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“Publishing is Mystical”: the Latinx Caucus Bibliography, Top-Tier Journals, and Minority Scholarship

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7,389 words

Abstract

In 2014, members of the NCTE/CCCC Latinx Caucus began contributing citations to a shared Google Document (GDoc) that suggested a relatively significant contribution of scholarship to the field of Rhetoric and Composition Studies. Scholars of color (Baca, Banks, Jones Royster, Pimentel, Ruíz) have argued that rhetoric and composition scholarship fails to represent diversity in academic publications. This study examines statistical data arrived at through analysis of the NCTE/CCCC Latinx Caucus Bibliography, with survey and interview data from Latinx scholars providing important context about publishing for POC.

Keywords

Latinx, publishing, scholars of color, Latinx Caucus Bibliography

In the summer of 2019, rhetoric and composition scholar Eric Darnell Pritchard wrote a guest post on the ethics and erasure of the intellectual labor of marginalized scholars for Carmen Kynard's blog Education, Liberation & Black Radical Traditions for the 21st Century. In the post, Pritchard details his personal experience of calling attention to the exclusion of women of color and queer scholars of color in a CFP on "Queer and Trans Embodied Literacies," by contacting the editors at Literacy in Composition Studies (LiCS). Pritchard details his suggestions, how the CFP was retracted, guest editors of color were added to the special issue, and a revised CFP was circulated. However, Pritchard points out that the reasons for the retraction and revision of the CFP omit the intellectual labor of his suggestions and others' feedback that informed the CFP's revision. Pritchard identifies this phenomenon of the erasure of intellectual and emotional labor as routinely happening to many scholars of color. To be clear, Pritchard further explains that he

is not only taking issue with this single journal, and he also includes other journals and professional organizations for “hav[ing] engaged in the violence of ignoring or minimizing the intellectual and emotional labor of those maligned on the basis of identity and difference.”

Pritchard advocates for greater inclusivity in the field when he writes,

I speak the truth of the scholars of color who work on race/ethnicity who have been asked by journals to review work submitted for publication in your area of expertise, only to have your own work gate kept out of those same journals or not even have your work cited in the publications sometimes by editors, sometimes by reviewers who were clearly chosen just to make sure you were not published in that venue. (“When You Know Better, Do Better’: Honoring Intellectual and Emotional Labor Through Diligent Accountability Practices”)

Pritchard’s critique of gatekeeping by journals speaks to issues of representation in academia, where publishing remains a perennial professional issue because of the “publish or perish” imperative for tenure and promotion cases. To unpack some of the complicated matrices of factors affecting publication in rhetoric and composition that impact career trajectories, this study explores the questions: 1) what does data suggest regarding POC representation in “top tier” journals; 2) what does data suggest about publishing possibilities for POC; 3) what factors impact scholars of color during the publishing process; and 4) what kind of recommendations for inclusivity are there for journal editors and those submitting to academic publications in the field of rhetoric and composition?

In Rhetoric and Composition Studies, Latinx and Native scholars, including, but not limited to, Victor Villanueva (1997; 1999), Malea Powell (2002; 2012), Damian Baca (“Rethinking”), Angela Haas (2012), and Ellen Cushman (2013) have problematized whether the

field can ever in fact be anything other than colonial, frequently pointing to the gatekeeping role of writing courses at many institutions. In spite of this role, scholars such as Baca, Cushman, Haas, Ruiz and Sánchez have inquired and identified decolonial potential within indigenous and Latinx writing practices and projects. This discussion of publishing draws on what I have previously described as the decolonial potential of a collaborative Google Document (GDoc) where members of the NCTE/CCCC Latinx Caucus collaboratively contributed their academic citations. In doing so, these contributions created a digital archive of knowledge that stands in opposition to colonial narratives embedded in academic assumptions about the breadth of contributions by communities of color to disciplinary knowledge.

This research began with a GDoc circulated in 2014 within the NCTE CCCC Latinx Caucus via the caucus listserv and follows previous scholarship examining the decolonial potential of digital and alphabetic writing by scholars and students of color (see Medina “Nuestros,” “Poch@,” and Racial). The initial motivation for circulating the GDoc was “creat[ing] a collaborative archive for members to consult when embarking on new projects and to raise awareness of shared research interests” (Medina “Identity” 223). Research interests covered in the bibliography include topics such as activism, assessment, Chicana and Latina feminism, citizenship, composition theory, critical history, critical race theory, culturally relevant education, decolonial theory, disability studies, documentary filmmaking, feminist pedagogy, gender theory, indigenous pedagogy, literacy studies, language policy, literary criticism, mestiza rhetoric, multimodal composing, multilingual education, service-learning, social justice pedagogy, technical communication, writing center practices, writing across the discipline, whiteness studies, rhetorical theory, student writing, zines and other topics that continue to grow with the length of the bibliography. The bibliography includes citations from journal articles,

chapters in edited collections, and single authored monographs. Preliminary analysis of the GDoc in June of 2017 showed some 160 citations by approximately 30 different scholars, primarily within the last ten years (“Identity” 223). As of January 2018, the total count grew to 253 citations from 40 members of the Latinx Caucus.

Although this GDoc was originally meant to serve as a resource for members of the Latinx Caucus, the advocacy to decolonize digital archives and redefine online spaces by scholars such as Ellen Cushman (“Wampum”) and Angela Haas (“Toward”) has been influential for considering the possibilities of projects focusing on linguistic and epistemic practices of marginalized communities. Because the field of Rhetoric and Composition Studies can tokenize (Martinez “A Plea”, Villanueva Bootstraps), marginalize (Baca “500 Years”, Villanueva “Rhetoric”), and exclude POC from Burkean parlors of scholarly discussion (Banks, Jones Royster; Powell), digital archives and bibliographies curated within and dedicated to scholars of color can inform and redress (Haas “Toward”) these practices that reinforce colonial paradigms of racial and epistemic hierarchies.

Therefore, this piece is in part an invitation to practice an epistemic generosity that is consciously inclusive of various knowledge traditions in the classes we teach and the scholarship we compose¹. A decolonial framework for epistemic generosity that draws on research from various loci of enunciation (Mignolo Darker) is then presented for interpreting survey and interview data collected from Latinx rhetoric and composition scholars. In concert with the statistical data arrived at from the analysis of the collaborative bibliography, this study practices a decolonial methodology through interviews with scholars of color on their experiences that are characterized by survey data and bibliographic data (Agboka); in doing so, this study seeks to bring to light perspectives of both established and emerging Latinx scholars within the field of

rhetoric and composition grounded in the bibliographic data that underscores negative perceptions about publishing by scholars of color in Rhetoric and Composition studies.

Such perceptions of scholars of color can be traced back to the June 1970 newsletter of the NCTE Latinx Caucus (then called the Chicano Caucus), where Felipe de Ortego y Gasca wrote an open-letter to then College English editor Richard Ohman, responding to the rejection of his manuscript entitled “Chicano Poetry: Roots and Writers.” Ortego y Gasca explains,

[Y]ou’ve done me/us a favor by rejecting my piece. For more than ever now we Chicano teachers of English realize that the only viable outlets for our expressions in this profession are those we make for ourselves...Not to publish our expressions or to publish something about us by a non-Chicano is simply to perpetuate the worst features of racism and the colonial mentality that continues to permeate the country. (19)

Ortego y Gasca’s criticism that Chicanos are written about as subjects rather than regarded as autonomous researchers capable of presenting scholarship from and about their cultures and communities remains an issue that other scholars take up. In response to being the subjects of study, indigenous scholars Scott Lyons (“Rhetorical”) and Lisa King have argued for the necessity of rhetorical sovereignty because of the colonial narratives imposed upon indigenous populations. Ortego y Gasca’s experience in 1970 with Chicano poetry and the College English editor highlights the colonial gatekeeping role publications play in authorizing the knowledge about a community from outside that community.

The question of “who has the authority to speak” is perhaps best addressed in Writing Studies by Jacqueline Jones Royster’s groundbreaking piece “When the First Voice You Hear Is Not Your Own.” Much like de Ortego y Gasca, Jones Royster argues that POC are too often

regarded as research subjects rather than contributors and holders of knowledge about their own communities. She writes,

I have been compelled to listen as they have comfortably claimed the authority to engage in the construction of knowledge and meaning about me and mine, without paying even a passing nod to the fact that sometimes a substantive version of that knowledge might already exist.... (30)

Much like de Ortega y Gasca's critique of Chicano poetry, Jones Royster acknowledges how the construction of knowledge by people outside of African American communities continues to negatively impact how her culture and communities are represented, especially when the knowledge created within this community is ignored. Furthermore, Jones Royster acknowledges how the dismissal of knowledge from non-dominant populations is function of colonial narratives when she concludes, "these 'authorities' let me know, once again, that Columbus has discovered America and claims it now, claims it still for a European crown" (31). Damián Baca extends Jones Royster's argument in "Rethinking Composition, Five Hundred Years Later" when he pays particular attention to how the field's colonial narratives about the rhetorical tradition exclude those non-white voices left out of the stories that are retold as fact. Baca writes, "Composition specialists often perceive their vocation from a colonial vantage point. As seen from within a Eurocentric narrative, Composition's rhetorical history is rationalized across the globe from East to West" (229). In both Jones Royster and Baca's writings, the logic of colonial history excludes those who disrupt or provide alternative narratives about the origins of rhetoric, culture, and epistemology.

Iris Ruiz reiterates Jones Royster's critique as she revisits the history of exclusion in Rhetoric and Composition Studies publications. In Reclaiming Composition for Chicano/as and

Other Ethnic Minorities: A Critical History and Pedagogy, Ruiz uses the analogy that “Reading Composition histories and scholarship is like reading Shakespeare. I can’t see myself, and, oftentimes, I can’t see my friends or those who look like me. We don’t look like the authors who wrote them. We are not white men. I can’t see my history” (1). Because of the historical nature of Ruiz’s monograph, she looks at a broader account of the field and concludes “that post-civil rights Composition Studies still shows signs of excluding POC in its main scholarly journals (Journal of Advanced Composition, College Composition and Communication, and Composition Studies) with the exception of ‘special issues’” (3). Octavio Pimentel echoes an assertion raised by Suresh Canagarajah that the academic venues where scholars of color publish is important because “it is not until scholars publish in mainstream publishing venues that true changes can be made” (Pimentel 100). What many in the field regard as “top-tier” journals serve as those publishing venues that reconstitute the field by informing audience about the topics, theories, methods, and scholars that are central to producing knowledge. Therefore, when audiences do not see POC published with any regularity in journals central to the field, scholars within the field could associate a low value with contributions by scholars of color or, even more perniciously, assume that there are no contributions by POC.

Decolonial Methods

When it comes to archives, indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith warns that the archive “is itself an artifact and a construct of culture” and that indigenous worlds “have been radically transformed in the spatial image of the West” (51). Smith’s assertion about archives serves as a warning for how archives can negatively transform the subjects through the “spatial image of the West” (Smith 51). Scholars need to remain cognizant of the impact of inclusion and exclusion as a potential reduction of knowledges reflected through the curation of cultures.

Angela Haas encourages educators to initiate classroom discussion about “how museums have historically promoted a colonial consciousness of consumption and nostalgia....often re-inscribed in culturally destructive ways” (“Towards” 196). The methodological underpinning for this bibliographic project comes from the decolonial archival projects articulated by Ellen Cushman when she explains that “Decolonial digital archives have built into them the instrumental, historical, and cultural meanings of whatever media they include” (“Decolonizing” 116). Previously, Cruz looked at how multimedia blogs provided Latinx graduate students platforms for knowledge-creation outside of traditional spaces for academic writing (“Poch@”), and, more recently, the decolonial potential for the inclusion of digital and multimodal work by scholars of color (Medina and Pimentel). The NCTE/CCCC Latinx Caucus bibliography performs a decolonial role by disrupting assumptions about the intellectual contributions by scholars of color and decentering these contributions on a collaborative platform. Angela Haas points out how decolonial approaches support the production of knowledge by scholars of color:

Decolonial theories, methodologies, and pedagogies are designed to assist scholars, educators, and students in decolonizing Western foundations of dominant thought by investigating and intervening in the histories and rhetorics that sponsor colonial intellectual production and reproduction. (190-191)

In his article on decolonial methodologies in technical communication, Godwin Agboka disrupts the hierarchies between subjects and observer in his consideration of unforeseen impacts on participants in the research process. During the process of researching citations online, Perla contacted individual members of the caucus and asked about the accuracy of the citations found on CVs, personal websites, and university profiles to incorporate members in the collection

process. After sometimes exchanging multiple emails, we added these additional citations to the collaborative Google Document (GDoc).

Following this initial exchange, a survey with a brief list of questions about publishing was circulated via the Latinx caucus listserv and the 21 respondents were asked whether they would be interested in a follow up interview discussion. From there, interviewees were asked to elaborate on responses to the surveyⁱⁱ. Eleven interviews were conducted over the course of three weeks. The majority of interviewees were of Mexican heritage, although at least one interviewee identifies as mixed Mexican and Salvadoran, with another interviewee from Columbia, and a non-Latinx, white member of the Latinx caucus. Though Mexican and Chicax identities might represent a vocal majority of the Latinx caucus interviewees, it is important to note that Mexican heritage is extremely diverse, with varying levels of Spanish heritage, indigenous heritage, and African heritage. These interviews amounted to 496 minutes of recorded audio that translated into 121 pages of single-space transcriptions. While conducting interviews, Cruz asked interview participants to choose their own pseudonym so that they could choose the level to which their chosen name could be associated with their interview responses. The responses to these questions were coded for salient themes as well as divergent perspectives. Additionally, interview responses were included alongside the bibliographic and survey data because the lived experiences tied to publishing provide important context that has been erased through colonial logic of overemphasizing numbers, or as one of the interviewees José explained, “Numbers are...wrong.” Following the bibliography data, interview responses appear thematically in tables that are intended to maintain the integrity of the quote, allowing for the members of this academic community to “speak for themselves.”

Publication Statistics

In June 2017, there were approximately 160 citations from about 30 scholars (Medina “Identity”). However, due to the nature of collaboration and uncertainty by some members about the process of adding citations to the GDoc, we worked together to fill in citations. By comparing the email list for the caucus listserv to the GDoc, we identified gaps in contributions between the 40 contributors in December 2017 and the 165 email addresses on the caucus listserv mailing list. As of May 2018, there were 502 citations from some 73 caucus members. The data in Figure 1 represent the breakdown of publications by decades following the systematic addition of citations.

| Dates Citations Tabulated | Pre-1990s | 1990s | 2000s | 2010s | Total | Contributors |
|----------------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 12/16/2017 | 6 | 11 | 39 | 197 | 253 | 40 |
| 4/30/2018 | 7 | 36 | 74 | 388 | 504 | 73 |

(Table 1. Table by publication dates of citations in December 2017 and April 2018)

Since GDocs are not static and evolve, a copy of the GDoc downloaded in May of 2018 serves as the baseline for bibliometric analysis. A potential limitation of analyzing this bibliography as a dataset could be the relatively low number of citations prior to and during the 1990s, especially considering the large number from the 2010s. However, these low citation numbers correspond with data from a study conducted in the closely related field of Communications. Drawing on 12 journals across 26 years and 5,262 articles and 7,259 authors, one study found:

Non-White scholars were virtually absent in journal publications as recently as the 1990s.

Non-White authors in these publications, however, increased to 6% by the end of 1990,

and 12% by the end of 2010. In general, non-White scholars are underrepresented among the published first authors in communication journals, authoring only 746 out of 5,262 (14%) documents published from 1990 to 2016. (Chakravartty et al. 258-9)

The virtual absence of non-white scholars in Communication journals during the 1990s parallels the number of publications by Latinx contributors represented in the GDoc with 7 prior to the 1990s and 36 during the 1990s. Also, in 1997, Theresa Enos notes that “[u]ntil the early 1980s, there were few writing journals”, although she identifies journals as better options than book publishing when she explains, “opportunities for publishing still were better there, especially in NCTE’s official journals” (60). While the number of scholarly publications by Latinx scholars has increased during the 2010s to 388 and counting, one reason that the contributions of Latinx scholars in the field might be relatively overlooked is the representation in “top-tier” journals, which overlap with the “official journals” that Enos identifies broadly as good opportunities for women scholars. In the next section, findings from the GDoc on rhetoric and composition’s “top-tier” mainstream publications are presented within the context of survey and interview data that address experiences and provide perspectives about these journals from Latinx scholars.

A survey with twelve questions about demographic, multiple choice and fill in the blank questions on publishing experiences was circulated through the caucus listserv and on the caucus Facebook page. The number of survey respondents at 21 could seem somewhat low for suggesting representative trends; however, this number is no doubt much closer to the number of scholars actively contributing to the caucus GDoc before December of 2017, with only 40 distinct names in the citations. What was most beneficial for this study was the rate of respondents’ opting-in for follow-up interviews being significant at more than 50% with eleven. Of the survey respondents, 70% self-identified as tenured or tenure track (TT), with 25%

graduate students, 5% retired and 5% unknown. This relatively high percentage of tenure and tenure-track faculty suggests a position of privilege relative to growing number of adjunct labor in academy, although tenured and TT faculty often have the responsibility of maintaining an active research agenda, which might account for their self-selecting into a survey on publishing. Among respondents, 61.9% identified their gender as female, with 33.3% identifying as male with 4.8% preferring not to say. This higher percentage of respondents self-identifying as female follows Theresa Enos' findings in the late 90s noting a "sharp increase in the publication of women's scholarship" (58), although she explains "[o]verall, males are still publishing more" with the gap narrowing as more women are tenured (60).

In terms of findings on publishing arrived at through the survey, perhaps the two most salient are the factors considered highest for affecting publication. According to respondents, 42.1% cited "Racial/Ethnic background" as a factor impacting their publishing experiences. This is significant because only "Type of institution/lack of institutional support" came in as larger contributing factor with 52.6%. While the focus of this study has focused on the field and its lack of inclusion, the material realities of POC continue to be impacted and impact publication based on the lack of institutional support they may or may not receive; institutional support is, in no small way, connected to whether POC have published widely from the outset.

For the purpose of maintaining manageable data sets, I focus on the representation of Latinx caucus scholars in three well-established journals that operate through central conferences in rhetoric and composition, namely National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and Rhetoric Society of America. The journals College Composition and Communication, College English, and Rhetoric Society Quarterly are in no way the only publications that are highly regarded and widely read in the field; however, the names of these journals repeatedly arose

during interviews, suggesting their metonymy for well-regarded journals in the field. Following the table below are some interview responses that provide some context. Figure 2 is a table that breaks down the number of citations from the Latinx Caucus Bibliography that were from the respective journals in total at the time of the analysis. Alongside the number of publications is the percentage that this number represents of the entire bibliography, as well as the yearly acceptance rate of each of these journals.

| Journal | Number of Published Articles | Acceptance Rate ¹ | Publications on GDoc | Percentage (from 504) | Percentage (from Published Journal) |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <u>College Composition and Communication</u> | 491 ² | 9% | 6 | 1.2% | 1.22% |
| <u>College English</u> | 588 ³ | 6-6.8% | 9 | 1.8% | 1.53% |
| <u>Rhetoric Society Quarterly</u> | 504 ⁴ | 16-20% | 1 | .2% | .2% |

(Table 2: Data from Latinx Caucus Google Document and Yearly Acceptance Rates of “Top-Tier” Journals)

On first glance, the number of publications on the GDoc and the acceptance rates of the respective journals can appear somewhat correlated, with the exception of *RSQ* at 16-20% with

¹ Numbers of articles submitted and published reported in MLA International Bibliography, [MLA Directory of Periodicals](#). Modern Language Association of America, National Council of Teachers of English. *CCC* submitted 220, articles published 20. **Date last confirmed:** June 20, 2016. *RSQ* submitted per year 100, articles published 16-20. **Date last confirmed:** June 21, 2016. *College English* 300-350 submissions, 18-24 articles. **Date last confirmed:** July 15, 2015.

² Number of articles is from Derek Mueller’s analysis of *CCC* journals from 1987-2011.

³ A conservative estimate based on an average of 21 articles per journal (average from 18-24 cited in *MLA Directory*) over 28 years (1990-2018)

⁴ A conservative estimate based on an average of 18 articles per year (average from 16-20 cited in *MLA Directory*) over 28 years (1990-2018).

only 1 publication on the GDoc. However, when comparing the number of publications on the GDoc to the number of articles from a given journal, then the numbers of publications that seem somewhat in line with acceptance rates drop to insignificant percentages. The overall submissions to these journals ranges from 100 (RSQ) to 220 (CCC) and 300-350 (College English), and the interview data provide some individual references to these journals, often on the topic of rejection.

Further, looking closer at the sixⁱⁱⁱ citations included from College Composition and Communication (CCC) journal, the significance of this number becomes complicated. Of those six, two articles were co-authored with non-POC, one citation was a short vignette; and five of the six came from 2011 or later. Even still, six citations from a total of 504 amounts to 1.2% of publications by Latinx scholars in a journal associated with the largest national conference for the field is dissuasive for Latinx wanting to publish in the journal. This percentage supports Victor Villanueva's advocacy that "[w]e can do better than 7% among our teachers and scholars of color, better than a representation that is statistically insignificant in our journals" (652).

Rhetoric Society Quarterly includes only one citation on the early May 2018 GDoc, with the single article coming from a special issue on Latin America. More of the articles from the special issue could have been written by scholars of color, although their names were neither included in the email list of caucus members nor added to the collaborative document by someone familiar with their work. Another book review in RSQ was added at a later date, although the .2% of the GDoc containing an RSQ article points to the perceptions of exclusion raised by interviewees. The low representation of Latinx in RSQ aligns with interview data that characterizes interactions with a past editor as somewhat dismissive. When submitting to the journal, some interviewees were told that they "weren't doing rhetoric" with their manuscripts.

With 9^{iv} citations of the 504, College English comes in with more citations with 1.8% on the GDoc, with .6% more than CCC and 1.6% more than RSQ. Still, four of the citations come from the same contributor, and four come from the same special issue, with only 3 contributors outside the special issue. The citations in College English supports perceptions by interviewees who commented that “once a journal does a special issue, they’re kind of like, we’re done with Latinx stuff for a while” and comments that “some journals really only focus on one scholar of color, which doesn’t create much space for up and coming scholars.”

While these numbers are low, an interviewee raised a potentially important issue when they identified themselves as having served as editor of the independent journal Reflections. The interviewee stated that “despite wanting and soliciting more articles by scholars of color, I unfortunately didn’t get as many submission as I would have wanted or hoped.” In the caucus bibliography GDoc from May of 2018, however, there are still 13 citations from Reflections, which is more than double the number from CCC (6) and 44% more than College English (9), and nearly as many as the two journals combined. The question of how many submissions were submitted to each journal by each scholar is not known, although Theresa Enos concedes that she continued to receive “more male-authored submissions” at Rhetoric Review in spite of her invested interest in women publishing “more sustained work in the history and theory of rhetoric and composition” (62).

These statistics also seem to support the survey data that perceive “Scholars of color infrequently published” (95.2%) or “Scholars of color only in special issues” (71.4%). One survey respondent offered an explanation, which ran contrary to the majority of the survey respondents, that the infrequency of publishing might have to do with the lack of “compelling” work: “But that doesn’t necessarily mean that there is an anti-diverse trend—it could also mean

that the work we're doing just isn't that compelling. My guess is that it's both (institutional racism AND much of our work isn't compelling.)” A different survey respondent offers a perspective that problematizes the selection of compelling topics: “We often find ourselves repeating the same things over and over and are told those topics are passé, and yet major scholars get to ‘reinvent’ a topic and that is seen as worthwhile scholarship. That is not right.”

Scholarly Voices

Following the surveys, eleven interviews were conducted over the course of three weeks. These interviews amounted to 496 minutes of recorded audio that translated into 121 pages of single-space transcriptions. These transcriptions were coded by response with the following categories of Intimidation, Not Belonging, Conditioning, and Advice relating to concerns addressed by the GDoc Bibliography data sets. To further contextualize perspectives by scholars of color, the following table includes quotes addressing the intimidating nature of “top tier” journals. We chose to use these tables in addition to the interview responses contextualizing survey data above so that these voice might perform a decolonial storytelling, where the interviewees speak their individual truths alongside the truths of others. Visually, the aim is for the audience to read the story of the “raw” data so that the Latinx community of scholars studied might speak on their own behalf.

| Table 3: Intimidation of Top Tier Journals |
|---|
| <p>“I think it's harder for me to get in [top-tier journals]. I think when you finally do get in as a person of color, you have to have had a book out on your own for them to say, "Oh, yeah. We need to feature this voice in our journal now."—Vincent</p> |
| <p>“There is, I don't know, the kind of imposter syndrome that I think many of us have who were first generation college grads, and then first generation professors at that, where asking for</p> |

help is almost like an admission of weakness. Or that I don't belong. Or confirmation that I'm not supposed to be here anyway.”—Paul

“[I]t's still really difficult and I also think really intimidating. I'm probably going to be speaking specifically from my experience as a graduate student and what I know other graduate students sort of go through. And so I think by and large, scholars of color are really just sort of intimidated and feel like there's always going to be some sort of pushback right at the beginning, like sort of anticipating that before we even try. And I know that's something that I've talked about a lot with other people too. So I think even if it's improving, there's still a sort of stigma and fear that is there and prevalent.” —Liz

“I published a little bit in other journals, but I didn't go for the top tier journals. I didn't go for College English. I didn't go for CCC. I don't know why. I might have been intimidated. Or I thought there were too many biases, too many restrictions.”—Christina (emeritus)

Another issue that repeatedly surfaces among interviewees was interviewees having been told by editors that their work did not belong or was not relevant to the field. What editors say can have an immense impact on how a scholar thinks about their work and place in the field. While it might be somewhat common for an editor to reject a manuscript because it is “not the right fit” for the publication, scholars of color seem to perceive that responses to their work carry with it the stereotypical “Reviewer Number Two” tone, which can be needlessly unkind and attack the submitter more than the manuscript. Former Composition Studies editorial team explains that editors have to be proactive when it comes to inclusivity because “waiting for work to arrive by and about underrepresented faculty and students amounted to magical thinking and

that editors and editorial teams can and should be viewed as similar to academic job search committees: both must recruit for diversity” (274).

| Table 4: Not Relevant/Belonging |
|---|
| <p>“[The <u>RSQ</u> editor] told me that just because I used the word ‘rhetorical’ didn’t necessarily mean that I was doing rhetoric. I was like, okay. Then, I submitted somewhere else I had always wanted to publish that’s not a rhetoric journal, but it still matters because my work is at the intersection of gender, race and disability. This was a journal on gender and religion. Then, it got an award.”—Victoria</p> |
| <p>“I submitted an article to <u>RSQ</u> when I was a grad student, and it was a straight up desk reject. Didn’t even get a chance to go out to peer review. That article, I sent immediately to <u>Philosophy and Rhetoric</u> and it got an acceptance with revision. So, as I see it at least, it wasn’t about the quality of the scholarship, it was about something else.... And I think that was one of the problems with my <u>RSQ</u> article, is that someone felt like they knew more about my scholarship than I did.” —José</p> |

José’s comments echo what Felipe de Ortego y Gasca argued in response to Richard Ohman in 1970, when Ortego y Gasca explains,

[A]s an Anglo you are asking me (as a Chicano) to rationalize my position and perspective of Chicano poetry in terms of assumptions you hold about critical theory and Chicano literature (poetry, etc.) rather than in terms of assumptions I hold as a Chicano scholar about Chicano literature (poetry, etc.). What happens then is that not only are you dictating the terms of my scholarship in Chicano literature—an area about which I wonder how much you know—but you are also stressing the primacy and superiority of

your assumptions about Chicano poetry over mine. In short: Anglo assumptions over Chicano assumptions. (19)

Looking at the number of publications by Latinx scholars in mainstream alongside survey and interview data substantiates claims previously made by scholars of color (Baca, Banks, Delgado, Jones Royster, Powell, Ruiz, Villanueva). These percentages and perspectives raise further questions about the lack of diversity in Works Cited pages and provoke questions about potential solutions. Interview participants point to how students are conditioned to expect an absence of scholarship by Latinx in academic research and course material.

Table 5: Conditioned

“I just also got my course evaluations for my 400 level histories of rhetoric course. And sure enough, and this didn't just come from white students, my students of color said you know, 'we overwhelmingly read people of color scholarship'...the actual break down of the percentages of the people of color versus white people scholarship, and it was almost an even 50/50 split. And so, the people of color scholarship of course was housed within that 50%, so portioned off African American, Asian American rhetoric, that kind of thing, where the white people got their own 50% category, but even that split felt like a lot. Felt overwhelmingly or mostly just half, you know? Because of how conditioned we are to not have any if any, you know?”—
Alejandra

“I think it's dead on to call it a ‘mystical process,’ because for me, what's really important is demystifying process but also demystifying organization. We often know what we're supposed to be doing, but not necessarily why. Once we get into the field long enough, we forget that we didn't always know this, right? I think too often as academics, we treat the people who don't

know, as they're just not good enough. But, it's like no, they might be. Have you ever thought about maybe telling them how to do it? The first thing I think I would tell beginning scholars is don't necessarily assume that it's you. It's going to feel really crappy to get turned down, but that does not mean that what you have to say isn't worthy of being heard, right?"—Victoria

In the quotes above, interviewees note how students seem conditioned to expect only white scholars, only a small percentage of scholars of color, or no citations by scholars of color in research about communities of color. This conditioning or lowered expectations could account for the point made by the former journal editor of Reflections when commenting on having received fewer submissions by scholars of color. Scholars of color can be resistant to submitting because they can feel unsure about the potential response by journal editors and peer reviewers.

When it comes to potential solutions related to publishing and citation practices, editors have the ability to make the largest impacts. Survey respondents cited interest from editors as having the largest positive impact (81%) on publishing experience, followed by graduate school mentors at 71.4%. Editors actively reaching out to scholars of color and prioritizing their inclusion follows Villanueva's advocacy of publishing as a recruiting tool for scholars of color ("On the Rhetoric" 652). In interviews, multiple respondents suggested more mentorship from journals during the submission and revision process similar to Peitho, Kairos, and Composition Studies. The Composition Studies editorial team strategically created a more equitable publishing process by "recruiting diverse reviewers who have expertise and interest in evaluating scholarship by non-majority scholars, establishing citation guidelines, reconsidering anonymized review, appointing diverse review board members, and installing manuscript mentors" (Blewett et al. 276).

| Table 6: Advice for Journals/Submitters |
|--|
| <p>“Beverly Moss at Ohio State, her idea was to think of something like an editorial pipeline by which folks of color could really receive that kind of mentorship to see what it's like behind the scenes and hopefully to fill those shoes of being an editor, but really having something within the structure that would entail folks to be able to be a part.... So, I think that's been something that really struck me that those opportunities have never really been available. For an organization like CCCC or NCTE, it's necessary.” –Paul</p> |
| <p>“I think one of the most useful things I've seen in terms of productive ways to draw attention to the diversity of publishing is the Latinx Caucus bibliography. I found that useful for my own work, and it's something I direct students towards, and I think that the Caucus could do a nicer job of publicizing that and making sure journal editors, for instance, are aware of that work.”—Chad</p> |
| <p>“If an article gets rejected once, twice, three times, four times, keep submitting it. Keep refining it. Don't ever let the work that you do go to waste. There will be a home for every manuscript. It's just a matter of finding the right home for it. And you should be rewarded for the work that you do. No manuscript left behind.”—José</p> |

Paul also recommends that the national College Composition and Communication Conference could create a similar infrastructure to NCTE Cultivating New Voices, using the Scholars for the Dream award to provide opportunities for emerging scholars to develop relationships with more experienced scholars. More broadly, there was also the suggestion for editors to consider scholars from outside the U.S., including more research from Afro-Latinx scholars. With regard to diversity, the issue of linguistic diversity arose in terms of journals

primarily only publishing in Standard English, rather than creating spaces for translingual practices. Interviewees also recommended that editors invite different senior scholars to take part in the peer review process because the same senior peer reviewer can become the only person on multiple journals.

The NCTE/CCCC Latinx Caucus bibliography is by no means an exhaustive solution for demonstrating the contributions of Latinx scholars to the field of Rhetoric and Composition Studies. The bibliography offers a practical resource for researchers and publishers. Perhaps it might cut down on the invisible labor as impromptu research assistants for well-meaning colleagues who ask for suggestions of Latinx scholarship. Future research should continue looking at citation practices, as Pritchard recommends in his advocacy of movements and groups like #CiteASista (citeasista.com) or @citeblackwomen on Instagram (citeblackwomencollective.org), because the impact of publications can be almost as important as publishing in some institutions when considering promotion and tenure. The interview and bibliographic data about the NCTE/CCCC Latinx caucus are not representative of all scholars of color in the field and there is important work still needed to be done across caucuses to examine representation widely within the field.

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Declaration of Interest Statement

Bios

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Appendix I

The questions below were asked of interviewees, following the initial survey.

1. Can you elaborate on your thoughts and feelings about publishing in Rhetoric and Composition journals?
2. How would you describe your experiences with the highly regarded, top-tier journals in the field if you have submitted or peer-reviewed for these publications?
3. What recommendations would you make to journal editors about the diversifying the kinds of articles published or the scholarship cited in their journals?
4. What kind of advice do you offer other scholars as they submit to these academic journals?
5. What might the role of affect play in how scholars of color are cited or not cited?
6. How do we reconcile a knowledge base for the field and diversifying works cited pages?
7. How do you incorporate diversity in Writing Studies syllabi?

ⁱ Gary Alan Fine uses the term epistemic generosity to explain the treatment of ethnographic subjects as knowledge-holders, whereas I employ this term to refer to the generosity demonstrated by researchers in their inclusion of diverse bibliographies.

ⁱⁱ The full list of questions can be found in Appendix I.

ⁱⁱⁱ Branson and Sanchez 2017; Gonzales/Blythe 2016; Medina 2013; Romney 2011; Ruecker 2014; Villanueva 1999

^{iv} Baca 2009, Guerra 2016; Martinez 2009, Ramirez 2009 Sanchez 2012; Villanueva ; (2017, 2009, 2004, 2001);