires careful methodological approaches. We need solid historical models drawn from archival methods such as the one offered by Sean Molloy's excavation of CUNY's still innovative SEEK program in Chapter 2. And we need to critique our field's own history through careful archival excavations such as J. W. Hammond's examination of early *English Journal* articles in Chapter 1. Beyond the archives, we see a need for mixed-methods validation of local assessments through racial validity and disparate impact analyses constructs (see also Moreland in Chapter 5) that Toth says comprise a project of validation for social justice in Chapter 4. And we must be cognizant of the embodied affects and effects of learning and assessment, particularly for students who feel marginalized or othered by their institutions (Caswell and Banks, Chapter 11). To that end, we would add that both Huey T. Chen's model of integral validity in our chapter and Michael T. Kane's (2013) argument-based approach to validity in Chapter 7 noted by Lederman and Warwick are promising avenues for deepening validity as a construct for socially just assessment. In our research, we are convinced that students need to be added deeply as stakeholders and co-participants in an assessment's design and construction for the vision of socially just assessment to be realized.

The findings in this volume also have deep implications for policy. For instance, Toth's chapter shows how Directed Self-Placement (Royer & Gilles, 2003) seems to be working quite well at the community college level, often in conjunction with Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP, Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Roberts, 2009). Since these programs are designed to reduce the "cooling off" effect that often keeps students most on the margins from finishing their degrees, our professional organizations might do well to create a policy that spells out the pedagogical and social justice rationale for converting all developmental courses that do not provide college credit to models like ALP that allow students to immediately begin accruing credits toward graduation. What might other professional policy documents look like that incorporate the innovative pedagogical approaches in SEEK (Molloy, Chapter 2)—approaches rooted in the knowledge that our first task as writing teachers is getting students to love writing as Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham observe in Chapter 9 rather than perform to a monolingual standard?

As a result of this volume, we envision the blooming of writing program assessment technologies that are rooted in validation for social justice. We envision a day where no program is stumped, much like some of Toth's respondents were, when asked about how their placement, classroom, or program assess-

ments are affecting different student demographics along racial, gender, class, and LGBTQA trajectories (Caswell & Banks, Chapter 11). We envision an assessment landscape where such disparate impact analysis becomes standard in institutions of higher learning and, particularly, in writing programs. And, perhaps most importantly, we envision an assessment landscape that deeply involves students as stakeholders in assessment design, that includes them as co-constituents of assessment revision, and that positions them as writers whose work matters beyond the classroom's walls.

It is time to get fired up!

> *Drawing on the theory of fourth generation assessment, Burns, Cream, and Dougherty illustrate the way that theoretical orientations to writing assessment can be imported from other scholarly areas and be expanded once applied in writing assessment research on outcomes. Their approach to research also illustrates the value of bringing students as stakeholders to assessment research: ". . . we are convinced that students need to be added deeply as stakeholders and co-participants in an assessment's design and construction for the vision of socially just assessment to be realized." Through such more inclusive, expansive approaches to assessment, Burns, Cream, and Dougherty ultimately envision the "blooming of writing program assessment technologies that are rooted in validation for social justice." We hope they are right.*

> *Assertions drawn from Burns, Cream and Doughtery's contribution:*

> - ***Outcomes: Assertion 7***. *To advance justice and opportunity, the articulation of writing outcomes should be based on robust writing construct models that are informed by current sociocognitive and sociocultural research.*
> - ***Outcomes: Assertion 8***. *Perspectives drawn from a variety of educational community members are required to develop writing outcomes.*
> - ***Classroom and writing center research: Assertion 9***. *Direct work with students is the first step in writing assessment.*
> - ***Next generation research: Assertion 17***. *Efforts should be made to eliminate high-stakes tests of writing for purely summative purposes.*

Reflections on Theory and Practice

Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham

Although we have not linked our project explicitly to Paulo Freire (2004) and Ivan Illich (1972), their theories of education frame the way in which we have structured our writing program, assessment protocol, and research project. Freire and Illich argued forcefully for practices giving voice to those who have been marginalized. We have designed our program and assessment to prioritize students' voices. Freire, in particular, insisted on listening carefully to students and teaching from within their lived experiences. Illich critiqued schools as an industry more interested in self-perpetuation than improving the lives of the underprivileged.

We have also worked from a long line of educators who have argued for engaged learning and the consequence of listening to students' voices; John Dewey (1970), James Britton and colleagues (1975), James Moffett (1994), Peter Elbow (1998), Mike Rose (2014), John Tagg (2003), Robert Fried (2005), and L. Dee Fink (2013) have been especially important. Norbert Elliot's extensive work in assessment theory, and in particular, his latest research linking social justice to assessment practices (2016), has influenced our way of putting our program and assessment in direct dialogue with each other. Pierre Bourdieu (1984) and Freire have heavily influenced our understanding of social stratification practices.

In this volume, we see a healthy mix of qualitative, quantitative, and archival research. Some researchers lean toward statistical models and others toward various versions of ethnographic research. Rather than privilege any method, we think researchers should work from their question outward, developing a method that will move toward answers. (We seriously doubt that any question of value is ever fully answered.) In the field of Writing Studies, perhaps more so than in other fields, the researcher should be aware of an array of research methods and knowing, like a good carpenter, which tool or array of tools are best for the job. We acknowledge the importance of work by psychometricians such as Lee J. Cronbach (1989), Samuel J. Messick (1989), Robert J. Mislevy (2007), and Michael T. Kane (2013), even while we agree with scholars in this collection (such as Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream and Timothy R. Dougherty, as well as Josh Lederman and Nicole Warwick) that we should be wary of letting research methods lead assessment's aim. Assessment is vital to Writing Studies; we need to understand the niche assessment plays in writing program ecologies as consequences ripple among students, teachers, and administrators. With our colleagues, we take fairness seriously; consequently, we advocate for assessments that foster rather than rank order student learning and that promote positive

attitudes toward writing.

Assessing, like writing, can help us to understand what we mean. Position papers and statements from the National Council of Teachers of English, the Conference of College Composition and Communication, and the Council of Writing Program Administrators offer extensive polices that deal with social justice, including position papers affirming Ebonics (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2016); a statement on Language Power and Activism requiring "respect for diversity, equity, social justice, and intellectual and pedagogical freedom," (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2016); a statement on "Racism and (g)WPA" (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2015), and others noted in this forum. These are important statements expressing the writing community's commitment to social justice.

When we juxtapose these statements with standard "performance" assessments that rank student writing based in part on standardized linguistic conventions—supported by the 2014 CWPA Outcomes Statement (Dryer et al., 2014)—we recognize an inherent tension between ideals and pragmatics. We exist, as writing teachers, with the uneasy knowledge that we have been trained in—that we perform within—linguistic and rhetorical conventions that can be unjust to expect from students. We suggest that policies advocating for intrapersonal and interpersonal domains—and adding domains where necessary, such as improving attitude toward writing to the CWPA Outcomes Statement—can shift this tension by contextualizing social justice issues within the larger ecology of students' educational experiences.

In terms of research stemming from our own work, we would like to see research that further investigates the kinds of writing instruction that instills negative attitudes toward writing in students and how these attitudes are complicated by socioeconomic status, ethnicity, first language, and gender. Several research projects seem obvious: In grades K-12, track changes in attitudes toward writing by socioeconomic status disaggregated by zip codes (Lederman and Warwick, Chapter 7). We could use Jean Anyon's (1980) research as a model to investigate the school writing experiences and their relationships to attitudes toward writing; track the correlation, year by year and by zip code, between the changes in attitudes toward writing, success in school, and admission into postsecondary institutions, which could also be ranked by zip codes (the zip codes of student populations). This research could document college experiences (disaggregated by zip codes) and post-collegiate life possibilities (available professions, salary, social status, labor autonomy). While this model focuses on socioeconomic status, data could be further disaggregating by gender, race, first language, and ethnicity.

For further broad programs of research, we particularly urge research exam-

ining the unacknowledged ways in which the educational industry promotes social reproduction, privileging the few at the expense of the many. It might be useful for scholars interested in assessment to become familiar with classification theory, which links language use, genre theory, and stratification theory. One could do worse than reading George Lakoff's *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things* (1990) and work outward from there.

> *Champions of student-centered learning, Nulton and Peckham redesigned their writing program curriculum and assessment to focus on student perspectives. Their work and their collection forum remind us that domain models of "good writing" are often rather narrow, resulting in unjust outcomes. As a result, Nulton and Peckham encourage us to develop more ambitious construct models of writing that include interpersonal and intrapersonal domains. Finally, they challenge us to design ambitious longitudinal models that track student attitudes toward writing over time and how those attitudes are complicated by socioeconomic status, ethnicity, language, and gender.*

> *Assertions drawn from Nulton and Peckham's contribution:*

> - *Outcomes: Assertion 7.* *To advance justice and opportunity, the articulation of writing outcomes should be based on robust writing construct models that are informed by current sociocognitive and sociocultural research.*
> - *Outcomes: Assertion 8.* *Perspectives drawn from a variety of educational community members are required to develop writing outcomes.*
> - *Classroom and writing center research: Assertion 9.* *Direct work with students is the first step in writing assessment.*
> - *Next generation research: Assertion 18.* *Efforts should be made to strengthen writing assessment for formative purposes in order to develop innovative approaches to assessment informed by social justice perspectives.*

DISMANTLING THE SOUND-PROOF WALLS THAT ARE BARRIERS TO A JUST FUTURE IN WRITING ASSESSMENT

Kelly J. Sassi

When we think about achievement of social justice and the advancement of opportunity, it becomes apparent that those of us working in the field of rhetoric

and composition and those of us working in K-12 education and in American Indian rhetorics would benefit from working together, and this is especially apparent in terms of theoretical approaches, which often grow in the petri dish of one disciplinary area without affecting other disciplines.

We see evidence of interdisciplinary work in this collection that is productive in advancing social justice. For example, Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham's conceptualization of the portfolio assessment in Chapter 9 and Michael Sterling Burns, Randall Cream, and Timothy R. Dougherty's lesson study presented in Chapter 8 provide opportunities for teachers to assess what has and has not worked in the classroom, just as SEEK teachers were expected to do, as Sean Molloy observes in Chapter 2. That is, these strategies put the focus on student learning rather than teacher planning, echoing the emphasis on student-centered instruction in education.

Similarly, when we are discussing the impact of colonization on writing assessment in the United States, it is important to be familiar not only with the forces of colonization (Harms, Chapter 3), but also the forces of survival and resistance, or survivance (Vizenor, 1994; Powell, 2006) in the vibrant American Indian rhetorical tradition that predates Columbus and continues to the present day. We can look to, or rather listen—using rhetorical listening as theorized by Malea Powell (2002) and Krista Ratcliffe (2005)—to this tradition for guidance in theorizing socially just forms of writing assessment. Just as queering writing assessment makes sexuality visible as a concern in writing assessment and opens up space for bodies marginalized by our culture, so indigenizing writing assessment could make audible American Indian and Alaska Native voices that have been speaking clearly—but not heard by all—since before first contact with Europeans on this continent.

Knowledge of quantitative methods is crucial when working for social justice in the field of writing assessment, especially in cases where large testing companies have not been entirely transparent with their data, as we saw in chapters by Christie Toth and Casie Moreland. But that knowledge is not enough. Even when the quantitative data suggest remediation is needed, other research has shown that is not necessarily a true or complete picture. Historical knowledge is also of critical importance—as the success of SEEK students in Molloy's chapter demonstrate and, in my chapter, as the writing improvement of Sitting Bull College students show as those scores contradicted the monotone picture painted by their COMPASS scores.

Authors in this collection have used a wide variety of methodological tools—among them historiography, archival, case studies, interviews, textual analysis, ethnography, surveys, and focus groups. Remembering Audre Lorde's (2007) admonition that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house,"

we are in danger of rebuilding the same house if we use these tools without a simultaneous interrogation of the theoretical frameworks that might come with the methodological tools (p. 110). Just as Sandy Grande (2004) noted that culturally responsive pedagogies may retain the deep structures of western thought, so may our methodological tools. Scholars like Linda Tuhiwai-Smith (2012) and her work on decolonizing methodologies may help us do social justice work in writing assessment. Regardless, intensive and self-reflexive attention to theoretical frameworks, as we see especially in Chapters 7 and 11 with violence and queering writing assessment, are important for change.

Policies created by national professional organizations, such as the 1972 resolution, "Students' Rights to Their Own Language" (adopted by Conference on College Composition and Communication in 1974 and reaffirmed in 2014) and Modern Language Association's "Statement on Native American Languages in the College and University Curriculum" (2005) are important for working toward social justice. At North Dakota State University, we used the MLA resolution to support our case in hiring a Dakota language professor. Hiring a Dakota language professor created a more positive climate for Dakota (and other Native and indigenous) students. It also provided me with the opportunity to study Dakota language, which then helped me to recognize Dakota sentence structure in the English writing of students at Sitting Bull College. Instead of seeing these students' "nonstandard" English as incorrect, I saw instances of correct Dakota structure in their English writing. This realization shaped my approach to the research project at Standing Rock. In Chapter 6, Gomes prods my thinking further when he asks why we cannot "promote linguistic diversity as an asset." This small, personal story illustrates how the resolutions of professional organizations can influence other institutions and people.

It is important that such policies are in place, but it is not enough. When we look at the institutional practices examined in some of the chapters, we begin to see a picture of practice lagging behind policy. It is what people do with a policy that really makes the difference in moving toward social justice. Even when writing instructors and administrators are positively disposed toward the policies in place, they may not be sure about what kinds of teaching and assessing practices will support the policy. This is where strategies such as lesson study described by Burns, Cream, and Dougherty in Chapter 8 may be useful because it provides space for groups of teachers to think through the effect on students of classroom interventions to address race and privilege. At every stage, from the formation of policies to their implementation, it is important that diverse stakeholders are involved. Our professional organizations have become better at nominating diverse leaders, but not so successful at electing them. Furthermore, given the power of unjust practices, movement in the direction of social justice is going

to require a significant effort. Anti-racist pedagogy is a necessity in making that effort.

Directions for research should extend further back and also further forward. Building on J. W. Hammond's excellent work in Chapter 1, social justice historiography of writing assessment should reach further back to the kind of assimilationist practices that pre-date those practiced on immigrants. We should include the study of boarding schools, because assimilationist and even genocidal policies, echoing Captain Richard H. Pratt's 1892 call to "Kill the Indian, Save the Man," reverberate to the present day through intergenerational trauma. At the present writing, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition is petitioning the U.S. government to tell the truth about the injustices suffered by boarding school students. Canada is ahead of the US in documenting and making reparations to First Nations people subjected to abuses in residential schools.

In terms of future domain models of writing and its assessment, Karen S. Nulton and Irvin Peckham found a high percentage of incoming students held negative attitudes toward writing. We see this also with Native American schools, where some students describe writing as actually "painful" (Sassi & Lajimodiere, 2016), which is not surprising, given the violent history of American Indian and Alaska Native education in our country. We should also look to extensions of John Rawls' (2001) theory of structural justice theory to the consequences of our assessment choices. Promising here is a turn to rhetorics of truth and reconciliation (Beitler, 2013) as well as further work with decolonization, as convincingly argued in Chapter 7.

> *Sassi's work is a model of teacher development that attends to the historical legacies, cultural values, and institutional contexts in which teachers work. Her decolonial approach to teacher development did not start with wholesale rejection of purchased tests. Instead, Sassi listened to her teachers' desire to know more how their students were performing on purchased tests. In doing so, she helped her teachers become agents of change at their tribal college and develop alternative methods of assessment that were better attuned to hearing the students they served. Sassi, ultimately, encourages us to "extend further back and also further forward" in our research on writing assessment, documenting the historical legacies of unjust assessment in tribal colleges and the ongoing work of decolonialization. In the end, Sassi eloquently writes:*

>> *Just as queering writing assessment makes sexuality visible as a concern in writing assessment and opens up*

*space for bodies marginalized by our culture, so indig-
enizing writing assessment could make audible Amer-
ican Indian and Alaska Native voices that have been
speaking clearly—but not heard by all—since before first
contact with Europeans on this continent.*

Assertions drawn from Sassi's contribution:

- ***History: Assertion 1.*** *Histories of writing assessment are
  invaluable in the analysis of practices viewed as deterministi-
  cally objective; therefore, these histories have profound impact
  on contemporary methods, policies, and consequences.*
- ***Theory: Assertion 3****. Theories of writing assessment are
  invaluable in the formation of ontological, epistemological,
  and axiological perspectives that have profound impact on
  method, policy, and consequences.*
- ***Purchased assessments: Assertion 13.*** *Purchased assess-
  ments—those assessments developed by testing companies—
  hold the potential to provide valuable information about
  students, but their use should never constrain the interroga-
  tion of social justice queries in local contexts.*
- ***Purchased assessments****: Assertion 14. Unless the vendor
  provides evidence of fairness, validity, and reliability, pur-
  chased assessments should not be used to make decisions for or
  draw inferences about students*
- ***Next-generation research: Assertion 17.*** *Efforts should
  be made to eliminate high-stakes tests of writing for purely
  summative purposes.*

FOLLOWING UNMARKED LINES: THE ACTIVIST WORK OF WRITING ASSESSMENT

Nicole I. Caswell and William P. Banks

As we reflect on the chapters included in this collection, we are heartened by
our colleagues' commitments to designing and implementing writing assess-
ments that challenge the dominant discourses and practices that have plagued
our history. We have each approached the goal of social justice in our assess-
ments through different theoretical frames, but our goal has been consistent:
how might we create assessments that provide equal opportunity for all students

to learn? The various theories referenced across the collection have allowed authors to consider factions in writing assessment and to identify moments when the consequences of writing assessment have not outweighed the benefits. As we continue to commit ourselves to equal opportunity for all students, we must engage theories that allow us to understand the ways that inequality in education function across intersectional lines of power and identity.

While one strength of writing assessment research is its commitment to multidisciplinary research methods borrowed from the fields of psychometrics, rhetoric, education, and literacy studies, we must remain outward looking as we think about the wide-ranging sites of assessment, from the individual teacher-student relationship to classroom to program to institution to state to national. In this collection alone we are exposed to a range of methods (such as archival, survey, interview, statistical analysis, focus group) working to advance a social justice agenda at multiple assessment sites. Each method focuses our attention on the complex and competing values and dispositions inherent in thinking about writing assessment as social justice.

Assessments designed for social justice will need to consider methods that place student and teacher voices at the center of data collection, and, as important, will need to provide critical validity arguments which foreground justice-based reason for interpreting that data. While historical methods have provided the foundation for understanding the consequences of our assessments on students, we need additional research using qualitative methods to develop a deeper contextual understanding of the kinds of consequences our assessments currently have (or might have) on students. We cannot assume that just because our theories have become more intersectional that our practices have necessarily embodied those changes. The chapters in this collection provide us with the kinds of qualitative methods necessary to develop student-focused assessments. As we strive to design more socially just assessments, we argue for mixed-methods approaches that provide space for teacher and student voices and experiences with writing and assessment alongside empirical validity and reliability evidence.

As we read the chapters in this collection, we were drawn to the ways researchers used policy statements to guide and challenge teachers' understandings of writing and assessing writing. Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve the Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools (2007), Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing (National Council of Teachers of English, Council of Writing Program Administrators, and National Writing Project, 2011), WPA Outcomes for First-Year Composition (Version 3.0) (Dryer et al., 2014)—these policy statements reflect current pedagogical values of teaching and learning, and forward important goals that shape the writing construct across contexts. These statements can serve as jumping off points for revising

curricula and assessment practices. By engaging with teachers, students, administrators, and community members around these statements, we can cultivate conversations around local contexts and values instead of simple wholesale adoption. Policy statements can serve as motivators for local change when educators collaboratively work together to articulate their values. Although policy statements can make complex issues into overly reductive statements, they also provide the space for challenging dominant norms. As we continue to develop theories and assessment designs around social justice, we are excited about the possibility of a policy statement that can serve as an authority for why others should engage in this kind of work.

At the same time, since policy statements can also become fixed documents that require significant labor to revise, we advocate for methodologies that see these texts as adaptable, living documents. Despite the fact that policy statements can provide useful frameworks, if we seek to ensure that our assessment projects engage social justice, we need to be consciously aware of the ways in which social justice is a fundamentally intersectional project. To that end, those of us in assessment need to be aware of who is and is not in the room when we're discussing, drafting, and revising policy, and we need to think carefully about how we create space for others to join the discussion. Locally, our writing center has begun the process of drafting a social justice statement, an idea that grew out of conversations the writing consultants were already having about the sort of writing center they wanted to work in and the ways they wanted the campus community to view that space. Our consultants have been responsible for articulating our shared writing center values because they are the ones working with writers across campus. While it is not always easy to sit back and watch as this process evolves, we believe teachers, students, and parents—those stakeholders closest to the assessment—should be given a space to design any kind of policy or statement. Our consultants have also demonstrated that they recognize there are voices still absent in these conversations and they have led the way in inviting different campus groups to be part of this conversation, to speak to them about issues or problems, as well as to consider drafts of our documents in order to show us where these texts may misunderstand some of the most vulnerable populations on our campus, or be less welcoming and inclusive than we would like. In this way, our center becomes a space on campus where we can work together to (re)mark the lines around our assessments, to make visible practices that are often unacknowledged or hidden, and to work together to shape a more ethical, socially just set of assessment practices.

> *For Caswell and Banks, social justice is a fundamentally intersectional project. Their assessment work in the writing center*

demonstrates that social justice-oriented assessment work can originate from locations other than first year writing programs. Their chapter and forum contribution bring home the importance of taking an intersectional approach to assessment to make visible the ways that inequality functions along multiple axes of power and identity in higher education. As they convincingly argue, we cannot assume that existing practices and polices reflect theoretical advances, even when they purport a social justice aim. For these reasons, both methodology and policy need to be revisited frequently with attention to whose voices are being heard: "those of us in assessment need to be aware of who is and is not in the room when we're discussing, drafting, and revising policy, and we need to think carefully about how we create space for others to join the discussion."

Assertions drawn from Caswell and Bank's contribution:

- ***Theory: Assertion 3***. *Theories of writing assessment are invaluable in the formation of ontological, epistemological, and axiological perspectives that have profound impact on method, policy, and consequences.*
- ***Classroom and writing center research: Assertion 9.*** *Direct work with students is the first step in writing assessment.*
- ***Institutional research: Assertion 11***. *When institutional research on student writing is conducted, collection of information related to age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic identity, race, veteran status, and sexuality should be justified and done with an understanding of current, ethical standards for the gathering and securing of such information.*

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WRITING ASSESSMENT, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF OPPORTUNITY

Edited by Mya Poe, Asao B. Inoue, and Norbert Elliot, this collection provides the first principled examination of social justice and the advancement of opportunity as the aim and consequence of writing assessment. Contributors to the volume offer interventions in historiographic studies, justice-focused applications in admission and placement assessment, innovative frameworks for outcomes design, and new directions for teacher research and professional development. Drawing from contributors' research, the collection constructs a social justice canvas—an innovative technique that suggests ways that principles of social justice can be integrated into teaching and assessing writing. The volume concludes with 18 assertions on writing assessment designed to guide future research in the field.

Mya Poe is Associate Professor of English at Northeastern University. Her scholarship has appeared in *College Composition and Communication, Journal of Business and Technical Communication, Journal of Writing Assessment*, and *Across the Disciplines*. **Asao B. Inoue** is Professor of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, Director of University Writing and the Writing Center, a member of the Executive Board of Council of Writing Program Administrators, and the 2018 Program Chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication. **Norbert Elliot** is Research Professor at the University of South Florida and Professor Emeritus of English at New Jersey Institute of Technology.