Feminization and Composition's Managerial Subject

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In "Composition as Management Science," Marc Bousquet persuasively argues that the success of composition's labor struggle depends ultimately on "the organized voice and collective action of composition labor" (494). Bousquet contends that despite a long history of successful social transformation and labor movements through collective action ("abolition, decolonization, feminism, communism, and trades-unionisms"), composition has invested the potential for equitable labor relations in an individual managerial subject (512). He explains that "the narrative" of the "heroic WPA" rests upon the WPA's ambiguous self-representation as both a revolutionary figure and as just one of "the gang of composition labor" (496, 503). Although the WPA position affords disciplinary authority, material privilege, and removal from hard labor in the trenches of contingent composition instruction, management often voices a primary identification with the very labor it manages.

In what follows, I would like to explore the gendered dimensions of Bousquet's observation that management's "identity crisis" manifests in its "co-opting the voice of labor" (503). I would propose that on one very important register, "the voice of labor" is the discourse of feminization and that composition management's identification with composition instruction is an institutionally structured *false* identification with the feminized subject position. Thus, in my view, composition's "identity crisis" and the failure of its labor struggle are a crisis of gendering, one whose roots were established in the formation of composition as a course of instruction in the nineteenth-century university.

The History of Feminization: Engendering Composition Instruction

Feminist composition scholars have applied the socio-economic concepts of feminization and "women's work" to the field of com-

position in order to expose the ideological and economic processes that keep women in subordinate positions in the academy and, specifically, in English departments. Feminization, as Sue Ellen Holbrook defines it, is "the process by which the field of composition has become associated with feminine attributes and populated by the female gender" (201). Restating the two key aspects of feminization and emphasizing the pejorative function of "feminine" in the labor process, Eileen Schell writes that feminization "has a double-edged meaning for women in composition, simultaneously signifying their presence as part-timers and adjuncts, while also signifying their absence in positions of power and influence" (55).

Composition's feminization has been commonly explicated as part of the history of English departments and understood as a process relative to literature's dominant, masculinized position. As Susan Miller explains, the formation and feminization of composition was crucial to the establishment of vernacular literary studies in the early nineteenth-century university. At that time, study of the English language, by virtue of its being the mother tongue, was "other" to the exclusive province of classical studies, whose Greek and Latin father tongues were reserved for male students. When instruction in vernacular language and literature began to serve the ideological function of inculcating a national identity and ethos, however, it was necessary to elevate its status. Describing the relationship between literature and composition as that of an "elegantly cooperative pair," Miller writes that:

> The 'woman's work' of composition filled a necessary symbolic (and often actual) 'basement' of literary studies in an easily understood process of identity formation. . . . and precisely contained within English the negative, nonserious connotations that the entire field might otherwise have had to combat. In mutuality with literary study, it enclosed those who might not 'belong,' even as it subsumed the soft, nonserious connotations of vernacular study. It became a place that the 'best men' escape from. ("The Feminization of Composition" 45)

Organized by phallogocentric logic, this "elegantly cooperative pair" segregated rhetorical education into activities that were readily associated with either the masculine or the feminine realm and structured a corresponding division of labor in English departments. Examining the correspondence between the binary pairing of "intellectual" work and "mechanical" work and the economic value assigned to the labor of men and women, Donna Strickland explains how cultural ideologies of gender that posit men as naturally suited for abstract, theoretical work reserved the more prestigious and better-paying work of upper-level English studies for men. Similarly, by positing women as naturally suited for skills-based, service-oriented work, they functioned to ensure that women's cheaper labor was used to staff the universally required first-year composition.

Theresa Enos's study of gender and the working conditions of compositionists, *Gender Roles and Faculty Lives in Rhetoric and Composition*, offers itself as a resource for those attempting to undo the processes of feminization. Enos focuses on the relative position of men and women in writing programs and concludes that despite the predominance of women, "what traditional rewards there are in the field have mostly gone to men" (vii). She suggests that women are more likely than men to undertake work, such as administration (which prior to disciplinarity did not meet traditional promotion and tenure criteria in English departments) and subsequently they face a glass ceiling. In response to these conditions, Enos suggests "broadening the definition of intellectual work" so that "writing program administration should be recognized not as service, but as a separate and special category of administration or intellectual work" (89). During the 1990s, a period Robert Connors calls composition's "era of disciplinarity," the discourse defining writing program administration as intellectual work worthy of tenure and promotion was produced. In its wake, we have seen the tremendous growth of tenure-track administrative positions and the movement of women into two-thirds of all WPA positions (Barr-Ebest "Gender Differences" 67; Gunner "Identity" 38). Given these conditions, it seems the argument to view writing program administration as intellectual work has succeeded in improving the status of women WPAs.

In a note to "Women's Work: The Feminizing of Composition," Sue Ellen Holbrook speculates on the outcome of composition's struggle for disciplinarity in an academy that has a history of "enhancing occupational status at the expense of women" (214). Holbrook writes, "Since the current move to upgrade composition is taking place within an atmosphere tinged with feminism, it will be interesting to see whether women and men can professionalize composition with a model less costly to women than we have witnessed in the past" (214). Arguably, the terms upon which composition has attained disciplinarity are largely those set forth in the argument to make writing program administration scholarly work worthy of tenure and promotion. As I will discuss in detail below, while the scholarship of administration has made material gains for composition management, it has not undone the intellectual/mechanical binary codings that "support the economic and managerial logic of divisions of labor in writing programs," and from this perspective it is a model as costly to women as any we have witnessed in the past (Strickland "Taking Dictation").

Masculinization: Engendering Composition Management

Composition's attainment of disciplinarity is the result of a culmination of multiple, complex social, cultural, and economic forces. At least two of these forces coincide in the relationship between the global information economy and the corporate university. J. Hillis Miller writes that composition and rhetoric has become "brilliantly professionalized," responding to "major social

forces such as the redefinition of the university's mission from cold war research and indoctrination in a single set of national values to 'preparing a skilled workforce for competition in a global marketplace'" (qtd. In Anson & Rutz 106). Rhetoric and composition's rapid development of research and pedagogical expertise in the literacy skills valuable to the global information economy has resulted in the tremendous growth of job positions in computer-aided instruction and technical/business writing.[1] The equally accelerated growth in administrative positions suggests that, ironically, another reason composition has made material gains in the corporate university may be attributable to a primary condition of feminization—its overwhelmingly large class of flexible, contingent writing instructors.

In many ways, composition's attainment of disciplinary status is strikingly similar to the process by which literature gained status in the mid-nineteenth-century university when its value to the state was recognized. The development of a global service economy and a corporate university responding to the labor demands of this economy have provided rhetoric and composition the opportunity to gain a more centrally important role in literacy education (see Downing, Hulbert and Mathieu; Selfe; and Williams). In rising to this task, rhet-comp has elevated its status by containing the feminine aspects of composition "that the entire field otherwise would have had to combat" within the classroom, and articulating certain aspects of composition work, such as administration, with traits socially, culturally coded male (Miller, S 45). Maintaining a segment of feminized workers has helped ensure the rising status of rhetoric and composition, and institutional value has enabled composition management access to the material support requisite to disciplinarity—time, money, and human resources necessary to establishing and participating in conferences, peer-reviewed journals, and professional organizations. Disciplinarity, in turn, has produced a discourse that sanctions the university's use of flexible, contingent labor by imposing intellectual/mechanical coding on the newly masculinized composition subject and the already feminized composition instructor.

At face value, calling writing program administration, work now predominately performed by women, "masculinized" is a contradictory and controversial move. Nonetheless, as I will discuss, recognizing composition management as masculinized is essential to revealing the field's complicity in exploitative labor structures and to decolonizing the discourse of feminism and feminization.[2]

My emphasis on feminization and masculinization as the gendered traits of work, rather than only as the sexual division of labor, is supported by the work of feminist socio-economic theorists such as Vosko, who discusses the "gendering of jobs"; Jenson, who details the development of a new set of "gendered employment relationships"; and Walby, who discusses "gender transformations" in employment. Such theorists attribute the destabilization of a strict correspondence between sexual divisions of labor and the masculine and feminine traits associated with that labor to the

development from a Fordist, nationalist economy to a post-Fordist, global service economy. While women's work has traditionally been defined as peripheral, service work, major restructuring of the world's economies, which has had a negative effect overall on both men and women of the working class, has resulted in a decline in full-time benefited industrial jobs and in an increase in the service sector (Hagen and Jenson 5-6). The characteristics that previously noted the work of women have become an apt description of the work of both men and women throughout our economy; at the same time, this destabilization has allowed women of racial and classed privilege to make inroads into traditionally male occupations (Armstrong, Bakker, Fudge).[3]

I use the terms masculine and feminine without strict correspondence to sexual identity to signify the binary system of valued and subordinated traits historically assigned to the work of men and women in order to produce reward differentials, or, in the case at hand, to make teaching cheap work. Although gendered traits no longer correspond directly to a sexual division of labor, composition labor is nonetheless still coded with hierarchically opposed traits that were historically organized by the central opposition in patriarchal society—male/female. Composition teaching remains feminized both in the sense that it is overwhelmingly done by women and that it is coded with historically feminine traits of work—such as subordination and mechanization—and composition management, despite the fact that it is a position now predominantly held by women, is masculinized by the material and discursive practices that set it in opposition to composition teaching and align it with historically masculine traits of work—such as the authoritative and the intellectual. In the post-industrial labor market, the socio-economic process of feminization functions not to guarantee that women work as composition instructors because of essential qualities attributed to their biological difference but to designate composition instruction as low-level "mechanical" work that does not require advanced graduate training and, consequently, does not warrant the benefits of faculty work, such as salaries, benefits, and academic freedom.

Discussions of feminization that focus primarily or only on sexual difference cannot account for the radically disparate positions women now hold in the field of rhetoric and composition. However, an analysis of the gendered system that defines composition's labor hierarchy may help disable the disciplinary practices that continue to construct composition instruction outside the boundaries of economically valued academic work, holding most composition workers in vulnerable, feminized positions, while enabling a few to access positions of power and authority.

The Case for WPA as Intellectual Work

Two pivotal documents that mark the decade of composition's attainment of full disciplinary status—The Council of WPAs' Portland Resolution and their "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of

Writing Administration"—are representative of the discourse that authorizes a hierarchy of composition work (modeled on traditional sexual divisions of labor) between a class of tenured faculty who make knowledge and the untenured instructors who implement this knowledge (see also Rose and Weiser 1999 and 2002; Stygall). Explaining the importance of discourse and disciplinarity to the operation of power in society, Foucault writes that power is "established, consolidated," and "implemented" in the "production, accumulation, circulation and function of a discourse" (93). He goes on to say that disciplines, as "the bearers of discourse," are "a fundamental instrument of industrial capitalism" (105). Composition's attainment of disciplinary status has been crucial to the operation of power relations in the corporate university. Disciplinarity has enabled composition to identify the work of its PhD holders as intellectual, research-oriented work, but its discourse has primarily identified only the production of pedagogical knowledge and the management of composition programs as intellectual work, excluding the practice of pedagogy from its disciplinary boundaries. While disciplinarity has effectively put the management of composition programs into the hands of tenure-track rhet-comp PhDs, it has reduced the number of degree holders who actually teach composition at the undergraduate level and has failed to provide the work of composition instruction with disciplinary status and its attendant rewards.[4]

In her discussion of feminization throughout the professions, Holbrook explains that "developing a body of abstract and special knowledge has been more characteristic of the masculine professions, while serving others through applying and communicating knowledge has been more characteristic of the feminine professions" (203). The Council of WPAs' Portland Resolution and their "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration" map composition programs as a bifurcated labor system where knowledge is generated by disciplinary experts and implemented by subordinated labor. In setting the terms of work Holbrook describes, these documents emphasize the socially constructed, economically realized, "feminine" traits of composition instruction and articulate composition management with traits coded male.

Written in the early 1990s, the six-page Portland Resolution sets forth institutional guidelines for Writing Program Administration in order to "help both Writing Program Administrators and those with whom they work and to whom they report develop quality writing programs in their institutions" (Hult et al 88). The resolution contends that developing "quality writing programs" depends upon the institution's willingness to move the WPA beyond "untenable job situations" (88). In effect, it strikes a deal with upper management, arguing that, in exchange for material security and tenure for composition managers, it can deliver up to the corporate university just-in-time labor strategies. The document's first heading, "Working Conditions Necessary for Quality Writing Program Administration," precedes demands for, among other points, a clear position in middle management—"WPA positions should be situated within a

clearly defined administrative structure so that the WPA knows to whom he or she is responsible and whom he or she supervises"—and job security—"WPAs should be a regular, full-time, tenured faculty member or a full-time administrator" (88).

In addition to setting forth standards for WPA job security, access to institutional resources, and methods of evaluation, it includes multiple lists of WPA job duties and responsibilities, which read like a corporate employment manual. In particular, these lists delineate the role the WPA plays in sorting, selecting, supervising, disciplining, and discharging the contingent labor of composition instructors and students. For example, the document lists the following as typical, expected WPA responsibilities:

> —designing or teaching faculty development seminars
> —training tutors
> —supervising teaching assistants and writing staff
> —evaluating teaching performance; observing and evaluating TAs and adjunct faculty in class; reviewing syllabuses and course policy statements; reviewing comments on student essays and grading practices
> .....
> —standardizing and monitoring course content
> .....
> —interviewing and hiring new faculty and staff
> .....
> —creating, or having access to, a database of information on enrollments, faculty and student performance
> —administering student evaluations of teachers
> .....
> —determining numbers of sections to be offered
> .....
> —staffing courses. (91-93)

The ostensible purpose of such lists is to limit the duties expected of WPAs to tasks directly related to writing program administration and, thus, to protect WPAs from an overly burdensome, unclear, ever-changing set of job demands, but in setting forth a vocational list of managerial tasks, the resolution also illustrates the crucial role WPAs play in university power, labor, and economic systems. Further, by outlining a labor structure in which it is necessary to sort, select, supervise, discipline, and discharge subordinate labor, it implicitly guarantees the maintenance of feminized, contingent labor. Foucault explains the importance of such managerial structures to capitalist divisions of labor, arguing that the "separation of tasks [could not] have been attained without a new distribution of power on the plane of management of the forces of production" (158). He goes on to point out that "it was necessary to have at the same time this new distribution of power known as a discipline, with its structures and hierarchies, its inspections, exercises and methods of training and conditioning" (158). The Council of WPA's Portland Resolution both delineates the gendered division of labor in writing programs made possible by the figure of

the WPA and also makes the successful continuation of this managerial work dependent upon full institutional support, or what the institution's support will eventually provide—disciplinary status. In doing so, the resolution introduces to upper management the possibility of a discourse, one that would legitimate and manage contingent labor from the base of disciplinary authority.

In her article "Politicizing the Portland Resolution," Jeanne Gunner offers an important and incisive critique of the Portland Resolution, identifying its construction of the WPA as an "efficiency expert" and agent of "the managerial interests of the larger institutional unit" (27). Elsewhere, Gunner explains that "composition is structurally placed in an Althusserian social formation" where it must utilize "conciliatory and assimilationist language" when speaking to a more powerful relation" ("Among" 163). While Gunner writes specifically of dominant/marginal power relations between literature and composition, her understanding that "individual voices cannot speak outside the terms of exchange" explains the structural economic and social relationships pressuring the model of composition labor set forth in the Portland Resolution (163). The "terms of exchange" governing the production of this text and relations between the corporate university, WPAs, and composition instructors are not only the setting of center/marginal relations within the field of composition, but also the post-Fordist strategies of just-in-time labor and total quality management systems that demand the existence of feminized labor. The Portland Resolution is "constrained by its intended audience," as Gunner points out, and also by its material context, one in which the WPA is always accountable to, and, thus, in some sense always speaks to upper administration. In documenting what is essentially a conversation between upper and middle management, the resolution reveals the power relations that hail the WPA and the subjectivity called forth by the regime of flexible accumulation.

Where the Portland Resolution sets the terms under which one class of compositionists is exclusively entitled to job security and material resources, The Council of WPAs' 1998 "Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration" makes the ability to define composition work as intellectual dependent upon this institutional support. Both documents define WPAs in relationship to the subjects they hire, train, supervise, and fire, but "Evaluating"—which presents "a framework by which writing administration can be seen as scholarly work. . . . that is worthy of tenure and promotion when it advances and enacts disciplinary knowledge within the field of rhetoric and composition" (85)—acts as a corrective to the Portland Resolution's vocational representation of the WPA and avoids defining WPA dominance purely as a matter of relative positioning in the corporate hierarchy. Rather, it seeks to define WPA work as superior by nature of its "intellectual" content, and, thus, it calls forth the symbolic coding that has rationalized divisions of labor in English departments for more than a century.

In several ways, "Evaluating" seeks to delineate the work of writing administration as "intellectual" by setting it in hierarchical

opposition to the work of composition instructors and by emphasizing characteristics of WPA work that are not materially accessible to most composition instructors. In this document, the transaction of knowledge between the writing administrator and the writing instructor is key in mapping difference. The five descriptive categories themselves, which include "Curricular Design" and "Faculty Development," emphasize the top-down nature of writing program administration, and the document specifies that among the WPA's "chief responsibilities" are "develop[ing] and implement[ing] training programs for new and experienced staff' and "communicat[ing] current pedagogical approaches and current research in rhetoric and composition" (97). The relationship between the WPA and instructors is set up as a one way transmission in which the administrator develops a practice that is implemented by the instructors. Furthermore, the administrator's ability to develop such practice is explicitly defined as "not a purely technical matter" (presumably, as an instructor's curricular development for her own class would be) because the WPA utilizes an "understanding of the conceptual, a grounding in composition history, theory, and pedagogy" (97). Although compositionists (see Zebroski) have clearly made the case that all teaching is informed by a theory of writing and learning, "Evaluating" precludes this argument by narrowly limiting what counts as theoretical and intellectual to those holding a rhet-comp PhD and pursuing an active research agenda. For example, the specific guidelines for assessing whether or not isolatable work is "intellectual" explicitly state that the work must require "disciplinary knowledge available only to an expert training in or conversant with a particular field" and "highly developed analytical or problem solving skills derived from specific expertise, training, or research derived from scholarly knowledge" (100).

The boundaries of what counts as intellectual are further limited by the document's requirement that the "intellectual" "results in products or activities that can be evaluated by peers (e.g., publication, internal and outside evaluation, participant responses) as the contribution of the individual's insight, research, and disciplinary knowledge" (100). Requiring review by authorized members of the discipline clearly limits on material grounds the ability of most composition instructors to define their work as "intellectual" by making money and time to travel to conferences, to read disciplinary journals, to conduct research, and to write articles prerequisites to claiming composition work as intellectual work. In defining the intellectual and theoretical as aspects of composition work inaccessible to most composition instructors, "Evaluating" restricts composition instruction to a mechanical practice, making it dependent upon the scholarly, tenure-worthy work of composition management. As such, it makes a case for the masculine engendering of the WPA's subject position, a move made possible by the concurrent reinscription of the composition instructor's feminized subject position, and sets the terms of work that feminist scholars have revealed as the undergirding of gendered divisions of labor throughout corporate workplaces.

Furthermore, and most egregiously, the council's statement makes the act of managerial dominance a scholarly act. In describing the managerial style of an "effective" WPA, the document states that:

> faculty and staff development depends primarily on one factor: the degree to which those being administered value and respect the writing administrator. Staff development cannot be accomplished by fiat. Instructors cannot simply be ordered and coerced, no matter how subordinate their position within the university. Thus faculty development, when it truly accomplishes its purpose of improving teaching and maintaining the highest classroom standards, is one of the most salient examples of intellectual work carried out within an administrative sphere. To be an effective administrative leader, the WPA must be able to incorporate current research and theory into the training and must demonstrate that knowledge through both word and deed. (97)

The document's notation that management is not accomplished "by fiat" and that composition instructors "cannot simply be ordered and coerced" implies that "effective" program administration will be accomplished through "feminist," or what is known as "soft," styles of management. In alluding to these methods of program management, "Evaluating" reveals a new and generally unacknowledged manner in which composition's gendered labor roles function to support corporate labor practices.

A significant body of sociological research concludes that university administration may be more successful in implementing post-Fordist labor strategies in higher education when they utilize female managers. Prichard & Deem contend that "women's previous 'outsider' positioning provides a basis for recruitment to such positions" and that "as with the feminization of other forms of work, this recruitment of women to middle level management posts is a key aspect of restructuring" of higher education (323). Blackmore writes that "women's 'propensity' for more democratic modes of decision-making, their emotional management skills derived out of their familial and pedagogical experiences, and their emphasis on curriculum and student welfare is an exploitable resource for new styles of management" (49). Ozga and Deem explain that the substitution of feminist managerial techniques for masculinist techniques may "make palatable the human costs of doing more for less" and aid "the surface amelioration of the unacceptable" (152). Feminist scholars have long known that gender coding, such as the mechanical/intellectual binary, is used to support corporate labor practices, but we have not considered how the "transgendering" of composition subjects—the movement of feminized subjects into masculinized positions, such as management—may be an exploitable resource used to implement the processes of corporatization.

Transgendered: Processes of (Scholarly) Reproduction

The description of female managers who have previously been positioned as "outsiders," who have worked extensively with pedagogy, shouldered the work of nurturance and service, and who, having moved into a position of authority, espouse a feminist approach to management seems to capture specifically the subjectivity of composition managers, both male and female. As graduate teaching assistants, and, for many, as part-time lecturers, all but the rare compositionist has been positioned in the university system and socialized in the manner sociological researchers found typical of the university's growing tier of mid-level management. To interrogate how the gender roles of compositionists may serve as an exploitable resource for the corporate university, I will examine, first, the ways in which training as a compositionists is an explicitly feminized experience that, for those completing the doctorate, generally progresses to the masculinized position of management. Next, I will consider the way the composition manager's previous experience as feminized labor manifests in self-identification with managed labor and a "feminist" style of management, both of which mask and enable corporate managerial practices. In doing so, I hope to help explain the ways that composition professionalizing mechanisms function ideologically to manufacture a subjectivity valuable to the corporate university.

Although the title graduate *student,* or even graduate teaching *assistant,* leads us to privilege scholarly work as the primary aspect of graduate school (as does most states' denial of a GTA's right to the legal status of employee), the overwhelming majority of time spent in rhet-comp graduate programs is devoted to pedagogical training and working as feminized contingent labor. Lynn Worsham has written that, "What the working day produces and reproduces as its primary and most valuable product is an affective relationship to the world, to oneself, and to others" (219). In relation to the graduate student's working day, the most valuable product, then, might be the affective relationship binding composition subjects to a primary identification with the feminized labor of composition instruction.

Following Worsham, my contention is that the pedagogy of graduate programs in rhetoric and composition is incorporated into the working day of graduate students as much as it is a part of the formal aspects of the graduate curriculum and that the primary work of this pedagogy is the ideological work Worsham terms "a pedagogy of emotion," the unacknowledged work of structuring a particular emotional disposition. For rhetoric and composition graduate workers, the pedagogy to which they submit is one that binds them to the feminized subject position on multiple levels—by nature of their status as flexible labor, by lack of autonomy, and by coursework focused on composition pedagogy. In naming the emotions that "form the core of the hidden curriculum for the vast majority of people living and learning in a highly stratified capitalist society," Worsham names the emotions that form the pedagogy

in our graduate programs, "emotions of self-assessment, such as pride, guilt, and shame," "exploitation and domination" (216; 223). Like flex workers throughout the economy, rhet-comp graduate students suffer the affective consequences of occupying a debased subject position, one that requires they do the work of a full-time, fully supported member of the workforce for a fraction of the pay and the absence of benefits, institutional identity, social recognition, or full communal membership.

Graduate student labor is further feminized by its subordination to a curriculum designed, theorized, and dictated by the department's composition expert. Sally Barr-Ebest's study of graduate programs in rhetoric and composition reports that "one-quarter [of all graduate students] work from a departmental syllabus and almost three-quarters use texts selected by a departmental committee. 59.2% are allowed to design their own syllabi, but "almost all of them [97.2%] work from models provided by their WPAs" ("Next Generation" 68). The degree of control exerted over graduate students' labor is necessitated by just-in-time labor strategies that put inexperienced teachers in the classroom, and writing program mechanisms, such as standardized syllabi, designated texts, mentoring groups, orientations, and workshops, provide programmatic space for the necessary control and surveillance of this undisciplined labor.

Richard Lloyd-Jones has written that "training programs and mass-management procedures to improve undergraduate teaching emerged as de facto doctoral programs in composition" (491). In many ways doctoral programs in rhetoric and composition still function primarily as "training programs" and create another institutional space for direction and surveillance while doing double duty as "advanced" disciplinary study. Research in graduate student education reveals that the common denominator of rhet-comp graduate curricula is the writing pedagogy course, which is generally comprised of nuts-and-bolts pedagogical training through methods of top-down instruction.[5] Given that the primary function of this course is to provide on-the-spot training in the matters vital to the first-year requirement, such as creating guidelines for and responding to student writing, it is not surprising that Catherine Latterell's survey of GTA education found that 75% of such doctoral courses emphasize pragmatic matters of the first-year classroom and lack historical and theoretical contexts. Latterell notes the following as common features of the typical writing pedagogy course: it is "taught by the director of the writing program or another member of the writing program committee"; the course "requires very minimal reading, focusing instead on first-year writing course materials and samples of first-year students' writing"; [and] "the course instructor observes the GTAs' teaching and evaluates their teaching materials and their response to (evaluation of) student writing" (18).

Barr-Ebest found that graduate research courses focus on research methods oriented towards the theorization and development of writing pedagogy, such as "ethnography, case studies, and

classroom/action research," but both her survey and a study conducted by Bereiter and Scardamalia found that nonempirical research methodologies, such as histories of rhetoric and composition or rhetorical theory are largely absent. Given that graduate students' time is consumed with taking and teaching courses focused on composition pedagogy and research methods, it is not surprising that pedagogical dissertations comprise 90.3% of the dissertations written by graduate students (Barr-Ebest "Next Generation" 73). For graduate students who shoulder 2/2 loads in addition to taking course work that supports their work in the classroom, little time or energy may remain for critical reflection upon the discipline and its broader institutional function or, in fact, the pursuit of any intellectual activity that is not related to the practical matter of supporting the university's writing program.

Ironically, while the preponderance of vocational and scholarly activity related to first-year composition undoubtedly results in well-trained, competent composition teachers, those who graduate with the rhet-comp doctorate will more likely employ this knowledge to theorize pedagogy for others and implement composition training programs than to develop and exercise pedagogy for their own classrooms. A review of the 2002 MLA *Job Information List* reveals that most rhet-comp PhDs will assume the work of writing program administration the day they step into an assistant professorship, and for many rhet-comp graduate students, movement towards the role of composition management begins in graduate school when they fulfill the terms of their graduate assistantships by serving as assistants to the WPA, work that involves the training and supervision of other graduate student instructors. As sociological studies suggest, this "transgendered" movement from the feminized position of composition teaching to the masculinized position of administration produces a subject whose self-understanding and managerial tactics function both to implement and to conceal corporate managerial practices.

The metaphor of the transgendered subject is useful because the movement signified by "trans" forces recognition of the movement from a feminized to a masculinized subject position. While the field has generally recognized composition teaching as feminized, it has not acknowledged composition management as masculinized. However, the identification of WPA as masculinized is supported by close analysis of its discourse, which, as I have outlined above, sets WPAs and instructors in a dominate/subordinate relationship and utilizes the symbolic coding of masculine/feminine work to support this power differential. Identifying composition management as a masculinized position and signifying this subject's movement away from the feminized subject position strips away the obfuscating function of the terms "feminized" and "feminist," revealing the way gender is used as a tool for implementing the processes of corporatization.

Additionally, in queer theory, there is a "consistent decoding of 'trans' as incessant destabilizing movement between sexual and gender identities" (Prosser 23). As noted above, the destabilization

of a strict correspondence between sexual divisions of labor and the gendered traits of this labor is a feature of corporate labor regimes giving rise to the subjectivity of WPAs and feminized contingent labor. Thus, "transgendering" enables the understanding that men in the field who serve as PTLs and GTAs are placed in a feminized subject position, just as women who serve as tenure-track administrators occupy masculinized positions.

Despite the content of the work most rhet-comp PhDs engage in—administering a writing program, pursuing their independent research agendas, and teaching, if at all, one or two undergraduate composition courses per academic year—composition management often identifies itself with the labor it manages and espouses an explicitly feminist agenda. Strickland writes that compositionists speak "of the feminization and proletarianization of *composition*, as if the entire field were marginalized because those who teach it—as opposed to those who specialize in it—are economically and ideologically marginalized" ("Managerial" 56). Further, while WPAs occupy positions of authority and enable the university's use of contingent, feminized labor, as sociologists noted generally of women managers, most WPAs see their position as a potential "site of social change" (Gunner "WPA" 29) and seek "to support productive and progressive social change," (Miles 50; see also Thomas Miller; Richard Miller; and Murphy). In an attempt to address the gross inequities in writing programs, which, again, most WPAs have experienced first hand, WPAs have sought to "democratize" administration through collaborative models of program administration (Cambridge and McClelland; Dickson; Gere; Gunner "Decentering the WPA"; Howard; Hult "Politics Redux"; Keller, et al.; H. Miller). For example, Keller et al. claim to have "flattened" administrative power by utilizing an administrative team comprised of the WPA, graduate student assistants, and PTL coordinators (36). Reviewing articles that call for the democratization of writing program administration, Jeanne Gunner argues that a feminist model of "post-unitary" and "reformist" WPA identity is emerging, one organized according to "cooperation and flexibility," "a conception of a multiple, relational WPA" that addresses "issues of power and authority as conflicts to be undone by decentering the position of the WPA, allowing an escape from the managerial slot" ("Decentering" 43). While the feminist agenda may seem oppositional to corporate conditions in higher education, sociologists Kenway and Langmead incisively point out that "the appearance of collaboration is important in the new managerialism" and that corporate conditions demand "feminist" styles of management (142). Rosemary Deem writes that "the 'softer' management skills of women may be used by universities to provide a cover for the harder aspects of 'new managerialism'" (66).

Despite the genuine desire of most WPAs to command the power of their position in the service of social justice, the material conditions of the WPA position generally work against feminist goals. The core duties of the position—training contingent writing instructors, developing a standardized composition curriculum, and inde-

pendently hiring and firing teachers according to the university's staffing needs—constitute labor practices that construct composition instruction outside the boundaries of traditionally valued and supported academic work. The top-down transaction of knowledge implicit in the WPA position makes the instructor's work seemingly dependent on the knowledge of an expert, who has sole rights to theorizing and establishing the terms of work in the composition classroom. Such labor practices mimic traditional sexual divisions of labor, and as such, they maintain conditions of oppression. Nonetheless, because most WPAs have experienced the conditions of feminized labor first hand, their espousing of a feminist agenda and identification with the feminized subject position are both fully understandable *and* institutionally expected. Making composition programs feel more "democratic" by including contingent labor in departmental planning and governance may not undo the dominant/subordinate terms of composition work that support the university's use of contingent labor. However, it may make the terms of contingent writing instruction more "palatable" and aid "the surface amelioration of the unacceptable" (Ozga and Deem 152). Further, such strategies may ease the discomfort and guilt created by the WPA's transgendered movement from labor to management.

Writing about the composition manager's vexed subjectivity, rhet-comp graduate students and new faculty often speak of the rift they experience between their primary identification as teachers and their subsequent role as managers. They describe the psychic violence of this disjunction as "the anxiety of authority," "an impossible balancing act" (Duffey et al.), and a "cognitive dissonance" (Willard-Traub 66). Rebecca Mountford writes that moving from composition instructor to composition manager is "not unlike being selected for middle management in a company in which you have been a blue collar worker" (43); graduate students Duffey, Feigert, Mortimer, Phegey, and Turnley write of the difficulty they experienced in exercising power over those with whom they "took classes, shared offices, and socialized with"; and Clyde Moneyhun says:

> I have deep misgivings about joining the managerial class of the composition industry. But here I am nevertheless, OTM [on the market]: poised to climb up to a level in the industry hierarchy that is different not just in degree but also in kind from any I've occupied so far. I'm leaving the ranks of the working masses, the grad assistants and part-timers who do most of the actual writing instruction that is the ostensible focus of our profession. OTM. Movin' on up. Management at last. Officer material. (406)

The shame of our discipline is not only our large class of female contingent laborers but it is also the implicit understanding that, as one graduate student writes, if contingent laborers wish to escape

feminized work conditions, they must be willing "to participate in the exploitation of others . . . so that they might earn the possibility of a better future if not tenure" (Peters 122). Considering the "emotional angst" created by the terms of WPA work, it is not surprising that WPAs have tempered the purpose of their position—maintaining a feminized workforce—with the discourse of feminization and feminism (Micciche 434).

However, working to undo the processes of feminization and putting a feminist agenda in action require resistance to the managerial imperative, not methods of making it more endurable. It means revising our labor structures and graduate programs so that neither serving as feminized labor nor assuming authority over this labor is requisite to joining the discipline of rhetoric and composition (the acceptance at CCCC 2003 of the Working Class Caucus's Resolution on Labor Rights, which recommends reduced teaching loads for GTAs, represents potential for movement toward this goal). At the same time, we must rely consistently less and less on the labor of non-degreed, unsupported, contingent labor and start "working toward a university without a WPA" (Bousquet "Composition" 518). Doing so will enable us to disassemble the symbolic and material divisions between masculinized and feminized labor in writing programs. Explaining the importance of raising the status of all composition work as part of the disciplinary process, Holbrook writes, "The transformation of composition from women's work to an esteemed profession can come only as part of the larger complex process of raising the status of teaching itself . . . and revalorizing socially produced differences between the masculine and feminine genders" (211). Revalorizing teaching, the vital step in undoing composition's feminization, means rearticulating the intellectual and theoretical with what has traditionally been women's work and ensuring that what have traditionally been the rewards of men's work are shared by all compositionists.

Notes

[1]Downing, Hurlbert, and Mathieu; Cindy Selfe; and Jeff Williams discuss the importance of rhetoric and composition's curriculum to the global information economy. In regard to job growth in composition, Stygall notes that from 1994-1998, job positions in rhetorical theory and history showed a very modest growth rate of 12.5 to 13%, yet administrative positions grew from 24 to 33%, technical writing from 10 to 19%, and computers and composition from 9.5 to 21%.

[2]In using of the terms "masculine" ("masculinized") and "feminine" ("feminized") to define the work of composition management and instruction, I do not refer to "appropriate" sexual divisions of labor or to intrinsic traits of composition labor. Rather than reinforcing the notion that composition work is mechanical work appropriate for women, I wish to reveal disciplinary practices that falsely construct it along these lines in order to clear the way for the

production of discursive and labor practices that value composition instruction as intellectual, autonomous work and economically reward it as such.

[3]Discussing the destabilization of sexual divisions of labor and gender roles in the service economy, Evan Watkins writes that "gender mobility [is] available to upper-level service occupations" (56). Further, he notes that "gender becomes a constitutive factor of class position not as a categorical social division identified in natural, universalized terms, but as a differential marker of relative mobility, a class freedom of movement across gender roles" (56). In Watkin's estimation, categories of labor are overdetermined by race and class, which dictate a subject's ability to move in and between gendered positions. For example, a white woman from the upper class is quite capable of operating in a public masculinized space, assuming a deanship or other administrative position in higher education. However, an Hispanic man from the lower socio-economic bracket would more likely find himself in the kitchen of the campus' Marriot food services than occupying the dean's office. In such an example, sexual difference is largely irrelevant to these subjects' relative masculinized and feminized positions in the social and economic order.

[4]Moghtader et al note that in 1998, fewer colleges and universities staffed composition courses with full-time faculty than they did in 1973. In 1973, the percent of private schools that staffed composition courses only with full-time faculty was 58%, in 1998, the percentage had decreased to 11%; in 1998, the percentage of schools relying on part-time composition instruction grew from 37% to 85%. The numbers for public schools during the same years are similar; schools using full-time faculty only went from 40% to 4%, the use of part-time faculty from 50% to 86% (455-59).

[5]Barr-Ebest's 1999 survey of writing programs found GTA education courses (composition theory and pedagogy) to be the common denominator among course offerings in rhet-comp graduate curricula. Catherine Latterell's survey of GTA education curricula in 36 rhetoric and composition doctoral programs found that the majority of graduate courses focused on teaching writing "teaches teachers within a pedagogical model that relies on translation-based approaches to theory and writing instruction and on one-way modes of communication: GTA educator to GTA; GTAs to first-year students" (19).

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Part IV:

Ideas for Action and Intervention