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Who Speaks and Who Replies in Human Science Scholarship?

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"One beginning and one ending for a book was a thing I did not agree with." -- Flann O'Brien, *At Swim-Two-Birds*

How shall we then begin: We enter the dark night of the empty word, the forever pre/omised dominion of dominion itself, an alterity both secreted and occluded by the ready-at-hand, and to which the present analysis can only serve as pale intimation... Or: I often find myself puzzled at why, given similar topics, I am so drawn to the writings of some scholars and so hardened to the works of others, why some authors feel like kindred spirits and others seem intent on drawing me into an impenetrable thicket of words.... Or shall we settle on: In the wake of the recent tsunami of critical analysis of the essentialized self, it is increasingly difficult to speak of authorship as originating within the minds and hearts of individual scholars. It is perilous indeed to attribute the theoretical insight, the rational argument, the acute observation or the ideological impulse to some person in particular. Nor can we easily speak of "the impact of ideas" on readers, as if there were virginal minds awaiting passively for the "seminal inputs" of the more knowing or experienced. Rather, we are invited to understanding "voice" within the scholarly spheres as owing to community, to negotiated understandings among interlocutors as to what counts as insightful, rational, objective, or moral discourse - in effect, whose voice shall be accorded significance in the affairs of the community. When framed in this way, the question of "who speaks" in the human sciences is most fruitfully addressed in terms of community traditions. Are there particular institutionalized roles or positions to which status or significance is accorded, and are there characteristic forms of discourse or rhetoric associated with (expected from, appropriate for) those who occupy these positions? To frame the issue in this way also leads us to inquire into appropriate postures of response to those who are given voice. If we do accord significance to the words of those of certain rank or status and who speak in a manner appropriate to these positions, what are the conventions of reply? To illustrate, we accord political candidates a right to voice, and when they speak in a manner appropriate to candidacy, listeners are positioned within the democratic tradition as evaluators or judges. Deliberation on the positive and negative aspects of the candidate's views are appropriate. Under ideal conditions, interrogation and dialogue might appropriately follow. In contrast, while newscasters are also accorded voice in contemporary society, the acceptable modes of address are quite different from those of the politician, and the typical mode of response is not that of opinion evaluation but information seeking. It would not be customary (good reasons not withstanding) to debate with the newscaster the wisdom or ideological grounds of his/her report. Historically speaking, the human sciences are of relatively recent origin, acquiring

intelligibility as self-conscious disciplines largely within the last century. In their struggle toward legitimacy there was little means of claiming positions of authority with associated speech forms that stood in complete disjunction with cultural tradition. A completely novel argot would function much like a Wittgensteinian "private language;" no one would comprehend its significance or appreciate its illocutionary force. In asking "who speaks" in the human sciences we must be sensitive, then, to the pre-history of the disciplines and to the rhetorics appropriated by and transformed within the disciplinary matrices. In effect, to give an account of contemporary voices, we must listen with an ear to temporally distant traces. At the same time, we may also attend to relevant modes of reply. How do these rhetorical traditions position their audiences and with what effects for human science inquiry and society more generally? In what follows the attempt will be to identify major forms of discourse to which we accord privilege, and to the traditions of authority from which they derive sustenance. Further, we shall consider the manner in which these rhetorical forms position their readers. Our concern, then, is with what we inherit from the western tradition as forms of authoritative voice and their contrasting invitations to their audiences. At the outset, four modes of traditional voice will be considered: the mystical, the prophetic, the mythic, and the civil. To place a reflexive edge on the analysis, I shall then take up recent developments in the rhetorics of the human sciences. The very intellectual movements spawning interest in the literary and rhetorical means by which texts achieve their authority, have also given rise to new genres of voice, along with repositionings of the reader. We shall be particularly concerned with the potential gains and losses afforded by two of these alternatives: the autobiographical and the fictional. A preliminary caveat is required. Any attempt to characterize rhetorical forms in the human sciences confronts a vast and ever shifting terrain. There are nonbinding sanctions over discursive relationships, and many reasons for sharing and inter-interpolation of discourses. As a result it is difficult to locate pure rhetorical genres. Even within the same work, or even the same passage, an author may invoke a range of tropes extracted from disparate traditions and inviting different responses. Further, many phrasings are ambiguous, often employed in multiple contexts. And too, the boundaries of the human sciences are porous and admit many variegated influences. The present analysis proceeds, then, by elaborating a range of ideal types with which we may index a range of existing texts. The analysis offers a "way of listening" that may help to critically evaluate our rhetorical legacy and its effects, along with emerging alternatives. Telling Traditions Although there are myriad means of organizing textual traditions and comprehending their relationships to audience, the focus here is determined largely by contemporary writing in the human sciences.(1) Given a broad (but by no means inclusive) range of discursive practices, what dominant traditions, themes or images do they evoke? Let us consider what may be considered four primary registers: The Mystical Tradition: Priests and Disciples And why are there "three holy's" and not four? This is because celestial sanctity is always expressed in threes. The Book of Bahir Jesus looked at his disciples and said, "Happy are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of God." Luke, 6, 20 Although the human sciences are typically allied with the profane or secular world as opposed to the sacred, we can locate within many texts what remain as remnants of a tradition originating in early

mysticism and carried forward in both the Jewish and Christian religions (with the Kabbalah playing a central role in the former case and Neoplatonism in the latter). In the mystical tradition, the right to convey to the public the profundities of the supernatural world has generally been assigned to those occupying high positions within religious hierarchies. Those occupying such "priestly" roles have been accorded enormous respect over the centuries, and for the human sciences there was (and is) much to be gained in textual power through the acquisition of mystical rhetorics. In my view the chief components of mystical writing within the human sciences include a high reliance on metaphor (and avoidance of the literal), the linguistic construction of realities beyond observation, and a strong evaluative terminology. The use of metaphor and the suppression of the literal enables the rhetor to lift the realities of the text out of the realm of common sense logics and assumptions; through metaphor things are other than what they seem. Curiosity and wonderment are invited. With the text removing the reader from quotidian reality, the way is prepared for the textual creation of a second-order world. This is a world beyond the senses and beyond rationality, and most importantly, its a world to which the mystic alone is privy. Often the sense of the unknown is achieved through subfuscous tropes, linguistic maneuvers that disrupt the ordinary, that create puzzlement, and furnish the general sense of a world that is beyond the realm of common understanding. Finally, a reliance on an evaluative language brings this world into the realm of the palpable, not directly observable and not subject to rational analysis, but rather, available through the more intuitive register of the emotions. One can literally feel the presence of the unknown. Further, evaluative language serves to establish the significance of the discourse. Frequently it warns of punishment to those who are impervious to the new reality, and offers significant reward to those who accept. In effect, the rhetoric of mysticism in the human sciences carries evocations of dread and joy. Mystical discourses have been integral to the human sciences since their inception. Freud's debt to the Jewish mystical tradition is well documented (Bakan, 1990).(2) Partly owing to his psychoanalytic training, and partly to his father's clerical profession, Carl Jung's writings may also be singled out for their manifestations of the mystical. Consider a fragment from Jung (1945): In reality...the primordial phenomenon of the spirit takes possession of the person, and while appearing to be the willing object of human intentions, it binds his freedom, just as the physical world does, with a thousand chains and becomes an obsessive idee-force. (p.91) In effect, through the metaphor of an invading alien force, we have the creation of a new reality, a "primordial phenomenon of the spirit," and without recognition of its power, one's freedom is bound "with a thousand chains." The transparent mysticism in this work reappears frequently in psychiatric writings. Consider R.D. Laing, writing in 1967: True sanity ...the emergence of the "inner" archetypal mediators of divine power, and through this death a rebirth, and the eventual re-establishment of a new kind of ego-functioning, the ego now being the servant of the divine, no longer its betrayer.(p.100) Jacques Lacan's works are interesting in their extension of the psychoanalytic reliance on the mystical. They draw significantly from the tradition, but face the challenge of a culture to whom much of the psychoanalytic reality has now moved into the realm of the literal. Through novel and highly complex circumlocutions Lacan breathes new life into the

possibilities of the unfathomable. Consider the sense of the supernatural forged by the following: Seizing the original and absolute position of..."In the beginning was the Word"...is to go straight beyond the phenomenology of the alter ego in Imaginary alienation, to the problem of the mediation of an Other who is not second when the One is not yet.(1953, p.203) Here Lacan writes obscurely but with a confidence that exudes first-hand knowledge of the mysteries not fully clear to the reader. He makes direct connection with the Biblical tradition, and lets the reader be known that we confront here evaluatively significant issues of alienation and incompletion. It is useful at this juncture to distinguish between the discourse of the priest as opposed to the disciple. The priest speaks ex cathedra, knowingly and confidently conveying the sense of clairvoyant connection to the mysterious realities themselves. In contrast, the disciple is not so much an official bearer of the mysteries as a personal emissary - one who humbly and with a sense of awe, bears personal witness to the "mysterious one." The disciple will speak more for him/herself as a mortal being than as a direct bearer of the mysteries. In addition to many of the tropes of mystical writing, the important feature of the disciple's writing is its frequent reference to "the holy one," that is, the individual who is the bearer of mystical powers or knowledge. It is the words of this one who are clarified, defended and praised by the apostle. A fragment of John Shotter's (1993) writing provides a robust illustration: But how can we investigate the nature of something that lacks specificity...This is where Wittgenstein's notion of "perspicuous representations" play their part...All the metaphors used by Wittgenstein...bring to our attention aspects of language, and of our knowledge of language, that were previously rationally-invisible to us...(pp 58-59) Although Shotter's work displays many marks of the mystical, it is not in this instance suffused with moral judgment. More purposefully judgmental is the emerging genre of cultural studies writing, a genre that frequently makes use of apotheosis (with such figures as Althusser, Benjamin, Harrendt, and Ray Williams frequently occupying the Pantheon), and employs their divine powers in the service of condemning various habits of contemporary society. Consider Hebdige's (1987) use of (Saint) Genet: So Genet brings us full circle...back to an image of graffiti, to a group of blacks, immured in language, kicking against the white-washed walls of two types of prison - the real and the symbolic...he brings us back also the meaning of style in subculture and to the messages which lie behind disfigurement...Like Barthes, he has secret insights, he is involved in undercover work.(pp.136-37) Let us turn to the issue of interpellation: how by virtue of our traditions is the reader positioned by the various forms of mystical discourse? At the outset, such discourses establish a hierarchy between the writer and the audience. The writer is one who possesses words of profound significance; the audience, in contrast, is presumed ignorant or unaware. The mystical rhetor never addresses an equally enlightened colleague. The form of address is that of revelation; a reader is thus required who "has yet to see." However, while the audience is treated as unknowing, it is not thereby devalued. Rather, the hierarchy is benign: the revelation is humane, intended to bring the supplicant into a state of grace, emancipation, or renewal. In effect, the text invites the reader into a redemptive posture; by forsaking past realities and their attendant commitments the reader may be redeemed. At the same time, for much of this writing a third party is invoked, one who is neither the writer nor the reader. The

third party occupies the lowest position in the hierarchy for it is he or she who has chosen not to listen, who remains in ignorance or sin (e.g. inauthentic, unemancipated, one-dimensional, falsely conscious). It should finally the noted that writing in the mystical tradition is typically impersonal and monologic. The rhetor does not inhabit the text as a flesh and blood individual, replete with common foibles, but serves as a channel for the divine. The reader's voice is not included in the text, except possibly in the form of an imagined interlocutor invented by the writer (a la Freud) as a foil. The Words of the Prophet Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet and there were loud voices in heaven saying, "The power to rule over the world belongs now to our Lord and his Messiah, and he will rule forever and ever.." Revelation 11, 15 The prophetic tradition is closely linked to the mystic in that the prophets served in early Greek culture as emissaries for the gods. The particular importance of the prophet, however, attached to the capacity of the oracular utterance to foretell the future - to warn or enunciate the future. In later Israelite society, the prophets occupied a distinct religious class, separated in important ways from the priestly. And in Christianity, while apocalyptic writings (e.g. the Book of Revelation) served (and continue to serve) an important religious function, they are separated from the inspirational role played by the books of the apostles.(3) Owing to its close association with the mystical tradition, the prophetic voice shares many of its rhetorical modalities. The strong emphasis on metaphor adds to the capacity of the prophet to create a visual picture of a future not yet available to the senses. In prophetic writing there is also a strong emphasis placed on moral evaluation. However, where the mystical voice offers redemption by virtue of "believing,"("seeing the light"), the apocalyptic voice tends to gain moral sway through warning. Catastrophe is at hand unless people change their ways. In the human science struggle to achieve cultural authority, the prophetic forms have been valuable adjuncts. One might single out the Hegelian inspired work of Marx as providing the touchstone for much apocalyptic writing in the human sciences. The prophetic voice in the service of moral ends is most clearly evident in The Manifesto of the Communist Party (with Engels): The bourgeoisie...is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society. The moral weight of warning evoked through the invocation of coming catastrophe also reverberates throughout the works of many critical school writers, most notably Horkheimer (1974) and Marcuse (especially, One Dimensional Man). More recently, we find the prophetic vein effectively mined by authors who, while not themselves Marxists, share in their critique of contemporary social conditions. Christopher Lasch's volumes, The Culture of Narcissism and The True and Only Heaven, both warn against the deterioration of cultural life (an increased self-obsession in the first instance, and an unlivable commitment to progress in the second), and use jeremiad to incite social change. Similarly, the work of Bellah and his colleagues, Habits of the Heart, finds intimacy and community under siege, and in the face of coming catastrophe asks for a return to earlier but now obscured moral traditions. To illustrate: "...the promise of the modern era is slipping away from us. A movement of enlightenment and liberation that was

to have freed us from superstition and tyranny has led in the twentieth century to a world in which ideological fanaticism and political oppression have reached extremes unknown in previous history. (p. 277) More interesting in their rhetorical modalities are recent prophetic offerings from the French context. They are fascinating, for one, because they make abundant use of the mystical rhetorics with which the prophetic tradition is intimately intertwined. Such rhetorics have been more easily absorbed into the Continental cultural traditions than the Anglo-American. Further, while these works contain a strong moral message, they allow little in the way of redemptive potential. Rather, one senses a coming doom from which there is little escape. Consider, for example, a fragment from the mystically saturated work of Deleuze and Guattari (1983): The schizophrenic deliberately seeks out the very limits of capitalism; he is its inherent tendency brought to fulfillment, its surplus product, its proletariat, and its exterminating angel." (p.35) Jean Baudrillard presents an interesting variation on the apocalyptic theme. After an early commitment to neo-Marxist ideas, Baudrillard turned his attentions to the mass circulation of signifiers within the culture, a move that essentially undermined the structural foundations of Marxist theory. However, in spite his defection, Baudrillard continued to draw from the prophetic tradition. To illustrate: Behind this exacerbated mise-en-scene of communication, the mass media, the pressure of information pursues an irresistible destructuration of the social. (1994, p.81) In its positioning of the reader, the prophetic genre is similar to the mystical. Again, a hierarchy is established with the high ground, both ontologically and morally, claimed by the rhetor. The reader is again treated as unenlightened, and with few exceptions, a redemptive option is presented to remove the threat of the future. However, in the prophetic genre, we seldom find the extended hierarchy, with the reader privileged over a second ranked horde of the unrepenting. Rather, the apocalyptic message is addressed to all; one gains no special credit for attending. Finally, prophetic writing is also impersonal and monologic. The Mythic Tradition Thus did he pray, and Apollo heard his prayer. He came down furious from the summits of Olympus, with his bow and his quiver upon his shoulder..." Homer, The Iliad A third voice in the human sciences may also be singled out for its roots in early religious practice. Originating somewhere toward the 9th century BC, stories about divine beings came to occupy an important place in cultural life. Myths essentially narrated a sacred history, relating events in a primordial time to lend intelligibility to the origin of things present. Myths played an important role in emerging religions because they typically demonstrated ways in which supernatural powers broke into the realm of the natural, and made intelligible the means by which significant patterns in the visible world were the result of divine action. Where the prophetic voice linked a natural present with a divinely revealed future, the mythic voice placed the present within the history of a divinely ordered past. And, like the prophetic voice, the mythic narration frequently carried with it moral messages, condemning certain actions while condoning other. Over the centuries, the mythic tradition has been absorbed into many forms of writing, including the Gospels in Christianity, along with folk tales, fairy tales, allegories and fables in the secular realm. In addition to many of the rhetorical markings of the mystical and prophetic traditions, mythic writing places a strong reliance on common rules of story-telling or narrative. Within the western narrative tradition emphasis is

placed on establishing story beginnings, sequences of inter-related actions or events (fabula), and the sense of a conclusion. Further, there is typically the establishment of a morally invested end-point, something toward which the events or actions are directed (a telos), and from which derives the capacity of the story to produce drama (the sense of a "high point" or climax).(4) Put in these terms, we can see that a substantial range of scholarship in the human sciences draws sustenance from the mythic tradition. Accounts of unknowable but inferred origins are (or have been) particularly popular in anthropology, archeology, history, psychology, and sociology. Illuminating here is Landau's (1991) analysis of prominent theories of human evolution in terms of their conformity to narrative convention, and the way in which competing theories depend on available options in narrative forestructure. Gergen and Gergen (1986) have also contrasted Freudian and Piagetian theories of human development in terms of their narrative properties, and most particularly the ways in which the dramatic impact of these theories is derived from narrative structure. In their approximation to mythic writing, Weber's Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Elias' Civilizing Process, Ong's Orality and Literacy, Luhmann's Love as Passion, and Foucault's History of Sexuality, would all lend themselves to similar analyses. In its filliation with the mystical tradition, mythic rhetoric establishes a hierarchical relationship with the reader. The rhetor again provides impersonal, monologic pronouncements, intended to illuminate and inform an unknowing audience. While the major emphasis is on lending intelligibility to the known through the metaphoric construction of the unknown, the narratives are frequently freighted with moral implication. The point is well recognized by critics of Whiggish history, historical accounts that valorize existing practices and conventions. More subtly, we find in Piaget's account of the epigenetic development of cognition, strong value placed on the ultimate achievement of human development, namely abstract reason. In contrast, Freud's theory of psychosexual development portrays the emerging adult as necessarily "neurotic," bearing the burden of multiple laminations of repression. The human trajectory, in this sense is a downward spiral, with the psychoanalytic process then introduced in order to place reason on the throne. In general, then, the prophetic voice of the human sciences typically functions in the service of moral vision. The Civil Voice Reason is a natural dignity and knowledge a prerogative, that can confer priesthood without unction or imposition of hands. Robert Boyle, Aretology While contributing significantly to the rhetorical power of the human sciences, the preceding traditions must be viewed as marginal to the central work of the disciplines of the past 50 years. Within the vast cadres of the sciences there is little but intonation left of the moral and emotional expressiveness so central to the preceding traditions; the metaphors of the mystical are largely replaced by literal language; and obscurity is abandoned in favor of "straight talk." Divine beings now reappear in secular form as "seminal" thinkers; the drama of prophecy is shorn in favor of experimental prediction and actuarial projection. Not only does the prevailing "scientific style" strive for dispassionate and mundane clarity, but it manifests an unfailing concern for evidence, and serves as a model of careful restraint. Although much has been written about the rhetoric of the dominant discourse in the human sciences, far less attention has been paid to its social and political origins. Perhaps the most extensive account of this kind is contained in

Seven Shapin's, A Social History of Truth (1994), a work richly elaborating the emergence of the scientific style in the "early-modern" culture of seventeenth century England. In particular, Shapin proposes, the English "gentle class" - demarked by wealth,ancestry, and education - came to serve as the dominant models for discursive interchange within the emerging practices of natural sciences. As the elite turned their attentions to natural philosophy and natural history, and the experimental work of Robert Boyle and others was becoming increasingly salient, the civil manner of speaking became the argot of science. Among the primary characteristics of civil discourse were a respect for the other (as a class equal, deserving of honor), the avoidance of hostility or direct antagonism (which would disrupt class congeniality), the avoidance of excessive persuasion (respecting the other's capacity for good judgment), impersonality of reporting (respecting the other's personal experiences), and modesty (emphasizing the equal standing of all gentlemen). Finally, authorial credibility was importantly linked to assumption that all gentlemen reported truthfully on their individual experiences. Thus, strong reliance was placed on evidence from first-hand observation. There is surely much more to be said about the transformations in style and significance of scientific discourse since the 17th century. However, for present purposes Shapin's account provides a convenient means not only of indexing a predominant form of discourse, but of comprehending the origins of its rhetorical potency. Exemplars of the civil tradition are everywhere at hand, and the present offering serves in many respects as a local instantiation. Remaining at question, however, is the issue of author-reader relationship. To be sure the civil tradition is more fully respecting of the reader than the preceding genres. Rather than plunging the reader into a position of helpless ignorance, one finds the reader enjoined as a potential commentator. The reader is thrust back upon his/her own experiences and reason as resources for rendering judgment. Further, civil discourse proceeds without diminishing the reader in terms of moral worth. The reader's integrity is never in question. Yet, it would be a mistake to conclude that civil discourse proceeds without the implicit production of hierarchy. Particularly as the concept of "gentle class" has eroded, as participation in the sciences has become democratized, and as the practice of science has moved from a local face-to-face context to the global and technologically mediated (Giddens, 1990), the question of trust or credibility is reasserted. Further, as measurement instruments have come to replace human experience as the touchstone of objectivity, and as competition for scientific funding has increased, self-vindication becomes a powerful sub-text in most scientific writing. (See for example, Bourdieu, 1977). In effect, while sustaining most of the earmarks of civil discourse, the dominant discourse in the human sciences does, by virtue of its claims to superiority, position the reader as a competitor - in a hierarchy of truth/prestige/power. After the Discursive Turn These voices from the distant past are diffused throughout the contemporary texts of the human sciences, and serve to position our subject matters along with those who acquiesce to their illocutionary promptings. However, in recent years we have also witnessed the entry of a new range of rhetorics into the scholarly arena, forms of voice and reader-author positionings that bear significant attention. In large measure these new forms of writing gain impetus from the extensive and intensive critique lodged against the presumption of scientific discourse as truth bearing. As variously

reasoned, there is no justification for a view of language as a picture or a map of reality in the raw, or the companionate presumption that scientific discourse is demanded or driven by nature. Rather, it is argued, we inherit in the sciences various traditions of writing and speaking, discursive genres that function as necessary forestructures of comprehension and communication. Accounts of self and society, then, are substantially shaped by textual traditions, rhetorical demands, and conventional forms of relationship between author and reader.(6) It is this shift in intellectual posture, of course, that gives birth to the present analysis. Most important for the present analysis, this discursive turn in the human sciences has had two profound effects on the practice of inscription. First, the traditional privilege of authority accorded to the writer is undermined. In the context of the discursive critique, it becomes increasingly difficult to accede to the author's claims to be bearing truths from mysterious worlds, prognosticating the future, telling reputable origin stories, or sharing providential information. Rather, the reader informed by these texts is prompted to resist the positions into which such writing has traditionally thrust him/her, positions of repentance, awe, or respect. Or more exactly, the reader approaches the text with a dual consciousness: on the one hand prepared by tradition to join a good-faith bond with the author, and simultaneously knowing that the pleasure of belief is bought at the price of substantial suppression. Coupled with such challenges to the traditional rhetorics and their illocutionary force, contributions to the discursive turn also invite the human scientist into a creative stance toward representation. Can means be located, one asks, for stepping outside the comfortable but unreflexive traditions, developing new forms of writing, and reshaping the relationship between author and reader? Specifically, as scholars have become increasingly sensitized to the politics of hermeneutics, and concerned with the potentials for totalitarianism, suppression, and injustice subtly secreted in the interstices of expression, experiments in inscription have begun to flourish. It should be recognized that these emerging forms are not, nor can they be, genuinely new. Any attempt to achieve intelligibility by abandoning tradition must necessarily fail by virtue of the same logic that issued the invitation. That is, to communicate at all requires the affirmation of some reiterative sequence of coordination, a dependency on an existing forestructure. Thus, we find the emerging forms of voice "new" primarily by virtue of the fact that they draw on different traditions from those prevailing heretofore. Let us consider two significant flourishings: The Autobiographer The first meeting with violence and injustice has remained so deeply engraved on my heart that any thought which recalls it summons back this first emotion. J.J. Rousseau, Confessions Although the term "autobiography" did not emerge until the late 18th century, I will use the term broadly here to encompass a genre of writing in which oneself serves as the chief focus of concern - both as a unique individual and as an experiential lens through which to understand the world. Broadly speaking we may thus include here not only autobiographical works as such, but personal diaries, memoirs, and travel journals. Such writing acquires its authority in several ways. It first enables the reader to gain access to a curious "elsewhere," into a period in history, a culture, or a particular personality - typically of broad significance. Further, there is often an educative function. For example, St. Augustine's Confessions, informs one of the travails of achieving spiritual purity; the

autobiographies of Benjamin Franklin and William Carlos Williams furnish insights into the creative process; Donald Trump tells the reader how to achieve economic success. Finally, autobiography borrows from both mythic and fictive traditions, providing intelligibility to previous times in the first instance and entertainment in the second.(7) With respect to rhetorical markings, we find little attempt to create the mysterious worlds of mystical writing. The autobiographer typically strives to present the fullness of life as experienced. Similar to the mystical and the prophetic, autobiographical writing is replete with expressions of value. However, such expression are not typically in the service of chastising the reader for his/her deficiencies, but for justifying actions taken. The reader is left, then, to draw object lessons from theseaccounts. The autobiography does share much with the myth, in terms of the commands of narrative coherence. However, these demands are often sacrificed for purposes of sharing the "lived experience" with the reader. Autobiography, while sometimes used for purposes of sustaining civil society, is more frequently employed by those who are in some way unusual - either non- or anti-normative. The autobiographer will often "reveal the dirt" that the civil reporter would wish to suppress. Perhaps the most significant characteristic of the genre is born of its attempt to share subjectivity, to enable the reader to stand in for the writer. This often means a high reliance on affectively charged language (for example, of the passions or the spirit, heavy usage of quotidian discourse (the reality shared by all), and a substantial reliance on metaphor (enabling the reader to sense the qualities of a unique experience). In my view it is the autobiographical voice that informs major movements in scholarship since the discursive turn. The genre was already present, influencing early scholarship in anthropology and introspective psychology, and it has continued to be sustained in psychotherapeutic writing. However, we now find a significant flowering of the autobiographical genre, in qualitative research, narrative inquiry, ethnography, case reports, feminist research, and more. Such writing is notable for two particular characteristics: the presence of the author as agent, and the reflection of another's subjectivity (the person or persons under study) through the author's experience. In the former case, the scholar resists appearing as someone other than a personal self, for example, priest, prognosticator, or civil fellow, and attempts to make his/her own interior available to the reader. In the second, there is an acknowledgment of the subjectivity of the other, and an attempt to render it transparent through the expression of one's experience. To illustrate, in an analysis of "nonunitary subjectivity in narrative representation," Leslie Bloom (1996) begins her ethnography by placing her own experience as the lens through which the subsequent account will be refracted: "When I met Olivia in 1991..."(p. 179) Rapidly, however, she replaces her voice with the verbatim account of Olivia, her informant: I had just gotten rid on of the biggest sexual perverts...at the organization. He was a senior executive. And I went after him. And I got him fired..."(p.180) Similarly, Amia Lieblich (1993) introduces a discussion of immigration and the self, with "When I experience loss of familiar orientation, such as being unable to find my way (lost!) on the freeway...I shudder for the immense loss of my young Russian new-immigrant students" (p. 93) Soon, however, the immediate sense of empathy we feel for Lieblich is extended to Natasha, her subject of concern. In Natasha's words: You know, you are the first adult outside my family with whom I had the opportunity to

talk at length since my arrival..." (p.105) Writing in the autobiographical mode invites the reader into a posture quite unlike those previously considered. Where the mystical, prophetic, mythic and civil forms tend to place a distance between author and reader, autobiographical rhetoric has the reverse effect: the reader is invited to identify or be at one with the writer. Because the author relies on tropes within the common vernacular, and particularly those reserved for more intimate or open circumstances, the reader can more easily resonate with the writing, that is, locate a host of personal experiences with which the writing resonates. The reader is invited to feel the account as "one's own." When the author features the narrative account of another, there is a triple fusing: the narrator, the author, and the reader are ideally bound (and bonded) within a common subjectivity. The Fictionalist And they behld Him even Him, ben Bloom Elijah, amid clouds of angels ascend to the glory of the brighteness at an angle of fortyfive degeees over Donohoe's in Little Green Street like a shot off a shovel. James Joyce, Ulysses Let us consider a final form of enunciation, a genre entering common consciousness primarily within the past century. Myths, folk tales, fables and epic poems have long been constituents of the western tradition. However, as civil discourse, the language of dispassionate objectivity, became increasingly prevalent, and claims for its significance increasingly vocal, a delineation between fiction and factual writing became increasingly imperative. The former discourse was to be taken seriously, matters of life and death depend on its depiction's; the latter was more typically viewed as a contribution to cultural refinement or simply a diverting entertainment. In the past century the term fiction has become increasingly identified with prose, and particularly the novel; however, the term can be used more broadly to include a wide variety of experimental writing. Such expansion in category has been increasingly necessitated as "literary modernism" in the present century has invited authors to free themselves from traditional modes of mimesis, and to explore the potentials of writing in and for itself (See for example, Quinones, 1985). The human scientist concerned with breaking from traditional modes of inscription has available, then, an intelligible position of authorship with broadest boundaries. It is a position respected for its contribution to cultural life (e.g. providing wisdom, insight, inspiration), but simultaneously one that can entertain, stimulate, and incite curiosity. Finally, the genre of fiction inherently operates as a counter to the dominant discourse of "fact," while simultaneously functioning in the human sciences to blur or destroy the fact/fiction binary altogether. Within this context, it is difficult to characterize the "fictional genre" in terms of rhetorical specifics. Rather, for the human scientist who is at once restless to break with common traditions, and informed by the fictional tradition, virtually all forms of writing become available for use (including pre-modern and modern traditions). And too, there are no general agreements as to appropriate collectanea. With respect to rhetorical form, virtually "anything goes" - with one exception: Because the fictionally oriented scientist is not bound to any specific rhetorical convention, highly innovative writing runs the risk of unintelligibility. If a reader cannot identify what the writing is intended to do, and how he/she is to participate as a reader, then it may be eschewed as nonsense. It is imperative, then, for the fictional-scientist to presume a readership immersed in the intellectual context giving rise to such experimentation. (If the assumption cannot be made, prefatory, "straight-talk" elaborations may be

necessary to establish the rational forestructure.) Although the range of experimental writing in the human sciences continues to expand, for present purposes I wish to focus on a single rhetorical posture. In my view, the most significant contribution afforded by the genre is its expansion of vocal registers. That is, in a variety of contrasting ways, authors have enriched the number of realities, rationalities, or values embraced within a single work. All of the genres considered heretofore depend on and reinstantiate the assumption of the author as a singular subjectivity. They presume and express the view of the author as a unified being, of one mind, one consciousness, a coherent rationality, and moral integrity. To be other than unified is invite epithets of incoherence, self-contradiction, or moral muddlement. However, the fictional impulse has given broad license for the dispersion of authorship. One of the earliest and most provocative illustrations is Michael Mulkay's 1985 volume, The Word and the World, Explorations in the Form of Sociological Analysis. The volume is extraordinary for its range of polyphonic experimentation. In the introductory chapter, the voice of a querulous interlocutor is interspersed throughout the text. The expository Mulkay speaks of "extending the range of analytical discourse to include forms not previously considered appropriate." (p.10) The Interlocutor replies "That sounds very attractive in principle, but it ignores the important distinction between fact and faction..." (p.10). Mulkay goes on to explain that even within science, "what is fact for one (scientist) is no more than fiction for the other."(p.11) The interlocutor rebuts, "Aren't we in danger of confusing two different meanings of 'fiction?'... Later chapters include an exchange of correspondence between the "fictional" figures of Marks and Spencer, letters from these individuals to Mulkay himself, a one-act play, a multi-participant discussion in which several of the "fictitious" participants are models of living and identified scientists, and a discussion among a group of inebriated participants at the Nobel ceremonies. While intellectually resonating with Mulkay's work, Stephen Tyler's 1987 volume, The Unspeakable, opens a new range of formatics. For example, in one attempt to dislodge the scientific view of language as carrying specific meaning (and therefore transparently revealing truth), Tyler playfully deconstructs a phrase from semiotics ("movement along the syntagmatic axis...") by showing that when the meanings of each word are fully traced, the phrase actually means, "the second world war pitted the anally fixated Germans against the orally fixated British." In a mirthic burst, Tyler than rapidly heaps one discursive tradition on another to animate the argument: The simultaneity of paradigmatic implication interrupts the urgent forward flow of signifiers in the singularity of time. Don't follow forking paths! Don't fork! Get thee behind me Borges! Time marches on! (1987, p.6) However, the rhetorical richness of the piece is perhaps best illustrated by the lyric mode with which Tyler completes the chapter: Beneath the glimmering boreal light, mirrored polar ice groans and heaves, the flame flickers feebly on the altar hearth, in the later heart, into the moldy breathing darkness of the antipodal night. (p.59) A final illustration of the polyvocality of fictional experimentation is provided by Stephen Pfohl's 1992 work, Death at the Parasite Cafe. The volume begins with five different "(w)riting prefaces:" from the editor, the translator, the author, the graphic artist, and the copy (w)riter, each representing a different position of authorship. The remaining chapters are collages of richly variegated forms of writing, including the mystical: "This is a story of...one (who is

(k)not One) to pass throughout the HORRORS of being orphaned. Without transcendence or the sublime assurance of genius. Without heroics or the call to war..." (p. 264), the prophetic: "This is the Parasite Cafe, a dark if brilliantly enlightened space of postmodernity where a transnational host of corporate inFORMational operatives feed upon the digitally coded flesh of others." (p.8), the autobiographical: "I'd like to inFORM you that my recollections of that field research in Florida represent the "origins" of the words you are reading." (p.54), the civil: "To take seriously the situated character of all knowledge is not to deny the objectivity of social scientific truths but to demand of objectivity that it reflexively locate the (always only) provisional adequacy of its own partial positionings with the world it studies." (p.79), and the fictional: "It's incredible to be here. I never thought I'd be writing these words in prison and with such fear." (p.59), all interlarded with photographs, headlines, and visitations by various "factional" characters such as Black Madonna Durkheim, Rada Rada, and Jack O. Lantern. With respect to reader positioning, it is useful to compare fictional endeavors with the autobiographical. In both cases there is an attempt to break the traditional hierarchical relationship between author and audience. Both avoid authoritative, well defended monologues. However, where the autobiographer often undermines author/ity by importing alterior, verbatim voices into the text, the fictionalist places greater reliance on multiple traditions represented within the single text. In a Bakhtinian sense the fictionalist actively "ventriloquates" the various genres (or speech communities) of which he/she is a constituent. Closely related, both the autobiographer and the fictionalist privilege dialogue over monologue; however, dialogue in the former case is achieved by establishing a relationship within the text between autobiographer and interlocutor/subject, whereas in the latter dialogue emerges from the author's juxtaposition and orchestration of differing voices. Both the diarist and the fictionalist also break with the civil tradition, in their frequent expression of political and moral views. However, such valuational expressions differ from those of the mystical and prophetic writer in their lack of a singular standpoint; rather than opting for the high ground, thus disadvantaging the reader, they tend toward multiple and fragmented voices - often admitting a moral relativity. Finally, we must consider a way in which the fictional voice is unique within the family considered here. Here it is useful to array the various genres along a continuum of author/reader distance. The mystical, prophetic and mythic voices clearly demark the author from the reader. The author in these cases is an independent being, a knower who in/forms the reader. The civil voice draws the reader closer, speaking to a common (albeit competitive) "brotherhood" of well intentioned and rational truth seekers. The autobiographer brings the reader even closer to the author. The author's experience (soul) is rendered transparent and accessible. With fictional writing, however, we discover a new domain of ironic distance. On the one hand the genre invites a high degree of author/reader intimacy. The author does not adopt a god's eye-view - coherent, impersonal and contained. Rather, he/she enables the reader access to the full complexity of being - the passionate, the playful, the sophisticated, the brutish, and so on. Further, drawing on the tradition of fiction as entertainment, the genre invites the reader to enjoy the experience, to indulge in the pleasures of the text. Yet, it is this very context of entertainment that gives rise to the ironic distance. For every

evidence of textual crafting - of "writerliness" - is simultaneously evidence of an authorial presence that is removed from the text, who is not authentically present but a "wizard behind the curtain." The earmarks of the fictional suggest a created world that is not to be taken seriously after all, one which is only visited by the autonomous author in the service of enthralling an audience. Inscription in Question I have attempted in the foregoing to locate in current human science writings a range of historical resonances, implicit claims to positions worthy of attention, the rhetorical vehicles through which they achieve efficacy, and the relationships they portend with their readers. With historical sensitivities thus attuned, we find playing through contemporary human sciences the voices of mystics, prophets, makers of myth, civil fellows, autobiographers, and fictionalists. To be sure, few writings can be singled out as "pure forms" of these genres. Not only are the genres themselves based on family resemblance ever subject to historical reconstitution, but careful analysis will typically reveal multiple voices within any reasonably complex text. Further, there are other genres to be considered, emerging for example from such authoritative realms as the judicial, the governmental, and the military (strategic). The present analysis is intended to be neither pictorial nor complete, but to serve as a resource for further reflection. I do not view such deliberation as best served by fastening on the deconstructive implications of the analysis. The substantial literature on the rhetoric of the human sciences has already generated broad consciousness of the constructed character of truth telling. Further, a recognition of our modes of rhetoric and the traditions from which they draw is not ultimately emancipatory. To be aware of the role of tradition, literary convention, and rhetorical rules does not permit escape. Even the recognition is reliant on the same resources it may serve to discredit. In this sense, the present analysis is fully dependent on the same rhetorical forms that it attempts to illuminate (most especially the civil and the mythical). Rather I see the most fruitful reflection issuing first from questions of comparative value and second from the challenge of expanding modes of expression. Several comments may be useful in seeding these dialogues. With respect to comparative merit, there are at least three major (and interrelated) criteria to consider: function, audience, and politics. It should be clear from the above analysis that the human sciences are scarcely unified in conception of function. Where goals of prediction and control are paramount in certain circles, others are variously committed to such ends as generating insight, emancipating the reader, moral molding, providing conversational resources, and constructing cultural futures. To the extent that we recognize these multiple goals as legitimate, we must also welcome the broad variation in traditions of voice. Mystical writing may be of little value in predicting drug use or suicide, while civil discourse is morally torpid; and so on. In effect, we may value the full panoply of available rhetorics, and attend to their relative strengths as we range over possible scientific and scholarly goals. Concerning audience, we find a strong tendency for scholarly enclaves to coalesce around particular genres of writing, with a concomitant disparagement of the alternatives (e.g. for variously being "mystifying," "banal," "impractical," "mawkish," "merely entertaining", etc.). Those outside the genres are unprepared to enter author/reader relationships outside their specialties. For example, to approach a mystical writing from a grounding in civil discourse is tortuous and unrewarding; at the same time the autobiographer will often find civil discourse

agonizingly flat and technical. The problem is exacerbated in terms of the capacity of the human sciences to reach audiences outside the academy. Although these various genres borrow heavily from common cultural traditions, as they continue to circulate within the academy and scholars continue to search for more sophisticated forms of enunciation (more mystifying, arousing, precise, inventive, and so on), their intelligibility as authoritative genres wanes within the public sphere. Most academic derivatives from conventional culture become unreadable in their locales of origin. We find, then, that in selecting from the existing genres, the scholar vastly truncates the potential audience for his/her work. We shall return to this issue shortly. Regarding political implications, the preceding analysis has emphasized the ways in which these various modes of voice favor or fashion forms of relationship. In effect, in selecting a genre one simultaneously invites a particular form of cultural life; genres of inscription function as mechanisms of social production. In this sense it is important to place not only the content of various works, but the forms of writing themselves under evaluative scrutiny. In the manner of positioning self and other, to what forms of society does the scholar wish to contribute? The ramifications of such queries are many, from matters of educational policy and pedagogical practice, to issues of familial and societal organization. However, to the extent that one favors cultural democratization, the dialogic generation of truth and morality, and reducing the experienced distances among people, then we find severe limitations inhering within our current legacy of inscription. Yet, in the end we need not be limited by this particular legacy. We do find attempts by human science scholars to further enrich the modes of legitimate expression. For example, we owe to R.D. Laing's Knots a debt for its introduction of the poetic voice to the human sciences, a voice that is increasingly present to the field. There is also a vital movement toward performance - the use of acting, dance, public display, music - as a means of carrying out professional work (see, for example, Case, Brett, and Foster, 1995; Gergen, 1995; Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995). While visual artists have long used their medium to speak of the human condition, we now find human scientists turning to art as a means of communication (see, for example, Gergen and Walter, in press). Similarly, human scientists are increasingly turning their attention to potentials of film and video as forms of professional expression. Films such as Paris is Burning, Hoop Dreams, and The Hunger Within continuously threaten the border between visual ethnography and entertainment. Most importantly, the shift toward performance, poetry, art and visual modalities, threaten the scholar/non-scholar binary. The identity of the scholar as authority is undermined, but the sciences are richly laminated in expressive capacity. Further, these expressive genres rely less heavily than most of the traditional argots on hierarchical structures. In the case of film and video, in particular, it might be said that rhetorical success depends importantly on the degree to which the work resonates with the pre-existing orientation of the audience. Here the audience does not anticipate "working in order to understand," but being pleasured through the "author's" understanding of them. Finally, the emerging range of genres opens an unparalleled possibility for human science scholars to reach audiences outside the academy itself. Where the success of the existing genres is largely dependent on a sophisticated coterie of initiates, the move to art, theater, poetry, film and the like is more populist. Particularly in the case of film and video, the audience is vast and

thoroughly prepared. A good book may have three openings entirely dissimilar and...one hundred times as many endings. Flann O'Brien, At Swim-Two-Birds

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