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Taking a Stand: Community-Engaged Scholarship on the Tenure Track

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Despite obstacles, author sees ways and offers guidelines for community-engaged scholars to negotiate the tenure track.

Taking a Stand: Community-Engaged Scholarship on the Tenure Track

Kevin Michael Foster

Abstract

This article assesses the journey to tenure among higher education faculty whose scholarship focuses on community engagement. It provides examples for two categories of action–contextual interventions and structural interventions–that agents of the university enact in order to create space for their approach to scholarship. It also describes structural transformation, which is the product of strategically conceived and deployed structural interventions that fundamentally alter university reward structures and culture so as to promote and support community-engaged scholarship. Finally, this piece describes a contextual intervention by the author that has allowed him to work within local communities while meeting standards of research and teaching that move him toward tenure.

Introduction

In this article I consider structural interventions to support the journey to tenure among faculty whose scholarship fundamentally includes ongoing community engagement. Such engagement is designed–often with community members–to research, analyze, and address challenges faced within communities and to subsequently have a direct, positive impact upon the quality of life in the areas addressed. I refer to the faculty work considered here as action-oriented and yet emphasize the research-based approaches to developing projects, analyses, and interventions that lead to the attainment of specific mutually identified outcomes. Such outcomes could include better circumstances for students in schools (Mehan, 2007), addressing health-care issues among the homeless (Power et al., 1999; Hwang, 2001), documenting community histories (Guajardo & Guajardo, 2004; Guajardo, Perez, Davila, Ozuna, Saenz, & Casaperalta, 2006), strengthening local non-profit organizations (Cairns, Harris, & Young, 2005), or policy reforms to address various unmet societal needs. The primary audience for this article are those involved in promotion and tenure of university faculty. An additional audience includes those outside the university structure who work with faculty on community-based projects.

My purposes are three-fold. First, I want to stake a claim for the importance and viability of an engaged, impact-oriented approach to community and scholarship now–before tenure–as a means to preserve dignity and integrity amidst a process that threatens to strip tenure-track faculty of both, and as a means to encourage like-minded faculty to stand for their freedom to pursue an intellectual agenda that centrally includes community engagement. Second, and by way of theoretical contribution, I want to provide a typology to

help scholars further consider and conceptualize the range of action-oriented responses among faculty operating in a context that does not fully support or value community-engaged scholarship. In doing this, I will discuss several terms: contextual interventions, structural interventions, and structural transformation. Third, I want to introduce the concept of intersectional scholarship as an approach to academic life defined by the seamless integration of teaching, research, and service.

As an additional introductory note, and though not the focus of this manuscript, it is important to mention that just as community-engaged scholarship is challenged and contested from within the academy, it also faces important community-based challenges. Challenges may include building trust, discerning and working with community-based epistemologies, and navigating non-university social and bureaucratic networks. Challenges will be ongoing and take different shapes in different times and places. Among those who have begun to address the external issues are Minkler (2005), who considered challenges of community-based participatory action research to address urban health problems, and Cheney (2008), who considered the ethics of engaged scholarship. The challenges to community engagement that are addressed in this article are those associated with the university structure and that help shape the cultural norms, values, and practices of faculty and administrators. The perspective is that of a tenure-track faculty member whose work consistently includes participatory action in community settings beyond the walls of his home university.

From Community Service to Community-Engaged Scholarship

Generally, higher learning institutions have been conceived to serve society, but this has meant different things in different eras. Plato's Academy "trained individuals for public service by analyzing the outstanding issues of the day" (Neal, Smith, & McCormick, 2008, p. 93). In the United States, the Morrill Act of 1862 provided the framework and perennial support for the land-grant universities that would conduct regionally significant research and play an important role in the nation's economic security and development. Land-grant universities, which today operate in all 50 states, "put things scientific at the center, around which an unusually strong research orientation has developed, with an emphasis on application and problem solving" (Johnson, 1981, p. 333). In World War II, the federal government turned to the nation's universities to provide a research base for the war effort (Nelson & Romer, 1996). The role of universities in providing research for national defense and security was solidified and strengthened following the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik in 1957 and the onset of the Cold War (Neal, Smith, & McCormick, 2008).

Along with efforts to serve society in partnership with the federal government, colleges and universities have also provided a range of specialized services to local communities. Among the examples are colleges of architecture partnering with local governments on municipal planning, law schools maintaining legal clinics for the poor, colleges of education providing teacher professional development, and dental schools offering continuing education for dental professionals and dental services for qualifying community members. Such works, however, are often defined as service or deployed as service-learning (thus fulfilling the university teaching mission in an especially effective way), as opposed to systematically conceived in terms of scholarly projects that will generate knowledge (see Yoder, 2006, for an example). Questions remain as to the connections between faculty work in community and faculty scholarship (Calleson, Jordan, & Seifer, 2005).

Among the examples of community-engaged work, it is possible to center such efforts within the academy by thinking of them in terms of how they can influence knowledge. For example, instead of simply offering professional development for teachers, it is possible for higher education faculty to work collaboratively with teachers to explore and develop increasingly effective professional development practices and to support teachers as active learners and researchers (Hamos et al., 2009; Karp, Sevian, Decker, Zahapoulos, Chen, & Eisenkraft, 2008). In such cases, what would otherwise simply be seen as service can be constructed such that it is grounded in pressing research questions, methodologies are developed and applied, and findings are written up and disseminated to impact theory and practice in relevant fields.

The field of anthropology, and in particular applied anthropology, is perhaps the academic discipline in which community-engaged scholarship has the strongest, and yet still incomplete, foothold. In the journal *Practicing Anthropology*, applied anthropologist Mark Schuller noted that:

> It's a matter of professional pride that anthropologists use our professional skills in the service of a here-and-now issue, group, [or] movement, or to solve a particular social problem. I am certainly proud of our heritage in real world issues. From Boas and Mead there is an unbroken legacy of social change agents in anthropology (2010, p. 43).

Yet later in the same article he also noted:

> When I was asked to research and write a paper about Haiti's food crisis that finally got world attention in April, 2008 because of riots, I had 36 hours to write a publishable account from scratch. This piece and others like it are more significant public anthropology than articles that I have spent literally years writing, editing, submitting, re-editing, and re-submitting, that "count" toward my tenure case (2010, p. 47).

The historic work of many scholars shows that there have long been at least some opportunities for action-oriented work. This can be seen in the work of anthropologists like Boas and Mead, sociologists like Du Bois, agriculture scientists like George Washington Carver, and of countless academicians who have worked for the federal government. At the same time, the conceptualization and framing of engaged work has shifted over time, and there has not been a consistently positive relationship between serving and engaging communities on the one hand, and tenure and status within the university on the other.

Disincentives for Community-Engaged Scholarship

Despite longstanding connections between university and community, contemporary academic life threatens to undermine faculty members' penchant for service, even where that service is part of a research agenda (Shapiro, Frank, May, & Suskind, 2009). In some cases, those who would be interested in a vibrant service dimension to their scholarly profile are discouraged from being thusly engaged, especially when prospects for tenure are raised as an item for primary consideration. Even in colleges and universities where tenure policies have been reformed to reflect the value of community-engaged scholarship, tenure track faculty may find that many senior colleagues nonetheless encourage a more conservative path to tenure (O'Meara, 2002). Such a path would have faculty focus on those aspects of the tenure dossier likely to carry the most weight in the review process. In the contemporary academic climate, tenure-focused alignment of work would likely include producing a book published by an academic press or a number of peer-reviewed articles per year, receiving teaching evaluations above a minimal threshold, and engaging a minimal amount of service that provides evidence of broader university or community engagement by the faculty member. Finally, tenure track faculty may be discouraged from community engagement through department or university reward structures that base annual merit pay raises solely on publications and teaching (Kutal, Rich, Hessinger, & Miller, 2009). In some cases, service may not appear in the merit scoring rubric at all, thus rendering service an unrewarded hobby that would take time away from tangibly awarded activities.

Contextual Interventions, Structural Interventions, and Structural Transformation

Within this picture, there are at least two possible approaches for those interested in community-engaged scholarship. The first has to do with prospects for reforming or transforming our expectations of faculty and corresponding reward structures; the second has to do with the intellectual capacity of engaged scholars to theorize, document, assess, and publish in ways that their intellectual work can be clearly described in terms of prevailing expectations and reward structures (Calleson, Jordan, & Seifer, 2005). In short, one approach is to reform the structure, while the other approach is to conceptualize the work to fit within the structure. The strategies are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they fit within the framework of contextual versus transformational action

as initially conceived by black studies scholar and anthropologist Ted Gordon, and further developed by Kraehe, Blakes, and Foster (2010).

Even at universities that include academic leaders who call for community-engaged scholarship, there may be a persistent reality that the calls to such scholarship and service contradict the basic realities of the university review and reward structure. Fortunately, there is a growing acknowledgment and critique of this reality (Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Shapiro, Frank, May, & Susskind, 2009). The critique creates intellectual space for community oriented tenure-track faculty to formulate visions of scholarship that include community engagement. The acknowledgement justifies efforts by interested senior faculty to build supports for community-engaged faculty members to carry out that scholarship.

As more faculty become involved with community-engaged scholarship, their work has often included responses to the structural impediments they face (Shapiro, Frank, May, & Suskind, 2009; Ellison & Eatman, 2008). Likewise, individual agents and units have worked to reform governance structures that hinder or devalue community-engaged scholarship. One way to categorize the range of these responses is in terms of contextual interventions, structural interventions, and structural transformations (Figure 1). Contextual interventions respond to and account for circumstances in context and in this case include adjustments to action-oriented practice and research such that the work meets the traditional academic expectations for teaching, research, and service. Such interventions can help individual faculty members survive within a structure that does not fully recognize or value their work, interests, or perspectives. Contextual interventions do not, however, alter, or even challenge, prevailing structures. Structural interventions are programs, policies, or practices that provide space, cover, and support for activities and understandings

that are outside established institutional norms. Individual structural interventions constitute reform, but also fall short of fundamentally altering prevailing conceptions and policies unless they are coordinated and carried out in conjunction with complementary interventions. For example, the impact of policy changes will be limited if they are not coupled with efforts to change institutional culture (Kutal, Rich, Hessinger, & Miller, 2009). Finally, structural transformation is the product of strategic and accumulated structural interventions and constitutes a fundamental change in the procedural and cultural landscape—in this case in favor of conceptions of academic merit that encourage, support, and reward community-engaged scholarship.

Since returning to The University of Texas at Austin in 2005, I have developed contextual interventions that accommodate my interest in community-engaged scholarship. I have also been supported by structural interventions initiated by supportive faculty and administrators. My hope is to contribute to eventual structural transformation, which in this case would mean that the university's policies, procedures, systems, and culture would support and reward community-engaged scholarship. Short of transformation, however, the interventions are critically important and have helped me to develop projects and programs through which I have experienced success as measured by standards that resonate both within the community and within the academy.

The programs through which I have experienced a sense of success and fulfillment were conceived of and operate in the context of the Institute for Community, University, and School Partnerships (ICUSP), which I founded as a vehicle to simultaneously conduct research, develop graduate students, and work with K-12 students, families, and schools. Our group, which includes myself, four graduate students per year, one full-time staff member, and administrative

Figure 1. From Intervention to Transformation

Contextual Intervention	**Structural Intervention**	**Structural Transformation**
These categories exist on a continuum of agency and impact. Contextual interventions are an exercise of agency, but with little structural power and hence little impact beyond facilitating an immediate desired outcome. Structural transformation is a cumulative impact of structural interventions.		

support that we in effect purchase from the university, has developed a range of student- and community-engaged programs. These include: an arts-focused residential summer leadership institute operated with a community partner; male and female student academic and leadership development programs for middle and high school students on 10 middle and high school campuses in central Texas; and embedded professional development where ICUSP project directors (graduate students or the one full-time staff member) work with schools to achieve specific outcomes related to teacher effectiveness.

Indicators of success that hold value within the local community include numbers of students who have gone on to college from our programs (115 of 121 seniors from 2007-2010); parent, teacher, and principal testimony about students who, instead of being suspended, are returned to the classroom as a result of conflict resolution skills acquired with the help of our university students; and local and national awards I have received for service to community. Few of these indicators of success hold anything more than symbolic value within the academy.

Indicators of success that are favored by the academy include program evaluations, quantitative data that attest to program outcomes, and peer-reviewed research publications. Funds brought in through community-engaged work may be appreciated as an indicator that projects or programs merit investment from outside entities, including schools, school districts, donors, or federal and non-profit agencies.

Contextual Intervention, with the Specific Example of Intersectional Scholarship

The work highlighted above is part of a program of community-engaged scholarship that is made possible by several contextual and structural interventions. An example of a contextual intervention that has sustained my work as a scholar has been the conceptualization of an intersectional approach to intellectual life within the academy. I call this approach and its outcomes *intersectional scholarship*. Working from John Venn's 19th century model representing the intersection of overlapping sets (the Venn Diagram), and further inspired by the Hedgehog Concept approach to developing a business organization (Collins, 2001), I attempt to work

within a conceptual space where three traditional academic activities–teaching, research and service–intersect. Such an approach stands as an alternative to a fractured professional existence where each academic area is treated independently and service inevitably ranked lowest (Ellison & Eatman, 2008).

By concentrating my efforts in those spaces where the three areas come together, I have been able to fully engage in service while living up to my responsibilities to teach and conduct research. I have done this through community-based research projects in partnership with my graduate students. The projects have concretely served middle and high school students (as evidenced by their high school graduation rates, scholarships, and expression of satisfaction with our programs in surveys), been a source of learning and funding for my graduate students, and led to publications in peer-reviewed journals. Instead of viewing teaching, research, and service as three disjointed arenas of activity, I teach my graduate students and full-time staff to view ourselves as working in one arena with three dimensions (Figure 2).

Intersectional scholarship constitutes an intervention because it involves rearticulating academic work in a way that, while discouraged at the outset by several senior colleagues, meets both my intellectual interests and the interests of the academy. This work remains on the contextual level, however, as it is just one scholar's creative adjustment to a potentially
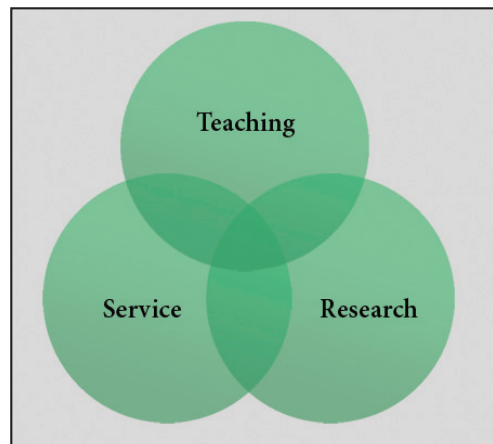
Figure 2. Intersectional Scholarship
The overlap of the three traditional arenas of academic work creates a nexus where all three can be coherently, simultaneously, and fruitfully engaged to the mutually reinforcing maximization of each.

limiting set of circumstances. As a concept, however, intersectional scholarship provides the intellectual groundwork for structural interventions to the extent that the alternative conception becomes institutionalized–whether through its future embodiment as a concept to guide policy (to the extent that university-sanctioned centers, institutes, or departments reproduce and further develop its rationale), or by other means.

Structural Interventions

Structural interventions include policy reforms, programs, supports, and actions that help produce an alternative outcome or systematically support an alternative practice or set of practices within an institution or institutions. Structural interventions considered here are those that make community-engaged scholarship more tenable for those on the tenure track. Such structural interventions can come from campus units that value community-engaged scholarship, from scientific and academic leadership organizations, and from the federal government. At The University of Texas-Austin, the leadership of the Warfield Center for African and African American Studies has become systematic and diligent in supporting faculty whose work significantly includes research conducted in the context of concretely serving communities outside the university. Carefully reviewing tenure files and writing letters of support that attest to the intellectual merit of the work of strong community-engaged faculty have become a diligently and carefully executed annual activity that also constitutes a structural intervention.

Federal initiatives and funding programs can also create structural interventions that support community-engaged scholarship. In recent years, several federal agencies and offices, including the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, the President's Office of Science and Technology Policy, and the Government Accountability Office (an independent bipartisan evaluator of the use of public funds), have developed programs, tools, or assessments to promote or measure the societal impact of scientific research. Their work tacitly, or in some cases tangibly, values research that most directly impacts society (AAAS, 2010).

The work of the National Science Foundation (NSF), which I observed for one year as a policy fellow at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, provides several strong examples of structural interventions that support engaged scholarship. The NSF provides over $7 billion annually in funds for basic research in science. In 1997, the NSF added "Broader Impacts" to its review criteria for determining which research projects to fund (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf08_1/gpg_3.jsp) and has since produced a statement regarding activities that facilitate broader impacts (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/gpg/broaderimpacts.pdf). Michael Marder, a prominent physicist and architect of the highly successful UTeach teacher preparation program (http://uteach.utexas.edu/, http://uteach.utexas.edu/), cites this change as being of specific benefit for drawing science faculty into the effort to prepare future teachers and support those already in the field. Referring in an unpublished paper to the NSF review criteria, Marder (2010) noted that:

> Criterion I asks, what is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity? Criterion II asks, what are the broader impacts of the proposed activity? Since 2002, all proposals have had to address both questions explicitly in the opening summary, with a charge to promote "teaching, training, and learning," and to "broaden participation of underrepresented groups" (pp. 10-11).

Marder further noted that while the "Broader Impacts" criterion has not led every natural scientist to deeply honor faculty engagement in K-12 schools, the criterion has inspired a critical mass to more seriously consider ways in which their work can directly impact society. Moreover, the criterion has created space for scientists to be acknowledged and rewarded for science education research that will directly impact K-12 teaching and learning. In short, such an esteemed independent federal agency as the National Science Foundation decided to require that to receive funding, researchers' projects must have an impact upon society. This decision has lent credibility to calls for community-relevant work when issued by others, and lent both credibility and justification for community-engaged scholarship by faculty members.

Consistent with the framework established by the "Broader Impacts" criterion, and in response to authorizing language by the Congress, NSF also initiated the Math and Science Partnership Program, which further supports community-engaged scholarship by way of supporting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) faculty work in K-12 education (see http://hub.mspnet.org/index.cfm/homehttp://hub.mspnet.org/index.cfm/home). From 2002 to the present, the program has provided over $800 million for university-school partnerships that engage STEM faculty in K-12 settings to improve student outcomes. Lessons learned include ways for STEM faculty to support teacher professional development, the establishment of reward structures that facilitate faculty choices to engage K-12 science education, and the realization that STEM faculty engagement with K-12 settings can produce benefits for the STEM faculty, including greater understanding of how to teach effectively at the university level (National Science Foundation, 2010; Zhang, 2010).

In addition to examples of support for community-engaged scholarship from the federal government, national scientific disciplinary organizations and several academic leadership groups and organizations have also produced guidelines, published position papers, or otherwise organized to support community-engaged scholarship. One example comes from the Association for Public and Land-grant Universities, which represents 218 institutions and has instituted Promoting Institutional Change to Strengthen Science Teacher Preparation among 26 of its member universities (McEver, 2010). This effort is not direct community engagement, but is concerned with developing the university structures that support and reward faculty engagement in schools. Another is the Imagining America Tenure Team Initiative, which was "inspired by faculty who want to do public scholarship and live to tell the tale" (Ellison & Eatman, 2008, p. ii). This initiative brought together university presidents, deans, faculty, and leaders of academic non-profit organizations to produce an analysis with recommendations on knowledge creation and tenure policy in contemporary universities. The goal of this initiative is to impact tenure procedures, policies, and expectations such

that community-engaged scholarship is fully supported (Ellison & Eatman, 2008). Even where they have a "grassroots feel" (in that groups of individuals have come together to develop and implement a strategy for change), the examples of support so far mentioned are structural interventions because the actions are those of institutional entities (an academic center, a federal funding agency, and organizations representing disciplinary fields or strata of the academy) that are directly or indirectly part of the academy writ large and largely owe their credibility to that affiliation.

Beyond the examples given, an additional argument can be made that the support of tenured faculty members, especially those on a tenure review committee, also constitutes structural support because the tenured faculty members are agents of the university. But while such support constitutes an endorsement of an approach to intellectual work, the breadth and power of that support are limited and must be put into the context of faculty governance, according to which individual faculty members represent one institutionally sanctioned voice among many, and one sanctioned voice within a structure that allows for, and even encourages, a range of voices and perspectives. In short, while systematic support from agents or bodies within the structure constitutes structural support, the weight of that support is determined by their proximity to or relationship with tenure granting centers of power (provosts, regents, trustees, etc.).

In the case of supporting community-engaged scholarship, the impact of the structural interventions is to provide intellectual space for the support and re-articulation of faculty work so that it can be recognized as valuable in the context of a traditional view that primarily measures scholarship according to the number of articles or books produced (quantified intellectual production), the selectivity or reputation of the venues or presses within which the writings are published (qualified intellectual production), and the evidence of a scholarly trajectory that predicts a likelihood for continued intellectual production after tenure. However, structural interventions fall short of structural transformation and the guarantee that community-engaged scholarship will be given as much weight as research that does not include

evidence of "Broader Impacts." Until there is structural transformation, the question as to how their scholarship will be perceived and evaluated at the time of their tenure review remains open for community-engaged junior faculty.

Structural Transformation

Contextual and structural interventions, though limited, are of particular importance because they provide building blocks for structural transformation. Contextual interventions are creative adjustments limited to an immediate sphere of action. Structural interventions are attempts to reform aspects of a structure or system. Short of transformation, they provide cover and support for intellectual efforts that are not part of an institution's norms.

Structural transformation, however, represents the seldom seen far side of the continuum, where interventions have been rendered unnecessary (Figure 3). Examples of structural transformation in support of community-engaged scholarship are difficult to find. One possible example, which represents the culmination of a series of structural interventions over several years, comes from the State of Georgia. In 2006, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved a policy statement on work in schools. According to the Academic Affairs handbook:
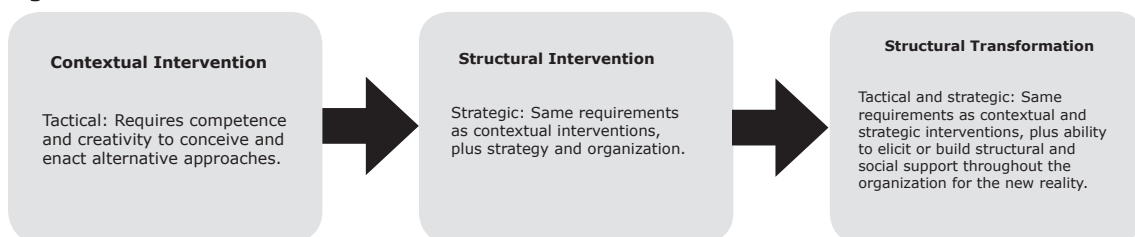
> The BOR [Board of Regents] values USG [University System of Georgia] faculty engagement with K-12 schools (http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/policy/8.3_additional_policies_for_faculty/#p8.3.15_work_in_the_schools). BOR Policy 8.3.15 states BOR expectation for faculty engagement with the public schools in institutions that prepare teachers. The Board expects presidents, provosts, academic vice presidents, and deans of colleges of education and arts and sciences

in institutions that prepare teachers to advocate for, assess, recognize, and reward practices consistent with this policy (http://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section4/handbook/4.7_evaluation_of_faculty/, http://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section4/handbook/4.7_evaluation_of_faculty/),

With this policy reform, a conversation about faculty involvement in K-12 education has fundamentally shifted. For any of the 35 higher education institutions in Georgia that prepare teachers, engagement with K-12 schools to develop teachers and improve student outcomes is not something that faculty members need to defend to tenure or merit review committees. Rather, it is now required that such engagement will be rewarded. But even this seismic shift could have a limited impact if it faced enough resistance from sufficiently empowered agents within the university structure. Thus, the structural interventions preceding the policy change were also critical to the eventual production of a structural transformation.

In the Georgia case, longstanding efforts to promote partnerships across the educational spectrum from pre-kindergarten through college found additional support from the National Science Foundation (Kettlewell, Kaste, & Jones, 2000). The Georgia Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics (PRISM), sought to engage higher education faculty in efforts to produce K-12 reforms that would enhance student learning (http://prism.mspnet.org/ and http://prism.mspnet.org/). Beyond calling for faculty involvement, the project included a strategic plan to fundamentally alter the collegiate landscape so that faculty could more freely engage in the work. The work included a series of structural interventions: convening, coordinating, and enrolling support of deans, department chairs, and other campus leaders;

Figure 3. Theoretical Path to Structural Transformation

Contextual Intervention

Tactical: Requires competence and creativity to conceive and enact alternative approaches.

Structural Intervention

Strategic: Same requirements as contextual interventions, plus strategy and organization.

Structural Transformation

Tactical and strategic: Same requirements as contextual and strategic interventions, plus ability to elicit or build structural and social support throughout the organization for the new reality.

> ## " *To some of us, the tenure process appears a conservative, brutish, and imprecise measure of intellectual worth coated with a veneer of civility.* "

funding a cultural anthropologist to track and study the process of change; working with campus leaders to facilitate receptiveness of departments to engagement through workshops, symposia, and incentives; and proposing language and guidelines for acceptance and implementation by governance structures (Kutal, Rich, Hessinger, & Miller, 2009). Structural transformation in Georgia, then, was the culmination of a coordinated series of structural interventions that together produced a fundamental shift that systematically rewards faculty engagement work in schools.

Conclusion: Connecting Interventions, Knowledge Production, and Tenure

This article has so far introduced three categories of action-oriented responses to work and positioning within the academy among community-engaged scholars whose scholarly production is not automatically valued within traditional university reward structures. I have discussed contextual interventions, structural interventions, and structural transformation. In discussing contextual interventions, I also introduced the concept of intersectional scholarship. Unfortunately for the community-engaged scholar, there are few available examples of structural transformation in support of community-engaged scholarship. For tenure-track faculty, that leaves the reality of having to negotiate circumstances as best one can to produce work that one values personally and meets requirements for tenure. For community-engaged scholars interested in a rich theorization of their work, a nexus may emerge where a particular contextual intervention merits further consideration and subsequent incorporation into the literature and practice of a given disciplinary field or academic structure. In such an instance, the contextual intervention has become inseparable from knowledge production and thus becomes part of the justification for their

tenure case. Further, contextual interventions that articulate a faculty members' interests with that which contributes to a tenure case can help an individual faculty member avoid the fragmentation and "professional schizophrenia" referred to by Ellison and Eatman (2008). These are additional manifestations of intersectionality in practice.

Yet, as long as the interventions are contextual (or even structural), the risk remains that among community-engaged scholars "important areas of achievement [may be] illegible at the point of promotion" (Ellison & Eatman, 2008, p. 19). As Rice noted, it is notoriously difficult to fully discern how your work will be judged—something akin to "archery in the dark" (Rice, 1996, p. 31). O'Meara further commented that "a substantial amount of research concurs that promotion and tenure are often elusive, unpredictable and fraught with 'conflicting expectations' and unwritten rules" (O'Meara, 2002, also citing Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000).

Because of the noted possibility that community-engaged scholarship may not be understood, valued, or appreciated as scholarship (Kutal, Rich, Hessinger, & Miller, 2009; Ellison & Eatman, 2008; O'Meara, 2002; Rice, Sorcinelli, & Austin, 2000; Rice, 1996), it would be foolhardy for untenured faculty members to stake their academic future on others' perceptions of community-engaged work. Rather, until their university has been transformed, community-engaged scholars should aim to meet and beat the perceived standards for tenure–even as they conduct the work that they value most. As crass at it may sound–and to apply a familiar metaphor–this means to bean count, to generate a number of peer-reviewed articles that exceeds the number of publications of the scholars who came before them and to ensure that, in addition to publishing in the journals that most closely reflect the scholar's interests, the scholar

produces a high number of articles for more widely read and traditionally heralded and cited journals.

To some of us, the tenure process appears a conservative, brutish, and imprecise measure of intellectual worth coated with a veneer of civility. Yet if we are committed to the possibility of an academy that engages work and produces knowledge to transform lives and circumstances, then, to quote a memorable movie line, "we do what we have to do in order to do what we want to do" (Washington, 2007). Community-engaged scholars would do well to come to terms with the current academic realities and then steadily work to co-create possibilities and conditions (through contextual interventions, structural interventions, and finally structural transformation) that will allow for something different, and, from the standpoint of community-engaged scholarship, something better.

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