

# The potential of critical feminist citizenship frameworks for citizenship and social justice in higher education

VIVIENNE BOZALEK

University of Western Cape

RONELLE CAROLISSEN

Stellenbosch University

*There is a paucity of South African literature that uses feminist critical approaches as a conceptual tool to examine intersections of social justice and citizenship. This article aims to address this gap by examining the potential of critical feminist approaches to transform conceptions of citizenship in higher education. It outlines how traditional normative frameworks of citizenship can be contested by drawing on feminist approaches. More specifically, the article focuses on feminist contributions regarding ontological constructions of human beings as citizens, the public-private binary, the politics of needs interpretation, participatory parity and belonging, illuminating these concepts with illustrative examples from the higher education context. The article concludes by suggesting recommendations based on the identified feminist conceptions.*

**Keywords:** Social justice, citizenship, feminism, South Africa, higher education

## Introduction

While some work exists on both social justice and citizenship in educational contexts in South Africa (see Badat, 2010; Enslin, 2003; Hill, Baxen, Craig & Namakula, 2012; Soudien, 2006; Walker & Unterhalter, 2007; Vally, 2007), there is a paucity of literature which uses feminist frameworks to integrate social justice and citizenship. We propose that one of the ways in which we can consider an integration of social justice and citizenship is by using feminist critical approaches as a conceptual tool to interface these two concepts. We regard this as a useful analysis since, with some exceptions (see Enslin, 2006; Pendlebury & Enslin, 2004; Walker & Unterhalter, 2007), feminist critical approaches have been used infrequently in educational analyses on citizenship and social justice in South Africa and more widely, too (Tormey & Gleeson, 2012).

In this article, we posit that traditional normative frameworks are, for several reasons, limited and that it is necessary to find alternative ways of thinking about citizenship in higher education (HE). The reason for this is that normative frameworks produce hegemonic discourses by conferring power on certain speaking positions and vocabularies, and thus include and exclude certain modes of speaking and thinking about citizenship (Sevenhuijsen, 1998, 2003). Feminist approaches are particularly helpful for deconstructing hegemonic discourses implicit in ideas of citizenship, difference and social justice in South African HE. These critical political feminist approaches have the potential to create alternative discursive or rhetorical spaces (Code, 1995) that can move ideas and practices residing at the margins of debates to the centre of political discourse (hooks, 2000). Insights gleaned from this process can then be used to consider possible ways in which critical citizens may be developed in and through HE, as suggested in the *National Plan for Higher Education White Paper* (Department of Education, 1997).

Citizenship has been foregrounded in South African HE policy documents. For example, the *Education White paper 3: A framework for transformation of higher education* (Department of Education, 1997:1.3) argues that one of the roles of HE is to contribute to socialising students who are the “enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens”. The Higher Education South Africa (HES) statement to the Higher Education Summit (2010) also quotes Saleem Badat, the Vice Chancellor of Rhodes, as saying that one of the key roles of HE is to contribute to “forging a critical and democratic citizenship” and

“developing students who are sensitive intellectuals and critical citizens” (retrieved from [http://www.cepd.org.za/?q=summit\\_document\\_submissions](http://www.cepd.org.za/?q=summit_document_submissions), June 2012).

In order to examine these issues in South African HE, we make use of feminist theorists such as Fraser (2008, 2009), Nussbaum (2010), Tronto (1993, in press); Sevenhuijsen (1998, 2003), Yuval-Davis (2011) and Young (2011) who have all made alternative contributions to debates on citizenship, belonging, social justice and inclusion. What is core to all their contributions are the alternatives that these theories provide to traditional normative frameworks through their incorporation of difference into social justice and citizenship, which we believe to be of central importance for HE.

In this article, we first elaborate on how traditional normative frameworks envisage citizenship and then outline the contributions which feminist approaches make in contesting these traditional views of citizenship. In perusing the literature, we identified common themes central to difference, citizenship and social justice across the major theorists mentioned earlier. The following themes were central: ontological constructions of human beings as citizens; the public-private binary; the politics of needs interpretation; participatory parity, and belonging. Throughout the article, we provide examples of how these feminist contributions to citizenship can be used to analyse and inform HE practices. Finally, we provide some recommendations for HE regarding these identified themes.

## Traditional normative frameworks

At its most basic level, citizenship is viewed as a legal status or membership of a nation state (Lister, Williams, Anttonen, Bussemaker, Gerhard, Heinen, Johansson, Leira, Siim & Tobio, 2007). Most scholars of citizenship use TH Marshall (1950) as a starting point for debates on citizenship (Lister, 2003; Tronto, in press; Yuval-Davis, 2011). Marshall (1950) argued that all who have citizenship status are equal with respect to rights and duties. He classified these rights as civil, political and *social* or welfare rights. At the time of his writing, he was a pioneer in terms of his progressive attitude to and emphasis on social class inequalities in terms of citizenship. He advocated for the provision of public goods for meeting educational, health and other needs which are not provided for by the market. However, his views on social inclusion were premised on the notion of the breadwinner husband and a stay-at-home wife with a few children. He believed that *citizenship rights* are conferred only on those who take up the duty to work in public spaces in order to contribute to the public good (Lister, 2003). His view of citizenship assumed a traditional patriarchal view of citizenship that valorises men’s contribution to society. This assumption was formulated in a context in which men had greater access to paid work during the 1950s when Marshall was writing. He valued women’s unpaid work, mainly in private spaces of the family and home, in their roles as caregivers for dependents, but did not associate this with citizenship. Ontologically, he therefore viewed human beings as workers and the work ethic (defined as those engaged in paid labour) as making human beings worthy of citizenship.

The work ethic excludes unpaid labour as valuable work and maintains that hard work will be rewarded. This is also based on methodological individualism where the worth of human beings is dependent on how hard they can work for themselves in the public sphere. It, therefore, excludes interdependency, collaboration and social sharing as valid and desirable practices in society. This view may be regarded as decontextualised and ahistorical, as it obscures the systematic privileging and oppression of citizens such as that observed in racism or gender discrimination (Tronto, in press).

Feminist authors have critiqued this view, not only because women and dependents (such as infants, children, the elderly and those living with disabilities) have been excluded as citizens (Kittay 2001, 2002; Nussbaum, 2006), but also as a result of the moral assumptions guiding Marshall’s views.

We will now consider ways in which critical feminists have defined citizenship and the alternative perspectives they have offered.

The themes central to feminist writing, in this instance, are the constructions of human beings as citizens; the politics of needs interpretation; the public-private binary; participatory parity, and belonging. We consider the implications that these themes have for citizenship and social justice in South African HE. It is important to recognise that real-life examples from HE contexts do not necessarily neatly

fit into these categories as mutually exclusive entities. There is considerable overlap between various thematic categories.

## Constructions of human beings as citizens

Critical feminists believe that autonomy can be possible only through social relations with others. Relational ontology rejects ideas of a rational, independent and self-sufficient self (Rawls, 1971), but rather views human beings as interdependent, vulnerable and temporal beings (Benhabib, 1992; Cockburn, 2005; O'Brien, 2005; Nussbaum, 2012; Sevenhuijsen, 1998; Tronto, 1993). Universalist discourses' constructions of autonomous human beings obscure alternative feminist normative constructions which regard the moral agent as "an 'encumbered self', who is always already embedded in relations with flesh-and-blood others and is partly constituted by these relations" (Keller, 1997:152). These feminist views of human beings incorporate difference, particularity, concreteness and situatedness (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005), rather than a Rawlsian universal or 'generalised other' devoid of specific characteristics and separated from day-to-day relationships with others (Benhabib, 1992; Cockburn, 2005).

A useful theory of citizenship should not explain away difference and situatedness in its emphasis on the homogeneity of citizens, but should provide theoretical tools to incorporate the possibility that all human beings in their differential positioning's and in the contexts of concrete relationships should be able to lead flourishing lives (Benhabib, 1992; Nussbaum, 2012).

Models of citizenship generally ascribed to in HE are chiefly informed by rights-based models such as those proposed by TH Marshall (1950) and male enlightenment theorists such as Rawls (1971). Inherent in these HE discourses is the assumption that we are all equally positioned and that differential access to social, economic and cultural resources are not taken into account. Since HE policies and practices generally operate from implicit assumptions that individuals are the same, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are not geared towards accommodating difference. Feminists such as Iris Young would insist that social, economic and cultural inequalities advantage some in HE over others, thus democratic equity in HE would need to recognise this and provide compensation for this unfairness to citizens in order for them to flourish in this sector (Young, 2004). Ultimately, these institutions expect individuals and ranges of difference to accommodate them rather than institutions adjusting to individuals (Young, 1992). HEIs would, for example, position a student from a rural Eastern Cape school in the same way as a middle-class child from an urban privileged school in the city. Similarly, the student who has to perform multiple caring duties after work is placed on an equal footing with a student who has access to multiple supports such as supportive partners, parents and/or domestic workers. Differential positionalities in relation to HE also apply to staff. Many women academic staff have repeatedly raised the issue of the double shift, central to women's work, as impacting on their abilities to keep abreast with the current demands to publish or perish in the academy (Raddon, 2002; Mills & Berg, 2010).

However, if individuals do not succeed in HE, their underperformance is construed as individual deficit. The pathologising of individuals arises because traits such as hard work, individual success, self-discipline and personal responsibility contribute to the discourse of autonomy in which people are held personally responsible for their own educational success, irrespective of their differential circumstances. The academy is structured to be an institution that privileges White, male, middle-class normativity and all who are positioned differently in terms of location/positionalities have to make numerous accommodations to fit into the established normative structure and institutional discourses. This is particularly evident in discourses of neoliberalism which currently underpin HE policies and practices (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Lister, 2003; Tronto, in press). Students are constructed as consumers and universities as corporate structures. This gives rise to technical-instrumental orientation in which the state plays a diminished role, but maintains control through an audit culture. In this audit culture, control can be situated from a distance, because the expectations are discursively interiorised and performed by individuals such as students and lecturers within the HEIs (Foucault, 1977). In this way, academic subjectivities are constructed through internalisation and performance of hegemonic practices. The dynamics inherent in the audit culture have a number of implications for HE. When students are thought of as consumers, the potential exists that the

teaching and learning project can be negatively affected (Vally, 2007). For example, student evaluations of modules and lecturers may be skewed when students engage in limited self-reflexivity and have a reduced capacity to engage with difference, particularly when the lecturer is constructed as different by the students.

## The public-private binary

As noted earlier, a denial of difference disguises ways in which relationships are politically skewed and unequal in society (O'Brien, 2005; Young, 2004). Assumptions implicit in Marshall's (1950) view of citizenship construct men as autonomous breadwinners, women as carers, and as living in nuclear families. Women and children are constructed as being dependent on men and as obtaining their status through men's position in society. These assumptions still tend to dominate traditional discourses on citizenship (Tronto, in press).

Young (1992:9-10) identifies the origins of citizenship in this conceptualisation:

*In this image of the republican citizen is a self-sufficient head of household, who supports himself and his dependents by means of his own property and labour. On this burger model, women, children, servants and others without independent means of producing a living, all those unable to work, are essentially dependent, either not citizens at all, or not full citizens.*

The work ethic and separation between public and private life prevailed in the late nineteenth century, where only men and women slaves were engaged in work, leaving the responsibility of care to women in the home. The work ethic reinforces the idea that if we work hard, we are deserving and will succeed (Tronto, in press). From this perspective, a citizen in HE is one who can present himself as being ready and available to work at all times, unencumbered by household responsibilities, and whose needs are fully taken care of by a woman in the private sphere.

In the public world, teaching in HE can be regarded as a form of care. Race, rank, gender and class impact on how academics often engage differently with teaching and learning (Omolade, 1994). In the context of marketization, casualization of academic labour has become ubiquitous (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005) and is regarded as a cheaper way of getting more work done for less pay (Mills & Berg, 2010). Teaching is often outsourced, while more senior White men are able to concentrate on research activities, which are more valued than the hands-on work of teaching. These categories of people are also generally better placed, because they are inclined to take on researcher positions focused on individual accomplishments and success, minimising teaching rather than adopting a teaching and supportive presence for students. This is in sharp contrast to the caring roles of women and, more particularly, Black women in academia (see Omolade, 1994 regarding the "mummification" of Black women in the public and private life).

Such models of citizenship informed by the boundaries between public and private life depend on the citizen worker and support staff (Tronto, 2001). This model of citizenship has been reinforced by neoliberalism which concentrates only on economic contributions by citizens, obfuscating care as a valuable and essential activity in human life. Tronto (2001) develops a convincing argument for including care as a necessary criterion or even precondition of citizenship. This would have the effect of making private considerations of care into public ones, and transcending the false dichotomy of the public/private spheres in views of citizenship.

## The politics of needs interpretation

As mentioned earlier, following the ideas of TH Marshall (1950), most contemporary views of citizenship highlight the importance of rights and obligations. Feminists adopt a broader view of citizenship which incorporates the politics of needs interpretation as an area of contestation (Fraser, 1989).

In an interview with Bozalek (2012), Nancy Fraser asserts that needs are not objective or absolute, but are constructed by discourses in society. These discourses are informed by neoliberal markets, experts and social movements. Contestations arise about where needs should be located – in the public or private sphere. Feminists would argue that needs are political and should be located publicly. Neoliberal

discourses would view needs as located in the individual where the responsibility for meeting needs is then located in private spaces of homes with individuals and families, absolving states from the responsibility for meeting needs. The process of needs interpretation is political and should be democratically decided by both caregivers and receivers – in other words, taking HE as an example by policymakers, academics and students. These debates would be considered central to discursive political struggles about citizenship. An example of the politicisation of needs in HE is particularly evident in how community engagement is construed in HE.

All South African HEIs are now required to include community engagement as part of their core function (Department of Education, 1997). Over the past few years, community engagement in South Africa has been regarded as important for attracting symbolic legitimacy for social responsibility in institutions. The idea of community engagement is generally that a well-meaning institution engages with communities outside of the university to provide services (research, intervention). Yet community is seldom constructed as work within the university and, at times, curricula including community issues themselves are stigmatised (Carolissen, Rohleder, Swartz, Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2010). All university-related actors are viewed as independent, resourced individuals and those outside as the antithetical poor, less resourced and marginal. This view constructs others outside the university as having needs and those within the institution as not having needs. When all are constructed as independent and resourced, the effect is that differential needs within the university are silenced. This, in turn, maintains the status quo of the university being constructed as a space of White, middle-class, male belonging. It is thus important for citizenship in HE to ask questions regarding who is involved in setting the agenda for what people's needs are. It is problematic if these needs are entirely driven by market-related or professional discourses without recourse to the recipients of care – students and on the ground providers of care in HE.

## Participatory parity

We regard participatory parity as a crucial concept for citizenship and social justice. Nancy Fraser (2005, 2008, 2009) equates social justice with the ability to participate as equals and full partners in social interaction. Social arrangements that promote participatory parity are a prerequisite to enable people to interact on an equal footing. Fraser foregrounds three different dimensions which affect participatory parity – the *economic*, *cultural* and *political* spheres, all of which require social arrangements to be in place for participatory parity. Table 1 visually represents Fraser's view of participatory parity, which will be explained systematically in the following paragraphs. The political sphere that is of direct relevance to this article will be emphasised.

Table 1: Fraser's contribution to citizenship

Participatory parity		
Economic	Cultural	Political
Mal-/distribution	Mis-/recognition	Mis-/representation
		Misframing

Fraser regards these three dimensions as distinct species or genres of social justice, all of which necessarily affect people's abilities to interact as equals. Since our article focuses specifically on citizenship, we regard her third dimension of the political sphere as the most important to concentrate on. However, as North (2006) points out, the economic and the cultural are also both important. The picture will be incomplete if one considers only the economic or material aspects of justice in HE (the way resources or social goods are distributed) – how HEIs are resourced or under-resourced, without the cultural aspect. Similarly, if only the cultural aspect is considered, this view will also be diminished, as it will only focus on middle-class interests and the normalising of values through hegemonic discourses and not on needed resources for participatory parity. It is important to note, however, that North (2006) identified these aspects before Fraser (2008, 2009) added a third dimension *belonging*, which we will discuss in more detail when

considering its importance for citizenship. In the following section, we briefly discuss the economic and cultural spheres and then pay more attention to the political sphere which includes belonging.

The *economic or class-based sphere* alluded to by Fraser pertains to the distribution of material resources and how this affects citizenship in HE. Participatory parity would be influenced by issues such as maldistribution of resources, disparities in income, leisure time and labour. The *cultural sphere* referred to by Fraser denotes the ways in which people's attributes are either valued or devalued – as Fraser (2005, 2008, 2009) explains it – how these attributes are either recognised or misrecognised. Being either recognised or misrecognised and one's differential access to material resources would have dire consequences for being able to participate as peers in the HE context. Firferey and Carolissen (2010) show how the dynamics of poverty in HE impact on poor students' ability to hand in assignments timeously and how shame about poverty, constructed as the individual's fault, perpetuates silences about the existence of poverty among HE students. These micro dynamics of poverty remain invisible and impact on throughput rates, but are minimally addressed because of their invisibility.

Fraser's (2008, 2009) third *political* dimension, which she has recently developed, is directly pertinent to citizenship, as it has to do with participatory parity in relation to representation and voice. This dimension was developed as a response to the need to move to a post-Westphalian view which transcends an obsession with the nation-state as a frame, and one which acknowledges globalisation. This dimension allows us, from a citizenship perspective, to incorporate an analysis of how injustices are perpetrated by transnational powers and how predator states affect citizens across geographical locations. To view these injustices from a nation-state perspective only would be an instance of what Fraser refers to as "misframing". The political sphere of society should enable all people involved in HE to have a voice and influence in decisions which affect them – this has to do with representation. In addition to being able to vote and participate in social movements such as Students' Representative Councils (SRCs) on campuses, Fraser introduces a second level of representation which pertains to the aspect of boundary-setting. This arises when HE establishes boundaries which exclude some groups or institutions and include others – what she calls "misframing" them. The notion of political framing and misframing thus allows us to also examine who is included and excluded from justice claims in HE. If one is excluded from HE, or from making claims, for example, if one is a cleaner in an HEI, one is not eligible to be counted as a citizen and would be excluded from justice claims.

It could, therefore, be argued that this third dimension of social justice is more severe than either the economic or the cultural, as one may be wrongly excluded from consideration for distribution, recognition and representation. In the contemporary HE landscape, historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs) are judged against the same criteria as historically advantaged institutions (HAIs). These equal but not necessarily equitable positioning's in relation to 'standards' or quality assurance processes allow HDIs to become excluded from resources, from obtaining recognition as institutions, and from petitioning with strong voices for a recognised place in the HE landscape. Fraser refers to the exclusion from consideration for first-order claims against maldistribution and misrecognition as a form of "misframing". Those who are excluded could only be supplicants for the benevolence of others in that it serves to prevent those who may be poor (economic dimension) or despised (cultural dimension) from challenging injustices against them. For these reasons, Fraser regards misframing as the defining form of injustice in the globalised era.

Bozalek and Boughey (2012) point out how exclusion takes place at institutional and systemic levels, and how either individual students or lecturers are held responsible for success or failure, even though systemic factors deeply affect success. The universalization of low participation and throughput rates in South Africa, for example, blurs inequities within the HE sector, as political issues are presented in apolitical and ahistorical contexts, obfuscating how historically Black universities (HBUs) have fewer resources and more poorly prepared students that are enrolled. Another instance of misframing occurs when the default student is hegemonically constructed as a White, middle-class male and excludes the fact that students are differently positioned with regard to epistemological access to engage with curricula.

All three dimensions – economic, cultural and political – must be present for participatory parity to occur. Although they may be complexly intertwined, none of them alone is sufficient for participatory parity and

one cannot be reduced to the other dimension. For each dimension of social justice, Fraser has distinguished between affirmative and transformative approaches for dealing with injustices. She views affirmative approaches as only ameliorative. While they may correct inequities created by social arrangements, they do not disturb the underlying social structures that generate these inequities. Transformative approaches, on the other hand, do address underlying root causes or the underlying generative framework.

In the economic dimension, transformative approaches make entitlements universal so that vulnerable groups of people are not regarded as citizens who are a burden to society, supplicants, or as benefiting from special treatment.

In the cultural dimension, transformative approaches acknowledge complexity, deconstructing and destabilising binary categories, rather than entrenching identity politics or multiculturalism.

In the political dimension, affirmative politics of framing accepts that Westphalian state boundaries are appropriate and attempts to redraw these state-territorial boundaries or create new ones. In the transformative approach, injustices are not only regarded as residing in state-territorial boundaries, but also beyond territorial boundaries, in the global economy, information and communication networks (the digital divide), environmental sustainability issues, and other non-territorial powers. These spaces are increasingly important for citizenship debates, as the digitalisation of knowledge and the new impact of social networks and media have potentially powerful impacts on participatory parity (see, for example, Boler, 2008). In addition to contesting the boundaries of the frame and invoking a post-Westphalian principle, the transformative politics of framing also proposes *to change the way in which the boundaries are drawn*. Fellow subjects of justice would not be constituted in geographical locations, but with regard to particular structural issues which promote advantage or disadvantage – appealing to an “all-affected principle” (Fraser, 2009:24-25). This “all affected principle” means that everyone who is affected by a particular social structure or institution could be claimants of social justice. People’s collective justice claims are thus not dependent on geographical location, but on common claims against structures that affect them. According to Fraser (2009:24), they come together through “their co-imbrication in a common structural or institutional framework, which sets the ground rules that govern their social interaction, thereby shaping their respective life possibilities of advantage and disadvantage”. Examples of groups of claimants of social justice against structures that harm them who have applied this “all affected principle” across state-territorial boundaries or higher educational contexts could be indigenous peoples, first-generation students, feminists and critical race-theorists. Rather than people in a particular geographical location, people who work together on an issue such as racism in HE, or the digital divide, will join forces across essentialist boundaries of differences and act on structures that affect them. Social movements such as Anti-Racism Network in Higher Education (ARNHE) and Open Educational Resources (OER) are examples of such cross-HEI movements, instigated by the “all-affected principle”.

## Belonging

Yuval Davis’s (2011) transversal politics of belonging are similar to Fraser’s (2008, 2009) “all-affected principle”, as they both argue for working across differential positions or locations to address structural issues.<sup>1</sup> This means that a focus on common values and political symbolism, rather than identification on the basis of similar socially constructed (and unitary identity) features such as gender and race *only*, is important. For both these theorists, collective action is, therefore, constructed from the perspective of common epistemologies and understandings rather than from identity politics.

The notion of dialogical engagement is central to belonging for Yuval-Davis (2011) and Fraser (2009) as well as for the political ethics of care (Tronto, 1993). However, Yuval-Davis (2011) alerts us to the important consideration that dialogue *alone* will not contribute to effecting transformation. Dialogue needs to be part of a component of engagements that have reflexive self-problematism (reflexive justice) as a central goal. This may mean that academics and students should reflect not only on their own histories of marginalisation, but also on histories of current and on-going privilege within and outside the frame of HE contexts (Pease, 2010).

## Conclusion

In this article, we have argued for a set of themes inherent in critical feminist approaches that may be useful for contesting traditional views of citizenship in HE. The themes are ontological constructions of human beings such as citizens, the public-private binary, the politics of needs interpretation, participatory parity, and belonging. These critical feminist perspectives signal the limitations of human rights discourses within citizenship (for example, TH Marshall's views) and are not sufficiently nuanced to address citizenship issues in HE; they should, therefore, not be accepted uncritically. Countries with democratic constitutions, such as South Africa and India, are still locations in which the majority of the population experience enormous inequities in HE and live with structural injustices. In this conclusion, we reconsider the themes developed to make some recommendations that pertain to HE.

### Human beings as citizens

HE needs to incorporate and embrace the realisation that all involved (for example, both academics and students) are interdependent and vulnerable. HEIs need to be able to accommodate difference, rather than participants having to adapt to rigid institutional cultures. Nussbaum (2010) observes that vulnerability should not be feared or shamefully regarded as a weakness, but as a central part of being human.

### Transcending the public-private binary

Social arrangements in HE need to be more inclusive of people's lives from a holistic perspective. For example, university calendars could be set up to cohere with school terms and timetables, and to accommodate caring activities, without it being assumed that staff and students have access to alternative caring facilities. In order to promote this view of citizenship, Nussbaum (2006) argues that public education should cultivate and incorporate the importance of care for both men and women to break down the reluctance that many men feel to do caring work. Such teaching should facilitate the shift in engaging men to take responsibility for care.

### The politics of needs interpretation

It is important for HE to recognise that needs are constructed and that multiple discourses about needs exist and can be contested. This recognition may create opportunities to disrupt dominant and singular hegemonic discourses about needs in HE such as the neoliberal view of students as consumers. It is thus important to involve all participants in democratic dialogue about how these needs should be prioritised and met.

### Participatory parity and belonging

To create opportunities for people to participate on an *equal footing* in HE, we should consider imaginative ways to achieve transformative approaches to citizenship, including redistribution, recognition and belonging. For example, we need to consider ways in which to achieve transdisciplinarity, collaboration across professions, differently placed institutions, and geographical locations. In addition, we need to be able to question authority and tradition and perceive ourselves in a complex web of relationships at local and global levels.

This article has aimed to incorporate critical feminist ideas into South African HE debates on citizenship and social justice by highlighting five themes central to a critical feminist framework. We have made recommendations regarding citizenship and provided examples from the South African HE context that may be considered and extended in future work.

## Endnotes

1. We recognise that many of the theorists' views are contested and that they themselves contest each other's' views (Olson, 2008). It is beyond the scope of this article to engage with these debates, as we

aim to draw together the key essence of critical feminist theories in developing a framework within which to analyse HE.

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