Gendered Inequality in Academia: Exploring Women's Experiences during the Pre-Tenure Stages of their Academic Career

By

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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts

MA Program in Social Justice and Equity Studies
BROCK UNIVERSITY
St. Catharines, Ontario

September 2008

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Appendix A – Letter of Invitation

Appendix B – Informed Consent Form
Abstract

This research uses the work of Pierre Bourdieu as a starting point for an examination of women’s experiences during the pre-tenure stages of their academic career. This thesis is based on six semi-structured interviews with six tenured academic women in the Faculty of Social Sciences at a medium sized Ontario University. I explore the ranges of experiences that the women report encountering during their pre-tenure years, as well as demonstrate how these experiences are gendered. Through my analysis, I find that women’s experiences in academia are shaped by a culture that legitimates their existence in the academic field insofar as they embody the dispositions that reinforce the gendered structure of the academic institution. I argue that being measured according to a prototypical male standard creates difficulties for academic women during their pre-tenure years.
Acknowledgements

Without any embellishment of the truth, this project would not have materialized if it was not for the support, guidance, and contribution provided by special people in my life. These individuals are owed sincere acknowledgement for their involvement in this work. Foremost, I would like show my gratitude by extending a special thank you to my thesis committee members, Dr. Michelle Webber, Dr. Ann Duffy, and Dr. Jane Helleiner. Thank you for having the patience to keep me on track with work, and for breathing life into this study. Michelle, you have served as more than just a supervisor for me, and have given new meaning to the informal responsibilities that academic women so often assume. I would also like to thank my external examiner, Dr. Lorna Erwin, for her participation during the final stages of this project.

My appreciation must also be extended to the faculty members of both the Social Justice & Equity Studies Master’s program and the Sociology Department. Dr. David Butz and Dr. Jane Helleiner, you have both served as invaluable Directors for the SJES program. David, you are an incredibly challenging theoretical course instructor and I appreciate the personal insight and thought that you afforded me both in and outside of the classroom, for both academic and non-academic issues. Dr. Mary-Beth Raddon, thank you for the guidance that you granted me while I developed the methodological approach for this study. Dr. Jonah Butovsky, always a pleasure taking a course of yours’. On a more personal note, thank you for the active concern and reassurance that you provided me while my father battled the rapid onset of heart disease during the latter stages of my Master’s course work. One does not forget such a heart. Dr. Sara Cumming, a distinct thank you is absolutely in order. You have been there for me in
most all aspects since my 2nd year of university. It was you who first encouraged me to pursue social justice, and more importantly, to write this thesis. I am fortunate to have you in my life. Thank you Jill Debon, Linda Landry, and Laurie Penner for not only taking care of the heaps of administrative work that would have most definitely bogged me down, but also for creating a welcoming environment in room AS 401.

I would also like to thank my family and friends. To my parents, Ed & Lena Reimer, my appreciation and grounds for appreciation goes beyond anything I can express in this sentence, but thank you for keeping my life headed in the right direction, instilling in me the critical lens through which I view the world, and teaching me the value of challenging myself. Thank you for never allowing me to abandon my priorities and being there for support when I find my priorities overwhelming. On the other hand, Andrew Papp, you have never failed at reminding me that there is more to life than priorities, that life is something to be discovered, and that the invisible lines that differentiate between the idea of friend and family are not always relevant. I place great value on our friendship.

Finally, this note would not be complete without acknowledgment of the time that the participants generously gave of themselves to provide me with research data. Thank you to the six women who participated in this study for allowing me to inquire about their academic and personal experiences. May this thesis provide its readers with a lens through which they can better understand your lives.
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Chapter One
Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore academic women's pre-tenure experiences. Through analyzing qualitative semi-structured interviews with academic women with tenure, I argue that academic women must negotiate an academic culture which organizes their careers according to the life course of a prototypical male scholar. I also argue that being measured according to a prototypical male scholar creates gendered difficulties for women with respect to navigating the academic field, managing the constraints of knowledge production, assuming service work, and balancing the care of children with the demands of an academic career.

This research project grew out of an interest in issues related to both higher education and gender. Majoring in sociology and concentrating in criminology as an undergraduate student, I had the opportunity to enrol in several undergraduate courses that explored the relationship between self and society, critical and feminist perspectives on law, social control, and moral regulation, gender in principal institutions such as the state, family, education system, etc., and Canadian and global perspectives on issues in higher education. More specifically, by personal observation and growing familiarity with research pertaining to gender issues in academia acquired during course work, particularly from the Brock University's advanced course in "Education & Equity", it became apparent to me that, as with many aspects of women's lives, their academic experiences remain outside the realm of dominant discourse. While I initially thought that I had developed a reasonable understanding of gender issues in academia through becoming familiar with relevant literature, it was not until I personally interviewed two
academic women for a previous study that I was able to develop an awareness of how gender mediates women's experiences in academia.

Drawing on my education and a set of experiences that complemented my studies in the Social Justice and Equity Studies program, my Masters thesis is the result of a shift in perspective that no longer isolates women's experiences to a particular university. Instead, I now see academic women's experiences as an accumulative result of socio-cultural processes that regulate and shape academia and its inhabitants according to a social order that ultimately promotes masculinity in the academic field, and in doing so, hierarchically frames women's experiences according to inherited and pre-existing sets of socio-cultural relations and masculinized conditions. Similarly, Bourdieu (2001) understands the accumulative result of masculinized conditions to be the effect of a process which he refers to as masculine domination. As will be shown by this study, the existence of masculine domination in academia has significant implications for pre-tenure academic women. Thus, utilizing the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu, this study explores the experiences of pre-tenure academic women in order to shed light on the gendered academic culture that they navigate.

Rationale

While studies of gendered inequality in academia have been conducted in the United States and abroad, there is a lack of Canadian-based research on this topic. Much of the literature that is available tends to emphasize that women's experiences are gendered, and that this is evident when considering their disproportionate representation in lower academic ranks, differences in salary when compared to their male colleagues, and difficulties with managing an academic career while caring for children. However,
there appears to be a limited amount of literature that discusses women’s pre-tenure academic experiences. This thesis is a response to this gap in the literature. While I agree that academic women’s experiences are gendered, I believe that the extent to which their experiences are gendered is evident beyond surface measurements and experiences exclusively related to those women who have children. I also believe that because an academic’s pre-tenure years have a significantly formidable impact on their overall career and the literature demonstrates that women’s experiences are gendered, an examination of their pre-tenure experiences is a site in need of investigation. By examining the experiences of women in contemporary Canadian academia, I will not only support existing Canadian research on this topic but also contribute to ongoing debates within academic circles and the public sphere and advance our understanding of women’s experiences in academia.

Organization of Thesis

In chapter 2 of this thesis, I present a review of current literature that focuses on issues that are pertinent to women in academia and therefore of interest to this study. Topics covered in this review include the threat of corporatization, tenure, the impact and pervasiveness of the social construction of gender, women’s statistical representation in academia, and women’s experience with managing an academic career while caring for children. In this chapter, I argue that there is an academic environment that is not as welcoming of academic women as of academic men.

In chapter 3, I present the theoretical lens that is used to examine women’s experiences during the pre-tenure stages of their academic careers. In this discussion, I outline Bourdieu’s concepts of field, capital, symbolic violence, masculine domination,
and habitus. I also address how these concepts are pertinent to the study of women's pre-tenure experiences.

In chapter 4, I present the methodology used for this study. In this discussion, I outline the project's epistemological and methodological assumptions. I also discuss the project's research design, including the different stages of the participant recruitment process, the interview method, and the data analysis process. Finally, I address both the ethical concerns and limitations of this project.

In chapter 5, I explore women's experiences during the pre-tenure stage of their academic careers according to four themes. In the first theme, I discuss how the women navigate the rules of the academic field. In the second theme, I explore how the constraints placed on knowledge production have shaped the women's pre-tenure experiences. In the third theme, I examine the women's experiences with service work. In the fourth and final theme I discuss the women's experiences with combining academic work and care of their children. The data from this study suggest that women's pre-tenure experiences are indeed gendered. The overarching argument in this chapter is that academia, and the academic job itself, is predicated on the model of a prototypical male scholar.

In chapter 6, I offer a conclusion highlighting the pre-tenure experiences of the women in this study. I address how this study advances Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction by showing how it applies to women's experiences in academia. I also address how the academic women's narratives shed light on the masculinist institution in which they work. I argue that women encounter problems during their pre-tenure years
because academia is culturally reproduced according to the model of a prototypical male academic career.
Chapter Two
Literature Review

Much attention is given to a vast array of issues in Canadian higher education. A perusal of the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) website, for example, reveals that issues of globalization and privatization of the university, intellectual property, tuition and access, governance, racial discrimination, academic freedom, and gender inequality, to name a few, dot the contemporary landscape of higher education in Canada. While all of these issues are worth exploring, an emphasis will be placed on reviewing literature that discusses the gendered culture that exists in academia in order to lay a foundation from which the scope and aims of this project can be realized. In fact, there is a considerably large body of literature that both discusses women’s experiences in higher education and paints an analytic picture of the gendered cultural milieu in North American academia.

As a guide, this literature review is organized according to five themes. First, a discussion of how academia is presently being restructured according to corporate ideology follows with a particular emphasis on how these changes impact academic women. Next, literature outlining the tenure system and its particulars is reviewed. Following this discussion, an emphasis is placed on literature which discusses how the social construction of gender plays an instrumental role in shaping the experiences of women in academia. Next, I provide a general statistical picture of women in academia with a specific focus on academic rank and salary. Then, the experiences belonging to academic women with children are explored. Through an examination of these themes, I hope to shed light on the issues surrounding the experiences of academic women.
Corporatization of Academia

The literature discusses how academia is presently in the midst of an ideological shift as a result of having embraced corporate practices and values. The reorganization of academia according to new corporate forms of managerialism can be attributed to a global sweep of economic rationalism that has left public and private industries subject to system and process changes (Luke, 2001; Ritzer, 2002). The corporate agenda ensures that the university operates in an increasingly efficient manner, that its operations are more predictable, and that it relies more than ever before on quantifiable measures of quality control (Ritzer, 2002). Corporate involvement in Canadian universities began to significantly grow during the 1980s with private funding. This funding shift brought with it a corporate agenda and a distinct set of corporate values, such as cost-minimization, productivity, marketability, and consumer satisfaction, that increasingly shape the day to day operations of the university (Hornosty, 2004). Research reveals that the shift in academic ideology which favours corporate values is problematic because it undermines traditional academic values of scholarship and threatens to restructure academia as a commercial enterprise that generates knowledge according to the interests of global knowledge economies (Blackmore, 2002). Research also finds that another consequence of academia becoming more influenced by corporate values is that academic critical thought and knowledge take a back seat to the needs of the global market (Hornosty, 2004).

Corporatization: a Threat to Academic Freedom

A precondition for critical thinking and independent thought is academic freedom. A fundamental component of academic freedom is the scholar’s right to study, research
and inquire, teach and publish free from control or restraint by the state, and/or by the institution that employs him or her or by any other outside agency (McGuinness, 2002). Academic freedom provides the university community with the necessary safeguards to protect independent research and teaching for the betterment of society, as well as express ideas that are critical of university administration, governments, media, or the corporate world without fear of retribution (Hornosty, 2004). In essence, academic freedom applies almost exclusively to faculty who advocate change to the status quo, and is rarely applied to those who uphold the maintenance of the system (Meaghan, 2004).

Over the last number of decades, academic women have in fact shown themselves to advocate for change to the status quo. As a result of their efforts and a university culture that, albeit limited in certain respects, fosters critical thinking, Canadian academic women have successfully introduced feminist paradigms challenging male privilege in both wider society and academia (Hornosty, 2004). However, with increasing permanence of corporate ideology in academia comes the progressive disappearance of bases of support from which women’s voices have been able to achieve influence (Smith, 2004). One such area where support for women’s voices has been dampened is in Women Studies Programs. Research finds that with the increased regulation of Canadian academia according to the corporate principle of commercial value has come reduced funding for Women’s Studies Programs, a 40 year old feminist achievement (Reimer, 2004). Since the corporatization of the university results in the commercialization of knowledge, the traditional pursuit of knowledge for the betterment of society, a tenet in which social science and feminist disciplines such as Women Studies are based, stands in the way of the corporate agenda (Hornosty, 2004). It does not come as a surprise then
that the recent allocation of funds for Canadian university infrastructure and research have been concentrated in Science, Engineering, and Computer Science, leaving feminist based programs, such as Women’s Studies, without the proper support structures (Reimer, 2004).

**Women as Contingent Academics**

A consequence of academia restructuring according to the corporate logic of cost-minimization and productivity is that universities now increasingly rely on contract academics. Contract academics either work full-time or part-time, but in either case are hired to teach specific courses, typically those with the largest classes, often without teaching or marking assistants that regular faculty receive (Paul, 2004). Contract academics are paid significantly less than permanent academics (Paul, 2004). So, contract academics essentially are paid less to assume responsibility for devalued academic work. This trend is fundamentally problematic because it widens the gap between tenured and untenured faculty producing a two-tiered academic workforce where non-permanent faculty assume significant responsibility for teaching, relieving tenured faculty to participate in more highly valued and well recognized scholarly activities such as research (Kimber, 2003). Thus, it follows that the more universities corporatize, the more likely they are to employ a greater number of part-time or contract workers, positions which stream a large proportion of academics into the lowest ranks of academia (Paul, 2004).

Of significant relevance to this study, literature also reveals that this trend is particularly problematic for academic women because they are both concentrated in and comprise the largest proportion of contract academic positions (Paul, 2004; Webber,
2007). Since the largest proportion of academic women are found in contract positions, further corporatization of academia will only intensify women’s place in low-status academic positions and reproduce systemic gender discrimination by making it more difficult for them to access full-time tenured positions, unemployment protection (EI), pensions plans, external research grants, merit incentives, and increases in salary (Paul, 2004). Research also finds that academic women working on contract are typically responsible for large teaching workloads (Webber, 2007). Studies show that assuming large teaching responsibilities is problematic for women on contract because it makes it difficult for them to develop the kind of research and publication record that is required to secure tenure-track positions (Webber, 2007).

Research thus reveals that the corporatization of the university is of particular relevance to academic women’s experiences in two significant ways. First, the corporate agenda values those disciplines which produce knowledge that is most aligned with the interests of global knowledge economies. Feminist based programs, which advocate the support of women, are not regarded in the corporate university as producing valuable knowledge, and for this reason do not receive funding which allows such programs to expand. Second, with further corporatization of the university comes increased reliance on contract academics. Contract positions are regarded as the least valuable position in academia. The university’s increased reliance on contract academics is therefore problematic because those academics which are disproportionately represented in contract positions are women. With increased adoption of corporate values in academia, one can expect further devaluation of those programs which advocate the support of women, as well as an increased gendering of academic positions.
Tenure

Tenure Defined

While universities across the globe possess a system of regulating academics, it is significant to mention that the tenure system is not universal, but rather a distinct feature of the higher education systems in Canada and the United States (Acker & Webber, 2006). Academic tenure refers to a permanent or continuous position within the university faculty until retirement, not including dismissal for an adequate cause such as failure to meet a specified norm of performance or productivity, participation in specified acts regarded by the university as forms of affirmative misconduct, or an imminent financial crisis that threatens the survival of the institutions as a whole and which cannot be alleviated by less drastic means than the termination of tenured faculty (Chait, 2002; Finkin, 1996). While tenure may vary among Canadian universities in terms of specific institutional policy, the notion of tenure in Canadian higher education as a whole has been influenced by the traditional practice of tenure in Great Britain and the United States to the extent that the tenure systems proffered by Canadian institutions of higher education tend to follow similar standards of academic freedom. These standards are the desire for intellectual independence in teaching and research, collective autonomy, and the time and financial security needed to carry on scholarly and scientific work (Horn, 1999). Literature also reveals that “tenure concerns power – who has the authority to decide and direct, and who has the prerogative to refuse and resist”, and that faculty at institutions without tenure generally exercise less social, political, and/or scientific power and influence than faculty on campuses with tenure (Chait, 2002: 69). At the very least, the benefits of academic freedom and power that are provided by tenure not only indicate
the importance of tenure in terms of one's scholastic pursuits and academic career, but also the social value and authority that accompanies having achieved the status of a tenured faculty member.

In Canada, immediately prior to attaining tenure, an academic exists in a probationary period where their performance and productivity are typically assessed for anywhere between 4 to 6 years according to the universities' norms and performance standards (Horn, 1999). At the medium sized Ontario University in which this study was conducted, while an untenured faculty member may apply for tenure at any time, faculty members are typically considered for tenure in their fifth consecutive year of full-time employment as a probationary lecturer or assistant professor. This probationary period is significant to the development of an academic's career because it is during this time that the tenure-track candidate undergoes annual evaluations of their teaching, research and publication progress, and service to the university to determine if they have achieved acceptable progress in scholarship and teaching. If the tenure-track candidate is consistently found by the department and the university to have successfully advanced their scholarship, the candidate is then subject to examination through the tenure application process. During this process, a tenure committee examines the candidate's course syllabi and assignments, all published material and any published review of that material, teaching evaluation forms submitted by students, participation in academic advising, and contributions to the department and the university to determine their scholastic worth (Finkin, 1996). Upon completion of this evaluation, the candidate is awarded tenure with the university or released from their contracts (Chait, 2002).
Tenure as a Gendered Experience

The extent to which men and male pursuits dominate academia can be seen in how academia's institutional processes shape the careers of women (Mackie, 1987). While there is a lack of literature that discusses women's experiences with the tenure process, what literature does exist reveals that women's difficult experiences during this process are gendered. Academia is characterized in literature as a competitive masculine hierarchy that confronts women with a continuous and cumulative process of discouragement, demoralization, discrimination, and elimination at all stages of evaluation and promotion processes (Heward, 1994). The impact that this environment has on women's experiences during their pre-tenure years includes sexual harassment, devaluation of their academic work, exclusion from valuable career opportunities, and the expectation that they will fit feminine and racial stereotypes (Caplan, 1993). Research also finds that the existence of a male dominated institutional setting in academia excludes women's research interests (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996). This exclusion is particularly problematic for women hoping to secure a permanent academic job because research is generally regarded as the most valuable form of academic work by the scholarly community (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996). Women also report that it is also problematic that assessors for tenure and promotion are often senior male faculty members (Acker & Webber, 2006). A consequence of men consistently administering recruitment, selection, probation, and review procedures is further stratification of men and women according to gender biases and discrimination during times of review and assessment (Bagilhole, 1993; Drakich & Stewart, 1997). Studies also find that women
often feel as if they must work much harder than their male colleagues during their pre-tenure years in order to be awarded tenure (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996).

Thus, while research pertaining to women’s experiences with the tenure system is sparse, these findings provide a sense of the ways in which the tenure system is problematic for women. These findings are explicitly linked to my project in the sense that they shed light on how the academic tenure system is gendered and stratifies men and women according to gender biases.

**Social Construction of Gender**

The social construction of gender is considered to be both a voluntary and involuntary process by which gender identities are an accumulative manifestation of the meanings and behaviours that we construct from the values, images, and prescriptions that we find in the social world around us (Kimmel, 2004). While literature written through a critical feminist perspective identifies how the social and linguistic construction of “male” and “female” sustains structural and material inequalities in society, it also emphasizes that the social construction of gender plays an instrumental role in dictating the experiences of women in academia (Acker & Armenti, 2004; Acker & Webber, 2006; Armenti, 2004; Caplan, 1993; Grant et al., 2000; Husu & Morley, 2000; Kimmel, 2004; Raddon, 2002).

**Social Construction of Gender in Academia**

The social construction of gender has defined identities, characteristics, and activities associated with men to be valued more than those associated with women (Hensel, 1991; Kimmel, 2004; Mackie, 1987). The gendered division of labour is arguably the most pertinent example of how men have remained dominant and women
subordinate in North American society. According to Kimmel (2004), the gendered division of labour has established certain forms of work as being more valuable than others, as well as more appropriate for one gender than the other. The notion persists in academia that women ultimately belong in the private sphere, assuming responsibility for domestic labour (Acker & Armenti, 2004; Grant et al., 2000).

Research also finds that even though contemporary academic goals and beliefs, such as feminist thought and writing, have slowly permeated North American universities, academia largely remains structured according to the male lifestyle and scholarship course (Acker and Armenti, 2004; Acker & Webber, 2006; Armenti, 2004; Caplan, 1993; Perna 2001; Wilson, 2001). Hensel (1991) asserts that there exists in academia an “old boy’s network”; a system designed to exclusively reflect the interests and secure the success of a white male majority. Research finds that academic culture is male dominated in the sense that traditional notions of professorship and scientific conduct that situate male professors as the “gatekeepers” of higher academic positions remain largely taken for granted and understood as a “natural” condition of academic culture (Rogg, 2001). Literature indicates that as a consequence of a male dominated culture in academia, the idea of a successful academic has become synonymous with the idea of the “male scholar”, one who possesses the social freedom and characteristics to dedicate their lives to academia (Acker & Armenti, 2004; Hamilton, 2002; Raddon, 2002; Williams, 2000; Wilson, 2001). As Rogg (2001) argues, the male dominated culture of academia generates a certain kind of blindness where men’s perceptions of themselves, their male colleagues, and an academic career in general, serves to legitimate their dominance despite the relatively recent entry of women into the academic field. An
overarching implication of this division is that the values and styles typically associated with men, such as competitiveness, success, individualism, hierarchy, and assertiveness, are typically valued the most in today’s university faculties (Acker & Webber, 2006).

Academic women, their feminine identities, characteristics, and activities, present an anomaly to the gendered regime of rationality in academia by existing in ways that are both similar to and different from men (Smith, 1992). In an effort to protect the coherence, dominance, and “moral valence” of the gendered regime and its members, academia responds by excluding, repressing, avoiding, and preventing the existence of any anomaly (Smith, 1992). While the different gendered forms that the “regime of rationality” assumes in academia are easily identifiable, such as disparities in salary and subordinate ranking, other forms are often subtle, elusive, and normalized through everyday practices (Husu & Morley, 2000). Indeed, the pressure to assume responsibility for administrative work that women disproportionately encounter serves as an example of an everyday practice that reproduces differences between male and female academics (Armenti, 2004). These findings suggest that women’s academic careers are not recognized by academic culture as being as valuable as men’s academic careers (Hensel, 1991). It is not surprising that studies show how such notions prevent women from utilizing network opportunities, establishing a personalized pedagogy, and, of specific relevance to this study, progressing through the tenure and promotion process (Husu & Morley, 2000). For example, studies show that academic women are treated differently than their male colleagues in processes of departmental decision making (Paul, 2004). Research also finds that a different criterion is often applied to women during times of tenure and promotion decisions (Perna, 2001). Findings such as these reflect the
pervasiveness and embeddedness of a gender regime in which men and their masculinities are upheld in academia as the norm (Blackmore, 2002).

After reviewing literature pertaining to the social construction of gender in academia, a stark conclusion can thus be drawn. Simply stated, a prototypical male standard has been normalized in academia to the extent that prevailing gender norms maintain a male dominated culture that differentiates between male and female academics. Considering this conclusion, one can assume that the social construction of gender is, at the very least, a substantial underlying factor in sustaining a gendered working environment in academia.

**Quantifiable Differences**

In addition to women being dominated by socially constructed gender norms that sustain men's dominance in academia, literature also reveals that there exists a quantifiable disparity between academic men and women. The most significant quantifiable differences between academic men and women are academic rank and salary.

*Academic Rank*

Among the most significant findings presented in this body of literature is that after accounting for differences in educational attainment, experience, and productivity, research continues to demonstrate that women are typically positioned in lower academic ranks than men and paid less than men (Acker & Webber, 2006). Research finds that although women account for more than half of all undergraduate students in the United States and Canada, their proportion drops from undergraduate enrolment to master's and doctoral programs, and even further on the faculty ladder to the point that once a woman
reaches the level of full professor, she belongs to a proportion of women that amounts to approximately 10 percent (Caplan, 1993). Even more than this, the percentage of women at the full-professor level in fields that have traditionally been male dominated is practically negligible, and this pattern is even more pronounced for women from non-dominant groups (Caplan, 1993).

More recent studies find that while women accounted for 58 percent of full-time undergraduate students and 48.7 percent of full-time graduate students in Canadian universities for the year of 2003-2004, they only represented 31.7 percent of full-time academic faculty (Drakich & Stewart, 2007). Furthermore, according to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), among full-time faculty in 2003-2004, while women accounted for 58 percent of instructors, 54 percent of lecturers, and hold 51 percent of unranked positions, they only represented 46 percent of assistant professors, 38 percent of associate professors, and 23 percent of full professors in American universities. These findings are relatively consistent with the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) of 2001 which reveals that women only represented 28 percent of full-time faculty with tenure in the United States, while they accounted for 51 percent of full-time instructors (Perna, 2001). Furthermore, according to the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), in 2004-2005 women represented 18.8 percent of full professors, 34.7 percent of associate professors, 41.4 percent of assistant professors, and 54.8 percent of "other" professors in Canadian universities. In addition to this, Drakich & Stewart (2007) determined that women only received 39.5% of the new appointments awarded by sixteen Ontario universities between 1999 and 2004. Essentially, each of these findings support the argument that North American women are
filtered through an "academic funnel" that causes their presence to decrease at each stage prior to and including full professorship (Caplan, 1993).

Literature also documents the gendered implications associated with being situated within inferior academic ranks. For instance, Caplan (1993) understands women’s disproportionate representation in inferior academic ranks to be the product of an environment in the vast majority of colleges and universities that is more welcoming and auspicious for men than it is for women. Even though women’s representation among full-time university faculty in Canada has grown slowly from 11% in 1960-61 to 32.6% in 2004-2005, women continue to be disproportionately found in less secure teaching and research positions throughout academia (Drakich & Stewart, 2007). Research also indicates that since academia has long been dominated by men, the male perspective remains most prominent in policy development and research (Cassin, 2004). Research conducted by women and about women is frequently undervalued in academia (Hensel, 1994). Trends such as these are evidence of a subversive network of power that subordinates women while maintaining the university’s male dominated institutional setting (Blackmore, 2002).

Salary

As with the majority of professional work in North American society, an academic’s position has a determining impact on the salary they are paid (Simeone, 1987). Research indicates that significant gaps in salary exist between academic men and women, and that this disparity in salary increases as one moves up the academic ladder (Wilson, 2004). For instance, the 2007 CAUT Almanac of Post-Secondary Education reveals that for the academic year of 2005-2006 male full professors earned an average of
$117, 215, while female full professors earned an average of $111,282; that male associate professors earned an average of $94, 735, while female associate professors earned an average of $91, 668; that assistant male professors earned an average of $77, 399 while female assistant professors earned an average of $73, 028; and that male lecturers earned an average of $86, 504, while female lecturers earned an average of $84, 457. Similarly, AAUP found that the earnings gap between men and women in 2003-2004 was largest at the rank of full professor and smallest at the rank of instructor; women earned on average 90 percent of what men earned at the rank of lecturer, 96 percent of what men earned at the rank of instructor, 93 percent of what men earned at the ranks of assistant and associate professor, and 88 percent of what men earned at the rank of full professor. Likewise, Wilson (2004) found that for 2003-2004, full-time tenured female professors in the U.S. earned an average of $80, 452 while tenured male professors earned a substantially greater average salary of $91, 002, and in the case of non-tenured instructor positions in the U.S., female instructors earned an average of $37, 868, while male instructors earned an annual average of $39, 378.

After reviewing these findings, it is clear that men are disproportionately represented in the highest ranks and receive the greatest salary in both Canadian and American academia. Research finds that academic value is generally measured according to one’s rank and salary (DiNitto et al., 1995). Thus, these findings also suggest that a man’s academic career is typically regarded in academia as being more valuable than a woman’s.
Academic Value and Productivity

Literature also emphasizes how being devalued in rank and salary problematizes women's efforts to be productive. Research also finds that lower ranked and lower paid academics are not considered by the university to be as productive as those in senior academic positions, and, as a result, responsibilities not typically regarded as productive work are allocated to those in the lower ranks of academia (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004).

The effect of assuming work of lesser value has on academic women does not become clearer than when examining the non-academic roles that faculty members and departments expect academic women to undertake. Studies reveal that in addition to meeting formal department standards with respect to research and teaching, women are often pressured by the members of their department to assume responsibility for routine administrative work, as well as caretaking responsibilities by providing support for colleagues and students under the auspices of contributing towards the university (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996; Bagilhole, 1993; Park, 1996). Research finds that women who are responsible for a disproportionate amount of administrative work describe such tasks as "voracious" and report that they experience a lack of control over their time because of the amount of work being generated for them instead of chosen by them (Acker, 2007). Cassin (2004) highlights the duality of this trend by emphasizing that while the department often relies on women to "look after things", women, on the other hand, can feel as if their contribution in this regard is taken for granted and remains invisible. To top it off, women often receive smaller rewards for administrative work than those allotted to men for such work since their work is generally not valued as highly as the work of their male colleagues (Simeone, 1987).
Studies also show that assuming a disproportionate amount of responsibility for administrative work in addition to research and teaching typically has a negative impact on the progress of women’s academic careers (Acker & Feuerverger, 1996; Bagilhole, 1993). As Cassin (2004) states, “taking on administrative positions … is the graveyard of many a career” (165). Research strongly suggests that by assuming responsibility for tasks that fall under the umbrella of university service, women are less able to allocate time and energy to more highly valued academic work (Cassin, 2004). For example, studies show that women who assume responsibility for administrative work often remain absent when the vast majority of papers are written and research contracts awarded (Heward, 1994). Since research and publishing are essential to developing an academic career and gaining scholarly recognition, it follows that the more time and energy that academic women spend on poorly valued work, the less time and energy they will be able to spend on research and publishing (Park, 1996).

The difficulties that women experience with focusing their careers on research have been and will only continue to intensify with the further adoption of corporate values by the university (Blackmore, 2002). Blackmore (2002) asserts that because corporate ideology so strongly values the idea of “performance”, the expectation that academics “perform” will be strengthened, and in turn, result in greater priority being given to productivity in research and publishing. This is problematic for academic women because as the university continues to adopt productivity as its benchmark for academic success, it will become more difficult for women who assume a disproportionate amount of responsibility for administrative work to make productive advances in research output (Cassin, 2004).
These findings support the idea that there exists a subversive network of male power from which women experience subtle forms of subordination. This is particularly evident when considering that women both disproportionately represent the lowest ranks and receive the smallest salary in both Canadian and American academia. The increasing permanence of corporate ideology in Canadian universities brings an emphasis on research, a priority which further intensifies the subordination of women, particularly those who assume a disproportionate amount of administrative work compared to their male colleagues. Not having access to more highly valued work and being expected to devote time and energy to less recognized tasks is detrimental to women’s pre-tenure academic records because they are not producing and participating in academic work that is of equal value to their colleagues who are instead focused on work that typically yields academic success and recognition (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004).

**Academic Women with Children**

The experiences belonging to academic women who care for children is another theme that is largely discussed in literature. Pertinent to this literature is the idea that we live in a deeply gendered society where the division of labour organizes women and assigns them different jobs and positions (Lorber & Moore, 2007). Women are socialized to assume primary responsibility for childcare responsibilities (Kimmel, 2004; Lorber & Moore, 2007; Mackie, 1987). Although studies show that fathers have increasingly assumed greater responsibility for the care of their children, women continue to shoulder primary responsibility of their children (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). Research conducted in 1995 reveals that while the typical academic spends at least fifty hours a week on academic work, women spend about eighty hours a week on combined
work and home responsibilities. This is in comparison to an average of fifty-seven hours that men spend per week on both work-related and domestic responsibilities; a difference of twenty-three hours per week when compared with academic women (Gregory, 1995). While this benchmark does not specify childcare as a task included in "home responsibilities" per se, it does however suggest that women labour a second shift in addition to their academic work, which men do not. Fast-forward a decade, more recent research in the United States finds with respect to the time that each parent spends alone with their children, that fathers averaged only 5.5 hours per week while mothers averaged 19.5 hours per week, a 350 percent difference (Kimmel, 2004). In essence, these findings show that women continue to assume a disproportionate amount of responsibility for their children than do men.

*Impediment to a Woman's Career?*

Even though research highlights the joys that academics with children experience while pursuing an academic career, academic women with children experience difficulties managing an academic career. Literature posits that women are more likely than men to experience difficulties with managing an academic career and childcare because they have been socially constructed to be the primary caretakers of children (Armenti, 2004; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004; Wright & Young, 2001). Academic women who care for children typically experience disparaging effects on their research, writing, and teaching, and ultimately hit a plateau in their careers (Wilson, 2001). Research finds that because the added pressure to care for children leaves less time and energy to devote to academic work, academic women with children often appear less productive than they otherwise would (Raddon, 2002). While women who have children
during the early stages of their academic career increase the probability of becoming a low ranked, and subsequently low paid academic, men who have children during these same stages of their academic career typically advance through the ranks without experiencing any significant complications, particularly during times of tenure and promotion (Hamilton, 2002). Research also finds that academic women with children are less mobile for international travelling, networking, and job-seeking purposes; these components, in addition to research, teaching, and university service, are crucial to the development of an academic’s career (Acker & Armenti, 2004). In addition to this, academic women with children report that meeting academic standards in research, teaching, and university service is particularly difficult because caring for children requires an extensive amount of time and energy (Armenti, 2004).

Furthermore, while there appears to be a limited amount of literature that addresses how some women are impacted by children during the pre-tenure stage of their academic career, the themes that emerge are consistent. First, it is important to highlight that for many academic women, their tenure clocks often tick simultaneously with their biological clocks (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). A common theme throughout much of this literature is that combining motherhood with the pursuit of tenure is a challenging venture (Wright & Young 2001). Research also reveals that women who interrupt their academic career to have children before achieving a tenure track position are not only likely to experience an increase in the length of time it takes for them to secure a permanent tenure position, but are also likely to experience a significant decrease in the probability of securing tenure (Armenti, 2004; McElrath, 1992). Thus, consistent with research that finds women’s academic careers are negatively impacted by the added
responsibility of caring for children, women who have children during the pre-tenure stages of their academic career experience difficulties with establishing an academic career.

Departmental Stumbling Block

The notion of the “ideal academic” describes an individual who can devote their life to academic work (Acker & Armenti, 2004). The notion of an “ideal academic” complicates the matter of maintaining this “ideal” image for academic women with children because they are typically perceived in academia as being less available to focus on their work as a result of having to care for their children (Hamilton, 2002; Williams, 2000; Wilson, 2001). More specifically, a prominent theme in literature is that both women with children and women who are interested in having children are often perceived to be an impediment to the functioning of the department because they are regarded to be less productive than an academic who does not have the added responsibility of caring for a child (Finkel & Olswang, 1996; Perna, 2001; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). In an effort to improve their chances of establishing themselves as an “ideal academic”, women must often prove to their fellow faculty members that they will not jeopardize their capacity to produce academic work by having children (Acker & Armenti, 2004). For example, studies reveal that department chairs have been known to hold meetings with younger academic women to advise them that if they are thinking of getting pregnant that they should time it so that the pregnancy does not conflict with the school year: September to May (Armenti, 2004).

Studies also reveal that the labels “unacceptable” and “unproductive” are attached to women who have, or are planning to have, children (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004).
Research shows that the negative connotation attached to these labels stunt the growth of women’s academic careers (Finkel & Olswang, 1996; Grant et al., 2000). As a response to this scrutiny, academic women with children report having to hide the difficulties that they experience with managing an academic career and caring for children (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). Similarly, academic women who plan on having children report being reluctant to discuss such an interest with the department in which they work because of the likelihood of being regarded as an “unproductive” academic and treated as such (Acker & Armenti, 2004). Considering these two examples of departmental scrutiny and the impacts on the decisions of academic women, unsurprisingly, academic women are more likely than their male colleagues to remain childless (Caplan, 1993). For instance, nearly half of the women in Finkel and Olswang’s (1996) U.S. study report that they decided to remain childless in order to protect their academic careers. In a similar vein, Armenti (2004) found that half of assistant professors interviewed in her study of Canadian academic women reported that they were not going to consider having children until they received tenure. Sadly, both of the associate professors with children who participated in Armenti’s (2004) study were both denied tenure.

In light of these findings it is clear that independence is a desirable quality in academia. However, the desirability of independence as a personal quality of academics has gendered undertones. As Kimmel (2004) explains, behaviours and expectations are defined by society as either masculine or feminine, and these definitions are in turn regarded by society as being appropriate for either males or females. More specifically, Bradshaw et al. (1998) assert that independence is a characteristic commonly associated with masculinity. Considering that research finds that women with children do not fit the
definition of an “ideal academic” by virtue of not having the freedom to dedicate their
lives to their academic career because of the added responsibility of caring for their
children, it can be argued that women with children are not “ideal academics” because
they ultimately do not possess those qualities which are associated with masculinity.

Making up the Difference

Although feminists have fought for and achieved maternity leave, a university
policy which provides a window of time in which a woman can temporarily leave her
academic job to care for a child, the very idea of taking a break from academic work
conflicts with an academic culture that is oriented towards the conditions (i.e. freedom
from non-academic responsibilities) that allow for academic success (Grant et al., 2000).
In addition to this, research also indicates that such difficulties continue to remain
unacknowledged in the larger institutional context (Dillabough, 2007). So, while
academic women who care for children are, to some extent, protected for a limited period
of time, they must work in an environment in which the difficulties that they experience
with balancing an academic career and caring for their children remain hidden.

Research reveals that in response to this lack of recognition, academic women
with children exercise personal strategies to mitigate work/family conflict. For instance,
as much as one can plan such things, some academic women plan their pregnancies for
the spring or summer months; a time when they are not as involved in academic work as
they are during the fall and winter semesters (Armenti, 2004). Other academic women
assume that they will be able to have children at a later stage in their life and postpone
having children until they have achieved tenure (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). Another
strategy that academic women with children use is to sacrifice reaching their scholarly
potential by spending less time on their academic responsibilities and producing work that is regarded as satisfactory according to academic standards (Tierney & Berisimon, 1996). Finally, another strategy that academic women use, albeit laden with its own difficulties as a result of a competitive academia culture, is to establish and maintain connections with colleagues who are able to provide encouragement and support (Caplan, 1993; Wright & Young, 2001).

Research therefore reveals that simultaneously assuming primary responsibility for children and meeting the expectations of academia, particularly those encountered during the pre-tenure stages of one’s academic career, increases the overall workload with which academic women must contend. It is not difficult to appreciate the frustrating situation that academic women who have or who are thinking about having children find themselves in during their pre-tenure years. However, one must ask why having children still impedes academic women from progressing in an academic career? Furthermore, despite having implemented maternity leave policies, relief from teaching during specific hours, and extension of the tenure clock, why have universities not sufficiently addressed the difficulties that are predominately experienced by academic women with children?

Conclusions

An examination of literature reveals that women’s experiences in academia intersect with the corporatization of higher education, tenure, the social construction of gender, gendered differences in rank and salary, and childcare. In this chapter, I argue that the corporate values by which academia is increasingly becoming organized are problematic for academic women because such values devalue feminist programs and stream a disproportionate number of academic women into low ranked academic
positions. I discuss how the tenure system in academia is a gendered process that negatively impacts women's academic careers and therefore that academia is gendered in the sense that women are measured according to a prototypical male standard that socially constructs them as inferior academics. I advance the idea that there exists a subversive network of male power which sustains women's subordination in academia through not so subtle ways, particularly in terms of academic rank and salary. I also argue that for women, combining an academic career with childcare can have a damaging impact on their careers. While literature focuses heavily on women's experiences in academia, it is clear that there is a lack of discussion with respect to women's experiences during the pre-tenure stages of their academic careers. That being said, the themes that are explored in this literature review are important to the development of this study because they shed light on the gendered cultural milieu that exists in academia. In other words, existing literature lays the groundwork for an investigation of women's gendered experiences during their pre-tenure years.
Chapter 3
Theoretical Framework

Pierre Bourdieu

Social justice theorist David Smith (1994) explains that the primary focus of a social justice theory should be to encompass not only the economic and material attributes of society, but also the social and cultural attributes that have an immediate bearing on people’s well-being and quality of life. Smith (1994) argues that questioning “who gets what where and how” provides a trajectory through which issues central to the conception of social justice can be illuminated. I approach this research from the theoretical perspective of Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist influenced by social theorists like Max Weber, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Claude Lévi-Strauss, who theorized that society is mediated by institutionalized hierarchies and symbolic systems which inform individuals and groups of their beliefs, traditions, values, language, and ultimately shape their understanding of the social world. Similarly to how Smith (1994) emphasizes the study of socio-cultural processes and their influence on our lives, Bourdieu was also devoted to questioning how individuals are culturally socialized. More specifically, Bourdieu sought to understand how individuals and groups are socialized according to social systems of hierarchy that reproduce a socially unequal society composed of the dominant and dominated (Wacquant, 2002).

Central to Bourdieu’s thought is the notion that through the interplay between the symbolic and material dimensions of social life, individuals come to embody the socio-cultural practices and dispositions which reproduce the organization of the culture in which they live. Bourdieu conceptualizes the impact that the symbolic and material dimensions of social life have on individuals through his idea of cultural reproduction: a
concept that highlights the importance of culture, social structure, and symbolic systems when explaining how stratified social systems, via cultural processes, resources, and institutions, hold and connect individuals and groups to competitive and self-perpetuating hierarchies of domination (Bourdieu, 1984). Through his notion of cultural reproduction, Bourdieu stresses the importance of illuminating the socio-cultural relationship between social structures, the formation of class-consciousness, identities, and social relations of symbolic power, as well as the potential and limits of social mobility, when understanding social injustice (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

For Bourdieu, situated at the heart of the interplay between the socio-cultural and material dimensions of social life is power, or what he often refers to as capital. As Bourdieu explains, capital is power "over the accumulated product of past labour ... and thereby over the mechanisms which tend to ensure the production of a particular category of goods and thus over a set of revenues and profits" (1991: 230). Contrary to liberal, post-structuralist, and Marxist views of power, Bourdieu's notion of capital embraces the complex interrelationship of culture and social structure in the legitimation of power.

According to Bourdieu, there are four different types of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital (1986). While economic capital simply refers to the accumulation of money and property, cultural capital refers to the collection and internalization of resources, (such as verbal facility, cultural awareness, aesthetic preferences, and social credentials), by an individual through socialization. Through the collection of these cultural resources, an individual develops the ability to use objectified forms of capital, such as art, scientific instruments, and so forth, as well as understand the educational credential system (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu's notion of
social capital refers to the "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (1986: 249). In other words, Bourdieu understands an individual’s social capital to be constituted by their acquaintances and social networks. Finally, symbolic capital is power which manages to impose symbolic meaning to forms of economic, cultural, and social capital, and in doing so, conceal the power relations which form the basis of such power (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1997). In this sense, the application of symbolic meaning to economic, cultural, or social capital legitimates the pursuit of particular interests as well as prevents an individual’s success in such interests from being perceived as a form of power.

By emphasizing the importance of culture and social structure in his conception of capital, Bourdieu probes how cultural socialization places individuals and groups within competitive status hierarchies, how relatively autonomous fields of conflict interlock individuals and groups in struggle over valued forms of capital, how actors struggle and pursue strategies to achieve their interests within such fields, and how, in doing so, actors unwittingly reproduce the social stratification order (Dillabough, 2004). Central to Bourdieu’s understanding of capital is the idea of field,

a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents, or institutions, by their present and potential situation ... in the structure of the distribution ... of power (or capital) whose possession command access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 97).

Bourdieu’s use of the term field is significant to his understanding of power because through this term, he calls attention to the social conditions that permit the cultural
reproduction of objective relations and practices that legitimate dominant and subordinate positions of power based on varying amounts of field-specific capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu breaks from the common application of the term field to describe, for example, a distinct discipline such as biophysics or pharmacology, and instead refers to open-endedly structured spaces organized around specific types of capital and interest, such as the intellectual field, that are constituted by a matrix of institutions, organizations, and markets of producers, such as academics. Bourdieu’s concept of field also captures the conceptual essence of the arenas of production, circulation, and appropriation of goods, services, knowledge, or status, as well as the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate different kinds of capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). From this definition, it is clear that fields are sites organized by their own mechanisms of development and impose upon individuals forms of struggle for legitimation that are specific to the field. Through the active role that field occupants (individuals) assume by responding according to the objective relations that configure the field, it is also clear that while the field structures individuals, the field itself is reproduced by the responses of field occupants (Naidoo, 2004).

Bourdieu understands power to have social, symbolic, and cultural forms in addition to strictly economic forms. Indeed, Bourdieu (1986) asserts that individuals and groups draw upon various forms of capital, whether it is money and property, cultural goods and services, acquaintances and social networks, and/or symbolic mechanisms of legitimation, to enhance their own positions within the social order. The social consequence of field occupants striving to position themselves with the various forms of capital, according to Bourdieu, is the creation of “categories of understanding” which
inform the translation of class-based inequalities into the cultural differences which serve to maintain and reproduce social inequality within a particular field (Dillabough, 2004). In this instance, what is particularly significant about Bourdieu's thought is the emphasis on the role of symbolic forms and processes in the cultural reproduction of social inequality.

Bourdieu argues that symbolic systems channel deep structural meanings shared by all members of a particular culture or field, and thereby function as instruments of communication and knowledge that build an ordered set of fundamental dichotomous distinctions, such as rare/common, good/bad, male/female, etcetera (1984). Dominant symbolic systems serve as instruments of domination in that they provide integration into power for dominant groups, distinctions and hierarchies for ranking groups, and legitimation of unequal social arrangements by influencing the dominated to accept the hierarchies of dichotomous distinction (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). For Bourdieu (1991), dominant power is symbolically violent in the sense that it manages to impose upon society a taken-for-granted symbolic means of understanding the social world while hiding the true relations that provide the basis of dominant power. Dominant power is also symbolically violent in the way that such power justifies the economic, political, and cultural relations that promote a binary logic of dominant and dominated at the expense of the ubiquitous intergenerational reproduction of inegalitarian social arrangements (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). In other words, symbolic violence is the means by which the dominated accept as legitimate their own condition of domination (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).
In line with the binary logic of distinction discussed in respect to the effect of symbolic power, a particular set of social relations that serve to both illustrate how symbolic violence and the cultural reproduction of discourses inform relationships of domination are those relations which organize gender into a relational division that differentiates between men and women. Understanding masculinity as the measure of all things, Bourdieu conceptualized the shaping power of this gender specific form of symbolic violence as *masculine domination* (Bourdieu, 2001). Bourdieu states

*(t)he strength of the masculine order is seen in the fact that it dispenses with justification: the androcentric vision imposes itself as neutral and has no need to spell itself out in discourses aimed at legitimating it. The social order functions as an immense symbolic machine tending to ratify the masculine domination on which it is founded (2001: 9).*

More explicitly, the “androcentric vision” is simply the idea that women are inferior to men, and the justification of that vision, according to Bourdieu (2001), is rooted in the symbolic construction and representation of the body according to a biological nature that is itself a naturalized social construction. While the masculine order is inscribed in the social structure, it is also inscribed in bodies through the hidden principles that are implied in the routines of the physical and social order that impose and indoctrinate a gender division by excluding women from valued tasks and designating them to inferior places within a particular field, by teaching them how to hold their bodies, by assigning them devalued tasks, and more generally by taking advantage of the very biological differences which are framed as the basis of “natural” social differentiation between men and women (Bourdieu, 2001). In this way, Bourdieu’s concept of masculine domination is predicated upon his argument that symbolic culture and social structure intersect to
build into the social world forms of domination, (in this case, masculine), that allow groups, (in this case, men), to clandestinely produce and reproduce the cultural conditions of their collective existence (Dillabough, 2004).

It is important to reiterate as a central tenet of Bourdieu’s social thought that symbolic violence structures all relationships of domination, including masculine domination, but moreover, that gender and gender-hierarchies of domination occur at every level of the general social field. In every sense of the word, masculine domination is ubiquitous. It is therefore reckless to assume that the inequalities that structure social class relationships have not increased all the while women have begun to experience growth in economic capital and presence in the labour market (Lovell, 2004).

An underlying component of Bourdieu’s theory is that the reproductive processes of domination, power, and privilege exist without the conscious recognition of individuals. From this principle, Bourdieu rejects a rational actor model of action and goes to great effort in his work to explain how the type of action that he feels is most significant in the perpetuation of cultural forms of domination and distinction actually escape the realm of conscious manipulation (Bourdieu, 1984). Linked with the notion of masculine domination, rather than measurable as an objective form of inequality, Bourdieu understood masculine discourses to be manifested, naturalized in social and cultural space, and embodied in field occupants as habitual dispositions (Dillabough, 2004: 6). Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus* is paramount to his social theory, and refers to

(a) rule ‘made man’, an embodied rule, or rather, a scientific modus operandi that functions in a practical state according to the norms of science, without having these norms as its explicit principle: it is this sort of scientific ‘feel for the game’ that causes us to do what we do at the right moment without the need to thematize what had to be done and still
less the knowledge of the explicit rule that allows us to generate this comfortable practice (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 223-224).

The embodiment of habitus is the product of the volumes of capital that can be carried by the body and used to negotiate social entitlement within the field (Bourdieu, 1984). Since habitus indicates a set of relatively permanent and largely unconscious ideas and dispositions about how society works, it leads individuals to act so as to reproduce the prevailing structure of life chances and status distinctions within a particular field. In this way, the dispositions of habitus are the product of class specific conditions of primary socialization, and the action generated from one's habitus is the product of class dispositions intersecting with the dynamics and structures of particular fields (Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu summarizes this relationship between habitus, capital, and field with the equation

\[(\text{habit})(\text{capital}) + \text{field} = \text{practice}\] (1984: 101).

In this sense, Bourdieu conceives the social world to be comprised of differentiated fields of action (i.e. the economic field, the political field, the academic field), each defining the rules, norms, and social/cultural practices (cultural beliefs, traditions, values, language, competencies, know-how, dispositions, etc.) that shape our understanding of reality. He also recognizes the constitutive impact that our unconscious embodiment of and active participation in such social/cultural practices has on symbolically perpetuating fields of action and further establishing and maintaining social hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1984). In other words, Bourdieu understands an individual's existence in the social world to be caught up in a competitive system of circular relations that unites objective structures, embodied class and social group dispositions, and subjective actions in a process where
the actions and socio-cultural practices exercised by individuals to achieve their interests and maintain distinction from the "other" are objectively organized in a manner that contributes to both the accumulation of field specific capital and the cultural reproduction of social space (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

In essence, the concepts of cultural reproduction, capital, field, symbolic violence, masculine domination, and habitus establish a theoretical undergrid upon which Bourdieu’s social theory is predicated. While the latter sections of this thesis provide an in-depth examination of how Bourdieu’s theoretical lens can help explain women’s experiences during the pre-tenure stages of their academic careers, and underscores the relevance of these concepts when explaining those experiences, it is nevertheless necessary after having just presented a summary of Bourdieu’s social theory to briefly explain how his theoretical concepts are helpful to the development of this project.

*Bourdieu and Higher Education*

To account for women’s experiences during their pre-tenure academic years, I utilize Bourdieu’s concepts of cultural reproduction, capital, field, symbolic violence, masculine domination, and habitus in a relational framework. Indeed, Bourdieu focused a great deal of attention on the role of education in society. Bourdieu understood the education system to perform three central functions: a means of socialization into a particular cultural heritage, the reproduction of class relations through the reinforcement, not redistribution, of the unequal distribution of cultural capital, and the legitimation of the system’s reproductive influence over the social world (1988). In this way, Bourdieu regards the education system as a principal site of ideological and cultural socialization that is more likely to reproduce social inequality than challenge inequality. In fact a
central argument for Bourdieu is that education continues to be governed by elites, and for this reason, it is necessary to recognize the socio-cultural relationship between educational structures, the cultural formation of class-consciousness and identities, and the potential for and limits of social mobility for women and men (Dillabough, 2004).

Extending this understanding to academia, Bourdieu (1988) asserts that higher education as a whole is permeated by the most characteristic properties of the dominant class, and that the frequency of such properties increases as one moves from the science faculties (culturally dominant) to the faculties of law and medicine (temporally dominant); law and medicine being those which exercise the strongest and most durable influence on society and are entrusted by the government and wider society with creating and controlling knowledge. Moreover, Bourdieu argues that higher education is an institution worthy of significant sociological study because of the way it contributes to the misrecognition and reproduction of structures of domination by invisibly permitting the realization of social stratification under the guise of academic neutrality (Bourdieu, 1988). In this sense, we see how Bourdieu has used his notion of cultural reproduction in his understanding of higher education as an institution that not only reproduces the structures of domination belonging to wider society, but one that is also organized by and exercises the norms of the dominant class.

Bourdieu also emphasized how the higher education system is a principal site for the allocation of status and capital. While the allocation of capital is most evident when considering how individuals, particularly the affluent, have increasingly converted economic capital into cultural capital via the education system in order to access desirable positions in the job market, the extent to which the higher education system
distributes capital, according to Bourdieu, can also be seen by the class-based variation that exists in the meanings and uses of capital within the institution itself (Bourdieu, 1988).

Bourdieu's notion of field is also of particular importance to an examination of academic women's pre-tenure experiences in the sense that he regards the academic field to be a "homologous structure" that reproduces itself according to a hierarchy of dominant and dominated (Swartz, 1997). More specifically, Bourdieu (1988) asserts that the academic field experiences "relative autonomy" and receives recognition for its supposed "neutrality" all the while contributing to the reproduction of the socio-cultural hierarchies that stratify the social world. According to Bourdieu, the academic field maintains the capacity to develop a distinct status culture and its own organizational interests without direct influence from the state, economy, or social classes through its reproductive capacity and vested interest in protecting the value of scholastic capital (1988). Essentially, while this "relative autonomy" and appearance of "neutrality" permits the higher education system to reproduce the cultural hierarchies of the social world, it also provides the guise under which the system can reproduce its own structure through self-organized activities of selection and indoctrination (Bourdieu, 1988).

Since Bourdieu has explicitly established higher education as a field that is relatively free to reproduce culture, social structure, and symbolic systems that connect individuals to competitive and self-perpetuating hierarchies of domination, his notion of symbolic violence is of particular importance to the examination of women's experiences during their pre-tenure academic years because according to Bourdieu, it is the symbolic systems of an institution, in this case higher education, that socialize individuals through "logical" forms of communication and knowledge to accept inegalitarian and hierarchical
social arrangements (Bourdieu, 2001). Furthermore, Bourdieu (2001) argues that even though women have recently experienced increased economic independence, the educational system continues to reproduce differences between the genders by perpetuating the dominant model of family structure and traditional principles of division. Thus, while Bourdieu did not specifically discuss the prevalence of masculine domination in higher education, he did understand this form of gender-specific domination to subordinate and exclude women from the social world to the point that it separates men from women in both the domain of symbolic exchanges, as well as the relations of the production and reproduction of symbolic capital; two key elements of the foundation of the whole social order whose principal function as understood by Bourdieu (2001) is to contribute to the perpetuation or expansion of the symbolic capital held by men.

By regarding the social world, including the institution of higher education, to be stratified by the eminence of masculine domination, and conceiving the higher education system as playing a formative role in perpetuating the mechanisms and hierarchies that promote social inequality, Bourdieu situates the academic field as one that has at its core the function to position men, masculinity, and masculine interests as dominant. Parallel to his reasoning that the masculine order is inscribed in the bodies of individuals, Bourdieu (1984) asserts that the collective academic body is the aggregated result of thousands of independent but orchestrated strategies of reproduction that effectively contribute to the preservation of that body for the reason that those strategies are the product of the "conservative" habitus belonging to the members of the dominant group; in this case, not women. With regard to the predominately unconscious nature of masculine domination, Bourdieu states,
(a)nd one would need to enumerate all the cases in which the best-intentioned of men (for symbolic violence does not operate at the level of conscious intentions) perform discriminatory acts, excluding women, without even thinking about it, from positions of authority, reducing their demands to whims that can be answered with a mollifying word or a tap on the cheek, or, with an apparently opposite intention, reminding them of and in a sense reducing them to their femininity, by drawing attention to the hairstyle or some other physical feature, or using familiar terms of address (‘darling’, ‘dear’, etc.) in a formal situation (doctor and patient, for example) (2001: 59).

Indeed, intellectuals, the specialized producers and transmitters of culture, play key roles in shaping their institutionalized hierarchies (Swartz, 1997). Considering this facet of Bourdieu’s understanding in relation to his idea that positions of power within higher education are dependent on the dispositions of habitus and on the opportunities of attaining the only recognized objectives in the academic field (those of scientific success and intellectual prestige), one would expect that positioning women’s habitual dispositions, which are typically feminine, as inferior to men’s habitual dispositions, which are typically masculine, would create difficulties for women during their effort to establish an academic career (Bourdieu, 1984). Thus, having shed light on the cultural milieu of academia, “it is logical that the university space as a whole be occupied by agents who, being produced for and by the academic institution, have only to follow their natural dispositions in order to produce ... the conditions of reproduction of the institution” (Bourdieu, 1984: 99-100); the most important of those conditions being to restrict people’s vision of the world and canvass their support for this vision, which in turn leads people to perceive as universal an extremely “singular culture”, much like the one that Bourdieu describes as existing in higher education.
While Bourdieu does not in all instances extend the notions of cultural reproduction, capital, field, symbolic violence, masculine domination, and habitus to explicitly describe the higher education system, this theoretical framework, fused with bits of his own insight into the role of education in society, provides a theoretical lens that offers a promising means of examining academic women's pre-tenure experiences.
Chapter 4
Research Design

When we ... spoke together as 'women', constituting 'women' as a category of political mobilization, we discovered dimensions of 'our' experience that had no prior discursive definition (Smith, 1997: 394).

Production of Knowledge

Designed according to the post-positivist perspective that knowledge is socially constructed and that society has a knowable reality, this thesis is premised on the assumption that reality is subjective. Pertinent to this project is the notion that all knowledge is constructed according to a specific matrix of physical location, history, culture, and interests, and that starting from the standpoint of people's experiences is a productive means of understanding how people are located within socially organized practices (Sprague, 2005). In this sense then, to work from an individual’s standpoint is to understand that their reality is rooted in knowledge of that reality. Furthermore, this thesis is written through a critical feminist lens that emphasizes how social relations and conditions shape women’s experiences. As such, this study is guided by the idea that the partial, personal, intuitive knowledge that comes from the consciousness of a knowing subject situated in a specific social context is valuable because such knowledge sheds light on the hidden power relations that are embedded in the everyday social practices and ideas that frame our existence (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 2002). Providing people with the opportunity to discuss their experience of the social relations and ideas relevant to their lives is therefore an important step towards enabling the production of new knowledge (Smith, 1997).

Written through a critical feminist lens that emphasizes how social relations and conditions shape women’s experiences, the methodology of this thesis also assumes that
women's social conditions in academia are organized by power relations. Drawing from women's standpoint and beginning with their experiences elicits information that is critical to generating knowledge of how masculine power relations and gender relations organize and situate women in academia (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 2002). In other words, gender, and the implicit underpinnings of what is real, thought, and experienced in terms of gender, can be understood through a feminist analysis of a woman's perception of her experiences.

It is imperative that this study uses the standpoint of women for the reason that the knowledge which sustains the social relations that organize everyday experience are based on what Smith refers to as a "textually-mediated virtual reality", the result of a practice where people's experiences are converted into knowledge in which their perspectives are transposed and subdued (Smith, 1990). Women's standpoint, on the other hand, is constituted by a complex process of knowledge construction where the interconnectedness of concepts, theory, and discourse intersect into "actuality"; "actuality" representing the connections that are drawn between what is real, what is thought, and what is experienced (Smith, 1997). According to Sprague (2005), a benefit of working from the standpoint of women is that it problematizes power and advantage, as well as illuminates the mechanisms that sustain privilege and the consequences of privilege for broader society. Women's standpoint is also valuable to understanding their experiences because such a method focuses on their lives as they live them in the social worlds in which they are situated (Smith, 1997). Also, since both reality and conceptions of reality are constituted through people's socially organized practices in the actual locations of their lives, studying women's experiences from their position gives access to
knowledge that is generally taken for granted and not discursively appropriated (Smith, 1997). Key to the methodology of this research then is that real power relations and their effects are organized in everyday social practices and ideas and that women can highlight the actual location of their lives using their own words (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 2002; Smith, 1997). In translating the value of women’s standpoint and experiential knowledge to the context of this research project, it is therefore vital to unpack the experiences of academic women via their standpoint not only because it illuminates a world and culture in which the generative and shaping power of male and masculine dominance remains hidden, but because it also contributes to the production of knowledge that is not necessarily represented in dominant discourses.

Epistemology

This thesis is a feminist project. Exactly how this research can be regarded as a feminist project is in how this thesis assumes what knowledge is and how knowledge is best produced. For instance, factored into the design of this research project is the understanding that knowledge constructed from a privileged place in social relations of inequality is more likely to resonate with the interests and worldview of the privileged rather than the oppressed, and thus perpetuate current power imbalances (Sprague, 2005). Instead, the knowledge generated by this thesis is the product of my analysis and the subjective experiences of academic women; women who are members of a larger group of female faculty members who may be disadvantaged within the realm of their career. While I have tried to stay true to the women’s perceptions of their experiences, I acknowledge that I am implicated in the knowledge generation based upon the formulation of my questions and the interpretation of the research findings.
Furthermore, critical feminism opposes a positivist approach to studying social life on the grounds that positivist research methods are dominated by a consciousness that only permits the world to be explained within a male-centered framework that does not allow researchers to ask how women are politically and socially situated (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 2002). Critical feminists also argue that positivism is a problematic approach to producing knowledge because it narrows thought to technical issues, and naturalizes current relations of privilege and disadvantage (Sprague, 2005). This thesis is situated within a larger critical feminist effort to locate women’s subjective experiences within a network of ruling relations, social practices, and social institutions. As a critical feminist project then, a central aim of this thesis is the critical analysis of academic women’s experiences and perspectives.

Why Qualitative Methods?

Given the feminist nature of this project, it is essential to exercise reflexivity throughout all aspects of the research process. According to Holland and Ramazanoglu (2002), practicing reflexivity is recognizing the power relations and the exercise of power that exist within the research process. Key to approaching this study was not just understanding how power operates in the research process, but also making decisions that put the feminist aims and intentions of this project into practice while refraining from discrediting or manipulating the participants’ perspectives. While reflexivity is a complex notion, and one that is taken up by feminist researchers in a variety of ways, to describe the practice of reflexivity in my methodological approach, it is necessary to discuss my social location as a researcher, the experience of interviewing up, the use of semi-structured interviews and the analysis of interview data.
To maintain reflexivity through this research design, it was essential for me to remain sensitive to how my particular social location was intimately connected to the relations of power that exist within the research process of this study. While there may be similarities between me and the academic women I interviewed, (I am a twenty-five year old, white, able-bodied, heterosexual, male graduate student from a middle-class Canadian nuclear family) in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, education, and access to resources, my social location is different from each of the academic women I interviewed. How this difference in social location affected this research project was and still is difficult to understand because of the subjective interpretation and hidden nature of power relations. However, in recognizing the difficulty of knowing the effects that social location and identity will have in practice, Holland and Ramazanoglu (2002) suggest that feminist researchers should bear in mind what relationships they have with the researched, as well as what effect their presence and knowledge may have on their research subjects.

Power cannot be completely eliminated from the research process. As a white heterosexual male, I am still seen to be in a position of power in particular social settings and situations. However, I attempt to empower the women in this study by giving them an opportunity to share their own experiences. Furthermore, Sprague (2005) explains that researchers studying the economically and politically powerful, women studying men, people of colour studying whites, and younger people studying elders can all be considered to be in situations in which their ability to control the interaction is limited, particularly when it is face-to-face. Essentially, this was my experience while researching academic women. The women who participated in my study are more
educated, older, and have greater access to economic and social capital than me, and for these reasons were able to exercise a significant amount of power during the research process. While I believe that the interviews were a positive experience, for both myself and the participants, at times I found it difficult to navigate the interviews and elicit information when the women were reluctant to speak about a particular experience or issue, and in this sense my ability to control the interviews was limited. In general, I felt it necessary to respect the extent to which the women were willing to interact.

As a feminist project, it follows that I employ a research methodology that provides the framework by which a feminist sensitivity remains at the forefront. Qualitative research methods allow for women's voices to be heard and for women not to be treated as objects to be controlled by the researcher's procedures (Bryman & Teevan, 2005). This feminist project contributes to these goals by providing the women with an opportunity to discuss their experiences in a reflexive research setting. Qualitative research is also conducive to this feminist project because it provides an effective means of focusing on women's experiences and exploring the shared meanings across them. Since the purpose of this thesis is to work from the standpoint of academic women to both learn about the social practices and constraints, as well as the relations and conditions that culturally reproduce the structure of academia, it is essential that this research proceeds by way of a qualitative approach (Sprague, 2005).

Research Design

In order to understand the experiences of pre-tenure academic women, I interviewed 6 women in the Faculty of Social Sciences at a medium sized Ontario university. Since an aim of this research is to provide academic women with the
opportunity to voice their pre-tenure experiences and reveal how these experiences are socially organized, it is fitting that women’s experiences constitute the focus of this project. What factors affect the process of attaining tenure? How is one’s personal life shaped in establishing an academic career? How is the academic job masculinized? Is the tenure process gendered, and if so, in what ways? How do women form an academic habitus? Through these questions, this study aims to analyze the findings of these interviews by examining the culture of academia, determining if there is a “singular culture” in academia, as Bourdieu asserts, or if these women have divergent experiences of academic life.

Method

I have decided to use interviewing to investigate academic women’s pre-tenure experiences. Interviewing is frequently used as a qualitative method in feminist projects because it allows research participants to describe personal experiences in their own words. Smith (1987) asserts that because women’s social worlds often remain “taken for granted”, the explanatory power of interviews provides the opportunity for the researcher to draw a larger and more accurate picture of the social relations that structure and organize women’s day-to-day lives. Interviewing is appropriate for exploring pre-tenure experiences of academic women because while interviews allow for openness, engagement, and self disclosure, they also allow for a reflexive research methodology. According to Kirsch (1999), reflexivity helps establish interactive and less hierarchical relations among participants and researchers.

More specifically, I employ the use of face-to-face semi-structured interviews. It is important to highlight that semi-structured interviews are considered by many feminist
researchers to be a particularly effective method for studying women and other marginalized groups (Reinharz, 1992). Semi-structured interviews are less rigid than structured interviews, and the flexibility allows interviewees to more openly express their opinions and ideas in their own words than in structured interviews (Esterberg, 2002). According to Sprague (2005), allowing research subjects to exclusively decide what is important and interesting with respect to a study is problematic because it can prevent them from thinking critically about the hegemonic discourses to which they are subject. Therefore, it was essential for me to prepare a guide that outlined specific topics to cover during the semi-structured interviews. While this guide structured the directions of the interviews, the semi-structured nature of my research method provided the freedom to explore in detail themes articulated by the interviewees, as well as ask questions that were not included in the interview guide. The semi-structured nature of these interviews also allowed the academic women to take the interview in directions that they considered important and relevant for their experiences and presented me with the opportunity to move beyond their own ideas and understand the interviewees' point of view. The semi-structured approach to interviewing is therefore an appropriate interviewing method for this feminist project because it permitted a more free exchange between the interviewee and me.

Qualitative researchers usually choose research participants for the specific qualities that they bring to the study (Esterberg, 2002). In this study, I approached academic women with a purposive strategy; a strategy in which the researcher intentionally samples participants for their specific perspectives (Esterberg, 2002). To do this, I utilized selective sampling to isolate individuals from a population of academic
women in the Faculty of Social Sciences according to their tenure status. More specifically, I initially narrowed the sample to tenured academic women in the Faculty of Social Sciences with tenure for no longer than 6 years. The rationale behind this decision was that academic women who had obtained tenure within the last 6 years would be more likely to remember their experiences than those who had tenure for greater than 6 years. Furthermore, women who had not been tenured for longer than 6 years were more likely to go up for tenure under the same policy guidelines.

I contacted the Human Resources Department at the research site, explained the specifics of the study, and requested a list of women faculty members in the Faculty of Social Sciences who were granted tenure between July 1, 2001 and July 1, 2007. There were a total of 16 women who had received tenure during this time. I rearranged the list in alphabetical order according to the women’s last names. I then assigned the number 1, 2, or 3 to each of the prospective participants according to the order in which their names appeared respectively on the list, and in doing so, created three separate lists of prospective participants. By assigning numbers to each of the women’s names I was able to randomly reorganize the order in which I was going to contact the prospective participants. Next, I retrieved each of the women’s university e-mail addresses through their department’s online faculty and staff profiles, and began contacting the women on list 1. Only 3 women from list 1 agreed to be interviewed, so I contacted academic women from list 2. Two women consented to participate from list 2, so I moved onto the third. No one from list 3 agreed to participate. Having exhausted the three lists without conducting a sufficient number of interviews for the study, I modified my research design to include an academic woman in the Faculty of Social Sciences who had been tenured
for 10 years or less in order to fill out my sample. I was referred to this woman by an
interviewee, and in this sense, I also employed the use of snowball sampling in my
research design.

I sent each prospective participant a letter of invitation that described me, my
research interest and the nature of their potential involvement in the study. Depending on
their response, I proceeded accordingly by either establishing a time and location to
conduct the interview, or thanking them for their consideration. In the case of not
receiving a response, another letter of invitation was sent as a follow up.

Participants

A total of 6 women participated in this study. All 6 of the interviewed women
were tenured academics in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the time of the interviews.
The women’s ages range from 29 to 59 and all six are white. In terms of sexuality, two
of the women identified as queer and the remaining 4 did not explicitly identify their
sexuality. As tenure-track faculty members, two of the six women had at least one child
under the age of five, and five of the women noted that they had partners. Rather than
separately describing the social location of each of the six women, I have chosen to
generalize this information in order to maintain confidentiality.

While the six women of this study are tenured professors in the Faculty of Social
Sciences, they did not enter their academic positions by following the same career
trajectory. The women, for instance, differ in terms of the time that they spent as a
tenure-track assistant professor in the department in which they received tenure. While
two of the participants only spent one year as a tenure-track faculty member, one
participant spent three years, two participants spent four years, and another participant
was tenure-track for a total of six years. The career trajectories of these women also differ when considering whether the women were contingent faculty members prior to achieving tenure. In fact, two of the women had contractually limited term appointments, one was a sessional instructor, and one worked as both a sessional instructor and as a contract faculty member before securing a tenure-track position. Further, the career trajectories belonging to these women are also different when considering whether the women worked in different universities before achieving tenure, as well as whether those universities were located in another country. Three of the women worked in different universities prior to entering a tenure-track position, and one of those women worked in a university in a different country. Finally, the women in this study also differ with respect to whether they had a career prior to becoming a pre-tenure academic. Two of the women had non-academic careers prior to working in academia.

The Interviews

The interviews were held over an eight month period in 2007 with each woman being interviewed once. Prior to the interviews, all six of the women signed two copies of an informed consent form (see Appendix B): one copy for the participant’s records and the other for my own records. By signing this form, the women consented to voluntarily participate in my research and I agreed to maintain the research participant’s confidentiality by replacing their actual names with pseudonyms and excluding identifying information in both the transcripts and thesis. By signing this form, each of the participants also consented to have the interviews audio-recorded. By audio-recording the interviews I avoided having to take written notes and was therefore not only able to concentrate on what was being said, but how it was being said. By not having to
extensively take written notes, I was also able to effectively engage with the interviewee. I believe that creating and maintaining a friendly and relaxed atmosphere during the interviews allowed the participants to feel comfortable while discussing personal matters.

All six of the interviews were conducted behind the closed doors of the women’s offices at the research site. Conducting the interviews at the research site was not my design, but in each instance, when asked where they would like to hold the interview, all of the women voluntarily suggested their office as a place to meet. I can only speculate as to the reason for this consistency, but the women’s offices proved to provide a quiet and secure location where they could freely discuss their experiences and express their concerns, sentiments, and perspectives. My time spent with the women was for the most part uninterrupted, but in two of the interviews, the women received work related phone calls that momentarily brought the interview to a halt.

The way in which researchers present themselves in terms of multiple aspects of identity and social location are critical to how they negotiate the engagement of their participants (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 2002). As was the case with a number of the women in this study, research finds that interview participants are often nervous prior to the interview or about being tape-recorded (Esterberg, 2002). As a preemptive strategy to deal with nervousness that some of interviewees seemed to have moments before the interview, I made an effort to “break-the-ice” and establish rapport with each of the women by informally discussing how my research was progressing and how I was finding the interview process. Through having informal conversations with the women prior to the actual interview, I was able to build rapport with each of the women and smoothly segue into asking interview questions.
While the amount of time that each of the interviews took ranged from 1 hour to an hour and a half, it is important to note that most of the interviews fell within the latter time range. While many of the women seemed anxious at the beginning of the interview, it did not take many of the women long to appear more relaxed and take advantage of the semi-structured nature of the interviews. In one interview, the participant did not make eye contact with me and had a shaky voice for the first few minutes of the interview. Another participant seemed guarded in how she answered questions during the first 15 minutes of the interview. During the majority of the interviews, I sensed that the women had thought about their pre-tenure experiences prior to the day of the interview. This was evident not only in the thought-out delivery of their dialogue, but also in the detail which they included in their responses. This could partially be attributed to the fact that the women were supplied with an interview guide prior to the interview. I also sensed from many of the women an eagerness to share their pre-tenure experiences. While all of the interviews were conducted according to the same interview guide, each of the women voluntarily took their interviews in different directions and shone light on particular dimensions of the pre-tenure process through their personal experiences. While the interviews were informed by an interview guide, the open-ended nature of the interview allowed the women to take the interview in directions that were pertinent to their own lives. For example, women who did not have children tended to focus more on the difficulties that they experienced within academia, while women with dependents tended to guide the interview towards their struggles with balancing their personal and academic demands. Each of the interviews contributed to the development of this project and were positive experiences.
Furthermore, traditional discussions among feminist researchers tend to assume that researchers are “studying down” in the way that they have more social power than the relatively powerless subjects that they tend to study (Sprague, 2005). As previously discussed, the women in this study have greater access to economic and social capital than me, and as a result can be considered in some contexts to have more social power than me. Thus, contrary to traditional feminist research, my experience with interviewing academia women is what Conti and O’Neil (2007) refer to as “studying up”. While “studying up” was ultimately a positive experience, to some extent, I felt quite dependent on the women’s interest in our discussion. As Sprague (2005) discusses, the power dynamics between the participants and me were such that the participants were able to dictate the boundaries of our discussion, while my ability to control our interaction was limited. For example, after I had asked a few opening questions, one particular woman spoke for nearly 20 minutes without a break, emphasizing the pre-tenure experiences that she felt were pertinent to my study. In another instance, after having described a particular facet of her pre-tenure experiences, one woman decided that such information should not be elicited, and asked to have a particular portion of our discussion stricken from the transcription of the interview. I assured her that that particular segment of our discussion would not be transcribed.

Analyzing Data

Through reconnecting with the practice of reflexivity in this research, the balance of power between the researcher and the researched shifts over the course of the research process (Phoenix, 1994). While the participants have power in that they choose whether to participate or negotiate the terms of their participation, it is in walking away with data
and making interpretations where a researcher is most powerful during the research process (Smith, 1987; Sprague, 2005). In situations where researchers cannot mitigate their position of power by undertaking their study with the researched as a collaborative interactional process, researchers retain ethical responsibility for the power that they exercise, and how they try to make this power explicit in their account of the research (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 2002). While the women whom I interviewed initially exercised power, particularly during times of recruitment and interviewing, I held full control over the analysis of the interview data. Also, aside from having varied involvement during the interviewing process, the nature of this study did not grant me the opportunity to collaborate with my research participants, and therefore I became ethically accountable for the knowledge which is produced as a result of this study. I am solely responsible for analyzing the data, and as such, exclusively exercise power and control in the research. Holland and Ramazanoglu (2002) explain that any approach to interpreting data is framed by the researcher’s epistemological and methodological predisposition.

The epistemological and methodological undertones of this research design are rooted in a critical feminist perspective. This study is designed according to a reflexive approach aimed at problematizing power and advantage. As such, I aim to illuminate the mechanisms that sustain masculine privilege and the consequences of such privilege for broader society. Thus, my interpretation of the academic women’s narratives is informed by a powerful political vision with women’s interests at the forefront. Yet, while researchers cannot be overzealous when representing the voices of others for the sake of constraining their own interpretation, it is also necessary that they avoid silencing women’s voices with authoritative ways of knowing (Ribbens & Edwards, 1998).
In terms of procedure, in order to organize the interview data in such a way that it could be analyzed, it was essential to transcribe the six interviews. In order to reference how things were said by the interviewees, I transcribed all of the women’s spoken words, repetitions, silences, laughter, and instances of sarcasm. After transcribing the interviews, I devised a strategy to immerse myself in the collected data. This strategy consisted of listening to the audio-recorded tapes and reading over the transcribed interviews. Once I felt sufficiently familiar with my research materials, I began to read through the transcripts and jot down notes with the purpose of generating preliminary ideas about what was being said in the interviews. While working through the transcripts to understand the meaning of what was said, I employed open coding, a process in which I sifted through each line of every interview and highlighted themes and categories that appeared to be relevant to the scope of my research. This was done by writing notes in the margins where themes and categories appeared in the transcript. After I began to notice patterns, commonalities, and differences between the six interviews, I was able to discern those themes most relevant to my analysis. At this point, I went through the interviews again while focusing exclusively on data relevant to the themes identified as key to my analysis. In doing this, I highlighted quotes from each interview that were pertinent to a particular theme, and organized them according to each theme on a separate document, and noted the interview and page on which the quote appeared.
Limitations

This study is not without its limitations. First, it is limited in its diversity. All of the participants are white, and as a result, this study does not account for the intersection of race and gender in the formation of women's pre-tenure experiences. Second, another limitation of this study is its small sample size and its concentration of academic women within one particular faculty. Because the study is focused on only six academic women from the Faculty of Social Sciences, my ability to generalize findings is limited. Third, there are no definitive gaps in terms of when each of the women went through their pre-tenure years. More or less, all of the women are from the same cohort. As a result, this study is therefore unable to make generational comparisons. Fourth, I did not ask questions pertaining to the women's class or family background. For this reason, I do not address how the women's pre-tenure experiences may have been informed by the values and privileges belonging to their social class. Fifth and, finally, even though some of the women openly discussed their sexuality, I did not explicitly address sexuality in my line of questioning, and as a result, do not account for how the women's experiences were shaped by intersection of sexuality and gender.

Conclusions

This thesis is an investigation into how women experience their pre-tenure academic years. This qualitative analysis uses Bourdieu's concepts and a feminist informed methodological approach. Through interviewing academic women who have been tenured for less than 10 years, this thesis sheds light on the particularities of their pre-tenured lives, an interesting site of investigation that has not yet received an abundance of scholarly focus. Particular attention has been given to questions
surrounding the factors that affect the process of attaining tenure and how one's personal life comes into play in their academic life.
Chapter Four - The Cultural Reproduction of Academia
Data Analysis

In this chapter, I present an analysis of the women’s experiences during their pre-tenure years. Four main themes characterize the women’s pre-tenure years. These themes are: (1) navigating the academic field, (2) managing the constraints of knowledge production, (3) assuming service work, and (4) balancing the care of children with the demands of an academic career. Drawing on cultural theory, particularly the work of Pierre Bourdieu, I argue that academia is an inequitable space that, through the use of symbolic systems, culturally reproduces the academic field according to a masculine model. I highlight the relevance of this contention by situating the women’s experiences within Bourdieu’s notions of field, masculine domination, capital, habitus, and symbolic violence.

I begin this chapter by exploring how through adhering to both the explicit and implicit rules of the academic field the women contribute to the reproduction of academia. This is followed by a discussion of the women’s experiences with particular constraints around the production of knowledge. I demonstrate that knowledge production in academia is a form of masculine domination that serves to culturally reproduce a narrow range of knowledges. Next, there is a discussion of how the allocation of service work in academia follows a gendered pattern with women assuming a disproportionate amount of the work. I establish this pattern as an example of masculine domination and demonstrate how a woman’s feminine habitus is inconsistent with the expectations of the academic field. Finally, I discuss how academic women with children experience difficulty managing an academic career and raising children because they spend much of their time caring for their children. The challenges that women with
children experience often remain invisible because the symbolic order of academia is oriented according to an unencumbered male scholar.

**Navigating the Academic Field**

The notion of field is pertinent to Bourdieu’s theory of cultural reproduction, and as such, is of paramount importance to the development of this analysis. In academia's reproduction of its own structure via self-organized cultural conditions of selection and indoctrination that, according to Bourdieu (1988), academia becomes a field. The academic field confronts academics with objective relations, or what Bourdieu (1998) also refers to as “rules of the game”, that must be tacitly accepted in order to achieve and sustain legitimacy within the field. Thus, while the academic field structures individuals, it is also through playing by the “rules” of academia that academics reproduce both the culture and structure of academia.

**Explicit Rules**

Academic work for the women in this study is governed by a Collective Agreement (CA). The CA sets out the rights and responsibilities for both the University and its faculty members. Faculty are expected to spend 40% of their working time on research and scholarly activities, 40% on teaching, and 20% on service to the university. While all of the women found these explicit requirements clearly outlined in their CA, it is evident through their narratives that their pre-tenure focus was not aligned with how these three components are weighted. The women state that it is because of this discrepancy that they experienced difficulties managing their academic work according to the conditions outlined in their CA.
The women in this study also discuss their experiences with research to a great extent. Although the extent to which research is prioritized is discussed in greater detail in the following section, despite constituting 40% of the academic job in their CA, all of the women asserted that research was a far greater priority during their pre-tenure years. For example, some of the women saw their teaching and university service as taking away from their research time. Jennifer explains that

Research requires that you have open ended time ... If you have to meet a student and then have a committee meeting, it is difficult to actually get into that stage of being where you can actually just write ... It’s difficult when you have a meeting at two o’clock, and after the meeting you write a couple of pages and then have another meeting and then write a few more pages and then teach a course. It doesn’t work like that.

Shannon asserts that where the real conflict exists with respect to research is during the school year, when most academics “give up trying to do any reading or writing and/or research” simply because of the demands of teaching and administrative work. Although Kendra reports having done quite a bit of administrative work during her pre-tenure years, she explains that she is aware of the trap it could become because too significant a service responsibility takes precious time from research.

These findings complement research that finds that spending more time on course preparation or helping a student in difficulty equals having less time for productivity in research and publishing (Husu & Morley, 2000; Litner, 2002; Park, 1996). As one academic in Litner’s (2002) study shares, spending too much time on teaching and teaching related responsibilities means that “I will have fewer badges to show for my efforts” (p. 132). When women are unable to devote substantial time to their research,
they may be less likely to secure research grants, leaving them disadvantaged when it comes to proving research output for tenure and promotion (Bain & Cummings, 2000). In this way, women’s diminished access to research opportunities can clearly be regarded as a gendered process that promotes the dominance of academic men and inhibits women’s efforts to secure permanent positions in academia.

The women also describe how preparing lectures, teaching related responsibilities, and the physical act of teaching are more onerous than how “teaching” is reflected in their CA. While some of the women emphasize the difficulties that they experienced while lecturing, other women discuss how they experienced the demands of teaching prior to ever standing in front of a class. For instance, Christine explains that

... when you are starting out as a new faculty member what kills your time is preparation for teaching ... when you are developing [your courses] for the first time and you are trying to make this something that you can do year after year and do a good job you know thorough and everything, it’s exceedingly time consuming. So, those pre-tenure years I worked a lot more on teaching, especially the first couple, but it was more because I was putting courses together.

Jennifer asserts that there are responsibilities typically associated with lecturing that are “incredibly time consuming”. Jennifer asserts that such responsibilities include responding to students’ e-mails, organizing teaching assistants, being available for office hours, and grading. Jennifer goes on to explain that the physical act of teaching is not only time consuming, but effectively projecting yourself in front of students requires “a different part of your academic being”, and therefore is also physically “exhausting”. Jennifer asserts that there are times after having lectured for two hours that she is just “done”. Putting into perspective the extent to which the teaching component can be
demanding, Kirsten states that there were times during her pre-tenure years when her teaching responsibilities consumed more "like 80 to 90%" of her academic work.

Some of the women spoke of how they regarded their experiences with teaching in the classroom to be gendered. For example, Kirsten explains that one of the problems that she continues to encounter while teaching is how students talk during her lectures. Kirsten asserts that "I certainly think, anecdotally, that students are more willing to talk during a lecture given by a woman than by a man". Kirsten’s experience is consistent with Carson (2001), who found that female academics report feeling disadvantaged because their students treat them with less respect than their male counterparts who, by virtue of fitting the academic stereotype in appearance, are automatically seen by their students as worthy of respect and given taken-for-granted intellectual credibility. These findings suggest that some women, in addition to the typical demands associated with teaching, must also contend with forms of gendered discrimination. Not being afforded respect from students as a result of being a woman, as Kirsten reveals, is challenging. These findings also support the idea that the academic field is gendered, and that women, by virtue of their femininity, are confronted with forms of gendered discrimination which reflect the institutions masculinist culture (Bourdieu, 1988).

The women describe university service and administrative work to include all those "care-taking tasks" that are not only essential to the professional image of the university, but essential to the operation of the institution of academia. The women list many tasks that fall under the umbrella of university service and administrative work, e.g. sitting on departmental hiring committees (which includes determining transportation for the candidate, determining dietary needs, touring them around campus), arranging
meetings, supervising students, and assuming other administrative roles in the department and the wider university.

Many of the women spoke of how they were invested in the administration of the department and university, and found their involvement in such work to be personally rewarding by fostering collegiality and feeling they made a contribution to their department. On the other hand, however, the women also reported that they found administrative work to be problematic because of the time demands of such work, i.e. often consuming more than 20% of their academic time.

When you take on administrative work you’re going to have not only meetings but the e-mails to set up the meetings and the arranging of the meetings. Not that it is so intellectually difficult, but it’s extremely time consuming and it takes your attention in a particular way and if you are a responsible person and vested in administrative tasks, you want to make sure that you are prepared and that you do a good job. (Jennifer)

Wilson (2001) finds that women’s on-campus hours are, in large part, typically consumed by service to the university. Consistent with research, Jennifer explains that she found herself overwhelmed by the amount of administrative work she assumed during her pre-tenure years, and explains that the departmental expectations to participate in particular administrative projects, such as a “hiring”, would consume “enormous” amounts of both her daily time and energy.

Implicit Rules

The women also indicate that the academic field is organized according to implicit rules. An overarching example of an implicit rule that all of the women in this study discuss as having impacted their pre-tenure years was the perceived emphasis
placed at both the university and departmental level on productivity in research and publishing. For instance, Sarah spoke extensively about the pressure to research and publish that she experienced at the larger university level. Sarah pointedly states, “It’s all about publishing, publishing, publishing”. Sarah also asserts that since her university is in the midst of shifting priorities to research and external funding, many of the university meetings that she attends emphasize the responsibility that she, and the university’s other faculty members, must assume in transforming the university into a research-oriented institution.

This shifting of academic priorities also filters down to the departmental level. As an example of how this priority was integrated into the departments in which these women worked, Christine explains that her

... department likes people who are ... strong researchers ... and it’s been a major focus of mine. Like I am a research oriented professor ... I sort of do the teaching that I am required to do in order to do the research ... Yeah, any spare moment I have that’s what I am doing. If I have an extra 20 minutes I go up in my lab and crunch some numbers ... or I go up to see how my lab students are doing, and that is my focus, and it was pre-tenure and it is post-tenure.

Similarly, when asked whether the weight assigned to academic work according to the CA was representative of the kinds of work that were emphasized during her pre-tenure years, Shannon explains that because research has become very important to her university, her department placed an emphasis on publishing and research. She states with respect to productivity in research and publishing that “it ends up being the focus of my meetings with the Dean annually ... and we almost have no conversation as to whether I’m doing any service”. Thus, in light of these narratives it is clear that in
In addition to fulfilling the requirements of their CA, the women of this study are expected to prioritize certain forms of academic work, chief among those forms being productivity in research and publishing. It is also evident that the pressure to research and publish is twofold in the sense that it is exerted at both the university and departmental level.

These findings are consistent with the research of Litner (2002), who found that the Canadian higher education system’s commitment to support teaching has been superseded by an emphasis on productivity in research and publishing. Using Church’s (1999) framework, the experiences of the women in this study are the result of a global phenomenon where the reorganization of academia to prioritize research is borne out of collusion between the political and economic forces of capitalism. These forces seek to commodify higher education and transform academic values into forms that prioritize research oriented production synonymous with corporate values; hence the corporatization of academia. Furthermore, the women’s experiences are also consistent with Reay’s (2004) research on UK universities showing that the contemporary research climate in higher education has increasingly resulted in the commodification of academic output as the measure of academic success. The pressure to prioritize research and publishing that the women in this study experienced during their pre-tenure years can therefore be thought of as a global phenomenon as opposed to an isolated incident, and, furthermore, not particular to women.

In order to respond to the pressure, many women simply focused their time and energy on research and publishing. Kendra, for instance, states that “I realized really early on that the only thing that was going to yield … tenure and promotion … was to focus most of my energy on research and publishing, so that is what I did, and it was …
very challenging”. Kendra, in an unfortunate compromise, gave up her volunteer community work in order to manage the pressure to research and publish, despite its personal rewards. Sarah also spent more than 40% of her time on research: “[because academics are] compensated presumably on a 40 hour work week … it wouldn’t be doable if you only spent 40 percent, i.e. 2 days a week, on research”. Sarah is frustrated with how the academic job is set up:

If you can’t sort of get it done and be competent within a forty hour work week, then what the hell are we doing? I work 70 hours a week. I don’t want to give the impression that I am tied to my desk 70 hours a week, but you … don’t go home and relax, you go home and you work.

So, while the women recognize that emphasizing research and publishing is an implicit rule of the academic field, it is also clear that they find the emphasis placed on such academic work to be problematic.

How the women in this study responded to the priority assigned to research and publishing is a perfect example of Bourdieu’s (1990) notion of habitus in the sense that the women report having focused their energy on research and publishing as a necessity to fit into the field and succeed in academia. Just as Bourdieu (1990) states that habitus is a “social necessity turned into nature, converted into motor schemes and body automatisms”, so can the women’s recognition of the potential to accumulate capital in the academic field through productivity in research and publishing be understood as having informed their decision to actively prioritize such academic work during their pre-tenure years (69).

Thus, these findings highlight how the academic field confronts women with both explicit and implicit rules that they must tacitly accept and appropriately navigate in
order to sustain their legitimacy in the field. In other words, we see how the women in this study recognized both the explicit and implicit rules of the academic field, internalized the significance of those rules to their pursuit of tenure, and navigated the field according to those rules.

Managing Knowledge Production Constraints

There exists in a given field symbolic systems which structure the field by maintaining distinction between groups (Bourdieu, 1991). Symbolic systems are violent, as they differentiate between the genders by allocating women to inferior places within a given field (Swartz, 1997). Bourdieu (2001) refers to this form of differentiation between men and women as masculine domination.

We can see this division in academia, particularly when considering the faculties. Bourdieu (1998) argues that there are “temporally subordinate faculties” (such as the arts and social science faculties) and “socially dominant faculties” (such as the faculties of medicine and law) in academia. Bourdieu (1988) asserts that the principal opposition between the “temporally subordinate” and “socially dominant” faculties is defined by a hierarchal power structure where capital is unevenly allocated to those faculties that are “socially dominant”. The differentiation between the faculties is a form of masculine domination considering that Canadian academic women in 2004-2005 were prominently positioned in the Faculties of Humanities, Fine Arts, and Social Sciences, (temporally subordinate faculties), and marginally represented in the Faculties of Biological Science, Engineering and Applied Science, and Mathematics (socially dominant faculties) (CAUT, 2007). Academics in “temporally subordinate faculties” are less likely to accumulate capital specific to the academic field than are academics in “socially
dominant faculties”. Women, by virtue of being positioned within a “temporally subordinate” faculty, experience constraints on their efforts to accumulate valued forms of capital and these constraints are a product of masculine domination.

Women’s efforts to accumulate capital are constrained by the value placed on certain forms of knowledges. The women are frustrated with the constraints placed on the production of knowledge in academia when certain forms of academic work are not regarded as “scholarly”. Informed primarily through the training that they had received from senior academics, witnessing the “nasty encounters” that their colleagues had endured, as well as having their work dismissed or scrutinized during times of review, the women discuss how they came to understand that qualitative, interdisciplinary, and social inequality research are not regarded in academia as “legitimate” scholarly knowledges.

Learning the Value of “Legitimate” Scholarly Work

The women spoke of the ways that they came to understand which forms of academic work are not regarded as legitimate scholarly knowledge. Many of the women discussed how the Tenure and Promotion Committee dismissed book chapters, non-refereed journal articles, text books, and books not published by prestigious publishing houses, valuing only refereed journal articles in “top tier” journals. The women explain that the Tenure and Promotion Committee prioritizes the number of journal articles that someone has published. This is particularly problematic for many academics in the Faculty of Social Sciences as they practice qualitative research methods. Qualitative researchers, unlike quantitative researchers, do not work with large datasets which can result in several 3 to 4 page articles published annually. Instead, as Sarah describes is the case with many of her colleagues in the Faculty of Social Sciences, qualitative
researchers do not produce near the volume that quantitative researchers do because they publish "20 to 30 page articles". Sarah found being measured according to a quantitative model frustrating.

When the T and P Committee gets your CV, and part of me thinks they hadn't even looked at your articles, ... they go '1 2 3 4 5 ... well you have 5 but so and so from the same faculty but different department had 15'. So they're not evaluating it in the way of 'what kind of contributions to knowledge has this person made?' They are just going '1 2 3 4 5, are they across whatever bar we've set?' (Sarah)

Sarah sees this process of counting articles as a disadvantage to qualitative researchers.

We're not people who can just sit there and crunch these large scale numbers from mail out surveys. We're going out into the field, maybe living with people or doing these interviews, and all of this takes ENDLESS amounts of time. So to be evaluated only on publications ... doesn't take into account all of those things that we do that would fall under scholarly activity.

Because the Tenure and Promotion Committee in position the year Sarah went up for tenure was comprised of members from disciplines that were "quantitatively oriented", she, with a number of her colleagues who also did qualitative and leftist work, was confronted with what she describes as an invasive scrutiny by the Committee to determine the scholarly significance of her work. In this sense, the women learned how qualitative work is not regarded as a legitimate form of scholarly knowledge by having such work dismissed by the Tenure and Promotion Committee. The same can be said for interdisciplinary work. Universities continue to evaluate academic work according to what Sarah describes as "staunch ... disciplinary boundaries" despite there being a large movement amongst academics to recognize the value of the connections that can be
drawn from cutting their work across several disciplines of traditional study. The women discuss how they encountered at both the departmental and broader university level a reluctance to recognize the value of interdisciplinary work as "good scholarly work".

Finally, research shows that issues concerning equity, women in politics, women's history, female sexuality, feminist theory, and lesbian identity receive little support in North American universities, and will continue to become increasingly devalued as academia continues to be corporatized (Hornosty, 2004). Consistent with research, the women discuss how they learned that research grounded in social inequality is not recognized as a legitimate form of scholarly knowledge. Many of the women agree that they have encountered a general lack of interest in social inequality research at both the departmental level and university levels. Some of the women explain that there is a density of critical scholars in their departments who do not see their work as disembedded from the broader socio-political context and who have a good understanding of the institutional relations between social inequality issues, such as class, race, and gender. However, the women also describe how such scholars encounter difficulty with having their academic work recognized as scholarly knowledge in their departments. Kirsten, for instance, works in a department where there are a number of people who do social inequality work, but feel that such work is marginalized by the department as a whole. Kirsten also explains how she understands the lack of recognition given to social inequality research as an extension of the culture within her department. Kirsten asserts that "gender, race, and sexuality are things that have gotten a lot less attention", "it is a problem that everyone is white", and "I felt quite uncomfortable coming out ... because sexuality had not been talked about much either". Through these
statements Kirsten sheds light on how there exists in her department a normative standard where being white, heterosexual, and conservative is preferred of its faculty members. Social inequality work that disrupts the normative standard that governs Kirsten’s department is not valued. In essence, Kirsten’s experiences demonstrate how through dismissing the importance of social issues, her department ensures homogeneity with the prevailing social order in academia, both in terms of knowledge and in terms of faculty members.

Reay (2004) has discerned that many academics with a commitment to social issues experience difficulties defending their scholarly record as a result of a growing research-oriented culture; the women in this study found there to exist outside of their department an environment that was not responsive to issues of social inequality. My participants also experienced the wider university as non-responsive to issues of social inequality. While some of the women describe the specific ways they found the university places emphasis on the production of “scholarly” knowledge, as opposed to social inequality research, no such example is more poignant than Shannon’s discussion of how she was accused by the Tenure and Promotion Committee as having insufficient publication material. Shannon, who along with some of her colleagues has an alternative interpretation, asserts that the issue for some of the Tenure and Promotion Committee members was with the nature of her work. Shannon explains that

So those people who are ... in the know have told me that ... the issue for at least one committee member was his difficulty with the work that I do ... I have not had trouble getting my work published ... in highly respected international journals ... It didn’t occur to me until ... two folks pointed it out ... that at least one member of the
committee can be perceived as a homophobic, racist, and sexist.

Shannon goes on to describe how she feels there exists a connection between her identity and the nature of her work.

It's obvious that I am also gay ... So if you have to separate out whether I think I've experienced any discrimination on being gay of my sexual orientation, the answer is no. Have I heard that there were rumours that there were issues with the nature of my work that I do, which is related to who I am, then the answer is yes.

So, while the Tenure and Promotion Committee's reluctance to recognize social inequality research as scholarly knowledge is subtle, what is not subtle is how the examination of Shannon's publication record is riddled with undertones that point to the pervasiveness of an academic environment dismissive of diversity in research, particularly with respect to gender, sexuality, and race.

Responses to Constraints on Knowledge Production

During the first interview, I quickly grasped the idea that there exists in academia a hierarchy of scholarly knowledge, one in which qualitative, interdisciplinary, and social inequality research are not understood as "legitimate" academic pursuits, therefore, I felt it worthwhile to pursue questioning that examines how the women navigated this hierarchy of knowledge.

The women in this study explained that they navigated knowledge production by shifting their research interests to include more "legitimate" forms of scholarly work. Consistent with these findings is Bourdieu's idea that social groups pursue strategies that not only produce and reproduce the conditions of their collective existence, but that hold them to self-perpetuating hierarchies of domination (Swartz, 1997). In essence, by
ensuring that their scholarly work is “legitimate”, the women protect their careers and, as pre-tenure academics, improve their chances of securing tenure. However, by tacitly producing “legitimate” forms of scholarly work, the women both reproduce the idea of what is regarded as “legitimate” knowledge and strengthen the social process through which the production of knowledge is constrained. For example, even though Kirsten identifies as a critical scholar, she made decisions during her pre-tenure years to pursue research topics that would not jeopardize her career during times of review. Kirsten describes that through choosing to pursue “safer” forms of research, she has not focused as much on critical studies. Kirsten states that “I haven’t focused so much on feminist studies ... So the topics that I publish in tend to be a little safer”. In essence, this particular finding supports research which finds that the devaluation of feminist research can pressure academics to shift their research priorities to emphasize more “appropriate” research (Hornosty, 2004).

Bourdieu’s notions of field and capital are of particular relevance to this finding. By producing “safer” forms of research in an effort to refrain from jeopardizing their careers, the women are caught up in a “competitive system” where their habitus of field-appropriate dispositions unite with the objective relations of the academic field in what Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) describe as a circular set of relations that allow the individual to accumulate field-specific capital in return for contributing to the cultural reproduction of the field’s social order. These findings highlight how the academic field, organized according to specific types of capital, confronts academic women with forms of struggle that they must respond to in order to secure field-specific capital and legitimation in academia.
Assuming Service Work

Research finds that academic women assume greater responsibility in the university than men for “support services”; responsibilities that support the work of students as well as the functioning of the department (Mather, 2002). Consistent with this research, the majority of the women discuss how there exists a significant gender disparity with respect to how “caring” and “administrative” work is divided among men and women faculty. The women also find that there are always female faculty members who are more attentive to organizing and facilitating department meetings, responding to their colleagues’ problems, advising students, and addressing issues that arise from teaching. These respondents unanimously agree that women assume a greater share of the responsibility for “caring” and “administrative” work than men. Since the responsibilities associated with “caring” and “administrative” work ultimately service the functioning of the department and the university, I refer to such work as “service”.

Service Work

Who we become is a socially constructed process where we both voluntarily choose and are coerced into assuming normative identities of either masculinity or femininity (Kimmel, 2004). Rooted in gender specific ideas of what “typical behaviour” is for a woman, women tend to assume nurturing and caring responsibilities that are generally regarded in society as “women’s work” (Kimmel, 2004). Although women’s emergence into the workplace has brought with it a transformation of feminine identities, the organizational logic of the labour market and its work processes continue to distinguish between male and female, masculine and feminine, and through doing so reproduce a gendered substructure of work activities that are appropriate for men and
women (Acker, 2004). As evidenced by the women’s discussion of how they are disproportionately responsible for service work in their departments, there also exists in academia a gendered division of labour, one in which different forms of work are regarded as more appropriate for women by virtue of their feminine identities (Kimmel, 2004). How the women come to assume a disproportionate amount of service work is synonymous with how we are socialized into assuming normative gender identities. The women regard the way in which they become responsible for service work as a twofold process where, on one hand, they are pressured by their colleagues, and, on the other, report a sense of obligation to assume such work. In this sense, the women describe being caught up in a process where they both voluntarily choose and are pushed into servicing their department and university.

The women’s narratives highlight how their feminine identities are tied into assuming a disproportionate amount of responsibility for service work. Kendra, for instance, talks about a time during her pre-tenure years when the department in which she works depended on its faculty members to assume responsibility for a substantial amount of administrative work. During this particular time, Kendra found that the majority of the department’s faculty members, particularly men, were not stepping up to claim responsibility for such work. Kendra describes feeling obligated to pick up the slack. Kendra explains that she, along with a number of her untenured female colleagues, ultimately assumed an uneven amount of their department’s administrative work, and had to guard herself against taking on more responsibility. No doubt informed by this particular experience, Kendra, when asked if she has found service work to be equally distributed among male and female faculty, states that “...there are some men that do
some of that and I don’t want to negate their efforts, but I think if we made some generalizations I would say that disproportionately women end up doing a huge amount of that work”.

While the women found assuming a disproportionate amount of service work to be a burden, they also report that they found participating in such work to be pleasurable. Sarah asserts that she has found it difficult not to contribute to her department because it is something that she both enjoys and recognizes as important to the department. Sarah explains that she has always been unclear as to why many of her colleagues do not also recognize that “there is work to be done and that we should all sort of share equitably in what many understand as a burden”.

Service Work and Masculine Domination

Relevant to the discussion of how the women in this study assume a disproportionate responsibility for service work is the idea that in academia there exists symbolic relations that promote the binary logic of dominant and dominated between genders (Bourdieu, 2001). The binary logic by which academia is organized is modelled in such a way that men and masculinity are dominant, and women and femininity are dominated; hence Bourdieu’s (2001) notion of masculine domination. Bourdieu (2001) explains that an effect of masculine domination in academia is the reproduction of differences between men and women by perpetuating traditional principles of division which, on the one hand, empower men in the gendered division of labour, and, on the other hand, subordinate women to the extent that they are held largely responsible for work that falls within the realm of domestic labour. In this sense, the gender divide in service work can be understood as a form of masculine domination.
How men are able to protect their research time by allowing women to assume a disproportionate amount of their department’s service work is a clear example of masculine domination. Research finds that protecting research time, and subsequently overburdening others with non-research related activities, is driven by the desire to generate personal academic success in relation to other academics (Reay, 2004). Consistent with these findings, the women explain that those academics who most aggressively protect their research time will typically make the courses they teach and the departmental matters they attend relevant to their research interests. Jennifer simply asserts with respect to those academics who protect their research time by not taking on service work that “we tend to have more men who take that route”. Research also finds that the quantification of research output as a means of academic evaluation is becoming increasingly prevalent in academia as a result of the initiative to structure academia according to corporate values (Ritzer, 2002). With the increasing use of research output as a standard for evaluating an academic’s scholarly contributions, one can anticipate an intensification of the pattern in which men protect their research time and women shoulder a disproportionate amount of the responsibility for service work, and therefore further gendering the academic profession. Increased use of research output as a measure of academic value also carries with it the potential to encourage women to become more protective of their research time.

Masculine domination is also apparent when considering how service work is valued. Although the university’s CA outlines that service work should be seen as something that strengthens a tenure application, the women discuss how such work is not recognized during times of tenure evaluation. The women explain that even though there
is "tremendous pressure" to assume service related responsibilities within their departments, they did not get from the Tenure and Promotion Committee the sense that service has anything to do with securing tenure. Shannon, for instance, explains that even though the university needs its faculty members to do service, such work does not actually strengthen one's tenure application. Although Shannon served on a number of committees during her pre-tenure years, she does not feel as if she would have had a problem securing tenure if she were to have done nothing in terms of service. Similarly, research finds that academic women involved in labour which remains invisible and labour which is recognized often do so at the expense of having their academic contributions discounted as though they are not scholarly (Smith, 1987). Consistent with research, Shannon goes on to describe the problems that some of her colleagues have encountered as a result of assuming responsibility for a substantial amount of service work. Shannon states

... when it comes right down to it service doesn’t play a major role in tenure. Now, there are individuals who have spent 4 or 5 years of service ... and who have found themselves in trouble because they don’t have the publications. They then have to really make a case [to the Tenure and Promotion Committee] that they have devoted their time to serve on major committees and therefore should not be penalized for the amount of service they have done which has prevented them from publishing. But I think generally speaking [the Tenure and Promotion Committee] doesn’t care about service ... I think it is about publishing.

Through this narrative, Shannon sheds light on how devalued contributions made to the university in the form of service are by the Tenure and Promotion Committee. The way the women in this study assume a disproportionate amount of devalued academic work
means that they are both subject to and, at the same time, support the masculine framework by which the academic job is modelled. In this sense, the feminization and devaluation of service work in academia can be understood as a condition of the academic field that contributes to the cultural reproduction of a masculine hierarchy of domination that pressures women to tacitly assume a disproportionate responsibility for devalued academic work that symbolically marks them as subordinate.

A Conflicting Habitus

Bourdieu’s (1984) notion of habitus is also relevant to the women’s experiences with service work in the way that it sheds light on how women’s habitual disposition towards caretaking conflicts with the masculine order of the academic field. For Bourdieu (1984), habitus is a set of dispositions that leads individuals to act in a particular way. According to Bourdieu (1984), women embody feminine dispositions that reflect a caretaking habitus. The academic women most clearly demonstrate their habitual disposition towards caretaking and a feminine habitus when they report feeling a “sense of obligation” to assume responsibility for their department’s service work. However, since academia is organized according to a masculine hierarchy of domination, masculine dispositions are valued most in the academic field (Bourdieu, 1984).

Academic women, by virtue of their habitual disposition towards femininity, embody a habitus that is not consistent with the expectations of the academic field. The women in this study shed light on what it is like to possess a habitus that is inconsistent with the expectations of the academic field in assuming a large portion of the service in the department in which they work, and not having such contributions rewarded. The women simply explain that they find this pattern nothing less than frustrating. Through
their narratives, it becomes clear that there are aspects of service work that they find difficult. For instance, many of the women remark that it is frustrating to bear a load of service work when the time and energy used on such duties could be spent on academic activities, such as research and publishing, which generate greater rewards. Many of the women find it disappointing when colleagues protect their research space by not offering to assume service responsibilities. These faculty members know that a number of dedicated faculty members are working overtime to manage service duties in addition to teaching, publishing and researching. As Christine states,

I think I hold it against other people when they don’t work with students, interact with other faculty, get involved in our colloquium series, go to faculty meetings. Those kinds of things don’t make our department any more collegial you know.

Furthermore, the women also appear to be frustrated with allowing themselves to continually bear responsibility for service work. They report that they find it difficult to shy away from service work because they feel obliged to ensure the successful functioning of their departments. The women explain that they want to make sure that they do their share of the service work and that they do it well. However, the women report that they are frustrated with the fact that the more service work they agree to take on, the more service they are asked by their departments to assume. Jennifer, for example, asserts that she is often interested in the administrative work in her department but finds the experience of being asked to do service aggravating because while she wants to be a supportive faculty member, she also has to ensure she has the time to “get the research done that needs to get done”.

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Balancing the Care of Children

The Encumbered Female Scholar

Research finds that academia is oriented according to a traditional model of the unencumbered male scholar who is free from responsibility outside of academia and who can dedicate his life to academic pursuits (Dillabough, 2007). The idea of taking breaks either to have or care for children, therefore, stands in the way of a masculinized culture in academia and disrupts the structure of the academic job, which is oriented according to the conditions for achieving male academic success like independence and autonomy (Dillabough, 2007). Consistent with the notion of an “unencumbered male scholar”, research finds that the impact that children have on an academic’s career follows a gendered pattern where women’s careers are negatively impacted greater than men’s (Stack, 2004). This differential impact can be attributed to the fact that women spend more time caring for their children than men, and are therefore positioned as primary caregivers (Kimmel, 2004). Academic women with children must juggle a disproportionate amount of care for their children in addition to the demands of their career.

Consistent with research (Dillabough, 2007; Kimmel, 2004; Stack, 2004), the women perceive that the impact that children have on men’s academic careers is relatively insignificant when compared to the challenges they face. The women explain that a key difference between how academic men and women are impacted by children is that men assume a relatively small share of their child’s caretaking responsibilities. Kendra states with respect to academic men that

They’re not organizing their work lives around caregiver responsibilities ... I think that that
makes a big difference. If you assume that somebody else is taking all the primary responsibility, your time is usually freed up.

Christine also discusses how she has noticed a difference in how academic women and men are impacted by their children, informed in large part by how both she and her husband, who is also an academic, experience childcare issues. Christine describes how she has experienced the care of her child differently from her husband.

My husband participates ... but the burden still falls on me … Like, I stayed home with [the child] all day while he went to work … at the same hours everyday … Sure [her husband] got some less sleep at night, and some, you know, less freedom during the evening when [the child] was up and stuff, and his weekends are different, but really his 9 to 5 didn’t change that much … whereas my 9 to 5 was UNRECOGNIZEABLE … It was insane, that’s not right. People didn’t see me for months!

Four of the women who participated in this study have children. Studies reveal that academic women who care for children typically experience difficulties with managing their academic career (Armenti, 2004; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). The women in this study also describe the experience of managing an academic career in the midst of having and caring for their children as challenging. Some of the women discuss the challenges they faced while pregnant. Christine states that “the one thing that really isn’t over dramatized is what having a baby does to your career”. She emphasizes how the physiological disruption of being pregnant lowered her energy levels to the point where she often encountered fatigue and found it difficult to work, leaving her unproductive.

Other women discussed the challenges that they encountered after their children were born. They talk about how caring for children interferes with the expectations of
the academic job. The women describe childcare as a continuous cycle of breastfeeding, bathing and cleaning, appointments with physicians, preparing appropriate meals and feeding, scheduling sleep, and dealing with sickness. As Kirsten, for example, explains, "... you only have so many hours in a day right, and having a child takes away a chunk of them ... Childcare ... takes a lot of time and energy!" More specifically, Kirsten describes how caring for children interferes with your ability to research and write. She explains that focusing on research and writing becomes difficult once you have young children because caring for them "takes tonnes and tonnes of time ... and interrupts your train of thought and your day ... It's bound to take away time that could be spent on writing".

The women also discuss how caring for children impacted their capacity to participate in professional development activities. They explain that activities such as networking and attending conferences are important to the successful development of an academic career and yet Kendra found that she had limited ability to network with other academics. Getting involved with her colleagues during evening and weekend activities has been quite limited because of the responsibility that Kendra has to care for her children. Care-giving also affected her availability to attend international conferences.

In terms of the kind of travel I would like to do professionally, I just can't do it with small kids. I wanted to go to a world conference in [another country]. I put in to go before I knew I was pregnant ... and I couldn't go ... Like just in terms of being able to organize the childcare to be able to leave for a period of time ... so those kinds of professional development activities I have had to forgo. (Kendra)
When asked if having to care for her children had a detrimental impact on her ability to satisfy the demands of her pre-tenure career, Kendra states, “I do think that I would have been a more productive human if I had slept more than an hour and a half in the last several years”.

Symbolic Violence

Fields are organized according to models which are sustained by symbolic systems that generate conditions upon which one’s legitimacy in the field is measured (Bourdieu, 1984). Symbolic systems are violent in the way that they are built upon the binary logic of inclusion and exclusion, and as such both define who is a “legitimate” and “illegitimate” field occupant (Bourdieu, 1984). While symbolic systems “legitimate” groups whose actions reproduce the model by which the field is oriented, groups whose actions are inconsistent with the orientation of the field are otherted as “illegitimate” (Bourdieu, 1984). Since the academic field is organized according to the traditional model of an unencumbered male scholar, the symbolic systems responsible for the reproduction of that model within the institutional context will both promote those groups that legitimate the conditions for achieving male academic success as well as dismiss those groups that are inconsistent with the traditional model. As evidenced by the discussion above, academic women with children do not constitute a “legitimate” group in academia for the reason that they are typically encumbered with a disproportionate amount of responsibility for the care of their children in addition to the demands of their academic career. In other words, academic women with children are not fully “legitimate” field occupants in academia because they cannot dedicate their lives to academic work in the way that an “unencumbered male scholar” is typically able.
Symbolic systems are also violent in the way that they define which activities are valued and devalued within the field (Bourdieu, 1984). Since the primary objective in academia is to accumulate academic capital by making contributions to scientific knowledge, one cannot expect activities that do not contribute to this objective to be valued (Bourdieu, 1988). As discussed by the women, childcare does not contribute to the accumulation of academic capital, but rather typically impedes one’s ability to focus on academic work. For this reason, the care that women provide for their children is not valued in academia.

The women talk about how they have experienced a devaluation of childcare. The women explain that the difficulties that women experience with managing an academic career and care of their children remain largely invisible. They describe how, at the departmental level, there is an environment that does not recognize the impact that childcare can have on a woman’s career. They explain that while certain departments may be better than others in terms of recognizing the responsibility that some women have to their children, there are definitely other departments that maintain a “sink or swim” mentality, and therefore disregard the significance of such issues. Kendra, for instance, assumed primary responsibility for the care of her child during her pre-tenure years. During these years, Kendra’s child experienced a number of health problems that required a significant amount of her attention. Kendra describes often putting in late nights and long days with her child. Having to care for her child became problematic because it limited the time that she was able to devote to her academic work. When asked to describe how the challenges that she encountered with caring for a sick child and meeting the demands of an academic career were recognized in her department, Kendra
replied, "I think that they are largely invisible". She explains that there exists in her department the idea that "work is not life, as if life happens outside of work". Kendra describes how this mentality impacts how childcare is perceived. She states,

I think that in a lot of ways, when you live in a society that doesn't place a lot of value on the care and raising of young kids, you are going to have massive imbalances and this certainly goes for academics ... We have not organized ourselves in such a way that we prioritize making work and being a caregiver compatible ... we're completely at odds with caring for kids.

The women with children also describe how there exists a lack of recognition for the care that academic women provide for their children at the broader university level. For instance, when asked if women's childcare responsibilities are recognized by the university, Kirsten asserts that "Yes, in the sense, the coverage of maternity leave for example recognizes that ... but beyond that I think there are places where no that doesn't happen". One such area where Kirsten has found a lack of value placed on the importance of childcare is during times of review. Kirsten specifically recalls a time while serving as a member on a Review Committee when the leave that an academic had taken to care for her children was not recognized by the Committee as having contributed to the woman's undersized publication record.

Kirsten also describes how the daycare facility on the campus of the university in which she works is inaccessible. While Kirsten expresses gratitude for actually having an on-campus childcare facility where she can bring her children, she argues that this particular service is problematic because it can only manage a relatively low number of children. These findings are similar to Wright and Young's (2001) work, which found that the provisions made for academic women with children are typically limited, and in
addition to being unaffordable, often do not include a drop-in childcare facility or close parking.

Bourdieu argues that dominant power in a particular field is also symbolically violent in the way that it influences field occupants to accept the taken-for-granted symbolic systems that sustain the model by which that field is organized (1991). Consistent with this idea, research finds that academic women with children remain silent about the conflicts associated with balancing their career and care of their children in order to protect their professional demeanour (Wright & Young, 2001). The women with kids in this study demonstrate that they have been influenced by the devaluation of childcare in academia through the way that they report having consciously separated such issues from their academic life. Kendra, for example, explains that because the environment in her department does not recognize childcare as being a hindrance to academic success, she is hesitant to discuss anything that has to do with her child. She asserts that as she has gotten to know other female colleagues who have children, she has learned that they too censor discussion of their children or how having to care for their children is affecting their work from their talks with other faculty members. Kendra also talks about how her department is not interested in the issues pertaining to childcare or the challenges that ensue as a result of combining childcare responsibilities and an academic career. Kendra states,

The culture in academia, my perception of it anyway, and it may be that I am a bit guarded, but the culture is such that you don’t really talk about your kids and it is not part of your work life ... I am very reluctant to have my kids be raised when I can’t do something, or at least to express that publicly. So you know, I would rarely say that I can’t attend X because my kid is sick.
Similar to Kendra, Jennifer also reports having to care for a child during her pre-tenure years who was born with major medical problems. Jennifer talks about how it was difficult to deal with the ups and downs in her child’s health. Even though Jennifer’s husband was able to help care for their children as a result of having been unemployed for a number of years, Jennifer explains that she would often become overwhelmed with the uncertainty of their child’s well-being as well as the intensive care that their child often required. Jennifer asserts that the worry and care of her child often took away from her ability to focus on her academic work. She describes an environment in academia that is not receptive to the anxiety of having to care for children while establishing a career. Jennifer states,

You look around you and there are mostly men and they are talking about research and the university and teaching and all these ... events around the world, so that is what you are going to talk about. There were very few female academics with children, nobody ever brought in children, nobody ever talked about them, nobody talked about personal relationships, nothing!

Jennifer explains that even though she experienced a significant amount of tension during her pre-tenure years as a result of managing a sick child, she never talked to her colleagues about her child’s health problems or the struggles that she was enduring as a result.

In light of the above findings then, the academic field is symbolically violent in the way that it influences women to accept the unencumbered male model by which academia is organized and remain silent about the challenges faced in balancing an academic career and caring for children.
Conclusions

In this chapter, I have drawn on the work of Bourdieu to explore the experiences of women during the pre-tenure stages of their academic careers. I have shown that by adhering to rules which structure the academic field, academics reproduce the masculinist culture in which academia is oriented. I have also demonstrated that academic women experience masculine domination in the way that the constraints placed on knowledge production in academia follow a gendered pattern where the forms of research that are regarded as producing “illegitimate” knowledge are most widely used in faculties disproportionately represented by women. I present women’s disproportionate responsibility for service work as a form of masculine domination, and show how a women’s habitual disposition to assume responsibility for service work is inconsistent with the masculinized expectations of the academic field. Finally, I show how the model of the “unencumbered male scholar” is symbolically violent as it generates an academic culture where the challenges that academic women with children encounter remain invisible. By connecting the women’s narratives to Bourdieu’s notions of field, masculine domination, capital, habitus, and symbolic violence, I have shown how academia is culturally reproduced according to a masculinist order which generates inequity between the genders.
Chapter 6
Conclusions

There is a lack of Canadian based research pertaining to women’s experiences in academia. The available literature is valuable, however, because it sheds light on the gendered cultural milieu that exists in academia, albeit to a limited extent, and lays the groundwork for an in-depth investigation of women’s gendered experiences during the pre-tenure stages of their academic career.

This thesis explored academic women’s experiences during the pre-tenure stages of their academic career. This project addressed the central research question of “what are women’s experiences during the pre-tenure stages of their academic career?” In addition to this question, this thesis also considered: What factors affect the process of attaining tenure? How is one’s personal life impacted by the venture of establishing an academic career? How is the academic job masculinized? Is the tenure process gendered, and if so, in what ways? How do women form an academic habitus?

This thesis is written through a critical feminist lens and emphasizes how social relations and conditions shape women’s experiences. The methodology of this thesis assumes that the social conditions of academic women are organized by masculinized power relations. This thesis also assumes that providing academic women with the opportunity to discuss their experiences will shed light on the social relations in academia and enable the production of new knowledge. Thus, the epistemological position of this thesis is that working from the standpoint of women problematizes power and illuminates both the mechanisms that sustain privilege, as well as the consequences of privilege for broader society (Sprague, 2005). By conducting semi-structured interviews with six women in the Faculty of Social Sciences at a medium sized Ontario University, this
thesis utilized a qualitative approach to conduct this research, and through doing so, maintained a feminist sensitivity while it explored the shared meaning between the women’s experiences.

This thesis is limited in the sense that all of the participants are white. If both white and non-white participants were used in this study, one could explore how race and gender intersect to shape women’s experiences in academia. In a similar vein, this thesis dismisses the significance of how the women’s experiences are informed by their whiteness. This thesis is also limited by its small sample size and concentration of participants in the Faculty of Social Sciences. A greater number of participants from more than one faculty would provide more adequate grounds to generalize findings. This thesis is also limited in the sense that the participants are from the same cohort. Drawing from the narratives of academic women from different cohorts would make generational comparisons possible. Another limitation of this thesis is that the women’s class and family backgrounds are not discussed. Finally, this thesis is limited because it does not explore the women’s sexuality. With an inquiry into the women’s sexuality, this study could have more fully explored how sexuality and gender intersect to shape women’s experiences in academia.

Regardless of these limitations, four central conclusions can be drawn from this study. First, as a result of explicit and implicit rules in the academic field, women are confronted with a masculinized set of criteria which they are required to adhere to in order to be considered by the institution and the scholarly community as possessing the cultural qualities that define a scholar. However, by tacitly accepting those rules, academic women contribute to the reproduction of the academic field. This is
significantly demonstrated by the women’s experiences with feeling the necessity to emphasize productivity in research and publishing.

Second, this study also sheds light on how the stratification of university faculties according to a hierarchy where the social science disciplines are positioned as “temporally subordinate” is significant to women’s gendered experiences in academia. By being disproportionately represented in the Faculty of Social Sciences and measured according to a model that does not value qualitative, feminist, and interdisciplinary work, women experience a devaluing of their research by the Tenure and Promotion Committee and, therefore, may experience greater difficulty accumulating field-specific capital and establishing themselves as an “ideal academic”. Since women are disproportionately represented in the least recognized faculties, the distinction between academic men and women is upheld, and the masculinized hierarchy by which academia is framed is subsequently reinforced. This conclusion is particularly significant because it draws links between women’s gendered experiences and the very structure of academia, while also highlighting how women’s subordination in academia is a systemic matter.

Third, even though women may adhere to the cultural values of academia sufficiently to enter a tenure-track position and establish a tenured academic career, their existence in the academic field is ultimately mediated by processes that diminish their academic work and draw distinction between the genders, positioning women as subordinate. This is not only evident when considering how women are subjected to gender discrimination through being pressured to assume a disproportionate amount of responsibility for service work when compared to men, but also in how women’s contribution to academia through service work is not valued in the academic field. In
essence, this is an instance where women’s feminine habitus conflicts with the expectations of the academic field.

Fourth, it is a masculine model that defines the cultural values by which academia is organized. As such, the academic job is structured according to the notion of the prototypical unencumbered male scholar who possesses the freedom to devote his life to an academic job by virtue of typically not having responsibilities in the private sphere that consume a substantial portion of time, energy, and attention. Academic women with children present an anomaly to this masculine notion by balancing the demands of an academic career while caring for their children. Academia does not recognize the challenges that academic women with children face and it is because of this lack of recognition that these women experience symbolic violence.

Thus, this thesis contributes to ongoing debates within academic circles and the public sphere as well as advances our understanding of women’s experiences in academia by using the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu and existing literature to show how the institution of academia is organized according to men and masculine interests. Based on the narratives of the women in this study and supported by existing literature, it is clear that from the model upon which academia is organized come the implied ideas of who should be an academic, how an academic should structure their lives, which forms of academic work are most valuable, how academic work should be allocated among faculty, and which faculties are dominant. Collectively, these presumptions form a systemic selection criterion by which all academics and academic work are measured, and subsequently positioned within an institutional hierarchy that upholds those qualities and dispositions that are recognized in academia as culturally dominant. While this
model no doubt encourages conformity from all academics, as is highlighted in the data analysis, this model is particularly problematic for women during the pre-tenure stages of their academic career.
References


Appendix A

Brock University – Social Justice & Equity Studies
Letter of Invitation

This project has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research and Ethics Board (REB). (File # 06-033).
MA Thesis Title: “Gendered Inequality in Academia: Exploring Women’s Experiences during the Pre-Tenure Stages of their Academic Career”.

(recipient’s name),

My name is Matthew Reimer. I am a student in the MA program Social Justice & Equity Studies. I would like to invite you to participate in a semi-structured interview which forms the basis of my MA thesis; an investigation of academic women’s experiences with the tenure and promotion application process. Your participation in this study will be of benefit to academic women because it will help illuminate experiences that are generally exclusive to academic women. I will be conducting this research under the supervision of Professor Michelle Webber and Professor Ann Duffy, who can be contacted respectively at mwebber@brocku.ca and aduffy@brocku.ca.

Participation in this study will take 60 – 90 minutes of your time. Prior to participating in this study, you will be required to sign an “Informed Consent Form”, documenting that you have indeed agreed to participate in a semi-structured interviewed conducted by the principal investigator, Matthew Reimer. Considering the title of this study, questions will be relevant to your experiences in academia, particularly your experiences with the tenure and promotion processes. A copy of the interview guide is included for your review.

There are no foreseeable risks to your participation in this research. In order to maintain confidentiality, your name will not appear in the research project. Instead, pseudonyms will be used throughout all aspects of the research project to ensure that all names will be changed. Likewise, academic departments and organizations/institutions will not be identified, but rather, statements will be made in a generalized fashion (i.e. “A faculty member about to go through tenure stated …”). Furthermore, data will only be accessible to myself, the principal investigator, and my faculty supervisors. However, faculty supervisors will only have access to data containing pseudonyms. Data and relevant materials will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the principal investigator’s home.

You are granted the option to withdraw from this study at any time. Also, you are not required to respond to all of the questions, and can decline any questions throughout the duration of the interview. You will have access to the thesis once it is completed.

If you have any concerns regarding your participation in this study, feel free to contact the Research Ethics Board (REB) (www.brocku.ca/researchservices), or the Research Ethics Officer (reb@brocku.ca).

If you are interested in participating in this research please contact me at m_reimer@hotmail.com.
Thank you,

Matthew Reimer
Appendix B

Brock University – Social Justice & Equity Studies.
Informed Consent Form

Title of Thesis: “Gendered Inequality in Academia: Exploring Women’s Experiences during the Pre-Tenure Stages of their Academic Career”.
Principal investigator: Matthew Reimer (MA student) Faculty supervisor: Professor Michelle Webber & Professor Ann Duffy.

I understand that the overarching purpose of this research is to give voice to women in academia. I understand that results of this study will be documented as a Master’s thesis. I understand that the Master’s thesis may potentially undergo further publication (i.e. journal articles, conferences, etc.). I understand that participants will have access to this Master’s thesis once it is completed.

I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study described in the attached “Letter of Invitation”. I understand that my participation in this study involves being interviewed by the principal investigator. I understand that the interview will be audio tape recorded and transcribed. I understand that participation in this study is expected to take approximately 60 – 90 minutes. I understand that there will be no payment for my participation.

I understand that all data will remain confidential. I understand that the interview will be transcribed and that I will be identified by a pseudonym. I understand that I will not be subjected to any foreseeable risks.

I understand that any names or places mentioned will also be changed to further protect my identity and the identity of those I mention. I understand that only the principal investigator, Matthew Reimer, and corresponding supervisors Michelle Webber and Ann Duffy will have access to interview data. I understand that the faculty supervisors will only have access to data containing pseudonyms. I understand that data will be kept in a safe location. I understand that data will be shredded upon completion of study, and that the original audio recordings will be erased.

I understand that I can refuse to answer questions at any time during the interview without consequence. I understand that I have the opportunity to withdraw from the project, and that all collected data will be terminated upon request. I understand that I must sign two copies of this “Informed Consent Form”; one copy for the principal investigator’s records, and one copy for my own.

I have read and understood my responsibilities and those of the researcher. I understand that I may ask the researcher any questions that I may have now or in the future. I also understand that my signature represents my free consent to participate.

Participant’s signature:                              Date:

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Brock REB (file # 06-033). If you have any questions or concerns about this research please contact Michelle Webber (905-688-5550 ext. 4441 or mwebber@brocku.ca) or the Research Ethics Officer at 905-688-5550 ext. 3035 or reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you.

I have fully explained the procedures of this study to the above volunteer.

Researcher’s signature:                              Date: