

## The Incorporation of Gender Scholarship into Sociology

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Waller, David V., Dana Dunn, and Joan Watson. "The Incorporation of Gender Scholarship into Sociology." Pgs. 43-58 in The American Sociologist, Vol. 29, No. 3, 1998.

The final publication is available at Springer via <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27698882>

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### Abstract:

The prospects of an intellectual revolution in sociology informed in part by a feminist perspective loomed large in the early 1970s. Following Ward and Grant's (1985) empirical examination of gender and feminist scholarship in sociology journals between 1974 and 1983, our research provides an empirical assessment of the "second ten years" after the feminist critique of the discipline, 1984-1993. Specifically, we examine the incorporation of gender content scholarship into mainstream sociology journals. Our research also assesses the extent to which gender-content scholarship published in these journals is feminist-oriented or not and the extent to which this is influenced by the sex of authors, the type of journal, and the sex composition of editorships and editorial boards. Our findings indicate that although there were more gender- and feminist-oriented articles published in the recent ten-year period proportionally there were fewer feminist-oriented articles than in the previous ten-year period. Our findings suggest that a feminist revolution in sociology is not likely to occur anytime soon, although the assimilation of feminist scholarship into sociology is occurring along the lines of other critical intellectual movements in recent decades.

**Keywords:** sociology | social sciences | feminists | learning and scholarship | intellectuals

### Article:

#### Introduction

The prospects of an intellectual revolution in sociology informed in part by a feminist perspective loomed large in the early 1970s. Following Ward and Grant's (1985) empirical examination of gender and feminist scholarship in sociology journals between 1974 and 1983, our research provides an empirical assessment of the "second ten years" after the feminist critique of the discipline, 1984-1993. Specifically, we examine the incorporation of gender-content scholarship into mainstream sociology journals. Our research also assesses the extent to which gender-content scholarship published in these journals is feminist-oriented or not and the extent to which this is influenced by the sex of authors, the type of journal, and the sex composition of editorships and editorial boards. Our findings indicate that although there were

more gender and feminist-oriented articles published in the recent ten-year period, proportionally there were fewer feminist-oriented articles than in the previous ten-year period. Our findings suggest that a feminist revolution in sociology is not likely to occur anytime soon, although the assimilation of feminist scholarship into sociology is occurring along the lines of other critical intellectual movements in recent decades.

The treatment of women in sociological scholarship has received much attention and criticism over the last 25 years. In the early 1970s, the prospects of an intellectual revolution in sociology informed in part by a feminist perspective loomed large (Bernard 1987; Daniels 1975). Yet, by the late 1980s, such optimism waned, as was evidenced by Stacey and Thorne's (1985) prominent article "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology." Recent views on the impact of feminist theory on sociology's treatment of women are wide ranging (Alway 1995, Devault 1996). Today, although few observers would disagree that gender scholarship has spread throughout the discipline, there is little consensus over whether this makes the disciplinary glass "half-full or half-empty" (Roberts 1981). While informal discussions of this issue are frequent in the academy, many are based more on personal observations than on systematic empirical research. Thus, to date, limited empirical research exists which systematically assesses the incorporation of gender content scholarship into sociology, with the notable exception of Ward and Grant's (1985) and Grant and Ward's (1991) examination of gender and feminist scholarship in sociology journals between 1974 and 1983.

Following the research of Ward and Grant (1985), our research is, in a sense, designed to provide an empirical assessment of the "second ten years" after the feminist critique of the discipline in the early 1970s. We examine the incorporation of gender-content scholarship into sociology journals in a more recent time period, 1984 to 1993, than did Ward and Grant. Professional peer-reviewed journals are a good indicator of the intellectual life of a discipline for many reasons. Professional journals are a central part of the communication system in a discipline. The level of competition to publish in scholarly journals and peer control over the journals more or less ensure that meritorious research is disseminated to and recognized by peers (Hagstrom 1965, Fuchs 1992). Articles in the most prestigious journals are more widely read and cited than articles in less prestigious journals, and are generally perceived to be concerned with the most important issues in a discipline. Journal articles are also widely used as a means to measure the productivity of scholars. Contributors to high-status journals receive the greatest compensation as well as promotion and tenure (for summaries see Cole and Zuckerman 1987; Fox 1983), and are viewed as contributing to the cognitive growth of the discipline. For these reasons, examining the number of gender-content articles in professional journals in sociology will provide information on the impact of such scholarship on the discipline.

### **Methods: Operationalization Issues and Data Source**

Our research is designed to determine the extent to which gender-content scholarship published in mainstream sociology journals is feminist-oriented or not and the extent to which this is influenced by the sex of authors, the type of journal, and the sex composition of editorships and editorial boards. We begin by documenting the number of gender content articles in fifteen professional journals and assess fluctuations over a ten-year period. The 1984-1993 time period was selected because the only other empirical study of the incorporation of gender-content

scholarship into sociology journals covered a ten-year period ending in 1983 (see Ward and Grant 1985).

To determine the extent of feminist-oriented scholarship in sociology journals, each article in our data set was evaluated to determine whether or not it could be classified as "feminist-oriented." The distinction between gender-content scholarship and feminist-oriented scholarship has been a central concern to scholars at least since Ward and Grant (1985) categorized gender-content articles in their research as "additions," "modifications," or "recasts." In their work, an article was classified as an "addition" if it merely controlled for sex but failed to elaborate on why sex differences existed or on the mechanism through which sex differences influenced the outcome under study. This type of gender-content research corresponds to what others have labeled "sex as a variable" (Stacey and Thorne 1985) or "add women and stir" studies (Andersen 1988). Andersen (1988:13) argues that such studies fail to "reconceptualize problems and topics in a way that takes gender to be fundamental in the organization of society and social life." In contrast, the articles Ward and Grant (1985) classify as modifications begin to reformulate paradigms, concepts, models, and methods to explain women's experiences, and often focus on those aspects of social life most relevant to women. The third category of gender-content scholarship in Ward and Grant's (1985) scheme, "recasts," is the furthest along the "feminist continuum," in that research of this type offers an overt critique of androcentric models and proposes major re-conceptualizations of research informed by a feminist perspective. We agree that a meaningful assessment of the influence of feminist-oriented scholarship on sociology must consider the "treatment of gender," namely in terms of its centrality to the work. The method we employ involves classifying gender-content articles into a two-category scheme as either "gender-issue" articles or as "feminist-oriented" articles. To be classified as feminist-oriented, articles had to meet at least one of the following criteria: (1) place women's experiences or issues at the center of inquiry, (2) reject the use of male experiences as the norm, or (3) reconceptualize knowledge and the tools of inquiry (e.g., concepts, models, methods, and theory) so as to account for the experience of women.[2] Sex as a variable scholarship, while it addresses gender, does not qualify as feminist-oriented scholarship in our research and would thus be placed in the gender-issue category.

We did not distinguish between articles that Ward and Grant (1985) label "modifications" and "recasts" in our analysis for several reasons. First, we believe that both modifications and recasts have the potential to represent significant contributions to gender scholarship in that the treatment of gender is not marginal. Second, our initial attempts to distinguish between the two types of articles in the course of developing our coding scheme resulted in serious inter-coder reliability problems. Moreover, the inter-coder reliability problems would likely be magnified when comparing the classification of articles across the time periods covered by Ward and Grant and our research.

While there are many potential factors that affect the publication of feminist-oriented scholarship in sociology journals, we believe that the author's sex and even the order of authorship by sex is particularly salient.[3] Since the 1970s, increased attention to gender and feminist scholarship in sociology has been accompanied by another trend — women's increased participation in the discipline (Ross and Jones 1993). There are reasons to suspect that these two trends are related. During this period, women's attraction to and clustering in disciplines like sociology may be the

result of the discipline's attention to gender-related subject matter which women perceive to be more central to their lives. To the extent that women's interest in gender is maintained after they enter the profession, the increased representation of women should result in an increase in the production of gender-content scholarship. Thus, other factors being equal, we expect that authors of gender-content and feminist oriented articles are more likely to be women than men. However, men are more likely to be tenured and have greater seniority than women. Since most sociology departments have been dominated by men who entered the field during the period of expansion of the mid-1960s and early 1970s, men benefit from the "Matthew effect" and enjoy an "accumulation of advantage" (see Zuckerman 1988). Since members of these departments are the most likely contributors to sociology journals, we expect senior men to be the first author if an article has multiple authors (for a discussion see Endersby 1996; see also Singley and Chase 1998).

As women enter the discipline they also make inroads into the editorial process. The representation of women on journal editorial boards has grown significantly since the early 1970s, although comparable change has not occurred in chief editorial positions. In 1972, for example, women filled only 16 percent of editorial board positions (Ad Hoc Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession 1973); between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, the percentage of women on editorial boards increased to about 21 percent (Ward and Grant 1985). Crane (1967) suggests that the gate-keeping role played by editors and editorial boards is an important one. Several researchers (Ward and Grant 1985; Spender 1981) argue that as women play a more active role in the editorial process, more published articles will address gender. To evaluate the possible role of women as gate-keepers, we gathered data on the gender composition of each journal's editorial board and on the sex of the primary editor for every year of the study. The journals examined in our study were selected because of their strong identification as disciplinary journals in sociology. Specialty journals including those focused on gender such as *Gender and Society* were deliberately excluded from the analysis because our focus is on "mainstream" journals and not those devoted to gender. The journals we examined include: the *American Journal of Sociology* (AJS), the *American Sociological Review* (ASR), *The American Sociologist* (TAS), the *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* (JHSB), the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (JMF), *Social Forces* (SF), *Social Problems* (SP), *Social Psychology Quarterly* (SPQ), *Social Science Quarterly* (SSQ), *Sociological Forum* (SForum), *Sociological Perspectives* (SPerspectives), *Sociological Quarterly* (SQuarterly), *Sociological Spectrum* (SSpectrum), *Sociological Theory* (STheory), and *Sociology of Education* (SOE). The *American Sociologist* was not published between 1982 and 1987, and *Sociological Forum* began publication in 1986. (Hereafter we may refer to an individual journal by its full or abbreviated title and to them collectively as "the journals.") [ 4] Many of the journals we included have high prestige ratings (Allen 1990), and are high-impact journals in the discipline (Institute for Scientific Information [ISI] 1991).

Gender-content articles were identified by searching the Sociofile database,[ 5] an index of the periodical literature in sociology, and by visual examination of the titles and abstracts of all articles in the journals selected for this study. Articles were counted as gender-content articles if in their title or abstract mention was made of a variation of at least one of the following search terms: women, woman, girl, sex, sexuality, gender, female, and feminism.[ 6] We counted all articles, notes, and research notes in our study as the population of research articles. We excluded

from the population of articles book reviews, letters to the editors, commentaries and replies, and short introductory notes written by regular journal editors. As the standard of presentation of content varies with each journal, the two senior authors judged on a case-by-case basis whether or not to include or exclude as an article any questionable journal item.[ 7]

## Results

**Gender content articles.** Data collection yielded a cumulative ten-year total of 1,826 gender content articles. Table 1 indicates the number and percentage of total gender-content articles by journal rank included in our study along with comparable data from the Ward and Grant (1985) study covering the previous decade. For the ten year period, 1971-1983, Ward and Grant (1985) found only 19 percent of the total articles in their review addressed gender.[ 8] In our sample between 1984 and 1993, 34 percent of the total articles published addressed gender. The increased proportion of articles addressing gender is not merely the result of differences in the journals examined. For the nine journals our study has in common with Ward and Grant's (1985), the number of gender-content articles increased from 651 articles in the 1974-1983 period to 885 articles in the 1984-1993 period. For individual journals, the number of gender-content articles increased in AJS from 48 to 87, in ASR from 99 to 122, in SF from 76 to 123, in SP from 93 to 114, in SPQ from 87 to 126, in Sociological Perspectives from 38 to 60, in Sociological Quarterly from 62 to 90, and in SOE from 46 to 65. The only journal with fewer gender-content articles during the most recent period was JHSB, in which there was a slight decline from 102 to 98 articles.

**Journal sponsorship.** A breakdown of articles by journal sponsorship indicates that the five ASA-sponsored journals in our sample published 23.4 percent of the total gender-content articles and that the five journals sponsored by regional associations published 26.7 percent of the total. The remaining five journals accounted for 49.8 percent of the total gender-content articles (note that JMF, a member of this set of journals, accounted for 32.5 percent of total articles). The percentage of total gender-content articles published each year by all journals in combination ranged from a low of 9.1 percent in 1993 to a high of 11.2 percent in 1992.[ 9] There is a reasonable amount of year-to-year fluctuation in the total number of gender-content articles published, but there appears to be no trend otherwise. Interestingly, the most recent year covered in our sample, 1993, had the second fewest gender content articles published. An examination of the percentage of an individual journal's gender-content articles published each year over the ten-year period also shows moderate year-to-year fluctuation. with increases in one year followed by decreases in the next and vice versa.

**TABLE 1**  
**Journal Rank,<sup>1</sup> Number, and Percentage of Gender-Content Articles.**  
**1974–1983 and 1984–1993**

Journal Name	Rank	1974-1983 <sup>2</sup>		1984-1993	
		#	(%) <sup>3</sup>	#	(%) <sup>3</sup>
American Sociological Review (ASR)	1	99	(15.2)	122	(6.7)
American Journal of Sociology (AJS)	2	48	(7.4)	87	(4.8)
Social Forces (SF)	3	76	(11.7)	123	(6.7)
Social Problems (SocProb)	4	93	(14.2)	114	(6.2)
Sociology of Education (SOE)	8	46	(7.1)	65	(3.6)
Social Psychology Quarterly (SPQ)	9	87	(13.4)	126	(6.9)
Sociological Quarterly (SQ)	10	62	(9.5)	90	(4.9)
Journal of Health and Social Behavior (JHSB)	15	102	(15.7)	98	(5.4)
Sociological Perspectives (SocPersp)	20	38	(5.8)	60	(3.3)
Journal of Marriage and the Family (JMF)	23	— <sup>4</sup>		594	(32.5)
Social Science Quarterly (SSQ)	35			149	(8.2)
The American Sociologist (TAS)	59			38	(2.1)
Sociological Forum (SocForum)	— <sup>5</sup>			64	(3.5)
Sociological Spectrum (SocSpect)	—			83	(4.5)
Sociological Theory (SocTheory)	—			13	(0.7)
Total Number of Articles		651		1826	

1. Journal rank is derived from Mitchel Allen (1990), *The Ranking of Sociology Journals, ASA Footnotes* 9 (Nov.): 4-5.
2. 1974-1983 data are from Ward and Grant (1985).
3. Values represent the percentage of all gender-content articles in the ten-year period, not the percentages of a journal's articles that are gender-content.
4. No value in this column means the journal was not included in Ward and Grant (1985).
5. No value in this column means the journal was not included in Allen (1990).

**Feminist-oriented articles.** Less than one-third (544 articles) of the total number of gender-content articles examined were coded as feminist-oriented articles (see Table 2). As was indicated in the previous section of the paper, we do not include "sex-as-a-variable" articles or what Ward and Grant (1985) labeled "additions" articles in our feminist oriented category. We classify these as gender-issue articles. For the decade prior to our study Ward and Grant (1985) found a much higher percentage, 52 percent (377) of the total gender-content articles examined, to be feminist-oriented (categorized as recasts or modifications in their study). Surprisingly, when the nine common journals for the two time-periods are compared, the overall number of feminist-oriented articles also declined from 337 in Ward and Grant's (1985) study to 229 articles in our study. We suspect that this decline results from changing norms in the discipline which increasingly require that sex, or minimally that sex as a control variable, be included in empirical research. Thus, the changing norms of empirical research may account for the higher overall number of gender-content articles observed for the period we examined and the resulting lower proportion of feminist-oriented articles.

Not surprisingly, the journal JMF contained the highest number of gender-content articles (32.5 percent of all gender-content articles), with an N of 594. Five additional journals published over 100 gender-content articles each: ASR (122), SF (123), SP (114), SPQ (126), and SSQ (149).

The percentage of the total gender-content articles published in these journals ranged from 6.2 to 9.2 percent. Seven of the remaining journals published between 50 and 100 gender-content articles each, ranging between 3.3 and 5.4 percent of the total number of gender-content articles. Only two journals published less than fifty gender-content articles over the ten-year period: TAS (38 articles, 2.1 percent of the total) and ST (13 articles, less than 1 percent of the total). The interpretation of statistics for these two journals should, however, be treated cautiously due to interruptions and variations in the publication schedule. Feminist-oriented articles constituted the largest share of gender-content articles in the following journals: ST(61.5 percent), Sociological Spectrum (48.2 percent), Sociological Forum (50 percent), Social Problems (45.6 percent), and SOE (44.6 percent). With the exception of the journal Social Problems, these five journals published less than 5 percent each of the total number of gender-content articles. Feminist-oriented articles represented the smallest share of gender-content articles in the following journals: SPQ (10.3 percent), ASR (17.2 percent), AJS (18.4 percent), and JHSB (18.4 percent), all highly ranked journals (see Table 1).

**Editors and editorial boards.** The majority of articles in our dataset, 1,477 or 80.9 percent, were published in journals with male editors. However, we found no significant relationship (as indicated by chi-square tests) between the sex of a journal's editor and whether or not the gender-content articles were feminist-oriented. Examination of the gender composition of journal editorial boards yields different results. For the gender-content articles, 66.8 percent were published in journals with editorial boards composed of at least 30 percent women.[ 10] The relationship between the sex composition of the editorial board and the number of feminist-oriented articles was significant, with knowledge of the editorial board's sex composition resulting in a 22 percent reduction in the prediction errors for whether or not the article was classified as feminist-oriented ( $\eta = .229$ ). Data on female editorial board representation are provided in Table 3. While it might be tempting to conclude from this association that editorial boards perform a gate-keeping function for feminist-oriented research, it is important to recognize that there is often a significant lag time between the acceptance of an article and its publication date. Consequently, the sex composition of an editorial board may be markedly different from its composition when an article was submitted for review and when it was accepted for publication. Moreover, it is important to note that editorial board members do not necessarily review every article submitted for publication in a given journal. For these reasons, the findings reported in Table 3 regarding the sex composition of the journal editorial board must be interpreted cautiously. As Ward and Grant (1985) note, it is quite possible that this association exists because the authors of feminist-oriented articles deliberately target such journals for submission of their work, assuming that a higher representation of females on the board is an indication of greater receptivity to feminist-oriented scholarship.

**TABLE 2**  
**Number and Percentage of Gender-Content and Feminist-Oriented Articles by Type,**  
**1974-1983 and 1984-1993.**

Journal Name	Gender-Content Articles				Feminist-Oriented Articles			
	1974-1983 <sup>1</sup>		1984-1993		1974-1983		1984-1993	
	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
American Sociological Review (ASR)	42	(13.4)	101	(7.9)	57	(16.9)	21	(3.9)
American Journal of Sociology (AJS)	17	(5.4)	71	(5.5)	31	(9.2)	16	(2.9)
Social Forces (SF)	31	(9.9)	92	(7.2)	45	(13.4)	31	(5.7)
Social Problems (SocProb)	26	(8.3)	62	(4.8)	67	(19.9)	52	(9.5)
Sociology of Education (SOE)	33	(10.5)	36	(2.8)	13	(3.9)	29	(5.3)
Social Psychology Quarterly (SPQ)	62	(19.7)	113	(8.8)	25	(7.4)	13	(2.4)
Sociological Quarterly (SQ)	18	(5.7)	55	(4.3)	44	(13.1)	35	(6.4)
Journal of Health and Social Behavior (JHSB)	73	(23.2)	80	(6.2)	29	(8.6)	18	(3.3)
Sociological Perspectives (SocPersp)	12	(3.8)	46	(3.6)	26	(7.7)	14	(2.6)
Journal of Marriage and the Family (JMF)			424	(33.1)			170	(31.2)
Social Science Quarterly (SSQ)			99	(7.7)			50	(9.2)
The American Sociologist (TAS)			23	(1.8)			15	(2.7)
Sociological Forum (SocForum)			32	(2.5)			32	(5.9)
Sociological Spectrum (SocSpect)			43	(3.4)			40	(7.3)
Sociological Theory (SocTheory)			5	(0.3)			8	(1.5)
Total Number of Articles	314		1282		337		544	

1. 1974-1983 data are from Ward and Grant (1985).

**TABLE 3**  
**Editorial Board Percentage Female by Year**

Journal Name	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
American Sociological Review (ASR)	21	33	38	39	35	33	33	42	39	36
American Journal of Sociology (AJS)	13	17	19	17	21	18	25	24	22	16
Social Forces (SF)	16	20	21	21	20	21	22	26	26	28
Social Problems (SocProb)	25	40	47	47	44	41	38	45	41	42
Sociology of Education (SOE)	29	25	36	38	36	40	27	25	25	36
Social Psychology Quarterly (SPQ)	20	24	21	19	23	23	23	32	32	42
Sociological Quarterly (SQ)	14	24	38	38	38	38	38	35	35	52
Journal of Health and Social Behavior (JHSB)	33	33	42	35	42	50	53	47	38	41
Sociological Perspectives (SocPersp)	40	40	28	29	29	29	33	50	50	24
Journal of Marriage and the Family (JMF)	33	39	44	44	49	52	51	52	46	38
Social Science Quarterly (SSQ)	24	23	26	25	26	25	25	26	26	25
The American Sociologist (TAS) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	-	35	35	35	35	35	45	56
Sociological Forum (SocForum) <sup>1</sup>	-	-	26	25	17	14	14	14	15	46
Sociological Spectrum (SocSpect)	32	46	33	33	46	46	50	36	36	36
Sociological Theory (SocTheory) <sup>2</sup>	0	-	-	-	-	20	33	33	33	25

1. Missing values indicate journal was not in print.

2. Missing values denote years with no gender-content articles.

**Authorship.** Who are the authors of gender-content articles? Not surprisingly, the majority of articles had two or more co-authors (59 percent). Roughly equal percentages of articles were – authored by single and double authors (41 percent and 40.1 percent, respectively). As indicated in Table 4, 13 percent of all articles had three or more authors. As we hypothesize, when authorship is broken down by sex, it is apparent that slightly more of the single-author articles are authored by women (women 49.4 percent; men 47.1 percent). When articles have two authors, first authors are slightly more likely to be men (men 51 percent; women 45.4 percent). Similarly, in articles with three or more authors, the first author is more likely to be a man.



**TABLE 4**  
**Authorship of Gender-Content Articles**

Authorship	Frequency	Percentage
Single	749	41.0
Two Authors	733	40.1
Three Authors	233	12.8
Four or More	111	6.2
<b>Sex</b>		
Single Author		
Male	353	47.1
Female	370	49.4
Don't Know	26	3.5
Two Authors		
First Author		
Male	374	51.0
Female	333	45.4
Don't Know	26	3.5
Second Author		
Male	398	54.4
Female	308	42.1
Don't Know	25	3.4
Three Authors		
First Author		
Male	121	51.9
Female	104	44.6
Don't Know	8	3.4
Second Author		
Male	127	54.7
Female	95	40.9
Don't Know	10	4.3
Third Author		
Male	125	54.3
Female	94	40.8
Don't Know	11	4.8

## Discussion

In this article we examined the incidence of gender-content articles and the proportion of feminist-oriented articles in sociology journals between 1984 and 1993. Many scholars since the 1970s anticipated that the intellectual concerns of the discipline would turn increasingly toward questions of gender and incorporate a feminist perspective. Such a turn toward gender content and feminist perspectives should result in peer-reviewed journals becoming increasingly "feminist-oriented." While more gender-content and feminist-oriented scholarship in sociology could result from the logic of discovery and innovation, scholars also expected these to increase (a) as more women became authors and (b) as more women participated in the editorial decision-making process of the journals.

Our findings indicated that there were more gender-content and feminist-oriented articles in peer reviewed sociology journals between 1984 and 1993 than in the previous ten-year period. Proportionally, however, there were fewer feminist-oriented articles between 1984 and 1993 than between 1974 and 1983. As the above analysis of journals included in our study and Grant and Ward's study indicates, the proportional decline is not attributable to our inclusion of more journals than were examined by Ward and Grant (1985) in the earlier period. In fact, there were proportionally fewer feminist-oriented articles in the journals common to both studies compared to the additional journals analyzed in our study.

Increasingly, the authors of gender-content scholarship are women. Increasingly, too, women occupy important roles as gate-keepers in the production of sociological knowledge. Some journals appear to be more "feminist-oriented" than other journals. Feminist-oriented scholarship does not enjoy a prominent position in any journal considered "mainstream."

Our findings only enable us to speculate as to why feminist-oriented scholarship today is not better represented in mainstream sociology journals. Townsend's (1993) description of factors which cause feminist authors to avoid submitting manuscripts to core education journals may also apply to feminist authors in sociology. According to Townsend (1993), as an alternative paradigm, feminist scholarship may be rejected because it does not reflect the commonly accepted assumptions of a field; editors and reviewers may reject it if they believe feminist research is ideology rather than true research. Feminist authors, concerned about such biases, may fear exclusion from the mainstream journals and thus submit their work elsewhere. The emergence in recent years of sociologically-oriented specialty journals, such as *Gender and Society*, may act as a safety-valve for research unable to penetrate the sociological mainstream. Moreover, the proliferation of explicitly interdisciplinary women's studies journals such as *Sex Roles*, *Women and Health*, *Feminist Studies*, *Women's Studies*, *International Forum*, and *Frontiers* may provide additional alternative publishing outlets for feminist-oriented research outside the traditional disciplinary boundaries of sociology. It is likely that some feminist authors deliberately target these outlets for their research as a form of voluntary separatism rather than in response to perceived exclusion from the sociological mainstream.

The incorporation of feminist scholarship into the traditional social science disciplines has been varied. Feminist scholarship has fared better in some academic fields than in others. As Stacey and Thorne (1985) note, history, literature, and anthropology were hospitable early on to the aim of developing gendered understandings. More recently, gendered interpretations have appeared in such diverse fields as archaeology (Gilchrist 1991; Engelstad 1991), international relations (see selection in Peterson 1992; Whitworth 1994), and, to a limited extent, economics (see for example Selz, 1993; Folbre, 1993; Woolley, 1993; Strober, 1994; Strassmann, 1994). The extent to which feminist scholarship has had a positive impact on sociology, it would seem, is optimistically moderate... certainly somewhat less than in anthropology yet greater than in political science, international relations, and economics.

Early assessments of the impact of feminism on sociology have stressed the various ways in which feminism has been "contained" within the discipline. Stacey and Thorne (1985: 306) have argued that the containment of feminism occurred in three ways: ( 1) by the co-optation of gender by traditional perspectives, ( 2) by the inclusion of gender as a variable rather than as a central theoretical concept, and ( 3) by marginalization. As Stacey (1995) now argues, even if feminism were to have achieved a revolution in sociology it necessarily would have challenged the discipline's traditional positivistic boundaries. At its core, she says, sociology remains a positivistic field of knowledge, from a broader perspective, rather than the "marginalization of feminism," it may be more accurate to describe the "marginalization" or fragmentation of methodologies, theories, and orienting perspectives within the discipline. Our examination of how theories and methodologies were utilized in gender-content research supports such an interpretation: there exists a wide plurality of theories, theoretical perspectives, and methodological orientations emphasized within gender-content research.[ 11] That no single

theoretical perspective, feminist-oriented or otherwise, dominates gender discourse in sociology today is not surprising. To the extent that there is a "feminist-oriented" perspective,[ 12] it is but one of many perspectives in the discipline. This line of analysis is similar to Becker's (1979) conclusion that sociology is a fragmented field without a center, a situation that, according to Howard (1987), makes a "feminist revolution" an unlikely event.

Lengerman and Neibrugge-Brantley (cited in Ritzer 1992) argued that sociology has been slow to incorporate feminist scholarship into its mainstream because it seems so new and radical, because so many feminist scholars are not sociologists, because feminist theory is not anchored in any established sociological paradigm, and because of suspicions about the scientific credentials of a scholarly undertaking closely linked to political activism. Howard (1987) suggests that the ontological and epistemological diffuseness of the discipline also present barriers to the incorporation of feminist perspectives. Lemert (1988: 806) characterizes feminist scholarship as a "theoretical revolution independent of (and aggressively hostile to) the bureaucratic disciplines." He argues that while perspectives critical of the disciplines like Mill's power elite thesis launch their criticisms from a secure position within them, feminist scholarship emerges from a history of exclusion. These factors may all combine to explain why feminist scholarship is considered by many to be a rather serious challenge to sociological orthodoxy. It is questionable that any discipline can assimilate approaches that repudiate its core knowledge.

Interestingly, some scholars once quite pessimistic about the potential for integrating feminist scholarship into sociology, now express concern about sociology subsuming and thus circumscribing feminist thought. Stacey (1995: 312) now states that sociology's "diverse qualitative, interpretive, and theoretical schools have, in varying degrees, accommodated themselves to feminist inquiry without much evidence of conceptual turmoil." Her concerns that the incorporation of feminist scholarship into the discipline may limit or corrupt it is countered by Fitzgerald et al. (1995), who express the view that the transformational quality of marginalized feminist scholarship has enhanced the sociological mainstream.

Does what we now know about feminism and gender-issue research published in the sociological mainstream help inform our understanding of change in the social sciences more generally? Might it be that the structure of the discipline itself is responsible for the fate of the feminist "revolution" in sociology? Couched in these terms, the question of feminist scholarship in sociology becomes a question for the "theory of scientific organizations" (Fuchs, 1992, 1993). Understood as a question of change in the social sciences, it is useful to note the characteristics of the fields in which feminism has been most successful. Many fields in the humanities and social sciences in which feminism has had the greatest successes — for example, literature, parts of anthropology, and history — are organizationally similar. Fuchs (1992, 1993) understands scientific change to be driven by competition among knowledge producers that takes place under the conditions of high or low mutual dependence among knowledge producers and high or low task uncertainty of the work process. The particular form of the innovation which results from the competition among producers is determined by the social relationships among them. In fields where task uncertainty is low and mutual dependence is high, scientific work takes the form of normal science and innovations result in increased specialization that reinforces the paradigmatic integrity of the field by producing cumulative advances in knowledge. The social sciences and humanities only rarely resemble such a work organization.[ 13] For the most part, the structure

and organization of these fields are weak and the resources to produce knowledge are widely dispersed. Consequently, mutual dependence among practitioners within a field is low while task uncertainty is high. Such organizations produce knowledge that is highly contextualized and certainly non-cumulative. Change does occur, but innovations do not spread throughout the entire discipline when interdependencies among scholars in a field are weak and when scholars have little confidence in the possibility of objective social science; indeed, innovations are likely to spread through networks across similarly organized disciplines as in the case of interdisciplinary feminism. If one hopes for a "great transformation" or a "feminist revolution" in sociology (or in the social sciences more generally) then, from the perspective of the theory of scientific organizations, we are led to conclude that such a revolution is unlikely if not impossible in sociology today. But this is not to say that the assimilation of feminism into the sociological mainstream is not occurring. It is only to say that the path of change is one of absorption through particular networks of practitioners in the discipline. As such, we are led to argue that the impact of feminist theory on sociology is likely to continue on a trajectory similar to that of other critical theoretical perspectives in recent decades such as Marxism, symbolic interactionism, and ethnomethodology.

### Notes

1. Please direct all correspondence to David V. Waller, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Box 19599, University of Texas, Arlington, TX 76019 or to [Waller@uta.edu](mailto:Waller@uta.edu).
2. Ward and Grant's (1985) category scheme can be mapped into our scheme as follows: their category "additions" is equivalent to our category "gender-issue" and their categories "modifications" and "recast" are equivalent to our category "feminist-oriented."
3. Ward and Grant (1991) found that female authors who wrote about gender were more likely to produce joint authored rather than solo-authored articles. This may be indicative of a broader trend in sociology and the social sciences in general (see Endersby 1996).
4. Five of the journals are publications of the American Sociological Association (ASA); six are publications of the major regional sociological associations; and one is published by the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP) and one by the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), respectively. We included two journals which were not sponsored by professional associations but are strongly identifiable as "sociology" journals AJS and TAS. It should be noted that TAS was an official publication of the ASA until 1982. The publication cycle of the journal AJS, ASR, and SF begins in midyear so there is not a direct correspondence between year and volume for these journals. The same is true for Social Problems during the late 1980s. Sociological Forum, the official journal of the Eastern Sociological Society, was first published in 1986. The ASA began publishing Sociological Theory (ST) with volume three in 1985. The first two volumes of ST were published by Josey-Bass Inc. ST was published biannually from 1985 until 1993 when it began to be issued three times a year. We excluded from study two ASA journals, Contemporary Sociology (CS), a journal of scholarly reviews, and Teaching Sociology (TS), a journal devoted mainly to pedagogy.

5. Sociofile, published by Sociological Abstracts, Inc., is a reference tool available in many academic libraries.
6. The search terms we use to identify gender-content articles for analysis are sufficient because the criterion for an article's inclusion is that it contain "one or more" of the search terms listed. Thus, articles about male or men's sexuality or sex roles would be included. Similarly, articles about masculinity typically discuss femininity, articles about masculine roles discuss feminine roles, and articles about boys discuss girls, etc. Moreover, we are not troubled that this search technique may have omitted a small number of articles focused exclusively on men as our focus is on the impact of scholarship about women on the discipline.
7. For example, the "Information Note," "Gender Roles and Women's Issues as an Area of Interest Among Sociologists, 1975-1985" by Wolf, Skipper, Steed, and Alpaugh in *Sociological Inquiry*, is counted as an article, but a "Review Essay" in *AJS* such as Alan Sica's "The Power of Talk" is not.
8. It is important to note that our population of sociology journals differs from Ward and Grant's (1985). We included nine of the ten journals they examined in our study. Unlike Ward and Grant, we did not include *Work and Occupations* in our set of journals.
9. Data collection is currently underway which will enable the calculation of the percentage of each journal's total articles that address gender-content.
10. With two exceptions, the journals showed an overall increase from 1984 to 1993 in the percentage of female editorial board members. The percentage of female editorial board members remained constant for the journal *Social Science Quarterly* and decreased for the journal *Sociological Perspectives*.
11. We examined the use of theories and the types of methodologies employed in gender-content articles in our original research but do not report detailed findings here.
12. Of course the entire debate about a "standpoint theory" within feminism questions the utility of identifying "the" feminist perspective. This internal debate is beyond the scope of the concerns of this article.
13. E.g., the field of economics is a successful organization of this type (Fuchs, 1992: see also Howard, 1987).

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