

BECOMING A FEMINIST DIRECTOR IN THE ACADEMY

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I investigate the creation of my performance of a feminist director. I examine how I became a feminist, what led me to directing, and what choices I made when I intentionally attempted to embody feminist theory in the rehearsal hall, particularly how I worked to de-center the power of the director. The theme of silencing is prevalent in the literature about women in higher education, women in leadership, and women and communication. The theme of silencing was prevalent in my life, and I examine how I overcame that silence.

I use performative writing and Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN) as method and methodology to guide my research into and reflection upon the topics listed above. In addition to my own recollections of directing *Touch* as a feminist, I contextualize my experience within the broader scholarship of leadership, communication, directing, and feminism. Combining SPN and performative writing allows me to tell my own unique story while still relating it to the scholars and practitioners upon whose shoulders I stand. Rather than simply telling my story, I examine the experience through a critical lens. This is an autobiography as a performance of self on paper.

Theatre practitioners often get caught up in the process of *doing* and *creating*. In this dissertation, I probe and reflect upon the choices I made in the rehearsal hall. I make those choices conscious and transparent so that others may draw from my experiences and add to their own directing toolkit.