

DISCIPLINING THE FEMININE

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I am reminded of a male colleague, a communication scholar, who has been trying to convince me that I and other feminists lack an internal grace or beauty of character that, once adopted, would allow us to move graciously through the world without anger and confrontation. I have responded that the admonition to "be nice" is precisely what is used to keep us in our places. We will be called crazy. We may be thought churlish and petty. We may be thought unscholarly and unintellectual. If so, we will be joining a long line of honorable women. (Rakow 211)

The ministers of knowledge have always assumed that the whole universe was threatened by the very changes that affected their ideologies and their positions. They transmute the misfortune of their theories into theories of misfortune. (de Certeau 95-6)

ACADEMIC writing of the kind published in this or any other professional journal is regulated by clear norms, usually among them the demand for a refined, ahistorical, smoothly finished univocality. That is, works published in most of our academic journals display as little as possible the circumstances and activities of their production. Notably missing, or at least reduced to virtual silence, is the passion that obviously drives our choices to write about particular topics in particular ways. Our writings suppress our convictions, our enthusiasm, our anger, in the interest of achieving an impersonal, "expert" distance and tone. Similarly, journal articles rarely reveal their own histories. The formative history of an essay is reduced to a notation of an "earlier version," or its history is constituted as a "disciplinary past" by situating the essay in the context of a literature review. Masked also are the mistakes we inevitably make in the process of research and writing. These cannot remain, for we seek a coherent, authoritative, cleanly argued, singular and defensible position, devoid of "extraneous" or "tangential" details. And gone are any overt signs, except perhaps in a note crediting them, of the "extra" voices of those who provided suggestions or sanctions for revision, in particular the voices of journal editors and referees. These voices are accommodated in such a way as to subsume them, to make them inaudible, to render them part and parcel of the unitary, uncomplicated speech of the author. Finally, the scholarly essay that addresses the working conditions or institutional apparatuses situating the professional scholar is rare indeed. "Scholarship," we would prefer to think, is vouchsafed by academic freedom and intellectual ethics. As a result, issues of institutional or professional power are deemed superfluous to the substance and character of our scholarly efforts.¹ These are but a few of the norms that govern our academic writing, but they surely are recognizable as vital rules to most of us who write in the professional academic milieu of speech communication.

Our approach in this essay is to misunderstand purposefully these norms in the interest of our goal: to point to and critique a constellation of practices in our discipline that some of us would prefer to believe were the relics of a time long past. We refer to the particular themes and enabling mechanisms of a masculinist disciplinary ideology, whose professionalized and seemingly liberal thematic motifs

serve as a benign cover for a selectively hostile and exclusionary disciplinary practice.

Our belief that we must break the sacrosanct rules of scholarly writing in order to display these practices is worth examining. In fact, such a move would not be wholly necessary if we were to limit our objective to the one with which we began this project; our goal had been to urge our disciplinary colleagues to eschew any professional/institutional/authoritative use of the findings or rationale of Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary's 1992 report, "Active Prolific Female Scholars in Communication." However, our project took on added dimension as we attempted to pursue that goal along the ordinary paths toward publication. We wrote an essay responding to the Hickson et al. report and submitted our essay to another prominent speech communication journal for editorial consideration. The anonymous reviews we received (attached to a rejection letter) themselves seemed sufficiently important as ideological fragments that we decided to "up the critical ante," to do more than comment on the Hickson et al. report. Those reviews constitute a rare find, tangible and unusually explicit fragments of what is almost certainly a larger, intolerant disciplinary text that typically remains implicit, unreadable, and deniable.² Thus, *in addition to* arguing against use of the Hickson et al. report, which we attempted to do before, we will suggest also that their report is a thematic marker of a masculinist ideology and that the anonymous reviews of our original essay are unusually explicit manifestations of the apparatuses that sustain and enable those ideological themes. We will begin in the next section with a description of our critical stance and with a narrative that chronicles the construction of this manuscript. The sections following are critical readings, in turn, of the Hickson et al. report and of the anonymous referees' reviews of our original response essay. We will conclude by discussing the implications for feminist scholarship of the ideological themes and mechanisms represented by Hickson et al. and by the reviews of our original essay.

FOLLOWING AND BREAKING RULES: PROFESSIONAL PRECEDENTS AND UNPROFESSIONAL WRITING

If the professional disciplinary rules that we have specified were to find absolute adherence, this essay would have been derailed by now, for it already has revealed something of the history of its production, hinted of a motivation grounded in anger, and staked for itself an explicitly politicized position. Worse, perhaps, we have claimed that it is our *own* disciplinary apparatus that is under indictment. That claim entails two unpleasant possibilities, first, that we *all* have helped to perpetuate the undesirable practices of our discipline by reinforcing and accommodating ourselves to its rules, and second, that the rules themselves are in need of scrutiny and possibly of change. We suspect that a great many journal article submissions have been rejected for far less serious breaches of disciplinary etiquette than these.³ However, there are precedents for breaking the rules, and this essay takes its particular stance at a nexus among several of them: a specific iteration of the rhetoric of inquiry project, as well as the general positions of the ideological turn, critical rhetoric, feminist theory, and the recent revelatory narrative project on sexual harassment in the *Journal of Applied Communication Research*.

The rhetoric of inquiry project is committed to understand the specific rhetorical constructions of various academic disciplines.⁴ While most self-described adherents

of POROI attend to the rhetorics of other fields, the aim of the project can and should be reflexive. That is, it can be turned back to examine its own professional instantiation.⁵ As Hariman argues, "If rhetorical studies are read into a disciplinary scheme they are read poorly; if they are read sympathetically they subvert the disciplinary reading" (212). He suggests that "the rhetoric of inquiry can itself be aggressively rhetorical—which means more than recognizing that one's own text is as fabricated as any other. The full-blown rhetorical perspective replaces disinterestedness with advocacy, balances specialization with generality, and confronts expertise with an assertion of voice" (213). Hariman's point stands as a precedent, for it suggests that we confront rhetorically the professionalization of university culture, which "has become more a repressive power than a productive power" (212), and it implies that we consider our own field of inquiry in light of that power.

Such an extension of POROI toward a reflection on the professional codes and practices of speech communication is consistent with another set of precedents found in the literature of the "ideological turn," advocated first by Wander and Jenkins, elaborated by Wander ("Ideological Turn"; "Third Persona") and Crowley, and supplemented by discussions of a "critical rhetoric" (McGee, "Text"; McKerrow; Ono and Sloop). The "ideological" project clearly names our discipline's assumptions and apparatuses as targets of critical analysis. What the ideological turn and critical rhetoric literatures highlight and share with Hariman's construction of POROI is the element of the political. All three are explicitly attuned to issues of power as they are inscribed and exercised in all varieties of rhetorical practice, including academic work. They also are committed to understanding the repressive nature of power as it is constructed and acted in discourse. Wander suggests that we attend to the "third persona," a rhetorical excision of the "unacceptable, undesirable, insignificant" elements ("Third Persona" 209), the "audience/s ignored or denounced through the speech, the discourse, the text" ("Politics" 288). And McKerrow specifies a "critique of domination" as a component part of critical rhetoric. Both the ideological turn and critical rhetoric, also like Hariman's position, are animated by poststructuralist thinking, which frequently demands a grounding in practice (rather than in grand theory) and which counts the most "local," everyday life events as legitimate objects of critique (de Certeau; Foucault). The critical writings within the poststructuralist stance often assume extraordinary forms, because the orthodox and prescribed modes of academic writing are unfit or unable to accommodate their positions. Thus, this group of writings also serves as a precedent; it understands the professional as political and academic norms as, in part, repressive. Moreover, it points us to the "local"; it is our position that our own disciplinary practices can and should be counted among the localities we engage critically. Finally, this literature is willing to count as possibly legitimate those writings that would be delegitimized and/or silenced when held to the traditional strictures of professional academic work.

The same is frequently true of feminist theory. Writing is often differentially inscribed and valued in feminist theory; it legitimizes experiential and narrative "evidence," redirection and misappropriation of language, and celebration of *pathos*.⁶ In addition, like ideological critique of the type advocated by Wander, feminist theory works at the focal point of power relations, but it understands them principally (sometimes exclusively) as sexually embodied or gender-normed. Virtu-

ally every iteration of feminist theory, from its most moderate to its most radical construction, claims a transformative or interventionist political stance. That entails changes in academic politics no less than it does alterations in the politics of the public sphere.⁷ We see feminist theory as a precedent, for some of the same reasons that we have named the others, but feminist theory specifies our project further; it situates us within a resistant political stance, but one that recognizes the particularity of repressive academic politics with regard to gender-normed practices.

That gender politics are played out in material ways with material effects is starkly clear in the recent special issue of *JACR*, " 'Telling our Stories': Sexual Harassment in the Communication Discipline." The vivid and poignant narratives about personal experiences of sexual harassment in the discipline must lead, as Taylor and Conrad suggest, away from the comforting but inaccurate characterization of gender politics as "someone else's problem" (402n). They also point out that the university structure is "conditioned by popular images of its pastoral innocence, and of its highly cognitive and theoretical workers—seemingly 'disinterested' intellectuals" (405). Strine recognizes essentially the same image, and she links the disembodied, cognitive realm to material practices in her suggestion that those who engage "their academic work as dispassionate, tough minded 'objectivity' and methodological rigor" may fear "feminine sensibilities and supposedly softer, more experimental and participatory approaches to knowledge" as "contaminants to the rationalistic male-centered academic workplace" (399).

The narrative accounts of sexual harassment ("Our Stories") and the attendant critical analyses by Strine and Taylor and Conrad, thus, serve notice in two ways that our position takes as precedent. First, they confront our discipline's unique twist on the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) syndrome. While acknowledging that increasing numbers of women have populated the discipline, they display the manner in which some of them have been mistreated, not somewhere else, but here—in our midst. Second, they display the effects of gender politics concretely; they set the supposedly disembodied neutrality of academic professionals off against the embodied materiality of their persons.

Certainly the story we have to tell is *far* less frightening and grotesque than those told by the survivors of these sexual harassment events. However, in a sense, our story is of a piece with those events. "How things work," the "norms governing the rational operation of the academic sphere," constitute the ideological background (Strine 391). This ideology enables both the episodic sexual harassment described in the narratives as well as the incidents of erasure and devaluation of women represented by the Hickson et al. report and enforced by the journal referees' reviews of our initial response essay.

The Hickson et al. report rank orders women in the field according to the number of articles they have published in journals indexed by Matlon and Ortiz. According to Hickson and his colleagues, the purpose of this ranking project is to "determine a yardstick for active, female researchers in communication" (351). They suggest that such a guideline is important for three reasons: (1) its use in tenure and promotion decisions; (2) its value in the sociology of knowledge, to determine where influence has been located in the discipline; and (3) its value to persons in other disciplines who want to know the comparative status of one individual's scholarly record (351). The report is one of several studies undertaken in recent years by

Hickson and his colleagues to assess scholarly productivity in the discipline.⁸ The research program by Hickson et al. represents but a portion of what Erickson, Fleuriot, and Hosman have recently described as the discipline's growing "cottage industry of counting articles authored by prolific researchers" (329).⁹ However, the Hickson et al. study of active, prolific female researchers is unique in its exclusive focus on a specific demographic/cultural group.

Soon after the report was published, we found ourselves locked in conversations about it. Although the three of us are in most respects professionally dissimilar (in rank, in research and teaching interests, in intellectual assumptions, etc.), we found each other to be equally dismayed by the *idea* of the report and in agreement that we should write an essay responding to it. Our dismay was grounded in both general and particular concerns. At a general level, the Hickson et al. report represented evidence of our discipline's continuing fascination with identifying the most prolific scholars in our midst, a fascination we find misguided. However, because others have recently argued that this fascination is problematic, we will not elaborate here on these general concerns.¹⁰ At a more particular level, we were fearful that Hickson et al.'s analysis of prolific female scholars would be embraced as a positive statement about women and for women in the discipline and that the masculinist ideology that ironically undergirds the analysis might be disregarded. This ideology is pervasive in the academy, including speech communication, and thus may not be immediately apparent to most readers in the absence of explicit discussion. The Hickson et al. report thus constitutes a fruitful "local" target for critique; it is, on one level, a seemingly benign if not positive statement about and for women but which, upon closer scrutiny, functions in precisely the opposite manner. By examining ways in which the masculinist ideology is apparent in the Hickson et al. report, we hoped to enter into the ongoing conversation about speech communication scholarship as gendered.¹¹

Our response essay was, from our point of view, rather modest. In fact, we worried that it might be too moderate, an irony in light of what our referees' reviews would suggest about it and about us. Nonetheless, we submitted the essay and, within a few weeks, received those reviews. After the initial shock of reading the reviews wore off, we realized that what we had received was a gift of sorts—two institutionally-sanctioned documents that displayed the enabling mechanisms that support the kinds of ideological themes Hickson et al. advance.

In the next section, we have reproduced almost the entirety of our original essay that responded to Hickson et al. We have eliminated one set of arguments and incidental markers thereof from the original version. This set of arguments addressed the factual accuracy, stylistic competence, and logical coherence of the Hickson et al. report.¹² Our decision to excise that component of the manuscript here is based on our realization that it probably served as a diversion from the principal point of our essay. We had attempted to link this set of arguments to our general ideological point by suggesting the possibility that such concerns as accuracy, style, and coherence simply might have been too easily disregarded in the case of an essay "merely" about women. However, ultimately the issues of accuracy and logical coherence seemed the only explicit substantive concerns of the initial referees; we had essentially provided them with an alibi for their refusal to address the primary arguments of our response. In the interest of providing the reader with

an accurate rendering of our ideologically-based objections to the Hickson et al. report, we have refrained from revising our original argument, despite the fact that any number of minor changes have occurred to us with the passage of time. However, none of these changes would alter the substance of our reaction to the report. The next section, thus, contains the remainder of our original essay.

SUBJECT OF OR SUBJECT TO RESEARCH? A RESPONSE TO HICKSON, STACKS,
AND AMSBARY'S "ACTIVE PROLIFIC FEMALE SCHOLARS
IN COMMUNICATION"

A number of scholars have described the "chilly climate" that confronts female faculty members in higher education.¹³ We believe that the temperature has dropped even further for females in the speech communication discipline with the publication of Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary's report of "research productivity" among "active prolific" female scholars. The Hickson et al. article constitutes an overt, if unintended, display of insensitivity toward and aggression against women in the discipline. In writing this response, we hope to persuade our female and male colleagues in the field to resist any use of its results.

Our desire to resist the Hickson et al. report is based in one simple observation: Although it is a report about women, it neglects or implicitly denies the fact that it is about women in virtually all of its constituent features—rationale, assumptions, method, and language. That is, Hickson et al. have named "female" as a category and then failed to consider the gendered specificity of the category. Their omission of any hint of the female gender among their "Key Concepts" list is a telling marker of a discourse that *effaces* women even as it specifies them as a group for observation. We submit that a discourse about women must not forget or erase women. But that is, paradoxically, what the Hickson et al. report accomplishes. And it does so by means much more significant and consequential than neglecting to name as a key concept the gendered group it purports to study.

Before exploring our specific concerns with the Hickson et al. article, however, let us be clear about our own stance. First, we do not wish to detract from the many scholarly accomplishments of the particular women listed in Table 1 ("Most Prolific Active Female Scholars in Communication, 1915-1990") of the Hickson et al. report. These women and many more not listed in Table 1 merit our respect for their scholarly contributions. Second, we do not believe or assume that the three *individuals* named Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary, are themselves aggressors against women. Neither do we believe or assume that the "aggressor" label is appropriate to describe the *persons* who reviewed or approved publication of this article. But it is not necessary to assume or make such individual attributions in order to conclude that the Hickson et al. *discourse* functions as an act of aggression against women in the field. We adhere to the general positions taken by a number of contemporary thinkers, that entire groups, institutions, or other power networks are speaking when individuals speak.¹⁴ To put it most simply, a discourse of right, power, and privilege is approved within our (or any) discipline, and that discourse is spoken by individual members of the discipline. In this case, it is being spoken by Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary. "Their" discourse indicts us all to the degree that we allow it to stand without resistance, because it is also *our* disciplinary discourse. So, when we refer to "Hickson et al.," "the authors," "they," "them," etc., we do not point to the

individuals Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary alone, but also to the entire institutional/discursive structure that legitimates their report.

Disciplinary discourses enable and ratify certain lines of argument and certain actions. In this case, "our" disciplinary discourse has authorized a ranking project grounded in an agentic perspective of impersonal abstraction, disciplinary territoriality, individuation, and hierarchy. A number of scholars have identified this perspective with the "male paradigm" that dominates higher education.¹⁵ These scholars, of course, are highlighting the themes of agency and communion that have been associated with males and females, respectively, in much social scientific research.¹⁶ The fact that female scholars were subjects of, and arguably subject to, the Hickson et al. agentic project is particularly distressing to us, because it is precisely this paradigm, and all that it represents, which constitutes the central obstacle to female achievement in academia. . . . A consideration of what/whose interests are likely to be served by their report [intensifies our distress]. We turn . . . [now] to the assumptions and ideological difficulties we find most disturbing in the Hickson et al. report. . . .

The Imposition of the "Male Paradigm"

The "male paradigm" is characterized, first, by *impersonal abstraction*. Initially, we wish to challenge the legitimacy of a project whose purpose is to develop context-free, universalistic "yardsticks" that can be applied in particular cases, in this instance, to female researchers in the field. Such a project, according to many scholars is anchored by a male-centered system of logic and morality, in contrast to the personalized and contextualized ways of knowing that are more typical of female socialization.¹⁷ The male-centered model of agency fundamentally is predicated on the separation of the person from contextual particulars. Thus, from the perspective of the "male paradigm," judgment should be based on universal principles and abstract laws that are characterized by "objectivity." The imposition of this male-centered model on females is offensive on its face, because it essentially forgets that they are female. Moreover, the resulting "yardsticks" ignore important contextual factors that distinguish female and male career patterns of research performance.

One of the most important of these contextual factors is the differing temporal rhythms that characterize the scholarly performances of female and male academics. Graphic representations of scholarly activity over the entire life of a career tend to be saddle-shaped for men and to be of a linear progression pattern for women. That is, male research activity tends to be high for the first five to ten years after the doctorate, then levels off at the associate level before picking up again at a later point in the career.¹⁸ By contrast, female research activity tends to be less than male research activity prior to tenure, but greater than male activity after the point of tenure (Task Force on Women in Higher Education). We recognize that the possibility of different temporal rhythms in the research activities of female and male scholars in speech communication has not been systematically researched, but we note with interest that the descriptions of gender-linked patterns "ring true" for the three of us, based on our own career paths to date. Hickson et al. display insensitivity to the possibility of gender-linked trajectories of scholarly activity in electing to measure productivity "outputs" at a single point in time. Further, in emphasizing the importance of females publishing early in their careers (355),

Hickson et al. promulgate the male career trajectory as the universal standard against which female scholars should be assessed. Obviously, females whose careers are better characterized by the linear progression pattern as opposed to the saddle-shaped pattern are ill-served early in their professional careers by evaluation grounded in the male career model. The issue of who is served (or not) by the Hickson et al. "yardsticks" is one we return to later in this response.

Also obscured in the Hickson et al. abstraction is the *character* of the publications they enumerate. While Hickson et al. claim that their report is "... valuable in the sociology of knowledge to determine where influence has been in the discipline . . ." (351), nowhere do they make even cursory mention of what is said in any of the articles they list. Their failure to do so suggests a cynically reductionistic view of scholarship and its purpose: *That* writing occurs is somehow more significant or influential than *what* is written or *how* that writing is read. This unidimensional portrait of scholarly activity insults both writers and readers by rendering their labors invisible and irrelevant.

Moreover, the authors' preoccupation with tabulating individual output evidences a naive conception of "influence," a narrow conception of "knowledge," and a rather thorough misunderstanding of the sociology of knowledge project. Based on their operational definitions, Hickson et al. appear to believe that influence is strictly a function of output rate and that "output" can be unproblematically equated with "knowledge." Accepting these beliefs seems to require that we ignore an entire range of *institutional* routines that enable production, that set the priorities used to assess the significance of that production, and that condition the acceptance or rejection of something *as* "knowledge." In other words, Hickson et al. assume that "influence" and "knowledge" inhere in the fact of production. They fail to consider how these latter characteristics are indeed *interpretations* made possible by the social, historical, and ideological context surrounding scholarly production/consumption. What, for instance, leads the authors to focus on journal publications as an index of influence? Why choose the narrow range of publications indexed by Matlon and Ortiz? These questions cannot be answered at the level of product/output alone. The answers reside in the context surrounding product/output, that is, in the history and politics of this discipline and the disciplinary system generally. And it is these systemic, contextual factors—the ones that lead us to "produce" in certain ways and to define the relative influence of that production—that Hickson et al. leave unexamined.

In light of the authors' silence concerning the institutional dimensions of scholarly production and the assessment thereof, we find it difficult to accept their report as "... valuable in the sociology of knowledge . . ." (351). Simply put, their report lacks a clear *sociological* dimension. Rather, their report displays and attempts to aggregate *individual* profiles. This approach displaces the social by construing it as essentially epiphenomenal (i.e., as the by-product of aggregated individual activity). In so doing, Hickson et al. place themselves at conceptual odds with much existing work in the sociology of knowledge. From the vantage point of Berger and Luckmann, Bourdieu, Toulmin, and others, social systems prefigure individual actors and provide the logics in and against which individuals may justify and give meaning to activity. Individual activity, while not necessarily determined by extant social systems, occurs in continual *relationship* to these systems. This view of the

individual-social relationship is fundamentally dissimilar to the one suggested by Hickson et al. Insofar as the authors attempt to justify their project by aligning it with a literature obviously not amenable to the perspective they advance, we find their justification considerably less than compelling.

The "male paradigm" is characterized, second, by *disciplinary territoriality*. Concern with strict disciplinary boundaries certainly varies among scholars in the field.¹⁹ Our point is that concern with clearly demarcated disciplinary boundaries displays a kind of territoriality that is likely to be gender-linked. Female scholars in the humanities and social sciences, in fact, tend to be more interdisciplinary than their male counterparts (Ward and Grant). A number of scholars have argued that female academics may be attracted more than their male colleagues to scholarly projects that bridge several disciplines because of differing gender socialization experiences.²⁰ Females are socialized to construct social reality by connecting the multiple perspectives that constitute their relationship-oriented worlds.²¹ An interdisciplinary perspective, in turn, could result in high rates of publication in interdisciplinary outlets or in the journals of other disciplines. In developing statistical "yardsticks" cast narrowly along disciplinary lines, Hickson and his colleagues render a portrait of scholarship by females in speech communication that may be seriously distorted in both quantity and profile. Although the three of us hardly constitute an adequate sample of female scholars in speech communication, we nonetheless note with interest that our own career experiences are captured much better by an interdisciplinary model of knowledge as opposed to a male-centered model of narrow disciplinarity; of our total of 66 scholarly publications, only 36% are included in the journals indexed by Matlon and Ortiz. Hickson et al. attempt to pre-empt this concern about interdisciplinary work by acknowledging that people, including those females listed as the "most active and prolific," may publish elsewhere (354-5). What Hickson et al. ignore is that females in the discipline may display disproportionately less disciplinary territoriality than males in their publication habits; if that is the case, Hickson et al.'s use of the Matlon and Ortiz index is inappropriate for establishing anything like a "yardstick" to measure scholarly activity among females in the field. Yet Hickson et al. *assert* that, "Certainly the journals in this study constitute where the vast majority of professors in the field of communication consider that they strive [sic] to publish" (355). This claim is open to serious question, and the confidence with which it is advanced itself reveals a territorial presumption.

Also revealing of the presumptiveness of disciplinary territoriality in the Hickson et al. report is their question: "Why are such yardsticks important to the discipline?" (351). If women are less territorial with respect to disciplines than their male colleagues, then Hickson et al. fail in their attempt to warrant the legitimacy of their project by answering this question. More pertinently, their question betrays the very territoriality that they presume to be characteristic of female scholars. The question manifests concern for a bloodless, abstract construct—"the discipline"—and not the material individuals and groups that constitute it. In fact, the three authors seem interested in "the discipline" at the *expense* of individuals and groups. They understand the results of previous studies of research activity as an "indictment" of individuals' publication records (351). Thus, this report and others like it are taken to be important on the grounds that they enable "the discipline" (or those who speak

for it) to survey the "territory" of disciplinary publication records and render judgments on them. If publication records within the disciplinary territory are deemed inadequate, then indictment of individuals seems the only conclusion; on this logic, the possibility that individuals simply have crossed the disciplinary borders apparently is unthinkable.

Individuation is the third characteristic of the "male paradigm." By "individuation," we refer to a set of beliefs that revolve around the presumed autonomy or independence of the individual agent, in contrast to a communal view of the individual as embedded in a web of connections with others.²² One of the beliefs implicated in the male model of individuation is a monadic conception of "influence." Hickson and his colleagues claim that their purpose is to "determine where influence has been in the discipline" (351). However, their understanding of "influence" is a male-centered, individualistic one in contrast to a more relationally-centered conception. Certainly, a person is positioned to be influential by publishing in scholarly outlets, but we would argue that "influence" is inherently a relational phenomenon; that is, whether or not an individual is "influential" can be determined only by what happens *between* people. If Hickson et al. were interested in the "influence" of published authors, perhaps their project would have been better advanced by studying citation patterns, that is, determination of the frequency with which a given author's work has been cited by others in the ongoing scholarly dialogue. Such an alternative approach would have the added benefit of broadening the domain of potentially influential publications to include articles published in other disciplines' journals, as well as books and articles published in interdisciplinary journals. And if citation patterns were studied across several disciplines, we might gain insight into the "influence" of given authors as their ideas and research gain currency outside the parameter of the journals indexed in Matlon and Ortiz.

A second belief implicated in the male model of individuation is the presumption of individual volition. Hickson et al. treat issues of female employment, publication, etc., as if they were entirely volitional. The authors remind readers of the importance of publishing early in one's career and of the correlation between research productivity and working in a doctoral-granting institution. But such advice presupposes that individual female academics are in sole control of their own scholarly activity, making choices without constraint concerning where to work and when to publish. Unfortunately, such advice, however well-intended, ignores the structural constraints that still face female academics with respect to problems of sponsorship and mentorship, access to scholarly informal networks, burdens of institutional committee service, and so forth, all of which affect female research activity in ways unrelated to matters of individual volition.²³

Last and perhaps most important, the "male paradigm" is characterized by *hierarchy*. By "hierarchy," we refer to the acceptance of asymmetrical relations between people, with some groups or individuals gaining dominance or empowerment through the subordination and disempowerment of others. "Hierarchy" is a simple and relatively straightforward concept in the abstract but one which surfaces in a myriad of insidious ways in the Hickson et al. report. It is in its hierarchical assumptions that we believe the Hickson et al. report most clearly moves from "mere" insensitivity and inappropriateness to aggression. The ranking offered by Hickson et al. discursively positions women against one another. The women

ranked among the most "prolific" are transformed into evidence for a negative commentary about those not ranked. The hierarchical nature of the list also discursively casts the women on the list against one another; being ranked as #1, according to the obvious hierarchical logic of ranking, is "better than" being ranked as #2. In addition, "active" female scholars are discursively privileged over "inactive" female scholars. Thus, women are cast not merely in the role of objectified, scrutinized subjects; they are cast also in a hierarchically competitive position vis-à-vis one another. Such individually-based competition seems particularly inappropriate when applied to women who are socialized to work more relationally and collaboratively than are men.²⁴ And to play female scholars off against one another, when they have been playing against a stacked deck in any case, is nothing short of offensive.

Equally offensive is Hickson et al.'s description of their report as an attempt to establish a "yardstick for active, female researchers in communication" (351). Hickson et al.'s report-as-yardstick hearkens to the vulgar (and frequently brutal) political arrangements characterizing dominant/non-dominant group relations in times we have come to believe were "less enlightened." The yardstick (along with its metonymic associates, such as "the ruler" and "the rod") often functioned as the instrument used to "articulate" and reinforce the punitive politics of domination and oppression. The teacher took the ruler to the unruly or obstreperous child; the paternalistic master took the rod to the wayward or disobedient slave; the male authors of this report take the yardstick to females scholars—such is the associational chain summoned in their choice of language. In each case the yardstick (or its equivalent) is used by one individual to *discipline* another. In so doing, *discipline* and those traditionally charged with its preservation, are maintained.

Yet, Hickson et al. explicitly link the yardstick with its most literal use—measurement. On its face, measurement seems to be a neutral enough activity. When we consider the myriad choices and assumptions made in even the most routine acts of measurement, however, even this seeming "neutrality" quickly disappears. Measurement necessitates division, categorization, and (more or less explicitly) comparison. Given that persons can be divided, categorized, and compared according to a variety of logics, and that choosing one logic over another changes the shape, orientation, or sense of value associated with the persons measured, acts of measurement, like language choices, are never free of tendency.

Equally significant is the fact that measurements are performed *on* (as opposed to, say, *with*) persons. In this sense, then, measurements function *to order*, *to contain*, and in these senses, *to discipline*. These functions certainly argue for the sociopolitical dimensions of measurement. Consequently, the "yardstick-that-measures" functions similarly to the "yardstick-that-punishes." While not as obviously brutal, the "yardstick-that-measures" functions as a show of strength by the institutionally powerful to those whose "unchecked" activities threaten order and discipline.

The fact that Hickson et al. have used the term "yardstick" in other studies ("Active Prolific Scholars") not segregated by gender fails to serve as an alibi for its use in a study about women. They are *communication* scholars as are those who approved their manuscript for publication. It is no secret to any of us in this discipline that language comes laced with connotative history and unavoidable tendentiousness. These connotations and tendencies change with the context of

utterance. The "yardstick" metaphor, when used by male authors to describe their examination of women, has a more sinister ring than it does when used inside a less lopsided set of power relations. Language choices are rarely innocent, even if motives are.

Hierarchy seems to be implicated as well in the authors' apparent lack of rationale for this research undertaking. It is important to note that they make no explicit case for the value of ranking *female* scholarly activity. They do include a paragraph that, we presume, is supposed to count as a rationale; in it, they note the number of women who have acted as president of the Speech Communication Association or as editors of three SCA journals.²⁵ That observation is the *only* initial remark Hickson et al. make about *women's* roles in the discipline. However it is problematic on two counts. First, it implies that contributions to the field are or should be measured according to people's occupancy of positions at the "top" of organizational hierarchies. Second, it provides utterly no justification for the measurement of active scholarship. The suggestion, that women have been journal editors and SCA presidents and that, *therefore*, an enumeration and ranking of women's publication records is legitimate, is a *non sequitur*.

Hickson and his colleagues also claim that, given prior research, "it is now possible" (351) to conduct their research project. Possibilities aside, the question of the *desirability* of this project still remains. It evidently *is* possible, but we are left with the issue of what licenses three men to single out women as a group for scrutiny. There is no obvious reason that presents itself in the literature for segregating research production by gender; no corresponding ranking of active *male* prolific scholars, for example, has presented itself. Rather, one must assume for purposes of warranting the Hickson et al. study that active female researchers have published systematically less than their active male colleagues in the field, in order to see any need at all for this research.²⁶ It may even be true that women have published less than men, but that is an unsupported hypothesis, not a documented claim. So, how can this unsupported hypothesis serve as an assumptive premise of this report? How, in fact, can it be assumptive when it is, itself a testable hypothesis? Its status as an assumption marks the ease with which women can be seen as inherently less accomplished than their male counterparts. The very taken-for-grantedness of the premise is itself the problem. To be less accomplished is one thing; to always be assumed to be less accomplished is another. Unfortunately, the assumption may well contribute to the condition. Whether or not it does, the assumption itself, and the apparent ease with which it is accepted, are offensive and inherently damaging to women.

The fact that Hickson et al. articulate no clear rationale for this study is disturbing not only because of what it forces the reader to accept as a premise; the lack of persuasive rationale is also troubling, given what the study *does*. Without any clear warrant, three men have conducted surveillance on women's research records (the bodies of their research?) and proceeded to rank order the most prolific among them (those whose bodies of research have the best measurements?). Our parenthetical questions suggest that we take this to be the academic equivalent of a beauty pageant. Indeed, it does seem an appropriate analog. It has all of the necessary trappings: line up the women, gaze on the parts you believe most pertinent, total up the points, and rank order them. That *this* pageant should be conducted strictly by

men even does "real" beauty contests one better; the latter frequently have female judges or administrators. Of course, the analog breaks down on another profoundly telling point as well—women in beauty contests presumably *choose* to participate in such displays.²⁷

The authors' consistent use of the term "prolific" to describe the women they display reinforces this sense of woman-as-object-of-male-surveillance. The reader comes away from the report knowing little more than which female bodies produced more than which other female bodies. This, coupled with the "prolific" language, summons an age-old way of construing female identity: Women *are* what their bodies can produce. And men monitor and regulate female production/reproduction as a means of asserting control over both the products and the power such products might afford the women who produce them.

It is neither fair nor convincing to assume that a woman's choice to publish in scholarly journals entitles three men, in essence, to reduce her activities to the fact of her physiology, to display her as a "better breeder" than other women, or to pit her "academic measurements" against other women's. These uses of women's labor are unfair, regardless of the interests such exhibitions may purport to serve and regardless of the voyeuristic pleasures such exhibitions offer. Just what purposes, and whose, might be served are issues to which we turn in the next section.

What/Whose Interests Are Served?

Hickson et al. conclude their "rationale" with the assertion that their report ought to provide colleagues in other disciplines with information useful in evaluating an individual female from the field "in a comparative sense" (351). But if the intended use of the "yardsticks" developed in the Hickson et al. piece is for tenure and promotion decisions, to whom would it be useful in the process of rendering such decisions? The majority of women named to Table 1 are full professors. The overwhelming majority are tenured. We have no wish or right to speak for these female colleagues or to comment on the personnel procedures at their respective institutions, but we suspect that the "yardsticks" would be of marginal utility, at least in terms of tenure and promotion issues, for most of those listed. What of the women in the discipline *not* named to the list? Does this ranking have value for them? That seems even more doubtful. We find it exceptionally difficult to believe that anyone would volunteer to a personnel committee that she was not ranked among the most active female scholars of her field. So, if the ranking is of use to someone in personnel decisions, it seems unlikely that that someone is the female candidate for promotion or tenure. Instead, the ranking seems more likely to be useful as an *impediment* to a woman's advancement. It requires little imagination to summon a scenario in which a female scholar is taken to task by her colleagues for not having accomplished "enough" or in the "right places" to be considered among the field's most active female scholars. Thus, this ranking serves the interests of those who would obstruct a woman's progress, for it makes acts of professional aggression against women even less difficult than they otherwise might be.

The Hickson et al. report threatens to work against the interests of women at a more "intimate" level as well. That is, what sorts of responses does the report most likely provoke in female readers? What do these likely responses "do" in terms of constructing, reinforcing, or modifying a sense of personal or professional identity?

What do these likely responses suggest about how a given female reader sees herself in relation to both male and female colleagues?

As we see it, three types of response seem most likely given how the report was compiled and presented. First, someone who does not appear on the list is likely to feel anxious about her own rate of scholarly activity and thus about her professional future. This response also leads to nervousness about being shown up by "one's own." Second, what if one does appear on the list? Shouldn't this provide some measure of security and gratification? Perhaps. Yet, given the hierarchical nature of the list and the competitiveness that hierarchy almost inevitably promotes, we can imagine that women ranked lower than first might feel less than gratified. Even the number one spot could be an awkward one to occupy. Such a position may create the alienation that comes from being raised—presumably without being offered a choice—above one's peers.

A third response is to be disheartened, as we are, by the fact that such a list exists at all. We are disheartened to see women set against each other in this fashion. We are disheartened to see some of our male colleagues' apparent obliviousness to how this may harm and discourage us. We are disheartened by the fact that "our" discipline would, however tacitly, condone and encourage this sort of activity. We are disheartened when we consider what this says about the state of our collective consciousness regarding gender issues. And, we are disheartened when we consider the kind of precedent this report threatens to set. Are "we" entitling the already secure to wield "the yardstick" against a host of marginalized groups? Does the publication of this report give the green light to future rankings of "prolific" African-American scholars? Hispanic scholars? Gay or Lesbian scholars? Are "we" authorizing the institutionally powerful to continue speaking *about* the less powerful, rather than encouraging the powerful to speak *with* us, or, more importantly, to let us speak?

Each of these reactions potentially invoked by the Hickson et al. report is painful in its own right. These reactions taken as a group are even more so. We find it difficult to imagine how any woman could be encouraged, gratified, or take any pleasure when she considers herself in relation to the report. Certainly it would be difficult to do so without simultaneously experiencing some sense of alienation from what could be a sustaining community—other women.

Finally, Hickson et al.'s report functions to reinscribe a disempowering form of subjectivity "offered" to women all too frequently in this culture. As John Berger describes it:

To be born a woman has been to be born, within an allotted and confined space, into the keeping of men. The social presence of women has developed as a result of their ingenuity in living under such tutelage within such a limited space. But this has been at the cost of a woman's self being split in two. A woman must continually watch herself. . . . From earliest childhood she has been taught and persuaded to survey herself continually.

And so she comes to consider the *surveyor* and the *surveyed* within her as the two constituent yet always distinct elements of her identity as a woman. (46)

The Hickson et al. report, then, serves to demarcate the space of female productivity and to remind us that we are under surveillance by male "colleagues."

More insidiously, however, reports such as this encourage us, quite literally, to split ourselves from ourselves. They do so at two levels. Most obviously, such reports

isolate individual women from each other. And, such reports isolate us from an integrated sense of self by handing us "the yardstick" so that we might survey and (often negatively) evaluate ourselves. We are hard pressed to think of a way that any community could more effectively control any group of members. We are equally hard pressed to imagine how reinforcing such an isolated and self-limiting form of identity could possibly be in the best interests of those to whom it is offered. Finally, we are hard pressed to see how splitting scholars from themselves and from each other serves "the discipline" in any meaningful way. How could encouraging isolation and self-alienation possibly lead to greater intellectual growth and creativity? How can any community flourish when more and more of its members are limited, made fearful, absorbed in self-surveillance, and, quite literally, broken? This is in no one's best interest, not even those with the most invested in maintaining traditional disciplinary boundaries and relations of power.

APPROVED IDENTITIES, READINGS, AND POLITICS: THE ANONYMOUS REVIEWS AND THE DENOUEMENT

Within a few weeks of submitting "Subject Of or Subject To Research?" we received a rejection letter, accompanied by two reviews that recommended against publication of our essay. In general we found the reviews to be overt displays of ideological mechanisms that not only approve the themes of the masculinist paradigm, but which seek to ensure that the masculinist paradigm represents the exclusive thematic directive for professional work in the discipline. The two reviews do more than reproduce the themes of the masculinist paradigm; they buttress its privilege by advancing what can count as approved (and disapproved) identities, readings, and politics within the discipline. In using these two reviews as explicit objects of analysis, we bring them into the public conversation of scholarly discourse. As Myers observes, a scholarly community's review of a text can be viewed as "a negotiation of the status that the . . . community will assign to the text's knowledge claim" (328).²⁸

Before we turn to a discussion of the approved (and disapproved) identities, readings, and politics that are embedded in these two reviews, we think it is important to emphasize that the mechanisms of the masculinist paradigm, like those of any ideology, perform enabling functions for a scholarly community. The masculinist paradigm, like other paradigms, provides a scholarly community with what Foucault calls "apparatuses of knowledge" (*Power/Knowledge*, 106); these apparatuses enable the production of research by invoking shared motivations, vocabularies, assumptions, and methods. At the same time, however, these knowledge apparatuses constitute systems of control that exclude alternative intellectual practices.²⁹

The focal work of both these reviews is the designation of approved and disapproved identities; that is, articulation of the range of what one is able to say and how, as well as who one can be as an acceptable member of a group, in this case the discipline. The related issues of approved readings and approved politics emerge in connection with the identity prescriptions. By approved readings, we mean prescriptions for "correct" ways of reading. By implication, "incorrect" ways of reading can be identified, rendered unacceptable, and, preferably, silenced. As Crowley observes, "[S]ince there are correct readings, misreading must occur through some

fault in the reader who produces it. If two readers disagree, one of them has failed somehow . . ." (459).³⁰ An approved politics refers to the roles particular individuals and groups are allowed to play vis-à-vis one another or the moves they are allowed to make—especially in cases of conflict or competition for scarce resources. In the case of an academic discipline, these supposedly "scarce resources" might be prestige, designations of "expertise," or even career survival.³¹

The overarching identity approved in the reviews of our essay is that of the professional intellectual or scholar.³² Referee #1 questions our status as scholars by rejecting our manuscript's status as a "scholarly article," indicating, in part, that "there are too many feline, petty attacks in this manuscript and too much ball-bashing to be a scholarly article." Referee #2 marks us immediately as "unprofessional" and "anti-intellectual," indicating that he or she is "embarrassed" for the academic field for producing persons who have written "the single worst piece of 'scholarship'" that he or she has ever reviewed. Both reviews further specify the stances and attitudes that "professionals," "intellectuals," or "scholars" must demonstrate in order for these roles to be designated as approved identities within the discipline. Appropriately "professional" scholars should be: (1) politically neutral, (2) respectful toward science, (3) mainstream, and (4) politely deferential.³³

Disciplinary professionals, first, must be *politically neutral*. Referee #2 opines that our manuscript was not a "critique of the published article" but a "political harangue against so-called 'male paradigm,' which is nothing more than the typical male-bashing brought forth by Marxist writers." This reviewer differentiates sharply between "critique" and "political harangue" but does not specify the boundary between them, apparently believing that it should be apparent to anyone wearing an approved identity. Certainly not all "political" discourse is "harangue," nor would most of us wish to be seen as engaging in the latter. But critique is always political and that seems to be the real problem for referee #2. That becomes clearer in an examination of the next identity characteristic and its attendant prescriptions for approved modes of reading.

The second identity characteristic, *respectfulness toward science*, is invoked in the second referee's claim that our manuscript was "laced with extreme anti-science orientations with the mask of the 'male' paradigm doing the front work." We understand the reproach of "anti-science" to define negatively a range of approved behaviors by which professionals either subscribe to the supposed value-neutrality of scientific work or at least agree not to expose the tendentious and valued character of so-called "objective" work.

The approved respect for the value-neutrality of science links naturally with a related directive for producing an approved reading. According to this view, published texts are transparent, easily and "correctly" readable; to read for or infer assumptions is unnecessary and apparently even unacceptable. This stance promulgates the naive understanding of scholarly languages (prose, tabulations, calculations, and the like) as neutrally privileged and magically exempt from tendency. Both reviewers find our reading of the Hickson et al. report to be "wrong" because we challenged its value-neutrality. Referee #1 "find[s] it insulting," in her capacity as one of the original reviewers of the Hickson et al. report, that we were "incapable of seeing" that its goal was straightforwardly "to identify and recognize women in the field who have sustained records of scholarship." The second referee also

concludes that our analysis of the Hickson et al. report was in error because we failed to read the piece as a celebratory documentation of the discipline's "advancement" of women in the field.

Ironically, however, these referees appear to speculate freely about the objectives of the Hickson et al. report. According to the referees' approved mode of reading, some readers (e.g., these referees) apparently may draw inferences about a text, provided that their inferences are consistent with other attributes of an approved reading. So, delegitimized readers "erroneously" "read into the piece" false inferences; they are deemed "criminal," "Marxist," and so forth. How can the referees' inferences be approved while our own cannot? The answer, of course, has to do in part with their institutional roles as referees and ours as mere authors of a manuscript. But that explanation, by itself, is too simple.

The answer is linked as well to a third element of approved identity—*occupancy of the mainstream*. Referee #2 suggests that our manuscript "represents the extremist fringe of the so-called feminist movement" and that it "does not represent the views of mainstream females in the field, or even that of most of us who see ourselves as feminists." As we will suggest further on, anyone who could characterize our response essay as "extremist" feminism cannot be very familiar with much contemporary feminist scholarship in this field or others. For now, it is enough to observe that referee #2 appears to define the "mainstream" of feminism as the ground occupied by most individual females in the field, not a ground of substantive views or reasoned stances. Feminism, thus, seems to be defined epiphenomenally.

Characterization of the mainstream as a population center provides an excellent opportunity for dismissing those who disagree. This practice makes it possible for an approved reader to draw inferences and to dismiss the inferences of disapproved readers, for example. Because the second referee reads our work as out of step with that of most other women or feminists, only one small move remains to reach the inevitable—dismissal or silencing. Precisely this move appeared in this referee's concluding remarks to us. S/he suggested the formation of "a whole new field that was off limits to males and heterosexual females. That field would appear to be more to the liking of these authors." By casting us as lesbians, a minority supposedly outside the mainstream female population center, this reviewer invokes the approved politics of exclusion and silencing accomplished via segregation. To be different, especially to be vocal about one's differences, is simply unacceptable, and action must be taken to silence those who would express their differences so openly. This stance is consistent with the remaining identity characteristic, which points also to the approved politics of exclusion/silencing.

Polite deference is the fourth and final characteristic, and its most important role seems to be to vouchsafe hierarchy. Referee #1 demonstrates the linkage in her claim that the Hickson et al. rank-order list serves "to identify and recognize women in the field who have sustained records of scholarship and point them out as role models for others to follow." The notions of role models and their followers, of course, reference a hierarchy. And everyone, apparently, should be arranged according to it. Referee #1 concludes that our response was "puffy and arrogant" and infers that we "didn't make the list (or weren't as high as [we'd] like to be." This reviewer immediately proceeds to discuss her own ranking, noting that the Hickson et al. list "reflected a little over half of my journal articles (and, of course, none of my

books)" and even claims that "this was the case for most of the women on the list." It apparently is difficult for this referee to believe that anyone would not *want* to be ranked, that anyone actually on the list could *object* to it, or that there could be any *discomfort* with the ranking except not being as high as one would like. This referee then concludes her comments with the hint that we should have "counted to ten" before sending off our response essay in order to avoid looking like "an immature ass." Clearly, this referee invokes a politics of exclusion in this comment. She equates anti-hierarchical positions with "immaturity," and this label functions to legitimate the silencing of unauthorized stances.

Referee #2 is no less clear about reinvesting hierarchy. S/he claims that, "In the past 20 years this field has made giant strides toward empowering females to rise to the highest levels of our profession, both scholarly and otherwise. I read the Hickson et al. article as a celebration of that advancement." Again, the approved identity is to rise, to occupy the "highest levels." And the appropriate reaction for others is to honor those who have risen. What Referee #2 also honors is the hierarchical arrangement itself and particularly that which Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary themselves have since referred to as the "numbers game" ("Active Prolific Scholars" 231). Referee #2 argues that it is "this field" that has "made giant strides toward empowering women." Apparently women have not been responsible for their own successes or in charge of their own careers; the field has been. As with the other prescriptions, if we are unable or unwilling to recognize the sanctity of hierarchical arrangements, the approved, exclusionary politics is put into play. Referee #2 goes so far as to advise that "since these authors publish two-thirds of their work outside the field, might I suggest that they raise that percentage to 100%?"

Rarely are the mechanisms of approval and enforcement so explicitly espoused as in these reviews, but then most referees probably do not expect that their reviews will appear in print. This kind of discourse is allowed to function to control and censor what is said in this discipline; it is absolutely privileged discourse, typically exempt from public scrutiny and always protected by anonymity. Certainly we believe, in fact we know, that all referees do not subscribe to the ideological prescriptions of these two referees. That attempts of this sort to censor and silence occur at all, however, should give us cause for consternation.³⁴

CONCLUSIONS/CONTINUATIONS

No conclusions offer themselves easily, for it is not up to the three of us alone to resolve the issues raised here. "Conclusions" will come only from the collective actions of the group we call our "discipline," a term which itself warns us against the seductive powers and dangers of our shared intellectual orthodoxies. We do wish to make three final points, however, that are more about continuing than with concluding.³⁵

First, the Hickson et al. report must not be invoked or used in any of our workplaces. It misrepresents the accomplishments of women in the field, refuses to understand their experiences in context, and subordinates their interests to the abstraction called "the discipline." Women *not* included in the Hickson et al. ranking will be those most profoundly affected by it if we sanction its use. The effect will be institutional punishment. That is not to suggest that those women who *are* ranked have been or will be unaffected. This report domesticates them and their work,

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disciplining them with the "yardstick," ignoring *what* they have had to say, and refusing to acknowledge that their work (as well as that of other female scholars) often has been accomplished against great odds and at serious personal cost. Certainly they *and other women* of academic stripe should be recognized, even lauded, for their work. Ensnaring them within a hierarchical ranking, however, cannot be construed as a "celebration"; this hierarchy exploits women and their work, pressing them into service as unconsenting tokens and thereby perpetuating the ideology that diminishes women. Female tokenism is in play when "the power withheld from the vast majority of women is offered to a few, so that it may appear that any truly qualified woman can gain access to leadership, recognition, and reward" (Adrienne Rich, quoted by Biesecker 43).

The men and women who identify themselves as members of this discipline must not comply with such an arrangement. All of us—women and men alike—have been "trained" to speak in the assumptive argot of the masculinist paradigm. The issues are whether we are able or willing to retrain ourselves to think and speak outside of its impersonal abstractions, disciplinary territoriality, individuation, and hierarchy. One way to begin could be to acknowledge that everyone in the field—men as well as women—might be better served by different arrangements. We believe that competitive, hierarchical rankings projects of individuals' publication rates peculiarly damage women in the ways we discuss above. But we are not convinced that they serve the men in this discipline either. Perhaps, we need to locate and sanction new ways of judging our scholarly efforts and effects besides simply counting them up and arranging them by rank. No one denies that judgment is a component of our working lives, but we *all* might benefit if the discipline's sanctioned grounds for judgment were reconfigured.

Second, the ideological apparatuses that approve a very narrow range of identities and readings and that force a politics of exclusion must not be allowed to silence other voices. The ideological mechanisms of professionalism as they are expressed in the initial referees' reviews would silence virtually any feminist voice.

Feminist stances of any ilk simply *are* political. As Campbell argues, "Feminist scholarship is distinguished by the systematic inclusion of women, by an absence of language and/or perspective that degrades women or minorities, by rigorous testing of assumptions that hark back to stereotypes and social mythology, and by a concern to rectify the omissions, the degradation, and the errors of the past" ("What Really Distinguishes" 4). To suggest that feminist critique must not be political is to suggest that it should not exist at all.³⁶

Moreover, feminist stances cannot necessarily respect traditional science. As Gregg acknowledges, "Feminists have been concerned with the equation of the findings of science with truth and knowledge, the designation of scientists as experts, the distance between scientific concepts and research and everyday life: in short, the power of science to predict, control, define, and restrict reality by virtue of its privileged position among other social activities" (8). Such concerns are not "anti-scientific." They are sites of critique. Feminist critique of intellectual practice is neither unusual enough to be "radical," nor limited to challenging the tenets of traditional science. Within our own field, feminists have targeted intellectual practices of rhetorical theory, ethnography, histories of rhetoric, and postmodernism, as well as those of conservative science.³⁷ Feminist positions must not be silenced on the

grounds of their "opposition" to science. Such an accusation is inaccurate, and it misses the transformative point of feminist critique, which is to change any academic stance that devalues, excludes, or effaces women's experience.

Feminism, similarly, does not respect "mainstream" or unitary stances. If the ideology of academic professionalism is allowed to accomplish such a reduction, feminism's virtues will be essentially obliterated. As Schwichtenberg suggests, "Feminism itself is a highly diverse terrain, which challenges monolithic assumptions deriving from a single feminist approach or style" (291). To silence any feminism, whether Marxist, African, Hispanic, Lacanian, or lesbian, is to diminish the extraordinary power of its diversity. Moreover, if arguments for the "mainstream" are allowed to prevail, it is very likely that we will return to the era (if, in fact, we ever left it) that witnessed feminist study of *any* kind declared to be outside the mainstream. Johnson describes it rather pointedly: "it is also not uncommon to hear one's colleagues describe a woman who does such research [gender studies] as 'a one-issue person,' 'narrowly focused,' 'politically motivated,' and 'not in touch with the mainstream of the field.' These comments are seldom heard about individuals who devote themselves to the study of, say, family communication, war rhetoric, communication theory, or small group communication; such individuals are, of course, 'specialists'" (320). If the "mainstream" is to serve as the arbiter, feminism will not pass muster.

Nor can feminist stances be held to the strictures of polite deference and survive. The demand for deference forces women's submission or surrender to masculinist conceptions. Deference simply reinforces a masculine hierarchy as if it characterized *human* ways of thinking, being, and acting. Women have no deference option except to submit and be counted against the measures created to characterize men. The result, as Tavis argues, is to be "mismeasured," to always be found inadequate.

Every ideological apparatus wielded by the initial referees would silence virtually any feminist statement. The silences would not be limited to those the referees would consider extremist, Marxist, lesbian, and so forth—those they clearly do wish to squelch. All of feminism would be quarantined at the disciplinary border and ultimately deported. Such an ideology cannot be allowed to govern an academic field that so proudly espouses pluralism, diversity, and communication. Disagreement is to be valued and kept in play in the dialogue of such a field, not silenced or kept cloistered behind the secretive curtain of blind reviewing.

Third, the writing practices that mark what counts as scholarly discourses in this field must not be maintained without scrutiny. It surely is incumbent upon the adherents of any academic field to scrutinize and evaluate their own rules of engagement and practice. It is the more so for scholars of rhetoric and communication; our written work reveals the assumptions and rules to which we hold *vis-à-vis* communicative practice and expression. If we have identified correctly the rules for writing the field's scholarship at the beginning of this essay, then we are obliged to acknowledge that these rules demand personae of singular, neutral, authoritative, observers who are detached from or ambivalent about their own histories and contexts. We are also bound to observe the coherence of these rules with the apparatuses that police the professional academic's approved identity and modes of reading by means of an exclusionary politics.

We began this essay by identifying several potent, yet rarely discussed, assump-

tions and practices characteristic of scholarly activity in the speech communication discipline. Our purpose in doing so goes well beyond the desire to vindicate our original manuscript or to settle scores with referees. We see this essay as the beginning of a process as well as the end of another, and as an invitation to invest in one conversation as well as an argument against investing in another.

We could include an additional entry on the list of troubling norms governing academic writing: the production and consumption of individual journal articles as if they were (or should be) free standing and finalized utterances on the topic at hand. Our talk about "scholarly dialogue" and "scholarly communities" notwithstanding, we tend to construe our work in monologic terms. We think in terms of single articles; rarely do articles past enter future discussions except as citations. In our estimation, this tendency to focus on single, isolated "scholarly turns" rather than on extended, interactive "scholarly conversations" reduces the chances for the kind of reflexive examination we suggest in this essay. The examination of ourselves as a community requires that we look at patterns in our writing and speaking and at the ideological positions such patterns depend on, reproduce, or refuse. Moreover, insofar as such examination focuses on ourselves as a community, it needs to be done as a community.

We hope, then, that our essay will evoke additional discussion of the issues we have raised. We hope that this discussion will be honest and passionate. We also hope that it will help to reinvest our scholarly activities with a sense of what is (or could be) at stake in them.

NOTES

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¹For further comment on these and other such academic writing practices, see: Bazerman; Brodkey; Wander and Jenkins; Wander, "Politics"; and Nothstine, Blair, and Copeland. Disciplinary practices—among them writing practices—seem to be at least a subtext of most of the essays in the Spring 1993 special issue of the *Western Journal of Communication* on "Ideology and Communication." See especially Wander's editorial introduction, as well as the essays by: Rodden; Owen and Ehrenhaus; Condit; Rigsby; West; Lee; and Wood and Cox.

²We are using the terms "text" and "fragment" in a fashion almost, but perhaps not entirely, consonant with their uses by McGee, "Text"; and Barthes. One understanding of "text" in their works is that of a combinatory fabric of multiple textual fragments constructed by a critic. Our use of the term here suggests that it may be constructed from material discursive fragments and the silences that surround those fragments. These silences might be the unarticulated "rules" of cultural or discursive codes or the silences of strategically unarticulated positions. In that sense, our use of the term links it to notions like Althusser's ideological apparatus, Foucault's discursive practice (*Archaeology*), or Lyotard's phrase regimen (*régime de phrase*) that link phrases or discursive fragments to one another (*The Differend*). In any case, Barthes' injunctions are ones we accept, that "the Text is a process of demonstration," and that it is "experienced only in an activity of production" (157).

³For example, as Condit describes, the referees for Wander's "The Politics of Despair" expressed "a general rejection-reaction" to the essay ("Introduction" 249). It probably is no coincidence that Wander committed a number of disciplinary "violations" in that essay, one of which was a description of some of the negative consequences of academic writing norms. For example, he suggested that, "As the system works to quash surprise, improvisation, and controversy, criticism begins to echo an established order . . ." (278).

⁴See: Nelson, Megill, and McCloskey, eds.; and Simons, ed.

⁵This seems to be consistent with Conquergood's point, when he argues that, "It is ironic that the discipline of communication has been relatively unreflective about the rhetorical construction of its disciplinary authority. It

would be illuminating to critique the rhetorical expectations and constraints on articles published in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, or *Communication Monographs*. What kinds of knowledge, and their attendant discursive styles, get privileged, legitimated, or displaced? How does knowledge about communication get constructed? What counts as an interesting question about human communication? What are the tacitly observed boundaries—the range of appropriateness—regarding the substance, methods, and discursive styles of communication scholarship? And, most importantly for critical theorists, what configuration of socio-political interests does communication scholarship serve?" (195). We find Conquergood's questions to be vital to the discipline at large, necessary for those who are concerned with the rhetoric of inquiry, and formative for our own critique in this essay.

⁶For an elaboration, see Johnson's review of books on women's language, particularly her discussion of Mary Daly's book, *Pure Lust*.

⁷This is the case, almost regardless of the particular feminist stance assumed or of the particular disciplinary specialty of the advocate. See, for example: Balsamo; Biesecker; Campbell, "Sound"; Cirksena; Dervin; Fine; Foss and Foss; Foss and Griffin; Gallagher; Gregg; Jarratt, "Performing"; Jarratt, "Speaking"; Kauffman; Muto; Press; Rakow; Rushing; Schwichtenberg; Self; Spitzack and Carter, "Women"; Steeves; Wood, "Feminist Scholarship"; and Wood and Phillips.

⁸Other studies in the Hickson et al. research program include: Hickson ("Profiling the Chairs"); Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary ("An Analysis of Prolific Scholarship"); Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary ("Administrator-Scholars"); Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary ("Active Prolific Scholars"); Hickson, Scott, Stacks, and Amsbary ("Scholarship in Mass Communication"). For convenience, we will refer to the report, "Active Prolific Female Scholars," simply as the Hickson et al. report without further designation. Other articles by these three authors will be differentiated from this one—the object of our response—by parenthetical designation of title.

⁹Other research in the bibliometric tradition of Hickson et al. includes Barker, Roach, and Underberg ("An Investigation of Articles . . . 1970 through 1978"); Barker, Roach, and Underberg ("An Investigation of Articles . . . Journal-by-Journal"); Burroughs, Christophel, Ady, and McGreal; Watson, Barker, Ray, and Hall.

¹⁰See Erickson et al. for a discussion of general concern about studies that rank prolific scholars.

¹¹In the interest of fair reporting, we should note that none of our names appears on the Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary list. As noted later in this essay, one of our initial referees accused us of list envy. The accusation is, of course, quite insulting. However, there are two very narrow senses in which it is quasi-accurate. First, one of our number would have been on the Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary list but for an error in the Matlon and Ortiz index. Second, we were relatively concerned that our colleagues might raise the question about our non-presence on the list in the context of merit or promotion meetings. Our concerns were not ill-founded. One of our colleagues "casually" observed in a conversation that he had noticed that we were not included on the Hickson list. In those senses, and those only, we had self-interested reactions to our own non-inclusion. Principally, we were disgusted by the ideology of the report and worried about its likely uses.

¹²We should note that the journal that published the Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary report did later print corrections to the mistakes in the report, errors that had resulted in some women being mistakenly excluded from the ranking and in others being misranked. However, the tone of the correction should also be noted. Unlike the other item on the erratum page, which was listed as a "correction" and carried with it an apology, Hickson et al.'s item was listed as an "update" and bore no traces of apologetic language. That women's careers had been placed potentially at risk apparently was not sufficient cause for regret.

¹³For a review, see Sandler.

¹⁴See, for example, Deetz and Mumby; Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*; Taylor; and Volosinov.

¹⁵See, for example, Ward and Grant. Throughout our response to the Hickson et al. article, we refer to the "male paradigm." Elsewhere in this essay, we use the term "masculinist paradigm." We regard these terms as synonymous; neither is essentialist in nature.

¹⁶For a general review of the agency-communication distinction, see McAdams.

¹⁷See, for example: Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule; Gilligan; and Lyons.

¹⁸See, for example, Baldwin and Blackburn.

¹⁹See, for example, the related essays by Charles R. Berger and by Redding.

²⁰See, for example, Renharz.

²¹See Belenky et al.; Gilligan; and Lyons.

²²See Gilligan; and Lyons.

²³See, for example: Clark and Corcoran; Menges and Exum; Sandler; and the Task Force on Women in Higher Education.

²⁴See Belenky et al.; and Ward and Grant.

²⁵Why they would not acknowledge female editors of other SCA journals is unclear. They name only *QJS*, *CM*, and *CE*. What of *CSMC*? One of its most recent editors is Sari Thomas. And what of the current editor of *TPQ*, Kristin M. Langellier?

²⁶We suppose one could also justify the segregation on the assumption that women publish systematically more than men, but that seems inconsistent with the general tenor of the essay.

²⁷In respect to the issue of choice, the better analogs might be livestock shows or slave auctions.

²⁸We are not the first to conduct an analysis of the reviewing process as a lens through which to analyze the

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functioning of a scholarly community. See, for example, Cohen; Myers; Peters and Ceci. For an example within the speech communication discipline, see Medhurst.

²⁹The dual capacity of any social convention or practice to both enable and constrain is a theme addressed by a number of scholars, including Giddens and Foucault, among others.

³⁰For a further discussion of the implications of approved or correct readings, see Crowley's critique of Wander's respondents in the ideological turn discussion [Campbell, "Response"; Corcoran; Francesconi; Hill; McGee, "Another Philippic"; Megill; and Rosenfield]. Crowley's discussion particularly turns on the responses of Megill, Hill, and Rosenfield. She argues that their responses to Wander turn on two warrants: (1) "that correct readings are possible," and (2) "that some critics cannot give correct readings of some texts" (456). These warrants, she argues, are conditioned by an ideology that appears under various names: "Kantian idealism, Enlightenment epistemology, liberal humanism, modernism" (457). Crowley's discussion points to the consequences of subscription to these warrants, in her argument that traditional critics "must perforce denigrate the work of critics whose readings . . . do not fall within the range of approved readings. More seriously, they must denigrate the work of critics who for some reason cannot become the readers they need to be in order to read the texts 'properly'" (459). Here Crowley notes not only the issue of approved readings but approved identities as well. Moreover, the notion of "denigration" points us to the political, for in the hands of sanctioned judges like journal manuscript reviewers, denigration is all too easily transformed into silencing and exclusion.

³¹For a discussion of these issues, see Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*; Wilshire; and Nothstine, Blair and Copeland. Also see Spitzack and Carter, "Feminist Communication," who argue that, "The third lie concerns the cultural portrayal of power as a scarce resource. Attempting to get power is charged by the belief that power exists in limited quantities. There is only enough for a few, and those who struggle to get power must override the competition. This lie endorses a hierarchy in which few are winners and many are losers. In order to 'win,' the competitors must show themselves to be superior to others. . . . When feminists compete with each other, striving to 'win' . . . we run the risk of perpetuating the very hierarchy we criticize. The three lies about power serve to fragment communities of women and assure that none of us will generate fundamental changes either for ourselves or for women in general" (34).

³²In quoting from the two manuscript reviews in what follows, we will come close to exhausting their content. That is, they contain very little besides what is represented below. Both *do* also address issues of accuracy in the Hickson et al. report, as we have noted earlier. Beyond that, they are almost completely contained in our quotations. As a means of insuring that our quotations represent the reviews fairly, we have provided the editor of this journal with copies of the reviews. We should note also that we refer to the first referee as a woman and the second in gender-neutral ways. Referee #1 identifies herself as female in her review; referee #2 does not so specify.

³³At least *female* professionals must fit this profile. That the three of us identified ourselves as female in our response essay complicates the ideological profile to some degree, particularly in these referees' prescriptions of disapproved identities. Disapproved identity characteristics cited in the two reviews include being "vehement," "egotistical," "feline," "petty," "ball-bashing," "extremist," "puffy," "arrogant," "political," and "male-bashing." It hardly seems worth asking if it is acceptable for male professionals to be vehement or egotistical or political. But we are compelled to ask if the more stereotypical female descriptors here might have been transformed to read "assertive," "argumentative," "emphatic," "forthright," "direct," or "confident," if we had cloaked our gender under third person references. In fact, we wonder if either of the referees would have been as likely to recite for us their professionalism lessons at all had we written in an androgynous tongue. Regardless, the uncertainty about whether male professionals would be required to assume the identities, read in these ways, and be subject to the politics that are all specified here, remains.

³⁴It is *not* sufficient, in our judgment, to dismiss these reviews as merely aberrant and thus insignificant. We cannot prove that there have been other cases just like these, but it is unnecessary to do so. For one thing, they represent privileged discourse, both because of the shielding provided by referee anonymity and because they were the sanctioned discourse of a journal in this field. In addition, we agree with the point made so clearly by Foucault, that statements actually uttered are those legitimized by the rules of a discursive practice. Such statements, even if rare, are indicators of the forces of power within a discursive field. See *Archaeology* 28, 120.

³⁵We are interested in continuations more than conclusions, because, despite Referee #2's invitation to us to leave the field, we have decided to stay.

³⁶Of course, it is equally absurd to suggest that any academic discourse be politically neutral, from our point of view. Feminist scholarship, though, is particularly vulnerable to this kind of demand, for it cannot effectively disguise itself as apolitical as many forms of academic discourse can.

³⁷See, for example: Balsamo; Biesecker; Foss and Griffin; and Kauffmann.

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