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ABSTRACT

A study focused primarily on determining whether women and men are being published at equal rates in the leading journals of the National Communication Association (NCA). The study also examined whether: females publish more in a particular area or journal; mixed-sex collaboration is as prevalent as same-sex collaboration; female scholars produce as many "lead articles" as males scholars; and female and male scholars differ in their choice of research topics or issues. Another question was whether males or females were listed first in mixed-collaboration articles. Tables of contents and abstracts from six leading national journals published between 1990 and 1997 were examined. Results indicated that women are making headway in the major NCA journals for overall publication rates. In two of the six journals, females are equal to males. Collaboration rates showed that the lead-authorship in mixed-sex collaboration was split between males and females. Same-sex collaboration examination showed that males collaborated with each other more than with females. Three times as many females as males wrote on interpersonal issues. Findings also suggest that female scholars may be more interested than males in the relationship between theory and praxis rather than in metatheoretical discourse or argument. (NKA)

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Women in the 90's: Are They Publishing or Perishing in the NCA Journals?

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Women in the 90's: Are They Publishing or Perishing in the NCA Journals?

Despite the concerns of some communication theorists that our discipline has somewhat deteriorated into "counting articles authored by prolific researchers" (p. 329, Erickson, Fleuriet & Hosman, 1993; see also Blair, Brown & Baxter, 1994), the practice of examining who is publishing and what they are publishing in our field and other fields has been a long-standing method of determining the direction of and the major influences in academic development (e.g., Barker, Ray, Watson & Hall, 1988; Boice, Shaughnessy & Pecker, 1985; Burroughs, Christophel, Ady, & McGreal, 1989; Foss & Foss, 1983; Hickson, Stacks, & Amsbary, 1993, 1989; Over, 1985; Watkins, 1986).

A search of several social science and humanities databases indicates that research has also been conducted to examine the impact of gender in publication (e.g., Foss & Foss, 1986; Hickson, Stacks, & Amsbary, 1992; Over, 1985; Rubin & Powell, 1987; Schuckman, 1987; Watkins, 1986). The primary focus of this study is to determine whether women and men are being published at equal rates in the leading journals of the National Communication Association. In addition to this question, other issues addressed in this study include whether or not female scholars focus on different issues, publish more in certain journals, and/or focus more on one aspect of the discipline.

Intuitively, we would assume females focus more than males on "women's issues." A quick perusal of the index to Women's Studies in Communication, indicates this to be true (i.e., 47 of the 55 articles in the decade of the 90's have been authored either solely by females or by female collaborators).

But what of the six major journals published by the National Communication Association? What are female scholars publishing in these? Do their publication rates match those of their male counterparts? These are the questions that spurred the present study. Specifically, we wish to address the following questions:

1. Overall, are female communication scholars publishing at the same rate as male scholars?
2. Do females publish more in one particular area or journal?
3. Is mixed-sex collaboration as prevalent as male-only collaboration and female-only collaboration?
4. In mixed-sex collaboration, who most often gets first authorship?
5. Do female scholars produce as many "lead articles" as male scholars?
6. Do female and male scholars differ in their choice of research topics or issues?

Methodology

The authors chose tables of contents and abstracts of articles from six national journals published from 1990 through 1997 by the National Communication Association for this study. The journals included *Communication Education*, *Communication Monographs*, *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, and *Text and Performance Quarterly*. These journals were chosen because they are all national publications and represent the full gamut of interests in the field. Initially, each article was coded and counted by category of authorship (see Table 1 for categories and counts) to answer question.

Four of the journals, *Communication Education*, *Communication Monographs*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, and *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, were selected for investigation of the sixth research question. These journals were selected because the articles published in them typically represent the wide range of issues and contexts currently under investigation in the field. *CE* publications are typically oriented toward instructional methods and curriculum design; *QJS* focuses on rhetorical-critical analysis; *JACR* covers organizational and as well other applied areas of research; and finally, *CM* publications tend to seek a broader audience whose interests focus on the development

of human communication theory ranging from intrapersonal through mass communication.

Since publication rates without an understanding of the base population would prove futile, we also did a count of male and female scholars who are members of NCA. While this measure may not indicate the true demographics (for surely there are non-members of NCA who publish) in the field, it can serve as a baseline for scholars who are active in the field. The NCA national office reported that they did not have this information. The membership director of the organization confirmed that this information is not a matter of record, but the "official" report is that the membership is a 50-50 split. Therefore, a page-by-page count was undertaken. Using the 1997-98 Speech Communication Association Directory, (listing over 8000 members), we counted approximately 44% men, 49% women, and 7% indistinguishable by name.

Results

Table 1 seeks to answer our first question, whether female communication scholars are publishing at the same rate as male scholars. It examines the number of articles by sex of author(s) in each of the journals. Each journal will be discussed separately:

CE--A total of 211 articles have been published in *CE* since 1990. 36%, over one-third of the articles, were written by males, while 28% were written by females. The remaining were written in mixed sex collaboration with male as lead author (15%) or female as lead author (16%), with 5% author sex unknown. Collapsing the data even further, 51% of the articles were written by males-only or with a male as lead author; 44% were written by females-only or with a female lead author. Mixed-sex-collaboration was higher for this journal than any of the others we examined (31%), with the lead being equally divided between males and females.

CM--Articles published by males-only accounted for 53% of the publications in *CM*, while females-only published only 27% of the articles. When adding in the mixed-sex-collaboration, males-only or male-lead-author continued to hold an almost 2 to 1 margin in publication (64% to 34%). The only area in which females came close to equaling male publication rates is in mixed-sex-collaboration (of total articles published--male-lead-author, 11%; female-lead-author, 8%).

CSMC --This journal is far from balanced in regard to gender. 57% of the articles were written by individual male authors. 61% of the articles were written by males exclusively or with a male-lead-author, leaving only 36% written by females or with a female-lead-author (3% unknown). As in *CM*, when mixed-sex-collaboration occurred (which was only 8% of the time), lead was split evenly between males and females.

JACR--Very few gender differences surfaced in the publication rates in this journal. In fact, it was the only journal examined where individual females outpublished individual males (31-29, a slight margin). In all other configurations, males outpublished females but not by much.

QJS--Gender differences were great in this journal, with individual males outpublishing individual females 67%-22% of total articles published. Male-only or male-lead articles outstripped female-only or female-lead articles by 71% to 28%. The only area where females led in this journal was in mixed-sex-collaboration--female lead authors published 6% to the 4% male lead authors published, a small portion of the total articles published.

TPQ--The publication rates of this journal indicate that females and males are about equal in the decade of the 90's. While male-only or male-lead articles comprised 49% of the publications, female-only or female-lead articles comprised 44%, with only 4% of the total articles being written in mixed-sex-collaboration (3% unknown). The vast majority of the articles were written by individual authors, with very little collaboration occurring in this journal.

Table 1

Number of Articles by Author Sex in Selected Journals

J	Number of Articles Authored By						
	ind male	ind female	multi-male	multi-female	male first	female first	UnKn
CE	44	39	32	21	31	33	11
CM	58	31	35	16	19	14	3
CSMC	90	49	12	8	7	8	5
JACR	29	31	26	17	19	15	1
QJS	103	33	17	7	7	10	3
TPQ	138	120	7	9	6	6	10
Total	462	303	129	78	89	86	33

Question two, "Do females publish more in one particular area or journal?" can also be answered using Table 1. Individual female authorship ranges from 22% (*QJS*) to 44% (*TPQ*) of the total articles published. When examining female-only and female-lead-author, the percentages range from 28% (*QJS*) to 46% (both *JACR* and *TPQ*). It appears that females do publish more in *TPQ* and *JACR* than in the other journals. Women appear to be more prolific when it comes to applied communication research and articles concerning performance issues, but lag far behind their male counterparts in terms of critical and rhetorical studies.

Question three, "Is mixed-sex collaboration as prevalent as male-only collaboration and female-only collaboration?" can also be answered with the data in Table 1. Males-only collaborated for 11% of the total articles in all the journals; females-only collaborated for 7% of the total; and mixed-sex collaboration occurred 15% of the time. In each journal except for *TPQ*, male-only collaboration occurred substantially more often than female-only collaboration. In every journal but *CE* there were more same-sex collaborations than mixed-sex collaborations.

Question four, "In mixed-sex collaboration, who most often gets first authorship?", the data shows that overall it is evenly balanced (male-lead=89, female-lead=86). It is almost as even when broken down by journal, with three journals indicating female-lead-author slightly more often, two indicating male-lead-author slightly more often, and one evenly balanced.

Question five, "Do female scholars produce as many lead articles as male scholars?" is answered in Table 2. Male-only authorship constituted 51% of the lead articles, while female-only authorship comprised only 28%. Of the 169 lead articles in all the journals, 62 (37%) were written in collaboration. When the collaboration was mixed-sex, lead articles were evenly divided between male and female first author.

The lead article, when written by an individual, was overwhelmingly written by males in *CE*, *CSMC*, and *QJS*. The individual lead article authorship was balanced between males and females in *JACR*, *CM*, and *TPQ*. Articles written in collaboration appear to be more evenly balanced among females and males across the board.

Table 2

Sex of Lead Author in Selected Journals

Journal	Lead Article Authored by					
	ind male	ind female	multi-male	multi-female	male first	female first
CE	11	3	6	2	4	4
CM	8	6	4	2	3	3
CSMC	17	8	2	2	0	1
JACR	4	5	3	1	6	5
QJS	15	4	1	3	4	2
TPQ	15	11	0	1	1	2
TOTALS	70	37	16	11	18	17

Question six, "Do female and male scholars differ in their choice of research topics or issues?" is examined in Tables 3-7. These tables indicate counts for topic areas for the four journals. In each table, the topics are listed in order from most articles written to fewest.

Table 3 reports the number of articles by topic area for *CE*. Topic categories include 1) the use of technology and media in the classroom, 2) course design issues and suggestions, 3) teacher/student relationships, 4) texts and tools used in the classroom, 5) professional issues such as certification, 6) communication apprehension, and 7) intercultural issues in the classroom. Almost 1/4 of the articles were written about teacher/student relationships, with authorship of this topic being rather evenly divided between males and females. While males wrote more articles involving technology and media (20 by males only or male first author to 12 by females only or female first author), many of the topics were fairly evenly divided between males and females. However, with two exceptions, males authored more articles in each category. The only topic besides teacher/student relationships in which females authored more than males was in the area of intercultural, which was also the least written-about topic.

Table 3

Topic Areas for CE

Topic	Number of Articles Authored By					
	ind male	ind female	multi-male	multi-female	male first	female first
teacher/st rel	7	10	7	6	8	7
tech/media	12	7	6	4	2	1
course design	9	9	3	2	2	3
texts/tools	4	3	5	1	2	7
prof issues	3	1	3	1	1	1
comm app	2	1	5	1	7	4
intercultural	2	2	0	2	1	2
other	3	4	2	3	4	5
Total	42	37	31	20	27	30

Table 4 reports the number of articles by topic area for *CM*. First glance shows that interpersonal issues is by far the favorite topic of *CM* authors, with males publishing three times as many as females. Interpersonal is also the topic that is most collaborated on, with males and females being fairly equally balanced in lead authorship in mixed-sex-collaboration. The state of the field and methodological issues are also primary topics in this journal, with the former being written by both males and females, the latter by males 2-1 over females. Very little mixed-sex collaboration has occurred, but except for the interpersonal issues, same-sex collaboration has occurred equally in all other topics.

Table 4

Topic Areas for CM

Topic	Number of Articles Authored By					
	ind male	ind female	multi-male	multi-female	male first	female first
interpersonal	14	6	17	5	10	8
state of field	14	9	1	2	0	0
method. issues	10	5	3	1	0	1
social/political	12	0	2	0	3	1
organizational	4	4	4	3	1	1
mass media	0	1	2	3	2	1
pub sp/pers	1	3	3	0	2	0
intercultural	0	1	2	1	0	2
other	3	2	1	1	1	0
TOTAL	58	31	35	16	19	14

Tables 5 and 6 examine the issues addressed in *JACR*. From Table 5 it is apparent that one significant gender difference in topics and issues in this journal is in the area of defining what applied communication is and how it should be studied. Sixteen articles appeared on this subject, and of those sixteen, twelve (75%) were published by males or male collaborators.

Another intriguing difference concerns the topic of social issues. Of the eighteen articles published on this topic, nine (50%) were authored by females-only. If we also take into account the other four articles in which male and female scholars collaborated, 72% of the total number of articles included women as either primary or secondary authors.

Table 5

Topic Areas for JACR

Topic	Number of Articles Authored By					
	ind male	ind female	multi-male	multi-female	male first	female first
healthcare iss.	4	10	3	8	8	6
org. issues	8	3	11	2	5	4
social issues	2	6	3	3	1	3
what app. res. is	9	2	3	2	0	0
classrm iss.	5	5	2	0	1	0
cultural diversity	1	3	0	1	2	1
other	0	2	4	1	2	1
Total	29	31	26	17	19	15

One other interesting difference emerges in the category of "Health Issues." Only seven of the 39 articles written about health issues were written solely by men. This constitutes only 17% of the total articles on this subject. If the category of "Health Issues" is divided into the following subcategories -- issues of the elderly, issues of HIV/AIDS, issues of dependency and counseling, issues of children and adolescents, and general issues of health -- another difference arises (see Table 6).

From this table it is obvious that women scholars alone or in collaboration with other women or with men published an overwhelming majority of the articles on dependency. Of the fourteen articles published

on this topic, women scholars were the authors or co-authors of twelve (85.7%).

Table 6

Health Issues in JACR

Topic	Number of Articles Authored By					
	ind male	ind female	multi-male	multi-female	male1st	female1st
Elderly	1	3	1	1	4	2
HIV/AIDS	1	1	0	1	1	2
Depend.	1	5	1	2	3	2
Kids	0	0	1	2	0	0
General	1	1	0	2	0	0
TOTALS	4	10	3	8	8	6

Table 7

Topic Areas for QJS

Topic	Number of Articles Authored By					
	ind male	ind female	multi-male	multi-female	male first	female first
theory/th.debate	37	8	9	0	1	2
Am/Eng historic	25	4	3	2	1	2
contemp. soc. iss	6	6	2	2	1	
contemp pol. iss.	12	0	1	1	1	0
feminist iss.	2	8	0	1	0	0
contemp. media iss.	4	1	0	1	2	1
cross-cult.	4	2	2	0	1	0
ancient rhet.	8	1	0	0	0	0
other	5	3	0	0	0	0
Total	103	33	17	7	7	10

As Table 7 indicates, *QJS* yields few surprises. As with *JACR*, *CM*, and *CE*, male scholars seem to take more interest in the metatheoretical debates concerning rhetorical and critical analysis. Also not surprising, most of the articles addressing feminist theory were written by women and a majority of the analyses of historical events were written by men. We assert that the latter is not surprising since traditionally recording of history has been dominated by the acts of men. When women scholars

have addressed historical events or figures (e.g., early labor movement, Mary Wollstonecraft) on the pages of *QJS*, their work is informed by a feminist perspective; therefore, we coded these articles under the category of "feminist theory."

Discussion

As for overall publication rates, women are making headway in the major journals of the NCA. In fact, their overall rates in *JACR* and *TPQ* are equal to males. In the other four journals that we examined, males still lead in overall publication, but except for *QJS*, not overwhelmingly.

Surprisingly, collaboration rates produced interesting findings. In every journal we examined, from *CE*, which had the most mixed-sex collaboration, to *TPQ*, which had the least, the lead-authorship in mixed-sex collaboration was split between males and females. Same-sex collaboration rates showed that males collaborated with each other more often than females in every journal but *TPQ*., another surprising finding, given the general expectation that females would be more collaborative in nature than males.

When examining the authorship of lead articles, we found that male-only authorship accounted for over half of all lead articles published in the six journals. Again, however, when examining mixed-sex collaboration, male- and female-lead authorship was evenly split. In this, as with each exploration of mixed-sex collaboration, the statistics point to the fact that when males and females work together, females as often as males take the lead.

A few differences surfaced in the area of topics/issues of research and publication. No major topic differences were discovered in *CE*, but in each of the others, some interesting findings warrant a mention. Three times as many males as females wrote on interpersonal issues, the largest topic category in *CM*. In *JACR*, males wrote more about what applied communication is and females wrote more about social issues, especially dependency. And males wrote more in the metatheoretical debates concerning rhetorical and critical analysis in *QJS*. This result, concomitant with results from question one, suggests women scholars may be more interested in the relationship between theory and praxis rather than in metatheoretical discourse or argument. It could also be that male scholars may be invited more to debate metatheoretical issues, or that when women are invited many decline, viewing such discussion as

unrelated or insignificant to their academic focus. Traditional research concerning differences in moral development might explain this discrepancy (see, Gillign, 1982; Kohlber, 1981). Females tend to focus on situational issues, whereas males tend to be interested in broad abstract principles. Our purpose here is to report differences, but further investigation of this particular issue is warranted.

Given the fact that male scholars publish far more frequently in *QJS* than female scholars, it is reasonable to assume from our numbers that female rhetoricians are more interested in contemporary social issues than their male counterparts. Of the twenty-two articles published on this topic, fourteen (64%) were authored or co-authored by women. This claim may be specious, though, in light of the fact that we did not look at the issues and topics published in *CSMC*. More often than not, *CSMC* publications focus on popular culture and current issues; therefore, an examination of the articles in that publication may reveal that the discrepancy evidenced in the counts from *QJS* alone are not representative of the gender difference concerning this topic. If we examine the specific social issues male and female scholars are addressing, no significant differences emerge. Contrary to intuitive thinking, of the five articles that dealt with "women's issues" (e.g., reproductive rights, the rhetoric of pro-life activists, the rhetoric of breast cancer), three were authored solely by men. Again, examination of the issues in *CSMC* might yield a richer understanding of the social issues male and female scholars are investigating.

It would be easy to dismiss this study as a "wash;" for little information emerges that would not be anticipated from common sense reasoning. But to do so would miss the significant start that has been made here. From this study, it is apparent that women scholars are indeed keeping pace with their male counterparts in most areas of the discipline. Yet as Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary (1992) indicate, only about 15% of all Ph.D.'s publish, and of that 15% about half limit their publications to articles that derive from their dissertations. While Hickson, Stacks, and Amsbary have been criticized for their methodology (e.g., see Blair, Brown, & Baxter, 1994), a comparison of prolific female and male scholars might prove interesting and yield insight to questions concerning whether prolific females are more prolific than their male counterparts or if scholars of either gender venture very far from their original interests evident in their dissertations.

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