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Afterword: Echoes from the Trenches and the Feminists Who "Dig" Them

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AFTERWORD

Echoes From the Trenches and the Feminists Who "Dig" Them

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Because our "Introduction" opens with the 2003 Biennial Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference where this project originated, we felt it fitting that this "Afterword" conclude with the 2005 conference, where we, along with Chris Farris, presented a panel on this collection's findings. During that panel's question-and-answer session, Nan Johnson asked where better than this conference to confer about the troubled intersections of feminist principles and administrative practices. We agree. Consequently, we wish to thank all of our colleagues there who expressed ideas for and interest in this project and who inspired us to think more deeply about echoes from the administrative trenches and the feminists who "dig" them (pun intended).

But we also want to extend this conversation beyond the conference. Based on our conversations there, we decided that this "Afterword" should not simply summarize our contributors' voices, but rather supplement them. Given our desire to provide as many successful role models as possible, we solicited advice via e-mail interviews from feminist administrators too busy to contribute to this collection, five of whom responded. Given our desire to consider how feminism and administration are inflected by issues of diversity (e.g., race, class, and nationality), we culled (non)administration scholarship and reflected on our own administrative experiences and then laid both alongside the e-mail interviews. And given our desire to

keep conversations about feminism and administration in play, we decided not simply to call for further research, but also to provide a website that supplements this book (cf. Appendix and www.femadmin.org). Laying solicited e-mail interviews alongside (non)administration scholarship and our own reflections with an eye toward continuing conversations on feminism and administration, this "Afterword" pays homage to the voices contributing and not contributing to this collection—voices that have inspired us, challenged us, humbled us, and become friends of our minds.

ADVICE FROM E-MAIL INTERVIEWS AND (NON)ADMINISTRATION SCHOLARSHIP

Our e-mail interviews invited administrators not contributing to this collection to respond informally to five questions:

1. What administrative positions have you held?
2. What (if anything) prepared you for these positions?
3. How has being a woman/being a feminist (either one or both) affected your administrative activities, positively and/or negatively?
4. What do you consider essential qualities of a good administrator?
As a good feminist?
5. What advice would you offer young women as they prepare to take on administrative positions for the first time?

Of all the e-mail invitations issued, five administrators responded: Cheryl Glenn (Professor, Penn State University), Gail Hawisher (Professor, University of Illinois), Andrea Lunsford (Professor, Stanford University), Carolyn Miller (Professor, North Carolina State University), and Carolyn Rude (Professor, Virginia Tech). We hope the patterns gleaned from their responses, laid alongside (non)administration scholarship and our own reflections, will provide pragmatic advice for budding and experienced administrators, whether feminist or not. In addition, we hope any gaps in the following discussions provide impetus for further reflection, conversation, and research.

1. What Administrative Positions Have You Held?

As expected, e-mail responses to this question vary because rhetoric and composition scholars fill myriad administrative posts. Traditional ones include: directors of first-year writing programs, directors/consultants of

WAC programs, directors of writing centers, and directors of graduate programs. These discipline-specific positions are usually held by tenured and/or untenured professors, with assistant positions often being held by graduate students. Because these jobs train professors and graduate students to be proficient administrators, they often serve as stepping stones to other institutional and national administrative roles. For example, rhetoric and composition administrators have also served their own institutions as vice provosts, directors of centers for teaching excellence, deans, department chairs, departmental vice chairs, and departmental consultants for issues as varied as curriculum design, assessment, teacher development programs, peer teaching evaluations, mentoring programs, and various interdisciplinary endeavors. Rhetoric and composition administrators have also served their national organizations, such as CCCC (Conference on College Composition and Communication), MLA (Modern Language Association), NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English), STC (Society for Technical Communicators), ATTW (the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing), TYCA (Two-Year College Association), and WPA (Council of Writing Program Administrators).

Given these opportunities, rhetoric and composition administrators benefit from considering intersections of theory and practice. Likewise, they benefit from considering these intersections in terms of feminism. Although in 1998 Amy Goodburn and Carrie Leverenz claimed that feminist WPA work remained "surprisingly undertheorized" (276), the journal *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, the online WPA archives, and the Shirley Rose/Bud Weiser collections function as mother lodes of information about theoretical and practical matters of writing program administration, and books by Susan Jarratt and Lynn Worsham and by Louise Phelps and Janet Emig provide chapters that theorize feminism and administration. This collection engages these discussions, and this "Afterword" also invites (non)administrative research voices into this conversation.

For example, rhetoric and composition administrators would do well to apply Malea Powell's question of imperialism to administration. She asks: ". . . can we take what we do best as a discipline—reflect, rethink, revisit, and revise the stories that create who we are? My hope is that we can begin to re-imagine ourselves, our pedagogies, our scholarship, our discipline [and, we would add, our administration] in relation to a long and sordid history of American imperialism" (428). Powell's hope invites administrators to consider how power differentials inform practical, theoretical, and political dimensions of administrative positions, particularly in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality.

The need for such consideration has been affirmed by Kris' experiences as a WPA. When a young man appealed his first-year writing grade, he claimed the instructor graded his work unfairly. What he did not say initially, because he did not want to be perceived as playing "the race card," was

that, as a young black man, he felt that the white instructor was inadvertently racist in ways that not only affected his papers' grades and comments, but also hindered his performance in class. Admittedly, grade appeals cannot be judged solely on what students might have done in different situations. However, when another faculty member apprised Kris of the young man's hesitancy to speak up, this appeal provided Kris the opportunity to speak with the instructor about ways that gender and race intersect in the classroom, especially in terms of differences between a teacher's intent and a student's reception of that intent. This appeal also provided Kris an opportunity to speak with the student about ways to conceptualize race and personal performance in terms of deciding when and how to speak up. Just as important, this appeal provided Kris a moment "[t]o come to terms with the circumscribing nature of (our) whiteness" (Rich, "Notes" 219).

2. What (If Anything) Prepared You for These Positions?

The e-mail respondents offer different responses to this question, but they all agree that preparation comes in terms of people, personal initiative, and training. As for people providing preparatory training for administrators, the range runs from mothers to predecessors. According to Rude, her mother taught her about making decisions within limited means, her children taught her to think of students as the "primary stakeholders in any program," and her colleagues taught her to "value synergy and trust consensus." The value of support from colleagues—and also from friends—is noted by Hawisher; also noted is the value of role models and mentors, although the two may not always occupy the same body. For Hawisher, mentors helped her to situate herself within academic administrative positions and to be cognizant of how best "to serve the generation of women (and men) behind [her]." As Miller notes, the administrative staff in the dean's office helped her learn her administrative jobs. As any WPA knows, administrative staff in a department or writing program are instrumental in providing administrators with information about running a program and generating morale among the teaching staff. If a former administrator is willing to provide transitional information, no one can be more helpful.

According to several respondents, personal initiative and reflection on its consequences are essential for administrative success. As Glenn reports, networking to "ask for advice, help, direction, or money" is a valuable administrative skill, as is employing research skills honed in PhD studies. For Lunsford, initiative entails purposely taking leadership positions that one can learn from and build on. For Miller, initiative means admitting what you do not know and asking "whom to call, how to chase things down, how to get an item to the attention of administrators and/or staff, . . .

how to run a meeting, how to motivate people, and how to follow through on something"—all of which may vary from institution to institution and from position to position.

As for training, Lunsford credits her graduate student work in writing program administration with training her to think like an administrator. Rude credits her rhetorical studies with providing her "a systematic way of reasoning about problems in communities and organizations," and Glenn credits attending university sessions on "personnel issues, academic policy, university budgets and strategic planning" with providing her a framework for understanding her university as a system. Unlike the respondents' experiences, current PhD students in rhetoric and composition programs benefit from graduate study in theories and practices of issues related to administration, such as program design, policy, diversity, and assessment. In answer to what, if anything, prepared her for her administrative positions, Rude has perhaps the most humorous, insightful, and succinct response: "Nothing and everything." Gleaning administrative lessons from all aspects of life (e.g., from parenting, coaching, socializing) is key to administrative success, because such reflections make administrators more aware of the metaphors that we administer by (e.g., mother/child, coach/player, friend), as well as the exigencies, constraints, and power differentials of such metaphors.

In the end, the question of preparation is difficult to answer because people and contexts differ. Each respondent's situation may be so different in mission, theory, design, and/or pedagogical method that finding a common administrative language across institutions can be difficult. What emerges, instead, is the feminist hope offered by Goodburn and Leverenz, who claim that, at their respective institutions, they "hope to create a language that the writing program staff can share for talking about resistance and conflict, not in personal but in institutional terms" (290). The acts of creating such a local language and acknowledging the theoretical assumptions undergirding that language are dependent on identifying and challenging existing terms, reinforcing the terms that work, revising the ones that do not, and constructing new terms that represent and promote the theoretical stance(s) built into the program while allowing room for individual teachers' own positions.

3. How Has Being a Woman/Being a Feminist (Either One or Both) Affected Your Administrative Activities, Positively and/or Negatively?

This question generated interesting reactions from e-mail respondents in terms of cultural and subject positions. When discussing current cultural positions of women administrators in the United States, Glenn notes two beneficial trends:

Women can . . . take advantage of a special historical moment for women (and it's about time for this!!) at a confluence of two societal trends: more women are taking administrative positions, and we are recognizing a wider spectrum of administrative styles and successes (collaboration rather than authoritarianism, networking rather than hierarchy, and so on).

According to Lunsford, in this historical moment, women are recognizing that "the glass ceiling is alive and well . . . though it isn't as thick as it used to be." What is the best way to deal with this glass ceiling? Lunsford claims that feminist theory provides grounds for action: When faced with an issue to resolve or a problem to solve, she employs the heuristic—What would a good feminist do?—a heuristic that often provides her an answer. Such questions and answers, of course, beg questions of definition: What *kind* of feminist? And good *for whom*? Both questions function as additional heuristics, reinforcing once again the interconnectedness of feminist action and theory and ethics.

In terms of particular subject positions, each e-mail respondent offers advice for beginning administrators based on her own administrative experiences. Although this advice is grounded in particular times, places, and experiences, it may be adapted by other administrators for their own situations when deemed appropriate. Some advice includes the following injunctions:

1. Embrace incremental change. (Hawisher)
2. Believe that voiced and unvoiced opinions make a difference. (Hawisher)
3. Focus on helping students. (Rude)
4. Focus on serving the generation coming behind you. (Hawisher)
5. Recognize that women (must) frequently do their homework more than men for meetings. (Miller)
6. Do not take things for granted, be complacent, accept boundaries, or be self-satisfied. (Rude)

In addition, Rude identifies a diminishing, but still existent, problem facing women in some institutions:

Not every university culture will recognize the leadership of women. One way to deal with that unhappy truth is to work with it. At one point I realized that I could have quicker success negotiating with some male deans and the provost if I took my male chair to meetings. He might not say or do anything, but his presence gave the negotiations gravitas, and I could accomplish my objectives. In another university culture, such gaming might not be necessary.

Regardless of whether this particular gaming strategy is embraced, *gaming* is an apt metaphor for administration. It is a game with stakes and consequences for multiple players. But as a player in this game, an administrator should remember that her or his identity is not totally defined by the administrative position. As Kenneth Burke claims, all names (such as *woman*, *man*, and *administrator*) are synecdoches of identity (*Philosophy* 27-28), and every administrator has important parts of his or her identity that lie outside the workplace (e.g., family member, friend, community volunteer, researcher). In tough administrative times (and there will be some), keeping this idea in mind is an effective survival strategy.

When trying to survive and thrive in the academy, feminist administrators must resist the impulse of institutions to coopt or "other" them. In terms of the latter, feminist administrators would do well to heed the words of Renee Moreno when she speaks of how Latinos/as are othered in the academy: "Although the histories of U.S. Latinos/as are very different from histories of African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, I argue that within institutions these histories are often collapsed; we are all 'othered,' even objectified, our histories balkanized" (224). Moreno's words are pertinent here in three ways. First, they are obviously and importantly applicable to all Latinos/as in the academy. Second, although Moreno's claims focus on ethnicity, they may be read for this collection in terms of intersecting gender and ethnicity; that is, this book intends neither to balkanize feminists nor to erase our ethnic histories nor to deny the presumption of whiteness that haunts U.S. culture and, hence, administration. This collection does, however, intend to identify the gender balkanization that sometimes still exists within institutions. Third, Moreno's claims are applicable for feminist administrators, reminding us not to perpetuate gender or ethnic balkanization in the academy via our practices of hiring, curriculum design, textbook selections, and so on.

As a counter to ethnic and/or gender balkanization, feminist administrators would do well to embrace, instead, the idea of reciprocity. Reciprocity foregrounds the care for self-other identifications that is central to feminist ethics. Although Katrina Powell and Pamela Takayoshi define *reciprocity* in terms of researchers, their following claim could easily be adapted for feminist administrators: "Reciprocity requires that researchers [and administrators] pay close attention to their participants' needs as they evolve and be ready to embrace moments for reciprocity as they emerge. Thus, reciprocity requires an alert attention to context" (414). Powell and Takayoshi further develop the idea of reciprocity in terms of ethics:

The classic rhetorical concept of *kairos* suggests at least two significant ethical dimensions to enacting reciprocal research [and administrative] relationships: (1) the appropriate form of reciprocity could be different

in different situations, and (2) moments of dissensus are generative indications of a need to pay attention to the purposes and needs of subjects that may not involve research [or administrative] aims. (415)

Reciprocity makes visible, once again, an oxymoronic linkage (i.e., the linking of agreement and dissensus, *both* of which may emerge from the grounds of reciprocity and *both* of which should be engaged).

4. What Do You Consider Essential Qualities of a Good Administrator? Of a Good Feminist?

This question generated e-mail responses that classify good administrators not just in terms of qualities, but also in terms of actions and goals. As for qualities, being curious and goal-oriented has served Glenn well. In addition, women's socialization can serve them well when it results in intellectual mobility and peripheral vision (Glenn). Such intellectual mobility enables administrators to "understand the persuasive power of both words and actions," and such peripheral vision enables administrators "to see, respect, and reward people around them, their work, experiences, talents, and time commitments" (Glenn). When combined with not being afraid to make decisions (Lunsford), such mobility and vision can help administrators construct a programmatic vision within which to teach and to learn, to mentor and to be mentored in return.

As for actions equated with good administrators, especially good feminist administrators, the e-mail respondents offered several options:

1. Listen. (Lunsford)
2. Collaborate. (Lunsford)
3. Prepare for meetings. (Hawisher)
4. Know the job. (Hawisher)
5. Develop a vision. (Hawisher)
6. Think about long-term consequences for people. (Rude)
7. Manage daily activities, such as keeping records, completing tasks on schedule, assessing, and planning. (Rude)
8. Perform "multiple roles—among them, advocate, mediator, motivator, delegator, instigator, supporter, colleague, organizer, leader, watchdog, gatekeeper, coordinator, officiator, auditor, lookout, forecaster, and probably mom." (Miller)
9. Assume good will on the part of all parties involved (even if they do not have it). (Hawisher)
10. Cultivate "patience" (even when you do not have it). (Hawisher)

Yet in addition to these injunctions, respondents offer a caveat: Women must still watch how they express emotion on the job because it still may be used to discredit them as weak, unstable, illogical, or bitchy.

As for goals, the most successful administrators, Glenn says, are those who "transform their individual goals into interests of the larger group—all of whom begin to work together toward a common goal" and who strive "constantly for inclusivity and invitation up, down, and across the university's population." Further, Glenn makes an important point about this inclusiveness: "Expanding the opportunities for women and other traditionally disenfranchised groups in higher education . . . not only *enhances the visibility of those groups* but *normalizes their roles*" (italics added). Only by normalizing such roles will the culture of any university or society change in ways that move beyond assimilation or tokenism.

Changing a culture presumes the existence of a community. When speaking about native Americans, Resa Crane Bizzaro makes the following claim about community: "Community renewal must begin with an examination of the paths of individual scholars who must then be heard as part of the collective history of the field of composition studies" (493). This claim may echo in the ears of feminist administrators in two ways. First, it signifies that feminist administrators must continue to publish their theories and practices of administration so as to be part of the discipline's scholarly conversation. Second, it signifies that whether designing programs, training teachers, chairing departments, or working as a vice provost, administrators must be aware of the histories they are writing as well as of who is being written in and out of these histories.

Contrary to popular belief, when writing such histories, feminist administrators do not focus on writing out men, but rather on inserting gender differences and gender equality into the story of administration. For example, the following claims by Bruce Horner and John Trimbur about the far-reaching effects of administrative decisions may be read for its potential inflections of gender:

We might argue that composition courses and programs provide crucial opportunities for rethinking writing in the academy and elsewhere: spaces and times for students and teachers both to rethink what academic work might mean and be—who is and should be involved, the forms that work might take, the ends it might pursue, the practices that define it and which might be redefined. (621)

Thinking critically and creatively about such challenges and their gender inflections—indeed, thinking about such challenges and their inflections as possibilities—can make administrative work intellectually engaging and personally rewarding. These inflections of gender are complicated by inflec-

tions of whiteness, class, historical moment, and so on. Moreover, these inflections of gender and their intersections inform training, curriculum development, mentoring, pedagogy, and institutional program histories.

When writing such histories, feminists need to engage the role of women as administrators. Some women are appointed as token women administrators, not because of any administrative talent, and are tolerated accordingly. But that does not negate the fact that many women are, in fact, good administrators: They are well informed on the details of their programs; they can develop a vision grounded in these details; they can think systematically and system-wide when making decisions; they can act not just on what they want but on what the people being administered both desire and can actually do; and they are adept at multitasking. Even so, a woman administrator may find herself tokenized, perceived as different from other women, as one of the boys, even if she does not feel like one. The danger in such cases is that an institutionalized sexism may remain in place, celebrating its inclusiveness of one or two women, but continuing its tendency to make success difficult for many women via gendered assumptions concerning administration, teaching reviews, maternity leaves, and so on.

5. What Advice Would You Offer Young Women as They Prepare to Take on Administrative Positions for the First Time?

This question seemingly implies that feminists are only concerned with women, but that implication is false. As mentioned in the previous section, how young women are mentored in administrative positions is but one of many feminist concerns. For our e-mail respondents, this concern generated a list of 21 practical tips that may be employed by young women so that they may not simply survive administration but also excel at it. Of course, as with any advice, these tips must be adapted by readers—female or male, young or old, white or non-white—for their own administrative posts and local sites. These 21 tips focus on three categories: other people, the administrator, and institutional politics.

According to e-mail respondents, reflecting on other people is one of the best ways to learn administrative skills. Glenn advocates five ways to facilitate such learning:

1. Watch people.
2. Listen to how they talk to/about others.
3. Locate good role models and bad, and know the difference, especially if the good and bad inhabit the same body.

4. Locate a mentor or two, which may not be the same as models.
5. Rely on trusted friends from graduate school, whether they are former graduate students, former professors, or administrators.

Although tips 1 and 2 might be read as implying that administrators should watch and listen to role models, it is also incumbent on administrators to watch and listen to *all* people involved in an administrative system (e.g., students, teachers, administrative staff, higher administrators, and teacher/scholars in the field).¹ Indeed, administrators should be cognizant not only of differences among these categories but also of differences within each one. As tip 3 indicates, administrators can learn from good role models and from bad ones. The key is not replicating, unconsciously, performances of bad administrators and not presuming that one's past bad experiences are the sole grounds for making decisions in a current program. As tip 4 indicates, mentors are invaluable for initiating one into an academic field and fostering collaborative mentoring. The latter is especially important because the best mentor/mentee relationships are two-way streets, with each getting as good as she gives. Finally, tip 5 provides a safe distance for complaining, seeking advice, and/or keeping sane. In this manner, studying other people and then reflecting on that study will enable administrators to construct a theoretical framework of administrative principles, stances, and tactics, along with a flexibility for implementing this framework in daily life.

Although the prior advice focuses on relationships with other people, an administrator also must know herself. E-mail respondents provide tips that may help define an administrator's sense of self and, hence, her actions. Some important resolutions include:

6. Don't be afraid to share the work—or the credit. (Lunsford)
7. Don't be "afraid to make decisions." (Lunsford)
8. Develop sensitivity for problems and emotions of others and a thick skin about your own. (Miller)
9. Recognize that you can't please everyone all the time. (Miller)
10. Recognize that being an administrator may distance you from your friends. (Miller)
11. Focus on your strengths. (Rude)
12. Think rhetorically. (Rude)
13. Make the impact on students your priority. (Rude)
14. Respect your colleagues. (Rude)
15. Take care of yourself and the people who love you. (Rude)

As for tips 6 and 7, releasing fear about sharing work and making decisions is liberating in that one's identity as an administrator becomes grounded in

one's own negotiated criteria for success, rather than in someone else's perceptions. Granted, administrators always have to report to superiors. However, once administrators negotiate their duties with their superiors, most superiors really just want administrators to make things work; that is, they *want* administrators to make decisions so they do not have to. Likewise with tips 8 and 9, recognizing that administrators cannot please everyone eases one's burden, yet in no way should this recognition be construed as accepting a haphazard, anything-goes program climate. Coming to terms with tip 10 (i.e., being distanced from friends) is sometimes difficult because administrative duties provide access to information that cannot be shared and responsibility for decision making that is not popular. As for tip 11, focusing on strengths is a reminder to resist U.S. gender socialization, which encourages women to obsess on imperfections in themselves. As for tip 12, thinking rhetorically allows women to adapt the gender socialization that encourages them to consider other people and put it to productive, not simply self-sacrificing, use. As for tip 13, making students the priority is the most important criterion. After all, student learning is (or should be) the central purpose of a university and its programs. Indeed, putting students at the center often provides clarity for decision making, especially when it is derailed by politics, such as disciplinary turf battles. As for tip 14 and 15, showing respect and care for others and yourself demonstrates not just the interconnectedness of self and other, but also the ethical decision making that can and should inform this interconnectedness.

Finally, e-mail respondents provide tips to help administrators be realistic about the politics of their locations—tips that may prove invaluable when navigating any university system:

16. Make sure that . . . someone in the university hierarchy . . . believes in you and your vision for the program, especially as you take on the position. (Hawisher)
17. DON'T DO IT WITHOUT TENURE!!! (Miller)
18. Make sure that your contract or employment agreement provides ways that your administrative work will be evaluated. (Miller)
19. Negotiate "sufficient reduction" in workload. (Miller)

Heeding tip 16, having support in the university hierarchy ensures that the needs of a program will often be met, which can determine whether a program will succeed. Such support can also protect administrators, especially non-white administrators, from being overworked by too many committee assignments. Such support also can protect administrators from being scapegoated. Heeding tip 17 by not accepting administrative posts without tenure guarantees more untenured time for scholarly activity, which is necessary to attain tenure and promotion. This tip is an oft-ignored maxim in

rhetoric and composition studies because new administrators do not realize either the degree of work and commitment that administrative positions entail or the degree of politics inherent in administration. When work commitments are coupled with the nonwork commitments that many women have, the time in the day available for scholarly pursuits simply vanishes. Even with tenure, administration eats up valuable time that could otherwise be spent planning innovative pedagogy or writing scholarly books and articles. So regardless of whether administrators are tenured, they should heed tip 18 and negotiate ways in which administration will count toward tenure and promotion. Moreover, such negotiations should be put in writing and signed by a department chair or dean. During these negotiations, administrators should heed tip 19, too, and put workload on the table in terms of reduced teaching loads and reduced service loads at least on committees not related to the administrative position.

As we contemplated the previous tips, what echoed in our minds was Shirley Wilson Logan's injunction for the field, which we believe also may serve as an injunction for feminist administrators in rhetoric and composition studies:

We must strengthen the links between language and democracy, text and street. During this present moment when various current national constituencies are "discovering" the importance of writing, let's make sure they understand what it means to teach writing and what learning and teaching environments best facilitate it. We have position statements that articulate those conditions. As language arts educators [and administrators], we ought to be at the center of all policy decisions that affect the teaching and learning of communication skills. Somebody needs to ask us the next time decisions are made about how facility with language will be assessed. Somebody needs to ask us before proclaiming a national crisis in the quality of college student writing. (335)

Two additional tips that we would like to offer from our own experiences include:

20. Turn administrative duties into scholarship.
21. Find ways to enjoy the job and make it intellectually engaging.

In terms of 20, publishing articles or books can benefit both the field and the administrator. Research not only enriches the field by theorizing that which is undertheorized, but also enriches an administrator's own performance and, let's be honest, promotion possibilities. In terms of tip 21, if intellectual engagement with administration is not possible, then seriously reconsider whether administration is a viable career goal. It is not for everyone, and there is no shame in such an admission.

CALL FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Just as this collection adds to existing research on feminism and administration in rhetoric and composition studies, it leaves in its wake the need for further research. The following questions (generated by several people's conversations about this project) are offered as invitations to contemplate the important issue of feminism and administration within rhetoric and composition studies. Some of these issues have been addressed and simply need to be updated for 21st-century administrative contexts, whereas other issues are yet to be adequately addressed in terms of feminism:

- What are different ways that we define the status of administrators and GTA as well as contingent faculty, staff, and students? How do these definitions affect people occupying these positions and working with these positions?
- Who owns the stories we tell about administration? How do we benefit and not benefit from sharing our stories?
- What are multiple ways of training faculty administrators for the economic/financial side of their jobs?
- How can becoming an administrator be imagined as a productive career move, rather than as nonproductive, going over to the dark side, or selling out?
- What are the implications of the situation that WPAs function as administrators yet are not in charge of hiring who they want, at least in English departments with graduate programs, where the graduate studies committee is usually in charge of selecting GTAs?
- How may feminist administrators counteract pundits' visions of a utopian humanities of the mind and effectively foreground the political realities within contemporary universities?
- How well are administrators incorporating the areas of visual studies, multimedia, and technology into their 21st-century programs?
- What are the actual learning outcomes for graduate and undergraduate students in university programs, and how do these outcomes coincide and/or conflict with our field's theories and our individual ideals?
- What problems haunt researcher's use of lore as evidence (is lore really nontheoretical and nonrigorous)? Does it simply serve the graduate students to make teaching seem to be something they can do even if they are not rhetoric and composition specialists?

- How should administrators negotiate graduate students' desires for teaching with undergraduate students wants and/or needs for learning?
- What are the implications of designing first-year writing programs so that noncomposition graduate students can teach it?
- Should WPA work be a professional and/or paraprofessional degree?
- How conscious are administrators of their intents and the effects of their actions, especially as these effects impinge on all people involved in a program?
- What roles can unions play in feminist administration for all involved people?
- How do free-standing writing programs that have broken off from English departments—and their students—fare in comparison to English-based writing programs, especially in terms of professional development for teachers and scholarly contributions to rhetoric and composition studies?
- What does *not* work in administration in terms of qualities and actions?
- How does a community college mission and teaching load inform intersections of feminism and administration?
- To what extent are silence and listening, along with collaboration and other actions so designated as feminist, actually feminist administrative practices?
- What tropes, other than oxymoron, are useful for feminist administrative work? How do these tropes represent and/or construct attitudes and actions for all people involved?
- How may the conversation in this collection's chapters be complicated by issues of race and ethnicity, including the haunting presence of whiteness?
- What other troubled intersections between feminist principles and administrative practices exist?

These questions all suggest that performing feminist administration entails a consideration of how programs, people, and feminist principles intersect. Questions of intersections, in turn, presume the presence of boundaries. Consequently, we conclude with Min-zhan Lu's exhortation about the importance of boundary work and language use in composition studies: "Whether we realize it or not, whether we acknowledge it or not, we take part in this struggle through every decision we make on which English to use and how to use it. Composition is boundary work. How we go about using English matters" (24). In terms of this collection, Lu's exhortation suggests two ideas: (a) Performing feminist administration in

rhetoric and composition studies is boundary work, and (b) how we use English in such administration matters.

If performance is a bodily site where cultural concept and concrete action meet, then performing feminist administration in rhetoric and composition studies means invoking feminist principles to underwrite administrative practices and, conversely, invoking administrative practices to challenge and/or reaffirm feminist principles. Reflection and action, action and reflection. Such performing is a recursive process, a process without end, a process that must be rendered anew each time it is adapted to a particular time and place. Yet rendering anew is not the equivalent of reinventing the wheel. Administrators may learn from one another's stories, theories, and knowledge. That is why the contributors in this collection are willing to share how they perform—sometimes easily, sometimes not so easily—feminist administration in their daily duties and in their scholarly conversations. We offer these chapters, as well as a continually evolving web presence at www.femadmin.org in hopes that such sharing will continue. Conversations such as these will benefit not only our field and our institutional programs, but also, and more important, *all* the people involved—both administrators and their colleagues—who, singly and collectively, may find themselves performing feminist administration in rhetoric and composition studies.

Jackie McKinney and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater's "Inventing a Teacherly Self: Positioning Journals in the TA Seminar." Reflection on their course prompted their inquiry. For application of critical reflection and inquiry to administrative experience, see Amy Goodburn and Carrie Shively Leverenz's "Feminist Writing Program Administration: Resisting the Bureaucrat Within."

AFTERWORD

1. Listening techniques described in Ratcliffe's *Rhetorical Listening* may be applied to administration.